

The *Mune*-Symbol as the Ark of the Covenant between Duguwa and Sefuwa

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Few events in the history of Kanem-Borno have left such a great impact on tradition as the destruction of the *Mune* symbol by Dunama Dibbalemi in the first half of the thirteenth century.

The brief state chronicle of Kanem-Borno, the *Diwān*, refers to the symbol in highly appreciative terms. It explains that although it was cut, only "God most high" knew of its nature.¹ In 1578, Ibn Furtū likewise mentions in his book on Idrīs Alawmā's wars in Kanem that the sacred object was destroyed by Dunama Dibbalemi (1203-1242). Despite the fact that he was the Grand Imam of Borno, he also held the object in high esteem. According to him, its elimination was responsible for the outbreak of a seven years' war against the Tubu and, later, for the attacks of the Bulala, which led to the withdrawal of the Sefuwa from Kanem to Borno.² On the other hand the thirteenth century Arab geographer Ibn Sa'īd depicts Dunama Dibbalemi as a great Muslim king, implicitly considering his radical approach towards old customs as act of Islamic reformism.³ In view of these controversial assessments, which are the nature and the function of the sacred *Mune*? Was it just a pagan symbol of social peace, which on account of the disturbances engendered by its destruction was later given undue respect, as historians tend to think?⁴ Or are there reasons to believe that the *Mune*, as is sometimes suggested, had something in common with the Qur'anic *sakna*, thus giving it an aura of sanctity irrespective of its pre-Islamic origin?⁵

Unfortunately, no precise description of the *Mune* survived. According to the *Diwān*, a text known for its simple language, the *Mune* was "a thing" which could

¹ H. R. Palmer, *Bornu, Sahara and Sudan*, London 1936:92; D. Lange, *Le Diwan des sultans du Kanem-Bornu*, Wiesbaden 1977:37, 72.

² Ibn Furtū, "Kanem wars", in: H. R. Palmer, *Sudanese Memoirs*, vol. I, Lagos 1928:69-72.

³ N. Levtzion and J. Hopkins, *Corpus of Early Arabic Sources for West African History*, London 1981:188.

⁴ H. Barth, *Travels and Discoveries*, vol. III, New York 1859, 584; Y. Urvoy, *Histoire de l'Empire du Bornou*, Paris 1949:52-53; D. Lange, "The kingdoms and peoples of Chad", in: D. T. Niane (ed.), *General History of Africa*, UNESCO, vol. IV, London 1984:245; B. Barkindo, "The early states of the Central Sudan", in: J. Ajayi and M. Crowder (eds.), *History of West Africa*, 3rd ed., vol. I, Harlow 1985:238-9.

⁵ S. Trimingham, *A History of Islam in West Africa*, London 1962:117-8; A. Smith, "The early states of the Central Sudan", in: J. Ajayi and M. Crowder (eds.), *History of West Africa*, 1st ed., vol. I, London 1971:173 n. 41. Overlooking the comparison of the *Mune* with the Ark of the Covenant, Trimingham and Smith insist on its comparison with the Qur'anic *sakna* (*History*, 118; "States", 173 n. 41).

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be cut open.⁶ In the opinion of Ibn Furtū it was encased in wrappings and covered up. Dunama Dibbalemi was warned not to open it because, according to common belief, it made the kings invincible for the unbelievers. But when it was broken, its content was set free and flew away. Before disappearing, it “impelled the great officials of the kingdom to strive for dominion and high rank”.⁷ Thus we would imagine the *Mune* to have been a rather small object, wrapped in either leather or cloth, and kept in a special place either in the palace or in a temple.

