ANTHROPOS

104.2009: 3–24

The Early Magistrates and Kings of Kanem as Descendants of Assyrian State Builders

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Abstract. – From an analysis of information provided by the *Dīwān*, in conjunction with comparative elements, it appears that the state of Kanem was founded towards 600 B.C. by refugees retreating from Syria-Palestine because of the collapsed Assyrian empire. Divided into ethnically distinct groups, the invaders established several minor states in the Central Sudan in which the ruling people spoke Chadic languages, contrasting with the present-day Kanembu-Kanuri of Kanem-Borno, a Nilosaharan language. In the first half of the first millennium A.D., Kanem emerged as the leading state of the region of Lake Chad. It was governed by different immigrant clans and united local warrior groups within the framework of a *suffet* system based on the annual celebration of the dying and rising god. When in the second half of the eleventh century, the ruling class adopted Islam as the state religion, this religious-administrative system became obsolete, and a dynastic system emerged progressively in its stead. After the failure of radical Islam in the first half of the thirteenth century, the old system was partly reestablished in form of a rotational succession between two royal lines. From the middle of the fourteenth century onwards, the Sefuwa properly speaking imposed themselves as the sole legitimate dynasty, although elements of a rotational system lingered on until the middle of the fifteenth century. *[Kanem, Kanem-Borno, Duguwa, Zaghawa, Sefuwa, Assyrians in Africa, migrations, state foundation, conquest state, ruling class, ruling clans, dying and rising god].*

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Introduction

The earliest history of Kanem is only known by a number of royal names transmitted by the dynastic records of Borno. However, these names are enigmatic, and it is at first sight impossible to decide, whether they designate legendary or historical figures, and whether, if the latter is true, these kings reigned in Kanem or elsewhere.[1] Supplementary data provided by the royal chronicle of Kanem-Borno, the *Dīwān salāṭīn Barnū*, give a touch of reality to these early figures by indicating for each king the length of his reign and some other precise elements. But again, the exceedingly long duration of some reigns, reaching in two cases two hundred and fifty years or more, are highly suspicious.[2] Most dubious is the identification of the great dynastic ancestor Sef with the late pre-Islamic Yemenite hero Sayf b. Dhī Yazan. Whether at all any light can be thrown on this obscure period, which in its early phase certainly predates the references of the first Arab geographers to Kanem, depends to a large extent, on the possibility to identify and analyse the names of these kings.

Oral traditions of Kanem-Borno are at first sight likewise very vague and difficult to use for histori-

1 Previous authors were convinced of a local identity of the early kings of Kanem, even though they are sometimes conceived of as Berber nomads (Barth 1857/II: 581–585; Urvoy 1949: 17–30; Smith 1971: 164–174; Zeltner 1980: 27–38; Lange 1988: 445–450).

2 For the text of the chronicle see Lange (1977: 22–82).

cal reconstruction. They insist on the Yemenite origins of the Magumi clans, formerly united in a distinct ruling class, and they are undoubtedly deeply influenced by Arab historical writings (see Palmer 1928/II: 83–95; 1928/III: 15–21). It is, however, also shortsighted to discard them entirely as being irrelevant, since Arab notions of Yemenite history may contain pertinent, although not yet properly understood, references to the history of the ancient Near East.

In fact, Arab historians themselves situate the early Yemenite kings at the beginning of Arab history and even attribute to them a preeminent role in world history. They are fascinated by the military exploits of the early Yemenite rulers leading to the conquest of Syria and Iraq, and extending as far as Azerbaijan, Samarqand, and India (Lange 2009b). Further, they echo Berber traditions tracing the origin of the Sanhaja and the Kutama likewise to Yemen.[3] Even more so, besides the Kanembu-Kanuri of Kanem-Borno, other Sahelian people cherish similar claims of Yemenite origins (Masonen 2000: 159, 202, 490 f.; Lange 2009c). Instead of dismissing these assertions, deeply rooted in Arab, Berber, and sub-Saharan traditions, as Islamic *feedback* without any foundation in history,[4] it may be useful to consider them in connection with other historical, onomastic, and linguistic evidence pointing to ancient Near Eastern connections.

The partly dependent and partly independent traditions of origin from different West African people appear to echo vast migrations set in motion by the collapse of the Assyrian empire at the end of the seventh century B.C. (Lange 2008a: 82 f., 89–92). As a result of the defeat of the Assyrian army by the advancing Babylonian and Median troops, the members of the numerous communities of Assyrian deportees in Syria-Palestine far to the west were at the mercy of their liberated local neighbours (Oded 1979: 75–135). In this anarchic situation, the deportee communities, who had largely preserved their languages and cultures, appeared to the local people as the representatives of their former Assyrian oppressors, and as such they were threatened to be exterminated. Flight away from this situation of turmoil and insecurity, was for them the only hope of preserving their lives. Many of them seem to have reached sub-Saharan Africa, leaving particularly pertinent traces in the traditions, the languages, and in the material artefacts in the region of Lake Chad (Lange 2008a, 2009a, 2009b).

1 The Duguwa as Pre-Dynastic Magistrates of Kanem (600 B.C. to A.D. 1068)

The most important information concerning the history of Kanem is transmitted by the *Dīwān*, the brief chronicle of the kings of Kanem-Borno. In its present form the *Dīwān* might date from the fifteenth century, but there could have been earlier versions.[5] Its orally preserved name *girgam*, which is also known as a designation for written dynastic records in some neighbouring kingdoms, seems to be derived from Sumero-Akkadian *girginakku* (box of tablets, library).[6] Together with the form of the chronicle, it suggests that there were earlier versions, possibly in a language of the ancient Near East (Lange 2004a: 245; CAD/V: 86 f.).

According to the oldest layer of information in the *Dīwān*, the kings of Kanem descend from Sef, the "king of the four regions of the world," not from the minor Yemenite hero of the sixth century A.D., Sayf b. Dhī Yazan. Apparently, the resemblance between the two names made Muslim scholars suggest, that the two figures were the same (Lange 2004a: 243). Moreover, the *Dīwān* claims that the mother of the eponymous founder of the Sefuwa was a daughter of the king of Baghdad, a town of which the regional predecessor might have been highly significant for a mighty king remembered in Kanem-Borno. In fact, there are good reasons to suppose that the mother of the dynastic founder was identical with Aisha from Baghdad, the ancestress of the two successive ruling groups of Kanem, the Duguwa and the Sefuwa, and the legendary equivalent of the powerful queen mother of the state, the Magira (Palmer 1928/II: 51, 83; Lange 2004a: 243). As Magira is derived from *gəbîrâ*, the name of the Israelite queen mother (Lange 2004: 181), it would not be surprising, if Baghdad was not the actualiza-

3 For a convenient summary of the information provided by al-Yaʿqūbī, al-Ṭabarī, al-Masʿūdī, und Ibn Khaldūn see Radtke (1992: 11–108). With respect to the origin of the Berbers see Norris (1982: 33–46).

4 On the important issue of *feedback* for the historical method see the debate between Lange (2008b) and Henige (2008).

5 The earlier suggested thirteenth-century date (Lange 1977: 156–160) seems to be too optimistic in view of the inconsistencies noted below.

6 The term designates in particular the two libraries of Ashurbanipal (664–627) in Niniveh (Unger, Bibliothek, RLA/II: 24). The Arabic term *dīwān* (register, collection; Lane 1863–93/III: 939) is a rather exact equivalent, while the more common *ta'rīkh* (history) – used in one manuscript in the rare plural form *tawārīkh* (Lange 1977: 22) – is not.

tion of a more ancient Mesopotamian capital city, probably Niniveh, in which the origin of the legendary ancestress of the kings of Kanem – and formerly also the eponymous state founder himself – were located.

Recently, archaeologists discovered a dramatic increase in social complexity southwest of Lake Chad dated to the mid-first millennium B.C. Town-like settlement structures, known today by the Akkadian-Aramaic term *birni* (CAD/II: 261–263; HALAT/I: 119), emerged at several sites. In Zilum, remains of a settlement surrounded by a wall were discovered that extended over an area of 12 ha. An estimated number of 3,500 inhabitants practicing craft specialisations lived within the precincts of the protective wall. Particularly noteworthy are the big thick-walled storage and burial pots which resemble those of the Sao civilisation found in later urban sites of the same region (cf. Magnavita 2004: 84–91). In all likelihood we face here the earliest evidence of an urban and state culture established in the region of Lake Chad by conquerors from the ancient Near East (Lange 2008a: 79–92).

Towards the end of the first century AD, Agisymba emerged as the most important polity of the region of Lake Chad (Ptolemy 1932: 8, 5; Lange 2004a: 280 f.). On the basis of the identification of the name Agisymba with that of the Chadic speaking Ngizim living west of Lake Chad (Last 1985: 172), it may be assumed that by the beginning of the Christian era Chadic speakers were still the major state people of the Central Sudan. Therefore, the shift from a Chadic to a Nilosaharan language for the inhabitants of the Kanem, apparent from the contrast with the present-day linguistic situation (Kanembu-Kanuri, the language of Kanem-Borno, being a Nilosaharan language like the neighbouring Tubu), and the rise of Kanem to the most powerful state of the Central Sudan would appear to have occurred later.

From the beginning of the eighth century onward, Arab geographers refer to the most important people of this region and in fact to the first known people of sub-Saharan West Africa as Zaghawa.[7] According to al-Yaʿqūbī, writing in 873, the Zaghawa were early immigrants from Babylon who settled in the Central Sudan, where they founded the kingdom of Kanem and where they ruled over the Hausa (Levtzion and Hopkins 1981: 21).[8] Al-Muhallabī, in the tenth century, likewise situates the Zaghawa in Kanem – without mentioning the country's name – and describes the ruler of the kingdom as a sacred king living in confinement.[9] Authors writing after the Islamisation of Kanem towards 1060, such as al-Idrīsī and Ibn Saʿīd, situate the Zaghawa outside of Kanem and depict them as pagans (Levtzion and Hopkins 1981: 114, 189). They thus confirm the identity between the Duguwa and the Zaghawa, their connection with the sacral state, and their destitution from power with the coming of Islam (Lange 1977: 113–124; 151–153; Zeltner 1980: 29–38). Furthermore, al-Idrīsī provides information about pagan people of the same name living at the Middle Niger who had moved from Sama to Gao,[10] a migration which can be correlated to the retreat of the Zaghē kings from Ghana and the continuation of their rule over Songhay (Lange 2004a: 438–449, 498–516). From these elements, it appears that the Zaghawa were a widespread ruling group of the Western and the Central Sudan, having come to power by conquest, which in some states lost its power in consequence of Islamisation. However, it is not certain that the term Zaghawa refers solely to conquerors from the ancient Near East. Although their elite were certainly not of local extraction, they may have been the driving force behind the spread of a Nilosaharan language among the people of the state of Kanem.[11]

The name Magumi covers a larger section of the society than the terms Duguwa or Zaghawa.[12] In Kanem and Borno, it refers to a number of noble clans which claim their Yemenite origin and which are connected by their name to Duguwa kings.[13] A

7 The Yemenite traditionalist Wahb b. Munabbih (654–732) notes in West Africa the existence of the Qazān/Fazzān, the Zaghāwa, and the Barbar (Levtzion and Hopkins 1981: 14 f.; Khoury, Wahb b. Munabbih, EI²/XI: 34).

