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'Addenda' and 'corrigenda' to the Khartoum inscriptions (I. Khartoum Copt. and Greek)

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Alexandros Tsakos

**ADDENDA AND CORRIGENDA
TO THE KHARTOUM INSCRIPTIONS
(I. KHARTOUM COPT. AND GREEK)***

INTRODUCTION

AFTER THE PUBLICATION of the catalogues of inscriptions in the Sudan National Museum (SNM), in both Coptic and Greek, by Jacques van der Vliet and Adam Łajtar respectively,¹ a study of the inscriptional material kept in the storerooms of the National Museum in Khartoum would seem unnecessary. Nevertheless, the problematic registration of several hundreds of objects as well as the mislocation of an even larger number than that, due to the conditions of access – and subsequently of research – in the main storeroom as well as in the storeroom ‘Z’ of the SNM, have made this paper worthwhile.

The purpose of this article is an attempt to clarify the problems of research in the SNM – as experienced in the period between September 2006 and December 2007 – that must have also faced the two scholars

* This paper has profited on various topics by Grzegorz OCHAŁA. All photographs appearing in the text were taken by the author.

¹ J. VAN DER VLIET, *Catalogue of the Coptic Inscriptions in the Sudan National Museum at Khartoum (I. Kharotum Copt.)* [= OLA 121], Leuven – Paris – Dudley, MA 2003; A. ŁAJTAR, *Catalogue of the Greek Inscriptions in the Sudan National Museum at Khartoum (I. Khartoum Greek)* [= OLA 122], Leuven – Paris – Dudley, MA 2003.

responsible for the aforementioned catalogues, by categorizing them in a logical way. Then, the issues raised will be applied on the case study of the inscriptional material offering initially some corrigenda to the two catalogues, and eventually suggesting a set of addenda to them. The latter would complete the data base of such material from the SNM, thus offering a glimpse into what could or should be done in the future with it, either in the frame of the single museum, or in relation to material kept and/or exhibited in other institutions.

PROBLEMS OF RESEARCH IN THE SNM

The medieval inscriptional material from (Christian) Nubia consists of some hundreds of texts written on stone and natural rock, terracotta plaques and pottery, metal and wood, bone and leather, parchment and paper, etc. The bulk of this material is gravestones, while documents of administrative or archival, liturgical or magical function have also been recognized. The languages used are mainly Greek and Coptic, then Old Nubian, and finally Arabic. The respective scripts are – with the exception of Arabic – all based on the Greek script. This fact underlines the difficult access for Sudanese researchers since the study of either Greek, or Coptic, or even Old Nubian, is almost non-existent in the academic institutions of the country.

Thus, the task of presenting this material to the academic world remains the responsibility of foreign scholars. In most cases, and after the colonial period of modern Sudanese history, these have been individuals who come to the Sudan as members of missions in their fieldwork seasons. Practical reasons, such as bureaucracy and the high cost of living in the Sudanese capital, are serious factors for the length of time a scholar can spend at the SNM. Moreover, this institution does not provide yet to the scholars a complete data base of its possessions which they could use as access keys to specific categories of possessions, as can be the case of the inscriptional material. Finally, most of the older publications have not produced concordance tables for the identification/location of the published objects in the SNM exhibitions and/or storerooms.

These problems were obviously met by van der Vliet and Łajtar too. The difference with the present paper is that the author has worked for a whole year on the formation of a catalogue of the medieval possessions of the SNM and a subsequent reorganization of these in the storerooms of the museum. Lately, works have also started in the old storeroom 'Z' with the idea that all inscriptions located there will be transferred to the main storeroom and subsequently be reorganized there in spatial order in relation to the whole of the medieval inscriptional collection of the SNM. This work is being developed as these lines are composed.²

Thus, what can be securely offered at this stage of working with this material are a set of corrigenda and a list of addenda to the aforementioned catalogues of van der Vliet and Łajtar.

CORRIGENDA

Starting with the Coptic Catalogue, one can make the following remarks concerning paericular inscriptions:

1) *I. Khartoum Copt.* 1 and 2 are catalogued with unknown registration number. The former, however, had the registration number SNM 24338, and the latter has recently been given the re-registration number SNM 32122. Both are now exhibited in the new display of the Medieval Gallery of the SNM.

2) *I. Khartoum Copt.* 17 (SNM 3990) is not included in the concordances' table with the inventory numbers of the SNM.

