Local Community Intangible Cultural Heritage Associated with Gebel El-Barkal and Napatan Region Archaeological Sites: Values, Identity, and Ownership Claims

by

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A thesis submitted to the University of Birmingham for the degree of
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Ironbridge International Institute for Cultural Heritage
School of History and Cultures
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University of Birmingham
2023

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this effort to my parents Hamid and Ganawa

To the memory of my brilliant brother Mohieldeen Hamid (1957 -2010)

To the memory of Dr. Abdullah Bola and Ibrahim Babiker

ABSTRACT

Individual scholars, governments, and international organisations have become increasingly interested in studying the interrelation between local communities and their heritage, notably archaeological sites. Most of these studies are limited in their approach and scope. First, they are driven by the national and international official heritage discourse, which presents the conceptualizations of the elite and not the voices of the local communities, whereas only a few of them give significant weight to the voices of the local communities. Secondly, these studies have also represented the common mode of separation between Tangible and Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH), accentuating official authenticity criteria in favour of the social realities associated with these archaeological sites. Thirdly, the method of involving local communities tends to be a top-down process, which creates either a disconnection mode with archaeological sites or an escalation of ownership claim conflict between local communities and national official state institutions.

This study explores the challenges of confronting the above limitation in a Sudanese context, through the lens of uses and modes of local community engagement with Gebel El-Barkal and Napatan region archaeological sites. This heritage setting is designated by UNESCO as a World Heritage Site of Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) to humanity, as well as being of considerable symbolic value in Sudan as a national monument; likewise, it plays a role in a multitude of more informal contexts of local everyday social and cultural life. Even if it is less well considered, the context of local social and cultural life is imbued with rich meanings that are also part of a larger and more complex process of heritage-making and its contestation, which it is critically important to understand.

In this study I argue that a bottom-up approach is the most effective method for addressing the relationship between local communities and archaeological sites. Moreover, I argue that adopting this method should begin with acquiring a sound understanding of how local

communities conceptualise archaeological sites, their sense of place, and the values associated therewith. Examining local communities' ICH associated with archaeological sites is the most efficient method for achieving this goal. This assertion is based on the notion that ICH linked with the site is a form of knowledge that scholars may use to deepen their understanding of the social and cultural context of the local community. Furthermore, ICH is an alternative discourse that competes with the Authorized Heritage Discourse (AHD). Thus, local communities' ICH, national communities' AHD, and the international conception of OUV of the site as defined by UNESCO all express distinct identity claims and values.

This qualitative research employed ethnography and phenomenology to investigate the local communities and their ICH associated with the investigated sites. Employing this methodology, this thesis examines cultural values of these archaeological sites from the perspective of the local communities. Social contact also furnishes information and discourse that contribute to the construction of this reality, responsible for the complex process of formation of identities and values of crucial importance for uses and meanings of the site. Capturing these diverse realities necessitates critical attention to understanding a range of important factors that position different communities in relation to the site, including the role of ethnicity, religion, social class, gender, and age.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This PhD has been a truly life-changing experience for me, and it would not have been possible without the support and encouragement of many people.

First and foremost, I am grateful to my supervisors, Dr. John Carman, Dr. Helle Jorgensen, and Dr. Lucie Ryzova, who have inspired me throughout my research with their great wisdom, immense knowledge, and wealth of experience. Their constant support and patience in both my personal and professional life made this work achievable.

I would also like to express my gratitude to the staff and community of the Ironbridge International Institute for Cultural Heritage, School of Arts and Law, and University of Birmingham for their generosity and encouragement. It is their kind assistance and support that has made my time at the University truly rewarding.

I am grateful to the local communities in Merowe province, Sudan for their cooperation during my fieldwork, especially my older brother Ibrahim Babiker (*Wad El-Saida*) for his warm welcome, valuable information, emotional and logistical support. I am also grateful to all of my colleagues and friends at the National Corporation of Antiquities and Museums (NCAM), especially Murtada Bushara Mohamed Bushara, the managers of the world heritage sites of Gebel El-Barkal and the Napatan region, loai Shams Alola, Alsamani Ezeldin, and Sami Mohamed Elamin for their assistance during the fieldwork. This work would also not have been feasible without the advice and support of Dr Salah Mohammed Ahmed, whose valuable comments and encouragement substantially affected how I filled the gap of several areas connected to his extensive expertise in both Merowe province and archaeological work in Sudan. During the fieldwork, I was grateful to the archaeological mission of Michigan University in El-Kurru, as well as the archaeological mission of Dongola University's Faculty of Arts and Human Studies.

I would also like to express my gratitude to my immediate and extended family. It would have been difficult for me to complete my research without their wonderful understanding and encouragement throughout the last few years. My heartfelt gratitude goes out to all of my friends in Sudan and UK who opened their hearts and homes to me during this difficult period. Many thanks also to Dr. Mohamed Ahmed Mahmoud, who convinced me during our multiple conversations that I should pursue my doctorate degree and who made it possible through his consistent support and follow-up. My special thanks also go to Nicola Taylor, University of Birmingham for her proofreading assistance, and I am terribly saddened that she passed away before she was able to see the results of her effort. I am grateful to Ahmed Hussein Abdelrahman Adam, University of Khartoum for offering me accommodation to reside in Khartoum while I collect primary data. I am also grateful to Elzain Elgamri, Dr. Rischard Bigambo, Mugtaba Hamid, Yasir Elamin, Adil Babikir, Hafiz Kheir, Dr. Taha Osman, Mohammed Hamdi, and Mohanned Elmukashfi for their assistance and time.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT ---------- v

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS ---------- vii

TABLE OF CONTENTS ---------- ix

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS ---------- xv

LIST OF TABLES ---------- xvii

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS ---------- xviii

GLOSSARY OF ARABIC TERMS ---------- xix

CHAPTER ONE ---------- 1

INTRODUCTION ---------- 1

1.1 Introduction ---------- 1

1.2 Background of the Study ---------- 3

1.2.1 The Relation Between Local Communities and Heritage from Global Heritage Management Perspectives 3

1.2.2 The Relation Between Local Communities and Heritage in Sudan 8

1.3 Research Focus and Justification of Research Problems ---------- 10

1.4 Objective and Significance of the Research ---------- 12

1.5 Research Questions ---------- 13

1.6 Overall Research Methodology and Key Concepts ---------- 13

1.7 Structure of the Thesis ---------- 16

1.8 Conclusion ---------- 19

CHAPTER TWO ---------- 22

LITERATURE REVIEW ---------- 22

2.1 Introduction ---------- 22

2.2 Tangible and Intangible Cultural Heritage ---------- 24

2.3 Community Modes of Engagement with Archaeological Sites ---------- 29

2.4 The Values Associated with Archaeological Sites ---------- 34

2.5 Identity Concepts in The Heritage Studies Discourse ---------- 36

2.5.1 Identity Levels, Dimensions, and Boundaries 39

2.6 Ownership Claim Concepts and Theory ---------- 44
2.7 Sense of Place, Social Memory, and Social Knowledge ---------- 45
2.8 Conclusion---------- 49

CHAPTER THREE ----------52

THE HISTORICAL, SOCIOCULTURAL, AND GEOGRAPHICAL SETTING -------52
3.1 Introduction---------- 52
3.2 Sudan: The National Historical, Social, and Cultural Context---------- 53
3.2.1 Historical Setting of Sudan.....56
3.2.2 Socio-Cultural Context and Question of Identity in Sudan.....58
3.3 The Merowe Province Context ---------- 61
3.3.1 Merowe Province Cultural and Ethnic Landscape 63
3.3.2 Local Community and Religious Identity in Merowe Province 71
3.3.3 Social Context and Gender Construction in Merowe Province Local Communities 72
3.4 Gebel El-Barkal and Napatan Region ---------- 72
3.4.1 The Archaeological Sites Management 73
3.4.2 Gebel El-Barkal and Napatan Region Landscape Identity 76
3.5 Recent Developments Impacting on Local Communities' Engagement with Gebel El-Barkal and Napatan Region ---------- 92
3.5.1 Gebel El-Barkal Festival for Tourism, Culture, and Investment 92
3.5.2 The Qatar and Sudan Archaeological Project (QSAP) 95
3.5.3 The Construction of Merowe Dam 97
3.6 Conclusion---------- 99

CHAPTER FOUR ---------- 100

METHODOLOGY AND DATA COLLECTION METHODS ---------- 100
4.1 Introduction----------100
4.2 Qualitative Methods and Qualitative Data----------101
4.3 The Ethnographic Approach ----------102
4.3.1 The Benefit of an Ethnographic Approach.....103
4.3.2 The Challenge of the Ethnographic Approach.....104

4.4 The Phenomenological Approach (PA) ----------105

4.4.1 The Benefit of a Phenomenological Approach 106

4.4.2 The Challenge of a Phenomenological Approach..... 107

4.5 Methods of Data Collection ----------108

4.5.1 Data Collection and Fieldwork Preparation and Planning 110

4.5.2 Approaching the Field and Data Collection 113

4.6 Data Collection Tools ----------119

4.6.1 Interviews 119

4.6.2 Participant Observation 126

4.6.3 Themes Emerging from the Data..... 128

4.7 Data Analysis and Interpretation Methods ----------129

4.8 Conclusion----------130

CHAPTER FIVE---------- 131

THE MODES OF ENGAGEMENT WITH GEBEL EL-BARKAL AND NAPATAN REGION ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES ---------- 131

5.1 Introduction----------131

5.2 The Local Communities' Modes of Direct Engagement with the Site ----------137

5.2.1 Visiting the Site/Place 137

5.2.2 Social Activities and Cultural Practise Associated with Gebel El-Barkal and Napatan Archaeological Sites..... 140

5.3 Local Communities' Engagement with the Site/Place in Social Imaginaries ----------145

5.4 Local Communities' Engagement Barriers and Challenges ----------158

5.4.2 Local Communities' Engagement Barriers and Challenges from Archaeologist Perspectives 167

5.5 The National and International Communities Attached to the Sites ---------- 167

5.6 Conclusion ---------- 170

CHAPTER SIX ---------- 172

LOCAL, NATIONAL AND GLOBAL COMMUNITIES' ASSOCIATED VALUES WITH GEBEL EL-BARKAL AND THE NAPATAN REGION'S ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES ---------- 172

6.1 Introduction ---------- 172

6.2 Theoretical Background ---------- 173

6.3 Local Social, Cultural, Spiritual, Aesthetic, Historical, and Economic Value ---------- 174

6.3.1 The Spirituality and The Continuity of The Sacred Conceptualization for Gebel El-Barkal and The Napatan Region 179

6.3.2 The Historical Value of The Site/Place Among Local Communities 180

6.3.3 The Importance of The Site/Place in Local Communities' Cultural Context 181

6.3.4 Gebel El-Barkal as An Aesthetic Site/Place 182

6.3.5 Social Associated Value 183

6.3.6 The Economic Associated Value 187

6.4 Local Communities Sense of Place ---------- 188

6.5 Gebel El-Barkal in the National Authorised Heritage Discourse and Global Discourse -191

6.6 The Opportunities that Enhance Local Communities Engagement with Gebel El-Barkal ---------- 193

6.6.1 Gebel El-Barkal International Festival and Local Community Associated Values 193

6.6.2 The Qatar-Sudan Archaeological Project and Local Communities' Associated Values 194

6.6.3 The Impact of Merowe Dam Construction on Local Communities Associated Value 197

6.7 Conclusion ---------- 198

CHAPTER SEVEN ---------- 201

LOCAL COMMUNITY IDENTITIES, OWNERSHIP CLAIM CONFLICTS, AND THEIR IMPACTS ON CULTURAL PRACTICE ---------- 201

7.1 Introduction ---------- 201

7.2 The Conceptualization of Identity and Ownership Claims Within Cultural Heritage Academic Discourse ---------- 202

7.2.1 Conceptions of Identity 203

7.2.2 Ownership Claim Concepts 204

7.3 The Influence of Identity on Community Mode of Engagement with Gebel El-Barkal and Napatan Region ---------- 205

7.4 How Gebel El-Barkal Provides the Local and National Community with A Sense of Identity ---------- 212

7.5 The Ownership Claims Conflict Towards Gebel El-Barkal and Napatan Region --------- 218

7.5.1 The Conflict within the Local Communities Themselves 219

7.5.2 The Conflict Between the Local Community and Heritage Authority 221

7.5.3 The Conflict at the National Community Scale 224

7.6 Conclusion ---------- 227

CHAPTER EIGHT ---------- 229

THE ROLE OF LOCAL INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE AND IDENTITIES IN UNDERSTANDING ENGAGEMENTS WITH THE ---------- 229

Sites ---------- 229

8.1 Introduction ---------- 229

8.2 Local Communities' Intangible Cultural Heritage Associated with Gebel El-Barkal Site/Place and Napatan Region Archaeological Sites ---------- 231

8.3 Local Communities Modes of Engagement with Gebel El-Barkal Site/Place and Napatan Region Archaeological Sites ---------- 237

8.4 Local Communities' Sense of Place and Associated Values ---------- 239

8.5 The Influence of Identity on Gebel El-Barkal Local Community Mode of Engagement, Associated Values, and Ownership Claims ---------- 270

8.6 Ownership Claim Conflict Towards Gebel El-Barkal and Napatan Region Archaeological Sites ---------- 278

8.7 Conclusion ---------- 284

CHAPTER NINE ---------- 286

CONCLUSION ---------- 286

9.1 Introduction ---------- 286

9.2 An Overview of the Research Findings ---------- 286

9.3 Contribution of the Study ---------- 290

9.3.1 Theoretical Contribution 290

9.3.2 Contribution to the Practice 294

9.4 Strengths and limitations of this Research ---------- 296

9.4.1 Strengths 296

9.4.2 Limitations 297

9.5 Area for Further Research Directions ----------299
9.6 Conclusion and Final Remarks----------301
References ----------305

Appendices.....316

In-depth interview schedules.....316

Participant Consent Form.....318

Participant Information Sheet 320

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Figure 3. 1: Sudan Map and Neighbouring Countries..... 54
Figure 3. 2: Sudan's location within Africa..... 55
Figure 3. 3: Northern state Location within administrative divisions of Sudan . 62
Figure 3. 4: Gebel El-Barkal and Merowe province location 63
Figure 3. 5: Local communities' residential area around Gebel El-Barkal 65
Figure 3. 6: Local communities' residential areas around the pyramids and shrines at El-Kurru 67
Figure 3. 7: Local communities' residential area around El-Zooma archaeological site 68
Figure 3. 8: Local communities' residential area around Nuri pyramids..... 69
Figure 3. 9: Merowe town local communities' residential area 70
Figure 3. 10: Napatan region map, arrows pointing to Napatan archaeological sites 77
Figure 3. 11: Gebel El-Barkal and Khartoum Location map. 78
Figure 3. 12: Aerial photo showing the Merowe province and Merowe dam..... 79
Figure 3. 13: Gebel El-Barkal landscape 80
Figure 3. 14: Gebel El-Barkal pinnacle 81
Figure 3. 15: God Amun temple currently..... 82
Figure 3. 16: God Amun temple 3D imagined feature..... 83
Figure 3. 17: Ram path and the entrance of the Great Amun Temple in Gebel El-Barkal..... 84
Figure 3. 18: Gebel El-Barkal Mut Temple..... 85
Figure 3. 19: Wad El-Karsani shrine 86
Figure 3. 20: El-Kurru site main entrance..... 87
Figure 3. 21: El-Kurru Royal Cemetery 88
Figure 3. 22: Reisner laboratory remains..... 89
Figure 3. 23: Nuri archaeological site: remains of Kushite pyramids..... 90
Figure 3. 24: The Treasury in Sanam archaeological site..... 91
Figure 3. 25: El-Zooma archaeological site..... 92
Figure 3. 26: Gebel El-Barkal Festival for Tourism, Culture, and Investment.. 95
Figure 3. 27: The archaeological sites founded by The Qatar-Sudan Archaeological Project (QSAP) 97
Figure 3. 28: The Merowe dam location from Gebel El-Barkal 98

Figure 4. 1: The Geographical Location of the research setting 124

Figure 5. 1: Local couples appreciate the view from the top of Gebel El-Barkal 132
Figure 5. 2: Gebel El-Barkal Mountain in the South Side 133
Figure 5. 3: Gebel El-Barkal Archaeological Site Part One..... 134
Figure 5. 4: Gebel El-Barkal Pyramids..... 134
Figure 5. 5: Wad El-Karsani Islamic Cemetery 135
Figure 5. 6: Gebel El-Barkal Museum and a class of school children ready to visit it..... 135
Figure 5. 7: Local Community Celebrate Eid on Gebel El-Barkal (1) 141
Figure 5. 8: Local Community Celebrate Eid on Gebel El-Barkal (2) 142

Figure 5. 9: Local Community Singing and Dancing in A Group at Gebel El-Barkal. 145
Figure 5. 10: Banat El-Shiekh Place at El-Kurru Archaeological Site. 149
Figure 5. 11: El-Gebel Team Kareema 158
Figure 5. 12: University of Michigan Team Organizing a Lecture to Introduce Their Work to Local Community. 165
Figure 5. 13: Trip for Students from Darfur, University of Nyala Visiting Gebel El-Barkal 169

Figure 6. 1: A group of youth gather to sing in public at the top of Gebel El-Barkal. 185
Figure 6. 2: A group of local community members working with the archaeological mission in Gebel El-Barkal 196

Figure 7. 1: The 19 December revolution Kandaka in one of the demonstrations. 214
Figure 7. 2: Stamp created on the first anniversary of the December Revolution 214
Figure 7. 3: The 19 December revolution Kandaka icon reused. 215
Figure 7. 4: December revolution transitional government cabinet 216
Figure 7. 5: Nada El-Galaa the singer of Gebel El-Barkal song wearing an ancient queen dress 217
Figure 7. 6: An example of one of the discussion groups on Facebook 225

LIST OF TABLES

TABLE 4. 1: GUIDELINE TO DATA COLLECTION PROCESS. 110
TABLE 4. 2: CODES OF RESEARCH ETHICS AND GUIDANCE. 112
TABLE 4. 3: QUESTION TYPES 118
TABLE 6. 1: THE VARIOUS LOCAL, NATIONAL, AND INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATED VALUES. 175
TABLE 8.1: AN OVERALL VIEW OF THE LOCAL COMMUNITIES ASSOCIATED VALUES IN TERMS OF SIGNIFICANCE, MEANING, AND USES OF GEBEL EL-BARKAL SITE/PLACE AND NAPATAN REGION ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES. 240

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AHD	Authorised Heritage Discourse.
ICH	Intangible Cultural Heritage.
NADO	Nubian Archaeological Development Organisation.
NCAM	National Authority for Antiquities and Museums.
OUV	Outstanding Universal Value (of World Heritage Properties).
PA	Phenomenological Approach.
QSAP	Qatar and Sudan Archaeological Project.
SAS	Sudanese Antiquities Service.
UNESCO	The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.
WHC	World Heritage Convention.
WHS	World Heritage Site.

GLOSSARY OF ARABIC TERMS

Al-Mahdi El-Muntazar	The long-awaited Mahdi (Saviour).
Ansar El-Sunna El-Muhammadiya	The followers of prophet Mohamed.
Arab Rohal	Arab nomads/Bedouins.
Awlad El-bahar	Sons of the river.
Awlad El-balad	Sons of the country.
Baraka	A Sufi word meaning a blessing.
Dahab	Gold.
Eid El-Adha	In the Muslim world, this day is observed to celebrate. Abraham's willingness to sacrifice his son to God.
Eid El-Fitr	Celebration to marks the end of Ramadan, the Muslim holy month.
El-Eliegia	An Egyptian tribe, according to local community social knowledge.
El-Gabal	Mountain.
El-Kass	A cup.
El-Khalifa	The chief Muslim civil and religious ruler.
El-Sagia	The single form of El-Sawagi.
El-Sawagi	Water wheel machine used by farmers to raise water. from the Nile to irrigate their filed. The term also means agricultural land.
Faqis	Holy men who make teaching and studying the Quran. their life's work.
Gubba	Shrine.
Isa	Jesus.
Jahiliya	The Age of Ignorance. Refers to the era in Arabia before the arrival of Islam.
Jiin	An intelligent spirit of lower rank than the angels, able to appear in human and animal form.
Kawasha	Online social group highly engaged with archaeology. The name refers to Kush civilization.
Molouk El-Nil	Nile kings.
Moridain	Followers of a Sufi leader or sheikh
Sheikhs	Leaders of Sufi communities.
Sufi	Islamic mysticism; a set of beliefs and practises that Muslims use to draw closer to Allah and experience God on a personal level.
Ta’rib	Standard literary Arabic imposed at the expense of English and other local language.
Tamboor	Shawiga/Shaigia traditional music genre, instruments, and dance.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

The reason behind choosing Gebel El-Barkal is that the archaeological sites of the Napatan region are the one of the largest and most important archaeological sites in Sudan and present a significant historical period in Sudanese history.

The Gebel El-Barkal and Napatan region Archaeological sites are two of Sudan's largest and most important archaeological sites. Gebel El-Barkal occupies over one square kilometre of concentrated ancient remains. Historically, Gebel El-Barkal as a "Holy Mountain" was associated with the coronation of kings. Within this "Holy Mountain", many temples are situated, dating from the New Kingdom (ca. 1550–1070 B.C.) and the Napatan Period (900 to 270 BC) until the Meroitic Period (270 BC to 350 AD)(Török, 2015). In addition to its religious importance, Gebel El-Barkal represents a political centre, evidenced by the presence of remains of palaces, statues of kings and victory panels, and a range of significant burial sites including pyramids whose original form and size has occasionally been preserved. In addition to the ancient archaeological remains, Gebel El-Barkal is also known as the cemetery and shrine (*gubba)* of the Muslim sheikh *Wad El-Karsani,* who lived in the later nineteenth century and is remembered locally as a holy man with distinguished social standing. This adds a considerable associated value for the local communities around Gebel El-Barkal, and the *gubba* is still visited for blessings.

In 2003, Gebel El-Barkal was inscribed on the World Heritage List as “Gebel Barkal and the Sites of the Napatan Region” (UNESCO, “Gebel Barkal and the Sites of the Napatan Region” no date). The World Heritage Site (WHS) contains five archaeological sites distributed over

more than sixty kilometres in the Nile valley. They are testimony to the Napatan (900 to 270 BC) and Meroitic (270 BC to 350 AD) cultures. The association of the archaeological remains with Napatan and Meroitic civilization, the presence of *Wad El-Karsani*, and the recognition of the place as a World Heritage site have given the site significance to local, national, and international communities. The listing of Gebel El-Barkal as a World Heritage Site based on archaeological values implies that the site has Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) to all of humanity – a central premise of the World Heritage list. However, this understanding of the site provides an international and academic outlook on Gebel El-Barkal which does not fully capture its lived reality and meaning as a place, and this, in turn, has implications for how the site is understood and used by different stakeholders. Understanding the living intangible cultural heritage of Gebel El-Barkal and Napatan archaeological sites is key to this thesis, which demonstrates how to comprehend local ways of making meaning of Gebel El-Barkal.

To understand the significance of Gebel El-Barkal and Napatan region archaeological sites for local communities, the aim of this thesis is to investigate their conceptualization of and way of engagement with the site and what values they assign to it, as well as the interrelation between the varied local, national, and international communities. The approach chosen to answer these research questions proceeds through investigating and analysing local communities' intangible cultural heritage associated with the site. The reason for applying this approach is that firstly, the intangibility of all heritage is interlinked with the way heritage is constructed. Secondly, intangible cultural heritage is a store of social knowledge and social memory for communities. Therefore, analysing the intangible heritage associated with the tangible heritage is a productive way of understanding local communities' conceptualization of the site/place as a key component of my study. The purpose of this chapter is to give an overview of this thesis focusing on the intangible cultural heritage around Gebel El-Barkal and Napatan region archaeological sites. I will outline the background of the study both in academic and

practitioner discourse, introduce the aims and purposes of the project, establish the significance of the study, identify research problems, discuss my overall research methodology, and finally present the structure of the thesis.

This introductory chapter contains eight sections. Section (1.2) is a summary background of the interrelation between local communities both in global and Sudan contexts. The role of this summary background is to highlight the significant historical, cultural, social, and political factors related to the interrelation between local communities and heritage. Following this, I will introduce the research area and justify the research problem (1.3). Subsequently, in (1.4) I introduce the research aims, and the significance of the research. I will then introduce the research questions (1.5), followed by brief information on the overall research methodology (1.6), and finally a short account provides an outline of the structure of the dissertation (1.7).

1.2 Background of the Study

In the following two sections (1.2.1 and 1.2.2) I will summarise the key focus of this project, notably the relationship between local communities and heritage site. I will discuss both its global and Sudanese contexts to place my topic within a broader context of relevant academic literature and heritage practice.

1.2.1 The Relation Between Local Communities and Heritage from Global Heritage Management Perspectives

Given that Gebel El-Barkal is a World Heritage Site (WHS), this section aims to demonstrate the transformation of the relationship between local communities and heritage from global heritage management perspectives, particularly UNESCO's discourse on WHS. To identify the issues associated with the relationship between local communities and heritage from global heritage management perspectives, I will shine the spotlight on the progression of the connection between intangible and tangible concepts within the discourse on global heritage

management, as well as the interpretation, the associated values assessment, and conceptualization of local communities' towards the tangible heritage. In addition, I will illustrate the broad scope of the relationships between local communities and heritage, as well as the wide and varied theories and approaches implemented by heritage management to enhance the local communities' mode of engagement with tangible heritage in the form of archaeological sites.

Communities, groups, and even individuals often recognise intangible cultural heritage in the form of practises, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills, and the instruments, objects, artefacts, and cultural spaces associated therewith. Respect for cultural diversity and human creativity is fostered by the ICH because it is passed down from one generation to the next, and because communities and groups are constantly recreating it in response to their environment, their interaction with nature, and their history (UNESCO, 2003:2.1). In the other hand, the relation between the key components of cultural heritage, namely tangible and intangible heritage, is intertwined and complex. It is difficult to distinguish between the two, as the tangible asset is part of cultural expression while the intangible heritage also needs physical manifestation (Munjeri, 2004). Currently, there is, on the one hand, a lack of intensive action in integrating cultural heritage in its totality, while on the other hand, there is the claim that all heritage is intangible, based on the argument that heritage is only heritage because of its intangible narrative that provides the tangible with meanings and values (Smith, 2006; Smith & Akagawa, 2009). Although Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) was recognized earlier in the national legislation of certain countries, the international acknowledgment of ICH is a recent phenomenon, which gained consideration in the 1980s and ‘90s and was formalised in a separate convention for the safeguarding of ICH by UNESCO only in 2003 (Lähdesmäki, 2016, p.768; UNESCO, 2003). Much of the current thinking on heritage in international and national heritage management, legislation, and policies is influenced by the traditional separation of the

material forms of heritage and the intangible aspects of heritage encountered in official cultural heritage discourse. Many, however, argue that distinguishing between the intangible and the material aspects of cultural heritage is an artificial binary that does not accurately reflect how cultures use and relate to their heritage (Bouchenaki, 2003; Ito, 2003; Munjeri, 2004; Smith & Akagawa, 2009; Harrison & Rose, 2010). A growing appreciation for the value of intangible heritage forms alongside tangible heritage forms is reflected in the World Heritage Convention's (WHC) implementation, which has placed a significant emphasis on intangible aspects of cultural heritage (Deacon et al., 2004). To better understand how local communities conceptualise the site/place, its associated values, and perceptions that are passed down from generation to generation, I intend to analyse the associated intangible cultural heritage of local communities around Gebel El-Barkal and Napatan region archaeological sites in this thesis.

There is a wide variety of ways in which local communities interact with their tangible cultural heritage, especially archaeological sites, ranging from legitimate tourism and education to illegal excavation and trafficking. In 1989, UNESCO's "Recommendation on the Safeguarding of Traditional Culture and Folklore" introduced the concept of local communities' relationships to tangible heritage into international cultural heritage management practise. The intangible heritage was highlighted, but the role of local communities was not adequately considered, and no mandatory guidelines were established for member states to follow (Blake, 2008). To "make local community feel a shared responsibility with the State Party in the maintenance of the site," the "Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention" (henceforth the Operational Guidelines) from the mid-1990s onward, community involvement in the nomination dossier's creation was emphasised significantly (UNESCO, 1994: Article 14). However, an additional challenge has arisen in the management of archaeological sites (as tangible heritage): the often-inadequate involvement of local communities and their conceptualizations of, valuations of, and interpretations of this heritage (Waterton, 2005;

Waterton & Smith, 2016). The Budapest Declaration on World Heritage (UNESCO, 2002: Article 3f), which advocated for the full and active participation of all levels of local community in the process of identifying, protecting, and managing our World Heritage properties, further solidified this as part of UNESCO's conceptualizations of good practise in 2002. Even though the declaration became an instrument to support the 1972 Convention, it only covers the World Heritage list – a limited number of sites that have been inscribed as having Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) for all of humanity.

Adopted in 2003, the "Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage" acknowledged that there is more to heritage than what experts value; it emphasised the significance of intangible heritage and the participation of local communities in determining the value of cultural heritage. The 31st session of the World Heritage Committee in 2007 added the fifth 'C' [Community] to the existing four 'Cs' – Credibility, Conservation, Capacity-building, and Communication – as the WHC's Strategic Objectives. Here was stated the decision to increase the role of communities in the implementation of the World Heritage Convention (UNESCO, 2007, p.193). In UNESCO's discourse on heritage, the principle of involving local communities in defining cultural heritage and its values is now widely accepted as a best practise (Brumann, 2015, p.276). This viewpoint emphasized the significance of viewing World Heritage properties as local community spaces in addition to globally significant sites. However, implementation of this principle remains inconsistent. Gebel El-Barkal is one of the cases in which there is room for improvement, given the conflicts between local, national, and international perceptions, uses, and values. Examining the relationship between these levels of comprehension of Gebel El-Barkal has been a crucial aspect of my analysis. Many concepts have been used to describe the various strategies cultural heritage management has employed in its efforts to improve the connections between local communities and archaeological sites: communication, education, learning, outreach, participation, and

engagement (Logan, 2016). Therefore, the relationship between archaeology and local communities centres on finding productive means to not only inform but also actively engage local communities. In this sense, heritage is not about the past, but about the present and the future (Logan, 2016, p.256). Thus, heritage plays a key role in communities, for instance in income generation, building national identities, and bringing them political credit within the nation. Protecting cultural heritage is reliant not only on the interventions of governments and the actions of heritage industry experts, but also on the customary management systems of local communities, as was stressed at a conference in 2003 hosted by the Dutch national commission for UNESCO with the theme of "linking universal and local values." (Logan, 2016 p.256). Avoiding the use of selective versions of cultural heritage to coerce minority groups into adopting the dominant discourse is the philosophy underlying this approach. This "top-down" discourse is described by Laurajane Smith (2006) as Authorized Heritage Discourse (AHD). The concept of AHD will be explained in greater depth in chapter two, the literature review. Simply put, AHD is an official discourse that dominates other discourses through the use of expert knowledge and the legitimization of their role and interpretation. As a result of this debate, there is now more of an emphasis on creating and employing bottom-up methods as an alternative to the traditional top-down structure. Recognizing the importance of bottom-up approaches in cultural heritage identification and management is essential to making archaeological sites more accessible to diverse communities. Through this they can articulate their identities, express their collective cultural memory, and establish their associated values. Based on this assertion, I have chosen to investigate local communities' engagement mode with Gebel El-Barkal and the Napatan region archaeological sites by analysing their associated intangible cultural heritage to a better and fair-minded understanding of their associated values, construction of identities, sense of belonging, and ownership claims. Moreover, archaeological excavations have influenced and been influenced by the lives and activities of nearby

communities. The effect of nearby communities on archaeological remains can be positive if the remains are integrated into their daily lives in a way that contributes to their preservation, or negative if they are subject to theft and looting. In contrast, archaeologists display archaeological artefacts in museums and publish the results of their research in order to cultivate knowledge and public understanding of the past (Lea & Thomas, 2014), but in some instances, they do so in a manner that denies local and descendant communities access to their own pasts. Efforts to directly address local communities in heritage practice and academia take various forms. The initiatives of archaeologists to engage local communities consist of archaeologists giving members of local communities the opportunity to participate in archaeological work at varying levels of involvement, as well as providing the public with experience of archaeological skills and methods and insights into the heritage of their local area (Lea & Thomas, 2014, p.6). This is, in the vast majority of cases, an outreach activity that enhances the AHD, but its top-down rather than bottom-up nature has produced limited results.

1.2.2 The Relation Between Local Communities and Heritage in Sudan

Given that archaeologists' and local communities' conceptions of heritage may vary significantly from one country, village, or social group to the next due to economic and socio-political conditions, there is a need to investigate the relationship between local and national communities and to apply an approach that is sensitive and effective enough to capture this diversity. In the context of Sudan as a so-called developing nation, research into this relationship has been shaped by its unique social, economic, and political context. Historically speaking, European colonial strategy began Sudanese archaeological explorations in the 18th century (Salah, 2021). The great majority of archaeological work in Sudan has consisted of rescue and salvage operations (Trigger, 1994; Salah, 2021). This was related to dam construction and heightening in Egypt's Aswan and Sudan's main Nile and its tributaries.

Subsequently, funding from numerous states/institutions international and national missions have contributed to clarifying the country's past through the archaeological remains uncovered in numerous locations (Salah, 2021). over the course of a lengthy archaeological project.

In economically disadvantaged countries such as Sudan, local archaeologists work for government agencies, universities, research institutions, and museums with inadequate funding from government agencies to an even greater extent than in so-called developed countries, where these issues also frequently arise. This lack of adequate funding creates a less favourable environment for addressing, researching, and evaluating the significance of enhancing local and national community participation in archaeological works. The relationship between communities and archaeology in Sudan has always been tackled from a top-down perspective. Professional archaeologists engage in outreach work with organizations such as schools or community groups. The economically disadvantaged situation in Sudan also has a negative impact on archaeological practice and the entire archaeology sector in Sudan, as archaeologists and heritage officers are constantly under pressure to deal with a lack of human and financial resources when confronting unexcavated archaeological material, fighting against looting, and addressing the absence of archaeological works on both a governmental and nongovernmental scale. All these obstacles reduce the attention given to addressing, investigating, and studying the relationship between local communities and archaeology. Moreover, due to the dominance of the AHD in Sudan, both researchers and practitioners pay less attention to the need to understand how local communities assign meanings and values to their heritage, as well as provide local communities with opportunities to become engaged with and involved in the interpretation and understanding of the past.

In the last six years, under the umbrella of the Qatar & Sudan Archaeological Project (QSAP), the connection between local communities and archaeology has undergone significant

development initiatives. These initiatives ranged from creating community centres, such as the community centre in archaeological sites of the island of Meroe and Gebel El-Barkal and Napatan region archaeological sites, to the outreach efforts performed by the University College London in Qatar at Meroe (Cf Humphris and Bradshaw, 2017; Humphris, Emberling & Bradshaw 2021), the University of Michigan in El-Kurru, the British Museum in Ammara west, and the University of Warsaw in Old Dongola. UNESCO's "Contributing to Sustainable Tourism at the World Heritage Site of Gebel Barkal and the Sites of the Napatan Region (Sudan)" is among the most crucial projects that focuses on the Gebel El-Barkal and Napatan region archaeological sites, as the mission has focused heavily on studying and investigating the interrelationship between the local communities and Gebel El-Barkal and Napatan region with attention to develop a sustainable tourism in the region (Cf UNESCO, 2020).

1.3 Research Focus and Justification of Research Problems

The aim of this research is to present the first in-depth study of the intangible cultural heritage of the local communities of the Merowe province surrounding the Gebel El-Barkal WHS, particularly their oral history, oral literature, traditions, customs, and the ways in which they perceive the archaeological sites of the region and construct their value. These are practices that are not written down but are passed orally from generation to generation and maintained in the present. Furthermore, given that identity, self-identity formation, and social reality always are embodied by and within a discourse that controls and is produced by cultural and social structures presented through intangible culture, this research intends to understand how the intangible culture of Gebel El-Barkal's local communities provides local communities with a sense of identity. Through analysing the intangible cultural heritage of the local communities around Gebel El-Barkal, this research will deepen our understanding of how such aspects of identity as ethnicity, gender, class, and age influence local communities' conceptualization of

the Gebel El-Barkal and Napatan region archaeological sites and shape their sense of place. Finally, this research addresses the conflicting claims over heritage ownership among local and national communities on the one hand, and between local communities and national heritage authorities on the other.

In this research I intend to contribute to the following theoretical problems:

- To critically examine relevant academic literature focusing on communities' engagements with heritage, the values associated with heritage, and debates surrounding the ownership of heritage in different social, cultural, and economic contexts.
- The attention that focuses on the historical values of the archaeological sites by the AHD and Westernised perspectives rather than considering the associated values assigned by the local communities.
- To address existing research gaps in the field of heritage studies by focusing on the links between tangible and intangible cultural heritage in Sudan through the case of Gebel El-Barkal, as well as between local communities, archaeological sites, and archaeologists.

