



## Translation history of "Ḥayy ibn Yaqzān" by Ibn Ṭufayl

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### ABSTRACT

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This article aims to discuss the historical flow of the translation of "Ḥayy ibn Yaqzān" by Ibn Ṭufayl into other languages, especially European languages, and is limited to the 14th to 18th centuries AD. Using qualitative research methods and analyzing various literary sources, the author explores how "Ḥayy ibn Yaqzān" spread in Europe and inspired several writers to translation. The results of the study show that the historical flow of the translation of Ḥayy Ibn Yaqzān from Arabic to other languages began in the 14th century into Hebrew, and continued into several other European languages, namely Latin, Dutch, English, and German, until the 18th century. In addition, in the history of the translation of "Ḥayy ibn Yaqzān" into other languages, especially European languages, Edward Pococke's Latin translation entitled "Ḥayy ibn Yaqzhan" became the main reference for other translators and had a significant impact in introducing Ibn Ṭufayl's work to the European world. In addition, Simon Ockley's translation is also well-known and helps expand the reach of readers of the work in the English-speaking world. Both of these translations made important contributions to the dissemination and understanding of the work among European readers. The contribution of this article is to map the translations of Ḥayy ibn Yaqzhan into several European languages in the 14th to 18th centuries CE, and to contribute to a deeper understanding of the cross-cultural exchange of ideas and values through literature, which enriches our appreciation of the interconnectedness of global intellectual heritage.

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### Introduction

Literature is a reflection of the social, cultural, and intellectual conditions of a society. Literary works not only convey stories, but also store values and thoughts that reflect the era and place of origin (Pradopo, 2001, p. 6). Interaction between cultures through literature has played an important role in the intellectual development of the world (Kamelia et al., 2023, p. 143). One of the most prominent examples of this cultural interaction is the influence of works from the Islamic world on the development of European literature and philosophy. In the Middle Ages, the Islamic world experienced a golden age in the fields of science, philosophy, and literature. Many important works written by Muslim scholars were later translated into Latin and other European languages,

thus influencing the development of thought in the West. One of the works that had a great influence was "Ḥayy ibn Yaqzān". This philosophical novel was not only known among Islamic scholars, but also attracted the attention of European intellectuals. Ḥayy ibn Yaqzān by the Andalusian writer and philosopher, Ibn Ṭufayl, is one of the great literary works in Arabic literature that transcends linguistic and geographical boundaries and spreads from the east to the west of the earth. In fact, this work is one of the most translated classical Islamic literary works after *Alfu lailah wa lailah* (Attar, 2007, p. 1). This novel not only offers a profound story about philosophy and human existence, but also provides a unique view of the relationship between religion and science (Sofiane, 2022. p. 634). "Ḥayy ibn Yaqzān" tells the story of a child who grows up alone on a remote island and achieves an understanding of the world through observation and reflection without the intervention of other humans. This story explores themes such as the search for truth, the relationship between reason and revelation, and self-discovery through the intellectual process. This novel provides a unique view of how humans can achieve a deep understanding of nature and God through the use of reason. This topic is interesting to study because "Ḥayy ibn Yaqzān" has been translated into various languages, and translations into Latin and became very popular in Europe during the Renaissance. Previous findings on the work of Ḥayy ibn Yaqzān were carried out by Ahmed Sabeeh Khalaf in his research *The Innate Journey of Knowing God and His Graces in Ḥayy ibn Yaqzān's Novel* discusses Ibn Yaqzan's journey in discovering various aspects of life and concludes that there are indeed two very dominant processes that Ḥayy went through in his journey, namely innate recognition of God and recognizing God's grace (Khalaf, 2024). Research by Mukhlis Latif entitled *Ibn Ṭufayl and His Contributions in the Field of Islamic Philosophy: Thoughts and Developments* discusses Ibn Ṭufayl's thoughts in the aspect of Islamic philosophy. The results of the study confirm that the context of Ibn Ṭufayl's thoughts in the field of Islamic philosophy is influenced by the context of the reality of the era in which Ibn Ṭufayl lived, namely the massive development of science (Latif Mukhlis, 2023). Research by Mohammed Naseer Hasson entitled *Loneliness As Self-Improvement: Ibn Ṭufayl's Ḥayy ibn Yaqzān And Daniel Defoe's Robinson Crusoe*. This study compares the different attitudes towards society, thought, and God presented by the protagonists in each of the novels Ḥayy ibn Yaqzān and Robinson Crusoe, and explores the philosophical and existential implications of solitude in the context of the experiences of the two main characters (Hassoon, 2020). Based on previous studies, many have discussed "Ḥayy ibn Yaqzān" from a philosophical aspect and there are still very few who explore the novel Ḥayy ibn Yaqzān from the historical aspect of the development of its translation, especially into several languages in Europe. Therefore, this paper aims to analyze the historical flow of the translation of "Ḥayy ibn Yaqzān" by Ibn Ṭufayl into other languages, especially European languages, and limited to the 14th to 18th centuries AD.