8 The identification of the *Ḥwḍ.n* with the Hausa was first proposed by Marquart (1913: 85 f.).

9 On account of its localisation southeast of Kawar, the kingdom of the Zaghawa must have been Kanem (Levtzion and Hopkins 1981: 171).

10 The nakedness of the Zaghawa may be taken as evidence for their pre-Islamic religion (Levtzion and Hopkins 1981: 119 f.).

11 In Ethiopia the Zagwe rulers, who ruled the country until A.D. 1270, when they were replaced by kings of the Solomonic dynasty, were likewise closer to the local population, the Cushitic Agaw, than the members of the foreign dynasty who were associated with the Semitic speaking population (cf. Tamrat 1972: 53–68).

12 The *Dīwān* apparently refers to the Magumi as *M.gh.r.ma* (Lange 1977: §§ 17, 18, 56). If that is correct, the name would be derived from *ġrm* meaning in Ugaritic (heap) and in Arabic (invader) (DULAT/I, 326). In fact, *M.gh.r.ma* might have been a cover name, used in order to avoid the religiously highly emotional *mqm*/Magumi.

13 Carbou (1912/I: 12 f.); Palmer (1929: 47); Le Rouvreur (1962: 78).

similar meaning is known from the "Kano Chronicle," where Magum designates the place of the ancestors of the northern Rūmāwā or "Romans."[14] In Kebbi traditions, Magum refers likewise to the place of origin of an ancient people called in this case Holawa (Harris 1938: 266). The authors of the *Dīwān* were convinced that the ruling Magumi or Sefuwa of Kanem were foreigners whose physical appearance distinguished them from local black Africans. With respect to Salmama I (1176–1203), they note that he was "very black" while all his predecessors from Sef (1) onward were "red like the Bedouin Arabs (*al-aʿrāb*)" (Lange 1977: 36, 71). Although Salmama I may have been singled out as the first black ruler of Kanem because of folk etymological considerations – the Kanuri term *sələm* (black) being accidentally similar to the name Salmama – the general notion of a progressive change from "red" to "black" kings by marriage with local women cannot be put into doubt. In this respect the observation of an early French administrator is noteworthy, according to which members of the Magumi clans of Kanem, not affected by intermarriage, look physically like Arabs and Tunjur (Carbou 1912/I: 43).[15]

Going one step further, the original meanings of the names Magumi and Zaghawa may perhaps be established. In the Chadic languages, which in all likelihood reached the Central Sudan with the waves of immigrants from the north or the east (Lange 2008a: 86–92), one of the roots designating "chief, king" is **mkm*.[16] The root is found in West Chadic in Buli and other languages as *kung*, in Ngizim as *digum* and in Central Chadic in Higi-Nkafa as *mbəgə*, in Lamang as *ámghàm*, and in Kotoko as *myáġe* (Jungraithmayr and Ibriszimow 1994/I: 34; 1994/II 72 f.). As a royal title, it may be derived from the Phoenician title *mīqim ʿelīm* of the administrative and cult functionary, or *suffet*, whose task was – in Phoenicia/Canaan and in North Africa (Dus 1963) – to resurrect the dying and rising god in the New Year festival.[17] If it is correct to link the name Magumi with this title, then the Magumi may have been the people of the "resurrector", who in the absence of the institution of kingship held, with another *suffet*, the highest position in the state. By contrast, the name Zaghawa could be derived from the title of the second *suffet*, called in Punic inscriptions of North Africa *ʿdr ʿzrm* (head of the helpers), in Latin *praefectus sacrorum* (leader of the holy ones) (cf. Krahmalkov 2000: 363 f.). Apparently, the celebration of the New Year festival, distinguishing between the supporters of the "dying and rising god" and those of his enemies, took place as a great cult drama opposing the two main clan sections of the society, the immigrants and the local people (Lange 2009c). Similar to the New Year *Itapa* festival of Ifẹ, the leaders of the ritual confrontation may have been the *mqm ʿlm* and the *ʿdr ʿzrm*, who correspond in Ifẹ to the major palace officials Jaran and Lọwa (Lange 2004b: 127–141). According to this interpretation, the first magistrate was in charge of the cult group of the great national deity of the upper world, while the second supervised the numerous cult groups of deities of the netherworld (Lange 2004a: 226 f.). Subsequently the followers of the two leaders became known as Magumi (*mqm*) and as Zaghawi (*ʿzrm*).[18]

Up until now, no study of the former Magumi ruling class or, for that matter, of any individual Magumi clan or lineage has yet been made. According to the literature, we find in Kanem three clans of the Duguwa – the Ngalma Dukko (3), the M. Katria (6), and the M. Bouloua (8) – and one clan of the Sefuwa, the M. Berea (2), (14) (Carbou 1912: 42; Conte 1983: 70).[19] In Borno we find six clans of the Duguwa – the M. Dugwa (3), the M. Arjowa (5), the M. Katuriwa (6), the M. Bulwa (8), the M. Arrigiwa (9), and the M. Jilwa (11) – and seven clans of the Sefuwa, the M. Saewa (1), the M. Umewa (12), the M. Dunamawa (13), the M. Biriwa (2), (14), (19), the M. Dalawa (15), the M. Tsilimwa (16), and the M. Ariwa (48).[20] Particularly noteworthy is the juxtaposition of the more encompassing Magumi Duguwa and the Magumi Sefuwa clans with the more individual Duguwa and Sefuwa clans. It suggests that the dynastic ancestors were not only name givers for the Duguwa

14 See *K. arbāb Kanū* (Kano Chronicle) transl. in Palmer (1928/III: 97; 1936: 225).

15 According to Alhasan, the court historian of Daura, the first inhabitants of Daura were white-skinned people, either Arabs or Persians (FN 1995: 3).

16 The spread of the iron technology and of the *birni* (town) complex point to the same direction (Lange 2009a)

17 Bonnet (1988: 174–179); Bonnet and Lipiński: *Miqim elim* (in Lipiński 1992: 29 f.).

18 For the cult drama of the Itapa New Year Festival of Ifẹ and the much more defigurated Gani New Year Festival of Daura see Lange (2004a: 221–229; 347–369). It should be noted that in Ifẹ, Jaran (*ʿzrm*?), who interacts with the procession of resurrection, is the head of those palace officials taking charge of the cult groups of Ọbatala, i.e., the dying and rising god (Lange 2004a: 365–368).

19 The M. Berea may either go back to Ibrāhīm/Brem (2) or to Bir I (14) (for the name see Carbou 1912/I: 42).

20 The names and positions are those of Palmer who follows the order of the *Dīwān* (1928/III: 30; 1929: 47). See also Nachtigal (1881: 418 f.) and Platte (2000: 58, fn. 39).

and Sefuwa lines of rulers but also for the eponymous ancestors of two great ruling clans.[21]

Transmitted in nearly identical form by the *Dīwān* and the king lists, the Duguwa royal names include nine items extending from Duku (3) to ʿAbd al-Jalīl (11). They are preceded by two "kings," whom together with Duku (3) we may call legendary on account of precise identifications with certain legendary or mythical figures.

Sef (1) is singled out by the *Dīwān* as "king of the earth in its four directions," a title which echoes the Assyrian royal title "king of the four regions of the world."[22] His name is probably a Canaanite name for the Assyrian state deity Aššur, derived from Ṣaphon, the mountain of Baal and the god's second name (Lange 2004a: 243; DULAT/II: 788). Just as Duku – see Duku (3) – is the mountain dwelling of the Babylonian state god Marduk, Sef/*ṣpn* seems to be the mountain dwelling of Baal/Aššur and apparently of other gods. In Ugaritic texts Sef/Ṣaphon designates firstly the mountain of Baal, secondly Baal himself as the personification of the mountain, and thirdly the place where sacrifices were offered for several gods on the mountain (*dbḥ ṣpn*).[23] Being a prominent feature in the landscape of Northern Syria, the mountain was also known among the Israelites. Its name designates in Hebrew the north and the mountain of the deities (HALAT/III: 979). During the Assyrian occupation, various local and deported people living in Syria-Palestine may have considered the mountain as the abode of their different deities and in particular that of the Assyrian god.

Ibrāhīm (2) is the Arabic form of the name of the Biblical patriarch Abraham. Contrary to the etymologically related name Biri (14) (19), it is directly and unmistakably referring to the great Israelite patriarch. As a father of Isaak, Abraham was the ancestor of all the Israelites and as a father of Ishmael also of all northern Arabs (Gen. 17: 5; 22: 18; EI/III: 1005). In the context of Syrian-Palestine refugees of the late seventh century A.D., his name emphasises the prominent position of the Israelites.

Duku (3) seems to be at first sight an abbreviated form of Marduk, a name designating the dying and rising Babylonian state god (Lange 2004a: 246–248). However, by itself the Sumerian name Duku refers to the "holy mountain" in the east of Babylonia, considered to be the home of the gods (Edzard 1965: 51). From an African perspective, Duku could, therefore, designate the most important clan deities and hence all human beings stemming from Babylonia. Furthermore, Mār-duk(u) is according to contemporary folk etymology the "son of Duk(u)," i.e., the most eminent son of the Duku dwelling of the deities (cf. Edzard 1965: 96). The names of the three legendary kings of the *Dīwān*, therefore, refer to the Syrians/Assyrians, the Israelites, and the Babylonians as the most important populations of the Neo-Assyrian Empire and also of Kanem-Borno, its successor state in the region of Lake Chad.

Funē (4) seems to be identical with Phūl or Tiglath-pileser III (744–727), the Assyrian ruler who conquered the Syro-Palestinian kingdoms and integrated them as provinces into the Assyrian empire.[24] In the king list of Kebbi, he is called Fūmi (28) and mentioned in connection with *Kanta/Sargon II (721–705).[25] The term Afuno, by which the Kanuri designate the Hausa, seems to be related to it, thus stipulating a more specific Assyrian connection to the Hausa than to the Kanuri.[26] Possibly the Magumi Fôrebu of Kanem may be traced to Funē/Ful.[27]

Arsū or Ariso (5) seems to be derived from Rusa I, the name of the 6th Urartian ruler (ca. 730–713), who's kingdom extended north of Assyria.[28] An Urartian king is also mentioned in the list of kings of Kebbi als Zartai (4), corresponding to Sarduri I, the first ruler of Urartu (840–830).[29] Although Urartu was never formally sub-

21 For the scholarly traditions of Kanem and Borno focussing on Yemen see Lange (2009b).

22 The *Dīwān* mentions *malik al-arḍ bi-ʿarbaʿ qibla* (Lange 1977: 23) and the Assyrian title is *šar kibrāt arba'i* (Seux 1967: 305; RLA/IV: 339). The strange Arabic wording *qibla* (direction of the Kaaba) seems in this context to reflect directly the Akkadian *kibrāt* (regions [of the inhabited world]). (CAD/VIII: 331).

23 Gese (1970: 124); Clifford (1972: 57–61). Anat is sometimes called *ʿnt ṣpn* (Anat of Ṣaphon) (Clifford 1972: 90).

24 2 Kings 15: 19–20, 29; 16: 5–18; A. K. Grayson, Tiglath-pileser (in Freedman 1992/VI: 552).

