Abdallah ibn ‘Umar Ibn Al-Khattab

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'Abdalläh ibn 'Umar
Ibn Al-Khaṭṭāb

by
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Thesis submitted to the
Faculty of Arts
in the
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Abstract

The aim of this work is to study ʿAbdallāh b. ʿUmar's life.

Ibn ʿUmar lived eighty-four years (74/693 years of the hijra), being born in 613 A.D.

He was first and foremost a jurist and religious leader and intellectual, and the founder of the Medinese School of Law. Therefore as long as there are Muslims in the World he has been, and will be, highly esteemed by past, present and future generations of scholars and others conversant with religious instruction.

There is still the need for a comprehensive study of his teaching and doctrine. The present work does not attempt to cover this need.

This thesis is a biography of ʿAbdallāh b. ʿUmar and deals with his activities and influence as a religious jurist and founder of an important School of Law. It is composed of six chapters. The introduction gives a brief biographical note on the social and religious background of the Arabs before Islām and the life at Mecca and Medina, the cities in which Ibn ʿUmar lived.
The first chapter aims to study the early life of Ibn 'Umar, his formative years, family background, childhood, conversion to Islam and his emigration to Medina, followed by a genealogical table. The second chapter deals with his military life, his career as a cavalryman and how he assisted in gaining victory for his nation, followed by a chronology of his military career table. The third chapter deals with his political life and how he rejected the offer of the Caliphate three times. Chapter four is concerned with his intellectual achievements; this study deals with his teachers, how he established a Medinese School of Law, his approach to his teaching, and his students with a brief note of his prominent students and an example of his work as a Mufti. Chapter five deals with his appearance and personality, his charity and his worship. Chapter six gives an account of his family and the end of his life.
Preface

This research on *Abdallah b. *Umar who lived in the first century of the hijra has been compiled of material not only from Durham University Library but also from the British Museum's Manuscript Room and also from the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London. The main references were The Qurʾān, al-Muwatṭaʾ (the commentaries of al-Zarqānī, al-Suyūṭī and M.F. ʿAbd al-Bāqī) and Musnad Ibn Ḥanbal also. Also history books such as Ibn Saʿd al-Ṭabaqāt al-Kubrā, Ibn Qutayba al-Imama wa ʿl-Siyāsa, Ibn Kathīr al-Bidāya and Ibn al-Athīr.
Acknowledgements

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I would like to thank the Head of Department, Professor J.R. Harris, and the Assistant Registrar, Mr. G.R. Thrush, who made it possible for me to be supervised by Dr. Smith.

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Last, but not least, I thank my husband, who has been left alone at home to look after himself while I have been working in Durham, and who has been a constant support.
Notes

1. Transliteration of Arabic:

Hamzah: not shown, when initial, otherwise

2. When two dates are given thus: 73/692, the first is the Hijra date.

When Christian dates alone are given, nothing is normally added.

3. Abbreviations:

b. بن
B. بن
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Introduction

Brief biographical note on ‘Abdallāh b. ‘Umar

Social and religious background

The religion of the Arabs before Islām

The life at Mecca

The life at Medina

‘Abdallāh b. ‘Umar was born in approximately 612, in the 1st/7th century. His life covered nearly three-quarters of the century and was spent in both Mecca and Medina.

Ibn ‘Umar spent his childhood in Mecca where he was born, and all the rest of his life in Medina where he established the Medinese School of Law. He died in Mecca in 74/693.

To understand the impact of the environment in which he lived, it may be useful to give a brief description of the two cities, Mecca and Medina.

Al Hijāz:

This is a region which consists of a narrow wadi. This wādī has three passes, one to the south (the Yemen), the second to the Red Sea and the port of Jidda, and the third to the north (Syria). Within this wādī lies Mecca, Medina and al-Tā‘if.
Mecca, with its holy Ka'ba, was a small city in the Hijaz, lying midway between the Yemen and Syria. This wadi undulates between high hills of gneiss and quartz. The general direction and slope is from north to south. Mecca does not have the advantage of tropical showers. The rain begins about December and the weather is hot in the summer time. There is no big difference between summer and winter temperatures. There are no rivers, but only a few springs or small oases(1). It is a very barren place, as stated in the Qur'ān when the Patriarch Abraham brought his wife and his son there(2), but nobody knew when exactly the Patriarch Abraham came to that place(3). It is difficult to ascertain when this wādi was first inhabited, because, for thousands of years, traders passed through it, making their way from north to south and back again, resting by the oases.

2. Qur'ān, XIV, 37.
3. Al-Azraqī, Akhbaar Makka, 19. When Abraham came from Syria there were some people living outside of Mecca. They were called al-ʿĀmāliq.
The merchants preferred this overland route to that of the sea and travelled in camel trains, despite the extra distance, in order to avoid the pirates who ravaged the sea routes. However, most of the Arabs who used to live in that wādi were nomads. They moved from one place to another where there was considerable rainfall in winter, and the valleys supported a rich vegetation and pasture. The bedouins moved in small or large groups, looking for pasture land with their camels, whose needs were satisfied with unusual ease and which provided the Arab with food and clothing, as was stated in the Qurʾān(4).

Major tribes:

The leading tribe in old Mecca was the Quraysh, which included many branches, such as B. ʿAbd Manāf, B. ʿAbd al-Dār, B. ʿAbd al-Uzzā, B. Taym b. Murra, B. Zuhra, the Asad, the Makkzūm(5) and the ʿAdday, the latter being ʿAbdallāh b. ʿUmar's tribe.

4. Qurʾān, XXXVI, 71, 72, 73.
5. Al-Masʿūdī, Merūj, III, 119-120.
Each tribe retained its tribal constitution and was self-governing in the same way as a desert tribe. Thus Mecca was rather a collection of tribal camps. The Quraysh, with all its branches, lived at Mecca. During that time, the Arabs lived a simple bedouin life, not only in the Hijaz but everywhere else on the Peninsula. The Quraysh were business people who used to go to the north (Syria) and to the south (Yemen). Such trade routes acted as a cultural background. They had two departures, one to the north in the summer time and the second to the south in the winter time (6).

That means the Quraysh had two sources of income, one from their journeys as commercial traders, and the second through service to the pilgrims visiting the Ka'ba. These businesses kept them from starvation and protected them against the enemy.

The economic system was simple. They used to carry goods for the merchants or guide them or they transacted business themselves. Under these circumstances, business transactions were, like everything else, regulated by common law and customs.

6. Qur'an, CVI, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5.
Their lives were regulated by these laws. Common law regulated barter, contract, share-cropping and usury.

In short, Mecca was the market centre of the Peninsula. Many people had dwellings in Mecca, but their cultural patterns and habits were identical in many respects with the bedouins.

There were no statutes to protect women upon marriage or divorce(7). Polygamy was unlimited and temporary marriage common. So also was divorce, often without what is now considered reasonable cause. The man could divorce his wife several times without a time limit, and return to her at any time. "And it was so after the beginning of Islām, until the advent of the Qur’ān"(8). "Divorce must be pronounced twice and then a woman must be retained in honour or released in kindness"(9). Women and infants were denied inheritance.

7. Mahmašānī, Falsafat al-Tashrīf, 25, There are some Arab customs which prevail today from pre-Islāmic times. For example in some tribes a woman did not accept a man as her husband until he had given her full powers to divorce herself from him, in case this should be required in the future. Salmī bint ‘Amr, one of the B. al Najjār, the mother of ‘Abd al-Muṭṭalib, is an example. For more detail, cf. Shalabī, Tārikh, I, 103-104; Hasan, Tārikh, I, 66.

8. Al-Wāhīdī, Asbāb al-Nuzūl, 43.

The people were very carefree and independent. They were proud and considered themselves of noble lineage and they did not mix with any race. Therefore, they were opposed to Muhammad, although he was a native son of Mecca, when he commanded them to leave off their habit of worshipping idols and follow him and embrace Islām. They feared, too, his political ambitions.

Medina:

This was the second city of the Islāmic Mission after the emigration of the entire Muslim community from Mecca in 622. Medina became a famous city and the capital of the Arab Empire.

In the course of its history, the town was known by at least thirty names(1). The name immediately preceding the hijra was Yathrib(2) and the usual explanation of the succeeding name (al Madīna) is "the town of the Prophet"(2). Originally, Medina "was an oasis of some twenty square miles or more"(3).

1. Al-Samhūdī, Wafā', I, 7; Yāqūt, Muṣḥam, V, 82-88 mentioned twenty-nine names, the famous one is Taba.

2. Yāqūt, Muṣḥam, V, 83.

Standing near the trade route through Hijāz territory, at the beginning of the Wādī al-Qurā, it was the largest and most important town in the wādī.

**The evolution and social life of the city:**

In ancient times, between about 1300-1200 B.C., the city was colonized by the Amorites al-‘Amalīq(4), a very powerful people. They practised agriculture on the cultivable land(5) around the oasis. After a long period of unquestioned supremacy, they were conquered by the Jews and fell from power. They inhabited Wādī al-Qurā and many other different places, such as Fadak and Khaybar. They took over several oases and began to cultivate the land with the co-operation of the Amorites. While the Jews lived in Medina, new immigrants arrived who had left the Yemen after the destruction of the dam of Ma‘rib. These newcomers were the Aws and Khazraj tribes who originated from the tribe of Al-Azd. They came from the south of Medina(6) and

4. al-SaMhūdī, Wafā’, I, 110.
5. Yāqūt, Muṣjam, V, 84.
settled there. The situation was greatly complicated by the presence of these foreign settlers. The Medinese were not in the same position as the Meccans. They were skilful artisans, agriculturalists and eloquent speakers; whereas the Meccans were traders or commercial agents of one kind or another, who had much contact with the Persians and Byzantines, and many other people. The Medinese had no such highly evolved business in the market of Yathrib. The most important commodity was dates, for which Medina is still famous. The Medinese had no coinage and instead used their date crops as a medium of exchange.

Their religion:

The residents belonged to different religions and different tribes, which induced much social conflict. There was no government and no judiciary or codified legal system, and the judge was usually a man of skill who put himself forward as arbiter. They also had no ruling family. There were no places of worship or places of pilgrimage and no public place for poetry recitals. They lived in the most primitive conditions.
The general tension reached a peak in the war between Aws and Khazraj, twenty years before the Hijra.

**The Hijra:**

When the Muslim community arrived at Medina, the Medinese hardly welcomed them. When Muhammad entered the city, he tried to diminish the difference between Meccan and Medinese Muslims, to encourage the idea of brotherhood between them. In practice, this meant that each Medinese Muslim was to regard himself as the supporter (Al-Ansār) and serve as host for one of the Meccan immigrants (Al-Muhājirūn). Later, they came to be known as the Companions (Sahāba).

'Abdallāh b. 'Umar was one of these Companions, even though he was nearly ten years old when he arrived at Medina. He was to gain fame as a Companion of Muḥammad and was the founder of Medina's School of Law.
Chapter One

The Early Life of
‘Abdallāh b. ‘Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb

A. His formative years
B. Family background
C. Childhood
D. Conversion to Islām
E. Emigration to Medina
F. In Medina
Abdallah b. Umar

A. His formative years

His birth. About ten years before the Muslim emigration to Medina (hijra), A.D. 613, a boy was born in Mecca to Umar b. al-Khattab whom the latter named Abdallah(1). This event was not of great significance at that time except for the interest aroused in his immediate family. Umar himself was naturally very pleased with the new boy, because it was the first male child born to him(2). As is still customary, the Arab preferred a male child to a female, for different reasons. These reasons included keeping the family name, supporting the parents, fighting the enemy and so on. At that time also some Arab tribes still used to bury girls immediately after birth(3). But Umar clearly did not follow this custom and already had a girl before the arrival of his baby son. Anyway, he celebrated the occasion on a large scale.


2. Umar's first child was a girl - Hafsa.

3. This custom did not appear in all the Arab tribes, but some clans were accustomed to doing so, such as B. Asad and B. Tamim, "but not all of them", cf. Shalabi, Tarikh, 1, 103.
in the taverns he was accustomed to frequent(4).

4. al-Aqqād, ʿAbgariyat ʿUmar, 116. Ibn Kathīr Bidāya, III, 81. ʿUmar was at this time a drinker. He himself admitted, "I was (before Islām) a drinker and I loved wine" (Kuntu ashrabuhā wa-Ūhibbuhā).
B. *Family background

'Abdallah b. 'Umar was born to a noble family. His father's name was 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb b. Nufayl b. 'Abd al-'Uzza b. Riyāh b. 'Abdallah b. Qurt b. Rizāh b. 'Adī b. Ka'b b. Luṭayy b. Ghālib b. Fihr. His kunya was Ābū Ḥafṣ and his laqab al-Fārūq(1).

Thus Āl al-Khaṭṭāb belonged to the tribe of Quraysh; the father of the tribe was al-Nadr b. Kināna, and their closest family group was called B. 'Addī. The more famous amongst them were those who lived in Mecca during pre-Islamic times(2). The B. 'Addī were of noble status amongst Quraysh and ranked highest amongst the tribal communities. All ambassadors to other tribal groups were chosen from B. 'Addī from those who were considered to be honourable, kind and respected(3). 'Umar acted as an envoy representing his tribe(4) (as his grandfather, Nufayl, had done before him), whenever wars


2. Ibn al-Athīr, Usd, IV, 53.


broke out among their tribe's sub-tribes or between themselves and other tribes. He was, however, usually occupied before Islam in helping his father, al-Khaṭṭāb, as a shepherd (5). However, later on, as is well known, he became the second Caliph. ʿAbdallah's grandmother was Hantama bint Hāshim b. al-Mughīra b. Makhzūm (6), the latter being one of the chiefs of the Quraysh. ʿAbdallah's mother was Zaynab bint Madʿūn b. Ḥabīb b. Wahab b. Jumāḥ al-Jumahiyya (7).

5. Ibn Saʿd Tabaqāt, III, 266.

6. See footnote 1. above. Some authors think she was the daughter of Hishām. If this is so, then it means she was Abū Jahl's sister. Hishām and Hāshim were brothers, so she must have been Abū Jahl's cousin. Cf. Ibn al-Athīr Usd, IV, 52-3, and Tabārī, Rivād, I, 787.

Hantama was from a very proud family who counted amongst their number such warriors as her father called Dhuʾl-Rumāyān. Cf. Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr, al-Istīʿāb, III, 144. Also al-ʿAqqād, ʿAbgaryyat ʿUmar, 37, said her father was a commander in the Quraysh army in every battle. Her uncle, ʿAmr, was named Ẓād al-Ruḥ, who had meals served to countless numbers of guests who came to his door without invitation. Cf. Levi-Provençal, Nasab Quraysh, IX, 299-301.

C. His childhood

"Abdallah then was born in Mecca, at the house of B. Addi between al-Safā and al-Marwah(1). Another author mentions that, before Islam, "Umar's house was in Mecca on the mountain al-"Aqir which is now known as "Umar's Mountain. At the time of "Abdallah's birth, social conditions in Mecca were in turmoil, due to the rise of the new religion spreading amongst the members of Quraysh and of Āl al-Khaṭṭāb(2).

This situation led to some confusion. It necessitated the overthrow of the idolatry of the tribal forefathers of the people. They did not know whether to believe in this new religion or to remain as they had always been.

The Quraysh, as mentioned above, were famous amongst the Arab tribes, not only in Mecca, but throughout the Peninsula. Divergence from their old religion would lead to Mecca no longer being a centre of pilgrimage. It

1. Ibn al-Azraq, Akhbār Makk, II, 210-2. "Umar demolished this house and, as an offering to the Faith, made it into an area in which camels could rest at the time of pilgrimage.

2. Ibn Sa'd, Tabaqāt, III, 266.
would also affect the main trade routes, for example that from the Yemen to Syria. Moreover, the Meccans were merchants or guides to the merchants, protecting them and assisting them in finding their way on their business journeys. Commercial activities were one source of income. If the Meccans changed their religion, no-one would trust them, then they would lose their influence with the others outside the town and finally lose their income also.

Another important reason was that the Quraysh were the protectors of the Meccan Haram (the sacred area around Ka'ba). When the people came to Mecca on pilgrimage, they would be under the protection and receive the hospitality of Āl Hāshim (family of Quraysh). All those who used to come on pilgrimage were idolaters, as were the Meccan people and also those in the surrounding areas. Thus, if the Quraysh changed their religion, then the pilgrimage to Mecca would be in doubt and the Quraysh - and the Meccan people - would lose one of the main sources of their income. The pilgrims, too, spent large sums of money in Mecca, which was the capital of the Arabian Peninsula, and this too would be lost to the town.
The third reason is that they were always independent in their way of life and had no wish to be followers of other people.