## Method

This research is a literature study by examining literary sources and works related to Ḥayy ibn Yaqzān by Ibn Ṭufayl and translations into European languages. The object of this research is the work of "Ḥayy ibn Yaqzān" by Ibn Ṭufayl and its translations into several European languages in the 14th to 18th centuries. The research method used is qualitative which is presented descriptively. Data collection in the form of books and research related to the novel "Ḥayy ibn Yaqzān", and several translated works in several European languages which are then processed from the aspect of the historical flow of the development of its translation in Europe, from the 14th to the 18th centuries. The use of secondary data to support the process of proper data analysis. The data found is then analyzed and processed with the following steps, namely Reduction (data selection) and Analytical Descriptive.

## Result and Discussion

Ibn Ṭufayl is one of the famous Muslim philosophers from the Murabitun community and is the second Muslim philosopher known in the West after Ibn Bajah. Ibn Ṭufayl was born in Wadiy 'Asy (Guadix), province of Granada, Spain in 1110 AD. His full name was Abu Bakr Muhammad ibn Abd Al-Malik ibn Muhammad ibn Muhammad Ibn Ṭufayl (Fulton, 1989, p. 8). Ṭufayl was actually the name of his great-grandfather, not his father. In Europe, Ibn Ṭufayl was popularly known as Abubacer (Zar, 2007, p. 205). Professor Aida Gasimova explains that there are three possibilities for giving the name Abubacer to Ibn Ṭufayl. First, it is possible that the name of one of Ibn Ṭufayl's sons was basir, therefore he was called Abubacer. Second, the word "Basir" in Arabic means "far-sighted", so it is possible that the word was used to describe the visionary figure of Ibn Ṭufayl. Third, sometimes Arab society names someone with Abu Basir to those who cannot see well, although there is no information about Ibn Ṭufayl's myopia (Salamat G. A., 2022, p. 32). After entering adulthood, Ibn Ṭufayl studied philosophy under the guidance of Abu Bakr Al-Sayegh, better known as Ibn Bajah or in the West known as Avempace, a very skilled expert in various fields of knowledge. Thanks to the guidance of his teacher, Ibn Ṭufayl managed to develop into a highly respected scientist (Budd J. M., 2000, p. 1). Ibn Ṭufayl's career began in 1147 AD, when he began his journey to Morocco to work. It is said that he became one of the traveling companions with Ibn Milhan, who was the ruler of Wadiy 'Asy. After becoming a successful doctor and surgeon, Ibn Ṭufayl moved to Granada. Thanks to his fame in this field, he got the opportunity to serve in the palace of Abu Yaqub Yusuf, who was the second Caliph of the Muwahhidun dynasty. After that, Ibn Ṭufayl was appointed as the caliph's doctor. His service in the palace of Abu Yaqub Yusuf was a turning point in his life (Syarif, 1994, p. 526). Caliph Abu Yaqub Yusuf had a great interest in science and philosophy and gave freedom to philosophize. His attitude made his government a leader in philosophical thought. Once, Caliph Abu Yaqub Yusuf asked Ibn Ṭufayl to bring several philosophers to the palace to study

the works of Aristotle, Plato, and other ancient Greek philosophers. Ibn Ṭufayl recommended Ibn Rushd for the job. It is believed that Ibn Ṭufayl met Ibn Rushd in 1169 AD when he was 60 years old. Thus, Ibn Ṭufayl introduced Ibn Rushd, a famous philosopher who was younger than him. In 1182 CE, Ibn Ṭufayl resigned from the position of the caliph's physician due to his old age and Ibn Rushd was appointed to the position. (Fulton, 1989, p. 12). In 1185 AD, Ibn Ṭufayl died in Morocco, exactly one year after the death of Caliph Abu Yaquub Yusuf. As a form of respect for Ibn Ṭufayl, the Caliph who was in office at that time, Abu Yusuf al-Mansur, also attended Ibn Ṭufayl's funeral (Syarif, 1994, p. 526-528).