25 Rattray (1913/I: 18); Sölken (1959–60: 141); Grayson, Tiglath-pileser (in Freedman 1992/VI: 552). The Kanuri name for the Hausa might be derived from it insofar as Bayajidda coming from Baghdad also seems to represent Assyrian rule (Lange 2009c).

26 Palmer (1936: 154, fn. 4) relates the Kanuri and Tuareg names Afuno and Itəfən for Hausa to the Kanuri term *fune/funi* (loin cloth, mouth veil).

27 Cf. Carbou (1912/I: 42). Palmer specifically notes the absence of a Magumi clan perpetuating the name Fune (1929: 47).

28 It should be noted that the vowelling of the *Dīwān* is rather deficient. Only indicating the long vowel, the *Dīwān* cites A.r.sū (Lange 1977: 25). With respect to the Bulala list, Hagenbucher mentions Ariso (1968: 51).

29 Rattray (1913/I: 16); Sölken (1959–60: 139); Nissen (1999: 103 f.).

ject to Assyrian rule, royal Assyrian inscriptions mention Urartians several times as deportees who were settled in Damascus (Oded 1979: 116, 118, 130, 132). In Borno there is the corresponding clan of M. Arjowa.

Katūr (6) is singled out by the *Dīwān* as "king of the earth." His name seems to correspond to one of those Mesopotamian kings called Kudur, (shepherd). On the evidence of the widespread Kassite names in Central Sudanic king lists, the name most likely reflects that of Kudur-Enlil, abbreviated Kudúr-ú-a, the 26th Kassite king (1264–1256). Other rulers of ancient Near Eastern kingdoms bearing Kudur names are Kudur-naḫḫunte (693–692), abbreviated Kudur(r)u, the 37th Elamite king and the Babylonian ruler Nebuchadnezzar II (604–562), sometimes called Ku-dúr-DU.[30] The Kassite rule over Mesopotamia lasting from 1595 to 1157 B.C. could explain the importance of the title "king of the world" given by the *Dīwān* to Katur (6). His outstanding status is confirmed by the local tradition of the Kanurised chiefly Bedde lineage of Garandoili east of Gashua, which has Mai Katuri as its royal ancestor.[31] In the Kebbi king list we find the similar name Kututuru (14) (Rattray 1913/I: 16; Sölken 1959–60: 139). In Kanem there is the clan of M. Katria which in Borno is called M. Katuriwa.

Ayūma (7) – in the king lists Wayāma or Boyoma[32] – is a name difficult to trace in ancient Near Eastern king lists. It may correspond to several Babylonian royal names, but the similarities are too vague to be taken into account as likely identifications.

Bulū (8) could be identical with Nabopolassar who rose to power in Babylonia in 626 B.C. and conquered Ninive in 612 together with the Medean king Kyaxares, and thus destroyed the Assyrian empire.[33] In Kebbi he seems to be remembered as Maru Tamau "the son of Tammuz" (Sölken 1959–60: 143; Lange, "Kings of Kebi" list, in preparation). Other candidates for identification are firstly Belû, the 14th legendary Assyrian king, secondly Baal I, the king of Tyros ruling during the reign of the Assyrian kings Asarhaddon (681–668), and Assurbanipal (668–627), whose name is rendered in Grec Belus and who is sometimes associated with the foundation of Carthage, and thirdly Baal II, who ruled in Tyros during the reign of the Babylonian ruler Nebuchadnezzar II (604–562).[34] On account of the parallel transmission of the name in a different form in Kebbi, the first identification seems to be preferable. Moreover, a local source confirms the specific Babylonian identity of this eponymous ancestor by giving him the name Bulu Dugumi "Bulu, son of Dugu."[35] In Kanem there is the clan of M. Bouloua called in Borno M. Bulwa/Bela.[36] The Magumi Bouloua of Kanem are particularly noted for the reddish complexion of their skin, which makes them nearly indistinguishable from Arabs and Tunjur (Carbou 1912/I: 43).

Arkū (9) seems to correspond to Sargon II (721–705) whose most common epithet was arkû, "the second," linking him up to his namesake Sargon of Akkad (2334–2279).[37] Thus, in the Ptolemaic Canon Sargon II is similarly referred to as Arkeanos (Burstein 1978: 38). With respect to Fune/Phūl/Tiglath-pileser III, the chronological order would have been correct, but not with respect to Bulū/Nabopolassar. Such a distortion could have been the result of the priority given to ethnic considerations. Less founded is the identification with Argišti, the 4th Urartian king (785–760) (cf. Nissen 1999: 104). Though certainly we cannot expect descendants of Sargon II to have reached as a corporate group the region of Lake Chad, there is in Borno the clan of M. Arrigiwa said to descend from Arku.

Ḥawwā' (10) and ʿAbd al-Jalīl (11), the final Arabic names of the Duguwa series, may be interpreted as early Muslim attempts of nominal dissociation from the sacral state. The name Ḥawwā' possibly refers to an important female officeholder like the queen mother Magira (Lange 2004a: 556), while ʿAbd al-Jalīl might be the Arabic rendering of the indigenous name Salmama (Barth 1857/II: 582).

Before considering the implications of the present onomastic analysis for the early history of Kanem, it is necessary to throw some light on the choice of specific Mesopotamian royal names by the founders of the state of Kanem. From

30 Brinkman, Kudur-Enlil (RLA/VI: 266 f.; CAD/VIII: 497).

31 More precisely, Mai Katuri is said to have had two sons, ʿUmar who came to power in Birni Gazargamo and Zabu (cf. Zuabu, the 11th king of the Assyrian list; RLA/VI: 103) who became the ancestor of the chiefs of Garandoili (Palmer 1928/II: 78).

32 Palmer (1928/I: 15; 1928/II: 116; 1928/III: 36); Ahmed Ibn Fartua (1926: 92). Hagenbucher mentions Beïso (1968: 51).

33 Sack, Nabopolassar (in Freedman 1992/IV: 977 f.; Roux 1992: 372–377.

34 Ebeling, Baʿal (RLA/I: 327); Bunnens, Baal (in Lipiński 1992: 55).

35 Enumerating the Sefuwa kings, the Imam al-ḥājj Malem Bukar of Ngigmi places Bulu Dugumi (15) after Dugu Bərəmi "Dugu, son of Bərəmi (Abraham)" (FN 1977: 136).

36 Carbou (1912/I: 43); Palmer (1928/III: 30); Platte (2000: 58, fn. 39).

37 CAD/I, 2: 236; Olmstead (1908: 29).

Tabelle: Ancient Near Eastern Names in the *Dīwān* of Kanem-Bornu

		Dīwān	Quality	Ancient NE Name	Identity and Chronology
	Pos.		**LEGENDARY**	**KINGS**	
	1.	**Sēf**	"King of the four regions of the world"	**Ṣaphan**/Aššur	National god of Assyria
I.	2.	**Ibrāhīm**		**Abraham**	Ancestor of the Israelites
	3.	**Dūkū**		Mar**dūk** "son of Duku"	National god of Babylonia
			SEFUWA AND DUGUWA	**MAGISTRATES**	**600 B.C.**
	4.	**Funē**		**Phūl** = Tiglat-pileser III	108th Assyrian king (744–727)
	5.	**Arsū**		**Rusa** I (also II and III)	6th Urartian king (730–713)
II.	6.	**Katūr**	"King of the world"	**Kudur**-Enlil	26th Kassite king (1264–1256)
	7.	Ayūma		?	?
	8.	**Bulū**		Nabo**pol**asser	1st Neo-Babyl. king (626–605)
	9.	**Arku**	Slaves in Kawar	**Arku**/"Second"/Sargon II	110th Assyrian king (721–705)
	10.	Ḥawwā'	A woman?	?	?
	11.	ʿAbd al-Jalīl	Last Dūkū king	?	?
			SEFUWA	**RULERS**	**1068 A.D.**
	12.	**Ḥumē/Ḥamē**	"Muslim"	Ḫ**ammu**rapi	6th king of Babylon (1792–1750)
	13.	**Dūnama** I.	Name of 8 kings	"The strong" = Sargon	Sargon II (721–705)
III.	14.	**Bīr** I.	Name of 3 kings	**Abrəm** = Abraham	Ancestor of the Israelites
	16.	**Salmama** I.	Name of 2 kings	**Šulmānu**-ašarēd I – V	77th, 109th. Assyr. king (1273–721)
	17.	**Dūnama** II.	Name of 8 kings	"The strong" = Sargon	Sargon II (721–705)
			DUGUWA	**REACTION**	**1242 A.D.**
	18.	**Kadē I.**	Name of 3 kings	**Kada**šman-Turgu	24th Kassite king (1281–1264)
	19.	**Bīr** II.	"King of the world"	**Abrəm** = Abraham	Ancestor of the Israelites
	20.	**Ibrāhīm** I.	Name of 4 kings	**Abraham**	Ancestor of the Israelites
IV.	21.	ʿAbd al-Allāh	Muslim name		
	22.	**Salmama** II.	Name of 2 kings	**Šulmānu**-ašarēd I – V	77th, 109th Assyr. king (1273–721)
	23.	**Kurī** I.	Name of 2 kings	**Kuri**galzu II	16. Kassite king (1410–1380)
	24.	**Kurī** II.	Name of 2 kings	**Kuri**galzu II	16. Kassite king (1410–1380)
	25.	Muḥammad I.	Muslim name		
			SEFUWA	**DYNASTIC RULERS**	**1335 A.D.**
		Nikāle	Father of Idrīs (26)	**Nergal-ēreš**	Assyr. governor (803–772)
V.	26.	Idrīs	Muslim name		New Sefuwa line

the identifications proposed, it can be seen that apart from the Kassite ruler Kudur-Enlil (1264–1256), the other kings reigned in the eighth or seventh century B.C. Since Kassite rule ended in Mesopotamia in the middle of the twelfth century B.C., a Kassite community of the seventh century had no other choice than to adopt the name of an ancient ruler. As for the Urartians, their state had been established by the middle of the ninth century, and the mentioned king ruled only a century before the collapse of the Assyrian empire. The Assyrian conquerors Tiglath-pileser III (744–727) and Sargon II (721–705) were certainly well remembered in the western provinces of the empire, and their names might have served as a reminder of the importance of Assyrian rule for the refugee communities in West Africa.[38] More difficult to explain is the occurrence of the name of the Neo-Babylonian conqueror Nabopolasser (626–605). Why would people claiming his authority flee to the Central Sudan instead of returning to southern Mesopotamia? The answer to this question must take into account the anarchic situation of Syria-Palestine after the retreat of the Egyptians, as a result of their defeat in the battle of Carchemish in 605 (Oates 1991: 178–184). Apparently, the fame of Nabopolasser had reached Babylonian deportees of Syria-Palestine, who in a situation of political turmoil, instead of turning east to their homelands, did not find any other solution than to escape to Egypt, North Africa and Nubia, and further to the region of Lake Chad.[39] Although it is not clear, how specific groups came to be known by the names of specific rulers, the examples of Tiglath-pileser III, Sargon II, and Nabopolassar show that the choice of a royal name did not depend on descent but on ethnic and political closeness. Therefore, the royal names seem to have functioned in the first place as ethnic markers and only subsequently as proper designations of clans.