3) *I. Khartoum Copt.* 23 appeared with unknown registration too. It was identified with SNM 23166, and it has found its place in the new display.

4) *I. Khartoum Copt.* 11 (SNM 4500) has been sent to the Nyala Museum and *I. Khartoum Copt.* 27 (SNM 15) to the Ali Dinar Museum in el-Fashir.

5) Among the finds from Mushu, the upper part of SNM 11463 (*I. Khar-*

²The author would like on this occasion to express his gratitude to the Director of Museums in the National Corporation of Antiquities and Museums (NCAM) of the Islamic Republic of the Sudan, Dr. ABDEL RAHMAN ALI, for his constant support of all the ideas and works in the Sudan National Museum.

toum Copt. 28) has been sent to the Kerma Museum. Then, *I. Khartoum Copt.* 42 appeared in van der Vliet's catalogue as unnumbered and uncatalogued. The whole set of smaller finds from Mushu (*I. Khartoum Copt.* 29–42) have been located in drawer no. 27 in cupboard κ IX of the main storeroom in the SNM. The fragments *I. Khartoum Copt.* 42, and *I. Khartoum Copt.* 40b have been given the registration number SNM 32197.

6) Finally, *I. Khartoum Copt.* 126, 127 and 128 have been retrieved and their new numbers are SNM 32194, 32195 and 32196, respectively.

Moving on to the Greek Catalogue, the following remarks should be made:

1) *I. Khartoum Greek* 2 is correctly identified with number 63/1/58. Registration number SNM 23378, however, does not refer to the same object as Łajtar suggests. SNM 23378 is the registration number of *I. Khartoum Copt.* 2 (Bishop Aaron's stela now in the exhibition at the SNM).

2) *I. Khartoum Greek* 15 is wrongly corrected as SNM 20 rather than 21, which was the initial number given by Ugo Monneret de Villard. The early scholar was not mistaken: SNM 21 is the number seen on the stone, and the description in the museum's register entry matches perfectly with the object, just as the dimensions given with the one published by Łajtar himself. SNM 20 has different dimensions and appearance than *I. Khartoum Greek* 15. That piece – another Greek inscription – has neither got the same dimensions with any of the objects not located in any of the two catalogues nor has it been identified in the storerooms of the SNM yet. SNM 21 has been sent to the Kerma Museum.

3) *I. Khartoum Greek* 26 is identified in the concordances' table with SNM 27574. This is wrong. The correct number is SNM 27594.

4) Since the time of Łajtar's publication, *I. Khartoum Greek* 18 has been given the registration number SNM 30149, and *I. Khartoum Greek* 79 the registration number SNM 31251.

5) *I. Khartoum Greek* 8 (SNM 3726) has been sent to the Museum at el-Damer and *I. Khartoum Greek* 29 (SNM 11562) to the Nyala Museum.

6) *I. Khartoum Greek* 4 and 19 await to be located in the storerooms so as to identify eventually their concordant registration.

7) *I. Khartoum Greek* 5 (SNM 32141), 80 (SNM 469), 81 (SNM 32140), 82



Fig. 1. SNM 24841: The 'retrieved' Ezana stela (*I. Khartoum Greek 78*)

(SNM 14451) and 83 (SNM 32115) have already been identified and/or given a new museum number.

8) Finally, *I. Khartoum Greek 78* (SNM 24841) has been retrieved and the photo, lacking from Łajtar's catalogue, can now be presented here (fig. 1).

ADDENDA

The list of the objects located by van der Vliet and Łajtar is rather accurate. In the conditions they worked in, it is even surprising that only a small number was not located. These are the following, copied as they appear in the registers of the SNM:

<i>SNM nos.</i>	<i>Provenance</i>	<i>Description from the registers of the museum</i>
3	Geteina	Seven bricks of which two are inscribed: 1. reads leak him 2. him = <i>MIXAHA</i> backwards 3. Iscultisou A monument with inscription in characters similar to those on the bricks was found in Darfour. It is now in the Museum at Constantinople.
20	Khandaq	Greek Inscription on rectangular block, wind-weathered. Red sandstone. White marble (49.2 x 32 x 8.3 cms.).
29	Khandaq	Funeral inscription on stone of a certain Angelosko, in late Greek. About 1000 A.D. published in J.E.A. vol. XIII, pp. 228–229 (22.5 x 17 cms.).
3157	Tangasi Island	Perforated block of sandstone (like Halfa brick) roughly inscribed in Greek <i>MIXAHA</i> and <i>ΠΕΤΡΟΣ</i> on one side and <i>ΙΩΑΝΝΗΣ</i> and ? <i>ΑΒΒΑΜΗ</i> ? on the other. From Christian site in Omda's village.
5409	Tondi, south of Wawa Rest House	Part of sandstone plaque inscribed with letters <i>ΑΜΓ</i> /// (in Greek?). 7.5 cms. long 3.8 cms. wide
5931	Faras	Fragment of uraeus cornice with Coptic writing (<i>ΟΓΡ</i>).
5932	Faras	Small sandstone slab lettered " <i>K B</i> " Exc. No 1/2518.
9496	el-Usheir Island	Inscribed red brick from church site.
9504	el-Koro	Fragments of inscribed pottery tiles. A, H N & V: published by Łajtar 9504 Bb, DD, I, W & U K.III.15: Unpublished.

<i>SNM nos.</i>	<i>Provenance</i>	<i>Description from the registers of the museum</i>
9509	el-Koro	Fragment of inscribed tile with Maltese cross in relief.
9510	el-Koro	Fragment of inscribed (?) circular tile with cross in relief.
11313	Umm Ruweim	Collection of nine sherds of Christian type, mostly fragments of tomb stelae or crosses. Lettered (a) to (i).
11446	Ganetti	Fragment of tomb stela.
11453	Ganetti	Fragment of inscription, in Greek. Marble, small ink-stain acquired in transit.
17509	Meinarti	Sandstone incised tablet, rectangular shaped with fine incised pattern on flat faces.
18108	Meinarti	Corner fragment of tombstone – only faint suggestion of an inscription.
18111	Meinarti	Decorative relief. <i>IC XC</i> on positive relief on one edge and rope pattern on positive relief on other three edges.
18386	Semna	Fragment of sandstone incised with Greek, Coptic or Old Nubian letters. The remains of three rows are left.
19355	Musawwarat	Old Nubian inscription.
19369	Musawwarat	Part of the Old Nubian (?) inscription.
20935	Ukma	Stone with cut impression and decoration, quartzite. Greek letter and corner of rectangular or star (?) motive.
23165	Ukma	Fragments of a dried mud plaque, inscribed on both sides, with a Greek text.
25423	Old Dongola	Fragment of marble stela (H: 5,5 cms; W: 6 cms).

<i>SNM nos.</i>	<i>Provenance</i>	<i>Description from the registers of the museum</i>
27940	Letti Basin; brought to dig house of the Canadian Mission in Hambukol by local people	Roughly cubic sandstone block inscribed on two sides. 1 lacke face inscribed with rosette and knot work pattern, small side face has inscription on it. A single line is completed – other side rough and unfinished. Inscription in Greek, Coptic or Old Nubian.
30150	Hambukol, North Kom	Grey stone cross inscribed on one side with Greek letters. Good condition.
31101	Suarda	Sandstone stela inscribed in Coptic.
31102	el-Ushier Island	Left hand side fragment of a terracotta funerary stela in Greek with the Euchologion Mega type of prayer for the dead.
31103	Goshabi	Fragment of a round-topped terracotta stela in Greek containing the opening of the Euchologion Mega type of prayer for the dead.
32111	Abu Haraz	Fired brick with inscription in Greek letters.
32120	Old Dongola	Fragment of an inscribed round marble stela reused as a door socket.
32199	Faras	Marble stela in Coptic for Bishop Petros I.

1) SNM 3 consists of seven red bricks of which at least four are inscribed. The larger one (40 x 14 x 6 cm) has the name *Μιχαήλ* written in inverse order, which suggests that it was used as a kind of stamping tool (perhaps for wet clay walls); the same writing should be understood for the other two fragments too; while the larger red brick (22 x 18 x 6 cm), chipped on the right side, reads a name ΚΟΥΤΚΟΥ (?), which cannot be explained. The matter as to whether these are carvings for protective purposes, or a kind of stamp tool must remain open. They were executed by applying the fingers on the still wet clay of the brick.

2) As already said, SNM 20 has not been located yet.

3) SNM 29 is kept at Sheikhan Museum in el-Obeid.

