

E. J. BRILL'S
FIRST ENCYCLOPAEDIA
OF ISLAM
1913-1936

EDITED BY

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VOLUME VIII
E. J. BRILL
LEIDEN – NEW YORK – KÖLN
1993

TAMĪM B. AL-MU'IZZ, fifth ruler of the Sanhādja family of the Banū Ziri, who reigned in eastern Barbary from 454-501 (1062-1108). He was born at Sabra-Man-Suriya near al-Kairawän. Ibn 'Idhāri described him as a man of tall stature and handsome appearance, and gives some curious details about his way of living. He was a very highly cultured man and reckoned among the most distinguished poets who have occupied a throne.

He was 23 in 445 (1053) when al-Mu'izz, his father, appointed him governor of al-Mahdiya [q.v.]. It was just after the appearance of the Banu Hilāl Arabs, who had already inflicted one or two severe defeats on the troops of al-Mu'izz and occupied a considerable part of Ifrikiya. Four years later, in 449 (1057), al-Mu'izz left Kairawän, his capital, where his position was untenable and took refuge in al-Mahdiya with Tamim who received him with deference. Tamim henceforth conducted the business of the state alone and on the death of al-Mu'izz (454=1602), he was officially recognized as sovereign. In the very difficult circumstances under which he came to power, Tamim showed very remarkable energy and ability. From the town of al-Mahdiya, which was practically all his dominion, he set himself to regain all the cities of Ifrikiya which former governors, Arab emirs, or mere adventurers had made into independent principalities. He had to fight against his relatives, the Banu Hammād of the Kal'a who were endeavouring to take advantage of the difficulties of the old kingdom of al-Kairawän. To this end he availed himself of the rivalries among the different groups of Arabs and gained the assistance of the most powerful, the Banu Riyah. With the help of this alliance which was not without its dangers, he was able to foil the Hammadid al-Nasir's plans against al-Mahdiya.

His activities, otherwise, seem to have been mainly directed against the towns of the coast. He sent many expeditions against them, the success of which could at best be ephemeral. He was able to retake Sūs, forced the Banu Kharāsān of Tunis to submit, failed before Gabes, then took it, laid waste the suburbs of Sfax and then entered it. His base al-Mahdiya was itself much threatened. The Arabs besieged it closely in 1084.

Tamim's effort against the coast-towns is explained by the aims which sent him to the sea while the land was slipping away from him. Following his father in this respect, he tried to prevent the conquest of Sicily by the Normans. Having failed, he intensified his piratical raids. On the Christian side, this produced an alliance of Genoese and Pisans who on Aug. 6, 1087 succeeded in occupying al-Mahdiya and sacked it. In 1104 the Romans (?) made another attack on the town which ended disastrously for them.

Four years later (1108), Tamim died at the age of 78 and was buried in the Kasr al-Saiyida at Monastir.