The fourth reason is that they did not like to do away with tribal solidarity and inter-family rivalry.

There is a final reason: the conservatism of the pre-Islamic Arabs. The Arabs were pagans, believing in a whole host of gods. When Muhammad asked them to follow him, they said, "Does he make all gods one god? Verily this is a thing astonishing" (3).

The Arabs were always proud of their ancestors. When Muhammad asked his uncle, Abū Ṭalīb, to believe in God, he said, "If I change my religion because I fear something, that is a shameful thing to do" (4).

This respect for their ancestors was very important to the Arabs.

When one said to them, "Follow what Allāh hath sent down," they said, "No, we will follow what we found our fathers following" (5).

For all these reasons then, the Meccans did not like change.

3. Qurʾān, XXXVIII, 5.
5. Qurʾān, XXXI, 21.
'Abdallāh b. ʿUmar, as a little boy, naturally did not understand the situation amongst his people and did not know what idolatry meant. He had probably seen idols in his house or in the Ka'ba when he went with his father. His father, ʿUmar, was at that time a heathen and was very cruel to the new Muslim followers. ʿAbdallāh was very respectful towards his father. When his father adopted the faith, he accepted Islām too.

ʿAbdallāh was the first boy born to his parents and he was therefore their favourite, especially of his father. ʿAbdallāh had this close relationship with his father until the latter died, in spite of the fact that he (ʿAbdallāh) had thirteen other brothers and sisters. He grew up very close to his father, and was greatly influenced by his father's manner and morals which he himself adopted. Some examples of this can be found in the next chapter.

D.  "Abdallāh b. ʿUmar's Conversion to Islam

When "Abdallāh was nearly six years old(1), his father, ʿUmar, embraced Islām(2). There are varying accounts of how the young boy also became a Muslim about the same time. They are as follows:

As he was so young, he could not comprehend the religious debate before him, but merely followed the religious ideas of his father.

There is direct evidence for this. "Abdallāh was reported to be always with his father, saying, "I accepted Islām along with my father when I was a child"(3). On another occasion, he said, "I was with my father" - he means going to the Kaʿba - "I was a little boy, but I recall everything"(4).

In addition, "Abdallāh was accustomed to seeing Islāmic religious ceremonies being performed, as his aunt, Fātimah(5), was already

1. We do not know exactly when he was born.


a Muslim. Therefore it did not seem strange for him to see his father doing likewise.

Ibn 'Abd al-Barr(6) and Ibn al-Athîr(7) mentioned that Ibn 'Umar embraced the Faith before his father. They said also, "That is not true, because Ibn 'Umar himself rejected that".

Ibn Kathîr mentioned that, according to Nâfi', it was said(8), "The reason for saying that Ibn 'Umar embraced Islâm before his father is that, at the time of al-Hûdaybiya during the month of Dhû 'l-Qa'da six years after the hijra, 'Umar saw an assembly of people around the Prophet Muhammad under the tree and asked his son, 'Abdallâh, to go to see what was the reason for such an assembly. 'Abdallâh saw all the Muslims making the "Pledge of Blood" or the "Pledge under the tree". ("Allah was well pleased with the believers when they swore allegiance unto thee beneath the tree ...")(9). As 'Abdallâh made his pledge to the Prophet and returned to

his father, he told him to come to make his pledge too. There is another possible justification for such a view. This was also the time of al-Ḥūdaybiya, when ʿUmar sent his son ʿAbdallāh to one of his friends who had borrowed his horse to ask him to return it, as it was needed for the fight. ʿAbdallāh saw that all the Muslims were assembled around the Prophet to pledge their faith to him, and he (ʿAbdallāh) made his pledge and went to his father to suggest that he also make his pledge(10).

Something new was happening to the little boy which was to affect his life. He felt that he had found something new. He used still to go with his father to the Kaʿba to learn how to pray. However, although he was very small for such a ceremony, he declared that this was his first step towards embracing religion(11). He began to realise that the Muslim community had suffered enough at the hands of the Quraysh, especially from his

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11. Ibn Saʿd, Tabaqāt, IV, 159.
father who was vehemently against them (12).

After his father, ʿUmar, embraced the Faith, the Muslim community changed. ʿAbdallāh saw the Muslims becoming stronger and thriving more. In the words of ʿAbdallāh b. Masʿūd: "We have been stronger since ʿUmar embraced Islām" (13).

ʿAbdallāh b. ʿUmar himself commented, "I noticed that when my father embraced Islām, he was anxious to pass the news of his conversion to Islām from person to person among the Quraysh. Then he asked a person to spread this news, and went to the Kaʿba. I was with him, following him and I understood everything that I heard or saw. He started to fight the Quraysh and to declare his conversion to his religion" (14).

ʿUmar did so because he had been harming the Muslim people and he wanted now to make up for his previous offensive behaviour towards them.

E. \textit{Abdullāh b. Ṣūlā'īb's Emigration to Medina}

Four years after Ibn Ṣūlā'īb embraced Islam, the Muslim followers started to emigrate to Yathrib, later Medina, to promulgate their new religion and to protect themselves from the Quraysh's cruelty. \textit{Abdullāh b. Ṣūlā'īb accompanied them. There is disagreement in the sources over Ibn Ṣūlā'īb's age at that time of his emigration to Medina and how he left.}

Some sources say that he emigrated before his father. As Ibn al-Athīr stated, "\textit{Abdullāh b. Ṣūlā'īb emigrated before his father, therefore some people thought he accepted Islam before his father}"(1). Others, however, say that \textit{Abdullāh b. Ṣūlā'īb emigrated to Medina with his father and his mother}(2). The latter seems more feasible because Ṣūlā'īb was amongst the third group of emigrants, after the last pledge of Ṣuqāba. The first group consisted of Ṣūqāba b. Ṣuqāba and Ibn Ṣunā'īb Maktūm(3). The second group consisted of Bilāl, Sa'd(4) and Amīr b. Yāsir. The third group


2. E.g. Ibn al-Jawzī, 	extit{Safwa}, I, 228; Ibn Sa'd, 	extit{Tabaqāt}, IV, 142; Ṣa'b, 	extit{al-Riyāḍ}, II, 80.

3. Ibn Ṣunā'īb Maktūm's name was Ṣuqāba b. Qays or \textit{Abdullāh}; his mother's name was Ṣūqāba and her kunya was Umm Maktūm. Cf. Ibn al-Jawzī, 	extit{Safwa}, I, 237.

4. Someone said Sa'd was Ibn Abī Waqqās.
consisted of Umar b. al-Khattab, his wife and his family and some of his relatives, such as his brother and son-in-law and twenty other friends(5).

There is another dispute amongst the authors about Ibn Umar's age when he emigrated. Ibn al-Athir said that Abdallah b. Umar was 11½ or 13 at that time. According to some authors, he was born two years after Muhammad's mission, assuming that Muhammad stayed in Mecca thirteen years. Others said Ibn Umar was born one year after Muhammad's mission, if Muhammad stayed in Mecca for ten years.

In general it seems that Muhammad stayed in Mecca for thirteen years after his mission. Muhammad did not tell anyone except his nearest relatives that he was receiving revelations from God for three years. After that time, he

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Ibn Kathir, Bidaya, III, 173.

5. There are three families who went to Medina one year before the last pledge of Aqaba:

(i) Abu Salma, Abdallah b. Abd al-Asad with his wife and his son later on;
(ii) Amir b. Rabia with his wife Layla;
(iii) Abdallah b. Ja'hash with his wife and sister.

They were all from the Quraysh. Cf. Ibn Hisham, al-Sirat, II, 77-78.
started to declare his mission for ten years. That means that "Abdallāh b. "Umar embraced Islām about nine years after Muḥammad declared his first revelation from God, or about six years after Muḥammad(6) publicly revealed his mission. "Abdallāh b. "Umar supports this by saying, "I was six years old when I accepted Islām"(7). In support of this, Ibn al-Αthīr also said, ""Umar accepted Islām after six years of Muḥammad's mission"(8).

Thus it seems that "Abdallāh b. "Umar emigrated with his father when he was ten years old.

8. Ibn al-Αthīr, Usd, IV, 57.
F.  "Abdallāh b. "Umar in Medina

When "Abdallāh b. "Umar entered Medina, he noticed a big difference between the two cities. The people of Medina on the whole welcomed the arrival of the emigrants, offering them hospitality(1). "Abdallāh was very happy, because he saw something new which he had not seen before. The city was much pleasanter than Mecca, since it was centred on an agricultural area with palm trees in plenty. The climate, too, was kinder than that of Mecca. The people, in the main, welcomed them very warmly, in contrast to the people of Mecca.

Anyway, it can be assumed that he was happy with this change, as is usual when a person travels to another city.

A remarkable new situation developed between the two peoples involved, who came to be known respectively as the Emigrants (Muhājirūn, those who migrated from Mecca), and the Helpers (Anṣār, Muḥammad's supporters in Medina), thus encouraging the idea of brotherhood(2) between them. As is stated in

1. Ibn Kathīr, al-Bidāya, III, 197.
2. Ibn Kathīr, al-Bidāya, III, 226; Ibn Hishām, Sirāt, II, 123. (According to the Hadith "Herender, the Muslims are as brothers").
the Qurʾān: "Those who entered the city and the Faith before them love those who emigrate unto them ..." (3).

In practice, this meant that each Medinan Muslim was to regard himself as the protector of, and host to, one of the Meccan immigrants. Later they came to be known as the Companions (Ṣahāba).

ʿAbdallāh b. ʿUmar was thus one of these Companions, even though he was only ten years old. He learned a useful lesson at the beginning of this phase of his life, schooling himself for his future life towards a close understanding with the people, as his first teacher Muḥammad had done. From the time when ʿAbdallāh b. ʿUmar started to follow Muḥammad, he remained for much of the day and night in the mosque (4). He had devoted himself to his religious duties since he embraced the Faith. Then, when they were at Medina, and since their house was facing the mosque, he asked his father if he could sleep at the mosque. He had heard that some people were always asking the Prophet about their dreams and that they had seen so and so

in them. His father granted his request and he slept in the mosque. The story is told that, in his sleep, he had a dream of someone giving him a kind of fabric (istabraq)(5). It was clear to him that this piece of material could take him to any place in Heaven. Then, in the morning, as he himself states, "I went to my sister, Hafṣ, to ask her to mention the dream to her husband, Muḥammad, and she did. The Prophet said: "Your brother (ʿAbdallāh) would be an upright man if he were to pray at night"(6). From that time ʿAbdallāh used to pray at night for a long time. That is why some authors mentioned this. Those such as Abū Ṭurāb al-Misāburī have doubts about Ibn ʿUmar's living in the mosque as "the people of the bench" (ahl al-Ṣaffa) who "were very poor people who had no homes and nothing to eat, and whom the other Muslims took over to their houses to feed"(7). According to

5. al-istabraq al-dibāj al-ghallīq. Cf. Maʿlūf, al-Munṣūd, 9, dibāj being a material woven from silk and whose warp and weft are pure silk.

6. This vision was related by his son, Sālim, and also by his client, Māfī, by several authors, such as Ibn al-ʿAthīr, Usd, III, 228; Ibn Saʿd, Tabaqāt, IV, 147 and Ibn Hajar, Isāba, IV, 107.

Nisabūrī's words, "'^Abdallāh b. 'Umar stayed in the mosque with the stone benches as his dwelling and shelter"(8).

Another author refutes this idea, saying, "The author, Abū Na'īm al-Isbahānī, mentioned in his book Ḥilyat al-awliyā' that he (Abū Na'īm) used some rather abusive words, called the Companions Sufīs and charged them with Sufism because they were ascetic"(9).

According to these words, the four Orthodox Caliphs and the Companions were much more ascetic than were the Sufīs, and incidentally did not subscribe to Sufism.

At that time, mysticism was not yet known or established and such an idea arose later on. Anyway, Sufism is out of the question. '^Abdallāh b. 'Umar was not from the group who were accommodated at the mosque, because he was not poor; on the contrary, his father, 'Umar, was self-supporting and he was one of the richest men amongst the Quraysh(10).

According to Arab custom, young boys live with their parents. This was especially true of 'Umar and his son, 'Abdallah, who was always with his father. On the other hand, 'Umar's house was beside the Prophet's house, facing the mosque and there was a private door leading to the mosque, according to the Prophet's own design(11). If 'Abdallah b. 'Umar for some reason slept occasionally in the mosque, that did not mean that he belonged to the same class of those "people of the bench".

Actually he was following in the steps of Muhammad, preparing for future religious matters and, therefore, he was always with his father in the mosque. He himself also followed the Prophet closely. He was therefore able to quote directly Muhammad's directions and orders concerning the religious and secular affairs of the community. Our sources suggest that 'Abdallah b. 'Umar participated in these affairs by reason of his outstanding ability to ensure that injunctions

11. al-Bathnūnî, Rihlah, 212. When Muhammad arrived in Medina he had the plan for the design of the mosque, for his own house, and houses of Abū Bakr, 'Umar and 'Uthman. Within the first month he arranged that his house stood inbetween those of his successors.
newly revealed were passed on to the community(12). Therefore, the new Muslim community lived very close to Muhammad, who taught them a new religion and way of life. Hence all the Muslims came to the mosque.

There is a story that ʻAbdallāh b. ʻUmar as a little boy always used to go to school (in fact in the mosque, because at that time the mosque was the school) with his father, and how very clever he was even as a small boy. The Prophet once said: "Amongst the trees there is one kind of tree, the leaves of which do not fall and which is like a Muslim. Tell me the name of that tree". Everybody started thinking about the wild trees of the desert area and Ibn ʻUmar thought of the date palm, but felt too shy to answer. The others said, "O Apostle of God, inform us of it". He replied, "It is the date palm". ʻAbdallāh told his father what had come to his mind, and ʻUmar said, "Had you said it, I would have preferred it to

anything that I might possess”. This indicates that he was very intelligent, but also a shy boy(13).

THE LINEAGE OF 'ABDALLAH B. 'UMAR

Zayd al-Aṣghar

Ruqsayya, Zayd

Haifa

'Abd al-Rahman

(Aṣim.

'Abd al-Rahman

al-Awsat

(d. 70/689)

"Aisha

Sūdah

Abd al-Rahman

Wāqia

"Abdallāh

(d. 105/723)

Sālim

(Umar

(d. 106/724))

"Uthmān

Haifa

"Umar

Abū Bakr

Sālim

Hamza

"Aisha

(d. 106/724)

(d. 106/724)

Bilāl

Qulābah

"Abdallāh

al-Aṣghar

"Abdallāh

al-Aṣghar

(d. 56/656)

"Iyād

Fāṭima

"Ubaydallāh

(d. 74/693)

Fāṭima

"Ubaydallāh

(d. 74/693)

(d. 56/656)
Chapter Two

The Military Life of ʿAbdallāh b. ʿUmar

Part played in the military campaigns of Muḥammad

His activities during the period of the Orthodox Caliphs:

Abū Bakr
ʿUmar
ʿUthmān
ʿAlī b. Abī Ṭālib
Part played in the military campaigns of Muḥammad

A short while after the new residents settled in Medina, several small military expeditions went out, led by Muḥammad himself with both Muhājrūn and Anṣār participating against the Quraysh(1).

Muḥammad acted thus against the Quraysh to avenge himself after their opposition to him, to impress upon them how strong the Muslim community had become and finally to obtain booty.

‘Abdallāh b. ‘Umar had not yet reached the required age to join the army. As usual, it is related, he followed his father as he left for battle. Also, he was so fond of Muḥammad that he wanted to spend as much time as possible in his company. He also clearly liked to see and to know what expedition was being mounted.

He eventually joined the invaders and associated with the army in their activities on the battle-field. He presented himself to Muḥammad at the time of the battles of

1. Al-Wāqidī, Maghāzī, 4-10.
Badr and Uḥud to ask permission to fight. The Prophet, however, sent him back on account of his age(2). He was to go with the army only so long as they were not actually in battle. He certainly went about amongst the combatants at Badr and Uḥud(3) to give out water, or to bandage wounded, or to help by preparing the arrows.

ʿAbdallāh was about fifteen years old at the time of the siege of Medina(4), the Battle of Khandaq. He supported his right to fight on this occasion, saying, "I presented myself to the Prophet to fight at the Battle of Uḥud, when I was fourteen years old. He did not permit me to fight then, but on the day of al-Khandaq when I presented myself, I was fifteen years old, so he permitted me"(5).

