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By Usama ibn Munqidh

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Editorial Review

About the Author

Usama ibn Munqidh (1095-1188) was born in northern Syria. In the last decades of his life he concentrated on writing, collecting his scattered poems into a much-praised *Diwan*, but specialising in topical anthologies of poetry and prose like *The Book of the Staff* or *Kernels of Refinement*. Usama's last patron was the mighty sultan Saladin, to whom he intended his most famous work, the *Book of Contemplation*. He died in Damascus in 1188.

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