### 1. *Ḥayy ibn Yaqzān and Other Works of Ibn Ṭufayl*

Ibn Ṭufayl preferred to be alone rather than spend his time with people. He had spent most of his time reading books in the large library of Caliph Abu Yaquub Yusuf (Shiddiqi, 1963, p. 10). Ibn Ṭufayl has written many books in the field of medicine, and he has also helped Ibn Rushd to create the work "Al-Kulliyat fit-Tibb" (Boer, 1970, 216). In 1181 AD, Ibn Ṭufayl wrote a book entitled "Urjuze fi Tibb". There is only one copy of the work, which is in the library of the University of al Qarawiyyin (Al-Karaouine) in Morocco. The work consists of 7 parts, 7700 verses and contains various diseases, their causes and methods of treatment. This work was introduced to the world of science by Mahmud al-Haj Qasim Muhammad. Another work of Ibn Ṭufayl is a poem containing the encouragement of the Arab nation to wage jihad. Caliph Abu Yaquub Yusuf asked Ibn Ṭufayl to write on this theme. The work consists of 44 verses. The poem is composed in a book entitled "Al-Man bi-l-Imam" by Ibn Sahib as-Salatin (Salamat G. A., 2022, 32). The work "Ḥayy ibn Yaqzān" is the main idea of all of Ibn Ṭufayl's ideas. It is believed that the work was written between 1169-1179 AD, namely the 12th century AD. The work has been translated into many Eastern and Western languages and is considered one of the first works of Islamic philosophy to be translated from Latin into English in 1674 and from Arabic into English in 1708. The work "Ḥayy ibn Yaqzān" is one of the most interesting literary works written in the Middle Ages, not only in Andalusia, but also in Europe (Nasution, 2002, p. 103). In short, Ḥayy ibn Yaqzān's book tells the story of a baby stranded on an uninhabited island, where a doe happened to pass by where the child was. He was looking for his lost child. He heard the child crying, then he went towards it. He found the newborn baby alive, then he breastfed the child and hugged him. Ḥayy ibn Yaqzān grew up by going through seven stages in his life. The first stage, the doe breastfed, nurtured, and cared for Ḥayy until he was seven years old. The second stage when the doe died, Ḥayy wanted to know the cause of her death, then this is where knowledge began to form for Ḥayy through his senses and experiences. The third stage is when Ḥayy discovered fire and began to use it. While in the fourth stage, he explored all living things around him, and thus he discovered unity and diversity, in body and spirit, and discovered the

similarity of creatures in matter and their differences in form. The fifth stage is the discovery of space, and this prompted him to go beyond his observations to find out that this world has existed since ancient times, as well as its origins. When he reached the age of thirty-five, Ḥayy began his sixth stage, which is concluding after thinking. He concluded that the soul is separate from the body, and he yearned for the Creator who must exist. Finally, Ḥayy bin Yaqzan asserted, in the seventh stage, that his happiness lies in continuously witnessing the Creator who must exist and his desire to remain in the life he has taken for himself (Khalaf, 2024, p. 168). Several other books by Ibn Ṭufayl are thought to have been lost during the chaos and war in the Maghreb (Nasution, 2002, p. 103).

## 2. Historical Flow of Translation of the Novel “Ḥayy ibn Yaqzān” into European Languages

“Ḥayy bin Yaqzan” is one of the great works of Arabic literature written by Ibn Ṭufayl, a writer and philosopher from Andalusia. This work is very famous and spread throughout the world, crossing linguistic and geographical boundaries. The story of Ḥayy bin Yaqzan is famous in Europe, has extraordinary appeal among European philosophers to the point of shaking the realm of Western world literature (Hilal M. G., 1962, p. 241). The novel he wrote was so popular and admired by European society. It is no wonder that his novel became a best seller throughout Western Europe in the 17th and 18th centuries.

His work in the field of philosophy also had a profound influence on classical Islamic philosophy and modern Western philosophy. His work has helped move European intellectuals to carry out the enlightenment movement (Attar, 2007, p. 54). The influence of this thought is certainly inseparable from the many translated works of Ḥayy ibn Yaqzān from various languages, so that scientists from various countries can access the ideas, theories, and knowledge that were originally written by Ibn Ṭufayl in Arabic.

