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that convey this sense of prominence, and the lack of correspondence between those narratives and onomastic data preserved in a biographical dictionary of similar temporal remove from the period in question, I would suggest that the narratives reflect 1) Arab tribal traditions that put strong emphasis on tribal membership, and hence on *mawālā* status; 2) preferential transmission of historical lore from government/military environments in which non-free converts, i.e., *mawālā* originating as prisoners of war, play roles disproportionate to their representation in the overall convert community; and 3) the desire of later families of conversion-based *mawālā* origin, or pretending to such an origin, to project upon the past a special status, and early date of conversion, for their ancestors.

The last of these explanations could also be indicated by the occasional biographical dictionary entry that preserves at length a putative Arab tribal genealogy, but the very nature of the dictionaries was such as to confine such myth building to specific entries. The bulk of the data available to the compiler reflected a much greater diversity of conversion experience and suggests therefore a more integrated view of the early conversion process and as lessened role for conversion-based patronage in the growth of the Muslim community.

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THE ECONOMIC STATUS OF THE MAWĀLĪ IN EARLY ISLAM

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Recent studies have devoted much attention to the institution of *walā'* and to its relationship with the caliphal institution.¹ Yet most of these studies have one serious shortcoming: they tend to generalize on the basis of one town or settlement (*mīṣr*, pl. *amṣār*) as if what was observed there was representative for the entire economic situation of all *mawālā* in all *amṣār*. As a direct consequence, these studies do not specify which differences existed between various places in the Islamic empire; for instance, conditions between the two famous Iraqi *amṣār* of Basra and Kufa differed and in turn these conditions

¹ A. von Kremer, *Kulturgegeschichte des Orients unter den Chalifen*, 2 vols. (Wien: Wilhelm Braumüller, 1875-1877), II, 136, 145; I. Goldziher, *Muhammadianische Studien*, 2 vols. (Halle: Max Niemeyer, 1889-90), I, 104; II, 101; G. van Vloten, *Recherches sur la domination arabe, le chérisme, et les croyances messianiques sous le Khalifat des Omeyyades* (Amsterdam: J. Muller 1894), 13, 80; Cl. Cahen, *Tārīkh al-'Arab wa-l-shu'ub al-islāmīyya mundhu zahūr al-islām ḥattā bid'ay al-imbā'īyya al-ūhūdīyya*, trans. Badr al-Dīn al-Qāsim (Beirut: Dār al-Ḥaqīqa lil-Tibā'a wa-l-Nashr, 1977), 37-40; W.M. Watt, *Islam and the integration of society* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1961), 108; R. Levy, *The social structure of Islam* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1962), 57; L. Vaglieri, "The patriarchal and Umayyad Caliphates," in P.M. Holt, A.K.S. Lambton and B. Lewis (eds.), *Cambridge History of Islam* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970), I, 57-104; W. Ende, *Arabische Nation und Arabische Geschichte. Die Umayyaden im Urteil Arabischer Autoren den 20. Jahrhunderts* (Beirut/Wiesbaden: Frank Steiner Verlag, 1977), 1ff.; P. Crone, *The mawālā in the Umayyad Period* (London, Ph.D. Diss., 1973), 92-128; R. Nicholson, *A literary history of the Arabs* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1930), 219, 248, 278; Th. Arnold, *al-Daw' al-islāmīyya* (Cairo 1947, trans. from the English), 57; U. Haarmann, *Geschichte der Arabischen Welt* (München: Beckverlag 1987), 95; G. Zaydān, *Tārīkh al-tamadūn al-islāmīyya*, 2 vols. (Beirut: Manshūrāt Dār Maktabat al-Hayāt, 1902, 1906), I, 220; III, 360; M. al-Najjār, *al-Mawālā fī l-'asr al-umawī* (Cairo 1945), 1-10; M. al-Mīqāḍ, *al-Mawālā wa-mizām al-walā' min al-jāhiliyya ilā awākhir al-'asr al-umawī* (Damascus: Dār al-fīkr, 1988), 210, 250; Sh. Muṣṭafā, *Dawlat banī l-'Abbās* (Kuwait 1973), I, 25; F. 'Umar, *Tārīkh al-daw' al-abbāsiyya* (Beirut: Dār al-Qalam l-Tibā'a, 1970), 132; A. al-Kharīb, *al-Hukm al-umawī fī Khurasān* (Beirut: Mu'assasat al-'Alamī/Baghdād: Dār al-tarbiya, 1975), 14; 'A. al-Dūrī, *Muqaddima fī tārīkh suḍr al-islām* (Beirut: al-Matba'a al-kathūlūkiyya, 1961), 88 and his *Muqaddima fī tārīkh al-īqtisād al-'arabī* (Beirut: Dār al-Mashriq, 1969), 44; M. Higāḍ, *Mā'āthir al-shu'ubīyya fī l-'adab al-'arabī* (Cairo: Dār ihyā' al-kutub al-'Arabiyya, 1961), 163; I. Baydūn, *al-Dawla al-umawīyya wa-l-mu'arāfa*, 2 vols. (Beirut: al-Mu'assasa al-Jāmi'iyya lil-Dirāsāt wa-l-Nashr, 1985), I, 26; H. Atwān, *al-Daw' al-abbāsiyya* (Amman: Maktabat al-Muhtasib, 1984), 17-20.