Problems/issues specific to heritage management practice that this thesis aims to address are as follows:

- The absence of giving the local communities the opportunity to participate in archaeological practices in Sudan.
- The lack of considering local communities as also stakeholders and giving them a role in safeguarding and protecting the archaeological sites in Sudan.
- To address conflicting claims on ownership that threaten the Gebel El-Barkal and Napatan region archaeological sites.

1.4 Objective and Significance of the Research

The importance of this research stems from the fact that it is the first scholarly study that investigates the engagement of local communities with, and their interpretation of, the tangible cultural heritage in Gebel El-Barkal and Napatan region archaeological sites. Taking advantage of my intimate knowledge of the local cultural context as a male, ‘’Arabic’’, and a researcher coming from the same geographical, social, and cultural background, I will offer an in-depth understanding of the interrelation between local communities and their heritage.

As explained in the previous section (1.2.2), local communities’ relationship to the archaeological sites ends with many open questions. Therefore, analysing the implications of official and unofficial discourses will highlight the impact of these discourses and will suggest avenues for further study in order to assist in creating and sharing new knowledge related to the site that can improve its management, and assist archaeologists working on this site to gain a better understanding of local complexities given that most of these archaeologists originate outside of this particular social and cultural context.

This research thus contributes to existing scholarly literature related to community engagement, heritage-associated values, and heritage ownership claims through examining these issues in a new context. The lack of scholarly attention to the crucial relationship between local communities and archaeological sites in Sudan raises the importance of understanding more about how local communities interact with their heritage and how inhabitants of a given area interpret their heritage. This gap in scholarly literature weakens the concrete foundation through which decision-makers design cultural heritage strategies and determine the practice of heritage assets preservation.

In conclusion, the significance of this thesis comes from the fact that it is first an in-depth scholarly account investigating the engagement of local communities with tangible cultural heritage in Gebel El-Barkal and Napatan region archaeological sites. This is of paramount

importance given that archaeological sites in Sudan in general, and Gebel El-Barkal and Napatan region as one of the country's most iconic sites, currently face major management problems and challenges.

1.5 Research Questions

Research questions determine research methods, as different research questions require different methods to pursue answers to those questions more effectively. Together, these two research components, research questions and research design, connect to the data collection tools and procedures (Punch, 2005). Acknowledging the importance of matching research questions and research methods, this section will present the conceptual framework and research methods that inform my thesis.

My core research questions are as follows:

How/which/why local communities from Merowe province engage with Gebel El-Barkal site/place and Napatan region archaeological sites?

What are the values assigned by local communities to Gebel El-Barkal and Napatan region archaeological sites, and how do they differ from values associated on national and international scale?

How does ethnic, gender, class, and age identities shape the local communities' mode of engagement and values associated with Gebel El-Barkal and Napatan region?

What are the causes for, and forms of ownership claim conflict among the local, national, and international communities concerning the Gebel El-Barkal and Napatan region archaeological sites?

1.6 Overall Research Methodology and Key Concepts

A research strategy is a plan of action that lays out a specific research logic to determine and address the research problem and realise the study's objectives (Denscombe, 2014). It refers to

the big picture of research, which encompasses everything from formulating a research question to writing up and disseminating the findings (Punch, 2005). This qualitative research will combine ethnography and phenomenology as a mixed approach to examine the local communities of Gebel El-Barkal and Napatan region archaeological sites and their beliefs, attitudes, material culture, customs, and social interactions towards theses archaeological sites. An essential source of research data was participant observation of people's actions and accounts in everyday contexts, as opposed to conditions created by the researcher, to answer and test research questions regarding the relationship between tangible and intangible cultural heritage. Other essential primary data were gathered through in-depth interviews to comprehend the relationship between cultural heritage values, the identities of local communities, and the communities' engagement with and perceptions of Gebel El-Barkal's cultural heritage. The six-month-long fieldwork focused on the relationship between the local communities and the archaeological site. This included investigations of differences in ethnic, gender, national, and religious identities, and their expression in relation to the site, as well as social interactions between the different local communities and the impact (if any) these interactions had on the engagement and interpretation of the site by the local communities. Participants in the data collection process include members of the local communities, local community leaders, and archaeologists with a family history in the area under investigation.

Intangible and tangible cultural heritage, community engagement, heritage values, identity, ownership claims, a sense of place, and social memory are among the various key concepts that will serve as the theoretical foundation for this thesis. Having an overview of the definitions of each of these concepts is provided here as it will improve the comprehension of my position as a researcher within the academic discourse surrounding the related debate. In addition, observing how I apply and utilise the concepts will reduce the inherent ambiguity of such terms and produce a precise description of how I will apply them in my thesis.

The United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) defines tangible cultural heritage in the 1972 Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (WHC) as monuments, buildings, and other physical objects (UNESCO, 1972). Meanwhile, the intangible cultural heritage as defined in the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (hereafter referred to as the 2003 Convention) relates to the non-physical aspects of heritage, for example, rituals, practices, skills, and representations (UNESCO, 2003). Academic research on communities generally assumes a connection between the concept of communities and geographically based factors. Since the concept of community is not fixed and may be contested, its complexities must be considered (Waterson & Smith, 2010). In the case of Gebel El-Barkal, local communities are those who reside in the Merowe province surrounding the five archaeological sites of the Napatan region: Gebel El-Barkal, Nuri, Sanam, El-Kurru, and El-Zooma, which will be described in greater detail in the context chapter.

Heritage values are a social and cultural construction resulting from social interaction, generation, and transmission of knowledge, as well as spatial and sequential frameworks that facilitate these processes. In contrast, identity refers to how markers such as ethnicity, gender, class, age, and religion contribute to shared interpretations of the past and are used to construct narratives of inclusion and exclusion that define communities (Graham & Howard, 2003, p.5). These narratives generate a set of symbols or lifestyle options from which people make decisions (Macdonald, 2013, p.167). Through social memories and social knowledge, there is a multidimensional connection between a place and an individual's identity formation and the values assigned by the local community.

1.7 Structure of the Thesis

The thesis comprises nine chapters with the following contents:

Chapter one summarises, both in academic and practitioner discourse, the interrelation between local communities and archaeology in the global and Sudanese contexts. Following this background, an outline of the focus research area and a justification of the research problems. Subsequently, this introductory chapter presented the objective and significance of studying and investigating the intangible cultural heritage around Gebel El-Barkal and Napatan archaeological sites, and the research questions. Also, this introductory chapter provides a brief statement of the overall research methodology and a definition of essential and related key concepts.

Chapter two, the literature review, critically evaluates the ongoing intellectual discussions associated with key concepts for examining the research questions and delivering direction in planning the data collection and interpreting the data. The focus is on assessing, in more theoretical depth, the interrelation of intangible and intangible cultural heritage, as well as the relationship between local communities and archaeological sites, which the introduction briefly set out as central concerns of the study. The chapter discusses the concepts of intangible and tangible cultural heritage in terms of the varied perspectives and definitions, the interrelation between the two of them, and how this discussion contributes to understanding the interplay between the intangible and the tangible components. Furthermore, the chapter introduces the theoretical approaches to the community definition and how communities in varied ways engage with and celebrate their heritage. This section is followed by providing a critical discussion of the debate of associated values and how they produce and enhance the community engagement mode with cultural heritage. The final two sections of this chapter explore the link between heritage and identity and offer an overview of ownership claim concepts and their influence on community engagement with archaeological sites.

Chapter three is an overview of the historical, geographical, social, and cultural context of both Sudan and the Merowe province, and a description of Gebel El-Barkal and Napatan region archaeological sites. The content of this chapter is divided into three parts: the national context, the local context, and the archaeological site context. The national context of the study provides a perspective on the interrelation between ethnic, class, and gender identities of Sudan, and politics of identity in the process of national and local community engagement modes with their history. In the local context, the chapter introduces Merowe province as the study area. The discussion focuses on providing an overview of the local communities of Merowe province in terms of their worldview, lifestyles, perception, and interactions with each other and outsiders. The third and final part is a description of the Gebel El-Barkal and Napatan region archaeological site's locations, features, and the historical significance of the sites.

Chapter four serves as a map and conceptual framework for the data collection by discussing the theoretical foundation underlining the methodological approaches applied to investigate the intangible cultural heritage around Gebel El-Barkal and Napatan archaeological sites. The chapter covers the utility of the qualitative research design and qualitative data as a mode of inquiry applied within this study, and the strengths and limitations of the ethnographic and phenomenological approaches. Also, the chapter provides an evaluation of the fieldwork and primary data collection along with the ethical concerns and reflections.

Chapter five investigates the varied social groups that engage with Gebel El-Barkal and Napatan archaeological sites. The structure and the contents of this chapter are divided into the key concepts definitions and uses of the notions of community and communities' engagement from different angles. This is followed by an analysis of the local communities' modes of engagement with Gebel El-Barkal and Napatan archaeological sites. The subsequent sections present the barriers and challenges facing the heritage management authorities and experts

including archaeologists when attempting to enhance local community engagement with the site, and a discussion on the national and international communities' engagements mode.

Chapter six discusses, analyses, and compares local community values associated with Gebel El-Barkal and Napatan archaeological sites with the Outstanding Universal Values claimed for the site on a global scale. This chapter discusses local communities' social, historical, aesthetic, and economic values. Moreover, the importance of the site/place in local communities' cultural context and the spirituality and continuity of the sacred conceptualization for Gebel El-Barkal site/place and Napatan region archaeological sites are also considered. Following this, I discuss the local community sense of place based on the claim that the local community sense of place has shaped their associated values toward the Gebel El-Barkal and Napatan region archaeological sites. In the final section of this chapter, I highlight recent developments that have influenced local communities' modes of engagement with the Gebel El-Barkal and Napatan region archaeological sites.

Chapter seven explores the ownership claim conflicts between the various communities around Gebel El-Barkal, the influence of identity on community modes of engagement with the site, and finally how Gebel El-Barkal site/place and Napatan region archaeological sites provides local communities with a sense of identity. The content of this chapter discusses the interaction between varied identity dimensions in terms of local, national, and international levels. Moreover, the ownership claims conflicts among the varied communities that engage with Gebel El-Barkal site/place and the Napatan region archaeological sites and the results of this conflict on the community modes of engagement with Gebel El-Barkal site/place, the associated values, and the management practice are discussed. The importance of bringing these two issues together to be discussed in one chapter stems from the fact that identity and identity creation have an essential role in ownership claim conflicts, and that the ownership

claim conflict has shaped individuals' choices and options to be a part of social groups and identify themselves accordingly.

Chapter eight is focused on bringing together the core discussion of the thesis themes by linking the academic contributions with the findings based on my fieldwork to analyse the intangible cultural heritage creation, circulation, use, and reuse by the local communities around Gebel El-Barkal archaeological sites to understand their conceptualization of the site/place. Further, I discuss the power of the intangible cultural heritage on the local communities and the social memory and intangible heritage transmissions of intangible cultural heritage to examine firstly, how Gebel El-Barkal provides the local community with a sense of identity, and secondly, what is the influence of identity on the local community engagement, ownership claim conflict, and associated values towards the Gebel El-Barkal and Napatan region archaeological sites. The final section of this chapter makes a comparison between the local values, AHD discourses, and OUV as global discourse.

Finally, Chapter nine concludes the overall research findings of this study. The discussions include a research evaluation of the theoretical contributions of this study, implications for research, and implications for practice.

1.8 Conclusion

In conclusion, the purpose of this study is to investigate the intangible cultural heritage of the Merowe province's inhabitants, specifically their oral history, oral literature, traditions, customs, storytelling, and cultural practises associated with the Gebel El-Barkal archaeological site. Significance at a global scale is likewise indicated by the fact that in 2003 Gebel El-Barkal was the first Sudanese site that was inscribed on the World Heritage Sites list. It remains one of only two cultural WHS in the country, the archaeological sites of Meroe having been inscribed on the World Heritage list in 2011, and a natural site, Sanganeb Marine National Park and Dungonab Bay – Mukkawar Island Marine National Park, being added to the list in 2016.

Notably, as a living heritage site, Gebel El-Barkal has gained a crucial role in the daily lives of local communities. The objective of this research is to obtain a comprehensive understanding of the diverse communities and their modes of engagement with these sites. In addition, the thesis intends to evaluate the values assigned by local communities and compare them with those of other communities on a national and international scale. I also acknowledge that the local communities surrounding Gebel El-Barkal are multi-cultural societies; therefore, there is a need to investigate the influences of identity differences in terms of ethnicity, gender, class, and age on the local communities' mode of engagement and values associated with the archaeological sites of Gebel El-Barkal and the Napatan region. Similarly, this thesis seeks to comprehend the causes and manifestations of ownership dispute among the local, national, and international communities regarding the sites.

The methodological framework applied within this qualitative research is an ethnographical and phenomenological approach. The involvement of direct contact with the relevant people and places provides in-depth and detailed information, which allows a real insight into the local community's lifestyle and beliefs and wider social and cultural contexts. Therefore, the ethnographic method can be a useful tool for answering research questions concerning the experiences, emotions, and knowledge of social groups. Similarly, a phenomenological approach is a valuable tool for identifying the cultural values and perspectives of the local communities regarding the archaeological sites of the region. Observation, interviews, and focus groups were indispensable techniques for gathering primary data. Given the oral nature of the primary data, discourse analysis was chosen as the method for data analysis and interpretation. As discourse is a form of knowledge produced through social interaction processes to construct reality, be accountable for identity formation, rationalise attitudes, and inspire values, this reveals competing claims and realities. The significance of this thesis stems from the fact that I intend, through investigating the intangible cultural heritage around the

Gebel El-Barkal and Napatan region archaeological sites, to contribute to and examine, for first time, the relevant academic literature in Gebel El-Barkal's different social, cultural, and economic contexts. Further, it assists in filling a research gap in the field of cultural heritage, namely, the interrelation of local communities and archaeological sites as well as the impact of social and cultural identity construction towards community modes of engagement with archaeological sites and assessing the associated values assigned by the local communities towards the archaeological sites. The significance of this theoretical contribution is based on the claim that tackling this theoretical aspect will assist in resolving the varied challenges related to the management practice at these sites, which include the lack of involving local communities as a stakeholder with the opportunities to express their voice, practice their identity, and being part of the sites' future planning.

The subsequent chapter, The Literature Review, will provide a discussion of previous scholars' contributions and their implications in relation to the various key concepts used in this research.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter aims to provide an overview of previous research associated with the theoretical framework of this thesis and to critically evaluate the ongoing intellectual discussions about the associated key concepts. It aims to provide guidance for assessing the importance of studying the interrelation of tangible and intangible cultural heritage, assist in identifying the theoretical approach for examining the research questions and deliver direction in planning the data collection and, in turn, interpreting the data. The final section of the chapter will outline three different concepts which are important as to how people relate to what they perceive, to be their past and its tangible as well as intangible remains, impact and reflection in the present: the sense of place, social memory, and social knowledge. The chapter will also outline and criticise the academic discourse and contributions of the relevant key concepts that are significant for studying the intangible cultural heritage around archaeological sites and how such heritage has been conceptualized by the local communities who engage with these sites. Furthermore, the objective of this discussion is to set a scene for the thesis and provide an initial exploration for the meanings of the relevant concepts within the study context. This chapter also aims to identify the key concepts related to each of the research questions and review different arguments and perspectives on studying such concepts. The relevant key concepts that are significant for studying the intangible cultural heritage around the archaeological site related to the investigated topic are as follows: tangible and intangible cultural heritage, community and community engagement, values associated to cultural heritage, identity concepts in the discourse of heritage studies, ownership claims, sense of place, social memory, and social knowledge.

The chapter will firstly discuss the concepts of tangible and intangible cultural heritage in terms of the varied perspectives and definitions, the interrelation between both, and how this discussion would, in turn, contribute to understanding the interplay between the tangible and the intangible components. Acknowledging the importance of understanding the community engagement mode with tangible cultural heritage sites and places, the chapter will secondly cover theoretical approaches on the definition of community and how communities engage with and celebrate their heritage through varied ways, and the mechanisms through which they do so. These discussions will be followed thirdly with a debate that aims to introduce the concept of associated values and how they produce and enhance the community engagement mode with cultural heritage and archaeological sites. Accepting the influence of gender, class, age, and ethnic identity on shaping the interrelation between cultural heritage and community, this chapter will fourthly explore through cultural heritage lenses the link between heritage and identity and how the identity of local communities around cultural heritage sites impacts the heritage values, community engagement and heritage management. Furthermore, the role of this section is to focus on identity concepts, ideas and practices that inform the entwining of heritage and identity in cultural heritage studies. The importance of discussing this subject lies in the overall idea that heritage is closely associated with the concept of identity. With identity claims on heritage, debates on 'whose heritage' often follows close behind. Next, in its fifth section the chapter therefore offers a discussion on ownership claim concepts, theories, and the impact of ownership claims on community engagement modes with cultural heritage. These will serve to understand the conceptualization of cultural heritage in local communities as well as their interpretation of the meaning of this cultural heritage. Finally, the chapter will wrap up with outlining the academic discussion on the concepts of sense of place, social memory, and social knowledge.

2.2 Tangible and Intangible Cultural Heritage

Heritage is a term with multiple meanings, depending on the context in which it is employed (Crooke, 2010; Smith & Waterton, 2010; Waterton & Watson, 2010). Although various conceptions of heritage have been used much earlier than 1972, one very influential context in which the concept of 'cultural heritage' has been defined is in the 1972 Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Natural and Cultural Heritage (hereafter the World Heritage Convention), which relates very much to the tangible aspects of heritage, for example, monuments, buildings, and other physical objects (UNESCO, 1972). The international recognition of Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) is a relatively new phenomenon, gaining attention in the 1980s and '90s and formalised in a separate convention for the safeguarding of ICH by UNESCO only in 2003 (Lähdesmäki, 2016, p.768, UNESCO, 2003). However, ICH was recognised earlier in national legislation in some countries around the world, most notably in Japan and Korea. This separation between material forms and intangible aspects of heritage (such as cultural practises and knowledge) in official cultural heritage discourse (such as in international and national heritage management, legislation, and policies) continues to influence a great deal of thought on heritage. As this review will demonstrate, however, many have criticised the separation of the intangible and tangible components of cultural heritage as an artificial dichotomy that does not reflect cultural usage and relationships with heritage. The field of cultural heritage studies has examined and defined the concept of cultural heritage from many angles. Some definitions of the concept have attempted to systematise "contents" or types of cultural heritage, as will be explained in greater detail below. The value and functions of cultural heritage in its social and cultural context have been central to some scholars' definitions of cultural heritage, while others have defined the concept through the creation, transmissions, and process of cultural heritage. In the end, there is no universally agreed-upon definition of the concept of heritage because debates over its meaning have led to a lack of consensus in the

discourse surrounding it (Waterton & Smith, 2008; Smith, 2006). It is only recently that the focus on material forms has shifted away from the definition of cultural heritage via a contents dimension to include intangible aspects of human culture such as knowledge, skills, traditions, and practises (Blake, 2000; Ahmad, 2006; Bouchikhi, 2007; Verco, 2010). As previously stated, traditional definitions of cultural heritage emphasised its material aspects, such as ancient works of art, movable antiquities, historic monuments, and cultural landscapes (Byrne, 2008, p. 230; Smith & Akagawa, 2009, p.1). Long ago, the academic and practitioner discourse on heritage was dominated by concepts of cultural heritage whose scope was restricted to tangible heritage. To define cultural heritage as a social construction and cultural practise rather than simply as sites, places, performances, or events, and to highlight the heritage-making process by applying and recognising the social significance of objects and expressions, it is necessary to consider and view cultural heritage through both tangible and intangible aspects (Arizpe, 2013, p.1). According to UNESCO (1982, article 23), cultural heritage comprises "expressions of the people's spirituality and the body of values that give meaning to life," such as "languages, rites, beliefs, historic places and monuments, literature, works of art, archives, and libraries." This shift has increased the value of heritage's intangible component and generated a substantial amount of research in cultural heritage studies. Recognizing that the definition of cultural heritage through its contents considers both tangible and intangible aspects, most perspectives have defined tangible cultural heritage as all traces of human actions and interactions in our material settings, including buildings and historic sites; monuments; books; works of art; and artefacts (McKercher & du Cross, 2002; Harrison, 2010; Swensen, et al., 2013). The 1972 World Heritage Convention defined cultural heritage as monuments, groups of buildings, and sites in Article 1 (UNESCO, 1972). In contrast to the term "tangible," "intangible" refers to everything that cannot be seen, touched, or sensed (Oxford Dictionary Online). In cultural heritage discourse, the general definition of Intangible Cultural Heritage

(ICH) is provided in the form of lists that include aspects such as practice, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills, as well as the instruments, objects, artefacts, and cultural spaces associated therewith – that communities, groups, and, in some cases, individuals recognise as part of their cultural heritage (UNESCO, 2003, art. 2). The definitions of cultural heritage from a content perspective are comparable in academic studies and practitioner discourse.

Scholars have seen cultural heritage as more than just a list of contents; it is also a method by which past artefacts are chosen based on how they have been interpreted, defined, produced, and transformed into a repository of cultural and social values. Smith observes that people typically view heritage as an inheritance from the past that requires preservation so that we can pass it on to future generations (Smith, 2006). In addition, Smith considers heritage to be a social construction embedded in a 'cultural work' process, in which an Authorized Heritage Discourse (AHD) exerts considerable influence over the development of heritage (Smith, 2006). As its characteristics and modes of operation are crucial to the analytic framework, the role of this AHD will be explained in greater detail below; however, it is important to explain Smith's general theoretical approach first. Significantly, Smith has defined heritage not as a 'thing' with inherent value, but rather as cultural and social processes engaged with acts of remembering to generate ways of comprehending the past and engaging with the present. Furthermore, the concept of heritage is a communication act and a meaning-making act (Smith, 2006, p.1). In addition to heritage as a process of valuing, remembering, communicating, and making meaning of the past to engage with present, the concept of cultural heritage concerns the notion of heritage being transmitted over generations, which may provide people with a sense of identity and continuity (Kato, 2006, p.460). Defining cultural heritage by the ways in which it is created and shaped provides a comprehensive description that extends museological values and methods such as collection, documentation, preservation, presentation, evaluation, and interpretation to living persons' knowledge, practises, artefacts, social worlds, and life

spaces (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, 2006, p.161; Smith, 2006, p.11). Therefore, cultural heritage does not require direct engagement with the study of the past. In contrast, it focuses on the utilisation of the past as a cultural, political, and economic resource to meet the needs of the present (Graham & Turnbridge, 2007). Consequently, heritage encompasses not only tangible material or intangible form(s), but also the meaning, interpretation, and representation created for or from them to serve the performance and negotiation of identity, as well as to produce values and a sense of place.

The intangible cultural heritage can be divided into four components, whether it has been defined through content lenses or through its creation, transmissions, and significance (Richard, 2009). Firstly, oral narratives and expressions, including language as a vehicle of ICH. Secondly, performing arts such as traditional music, and dance. Thirdly, social practices, rituals, and festive events. Fourthly, knowledge and practices, including knowledge, know-how, skills, practices, and representations developed and perpetuated by communities in interaction with their natural environment.

The intangibility of all heritage is intertwined with the manner in which heritage is constructed in and through discourse, as well as the ways in which dominant heritage discourses control and govern not only what is defined as heritage and its use, but also the social and political significance that it entails. As stated previously, Laurajane Smith has designated this dominant discourse as Authorized Heritage Discourse (AHD). The AHD dominates other discourses by utilising the expertise of experts and legitimising their role. Consequently, experts from the upper and middle classes acquire the authority to create the legal and policy processes that define, preserve, and manage heritage. This legitimization identifies official heritage practitioners as guardians and custodians of the past, as opposed to non-expert discourses (Smith, 2006). Recent discussions in the international heritage literature have focused on community engagement and the relationship between local and official authorities in an effort

to reduce the dominance of the AHD, including its heavy emphasis on materiality and monumentality, aesthetic value, and expert-defined authenticity. In this context, the attempted shift has been one towards identifying the ways of talking, understanding, and interpreting cultural heritage used by local and official actors, and to deconstruct the struggle of meaning that is taking place (Mydland & Grahn, 2012, p.564). Therefore, the concept of the AHD – and the search for ways to interrogate this concept critically – has become one of the most powerful analytical approaches in the study of how heritage is created.

Smith argues that heritage functions as a powerful discourse in contemporary society, dictating how we act and think about both the past and the present and reinforcing existing power structures and national narratives (Smith, 2006, p.11-12, 29). Academic contributions that define cultural heritage and its functions concentrate on cultural heritage and its role in intergenerational communication, creating a sense of identity, and serving as a repository of cultural and social values. Recognizing the social power of discourse in shaping and directing how people act, interact, and organise their interactions, this perspective argues that discourse shapes how people view, interact with, and manage heritage in practise (Arizpe, 2013, p.1). Therefore, AHD should not be understood as a reflection of reality, but rather as one of many dominant discourses. As a mode of perceiving and interpreting heritage, AHD evolved and expanded into the international discourse as the dominant discourse. The international discourse has authority over alternative methods of defining heritage and heritage values, including local community discourses. The AHD also constructs an authorised mentality structured to comprehend and relate to social issues centred on claims of identity and memory. Therefore, AHD can perpetually legitimise and delegitimize a variety of cultural and social values using power that underpins the heritage management process, without much regard for the values of local communities.

The relationship between the two components of cultural heritage, tangible heritage, and intangible heritage, is intricate and interdependent. It is difficult to distinguish between the two, as the tangible asset is an expression of culture, and the intangible heritage requires physical manifestation. Certain sets of intangible cultural or social values are acknowledged as heritage (Munjeri, 2004; Carman, 2009; Smith & Akagawa, 2009, p.6). Therefore, the forms of heritage that we experience as tangible or 'material' heritage are recognised as heritage not because of their physical existence but because of the intangible value and meaning that society has ascribed to them (Amselle, 2004; Smith, 2006; Leimgruber, 2010). Therefore, what constitutes heritage are the intangible qualities it possesses, not its physical characteristics (Carman, 2009a, p.45). In other words, they originate from abstract forms of interests, ideas, or the desire to create them (Smith, 2006). Therefore, cultural heritage should not be considered in isolation, but rather in the context of the relationship between its tangible and intangible components.

2.3 Community Modes of Engagement with Archaeological Sites

Defining and conceptualising the communities that interact with archaeological sites is crucial for understanding local communities' processes and modes of engagement with these sites. Sociologists have been interested in studying social groups since the nineteenth century, but it was not until much later that they began to focus on studying communities specifically (Smith & Waterton, 2009, p.20). The definition and nature of community often serve as the jumping-off point for discussions about belonging in a heritage context. In theory, a community can be defined in a variety of ways. According to Zolberg, a community is "a social group whose members reside in a specific locality, may share some aspects of governance, and often claim a common cultural and historical heritage." However, physical proximity isn't always required to define a community, especially if its members are spread out over a wide area but still have a lot in common (Zolberg, 1992, p.109). Community is defined not just by locality or closeness in social relationships, but also by cognitive and symbolic processes (Delanty, 2003, p.3).

Cohen argues that a community is a concept that exists in the imaginations of its members and not something that can be reduced to a geographical or sociological 'reality' (Cohen, 1985, p.98). Different communities have often been addressed in the heritage discourse based on their close connection to and involvement with heritage. For instance, "historical archaeology" in Australia and North America refers to the history of colonial settlers, while "prehistoric archaeology" is associated with indigenous populations (Greer et al. 2002, p.266).

The online Oxford Dictionary defines a community as "a group of people who live together or who share religious, racial, occupational, or other characteristics," while the common perception has always associated communities with a specific location. Nonetheless, there are communities whose social and cultural experiences, as well as their political views and aspirations, define them more. In relation to intangible cultural heritage, therefore, communities are networks of people whose sense of identity or connectedness derives from a shared historical relationship rooted in the practise and transmission of, or engagement with, their ICH (Blake, 2008). As such, a cultural community in this context is one that either shares a common culture or cultural design with a subset of the population or has developed its own subset of the generic culture to which it identifies. As an additional dimension, a nation can be understood as a cultural group (Sunder, 2001). Benedict Anderson (1991) is credited with coining the term "imagined community" to describe the sense of shared identity among members of a particular race, religion, or nation. The concept explores the nexus between individual creativity, social networks, and physical locations. In the literature on cultural heritage studies, a variety of terms are used to refer to communities in relation to archaeology and heritage. Some of these concepts were borrowed from other studies in the social sciences and humanities in order to examine the relationship between heritage and community engagement. While these terms have seen extensive use in the academic study of cultural heritage and in the professional discourse of the heritage sector, they have also been employed

to encompass a variety of perspectives on and rationales for the connection between the two. Terms like "communities archaeology," "community-engaged," "community-based," and "community-led," "outreach," "public archaeology," "indigenous archaeology," "communities collaboration," "communities facilitation," "postcolonial archaeology," "public education," "civic engagement," "democratic archaeology," "communities heritage," "community building," and "participatory archaeology" are frequently used (Smith & Waterton, 2009, p.16; Silverman, 2011, p.153). Although all these terms are used from different perspectives, each one of them is meaningful but certainly open to revision. A closer examination of each of these terms reveals that some of them, like "outreach" and "public education," are centred on the efforts made by heritage professionals and archaeologists to educate and inform local communities about the significance and official interpretation of heritage. Others consider how and to what extent a community can participate as a stakeholder in the heritage management process. Included in these concepts are community collaboration and community facilitation. The argument underlying these concepts is that stakeholders, including local communities, should be consulted, must have a voice, should derive some benefit from a project, and should not be negatively impacted (Little, 2002; Kyriakidis & Anagnostopoulos, 2015; Kyriakidis, 2019; Lekakis, 2020). There have been a great many scholarly works devoted to the goals of increasing community agency, broadening community expression, and improving community access to heritage benefits, especially for traditionally marginalised communities (Mydland & Grahn, 2012; Smith & Waterton, 2009; Silverman, 2011). The concepts of community-based archaeology, public archaeology, democratic archaeology, indigenous archaeology, and alternative archaeology are applied as an approach to a civic dialogue between communities and heritage professionals. On the other hand, postcolonial archaeology has been used in developing countries, particularly by American archaeologists, to study communities where colonialism, imperialism, or the local elite power structure did not foster meaningful

relationships between archaeologists and the people they studied (Silverman, 2011, p.153). Through the development of the concepts of civic engagement and community engagement, people have come to appreciate the utility of heritage and archaeological material as a means by which to address the pressing issues that affect modern societies (McManamon, 2005). To address the connection between community and heritage and to foster an identity based on heritage, memory, and positive applications of the past, community building as an outcome of public outreach, civic engagement, and community collaboration has been utilised (Silverman, 2011, p.155). In heritage studies, the relationship between community and heritage has received considerable consideration. Due to the fact that this interrelation may take various forms and be influenced by a variety of stakeholders, concerns, and goals, each of these contributions has approached and analysed it from a slightly unique angle.

The ways in which people interact with cultural heritage vary based on time, place, and historical circumstances. In addition, other factors, such as a person's race, gender, age, socioeconomic status, religious affiliation, and perception (Bender, 1993 p.2) can have an effect, as they are all used to construct narratives of inclusion and exclusion (Graham & Howard, 2008, p.5). As a result, communities serve a variety of functions in the cultural meaning and interpretation process and the preservation and upkeep of heritage and heritage identities (Ashworth, Graham, & Tunbridge, 2007). Indeed, how communities are constituted can be conceptualised differently depending on perspective and social context; for example, what may appear to an archaeologist as "the local community" may internally be understood as several different communities based on local interests and forms of differentiation, or a group which acts as a community in one context based, for example, on religious sentiments or class solidarity, may in other contexts constitute itself as part of a larger community based on other factors. Regardless of what else a community may be, it is neither homogenous nor fixed, and it is important to emphasise this. However, communities' engagement processes and

level of engagement with heritage depend on their perception and knowledge that heritage can play a significant social role as part of the cultural context because it has a central role in shaping their society's historical memory (Vienni, 2014, p.97). To comprehend the relationship between communities and heritage, it is essential to identify the diverse purposes, values, and motivations underlying communities' processes and modes of engagement with heritage.

Concerns vary regarding local community involvement, participation, and engagement with archaeological sites, particularly those on the World Heritage list. One of these concerns is the challenge of integrating the local community's interpretations and associated values with the concept of Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) that motivates a site's inclusion on the World Heritage list (Brumaan, 2015). This concern has arisen as a result of AHD dominance, which has not paid sufficient attention to local communities' heritage values. OUV as a reflection of a global Authorized Heritage Discourse presupposes that everyone in the world will agree on the values of a heritage site, as if these values are fixed and incontestable. Other concerns give attention to the importance of enhancing the involvement and participation at local community level to improve their engagement with the site to become an effective tool in safeguarding and protecting these archaeological remains as they are the daily users of the site, and they can widen the meaning of heritage. However, when determining the significance of a World Heritage Site (WHS), the local community is occasionally excluded from the decision-making process (Fahmi, Ahmad & Hashim, 2018). According to Jokilehto (2017), heritage frequently comes from the communities who may both have created and maintained it and certainly live with it. Yet many communities are often being isolated from the management of World Heritage sites, which has been problematised by both scholars and some heritage practitioners because it raises theoretical as well as practical concerns about how heritage is recognised, produced, protected, used, and valued (Fahmi, Ahmad & Hashim, 2018).

2.4 The Values Associated with Archaeological Sites

The conceptualization of cultural heritage values dates back to discussions initiated by Alois Riegl in 1903 on the question of what types of values are conveyed by cultural heritage, including concepts such as "age value" and "art value" (Kobyliski, 2013, p.719). This debate has spread to multiple arenas of scholarship and professional practise, all of which serve to emphasise the fact that archaeological sites and artefacts hold a wide range of values (Thomas, 2019). Current theoretical conceptualizations must acknowledge that something is recognised as heritage when it expresses the values of society or a subset of society with the authority to determine what is significant or valuable as heritage and what is not. Consequently, as was discussed in greater detail in the preceding section of this chapter, the tangible can only be comprehended and interpreted through the intangible (Munjeri, 2004, p.13). One method of distinguishing heritage values is an interpretation that classifies heritage value and significance according to scale levels: international significance, national significance, regional significance, and then local and personal significance (Carter & Bramley, 2002). In spite of this, heritage interpretation and heritage value assessment are ongoing processes due to the diversity of time, space, social, and cultural contexts, as well as change.

Through social interaction, generation, and transmission of knowledge, as well as spatial and sequential frameworks in which these processes can occur, values are unquestionably a significant and influential factor in heritage construction. Due to the fact that values are expressed through the meanings and merits given by people on the site or in practise, the discussion of values has always been difficult and contentious (Munjeri, 2004). In academic discourse, the term 'values' refers to morals, principles, ethics, and ideas that serve as action guides (Munjeri, 2004). In this sense, values are the qualities of locations such as sites, buildings, and landscapes (Mason & Avrami, 2002, p.15). Although the discussion of values, particularly regarding their evaluation and assessment, has always been difficult and

contentious, it is generally acknowledged that the role of values in cultural heritage is central to how communities (and other stakeholders) interact with it. This is notably applicable in terms of its relationships with identity and dominant ideologies, as well as its level of integration with other social phenomena, such as leisure, professionalisation, contestation, and lived culture (Waterton & Watson, 2016, p.14). Given this line of reasoning, it is clear that many competing values are at play, as will be demonstrated in greater detail later in this chapter.

Heritage values have been identified using a wide range of methodologies, and discussions of these values in both theory and practice have highlighted the importance of these various approaches and perspectives. All of these approaches seek to define what cultural heritage is worth and why it matters, so that they can inform and shape the policies, strategies, and practises that will either preserve or destroy this precious resource (Munjeri, 2004). Some of these approaches, such as "values-based conservation," emphasise the role of value in safeguarding and preserving cultural heritage (Mason, 2002, p.5). Others focus on the role of value comprehension in the management process as a "value-based management" approach (Mason, 2002, p.27). In contrast, "value-based assessment of cultural heritage" (Satterfield, 2002, p.77) or the "significance-driven approach" emphasises the importance of evaluating the heritage value in order to comprehend the associated values in and of themselves. Despite ongoing debate in the heritage field, there is consensus that cultural significance serves as a benchmark for the identification, protection, and preservation of heritage expressions (Mason, 2002, p.5). This is due to the fact that the emphasis of a cultural significance approach is not on the heritage itself, but rather on the heritage's contribution to achieving another goal deemed valuable. This perspective defines cultural significance as the aesthetic, historic, scientific, social, or spiritual value for past, present, and future generations (The Burra Charter, 1999). In value typologies as cultural significance assessment methodologies, a tried-and-true set of criteria is also recommended (Walton, 1999), as "a typology of heritage values would be an

effective guide to characterisation in which all parties' values can be discussed to represent a summary of the overall value of the cultural heritage" (Mason, 2002, p.9). For some scholars, however, value typologies are insufficient for identifying heritage value because they do not capture the full appreciation of heritage and its values because they do not contemplate all the cultural heritage elements that shape the location (Fredheim & Khalaf, 2016). The terms cultural significance (Avrami et al., 2000) and cultural meaning (Lowenthal, 2000) are central to discussions of cultural heritage values examination processes. The meanings and applications of these key concepts in research and practise discourse vary. As the most frequently used term, ‘significance' describes the expression of values in heritage qualities: "the term that the conservation community has used to encompass the multiple values ascribed" to cultural heritage expressions (Avrami et al., 2000, p.7). In contrast, the ‘meaning' of cultural heritage typically refers to the comprehension gained by an individual or group through the interpretation of heritage. In addition, meaning connects heritage to the formation of cultural identity. Meaning is thus understood as the values and messages that individuals take away from an encounter with an expression of their cultural heritage through a process of reflective understanding.

