



# **Ibn Tufayl: Living the Life of Reason (Makers of the Muslim World)**

*Taneli Kukkonen*

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Ibn Tufayl (1105–1185) was an Andalusian courtier, philosopher, Sufi master, and royal physician to the Almohad Caliphs. He inspired the 12th-century Andalusian revolt against Ptolemaic astronomy and through his sponsorship he was also responsible for the career of the most renowned Aristotelian of medieval times, Abu al-Walid Ibn Rushd (the Latin Averroes). In *Ibn Tufayl*, we see an exemplar of the kind of versatile and pious scholar early Almohad culture wanted to cultivate.

Ibn Tufayl's own intellectual outlook is preserved for us in *Hayy Ibn Yaqzan*, a philosophical romance that is one of the most beloved and best read pieces in all Arabic literature. A popular and often-copied work in early modern Europe, *Hayy* has for many come to represent what is distinctive of high classical Arabic philosophy. *Ibn Tufayl* sets one of the most famous Arabic philosophical works of all time in its historical and philosophical context: it paints a vivid portrait of the world as Ibn Tufayl saw it and as he wished for it to be seen.

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