



## Ibn Khaldun: Life and Times

By *Allen Fromherz*

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### **Ibn Khaldun: Life and Times** By Allen Fromherz

Ibn Khaldun (d. 1406) is one of the most influential and important Muslim thinkers in history. Ibn Khaldun has inspired at least as much interest among modern scholars as his immediate contemporaries. Legions of sociologists, anthropologists and historians have studied his philosophy of history, treating the *Muqaddimah* as a timeless piece of philosophy. Most studies of Ibn Khaldun ignore the fascinating story his own life and times. Rejecting portrayals of Ibn Khaldun as a modern mind lost in medieval obscurity, *Ibn Khaldun: Life and Times* - newly available in paperback - demonstrates how Ibn Khaldun's ideas were shaped by his historical context and personal motivations. Relying on original Arabic sources, most importantly Ibn Khaldun's unique autobiography, this is the first complete, scholarly biography of Ibn Khaldun in English. While previous studies dismissed Ibn Khaldun's autobiography as lacking in psychological depth, *Ibn Khaldun: Life and Times* challenges this view. Demonstrating the rich and complex nature of Ibn Khaldun's memoirs, *Ibn Khaldun: Life and Times* not only tells the life story of Ibn Khaldun in an accessible way, it also introduces readers to the fourteenth-century Mediterranean world. Seen in the context of a politically tumultuous and religiously contentious fourteenth century Mediterranean, Ibn Khaldun's ideas about tribalism, identity, religion and history are even more relevant to pressing, modern concerns.

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### Editorial Review

#### Review

"This book by U.S. professor Allen James Fromherz tries to push back against some of the more simplistic contemporary adoption of Ibn Khaldun. It frames his highly original ideas in the context of the turbulent historical and personal circumstances in which he found himself in 14th century North Africa and Andalusia. This, Fromherz suggests, is a more reliable guide to his work than trying to shoehorn him into modern-day concerns: 'The temptation to identify Ibn Khaldun as a modern mind ignores the direct relationship between his times and his thought.'" -- William Armstrong, *Hürriyet Daily News*

#### About the Author

**Allen Fromherz** is Professor of Medieval Mediterranean and Middle East History at the Georgia State University, Atlanta.

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