2.5 Identity Concepts in The Heritage Studies Discourse

This section will explore the various perspectives on defining identity concepts, production, reproduction, and the expression of identity narrative discourse. It will also discuss forms and types of identity by focusing on gender, ethnicity, age, social class, and religious identity, as these are the primary dimensions this thesis seeks to explore. Moreover, the purpose of this section is to examine how modes of community engagement with cultural heritage can influence and shape identity. As previously discussed in this chapter, heritage is viewed as a path of conscious and influential remembrance for the needs (e.g., political, cultural, or economic) of the present. Recognizing that an identity, self-identity formation and social reality

are always embodied by and within a discourse, this part of the chapter intends to understand how the intangible culture heritage of local communities provides them with a sense of identity and how identity influences and shapes local community engagement with the tangible heritage. In the context of this research, identity and its impact refer to the ways in which markers such as ethnicity, gender, nationality, religion, and shared interpretations of the past are used to construct narratives of inclusion and exclusion that define communities (Graham & Howard, 2008, p.5). By creating a set of symbols or lifestyle options from which individuals make their own selections (Macdonald, 2013, p.167), these symbols and options can be associated with particular groups of individuals.

The definitions of identity are slippery, fluid, and multidimensional. It can be used to define and locate individuals based on their shared characteristics and their distinct culture (Stephens & Tiwari, 2014, p.104). Moreover, as a sense of belonging is not only centred on the ways in which we may (or may not) prompt and present our cultural identities and affiliations, but also on articulating and figuring out a variety of other cultural, social, and political experiences. These experiences may be structured and understood by relations defined, for instance, by ethnicity, class, or religious beliefs (or non-beliefs), age, and/or gender (Smith 2008, p.160).

The concept of identity has been viewed from a variety of perspectives, each of which has produced quite distinct concepts and definitions. Stuart Hall focuses on how others represent themselves in social contexts in his contribution (Hall, 1996), whereas Woodward focuses on how individuals construct their own sense of identity, 'self-identity' (Woodward, 2004). Goffman, on the other hand, focuses on how people present themselves to others in everyday interaction, conversations and encounters and suggested that how we present ourselves to others was, rather, like acting out a part in a play where the scripts are already written (Goffman, 1959). Hall emphasises in his contribution that identities are continuously formed and transformed in relation to how individuals and groups are represented or addressed by

cultural systems (Hall, 1996, p.597). According to Kath Woodward (2004), identity always involves a connection between the personal and the social through the active engagement of those who adopt identities to be the same as some individuals and different from others (Woodward, 2004).

Regarding identity and heritage, there is widespread consensus that the term heritage is intrinsically linked to the notion of identity, as well as to the connection between people living in the present and people, groups, ideas, material objects, practises, events, or locations from the past (Mclean, 2006). Furthermore, heritages and identities should be considered, as heritages have multiple uses and multiple producers. These may be public/private sector, official/non-official, and insider/outsider - each of the communities and social groups that engage with the heritage have different and multiple objectives in the creation and management of heritage according to their identity formation, and what appears as heritage to one group may not appear as such to another (Graham & Howard, 2003). Consequently, the significance of things is determined by their identities, and it is produced and exchanged through a variety of social interactions and media; it is also created through consumption. These meanings further regulate and organise our conduct and practises by assisting in the determination of rules, norms, and conventions: "It is we – as a society, as a human culture – who give things their meaning, who give them their significance. Therefore, meanings will always change from one culture or time to the next" (Hall, 1997, p. 61). The use of heritage in this way, as proof of continuity between the past and the present, is widespread and is employed to construct identities for communities large and small, politically diverse, and geographically dispersed, and spanning the entire span of human history (Mclean, 2006).

Fundamental or gradual changes in the public landscape of memory often mirror the reproduction of major political change or the arrival of new socio-political forces within societies. Soon after, the current heritage will be contested, and the new order will try to

legitimise itself through allusions to the past, especially to the one that symbolises national identity and culture (Marschall, 2008, p.347). This includes both tangible and intangible forms of cultural heritage, such as the names of streets, public squares, and historic sites, as well as entire townscapes or natural landscapes. Societies recently emerging from previous colonial dominance, particularly those that experienced violence in their colonial relationship and their achievement of political independence, tend to be concerned with representation and defining a new identity (Werbner & Ranger, 1996). The identity that corresponds with the social, cultural, and political setting.

2.5.1 Identity Levels, Dimensions, and Boundaries

Identity as a sense of belonging is concerned not only with the ways in which we may (or may not) prompt and present our cultural identities and affiliations, but also with articulating and figuring out a variety of other cultural, social, and political experiences (Taylor & Lennon, 2012). From this perspective, identity has three distinct levels. One is identity derived from a shared historical relationship within a broad community context. Another is the identity of a group across communities who share characteristics such as skills, experience, and specialised knowledge, and therefore accomplish specific roles in the present and future practice, re-creation, and/or transmission of their intangible cultural heritage, such as cultural curators, experts, and trainees (Blake, 2008, p. 60). Personal and individual identity is the third level of identity.

There are multiple dimensions contained within each and every identity. Ethnicity is only one of many identities that might be used as a negotiating tool in the politics of everyday life (Werbner & Ranger, 1996). According to Narroll (1964) in anthropological literature, an "ethnic group" commonly refers to a population that mostly reproduces biologically within its own ranks. Second, there is clear cultural cohesion because of a shared set of underlying beliefs.

Thirdly, it is a field of interaction and communication. Fourth, its membership identifies itself and is identified by others as distinguishable from other categories of the same order (Narroll, 1965). Ethnicity is all about social and cultural constructions and boundaries, according to Barth (1969). Similarly, Wallman (1977) asserts that ethnic identity refers here to the perception of group difference and, consequently, to the social divisions between different segments of the population. In this sense, ethnic "difference" is the distinction between "us" and "them."

The landscape of cultural elements, and modern heritage specifically, are still being moulded by ethnicity (Litter, 2008, p.89). It is not only genetics that can define a group's ethnicity; rather, it can encompass anything that members of that group have in common, such as their language, religion, customs, traditions, and attachment to a particular location (Hall, 1996, p.617). References to ethnic groups, ethnic identity, and ethnicity have become commonplace in scholarly work (Cornell & Hartmann, 1998, p.15). Max Weber is the only classical sociological theorist to provide an explicit definition of the term "ethnic" (Roth & Wittich, 1968). Ethnic groupings, as defined by Weber (1947), are societies that share a subjective belief in their common heritage on the basis of shared physical characteristics, cultural practises, or both.

The study of archaeology and nationalism, one of the most controversial topics in the practise of archaeology in the late 20th century, demonstrates how issues of ethnicity, cultural identity, nationalism, and politics impact the study of the past (Kane 2003; Kohl, 1998; Kohl & Fawcett, 1996). Since national identity is such a powerful way of classifying and connecting a population to a specific location, it is not surprising that it also plays a role in how communities interact with archaeological sites (Duncan Light & Dumbraveanu, 2007, p.28). People's actions and their ideas about who they are in relation to "the nation" are shaped and constructed by the discourse that constitutes national culture (Hall, 1996, p.613). Numerous structures, monuments, and landscapes have been appropriated for use in nation-building because they

have attained national symbolism or icon status (Duncan Light & Dumbraveanu, 2007, p.29). National identity and nationalism express the aspiration of people to establish and preserve a self-governing political entity. It has become one of the most powerful forces in the modern world, from its origins in Europe in the 19th century to its spread to the rest of the globe, where decolonization processes have continued to create new nations and necessitated new processes of national identity formation (Cornell & Hartmann, 1998, p.34). Consequently, a sense of national identity is unquestionably central to the lives of a great number of people, providing a sense of belonging and distinguishing them from other groups. The political role in reinforcing and contesting nation-building processes and national identity is one of the heritage values that have been embedded in archaeological sites. A nation is a symbolic community that fosters an imagined sense of identity and loyalty. In fact, all communities beyond primordial village face-to-face interactions are imagined (Anderson, 2006, p.6). These imagined communities are composed of social memories, the desire to coexist, and the preservation of the heritage (Hall, 1996, p.616). As a means of strengthening the idea of the nation-state, national heritage has led to the official recognition of a distinct national history and identity. The opposition of regionalism to nationalism and of minority groups to hegemonic representations of ethnonationalism are two prominent examples of how local identity derived from attachment to a local place can become a means of resistance.

Community engagement modes within heritage sites, especially in the construction and expression of identity, may be profoundly affected by factors including not only ethnic and national identity but also gender identity (Smith, 2008, p.160). Gender identity appears to be a hot button issue in the field of heritage studies, where issues of authority, discourse, and consumer culture merge (Wilson, 2018). However, scholars have continually offered new definitions of gender, which has complicated its use in heritage studies (Wilson, 2018). Gender in heritage studies literature reveals four research areas, each of which raises varied research

questions around gender and sexuality. These research areas around, firstly, gender in relation to heritage representation, collection, sites, and performance and how gender is articulated within the content, meaning, and space of a museum, gallery, public monument, site, or cultural practice (Porter, 1998; Machin, 2010). Secondly, research has focused on gender and heritage from the perspective of consumption, including an analysis of the number of museum visitors and how men and women relate differently or similarly to exhibits (Reading, 2015). Thirdly, there has been an emphasis on gender and heritage production, commonly in terms of workplace structure, curatorial practises, and heritage management behaviour. Fourthly, there has been work on gender in relation to local, national, and international heritage policies, protocols, and conventions (Reading, 2015). This thesis examines the extent to which gender, social, and cultural constructions produce differences in how females and males in local communities are attached to and interact with Gebel El-Barkal site/place and Napatan region archaeological sites. Examining the interrelationship between the production, articulation, and representation of intangible cultural heritage and gender will be the focal point of this examination. However, despite this recognition of gender as an important subject and as a critical tool for examining the form, function, and use of the most intimate and fundamental aspect of human identity (Ridgeway, 2011), gender appears to be on the periphery of the major concerns within heritage studies (Smith, 2008).

Identity, particularly class identity in addition to other dimensions of identity, has a profound effect on how heritage is defined, interpreted, and engaged with, as I pointed out in my discussion of the Authorized Heritage Discourse (AHD). Despite the fact that social class is a central and highly contested concept in the social sciences, there is little consensus on its definition and measurement (Woodward 2004). Class identity is defined by Woodward (2004) as a way of grouping together people who share a common economic interest, experiences, and lifestyle.

However, Marxist, and Weberian schools of thought have dominated thinking about social class. Even though their understandings of class are distinct, particularly in terms of the construction of class identities, they agree that classes as social groups are structured by economic relationships (Woodward, 2004). In this thesis, I will draw inspiration from these approaches by focusing on how the society under study is stratified according to class and the strength of economic relationships.

Scholars have been interested in religious identity and religious discourse as one identity dimension in order to better comprehend the ways in which religious and social desires and fears are reflected and reproduced in society (De Rogatis, 2003). Observationally, academic studies tend to address the relationship between religious identity and heritage in two distinct ways. First, the effect of religious discourse on community engagement and cultural heritage appreciation. Second, the manner in which religious beliefs influence the space/sense of place in order to create a sacred space for tangible cultural heritage. So, through the construction of sacred spaces and the performance of rituals, religious practises have shaped the physical landscapes of specific communities (Harvey, 1979). In a similar vein, Graham Ashworth, and Tunbridge (2000) state that religious-built forms played an active role in the historical social and cultural context, but that it was not until the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries that attention to value, use, and conservation emerged. However, in a more general sense, religious heritage can be thought of as the locations where people perform rituals that serve to keep alive and celebrate the interconnectedness of nature and culture (Singh, 1997). In conclusion, the structure of the past has always been invented and reinvented over the course of generations, with each new iteration adding spheres of religious significance.

In conclusion, identity possesses diverse and multiple dimensions that give individuals and societies their distinct social and cultural identities. Therefore, identity formations matter

because identity formations always influence how individuals engage with and approach heritage.

2.6 Ownership Claim Concepts and Theory

The notion of ownership plays a central role in the literature on cultural heritage. In their discussion summary, Bergerbrant and Sabatini (2013) identified six distinct theoretical approaches, each of which views the concept of ownership from a different angle. The moralistic theory contends that the cultural heritage ought to belong to its creator. The internationalist theory holds that cultural resources belong to the entire human population. The nationalist theory asserts that cultural property should belong to the nation and be preserved in its original location. The definition of ownership in the theory of the primacy of science centred on the right to produce knowledge and conduct scientific research. In the meantime, the theory of market primacy asserts that historical objects should be subject to regulated trade and must be governed by the state's right to the market. The ownership claim conflict over cultural heritage can be understood as being shaped and influenced by economic values, provided that these values are considered as a fundamental aspect of cultural heritage.

The discussion concerning the looting and trafficking of cultural artefacts has influenced the field's emphasis on private ownership of such objects. Schmidt (1996) observes that the current connections between rights discourse and cultural heritage often originate in the annoyance and social alienation caused by the actual physical removal of material remains, as is the case with the plundering of Africa's past. Globally, discussions of rights have been largely driven by the deep desire to reclaim it (Schmidt, 1996; Prott, 1996; Hicks, 2020). The cognitive ownership, access, and rights of those who have that ownership are often emphasised in discussions of the connections between ownership and cultural heritage (Kobylinski, 2013). Perhaps the long-held belief, also expressed in AHD, that individual nation-states exercise unquestionable sovereignty over the history located entirely inside their borders accounts for

the emphasis on ownership of the past. The notion that the past is owned by someone is also necessarily conflictual (Tunbridge & Ashworth 1996): to claim an ownership is always to exclude others and, consequently, determine in-groups and out-groups. In addition, the way in which people interact with heritage—whether to get access, learn from it, teach others, heal from it, profit from it, or display it in a museum—is often linked to the ownership claim they make over it and the uses and values to which it is put.

2.7 Sense of Place, Social Memory, and Social Knowledge

This section introduces three central ideas that contribute in different ways to our understanding of how local communities and cultural heritage are intertwined. Having a sense of place, social memory, and social knowledge are the three components. The significance of bringing these concepts into the discussions is their association with understanding and examining the local community perceptions and conceptualization toward the heritage, the associated values, and the mechanism of community engagement with cultural heritage.

There are various concepts within the field of cultural heritage studies that centre on the different interpretations of the physical environment and context, for example, place attachment, place identity, and the spirit of place (Tuan, 1974; Relph, 1976; Tuan, 1979; Norberg-Schultz, 1980; Cross, 2001, 2015; Gospodini, 2004; Massey, 1991; Massey, 2005). Heritage management professionals should pay attention to local communities' sense of place since it may shed light on why people have strong emotional links to specific locations. In the study of cultural heritage, the tangible and intangible aspects of the place contribute to its overall impression. Norberg-Schulz's (1980) research on "place identity" is cited by Jiven and Larkham (2003), who stress the significance of a location's unique personality. However, Norberg-Schulz's research focuses more on the physical constructed environment than on the symbolic meanings, values, and perspectives of its inhabitants. Relph (1976) argues that the identity of a place is shaped by three factors: its activities, its meanings, and its constant

physical context. The actions can be categorised as either constructive or destructive, as well as group or individual. Meanwhile, there is a growing need to examine how people's intents, experiences, origins, cultures, preferences, and points of view affect the significance of certain places. Gospodini (2004) acknowledges that the constructed history can be an effective instrument for creating a sense of belonging to a particular place. One way to do this is to make reference to concepts of national identity and culture in which people's constructed heritage is elevated to the status of a common thing. A'spatial membership' will be formed, giving rise to a sense of belonging to a specific location. Her research, however, does not discuss the significance of incorporating intangible elements of the constructed past to form a sense of place identity.

One of these relationships is between individuals and a specific setting in which they see the location as the centre of meaning assigned by individuals or groups to the landscape with which they interact (Jorgensen & Stedman, 2001, p.233). From this perspective, a sense of place is a multidimensional connection between place and individuals through memories and the significance created by the communities surrounding this landscape (Teather & Chow, 2010). People and landscape are in constant interaction, according to Turner (2006), because landscape is a form of active material culture that has both shaped and been shaped by people. Accordingly, people's beliefs, feelings, and behavioural exclusivity in relation to alternative places are shaped by their location.

On a personal level, individuals can develop vitally important attachments to specific locations. Whether particular locations are preserved, transformed, or demolished can be crucial for the preservation of their memories and sense of identity (Teather & Chow, 2010, p.93). In this sense, the past is materialised in bodies, objects, buildings, and locations (Hardy, 2013, p.80). Sense of place refers to the cognitive or emotional involvement and connection between individuals or social and cultural groups and their residential environment (Vong, 2015, p.345).

In examining the interrelation between heritage and landscape identity, it is beneficial to study the sense of place as an attitude toward it as a spatial setting, since this sense shares strong similarities to the affective and cognitive components of attitude, respectively (Jorgensen & Stedman, 2001, p.233). On the basis of observation, academic discourse clearly distinguishes between the concepts of place and space. Spaces become places by imbuing them with significance through shared experiences, customs, and rituals, thereby fostering a sense of community (Lovell, 1998). Different people have different associations with places based on their own affiliation (gender, age, race/ethnicity, socioeconomic status, and religion), as described by Tuan (1974). And just like gated communities and other forms of physical and discursive segregation, these categories serve to exclude those who do not fit in (Douglas 1991, P.289). Therefore, understanding the relationship between people and place requires a significant focus on the boundaries and politics of belonging, as well as the place's associated value and interpretation. Human experience, emotion, and thought are the origins of geographical knowledge. In this sense, space is considerably more abstract than place; it provides contextual information about places (Relph, 1976). It follows that without spaces there can be no places, and the former have primary ontological significance as centres of bodily activity, human significance, and emotional attachment.

It is essential, when considering the roles of heritage within societies, to comprehend the creation and management of place identities. Certain landscapes inspire a sense of belonging in individuals and social groups. From this perspective, landscape is a cultural image, a symbolic mode of representing, and a method of structuring or symbolising (McDowel, 2008, p.39). These symbolic systems are created by people because of their engagement with the world around them, or even distant and half-imagined locales (Bender, 1993, p.1). Therefore, place can be read, interpreted, and produced as a text, interacting with the social, economic, and political institutions and context (Ashworth, Graham, & Tunbridge, 2007, p.60.)

In the literature on cultural heritage, the concept of place is increasingly acknowledged as part of broader geographic and environmental contexts (Davis 1999; Fontein, 2006; Smith, 2006). In these studies, the approach to place is derived from investigating a sense of identity to investigate the interrelationship between who we are and where we are (Dixon & Durrheim 2000, p.27). In the field of cultural heritage, place is not seen as a static backdrop for social life, but rather as part of a dynamic connection in which both place and social life shape and are reshaped by each other (Dixon & Durrheim, 2000, p.27; Krupat, 1983, p.343). More emphasis has been placed on the connections between local communities and place since it became understood as an integral component of the 'self' rather than as mere 'property.' This allowed for the emergence of new meanings of place. As Smith (2006) notes in her investigation of local communities' relationships with archaeological sites, communities placed special emphasis on these places as social hubs where members could gather and socialise. Smith continues by asserting that local communities are bound to a particular time and place since memory is an essential aspect of the meaning-making process of a place.

Thus, memory has a strong connection to intangible cultural heritage, including the ability to preserve, transmit, and accumulate this heritage within human society (Petrov, 1989, p. 78). The nature of the information preserved in the memory of communities through oral tradition and intangible culture may vary. The awareness of past events that were significant to the local communities' way of life and their desire to memorialise these events on archaeological sites is a specific type of information I intend to examine in this study. In the 1920s, French sociologist Maurice Halbwachs was the pioneering theorist of the social framework of social memory concepts, as he called it. Halbwachs argued that social groups construct memory by determining what is memorable and how it will be remembered (Halbwachs, 1920; Burke, 1988, p.89). In his contribution, Halbwachs made a clear distinction between collective memory, which he considered to be a social construct, and written history, which he viewed as

objective in a somewhat antiquated positivist manner. Additionally, he considered memory to be the product of social groups (Burke, 1988, p.98). All societies aspire to represent memory through specific sites that are endowed with significance to represent the heritage of an individual, a group, or a community (McDowel, 2008, p. 38). Assuming that heritage is a selective practise that utilises the past as a resource for the present and future, it should come as no surprise that memory and commemoration are highly intertwined with the heritage process and play a crucial role in the formation of group identities. As Olick, Vinitzky-Seroussi and Levy (2011) argue, without shared stories about the past of the group, there would be no group identities. On the other hand, social knowledge as a third concepts is the set of shared convictions and ideologies that emerges organically inside of communities because of shared experiences and allows its members to draw realistic conclusions about the world around them (Fussell, 1996, p.44). Thus, communities' understandings of their heritage and their methods of interacting with it are constructed by the knowledge they share.

2.8 Conclusion

In conclusion, cultural heritage concepts have several meanings, depending on the context in which they are used: the final dimension focuses on defining the cultural heritage via its functions in its social and cultural context. Intangible cultural heritage can be separated into four elements: oral narratives and expressions, performing arts, social practise, and knowledge. Furthermore, intangible cultural heritage in all these elements plays an essential role in giving the tangible cultural heritage meaning and value. Defining, conserving, and managing heritage has been constituted through an Authorized Heritage Discourse (AHD). This expert discourse dominates alternative non-expert discourses. The relation between the two components of cultural heritage, the tangible, and the intangible heritage, is intertwined and complex as it is difficult to draw a distinction between two. This separation between material forms and the

intangible aspects of heritage, such as cultural practices and knowledge, in cultural heritage practitioner discourse continues to inform much heritage management in international as well as national heritage management, legislation, and policies. This has implications for how communities can access the spaces of officially designated heritage, and which of the discursive and practical roles expressed in the community definitions and uses of the same assets are allowed to flourish.

Acknowledging that a community is a group of people living together in one place or having a religion, race, profession, or other characteristics in common, I would argue that cultural heritage produces a discourse that shapes, constructs, and controls the ways in which those people engage with their heritage. Cultural heritage studies have made extensive use of modes of community engagement with tangible and intangible cultural heritage to investigate and explain the relationship between heritage and cultural community, leading to the conclusion that the ways in which people engage with cultural heritage depend on the specific time, place, and historical conditions. Numerous factors have a significant influence on the relationship between a cultural community and its cultural heritage. These variables include ethnicity, gender, age, socioeconomic status, and religious affiliation. Moreover, the involvement, participation, and engagement of communities with cultural heritage are constituted differently based on varying perspectives and social contexts. This argument is based on the fact that both tangible and intangible heritage are recognised as such when they express or reflect the value of at least sections of a society. Consequently, communities in relation to cultural heritage are networks of individuals who share a sense of identity, a common understanding of historical events, and shared values that have been constructed through social interaction, generation, and transmission of knowledge.

In this view, identity has a close relationship with heritage and heritage practice, as it fosters affiliation and a sense of belonging. Nevertheless, communities and social groups engage with

heritage in accordance with their identity formation, given that identity has multiple dimensions. Each of these dimensions has been socially and culturally construed by means of indicators of similarity and difference, inclusion, and exclusion. There is a strong connection between the associated values of cultural heritage, identity, and ownership claim, as each of them influences the way communities interact with cultural heritage. This connection stems from the fact that claiming ownership excludes others and establishes in-groups and out-groups. Claimants must have associated values with the heritage to which they claim ownership, as well as the values that they perceive as having created their sense of time and/or sense of place and a social memory that give this heritage significance and meaning.

In the following chapter, I will introduce the social and cultural context of the local communities around Gebel El-Barkal and Napatan region to set a scene to the reader and give an explanation on why the phenomena of engaging with Gebel El-Barkal looks appears as it does.

CHAPTER THREE

THE HISTORICAL, SOCIOCULTURAL, AND GEOGRAPHICAL SETTING

3.1 Introduction

This chapter aims to present an overview of the historical, geographical, social, and cultural contexts of both Sudan and the Merowe province, as well as a description of the archaeological sites of Gebel El-Barkal and the Napatan region. The chapter contains five sections. The introduction section (4.1) introduces the chapter. The second section (4.2) presents a brief historical, social, and cultural background of Sudan to enable the understanding of the investigated area. This will provide a clearer perspective on the interrelation between ethnic, class, and gender identities and their role and impact on the engagement modes of local and national communities with their history and the archaeological sites. The section on the national context provides an overview of the influence of ethnic identity on interpreting, presenting, and foregrounding certain historical events in Sudan, and is focused on explaining how the nation and its history is portrayed officially. This part of the chapter outlines the question of identity in Sudan and the impact of identity politics on Sudan' cultural and social context. After this national overview, section three (4.3) introduces Merowe province as the study area. This section presents the specific geographical and social contexts which influence local communities of Merowe province in terms of their world view, lifestyles, perception and interactions with each other and outsiders. This section further aims to provide a description of local communities of Merowe province explaining their ways of living, ethnics groups, social and cultural gender constructions, and class division. The purpose is setting a scene for the reader to understand the mechanisms of local communities' engagement modes with Gebel El-Barkal and Napatan region archaeological sites in relation to influences of ethnic, gender, and class identities as well as religious affiliation. The fourth section (4.4) provides an overview

and description of Gebel El-Barkal and Napatan region archaeological site's locations, features, and the historical significance of the sites. In addition, this section explains the management scheme of the site as a World Heritage Site. This is followed by a brief introduction of some recent developments which constitute factors that impact the local communities' engagement mode with Gebel El-Barkal and Napatan region archaeological sites. The benefit of including this part is to provide a basis for discussion in later chapters on the issue of the wide-ranging communities and their varied values associated with Gebel El-Barkal site/place. Having an enhanced vision on Gebel El-Barkal archaeological site as a World Heritage Site from varied perspectives, will explain the various interpretations of the sites in later discussion. The interpretation which along with other factors have contributed to the formation of the ownership claim conflict among the international, national, and local communities of Gebel El-Barkal. Since the engagement modes of local communities with the Gebel El-Barkal and Napatan region archaeological site has changed over time, the fifth section (4.5) will present a brief overview of three factors that contributed to this change. This change has transformed how, when, and why local communities engage with the site in comparison to previous engagement modes. These three factors include Gebel El-Barkal Festival for Tourism, Culture, and Investment, the Merowe dam construction, and the Qatar & Sudan Archaeological Project (QSAP).

3.2 Sudan: The National Historical, Social, and Cultural Context

This component focuses on providing historical background by introducing the essential historical events which shaped the present Sudan in terms of its population's perception of their heritage. Furthermore, the section will provide overview on Sudan as a multi-cultural and multi-ethnic society and reflect on the questions of identity and identity politics in Sudan.



FIGURE 3. 1: SUDAN MAP AND NEIGHBOURING COUNTRIES

https://africanews.space/inside-sudans-national-space-programme/



FIGURE 3. 2: SUDAN'S LOCATION WITHIN AFRICA

https://www.africabib.org/women.htm

The Republic of Sudan is situated between Egypt and Eritrea in northeastern Africa, along the northeastern coast of the Red Sea. It shares borders with Libya to the north, Chad to the west, the Central African Republic to the south, South Sudan to the south, and Ethiopia to the southeast (viz figures 3.1 and 3.2). The country consists of a vast plain bordered on three sides by mountains: to the northeast by the Red Sea Hills, to the west by the *Marrah* Mountains as the highest point in the country. Yet, the majority of the topography in the northern Sudan region under study is desert, and desertification is a serious issue in the region. Khartoum, the capital of Sudan, is located in the country's centre region, where the White Nile and Blue Nile rivers join each other to create the Nile. The Nile is Sudan's most prominent topographical

feature and the country's primary source of water (Berry, 2015). The habitable land by the Nile in northern Sudan is no more than two kilometres wide. Sudan's geography, then, is dominated by the Nile (Willis et al, 2012, p.40), and so is its history, as it will be explained in the following sections. Most population in the province of northern Sudan currently resides near the river, which serves as a natural corridor for the concentration of major towns, industry, agriculture, wealth, and power in the region.

3.2.1 Historical Setting of Sudan

Historically, other names have been used to describe the current Sudan region. "*Kush*" has been widely used as well as "*Aithiopia*" (Reisner, 1918).Further, the ancient Egyptians used the name "The Southern Lands" to include the entire vague realm of Egyptian influence that extended southward towards central and eastern Africa. In this sense, the term "southern land" refers mostly to the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan. in addition, historically known as "the land of the negroes," this region is now more commonly referred to by the names Ta-sety, which means "Land of the Bow," and Kush (Reisner, 1918).

To the Arabs, it was a part of what they named "*Bilad–Elsudan*" (Edwards, 2004, p.1) which means the country of Sudan or the country of the blacks (black-skinned people). Closely connected are the concepts of "*Nubia*" and Nubian people, used to describe Egypt's southern neighbour. While other forms of the name are recognised in many languages, since it first appeared in classical sources, the term Nubia has been used to describe the areas of northern Sudan and southern Egypt (Edwards, 2004; Dunham, 1950). Although the term "*Aithiopia*" has been used widely, it is not satisfactory as a designation for the part of the Upper Nile Valley that extends from the city of Wadi Halfa, near the northern frontier of the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan, to the confluence of the Blue Nile and the White Nile in Khartoum (Dunham, 1950). On discussing and introducing Sudan's historical context, I will focus on certain events as I

argue that they have shaped and influenced the present Authorised Heritage Discourse (AHD) as well as Sudanese and local communities' modes of engagement with their early history before the arrival of Arabs and Islam to Sudan.

Islam was imported from Egypt during the fourteenth century, along with migrations from the north (Berry, 2015; Holt & Daly, 2011; Karmer et al, 2013). The historical event of Islam's arrival has gradually altered the nature of Sudanese society by facilitating the splitting of the country and society into Arab Muslims in the north and African animists/Christians in the south (Berry, 2015). The second alteration brought about by the arrival of Islam and Arabs in Sudan was the dominance of Sufi thought and belief. The spread of Islam culminated in 1504 with the establishment of the Funj Sultanate (or Funj empire) in Sinnar, central Sudan, which promoted political cohesion, economic progress, and educational advancement among Muslims (Berry, 2015; Karmer et al 2013). Later, Sulayman Solong (1596–1637) became the first sultan of Darfur for the Fur Islamic kingdom, which also aided the expansion of Islam in Sudan (Berry, 2015). After Sinnar's surrender to the last Funj sultan Badi the IV, Ottoman troops destroyed numerous ancient Meroitic pyramids in their pursuit for wealth during the Ottoman Era (1821–1885) (Berry, 2015; Woodward, 1990). During this time, the present Sudan comprised of various provinces that corresponded to tribal territories, and the Ottomans delegated administrative authority to the tribe leaders (Berry, 2015). In addition, the regime created a new class distinction by granting these tribal leaders the legal status of substantiated landowners.

In early 1880, the Islamic cleric Muhammad Ahmad proclaimed himself 'the long-awaited Mahdi', "*al-Mahdi al-Muntazar",* who has been sent by *Allah* (Woodward, 1990) to redeem the faithful and prepare the way for the second coming of the Prophet *Isa* [Jesus]. The discourse of this Mahdist movement was solely focused on recreating the ideal society of early Islam. Consequently, Mahdists prohibited alcohol and cigarettes and advocated women's severe

seclusion. Some of his followers continue to observe these practises and customs. The significance of highlighting this aspect lies in demonstrating the extent to which the Mahdist period and movement influenced the Islamization process in Sudanese society and how this process has increased the existing disconnection mode between Sudanese and their early history prior to the arrival of Islam and Arabs, as I will discuss in greater detail in chapter eight's analysis. The Anglo-Egyptian conquest re-established Egyptian rule (1899–1955) in the Sudan in January 1899, albeit this was done under the Condominium of shared power between Britain and Egypt (Berry, 2015; Holt & Daly, 2011). During the Condominium, the Nile valley settlements were the only ones to experience economic growth (Berry, 2015, p.22). This policy magnified the conflict between Arab Muslims in the north and African Animists/Christians in the south. In the years leading up to and following Sudan's independence on January 1, 1956, this conflict informed much of the discussions about the country's national identity.

3.2.2 Socio-Cultural Context and Question of Identity in Sudan

The significance of discussing the socio-cultural context of Sudan alongside and in relation to the question of national identity arises from the fact that identity crisis and conflict in Sudan have influenced the selective interpretation of the nation's history. Secondly, identity politics strengthen the power of particular social groups, specifically those who claim Arab identity and their use of state institutional power following Sudan's independence (Muddathir, 1973; ; Deng, 1978; Deng, 1995). These two factors contribute to the ignorance of the fact that Sudan is a multi-ethnic and multi-cultural nation, home to an estimated six hundred distinct ethnic groups with deep historical ties and a strong sense of their social group or self-identity.

Sudan has historically served as an arena of interaction for the cultural traditions of Africa and the Mediterranean world. In recent centuries, Islam and the Arabic language have become

dominant in many northern parts of the country (Oppong, 2010). Although there is a substantial non-Arabic-speaking community in Sudan (Oppong 2010, p.3; Berry, 2015; Bechtold, 2015), Arabic is the official and educational language. Sudan is predominantly Muslim, however there are also a minority of non-Muslim citizens (Oppong, 2010, p.3; Berry 2015; Bechtold 2015). People in Sudan are affiliated with local tribal groups. Each of these groups has its own history and sense of distinctness. However, due to immigration and social interaction, the languages of some of the country's minor ethnic groups have disappeared in recent decades (Bechtold 2015). Furthermore, people in Sudan belong to a wide variety of ethnic groups, and both their personal and collective identities are complex, with many overlapping dimensions. This includes the shared language or place of origin, means of subsistence, physical traits, and political or religious affiliation (Ryle, 2012; Bechtold, 2015; Muddathir, 1973).

Nonetheless, discrimination based on ethnicity remains a source of violent conflict in Sudan (Oppong, 2010). Like the rest of North Africa, Sudan is dominated by Arab-Muslims, who are in direct struggle with indigenous Africans (Oppong, 2010). As the Muslim north Sudan is the dominating region in terms of population, political control, and economic power, its inhabitants maintain a satisfactory standard of living. When Sudan achieved independence in 1956, Arabic was by far the most commonly spoken language in the territory. Upon decolonisation, nationalist leaders in Sudan advocated the Arabization *(ta'rib)* policy, which aimed to impose standard literary Arabic at the expense of English and other local languages. The Arabization process entailed the gradual spread of both Arab identity and the Arabic language among northern Sudanese. Arabization in Sudan began historically with the influx of Arab Muslim nomads during the early Islamic period. After the fall of Nubia's Christian kingdoms in the early fourteenth century and the advent of the Funj sultanate in north-central Sudan in the sixteenth century Arabization accelerated and achieved a level of consolidation with Islamic culture more broadly (Sharkey, 2008). In the postcolonial era, the Arabization process

proceeded with attempts to impose a new national identity on Sudan, one that viewed the country's religious and cultural diversity as a challenge to be overcome in the name of a single unified belief system (Willis & Ryle, 2012).

In Sudan, as in many regions of Africa, marriage and family structure is a fundamental aspect of daily life from birth to death. Gender ideologies are embedded in all elements of life, including religion, traditional rituals, and public institutions. Thus, marriage and the family are two interconnected practises or institutions that are connected from head to toe; consequently, it is impossible to discuss marriage without examining its consequences for the family and gender roles (Essien & Falola 2009). Consequently, family structures are an essential component of Sudanese societies. In the majority of Sudanese households, the father, mother, and children each fulfil distinct responsibilities that have been handed down from generation to generation. Attempts to alter traditional gender roles have progressed slowly due to ethnocentric tendencies and religious discourse. In these contexts, any attempt to alter gender norms is often viewed as a neo-colonial imposition (Essien & Falola, 2009; Bechtold, 2015).

Since the vastness of the land makes it possible for many of Sudan's ethnic and tribal groups to live in relative isolation from each other and beyond the reach of the central government, "loyalty remains divided among family, clan, ethnic group, and religion," and national identity and unity is difficult to achieve (Bechtold, 2015, p.61). British colonial policy after the Anglo-Egyptian conquest of 1898 favoured a narrow segment within these so-called "Arab" groups. Later, these favoured, selected, and influential people formed an idea of a distinct, national Arabic Sudanese identity (Sudanese Community Profile, 2007).These elites thought that establishing Sudan as an Islamic-Arab state and educating students in a way that emphasises this identity will help assimilate the country's many different African ethnic and religious groups into a single, unified national identity (Deng,1995). As a counterargument to this discourse, the African school asserts that Sudanese identity is African identity (Deng, 1978).

These two political positions for defining Sudanese national identity were in a binary opposition, until the appearance of other schools and theories. One such theory is the jungle and the desert school, which claims that Sudanese culture and identity is a half-breed between Arab and African culture (Babikir & Shenoda, 2019). Alongside this theory is the "unity and diversity" school, which claims that Sudan is one of the most ethnically and linguistically diverse countries, and therefore, Sudanese national identity must be viewed as a diverse culture with a unity component (Ahmed, 1995). All of these national identity theories influenced the academic discourse and political context of defining Sudan's national identity.