were different from those of Syria and Egypt and so on. Additionally, many scholars have been influenced in their writings by political and/or ideological struggles between Islam and the West or by the current of pan-Arab nationalism or religious ideologies and, unfortunately, some of these biases have found their way in their writings on this topic. At once, most of these studies espouse the view that the Arabs had, during the early period of Islam, deprived the *mawālī* of any right to be added to the *ḍiwan al-ʿaīāʾ* (alternatively called the *ḍiwan al-jund*), which, if correct, would have meant that the *mawālī* received no annual salary or monthly sustenance or provisions like the Arabs did. It is, moreover, asserted that the *mawālī* were overburdened by taxes (*ḫarāj*, *jizya* and *ʿuṣṭr*). These measures—implying no right to any continuous state salary together with over-taxation—naturally would have had a negative effect on the economic conditions of the *mawālī*. Taking this line of thinking further, these studies suggest that the *mawālī* were consequently forced to join political and religious opposition groups that participated in rebellions (*fitan*) against the caliphal state.

The purpose of this article is to question the validity of these statements. It does so by scrutinizing our main primary sources to gather information about occupations pursued by *mawālī* from the early period of Islam up to the end of the Umayyad period, which roughly corresponds with the first century and a half of Islam, 632–750 CE. A picture is offered of the economic conditions—and their corresponding social standing—of the *mawālī* while noting a number of differences in these conditions across the Islamic empire.

Mawālī in crafts and trade

Readers of early primary sources will find it difficult to talk about one unified socioeconomic condition for the *mawālī*. In fact, several forms of *walāʾ* existed, each offering a different socioeconomic condition. Some of these forms were a continuation of pre-Islamic forms of *walāʾ*, such as *walāʾ al-ʿūqāq*, *walāʾ al-ḫijf* (also known as *walāʾ al-ʿiqd*), *walāʾ al-ḫūḍma*, *walāʾ al-inqīṭāʾ* and *walāʾ al-jiwār* (or *al-suknā*). Islam introduced other forms, notably the *walāʾ al-islām*.² Additionally, allegiance amongst the *mawālī* themselves also existed, which can be

² See also the contributions by Landau-Tasseron, Lecker and Mitter on (dis)continuity with the pre-Islamic period.

called *mawālī* loyalty. As a direct result of these varying forms of *walāʾ*, varying social conditions for the *mawālī* existed. It should also be pointed out that social divisions amongst the *mawālī* were not solely determined by their economic condition but rather by their legal and/or social dependence or association with Arabs as well. A sense of the different social and economic conditions for the *mawālī*, first, amongst themselves and, secondly, across *amṣār* can easily be gauged by a listing of the various activities in which the *mawālī* were active according to the primary sources: they were merchants, salesmen, brokers, commercial agents, artisans, craftsmen, writers, civil servants, tax collectors, administration officials, workers, rulers, soldiers, military leaders, policemen, private guards, gatekeepers, Qurʾān reciters, scholars, ḥadīth narrators, storytellers, judges, scholars of Islamic law (*fiqh*), muftis, educators, teachers, money changers, landowners, goldsmiths, landlords, builders and engineers (more on this below).

Various Arabic sources maintain that the majority of those involved in crafts and goods manufactured during the caliphate consisted of *mawālī* and slaves.³ In this regard, Abdallāh b. ʿAmr b. ʿAbd al-Qays Abān (d. ca. 75/694), the caliph ʿUthmān b. ʿAffān's client: "May God increase the number of people like you, so that you would become tailors, tanners and shoemakers."⁴ Al-Aḥnaf b. Qays al-Tamīmī (d. 67/686) is another case in point. When Ziyād b. Abīhi, Muʿāwiya b. Abī Sufyān's governor in Basra, solicited al-Aḥnaf's advice concerning the killing of the *mawālī* and slaves of Basra, he wondered, "Do you want the Arabs to be butchers, plasterers (*jaṣṣāṣīn*) and doctors (*ḥajjāmīn*)?"⁵ The *mawālī* excelled in more than one craft or profession.⁶

³ J. Janda, *Die sozialen und wirtschaftlichen Aspekte der Mawālī in frühislamischer Zeit* (Tübingen, Ph.D. Diss., 1983), 105–10; al-Miqdād, *Mawālī*, 211–14.