Turning our attention again to the information provided by the *Dīwān*, we note that the chronicle sets the first three legendary kings – Sef (1), Ibrāhīm (2), and Duku (3) – apart from the following rulers by singling out Duku as the ancestor of all the Duguwa until ʿAbd al-Jalīl (11). In fact, the Duguwa are the most prominent eponymous ancestors of Kanem, and as such the names of rulers correspond to those of certain descent groups. Sef (1) is the eponymous ancestor of the Magumi Sefuwa and in a wider sense the ancestor of all the Magumi, while Duku (3) is the name giver of the Magumi Duguwa and of the Duguwa blacksmiths of Kanem.[40] As for Ibrāhīm/Abraham (2), he may on account of his name be associated with the Magumi Biriwa.[41] Considering that the three legendary kings and all the Duguwa rulers are ancient Near Eastern figures, one might expect that the corresponding Magumi clans also originated in that region. Therefore, the Yemenite traditions of the Magumi as a whole should likewise contain valid historical information (cf. Carbou 1912/I: 12; Le Rouvreur 1962: 78).

The following identifiable names from Fune (4) to Arku (9) refer less systematically to various ancient Near Eastern people including Assyrians. Since in the Duguwa section of the Dīwān we find royal names of different Mesopotamian states, it appears that the first chronicler of Kanem composed this part of the *Dīwān*, having in mind Mesopotamian ethnic groups united under a pan-Babylonian umbrella. He expresses this idea by giving preeminence to the Babylonian state deity Duku/Marduk, "son of Duku," or to the dwelling place of all the Babylonian gods. Accordingly, the Duguwa "kings" were the eponymous ancestors of various clans and not of individual African rulers.[42] Bearing foreign royal names, all six "kings" from Fune to Arku were, therefore, not historical rulers of Kanem but ancient Near Eastern kings who were remembered in Africa as eponymous ancestors of various clans. Their only claim to historicity may rest, as we will see, on the later replacement of individual names by the names of clans.

Apart from the Assyrian, the Israelite, and the Babylonian descent groups, referred to by the names of Sef (1), Ibrāhīm (2), and Duku (3), there are also the Magumi Kadiria, which deserve special attention. Attached to Katur (6), a name

38 Probably the ethnonym Fulani/Peul is likewise derived from Phūl/Tiglath-pileser III. In the ritual of royal enthronization of Kebbi, Kanta – here the Babylonian aspect of Sargon of Akkad – seems to be called "slave of the Fulani" because of the Assyrian occupation of Babylonia (cf. Hogben and Kirk-Greene 1966: 241, fn. 1).

39 On the deportee communities of Assyria and the collapse of the Assyrian empire and its consequences for the Central Sudan see Oded (1979: 116–135), and Lange (2009c).

40 Barth (1857/II: 581 – Duguwa); Nachtigal (1881: 419 – M. Dugwa); Palmer (1928/III: 30 – M. Dugwa); Lange (1977: 151–153 – Duguwa); Platte (2000: 58, fn. 39 – M. Saewa, M. Duwa); Ngan/Mongono, Maiduguri FN (1977: 2a, 92 b – M. Sewa; M. Saiwama).

41 Barth considers Biri to be an abbreviation of Biram, itself a variation of Ibrāhīm/Abraham (1857/II: 18). The Magumi Biriwa are mentioned by Nachtigal (1881: 419); Carbou (1912/I: 42 – Berea); Palmer (1928/III: 3). They can be related to either Ibrāhīm (2) or to Bir (14), (19).

42 Zeltner recognizes the primacy of the clans with respect to the royal names (1980: 38).

probably derived from that of the Kassite king Kudur-Enlil, they were also a powerful noble clan. The clan's importance is underlined by Katur's remarkable epithet of "king of the earth," which is slightly less impressive than the title "king of the earth in its four directions" accorded to the Assyrian Sef (1). Furthermore, Katur is given a reign of 250 or 300 years, which brings him close to the Babylonian Duku/Marduk with 250 years (Lange 1977: §§ 1, 3, 6). According to the oral traditions of the region of Birni Gazargamo, the former capital of the Sefuwa was thought to have been inhabited by three major Magumi sections – the Magumi Sefuwa, the Magumi Duguwa, and the Magumi Kadiria – before its destruction by Fulani Jihadists in 1807.[43] Hence it would appear that besides the Assyrian Sefuwa, the Israelite Biriwa, and the Babylonian Duguwa, the Kassite Kadiria played a prominent role during the period of Duguwa rule in Kanem.

Attention has also to be drawn to the Magumi Arjowa or Arja who on account of their eponymous ancestor Ariso/Rusa (5) can be traced to the kingdom of Urartu, north of Assyria. There is no reason why Urartian immigrants should only have been part of the ruling class of Kanem. Hence, the name of the Sao town of Damasak at the banks of the Komadugu Yobe, may indeed reflect the name of the Syrian capital Damascus (cf. Lange 1987: 120 f.). The clan head of the Arjowa, or Arjowan Arriwanbe, was the well-known official Arjinoma, governing a northern province of Borno.[44] It is conceivable that the northern province of the Arjinoma within the Borno empire reflects the northern position of Urartu with respect to Assyria.

With respect to the specific lengths of reign given to the successive Duguwa kings, it should be noted that the excessively long reigns of Duku (3) and Katur (6), 250 or even 300 years, could refer to numerous magistrates of the Duguwa and Kadiria clans having been together in power for the approximate number of years accorded to their clan ancestor. Likewise the 60 years accorded to Fune (4) and the 50 years to Arsu/Ariso (5) might indicate that the magistrates of the M. Forebu and the M. Arjowa ruled together for that number of years. Before them the 20 years of Sef (1) and the 16 years of Ibrāhīm (2) and after them the 20 years of Ayuma (7), the 16 years of Bulu (8), and the 44 years of Arku (9) look more like those of individual rulers. It cannot be ruled out that the first two are legendary survivals belonging to the ancient Near Eastern past, and that the latter three figures stand for individual kings who were remembered by the names of their clan ancestors. Underlying these early arrangements of names and years may have been chronological considerations, which in the Assyrian tradition are perceptible from the dating by eponymous magistrates.[45] If these suppositions are valid, the Duguwa section of the *Dīwān* would provide precious evidence for the preeminence of five ruling clans during the earliest period of Kanem history. In that case, the Babylonian-derived M. Duguwa and the Kassite-derived M. Kadiria would have been most influential, while the Assyrian-derived clans – the M. Forebu (4) and the M. Arrigiwa (8) – and the Urartian clan of the M. Arjowa would have been less important. The eclipse of the Assyrian element in the Central Sudan, in spite of the remaining preeminence of Sef (1), Fune (4), und Arku (9), is also perceptible from the Bayajidda legend. In this case the foundation of Daura is attributed to the Canaanites under the Queen Magajiya, while the lonely dragon killer Bayajidda from Baghdad/Niniveh representing Assyria only provided ideological legitimacy to the state foundation achieved by others (Lange 2009c).

Furthermore, it may be observed that there are good reasons to believe that the political system of the Duguwa corresponded to a pre-dynastic regime. When al-Yaʿqūbī in the ninth and al-Muhallabī in the tenth century noted the existence of a king of Kanem – the latter by insisting on his seclusion – they seem to have referred to an advanced stage of the development leading from a temporary magistracy to a lifetime tenure and hence to kingship (cf. Levtzion and Hopkins 1981: 171). As we have seen, the early state of Kanem was a bicephalic polity in which there were two leading officials associating, on a religious-administrative basis, foreign and local people, the Magumi magistrate acting as the "resurrector of the deity" (*mqm ʿlm*) and the Zaghawi magistrate acting as the "head of the helpers" (*ʿdr ʿzrm*). During the first half of the Duguwa period, extending from 600 B.C. to the first half of the first millennium A.D., the immigrants most likely occupied the dominant positions in the state under the leadership of the Magumi magistrate (*mqm*

43 Information provided in Dekwa near Birni Gazargamo (FN 1977: 22a) and partly confirmed by Platte who lists the Maami Saewa, the Maami Duwa, and the Maami Katria among altogether eight Magumi groups (2000: 58, fn. 39).

44 Barth (1857/II: 592); Palmer (1929: 47; 1928/III: 63).

45 Cf. Ungnad, Eponymen (in RLA/II: 412 f.).

ʿ*lm*), thus giving rise to the notion of a Magumi ruling class.[46] During the second half of the Duguwa period, the Zaghawa, comprising mainly local warrior groups, became under the leadership of Zaghawi magistrate (ʿ*dr* ʿ*zrm*) the main political force of the state.[47] It was probably on account of the seniority of the Zaghawa official and his people, that the North African traders conveyed to this term a quasi-ethnic meaning, relating it to all the people of Kanem-Borno.

Finally, from the different scope of the Magumi class in Kanem and Borno, it may be inferred that there existed a restricted and an enlarged meaning of the Magumi concept. In the restricted sense, the Magumi were solely the people of the Magumi magistrate (*mqm*), presiding over the resurrection of the creator deity. The people of this office, the Magumi, were the foreign conquerors *par excellence*, comprising the members of the former ruling elite, the few Assyrian-born leaders, and the many associates from among the deportee communities. Contrary to him, the Zaghawi magistrate, the "head" of the helpers (ʿ*dr* ʿ*zrm*), stood by the side of the primordial deities and their clans. These people consisted originally of the subject people of the former Assyrian empire. In Africa, the distribution of the people according to the religiously motivated bicephalic organisation of the state was renegotiated – hence the former subject people were integrated into the Magumi people properly speaking, whereby the former Duguwa became Magumi in contrast to the autochthones of Kanem. Only a few people related to the primordial deities, especially the artisans, remained by structural necessity during the foundation period at the side of the Zaghawi magistrate, so that the important reenactments of creation and of resurrection could be celebrated. In the course of time, the power of the Zaghawi magistrate increased dramatically, due to the integration of the local people, nomadic Tubu and others, to the state on his side. Being associated with the Zaghawi magistrate and his helpers, the autochthones also adopted the ancient clan divisions without being Arjowa from Urartu, Bulwa from Babylonia and Katuriwa from the land of the Kassites. Such an integration of local people into foreign clans could have contributed to the Dīwān's listing of the corresponding ancient Near Eastern "kings" among the Duguwa rulers of the second pre-dynastic period, although, in fact, the local warrior groups were by that time largely predominant. Hence, this shift of the political power, consisting in the demotion of the Magumi magistrate (*mqm* ʿ*lm*) and the promotion of the Zaghawi magistrate (ʿ*dr* ʿ*zrm*) during the early pre-dynastic period of the history of Kanem, cannot be deduced from the particular names given to the Duguwa "kings" but only from the rising importance of the Zaghawa, and from the substitution of a Chadic by a Nilosaharan language.

2 The Early Sefuwa Period and the Marginalisation of the Duguwa (1068–1242)

During the reign of Hume (1068–1080), the forces trying to implement Islam achieved a major breakthrough. The demise of the Zaghawa, as evidenced by the Arab sources of this period, seems to indicate that the end of the Duguwa regime corresponded to a political revolution. Thus, al-ʿUmarī specifically notes the rise to power of the Sefuwa in Kanem after the establishment of Islam (Levtzion and Hopkins 1981: 261). However, other evidence points rather to the continuity of the former ruling class without any major disruption. Ibn Saʿīd and al-Maqrīzī only mention the introduction of Islam five generations before Dunama II (1202–1243), and the latter singles out Ummay as the first king of a line of new rulers (Levtzion and Hopkins 1981: 188, 353; Lange 1979: 192, 199). Although the Zaghawa were no longer located in Kanem by al-Idrīsī and Ibn Saʿīd (Levtzion and Hopkins 1981: 114, 189), there must have been considerable political and social continuity in Kanem, otherwise the re-emergence of the Zaghawa after the reign of Dunama II would have been incomprehensible.