4) SNM 3157 is the earliest registered possession in the SNM from a category of non-pottery inscribed objects which contain either just a small number of words, or even a set of letters/ancient numbers. In this case the inscription concerns names on the sides of the block (15 x 10 x 6 cm), perhaps of an apotropaic character. The names are Πέτρος and Μιχαήλ, Ἰωάννης and ἄββα Μη... – with the two betas seemingly reversed.

5) SNM 5409, inscribed with three Greek letters ΑΠΛ, might have been – according to its dimensions – a stamp for an amphora mud seal.³

6) SNM 5932 (20 x 10.5 x 6.5 cm) preserves the two letters ΚΒ, which can be a number (22). It might have been a loom weight.

7) SNM 5931 seems to be a fragment (10 x 6.5 x 2 cm) of a larger decorative element, and more specifically of a frieze of uraei, underneath which an inscription in Greek might have been running. The letters ΟΓΡ are still visible, while traces of another one can be discerned to the right of these (perhaps Δ, Α, or Ζ). It would be interesting to test the hypothesis that this is a fragment of a monument of much earlier date (Meroitic?).

8) SNM 9496 has already been presented in the frame of the present author's contribution to the 11th International Congress of Nubian Studies held in Warsaw, between 25 August and 2 September 2006. It is difficult to ascertain whether this is an object which was set in a wall and thus its writing might suggest a magical invocation of Jesus Christ (the Α and Ω, the beginning and ending of all), or whether it was used as a 'tool', a stamp of the sort that objects of SNM 3 might have been used. The carving was also executed with fingers on the wet clay, like in SNM 3 (with which it shares almost the same dimensions: 30 x 14 x 6 cm).

9) SNM 9504 is an entry consisting of more than twenty-five fragments of terracotta plaques from which nine seem to have been inscribed or certainly have belonged to terracotta funerary stelae. In general, at Koro sixteen such objects have been uncovered, without counting the similar numbers of terracotta sepulchral crosses inscribed with the wording φώς – ζωή ('Light – Life'). Łajtar published register entries A, H, N, and V, while here

³ Opinion of Grzegorz OCHAŁA who has seen the seals on the mud stoppers of amphorae from Old Dongola.

are presented for the first time entries Bb (7 x 6 x 3 cm), Dd (7 x 5 x 3 cm), I (8 x 10 x 3 cm), W (6 x 10 x 3.5 cm), and U (5 x 4 x 3 cm). None contains significant parts of a text. Two come from the left-hand side of the stelae.

10) SNM 9509 and SNM 9510 are round fragments of terracotta plaques, both decorated with a cross and a raised frame. Both should be understood as the upper part fragments of round-topped funerary stelae. SNM 9509 (14 x 20 x 2–3 cm) seems to contain in embossed capitals the letters *ΠΝ* with a supralinear stroke above, most probably a part of the abbreviation $\overline{\pi\nu\alpha}$ for the word $\pi\nu(\epsilon\acute{\upsilon}\mu)\alpha$ (or in one of the oblique cases), which is very common in opening lines of the Euchologion Mega type of funerary inscriptions in Greek from Nubia.⁴ As to the text of the latter (17 x 12 x 2–2.5 cms.), it seems that it contains the article δ and the abbreviation $\overline{\theta\varsigma}$ for $\theta\epsilon\acute{o}\varsigma$ (the God), which might be an indication that this text is also an opening of an Euchologion Mega type of prayer for the dead.

11) SNM 11313 also contains fragments of terracotta sepulchral crosses inscribed with the common wording $\phi\acute{\omega}\varsigma - \zeta\omega\acute{\eta}$.⁵

12) SNM 11446 (9 x 5 x 3 cm) is a fragment of another terracotta funerary stela. The only preserved word can very well be the genitive $\sigma\alpha\rho\kappa\acute{o}\varsigma$, suggesting another instance of the very common Euchologion Mega type of prayer for the dead.

13) SNM 11453 (8.5 x 5 x 0.9 cm) is a tiny fragment of a marble stela. The text can not be reconstructed at all, but the finding of these two fragments in the village of Ganetti on the west bank from the Letti basin testifies to the importance of the area in the literary world of Christian Nubia.

14) SNM 17509 might be another instance of a loom weight. It is inscribed with the letters *ΠΙΦ* preceded by a cross, while on the back (?) side a letter *A* is carved.

15) SNM 18108 and SNM 18111 have already been presented by William Y. Adams in the final reports of the excavations at Meinarti.⁶

⁴ The reading was suggested by Adam ŁAJTAR.

⁵ See above, no. 9 and below, no. 23.

