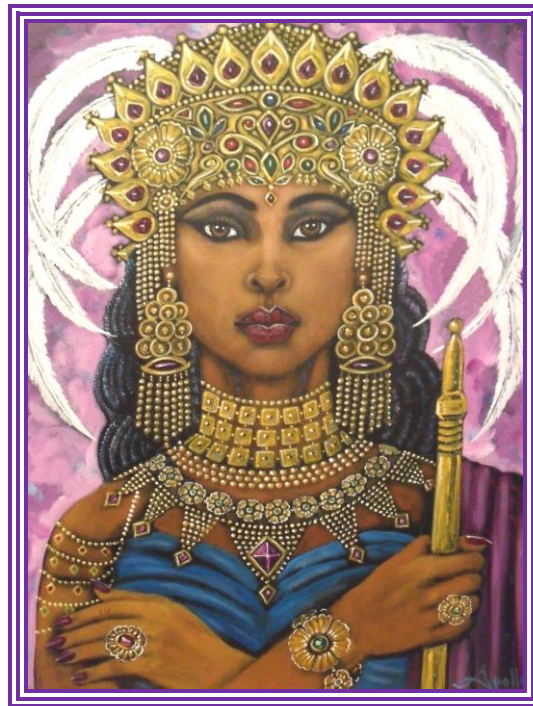


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Bernd Rohrmann
Essay about Queen Sheba
Tale ~~ Myth ~~ Validity



>>> Feb 2018 <<<

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/2/ However, when traveling in Ethiopia, the prevailing perspective was firstly that a Queen Sheba has existed, and secondly that her kingdom was in the region of Aksum, actually north-east of Aksum where Jeha is located – the assumed capital of the kingdom “d’m’t” ~ Damot (980–400 BC).



Yet there are no historic remains linking to Queen Sheba, neither in Aksum nor in Jeha.

/3/ Not much is known about the kingdom “d’m’t”. But several historians assume that during this sovereignty, as well as during the following Aksum sovereignty, the western part of Yemen – then Sheba – and the north-eastern part of Ethiopia – then Damot – belonged together, across the Red Sea!



And this means that queen Sheba did reside in each of these, that is, in both of them. The proof of this is thin though – more records point at Marib.

/4/ The fourth theory is the hardest and wildest one, put forward by a few historians – – there was no “Queen Sheba”, queen Sheba is just a fable of the bible and related tomes. If that were true, the question “where did she reign” is pointless...

❖ Did she visit king Solomon?

Of course this is a crucial question – Queen Sheba’s famous visit of King Solomon of the Israel state in the 10th century BC has been described countless times.

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❖ Which sources feed the views of Queen Sheba?

Here are brief summaries of the pertinent text passages, ordered by religions:

CHRISTIAN, Bible, Old Testament

The Queen of Sheba came to Jerusalem "with a very great retinue, with camels bearing spices, and very much gold, and precious stones" (1 Kings 10:2). The Book of Kings is rated as finalized around 550 BC. "Never again came such an abundance of spices" (10:10; II Chron. 9:1-9) as those she gave to Solomon.

CHRISTIAN, Bible, New Testament

Christian scriptures mention a "queen of the South" (Latin: *Regina austri*), who "came from the uttermost parts of the earth", i.e. from the extremities of the then known (Christian) world, to hear the wisdom of Solomon (Mt. 12:42; Lk. 11:31).

JEWISH, Talmud & Bible sections

According to Josephus (Ant. 8:165-73), the queen of Sheba was the queen of Egypt and Ethiopia, and brought to Israel the first specimens of the balsam. Josephus affirms that the Queen of Sheba or Saba came from this region, and that it bore the name of Saba before it was known by that of Meroe.

The Talmud (Bava Batra 15b) insists that it was not a woman but a kingdom of Sheba (based on varying interpretations of Hebrew *malk*) that came to Jerusalem, obviously intended to discredit existing stories about the relations between Solomon and the Queen. Bava Batra 15b: "Whoever says *malkath Sheba* (1 Kings X, 1) means a woman is mistaken; ... it means the kingdom of Sheba".

The most elaborate account of the queen's visit to Solomon is given in the 8th century "Targum Sheni to Esther" (or Colloquy of the Queen of Sheba). The weirdest words are that Solomon informed her of her hairy legs...

