

On Life In The Sudan

By Bayyinah Sharrieff

The Sudanese women placed much attention on their personal selves. They were always very careful to make sure that their dresses matched the color of their tobés (national wrap which is worn to cover their hair and their dress) and that their tobés were free of wrinkles.

THEY TOOK time with their hair, brushing and oiling and twisting it to keep it neat and beautiful. They were so particular themselves when compared to the American woman (who gets up late in the morning and rushes a wash-off and grabs practically anything in the line of clothes

to put on and gives her hair a quick brush over) that I was first very surprised to see such cleanliness and grooming among a people who white America had said were half savage and uncivilized. I had to make sure that I was equally as conscious that I might feel comfortable around them.

They were light pastel colors in the day time, but hardly ever more than one or two colors. Nothing like the multicolored African prints which are on the market today representing Africa.

No one Sudanese woman cleaned a whole house and yard complex by herself. In almost all instances a boy or two were hired to do the heavy house work. This gave the Muslim Sudanese woman time to care for herself during the day while her husband was at work and thus inabled her to remain attractive to her

husband and family.

We who have been born in America have been in the practice of dressing up to go outside, not caring how we look on the inside. This is not the practice in the Islamic societies around the world.

The Muslim woman spends the majority of her time in her home, and she knows that she must grace her home. Her appearance reflects on the whole of her family. Her hair is one of her main beauties and she therefore cares for it. She would consider it disgraceful to let her hair go "bushy" as many Blacks here in America do.

The Honorable Elijah Muhammad teaches the women in Islam that they must stress cleanliness with themselves first. He teaches them to groom self to its betterment.

I have lived in the Sudan practically two years (not as a foreigner) and can bear witness that what the Honorable Elijah Muhammad is teaching the Black Woman is the Truth.