



# **The Shipwrecked Sailor in Arabic and Western Literature: Ibn Tufayl and His Influence on European Writers (Library of Modern Middle East Studies)**

*Mahmud Baroud*

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From the ancient Egyptian tale of a *Shipwrecked Sailor* through to *Sinbad* and *Robinson Crusoe*, the stranded castaway living and philosophizing alone on a strange, desert island is a theme which has captured the imaginations of writers spanning cultures and millennia. Most familiar to Western literary historians is Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*, which inspired generations of writers from Jonathan Wyss and William Golding to Michel Tournier and J.M.Coetzee. However, little attention has been paid to Defoe's antecedents, such as the remarkable *Hayy Ibn Yaqzan* by twelfth-century Arab physician and philosopher, Muhammad Ibn Tufayl. Mahmoud Baroud here conducts a detailed comparative textual analysis of *Hayy Ibn Yaqzan* and *Robinson Crusoe*, and concludes that Daniel Defoe was likely to have been deeply influenced by Ibn Tufayl's Arabic text. This book will be of interest to students and scholars of comparative literature, along with medieval Arabic literature, culture, and philosophy.

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