How to explain the shift from the Duguwa to the Sefuwa or, as the *Dīwān* has it, from the Banū Dūkū "the sons of Duku" to the Banū Ḥumē "the sons of Hume"?[48] One might have thought that it was a change of dynasty (Lange 1988: 454–459), but since the Duguwa were pre-dynastic rulers, it must rather be considered as a more general transformation within the ruling class. The following factors could explain the events which took place in Kanem towards A.D. 1068. First, the

46 It would also be appropriate to refer to this epoch as to the early Sefuwa period, while the main Sefuwa period set in with the demise of the Zaghawa towards 1060 (for the chronology see Lange 2004a: 552).

47 It is often supposed that the Zaghawa founded the state of Kanem (Oliver and Fage 1988: 48 f.; Trimingham 1962: 104 f.; Fage 1988: 59–61).

48 For earlier considerations of the distinction between Duguwa and Sefwua see Lange (1977: 114–129) and Zeltner (1980: 40–45).

Magumi properly speaking had been marginalised by the rise of the Zaghawa to seniority within the dual magistracy since the early Christian era. Second, in consequence of the rise of the state of Kanem to the imperial status both magistrates, the Zaghawi and the Magumi leader, continuously extended their tenures, which finally became lifetime positions on the basis of a rotational system (within the two sections separately). Third, the last two Duguwa-Zaghawa rulers were already Muslims, but their short periods of tenure indicating political unrest may be interpreted as a structural incompatibility of Zaghawa rule with Islam (Lange 2004a: 549 f.). Forth, on account of the ethnic connotation of his name, Hume himself was – as we will see – most likely the member of a Duguwa clan. Belonging to a Muslim section of the Duguwa (in the ethnic sense), Hume was apparently able to rally Magumi support and to impose himself as the *mqm*, the senior Magumi leader. Hence, the shift from polytheistic Zaghawa to henotheistic Sefuwa rule consisted mainly in the removal of Duguwa-Zaghawa clans from power and their replacement by Magumi-Sefuwa clans. From the point of view of the cult-administrative organisation of the state, this modification within the ruling class can be conceived of as an interchange between the Magumi and the Zaghawa magistrate-king, the former replacing the latter in the leading position in the state. Thereby the immigrant forces behind the dying and rising god once more assumed leadership in the cult-dramatic and in the organisational set up of the state of Kanem.

The first ruler of the Sefuwa was Ḥumē (1068–1080). According to the Dīwān, ʿAbd al-Jalīl (11) was the last king of the Banū Dūkū or Duguwa, while his successor Hume (12) initiated the rule of the Banū Ḥumē or the Sefuwa (the descendants of Sayf b. Dhī Yazan) of the Arab geographers. The authors of the *Dīwān* may have been reluctant to single out Hume as the initiator of Sefuwa rule because of his Duguwa clan identity or because of the earlier rule of the Sefuwa in Kanem. Like certain other royal names of the Central Sudan, his name seems to be derived from that of Hammurabi of Babylon (1792–1750)[49]: Ḥamar-Kurma in Kebbi, Ḥamitu-Kurma in Zamfara, and Ḥamar, Ḥ.m.r.h or Aḥmar in Ndufu (Kotoko).[50] Such an etymology is plausible not only on account of the wide distribution of the name but also because of the Mesopotamian context of the preceding Duguwa "kings." Since there is apparently a clan of M. Umewa, the name could either be that of an earlier clan – then Hume would have been the last ruler named by his clan affiliation – or else the clan comprised his own descendants.[51] On account of Hume's links with the Duguwa, the former hypothesis seems to be more probable so that he belonged in all likelihood by birth to a clan of the Duguwa with Babylonian antecedents.

The second ruler of the Sefuwa was Dūnama I (1080–1133), the son of the Tubu woman Kintā.[52] This most frequent name of the Sefuwa rulers is applied to six different kings from Dūnama I (1080–1133) to Dūnama VI (1808–1816). It is derived from Akkadian *dannu* (strong), *dannūtu* (strength), and has the suffix *-ma* expressing ownership of a quality and therefore means "strong person."[53] *Šarru dannu* (strong king) is an epithet already used by Babylonian kings, but more frequently employed by Assyrian rulers (Seux 1967: 293–296). The Kanuri terms *dúnoa* (strong), *dúno* (strength), can likewise be considered as loanwords from Akkadian (cf. Cyffer and Hutchison 1990: 39).[54] In turn, the Arabo-Islamic equivalents Muḥammad and Aḥmad stress the great significance accorded to the name Dunama.[55] When in certain Kanuri traditions the ancestor of the Sefuwa is called Aḥmad, ruler of Baghdad, this can be interpreted as Dunama, king of Baghdad, or even as *šarru dannu* of Babylon or Aššur.[56] From the dynastic records of Kebbi, it appears that the Islamic name Muḥammad stands for Kanta, a name which is derived from *šarru-kîn* (rightful king) or more particularly from *kîn* or *kinātu* (loyal, loyalty), originally applied to Sargon of Akkad (2334–2279) (Lange 2004a: 325; 252, 260).[57] The

49 The name Ḫammu-rapi' signifies "the uncle (from the side of the mother as a god) heals." Roux translates "the god Ḫammu is healer" (1992: 195).

50 Lange (2004a: 253); Palmer (1928/II: 101); Kalous (1995: 22–24); Ndufu (in FN 1977: 83b).

51 Nachtigal considers the Umewa as descendants of Hume (1881: 419), Palmer omits them (1928/III: 30).

52 The Arabic text mentions Kintā (Lange 1977: § 13) but in the translation mistakenly figures Kitnā (Lange 1977: 68).

53 CAD/III: 92–100. In Akkadian the prefix *ma-* is a *nominum instrumenti* (von Soden 1952: 64). In Kanuri the nominalising suffix *-ma* indicates a profession and a character (Hutchison 1981: 56–58).

54 See also in Yedina *dúmù* (big) and in Kotoko *dónō* (strong) (Lukas 1936: 90; 1939: 98).

55 Lange (1979: 199; 1977: 93); Palmer (1928/I: 15). For the connection of Aḥmad with Muḥammad see Qurʿān 61, 6.

56 Palmer (1928/II: 83 – five tribes; 1928/III: 3 – Mahram of Umme Jilmi). In the "Song of the Magira" the legendary ancestress of the Sefuwa kings is called Dunama-ram "daughter of Dunama," a name later identified as the one of Dūnama II (Patterson 1926: 5).

57 In some contemporary letters Sargon II is referred to simply by the epithet *ki-i-ni/nu* (Seux 1967: 297, note 181).

present form of the Kebbi list of kings distinguishes between Muḥammad I and Muḥammad II, referring originally to Kanta I and Kanta II, i.e., Sargon of Akkad (2334–2279) and Sargon II (721–705),[58] the latter being specifically designated by the Hausa name Muḥammad Ḳarfī, "Muḥammad the strong."[59] Also, the Magaram or royal sister of Borno is called in her song of praise Kintabo, "the one of Kinta," thus suggesting an earlier Kinta/Kanta epithet of the king.[60] Hence, it would appear that the names Dunama of Kanem and Kanta of Kebbi, and the legend of the latter refer back to the great Mesopotamian empire builder, Sargon of Akkad, and, therefore, to the same imperial tradition of Assyria.[61] Additional support for the proper Sefuwa identity of Dunama I comes from Kintā, the name of his mother. It strangely resembles Kanta, a name which on account of its feminine form might also have been applied to women, and which may have spread to the Tubu.[62] From these onomastic elements it can be deduced that Dunama I was a king who stood by his name – which may have been adopted at his enthronisation – in the continuity of the Neo-Assyrian rulers, although as a son of Hume he belonged by birth to the Babylonian Duguwa.

The third king of the Sefuwa was Bīr/Biri I (1133–1160), whose historicity is confirmed by Ibn Furṭū by reference to the place where he was buried in Kanem (Palmer 1928/I: 28 f.; Lange 1977: 70, fn. 8; 2004a: 79). Al-Maqrīzī calls him ʿUthmān, and other sources corroborate the validity of this onomastic equivalence for Biri III.[63] However, etymologically the name seems to go back to that of the biblical ʿAbrām or ʿAbrāhām (Gen. 17: 5). The phonetic closeness of the two names is indicated by other local forms of Ibrāhīm: Brem in Kanuri traditions, Biram in the Hausa legend, and Birema in the Kebbi praise song of Kanta.[64] Ibn Furṭū calls Biri I *al-sulṭān al-faqīh al-taqī* (the legist and the pious sultan), indicating thereby his special commitment to Islamic law (*fiqh*) (Barth 1857/II: 583; Palmer 1928/I: 28). Further, there is the strange description of Bīr II by the Dīwān as "king of the earth" (in Lange 1977: § 19), which echoes the qualifications "king of the earth in its four directions" and "king of the earth" attributed to Sef (1) and to Katur (6), the eponymous ancestors of the Assyrian Magumi Sefuwa and of the Kassite Magumi Kadiria.[65] It was perhaps originally meant to indicate the superior status of the other important Biri/Ibrāhīm, i.e., the ancestral Ibrāhīm I/Abraham, who lacks such a qualification.[66] From these elements it would appear that Biri I – and also Biri II – belonged, on account of their names and of their clerical qualities, to the preexisting Magumi Biriwa. Ibn Furṭū mentions the central importance of the Mune symbol, which he considered to be identical with the Israelite Ark of the Covenant of King Saul.[67] There are reasons to believe that the Magumi Biriwa served as priests of an associated cult, thus perpetuating an indigenised form of an ancient Israelite religion. A key role played by them in the history of Kanem during the period following the demise of the Duguwa, would be quite in conformity with the more monotheistic policy promoted by the Sefuwa. However, since early times the members of the clan must have given up their particularly Israelite articles of faith; otherwise the available sources would certainly have designated the kings originating from this clan as Israelite or even Jewish.

The fourth king of the Sefuwa was ʿAbd Allāh I (1160–1176), who has the second name B.k.rū in the Dīwān and Bikrū in the king lists.[68] It appears that the original "pagan" name Bikru, which the *Dīwān* explains folk etymologically by the Arabic *bakr* (young she-camel), was probably

58 In the context of the traditions of Kanem, it should be noted that among the Bulala Sef is called Mahamat Sef Allaï Yemen (Hagenbucher 1968: 51).

59 Sölken (1959–60: 139); Lange (2004a: 253; "Kings of Kebi" [in preparation]). Seux indicates that six Assyrian rulers from Assurnasirpal II (883–859) to Assurbanipal (668–627) are frequently called *šarru dannu* but more particularly Sargon II (1967: 295 f.).

60 She is also called Kinda-gerima (Patterson 1926: 6, 7).

61 For the comparison of the legend of Kanta with that of Sargon I see Lange (2004a: 323–330). Further it should be noted that the story of the exposed child Sef as related in "The Story of the Seven Tribes of Kanem" resembles the legend of Sargon of Akkad (cf. Palmer 1928/II: 87).