⁶ W. Y. ADAMS, *Meinarti*, II: *The Early and Classic Christian Phases* [= *Sudan Archaeological Research Society Publication* 6], London 2001, pls. 35 e2 and 36 a–b, respectively.



Fig. 3. SMN 23165: Foundation deposit (?) inscription on mud (text on both sides) from Akasha

The preserved fragment reads: *P* (horizontal line), *Λ* (corner), *O* (vertical line). At least another letter can be discerned under *O*.

20) SNM 23165 (fig. 3) is the most interesting *addendum* to the two catalogues, since it seems to be a text of magical function inscribed on a dried mud plaque. This plaque had been found in the north-east angle of the Ukma Church and it can as well be interpreted as a foundation deposit for it. The plaque is very friable and already in several small

pieces. The dimensions of the largest reconstructed part is 8 x 7 x 1.5 cm. It is written on both sides with a sharp instrument on dried clay.⁷

21) SNM 25423 is a very small left-hand side fragment of a marble inscription. It just preserves the letters *M* and possibly *H*. Nothing can be said with certainty.

22) SNM 27940 has not been located yet.

23) SNM 30150 is the only example of a sepulchral cross inscribed on stone with the wording $\phi\acute{\omega}\varsigma - \zeta\omega\acute{\eta}$ ('Light – Life'). A complete presentation of all such fragments from terracotta objects in the SNM,⁸ and in Nubia in general, is under preparation by the author.

24) SNM 31102 and 31103 have been published by the present author in two occasions.⁹ SNM 31101 has also been studied by the present author but the final publication was in the hands of Salah Omer el-Sadig, the late Director of Field Work in the NCAM.¹⁰

25) SNM 32111 (fig. 4) is a rare type of funerary stela (?). It is made on a red brick (36 x 17 x 6 cm), and might have been used as a header with its wider side visible on the outer surface of the superstructure of a grave. It was found at a site near the modern town of Wad Medani. This is the southernmost inscription in any of the medieval scripts known from the Sudan, and thus can offer a good insight to the linguistic variations of the languages which were in use. The text reads:

⁷ The object has already been presented by J. RUDHARDT, 'Inscription trouvée dans l'église d'Ukma', [in:] C. MAYSTRE, *Akasha* 11, Geneva 1996, pp. 20–23 (some photos taken by the mission along with some notes were found in Tomas HÄGG's personal archive and further details were supplemented).

⁸ Apart from the finds from Koro there is a set of unregistered objects of this category from Ghazali.

⁹ A. TSAKOS, 'Two funerary stelae in Greek from Christian Nubia', [in:] *Greaco-Arabica* 9–10, *Festschrift in Honour of V. Christides*, Athens 2004, pp. 365–381; IDEM, 'Terracotta funerary stelae from Christian Nubia', [in:] W. GODLEWSKI & A. ŁAJTAR (eds.), *Between the Cataracts. Proceedings of the 11th Conference for Nubian Studies, Warsaw University, 27 August – 2 September 2006* 11 [= *PAM Supplement Series* 2.2], to be published in 2010, pp. 683–694.

¹⁰ It is the wish of the author to see a collection of papers dedicated to the memory of the Sudanese colleague in which the complete publication of this inscription would be the least of contributions.



Fig. 4 SMN 32111: Funerary stela inscribed on a red brick from a site near Wad Medani

ENΘAC...
 † καὶ ΟΙ ΘΝ κύριε
ΑΠΕΣ ἐν κόλπις
 4 *Αβραὰμ καὶ Ἰσαὰκ*
καὶ Ἰακώβ τάδη
καὶ ὄμον

Apart from the expression *ἐν κόλπις Ἀβραὰμ καὶ Ἰσαὰκ καὶ Ἰακώβ* ('in the bosom of Abraham, Isaak and Jacob'), which was also recognized by Father Giovanni Vantini, who was the first one to see the object,¹¹ the rest of the text remains incomprehensible. Perhaps it is due to some local use of the Greek script and/or language.

26) SNM 32120 (fig. 5) is a very interesting fragment (24 x 15 x 4 cm) of a circular (?) marble stela, perhaps an earlier offering table. It was also reused in later times as a door socket (as indicated by a hole of c. 4 cm in

¹¹ Fr. G. VANTINI, 'The remotest places reached by Nubian Christianity in the Sudan', *Nubica et Æthiopica* 4/5 (1999), pp. 347–350.