⁴ al-Fasawī, Yaʿqūb b. Sufyān. *Kitāb al-maʿārif wa-l-ʿarīḥ* (ed. Akram Diyāʾ al-ʿUmari, Baghdad: Maktabat al-Muthanna, 1974–76), II, 69; Ibn Qutayba, *ʿAbdallāh b. Muslim. Kitāb al-maʿārif* (ed. Tharwat ʿUkāsha, Cairo: Dār al-Maʿārif, 1960), 439; Ibn ʿAbd Rabbih, *Aḥmad b. Muḥammad. al-ʿIqd al-farīd*, ed. Aḥmad Amin, Aḥmad al-Zayn and Ibrāhīm al-Ibyārī (Cairo: Maṭbaʾat Lajnat al-Taʿlīf wa-l-Tarjama wa-l-Nashr, 1940–44), IV, 414; Ibn ʿAsākir, ʿAlī b. al-Ḥasan b. Hibbatallāh. *Tahdhīb al-ʿarīḥ al-ḥabīr*, ed. ʿAbd al-Qādir Badrān (Damascus: al-Maktaba al-ʿArabiyya, 1330–32), VII, 169.

⁵ Ibn ʿAsākir, *Tahdhīb*, VII, 15; Mubarrad, Muḥammad b. Yazīd, *Kitāb al-ḫamīl fī l-ʿadab*, ed. Muḥammad Abū l-Faḍl Ibrāhīm and Sayyid Shāhāta (Cairo: Maṭbaʾat Nahḍat Miṣr, n.d.), III, 314; Ibn Abī l-Ḥadīd, ʿIzz al-Dīn Abū Ḥamid. *Sharḥ naḥy al-balāgha*, ed. Muḥammad Abū l-Faḍl Ibrāhīm, 20 vols. (Cairo: Dār Iḥyāʾ al-Kutub al-ʿArabiyya, 1959), IV, 164.

⁶ Ibn Qutayba, *Maʿārif*, 485.

The *mawālī* were also involved in commerce, selling and buying locally (within the same *miṣr*) or between various *amiṣār* and even internationally between the Islamic empire and non-Muslim lands.⁷ In this context, the caliph 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib (r. 35-40/656-661) once remarked to a Kufan *mawālī*, when the latter objected to the inequality between *mawālī* and Arabs when it came to rewards each group received: "Oh, you *mawālī*, these [Arabs] have made you equal to the Jews and the Christians—keep trading, may God bless you. The Prophet Muḥammad, peace be upon him, said: 'Sustenance is ten parts. Nine parts are in trading.'⁸ An Umayyad poet expressed this same message in one of his verses: "I have contemplated Iraq's markets only to find that the *mawālī* are the owners of their shops."⁹ Furthermore, the involvement of *mawālī* in trade and their practice of professions and crafts had drawn al-Jāhīz's (d. 254/868) attention when he wrote: "The Arabs were neither tradesmen, artisans, physicians, accountants nor cultivators."¹⁰

The *mawālī* were able to dominate crafts and trade primarily because they owned slaves and were the patrons of other *mawālī*, who acted as craftsmen, salesmen and traders for their *mawālī* masters or patrons.¹¹ Eventually some of these even found themselves in a better economic situation than that of their masters or patrons. This phenomenon is apparent from both the quantity and the contents of their correspondence with their masters for emancipation.¹²

⁷ S. al-Qawāsmīh, *al-Tjāra wa-dawlat al-khilāfa fi ṣaṭr al-islām* (Nablus, Mg. Thesis, 1999), 7-20.

⁸ Kulaynī, Muḥammad b. Ya'qūb, *Kātib al-kāfi*, ed. 'Alī Akbar al-Jāfārī, 8 vols. (Teheran, 1377-89), V, 318.

⁹ Jāhīz, 'Amr b. Bahr, *al-Rasā'īl*, ed. Muḥammad 'Abd al-Salām Hārūn, 2 vols. (Cairo: Maktabat al-Khānījī, II, 251).

¹⁰ Jāhīz, *Rasā'īl*, I, 69.

¹¹ Ibn Sa'd, Muḥammad, *Kātib al-ṭabaqāt al-kubrā*, ed. Eduard Sachau, 9 vols. (Leiden: Brill, 1909), V, 24; Abū 'Ubayda, Ma'nar b. al-Muthannā. *Nagā'id Jābir wa-l-Farāzdaq*, ed. Anthony Ashly Bevan, 2 vols. (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1905), II, 350; Wakī', Muḥammad b. Khalaf b. Hayyān, *Kātib akhbār al-quḍāt*, ed. 'Abd al-'Azīz Muṣṭafā al-Marāghī, 3 vols. (Cairo: Maṭba'at al-Isṭiqāma, 1947), II, 276; Isfahānī, 'Alī b. al-Ḥusayn, *Kātib al-ghīām*, 24 vols. (Cairo: Dār al-Kunūb al-Miṣriyya, 1927-74), I, 41; Abū Nu'aym, Ahmad b. 'Abdallāh al-Isfahānī. *Ḥiṭyat al-awliyā' wa-ṭabaqāt al-ʿaḥyā'*, 10 vols. (Beirut: Dār al-Kitāb al-'Arabī, 1970), I, 90; Sukkarī, Abū Sa'īd al-Ḥusayn, *Diwān Abī l-Aswad al-Du'ālī* (Beirut, 1974), 127.

¹² Ibn Habbīb, Muḥammad. *Kātib al-muḥabbar* (Hyderabad: Maṭba'at Dār al-Ma'ārif al-'Uthmāniyya, 1942), 342.