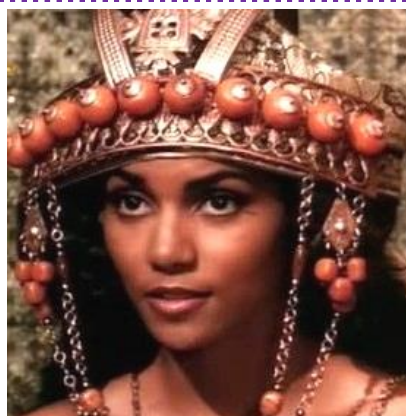
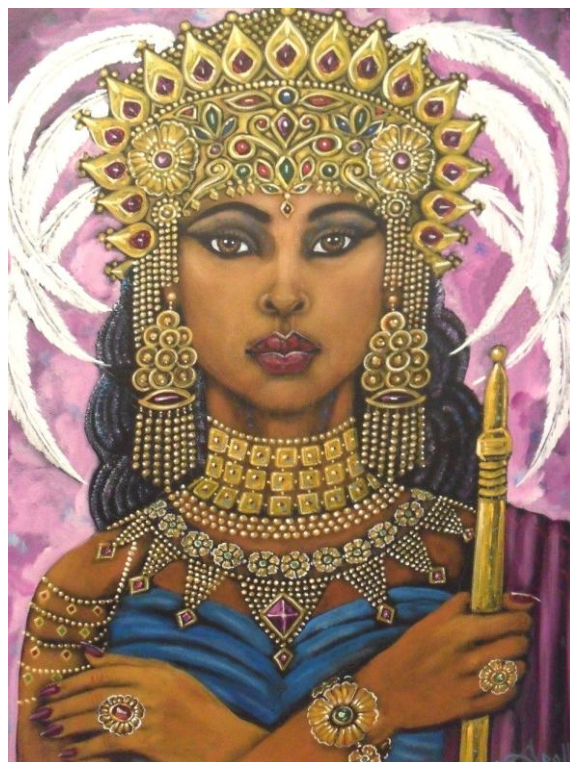
The text from Yemen "Midrash ha-Hefez" also refers repeatedly to Sheba, similar to the Talmud.

Finally, the Queen of Sheba was labeled in the Kabbalah as one of the queens of the demons.

ISLAM, Quran

The messages are to some degree analogous to those in the bible. Some say that Solomon married Sheba, others that she was given to a different man. She was named Bilqis (this name may be linked to concubine). Bilkis a legend on its own.

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Almost all pictures of Sheba or models in Sheba style are focussed on her beauty and her slim appearance, only a few deviate in this regard.



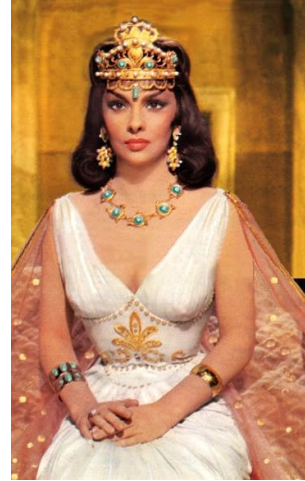
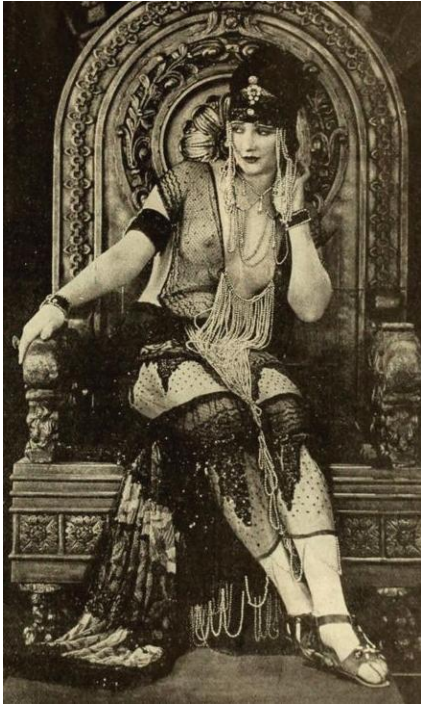
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A woman with dark hair and red lipstick is the central figure, wearing a vibrant green dress and an elaborate set of jewelry. Her accessories include a large green gemstone necklace, matching earrings, a bracelet, and rings. She is posed against a backdrop that features a large, ornate golden frame and a landscape painting of a body of water and distant hills. The overall aesthetic is opulent and theatrical.

[illegible]

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These are two impressive film stars – Betty Butterfly, from 1921 and, yes Gina Lollobrigida, from 1959.

Finally, dress designers use about every subject they see or read about, so, no wonder that there are lots of “sheba” costumes as well!

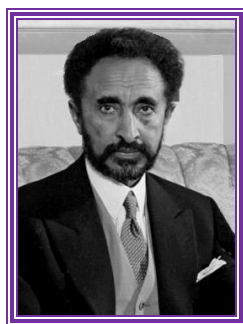


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❖ What was/is the impact of Ethiopia?

What's behind this 3000 years old realm begins with a legend, with a myth, with a saga. Almost all Ethiopians believe, or at least like to believe, that their very first king, Menelik, labeled "king of kings", was the son of king Solomon of the israel state and queen Makeda of the Sheba kingdom, and ruled at about 960 BC. This refers to the first Ethiopian kingdom, "d'm't", 980-400 BC. Historians mostly assume that it connected east Africa with south Arabia. Yet there is no convincing proof yet whether the (mystic) Queen Sheba did reside in Ethiopia (in or near Jaha) or in Yemen (in Marib) or both. The dynasty, supposedly beginning with Menelik, ended in 1975, 225 generations later, with the death of the last Ethiopian emperor, Haile Selassie.



While the Queen of Sheba, called Makeba in Ethiopia, is mentioned in both the bible and the quran, this is not a proof in scientific terms. Unfortunately no evidence has been found in northern Ethiopia about Menelik's regime.

And even worse, as already mentioned above, some historians actually doubt that Queen Sheba~Makeba actually visited king Solomon, or that she existed at all!



However such disbeliefs hardly exists in Ethiopia. So, here are pieces of art showing them.