3.3 The Merowe Province Context

This section of the chapter aims to offer a picture of the Merowe province as an investigated area in terms of the geographical landscape, local communities' ethnic background, class divisions, and the religious discourse and affiliation. Recognizing the significance of the surrounding environment on socioeconomic relations and residential patterns, as well as cultural production, circulation, usage, and re-use, this section will examine land distributions. In addition, the relationship between land ownership and identity, as well as the diverse land values, are strongly tied to the location of land in relation to the fertile river.

The state of Northern Sudan, of which Merowe province is a part, is situated between the Egyptian border and the capital city of Khartoum and is divided into two distinct regions: the desert and the Nile valley. Both the Nubian and Libyan deserts are located to the east and west of the Nile, respectively (Berry, 2015, p.63). Merowe, Kareema, and Ed-Debba are the three local governorates that make up Merowe province in rural northern Sudan. The geography of the Merowe region in the Northern State consists of hills, flat desert, and mountains. Figure (3.3) displays the state of Northern Sudan in relation to the other states of Sudan, while Figure (3.4) illustrates the Gebel El-Barkal and Napatan archaeological regions within the state of Northern Sudan.



FIGURE 3. 3: NORTHERN STATE LOCATION WITHIN ADMINISTRATIVE DIVISIONS OF SUDAN

https://ontheworldmap.com/sudan/administrative-divisions-map-of-sudan.html



FIGURE 3. 4: GEBEL EL-BARKAL AND MEROWE PROVINCE LOCATION

(Merowe town and province are spelt differently on the map "Marawi")

https://www.mapsofworld.com/sudan/

3.3.1 Merowe Province Cultural and Ethnic Landscape

The inhabitants of Sudan are split by ethnic, linguistic, and religious differences. Particularly, Sudanese in the north, and thus in the investigated area, claim Arab ancestry and speak Arabic. However, Sudanese Arabs are highly differentiated. The people who originate in the Merowe province are one of the tribes that perceive and identify themselves as an Arab/Muslim social group. The district around Gebel El-Barkal is occupied by the *Shawiga/Shaigia* tribe, formed of mixed Arab and Nubian elements. These people evolved and settled there before the 14th century (Kendall 2010). *Shawiga/Shaigia* are primarily farmers. Historically, they have played

an important role in the armed forces, police force, and border guards while other tribes worked in fields like spinning, weaving, and transportation. *Shawiga/Shaigia* is the socially dominant group and are referred to as the so-called 'boys of the country', "*Awlad El-balad*". The connotation of 'boys of the country' or 'the boys of the river', "*Awlad El-bahar*" always refers nationally and locally to those who belong to the Arab tribes. In contrast, the term 'Arab' has a negative meaning when used to refer to the traveller tribes that have recently established in the region as "*Arab Rohal*," which means Arab nomads/Bedouins. In section (3.2), figures (3.5) through figure (3.9) illustrate the ethnic groupings around the five archaeological sites.

Considering that local communities in Merowe province and around Gebel El-Barkal are highly diverse in terms of distinctive customs and the structure of kinship links, economic practices, and so on, the engagement of local communities with the site varies according to the diverse ethnic background. The *Shawiga/Shaigia* are the historical residents of the area. This fact plays an essential role in the land distribution of Merowe province. The land is locally conceptualised as having four spheres differentiated according to their economic, social, and cultural values. Land in Merowe province gains its importance and value~~s~~ according to its proximity to the river; its value diminishes the further it is away from the river and the closer it is to the desert. The first and primary sphere of value is represented by the river itself, the most treasured element in the public perception. In northern Sudan, where Merowe Province is, land is perceived to be dominated by the Nile. The second sphere of value, which is occupied and owned by the *Shawiga/Shaigia* is the agricultural land. This is followed by a third sphere which is owned by the government and used to construct public facilities such as schools and roads. After the government sphere comes a residential sphere inhabited by the *Shawiga/Shaigia* to which they moved after a devastating flood which occurred in 1948. According to local historian *Awad Ebaid Allah* (Narrator code 62AAB), this flood was one of the greatest floods the area/community had faced in its history. To prevent the flood damage,

'*Abdul Qawi Pasha*, Minister of Works, announced the need to mobilise every unemployed hand. In addition, the authorities used prisoners to fill sandbags and put them along the riverbanks. The fourth sphere, the one with the least value recognition, is the one represented by the desert area where marginalised rural and nomadic communities live.

The Nubians within Merowe province's social context are separated into two different social groups. These two social groups are distinguished according to their geographical and ethnic background. The first Nubian group are the ones who came to reside the area from up North and the second Nubian group are those came from Nubia Mountain in western Sudan.



FIGURE 3. 5: LOCAL COMMUNITIES' RESIDENTIAL AREA AROUND GEBEL EL-BARKAL

https://earth.google.comhttps://earth.google.com

Figure (3.5) above is a Google edited satellite map presenting the settlement area of the local communities according to their ethnic affiliation. As explained previously, it has been divided into three residential areas including the border of the Nile River. East of Gebel El-Barkal area, attached to the Nile River, is an agricultural area owned by *Shawiga/Shaigia,* the dominant social group, which appears green. This is followed by the government land. The government land toward the west is occupied by *Shawiga/Shaigia* who later moved further west. The final sphere is the desert edge occupied by the three *Arab Rohal tribes, Hassania*, *Manasier*, and *Hawaweer*. Kareema town, like other Sudanese towns, has a cross-cutting ethnicity feature.



FIGURE 3. 6: LOCAL COMMUNITIES' RESIDENTIAL AREAS AROUND THE PYRAMIDS AND SHRINES AT EL-KURRU

https://earth.google.comhttps://earth.google.com

Figure (3.6) above presents the features of the ethic group of the local communities in *El-Kurru* village where the pyramids of *El-Kurru* archaeological site is.

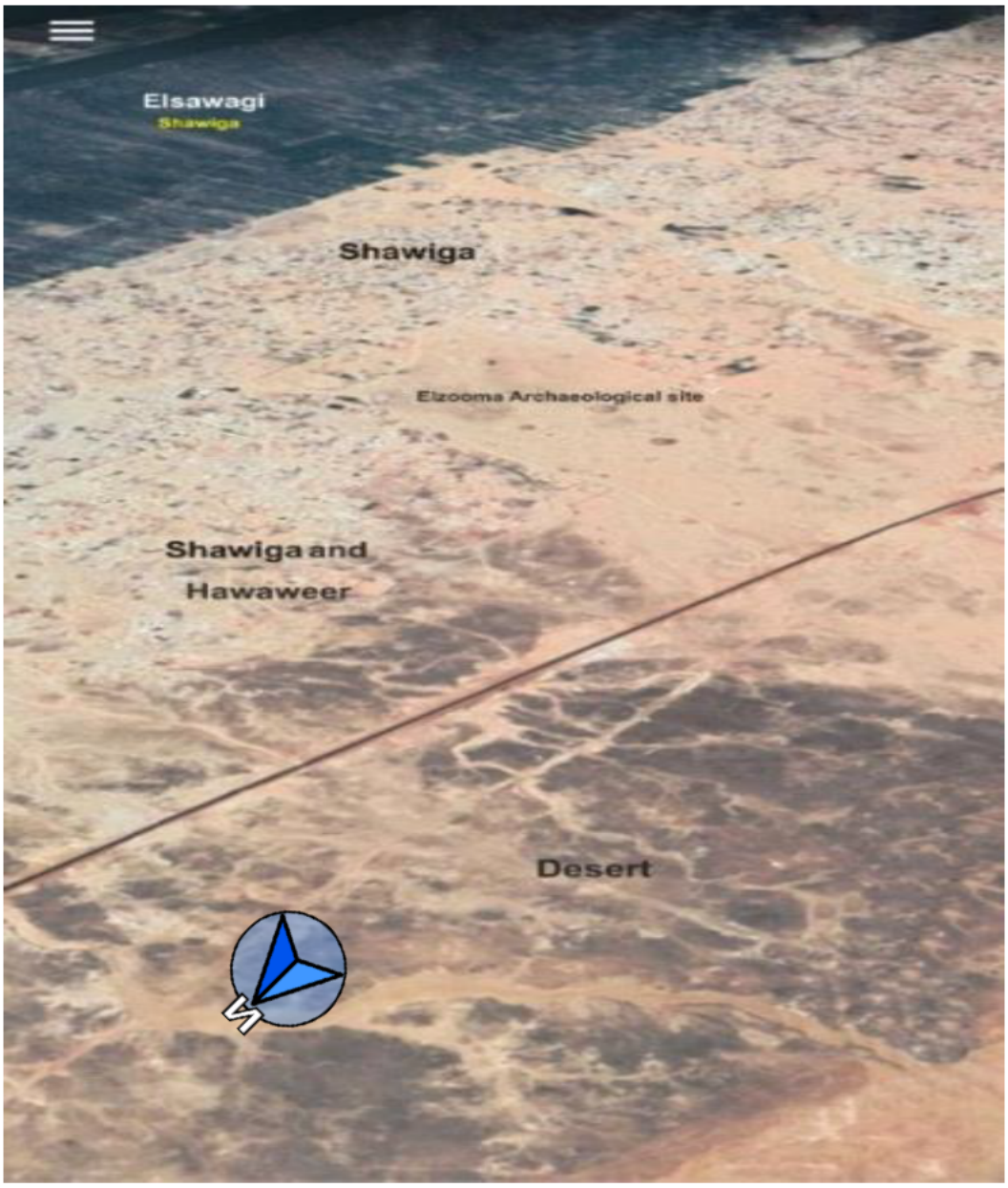


FIGURE 3. 7: LOCAL COMMUNITIES' RESIDENTIAL AREA AROUND EL-ZOOMA ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE

https://earth.google.comhttps://earth.google.com

The residential area of the local communities in El-Zooma village around El-Zooma archaeological site as shown in figure (3.7) above is slightly different, because this area is ethnically mixed (or heterogeneous) as the *Arab Rohal* have occupied the third land sphere in a narrow area beside the *Shawiga/Shaigia*.



FIGURE 3. 8: LOCAL COMMUNITIES' RESIDENTIAL AREA AROUND NURI PYRAMIDS
https://earth.google.comhttps://earth.google.com

The *Shawiga/Shaigia* tribe's civil administration is headquartered in *Nuri* village (viz figure 3.8), where the pyramid of *Nuri* is located. Therefore, land distribution is heavily influenced by the previously described social and ethnic characteristics.



FIGURE 3. 9: MEROWE TOWN LOCAL COMMUNITIES' RESIDENTIAL AREA

https://earth.google.comhttps://earth.google.com

The Sanam archaeological site is located in the city of Merowe. Merowe town shares the same land sphere characteristics described previously, especially in the agricultural sphere (viz figure 3.9), which is owned by the *Shawiga/Shaigia*, and the fourth sphere, where *Arab Rohal* usually reside. However, being the provincial capital of Merowe, the town is filled by middle-

class individuals who have come to work in government offices from elsewhere in the country alongside the original residents.

3.3.2 Local Community and Religious Identity in Merowe Province

Religious discourse as a component of identity generates meanings that regulate and shape the behaviour and practises of individuals and social groups through the establishment of rules, norms, and conventions. Among the native population of Merowe province, Islam is the dominant faith, while the Christian community is estimated to make up about 1 to 2 percent, and the remaining South Sudanese immigrants, are mostly Christians (Bechtold, 2015; Berry, 2015). The institutional Islamic discourse, as a religious dominant discourse in north Sudan, along with local culture and local knowledge, creates norms that constrain people's acts and behaviours. This form of religious discourse has produced two distinct social groups and each of these groups has their own interpretation and practice of the Islamic religious text. These two social groups include the Islamic fundamentalist group who are known as *Ansar El-Sunna EL-Muhammadiya*, "The followers of Prophet Muhammad". This social religious group are strictly orthodox Muslims. The second social group are the *Sufis* who believe in Sufism, or Islamic mysticism. The *Sufi* school of Islam seeks a spiritual union with the Divine through self-discipline and spiritual exercise. During the fourteenth century Sufism brought to the Sudan the *"tariqa"* or religious brotherhood, as a new form of special organization (Berry, 2015; Oppong, 2010; James, 2012); this school remains important. The Qur'an, rather than any religious leader, is considered the ultimate source of spiritual authority in Sufism and is believed to hold the answer to any question or dilemma one might have. However, social authority is vested in a leader recognized as having special spiritual power or "*baraka*" (blessing). This blessing is passed on from a teacher or spiritual master to his followers, often to his own son (James, 2012, p.90). *Faqis* and *sheikhs* are the leaders of *Sufi* communities; they are considered to be holy men who dedicate themselves to the study and teaching of the Qur'an,

Islam's holy book, which is what imbues them with social authority. Often gifts are presented to these religious Sufi leaders to offer and achieve spiritual blessings.

3.3.3 Social Context and Gender Construction in Merowe Province Local Communities

In Sudan and the province of Merowe, the social and cultural construction of gender is determined and affected by economic, social, and cultural elements. Culturally and historically, a male is the official head of the household because he is accountable for all financial elements of the household. Consequently, he makes all family-related choices and may confer with his brothers, brothers-in-law, or other male family members. Women supply the majority of family services and are responsible for maintaining the home and raising the children, but this varies by tribe and region. Culturally, the traditional behaviours, habits, and values of many ethnic and cultural groups remain a formidable obstacle to tackling gender issues at the political, economic, or cultural levels (Sudanese Community Profile, 2007). Despite women's active participation in society, their socioeconomic status remains precarious. They have been economically and socially marginalised, as well as excluded from political and cultural activities, for decades. Through the Islamic theological discourse, which overlaps with social norms and cultural tradition, gender is constructed culturally. This is combined with other difficulties, such as poverty.

3.4 Gebel El-Barkal and Napatan Region

This fourth section of the chapter introduces the archaeological interpretation of the site and the associated historical events and values. It will cover Gebel El-Barkal and Napatan region as an archaeological site. Besides, Gebel El-Barkal as a place with a different sense for local communities than the Authorised Heritage Discourse (AHD) interpretation. Following this point, this section will offer an overview on Gebel El-Barkal as a World Heritage site in terms of the associated values based on which Gebel El-Barkal has been inscribed on the World

Heritage list. Considering the apparent tension between international associated values and those at the local and national level, it is crucial to consider this subject. The concluding parts of this section are intended to provide a brief introduction to recent developments that impact and improve the local community's engagement mode with Gebel El-Barkal and Napatan region archaeological sites. Gebel El-Barkal Festival for Tourism, Culture, and Investment, and Qatar Sudan Archaeological Project (QSAP), and the construction of the Merowe dam are among these facts.

3.4.1 The Archaeological Sites Management

The study of Sudanese archaeology began in the early nineteenth century, when European middle-class archaeologists interpreted the archaeological record which in light of hypotheses unconsciously reflecting their own interests (Trigger, 1994). An example of these motives is the facilitation of the interpretation of archaeological findings that backed up the justification for European colonialism of Africa. After Sudan's independence, these views were met with new ways that pay more respect to the people there and their history and dignity (Trigger, 1994, p.323). One of the significant developments in the field of archaeological research in Sudan is the establishment of the Sudanese Antiquities Service (SAS). In my interview during the field works with Dr Hassan Hussien Idress, the previous Managing Director of the National Authority for Antiquities and Museums of Sudan, revealed that "*the Sudanese Antiquities Service (SAS) was attached to the Ministry of Education in 1953, it became a stand-alone administration, in early 1969, the first Sudanese director of the National Antiquities Authority was appointed, Mr. Thabet Hassan Thabet*" (heritage officer narrator group narrator code 85HHH).

In 1992, National Authority for Antiquities and Museums of Sudan was changed to the National Corporation of Antiquities and Museums (NCAM). This resulted in a change in the

organizational and administrative structure for managing cultural resources in line with the state's policies and plans aimed at protecting the archaeological heritage. The National Authority for Museums and Archaeology is responsible and supervises the management of all Archaeological Sites. To execute the legal acts and legislative stipulates the National Authority for Antiquities and Museums with the local state or municipality authorities and Tourism Police as well as a group of citizens and civilian workers experts and assistants working at the site all coordinate and form an integrated executive arm. Yet it is worth mentioning that very few trespasses and offenses have been prosecuted. These trespasses were not controlled or greatly deterred after the implementation of the law. The archaeological sites are protected under the Protection of Archaeological Sites law 1999, and before that the Protection of Archaeological Sites Law of 1952, that specifically codifies both the protection of archaeological sites and the punishment of trespassers and offenders. However, the trespassers offence has been seen by the local communities as an acceptable act.

Gebel El-Barkal and Napatan archaeological region is under the supervision of the northern Sudan province, headed by the general director of the northern region. This division oversees archaeological excavations on the sites and controls the strictly regulated visitor traffic. The collection of archaeological sites at Gebel El-Barkal and the Napatan Region were added to the World Heritage List in 2003. The so-called outstanding universal values that prompted the classification of Gebel El-Barkal as a World Heritage Site (WHS) to be preserved for future generations are as follows:

> **"Criterion (i)** The pyramids, palaces, temples, burial chambers and funerary chapels of Gebel Barkal and the Sites of the Napatan Region and their related relief, writings and painted scenes on walls represent a masterpiece of creative genius demonstrating the artistic, social, political, and religious values of a human group for more than 2000 years.

The corbel vaults of the tombs of Kurru constitute a new building technique which influenced Mediterranean architecture from the 7th Century BC onwards.

Criterion (ii) In terms of their architecture the sites of the Napatan Region testify to the revival of a once almost universal religion and related language: the Egyptian old script and the worship of the State God Amon.

Criterion (iii) Gebel Barkal and the other sites of the property bear an exceptional witness of the Napato-Meroitic (Kushite) civilization that prevailed in the Nile Valley from the 9th Century BC to the Christianization of the country in the 6th Century. This civilization had strong links to the northern Pharaonic and other African cultures.

Criterion (iv) The typology of the buildings, their details, and the layout of the ensemble of the pyramids of Gebel Barkal, Nuri and Kurru with their steep angles and decorated sides, together with the painted rock-cut burial chambers, represent an outstanding example of funerary architecture and distinctive art that prevailed over a long period of time (9th Century BC- 4th Century AD). The mounds of Zuma represent a continuation of some aspects of this burial tradition up to the 6th Century AD.

Criterion (vi) Since antiquity the hill of Gebel Barkal has been strongly associated with religious traditions and local folklore. For this reason, the largest temples (Amon Temple for example) were built at the foot of the hill and are still considered by the local people as sacred places." (UNESCO, 2003)a

According to Dr. Salah Mohamed Ahmed, General Coordinator, and co-author of the nomination files, "*the file was presented in the name of the General Authority for Museums and Archaeology through the National Committee for UNESCO*. *At the time, the General Authority for Museums and Archaeology was part of the Ministry of Tourism and Wildlife. In*

addition, the Sudanese Embassy in Paris offered great support, and both the Ambassador and the Sudanese representative to UNESCO in Paris played significant roles. This inspiration was made possible by all the assistance and encouragement from other stakeholders, including the local community" (Heritage officer narrator group narrator code 85HHH). Dr. Salah Mohamed Ahmed responded to the question of why this listing was requested by stating, "*Our agenda and purpose on Gebel El-Barkal to be listed on World Heritage Sites (WHS) is to enhance the sense of belonging, to give the site the opportunity of international technical assistance in promoting and protecting the Archaeological site"* (Heritage officer narrator group, narrator code 86SAH).

3.4.2 Gebel El-Barkal and Napatan Region Landscape Identity

The great temple of the god Amun is located under the eastern boundary of Gebel El-Barkal, also known as "Holy Mountain." Ancient Napata was the capital during the early phases of Kushite civilization. However, it has not been identified with absolute clarity where the ancient Napata administrative centre was located. There is some evidence pointing to its having been at, or close to, the modern district headquarters of Merowe. This is not to be confused with ancient Meroe, which lies four miles downstream from Gebel El-Barkal on the east bank of the river (Lohwasser, 2010, p.9). According to UNESCO, the district of Napata region in the Nile valley is home to five separate archaeological sites spread out across a distance of more than sixty kilometres, making up the World Heritage Site in its whole. The site in its totality constitutes a record of the Napatan (900-270 BC) and Meroitic (270-350 AD) civilizations, respectively. Figure (3.10) below shows the location of the five Napatan archaeological sites *(*Gebel El-Barkal, El-Kurru, Nuri, Sanam, and El-Zooma).



FIGURE 3. 10: NAPATAN REGION MAP, ARROWS POINTING TO NAPATAN ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES
(Merowe town and province are spelt differently on the map "Meroe")

https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Napata_Map-es.svg

Gebel El-Barkal, one of these five locations, is located on the western border of Kareema town in north Sudan, approximately three hundred sixty-five kilometres from Khartoum. The location of Gebel El-Barkal and its distance from Khartoum are seen in figure (3.11).

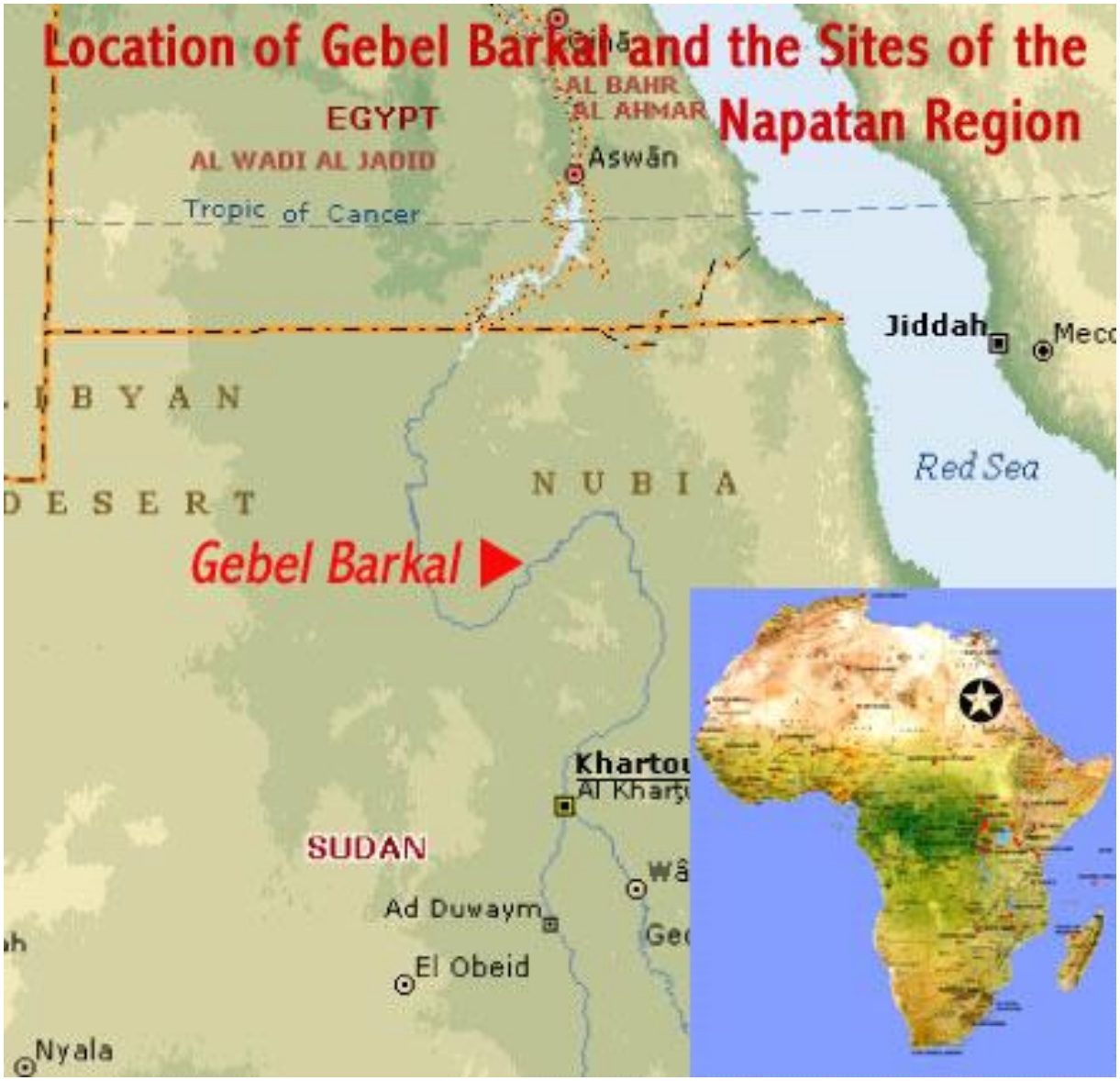


FIGURE 3. 11: GEBEL EL-BARKAL AND KHARTOUM LOCATION MAP.

http://www.africanworldheritagesites.org/cultural-places/ancient-civilisations-of-the-nile/gebEl-Barkal.html

Moreover, Gebel El-Barkal is located twenty-three kilometres downstream of the Merowe Dam at the fourth Nile cataract. The dam is located on the right bank, just below the middle of the great bend of the Nile (Kendall, 2010). Figure (3.12) illustrates Gebel El-Barkal and the location of the Merowe Dam.

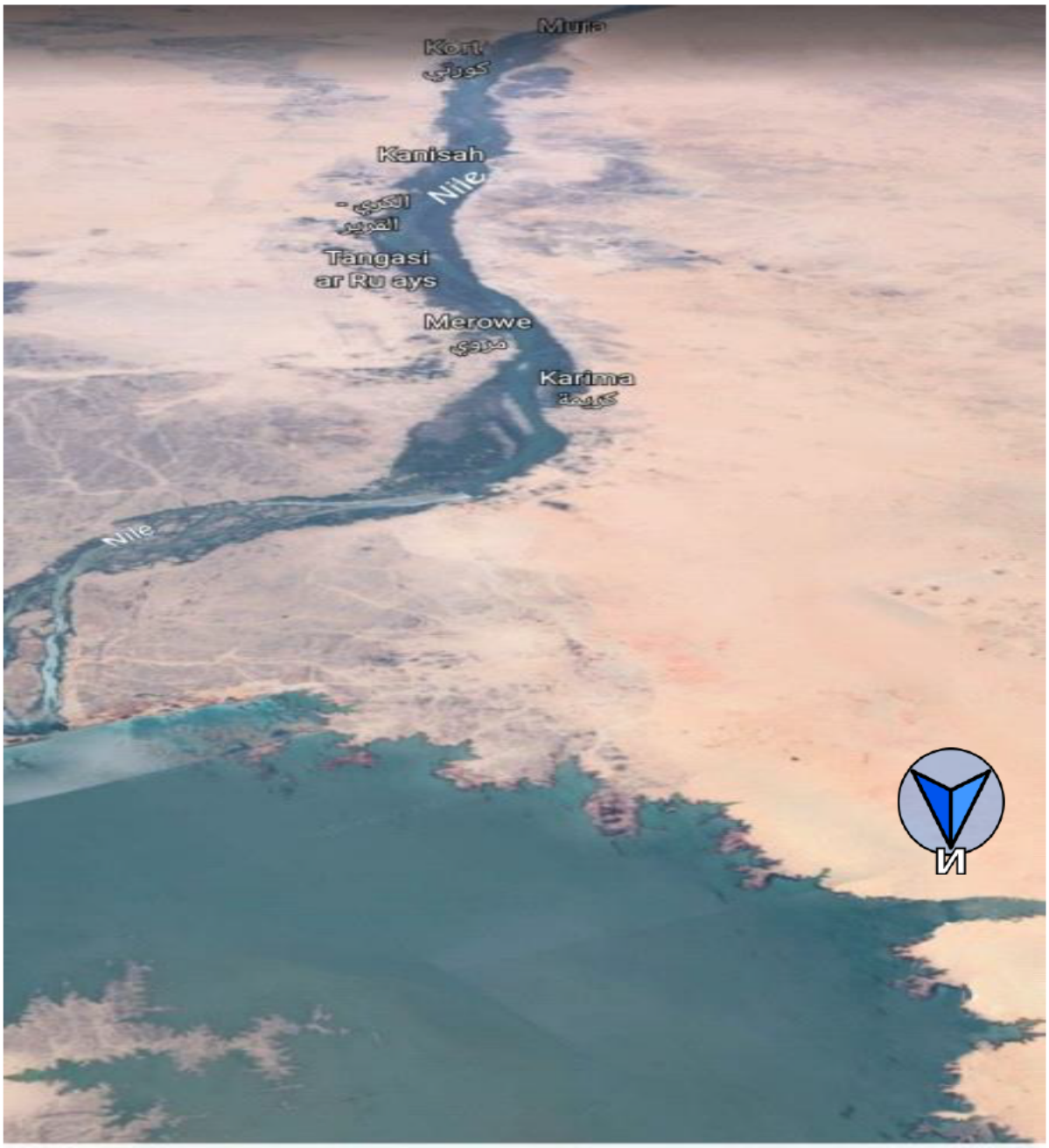


FIGURE 3. 12: AERIAL PHOTO SHOWING THE MEROWE PROVINCE AND MEROWE DAM
https://earth.google.com

Gebel El-Barkal is one of the largest archaeological sites in Sudan, occupying over one square kilometre of concentrated ancient remains. Figure (3.13) shows the most distinctive feature of Gebel El-Barkal which is the "Holy Mountain" with its gigantic free-standing pinnacle, seventy-five meters high (Kendall, 2010). On his contribution, Kendell (2016) claim that, the pinnacle is a statue of cobras, and the cobra was a sign of royal authority, and they are always

found on the crowns of kings (Kendall & Mohamed, 2016). Figure (3.14) present the current appearance of Gebel El-Barkal pinnacle.



FIGURE 3. 13: GEBEL EL-BARKAL LANDSCAPE

http://www.italtoursudan.com/luogo/jebEl-Barkal/



FIGURE 3. 14: GEBEL EL-BARKAL PINNACLE

Photo by Author 2018

Historically, the mountain was associated with the crowning of kings. This ceremony was tied to the mountain's existence before the Napatan civilisation, and it preserved these ceremonial and religious significances even after the capital was relocated to Meroe, Sometime around 590 BC (Kendall & Mohamed 2016). The mountain encompasses a number of temples, the most significant of which is the great temple of the god Amun, which is located east of the mountain along the east-west expansion of urbanisation. The Amun temple is one of the most important temples of the Kush civilization. In addition to its religious importance, the temple of the god Amun represents a political centre given the presence of statues of kings and victory panels. The temple was extended and developed in the Egyptian style in varied historical periods (Kendall & Mohamed 2016, p.17), a fact that indicated its continued importance through

history. Figure (3.15) represents the current Amun temple, while figure (3.16) shows an image that embodies an imagined reconstruction of what the temple was like in the past.



FIGURE 3. 15: GOD AMUN TEMPLE CURRENTLY

https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Remnants_of_Amun_temple_at_Jebel_Barkal_(1)_(34027055430).jpg

The path of rams (viz figure 3.17) is the initial entrance to the Amun temple, followed by a massive gate known as the pylon, which leads to a number of halls. The final hall, which represents the most holy and more secretive space, it is the hall closest to the mountain.

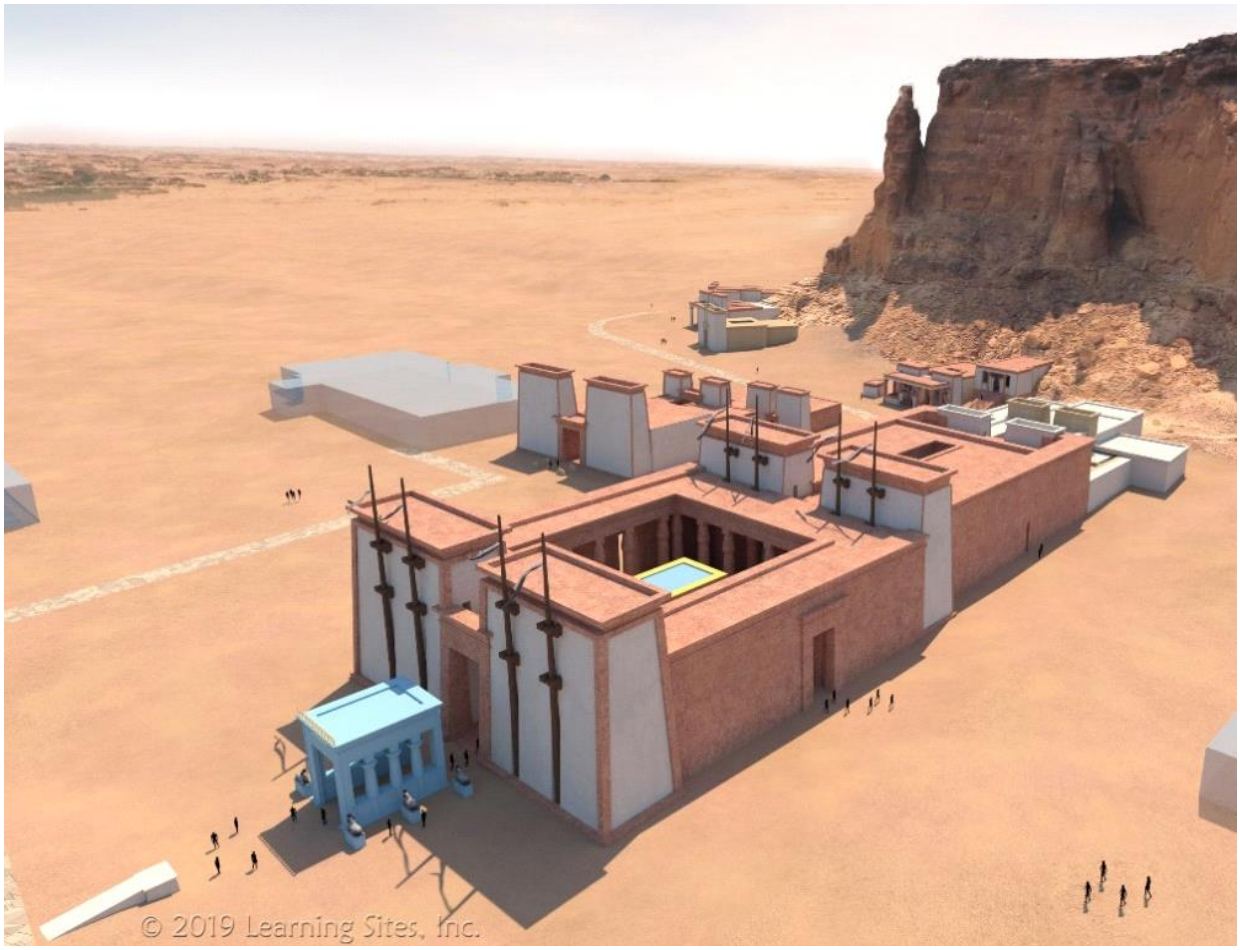


FIGURE 3. 16: GOD AMUN TEMPLE 3D IMAGINED FEATURE

(Kendall & Mohamed, 2016).



FIGURE 3. 17: RAM PATH AND THE ENTRANCE OF THE GREAT AMUN TEMPLE IN GEBEL EL-BARKAL

https://www.safariadv.it/en/2021/06/13/jebEl-Barkal-a-jewel-in-the-sudan-desert/

Goddess Mut temple is the second prominent temple at Gebel El-Barkal ancient site (viz figure 3.18). King Taharqa constructed this temple to honour the goddess Mut. The Goddess Mut is the wife of Amun and represents the female element and its qualitative composition. Goddess Mut is the goddess of fertility. “Mother” is the meaning of her name in the ancient Egyptian language. One of the current local communities’ rituals and customs were linked to this goddess and her temple, as the champion of fertility for the woman who has not given birth. In chapter eight, I will explain this organic connection in my examination of the continuity of culture and the cohesiveness of its aspects.



FIGURE 3. 18: GEBEL EL-BARKAL MUT TEMPLE

Photo by Author 2018

Multiple temples dating back to the New Kingdom, the Napatan Period, and even the Meroitic Period are scattered across this ninety-meter-high mesa at this "Holy Mountain" (Kendall, 2010). The sacral area of Gebel El-Barkal is not only home to magnificent temples, but also to significant palaces (Lohwasser, 2010). Furthermore, Gebel El-Barkal occupying within its southwest area with pyramids which are still preserved in their original shape and height. Most of the original contents of the pyramids' chambers have been either carried away or broken up by thieves (Dunham, 1955, p.4).

In addition to the archaeological remains, at Gebel El-Barkal there is "*Wad El-Karsani*" (El-Karsani's son) Cemetery and his "*Gubba*", shrine. *Wad El-Karsani* is buried in a shrine near

the southern corner of the mountain. The shrine is a small rectangular structure built of sandstone blocks taken from the ancient temples. *Wad El-Karsani*, who lived in the later nineteenth century, is remembered as one of the holy men in the Sufi religion, with distinguished social standing. Figure (3.19) shows the *Wad El-Karsani* shrine.



FIGURE 3. 19: WAD EL-KARSANI SHRINE

Photo by Author 2018

El-Kurru, one of the five Napatan region archaeological sites, is located about twelve kilometres downstream from Gebel El-Barkal. This site of Kushite royal cemeteries contains the tombs of the kings and queens of the early Napatan period (Lohwasser 2010, p.9). The principal period during which the cemetery at El-Kurru was used comprises twelve generations, the last seven of which are represented by the tombs of members of the royal family of the Napatan period (900 to 270 BC) (Dunham 1950). Figure (3.20) displays the newly developed

entrance to the site with the UNESCO logo as the only Napatan region archaeological sites representing the relationship between NCAM and UNESCO.