And this can additionally be derived from the fact that there are reports about selling allegiances at very high prices.¹³

The *mawālī* benefited from their relationship with the Arabs and they improved their economic situation. The *mawālī* of caliphs, governors, tribal and military leaders were the first beneficiaries. For example, the *mawālī* of the caliphs 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb (r. 13-23/634-644) and 'Uthmān b. 'Affān (r. 23-35/644-656) had the monopoly in the grain trade of Medina during the former's caliphate.¹⁴ The *mawālī* of one of the caliph Mu'āwiya's (r. 41-60/661-680) wives, Fākhta bint Qurza, asked Mu'āwiya to grant him business concessions in Basra, which the caliph did.¹⁵ It is also narrated that Abū Kathīr, a *mawālī* of the Aslam tribe, enjoyed a good relationship with an Umayyad governor of Egypt, 'Abd al-'Azīz b. Marwān (d. 85/704), who had exempted this *mawālī* from paying customs on trade once he entered Egypt as a tradesman.¹⁶ Sources also report a connection between trading *mawālī* and moneychangers (who were usually also *mawālī*) on the one hand, and the *bayt al-māl* (alternately known as *dīwān al-ḥiṭā*, *dīwān al-kharāj* and *dār al-rīzq*) or caliphal treasury on the other. The caliphal treasury also used to borrow money from *mawālī*. Moreover, *mawālī* were involved in minting coins for the caliphate.¹⁷

All anecdotes like the ones just narrated strongly reinforce the impression that the *mawālī* enjoyed some form of economic superiority. Some sources even deal with the excessive wealth some *mawālī* reportedly had. 'Abdallāh b. Farwa, the caliph 'Uthmān b. 'Affān's *mawālī*, is one example of such a case since he was considered one of the richest people of Medina.¹⁸ Mūsā al-Salmānī, a *mawālī* of Ḥadramawt, living in Basra, was one of the wealthiest traders in that city.¹⁹ During the reign of the military governor of Iraq, al-Ḥajjāj b. Yūsuf (ca. 41-95/661-714), one of the most well-to-do

¹³ Ibn Sa'd, *Ṭabaqāt*, VI, 203; Fasawī, *Mā'rifa*, II, 588; Ibn 'Asākir, *Tahdhīb*, VI, 311.

¹⁴ Ibn Ḥamīd, Muḥammad b. 'Abīd. *Kātib al-muntalib min musnad 'Abī b. Ḥamīd*, ed. Ṣubḥī al-Samarrā'ī and Muḥammad al-Sa'īd (Cairo: Maktabat al-Risāla, 1988), 34, 35.

¹⁵ Balādhuri, *Anṣāb*, IV, 207.

¹⁶ Balādhuri, *Anṣāb*, IV, 163; ms. II, 164.

¹⁷ Fasawī, *Mā'rifa*, I, 439-41; al-Qawāsmīh, *Tjāra*, 94-104.

¹⁸ Ibn Qutayba, *Mā'ārif*, 202.

¹⁹ Ibn 'Abd Rabbīh, *ʿIqd*, VI, 96.

people in Basra was the *mawālā* Fayrūz Ḥusayn; his financial resources reportedly even exceeded those of Basra's *bayt al-māl* at the time.²⁰ Al-Madā'inī mentions that a *mawālā* of the Basran governor 'Abdallāh b. 'Amīr (d. ca. 59/680) had lent the general al-Muhallab b. Abī Ṣufra (d. ca. 83/703) 300,000 dirhams when he assumed power over the province of Khurasan in 78/697.²¹ Moreover, Abū Abdrab, a *mawālā* of the Banī 'Uthra, was one of the wealthiest people of Damascus.²² Also found in the sources is a statement that Dīnār, a *mawālā* of the Banī Qutay'a in Kufa, had purchased Ibn al-Ash'ath's maintenance, during his rebellion in the year 82/702 against al-Hajjāj and 'Abd al-Malik; al-Hajjāj b. Yūsuf later had him killed.²³ The writer Ibn Habīb reports in his book *al-Muḥabbar* about one of the Kufan *mawālā* saying: "Abū Dukayn, a *mawālā* belonging to al-Jamāliyyīn of Murād had agreed with his master to give him 100,000 dirham in return for his emancipation. [This] Abū Dukayn [also] sold merchandise to al-'Atā', selling perfumes, slaves and horses and he lent the Murād tribe 700,000 dirhams until they would receive their salaries (their 'atā')."²⁴

Inasmuch as economic responsibility was, during this early period, primarily collective due to the still existing tribal system and since the *mawālā* were mainly traders, craftsmen and proprietors, having as such economic leverage over Arab patrons, it should come as no surprise that many Arab tribal figures depended on their *mawālā* for supporting their families. One of the leaders of the tribe of Qays, for instance, a certain Zufar b. al-Ḥārith, is quoted as saying, when one of his *mawālā* was killed along with his son during the Marj Rāhiḡ battle (64/684): "I was sadder for the death of my *mawālā* than for the death of my son because my *mawālā* was my source of sustenance for my family."²⁵ In short, many Arabs at that time were used to borrowing money from their *mawālā* whenever they needed it.²⁶ What is more, the Arabs tended to increase their capital by investing it with their *mawālā* for trade.²⁷

²⁰ Mubarrad, *Kāmil*, III, 352-53.