2. Al-Waqidi, Maghāzi, 12.
4. Abū al-Fida, Tarīkh, I, 141. This campaign took place on 5 Shawwāl, 5/626.
5. Ibn Saʿd, Tabaqāt, IV, 143. This served as a precedent later in an analogous case put forward by ʿUmar b. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz, the Umayyad Caliph, who said, "That is the division between the old and the young".
Afterwards he took part in all military actions during the Prophet's lifetime, such as Khaybar, the disastrous expedition to Mu'ta, the Conquest of Mecca and so on. Even as a young man he was remarkable in military matters. He fought bravely as a cavalryman in the army, if not always as a commander. For instance, the Prophet sent him with a detachment to Najd where they won the battle and took part in dividing the booty among the soldiers. Everyone was given eleven camels and one more. This division was accepted by the Prophet without any change. This meant that 'Abdallah was capable both as a fighter and as an administrator(6).

However, another source(7) states that 'Abdallah b. 'Umar mentioned, "I was with a detachment sent by the Prophet to Najd. We won the battle and our share (was) eleven of something (Sahm) of the booty, and twelve camels, and the Prophet gave us one more camel as a present (nafal)." This version, mentioned in one reference only, differs from most.

6. Ibn Sa'd, Tabaqat, IV, 146.
7. E. Lévi-Provençal, Nasab Quraysh, 350.
When 'Abdallāh b. 'Umar was twenty years old, he went with the Muslim army to conquer Mecca. He was one of the cavalrymen to find favour with Muḥammad. The latter praised him when he saw him riding a steady horse with a heavy spear, and arrayed in battle finery and swaggering in the ranks of the army. The Prophet said: "That is 'Abdallāh! That is 'Abdallāh!"(8).

8. Ibn Sa'd, Ṭabaqāt, IV, 172.
'Abdallah b. 'Umar's military activities during the period of the Orthodox Caliphs

Introduction

Before we continue our account of Ibn 'Umar's military life during the later years it is necessary to give a brief idea about the changing state of the régime from the period of the prophecy to that of personal government.

Naturally human beings seek to wield authority over other people, even over close relatives. Therefore, after Muḥammad died the Muslim community started to quarrel amongst themselves to obtain power, even though Muḥammad was still not buried. The trouble-makers were the Anṣār, who had a meeting in Saqīfat B. Sā'īdah(1). The leader of the meeting was Sa'd b. 'Ubādah(2), one of the Anṣār. He was desirous of being Caliph after Muḥammad. The other side opposing

2. Sa'd b. 'Ubādah b. Dulaim b. Hārithah al-Khazrajî. He was one of the nine persons in the accounts of the second meeting at al-'Aqaba as guarantors of the new converts. He was proposed as a successor to the Prophet. His death was in Hawrān about 15 (636/637). Cf. E.I., IV, 32.
him were the Muhājirūn, whose leaders were Abū Bakr, Umar and Abū ʿUbayda(3). The third group was ʿAlī b. Abī Tālib and some of his relatives.

A certain Khazrajī stated that he would not like the Caliphate to be given to Āl al-Daylam from the Anṣār. That was most favourable to the cause of the Muhājirūn. Bashīr b. Saʿd(4) sided with the Muhājirūn, accepting ʿUmar's idea that the Caliphate must go to one of the Quraysh.

Immediately, ʿUmar and Bashīr started to pay homage to Abū Bakr. At the same time, Usayd b. Hūḍayr(5), the chief of the Aws, gave his homage to Abū Bakr and followed his tribe because Usayd thought that if the Khazraj won power, it would be disastrous

3. Abū ʿUbayda: ʿĀmir b. ʿAbdallāh b. al-Jarrāh of the family of al-Ḥārith of the Qurayshite tribe of Feesr. One of the ten believers to whom paradise was promised. He fell victim to the plague in Syria in 18/639 at the age of 58. Cf. E.I., I, 158.


5. Usayd b. al-Hūḍayr b. Samāk b. ʿAlīk b. ʿImrūʿal-Qays. He was the leader of the Aws. He was known as al-Kāmil because he was renowned for his writing, swimming and shooting. He died in Medina in 20/ 640. Cf. Ibn Saʿd, Tabaqāt, III, 603-6.
for the Aws. Then the Muhājirūn and Anṣār paid their homage to Abū Bakr.

These two parties had solved their problem, but what about B. Hāshīm? ‘Alī, his uncle al-‘Abbās and Abū Sufyān(6) began to excite ‘Alī against Abū Bakr. There were a few of both the Muhājirūn and Anṣār and ‘Alī’s relatives, who did not pay homage to Abū Bakr, because they thought that Alī was more entitled to be Caliph. ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib kept quiet, without paying homage to Abū Bakr, until his wife, Fātima(7), died in 11/632. Even ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib was seeking to be Caliph, but he did not like to make trouble for the company, even though his uncle and others were pushing him, but in fact his delay in paying homage was because his wife, Fātima, was annoyed with Abū Bakr about her inheritance


7. Fātima, Muhammad's daughter. She died six months after her father. Cf. Al-Ṭabarī, Tarīkh, II, 208.
of Fadak(8). Abū Bakr did not give them the right to have such a thing, because Muḥammad himself said: "We are not heirs; the property we have will go to the people as alms"(9).

ʿUmar was very hard on them when they did not pay homage to Abū Bakr.

Thus, after Muḥammad's death and the congress of Saqqafat B. Sāʿida, the Muslim community immediately elected Abu Bakr(10), and he was followed by ʿUmar b. al-Khaṭṭāb. Both were accepted throughout the land, with the same spirit of complete equality and brotherhood as had prevailed amongst the

8. Fadak: an ancient small town in the northern hijāz near Khaybar, not far from Medina. The modern village of al-Huwayyiṭ. When in 5/627 Muḥammad took his well-known measures against B. Qurayṣa, the Jews of Khaybar, after their breaking of a vow, Fadak was allocated to Muḥammad, who devoted the revenues from it to needy travellers and also for the maintenance of the poor of the B. Ḥāshim.

Fāṭima maintained that Fadak, like Muḥammad's share, should come to her as her father's heiress. Abū Bakr, on the other hand, maintained that this should remain exactly as Muḥammad had settled it. Alī supported his wife. This question of inheritance aggravated his opposition towards Abū Bakr. Not only Fāṭima, but her uncle, al-ʿAbbās, also was a claimant to the estate of Fadak. Cf. E.I.II, II, 725-7.


faithful since Muḥammad's time. The first three Caliphs continued to follow the general policies, especially Abū Bakr and ʿUmar. Religious enthusiasm was still alive. ʿUmar was successful in checking tribal jealousies and family rivalries. His rule was accepted without objection or question. Military activity did not cease. While at first Muḥammad and his followers fought against the Quraysh and other Arab tribes around Mecca, now the fighting continued against other peoples, e.g. the Byzantines and the Persians. While formerly they had been fighting in and around their own land, now they campaigned to distant places, into Iraq, Khurāsān, Nahāwand and Africa, until they had carved out a large empire.

ʿAbdallāh b. ʿUmar, during the Caliphate of Abū Bakr and his father, ʿUmar, spent his time in military activities.

We hear also of his participation in military affairs during the Umayyad Caliphate, particularly that of Muʿawiya.
Soon after Abu Bakr came to power, war broke out. This war was known as the "War of Apostasy", or the War of the Ridda. It was very important in the life of the early Muslims, because it flared up just after Muhammad's death when Muslims were still not unanimous about Abu Bakr taking the Caliphate.

Briefly the background to this war was as follows: The Arabs were more inclined to accept Islām after Muḥammad won a victory at Badr(1) with such a small number of his followers, for then he became greater in the eyes of the Arabs. After Badr he staged numerous expeditions against the Quraysh and also against other hostile nomads. However, they occupied a wide area round Medina and even as far as places on the route to Syria.

Then the Islāmic community increased rapidly as many of the smaller tribes near Medina allied themselves with Muḥammad.

1. Badr: the name of a place between Medina and Mecca, which became the scene of a battle between Muḥammad and Quraysh in 2/623. Cf. Al-Masūn, 332.
Throughout west and central Arabia his power and prestige were great. This was because the nomads discovered that Muḥammad was the strongest man in Arabia.

Soon those Arabs who were not in an alliance with Muḥammad came to Medina from all parts of Arabia, asking for alliance with him. The conditions of alliance were the acceptance of Islām and the acknowledgement of Muḥammad as prophet, and they had to agree to the Islāmic ritual, such as certain payments to Medina, technically in the form of "religious alms".

This, however, did not mean that all the Arabs became Muslims. There were some reasons for accepting such a religion, even without being pressed into it. For example, some of the tribes were weaker and sought an alliance with Muḥammad in order to strengthen their position against their rivals. Some thought that they would have more opportunity and hope of plunder in the Muslims' expeditions than in their own raids. It was becoming increasingly obvious that Muḥammad was in a better position to guarantee security to his followers than any other leader in that part of Arabia, and that he was able to show a high degree of justice and fair
play between the various sections of his community. As Muḥammad's position strengthened, those not allied with him became more inclined to join him, including some whose alliance to him would mean some loss of self-determination.

In the year 9/630(2) after Muḥammad's conquest of Mecca, the Quraysh and Thaqīf embraced Islām and the other Arabs understood there was no choice for them but to do the same because the Meccans were the cornerstone then, and the remainder could not fight Muḥammad. They, therefore, started to send their deputies to make peace with Muḥammad. In the same way, the pro-Persian groups in the Yemen(3), Oman and other places followed him because they thought that the Islāmic state was like the Byzantine and Persian empires. If they went on to say how it differed, they had to use religious terms.

2. Ibn Hishām, Sīrat, IV, 221-258. The Year 9 was called the "Year of Deputation"; Ibn al-Aṯīr, al-Ḵāmil, II, 195-9.

3. Ibn Hishām, Sīrat, IV, 264-271. It was at the end of the Year 10/631 that Muḥammad sent delegates to countries such as the Yemen.
After Muhammad's death, therefore, they began to give up their obedience(4) and al-
Aswad al-'Ani(5) claimed the prophecy in the Yemen and Musaylima(6) and Sajah(7) did the same in Yamama, because they had seen Muhammad had become such a powerful person, because he was a messenger of God.

Yet others did not claim that they were prophets, and did not return to Arab paganism, but remained Muslims, yet refused to pay the (Zakat) alms. Then most of the Arabs were

4. Ibn al-Athir, al-Kamil, II, 231; al-
Tabari, Tariikh, III, 228-249.

5. Al-Aswad b. Kāb al-'Ani of the tribe of Madhhij, leader of the first Ridda in the Yemen during Muhammad's time. His proper name is 'Ayhala or 'Abhala. He claimed to be a (Kāhin) soothsayer, speaking in the name of Allah or al-Rahman. His monotheism is probably derived from Christianity or Judaism. He was killed in 11/632 by some persons whom Muhammad had sent. Cf. E.II, I, 728.

6. Musaylima, a prophet of B. Hanifa in Yamama. He must have been considerably influenced by Christianity. He was killed in 12/633. Cf. E.I, III, 796.

7. Sajah, one of several prophets and tribal leaders who sprang up in Arabia shortly before and during the Ridda. She herself was Christian. She came to the fore in 11/632 after Muhammad's death. She decided to join Musaylima and married him. Later, she embraced Islam when her family decided to settle in Basra. Cf. E.II, IV, 44-45.
apostates except the Quraysh and Thaqīf(8). This happened because they thought the Muslim community would be very weak after Mūhammad, and they did not know who would follow him, and if he would be as strong as Mūhammad or not. They decided, therefore, that they would wait and see how events turned out.

Abū Bakr began military action against them in different places with a number of commanders, such as Khālid b. al-Walīd, ʿAmr b. al-ʿĀṣ, Shuʿba b. Ḥasnah, ʿIkrima b. Abī Jahl and others. Abū Bakr himself was fighting against those who came to the borders of Medina.

During the Ridda, ʿAbdallāh b. ʿUmar was with his uncle, Zayd b. al-Khaṭṭāb, who was the commander of the Muhājirūn. The army triumphed over the enemy and returned to Medina. Zayd b. al-Khaṭṭāb himself was killed. ʿUmar was very sad at his brother's death, as he loved him very much. Then ʿUmar said to his son ʿAbdallāh, "Why did you not perish like your uncle, Zayd?" ʿAbdallāh replied, "He asked God to grant that he should die as a martyr in the way of God, and He granted his

wish. I asked the same favour, but was not accepted" (9).

When the Muslim armies eventually triumphed in the Ridda wars, Abū Bakr asked the Medinese people and the Companions to form an army to serve in the newly conquered territories, as Muḥammad had intended(1).

When Umar came to power that campaign was under way in the struggle to conquer these territories. ʿAbdallāh was one of those present in the campaign, and the Commanders-in-Chief were ʿAmr b. al-ʿĀṣ and Abū ʿUbayda b. al-Jarrāh. ʿAbdallāh b. ʿUmar was the leader of one thousand cavalrymen under his flag, and this was the first time he led such a number.

This action was against the Byzantines near Aylah(2). ʿAbdallāh killed the enemy Commander(3). ʿAbdallāh was very proud of his army's achievement because he lost only

1. Al-Waqidi, Futūḥ, I, 2; Kurd ʿAlī, Futūḥ, I, 106. .

2. Aylah: a small port on the Gulf of ʿAqaba. It was a trade centre between Palestine and the Arabian Peninsula. It is now called ʿAqaba. The Muslims won a victory there.

seven soldiers, although he had seized very valuable booty and his army said, "We accept all this triumph and goods because ‘Abdallāh was a pious man"(4).

He continued to use such methods. When the army was beset with difficulties, the Commander asked, "Where is ‘Abdallāh b. ‘Umar?"(5). Military affairs were not alien to him(6). He was also one of the six whose valour was proved in the war(7). ‘Abdallāh always sought out the leader of the enemy in the battle. An example of this was at al-Madā’in(8) in Iraq. In this campaign, ‘Abdallāh b. ‘Umar fought a duel with a Persian leader (dahqān). Ibn ‘Umar triumphed over this enemy and killed him. Some of the soldiers were accustomed to looting everything after an assault, especially military equipment, and then giving it to Ibn ‘Umar,

4. Al-Wāqidī, Futūḥ, I, 10 and 11.
5. Al-Wāqidī, Futūḥ, I, 104.
but he did not accept the booty. When he came back to Medina he gave it to his father(9).

He did this because he was not fighting to obtain booty or to seem superior amongst his Companions, but for the glory of his country and creed. He said, "If you hate jihad, you will be despised and your enemy will conquer you"(10).

On one occasion the Persians again renounced their allegiance to the Arabs in Nahawand and began to rebel after having been conquered by them. The Caliph 'Umar wanted to join in the fighting there himself, but the Companions in Council did not accept his request. Then 'Umar sent notable persons from Medina under the command of al-Na'man b. Muqrin. His son, 'Abdallāh, was one of those men(11). 'Abdallāh b. 'Umar was fighting

9. Ibn Sa'd, Tabaqāt, IV, 170. (This information about 'Abdallāh b. 'Umar was given on the authority of Ahmad b. Abd-Allāh b. Yūnis, on the authority of Abū Shihāb, on the authority of Hājjāj b. Irṭā, on the authority of Nāfi'.)

10. Al-Shaybānī, Sharḥ al-Siyar, I, 29.

11. Khalīfa, Tabaqāt, 172, mentioned that 'Abdallāh b. 'Umar was fighting with the army to conquer Khūzistān, Kirmān, Nahawand and al-Fayhān; Ṭabarī, Tārīkh, IV, 115.
in different cities of the east, Kirmān, Isfahān and so on.

    On the other hand, he was not only engaged in fighting along with the army, but also used to put forward religious views and advice, according to what was happening in the course of the campaign(12). Since it was winter, with deep snow covering the road, the army was stranded there for six months. 'Abdallāh b. 'Umar was performing the short prayer(13).

    However, this case of reducing prayers, as Ibn 'Umar said, is the Sunna, supplementing the Qurʾān and Muḥammad's teaching, as the following example shows.