FIGURE 3. 20: EL-KURRU SITE MAIN ENTRANCE
Photo by Author 2018

The previous figures show the celebration of the heritage authorities by the site as a World Heritage Site, by hanging Sudan's national flag alongside a flag with the UNESCO logo. The El-Kurru main entrance has been built by the Dongola archaeological team, with funding from The Qatar-Sudan Archaeological Project (QSAP), which will be described further in the following section.



FIGURE 3. 21: EL-KURRU ROYAL CEMETERY

https://exhibitions.kelsey.lsa.umich.edu/graffiti-el-kurru/El-Kurru.php#content

In El-Kurru royal cemetery (viz figure 3.21) there are four types of royal burial architecture. These are, from the oldest to the newest: tumulus, tumulus with horse-shoe shaped enclosure, mastaba (an ancient Egyptian shrine consisting of an underground burial chamber with rooms above it), and pyramids. Currently, there is one pyramid that has remained stable and existent until the date of writing this research. Although the site has more than one temple with superstructure of a pyramid, its construction tools and stones were used by the residents and, apparently, by the American archaeologist George Andrew Reisner (1916 -1923). Within the site there is a building that contains two rooms built by the archaeological stones which local

communities and archaeologists believe they are Reisner's laboratory and store. Figure (3.22) shows the remains inside the archaeological site.



FIGURE 3. 22: REISNER LABORATORY REMAINS
Photo by Author 2018

Nuri as a Napatan region archaeological site is located on the left bank of the Nile, seven kilometres upstream of Gebel El-Barkal, six miles from Kareema town, and a mile south of the river (Lohwasser, 2010, p.9). The cemetery of Nuri has been named as Nuri after the neighbouring village which lies to the northwest on the outskirts of palm groves between the Nile and the pyramids (Dunham, 1955, p.1). In the large cemetery of Nuri are buried the kings and queens of the Middle and Late Napatan Period (Lohwasser, 2010). As was the case at Nuri, the pyramids both at Gebel El-Barkal and at Nuri had been universally plundered. The robbers entered the subterranean chambers, as they had at Nuri, by digging a hole in the western end of the filled stair-cut until they reached the blocked doorway at its base (Dunham 1957, p.2). Figure (3.23) presents the royal cemetery of Nuri which contains no fewer than 20 royal

pyramids. The burial in Nuri began in the seven centuries with the burial of King Taharqa, which is the largest pyramid at the site (Kendell, 2010).



FIGURE 3. 23: NURI ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE: REMAINS OF KUSHITE PYRAMIDS.
Photo by Author 2018

The site of Sanam, which can be translated as idol, is a fourth Napatan region archaeological site which is positioned about twenty-five kilometres south of the fourth cataract (Lohwasser 2010, p.8). The site of Sanam owes its name to a large statue (Sanam) anciently found in the *Wadi Abu Dom* that crosses the town (Vincentelli n.d, p.3). There was a large cemetery there with one hundred fifty graves, a temple constructed by King Taharqa dedicated to the Nubian God Amun, and a massive, mysterious building widely known as the "Treasury." (viz figure 3.24). However, Sudan is no longer home to the many fascinating artefacts that were once discovered in the graveyard. The Ashmolean Museum in Oxford is home to the majority of the artefacts, while other museums across Europe keep the others (Vincentelli n.d, p.5). I will discuss in chapter eight how these impacts on how local communities engage with the site and enhances a negative perception and image of archaeologists and heritage authorities.



FIGURE 3. 24: THE TREASURY IN SANAM ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE

Photo by Author 2018

The fifth Napatan region archaeological site is El-Zooma on the west bank about fifteen miles below Gebel El-Barkal. The remains in El-Zooma included burial mound built of sand and loose stones, surrounded by a ring of stones. There are two separate chambers in the underground M-shaped burial shaft, one for the funeral and one for the burial goods. Figure (3.25) shows burial mound for the burial of elites, dating back to the post-Meroitic period mid-4th century.



FIGURE 3. 25: EL-ZOOMA ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE

Photo by Author2018

3.5 Recent Developments Impacting on Local Communities' Engagement with Gebel El-Barkal and Napatan Region

This section introduces three recent developments that the study identifies as having a substantial impact on local communities' engagement with the Gebel El-Barkal and Napatan region. These three factors include the Gebel El-Barkal Festival for Tourism, Culture, and Investment (2014), the Qatar and Sudan Archaeological Project (QSAP) (2012), and construction of the Merowe Dam (2003).

3.5.1 Gebel El-Barkal Festival for Tourism, Culture, and Investment

Gebel El-Barkal Festival for Tourism, Culture, and Investment was a 2011 initiative of the local community that reflected their pride and aspirations but also aimed to promote tourism in the region. However, local, and national government seized the idea and initiative, resulting in

local community frustration and anger (Heritage officer narrator group, narrator code 86SAH) The local community believes that transferring the festival to the national government will diminish its benefits for the local community. As a result, the investment and tourism aim has expanded and moved to the forefront of the lobbying efforts of governmental authorities and politicians, who have all benefitted in some manner from tourism. According to the archaeologist Dr Salah Mohamed Ahmed, the vice president for the Cultural Committee of Gebel El-Barkal Festival for Tourism, Culture, and Investment, "*The government's intervention and politicians' involvement led to loss of [the] main cause and main objective and fell out for tourism. Hence, I resigned, with others following me*" (Heritage officer narrator group, narrator code 86SAH).

The first season of the festival, when it was still run as a local community initiative, took place between the end of 2011 and early 2012, continuing through most of the winter months (Heritage officer narrator group, narrator code 86SAH). Abdelgadir Mohamed Abdelgadir, who is a teacher and a poet, was an active member of the Gebel El-Barkal Festival for Tourism, Culture, and Investment. In my interview with him he revealed that "*the festival took the name of Gebel El-Barkal because the site has international importance representing both the historical centre of regional power and politics.*" (Merowe narrator group, narrator code 45AAM).

The festival as an official state level venture started in 2014 under the sponsorship of the former President of the Republic of Sudan, Omar Hassan al-Bashir (1989- 2019). The festival sessions are held annually every January for ten days under the supervision of a Commission for the Gebel El-Barkal festival for tourism, culture, and investment; set up though a republican decree. The festival's content focuses on tourism, cultural, artistic, heritage and marketing activities, all of which aim to promote tourism in the region and enhance the concept of sustainable tourism in Sudan. This contributes to presenting the cultural heritage of Gebel El-

Barkal and the Napatan Region to festival visitors, as the festival represents an opportunity to shed light on Gebel El-Barkal attractions and associated investment in the north of the country. The festival also aims to represent the culture of the northern state and the Sudanese civilization in general. It seeks to achieve these goals through several events and activities. The festival features cultural and sports activities, heritage, and folklore exhibitions, with the participation of a few Arab and foreign countries and the various states of Sudan. It includes river boat rides and cultural evenings, so that visitors can enjoy the culture of the region; art and folk dance had a distinguished presence in the festival.

Four years later in 2018, Lieutenant-General Bakri Hassan Saleh, First Vice President of the Republic, and Prime Minister, issued a decision to dissolve the Gebel El-Barkal Festival for Tourism, Culture, and Investment authority and steering committees which had already eliminated the jobs of its employees and proceeded to settle its activities due to a dispute between the Authority and another committee that was formed to supervise the Karma Festival in Dongola province in the northern state. The Karma Festival is officially designed with similar aims and contents to The Gebel El-Barkal Festival for Tourism, Culture, and Investment. This is no coincidence but has its root cause in the ongoing conflict over the ownership of history between the residents of the Meroe region as Arab groups and the residents of the Dongola region as a Nubian group. Therefore, the Commission intervened and entered the committee under its supervision based on the decision of the Vice President of the Republic to supervise the Karma Festival and consider it a fifth edition of the Gebel El-Barkal Festival for Tourism, Culture, and Investment. These contestations show that the site remains a part of contested politics of history, the issue that I will discuss on the ownership claim conflict section. Figure (3.26) shows Gebel El-Barkal Festival for Tourism, Culture, and Investment visitors.



FIGURE 3. 26: GEBEL EL-BARKAL FESTIVAL FOR TOURISM, CULTURE, AND INVESTMENT
https://www.facebook.com/Gebelalbarkal

3.5.2 The Qatar and Sudan Archaeological Project (QSAP)

The Qatar-Sudan Archaeological Project (QSAP) was initiated in 2012 to support the exploration of Sudan's history and heritage through preservation and promotion of domestic and international tourism (The Qatar-Sudan Archaeological Project 2013). The five-year project Qatar-Sudan Archaeological Project (QSAP) is registered in Sudan as a non-governmental organisation under the name "Nubian Archaeological Development Organisation" (NADO) and works closely with both the Sudanese National Corporation for Antiquities and Museums (NCAM) and its Qatari counterpart, Qatar Museums (The Qatar-Sudan Archaeological Project, 2013). Dr. Salah Mohamed Ahmed, the project coordinator, acknowledged in our interview that "(*QSAP) funding has played a significant role in developing public awareness of the country's cultural heritage through public outreach and*

the creation of local visitor centres" (Heritage officer narrator group, narrator code 86SAH). In addition to these efforts, QSAP provides funding for the publication of research and excavation results, as well as educational programmes aimed at school-aged children, university students, and professional guides (The Qatar-Sudan Archaeological Project, 2013). The outcome of the project was its contribution to enhancing the fast growing domestic and international tourism, particularly after the high-profile visit of the project sponsor Sheikha Moza bint Nasser, wife of the former Amir of Qatar to the pyramids of Sudan in 2017, which gained a high international media attention. Furthermore, The Qatar-Sudan Archaeological Project has created a stunning amount of archaeological and historical records that give new insights into Sudan's history. Through around thirty-seven funded archaeological national and international missions, experts have come from well-known institutions to conduct research, excavations, and conservation activities. This effort led to the discovery of considerable amount of new archaeological sites; further fifty-six archaeological sites have been protected and safeguarded while twenty-four sites have been renovated and rehabilitated (Heritage officer narrator group, narrator code 86SAH). Figure (3.27) presents the archaeological sites supported and funded by the Qatar-Sudan Archaeological Project. In my interview with Dr Salah, he answered the question of what the contribution of QSAP is by stating that "*the National Authority for Museums and Archaeology jointly with the German Institute for Restoration made a significant conservation to the site. Dongola university team in El-Kurru restore and present the site. Also, the American Michigan mission and the Danish Mission carried out restoration and protection of the burial temple and pyramid*" (Heritage officer narrator group, narrator code 86SAH).



FIGURE 3. 27: THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES FOUNDED BY THE QATAR-SUDAN ARCHAEOLOGICAL PROJECT (QSAP)

http://qsap.org.qa/en/qsap-sites.html

3.5.3 The Construction of Merowe Dam

The idea of constructing the Merowe dam dates to the 1940s, but it was not possible to realise initially; however, the government that came to power in 1989 considered the construction of the dam as one of its major priorities. Merowe Dam, also known as Merowe High Dam in Northern Sudan, was built on the Nile's fourth cataract (viz figure 3.28) between 2003 and 2009. The dam created a reservoir with a length of one hundred seventy-four kilometres. Figure

(3.28) shows Gebel El-Barkal and Napatan region archaeological site and the local communities around the sites and their location from Merowe Dam. The construction led to the displacement of more than fifty thousand people from the fertile Nile Valley to higher-up but dry desert locations. Thousands of people who refused the vacation of their homes were affected by the expanding waters of the reservoir (International Rivers ND).

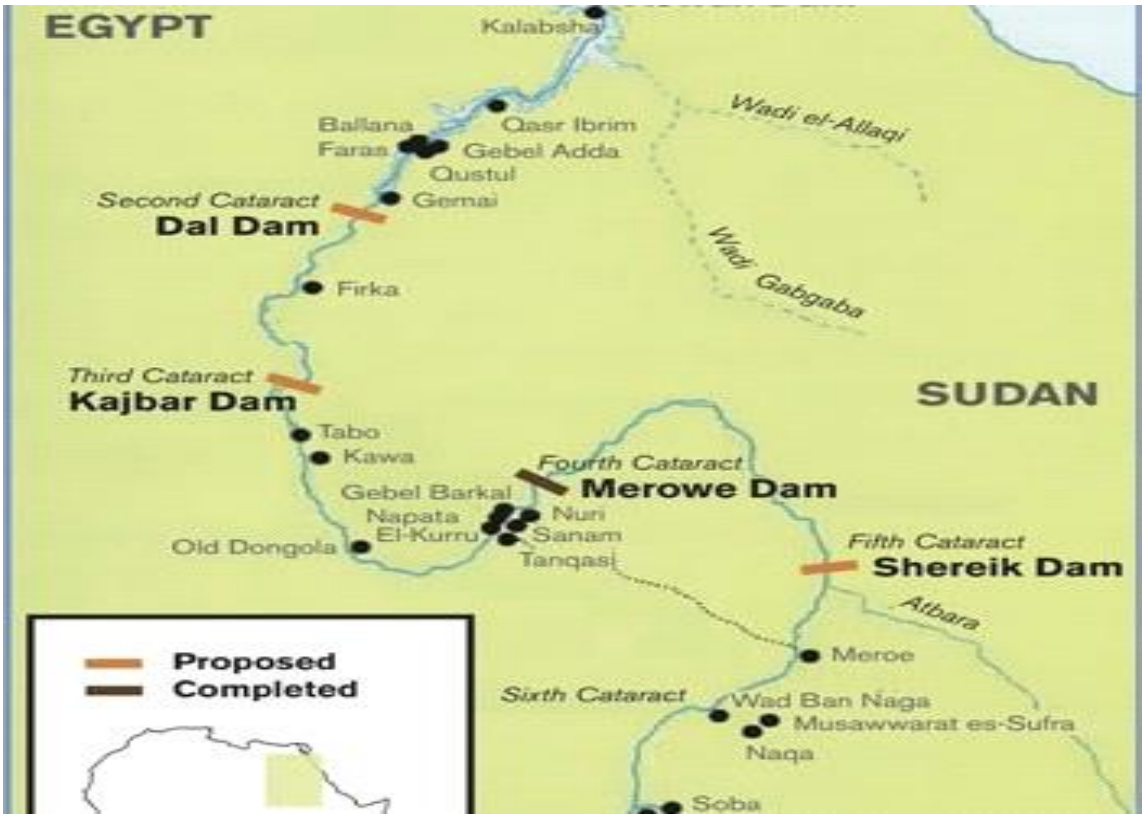


FIGURE 3. 28: THE MEROWE DAM LOCATION FROM GEBEL EL-BARKAL
Internationalrivers.org

The Dam has generated many further social and environmental concerns, as it displaced many already socioeconomically vulnerable communities, putting strain on the social fabric of the area and, in the process, drawing attention to issues of structural violence. The dam also flooded inestimable archaeological remains in its reservoir (International Rivers ND). This led local communities to refer to archaeological sites in their resistance discourse (Askouri, 2014). The dam meant a considerable social, cultural, and economic transformation in local people's lives

as they resisted their displacement from the Nile valley and proposed to be resettled along the banks of the new reservoir. The forced change of habitat for some of those local communities and the concomitant change in lifestyles and cultural practices for those who decided to stay creates a significant need to examine and investigate the consequences of the Merowe Dam on local communities, particularly their tangible and intangible cultural heritage.

3.6 Conclusion

Sudan confronts significant challenges due to its multi-ethnic society, in which ethnic groups are continuously forming and reforming national and regional history. These great challenges create ongoing tensions in Sudanese society. The tension that culminated with South Sudan's declaration of independence on July 9, 2011, followed a lengthy civil conflict. Ethnic, religious, and other identity aspects in Sudanese society also produce meanings that control and form the conduct and practices of individuals and social groups by determining rules, norms, and conventions. In the case of Northern Sudan and the Merowe Province in particular the identity discourse construct and create the foundation for the local communities to the social, cultural, and political uses of history and archaeological remains. The institutional Islamic discourse, as a religious dominant discourse in North Sudan along with local culture and local knowledge creates norms that constrain people's acts and behaviour. Consequently, the power of this discourse played significant roles in Sudanese communities in terms of their social structure, context, and customs, as well as their cultural practises and values. In addition, social and cultural construction of identity is utilised to define groups through narratives of inclusion and exclusion.

The following chapter will discuss the theoretical underpinnings of the methodological framework I used to direct the data collection and interpretation.

CHAPTER FOUR

METHODOLOGY AND DATA COLLECTION METHODS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter's purpose is to provide a conceptual map and framework for the research methods. Recognizing that research questions have a powerful influence on research methods and that different research questions require different methods to pursue answers more effectively, I will revisit the research questions presented in chapter one. The research questions this thesis aims to investigate are firstly, How/which/why local communities from Merowe province engage with Gebel El-Barkal site/place and Napatan region archaeological sites? What are the values assigned by local communities to Gebel El-Barkal and Napatan region archaeological sites, and how do they differ from values associated on national and international scale? How does ethnic, gender, class, and age identities shape the local communities' mode of engagement and values associated with Gebel El-Barkal and Napatan region? What are the causes for, and forms of ownership claim conflict among the local, national, and international communities concerning the Gebel El-Barkal and Napatan region archaeological sites?

This study is based on qualitative research which adopted ethnography and phenomenology as a mixed approach to study the local communities of Gebel El-Barkal and their beliefs, attitudes, material culture, customs, and social interactions toward the Gebel El-Barkal site/place and Napatan region archaeological sites. The process of collecting material was carried out primarily through participant observation and interviews with both individuals and focus groups. Since the primary data consists mainly of oral culture, I have relied on discourse analysis in interrogating, interpreting, and evaluating the data.

This chapter is structured to discuss the theoretical basis for the methodological framework used to guide data collection and interpretation. In addition to the usefulness of the qualitative research design and qualitative data as a mode of inquiry employed in this research, quantitative

data are also employed to facilitate (4.2). In addition, the chapter discusses ethnographic and phenomenological approaches by introducing their benefits and drawbacks and explaining why both approaches were employed as a methodological framework (4.3) and (4.4). In addition, the chapter offers an evaluation of the fieldwork and collection of primary data (4.5) and (4.6), as well as data analysis and interpretation techniques (4.7). The final section (4.8) concludes the chapter.

4.2 Qualitative Methods and Qualitative Data

This research is based on a qualitative research design, data, and method of investigation. Qualitative research as a situated activity locates the researcher in the real world and has a long and eventful history in academic disciplines (Denzin, 2000; Coffey & Atkinson, 1996; Silverman, 2006). Multiple methodologies and practises make qualitative research as a set of activities a complex, dynamic, and contested field, as it is comprised of a variety of methodologies and practises (Punch, 2005; Denzin, 2000). However, qualitative research generally consists of a set of interpretive tools and practises that seek to make the world intelligible through the transformation of field notes, interviews, conversations, photographs, recordings, and memos into a series of interpretations in an effort to gain an in-depth understanding of the investigated subject (Denzin, 2000). Qualitative data is diverse in origin and style, inconsistent in particulars, and diverse in origin and dependability (Richards, 2015). Its non-numerical form of data comes as text, images, and audio files (Denscombe, 2014). These records include information about the social and cultural context from people's own accounts and in their own words, as well as records of observation or complex and contested interaction between the researcher and the subject (Richards, 2015; Denzin, 2008). Researchers who are concerned with the social and cultural contexts that shape people's lives, as well as their understanding of the world, interpretation of their own experience, and production of meaning, have placed a greater emphasis on qualitative research as a means, style, and method

of inquiry (Merriam, 2009; Silverman, 2010). Thus, the objective of qualitative research is to investigate something novel rather than to test something already known (Richards, 2015). Diverse disciplines have utilised qualitative research as a theoretical paradigm to explore and emphasise the socially constructed nature of reality, demonstrating how social experience is constructed and given meaning (Denzin, 2000). Qualitative research and qualitative researcher characteristics share the fact that the qualitative research is naturalistic, has multiple methods, is emergent rather than prefigured, and finally is interpretive (Marchall & Rossman, 1999; Denzin, 2011). For the qualitative researcher, the world and social phenomena under investigation are holistic, and they reflect systematically on their own role in the research process and interpretation. In addition, they are sensitively considering the impact of their personal biography on the direction of the study. Benefits of applying qualitative method to this research include firstly, identifying the intangible cultural heritage associated with Gebel El-Barkal by investigating people's own accounts and in their own words to gain a better understanding of the socially constructed nature of reality, demonstrating how social experience is given meaning. Secondly, qualitative research allow this research to highlight the social and cultural context which frames people's lives, knowledge, and the way they understand and how local community around Gebel El-Barkal value their past.

4.3 The Ethnographic Approach

The term "ethnography" does not appear to have a universally accepted definition (Hammersley, 2007;Heyl, 2001; Tedlock, 2000). The phrase 'ethnography' is derived from Greek and has two components: '*Ethnos*' which refers to people and '*graphos*' to writing. Consequently, ethnography refers to writing about or describing the way of life of a particular people (Hammersley, 2015). Therefore, ethnography is both a method and a product. It is a research method with a distinct structure whose output is ethnographic records (Punch, 2005).

As a research strategy, ethnography possesses a variety of characteristics. The first is that ethnography requires substantial time in the field among the investigated people and society (Denscombe, 2014), to concentrate on a few cases, generally small-scale, perhaps a single setting or group of people to facilitate in-depth study (Hammersley, 2007). Secondly, research data consider people's actions and accounts in everyday contexts, as opposed to conditions created by the researcher (Punch, 2005). These data are collected from a variety of sources, but participant observation and informal conversations are typically the most significant. Lastly, the ethnographic research method investigates how the members of a group comprehend, interpret, and perceive their reality (Denscombe, 2014). Within the research process, the relationship between the researcher and the world they seek to describe, and study must be considered. Consequently, the researcher must be extremely sensitive to reflexivity in relation to their position and how it influences their perception of the culture, society, or events under investigation (Denscombe, 2014). Identifying that the researcher's social background and personal experience produce the meaning and language used to describe the observed phenomenon, it is crucial for the ethnographic researcher to reflect on how their personal beliefs, identities, and social values have influenced their access to data interpretation and data collection (Denscombe, 2014). Due to the nature of the investigated aspects and their associations with political and religious sensitivity, considerable consideration has been given to the research's reflexivity impact.

4.3.1 The Benefit of an Ethnographic Approach

The ethnographic approach, which involves direct contact with the relevant people and location, provides this research with an in-depth and detailed information that provides a genuine understanding of the local community's lifestyle and beliefs and links this to its social and cultural context. In addition, the ethnographic approach addresses in a useful manner the

research questions associated with this study, as this study is concerned with the experiences, feelings, and knowledge of local communities as a social group. In doing so, ethnographic approach assists in addressing the association of cultural heritage value, local communities' identities and communities' engagement and perceptions towards Gebel El-Barkal cultural heritage. As the analysis of ethnographic data requires interpretation of the meanings, functions, and consequences of human action and institutional practises, as well as how these are implicated in local and wider contexts (Hammersley, 2007). By observing people and events in their natural state and employing an ethnographic research methodology, it is possible to get reliable and up-to-date data that can contribute to a greater knowledge of the interaction patterns of Gebel El-Barkal local communities with the archaeological site. Applying an ethnographic method to this research provides access to the common cultural meanings in their natural context among the many local communities. This research's ethnographic methodology attempt to gives an understanding of cultural contexts, symbolic meaning, and the significance of that meaning within the culture and social process (Punch, 2005). Recognizing that the purpose of this research is to investigate the relationship between identity, heritage values, and heritage ownership claims, I believe that using an ethnographic approach to collect primary data enhance the investigation of how local communities associated values, identity, and ownership claims influence local communities' engagement with the Gebel El-Barkal and Napatan region archaeological sites.

4.3.2 The Challenge of the Ethnographic Approach

Due to its nature, the ethnographic method presents various challenges. An internal conflict within ethnography is the one between naturalism (the unbiased portrayal of events or cultures) and reflexivity (the impact of the researcher's "self" on the results) (Denscombe, 2014, p.91). The other challenge that faces the ethnographic approach which is associated with reflexivity

is the reliability of the findings. The narrative of the records relies significantly on the interpretation, technique selection, and findings of a single researcher. The traditional criticism of ethnography is that it is too concerned with the here and now to account for historical context and change (Fabian, 2014). The greatest difficulty of the ethnographic method is the ethics related with the research subject, such as, participant confidentiality, obtaining informed permission, and safeguarding informants from harm.

4.4 The Phenomenological Approach (PA)

As an alternative to positivism, phenomenology is an umbrella word for a research methodology that does not rely on measurement or statistics (Denscombe, 2014; Crotty 1996). It is associated with subjectivity rather than objectivity as a method. It also prioritises description and interpretation above analysis. Phenomenological study helps to establish a context and provide an early assessment of people's perceptions, attitudes, beliefs, emotions, and feelings (Denscombe, 2014; Smith, Flowers, & Larki, 2009). A phenomenon is a scenario that has been perceived by sight, hearing, touch, smell, and/or taste. It is something that can only be perceived by the direct use of the senses (Denscombe, 2014, p.76). In other words, in the phenomenological method, researchers are interested in the significant daily flow of lived experience (Smith, Flowers, & Larki, 2009; Maso, 2001). Consequently, the phenomenological approach focuses on people's experiences, viewpoints, interpretations, and comprehensions of these experiences (Denscombe, 2014, p.119). Thus, it focuses on the significance of these events for the participants (Smith, Flowers, & Larki, 2009). The purpose of adopting the phenomenological approach to this research is not only to interpret or repackage these experiences, but also to present them through the eyes of others in an honest manner. In addition, to make sense of their personal experiences, it is necessary to comprehend how they have become entwined with the normal and ordinary aspects of social life (Hammond et al, 1991). Access to data collection for the phenomenological approach depends on the

researcher's perspective of the world of others. The phenomenological method focuses on analysing the participant's story to determine their perspective and interpretation of the social reality.

4.4.1 The Benefit of a Phenomenological Approach

The objective of employing a phenomenological approach to study the intangible cultural heritage of the local communities of the Merowe province associated with Gebel El-Barkal World Heritage Site, is to identify the cultural values and the ways in which the local communities perceive the archaeological sites of the region. Thus, the phenomenological method provides a description of human experiences and meanings that develop from local communities, as opposed to being imposed by the researcher. Consequently, the phenomenological method aid in clarifying how local communities are experiencing their new way of life after the construction of the Merowe dam. In addition, the phenomenological method provides ways that preserve descriptions as true as feasible to the participant transcripts' experienced raw material. The focus and interests of phenomenology on the social construction of reality and how social life is constructed by those who participate is beneficial to the research in two ways: first, in identifying what are the significant values and interpretations that are mediated and recreated by local communities regarding Gebel El-Barkal archaeological site; and second, in examining what is the sense of place and sense of time attached to this place by the local communities. Recognizing that the phenomenological approach focuses on people and their lives as contrasted to systems, aggregates, and trends operating at a high level of abstraction (Denscombe, 2014), the phenomenological approach contribute to illuminating the forms of local community engagement and activities around Gebel El-Barkal and Napatan region archaeological sites. Reflecting the reality that knowledge, interpretation, and the assignment of meaning to the social world are socially constructed, it allows for the possibility

of numerous social realities that change from circumstance to situation and cultural context to cultural context. It accepts and even embraces the potential of different realities in this regard (Denscombe, 2014). Furthermore, phenomenology rejects the notion that there is a single universal reality. Instead, the phenomenological approach argues that things can be viewed differently by different people at different times and under different circumstances, and that each alternative version must be acknowledged as valid in its own right (Smith, Flowers, & Larki, 2009). Taking into consideration this argument, the phenomenological method assist in identifying, interpreting, and presenting the local or national communities that claim affiliation with the Gebel El-Barkal archaeological site. Consequently, the phenomenological approach aid in demonstrating the power relations, cultural meanings, and significant values for the various social groups within the local communities around Gebel El-Barkal, as it allows and seeks to grasp competing versions of what things are, how they perform, and what they mean.

4.4.2 The Challenge of a Phenomenological Approach

The phenomenological method seeks to produce a detailed description and comprehension of a particular human experience or experiencing moment (Hammond et al, 1991). Nonetheless, the phenomenological method employed in this research involves obstacles and limitations that vary depending on the researched group and individual informants. In terms of the data collecting procedure, the phenomenological approach in this research is challenged by the inability of certain informants to communicate their emotions and thoughts, whether for covert motives or due to a lack of proficiency in self-disclosure and expressiveness. As the phenomenological method relies on the communicative abilities of the individuals who provide the data, articulacy is essential. Due to its focus on a certain era or instant, the approach may overlook information concerning longer periods or the evolution in terms of temporal development (Smith, Flowers, & Larki, 2009). In concentrating on a detailed account of an

experience, the phenomenological method overlooks information about the circumstances that preceded that experience. In the inquiry method, this research employs both an ethnographic and phenomenological approach.

4.5 Methods of Data Collection

The method of data collection and the collected data itself serve as tools for the researcher to get a deeper grasp of the subject under inquiry, an accurate perspective of events, and the facts and supporting evidence. There are several methods for data collection. Before adopting and implementing any of these strategies, the three elements indicated below must be considered. First, research methodologies and research strategies are often associated. Second, each of these strategies has distinct advantages and disadvantages. When selecting a strategy, it is crucial that researchers base their judgement on what works best in reality. Third, research methodologies need not be mutually exclusive; a combination-of-methods approach may be used (Denscombe, 2014, p.163). After determining the research questions, study design, and doing a literature evaluation, it is time to summarise the key steps to develop the conceptual framework for the collection of primary data. Interviews, including semi-structured interviews, unstructured interviews, and focus groups, as well as participant observation, were employed to collect data for this study. A wide range of informant categories were interviewed. I have categorised the various interviewee into local historians, community leaders, a random sample of local residents, heritage officers, and archaeologists with ties to the region. So, many questions have been developed that consider the respondent's expertise and cultural background. This provided insights into the thoughts of individuals and groups occupying various positions. In addition, through in-depth interviews, their experiences and rationales have been detailed and clarified in a manner that enables me to see things from the perspective of the individuals themselves. In accordance with the interview guide, Appendix (1) presents the various types of questions. In addition to interviews, participant observation was used to

collect data: I observed the social and cultural activities associated to Gebel El-Barkal and the reflection of Gebel El-Barkal in the oral tradition of the local communities, as described in the section on participant observation. I have divided the data collection and fieldwork into three primary periods for an effective data collection plan. The first addresses the pre-fieldwork, throughout which I focused on planning, preparation, and project management. This part served the planning of data collection and related issues, including funding, the conceptual framework for data collecting, the logistics and expenses of fieldwork, and official authorisation and obtaining the regulatory permits and approval. The second part addresses the period of conducting the fieldwork. This section assists me in highlighting all the matters related to the actual data collection procedure within the field. In addition to that, I here discuss the appropriate way of getting access, gathering, and recording the data as well as the ethical considerations on conducting the fieldwork. The final section covers the after-fieldwork tasks related to analysis.

The following table served as a guideline for the data collection procedure.

TABLE 4. 1: GUIDELINE TO DATA COLLECTION PROCESS.

The Question	**Brief answer**
Which data to collect?	Intangible cultural heritage of Gebel El-Barkal local communities
How the data will be collected?	Observations, interviews, and desk-based research
When the data will be collected?	October 2017- April 2018
What categories will be used to identify the groups of interest?	Local historians Local community leaders Sample from local communities Official heritage officers and archaeologists from the investigated research area

4.5.1 Data Collection and Fieldwork Preparation and Planning

Having chosen the conceptual framework for data collection, I commenced the stage of preparation by obtaining the most essential approval required prior to data collection. To conduct research with the local communities around Gebel El-Barkal, I required firstly, an ethical approval from the University of Birmingham since all research within the university is required to go through the appropriate ethics review process. Therefore, this research has been bound by the stipulations of the ethical review committee of the College of Arts and Law, University of Birmingham. Secondly, the permission of conducting research from the national authorities in Sudan.

4.5.1.1 Ethics Code, Guides, and Approval

Conducting research in an accountable and ethical manner involving human subjects is a heavy burden. Thus, the research ethics should be included into every step of the study, from design through analysis (King & Harrocks 2010, p.103). Among these crucial ethical considerations is informing participants of the study's goals. Therefore, after informing participants about the research goals and offering voluntary involvement, I provided them the chance to express their views and experiences freely without interference, keeping in mind my position as a researcher. The researchers' privileged position in society, which allows them to pursue their interests at the expense of those they investigate, notwithstanding the potential usefulness of the research. Because of this, research ethics cannot be ignored and must be a part of any credible study (Denscombe, 2014, p.306). The ethical aim of this research is to protect the interests of the participants as well as their privacy and their personal safety. My research raises ethical concerns since it is voluntary, and because the participants have a right to privacy that must be protected by maintaining their anonymity and confidentiality. Therefore, I have introduced myself to the interviewees and briefed them about the research goals and significance of this research as part of the ethical procedure I have followed during the fieldwork. I also gave them a consent document to sign after this introduction (see appendix no (3)). One of the most critical factors I've always regarded is giving interviewers with accurate information and ensuring they were aware of their right to withdraw from interviews within a month of their scheduled interview date. Furthermore, in an attempt to enhance the level of trust between me and the participants, I explained how I will treat and manage their information in accordance with the ethical approval requirements. The guidelines that emphasise the necessity of maintaining the confidentiality of the information supplied by participants during research by prohibiting the disclosure of their accounts to other participants or anybody unaffiliated with the research. Despite the fact that this ethical procedure is unfamiliar to the majority of interviewees,

it increased the credibility of the participants' statements by making them more comfortable with disclosing information. In conclusion, a transparent ethical code has been implemented for the benefit of the researcher, participants, researched society, and academic community.

The following is a summary of the research's ethics guidelines, which offer me with direction on what action I ought to take.

TABLE 4. 2: CODES OF RESEARCH ETHICS AND GUIDANCE.

The Ethical principle	**The action has been taken**
Obtain ethical approval prior to data collection.	Ethical review and approval request submitted and approved from University of Birmingham
Compliance with local regulations	Permission to perform this research has been acquired from the national authorities in Sudan.
Participation is voluntary, and participants have the ability to withdraw within one month of their scheduled interview.	Forms of informed consent have been created and distributed to each participant (see appendix (3): The participants consent form).
Confidentiality and anonymity unless agreed.	Participants have signed the informed consent form, and the data collection, storage, and analysis processes have considered the issue of confidentiality by assigning a unique code to each participant. (See appendix (2): Interviewees list and code).
Acknowledge the importance of protecting the anonymity and comfort of all participants.	To preserve the participants' privacy, I have taken the following measures: - stick to the informed consent - save the data on a secure device.

	- conduct the interviews at a place where privacy and confidentiality may be maintained
Provide participants with adequate information	The participants information sheet has been provided (see appendix (4): The participants information sheet)
Specify the kind of commitment required from participant.	Informed consent has been provided (see appendix (4): The participants information sheet)
Avoid fraud and misrepresentation when providing information and data to participants.	Followed the ethical guidelines
Ensure the data are accurate	I used a variety of recording formats, including audio, video, and notes
Collect data in a fair and lawful manner	- Give an equal opportunity for the interview among varied social categories within the local communities. - Avoid discrimination and stereotypes.
Anonymize the data	I used anonymisation techniques in storing, transferring, coding, and analysing the data.

4.5.2 Approaching the Field and Data Collection

Access to the field is a crucial prerequisite for a successful research project. This process of entering the research field can vary greatly from one kind of research to another, the personal characteristics of the researcher, the obstructive and facilitative relationship the researcher has with prospective gatekeepers and informants. In this study, the impression management in the field and my social and cultural background played an essential role in obtaining access to local communities of Merowe province. As this ethnographic research would take place, I took

advantage of my previous social networks as an undergraduate student graduated in 1998 from the Faculty of Arts and Human Studies at the University of Dongola which is based in the same research area. My previous knowledge of the local communities around Gebel El-Barkal and their social and cultural context made it easier to represent myself effectively to different types of people populating it. Having a recognised knowledge and social networks within the area under investigation had added value in terms of knowing the right people to conduct my interviews with. Acknowledging that the investigated society has a wide range of cultural and social settings I have benefited from the way local communities identified me as not just as Sudanese and thus a compatriot, but also as coming from their part of the country, North Sudan, being a fellow Muslim, with an Arab identity affiliation, and having graduated from their area. The various aspects of my identity that connected me to the area where the study was conducted allowed me to gain their trust and access to information, as I was perceived as someone who could understand, respect, and empathise with my interlocutors. In addition, my gender had a significant influence in gaining access to male informants but posed obstacles in gaining access to females.

4.5.2.1 Defining Samples and the Choice of Informants

In qualitative research methods, it is crucial to recruit individuals who have various perspectives on the topic under investigation. In addition, decisions about settings and processes, as well as the individuals to interview or the events to observe, necessitate the use of sampling strategies. Therefore, non-probability sampling methods, such as snowball and theoretical sampling, are frequently used in qualitative research (Minichiello et al, 1995; Punch, 2005). Due to the vast diversity and complexity of the local communities around Gebel El-Barkal, I attempted to obtain a representative sample from a variety of socially salient categories. To address age and gender social categories, the categories have been separated into over adult youth female, adult youth male, over thirty of age male, and over thirty of age

female. In terms of their ethnic identity, the informants were classified as *Shawiga/Shaigia*, *Arab Rohal*, or *Nubian* based on the tribal affiliations of the surrounding local communities. The final social groups given the opportunity to be represented are *Ansar El-Sunna El-Muhammadiya* and the *Sufi*, to provide the research with information on the influence of religious identification on the engagement mode of local communities with Gebel El-Barkal and their associated values.