²¹ Ṭabarī, Muḥammad b. Jarīr, *Tārīkh al-rusul wa-l-mulūk*, ed. Muḥammad Abū l-Faḍl Ibrāhīm, 11 vols. (Cairo: Dār al-Ma'ārif, 1966-70), VI, 320.

²² Fasawī, *Mārifa*, II, 417.

²³ Balādhurī, *Ansāb*, ms. II, 1221.

²⁴ Ibn Habīb, *Muḥabbar*, 342.

²⁵ Balādhurī, *Ansāb*, V, 157.

²⁶ Ibn Habīb, *Muḥabbar*, 342.

²⁷ Jūdā, *Mawālā*, 113-15.

Mawālī in administrative functions

The early Islamic empire in general continued the administrative systems they encountered in the lands they had conquered. Arab Muslims reached agreements with the administrative officials or with local rulers concluding treaties and truces with them. In the conquered lands, the Muslims introduced changes that were meant to refine the older systems in order to make them more harmonious with the principles of Islam. The *dawā'im al-kharāj* (treasures for the land-tax) remained in the hands of the indigenous employees albeit under Arab Muslim supervision. After the indigenous people had actually experienced that Islam upheld their social and economic status, many of them converted to the new religion.²⁸ With the passing of time, many employees in the land-tax treasuries also converted to Islam. Accordingly, most if not all of them became the *mawālā* of Arabs and at the same time kept their administrative, social and economic positions.

A large number of *mawālā al-ūāqa*²⁹ was charged with running land-tax treasuries (*al-kharāj dīwān*) for rulers and governors or they were made responsible as tax collectors and clerks in these *dīwān*s.³⁰ The *mawālā* also worked as personal clerks for their patrons' secretaries or as treasurers and officials in charge of their patrons' money and expenses.³¹ The *mawālā* even worked as clerks while accompanying military campaigns. In this case, the duties of the *mawālā* included writing letters and treaties, the distribution of booty and supervision of spending on the army.³² Some *mawālā* worked in post

²⁸ Balādhurī, *Futūḡ al-buldān*, ed. De Goeje (Leiden: Brill, 1866), 265; Ṭabarī, *Tārīkh*, III, 517-18; Abū Nu'aym, *Ḥibya*, I, 81; Iṣfahānī, *Aghānī*, II, 154-55; Ibn Abī l-Ḥadīd, *Sharḡ*, III, 204; al-Jahshiyārī, Muḥammad b. 'Abūs, *Kitāb al-wuzarā' wa-l-kutub*, ed. Muṣṭafā al-Saqqa (Cairo: Maṭba'at Muṣṭafā al-Bābī al-Ḥalabī), 61; J. Jūdā, *al-'Arab wa-l-ard fī l-'irāq fī saqr al-islām* (Amman: al-Sharīka al-'Arabiyya lil-Tibā'a wa-l-Nashr, 1979), 107; al-Miqdād, *al-Mawālā*, 154.

²⁹ *Mawālā al-ūāqa* are but one category of *mawālā*; these were slaves who were manumitted after which they became the *mawālā* of their former masters (see Jūdā, *Mawālā*, 22-25 and Mitter's contribution in this book).

³⁰ Jūdā, *Mawālā*, 115-20.

³¹ Khalīfa b. Khayyāt, *Tārīkh*, ed. Suhayl Zakkār, 2 vols. (Damascus: Wizārat al-Thaqāfa wa l-Irshād al-Qawmī, 1967), I, 77; Balādhurī, *Ansāb*, II, 191; IV, 101; ms. II, 508, 684; Ibn Qutayba, *Mā'ārij*, 244; Ṭabarī, *Tārīkh*, V, 560; VII, 148; Iṣfahānī, *Aghānī*, III, 290; XVII, 99; Ibn Hajar, *al-Iṣṣāḡ fī lampiz al-sahāba*, 8 vols. (Cairo: Maṭba'at al-Sa'āda/Beirut: Dār Ṣadr), 1325, III, 553; *Tahdhīb*, II, 184; Jahshiyārī, *Muzanā'*, 25, 34.

³² Balādhurī, *Futūḡ*, 394; *Ansāb*, ms. ii, 43, 194; Ṭabarī, *Tārīkh*, iv, 31, 116;

offices (*al-khatam dīwāns*) and most of these also belonged to the category of *mawālī al-ʿiāqa*.³³ In this way, the *mawālī* dominated in different types of public and private *dīwāns*.