Similar sacred objects are known from other kingdoms of West Africa. The *Dirki* of Kano, to which cattle were sacrificed in time of need, is said to have been a Qur’an wrapped in leather. The last Hausa king had it cut open with axes but as a result misfortune is supposed to have ensued in form of the Fulani conquest.⁸ The *Kudandam* of Katsina was a house covered with red leather considered to be the seat of power. Consequent to its opening, the town is said to have been invaded by the Fulani and the king killed.⁹ The *din t̄ari* of Songhay seems to belong to the same category of objects. When Askia Ishāq fled from the Moroccan conquerors he took it with him. Before he left the country he was asked by the senior official to cede the object to those who stayed behind, so that the kingship might continue under new auspices.¹⁰

In one instance, which has been overlooked up till now, Ibn Furtū is very precise on the origin of the *Mune*. In his *K. ghazawāt Kānim* (“Book of the Wars of Kanem”) he makes it clear that the *Mune* was not only considered to be *like* the Israelite Ark of the Covenant but that the people considered it to be *identical* with the Ark which was once in possession of King Saul. Having mentioned its opening by Dunama Dibbalemi, the chronicler continues relating the circumstances of the disastrous deed:

*al-’amr [...] al-musammā bi-munē al-tāhir hāl al-faḥ wa’l-fakk hattā ghāba ‘an ‘a’yn al-nās al-nāzīrīn ilayhi mā anzla Allāhu ta’ālā ‘alā banī Isra’īl min al-tābūt alladhī fihi ma’rifat naṣrihim fī zaman al-malik Ṭālūt kamā dhakara ta’ālā fī kitābihi al-’azīz.*¹¹

The thing named *Mune* flew away upon the breaking and opening thereof and it disappeared from the eyes of the people who were looking on that which God (be He

⁶ Palmer, *Sahara*, 92; Lange, *Dirwan*, 37, 72.

⁷ Ibn Furtū, “Kanem wars”, in: Palmer, *Memoirs*, III, 70.

⁸ “Kano Chronicle”, in: Palmer, *Memoirs*, III, 127.

⁹ “King list of Katsina”, in: Palmer, *Memoirs*, III, 82. The name is given by Trimmingham, *History*, 118 n. 1.

¹⁰ Ibn al-Mukhtār, *T. al-Fattash*, 153; tr. 274; D. Lange, *Ancient Kingdoms of West Africa: Africa-Centred and Canaanite-Israelite Perspectives*, Dettelbach 2004, 556-7.

¹¹ H. R. Palmer (ed.), *Hadhī al-kitāb huwa min sha’n sultān Idriṣ Alawma*, Kano 1930, 129.

exalted) had sent to the children of Israel as an Ark in which was the secret of their victories in the time of King Saul, as He (be He exalted) has recorded in his Book.¹²

Hence, it is obvious that the author considers the *Mune* to have in the past been located in Israel. One of the available translations adds to the correct rendering of the Arabic phrasing the particle “like”, insinuating that the *Mune* was not identical with the Ark of the Covenant mentioned in the Qur’an.¹³ The other translation is similar to the present one.¹⁴ The two available manuscripts of *K. ghazawāt Kānim* have at this instance the same wording as the published text.¹⁵ In fact, Ibn Furtū is quite specific by indicating that the *Mune* was the Israelite Ark of the Covenant. He would have been better understood by his later readers if he had clearly stated *Munē wa-huwa tabūt Banī Isrā’īl* – “the *Mune* was the Ark of the Covenant of the children of Israel”. Apparently, he did not think it necessary to make such a clear statement since all his local readers must have known about the origin of the prestigious object.