4.5.2.2 Snowball Sampling

Relying on my prior understanding of the social context of the research and the snowball sampling technique, I initiated contact with informants who could propose other individuals who would be relevant to the research and requested them to introduce me to them. If they fulfilled the criteria for the research project, I then acquired an interview agreement and established a time that was convenient for them to be interviewed. The snowball sampling method required acquiring access to participants. Even where no formal permits are necessary, access may be difficult due to the consent of multiple gatekeepers (King & Harrocs, 2010, p.30). How to encourage individuals to consent to being interviewed or observed, as well as the most effective methods for gaining their cooperation, are crucial for gaining access. To do this, I developed a detailed plan outlining, first, how I would position myself among the local communities and which techniques I would employ to reach the informants, all the while considering the appropriate ethical considerations. It is vital to identify the gatekeepers who have the legal or social authority to grant or reject access to the possible participants to acquire access to the setting and informants. In my case, I relied on my social networks within the local community, including several social groups and my link with the director of the Gebel El-Barkal Museum. Occasionally, it may not be required to be supported by a gatekeeper, but there may be benefits to doing so (King & Harrocks, 2010, p.31). Using this access to approach

the field allowed me to conduct first interviews with individuals nominated by friends and endorsed by my personal networks. However, this sampling was expanded when more interviews were conducted and I also solicited interviews based on everyday encounters in the field, which did not directly rely on existing social networks, and therefore mitigated any risk of bias. At the completion of each interview, I routinely asked the interviewees to provide me with a list of at least four nominated participants and an explanation of why they believed it was important for me to undertake interviews with these individuals. This technique has presented me with a group of interviewers from various social groups who have provided me with valuable information that has increased my understanding of their social context and opened up avenues for additional inquiries.

4.5.2.3 Building Rapport and Conducting the Interviews

This section will emphasise the significance of and my method to establishing rapport. It will also provide further information on the techniques I used to initiate the interview, the process of recording and monitoring the interview, the sort of interview questions, the most successful manner to ask the questions, and how to overcome challenges. Establishing rapport with interviewees is usually regarded as a crucial component of a successful interviewing process. Recognizing such a rapport is about positive relationships and trust between me, as the researcher, and the interviewees; I committed to all the ethical criteria I had previously established so that participants would feel comfortable opening and sharing their knowledge and experiences. Primarily, establishing rapport with my participants relied on how I presented my research and myself, as well as how I constructed my questions and selected my words. Understanding the other individual's worldview and communicating with them are necessary to achieve compatibility and harmony. This can be accomplished effectively by matching perceptual language, world representations, and speech patterns. In conclusion, one of the

variables that assisted to establish a connection between me and the research participants was our shared ethnic and religious identification characteristics. With a high consideration for not viewing the locality through the eyes of the majority, the act that can cause the minority to distrust me as both are important and valuable in the process of obtaining information.

In the interviews, I evaluated how questions were phrased, how I should handle words, and how to manage non-verbal communication, all of which I felt to be essential for a successful connection between myself and the participant. As I relied on in-depth unstructured and semi-structured individual and focus group interviews, I entered the interviews with a list of relevant issues and general questions to discuss with the interviewees. Formal questions and key-point questions are examples of these types of inquiries. In addition, I avoided limiting myself to a single method of questioning by posing open-ended questions rather than yes/no or alternative questions. I obtained information through using below table (Table 4.3) as a guide for questioning types and methods.

Question type	Rationale	Notes	Which questions from the interview schedule
Background demographic questions	To identify the interviewee in relation to other members of society.	Age, gender, education, occupation, place of residence, ethnicity.	For all. At the beginning of the interview
Descriptive questioning	To allow interviewees to discuss their own experiences and placing their own interpretations of the topic.	Used to cover: • The local communities' relationship with Gebel El-Barkal • The local communities' perception to the site and its landscape identity • The question of identity	Used in main question one.
Contrast questioning	To enable interviewees to compare events or situations in their world and to discuss the significance of these comparisons.	It provides rich data for discovering the tension between ethnic and religious identities within the local communities' of Gebel El-Barkal.	Main question three.
Opinion/value questioning	To access and understand the cognitive and interpretative processes underlying people's perceptions of social reality.	- Identity - Gender construction - Social reality - Public knowledge - Oral history	Used in main question three.

Feeling questioning	Feeling and emotions	Designed to grasp the emotional response of people to their new lifestyle following the construction of the Merowe dam.	Used in main question two.
Sensory questions	Raising questions about what the informant has seen, heard, felt, tasted, and smelled.	Determine the mechanisms of community interaction and interpretation at the site. Added to that are the associated values.	Question One.

TABLE 4. 3: QUESTION TYPES

4.6 Data Collection Tools

4.6.1 Interviews

Interviewing as a main data collection tool in qualitative research is a means of gaining access to information of different kinds. It is a useful way of accessing people's perceptions, meanings, and definitions of situations and constructions of reality. It is also one of the most powerful ways we have of understanding others (Punch, 2005, p.186). Research interviews focus on self-reports: what people say they do, what they say they believe, what opinions they say they have (Denscombe, 2014, p.184). For understanding other persons' constructions of reality, it is beneficial to give them the opportunity to reveal their knowledge in their terms in depth so they can address the rich context that is the substance of their meanings (Jones 1985, p.46). Although the core of an interview consists of posing questions and getting responses, there is significantly more to it than that, particularly in the realm of qualitative research. Interviews can take different shapes and serve many functions. Interviews usually take the form of one-on-one discussions, but they can also be conducted as in-person, small-group discussions (Punch, 2005; Minichiello, Aroni, Timewell, & Alexander, 1995). In terms of question types and the process of the interview, interviews can be structured, semi-structured, or unstructured. Each type has its distinct style, methods, advantages, and limitations. Each use and builds on our common-sense knowledge about talking to others. This research utilised semi-structured and unstructured interviews, as well as group interviews, the characteristics of which are discussed in the following. Based on the previous theoretical background, interviews have been chosen to be the major data collection tools and methods. The semi-structured and unstructured interviews have been used with a heavy attention on the fact that their success was based on how I presented myself and in what capacity I have communicated with participants.

4.6.1.1 In-depth Interviewing

In my semi-structured interviews, I created a list of issues without a fixed wording or order. The focus of the semi-structured interview focused on the central issues addressed by the research questions. However, I was prepared to be flexible in terms of the order in which the themes are discussed, and perhaps even more importantly to allow the interviewee to develop ideas and speak more broadly on the concerns raised. The responses was open-ended, and the interviewee was encouraged to elaborate on points of interest (cf. Denscombe, 2014; Minichiello et al 1995; Gubrium, 2003; Johnson & Rowlands, 2012). Within this semi-structured style, probes are employed based on whether the interviewer believes there is more information to be shared at a certain point (Gillham, 2005, p.70). In this research, semi-structured in-depth interviews were conducted with all categories of informants, see appendix (1) Interviews questions and themes, for interview guidelines for each category of informant. As with all other forms of interviews, I began by ensuring that the informants had been informed of the goal of my research and the intended uses of the data they gave, and that they had consented to participate using the form provided in Appendix (3).

All of the interviews I have conducted were face-to-face. The interviews lasted between one and two hours, depending on the flow of the conversation, the physical ability of the participants, and the time offered by the participants. Eighty interviews were done, and each was distributed equitably among the various types of informants. Appendix (2): Narrator list contains a participant information table.

4.6.1.2 Unstructured Interviews

Unstructured interviews refer to interviews which dispense with formal interview schedules and ordering of questions and rely on the social interaction between interviewer and informant to elicit information. The unstructured interviews in my research took place in the form of a normal everyday conversation. However, it was a controlled conversation geared for my

research interest and I used it as a way of understanding the complex behaviour of local communities' without imposing any prior categorization which might limit the field of inquiry. Within these unstructured interviews there were several considerations. The most important ones are accessing the setting, gaining trust, and establishing rapport. In my unstructured interviews, my main role as interviewer was to set the ball rolling by introducing a theme or topic straight after explaining the purpose of my research and obtaining the informants' informed consent, but then to be as non-directive as possible. The objective was not to direct the respondents' thoughts with questions, but rather to provide a space for them to explore their own interests and ideas. These unstructured interviews gave the interviewees the opportunity to reveal their thoughts and feelings without the interference of the semi–structured interview questions. This kind of interviews developed a narrative and conversation which assisted the research on examining varied local communities' conceptualization towards Gebel El-Barkal and Napatan region and contributed positively to clarifying the diverse ownership claim conflicts and identity formulation.

4.6.1.3 Group Interviews

Group interviews are those in which the interviewer gathers a group of informants to engage them in conversations for a research purpose (Minichiello, Aroni, Timewell, & Alexander, 1995, p.66). It is usually tied to the research question as well as to the pragmatic exigencies of the research process, such as restricted access to samples, funding restrictions or time constrains (Minichiello et al, 1995; Krueger & Casey, 2000). This research took advantage of these points in the group interview to conduct its data collection from participants from similar social groups in general and from female research participants. The reason for employing this method of interviewing with female participants is due to the gender limits that are a component of the social and cultural construction of the conservative communities around Gebel El-Barkal

and the entire region. These imply restrictions to socialisation between the genders, which I was also subject to in my interactions with the research participants.

Planning the steps of the group interview was the initial step in conducting group interviews. The planning approach covered the participant selection methods and the group size determination. In addition, the planning considered the interview location, which has a significant impact on how people react. Consequently, the room and physical environment were set so that each participant could make eye contact with the researcher and the other participants. A small number of group interviews have been placed at the archaeological sites. In addition, I ensured that there was a group agreement for safeguarding the confidentiality of shared information in accordance with the informed consent of the participants.

The group interviews, which comprised primarily of three to ten participants, contributed significantly to the data collection since they allowed me to develop data and insights that would have been more difficult to obtain without group interaction. Due to local standards of propriety, as a man I did not have unrestrained access to individual women of all ages; however, interaction in a group setting avoided reluctance on the part of female informants and any suspicion on the part of others in the community that anything not in accordance with local norms may have been part of the interaction. I was able to do one-to-one interviews with older women aged sixty and above who were above suspicion in contrast with younger ones. In addition to practical issues of access to certain types of research participants, the situation where interviewees are interacting as a part of a group viewed as naturalistic and much closer to everyday life than the individual encounter with a lone interviewee. Moreover, group interviews encourage recollection and tend to engage participants in a re-evaluation of their personal position and views, which may be amplified, reviewed, amended, or contradicted when expressed as a part of a group interview. From my own experience in the field, due to the nature of the focus group setting as well as the social and cultural context, the responses of the

participants were not independent, as they mutually influence each other's responses. Rather than taking the lead myself, I took on the position of moderator throughout these interviews. Group interviews were conducted, and I prompted participants to talk amongst themselves on the topic. By talking things out, we were better able to grasp the logic behind the many points of view and perspectives expressed in the group. In addition, it provided me with the opportunity to inquire into the participants' reasoning and a way to investigate underlying logics that would explain why they have a particular opinion, and why they are saying things in a certain way while also saying other things in other settings and at other times. Alternatively, the group's discussion serves the research to expose significant differences among group members and presented primary data with a range of opinions and feelings relating to the topic, particularly the issues related to Merowe dam construction and Gebel El-Barkal Festival for Tourism, Culture, and Investment. To this end, I made a concerted effort to foster an environment where everyone felt safe enough to speak their minds openly and honestly. I have done that through firstly, choosing a location that made each of the participants feel comfortable, secondly by giving the participant's around twenty minutes to chat in friendly manner with each other before the focus group interview went ahead, and finally via assuring that all members of the group had an equal amount of time to voice their views.

Reference group as a form of group interview has been used within this research for the precise political information from stakeholders or representatives of stakeholders in the social context of my research. However, there are varied complications in applying reference focus groups. One of them is the difficulty of identifying who the key stakeholders are in the research context. Furthermore, all members of the reference group will have their own interests to represent, and this may conflict with the researcher's sense of integrity in responding to the concerns and interests of the different members. These types of group interview have been conducted with the local community members of each social and ethnic group within the local communities

around Gebel El-Barkal to enrich the primary data in identifying the numerus interests in engaging with the Gebel El-Barkal Festival for Tourism, Culture, and Investment.

4.6.1.4 Fieldwork Setting and Interview Location

Research problems and research questions play a significant role in choosing the nature of the research setting, and the setting plays a key role in the primary data collection process. The setting of this research project was the archaeological sites of the Napatan Region on both sides of the Nile. These include five archaeological sites (Gebel El-Barkal, El-Kurru, Nuri, Sanam and El-Zooma).

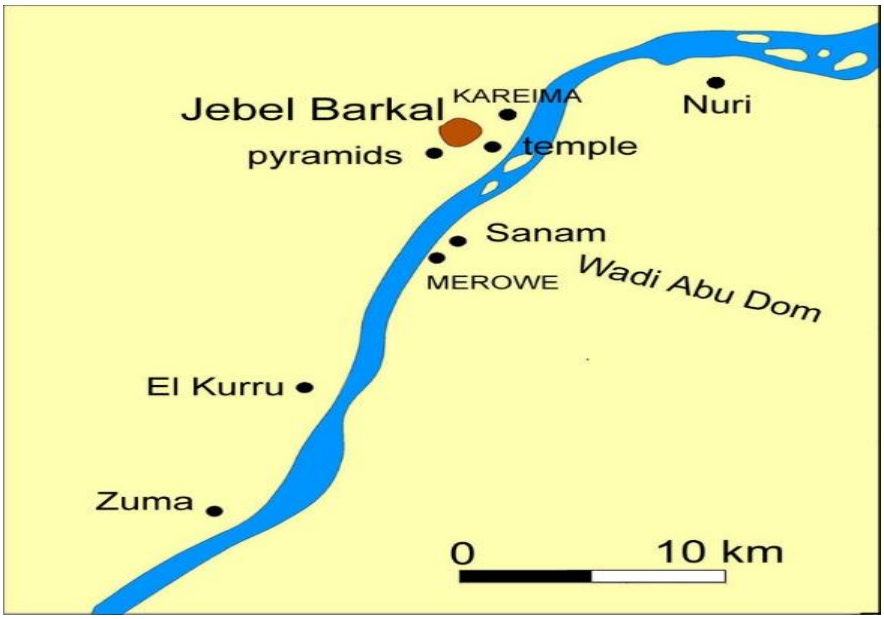


FIGURE 4. 1: THE GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION OF THE RESEARCH SETTING
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Merowe,_Sudan#/media/File:Napata_english2.jpg

The interview location plays an essential role in constructing reality and serving simultaneously as both cultural product and producer. The choice of interview location is not just a technical matter of convenience and comfort. It should be seen within the social context of the study being conducted and analysed as an integral part of the interpretation of the findings (Herzog, 2012, p.207). It is generally good practice to ask participants where they would like the

interview to be held. The location of the interviews in my fieldwork varied according to the participant's types of work and gender. In this research the participants always gave their preference of location. Participants working in a self-employed capacity preferred to have their interviews in their home after work while those who worked in an office job mostly preferred to have the interview in their office during the day. Females always preferred to conduct their interviews either in their home or their relatives' home during the daytime. Acknowledging the importance of the physical and psychological environment in encouraging the informant to disclose their experience and knowledge, I considered the interview locations to provide me and participants with a comfortable setting where it was possible to hear each other as well as catch their non-verbal communication without interfering with their personal space.

4.6.1.5 Recording and Managing Difficulties in Interviewing

In qualitative research, it is essential to have audio recording and a hand-written record of each interview (King & Harrocks, 2010; Hammersley, 2007; Denscombe, 2014). Recording equipment has different meanings to different people and, accordingly, has a varied impact on the interviewing process (King & Harrocks, 2010, p.45). As a result, it is not advisable for the interviewer to be certain beforehand on how anyone will react to being recorded, and one should always be alert to potential problems (King & Harrocks, 2010). Asking the participant's permission for recording is an essential ethical matter in the data collection process. Accordingly, I decided to choose to take handwritten notes for those who agreed to take part in the interviews but had concerns about audio recording. The types of recording tools I have used to store the interviews were the mobile voice recording facilities and a camera for the video recording and photos. Permissions for video and voice recording have been refused by groups of females as well as by individuals and groups from the ethnic minority nomads (*Arab Rohal*). Giving personal information such as their names while recording has been mostly

refused by those who work for the state in a professional capacity, such as heritage officers and some of the local council personnel. There was a certain interview where I faced difficulty and consequently prepared to deal with such challenges or find a way to avoid them in the next interviews. One of such challenges was the status issue, as the perception of higher or lower status between the interviewer and interviewee could likely have an impact on the quality of the interview, besides the potential risk of their perception of me as having interests that aligned with the site management team. To avoid and anticipate the negative impact of my status and their perception, I introduced myself as an independent researcher and not part of the government's heritage management office. To create and strengthen trust between me and local communities, I consistently presented myself as one of them by beginning conversations with a description of my university days in the region. This strategy benefited me in overcoming the challenges imposed by perceptions of my academic high status and my affiliation with a foreign institution.

4.6.2 Participant Observation

Observation as a systematic description of events, behaviours, and artefacts in the social setting of the study (Blevins 2018; Musante & DeWalt 2011) assisted the primary data collection in learning about the activities of the local communities of Gebel El-Barkal in the natural setting through observing and participating in their activities associated with Gebel El-Barkal archaeological sites. Conducted participants observation promoted and discovered additional points that I used for further clarification later in my interviews with local communities. Spend around six months at the residential areas of the local communities around Gebel El-Barkal, allowed me to have a deeper understanding of their social and cultural context in terms of identified the stakeholders, their interactions, and their nonverbal expressions. Likewise, participant observation through being part of visits to the place/archaeological sites of Gebel El-Barkal offered me the opportunity to have a great relationship with the local communities

members, which assisted me to get more informants for later interviews. Additionally, applying participant observations methods, provide me with significant knowledge of the underling meaning that are present in day-to-day lives. The procedure of applying participant observation has taken place on the regular visits to Gebel El-Barkal as a public place every Friday evening as a visitor to the place. The way of observing started with being parts of the visitors with an open eye to any complex situations that might need and explanation in which I do introduce myself and my research to get the permissions from the participants to have a short unstructured interview or arrange a semi-structured interview in different time and location. In case of a group of people practicing a traditional aspect of culture related to the site/place I did request the group to let me observe them. However, in some cases particularly the group of families can be wary of accepted me as an outsider to observe them. Once these groups consented to allow me to observe them and engage in their activities, I began to observe what they do, what they say, to whom they say it, what their positions are, how they pay attention, and to what issues they pay attention. In my experience, the success of obtaining information through participant observation is based on two factors: first, the quality and the length of time I spent with the group, and second, how I present myself to the group.

For the benefit of this research, I observed the following:

- Day-to-day or life routine activities
- Social and cultural practices and traditions associated to the site/place.
- Oral history circulation
- Informal conversation
- Who visits Gebel El-Barkal?
- How long do they remain?
- What are they doing during their stay?

- How do they interact with visitors and archaeologists?
- Gebel El-Barkal Festival for Tourism, Culture, and Investment

4.6.3 Themes Emerging from the Data

The purpose of this section is to introduce the themes that emerge from the fieldwork primary data. The goal of establishing these themes is to emphasise and address the intended flow of both the data and discussion chapters. The section will examine the prospect of narrowing the general themes by focusing on each theme's central idea. The interviews, observations, and secondary data have assisted in identifying and illustrate these themes.

Themes emerging from interviews and observation can be categorised as follows: community engagement theme which reveals the social group attached to the sites, their social status background, and their own way of engaging with the place/site. The second theme is local communities' sense of place and sense of time. This theme provides insight on the landscape identity and the different significant parts of the place. The third theme is the ownership claim conflicts over the heritage site/place, and the ethnic and race identities at play in claiming Gebel El-Barkal past and place. The fourth theme is how identities and ownership claim conflicts shaped and influenced communities' engagement and associated value with Gebel El-Barkal site/place and Napatan region archaeological sites. The fifth theme is the impact of religious discourse on community engagement modes and interpretations of the place in whole and in each part of Gebel El-Barkal.

4.7 Data Analysis and Interpretation Methods

This study will apply the methods of discourse analysis in interrogating, interpreting, and evaluating the data. Acknowledging that the primary data is an oral material, discourse analysis was the chosen method of data analysis. In attempting to apply discourse analysis on studying the intangible heritage of the local communities around Gebel El-Barkal, it is useful to define what discourse is. Discourse is a “particular form of language with its own rules and conventions and the institution within which the discourse is produced and circulated" (Rose, 2001, p.36). Furthermore, discourse is a form of knowledge produced in social interaction processes to construct reality, be responsible for identity formation, rationalise attitudes and inspire values (Brown, 1983). Therefore, discourse jointly is a source and a product of this knowledge (Barbara, 2007; Bloomaent, 2005). Intangible cultural heritage is one way of expressing discourses, structured according to various patterns of speech when people engage in different domains of social acts, it is also a specific way of speaking about and knowing the world (Jorgensen & Phillips, 2002, p.17). Accordingly, discourse analysis is a study of language (Jones, 2012, p.2) as a communication mode produced, circulated, and used within semiotic systems (Barbara, 2007, p.2) to reflect and represent the reality as it has been socially and culturally constructed by powerful social institutions (Gill, 1996, p.17) through which individuals shape their acts and construct their identities (Jones 2012, P.38). Even though discourse analysis is used in numerous interdisciplinary approaches, it specifically signifies effective theories and methodologies for linguistics, communications, and cultural studies (Jorgensen & Phillips, 2002, p.2). Consequently, I have discovered that discourse analysis can successfully analyse the significance of Gebel El-Barkal intangible cultural heritage in the local communities' conceptions of this site/place.

Although the idea of discourse is well established within heritage studies, it remains disappointingly ill-defined in terms of its utility as an analytical category (Waterton, Smith, &

Campbell, 2006). In this research the discourse analysis aims to: firstly, provide the way forward for understanding the implications of discourse in terms of how Gebel El-Barkal as archaeological site is understood or conceptualized by the local communities; secondly, to highlight the socially constructive effects of discourse looking closely at what happens when people talk about the site, who talks, and with which implications; thirdly, examine how the intangible heritage discourses of the local communities around Gebel El-Barkal constitute certain knowledge, values, identities, consciousnesses and relationships; fourthly, to identify the dominance, social force, discrimination, or organised power and control embodied in this discourse as well as the tensions between competing discourses.

4.8 Conclusion

In conclusion, this ethnographical qualitative research is intended to gather information on the intangible cultural heritage of the Merowe province's local communities in the context of a World Heritage Site. Observation, interviews, and group interviewing techniques were the essential primary data collecting methods. This dissertation intends to identify the local community engagement mode with Gebel El-Barkal and Napatan region and how this engagement created associated values with the sites. Having a better understanding on both local communities' conceptualization and interpretation, and the way of seeing of these local communities towards Gebel El-Barkal and Napatan region archaeological sites is essential process for the site's management and conservation. Moreover, as identities, self-identity formation and social reality are always embodied by and within discourse, which controls and is produced by cultural and social structures and presented through intangible culture this research intends to understand how Gebel El-Barkal local communities' intangible cultures provide them a sense of identity.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE MODES OF ENGAGEMENT WITH GEBEL EL-BARKAL AND NAPATAN REGION ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES

5.1 Introduction

This chapter's goal is to explore the various social groups that engage with Gebel El-Barkal site/place and Napatan region archaeological sites, focusing on their patterns of engagement. To understand the engagement processes and modes of interaction of local communities with Gebel El-Barkal, it is essential to identify and conceptualise the communities that interact with the site as a World Heritage Site. As discussed in the literature review, the interest in researching communities as a field of sociology has its origins in the nineteenth century (Smith & Waterton 2009, p.20). Communities and locality have been related by a generalisation. However, there are social groups that are defined more by their social and cultural experiences, as well as their political beliefs and aspirations, than by their geographical location. In this research, the term "community" refers to social groupings that share a common set of values, beliefs, and interests, in addition to residing in the same geographical area, which refers to the regions around the five archaeological sites of Gebel El-Barkal and Napatan. Each of these communities has its own objectives with regard to the cultural significance and interpretation of the Gebel El-Barkal site/place as well as the management of heritage and heritage identities (cf. Ashworth and Graham 2007). Local communities as stakeholders understand that heritage can serve a significant social function as part of the cultural context since it plays a crucial role in forming their society's historical memory (Vienna 2014: 97). With the objective of having insight into the distinct communities' engagement with Gebel El-Barkal, it is essential to introduce the character of the site/place as each part has its own form of engagement. Gebel El-Barkal as explained in chapter three can be divided into seven main parts: The mountain, the top of the mountain (viz figure 5.1), the mountain sand (viz figure 5.2), the archaeological

remains (viz figure 5.3 and 5.4), *Wad El-Karsani* cemetery (viz figure 5.5) and shrine, and Gebel El-Barkal Museum (viz figure 5.6).



FIGURE 5. 1: LOCAL COUPLES APPRECIATE THE VIEW FROM THE TOP OF GEBEL EL-BARKAL
http://www.peterboekamp.com/Sudan/Sudan-Tour-Gallery2.html

The top of Gebel El-Barkal Mountain (viz Figure 5.1) is an essential element of the place where members of the local, national, and international communities climb the mountain to overlook the city and the agricultural region along the Nile.



FIGURE 5. 2: GEBEL EL-BARKAL MOUNTAIN IN THE SOUTH SIDE

Photo by Author 2018

Figure (5.2) displays the sand area at Gebel El-Barkal, where children and youths play and roll down from the top of the mountain.



FIGURE 5. 3: GEBEL EL-BARKAL ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE PART ONE

Photo by Author 2018

Figure (5.3) above present the current situation of the Amon temple in Gebel El-Barkal.



FIGURE 5. 4: GEBEL EL-BARKAL PYRAMIDS

Photo by Author 2018

The Gebel El-Barkal pyramids are located on the southern slope of the mountain, as shown in Figure (5.4).



FIGURE 5. 5: WAD EL-KARSANI ISLAMIC CEMETERY

jebEl-Barkal06.jpg (600×400) (italtoursudan.com)



FIGURE 5. 6: GEBEL EL-BARKAL MUSEUM AND A CLASS OF SCHOOL CHILDREN READY TO VISIT IT

Photo by Loay Shams Elola 2018

This chapter is divided into seven sections. First (5.1) is the introduction, which gives definitions and uses of the notions of community and of communities' engagement with heritage from various perspectives; my use of the terms site/place within this research; and a description of the landscape identity of Gebel El-Barkal. The second section (5.2) explores the various modes of engagement of local communities with Gebel El-Barkal, specifically engagement that involves physical presence at the site/place. The third part (5.3) focuses on the social imaginaries of local communities' which is taking place outside the actual site/place. These indirect attachments include oral literature, activities on social media platforms and daily life events undertakings by local communities. The fourth section (5.4) presents the barriers and challenges facing the heritage management authorities and experts including archaeologists, when attempting to enhance local community engagement with the site. The fifth section (5.5) presents national and international communities' mode of engagement with Gebel El-Barkal and Napatan archaeological sites. The final section (5.7) is a conclusion of chapter five.

The concepts of 'site' and 'place' (site/place) mentioned previously, will be used to illustrate the wide-ranging uses of Gebel El-Barkal and its archaeological remains amongst the local communities under investigation. The concept of "site" within this research is used to refer to the perspective of those who are interested in the archaeological past whether as a career or a personal interest. Nearly all of those who use site as a concept associated with Gebel El-Barkal are middle class. Conversely, the notion of Gebel El-Barkal as a "place" circulated among those who see and make their attachment to Gebel El-Barkal as a place, namely the local communities: The concept of 'place' conveys their memory, expresses their feeling towards their surrounding physical environment, and promotes insights in the meaning of their religious affiliation. Gebel El-Barkal in this sense is a sacred and inspirational mountain among the local communities under investigation.

5.2 The Local Communities' Modes of Direct Engagement with the Site

Social groups attached to the site/place have been categorised into three main groups. Local community, national community, and international community. The concept of local communities has thus been used in a plural form within this research because local communities around Gebel El-Barkal cannot be understood as a coherent whole. This is due to the fact that the communities around Gebel El-Barkal are varied in their ethnical and religious background, gender social and cultural construction and affiliation, their economic classification gaps, and finally their age.

The local community direct engagement refers to the various activities that require a physical presence on the site/place. These can be divided into the following activities:

- Visiting the site/place for various social purposes as a part of everyday life.
- The uses of the site/place associated with traditional cultural practices.

5.2.1 Visiting the Site/Place

Local communities' access to Gebel El-Barkal and Napatan region archaeological sites and within Gebel El-Barkal itself varies from site to site. Similarly, the time, purpose, and manner of the visits vary among local communities. Since Friday is a holiday and is culturally recognised as a family day, the site or venue usually receives a large number of visitors on that day every week: "*Our best and frequent visiting time is in the evening, particularly on Fridays*" (Nuri local community informants group narrator code 49MHN). Furthermore, local communities have chosen Friday evening because it is often too hot in the desert during the day. A limited number of visitors prefer to visit the site/place alone in the evenings throughout the week, either to relax or to reflect deeply on their personal lives or to imagine the way of life for individuals who lived in the past, hence visitation times tend to be irregular during the

week. This was backed by two other participants who stated, "*I enjoy going there because I can have some time to myself. While I am there, I reflect and think about life in general as well as recall my past*" (El-Barkal local community informant group narrator code 53AAB); and "*The quietness of the place affords me the opportunity to reflect extensively on different matters*" (Merowe local community informants narrator code 47MOM).

Visitors may arrive in groups of relatives/friends or as individuals. On the south side of Gebel El-Barkal Mountain, where children and young people can play in the sand area to roll over from the top to the bottom, I have observed a substantial percentage of picnickers. On the mountain's north side, where the archaeological remains are located, and on the mountain's southwest side, by the *Wad El-Karsani* cemetery, there are only a few additional visitors. This was supported by informants who argued: "*The place we frequently visit is the Gebel El-Barkal*" (Nuri Local community informant group narrator code 49MHN), "*I swear, Gebel El-Barkal place is liked by most people compared to El-Kurru and Nuri, because it has the pyramids and when you climb the mountain you will be able to see the top view of the area*" (Merowe local community informant group narrator code 45AAM),"*we used to visit Gebel El-Barkal a lot but the other places we leave straight once we see it from a far distance*" (Merowe local community informant group narrator code 42EAM). According to the informants' understanding, the greatest and most valid grounds for this preference are that Gebel El-Barkal is an appealing place and that it offers the option to participate in a variety of activities.

Within the six varied elements of the landscape of Gebel El-Barkal, most of the informants reveal that they usually visit to stay at the mountain and its sand while *Wad El-Karsani* cemetery is also often paid a visit by a certain local community. The cemetery visitors are mostly members of the *Shawiga/Shaigia,* the dominant tribe who have a strong belief in *Wad El-Karsani* and for whom the cemetery has a strong association with their collective memory. The social group most attached to *Wad El-Karsani,* and the cemetery call themselves, and are

called by others as "*moridain*" (disciples). These believers come in either a group or individually to visit the cemetery and read the Quran or to visit *Wad El-Karsani* Shrine. According to one of the followers/believers, "*Wad El-Karsani is the only reason I visit Gebel El-Barkal*" (Female group narrator code 57FGB). *Wad El-Karsani* as a location also exhibits a large attachment from the local communities outside of the believers, particularly from those who visit the cemetery to memorialize their relatives and friends who have been buried there, as seen by my observations and conversations with informants. *Wad El-Karsani* derives his religious legitimacy from the surrounding myths, oral histories, and tales. These stories describe his personal and familial history, his spiritual power, and his reputation as a kind man with a notable social position in the local community. More significantly, the account reveals how he selected to be buried at Gebel El-Barkal. He was originally from Shiba (a small village four kilometres from the mountain). His legend states, "*While they are carrying his body to the grave, he flies and lands at Gebel El-Barkal, where locals from El-Barkal continue to bury their relatives*" (El-Barkal local community informants group narrator code 54EB).

Likewise, some from the local communities, notably the youth, prefer to use the mountain and other hidden sites as secret places to either drink alcohol, meet with the other gender or to have a fun out of others' view. "*We don't go to Gebel El-Barkal often, but youth go there in the evening and some of them at the night-time to do youth things"* (Merowe local community informant group narrator code 55MSB). The narrator was a random old age informant whom I met at Gebel El-Barkal. Another informant verified that, "*before the heritage authority put the lights on at the area, the youth usually go there during the night because they don't like to be disturbed by others. Some of them drink and others smoke "Hashish", but unfortunately some of the youth go there to do El-haram [forbidden activities, i.e., sex]*" (El-Barkal local community informants narrator code 54EB).

Many others only visit the sites/place when they have a visitor who comes from somewhere else to show them that this area has a long history, or to spend some quality time outside the house. "*We normally go out of the house to visit the archaeological site when we have a guest. We do so to get out of the house to have fresh air and enjoy the views*" (El-Kurru local community informant group narrator code 8HHK).

The uses of the archaeological site and the mountain landscape have also been changing over time. One resident of El-Barkal, commenting during an interview, recalled how, "*back in the old days, in the sixties, the Gebel El-Barkal area was absolutely deserted; you would simply discover the archaeological remains and Wad El-Karsani. It was common practice for people to spend the day away from home tending to their livestock by feeding them. We and our cattle used to drink the rainwater that flowed from the top of the mountain. The yard in front of the mountain was a market where individuals sold dates and fruits (*El-Barkal local community informants group narrator 53IBB).

5.2.2 Social Activities and Cultural Practise Associated with Gebel El-Barkal and Napatan Archaeological Sites

In addition to the visits, social activities and cultural practise provide the second direct form of community engagement. This includes Eid and wedding celebrations, song and dance practice, and customs and traditions associated with *Wad El-Karsani*, the mountain, and "*Banat El-Shiekh*" (the daughters of the holy man) as a sacred place.

El-Fitr and El-Adha celebrations at Gebel El-Barkal have a long history (Viz figure 5.7 and 5.8). There are two primary components. Males of all ages and children of both genders gather in the morning to do the Eid prayers (viz figure 5.7). "*When we were children, we eagerly anticipated Eid so that we could travel to Gebel El-Barkal and play with other children. We used to climb the mountain and down into the sand. We also participated in several sporting*

competitions" (local archaeologist informants group narrator code 84AEH). During the evening families come along to celebrate Eid with each other, and there are local traders who sell different items such as sweets, local foods, and drinks. As I have been informed, these social and cultural practises have changed over time in terms of the number of visitors, which is decreasing, in addition to the change of the activities associated with the *Eid* celebration. "*Nowadays people after they finish Eid prayers, only a few people go back at the evening to climb the mountain and make their way to the local park*" (Merowe local community informants group narrator code 48AAM). "*In old time, we used to visit Gebel El-Barkal regularly. But now the social and cultural event we do is just Eid prayers*" (Merowe local community informants group narrator code 48AAM). According to a few local informants, one of the primary reasons for celebrating Eid in Gebel El-Barkal is "*to visit the cemetery so they can commemorate those who passed away and read the Quran to them*" (El-Barkal local community informants group narrator code 54EB and 4AEH).

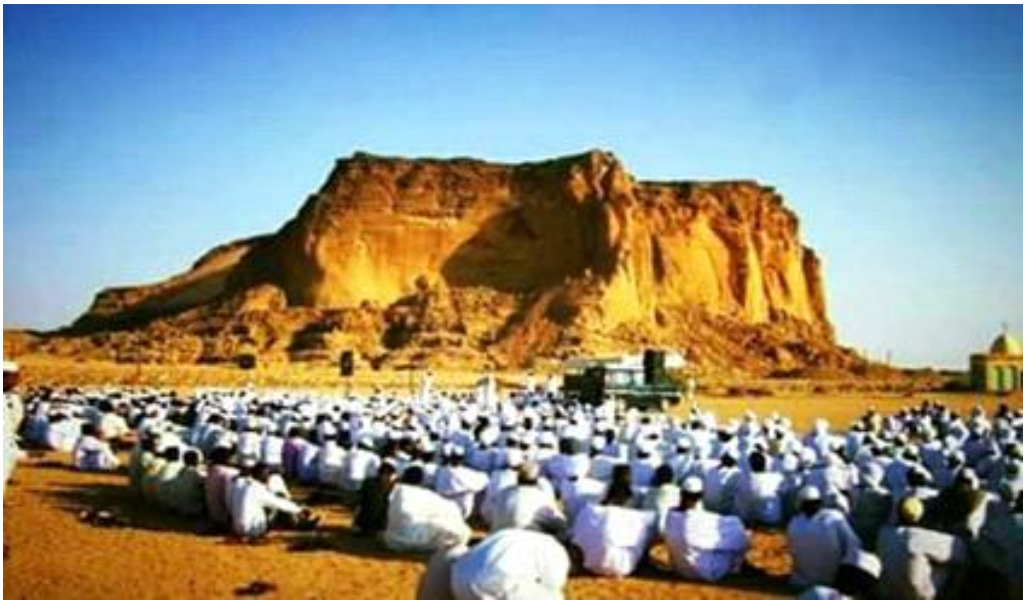


FIGURE 5. 7: LOCAL COMMUNITY CELEBRATE EID ON GEBEL EL-BARKAL (1)

https://m.facebook.com/553249848078545/photos/a.565332196870310/565332220203641/?type=3&locale2=ne_NP



FIGURE 5. 8: LOCAL COMMUNITY CELEBRATE EID ON GEBEL EL-BARKAL (2)
https://www.facebook.com/groups/363791500352781/permalink/5372205442844670/

Figure (5.7) and (5.8) above shows the traditional Eid prayer in the south side yard in front of Gebel El-Barkal Mountain. Figure (5.7) is an old archive photo, while Figure (5.8) is a recent photo. Comparing the two, we may conclude that women have participated in the cultural practise of the Eid prayer. This phenomenon is a strong sign that the gender power relation negotiation has resulted in a shift in the performance of this cultural practise, given the large gap between the male and female groups in the celebration area.