Caliphs, local rulers, leaders and tribal leaders had *mawālī* gatekeepers.³⁴ They also had *mawālī* and slaves as personal bodyguards.³⁵ Police battalions in big cities consisted mostly of *mawālī*.³⁶ This means that the protection of state officials and the maintenance of security inside the *amṣār* belonged to the responsibilities of *mawālī* who would receive their provisions or sustenance and salaries from the state treasury. *Mawālī* also worked as papermakers and copyists, especially of the Qurʾān, and this activity constituted a source of income.³⁷ Some *mawālī* additionally worked as paid teachers for children in special offices.³⁸ A large number of educated *mawālī* were involved in teaching the children of caliphs, leaders and rulers for which they received high wages in return.³⁹ Still other *mawālī* composed poetry praising caliphs and emirs in their poetry and at once making this a source of their livelihood.⁴⁰ Other *mawālī* were musicians and singers and taught music to others.⁴¹ *Mawālī* were also charged with the collection of customs and taxes on trade for the state or region at the border or on trade roads.⁴² They also worked in post offices,⁴³ as mentioned above, and as controllers in markets to check prices.⁴⁴ They also assumed responsibility for the caliphal treasury in the city

Sukkarī, *Dīwān*, iii, 714; Nisābūrī, *al-Faḍl b. Shadhān al-Azdī, Kitāb al-tidāh*, ed. Jalāl al-Dīn al-Ḥusaynī (Teheran 1972), 91.

³³ Khalīfā b. Khayyāṭ, *Taʾrīkh*, 412, 427, 468; Balādhurī, *Ansāb*, ms. II, 108, 149, 236, 312, 1174; IV, 8; *Futūḥ*, 352; Jāhshiyārī, *Wuzarāʾ*, 35, 44, 68, 69, 72; Ibn Qutayba, *Kitāb ʿilm al-akḥbār*, 4 vols. (Beirut: Dār al-Kunūz al-Misriyya, Cairo 1952), III, 173; Ṭabarī, *Taʾrīkh*, VI, 544; VII, 211.

³⁴ Jūda, *Mawālī*, 117.

³⁵ Jūda, *Mawālī*, 117.

³⁶ Jūda, *Mawālī*, 117.

³⁷ Ibn Saʿd, *Ṭabaqāt*, VII, 11; Ibn Qutayba, *Maʿārif*, 470.

³⁸ Ibn Qutayba, *Maʿārif*, 549.

³⁹ Fasawī, *Maʿrifat*, I, 568; Balādhurī, *Ansāb*, III, 100; Ibn ʿAsākir, *Tahdīb*, VI, 277; Ibn Ḥajar, *Tahdīb*, I, 317.

⁴⁰ Balādhurī, *Ansāb*, V, 131; Isfahānī, *Aghānī*, I, 342. For *mawālī* and poetry see van Gelder's article in this book.

⁴¹ Isfahānī, *Aghānī*, VIII, 321; Ibn Khaldūn, ʿAbd al-Rahmān b. Muḥammad, *al-Muqaddīma*, ed. M. Quatrecere, 3 vols. (Paris 1858), II, 360. On *mawālī* and music see Kilpatrick's contribution to this book.

⁴² Ibn ʿAsākir, *Tahdīb*, V, 321; Ibn Ḥajar, *Isāba*, I, 491; *Tahdīb*, III, 274.

⁴³ Balādhurī, *Ansāb*, ms. II, 890.

⁴⁴ Ibn Saʿd, *Ṭabaqāt*, V, 130.

in which they were living; others were in charge of their patrons' houses of finance.⁴⁵

Summing up, it appears that the bulk of administrative positions in the early caliphal state were in the hands of *mawālī al-ʿiāqa* and *mawālī al-ʿiqd* (contract) or *mawālī al-islām*.⁴⁶ Simultaneously, the *mawālī* were a dominant constituent of police forces in urban centers. All of this evidence underscores the fact that the *mawālī* received steady and permanent income provisions and salaries.

Mawālī as landowners

According to the primary sources, *mawālī* also became landowners acquiring land through purchase or law grants given to them by the caliph. This was especially true for *mawālī al-ʿiāqa*. *Mawālī al-islām* were originally either prominent or small landowners, just like contract *mawālī* were either peasants or very rich. According to some sources, many *mawālī* owned villages and country estates in different *amṣār*.⁴⁷ In some cases, *mawālī* worked as agents for their masters in estates and buildings.⁴⁸ It is interesting to note here that almost all the Arabs or the caliphal state overburdened the *mawālī* with taxes and sometimes even imposed the *jizya* (head tax meant for non-Muslims) on them, though the vast majority of *mawālī* were Muslims: there seems, then, to be much exaggeration about this issue. Islam offered non-Muslims the possibility to embrace the new religion and as such to be exempted from paying *jizya*. As Muslims they would have to pay alms (*zakāt*) rather than *jizya*, which meant that instead

⁴⁵ Ibn Saʿd, *Ṭabaqāt*, VII, 178.

⁴⁶ Unlike the *mawālī al-ʿiāqa*, *mawālī* who, as noted above, entered a relationship with their patrons after manumission, the *mawālī al-ʿiqd* and *mawālī al-islām* constitute a patron-client relationship between two free individuals. Usually the *mawālī* involved had converted to Islam through the mediation of his Arab Muslim patron while the *mawālī al-ʿiqd* converted to Islam by himself (see Jūda, *Mawālī*, 71-73).