    Once, a person came to Ibn 'Umar, asking him, "Abū 'Abd al-Rahmān ('Abdallāh b. 'Umar's kunya), we find an instruction in the Qurʾān to reduce the prayer when fighting, but nothing about travelling in peace time". Ibn 'Umar said, "That is the Sunna of the Prophet and we must follow the Sunna"(14). As is stated in

12. Ibn Sa’d, Tabaqāt, IV, 162.

13. Short prayer. This is permitted in Islām in times of war, travelling, etc. to reduce the number of rakā’ahs - in some prayers - at noon, afternoon and late at night.

the Qur'ān: "Verily, in the Messenger of Allāh, ye have a good example"(15).

On another occasion when the Muslim army departed for the conquest of Egypt, their enemy was large in number. The Muslims were apprehensive about this. The Commander-in-Chief was Amr b. al-‘Āṣ and he proceeded to call together his leaders, such as al-Zubayr, ‘Abd al-Rahman, ‘Abdallāh b. ‘Umar and others. ‘Abdallāh b. ‘Umar answered the call readily and was put in charge of a troop of five hundred cavalry. He was delighted with his command and hurried to the battle-field, reciting a poem praising his own valour(16) though such haughty behaviour is disapproved of in Islām.

‘Abdallāh sometimes used to be a guide or soldier with an army division under him. He rode in the centre of his soldiers, or on the wing. He would not change his position, but, if he had no special detachment, he would then be in the centre of the combatants, helping the weak section of the army, or he would be at the side of the Commander(17).

15. Qur'ān, XXXIII, 21.
17. Al-Wāqidī, Futūh, II, 146.
On one occasion he was fighting against a mass of Byzantine soldiers, amounting to more than one thousand. With his division he triumphed, but he was wounded six times in his hand (18). This points not only to his personal bravery, but also to his carelessness for his own safety. If he had died, it would have been glorious for him to perish in God's way (fi sabīl Allāh) or to give his nation victory. He himself explained this to his father: "I always obtained victory for the army and with my fighting I shook the Byzantine army's faith and caused their collapse" (19).

18. Al-Waqidi, Futūh, II, 149.
When 'Uthmān came to power, 'Abdallāh b. 'Umar took no part in military activities because he was older than before and occupied himself with serving the people by solving their religious and legal problems in his capacity as a judge. Even though several military expeditions took place during 'Uthmān's reign(1), Ibn 'Umar joined in only one campaign invasion of Jurjān and Tabarastan under the command of Saīd b. al-Āṣ invaded with the other Companions, such as Hudayfa b. al-Yaman, 'Abdallāh b. 'Abbās, 'Abdallāh b. al-Zubayr, 'Abdallāh b. 'Amar b. al-Āṣ, al-Hasan and al-Ḥusayn, the sons of 'Alī b. Abī Ṭalib and others. That foray was in 30/650(2).

Ibn 'Umar reduced his military activities because fewer and fewer conquests were taking place, and most of the states were occupied before by 'Uthmān's time.

It is possible that Ibn 'Umar went on campaigns but historians of that time did not mention his name.
The Caliphate of 'Ali b. Abī Ṭālib
35-40/655-660

Previously 'Abdallāh b. 'Umar had played a large part in military life, but after all the struggles in which he had participated since the age of eleven, he changed his life style by leaving his active military life and keeping himself away from the incessant troubles at Medina, in order to devote himself to religious pursuits.

When 'Ali b. Abī Ṭālib came to power, all the Muslim communities were in an extremely agitated state. 'Abdallāh b. 'Umar did not pay homage immediately, not because he considered 'Ali as undesirable, but first of all because he disapproved of the violent way in which 'Uthmān had been removed from his office, and secondly, he disapproved of this manner of choosing a successor, that is by means of regicide, which naturally horrified the Muslim community at that time.

1. Al-Waqīdī, Maghāzī, 171.
2. Al-Balādhurī, Ansāb, V, 188; Ibn Qutayba, al-Imāma, I, 42.
3. Ibn Qutayba, al-Imāma, I, 42; Ṭabarī, Tārikh, IV, 428.
Later on ‘Abdallāh b. ‘Umar paid his homage to ‘Alī, along with the whole company.

According to Ibn ‘Umar, ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭalib was the most suitable person for Caliphate for many reasons; he was one of the six persons at the Council who were elected by ‘Umar to be Caliph; he was the most suitable candidate because he was the first young Muslim; he was the cousin and son-in-law of Muḥammad and had been in daily contact with him; and he was very religious and courageous in time of war.

After a while, the first Civil War broke out. It began with the Battle of the Camel, when Ṭalḥa and al-Zubayr, together with ‘Ā’isha, wanted to go to Baṣra in order to fight the Caliph ‘Alī to revenge ‘Uthmān. The mood of the people arose out of feelings of confusion due to the divided loyalties which they shared between ‘Uthmān and ‘Alī’s cause, together with the existence of a third faction which remained politically neutral.


5. Baṣra is a city in the southern part of Iraq, established in the reign of the Caliph ‘Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb.
Talha and al-Zubayr were among the six of the Council appointed by ‘Umar to be Caliph. They were also among the ten persons whom the Prophet Muhammad declared would go to Paradise. They were very close Companions and related to him as well. Al-Zubayr b. al-‘Awām was the maternal cousin of the Caliph ‘Ali b. Abī Ṭālib. They went there because there they found some support for their cause. Ostensibly, they were avenging ‘Uthmān, but the fact was that Talha and al-Zubayr wished to share the rule with ‘Ali. ‘Ā’isha was not in reality avenging ‘Uthmān, but avenging herself because her action had been misinterpreted and her honour called into question by ‘Ali when Muhammad was alive(6).

Both parties asked ‘Abdallāh b. ‘Umar to join them for different reasons. The first party - ‘Ā’isha, Talha and al-Zubayr(7) - asking Ibn ‘Umar to join them to seek the people’s support because he was a popular person throughout the community. The Caliph ‘Ali b. Abī Ṭālib(8) asked Ibn ‘Umar to join him because he was afraid of those in Medina

7. Ibn Qutayba, al-Imāma, I, 47.
8. Al-Ṭabarī, Tārīkh, IV, 446.
who remained entirely neutral. They were the Companions, the Muhājirūn. But Ibn ʿUmar refused to give his support to any one faction. ʿAbdallāh b. ʿUmar escaped to Mecca from the atmosphere of sedition prevailing at Medina to save himself and his religious principles from such a terrible environment.

Like Ibn ʿUmar, some of the Companions who had remained in Medina, apart from those who had adopted an attitude of political neutrality, went to Mecca.

Thus, the situation throughout the whole Muslim Empire had a troubled and disturbing effect on the lives of the people. Ibn ʿUmar was spending his life at that time, as usual, giving legal opinions in the mosque in Mecca, or in the mosque of Medina.

After a few months, another Civil War was to break out; that leading up to the Battle of Siffin, between ʿAlī, the legal Caliph of Islam, and Muʿāwiya b. ʿAbī Sufyān, who was the Governor of Syria. ʿAbdallāh b. ʿUmar did not join in the civil war which broke out, neither in the ranks of the Caliph, ʿAlī b. Abī Ṭālib, nor in those of his opponent, Muʿāwiya(9). In his opinion, such wars were

illegal because both parties were Muslims(10), and he said: "I have engaged in wars, as long as they were for God (or in the path of God), but you are fighting just to kill each other and this is sedition. I will not fight any Muslim, following the Prophet's tradition"(11).

'Abdallāh b. 'Umar believed that such wars were seditions and would bring about a division in the Islamic community. For this reason, he did not wish to join even the Caliph, 'Ali b. Abī Ṭālib. Some authors mentioned that Ibn 'Umar was later regretful because he did not fight along with Caliph 'Alī(12).

'Abdallāh b. 'Umar then was a person of high principles who did not want to join in the civil wars to fight against other Muslims. In his opinion, in Islam, civil wars were seditious and subsequent happenings proved him correct, for the Muslim community was divided into many parties, instead of Muslim unity being preserved.

10. Al-Dhahabī, Duwal al-Islām, I, 15.
After nearly twenty years, Ibn 'Umar returned to his favourite life with the military. During the reign of Mu'awiya he set out with the Muslim army to conquer Constantinople. The army attacked Byzantine cities and besieged Constantinople. In that campaign were Ibn 'Umar, Ibn 'Abbās and some other Companions, such as Abū Ayyūb al-Anṣārī. That was in 48/668(1).

There were differing opinions about the exact time of this foray. According to al-Ṭabarī, "The siege of Constantinople occurred in 49/669"(2), although Ibn al-Athir mentioned it happened in 50/670 or 49/669(3).

Some authors mentioned that, during Mu'awiya's reign, 'Abdallāh b. 'Umar went on another campaign to Samarqand, under the command of Sa'īd b. 'Uthmān. In this

1. Abū al-Fidā, Tārīkh, I, 186.
2. Al-Ṭabarī, Tārīkh, VI, 130.
campaign, Qatham b. al-ʿAbbās was killed and buried in Samarqand. This expedition took place in 56/675(4).

ʿAbdallāh b. ʿUmar's military life ended after this campaign.

Though ʿAbdallāh b. ʿUmar had been a cavalryman since his youth, as mentioned before, and had had a very successful career right down to his old age, it should be noted that historians glorified his military exploits. They put him alongside the great commanders, such as al-Zudayr b. al-ʿAwām. For example, in 70/689, Najda al-Ḥarūrī wanted to invade Medina and the news was spread over Mecca (because Najda was in Mecca at that time). The people there were frightened by such news. When Ibn ʿUmar heard it, he got ready to fight. When Najda received the news, he changed his route to al-Taʾif(5), because he was afraid to meet and fight Ibn ʿUmar. At that time Ibn ʿUmar was eighty years old and still a man to be feared.

5. Anonymous, Arabische Chronik, 137.
However, there are many strange stories about Ibn 'Umar's life, which occasionally leave one in doubt, but which may, perhaps, be true.
### Chronology of ʿAbdallāh b. ʿUmar's Military Career

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References:

(1) al-Ṭabarî, Tārikh, IV.
(2) al-Wāqīdī, Fatūh, I, II.
(3) Yāqūt, Muqjam, V.
(4) Al-Khuḍārī, Tārikh
(5) Al-Balādhurī, Futūh
(6) Abū al-Fidā, Tārikh
(7) Ibn Hishām, Sīrat
(8) Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya, Zād al-Miʿād
(9) Al-Wāqīdī, Maghāzī
(10) Kurd ʿAlī, Khutat
Chapter Three

Abdallah b. Umar
and the Caliphate
'Abdallah b. 'Umar did not have a very remarkable role in political life. He was neither head of state nor leader of the army. However, he was a brave cavalry soldier during his military service and during his military life he did sometimes achieve outstanding and noble feats in several battles and combats.

Nevertheless, Ibn 'Umar was one of the famous Companions of those who took an active part in the foundation and building up of the religious fabric of Islam, but not of its political framework. The majority of those who were responsible for the political establishment were decidedly dominated by greed for gold, ambition, love of war, tribal spirit and family rivalry.

Ibn 'Umar's life and thoughts were completely different from most of the other Companions. He was distinguished by reason of his high religious and social standing and his respectability was high amongst the Companions. For all these reasons the Caliphate was offered to him three times:
(1) After the death of ʿUthman;

(2) During the negotiations at Dawmat-al-Jandal, or at Adhruḥ(1), of the two arbiters appointed to resolve the dispute between the Caliph ʿAlī b. Abī Ṭālib and Muʿāwiya;

(3) After the death of Yazīd b. Muʿāwiya in 65/684(2).

But Ibn ʿUmar refused all three offers.

To be able to appreciate the importance of this, it is necessary to examine the situation at the time of the Caliphate of ʿUthman.

When ʿUthman accepted the Caliphate, the Government assumed a worldly shade and colour. The element of kinship supplanted the religious element in the Caliphate. ʿUthman excessively favoured his own tribesmen, the Umayyads, and the Meccan aristocracy connected by marriage to him, and thus he was responsible for the revival of the old tribal spirit.

1. There are differing views. Some authors mention that the two arbiters appointed to resolve the dispute between ʿAlī and Muʿāwiya met at Dawmat-al-Jandal; others say at Adhruḥ.

According to tradition, there was in Mecca a continued struggle among the families of Hashim and Umayya for political power. Through the victory of Muhammad, and the election of the first two Caliphs, the house of Hashim, a branch of the Quraysh tribe, came out on top. There had been constant efforts by the conquerors to remove all tribal and family distinctions, in order to induce the whole body of the Arabs to regard one another as brothers in the spirit of Islam.

With 'Uthman, a Caliph of the house of Umayya, all these efforts were in vain. When the Caliph 'Umar was asked to nominate his follower from among the Companions, he appointed an elective council of six to settle this question after his death. He was obviously aware of the danger that 'Ali b. Abi Talib or 'Uthman b. Affan, the likely successors, might reintroduce the kind of tribalism that he had sought to avert all his life(3). Therefore, in most of the Muslim states, insurrections broke out, and the acceptance of the Caliphate by 'Uthman led to conspiracies and a period of civil war until he fell victim to the dagger of the conspirators(4).

3. Al-'Antawi, Akhbar 'Umar, 452.
4. Al-Tabari, Tarih, IV, 393.
To return to 'Abdallāh b. 'Umar, the Caliphate was offered to him immediately after the death of 'Uthmān(5), but he was not in favour of such a life. Even Al-Ḥasan b. 'Alī admonished him, saying, "You must accept, otherwise they will kill you in your bed". Ibn 'Umar did not change his mind, however, and refused yet again(6).

After the Battle of Siffin between the Caliph 'Alī and Muʿawiyah, 'Abdallāh b. 'Umar was the first person who was expected to become Caliph by most people except himself.

First of all, private letters arrived from Muʿawiyah himself to Ibn 'Umar, saying, "There is no one from the Quraysh whom I prefer to be Caliph after 'Uthmān's death except you. I remember how you disappointed 'Uthmān and criticised his helpers. At that time I had a bad opinion of you. But I changed my mind about you when I saw you disagree with 'Alī, and I forgot everything. So please help us to avenge the unjust murder of the Caliph 'Uthmān. I do not want to be your governor, but I would like you to be our

5. Al-Ṭantāwī, Akhbar 'Umar, 475.
governor. If you do not want to accept it, then there will be a council among the Muslims"(7).

'Abdallāh b. 'Umar's answer was as follows: "The idea in your mind gave rise to such a situation: I did not support 'Alī, the Muhājirūn and the Anṣār and I did not support Talḥa and al-Zubayr; you want me to follow you. That will never happen. You said I criticised 'Alī. Who am I to do such a thing to 'Alī? I am not like him from the point of view of the Islamic people. 'Alī is a much better man than I am. My delay (in paying homage) was because I saw something different (the number of the Caliph) from the Prophet's time. Thus I thought, if this situation is right then I have lost something good, and if it is something undesirable, it will not be a calamity. Please leave me"(8).

Later when he was chosen as candidate during the negotiations by the arbiters appointed at Dawmat-al-Jandal or Adhruḥ after Siffin and the Caliphate was offered to him, he again refused as he had previously.

When he found out that he was the candidate nominated not only by the arbiters, but also by the public at large(9), he still did not accept and he sent a letter to Abū Mūsā al-Ashʿarī: "O Abū Mūsā, you have offered me the position, although you do not know whether I wish to accept it or not. Do you think that I would do something that was prohibited to me by my father, ʿUmar?"(10).

In any event, on several occasions, Ibn ʿUmar declared his opinion about ʿAlī, namely that he was the most worthy of the office.

This clearly indicates that ʿAbdallāh b. ʿUmar was not an unimportant figure, but, on the contrary, had a very high standing, not merely in the Ḥijāz, but in the eyes of the public at large throughout the Islamic Empire.

It was said by the people during the negotiations of the arbiters appointed at Adhruḥ (38/656) between Abū Mūsā and ʿAmr b. al-ʿĀṣ in nominating ʿAbdallāh b. ʿUmar:

9. Al-Ṭantāwī, Akhbār ʿUmar, 475; al-Khudarī, Tārīkh, 143 mentioned that "Ibn ʿUmar did not accept the Caliphate, even although he was the favourite person in the eyes of the Medinese and Syrians generally".

"He will return us to 'Umar's time.(11). The entire Islamic state was happy at the prospect of his nomination.

Subsequently, the Caliphate was offered to him after the death of Yazīd b. Mu'āwiya, but, as on previous occasions, Ibn 'Umar again refused. According to some authorities, he would have agreed to his election if it had been agreed upon unanimously(12), since he wished to avoid bloodshed in securing it. His refusal was hardly due to narrow-mindedness, but it has to be seen in the context of his life-long dedication to the service of God and his people. Some other writers have suggested that 'Abdallāh b. 'Umar was lacking in energy and that his father recognized this defect in him, and therefore did not nominate him to be his successor because 'Abdallāh did not know how to divorce his wife(13).

