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Stellingen

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Protective Interventions by Local Elites in the Countryside of

Early Islamic Egypt

Eline Scheerlinck

1. The Coptic protection letters, in all their variability, form one documentary genre.
2. The Coptic protection letters were intrinsically linked to fiscal practice, but they were not fiscal documents issued by the administration in the way that tax receipts and tax demands were.
3. The increased presence of Coptic protection letters in the first half of the eighth century results from caliphal Marwanid policies, and formed a local reaction to the heightened attention to and control of revenue flow and mobility of people.
4. Coptic protection letters served a different purpose than the travel permits issued by the provincial government, and cannot be interpreted as their short-distance parallels.
5. Documentary papyri do not represent “what really happened”, but are, similarly to literary texts, coloured by the author’s perspective and circumstances.
6. The study of documentary papyri in local, non-Arabic, languages offers a crucial perspective on the Islamic Empire.
7. Village elites and their social and administrative roles in the Egyptian countryside are underrepresented in the studies on local elites of the Early Islamic Empire.
8. It is possible to reconstruct administrative procedures and mechanisms on the basis of papyri which are not part of the same archive or otherwise obviously connected.
9. Magic can play a role in historically authentic (role playing) games.