References to Israelite history in the state chronicle of Kanem-Borno imply that the Sefuwa considered themselves to have had Israelite ancestry. The opening paragraph of the *Diwān* indeed presents the supposed ancestor Sayf b. Dh3 Yazan as the descendant of 17 Arab genealogical figures including Quraysh. Beginning with Ishmael, son of Abraham, it continues mentioning in an ascending line the names of 21 Biblical patriarchs up to Adam.¹⁶ Apparently the Yemenite hero Sayf b. Dhi Yazan of the second half of the sixth century AD was chosen as the new ancestor since, at least, the thirteenth century to accommodate the earlier Biblical origin with the newly adopted Islam.¹⁷ Under these auspices local historians were probably led in their choice by the similarity of his name with an earlier Sef of the local tradition.¹⁸ In fact, the original name Sef might derive from the name of the Canaanite Baal Saphon/Sapan, a deity preceding the emergence of the monotheistic Yahweh in Israel.¹⁹

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- ¹² J. W. Redhouse, “Translation from the original Arabic of a history ...of seven expeditions in the land of Kanim”, *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* 19 (1862), 122; Ibn Furtū, “Kanem wars”, in: Palmer, *Memoirs*, I, 70.
- ¹³ Redfield has “Mun...was like unto that which God sent [...]”, “Translation”, 122.
- ¹⁴ Palmer has “there disappeared that which God had sent down to the children of Israel [...] the ark in which was knowledge of victory” (“Kanem wars”, 70).
- ¹⁵ School of African and Oriental Studies, Arabic Ms 1384 (c) f. 137; Institute of the Royal Asiatic Society, Case 6, Lower Right A, Add. mss. n° 68, f. 136.
- ¹⁶ Palmer, *Sahara*, 90; Lange, *Diwān*, 22-23, 65.
- ¹⁷ D. Lange, “La région du Lac Tchad d’après la géographie d’Ibn Sa’id”, *Annales Islamologiques* 16 (1980), 163, 168 ; Levtzion/Hopkins, *Corpus*, 188.
- ¹⁸ Two legends call the dynastic ancestor Sef, son of Aisa (Palmer, *Memoirs*, II, 83-84, 87).
- ¹⁹ Lange, *Ancient Kingdoms*, 243; K. van der Toorn, “Yahweh”, *Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible*, Leiden 1995:1719-1728.

In spite of this shift from a Canaanite-Israelite deity to an Arab legendary figure, the *Diwān* continued to keep record of the Israelite connection. The list of the 21 patriarchs cannot possibly have been borrowed from Arabic sources because some of their forms are undoubtedly original. Thus the patriarch Methuselah is given the second, explanatory name Matusalim, mentioned in early Christian literature but unknown to the Biblical books and to Muslim authors. Also, the importance of Eber, the eponymic ancestor of the Hebrews, is highlighted by the additional epithet *amīr*, "commander", although Muslim historians ignore the link of the name Eber with the ethnonym Hebrew and hence any outstanding quality of the patriarch. Furthermore, the fourth patriarch is called Kenan in spite of the Biblical form Qenan and the corresponding spelling in the Arabic chronicles. Similarly Re'u, the name of the sixteenth patriarch, called Arghu by the Arab authors, is written Arku. Hence the possibility that the Biblical names of the *Diwān* derive from borrowings from Arabic written sources may confidently be discarded.²⁰

An ancient internal line of transmission of Biblical and other Canaanite-Israelite material is also suggested by the non-Arabic name *girgām* sometimes given to the *Diwān*.²¹ Apparently, this term, referring to both written and oral historical information, derives from *girginakku*, an Acadian loanword from Sumerian, meaning "box for tablets, library".²² Hence, it would appear that the Arabic-Persian term *dīwān* "collection of poems written by one author, chancery, council" closely corresponds to the original meaning of *girginakku/girgām*.²³ Other Sumerian loanwords noted in Kanuri corroborate the hypothesis of ancient Near Eastern cultural influences reaching the region of Lake Chad via the Canaanites of Phoenician North Africa.²⁴