The historical flow of the development of the translation of Ḥayy ibn Yaqzān from Arabic to several languages in Europe began when this book was translated into Hebrew by Moses ben Joshua of Narbonne and published in 1349 AD. The first Latin translation was published in the second half of the 15th century, translated by Pico della Mirandola (Attar, 2007, p. xvi). The following is a table explaining the timeline of the translation of Ḥayy ibn Yaqzān.

**Table. 1 Translation flow of “Ḥayy ibn Yaqzān” from 1349-1782**

No	Translator	Year of Publication	Language of Translation	Description
1	Moses ben Joshua	1349	Hebrew	It is the first translation of Ḥayy ibn Yaqzān's work (Attar, 2007, p. xvi).

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2	Pico della Mirandola	Second Half of the 15 <sup>th</sup> Century	Latin	Pico was one of the important figures of the Renaissance. Pico died in 1494 at the age of thirty-one. This translation is based on the Hebrew version by Moses ben Joshua (Garin. E., 2008, p 297-298).
3	Edward Pococke	1671	Latin	The second Latin edition, translated directly from the original version of Ibn Ṭufayl's Ḥayy ibn Yaqẓān by Edward Pococke, son of a renowned orientalist professor at Oxford. In this translation process, Pococke attempted to maintain the philosophical and theological integrity of the original work (Smith H. Z., 2022, p. 106).
4	Withheld	1672	Dutch	Translated from Edward Pococke's Latin version (Attar, 2007, p. xvi).
5	George Keith	1674	English	George Keith was a Scot and a prominent Quaker (Protestant Christian Society in the 17th Century). This translation is based on Pococke's Latin Translation (Conrad L. I., 1996, p. 270).
6	George Ashwell	1686	English	George Ashwell was a Catholic priest and is known for his naturalist philosophy. This translation is based on Pococke's Latin Translation (Clark, 2020, p. 179)
7	Edward Pococke	1700	Latin	The Latin translation of Edward Pococke has been republished (Attar, 2007, p. xvii).
8	Adrian Reland	1701	Dutch	It is a revision of the first edition and published in Amsterdam (Attar, 2007, p. xvii).
9	Simon Ockley	1708	English	Simon Ockley was an orientalist and professor of Arabic at Cambridge. This translation is the first English translation from the original Arabic (Fulton, 1989, p. 35).
10	Simon Ockley	1711	English	Simon Ockley's translation was republished in London (Fulton, 1989, p. 35).

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11	Adrian Reland	1721	Dutch	Republished in Utrech (Attar, 2007, p. xvii).
13	Johann Georg Pritius	1726	German	Johann Georg Pritius was a Protestant Christian theologian and pastor. This translation is based on the Latin edition of Pococke's work (Attar, 2019, p. 237).
14	Simon Ockley	1731	English	Simon Ockley's translation was republished for a third time in Dublin (Attar, 2007, p. xviii).
15	Johann Gottfried Eichhorn	1782	German	Johann Gottfried Eichhorn was an orientalist and Protestant Catholic theologian. This translation is based on the original Arabic version (Attar, 2019, p. 237).

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Until now, Ḥayy ibn Yaqzān has been translated into many languages, such as Indonesian, Malay, Persian and the majority of other Islamic languages (Budd, J. M., 2000, p. 3). Until now, the latest translation is a translation from Modern Greek by Kalligas Pavlos which was published in January 2018 (Kalligas, 2018). From the table above, it can also be seen that Edward Pococke's Latin Translation is widely used as a reference. Edward Pococke was an English orientalist and theologian who had a great interest in the study of Arabic language and literature. In the 17th century, Pococke traveled to the Middle East, especially to Syria and Egypt, to study Arabic and collect manuscripts. There, Pococke found the manuscript of "Ḥayy ibn Yaqzān" by Ibn Ṭufayl (Holt P. M., 1957, p. 444-445). After returning to England, Pococke translated the work into Latin in 1671, under the title "Philosophus Autodidactus". This translation was then published in Europe in 1671 and gained wide attention among European intellectuals (Smith H. Z., 2022).