The second traditional mode of direct engagement by local communities with the site/place is the wedding visit. On this occasion, the couple, their families, and their friends visit the Gebel El-Barkal or El-Kurru site, for those who live in the neighbourhood. This visit occurred in the past alongside a traditional visit to the Nile, during which the couple was required to wash their faces with Nile water and pay a brief visit to the Temple of God Amon. Currently, only a few of families participate in this activity because of social and cultural change "*During the wedding season, the locals take the couple to Gebel El-Barkal or the Nile*" (Nuri Local community informants group narrator code 49MHN).

Customs and traditions that have a direct relationship with the site/place are the third form of direct community engagement. The most significant of these customs are visits of the local

people, especially by the *Shawiga/Shaigia* to *Wad El-Karsani* or *Banat El-Shiekh i*n *El-Kurru.* Those who seek the holy man's blessings to fulfil their necessities frequently make this visit. Apparently, anyone prays to him or them for the fulfilment of any desire has it granted. When a person's desire is granted, they usually bring a small goat or lamb as a sacrifice or promise to *Wad El-Karsani*. The same applies to *Banat El-Shiekh* in *EL-Kurru*. "*The sacred places, such as the Wad El-Karsani cemetery, are frequently visited by individuals from many locations, who take tiny bags of grave sand home for blessing" (Merowe local community informants group narrator code 48AAM), "My grandma visits Wad El-Karsani and returns home with sands at sunset. When she arrives at her residence, she puts some of this sand in our hair and continues to read the Quran. She is confident that this sand will offer us happiness and enable us to realise our aspirations (Local archaeologist informants group narrator code 84AEH).*

Night-time visits to Gebel El-Barkal and *Wad El-Karsani* by women seeking conception are the most significant. In the presence of several ladies, they go to the mountain and ask *Wad El-Karsani* to enable them to have children. The women then visit the great Amon temple and sit on one of the ram statues so that their genitalia touch the statue's body. This is believed to increase their fertility. People have a widespread notion that these statues are a source of fertility. Women from all around the region visit Gebel El-Barkal in the assumption that they can induce fertility and conceive children there. Especially those who did not have one. *"They come at night with an elderly woman. When they approach the cemetery, the old woman pulls out a razor and makes minor incisions in the vaginas of the women seeking fertility*. The narrator continues, *"The old women then take part of the woman's blood and request that she sit atop the ram statue in front of the Amon temple. To be honest after a while we do hear that this woman surprisingly gets a baby"* (El-Barkal local community informants group narrator code 65BGB). Comparing the local communities' beliefs and perceptions to the academic discourse on ancient religions in the region during the Napatan period, I infer that this tradition

has a significant connection to the past, namely religious practise related with the God Amon and the Goddess Mut. As both beliefs and practise share this characteristic, this location has a significant link to fertility. In addition, based on observations and interviews, the local communities visit *Wad El-Karsani* and *Banat El-Shiekh* in *El-Kurru* to seek medical assistance for a variety of illnesses, particularly the illness they believe Jiin has caused. Clearly, then, there is a strong consistency in identifying the places with supernatural forces and healing agencies, despite the fact that they are attributed to various spiritual forces.

In addition, members of the local community use the mountain sand for a sand bath. Which is provides by one of the local holy men, who brings his patients with rheumatism and muscle weakness to the south side of the mountain shortly before sunset and covers them with sand for a couple of hours, as there a wider belief that sand may be used for beneficial ritual purposes.

The third direct cultural activity and practise done by local communities at Gebel El-Barkal are spontaneous festivities where the local community, particularly the male youth, sing the *Shawiga/Shaigia* tribal community's traditional songs (vis figure 5.9).



FIGURE 5. 9: LOCAL COMMUNITY SINGING AND DANCING IN A GROUP AT GEBEL EL-BARKAL.
Photo by Author 2018

Figure 5.9 displays a youth group of *Shawiga/Shaigia* tribal members singing and dancing their traditional *Tamboor* performance art. *Tamboor* is the name of their traditional music genre and instrument, and their traditional dance.

The following section (5.3) presents social imaginaries as a second form of engagement with the Gebel El-Barkal site/place and the Napatan region archaeological sites.

5.3 Local Communities' Engagement with the Site/Place in Social Imaginaries

This section focuses on the attachment of local communities to Gebel El-Barkal that occurs in social imaginaries outside the real site/place. These indirect attachments include oral literature, activities on social media platforms and daily life events. Investigating oral literature associated with Gebel El-Barkal will reveal a deeper understanding of local ideas, experiences, values, and conceptualizations associated with the site/place among members of the local communities. Myth, storytelling, songs, and poems associated with Gebel El-Barkal and Napatan region have a considerable presence within local community's oral literature. The most widespread myth among local communities associated with Gebel El-Barkal and Napatan region are *Nosaira Bit El-Gabal, Banat El-Shiekh* in *El-Kurru,* stories related to Jiin, the myth connected to the origin of the name of Gebel El-Barkal, the huge cobra myth, and the underground tunnel myth. I will explain these in the following.

Nosaira Bit El-Gabal ("daughter of the Mountain," meaning Gebel El-Barkal) exists in many versions, but the common motive is the mountain as the location of a kingdom of Jiin. These spirits resided in the mountain, where they guarded a golden treasure. According to the myth, a queen of the Jiin once emerged from the mountain in search of food. A farmer recognised her as *Nosaira Bit El-Gabal* and questioned her who she was and why she was stealing sorghum

from his crop. She informed him of her own and her people's hunger. The farmer asked her to marry him, and she said she would if he provided food for her people. They married and had a daughter and a son. Later, the couple had a dispute, and *Nosaira Bit El-Gabal* disappeared into the mountain, never to be seen again. It is stated that as her children reached adulthood, they founded the tribe that resided beneath the mountain. This myth has different versions according to the narrator family background within *Shawiga/Shaigia* tribe. These narrators claim that *Nosaira Bit El-Gabal* is their ancestor to support their authenticity and their ownership claim (El-Barkal and Merowe Local community informant group narrator code 84AEB and 47MOM). The other version of the *Nosaira Bit El-Gabal* introduce that there was a woman who lived inside Gebel El-Barkal, and she does not appear to be seen by people because she is a Jiin. One day she came out and met a man and they had a conversation. In the conversation she asked him to exchange the gold she had with corn to feed her children. They completed their deal and they got married (El-Barkal local community informants group narrator code 54EB). The notable element in both versions of this myth is the general perception held by local communities that the archaeological site contains an enormous gold reservoir. This widespread belief among the local community related archaeological sites with gold, and as a result, they associate this gold with the Jiin as a traditional kind of protection for the gold.

The second myth, especially prominent in the El-Kurru area, is *Banat El-Shiekh* (Daughters of the Holy man). The circulates under different names; some call it *Banat El-Sheikh* while others name it *Banat El-gar* [Laurel's girl]. The myth tells a story of a group of Jiin girls. The numbers of the girls, as the name, varies from one narrator to another. During my investigation, the given number varied between seven and eleven (El-Kurru local community informants). These girls are half human and half Jiin, and they are daughters of the well-known local *Shaikh* (Holy man) *Isa El-Agbash*. Their names are only well recognised by their believers. *Banat El-Shiekh* have come from a far place, it is told: "*they live in Fas where there is no place after it, they*

only come to their place in El-Kurru on Monday, Tuesday and go back on Wednesday. People visit them on Friday. The narrator explained that *"They have appeared here since English people [were] here. Nobody sees them; they only visit the followers and believers in their dreams."* (El-Kurru local community informants group narrator code 4HFK. The place where *Banat El-Shiekh* appear is situated at the top of one of the pyramids at the archaeological site (viz figure 5.10). Community members have placed a modest white flag at the site to distinguish it from other archaeological remains. *Banat El-Sheikhs'* customs and traditions are done directly on their land when delivering offerings and asking favours. Those who need their wishes to be granted and seek blessings bring goats or money as gifts to the site and leave them there. In addition, they scatter sorghum everywhere and leave coins. Other customs are related with *Banat El-Shiekh*, such as the concept that food should be left at the house for them: "*When one of our families gets married or when we have a guest, our grandmothers set aside some of the food. They turned out the light, and after some time we heard their voice moving about. When we believe they have done eating, we turn the lights back on*" (El-Kurru local community informants group narrator code10AEK). Based on observations and interviews with the informants, the vast majority of *Banat El-Shiekh* worshippers are old women and a few old men. This fact raises a fundamental question in relation to this topic: Will this worship vanish as these elders pass away, or is it merely a tradition that future elders will join?

El-Kurru community as well as believers from outside also strongly believe that *Banat El-Shiekh* can predict the future. One of the informants reveal "*Before my son died away, Banat El-Shiekh visited me in my dream and gave me a little stone, then asked me to swallow it, they told me that everyone follows this path, and that life is a track that we must follow. Then I realised that something was going to occur. Three days later, my kid passed suddenly* (El-Kurru local community informants group narrator code10AEK). They also believe in their ability to influence the future and fulfil the desires of worshippers: "*they can accomplish*

anything. There was a woman who had four daughters. She contacted Banat El-Shiekh and requested assistance in marrying off her daughters. Within a few months, all the girls were getting married" (El-Kurru local community informants group narrator code 1IAK). Similarly, one of the El-Kurru local community informed me, "*My daughter had a significant operation, which caused me great concern. [Banat El-Shiekh] visited and assured me that they will assist the tall white man who will be in charge of the operation. When we arrived at the hospital the following morning, a white, tall guy doctor greeted us. After asking my daughter to accompany him, he returned a few hours later to notify us that the operation had been successful* (El-Kurru local community informants group narrator code 4HFK). There is also a strong notion that the *Banat El-Shiekh* will safeguard local community claims against heritage authorities. "*No one is allowed to dig near them; once, when archaeologists attempted to dig up there, they caught fire and massive dust filled the area*" (El-Kurru local community informants group narrator code 4HFK).



FIGURE 5. 10: BANAT EL-SHIEKH PLACE AT EL-KURRU ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE.
Photo by Author 2018

Myths around Jiin have a significant presence in local communities. Most of these myths involve artefacts discovered at the Gebel El-Barkal archaeological site. As one of the informants acknowledged, "*most of the stories related to Jiin are associated with archaeology*" (local archaeologist informants group narrator code 84AEH). "*There are well spread stories associated with the archaeological remains and the Jiin, even among the educated people*" (local archaeologist informants group narrator code 74BBH). Myths of encounters with Jiin mostly take place at night: "*since we were kids, we heard stories about people walking near Gebel El-Barkal archaeological site coming from a party, suddenly they saw a man, when they say hello to him, they notice that he has donkey legs"* (local archaeologist informants group narrator code 84AE). The Jiin within these stories may sometimes appear as an animal: "*the local people always say when we go to the archaeological site particularly at night, we either*

see a cat, dog or snake or we hear a donkey" (local archaeologist informants group narrator code 84AEH). Even though local people state that *"because of this Jiin we don't like to visit these places"* (Merowe local informants group narrator code 47MOM) the common images of the Jiin that live or are seen near the archaeological site are completely different from the desert Jiin. "*It is obvious, Jiin [that] live by the archaeological site in the social imagination is different compared to others. Residents of the area claim that the Jiin who reside near the archaeological site are pleasant, so long as you respect his space and don't provoke him. The other Jiin is cruel and nasty; it has the power to destroy homes and minds and take lives* (local archaeologist informants group narrator code 74BBH). Regarding the relationship between Jiin and archaeological monuments, members of the local community associate these myths with the assumption that Jiin had a key role in the construction of these artefacts, particularly the pyramids. One of the respondents argued: "*a normal person cannot carry these heavy stones in order to build the pyramids*" (Merowe local informants group narrator code 48AAM). Subsequently, the Jiin takes the responsibility to safeguard these remains: "*the Jiin guards the archaeological remains from any person who is attempting to do any harm to it"* (El-Barkal local informants group narrator code 54EB). Such beliefs lead the local community to request assistance and protection from a holy man to read the Quran for them if or when they discover archaeological remains while renovating their homes. "*There are many stories that tell people to go to the saint if they discover archaeological remains while redeveloping their houses or walls*" (local archaeologist informants group narrator code 84AEH). Similarly, "*those who unlawfully hunt for ancient remains contact a saint who is fluent in the Jiin language to communicate with them or to read the Quran to acquire their friendship*" (local archaeologist informants group narrator code 74BBH). The locals are convinced that if they have not done so, "*they can be hurt, and this injury can spread and have severe effects, such as diseases like madness and uncontrollable urinating*" (local archaeologist informants group narrator code

74BBH). Other informants stated, "*two individuals attempted to steal archaeological artefacts from the site one day. They brought an equipment to help determine what is present. One lost control of his body and began vomiting and urinating while digging, while the other was injured and began bleeding. Additionally, if you saw him now, he would still be bleeding*" (El-Barkal local informants group narrator code 54EB). Regarding the objects that may be found at these sites, members of the local community believe that first and foremost these include gold. They consider Jiin to guard the gold because the gold is theirs: As one informant explained, "p*eople think Jiin guard the gold at the archaeological site*" (Merowe local informants group narrator code 48AAM). Other informants stated that "*whenever we are excavating the land in a search for archaeological remains, a cat always appears to stop us when we are close to reach the treasures"* (El-Barkal local informants group narrator code will be hidden in this quotation for the informant's request). The second explanation for this interrelation is "*the archaeological remains have a curse that stop people from taking the remains away from the site or use them" (*El-Barkal local informants group narrator code 54EB).

According to local myth, the name Gebel El-Barkal derives from an old ruler named *Barkal* who once resided in the area. It is said that he was a ruthless ruler who compelled his people to create two lines between *Barkal* and *El-Kassinger* (a village around ten kilometres upstream) and supply him with wine. The cup was filled at *El-Kassinger* and passed from person to person until it reached him at his mountainside palace. The empty cup was then returned in the same manner to be refilled. *El-Kassinger* got its name from the interactions between the two terms *El-Kass* (the cup) and *inger* (was pulled). People also claim that a huge cobra resides at Gebel El-Barkal, inside a cave the locals call *Beit Abu Kalaan* (Abu Kalaan house). This cobra was believed to guard a magnificent gold treasure. According to the myth, several European travellers reportedly visited the site with frankincense and burned it in the cave. After smelling

it, the snake became drowsy and fell asleep. The Europeans then robbed the gold and fled. When the snake awoke, it pursued them, captured them, and murdered them at the edge of the desert and retrieving the gold. Another myth describe an imagined underground tunnel that connects Gebel El-Barkal to Old Dongola town, approximately hundred and ten kilometres west-southwest of Gebel El-Barkal in a direct path. A common myth describes a cow that entered this tunnel in *Beit Abu Kalaan* and emerged at Old Dongola without its skin, which had been scraped off by the rocks of the underground passageway. One more myth claim a tube that passes under the Nile and connects the mountain to the Nuri pyramids approximately ten kilometres away. People claim that the funeral processions of kings buried at Nuri began in Gebel El-Barkal and passed through this tunnel under the river.

In the territory of Gebel El-Barkal and the Napatan region, the storytelling is widespread. Within this research, a story is a narrative of true or fictional events, whereas a myth contains supernatural aspects or characters. *Bit El-Dahab* (The girl of the gold) is one of the stories that circulate within the local villages of Kareema and El-Barkal. According to the narrative, a little girl cared for her livestock. She discovered a golden statue as she crossed the Gebel El-Barkal. One man observed her attempting to hide it and demanded a portion. While debating and attempting to pull the statue, one of its legs fell off. One of the local archaeologist informants stated *"the girl then took the statue to her family and since then people gave her the name of Bit El-Dahab. After the government notice, they came over and took the statue to Khartoum" (local archaeologist informants group narrator code 84AEH).* The local archaeologist added: *"El-Khalifa (Caliph) Mohamed Fadelsied Esawi is the one who returned the gold statue to the government. The statue was found by a little girl form El-Barkal. The girl found the gold statue while she was looking after her cattle" (local archaeologist informants group narrator code 84AEH).* After obtaining information from a witness, the police recovered the statue after compensation was offered. Local communities believe that the statue only had one leg because

"While the police and the girl's family were arguing and trying to pull at the statue, the leg came out. The statue is still displayed at the National Museum with one leg. The police took the statue and compensated them" (El-Barkal local informants group narrator code 54EB).

As a result of this incident's significance to the local communities, I have collected a numerous poems associated with this incident; the following are examples:

1. *Koraa Elmalika fi Eldokan*
   Eind Khalf Allahh wad Salman

   Koraa Elmalika Fi Elsandoug

   Eind Zainab Elsaksouk

The translation of this poem is as follow:

(The Queen leg at the shop

Khalf Allahh Wad Salman [local shop owner] have it

The Queen leg inside the box

Zainab Elsaksouk [the girl that people believe found the archaeological remain] have it).

1. *Motaal Akhoy ma tagoum*
   Shilt Elaginda wa Elgadoum
   Mashi tagsim lile lharoum
   Wa el police yehoum

The translation of this poem is as follows:

(My brother Motaal stay where you are
How come you are taking your tool
And planning to give the women their share.
While the car is full of the police)." (El-Barkal local informants group narrator code 54EB).

The second version of the story signifies the involvement of certain local community members in attempting to hide the statue from the authorities, which also illustrates the conflict between

the local communities and archaeologists on the ownership of the archaeological remains. But there are other conflicted power relations at play in these stories: Based on earlier myths and storytelling associated with Gebel El-Barkal, the heroes of those stories are women: *Banat El-Shiekh, Nosaira Bit El-Gebel, and Bit El-Dahab*. In addition, the female characters of these stories and myths represent the feminine resistance mode to social and cultural gender construction. Since local communities' stories and myth are more used and circulated by women, I argue that women strive to incorporate their goals and desires to expand their role in this traditional and conservative society through oral literature.

In addition to myths and stories, traditional poems offer a reflection on how local communities view the archaeological remains and construct their sense of place towards Gebel El-Barkal and Napatan region archaeological sites. Muhammad El-Hassan Hemaid is the author of one of the most widely utilised poems in the local communities. He is a local socialist politician who was nominated to represent the Merowe region in the 1986 and 2010 parliamentary elections.

One of his archaeology-related poems is structured as an imagined correspondence between a married couple. *Elzain Wad Hamid*, the husband, is an active communist who has been imprisoned for his political activity. His wife, *Sit Eldar Bit Ahmed*, writes him letters alerting him of their twins' activities and when foreigners are spotted in their village. She expresses how disappointed they are that the foreigners are archaeologists and tourists, but none are agricultural specialists. Khawajas has a negative connotation in Sudanese Arabic, meaning "foreigners," particularly white foreigners from America or Europe. In the poem, the wife utters:

"Ma kalmtak bi Eltoumat

Awl elbarihganiyarotnan

Wagalannihnaelkhawakgaat

Bis allahmagtligietlakgaaferzardelbiet bi elkhawagaat

Yabgahidasherwakhawagiea

Naselhilaienkasaaroaliehoum

Fidloygaliebo fi eideihoum

Admanien min ism hakiem

Wala khabiern bilelmashrou

Olmaathar

Fidlat fi athar?

Makhmoyhaelgounagabolkoum

Shin khalowlnablahogar

"Athar?

Athar Aih

Ho fidlat fi athar?

Makhmouhaelgounagabblokom

Shin khaloulna bla hogar

Allah yasourf elkhawagaat"

The above poem can be translated as:

Didn't I tell you about our little twin girls?

The other day they came in.

Blurting out unintelligible jargon

We are the Khawajaas, they chanted.

I invoked God's protection and went out.

I found Gaafar's house packed with khawajaas.

Eleven of them plus a female

The locals came out to see who those were.

But they soon retreated disappointed, fanning their hands.

"Not a single doctor among them!

Or even an agricultural expert!"

Archaeologist, they say!

Archaeologist for What?"

When there are no antiquities left.

The previous teams have wiped the place clean.

Except for some stones here and there.

Damn all khawajaas!

Hemaid replies to his wife:

Loma bakietya ya Sit Eldar

Lmagarietolmaathar

Olmaathareihya sit eldar?

Olmaatharaihmaindikras

Wa diel gamaatel CIA

Taarafiaihel CIA?"

The above poems can be translated as:

I burst into tears.

Yes, I did, Sit Eldar

When I read the word “archaeology experts”

What experts?

What tourists?

Are you out of your mind?

Do not get confused.

These are CIA gang.

You know what CIA is? (This Poems is well circulated among the local communities)

This poem asserts that these foreigners [archaeologists] come to steal our heritage, yet they contribute nothing to the local community. In addition, it turns out that they are CIA operatives, which is a unique spin on an older narrative that is particularly specific to the author, a communist; and to the time period: clearly, this poem has a cold war undertone.

Accepting that social media is the modern version of the oral stories of older times, the commitment of local communities to Gebel El-Barkal in their social imaginaries is also evident on social media platforms (Cf Giaccardi, 2012; Ciolfi, 2012; (Craig Wight, 2020). This method of interaction comes in a variety of forms. Local youth engage in numerous debates and discussion forums on Facebook to educate outsiders about their cultural diversity and the history of the Napatan civilization and their region. Some of these groups have been formed to foster social tenacity, while others are devoted to analysing the various methods of preserving archaeological remains and negotiating their diverse interpretations. Numerous discourses have resulted from these groups' discussions, demonstrating the level of ownership dispute between local communities. One of a good example as I demonstrated in chapter eight, is the dispute between the *Shawiga/Shaigia* group and the *Nubians* in the north, which reflects the national ownership claim conflict and the history of a struggle over interpretation between these groups.

Local communities also indirectly engage with Gebel El-Barkal through the naming of two of their football teams: *El-Gebel* (the mountain) [Gebel El-Barkal], football team (viz figure 5.11), and *Molouk El-Nil* (Nile Kings) refers to the local perception that they are the generation of the Nile King. Similarly, local towns frequently utilise Gebel El-Barkal as a brand name for their commercial enterprises, restaurants, and stores.



FIGURE 5. 11: EL-GEBEL TEAM KAREEMA
https://www.facebook.com/aljabal.s.fc/

The following section will discuss the community engagement mode barriers and challenges with Gebel El-Barkal and the Napatan region archaeological site.

5.4 Local Communities' Engagement Barriers and Challenges

This section intends to address the constraints and challenges facing the local community's interaction with Gebel El-Barkal as an archaeological site relative to other dimensions and elements of the Gebel El-Barkal landscape and its significance in local imaginaries and social practises. Through interviews, both local archaeologist and community perspectives are expressed. Local archaeologists and members of local communities concur that local communities engage with Gebel El-Barkal more as a sacred site and natural phenomenon than

as an archaeological site with values defined by professional, educational, or official discourses on heritage. The underlying causes can be categorised as follows:

A. Lack of knowledge

Even while the local community takes pride in the history of their civilization, their ancestors, and stories from the past, there is a lack of understanding about the history of these sites within the local community. "*Some people do not realise what archaeology is or what this archaeological site contains until they die*". (El-Kurru local community informants group narrator code 7HFK). "*Lack of understanding in the local people reduces their care for the archaeological remains.*" (Nuri local community informants group narrator code 49MHN). Other informants argued: "*Locals do not value the archaeological remains since they are unaware of their historical significance.*" (Merowe local community informants group narrator code 7HFK) and one local community member stated that "*We lack sufficient information regarding archaeological sites. When we visit the site, we are not provided with any information regarding its content or meaning. We differ from educated individuals who read about the site before to their visit.*" (Merowe local community informants group narrator code 47MOM). "*Regarding the pyramids, what is it and what is there, the locals have no information whatsoever."* (El-Kurru local community informants group narrator code 7HFK). Providing tools for site interpretation could aid in addressing this issue from the standpoint of the local community. "*My knowledge will expand if the archaeological sites offer brochures, guides, flags, and signboards for visitors like me. Unfortunately, none of these are present, and this can be considered a deficiency on the part of the authority."* (Merowe local community informants group narrator code 45AAM). *"The archaeologist and heritage authority should conduct seminars, workshops, and public lectures to inform the local community about archaeology and the significance of this archaeological site to their history."* (El-Barkal local community informants group narrator code 53IBB). Other informants believe that this barrier

must be addressed in advance and that archaeology, and its history should be incorporated into mandatory education. "*We must examine this issue from a different perspective; for political reasons, the school system teaches kids more about Islamic and recent history. They do not want the ordinary public to learn much about their history. As you may have noticed, therefore, all the history that people study pertains to the Islamic period. Conflict exists between ancient history, ideological value, and political speech. Giving children information about their ancient history through the education system will allow them to develop a great attachment to their heritage, something those in power do not want."* (local archaeologist informants group he prefers not to give him a narrator code). The request to hide the informant's identify indicates that the comment is extremely politically sensitive.

Local knowledge and official discourse represent more overtly how discourses about what counts as significant 'knowledge' are formed by power relations between local communities and the Authorized Heritage Discourse (AHD). My argument is that the AHD and heritage government institutions have ignored the reality that local communities have cultural knowledge in the form of stories and myths that is otherwise overlooked. In addition, this act will expand the dominance of AHD and lead to archaeological work within these archaeological sites where the stakeholders miss the opportunity of working together and learning from each other. In conclusion, I contend that the local community plainly possesses little academic archaeological and historical information about the site, but similarly archaeologists and the state "lack awareness" of local cultural knowledge that pertains to the site. Even archaeologists with a local background tend to be well-versed in local culture and beliefs, but this knowledge does not appear to be taken into consideration in management. This is because the AHD does not accept certain local knowledge as relevant 'knowledge' or 'heritage'. These circumstances generate tension and conflict between these discourses and their implementation.

B. Effect of Jiin Stories

Even though the Jiin stories and myths surrounding Gebel El-Barkal played a significant role in preserving the archaeological remains, they also prevent the local population from engaging more deeply with the site from an archaeological standpoint. In other words, Jiin stories are a barrier to both the positive and negative engagement of local communities. The stories establish a feeling of place that associates the archaeological sites with Jiin, which has the unintended consequence of frightening visitors and archaeological remains thieves.

C. Conflict Over land

Both the civilian communities and local archaeologists view the disagreement between the local and heritage authorities over land as a significant barrier to the local community's engagement with these sites. Land is significant in determining socioeconomic standing: "*The territory along the Nile is controlled by Ahal al-balad, the original inhabitants, who are ultimately the Shawiga/Shaigia* (Merowe local community informant's group narrator code 45AAM). "*The agricultural land is always located along the Nile. This land has been inherited by Shawiga/Shaigia families since the arrival of the English. These always carry the family name" (*El-Barkal local community informants group narrator code 53IBB), "*nowadays, the family is growing, and additional land is required"* (Nuri local community informants group narrator code 49MHN). Land have substantial social value within the social and cultural context of the Merowe region: "*It is a shameful and disgraceful conduct in our culture to consider selling family land.*" (El-Kurru local community informants group narrator code 7BHK). Moreover, "*Land is the primary means to establish one's identity as a native resident, and if there is a land dispute between two parties, one can kill the other. Locals here regard the land as if it were a limb or a hand; if you took any part from them, it would be as if you had taken one of their limbs"* (Local archaeologist informants group narrator code 84AEH).

Acknowledging the importance of the land for the local communities, the land is always like embers under the sand: "*Local community and the heritage authority are constantly at conflict over land; this dispute is always resolved by the courts and occasionally escalates to a physical confrontation. In several instances, locals destroy archaeological remains to express their anger"* (local archaeologist informants group narrator code 84AEH). Anger arises because *"it is difficult for the locals to comprehend that their property has been seized because archaeologists have discovered archaeological remains"* (El-Kurru local community informants group narrator code 7BHK). "*Many villagers get themselves into difficulty by reporting to the heritage authority that they have discovered archaeological remains in their homes. Sincerely, I find it unfair*" *(*El-Barkal local community informants group narrator code 53IBB). One of my informants notified the heritage authorities that he had discovered archaeological remains on his agricultural land, and as a result, he received considerable opposition from the local communities. The difficulties that heritage authorities typically encounter are influenced by local perceptions that "*the archaeological sites are just unused land. We have no right to live on it, and the heritage authority have no desire to work hard to make it attractive for the visitors*" (Merowe local community informants group narrator code 45AAM).

D. Conflict Between Archaeologists and Local Communities

The tensions between archaeologists and local communities are the third barrier and challenge revealed by fieldwork and interviews. This contradiction manifests itself in numerous ways. As most archaeologists are foreigners, some of the local community's concerns is that archaeologists behave in ways that are contrary to their social and cultural beliefs. This contradiction manifests itself in numerous ways. One of the local community's member states "*I hope there is a strong relationship between the local community and archaeologists, in which the archaeologists respect local values, consume local foods, and behave as though they*

are members of the local community." (Merowe local community informants group narrator code 48AAM)."*The archaeologists must be a part of the local community to foster positive relationships with the residents".* (Local archaeologist informants group narrator code 84AEH). Moreover, some of the local communities are convinced that the archaeologists are stealing the archaeological remains. This view is widespread and has a significant impact on the image of archaeologists in local communities. "*A friend of mine often works with archaeologists. At a certain point, he informs me, the archaeologist invariably requests that we cease our digging efforts. When we return the next day, the hole is not at the same level as when we left it the day before*". *(*Merowe local community informants group narrator code 45AAM). This suspicion is often associated with international archaeologists; as one of the informants argued: *"foreigners have been stealing archaeological artefacts for quite some time, and I'm sure you've heard of the German archaeologist who destroyed the pyramid's head and stole everything within" (*Merowe local community informants group narrator code 42EAM). Cf the context chapter, numerous valuable artefacts have been removed from archaeological sites and now reside in European museums. *(*Merowe local community informants group narrator code 47MOM). *"Have you ever heard of Barclays bank? All of Barclays' money is our money, and they have sold all our archaeology. This mountain's resources were used to build the Barclays bank" (*El-Barkal local community informants group narrator code 54EB). *"These people (international archaeologists) smashed the horses [the archaeological ram lay in front of the temple of God Amon]. This is a well-known fact. Our ancient artefacts were stolen by the English, the Turks, and the Egyptians" (*Merowe local community informants group narrator code 45AAM). *"The German queen had a store within Gebel El-Barkal Mountain, where she housed all of the archaeological artefacts she stole from us. In the past, El-Eliegia [one of the Egyptian tribes] and the English stole and hid the priceless archaeological remains. This occurred precisely during the colonisation of Egypt by*

*the English" (*El-Barkal local community informants group narrator code 54EB). *"When foreigners visit this site, they tip the police guarding the place and take everything they want. One night, I slept outdoors. I suddenly observed that there are sounds near the top of the mountain. As I got closer, I noticed people shooting photographs with cameras. They were dressed in blue uniforms and carried torches. To stop them, I stripped nude and placed a light on my head, leading them to believe I am Jiin. When they saw me, they dropped their belongings and fled" (*El-Barkal local community informants group narrator, prefer to hide his details).

However, the theft of archaeological objects is often perceived differently when the person who is attempting to steal is a local community member: "*if anyone trying to steal or keep digging to steal an archaeological remains the local community's reaction depends on who is trying to do so. If he is a local, they do not mind, but if he is from outside, they will stop him. They normally explained this by saying, the foreigners are stealing all of the gold why don't we let our own people get the benefit of their heritage?*" *(*Merowe local community informants group narrator code 42EAM).

In addition, local archaeologists reject the theft allegations made by the local community because they feel "*what the local community claims is part of a campaign designed to conceal the actual thieves of archaeological artefacts. As a result, they have accumulated a great deal of income, and their lives have been completely transformed. Unfortunately, even the government knows who is behind this foolishness and whether or not the original archaeological artefact has been looted"* (Local archaeologist informants group narrator code 84AEH). In an interview, a prominent local archaeologist claimed, "*The widely-circulated story that archaeologists constantly request labourers to leave is absolutely true. We do always ask them to leave when we reach a certain point, not because we need to steal, but because we know from experience that we have reached a sensitive point and they are unable to do anything because they are not archaeologists and do not have the necessary training to*

perform sensitive tasks that require specific skills. We do ask them to leave so that we have time to complete our own work, and so that they can relax and be ready to work the next day. There are two sides to every coin, and each narrative can be understood differently" (Local archaeologist informants group narrator code 76AAH). Some of the archaeological mission has noticed the importance of this issue and started to communicate with the local communities, such as university of Michigan and the National Authority for Antiquities and Museums mission (viz figure 5.12).



FIGURE 5. 12: UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN TEAM ORGANIZING A LECTURE TO INTRODUCE THEIR WORK TO LOCAL COMMUNITY.

Photo by Author 2018

D. Tension Between Heritage Authorities and Local Communities

Tension between archaeologists and local community extends to the heritage authority who, from the local community's perspective, are not fulfilling their obligation to provide a good quality of service to make the archaeological site attractive. This point of view has different causes. The local community has a strong belief that by taking their own archaeological objects

to Khartoum or to European countries to be kept in national museums prevents them (and the region) from the benefit of having them in their local museum. *"I don't know why the authority always takes our history and display it at the national museum? In 1925 we used to have the first museum in Sudan. This museum has all what the archaeologist discovered. But unfortunately, in 1973 this museum has been transferred to Khartoum. Our people here are not happy with what Numairi* [Sudan president 1969-1985] *did, but they cannot say anything, because we all know if we say anything this will take us straight to jail*" *(*Merowe local community informants group narrator code 45AAM). "*A long time ago the archaeologists discovered a valuable statue, people here were so happy but, a week later the statue had been transferred to Khartoum" (*El-Barkal local community informants group narrator code 53IBB). In addition, some of the more educated members of the local community are concerned that the heritage authority does not give the archaeological remains sufficient funds and enough attention to conserve and safeguard the sites: *"the archaeological site must be fenced and have enough security guards. By doing so locals will realise that this place is so important, and they will know the historical value of the place" (*Merowe local community informants group narrator code 42EAM).

Furthermore, members of local communities in their interviews revealed that the absence of the sense of belonging to the archaeological sites increase the feeling that they are not among stakeholders, and they have been excluded from the site management: "*At the end of the day if the authority keeps excluding us from the management process, they cannot find somebody who really cares to protect these sites"* (Nuri local community informants group narrator code 49MHN).

5.4.2 Local Communities' Engagement Barriers and Challenges from Archaeologist Perspectives

As a social group belonging to the local communities, local archaeologists believe that one of the barriers that make the local communities not fully engage with the archaeological site is that they do not value the archaeological remains. They consider these remains to be little more than stones with no value. It then follows that all the efforts done by archaeologists are perceived as stupidity: "*local people see the archaeological remains as nonsense and they don't see any difference between the archaeological site and any normal grave*" (Local archaeologist informants group narrator code 76AAH). *"That's why the archaeological site for the local is a place where they throw their waste and a suitable place to go toileting there"* (Local archaeologist informants group narrator code 84AEH). Compare by *Wad El-Karsani* cemetery which consider as a holy place. Another local archaeologist states "*those people do not value what they have. They keep breaking it and throw away some remains. Whatever we have done, they do not listen*" (Local archaeologist informants group, prefer not to share his name).

To have a better understanding of the local communities engagement mode with Gebel El-Barkal and Napatan region archaeological sites the following section aims to address the national and international communities' engagement modes.

5.5 The National and International Communities Attached to the Sites

The national community around Gebel El-Barkal consists of university students studying archaeology, history, or fine arts (Viz Figure 5.13). According to observation and interviews, "*most visitors to the site are students, whereas only members of the local community visit the mountain."* (local archaeologist interview narrator code 84AEH). Other informants confirm this statement in saying "*I have noticed that the majority of people who visit Gebel El-Barkal are the students*" (Merowe Local community informants' groups, narrator code 48AAM). The

second sub-category of this group is those visitors who have roots, relatives, or friends within the local community around the site. As I have been informed by several informants "*The resident people don't visit Gebel El-Barkal unless they have a relative from outside who has visited them. When they have guests, they take them around the area*" (El-Zooma focus group interview narrators code 28MGZ). One central goal of this visit is to have a good quality of time outside of the home: "*we do visit Gebel El-Barkal when we have a guest for several days, we normally take them there for a change*." (Merowe local community informants' group narrator code 45AAM). The second purpose of the visit is the willingness of the local community to introduce the area to others as a part of honouring their civilization. As one of the informants explained: "*when a relative visits, I do take them to Gebel El-Barkal to show them our civilization and or history*" (El-Barkal local community informants' group, narrator code 47MOM). The third subcategory of the national group are middle-class tourists working in either public or private sectors. "*Sometimes I call on Gebel El-Barkal with my family, but most of the times I visit it with my colleagues*" (Merowe local community informants' group, narrator code 42EAM). Apart from the relative and friend's subcategory, the remainder visit Gebel El-Barkal in a group via a trip organized by their organization or universities.