⁴⁷ Ibn Saʿd, *Ṭabaqāt*, VII, 71, 88; Ibn Qutayba, *Maʿārif*, 74, 422; *ʿUyūn*, II, 35; Balādhurī, *Futūḥ*, 351, 361, 363, 366-69; *Ansāb*, ms. II, 1221; Ṭabarī, *Taʾrīkh*, VII, 239; Ibn Ḥabīb, *Muḥabbar*, 345; Ibn Ḥajar, *Isāba*, III, 408; Ibn ʿAsākir, *Tahdīb*, IV, 340; Sukkarī, *Dīwān*, 127.

⁴⁸ Balādhurī, *Futūḥ*, 8, 138, 366; *Ansāb*, IV, 110; V, 130; Ibn Qutayba, *ʿUyūn*, I, 214; Mubarrad, *Kāmil*, IV, 124; Ṭabarī, *Taʾrīkh*, VII, 203; Isfahānī, *Aghānī*, XIV, 321.

of paying the state between 50%–80% of their revenues or production, they would only have to pay 10%.⁴⁹ This offer was of course a strong incentive for non-Muslims to embrace Islam. A considerable number of *mawālī* benefited from this offer in the early period of Islam and they improved their economic circumstances after they started to pay *zakāt* instead of *jizya*. Yet the spread of Islam had affected the state treasury. The Arabs' ownership of non-Muslim land (*ard al-kharāj*) usually transformed the land automatically into *isṭiṣṭā* land (land-tax for non-Muslims). Consequently, the spread of Islam and the expansion of Arab-Muslim ownership negatively affected the state treasury. These effects began to appear first in Iraq and Greater Syria, after approximately half a century after the Arab-Muslim conquest. This problem, according to the sources, manifested itself critically during the reign of 'Abd al-Malik b. Marwān (r. 66–86/685–705). To solve this problem, the caliph and his governor al-Ḥajjāj b. Yūsuf felt compelled to impose land tax (*jizya*, *jizyat arḍ*, *kharāj*) on both Arabs and *mawālī* for the first time in Iraq and Greater Syria. When 'Umar b. 'Abd al-'Aziz assumed office (r. 99–101/717–719), he pursued this matter further and adopted al-Ḥajjāj's measures but only for Iraq and Syria since the problem did not present itself in other regions. He issued a decree stipulating that *kharāj* land, after 100 AH/718–719 CE, would keep that status regardless of the owner, thus making land-tax the same for Muslims and non-Muslims in the empire, taking away the fiscal advantage for Muslims—at least in Iraq and Syria. This caliph limited the *jizya* to head tax only and exempted those who had converted to Islam from paying it.

The financial crisis appeared in Egypt during the second decade of the reign of al-Walīd b. 'Abd al Malik (86–96/705–714) and in Africa during the rule of Yazīd b. 'Abd al-Malik (101–105/719–723). In Khurasan the financial crisis occurred during the latter part of the caliph Hishām b. 'Abd al-Malik's reign (105–125/723–742). The authorities there adopted the same measures initiated by al-Ḥajjāj and approved by 'Umar b. 'Abd al-'Aziz to save the state treasury.⁵⁰ These financial measures seem to have had an effect on the status

⁴⁹ Abū Yūsuf, Ya'qūb b. Ibrāhīm, *Al-Kharāj* (Cairo: al-Matba'a al-Salafiyya wa-maktabanuhā, 1392), 44 (on the taxes that al-Dahhāk b. Qays, d. 128/746, had imposed on the people of *al-Jazīra al-furātīyya* and Syria).

⁵⁰ J. Jуда, "al-Ṣulḥ wa-l-'anwa laḍā 'ulamā' al-amṣār fi ṣadr al-islām," *Majalat al-Majāhīz li-Abḥāth*, 2/8 (1995), 7–38.

of both *mawālī* and Arabs. As a consequence, some Arab Muslims and *mawālī* participated in Ibn al-Ash'ath's rebellion in Iraq during 'Abd al-Malik's rule (80–83/699–702); both landowners as well as leaders were amongst them. The same thing happened to the (*mawālī*) governor Yazīd b. Abī Muslim (d. 102/720–721) in Africa when the Berbers and some Arabs rebelled against him and killed him.⁵¹ In Khurasan, later, the *mawālī* and some Arabs upheld the 'Abbāsīd call and participated in the rebellion that ultimately resulted in the overthrow of Umayyad rule in 132/750.

Based on the above, it is unreasonable to accept the conclusions of some modern studies that the Arabs had overburdened the *mawālī* with taxes and head tax. The only problem was the state's imposition of land tax (*jizyat al-'ard*), for the first time, on the properties of *mawālī* and Arabs after the financial crisis of the state treasury, which made it unable to make ends meet and to provide provisions and salaries. Therefore, the *mawālī* landowners, during the first Islamic century, enjoyed a prosperous life after embracing Islam and concluding agreements of allegiance with the Arab Muslims until the 'Abbāsīd caliphs of later came to impose the taxing system more strictly which did lead to a somewhat diminished economic position for the *mawālī*.