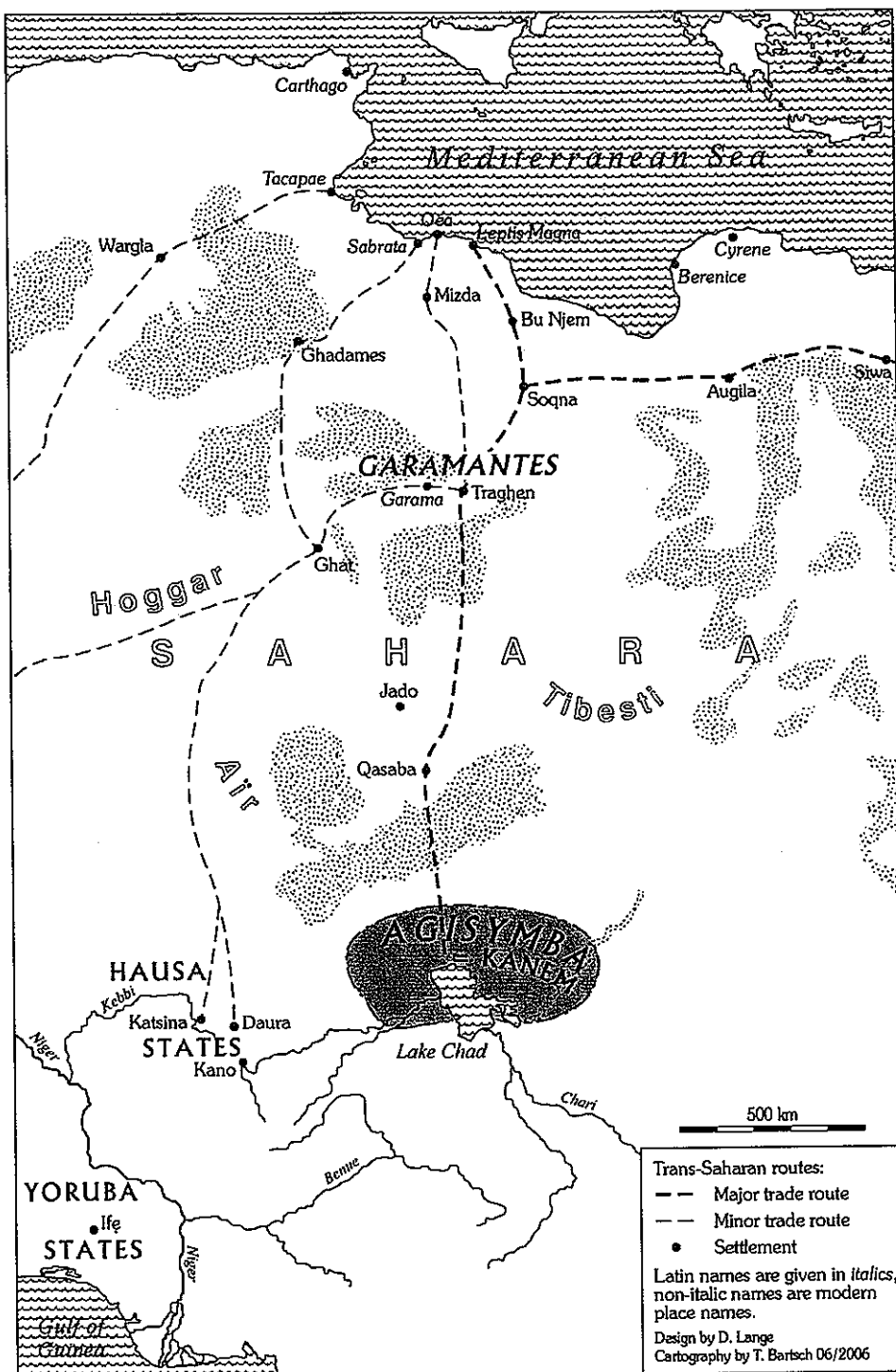
²⁰ Lange, *Ancient Kingdoms*, 244.

²¹ Palmer, *Sahara*, 9 n. 5; Smith, "Early states", 167 n. 23, 175.