If the paragraph is studied closely, it will be noticed that the suggestion of this authority may be contradicted and refuted in this way. 'Umar said to the man who advised him to nominate his son, 'Abdallāh, "You are not a good adviser, because, as we have seen,

11. Al-Ya'qūbī, Tārīkh, II, 166.
13. Al-Ṭabarī, Tārīkh, IV, 228.
“Abdallāh did not know how to divorce his wife. Do you not realise that I have been troubled by many problems and worries, good and bad things during my reign as a Caliph, and I do not wish my son or anyone from my family to inherit these. If things go well, we accept the situation, and if they go badly, it is enough that one person suffers”(14). This means not that Ălmār recognized a defect in his son, but that he did not want to involve his favourite son in such troubles.

When Ăbdallāh divorced his wife, he was still very young, perhaps sixteen years old(15), and it was during the Prophet's life time when the Islāmic law was first instituted. Thus, it was an entirely new kind of divorce, and Ălmār himself did not know about this law.

14. Al-Ţabarī, Tārīkh, IV, 228; Al-Ţantāwī, Akhbār Ălmār, 452; Tāha Husn al-Fitna.

15. Al-Wahīdī, Aṣbāb al-Muẓūl, 245, mentioned that Sūrat al-Ţalāq (divorce), according to al-Şaddī, was revealed when Ibn Ălmār divorced his wife. Ălmār went to the Prophet and asked him about this new situation, because it was the first case at that time. Sayyid Qūṭb, Zīlāl, VI, 3599, states: "According to the Hadith of al-Bukhārī, it was revealed when Ibn Ălmār divorced his wife. (That happened in 6/627 and the date of the revelation is 6/627, a little earlier). Cf. Picket Hall, The Meaning of Glorious Qur’ān, 403.
Therefore he went to Muhammad and asked him about it, because the word "concept" could mean several things. Thus, one would like to know how or why 'Umar asked the Prophet about it(15).

It must mean that 'Umar himself did not know. However, could his son, 'Abdallâh, know whether he did right or wrong? It appears that some authorities tended to reduce his status or perhaps slightly misunderstood the situation(17).

If the scholar examines the question carefully, he will see how the suggestion that Ibn 'Umar was unfit for office is refuted: "I did not offer it to anyone of my family". Ibn Qutayba mentioned that, when the Companions asked 'Umar to nominate his successor, he left the choice to the six persons sitting in council, and ordered that his son, 'Abdallâh, must be with them, as a

16. There are methods which must be followed when a man divorces his wife, because even divorce may be good for the married couple. On the other hand, it may be very bad depending on its results. Therefore, there are statements made by the Prophet to safeguard the parties. For further explanation see, H. 'Ali al-Azami, Personal Statutes, 108-129, Ibn Rushd, Bidâyat, II, 60-99.

counsellor only. The Companions said: "Why did you not nominate him as a successor? He is very suitable for such a position and we have great confidence in him and we accept him." ʿUmar replied: "No, it is enough for one person from ʿAl al-Khaṭṭāb to bear the burden of the Caliphate". He said to his son, ʿAbdallāh, "I warn, you are not to accept the Caliphate" (18).

According to ʿUmar, he took his cousin, Zayd b. Saʿīd b. Nufayl, away from the council. He asked the six members to choose one amongst themselves as Caliph (19).

Anyway, ʿAbdallāh b. ʿUmar was very loath to follow such a life. When the Caliph ʿUthmān asked him to be an official judge he refused, saying, "I do not want to be a judge, because I have heard that if one gives an ignorant judgement, one will go to Hell. If a man is prejudiced he will also go to Hell. But if a man strives hard and gives a right judgement, he is impartial and has no recompense


19. There were ten persons whom Muhammad declared would be in Paradise in the second life; two of whom (Abū Bakr and Abū ʿUbayd b. al-Jarrāḥ) were dead, and ʿUmar himself. The remainder made seven, but he left his cousin, Zayd b. Nufayl, out of these. Therefore the final number was six. Cf. al-Ṭabarī, Tārīkh, IV, 228.
nor any fault." `Uthmān said, "Your father was a judge in the Prophet's time and during the Caliphate of Abu Bakr." Ibn `Umar replied, "Yes, he was. If he had a problem, he would ask the Prophet. If the Prophet had a problem, he would ask the Angel Gabriel. I do not know whom I will ask. I have heard the Prophet say, 'Whoever finds protection in God, He will protect'."

`Uthman said, "Yes. Then excuse me," and accepted the decision of Ibn `Umar, who replied, "I take refuge in God that you do not involve me"(20).

However, he gave advice on jurisprudence to `Uthman, and spent much of his lifetime helping people with legal or religious problems in an unofficial capacity(21) in Medina and in Mecca when he was there.

20. Ibn Sa`d, al-Tabaqat, IV, 146.
Chapter Four

'Abdallāh b. 'Umar's intellectual achievements

Ibn 'Umar's scholastic life
'Abdallāh b. 'Umar's teachers
The Medinese School of Law
'Abdallāh b. 'Umar's approach
His students
Some of his Fatwās
Introduction

In the past, the social environment was very different from nowadays. This naturally affected the intellectual life and social organization. If we want to attempt to discuss this intellectual life of Ibn 'Umar, we must examine his life and thought and the things which influenced his life.

Ibn 'Umar's scholastic life

Ibn 'Umar was born in Mecca nine years after Muhammad's mission in 613 A.D. (1). He embraced Islam in his childhood and grew up within an Islamic environment. It is clear that the religion of Islam in its earlier forms was adapted to the social and intellectual needs of Mecca and Medina and the Arabian Peninsula as a whole. So the first thing 'Abdallah experienced in his life was the success of Islam, first of all in Medina after the hijra, then in Mecca. Previously it was through the tribe that a man's life became meaningful. However, the appearance of Islam

1. Al-Zirikli, Al-lam, III, 246.
led to a religious as well as a social crisis. In Ibn 'Umar's early life, before he left Mecca for Medina, an important section of the Arab community dealt with this crisis by substituting to some extent the Islamic community for the tribe. Life became significant for them through the membership of this community, since it was divinely founded and was living in accordance with divinely given laws. If a person followed this new religion conscientiously, it would take him to a pleasant life and everlasting bliss. Then the followers of Muhammad started to follow this divine religion strictly.

As mentioned previously, since Ibn 'Umar had embraced the faith, he followed Islamic ceremony, even though he was very small. As he always went to the mosque to pray with his father, and met his father's associates, he came into contact with the intellectual circles of the time. His father was very anxious that his sons, especially 'Abdallāh, should be educated very well(2), so 'Abdallāh himself was very keen on acquiring Islamic knowledge which was desirable for people of that time(3) who were hoping to follow this new religion.

2. See Chapter 19, p. 19
3. Al-Khūlī, Tarjama, 48.
The basic teaching in those early days was the Qurʾān and the Ḥadīth, the traditions of Muḥammad.

The Qurʾān was the basic scripture of the new religion and Qurʾānic principles were designed to control the life of the State. However, the Qurʾān was the spiritual basis of the community, as well as the Ḥadīth. The Qurʾān is the main source of the Muslim law, and the Ḥadīth is merely of secondary importance.

There were no schools or colleges, except the mosque. A school was established at Medina when the mosque was built. Here Muḥammad taught the Qurʾānic verses and the Ḥadīth.

The teaching at that time was verbal because most of the people were illiterate. It is for that reason that the Qurʾān and the Ḥadīth were learnt by heart. Generally, the Ḥadīth were easy to memorize, because the words were not complicated and it was permissible to alter the words, as long as the meaning was retained. The Qurʾān, however, was more complicated because alteration even of a single letter was prohibited. ʿAbdallāh

b. "Umar spent some years learning Sūrat al-Baqara. Al-Bājī commented: "There are different ideas about how long Ibn ʿUmar took to learn this Sūra; some of them said four years, others said eight years or more. According to Imam Mālik b. Anas, Ibn ʿUmar took twelve years to memorize it after which he sacrificed a camel as a token of celebration"(5).

The reason it took Ibn ʿUmar so long to learn this Sūra was not because he was not a good learner, but because he found the Sūra very interesting(6). ʿAbdallāh confirmed that, saying, "After the Sūra was first revealed to Muḥammad, people believed in it and understood the Qurʾān, whereas before they had only read the Qurʾān without fully understanding it." Ibn ʿUmar also said, "Many people in Muḥammad's time believed before they read the Qurʾān, but people later on read the Qurʾān first, then they believed"(7).

The period of revelation of this Sūra covered two years by which time Ibn ʿUmar was eleven. At such an age learning by heart

5. Suyūtī, Tanwīr, I, 162.
6. al-Suyūtī, Al-Īṭqān, II, 176.
7. al-Suyūtī, Al-Īṭqān, I, 85.
was very easy for him, but understanding the meaning was not, because this Sūra was the most difficult in the Holy Book. It mentions all the essential points of the Revelation(8) which are elaborated elsewhere in the Qur'ān, such as the rules for fasting, pilgrimage, divorce, usury, contracts, etc. In addition to learning this difficult Sūra, Ibn ʿUmar was learning other things, such as the Hadīth and other Qur'ānic verses as well.

In these early times, the most important subject was religion, which everyone wanted to learn because it was a new subject to which people gave priority. They would study the Qur'ān and its exegesis and the Hadīth in depth. Anyone mastering these was revered by his colleagues.

Ibn ʿUmar attained such recognition by devoting himself to religious duties that he became highly regarded in this field. Concerning Ibn ʿUmar's following the Sunna, it was said by Abū Jaʿfar: "There is no-one from amongst the Companions of the Prophet who, if he hears something from the Prophet, will transmit it as it is, neither adding to

8. The period of revelation of Sūrat al-Baqara covers the years 1/622 and 2/623. Cf. Pickett Hall, Qur'ān, 34.
nor omitting anything from it, except "Abdallāh b. "Umar"(9).

He was in a good position to follow Muhammad for his sister, Ḥafṣa, was Muhammad's wife. Therefore, he was always with him, either outside in the mosque, or indoors in his sister's house. As "A'īsha said, "There is no-one who follows in the Prophet's steps as 'Abdallāh b. "Umar does. He used to follow him to his house"(10).

Moreover, he followed him not only in the matter of legal decisions, but in everything - his ways, his dress, his habits and his life style. There are many stories which illustrate his devoted following of Muhammad. For example, once Ibn "Umar was with his client, Nāfi', on a road, and both of them were riding camels. Suddenly he heard a shepherd playing music on a pipe (Zummāra). He put his fingers in his ears so as not to hear the music, and he made his camel change direction in an effort to get away from the music. He asked Nāfi': "Can you still hear the music?"

9. Ibn Sa'd, Tabaqāt, IV, 144.
10. Ibn Sa'd, Tabaqāt, IV, 145.
Nafi replied, "Yes". He asked him several more times until Nafi's answer was "No". Then he brought his camel back again on the road and completed his journey. This story illustrated how wholeheartedly Ibn \(^{\text{c}}\)Umar followed Muḥammad, for on one occasion Muḥammad heard this kind of music and had avoided it. The incident was reported by Nafi himself\(^{(11)}\).

However, he did not want to change his life style even a little from that of Muḥammad, and his father, \(^{\text{c}}\)Umar, and he adhered to the same style. Therefore, as has already been mentioned, when one saw Ibn \(^{\text{c}}\)Umar, he was reminded of Muḥammad and his two first successors\(^{(12)}\).

Some scholars are under the impression that the cultural and intellectual life of the Islamic community was affected after the conquest of parts of the Byzantine Empire and Persia, because many of the new converts came from a higher cultural level than the Arabs, and naturally retained some of their culture. Some of the pious scholars in whose hands the Sharī'ah took shape, developed the principles found in the Qur'ān by adding to them from Christian, Jewish, Gnostic and other trad-

\(^{(11)}\) Ibn Sa'd, \textit{Tabaqāt}, IV, 163.
\(^{(12)}\) Ibn Sa'd, \textit{Tabaqāt}, IV, 146.
itions. Such people as 'Abdallāh b. 'Abbās, too, had an influence and dealt with the Old Testament in his exegesis of the Qur'ān, because he got a great deal through Ka'b al-Aḥbār, Wahb b. Munabbih, 'Abdallāh b. Salām and others, who were originally Jewish. When they converted to Islām, they still retained the education they had received under their old religion(13).

Abdallāh b. ʿUmar's teachers

No doubt ʿAbdallāh b. ʿUmar's first teacher was his father, which is usual for many children.

There was another teacher, of course, who was very important for his career, and that was Muḥammad himself, whom ʿAbdallāh followed closely when attempting to establish religious education in Medina. Therefore his education was first-hand. The entire corpus of Hadīth or Sunna was related to him authoritatively by Muḥammad. He also learnt from his father ʿUmar, Abū Bakr, ʿUthmān and ʿAlī b. Abī Ṭālib(1), who all became Caliphs. Amongst them, the most learned on the subject of the rituals connected with the pilgrimage was said to be ʿUthmān, and after him, Ibn ʿUmar(2). On another occasion, somebody said it was Ibn ʿUmar, because he had followed Muḥammad during the Muslim conquest of Mecca and made the first pilgrimage in Islāmic times. He was with the Prophet, therefore he did exactly as Muḥammad and that was in his favour(3).

1. Ibn al-ʿAthīr, Usd, III, 229.
Ibn *^Umar was related also to ^A'isha, Ḥafṣa, Zayd b. Thābit and Muʿādh b. Jabal(4).


Ḥafṣa: bint *Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb, Muḥammad's wife. She was born five years before Muḥammad's mission; She died in 45/665. Cf. E.I. 2, III, 65.

Zayd b. Thābit al-Ḍaḥḥak al-Anṣārī al-Khazrajī. He was a specialist on the subject of hereditary law. He was born eleven years before the hijra. He died in 45/665. Cf. E.I. 4, IV, 1195.

Muʿādh b. Jabal b. ʿAmr al-Anṣārī al-Khazrajī. He was born twenty years before the hijra. He was distinguished amongst the Companions by his profound knowledge of the law. He died in 18/639. Cf. Al-Ziriklī, Al-ʾĀlām, VIII, 186.

^A'isha: see below,
The Medinese School of Law

At the time of ʿAbdallāh b. ʿUmar there was no legal school at Medina, but no other cities in the Arabian Peninsula provided lectures in religion or Fatwā except Medina. In general, this city was Muḥammad's home. When he arrived there he started to give decisions or commands, and aid on legal points, particularly after he had built the Medina mosque. Such decisions came from the Ḥadīth or Sunna, but most importantly the Qurʾān. Therefore, Medina was the intellectual centre of the Arab world.

After the death of Muḥammad, his successors, the Orthodox Caliphs, led this School and with them were some of the other Companions. According to some authors there were seven persons who gave such decisions. They were ʿUmar b. al-Khaṭṭāb, ʿAlī b. Abī Ṭālib, ʿAbdallāh b. Masʿūd, ʿAʾisha bint Abū Bakr, Zayd b. Thābit, Ibn ʿUmar and Ibn ʿAbbās(1). ʿAbdallāh b. ʿUmar was the leader of this School - alone after ʿUmar b. al-Khaṭṭāb and Zayd b. Thābit(2) - for a long

time, as mentioned before. As one who related the Hadith, "Abdallah b. "Umar among the other Companions(3) passed down to us the majority of the Hadith from Muḥammad. A brief review is, therefore, necessary about Hadith, its chronological development, Hadith from the point of view of men of knowledge and Ibn "Umar's attitude towards Hadith.

Definition of Hadith:

"It is all that a man utters in speech"(4), and in the spoken language it is information conveyed through speech, be it little or much. Furthermore, haddatha as a verb means to tell and to relate something about somebody(5). Terminologically speaking, Sunna and Hadith are considered synonymous, but there is in fact a difference in their meaning. Sunna 'tradition' means "personal history and method, the nature of God, His legislation and His orders and prohibitions"(6). Therefore, all Sunna is Hadith, but not all Hadith is Sunna. The Hadith is a general term and is used to describe a saying of Muḥammad. Sunna deals

3. Ibn al-'^Imad, Shadharat, I, 63-64.
4. Al-Shatibi, Muwafaqat, I, 23-5; Abu Zahw, Al-Hadith, 8-79.
with his actions(7), although Hadīth refers to the general and Sunna refers to the specific. But even so, the majority of scholars consider both terms as one and the same. Therefore, the definition of Hadīth and Sunna, according to the general convention, is: "The entire output of what originated from the Prophet Muhammad in saying, action and statement"(8). These items are considered as being of secondary importance after the Qurʾān as a source of Islamic Shariʿa. There is another aspect to the Sunna for it also contains translations of some Qurʾānic passages of the more intricate issues of verses, such as al-Ṣalāt, al-Zakāt.