Mawālī in the military

Primary sources stress that the *mawālī* participated alongside Arabs in fighting either as individuals with their Arab patrons' tribes or as independent battalions that fought side by side with Arab Muslims. In the last quarter of the first Islamic century (694–719 CE), the *mawālī* formed the majority of fighters in the Umayyad army and in all *amṣār*.⁵² Many leaders, rulers, caliphs and tribal leaders as well as Umayyad family members had special *mawālī* fighting forces.⁵³ Sources also indicate that inequality in salaries given to Arabs and

⁵¹ Ibn Khallikān, Aḥmad b. Muḥammad, *Wafayāt al-ayyān wa-anbā' abnā' al-zamān*, ed. Muḥammad Muḥyī l-Dīn 'Abd al-Ḥamīd, 6 vols (Cairo: Maktabat al-Nahḍa al-Misriyya), 1948, VI, 354.

⁵² Jуда, *Mawālī*, Part 3 (*al-Mawālī wa-tūwān al-jund*). Compare Elad's contribution to this book on the composition of the army under the 'Abbāsīd caliph al-Ma'mūn (r. 198–218/813–833).

⁵³ Jуда, *Mawālī*, 120–32.

mawālī existed.⁵⁴ However, other sources state that the *mawālī* received the same amount as Arabs (*sharaf al-ʿaitā*).⁵⁵ Some sources specify that many *mawālī* reached the honor of receiving *ʿaitā*.⁵⁶ Concerning the opposition voiced by some Kufan Arabs about the rebel al-Mukhtār (d. 67/687) giving these *ʿaitā* salaries to *mawālī* and slaves,⁵⁷ it should be emphasized that this had been a special case for Kufa and that it cannot be generalized.⁵⁸

It is also worth noting here that *mawālī* fighters received booties like their fellow Arab Muslim fighters. These booties were more rewarding financially than normal salaries; one poet even described the *mawālī* as booty-inviting wealth.⁵⁹ Moreover, the participation of *mawālī* in conquering new regions and lands meant that the newly conquered areas would bring prosperity to all, including the *mawālī*. This applied to the eastern regions, Africa and Andalusia. The *mawālī*'s involvement in the army and fighting, side by side, with Arabs, was financially and economically rewarding for them. They received their provisions and salaries. They had their share in booties and money from the lands conquered by them, along with their fellow Arab Muslims. It should also be pointed out that conquest campaigns were used to improve economic activity, particularly commercial enterprises and the increasing demand for luxury items. Inasmuch as traders, craftsmen and artisans were mostly *mawālī*, they were the first to benefit from these economic gains that helped improve their economic status.

⁵⁴ Balādhurī, *Ansāb (Nasab al-Zubayr)*, 141; Ibn Abī l-Ḥadīd, *Sharḥ*, II, 200; Kulaynī, *Kāfī*, V, 69; Isfahānī, *Aghānī*, VI, 146; Abū ʿUbayd, *Amwāl*, 335.

⁵⁵ Balādhurī, *Futūḥ*, 458; Ṭabarī, *Tārīkh*, IV, 186.

⁵⁶ Balādhurī, *Futūḥ*, 265; Yaʿqūbī, Ahmad b. Wādiḥ, *Tārīkh*, ed. M.Th. Houtsma, 2 vols. (Leiden: Brill 1969), II, 176; Ibn ʿAsākir, *Tahdīb*, VII, 203; al-Kindī, Muhammad b. Yūsuf, *Kitāb al-wilāyat wa-l-quḍāt*, ed. R. Heuvelon Guest (Beirut, 1908), 51.

⁵⁷ Balādhurī, *Ansāb*, V, 300; Ṭabarī, *Tārīkh*, II, 559; VI, 28, 43, 44; Jahshiyārī, *Wizarat*, 42; Yaʿqūbī, *Tārīkh*, II, 362.

⁵⁸ The rule of *walāʾ* *al-ʿūqāq* in Kufa and the failure of *al-ʿūqāq mawālī* to participate in conquering Iraq on the one hand, and al-Mukhtār's dependence on many of them in his army on the other, had harmed the indigenous Arabs of the city, especially those who were receiving the *ʿaitā*. This angered the Arabs and compelled them to oppose al-Mukhtār's measures. Another version has it that the *mawālī* of caliph ʿUmar b. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz had protested, arguing that some 50,000 *mawālī* fighters had been fighting in Khurasan without receiving salaries. However, it should be stressed that many of these were volunteers who had sought economic gain, booties and ultimately better salaries. See the main text above that follows.

⁵⁹ Isfahānī, *Aghānī*, XI, 213.

In closing, let me summarize the main findings of this contribution. We have seen above that the *mawālī*, shortly after the conquests, were in charge of business activities, professions and crafts, markets, money changing and administrative jobs within the *dīwāns*. They were also members of the police force or served as personal bodyguards and in the army. They worked as clerks for their masters but they were owners of estates and villages, too. All this shows that the *mawālī* and the non-Muslims were strong productive forces during the early caliphate and that they had benefited greatly from their positions. In other words, their economic situation was not bad, especially when compared with their Arab co-religionists since, at once, the very same sources state that bad economic situations existed for both Arabs and *mawālī* alike.

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