62 The most noble clan of the Tubu, the Tomagira – also found elsewhere – is said to have originally immigrated from Borno (Chapelle 1957: 83–86).

63 Levtzion and Hopkins (1981: 353 – al-Maqrīzī; 347 – letter reproduced by al-Qalqashandī).

64 Ibrāhīm I is called Dugu Bremmi and Ibrāhīm II Mai Brem Gumsumi "Brem, son of the Gumsa" or Mai Bremmi "son of Brem" (Palmer 1928/II: 103–107; Hogben and Kirk-Greene 1966: 82, 149; Diskam, Maganwa in FN 1977: 34v, 38b; Lange 2004a: 216, 236).

65 For this identification of the Magumi Kadiria see below.

66 Even the qualities of *al-faqīh al-taqī* applied by Ibn Furṭū to Bir I may originally have been those of Ibrāhīm I/Abraham (Palmer 1930: 71).

67 Palmer (1928/I: 28). Moreover, the Mune seems to have played an important role in maintaining the unity among the different clans of the ruling class (Lange 2006a: 23 f.).

68 Ibn Furṭū in Palmer (1928/I: 15 – Bikuru/Bikru); Barth (1858/II: 583 – Bíkoru); Nachtigal (1881: 394 – Bekrû); Landeroin (1911: 348 – Beker); Lange (1977: 35, 70 – Bakurū).

derived from Hebrew *b.kōr* (first born) or else from Akkadian *bukru* (son, child), which in Neo-Babylonian is applied amongst others to the first born son of a king.[69] This derivation is partly supported by the etiological story provided by the *Dīwān*, according to which the name was given to the prince subsequent to a visit to his royal parents when he and his – apparently younger brother – were, according to their later names, provided with two different kinds of camels.[70] Being the son, or even the "first-born" of Biri, Bikru could also have been a member of a formerly Israelite clan. On account of his name, one might suspect, in his case, the Magumi Dalawa to have been his clan.[71] The head of this clan is still the Yerima, whose name, on account of the mysterious usage of the geographical designation Yeri and Yeru, is possibly derived from that of Jerusalem (cf. Palmer 1929: 47).[72]

The fifth king of the Sefuwa was Salmama I (1176–1203), whose mother belonged to the local tribe of Dibbiri.[73] Applied also to Salmama II (1328–1332), his name is probably derived from Šulmānu-ašarēd, "the god Šalmānu is the foremost."[74] Five different Assyrian kings are called by that name, which is reproduced in the Bible as Salmaneser and as Šalman.[75] According to contemporary authors, the rendering in Arabic was Jīl, probably equivalent to Jalīl (but not to ʿAbd al-Jalīl), and not the phonetically closer Sulaymān.[76] It may be noted that Arabic *jalīl* (great in dignity) – ʿAbd al-Jalīl being "the slave of the Great in Dignity" – has a meaning coming close to *ašarēd* (first, foremost).[77] In Kebbi we find the name Sulaymāna, which can likewise be considered as a direct rendering of Šulmānu-ašarēd (Sölken 1959–60: 139; Lange 2004a: 253). As such, it has apparently shaped the Hausa form Sulaimana corresponding to Arabic Sulaymān. In view of the Assyrian antecedents of his name, Salmama I would seem to have belonged like Dūnama I to the Assyrian Magumi Sefuwa clan. Hence, it must be remembered that the Dīwān depicts him as the first black king of Kanem.

The sixth king of the Sefuwa was Dūnama II (1203–1242), whom Ibn Saʿīd and al-Maqrīzī describe as a descendent of Sayf b. Dhī Yazan.[78] Ibn Saʿīd specifically states that Islam was introduced in Kanem by his fourth great-grandfather – i.e., Hume – while he depicts Muḥammad b. Jīl/Dunama II himself as a great Muslim reformist famous for his holy wars (Lange 1980: 168). Although he mentions the Muslim names of some of his predecessors, al-Maqrīzī even considers him as the first Muslim king of Kanem.[79] From the internal sources we know that he destroyed the Mune cult object – a symbol considered to be equivalent to the Israelite Ark of the Convenant[80] – and thus brought about considerable disturbances within the Magumi ruling class. Ibn Furṭū writes that in consequence of this destruction a mysterious invitation was addressed "to every possessor of power among men, who might have any desire or ambition to acquire the kingdom and the majesty."[81] This tradition seems to imply that, besides the great war between Dūnama II and the Tubu, specifically mentioned by the *Dīwān*, the coexistence among the different clans of the Magumi ruling class was disrupted by internal conflicts. On account of their

69 Lane (1863/I: 240); HALAT/I: 125 f. While in Akkadian the word has the general meaning of "son, child," the royal meaning of "first-born" is restricted to Neo-Babylonian (CAD/II: 309 f.).

70 With respect to Batkū, the name of the brother, it should be noted that in Akkadian *batāqu zittu* means "to divide an heritance into shares" (CAD/II,2: 164).

71 The M. Dalawa are also mentioned by Nachtigal (1881: 419) and Platte (2000: 58, fn. 39). *Dallu* means "small, inferior" in Akkadian (CAD/III: 52). There are similar forms and meanings in Hebrew and Ugaritic (HALAT/I: 212 f.).

72 Palmer (1936: 143, 230) considers *yeri* to be equivalent to *yalá* (north). The Koyam are said to originate from *ngəla Yeru* (good Yeru) (FN 1977: 98).

73 The originally sedentary Dibbiri live in eastern Shitati northwest of Mao, the capital of Kanem (Nachtigal 1881: 319 f.).

74 It should be noted that Salmama II as a descendant of ʿAbd Allāh b. Kade belonged to the Magumi Kadiria (cf. Lange 1977: 161; 1984: 261).

75 2 Kings 17: 3; Hos. 10: 14–15; Grayson, Königslisten (in RLA/VI: 134); Shalmaneser, ABD (in RLA/V: 1155); Astour (1971: 384–386).

76 Lange (1977: 93). Ibn Saʿīd and al-Maqrīzī (Lange 1980: 168, 169; 1979: 199; Levtzion and Hopkins 1981: 188, 353, 428, fn. 8). Barth (1857/II: 582) considers Jīl as an abbreviation of ʿAbd al-Jalīl and calls ʿAbd al-Jalīl (11) Selma. However, on account of the Assyrian name Šalmānu-ašarēd abbreviations such as Selma should be discarded.

77 CAD/I, 2: 416–418; Lane (1863/I: 437 f.).

78 The proper wording of the text is ʿMuḥammad b. Jīl of the posterity of Sayf b. Dhī Yazan' (Lange 1980: 168 f.; Levtzion and Hopkins 1981: 188).

79 It is generally supposed that al-Maqrīzī misunderstood an information which originally described Hume as the first Muslim king (Lange 1979: 199, fn. 1; Levtzion and Hopkins 1981: 428, fn. 8), but in view of the superficial Islam of his predecessors and the important reforms promoted by Dunama II, it could be that the latter was considered as the first "real" Muslim king of Kanem.

80 The name is derived from *manna*, the miraculous food mentioned in the Bible, a pot of which was placed in the Ark of the Covenant for the future generations (Exod. 16: 34; Lange 2006a: 21).

81 Ibn Furṭū, K. Kānim (Palmer 1930: 128; transl. in Palmer 1928/I: 70).

priestly association with the Mune cult, his former allies, the Israelite Magumi Biriwa, were probably among the most hostile groups of opposition.

There is a clear contrast between the Duguwa kings, bearing from Arsu/Ariso (5) onward the names of specific Mesopotamian rulers, and the early Sefuwa kings, having mainly Assyrian-derived names. This is true for Dunama I (13), Salmama (16), and Dunama II (17). Moreover, contrary to the Duguwa names, those of the Sefuwa are not attached to clans but to individuals. They thus bear witness to a transformation of the political system from a *suffet* regime of two chief magistrates to a regime of royal government and dynastic succession.

In between the four Sefuwa rulers properly speaking, we find two kings who by name and by clan connection reveal an Israelite identity: Biri I (14) and ʿAbd Allāh Bikru (15). This juxtaposition of names seems to indicate that during the early Sefuwa period the father-son successions were at some stage interrupted by the rule of dynastic outsiders, since the line of Sefuwa kings includes by two kings of a faint Israelite identity. Moreover, Biri I and ʿAbd Allāh Bikru might have belonged to two different clans of the same Israelite tradition, the Magumi Biriwa and the Magumi Dalawa. Being entirely cut off from the outside world, and lacking contacts with coreligionists, the members of these clans cannot possibly have been real Israelites and even less so Jews in the sense of having maintained contacts with their coreligionists in Palestine. This does not preclude the possibility that they may have continued to uphold the basic elements of monotheism, while at the same time being fully integrated into the sacral state.[82] Therefore, during the mid-eleventh century, they seem to have easily adopted Islam, thus turning into valuable allies of the Sefuwa rulers properly speaking.

During the early Sefuwa period some progress of indigenisation of the foreign Magumi can be observed. Neither al-Yaʿqūbī nor al-Muhallabī had any doubt about the black African identity of the kings of Kanem, but their information concerns the Zaghawa kings characterized by the close association with indigenous nomads. From the *Dīwān* it appears that they had married women from nomadic clans, like the Kai and the Tomagira of indigenised northern origin.[83] Contrary to the Zaghawa kings, Hume and his successors must have been of a fair complexion, since Salmama I is said to have been the first black king (of the Sefuwa). In fact, since their rise to power the Magumi continued the policy of intermarriage: Dūnama I (13) had a Tubu mother and likewise ʿAbd Allāh I Bikur (15), while the next ruler, Salmama I (16), was the son of a women from the local Dibbiri (Lange 1977: 68, 70).[84] The logic behind this series of maternal relationships consists apparently in the increased attempt of rapprochement between the Sefuwa rulers and the indigenous black African peoples, including sedentary societies, without regard for their religious status.

3 Eclipse of the Sefuwa and Return of the Duguwa to Power (1242–1335)

The radical Islamic reforms pursued by Dunama II (1203–1242) met with considerable resistance. In particular, the destruction of the Mune symbol was greatly resented by the people and even by the supporters of Islamisation. Although strong disapproval was later expressed by court and Islamic circles, the sources do not disclose the precise consequences of the deed. Without giving any further detail, Ibn Furṭū mentions only ardent competition among the influential officials. One may expect that on account of the Mune's equivalence with the Israelite Ark of the Covenant members of the Magumi Biriwa clan turned against the ruling Sefuwa. Even though the Dīwān does not state this, the chronicle provides clear evidence for the subsequent discontinuation of Sefuwa rule.

One independent outside source confirms the partial restoration of the earlier Duguwa regime by using the former terminology. Referring apparently to the reign of Ibrāhīm II (1290–1310), al-Maqrīzī declares that Kanem and Borno were two

82 Less influenced by early Israelite ideas, the Ọbatala clan of Ifẹ is an example of a quasi monotheistic clan of the dying and rising god (Lange 2004a: 355–366). Israelite elements are recognizable in the deities Ọṣaara (Sarah) and Mọremi (Miriam) (Lange 2004a: 236 f.; 2006b: 311–322).

