

## Saga of Disrespectful European Sailor Who 'Lost' Ear Over Sudanese Woman

By Sister Christine

A true story, which I believe is among the most well known in the Sudan, deals with the respect of Sudanese women. It is the story of a European sailor at Port Sudan.

**PORT SUDAN** is a city on the east coast at the Red Sea. It is a very clean and quiet city. After 9 o'clock in the evening the streets are so quiet that I believe one could "hear a pin drop." Most of its occupants are in their homes after dark. When I reflect on Port Sudan, many happy memories come to my mind.

The city is on a large salt deposit. Top soil must be brought into the city from another area for plants to grow. One finds very few trees there in general, but still the scene is pleasant. There is a small city park where many colorful plants and pink, yellow and orange flowering trees are to be found. One may also obtain refreshments there. I loved this park.

It is not often that one sees a Hadendowa (a group of people who occupy the Eastern region of the Sudan) in the Red Sea area. These

people were referred to as "fuzzy-wuzzies" by the English because of their curly long hair.

**ONE WILL** not find women walking in the streets, except around the hours of 10 a.m.-12 noon, when shopping is at its height. The waters in the Port are so clear that one is able to see many colorful fish thru them when the waters are not rough.

It was about 4:30 p.m., tea time, when a young woman, covered in her tobe, the national dress, was out perhaps to go to the dukan (small store) to buy spices for tea when a Caucasian sailor, whose ship was at dock, saw her.

Upon seeing the sailor, the young woman pulled up a part of her tobe to cover the bottom half of her face, as the women do there to avoid any suggestions of flirtation and to hide themselves from suspicious and wondering eyes.

**THE SAILOR**, as do most European sailors when in black original lands and waters, was looking for amusement and what Muslims refer to as "foul play." When he saw this young woman, he spoke to her and tried to get her attention.

At this time, an old man was coming down the opposite side of the street. The sailor tried to block the woman's direction and winked at her. By this time the old man—who had heard the European's voice when he called to the lady—moved quickly to the aid of the young woman. With his sword, which most of the older Sudanese men carry (if not a heavy stick or cane) struck the sailor, slicing off his ear.

This incident caused much embarrassment to the European's country. In fact, this incident caused that European's government to make a formal apology to the Sudanese government for the disrespect it's citizen showed a Sudanese woman.

**PLEASE DO** not think this example to be an exaggeration of the protection a woman receives in the Sudan. This sailor was fortunate to escape with his life. Had a young man witnessed the sailor's disrespectful manner, that sailor most certainly would have been killed—and his murderer praised.

The women there are highly protected and respected. When visiting the East, West-



THIS IS NEWARK, N.J., and the same is in Detroit, Michigan, where the armored forces were thrown against rebellious black communities protesting centuries of oppression and injustice. Black sociologists say, however, there is more to come unless drastic changes are made in American treatment of black people.

erners see very few women in the streets and no women out after dark, unless accompanied by a male member of their family. When they return to their countries, they spread the untruth that the women in Islamic societies are slaves to their men, and have no freedom. The truth

is that the women in Islamic societies are well protected and respected as should be the case.

The Honorable Messenger has established rules of respect for us to follow, as I have mentioned in my previous articles.

To be continued