Ibn ʿUmar's teaching was generally from the Hadīth.

As previously stated, Medina was the home of the Hadīths and the Medinese know very well why a certain verse of the Qurʾān was revealed, and why a certain hadīth was given. Ibn ʿUmar, as was said by al-Shābī, "was excellent in interpreting the Hadīth, but not as good as he was in Fiqh", and he said this was because he was very careful in his religious piety.

However, most of his students followed that way, as did the Seven Lawyers of Medina(9).

7. Qaṭb, ʿUlum al-Hadīth, 8.
8. Al-Khāḍarī, Tarīkh, 32.
9. For the seven lawyers' names, see below pp. 104-105.
"Abdallāh b. ʿUmar's approach

In his school, which was known as the Hadīth School, Ibn ʿUmar would have a circle of students sitting around him, to teach or to answer their questions or those of the other people who came to ask him about their problems, especially for legal advice according to the Shariʿa, for example the problems of marriage or divorce and also secular issues.

Sometimes Ibn ʿUmar used to turn aside from the Hadīth. For example, he hated to perform ablutions with water if a cat had touched it, because he was a very clean man. Even the Prophet used to allow such water to be used for ablutions(1). On another occasion, Ibn ʿUmar's father deviated from the Qur'ān about the division of the lands of Iraq and Syria as booty between the Arab armies when they conquered these lands. This was against both Qur'ānic teaching, and the Sunna. ʿAbdallāh was with his father on this occasion and accepted his ideas, which meant his approach in his school sometimes turned aside from the Hadīth, if it dealt with health or was in the public interest(2).

1. Ibn Māja, Sunan, I, 149; Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr, Ḥadīth, 273.
2. Al-Khulāṣ, Tārikh, 114.
When he had a problem, he mostly solved it by following Qur'anic teaching, but if he did not find the solution there, he would follow the Hadith. If there was nothing to refer to, he would follow the approach of the Orthodox Caliphs, and as a last resort he would give his own opinion, but very seldom did he do this because he was very God-fearing.

His circle in the mosque was always crowded. He would say to the people: "Please do not ask me a lot, for I do not know if I will be able to judge for you. If I knew that, I would have learnt more and more to be able to give you judgement" (3).

On another occasion, a man asked Ibn 'Umar a legal question but Ibn 'Umar did not answer him immediately. The man said, "Abū Abd al-Rahmān (Ibn 'Umar), did you not hear my question?" Ibn 'Umar replied, "Yes, but please let me think of the answer. If I know the solution I will tell you, or if not I will tell you too. Do not use my back as a bridge between goodness and evil." (4)

Sulayman b. Yasar says, "I used to divide my time for studying between Ibn 'Umar and Ibn Abbās. Often have I heard Ibn 'Umar say

3. Ibn Sa'd, Tabaqāt, IV, 145.
'I do not know', while Ibn 'Abbas never refused any answer. Once I heard Ibn 'Abbas say, 'I wonder about Ibn 'Umar and his turning people away. Could not he look into any question he was not sure about and see if a tradition was established about it which he could follow, otherwise resort to his own judgement?'"(5)

Even though Ibn 'Umar was a traditionalist, he did not say "Muhammad said so and so ....." For example, al-Sha'bî said, "I was with Ibn 'Umar more than one year. I have not heard him say, 'Muhammad said'"(6).

"Abdallâh b. 'Umar's principles in his judgement were: "The Holy Book, The Sunna Mâdiya and I do not know"(7), which means that he was following the Holy Book, the Qur'ân in his Fatwâ and the Sunnaton Mâdiya, which means the Sunna which is very frequently used and clearly understood, and the sentence 'I do not know', which was used by Ibn 'Umar when he was not sure of his answer. Thus he gained half of the knowledge required and was half-way to a fuller understanding of the problems.

5. Al-Tûsî, 'Abdallâh b. 'Umar, 8.
Anyway, he was one of the highest ranking men in his field, and he was a prominent religious leader(8). As Malik b. Anas said: "Abdallah b. Umar was present for over sixty years at the mosque in Medina and Mecca giving Fatwās after Muhammad, and many people came from different countries to ask him for a Fatwā"(9).

He divided his day-time between his job as a merchant and a teacher, and he used to go to the market daily, even if he had nothing to do concerning his business, to see the people who had no opportunity to meet him in the mosque.

Ibn Umar's school was an important school in ancient times. The old savants of the Muslim religion were educated there. First of all, during the Prophet's time, the Companions, amongst them Abdallah b. Umar, then his students, a great number of first Followers, then the 'Followers of the Followers', such as al-Zuhri, and the last was Malik b. Anas. Then four Islamic madhhab, especially the Mālikī and Shāfi‘ī, followed Ibn Umar's teaching and doctrine more than other madhhab.

The Seven Lawyers

These were seven scholars who used to examine and give their opinions on the problems arising in any one sitting after which the judge could give the final judgement. They were:

1. Sa'Id b. al-Musayyab, al-Qurayshī al-Makhzūmī. As he was a collector of fatwās, advising in the time of 'Umar b. al-Khattab, Abdallah b. 'Umar used to ask him about some of these cases, although Sa'Id was only a little boy in 'Umar's time. His death took place between 93-100/711-718. Cf. Ibn Ḥajar, Tahdhib, IV, 84-88.

2. Sulaymān b. Yasār al-Hilālī, was a client of Maymūna, one of the Prophet Muḥammad's wives. She gave him to her nephew Ḥabīb b. 'Abbās. He was born in 24 or 27/644 or 647, and his death occurred between 97-101/715-719.

3. Al-Qāsim b. Muḥammad b. Abī Bakr. He was brought up by his aunt, 'Ā'isha. He achieved fame for his knowledge of hadīth. His death was in 106/724. Cf. Ibn Ḥajar, Tahdhib, VII,
4. ʿUrwa b. al-Zubayr b. al-ʿAwām al-Asadi. He knew best his maternal aunt's (ʿAʾisha) hadīth. He also avoided all the sedition which arose in his time. His death occurred in 94/712. Cf. Ibn Ḥajar, Tahdīb, VII, 180.

5. ʿUbaydallāh b. ʿAbdallāh b. ʿUtba b. Masʿūd. He was a teacher of the Caliph ʿUmar b. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz. He was very remarkable in jurisprudence and was also an illustrious poet. Cf. Ibn Ḥajar, Tahdīb, VII, 23.


7. Sālim b. ʿAbdallāh b. ʿUmar. His biography will follow.
The four Islamic madhhabs, especially the Mālikī and Shāfi‘ī, followed Ibn ʿUmar's teaching. As previously stated, hadīth is one of the most important authoritative source in the Muslim religion, and it was known that Ibn ʿUmar's related hadīth were very accurate, as stated by Muhammad al-Bāqir(1). Al-Dahlawī mentioned that Malik's teaching fiqh was based on the hadīths and on ʿUmar's legal decisions and on the fatwā of Ibn ʿUmar and his work, and after them on the judgement of some of the Companions, and the followers such as the Seven Lawyers(2).

Mālik chose Ibn ʿUmar's works because it is mentioned in al-Muwatta': "The most famous and oldest Companions gave evidence in favour of his integrity and truthfulness in presenting the hadīths amongst the other Companions, especially after the two civil wars"(3).

Mālik's scholarly activity was at Medina(4). No exact date was mentioned when Mālik arrived in Medina because he was born in a village 192km. from Medina(5).

4/5. Al-Khūlī, Tarjamah, 79.
Medina was distinguished by several features from the other Islamic states because, firstly, it was the scene of the revelation of the Qur'an and the capital of the Islamic Empire in the era of the four Orthodox Caliphs. Medina was not affected by the infiltration of conquered peoples as much as other Arab countries and no ancient civilization had influenced the city before Islam (6). On the other hand, there were no subjects other than Hadith studied at that time. In Medina most people paid more attention to the Companions and their legal decisions than those in other Arab states were doing, although the Medinese were very poor from the point of view of civilization. Islamic teaching was thus the first and only basis of their education. Therefore, Malik went to Medina and attended the mosque to learn fiqh. He followed many teachers, such as Ibn Shihāb al-Zuhrī and Nāfi' (the client of 'Abdallāh b. 'Umar) and others. Most of his teachers were students of Ibn 'Umar.

6. See above, Introduction, p. 6...
It was said: "The correct isnad is on Mālik's authority, on the authority of Ibn "Umar, through Nafi', and called the golden chain"(7). On another occasion, as mentioned, al-Dahlawī said: "The Medinese were working at the time of Mālik, and before and after his time in Medina which was a centre of refuge and the place where savants broke their journey. There emerged many persons skilled in fatwā and fiqh since Muhammad's time, and Mālik inherited all that"(8).

If you look at al-Muwatta', Mālik's book, you will see it contains a large percentage (27.86%) of Ibn "Umar's doctrines and teaching and hadiths related on his authority by his son, Sālim; his client, Nafi' and some of his students, such as 'Abdallāh b. Dīnār and others.

After Ibn "Umar and his father had built up such an important contribution to the Muslim world, the people forgot about them and their names. The people then began to follow different schools of thought and they continued to have many followers in the past,
present and future, such as al-Ḥanafi, al-
Mālikī, al-Shafiʿī and al-Ḥanbalī. All
these schools included many of Ibn ʿUmar's
doctrines in their religious instruction
books, such as Kitāb al-Sarakhsī al-Mabsūt,
which contains Kutub Zahir al-Riwaya,
Al-Shaibānī, Sharḥ Kitāb al-Siyar al-Kabīr,
Abū Yūsuf, Kitāb al-Athar and others,
Al-Shafiʿī Kitāb al-Umm, Akhṭīṭāf al-Ḥadīth,
Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal-Musnad b. Ḥanbal.

Thus, Al-Shafiʿī, more than any of the other
students, was a follower of Ḥadīth, his topic
was the Ḥadīth and the Qurʾān, because he
spent his youth in Medina and his childhood
in Mecca. It was related: "His mother sent
him to Mecca when he was two years old
(following the tradition of his tribe which
was the Quraysh)"(9) Later he went to
Medina where he was always with Mālik. It
was said by al-Dahlawī, "Shafiʿī's madhhab
is an elaboration of al-Muwaṭṭa', and the
later two Imams - al-Shafiʿī and Aḥmad b.
Ḥanbal - are Mālik's students"(10).

Thus, al-Shafi'i had good connections with Ahmad and therefore obtained Hadith from Malik and Ahmad. It was said: "He, al-Shafi'i, was the meritorious authority for the Hadith followers, because he put them on the right way, using the correct meaning of the Sunna against their contradictors. By elucidating the proof, therefore, he gained a high position amongst them"(11).

Then later on he was to contest the Maliki school concerning the Hadith, such as the hadith of Ibn Umar and others.

Malik b. Anas was very famous as a Muslim jurist. His teaching (madhhab) is the which is named after him, and frequently he is called the Imam of Medina or Imam Dar al-Hijra.

Malik's great work is Kitab al-Muwat'ta which represents the traditions. Al-Bukhari said: "The correct Isnad of Malik is on the authority of Ibn 'Umar, on the authority of Nafi"(1). Malik himself mentioned that, "I was going to Nafi at midday, the sun was too hot as I was waiting for him to come home to ask him what Ibn 'Umar said in such and such a case. He used to answer me and I stayed with him for a long time every day so that he could teach me"(2).

Malik's death was in 179/795.

Al-Zuhri: Muhammad b. Muslim b. 'Ubaid(3) allah b. 'Abdallah b. Shihab. He was one of Malik's teachers, as some people said: "The correct Isnad of Malik by Ibn 'Umar

3. Kahhala, Musjam, XII, 21. His father's name was Muslim, but al-Dhhabi, Tarikh, V, 136 mentioned Salim.
via Sālim via al-Zuhrī"(4). He was a celebrated traditionalist, the collecting of Ḥadīth being his main preoccupation(5). Therefore, he gathered a vast number of traditions, not only of the Prophet Muḥammad, but of the Companions' Ḥadīths also. He is described as being the first to fix Ḥadīth in writing, but this was done only under pressure during the Umayyad reign(6).

His death occurred in 124/741(7).

**Al-Shāfiʿī:** Muḥammad b. Idrīs. He was from the Quraysh tribe. He established his school in Baghdād and Egypt. His school was distinguished by the fact that it followed the manifestation of the Qur'ānic word until he found evidence which proved the opposite, then he followed the Sunna. His school met the traditional school half-way. He was the only person to promulgate his science himself and wrote his book unaided as well. He was

4. Al-Khidari, Tarīkh, 240; Ibn 'Asākir, Tahdhib, IV, 52; Al-Nawawi, Tahdhib, I, 207.
6. E.I., IV.
Ahmad b. Hanbal al-Shaybani al-Baghdadi(9). He was the leader of the Hanbali School. He was born in Baghdad in 164/780. Ibn Hanbal was a contemporary of al-Shafi'i.

His school followed the purely traditional pattern. His death was in Baghdad in 241/855.

Abdallāh b. ʿUmar's Students

Abdallāh b. ʿUmar instructed a great number of students in the nature of divine inspiration and Islamic teaching in the Medina School and Mecca. Some of these students were from amongst the Companions. Those who failed to come to the mosque enquired from their friends about the contents of the talk. These were also the cases with those who did not live in Medina all the time and did not keep company with Muḥammad all the time, such as Abdallāh b. Abbās, Jābir, al-Aʿazz al-Muẓnī and others (1). Ibn ʿUmar also taught his sons, amongst them Salim, Ḥamza, Abdallāh and Bilāl (2), and his grandchildren and his nephews too. Other students of Ibn ʿUmar were the older, famous Followers (3), the Followers, such as Saʿīd b. al-Musayyab, Sulaymān b. Yasār, Sālim b. Abdallāh b. ʿUmar, al-Qāsim b. Muḥammad, ʿUrwa b. al-Zubayr, ʿUbaydallāh b. Abdallāh b. ʿUtba and Khārijah b. Zayd (4).

2. Al-Nawawī, Tahdhīb, 279.
from the clients, Nāfiʿ, ʿAbdallāh b. Dinār, Aslam and others(5).

Surpassing all the other students were his son, Salim, and his own client, Nāfiʿ, who both belong to the first category.

Let us give a brief idea of the career of each of them:-

Salim (as he was known) al ʿAdawy, al-Qurayshī. His mother was a Persian princess, the daughter of Yazdajrid(1). She was captured during the war with Persia.

He was one of the famous jurists of Medina, one of the Seven Lawyers and the chief


1. Āmin, Fair, 91. They were three captive girls. ʿAlī b. Abū-Talīb asked ʿUmar the Caliph to purchase them in a separate group because they were the King's daughters. ʿUmar accepted, then ʿAlī b. Abū-Talīb gave one of them to his son, al-Ḥusain; the second girl to Muhammad b. Abū Bakr, the first Caliph; and the third one to ʿAbdallāh b. ʿUmar, the present Caliph. Three of them gave birth to three boys successively, who were ʿAlī Zayn al-ʿĀbidīn, al-Qāsim and Sālim. They were remarkably skilled in jurisprudence. Two of them were from the Seven Lawyers, and some authors used to count ʿAlī Zayn al-ʿĀbidīn among the Company proclaiming the Fatwā.
amongst his contemporaries of the first category (2) (the Followers) during the Umayyad reign. He resembled his father, 'Abdallāh, in everything, not only in his dress and bearing, but also in his scientific prowess, his religious nature and his piety. Therefore his father loved him very much and respected him amongst his brothers. Ibn ʿUmar helped Sālim to further his scientific studies even under his own tuition and supported his son in his efforts to win high position (3).

He was the most respected amongst his contemporaries, not because he was the son of 'Abdallāh, but on account of his high position in his fiqh - jurisprudence - and his influence in the community at that time.


3. Ibn Saʿd, al-Ṭabaqāt, IV, 184. When Ibn ʿUmar felt that he would die, he gave his Will to his son, ʿAbdallāh. When some friends asked him, "Why did you not give it to Sālim?" (because he loved Sālim more than the others), he said, "Because I did not like to involve him in mundane affairs".
He related a vast mass of Hadith from his father, who, in his day, had inherited them from Muḥammad. Therefore he was the authority on Hadiths and Fatwas of Medina.

