

Ma'n b. Şumādih

Ma'n b. Şumādih (d. Ramaḍān 443/6 January–4 February 1052) was the first ruler of the Banū Şumādih dynasty in the Taifa of Almería.

The Banū Şumādih (r. c.403/1013 to 484/1091) were part of the Arab Tujibid dynasty from the Ebro valley (in the Upper March, in northeastern al-Andalus) that ruled Zaragoza and the surrounding cities from 400/1010 to 431/1040, near the beginning of the Taifa period. The family initially came to prominence when Muḥammad b. Aḥmad b. Şumādih, governor of Huesca, quarrelled with the first Tujibid ruler from Zaragoza (his cousin Mundhir, r. 400–14/1010–23) and was forced to flee, taking refuge in Valencia, where he was welcomed by the *amīr*, 'Abd al-'Azīz b. al-Manşūr (r. 411–52/1021–61). The *amīr* then helped the Banū Şumādih seize Almería, which the father and son controlled from 432/1041 to 443/1051.

At the beginning of the Taifa period, Almería was ruled by a dynasty of Slavic former servants of the caliphal administration who seized control in about 399/1009 and remained in power until 429/1038. We have two different accounts of the way in which Ma'n gained power in Almería. According to the first—included in the so-called *Crónica anónima de los reyes de Taifas* (an anonymous Arabic chronicle, dated around the late sixth/twelfth century) and mentioned by the chroniclers Ibn 'Idhārī (d. first half of the eighth/fourteenth century) and Ibn al-Khaṭīb (d. 776/1375)—it was the inhabitants of Almería themselves who took the initiative. After the death in 429/1038 of Zuhayr, the second (and last) Slavic ruler, the people swore allegiance to 'Abd al-'Azīz b. al-Manşūr in Valencia, who became the new sovereign of the city

and, as such, minted coins bearing his name from 429/1038 to 432/1040–1. He initially placed the city under the direct control of his son 'Abdallāh, who took the regnal name al-Nāṣir, but 'Abdallāh died shortly thereafter. The *amīr* then appointed Ma'n b. Şumādih who, in Rajab 433/24 February–25 March 1042), betrayed the *amīr* and declared Almería an independent Taifa.

The second account comes from al-'Udhri (d. 478/1085–6), an author from Almería, who openly favoured the Banū Şumādih and provides a detailed account of their rise to power. According to this report, the inhabitants of the city reached an agreement with 'Abd al-'Azīz b. al-Manşūr that allowed them to choose their own ruler, and they turned to Ma'n, whom al-Udhri praises as a clever and generous patron of the arts and sciences who was well suited for rule, given his noble lineage.

After a decade of rule, Ma'n b. Şumādih died in the Almería citadel in Ramaḍān 443/6 January–4 February 1052. His son and successor, Muḥammad b. Ma'n, was only fourteen years old at the time and therefore did not officially take power until 446/1054–5 (he ruled until 484/1091).

BIBLIOGRAPHY

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