Fig. 5. SMN 32120: Fragment of a re-used inscribed round marble stela from Old Dongola

diameter). Fragments of two parts of what seems to be the same inscription are preserved. The first one occupies the raised border of the main epigraphic field in the center. On this border there must have been a text running in two lines. The preserved part reads:

.χερσί[
]σων ποιησ[

The text must be referring to some act of creation, possibly divine.

The second text, which occupies the central epigraphic field, contains a series of abbreviations, perhaps numerals,¹² but also the phrase [πάσ]ης σαρκός, which allows the identification of at least this part of the text as an Euchologion Mega type of prayer for the dead.

¹² KHIDIR EISA ADAM, 'The so-called Abdallah Ibn Abi Sarh's mosque at Old Dongola', [in:] *Études nubiennes. Conférence de Genève. Actes du VII^e Congrès d'études nubiennes, 3-8 septembre 1990*, II: *Communications*, Genève 1992, pp. 278-279, mentions the stela SNM 32120 and attaches a tracing. The stela comes from Old Dongola and bears the date AM 590 = AD 874.

27) SNM 32199 is a very fine marble stela in Coptic, commemorating the death of Petros I, bishop of Faras, who died in AD 999. The stela was obviously not located by van der Vliet, since it is not even identified in the registers of the SNM, but it had already been published by Stefan Jakobielski and Jadwiga Kubińska.¹³

28) Finally, among the unregistered objects from the excavations at Ghazali, a small fragment of a terracotta stela, preserving five illegible letters in three lines of text, has been found in drawer 11 of cupboard K VII. Its dimensions are: max. width: 6.5 cm; max. height: 9.5 cm; thickness: 2 cm. The object will remain unregistered until further work is undertaken on the complete set of finds from Ghazali, which still remain unstudied in the main storeroom of the SNM.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

These objects, along with the latest finds from the Polish missions which are published in various journals or are under publication by Łajtar, complete the data base of the medieval inscriptional material in the SNM, as known up until the end of 2007. They can be divided in the following categories:

- a) Funerary stelae (SNM 20, 29, 9504, 9509, 9510, 11446, 11453, 18108, 18386, 20935, 25423, 31101–31103, 32111, 32120, and 32199);
- b) Sepulchral crosses (SNM 11313, 30150 and Unregistered Objects from Ghazali, el-Koro e.a.);
- c) Loom weights (SNM 5932 and 17509);
- d) Texts on objects of architectural use/architectural blocks (SNM 18111, 19355, 19369, and 27940);
- e) Terracotta bricks of unknown use, possibly either of apotropaic function or used as stamps (SNM 3 and 9496);
- f) A stamp for an amphora mud clay seal (SNM 5409);

¹³ S. JAKOBIELSKI, *A History of the Bishopric of Pachoras on the Basis of Coptic Inscriptions* [= *Faras III*], Warszawa 1972, pp. 135–139; Jadwiga KUBIŃSKA, *Inscriptions grecques chrétiennes* [= *Faras IV*], Varsovie 1974, p. 56.

- g) Texts of magical character (SNM 23165);
- h) Inscribed objects of unknown functions (SNM 3157 and 5931).

It is almost certain that further research in the storerooms of the SNM will reveal more inscribed objects of a medieval date, especially when the architectural blocks stored there are more closely examined, and will perhaps diversify the categorization presented here. Moreover, no reference has been made to the various inscriptions on objects in the new display of the old Faras Gallery at the SNM, due to the pending situation of the related publication after the completion of the UNESCO project for the rehabilitation of that Gallery.

Nevertheless, there is already a last category of inscribed objects which has not been touched upon in this paper, although a sample has found its way in the Coptic catalogue of van der Vliet (*I. Khartoum Copt.* 22 and 24). The reference is to inscribed pottery fragments, ostraca e.a., which, in the opinion of the present author, should form a special catalogue apart. Suffice to say here that this set of objects contains the bulk of written records in Old Nubian stored in the SNM. They also compile an interesting collection of texts in Arabic (also found written in ink on bones). The majority, however, consists of names and symbols (monograms, cryptograms etc.), which hardly allow any identification of their linguistic provenance.

As a final remark, it would be a praiseworthy undertaking to compile a catalogue of all the known inscriptions from Nubia stored and/or exhibited around the world, as a result of the history of archaeology in the Sudan, and of the instances of legal or illegal trade in antiquities.

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