²² Lange, *Ancient Kingdoms*, 244-5. An illustration of a box in which written clay tablets were kept is shown in B. Meissner, *Babylonien und Assyrien*, vol. II, Heidelberg 1925:331 and ill. n° 44.

²³ See E. W. Lane, *An Arabic-English Lexicon*, vol. III, Edinburgh 1867, 938-9.

²⁴ A. Drexel, "Bornu und Sumer", *Anthropos* 14/15 (1919-1920), 215-294; Lange, *Ancient Kingdoms*, 244-5.



Agisymba and other states and cities in The Central Sudan, ca. 100 CE

In the sixteenth century, when Ibn Furtū was writing, the Israelite identity of the Sefuwa had been largely eclipsed by the Arab-Yemenite filiation. Ibn Furtū himself was convinced that the Sefuwa had migrated under Ibr1h3m b. Sayf b. Dhi Yazan from Sana'a in Yemen to Kanem.²⁵ Altogether only three Arab authors commented on the origin of the kings of Kanem: al-Ya'qubī, in the ninth century, claimed that all the founders of the Sudanic kingdoms migrated from Babylon via Egypt, while Ibn Saīd and al-'Umarié, in the thirteenth and fourteenth century, mentioned the Yemenite filiation.²⁶ With the exception of Ibn Fātima, from whom Ibn Sa'īd derived his information on Kanem, and of D. Denham, who stayed for a short time in 1823 in the capital of the last but one Sefuwa king, no observant traveller whose records have survived ever visited Kanem-Borno during the period of the Sefuwa.²⁷ Any possible claim of an Israelite origin having outlived the invented Yemenite connection must therefore have remained unrecorded. When the Sefuwa were definitely evinced from power in 1846 after a conspiracy with a foreign enemy, its members and supporters having being persecuted and slain in great numbers, the supporters of the new dynasty strove eagerly to have all records of the earlier dynasty destroyed in order to obliterate their prestigious memory.²⁸

What was the content of the Mune? The *Diwan* explicitly states that only God most high knew more of it. It is striking that Ibn Furtū besides identifying it with the Ark of the Covenant also compares it obliquely with the Qur'anic *sakīna*. From *Qur'an* 2, 248 it appears that the Ark of the Covenant was composed of two parts, the *sakīna* "the inhabited" and the *baqīya* "the remnant". The Qur'an relates the first to the people of Moses and the second to the people of Aaron. In the five other instances when it appears in the Qur'an the word *sakīna* always refers to the "presence" of God and his corresponding divine aid in battle.²⁹ The *baqīya* is mentioned in two other, not well understood instances in the Qur'an and it survives in the form of *bāqī*, one of the 99 names of God.³⁰ According to Ibn Sīdah these two elements corresponded to Moses' staff and Aaron's yellow turban.³¹ Hence it would appear that the *sakīna* was a rather immaterial or abstract representation of a divinity and the *baqīya* a concrete representation of another divinity perhaps in form of a statue.

²⁵ Ibn Furtū, "Kanem wars", in: Palmer, *Memoirs*, I, 15-16.

²⁶ Levtzion/Hopkins, *Corpus*, 21, 188, 261.

²⁷ Denham stayed only one day in Birni Jad3d, the residence of Ibrāhīm b. Ahmad (1820-1846) which was at a distance of five kilometres from the residence of al-Kīnem3. He left the town immediately after having been received at the court (D. Denham *et al.*, *Narrative of Travels and Discoveries*, vol. 1, London 1826, 104-8).

²⁸ Barth, *Travels*, II, 16, 602-3.

²⁹ *Qur'an*, 9, 26; 9, 40; 48, 4; 48, 18; 48, 26.

³⁰ *Qur'an*, 9, 87; 11, 118; Lane, *Lexicon*, I, 238.

³¹ T. Fahd, „Sak3na“, *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd ed., VIII, Leiden 1995:888.