The followers of the traditional school to which Ṣālim belonged, were very strict concerning the authenticity of the hadith. According to some, he did not like to give his opinion if there were no Hadith(4). This observation is exaggerated for as he was in a high position of Fiqh, it is unlikely that he could not give his opinion unsubstantiated by the hadith.

His death was in Medina in 106/724(5).

Nāfi': He was a client of Ṣabdallāh b. ʿUmar and was known as Abū-Ṣabdallāh al-Madani. Originally he was known to have come from Daylam, although his parentage is unknown. Ṣabdallāh b. ʿUmar took him as a slave on one of his occasional raids when Nāfi' was still a little boy(6). Ṣabdallāh

b. ʿUmar recognised that the little boy would become very famous and clever, then he said: "Nafiʿ was granted to us from God"(7). His expectations were to be fulfilled later.

Nafiʿ was educated by Ibn ʿUmar himself and was, therefore, one of the famous persons in his Fiqh (jurisprudence). If he related ḥadīth, he related it correctly. He had many students, the most famous being al-ʿImām Mālik b. Anas.

Al-Nassāʾī said, "Nafiʿ is reliable and passes on authentic messages to Mālik, and he is like Sālim, but Sālim is more dignified and esteemed than Nafiʿ"(8). Therefore Nafiʿ could not give any Fatwā during Sālim’s lifetime. That was proved by Ibn Wahab(9).

Sālim did not ask him to do so.

In the reign of ʿUmar b. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz, the Umayyad Caliph sent Nafiʿ to Egypt to teach the Egyptians the Ḥadīth or the Sunna(10).

7. Ibn Ḥajar, Tahdhib, X, 413.
8. Ibn Ḥajar, Tahdhib, X, 413.
9. Al-Dhahabī, Tārīkh, V, 10; Al-Khīḍarī, Tārīkh.
10. Al-Khīḍarī, Tārīkh, 146.
"Abdallah b. "Umar gave Nāfīʾ his freedom and he wed him to his favourite slave girl, Rumayth (or Rumyna), having already given her her freedom also(11). Nāfīʾʾs death occurred in 117/735 or 119/737(12).

11. Ibn Kathīr, al-Bidāya wal-Nihāya, IX, 319. Ibn "Umar was offered ten thousand Dinars to sell Nāfīʾ, but he said: "It is the best thing that he be freed to serve God."

The following examples are given in order to give some idea of this person who sat in judgement for sixty years after Muhammad's death, giving Fatwās on different subjects in the mosque in Medina, which became, as it were, his School of Law, and also in the Meccan Haram, during the time of pilgrimage or lesser pilgrimage. Unfortunately, most of Ibn 'Umar's Fatwās have been lost. Their exact number is unknown, but it must have been great.

**Example 1 - Prayer**

Once, when it was very windy and very cold, Ibn 'Umar was travelling. The time for prayer came and he ordered those who were with him to pray, seated on their saddles. He ordered the Mu'ezzin to announce that the prayer would be said in the saddle. He did so because the Prophet had done so.

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1. A fatwā is an informal, unofficial legal opinion, given either to a judge or to a private individual. The giver of such a fatwā is a mufti.

2. Ibn Farḥūn, Dibaṭ, 25.

3. Malik, Muwatta', I, 73.
Example 2 - Zakāt

(a) Nāfi’ mentioned that Ibn ʿUmar said: "No Zakāt may be levied upon any kind of income until after one complete year".(4)

(b) ʿAbdallāh b. ʿUmar said: "There is no reason for the slave to pay Zakāt". However, on another occasion, Ibn ʿUmar said: "The slave will pay Zakāt on his income"(5).

When Ibn ʿUmar excused the slave from paying Zakāt, it was because the slave had no right to make money from his own labour. His master gave him his orders and it was said: "The slave and all his possessions belong to his master." The slave has no profit with which to pay the tax.

When Ibn ʿUmar said the slave should pay Zakāt, this was for another kind of slave called Mukāṭāb. That slave would have negotiated a contract with his master to pay him such an amount for his freedom.

(c) Zakāt al-fitr: Alms given at the end of Ramaḍān.

ʿAbdallāh b. ʿUmar said: "The Prophet Muḥammad ordered the payment of Zakāt for the

5. Averroes, Bidāya, I, 245.
breaking of the fast (Zakāt Siyām Ramadān) for every Muslim, free man or slave, man or woman, one ṣā‘ī measure of dates or barley (6).

Nāfi‘ said that ‘Abdallāh b. ‘Umar always used to pay the Zakāt al-fitr in dates, except once when he paid it in barley (7).

Example 3 - Pilgrimage

Sālim mentioned that his father, ‘Abdallāh b. ‘Umar, said, "If the pilgrim is detained or kept back from practising the pilgrimage in Mecca, he must hold himself in readiness to make the pilgrimage at some future date, when he can carry out the walk between al-Ṣafā and al-Mawra and circumambulate the Ka‘ba. If he needs to dress himself or to take medicine for his condition, he can do it, but he will have to make a sacrifice on his arrival at Mecca and after the ceremony" (8).

Mālik narrated that al-Sikhtiyānī said there was a man from Basra, who was on his way to Mecca. After a while he broke his leg in an accident and he sent someone to Mecca where

7. Mālik, Muwatta', I, 284.
"Abdallāh b. 'Umar and 'Abdallāh b. 'Abbās and others were. "They did not permit me to be free from my ihram, so I stayed in that place beside the well for seven months until I became well. I entered Mecca on the lesser pilgrimage and I was free from my ihram" (9).

Mālik said Nāfi' mentioned that "Abdallāh b. 'Umar said, 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb said, "Make a distinction between the main pilgrimage and the lesser pilgrimage, because it is much better to make the two in different months" (10).

Someone asked Ibn 'Umar for a fatwā about someone walking to the pilgrimage; what, for example, to do if this person was an old lady who could not walk. Ibn 'Umar said: "Let her ride and let her walk; when she feels tired, let her ride again until she arrives at Mecca" (11).

In connection with the pilgrimage, Nāfi' mentioned that "Abdallāh b. 'Umar said: "A woman must not wear the veil on her face or wear gloves" (12).

12. Mālik, Muwatta', I, 326.
Example 4 - Fasting

Al-Shāfi‘ī mentioned that Ḥādīth of 'Abdallah b. Ṭālib that the Prophet Muhammad said the month will be twenty-nine days. Do not fast until you see the moon rise, and do not end the fast until you see the Shawwāl moon rise. If the sky is overcast, then complete the thirty days"(13).

Mālik mentioned that Ḥādīth of 'Abdallah b. Ṭālib was asked if it was right to pray on behalf of another person or to fast on behalf of another. His reply was: "No, no-one can pray instead of another, nor can he fast"(14).

Mālik mentioned that someone had asked Ḥādīth of 'Abdallah b. Ṭālib what a pregnant woman should do in case the fast might harm her unborn child. Ibn Ṭālib said, "She should stop fasting and pay one midd (a certain measurement of wheat) daily to poor people"(15).

Mālik said that Ḥādīth of 'Abdallah b. Ṭālib did not fast when he was travelling(16).

13. Al-Shāfi‘ī, al-Umm, II, 94.
15. Mālik, Muwatta', I, 308.
Other examples

Narrated by Mujähid b. Jabur: "I was with Ibn ʿUmar when there came to him a person whose name was Wardān al-Rūmī. He was a goldsmith. He asked Ibn ʿUmar, 'Abū ʿAbd al-Rahmān, I make gold jewellery and I sell it for more than its weight in order to earn a little for my labour'. Ibn ʿUmar's reply was, 'I prohibit you from doing so; that is usury.' The goldsmith repeated the story again and again until we arrived at the door of the mosque and Ibn ʿUmar said, 'A dinār for a dinār and a dirham for a dirham, and no more! That was the Prophet's order to us and we commit this to you.'"(17)

Sālim narrated this from his father's Fatwā: When some man asked him if he owed a debt to another person, to be repaid by a certain time, and if the creditor subtracted some amount in return for his money, was it right? Ibn ʿUmar said, "No, that is usury"(18).

A man came to Ibn ʿUmar and asked him, "I have a slave and emancipated a third of him." Ibn ʿUmar said, "There are no half measures with God. The slave is free"(19).

17. Malik, Muwatṭa', III, 111.
18. Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr, al-Istidhkār, MS unnumbered folios.
19. Ibn ʿAbd al-Bar, Istidhkār, MS.
Someone came to Ibn ʿUmar for a fatwa concerning the following:-

Two or more had bought a slave between them. One of them decided to free the slave with his part share, but what about the other person's share?

Ibn ʿUmar said, "If the slave has enough money to buy out the other person's share of him, he must be allowed to do so. But if he does not have the money, he will belong entirely to the other party"(20).

ʿAbdallāh b. ʿUmar judged himself once. He sold a boy slave and after some days a defect appeared in the slave. The buyer asked Ibn ʿUmar to swear that there were no defects in the boy when he sold the boy. There appeared to be no defect in him, but Ibn ʿUmar felt unable to categorically swear to this(21).

Abū Māʾīz al-Aslamī-ʿAbd allāh b. Sufyān said, "I was with ʿAbdallāh b. ʿUmar when a woman came to him for a Fatwa. She said, 'I was near the mosque door when blood came to me (i.e. I began to menstruate again although I

20. Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr, Iṣṭidhkar, M.S.
21. Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr, Iṣṭidhkar, M.S.
thought I had finished). I went away to my home, and when I was very clean, I came again. Suddenly, at the same place, the blood came again three times. What should I do?' 'Abdallāh b. 'Umar replied: "Bathe yourself and hold a piece of clean garment to yourself and proceed through the mosque" (22).

Sufyān reported on the authority of 'Amr b. Dīnār and Ḥāmid al-Āraj Ḥabīb b. Abī Thābit as saying: "I was with Ibn 'Umar when a bedouin came and said, 'I have given my son a camel for his lifetime and it gave birth to more camels'. 'Abdallāh b. 'Umar replied, 'They are his in his lifetime and after his death.'" (23)


23. Al-Shafi'i, al-Umm, VII, 201; Malik, Muwatta', III, 241.
Some of Ibn 'Umar's Fatwās

1. Nāfi' told Mālik: "I have heard from 'Abd-ALLĀH b. 'Umar that his niece (the daughter of 'Ubayd allāh b. 'Umar, her mother being the daughter of Zayd b. al-Khaṭṭāb) was engaged to one of his sons, and that the son died before their wedding; he did not mention the matter of the dowry. However, the girl's mother endeavoured to obtain the dowry for her daughter. But 'Abdallāh b. 'Umar said, 'There is no dowry for her because, if there were a dowry for her, I would have given it to her.' The girl's mother did not accept Ibn 'Umar's judgement and so she went to Zayd b. Thābit and she told him the entire story. However, his judgement was the same as Ibn 'Umar's"(1).

2. Concerning the financial compensation (Alimony) paid to a woman whose marriage contract is dissolved by her partner

Mālik heard the case from Nāfi' who heard from 'Abdallāh b. 'Umar: "If a divorced woman's dowry is mentioned, she is entitled to receive alimony from her husband. But a woman is only

entitled to obtain half of her dowry if she is divorced before the wedding ceremony"(2)

3. ‘Iddā - the legal prescribed period during which a woman may not be re-married after being divorced

It was said by Yaḥya, referring to Mālik who heard it from Nāfi', that once Ibn ḤUmar divorced his wife during her period. During the Prophet's time, his father (Umar) had asked him about the case. The Prophet said: "Let him take back his wife and keep her until a time when she will be free from her period, and also her second period. After this time, he may either keep her as his wife or divorce her, according to the word of God."

'Abdallāh b. ḤUmar therefore arrived at the judgement that if a husband insists on divorcing his wife, his divorce will be regarded as absolute during her third period(3).

4. Mālik heard from Nāfi' referring to 'Abdallāh b. ḤUmar's judgement, that a widow, whose husband had died, and who was pregnant

2. Suyūṭī, Tanwīr, II, 27.
at the time, could be remarried after the birth of her child(4).

5. Mālik heard from ʿAbdallāh b. Dīnār when the latter was with ʿAbdallāh b. ʿUmar at the court-house and he said, "The man asked Ibn ʿUmar about the case of suckling milk. ʿAbdallāh b. ʿUmar's judgement was that, 'Suckling milk is for a child and not for an adult'"(5)

5. Suyūṭī, Tanwīr, II, 44.
Chapter Five

"Abdallāh b. ʿUmar's Character and Personality

Ibn ʿUmar's Appearance
His Character
His Manner of Worship
His Charity

"Abdallāh b. ʿUmar's Family and His Death
Abdallāh b. ʿUmar's Appearance

From the fragments of records left to us, we are hardly able to draw a physical picture of Abdallāh b. ʿUmar, but we can try to piece together the available information in order to arrive at some idea of his appearance, personality and behaviour.

Al-Barāʾ(1) said: "I saw Ibn ʿUmar between al-Safā and al-Marwā. He was a corpulent, swarthy man with an impediment in his speech, being unable to pronounce rāʾ correctly, and a long beard without a moustache"(2).

According to another reference - that of Abū Ishq al-Subayyī - he is described as follows: "He was a tall, corpulent man, bald-headed, with straight hair and a light beard"(3).

1. Al-Barāʾ b. ʿĀzib: one of the Companions. He participated in fifteen raids led by Muhammad. He was an envoy of ʿĀlī b. Abī-Ṭalib to Kufa, and later he was sent on a political mission to the Khawārij. He died in 72-73/692. Cf. al-Baghdādi, Tārīkh, I, 177.


3. Abū Ishq al-Subayyī: his name is ʿAmr b. Abdallāh. He heard the discourses of Ibn ʿUmar and others. His reports were very reliable. He died in 126-129/743-746 at the age of 96 years. Cf. Nawawī, Tahdhib, II, 171-172.
As we can see, there are no marked differences between these various accounts. It seems fair to assume that he was a tall man, especially since his father, "Umar, was unusually tall, and he was as tall as his father(4). His complexion was not fair but swarthy, as confirmed by "Abdallāh's own report which said: "The swarthy complexion is hereditary from our maternal uncle because my father (God have mercy on him) was very fair in colouring. When he wished to marry a lady, he chose his bride from a noble family in order that he should have a worthy son"(5). This means that he was swarthy of complexion but his father was fair, with a reddish colour (as "Abdallāh confirms). He was a bald-headed, tall and corpulent man, with a long beard.

"Abdallāh b. "Umar seems also to have been elegant and genteel, for we are told that he used to wear fine clothes of various materials, though not silk(6). He used to attire himself in a turban, and coloured his

beard with saffron or crocus and ground rose petals with musk(7), while his perfume was also musk.

His Character

\(^\text{\'Abdallâh b. \text{\'Umar}}\) was distinguished by his high moral qualities, compassion and justice. He inherited all his father's characteristics. His father, \(^\text{\'Umar}\), was very strict in his religion, as \(^\text{\'Abdallâh}\) was also. For example, he used to pray five times a day in the mosque with others. If he could not do this, or he missed the appointed time, he spent the whole night praying, the day fasting and he would emancipate one of his slaves\(^1\).

Once, when \(^\text{\'Abdallâh}\) was ill, he asked for a meal of fish. His wife prepared it for him, but when he began to eat it, a needy man came to the door seeking food. \(^\text{\'Abdallâh}\) gave him all the fish, not even tasting it himself. His wife said, "You wanted the fish and I hoped you would eat it yourself. I will give the man something else"\(^2\).

There are many stories which bear this out. However, it was told by Abû Salama, one of the Companions, that, "During \(^\text{\'Umar}\)'s time there were many similar pious Muslims, but in the time of \(^\text{\'Abdallâh b. \text{\'Umar}}\), there was no one similar to him"\(^3\).

1. Al-\text{Tantawi}, \text{Akhbâr \text{"Umar}}, 478.
2. Ibn Sa\'d, \text{al-Tabaqât}, IV, 158.
Qur'ān said: "I saw Abū ʿAbd al-Rahmān (i.e. ʿAbdallāh b. ʿUmar) in a very coarse garment and I brought him a finer one, saying, 'Abū ʿAbd al-Rahmān, I brought a garment for you made in Khurāsān, and I would be very pleased if I saw it on you'. ʿAbdallāh said, 'Let me see it'. Then he touched it with his finger and said, 'Is it silk?' I replied, 'No, it is cotton'. ʿAbdallāh replied, 'No, I do not like to wear such things, but thank you'."(4)

There is also the story of one of his clients who came once from Irāq. He insisted on visiting his master, ʿAbdallāh b. ʿUmar. The client said, "I have brought a present for you." ʿAbdallāh said, "What is it?" The client replied, "Jawārīsh." ʿAbdallāh asked, "What is Jawārīsh?" The client replied, "Something to help you to digest food."
 ʿAbdallāh said, "O, dear me, I have not filled my stomach for forty years, so what shall I do with it?"(5)

ʿAbdallāh b. ʿUmar was not a poor person however. He could eat well and have anything he wished, but he liked to follow the example of his father and the Prophet.