83 The names Tomagira and Wangara are derived from Akkadian *tamkāru* (merchant, trader) (CAD/XVIII: 125–141). According to oral traditions the Tomagira and the Kai immigrated from the ancient Near East (Palmer 1928/II: 93; Smith 1983: 45, 48). The Imam of Ngigmi traces the origin of the Tomagira to Medina and that of the Kai to Baghdad (FN 1977: 136). On account of the often expressed opposition between the Tomagira and the Kai, it might be useful to consider the possibility of a derivation of Kai from *kanaʿanī* (Canaanite, trader) (cf. Schottroff, Handel in NBL/II: 29 f.).

84 As for Hume (12) and Bir (14), they had both mothers from the Kai and are, therefore, in line with the Duguwa rulers (Lange 1977: §§ 12, 14). The Dibbiri are sometimes also localised in Arabia, but the Tubu never (Palmer 1928/II: 93; Smith 1983: 45, 48).

kingdoms called together Zaghāy.[85] Due to textual corruption, this statement was earlier not clearly understood (Lange 1979: 195, 207 f.; Levtzion and Hopkins 1981: 350–355). Zaghāy being just a different form of Zaghawa, it now appears that it points to a return to power of the Zaghawa or Duguwa after the death of Dunama II.[86] The onomastic analysis supports this contention and clarifies the details of this reversal of fortune by confirming the temporary marginalisation of the Magumi Sefuwa.

Kadē I (18), the seventh post-Duguwa king who ruled from 1243 to 1270, is mentioned in the *Dīwān* only by the name of his mother and not by that of his father.[87] On account of this omission and the omission of his name from the genealogy of Idrīs Alauma, it can be concluded that he was not a son of his predecessor Dunama II.[88] His name seems to be an abbreviation of the Kassite royal name Kadašman, borne by five rulers – two called Kadašman-Ḫarbe (ca. 1400) and (1223), two Kadašman-Enlil (ca. 1370), (1263–1255), and one Kadašman-Turgu (1281–1264) (Grayson, "Königslisten" in RLA/VI: 130; Nissen 1999: 246 f.). Owing to his long reign, the latter, Kadašman-Turgu, was perhaps the specific name giver. There are two further occurrences of this name noted in the Central Sudan, Kudamdam (9) (Kadašman) in Kebbi and Karīm-Tagāmi (12) (Kadašman-Turgu) in the former Kotoko town Ndufu.[89] On account of his name, he seems to have belonged, like Katur (6), to the Magumi Kadiria.

Bīr/Biri II (19) and Ibrāhīm II (20) are noted in the *Dīwān* as the son and the grandson of Dunama II. Their status of real Sefuwa kings is, however, doubtful, since the genealogy of Idrīs Alauma mentions Ibrāhīm instead of Biri (19) and Nikale instead of Ibrāhīm (20). This discrepancy, most likely due to the artificial lumping together of names designating successive rulers, but not genealogical descendants, is all the more striking since the names of all other Duguwa und Sefuwa kings given in the genealogy correspond closely to those of the *Dīwān*. Further notes of Ibn Furṭū confirm, that the father of Idrīs (26) and Dāwūd (27) was indeed called Nikale and not Ibrāhīm.[90] Though Nikale might have been a second name of Ibrāhīm II,[91] it is strange to find prior to him in the genealogy of Idrīs Alauma not the expected Biri – as in the *Dīwān* – but Ibrāhīm. Again Ibrāhīm might be an equivalent of Biri, but there is no evidence to show that the scholars of Kanem-Borno were aware of this similarity, since they render Biri as ʿUthmān.[92] No doubt, if Biri had really been the son of Dunama II, as noted by the *Dīwān*, he should have been mentioned as either Biri or ʿUthmān in the genealogy of Idris Alauma.[93] It is in fact far more likely that the genealogy of Idrīs Alauma differs at this point from the *Dīwān*, before following it again upward till Sef (1) because of real divergences in the available information. Moreover, the specifically Israelite connotations of the names Biri and Ibrāhīm rather seem to suggest membership in the Magumi Biriwa clan.[94] Therefore, the genealogical link between Biri II and Dunama II indicated by the *Dīwān*, in contrast to its absence between Kade (18) and Dunama II (17), seems only to be a sign of the political closeness between the Magumi Sefuwa and the Magumi Biriwa, and not an indication of real parentage.

Ibrāhīm II (20), who ruled from 1290 to 1310, occupies a middle position between the Sefuwa and the Duguwa. Al-Maqrīzī refers to him as a pilgrim king and calls him a descendant of Sayf b. Dhī Yazan, but at the same time he refers to Kanem and Borno as two kingdoms being called Zaghāy. Oral traditions collected at the place of his burial south of Birni Gazargamo depict him as a "great priest" (*alolí*) and ascribe to him the ability to read and write.[95] For the reasons given above, he does not seem to have been a real descendant of Dunama II.

85 Levtzion and Hopkins (1981: 354, 429, fn. 13). The ruler of Kanem being called just before the greatest of the kings of the Sūdān, the text must refer here to Ibrāhīm II (1290–1310) and not to the break-up of the Kanem-Borno empire from about 1380 mentioned later.

86 Former considerations related this remark to the beginning of the fifteenth century, the period of al-Maqrīzī (Lange 2004a: 147).

87 Her clan were the M.gh.r.ma who seem to correspond to the Magumi (Lange 1977: 71, fn. 4 and above fn. 12). If that is correct, there would have been intermarriages between the Magumi and the Duguwa clans at this period.

88 Urvoy (1949: 77); Smith (1971: 178); Lange (1977: 161).

89 Sölken (1959–60: 139); Kalous (1995: 22–24); Ndufu (in FN 1977: 83b).

90 Ibn Furṭū mentions twice the full name Dāwūd b. Nikale (K. Kānim, transl. in Palmer 1928/I: 70, 71).

91 Following Barth, historians generally speak of Ibrāhīm Nikale (1857/II: 18, 585).

92 Barth admits the equivalence of the names, but he omits to note that the Arabic name for Biri is ʿUthmān (1857/II: 18; Lange 1979: 199; 1977: 77, § 34, fn. 1).

93 In the position before Idrīs (26), the genealogy has ʿUthmān instead of Biri (Palmer 1928/I: 15).

94 Barth considers Biri to be a variation of Biram and hence an abbreviation of Ibrāhīm (1857/II: 18).

95 In Dagambi and Raga, Mai Brem is said to have been able to write, according to the tradition of Raga he was an *alolí* (Dagambi, Raga, in FN 1977: 102, 104).

ʿAbd Allāh II (21), the son of Kade I who ruled from 1310 to 1328, rose to power after the violent death of Ibrāhīm at Diskam, south of Birni Gazargamo. This region was inhabited by Sao, who by pagan reaction may have striven to eliminate a powerful promoter of Islam. Although traditions claim that ʿAbd Allāh II later punished the regicides, he possibly benefited from their anti-Islamic opposition. Also, his Arabic name should not necessarily be considered as a sign of deep Islamic commitment, since it could have been, as for his preceding namesake, a standard translation of the original name Bikru "first born son."[96] According to the *Dīwān*, he was cursed for having transgressed the *sharīʿa*, a remark which may indicate some laxity with respect to Islam.[97]

Selmama II (22), the son of ʿAbd Allāh II who ruled from 1328 to 1332, was the first of four sons of ʿAbd Allāh II to die in wars against the Sao. He has the same name derived from the Assyrian name Šulmānu-ašarēd, "the god Šalmānu is the foremost," as the proper Sefuwa ruler Salmama I (16). This proximity with the Sefuwa may be explained by a certain degree of influence brought to bear by the Magumi Sefuwa during the rulership on other clans of the Magumi and also by the slow but continuous detachment of specific names from their inherited clan connections.

Kurī I (23) and Kurī II (24) were also sons of ʿAbd Allāh II (1332 to 1335). Their name is apparently derived from that of the Kassite rulers Kurigalzu I (ca. 1390) or Kurigalzu II (1332–1308) (Grayson, Königslisten, in RLA/VI: 130; Nissen 1999: 246 f.). Kurigalzu I distinguished himself from other Kassite rulers by his impressive building activities (Sassmannshausen 2004). A similar abbreviation of the name seems to be Kọri (7), known from the oral traditions of the Ọyọ-Yoruba (Johnson 1921: 26 f., 155 f.). Since the name Kuri/Kurigalzu is born by two grandsons of Kade I (1243–1270), it confirms the membership of Kade I and of his five descendants – including ʿAbd Allāh II (21) and Muḥammad I (25) – to the clan of the Magumi Kadiria.

With the accession to the throne of Idrīs b. Ibrāhīm Nikale in 1335, the Zaghawa/Zaghay were again discarded and the Sefuwa came back to power a century after the failure of the radical Islamic reforms promoted by Dunama II. Since the name of Idrīs' father, Nikale, is not traceable among the successors of Ḥume, it must be supposed that the Sefuwa properly speaking were evicted from power. Together with the name of a Kaigama of the fifteenth century, it seems to be derived from the name of Nergal, the Mesopotamian god of war and pestilence, which figures in several theophoric names of Assyria and Babylonia.[98] According to the genealogy of Idrīs Alauma, Ibrāhīm was the son, Nikale the grandson, and Idrīs I (26) the great-grandson of Dunama II. Such a descent through two nonroyals is not impossible, but it seems more likely that Nikale was not a real descendant of Dunama II. Just as the genealogy of Idrīs Alauma lumps together Hume and his descendants with the preceding Duguwa, it also connects Biri II and Dunama II. The Dīwān, which dissociates Kade I (18) from Dunama II (17) but not Hume (12) from ʿAbd al-Jalīl (11), probably connects Idrīs I (26) with Ibrāhīm II (20) and Biri (19) with Dunama II (17) on account of the common membership of the corresponding clans to the real Magumi. By contrast, the kings of the Magumi Kadiri seem to have been set apart as a different line because of their membership to the Duguwa who did not belong to the Magumi properly speaking.

From the second half of the fourteenth century onward, the *Dīwān* carefully records the genealogical relationships between the succeeding kings. The chronicle makes it clear that violent conflicts arose between the Sefuwa and the Bulala, leading towards 1380 to the withdrawal of the Sefuwa from Kanem and their permanent establishment in Borno. As inheritors of the old Duguwa system of *suffet* government, associating different clans to power, the Sefuwa followed an attenuated form of these succession rules by shifting them to the alternation of power between the descendants of Idrīs and Dāwūd b. Nikale. The rotational system functioned smoothly for half a century, it was then reactivated by the intervention of high officials between 1415 and 1433, but it escalated into civil war between 1434 and 1449.[99]

96 Palmer calls both, ʿAbd Allāh I and ʿAbd Allāh II, "Abdallah Bikur" (1936: 167, 195).

97 The curse must, however, also be understood as a retrospective explanation for the death of his four sons in wars against the Sao (Lange 1977: §§ 21–25).

98 Lange (1977: § 35). The following personalities may be noted: the Assyrian governor Nergal-ēreš of the Syrian province Raṣappa, south of the Euphrates, who was eponymos in 803 and in 775, the short-lived king of Babylon Nergal-ušēsib (693 B.C.) and Neriglissar, the fourth king of the Chaldean dynasty of Babylon (560–556) (Streck, Nergal-ēreš, in RLA/IX: 227 f.; Grayson, Königslisten, in RLA/VI: 132).

99 Previous studies of the early dynastic period insisted on the continuous dynastic conflicts between the end of the fourteenth century and the middle of the fifteenth century (Barth 1857/II: 587–589; Urvoy 1949: 53–55; Smith 1971: 177–182; Lange 1984: 263–265).