Is it conceivable that the Mune of Kanem was an African survival of the Israelite Ark of the Covenant? It is well known that the Ethiopians cherish the idea that Menelik brought the Ark of the Covenant from Jerusalem to their country in the days of Salomon.³² Similar sacred objects existed in Canaan and the Phoenician world. In the Old Testament we find in some instances elements of information which may be paralleled with the Qur'anic indications. Aaron is said to have placed on the instruction of Moses a jar of manna together with the rod of Aaron representing the house of Levi before the Ark of the Covenant.³³ According to Heb 9, 4 the Ark comprised a golden jar with manna, the rod of Aaron and the tablets of the Testament.³⁴ From other instances it would appear that the Ark included two sacred stones (*baitylos* or *bet el* – "house of El").³⁵ Combining the information of the Qur'an, the New and the Old Testament one gets the impression that the Ark of the Covenant contained symbolical elements representing the two priestly groups descending from Moses and from Aaron, the Levites and the Kohanim.

As for the name of the Mune itself it looks suspiciously like *manna* which is said to have been contained in the Ark of the Covenant.³⁶ It has possible cognates in the name of Amane, the major deity worshipped in pre-Islamic Kano, in Mani, the ancestor of the Kangu clan of Borno, in Mani, the paternal name of the Masfarma *shaykh* who supposedly converted Humē, the first Sefuwa king of Kanem, and in the Zaghāwū name Māni for the Qur'an and a "ram".³⁷ If it is correct that the name Mune is derived from *manna* it seems to follow that in this case the *manna* aspect

²⁹ Qur'an, 9, 26; 9, 40; 48, 4; 48, 18; 48, 26.

³⁰ Qur'an, 9, 87; 11, 118; Lane, *Lexicon*, I, 238.

³¹ T. Fahd, „Sak3na“, *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd ed., VIII, Leiden 1995:388.

³² Munro-Hay, S., *The Quest of the Ark of the Covenant*, London 2005.

³³ Ex 16, 32-34 (manna); Num 17, 8-10 (Aaron's staff representing the house of Levi).

³⁴ K. H. Bernhardt, "Lade", *Biblisches-Historisches Handwörterbuch*, vol. II, Göttingen 1964:1041; C. L. Seow,

"Ark of the Covenant", *Anchor Bible Dictionary*, vol. I, New York 1992:393.

³⁵ Seow, "Ark of the Covenant", 388.

³⁶ Lange, *Ancient Kingdoms*, 556-7.

³⁷ Trimmingham, *History*, 118; *Kano Chronicle*, in: Palmer, *Memoirs*, III:98, and Palmer, *Memoirs*, II:83; III:3-4.

of the *sacrum*, corresponding probably to the *sakina*, was more important than the *baqya* or figurative aspect. In other terms, the Moses people had with respect to the Mune a greater importance for the object than the Aaron people.

Modern commentators believe that the Ark of the Covenant was a sacred object in the possession of several Semitic people. Basing themselves on the Biblical description of the Ark of the Covenant as being kept in a red tent they compare it to modern tent shrines (*utfah*) being carried from place to place by the nomads. At Palmyra a bas-relief from a temple of Bel (1st century BC) shows a camel in procession, carrying a tent of red colour. According to Diodorus Siculus, the Carthaginians also had a holy tent, which they took with them in battle. An altar was located near this tent shrine (Diod. 20.65). Philo of Byblos mentions on the authority of Sanchuniaton (10th century BC) an ox-drawn shrine among the Phoenicians.³⁸ Hence it appears that the Ark of the Covenant, which is given great importance by the authors of the Old Testament, was by no means restricted to Israel. Its spread to West Africa may have occurred towards the middle of the first millennium BC at a period when also other elements of the Phoenician-Canaanite civilisation reached the region of Lake Chad.³⁹