5. Abū Naʿīm, al-Ḥilya, I, 300.
"Little of the night did they usually slumber, And in the mornings they asked forgiveness" (1)

With this idea, 'Abdallâh b. 'Umar spent his life following the Qur'ânic words. These words urged the people to renounce the rewards of the world in favour of a life of prayer and contemplation more intense and all-embracing than that of the rest of the Believers, and to follow the example and inspiration of the Prophet himself down the ages, through many generations of Muslims from the first century onwards.

'Abdallâh b. 'Umar, however, was a man who had been marked out from his early youth for the pursuit of worship, since he embraced the faith in his childhood. He had the certainty, resolution and veracity of a Believer and he trusted in God constantly in everything he did and was devoted to the recitation of God's Holy Book.

He prayed at night as much as he could (2), as the Prophet had advised him after his dream (3). For example, his client, Nafi', mentioned, "If Ibn 'Umar missed the last prayer at the mosque, he used to spend all night praying until dawn. Then he used to take his Sahūr (pre-fast meal in Ramadān) and begin to pray once again" (4).


3. See Chapter II (p. ) below.

His Charity

"And in their wealth the beggar and the outcast had due share"(1)

These Qur'anic words were Ibn 'Umar's guide in life, as is shown by the way he shared his income with people. There are many stories which bear this out. For example, in one sitting on poor people, he once spent more than one-hundred-thousand dinārs and also gave away a piece of velvet, then he asked someone to lend him some money to buy food for his beast(2).

There are plenty anecdotes and charming touches which serve to illustrate his native wit, his deep piety, his generosity, compassion, justice and sense of fairness. He was also renowned for his kindness, modesty, propriety and continence, and for his determination to detach himself from all that he loved most(3). Some of these stories may have been invented, but Ibn 'Umar's nobility is incontestable.

Abdallāh was later a rich man, a merchant, and he also had a good income from the community because he served as a cavalryman. Sometimes, too, he came into money which was presented to him as a gift, but he was always left with nothing because he used to give it away to the needy.

It was mentioned by Maymūn b. Mihrān that, "One day Abū 'Abd al-Rahmān (Ibn 'Umar) received 22,000 dinārs and spent them during the same sitting"(4).

There is yet another story: Nafi said, "We were with Abū 'Abd al-Rahmān (Ibn 'Umar) on a journey. When we sat down to eat, a shepherd passed by, who was a young black slave with his sheep. 'Abdallāh b. 'Umar asked him, 'Will you join in our meal?' He replied, 'I am sorry, I am fasting.' Ibn 'Umar said, 'Are you sure? How can you fast on such a warm day, when it is not Ramadān, and you have to run after the sheep between the hills?' The shepherd said, 'Yes, I am fasting now to secure the days to come.' Ibn 'Umar was very surprised and he wanted to put his faith to the test. He asked him, 'Will you...

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sell me one of these sheep? I want to slaughter it and then give you a piece of it to break your fast.' The shepherd boy replied, 'They are not mine, they belong to my master.' Ibn "Umar said, 'Well, you can tell him a wolf ate it.' He merely wanted to ascertain whether or not the boy was honest. The boy went away raising his index finger and asking, 'Where then is God?' 'Abdallāh b. "Umar repeated, 'Where then is God?' again and again.

"When Ibn "Umar returned to Medina he went to the owner of the herd and bought both the slave and the sheep and emancipated the boy and gave him the sheep as recompense for his honesty"(5).

This type of illustration gives us an idea of 'Abdallāh b. "Umar's kindness and his fear of God. He did not care about money, as is shown by the fact that he spent money on the poor and bought slaves to emancipate. As his bondsmen knew his habit of emancipating those who followed godly ways in worship and prayer, they showed their willingness to follow the faith(6). Ibn "Umar observed their behaviour and emancipated them. His friend said to him,

5. Ibn al-Athīr, Usd, III, 228; Tantāwī, Akhbār "Umar, 488.
"O, Abū 'Abd al-Rahmān, they are not so (good), but they are deceiving you." Ibn ʿUmar replied, "If they are deceiving me in the name of God, I will be deceived"(7).

It was said that Ibn ʿUmar emancipated one-thousand(8) slaves during his lifetime. He did so only to please the people, not for personal gain. For example, if he lost his temper and swore at a slave, to show his repentance he would give the slave his freedom(9).

His fear of God was natural. He inherited this from his father and by following the Qur'ānic teaching. He therefore came to follow a life of devotion. The people venerated him because he preserved every aspect of life as it had been in the time of his father and the Prophet.

Chapter Six

Abdallah b. Umar's Family
and His Death
Abdallah b. Umar was the father of twelve sons and four daughters. They were by different wives and concubines.

His first wife was Safiyyah bint Abi Ubayda al-Thaqafi. This marriage took place in 16/637. She gave birth to five boys and two girls. The oldest son was Abdallah. He was one of his father's executors. He was a noble man educated by his father and Abu Hurayra. He, in turn, educated his son, Abd al-'Aziz, and Nahit al-Zuhri and others. He was a great authority on the transmitted Hadith. His death occurred in 105/723.

The other children were Abu Bakr, Umar, Waqid and Abu Ubayda, and two girls, Suda and Hafsa.

1. Ibn Sa'd, Tabaqat, IV, 142.
2. Al-Tabarî, Tarih, IV, 188.
The second wife was Umm 'Alqama bint 'Alqama b. Shaybān b. Muḥārib b. Fihr. Her son was 'Abd al-Raḥmān.

The third wife was Sahlah(6) bint Mālik b. al-Shāḥḥah ... b. Taghlib. She gave birth to a boy whose name was Zayd.

The mother of Sālim(7) was one of the concubines. The mother of 'A'isha, his daughter, was also a slave girl, as was the mother of Bilāl, Abū Salama and Qīlāba.

On the other hand, al-Ṭantāwī mentioned that 'Abdallāh b. 'Umar was the father of ten sons and one daughter: 'Abdallāh, Sālim, 'Ubaydallāh, Zayd, 'Āsim, Ḥamza, Bilāl, Wāqid and 'Abd al-'Azīz. The girl's name was Sūda.

The difference between the two authors is that al-Ṭantāwī mentioned two boys who were not mentioned by Ibn Sa'd: 'Āsim and 'Abd al-'Azīz. Again Ibn Sa'd mentioned four girls —

6. According to Ibn Sa'd, Zayd's mother was a slave girl.

7. Sālim: his mother was a Persian princess, the daughter of Yazdajrid. Cf. Amin, Fajr, 94. His father loved him and when he left his estate to his son, "Abdallāh, some friends asked him, "Why did you not give it to Sālim?" He said, "Because I did not like to involve him with mundane affairs." Cf. Ibn Ḥajar, Tāhdhīb, VI, 52.
Hafsa, Sūda, 'Ā'isha and Qilāba - while al-Tantawi mentioned only one girl, Sūda(8).
After many years the life of this man, 'Abdallah, who transmitted the Hadith of the Prophet, whose own doctrines were in time taken over by later scholars throughout the Muslim world, came to a close. His virtues and merits were endless. He died at eighty-four years of age (1) in 74/693. There are different ideas, however, about the year of his death and of the age at which he died (2).

His fanatical adherence to his religious duty hastened his end. He always showed his concern about the time of prayer when al-Hajjaj was Governor of Mecca. As the Governor was not a very religious man and was lax in carrying out his duties, Ibn 'Umar

1. Ibn Sa'd, al-Tabaqat, IV, 187; Al-Ya'fi'i, Mirzat, I, 155; Ibn al-'Imad, Shadharat, I, 91; Ibn Hajir, al-Isaba, IV, 109 mentioned that "His death was in 72/73 or 74"; Khalif, Tarikh, 346; Al-Dhahabi, al-Ibar, 84; Ibn Asakir, Tahdhib, III, 229; Al-Baghdadi, Tarikh, I, 722 mentioned that Ibn 'Umar's death was in 73 or 74; Ibn Khallikân, Wafiyat, II, 237 mentioned that his death was in 63/682; Ibn 'Abd al-Barr, al-Istibâb, III, 953 gives 73/692; also Ibn al-Athir, Usd, III, 230.

2. Most of the authors mentioned that 'Abdallah b. 'Umar's life span was eighty-four years. Muhammad b. 'Umar Ibn Sa'd, the author of al-Tabaqat, mentioned that on the authority of Salim b. 'Abdallah b. 'Umar, his father died in 74/693 at eighty-four years of age. This is correct for his death and age.
constantly drew his attention to the prayer time or otherwise reminded him of his duties. Al-Ḥajjaj was not scrupulous about the time for prayer or pilgrimage and therefore, not wishing to be reminded of his religious duties, he did not welcome Ibn ʿUmar's interference, but rather resented it. On the other hand, ʿAbd al-Malik b. Marwān, the Umayyad Caliph, asked al-Ḥajjaj to follow Ibn ʿUmar's orders about the pilgrimage and this further annoyed al-Ḥajjaj. All our primary authorities agree that al-Ḥajjaj asked one of his soldiers to inject the foot of Ibn ʿUmar with a poisoned spear when the pilgrimage returned to Mecca, and as a result of this, he contracted gangrene in his foot, which was the eventual cause of his death\(^{(3)}\). His death took place at Mecca. He was buried in the area of the haram in the place called Fakhkh\(^{(4)}\), the emigrants' burial ground/cemetery. The actual

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4. Ibn Saʿd, al-Tabaqat, IV, 188; Al-Baghdādī, Tarīkh, I, 172. But al-Yāfī, Mirāḍ, I, 155, mentioned that Ibn ʿUmar was buried in the place called Ṣhāt Adkhār, now called al-Maḥṣūdā; Ibn al-Ṣimāḥ, Shakhārāt, I, 81, mentioned the same place as above or at al-Maḥṣūd.
burial took place against his wishes, because he did not relish the thought that al-Ḥajjaj should pray for him over his body.
From the foregoing survey of 'Abdallāh b. 'Umar's life, we can conclude that his early life was affected by the land and places in which he lived, and by those with whom he lived. His military and political life, of course, affected his personality and his standing as a scholar.

Human beings are undoubtedly affected by their environment and we know that 'Abdallāh b. 'Umar was born in Mecca, spent his childhood there and spent the rest of his life in Medina, even though he left the Hijaz sometimes for one reason or another, such as to join military expeditions to other places.

When he was born, the Meccan people were in a state of great excitement and confusion over the appearance of Muḥammad's new religion. Muḥammad denigrated their forbears and censured their deities. The people were frightened and did not know what to do for the best. Ibn 'Umar also saw how the people were suffering from the tortures inflicted on the Muslims - usually the poor people or slaves - by the Quraysh.
\[\text{\textcopyright\textdagger}\text{Abdallâh, being a very sensitive and tender man, was greatly affected by this and subsequently always asked poor people to come to his house and join him in his meal(1).}

He was also affected by the nature of his land. It was the Arab custom to send their children, when babies, out into the desert to the nomad life of the Bedouin(2), because they wanted their children to enjoy good health in the fresh air of the desert, and to grow up with a knowledge of true Arab customs.

Naturally the Arabs in ancient times - even the people of Mecca(3) - had the same customs as the Bedouin. They were always invading(4) and capturing from other tribes because that was the nature of their life, and was necessary for many reasons, such as to protect themselves, their possessions and their honour, and their religion in Islamic times. When the Islamic religion emerged in

1. Ibn Sa\'d, al-Tabaq\=at, IV, 165-166.
2. I have not found any such reference about Ibn \(^\text{\textcopyright}U\text{mar being sent out as a baby.}
3. Ibn Hish\=am, Sirat, I, 142-146 (sworn alliance).
4. Qur\'\=an, LXXXI, 8.
Mecca amongst the Arabs, the Meccans were still bedouins. Therefore, Muḥammad's invasions were instinctive: he was an Arab and a Bedouin who had grown up in such an environment (5), and to him it was an accepted custom to raid to obtain booty, and to show the Quraysh the strength of the Muslim community, as opposed to the non-Islāmic community (6).

ʿAbdallāh b. ʿUmar himself, in accordance with Arab tradition, was most anxious to join the army, even though he was under age, for one reason he wanted to be with Muḥammad, and for another, it was instinctive, although he himself might not have appreciated this at the time. Also the waging of religious war - jihad - was one of the pillars of Islām: war is lawful in life.

It is mentioned that Ibn ʿUmar was very clean in his personal attire. He always scented his clothes with incense, except when he went on pilgrimage (7), he covered his head with a black turban and he used musk perfume (8).

He used to shave his moustache but left his beard (as a Sunna) and coloured it with saffron, as Muḥammad did(9). He always kept himself very clean, even when he performed ablutions he used to keep his eyes open to let the water go into his eyes(10).

He was a very modest man, who used to go every day to the market, not to buy or to sell but to see the people and greet them, even if he did not know them(11).

It is very natural that a son physically inherits his father's characteristics and it is well-known what a just and righteous person ʿUmar was. When he was a candidate for the Caliphate, someone said, "If Ibn ʿUmar is Caliph, we will return to the values of the late Caliphate ʿUmar's reign"(12). But he was not a hard man like his father, except when it came to the problems of the sharāʾ (religious law). In this he resembled the Prophet Muḥammad in his humanity.

10. Though this was not Sunna, al-Zarqāni, al-Muwatta', I, 83.
11. Ibn Saʿd, al-Tabaqāt, IV, 156.
12. Ibn Saʿd, al-Tabaqāt, IV,
We know that "Abdallāh b. "Umar lived a long time; his life was contemporary with the era of the Orthodox Caliph and he also saw the transfer of rule from the Orthodox Caliphs to the Umayyads. Moreover, he lived through two civil wars and he saw the results of these wars and the rise of different parties which appeared at that time, just like the parties in our own time. There were some differences between these parties although they all appeared under the auspices of religion and under different names, such as al-Khawārij, al-Shi'a, al-Murji'a and al-Mu'tazila. In fact they were political parties. Ibn "Umar was always neutral and he did not join any one of them. There is no doubt that Ibn Umar was not inclined towards any party, because he was a teacher and legislator and a very straightforward man. Once Muʿawiya asked him about a new palace, "What do you think about it?" His reply was: "If it is from the public treasury, you are a thief; if it is from your own money, you are extravagant."

"Abdallāh b. "Umar was a most religious man, therefore he had a high standing as a savant amongst the other Companions for many reasons.

He had embraced the Islamic faith since his childhood, and he practised no other type of worship(14). He was contemporary with the Prophet Muḥammad, living in Medina, following him, spending all his time with him as a close friend. He decided to follow Muḥammad not only from a religious point of view, but on his high moral guidance and humanity. ʻAbdallāh b. ʻUmar was also the Prophet's brother-in-law, through his sister, Ḥafṣa(15). Ibn ʻUmar was extremely anxious to learn everything from Muḥammad, therefore he even asked the other Companions about everything that Muḥammad did when he himself was sometimes absent (which, in fact, seldom happened). He therefore knew everything about the Hadīth, where and why the Prophet had said such and such a thing or acted in a particular way. Consequently, his Hadīth was first-hand.

ʻAbdallāh b. ʻUmar distinguished himself amongst the other Companions by being very devoted to his religion and he left himself free from worldly desire(16) and avoided becoming involved in the civil war between the Companions. He occupied himself exclusively

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16. Al-Ṭabarī, Tārīkh, IV, 446.
with serving the people as a legal adviser and devoting himself to studying the Hadīth, so that he could spread knowledge. He was in the habit of going to Mecca very often, several times a year.

Ibn ʿUmar lived much longer than most of the other Companions and a good number of generations fell under the influence of his teaching. He had been in the habit of giving legal advice and Fatwās from the age of twenty, but later in his life he became the principle legal adviser at the time of the Caliphate of ʿUthmān and during the Umayyad reign.

We may conclude that ʿAbdallāh b. ʿUmar was a real traditionalist throughout all the territory of the Hijaz, and he was the one who preserved the Sunna, as his students did after him.
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