At the same time the institutions of the sacral state were progressively modified so that in the end all reminiscences of their earlier functions with respect to the cult-mythological foundations of the state were eliminated. After having been the first king at the end of the Duguwa period, the Digma had, by the second half of the sixteenth century, become a Wazīr who could even be Ngizim.[100] The important office of the queen mother, the Magira, survived at the same period with her own court at Gambaru near Birni Gazargamo, before it progressively declined.[101] However, the seclusion of the king was still partially practiced in the first half of the nineteenth century (Denham 1826/I: 106–108). It was completely abandoned by the kings of the following al-Kanemi dynasty who executed the last king of the Sefuwa line in 1846 (Barth 1857/II: 603).

Conclusion

From the previous onomastic analysis it appears that subjects of the collapsed Assyrian empire emigrated in large numbers via Egypt and Nubia (or North Africa) to the region of Lake Chad. They had fled from Syria-Palestine, because in the prevailing situation of political disorder they were threatened to be killed by local insurgents taking revenge on the deportee communities for their former oppression. East of Lake Chad, they conquered the local segmentary societies by submitting some and expelling many others, so that no subservient class of conquered people was constituted. Consisting of Assyrian, Babylonian, Kassite, Urartian, Israelite, and other refugee groups, they founded several petty states in which their mixed languages, surviving today as Chadic, were spoken. In the first century A.D., the Chadic state of Agisymba/Ngizim emerged as the most important of these polities. By that time, the Garamantes controlled the sporadic trans-Saharan trade and held some authority over Agisymba (Ptolemy 1932: 8, 5).

By the mid-first millennium A.D., Kanem had emerged as the most powerful polity in the region of Lake Chad. It had absorbed the state of the Ngizim and brought the Garamantian suzerainty over the region to an end. Apparently, it had been able to take advantage of the trans-Saharan trade, which had increased due to the usage of the camel from the third century A.D. onward and to the reconquest of North Africa by Byzantine forces in the sixth century. By the middle of the seventh century, when the Arab conqueror ʿUqba b. Nafiʿ travelled from Fezzan as far south as Kawar on a route which was apparently well-known and often used, Kanem was no doubt at the southern end of the central Saharan trade route already providing protection for the traders from marauding nomads (Lange 2004a: 26–31, 284 f.). At the beginning of the eighth century, Kanem was the first sub-Saharan state to attract the attention of the Arab geographers, and in the ninth century it might already have held some authority over the Hausa states (Levtzion and Hopkins 1981: 15, 21). This expansion was apparently the result of the integration of numerous local warrior groups into the state, thus giving the ruling elite a military capacity, which other Chadic states were lacking. Consequently to this massive influx of foreign people into the population of Kanem, the Chadic language of the state was superseded by a Nilosaharan language.

How could this modification of Kanem from a petty state to an empire be achieved? For the answer to this important question, we must take into consideration the bicephalic structure of the polity which the immigrants, following the model of the Canaanite *suffet* organisation, had established in Kanem. According to the dual magistracy of the Phoenician city-states, the "resurrector of the deity" (*mqm ʿlm*) was during the annual celebrations responsible for the supervision of the activities in favour of the "dying and rising (national) god," while the second magistrate, the "head of the helpers" (*ʿdr ʿzrm*), supervised the forces cult-dramatically opposed to the resurrection of the national deity. In Kanem, the first came to be known as the Magumi and the second as the Zaghawi, their people being the Magumi and the Zaghawa. In the first period of Kanem history, the Magumi magistrate was more powerful than the second *suffet*, because most of the foreign conquerors were united under his authority. Therefore, the ruling class as a whole came to be known as Magumi, although a minority from among the immigrants, in particular the ironworkers and other artisans, known later as Duguwa, were affiliated to the Zaghawi magistrate.

The development from a Magumi to a Zaghawa state was not accidental. It depended on the structural ability of the *suffet* state to integrate

100 A slave origin seems to be excluded since the two successive Wazīrs of the mid-sixteenth century, Kursū and Idrīs b. Hārūn, were brothers (Lange 2004a: 104).

101 Ibn Furṭū mentions the swearing-in of the great officers of the army in front of the princesses at Gambaru (Palmer 1928/I: 60).

foreign people on a relatively equal level with the original carriers of the state. On account of his authority over the numerous primordial deities – opposed to the resurrection of the single national god – the Zaghawi magistrate was by office in a position of authority towards the new groups and their earth-priests worshipping their numerous inherited deities. Indeed, as it is apparent from the premonotheistic situation of Ifẹ, all deities of the netherworld stood by the side of the forces opposed to the dying and rising god, who was in Kanem under the custody of the Magumi.[102] The influx of new people into the state increased the power of the Zaghawi magistrate with respect to that of the Magumi magistrate to such en extent that finally the former surpassed the latter by becoming the supreme authority in the state. Having probably occurred during the mid-first millennium A.D., this transformation of the power balance within the bifocal state became known to the outside world through the growing fame of the Zaghawa name. Another important modification of the political setup of the state consisted in the progressive extension of the formerly annual tenure of both magistrates to a lifetime position. At that stage, reached perhaps as late as the ninth century, the former system of dual magistracy had developed into a dual kingship. However, succession to power was still rotational (within the same section), so that from a later perspective the chroniclers noted the clan names of the successive Zaghawa "kings" – and not their individual names – because they were more important for the upholding of the rotational system.

The coming of Islam inaugurated the third period of Kanem history. The first Muslim rulers were two Zaghawi kings, but obviously monotheism was less compatible with the multitude of deities on the side of the netherworld deities than on the side of the single dying and rising god. Therefore, power within the dualistic *suffet* system, which was still operative, shifted with Hume (1068–1080) again to the side of the Magumi. Though ethnically Hume belonged to a Duguwa clan with Babylonian roots, he might have been eligible to the position of a second king, a Magumi, which he was able to impose as the senior kingship. At the same time, he operated an ideological shift by reasserting the primacy of Sef (1) as opposed to Duku (3). On account of these two modifications, the rulers of Kanem were henceforth considered as descendants of Sef and, therefore, as Sefuwa, although in fact they were the second Sefuwa line renewing Magumi rulership after about six hundred years of Zaghawa predominance.

The third transformation during the second Sefuwa period consisted in the establishment of dynastic rule. However, this change was more difficult to assert than the two previous ones. After Dunama I (1080–1133), who was in fact the son of Hume, two kings stemming apparently from two originally Israelite clans, the Magumi Biriwa and the Magumi Dalawa, came to power. Such a rotation in power was quite in conformity with the earlier Duguwa system, in which the ruling clans were of prime importance not individual kings and certainly not their descendants. Therefore, the shift from two rulers of the Magumi Humewa – father and son – to two kings belonging probably to two different Israelite clans was quite in conformity with the pre-dynastic system of the Duguwa period. Nevertheless, under Islam the ideological basis for the bicephalic authority within the state eroded. Instead of the "dying and rising god," and his opponents perpetuating the creation combat, from now on the single Islamic creator god let no room for any religiously founded clan opposition within the society. The development towards unitarian dynastic kingship was, therefore, irreversible. When Dunama II (1203–1242) had succeeded his father Salmama I, it was, however, delayed by his radical Islamic reforms, culminating in the destruction of the Mune and precipitating great disturbances.

The failure of radical Islam led to the reestablishment of a moderate form of the Duguwa regime and possibly to the renewed empowerment of a Zaghawi king. Indeed, there is hardly any doubt that Kade I (1243–1270) belonged to the Kadiria, one of the most powerful clans during the Duguwa period. Also, in consequence of the large disapproval met by the reforms of Dunama II, the descendants of the early Sefuwa seem to have been definitely discarded from power, since the two successors of Kade I – Biri II and Ibrāhīm II ruling together from 1270 to 1310 – also belonged, in all likelihood, to a different Magumi clan, the M. Biriwa. Hence, the old tradition of rotational succession between different ruling clans was perpetuated even after the rise of Islam between members of two clans belonging to the old ruling establishment. However, in this case the important Duguwa clan, the Kadiria, alternated with the important Magumi Biriwa clan. Thus, the rotational system had by this time broken through the limits

102 In Ifẹ Jaran may be considered as the Magumi and Lọwa as the Zaghawi magistrate (Lange 2004b: 127–141), while in Daura the opposition is between the king and the Magajin Bayamadi (Lange 2004a: 221–224, 230).

between the two major clan sections, the Zaghawa and the Magumi clans.

The period of uninterrupted dynastic rule was inaugurated only 1335 with the rise to power of Idrīs b. Nikale. Although later on genealogists connected him with his Biriwa and Sefuwa predecessors, it is quite apparent that he belonged to a different Sefuwa line than that of Dunama I b. Hume and that of Dunama II b. Salmama. Indeed, the dynastic idea of father-son successions was yet so tennously established that he was followed by his brother Dāwūd b. Nikale. Moreover, the concept of rotational government imposed itself once more through the formation of two dynastic lines, the Idrīsids and the Dāwūdids, which in the end became so entrenched that their conflict escalated into a civil war. It is only after the defeat of the Dāwūdids and the expulsion of their last descendants that ʿAlī Gaji (1455–1487), the builder of Birni Gazargamo, the first permanent capital in Borno, was able to impose a lasting dynastic regime fully compatible with Islam. Hence, the establishment of dynastic rule in Kanem-Borno was the result of a far more complex development than it would appear at first sight from the Dīwān.

For the longest period in Kanem-Borno history, the immigrant clans from the ancient Near East, barely mentioned by the chronicle, had been the main historical actors. Then different factors, in particular the advent of Islam, contributed to the emergence of dynastic rule and the erosion of the religiously founded clan system. However, vestiges of the former situation still survive in present-day oral traditions from the area of the old capital. By stipulating that Birni Gazargamo was inhabited by three Magumi clans – the Magumi Sefuwa, the Magumi Duguwa, und the Magumi Kadiria – they refer to the political power of the ruling clans, which in fact had been broken by the Sefuwa kings several centuries ago.[103]

Corrections by Katrin Mitzinger and useful discussions with her are gratefully acknowledged.

103 Ali Kadi Kaalisama, the Lawan of Dekwa, east of Birni Gazargamo, who provided this information, is himself of the Ngalaga clan, which he does not reckon among the inhabitants of the capital (FN 1977: 22a).

Abbreviations

CAD = I. J Gelb et al. (ed.). The Assyrian Dictionary of the University of Chicago. 21 vols. Chicago 1956–2006.

DULAT = G. del Olmo Lete and J. Sanmartin. Dictionary of the Ugaritic Language in the Alphabetic Tradition. 2 vols. Leiden 2004.

EI² = B. Lewis et al. (ed.). Encyclopédie de l'Islam. 11 vols. Leiden 1960–2002.

FN = 1977 etc.: field notes by D. Lange from the years 1977 etc., to be deposited at the University Library of Bayreuth.

HALAT = W. Baumgartner et al., Hebräisches und aramäisches Lexikon. 3rd ed., 5 vols., Leiden 1967–1996.

NBL = M. Görg und B. Lang (eds.), Neues Bibel-Lexikon. 3 vols., Zürich 1991–2001.

RLA = E. Ebeling und B. Meissner (eds.), Reallexikon der Assyriologie. 10 vols. 1932–2001 (not completed).

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