Edward Pococke's Latin translation of "Ḥayy ibn Yaqzān" was widely used as a reference by other translators for several main reasons related to accessibility, reputation, and historical influence. In the 17th century, Latin was the main language of scholarship in Europe, making the work accessible to a wide academic community. Pococke's translation enabled scholars who did not speak Arabic to understand and examine Ibn Ṭufayl's philosophical ideas. Latin served as a lingua franca among academics, facilitating the spread of knowledge and intellectual discussion across national and linguistic boundaries (Šubarić, L., & Kamusella, T. 2021, pp. 41-42). At the time, Arabic manuscripts were probably difficult for Western scholars to access due to limited resources and language barriers. Pococke's translation provided a more accessible and studyable text, allowing more scholars to explore and disseminate the ideas of Ḥayy ibn Yaqzān.



Another well-known translation is Simon Ockley's translation of Ḥayy ibn Yaḡzān, the most famous of which was the first edition published in 1708, entitled "The Improvement of Human Reason: Exhibited in the Life of Hai Ebn Yokdhan" (Fulton, 1989, p. 35). This translation introduced Ibn Tufayl's philosophical work to a wider audience in the English-speaking world. This edition was not only published once, but was also reprinted several times throughout the 18th century. One of the most famous editions is the Dublin edition published in 1731. This edition is considered a bestseller in its time, indicating the great popularity and influence of this work among intellectuals and the general public in Europe (Ferlier, L., & Gallien, C. 2019, p. 95). Of course, the contributions of Edward Pococke, Simon Ockley and other translators are very large in bridging linguistic and cultural gaps, enriching thought, and encouraging progress in various aspects of life, so that the novel "Ḥayy ibn Yaḡzān" by Ibn Ṭufayl can be accepted in Europe and inspire literary works in Europe. Ibn Ṭufayl's "Ḥayy ibn Yaḡzān" has had a significant influence on several European literary works and has been very popular since its first appearance in European translations. Its influence can be traced in various literary and philosophical works, which have themes of isolation, self-discovery, and natural education (Kruk R., 2011, p. 91).

Ibn Ṭufayl's "Ḥayy ibn Yaḡzān" has had a wide and deep influence on European literature, inspiring important works such as "Robinson Crusoe" by Daniel Defoe which is the forerunner of the robinsonade genre. This genre refers to stories that depict the main character who is stranded in a remote place and must survive by utilizing the skills and resources around him, which are many famous works of this genre, such as "The Jungle Book" by Rudyard Kipling, "Life of Pi" by Yann Martel, and many more (Durand, 2020, p. 39). Then the works that were also inspired by "Ḥayy ibn Yaḡzān" are "Emile, ou De l'éducation" by Jean-Jacques Rousseau, "The Spectator" by Joseph Addison, "Simplicius Simplicissimus" by Hans Jakob Christoffel von Grimmelshausen, "El Criticón" by Baltasar Gracián and "Candide" by Voltaire. Themes such as isolation, natural education, intellectual development, and the search for wisdom explored in "Ḥayy ibn Yaḡzān" have been adopted and adapted by these authors, showing the importance of direct experience and philosophical reflection in the process of seeking knowledge. In addition, his thoughts can be found in various forms and at different levels in the books of Roger Bacon (1220-1292), Hobbes (1588-1679), René Descartes (1596-1650), Spinoza (1632-1677) Isaac Newton (1642-1727) and Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz (1646-1716) (Attar, 2007, p. 53).

## Conclusion

Ibn Tufayl's work entitled "Ḥayy ibn Yaḡzhan" is one of the important works in Arabic literature because it has been translated into various languages in the world, including several European languages. The historical flow of the translation of Ḥayy Ibn Yaḡzān from Arabic to other languages



began in the 14th century into Hebrew, and continued into several other European languages, namely Latin, Dutch, English, and German, until the 18th century. In addition, in the history of the translation of "Ḥayy ibn Yaḡzān" into other languages, especially European languages, Edward Pococke's Latin translation entitled "Ḥayy ibn Yaḡzan" became the main reference for other translators and had a significant impact on introducing Ibn Tufayl's work to the European world. In addition, Simon Ockley's translation is also well-known and helped expand the reach of the work's readers in the English-speaking world. Both of these translations made important contributions to the dissemination and understanding of the work among European readers. The contribution of this article is to map the translation path of Ḥayy ibn Yaḡzhan into several European languages in the 14th to 18th centuries CE, and to contribute to a deeper understanding of the cross-cultural exchange of ideas and values through literature, which enriches our appreciation of the interconnectedness of the global intellectual heritage. The limitations of this paper are that it is still limited to translations into several European languages and is limited to the 14th to 18th centuries. Recommendations for further writing are to expand it to the current modern century, and translations into various languages around the world.

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