Various indications suggest that Kanem emerged as a structured kingdom much earlier than previously thought. Classical sources provide the impression that the Sahara was only crossed by sporadic travellers, but since most of the information pertaining to the pre-Roman period was only second hand, one should not rely too much on it. After the conquest and destruction of Carthage by Rome in 146 BC there was no major power left in North Africa capable of promoting any continuous trade relations beyond the Sahara.⁴⁰ In that situation the Garamantes apparently seized the opportunity and imposed some kind of suzerainty over the region of Lake Chad. We know from the famous Alexandrian geographer Ptolemy that the trader Julius Maternus from Leptis Magna travelled with the king of the Garamantes to Agisymba when the latter staged an expedition against his rebellious subjects. Travelling for four months due south he is said to have reached the land of the Ethiopians where the rhinoceros was to be found.⁴¹ On account of this geographical position, the traders' interest in rhinoceros and the apparently numerous black population of it there can hardly be any doubt that Agisymba was situated in the region of Lake Chad and that it constituted the nucleus of the Kanem state.⁴²

³⁸ Eusebius, *Praeparatio evangelica*, 10.12; H. Ringgren, *Israelitische Religion*, 2nd ed., Stuttgart 1982:35-36; Seow, "Ark of the Covenant", 392.

³⁹ Lange, *Ancient Kingdom*, 277-8, 369-371.

⁴⁰ Lange, *Ancient Kingdom*, 277-285.

⁴¹ Ptolemy, *Geography*, I, 8, 5; J. Desanges, *Recherches sur l'activité des Méditerranéens aux confins de l'Afrique*, Rome 1978, 197.

⁴² Huss, "Agisymba", NP, I, 260; Lange, *Ancient Kingdoms*, 2004, 280-1.

From the ninth century onward Arab geographers refer to the kingdom of the region of Lake Chad as Kanem. During the early period of its history the kingdom was ruled by the Zaghāwa. The advent of Islam in the second half of the eleventh century paved the way for some kind of dynastic change. The first Muslim was Hawā', apparently a woman, and the second was 'Abd al-Jalil, both being considered as Duguwa or Zaghāwa.⁴³ Together they stayed in power for only eight years. In 1068 Humē, the founder of the Sefuwa line, came to power. From then on only Sefuwa kings ruled in Kanem-Borno until the beginning of the nineteenth century.⁴⁴ The *Diwan* refers to this important event in the history of Kanem linked to the conversion to Islam as corresponding to a transfer of power from the Banū Dūkū to the Banū Humē or Sefuwa.⁴⁵ However, the Banū Dūkū/Duguwa or Zaghāwa continued to play an important role in the history of Kanem. The eclipse of the Duguwa in consequence of Islamisation can best be explained by the greater compatibility of the pre-Islamic cults of the Sefuwa with Islam.⁴⁶

There are reasons to believe that the Mune incident was the result of a deliberate attempt to precipitate the demise of the Duguwa. Indeed, the *Diwan* mentions subsequently to the destruction of the Mune the outbreak of a war with a certain Ghāyū b. Lafrad, who might have been a well-known leader of the Duguwa.⁴⁷ As for Ibn Furtū he considers the seven years' war against the Tubu the most important immediate consequence of the Mune destruction, while the Bulala war and the retreat of the Sefuwa to Borno in the second half of the fourteenth century were in his opinion dramatic long term consequences. By indicating that the breaking up of the Mune precipitated greed and ambition among the great officials of the kingdom he obviously believed that civil war was the most important result of the incident. Such an internal break of order can best be explained if we suppose that the Mune was a symbol of Sefuwa and Duguwa collaboration on different levels of state organization. To destroy it meant to upset a fragile equilibrium based on cultic antagonism and cooperation. More specifically Islam had thus become an ideological weapon in ostracising the Duguwa and rejecting them into the rank and fold of "pagans". The outcome of this anti-Duguwa policy was on the one hand the rise of pro-Duguwa rebellions first staged by the Tubu and later by the Bulala and on the other hand the marginalization of the Duguwa which led to the formation of a Duguwa caste in Kanem.⁴⁸

⁴³ For the identity of the Zaghāwa and the Duguwa see Lange, *Diwan*, 113-129, and id. *Ancient Kingdoms*, 243-8.

⁴⁴ In spite of the reappearance of the name Zaghāwa/Zaghāy at the beginning of the fifteenth century, it is not very likely that individual Duguwa rulers were able to come to power again. For a contrary view see Lange, *Ancient Kingdoms* ("Ethnogenesis", 270-2), 146-8.

⁴⁵ Lange, *Diwan*, 31, 68; omitted in Palmer, *Sahara*, 91.

⁴⁶ Lange, *Ancient Kingdoms* ("Ethnogenesis", 265-269), 141-5, 243-8.

⁴⁷ Lange, *Diwan*, 37-38, 71-72; omitted in Palmer, *Sahara*, 92.

⁴⁸ D. Lange, "Sufeten-Staaten südlich der Sahara", *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft* (in press).

These developments were set in motion by Dunama Dibbalemi's decision to destroy the Mune. They were partly reversed when later kings realised the dangerous consequences of a radical Islamising policy leading to the demotion of the great Duguwa officials of the state and the corresponding competition among the Sefuwa to fill the vacancies. The *Dirwān* blames explicitly the sons of the king for having constituted parties and factions in different regions but it does not mention any Duguwa rebellion.⁴⁹ Probably, the situation was rather confused: The destruction of the Mune must have disrupted the basis of cultic and clan cooperation in the state by ostracising the leading Duguwa officials without precipitating a general conflict between the Sefuwa and the Duguwa. Instead, there was probably a twofold movement: Some Duguwa siding with the Tubu were in radical opposition while others, accepting to be led by dissident Sefuwa princes, set up in the region of Lake Fitri the rival kingdom of the Bulala. The Tubu were vanquished by Dunama Dibbalemi after a protracted war of seven years towards 1230, but the Bulala, leading the war from outside the kingdom's borders, were launching powerful attacks against the Sefuwa of Kanem since the reign of Dāwud b. Ibrāhīm (1359-1369). Towards 1380 they finally succeeded in uprooting the Sefuwa in Kanem and forcing them to withdraw to their western province of Borno where they had temporarily resided since at least the time of Dunama Dibbalemi.⁵⁰

In the external sources these developments are reflected by important information provided by the Egyptian historian al-Maqrīzī at the beginning of the fifteenth century. Commenting in general terms on the political situation in the region of Lake Chad before the revolt of "the people of Kanem", *i.e.* the Bulala, the author notes that Kanem and Borno, which were both royal provinces, were called together Zaghāy. This remarkable resurgence of the term Zaghāwa, which under the pen of the external observers designates the Duguwa,⁵¹ shows that the Mune incident did not lead to the definite elimination of the former ruling aristocracy of the Duguwa.⁵² In reality, it would appear that the opposition encountered by the radical approach of Dunama Dibbalemi towards the Duguwa did finally have the contrary effect of rehabilitating to a certain extent the cultic enemies of the Sefuwa. Such an interpretation is in line with the criticism voiced by Ibn Furtū and others against the destruction of the Mune and his willingness to remind his readers of the Israelite antecedents of the great cult symbol of his people.

⁴⁹ Palmer, *Sahara*, 92; Lange, *Dirwān*, 37-38, 71-72.

⁵⁰ Lange, *Ancient Kingdoms* ("Eviction", 315-331), 83-99, 551-2.

⁵¹ Levtzion and Hopkins consider the names Zaghāwa and Zaghāy to refer to identical phenomena (*Corpus*, 460).

⁵² D. Lange, "Un texte de Maqrīzī sur les 'races des Sudān'", *Annales Islamologiques* 15 (1979), 195, 207; Levtzion/Hopkins, *Corpus*, 429 n. 13.

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