FIGURE 5. 13: TRIP FOR STUDENTS FROM DARFUR, UNIVERSITY OF NYALA VISITING GEBEL EL-BARKAL

Photo by Author 2018

Most recently in mid nineteens, the heavy immigration of the Sudanese to America, Western and Gulf countries, create an enormous number of second-generation Sudanese immigrants. This sub-category group can be broadly classified either as an international or national sub-category, who have started to build a new form of engagement with the archaeological remains around Gebel El-Barkal. Their community engagement has increased because of new second-generation experiences and their new way of life abroad. Furthermore, based on my own analysis the engagement of this social group with the site and particularly with Nubian history are the product of their search for a self-identity to tackle the identity crisis dilemma experienced in their new life as emigrants.

The final sub-category of the national community is the digital community of those who have an active engagement with the site through social media. This sub-category differentiates themselves through ownership claims and their interpretations. This sub-category can be further divided into two main groups, the Kushite, and the Nubian. The Kushite group are

mostly youths who have roots in *Shawiga/Shaigia* or *Gaaleen* tribes. They claim an Arab ethnic identity. On the other hand, Nubians who live far North Sudan. It is evident that there is a constant debate on various social media platforms (but particularly on specific Facebook pages) surrounding the ownership of the archaeological remains and their interpretation. These interpretations have been shaped by the local and national communities' social knowledge. The ownership conflict has arisen as an effect of concrete conflict on the question of identity, which has a vast influence in Sudan's cultural, social, and political context, as outlined in the context chapter.

The third social category is the international community who are traditionally represented by archaeologists and tourists. These primarily come from North America and Europe. Based on observations, the significant associated values for these social groups are education and research, new knowledge and experience, entertainment, and adventure. Therefore, for this group the archaeological remains and the Gebel El-Barkal Mountain are essential. The involvement of these international communities in the local cultural practices associated with Gebel El-Barkal remains insignificant due to their lack of knowledge of local culture and the meanings locals assign to these places.

5.6 Conclusion

In conclusion, the local communities of the Merowe region engage with the Gebel El-Barkal site/place in a variety of ways. These are especially evident in direct involvement modes, such as visiting the site/place for a variety of social activities and using the site/place for traditional cultural practises. In addition, the place is related with imaginaries that arise in myth, storytelling, oral history, and cultural practise. Furthermore, examining this engagement mode reveals and identifies the cultural values, the way of seeing of these local communities toward Gebel El-Barkal archaeological sites of this region and the process through which local communities give meanings to and interpret the material remains of the past which will be

discussed in more detail in the next chapter. The overall aims of the next chapter are to explore through cultural heritage lenses the interrelationships between heritage and local community associated values as well as the internal and external opportunities that create a new associated value.

CHAPTER SIX

LOCAL, NATIONAL AND GLOBAL COMMUNITIES' ASSOCIATED VALUES WITH GEBEL EL-BARKAL AND THE NAPATAN REGION'S ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES

6.1 Introduction

The focus of this chapter is to examine and emphasise the local communities' associated values of Gebel El-Barkal and Napatan region archaeological sites. More so, this section will evaluate the site's national and international heritage values alongside one another. The approach of doing this analysis on the local communities' scale depends upon the primary data collected from the field in which the local community reveals their conceptualization, perception, and the associated value of the sites. For understanding and investigating the national and global associated value, I interrogate their implications as the Authorized Heritage Discourse (AHD). The AHD within this research is represented in the official documentation issued by the archaeologists or government agencies, legislation, and the interpretative materials written regarding Gebel El-Barkal. In addition to these written materials, the discussion relied on the primary data collected from the local archaeologist informants' group. Understanding the global scale of the supposedly universal value associated with the site is investigated through studying the claims on Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of Gebel El-Barkal and Napatan region as defined in the listing process of the site on the UNESCO's World Heritage list as well as in the relevant documentation submitted on the purpose of deciding on adding the site into the list. Furthermore, I discuss the varied opportunities that have an impact on the existing values or create new associated values.

The structure of this chapter includes an introduction (6.1) to the approach used in discussing the varied associated values with Gebel El-Barkal and the Napatan region's archaeological sites followed by a theoretical background (6.2) addressing the conceptualization of heritage value

and the conducted comparison, Table 6.1 of the varied associated values among the local, national, and international communities around the sites. Following this theoretical background, I introduce the varied local communities' social, culture, spiritual, aesthetic, historical, and economic associated values (6.3), in which I have focused on the local scale of the investigated social group of this research. Acknowledging the fact that local communities around Gebel El-Barkal and the Napatan region's archaeological sites have their own sense of place towards Gebel El-Barkal, section (6.4) describes the link between local communities and Gebel El-Barkal setting. To compare Gebel El-Barkal associated value among the local, the national and international communities I present in section (6.5) the national and international associated value based on the AHD in two scales in addition to the primary data collected from the local and national archaeologist and heritage practitioners. In the following section (6.6) I discussed the developments and opportunities that I argue have made a change in Gebel El-Barkal associated values. These particularly include the Merowe dam construction, Gebel El-Barkal international festival and the Qatar-Sudan Archaeological Project (QSAP). These have contributed to developing sustainable archaeological works in Sudan for more than five years. In the final section (6.7) I summarised the chapter content.

6.2 Theoretical Background

On both the global and local scales, the notion of heritage associated value has developed and extended, and new groups of citizens, professionals from other professions, and representatives of special interests have joined the specialists in its identification. Such communities approached the heritage field with their own set of beliefs and values, which may or may not align with those of heritage professionals. Therefore, values can only be recognized in the context of the culture, time period, and location in which they were first articulated and defined. The realisation that heritage values are subjective rather than objective is, thus, crucial.

Heritage values are not simply found, fixed, and unchangeable. They are not inherent to an artefact but rather arise as a result of interactions between the artefact and its settings. Value can be simply described as a set of positive attributes or qualities recognised in cultural artefacts or venues by certain individuals or groups (Torre, 2002, p.3). An object, building, or place might well be considered valuable because of the significance it has for individuals or communities, whether that significance derives from the object's aesthetic quality, historical significance, or association with a notable person or event. Contemporary heritage values and meanings are always intangible, related to the physical fabric of historic places. Furthermore, qualities such as a sense of place, identity, and memory are actively produced and contested within the historic environment via a variety of social and cultural processes (Jones & Leech, 2013). In this context, "heritage value" refers to the significance of a site as assessed by the aggregate of its associated values. In the next section, I demonstrate local communities around Gebel El-Barkal associated value that produced out because of their interaction with the sites and shaped by their social, cultural, and economic context.

6.3 Local Social, Cultural, Spiritual, Aesthetic, Historical, and Economic Value

Local communities values linked with Gebel El-Barkal differed based on an individual's ethnic, gender, age, and religious sense of identity affiliation In this section, I will highlight the various associated values (Table 6.1) for the local, national, and international communities, followed by a detailed section on each value. Included in these values are the social, cultural, spiritual, artistic, historical, and economic values.

TABLE 6. 1: THE VARIOUS LOCAL, NATIONAL, AND INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATED VALUES.

The Value	Local Scale	National Scale	Global Scale	Notes
Religious and spiritual Value	Gebel El-Barkal is closely associated with religious traditions and fertility customs at the shrine of sheikh *Wad El-Karsani*, which is still being visited by the local people for blessings, as well as fulfilling their needs. This is the reason why locals have given the mountain its name (Gebel *Wad El-Karsani*).Gebel El-Barkal is a religious hub for local communities for celebrating Eid.	Gebel El-Barkal is a religious place for God Amon.	God Amon resided in Gebel El-Barkal "Holy Mountain". Since locals continue to pay their respects at the sheikh's *Wad El-Karsani* shrine, the mountain has strong religious overtones. In addition, this "Holy Mountain" was once the home of the god Amon.	Gebel El-Barkal is regarded as a holy place/site by the local, national, and international communities. The ancient religious practises that archaeology connotes and/or a later Islamic sphere assigned by the local communities.

Historical Value	Although the site contains archaeological artefacts with historical significance, the local communities place less importance on its historical significance than other national official communities and international communities.	The historical value of the place goes back to more than two thousand years.	More than two thousand years old, the artistic, social, political, and religious qualities of a human community have been on exhibit in the relief, writings, and painted scenes on the walls of the sites in the Napatan Region and at Gebel El-Barkal.	The historical value on the national and global scale as AHD shaped the educational and academic values of the place. UNESCO notice and admit local community sense of place and perceptions.
Cultural value	The site/place plays a crucial role in the cultural practises and identity formation of the local community.	The national AHD promotes the cultural significance of the site for both the local and national	The international discourse demonstrates that UNESCO, in particular, considers the site to be a location containing artefacts and inscriptions attesting to a major ancient culture that existed and thrived in	National and international cultural significance is

		communities. For the AHD, the archaeological remains at Gebel El-Barkal demonstrate the cultural influence of Sudanese past and can play a significant part in defining their national identity.	this region alone. Gebel El-Barkal and the Sites of the Napatan Region represent a masterpiece of creative genius demonstrating the artistic, social, political, and religious values.	more concerned with the past than with the present.
Aesthetic Value	The site/place provides the opportunity to experience a stunning and unique view. Pyramids and El-Kurru wall paintings give evidence to the existence of a distinctive ancient culture.	Within the national AHD, aesthetic value has been acknowledged for the sake of tourism promotion.	Gebel El-Barkal's setting amid the desert border environment and on the banks of the Nile makes it unique place. Art and inscriptions are evidence of a significant ancient culture that flourished in this region exclusively.	The aesthetic uniqueness has been acknowledged among the three varied scale.
Social Value	Gebel El-Barkal and the archaeological sites in the Napatan region serve as a focal point for social interactions.	Site/location National visitors employ their trip to mingle with locals and other tourists. Especially those who reside in a	The international site/place visitors take advantage of the ability to interact with local, national, and international visitors. Moreover, they get greater awareness and comprehension of other societal values and norms.	The inability of most residents to communicate in English creates a barrier

		different country region but have family links.		between the local and international communities.
Economic Value	Economic value is limited to members of the local community who work as labourers for archaeological missions. In addition, individuals who provide accommodation for archaeological missions and tourism trips.	Nationally, the international fund, tourism fees, and the capital that generates a flow of services have economic value.	The economic value of the Gebel El-Barkal and Napatan archaeological sites as World Heritage Site exceeding the need for increasing the budget to meet the stronger demand and expected change in service standards. This include a research and archaeological works on how to preserve the cultural properties of the sites. Subsequently, these opportunities increase the economic values for the international archaeologist, practitioner, institutions as an international community.	One of the elements that led to the confrontation between local and national governmental entities was economic values.

In the following six subsections, I will interpret Table 6.1 and offer information from fieldwork data conducted with local communities and academic contributions to each of the national and international communities associated with Gebel El-Barkal and the archaeological sites of the Napatan region.

6.3.1 The Spirituality and The Continuity of The Sacred Conceptualization for Gebel El-Barkal and The Napatan Region

Gebel El-Barkal, as indicated previously in this chapter, is a site/place associated with or imbued with religious or other spiritual significance for the three local, national, and international scales. These spiritual values in which Gebel El-Barkal promotes insights in the meaning of religious, sacred, and inspirational practices and experiences for the local communities, can emanate from local communities' belief or secular experiences of wonders. Meanwhile the sacred significance for the national and international communities derives from the academic literature and the contributions of scholars who have interpreted the site as a "holy mountain" because it was the residence of the god Amon, where the largest temples were constructed at the foot of the hill. Local communities associate the place's sanctity with the appearance of *Wad El-Karsani* and later with his shrine at the southern-east corner of the mountain.

As noted previously in Chapter five, the most major night-time visits to Gebel El-Barkal are made by women seeking fertility. These customs and traditions have spiritual significance because of their direct link to the local communities' views regarding *Wad El-Karsani* as a holy man with supernatural abilities during his life and after his death. The supernatural power he acquires from his religious knowledge and closeness to Allah. Such women go to the mountain, accompanied by another and they ask *Wad El-Karsani* to enable them to have children. In turn, these spiritual beliefs strengthen the claim of cultural continuity of local communities where the academic discourse explains the historical function of Goddess Mut as I outlined in

Chapter three. In contrast, after the arrival of Islam, when the pristine mountain became known as the Sacred Mountain, the place retained its sacred significance, through the appearance of *Wad El-Karsani*.

6.3.2 The Historical Value of The Site/Place Among Local Communities

The archaeological sites and tangible heritage historical value is continually defined and shaped by the experts, and hence strongly influenced by the AHD. The heritage material's age, connections to significant people or events, rarity, uniqueness, technological qualities, or archival/documentary potential are only a few of the factors that contribute to its historical significance. (Torre, 2002 p.11). There are two significant subcategories of historical value, namely educational and academic value, which both consist of the potential to acquire historical knowledge (Torre, 2002). However, arguably the connection with social memory – which in many respects has a closer connection with the experiences and values of local communities - also needs to be factored in when considering historical value of Gebel El-Barkal and Napatan region archaeological sites.

In the local community of Gebel El-Barkal, social memory plays a crucial role in shaping contemporary understandings of the past. Social memory in this context applies to the concept which explore the connection between social identity and historical memory (French, 1995). In addition, social memory differs from history and official academics in that it seeks to understand how and why various individuals come to view themselves as members of a community with a common past. Therefore, social memory usually consists of a dynamic collection of fragmented stories that revolve around family histories, events, myths, and community places as explained in chapter five. Therefore, Gebel El-Barkal as a place and archaeological site provides connection with the past and a sense of continuity.

The “lack of knowledge” for the local communities of the academic and official discourse for Gebel El-Barkal places the historical value asserted by the AHD at the bottom of the associated values for Gebel El-Barkal and the Napatan region site/place. The local communities have formed narratives that have a separate existence and form of knowledge from those of the professionals. These narratives as oral traditions and local knowledge are powerful ways in which local communities have conceptualized and constructed their view of this place as explained in section (6.4).

6.3.3 The Importance of The Site/Place in Local Communities’ Cultural Context

The term cultural/symbolic value is used to describe the significance of a heritage resource beyond what can be determined by considering at its history alone (Jones & leech, 2013). Performance and practise play a crucial part in establishing the cultural significance of heritage places. These may include communal celebrations, ritual and ceremonial practises, daily activities, recreation and leisure, and memorial ceremonies. As previously mentioned, Gebel El-Barkal, as a place or site, has served as a focal point for the cultural practises and daily cultural activities of numerous local communities.

As will be examined in depth in the following chapter, Gebel El-Barkal gives a sense of identity that is vital to the lives of many people, a sense of belonging, and a means of distinguishing them from other groups. From this perspective, identity is undeniably one of the values embedded in these archaeological sites as a means of strengthening the community-building process and identity. Identity work and process of the local community through Gebel El-Barkal engagement most of the time comes in a conflicted mode when they debate the economic and social values of the archaeological site. Even though the local community deny the importance and the utility of the archaeological site, on the other hand they also believe “*this historical evidence of a rich civilization gives us the opportunity to be well known nationally and globally*” (El-Barkal local community informants group narrator code 65BGB).

In addition, Gebel El-Barkal provides the local communities in Merowe region a symbolic meaning and power as a place. This symbolic use can be seen in the naming of many streets within the region as well as football teams (*El-Barkal* Football team and *Molook El-Nil*, the Nile kings).

Gebel El-Barkal's cultural value for the local communities varied from one social group to another. This is because of their affiliation in terms of ethnicity, class, gender, age, and religion. Even though the local communities have a solid social construction value that shape individual acts and behaviours, to some extent the cultural activities associated with Gebel El-Barkal are crossing these boundaries. From my own observation and that of local informants, I have concluded that male teenagers are more interested in the site/place than other social categories to provide a stage upon which to hone their singing and dancing abilities in the local arts. For women, however, *Wad El-Karsani's* rituals and traditions hold the most cultural significance. The other cultural value associated with Gebel El-Barkal and the Napatan region is the durable belief that sees the place as a provider for constant and bright future for the family stability. This belief has led to the custom of the newlyweds to visit the site/place on their wedding week to celebrate their marriage and seeking blessings for the new family. "*Our people visit Gebel El-Barkal and the Nile sometimes when any of our community member get married''*. (El-Kurru local community informants, narrator code 50HAB). Based on my observation and my conversation with locals the newlyweds customs has declined compare by the old days.

6.3.4 Gebel El-Barkal as An Aesthetic Site/Place

Aesthetic value is a form of sociocultural value, which is socially and historically constructed. Different social actors perceive different cultural artefacts or their characteristics as having an aesthetic value, or as being "beautiful" or "sublime." This applies also to places and heritage. The source of aesthetic value of Gebel El-Barkal for the local communities is less the

archaeological remains and more the top of the Mountain where the visitor can view all the city, river Nile and the dates trees which give them great aesthetic pleasure. As one of the informants stated, "*I feel like I am flying when I go at the top of the mountain, the view over there is amazing."* (El-Barkal local community informants' group narrator code 53IBB).

6.3.5 Social Associated Value

The definition of social value in heritage instruments, policy statements, and research reports differs greatly. There are overlapping concepts that are all used to describe the social value. These concepts include social asset, communal value, community value, heritage community value, and social significance (Jones & Leech, 2013). In different contexts, community identities, attachment to place, symbolic value, spiritual connotations, social capital, recreation, and education have all been used to describe what we mean when we talk about social value (Jones & Leech, 2013). As a term, "social value" refers to the degree to which members of a certain community feel a sense of loyalty to an area because of the significance of the meanings and values associated with that area (Johnston 1994, p.10). Gebel El-Barkal and the Napatan region's social values allow and facilitate social interactions, networks, and other relationships. In a broad sense, one need not be connected to the central historical values of Gebel El-Barkal to be connected to it as a place where local communities interact with each other and with visitors from national and international communities. This aspect of the social value of the Gebel El-Barkal archaeological site and the Napatan region for the local communities could include the use of the site for social gatherings such as celebrations, markets, picnics, and ball games that do not necessarily capitalise directly on the historical value of the site but rather on the public-space qualities. According to my observations, visitors to the place always arrive in groups that are related by family, job, studies, or friendship. One of the local archaeologists who previously worked at the site has confirmed this observation. He declared that: *"We have always enjoyed visiting Gebel El-Barkal in a group, as this is the greatest way for us to see it.*"

(local archaeologist informants group narrator code 84AEH). Group visits to Gebel El-Barkal and the Napatan region promote social contacts and increase the region's social value by giving local communities the opportunity to socialise with other families, neighbours, and ethnic groups. This claim is confirmed by many informant assertions stating, for instance, that '' *Gebel El-Barkal is a place where I enjoy meeting new people and forming new connections.*" (El-Barkal local community informants, narrator code 56AAB). Others viewed the visiting group, particularly the family, as an opportunity to strengthen the family as a social unit. A few informants from local communities stated that "*when we come back from a visit to Gebel El-Barkal where, as a family, we shared food, tea, jokes and friendly conversations, we felt they were closer to each other".* (El-Barkal local community informants, narrator code 55MSB). In the same manner, the social value of a group visit mode to Gebel El-Barkal and the Napatan region enhanced and enabled special interest groups with shared social values and aspirations to practise and share their knowledge. "*When I visit Gebel El-Barkal, Nuri, or El-Kurru with my friends, we always display or paint and debate what we've drawn to enhance our painting talents, and at the conclusion of our conversation, we periodically give ourselves time to create a new work of art".* (El-Kurru local community informants, narrator code 8HHK*).* Moreover, Gebel El-Barkal encourages relationships and social engagement for members of the surrounding communities, especially the youth, who visit every Friday evening to meet people of the opposite gender. In a conservative environment, they would not otherwise have access to this opportunity. The male youths always visit Gebel El-Barkal along with their friends and colleagues compared to females who often come as a part of their family. Figure 6.1 below shows a group of youth that come on a regular basis along with their music instruments to play music and sing, as they enjoy the attention of foreign tourists. One of the youths who frequently visits Gebel El-Barkal commented, "*Even though I don't speak good English, I enjoy conversing with foreigners who go great distances to see Gebel El-Barkal so I can show them*

who we are." He continued, "*This friendship is occasionally maintained by exchanging our contact information with others*." (El-Kurru local community informants, narrator code 21YHK*).*



FIGURE 6. 1: A GROUP OF YOUTH GATHER TO SING IN PUBLIC AT THE TOP OF GEBEL EL-BARKAL.

Photo by Author 2018

In addition, Gebel El-Barkal fosters community values and social cohesiveness. 'Friendship – Love – Family – Relatives – Visitors – Colleagues' are the social notions imbedded in this narrative on social activities, as demonstrated in the previous chapter. On the other hand, Gebel El-Barkal as a place has become a store of the social memory of the locals, and many locals visit Gebel El-Barkal to retrieve their personal and social group memories. This assertion also applies to the rest of the Napatan archaeological sites, including El-Kurru, because the site is situated between the settlement and the school. Some residents of El-Kurru commented, "*I enjoy traversing the archaeological site, as I did as a child, because it reminds me of the good*

old days." (El-Kurru local community informants group narrator code 7BHK). Individual and social memory in Gebel El-Barkal are motivated and shaped differently. They begin by recalling past visits and experiences and then go on to their old life or family members who have either moved to a new region or passed away. *Wad El-Karsani's* presence as a local community cemetery at Gebel El-Barkal enhances the place's social significance as part of local social memory. The significance of this social value and memory was demonstrated by the local community's strong resistance to the local government's decision in 2017 to discontinue burying new people at *Wad El-Karsani* cemetery. One of the local informants demonstrates the strong resistance to this decision by stating: "*If the government requires us to stop using the cemetery on the grounds that it may harm archaeological remains, we will continue defending our rights in the place. Because we would like to have our family buried nearby so that we can visit them on occasion. Additionally, the people who pass away recently are more valuable than those who have passed away for more than one hundred years''* (El-Barkal local community informants, narrator code 51SEB). Based on my observations and what I've been informed by some of the informants, they do visit the cemetery as a family to petition God for mercy and peace for those who pass away and buried family members in the *Wad El-Karsani* cemetery. In conclusion, the social values connected with Gebel El-Barkal by the local community are a sense of connection and belonging. Besides, enhancing and promoting the local communities' moral values and beliefs and retrieving their individual and social group memories.

6.3.6 The Economic Associated Value

The heritage and economic interrelationship has been addressed through the claim that heritage contributes to the expansion of economic sources while the expansion of the economy generates revenue from the preservation of heritage. Use value and non-use value are included in the economic value of cultural heritage (Kim, Wong & Cho 2007). Use value is defined as the direct advantage derived by users when utilising the site's facilities. The non-use value refers to future usage, where the benefit from the resources stems from the idea that the preservation of the resources ensures that the heritage site will continue to exist for future generations (Kim, Wong & Cho 2007). Theoretically, the economic benefits of heritage sites increase as the number of site visitors rises, through users' entrance payments, financial support, and the generation of economic return (Buckley, 2004), also associated with the site's designation as a cultural World Heritage site.

Based on my observation and interviews, the way that Gebel El-Barkal and the Napatan region's archaeological sites contribute to economic activity in local areas varied based on day-to-day operations of a heritage attraction, in addition to the economic benefits associated with tourism. Even though five Napatan sites are becoming increasingly appealing to businesses, this trend has not translated into tangible benefits for the local communities (Bushell & Staiff, 2012; Viñals & Morant, 2012; Brown & Hay-Edie, 2014; Su & Wall, 2014; Magi & Nzama, 2009). In his interview, a member of the local community claimed, "*We, the local people, do not gain anything from the Gebel El-Barkal archaeological site. This is because the national government collects the tourist money, and the tourism agencies bring their own tour guides from Khartoum".* (El-Barkal local community informants, narrator code 51SEB). Renting out their homes to tourists or the archaeological mission, as well as the income they receive for their work with the mission, are the primary sources of income for the locals who live near the archaeological sites of Gebel El-Barkal and Napatan in the region. However, a few of local

communities members are concerned that "*the labour positions are always offered to individuals who are close to the Sudanese archaeologists who are working on this mission*" (El-Kurru male group interview code 27MGK).

Gebel El-Barkal and the archaeological sites in the Napatan region are imbued with many interpretations and connotations by the local communities, whose perceptions and associated values generate their own sense of place. In the next section, I will examine local communities' sense of place and their conceptualization of the sites/place.

6.4 Local Communities Sense of Place

Diverse academic contributions to the field of cultural heritage studies (Vong 2015; Teather & Chow 2010; Jorgensen & Stedman 2001; Hawke, 2010) examine the various interpretations of the surrounding physical environment and context, as well as how individuals and social groups create their own sense of place. This research defines sense of place as the positive affective bond or association between individuals or social and cultural communities and their residential location as cognitive or emotional engagement and connection (Vong, 2015, p.345). In examining the interrelationship between Gebel El-Barkal as an archaeological site and its landscape identity, it is beneficial to study sense of place as an attitude toward it and as a spatial setting, as this sense has strong parallels with the affective and cognitive components of attitude, respectively (Jorgensen & Stedman 2001 p.233). In addition, a sense of place describes the relationship between an individual and a particular area, in which the individual or group assigns meaning to the landscape they interact with (Jorgensen & Stedman, 2001, p.233). Empirically, a sense of place is a multidimensional relationship between a certain location and an individual's memories. On a personal level, members of the communities surrounding Gebel El-Barkal can develop a strong attachment to it, primarily the mountain and not the archaeological remains, as it is essential to their well-being in terms of preserving their memories and sense of identity (cf Teather & Chow 2010 p.93). Based on my observations and

interviews with the local communities, the role and heritage values of tangible cultural heritage are central to the way that local communities around Gebel El-Barkal engage with the sites. Particularly in terms of its relationships with identity, dominant ideologies, and the extent to which it is integrated with other social phenomena such as leisure, professionalization, contestation and culture practise and their social interaction.

The way people attach and give sense to the place differs according to the individuals' experiences, attitudes, and memories and differs from what has been ascribed by the national level power (Hawke, 2010). In addressing the local communities' sense of place towards Gebel El-Barkal in the Merowe region, and based on the primary data collected, the local communities' sense of place appears in three dimensions: the embedded symbolic meaning, social and cultural activities, and the physical setting that creates the image of the place. For the local communities Gebel El-Barkal is sacred place because of the *Wad El-Karsani* Islamic cemetery. *Wad El-Karsani* cemetery and *gubba* (shrine) have a significant value to Merowe region local communities, in terms of Gebel El-Barkal's sense of place, particularly to El-Barkal residents. In my interview with a cemetery visitor, I inquired as to why some archaeological remains were used to construct the shrine. The informant explained, "*What is archaeology? All the archaeological remains are owned by Wad El-Karsani and if he does not want them by him, he can destroy them in a second, you need to thank God he has not done so, otherwise you'll be jobless*" (El-Kurru local community informants narrator code 1IAK). During my inquiry into the reasons why Wad El-Karsani chose Gebel El-Barkal to be buried there, I discovered that some locals believe that "*Wad El-Karsani chose Gebel El-Barkal because it represents a powerful civilisation and has a long history*" (Merowe local community informants narrator code 48AAM). Others assert that "*he owns Gebel El-Barkal, and that the mountain's name has been changed from Wad El-Karsani Mountain to Gebel El-Barkal. When we were children, the mountain was known as Gebel Wad El-Karsani, not Gebel El-Barkal*

(Wad El-Karsani Mountain)" (Local archaeologist informants group narrator code 84AEH). The third local perspective states, "*Wad El-Karsani is related to the prophet Mohammed, as his uncle Elabas is Wad El-Karsani's great-grandfather, and his place (North Sudan) has been visited by many Sahaba (disciples of the prophet Mohammed), such as Abobakr Elsiedieg and even Osman Bin Masoud, who are buried in this region, our region.*" (El-Barkal local community informants group narrator code 54EB). The three voices mentioned earlier clearly suggest that Gebel El-Barkal is involved in several significant concerns. One is the dispute over ownership between the local community and the heritage authorities. This theme will be explored in further depth in Chapter seven, which concentrates on ownership claim conflicts and identity. The second issue revealed here is the local community values associated with the site/place, which I claim differ from the associated value assigned by the AHD (including OUV) and match it in a variety of aspects. The fourth issue is the Islamization process, which has significantly influenced and shaped the local community's oral history, self-identity work, and conceptions of archaeology and archaeological sites. In addition, Gebel El-Barkal is crucial to the local communities because it offers them with opportunities for social contacts, a sense of unique identity, and a site that attests to their civilization.

Gebel El-Barkal plays a vital part in the day-to-day lives of the local communities through the social and cultural activities that establish their own sense of place and are undertaken in groups or by individuals. These social and cultural activities as explained in more details in chapter five included Eid Celebration, the festive and the praise of their performance arts, and the customs associated with place. As stated before in chapter five, local communities around Gebel El-Barkal have a shared perspective on place identity and its physical setting. In the following sections, I will focus on the various perspectives in which scholars and professionals have discussed Gebel El-Barkal and other archaeological sites in the Napatan region (viz table 6.1 in section 6.2).

6.5 Gebel El-Barkal in the National Authorised Heritage Discourse and Global Discourse

This section's analytic approaches will be based on Smith's (2006) concept of the Authorized Heritage Discourse (AHD). Cf. the literature review, this is conceived of as an 'official' way of understanding heritage. According to Smith (2006), it is a particular understanding of heritage that emphasises the significance of professional knowledge and favours the cultural memory of a narrow social strata, which tends to be upper middle or upper class. It usually emphasises the physical characteristics of the object, such as its antiquity, technological characteristics, and grandeur. This frequently contrasts with what Smith refers to as alternate conceptions of heritage.

In examining Authorized Heritage Discourse (AHD) on Gebel El-Barkal and the Napatan region, there are several associated values that influence the perspectives of national and international communities, in addition to those interested in the historical significance of the archaeological sites. According to the Authorised Heritage Discourse and scholarly literature, Gebel El-Barkal is one of the greatest archaeological sites in Sudan (Kendall & Mohamed, 2016). It was a major river crossing on the north-south overland commerce route between central Africa and Egypt. Gebel El-Barkal and its Amon sanctuary remained the kingdom's principal religious centre and the premier location for royal coronations for several centuries. In addition to its historical significance, Gebel El-Barkal on the Authorised Heritage Discourse is sacred to both local and international communities. Moreover, Gebel El-Barkal according to AHD continued as an important royal residence and religious centre until about 350 AD, when the kingdom finally collapsed.

Furthermore, the symbolic and aesthetic value of Gebel El-Barkal for the Authorised Heritage Discourse can be seen in the east side of the mountain, where the Mut temple has been

constructed. Depending on the angle from which it was viewed, the side vaguely resembles a human wearing a crown; the uraeus, placed on the front of the king's crown, was the principal sign of Egyptian kingship, while the White Crown was the symbol of royal rule over Upper Egypt (the South).

The global associated value according to UNESCO (UNESCO, 2003)a, is that Gebel El-Barkal exhibits an architectural tradition that shaped the political, religious, social, and artistic scene of the Middle and Northern Nile Valley for more than two thousand years (1500 BC- 6th Century AD). Also, set in the desert border landscape on the banks of the Nile, the remains, with their art and inscriptions, are testimony to a great ancient culture that existed and flourished only in this region, and Gebel El-Barkal and the Sites of the Napatan Region and their related reliefs, writings and painted scenes on walls represent a masterpiece of creative genius demonstrating the artistic, social, political, and religious values of a human group for more than 2000 years. In line with the local cultural values and perception, UNESCO describes Gebel El-Barkal as a sacred mountain since New Kingdom times (ca. 1500 BC). On its description and associated Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) UNESCO states that the mountain is locally named *Gebel Wad El-Karsani* after a Muslim *sheikh* (saint) buried near the 100m high, flat-topped sandstone rock and that the mountain is closely associated with religious traditions, since the shrine of this sheikh is still being visited by the local people for blessings (UNESC), 2003)a. The description indicates that the international discourse recognises the significance of conveying the local communities and Gebel El-Barkal's associated values..

In considering the intertwined relation between communities' engagement with heritage and their imbedded associated values with this heritage, I will in the next section discuss the varied factors and opportunities that I claim have an impact on local communities' engagement mode

with Gebel El-Barkal and subsequently have made a change in their associated values with sites.

6.6 The Opportunities that Enhance Local Communities Engagement with Gebel El-Barkal

The following section (6.6.1,6.6.2, and 6.6.3) aims to introduce the varied opportunities which have more recently enhanced local communities' engagement and made a change in the associated values among local communities around Gebel El-Barkal and the Napatan region's archaeological sites. These developments include Merowe Dam construction, Gebel El-Barkal Festival for Tourism, Culture, and Investment, and Qatar-Sudan Archaeological project.

6.6.1 Gebel El-Barkal International Festival and Local Community Associated Values

Gebel El-Barkal Festival for Tourism, Culture, and Investment (as explained in chapter three) is a cultural, artistic, and cultural marketing effort aiming at promoting tourism in the region and shed light on it, through conducting an activity held around the ancient areas of Gebel El-Barkal and the Napatan region. Gebel El-Barkal Festival for Tourism, Culture, and Investment from the lenses of government, the main festival funders, and organizers, as has been stated by the manager of the world heritage site of Gebel El-Barkal and Napatan region archaeological, *"the festival is an attempt to recover the Sudanese antiquities that have been smuggled out of the country, through efforts led by civil society organizations, as well as reaching a roadmap that contributes to rewriting the history of Sudan".* In his interview the world heritage sites of Gebel El-Barkal and Napatan region archaeological sites added, "*The festival aims to show Sudan its distinct cultural dimension, because of the stability it has been blessed by God, so that we can historically affirm that we are the first people* [Sudanese] *occupied the place, and we care about humanity and honour women, as historical manuscripts indicated that there is a series of Sudanese rulers*" (heritage officers group narrator code 83MBH).

Contradictory, the archaeologists at local and national level viewed the festival as one of the major threats to the site. In his interview the regional general manger acknowledged that "*Gebel El-Barkal festival activities during the four years was focusing on the investment and marketing side for the investor. With an ignorance on representing the historical importance of the sites"* (Local archaeologist informants group narrator code 84AEH). The other concerns stated by the archaeologist is that "*there was an absence of organizing lectures and seminars to highlight the historical heritage of the region, which extends to more than five thousand years*". He furthermore state that "*new discoveries have been made in the areas, all of which are topics that require highlighting and can attract large numbers of tourists, but unfortunately this matter has not had a considerable attention within the festival* " (Local archaeologist informants' group narrator code 84AEH). The major anxieties raised by the archaeologist were that the festival and the crowd inside the site and the buffer zone made a damage to the archaeological remains.

From the perspective of the local community, the Gebel El-Barkal Festival for Tourism, Culture, and Investment is harming the social values and structure by violating concerns on social restrictions such as gender mixing, as well as having fun and playing music near cemeteries, which is against Muslim religious norms, as I have been informed by locals on varied interviews (cf group interview code 28MGZ).

6.6.2 The Qatar-Sudan Archaeological Project and Local Communities' Associated Values

The Qatar-Sudan Archaeological Project (QSAP) contributes to Sudan's heritage preservation for the future generation and promotes domestic and international tourism to sites of cultural interest, serves as an umbrella for forty-one missions engaged in surveying unexplored landscapes, excavation, and conservation of ancient monuments, and in construction of new

visitor centres (The Qatar-Sudan Archaeological Project (QSAP), 2013). Collectively, the research funded by the QSAP contributes significantly to the preservation and interpretation of Sudan's civilizations and cultures, creating a massive information of archaeological and historical records in the process that give new insight into Sudan's history (The Qatar-Sudan Archaeological Project (QSAP), 2013).

According to the north regional manager, and as I explore in chapter three visitor numbers have increased because of these efforts. This massive shifting has parallelly increase the tension at the archaeological sites. However, nearly all local community members believe that the visitors' flow from outside the region are overwhelmingly managed from Khartoum. Local community leader informants state, "*I don't understand why the tourist agency always sends individuals to do a job that we, as community members, are capable of doing if we are provided with the training. Perhaps they do not want us to profit financially from our sites*" (Merowe local communities informants narrator code 45AAM). A few of those who work with archaeological missions feel that Gebel El-Barkal and the Napatan region's archaeological sites has a potential economic value after the heavy archaeological works conducted under the supervision of QSAP. One of them stated that "*these archaeological sites can bring a gold egg if it has been used effectively and fairly*" (El-Kurru local community informants narrator code 3MEK). This economic value to some extents has changed local community perceptions and engagement modes with the archaeological sites because they have begun to see the site as a potential source of economic revenue. As a result, the tendency of tourism investment in private and state sector has risen in the national scale. On his interview one of the local archaeologists stated that "*listing the sites as a World Heritage site plus the contribution of Qatar-Sudan archaeological project has enhanced the image of the site internationally*" (local archaeologist informants narrator code 84AEH). The local community, along with the local archaeologist, believe that the QSAP provides a new-found sense of belonging to the

archaeological remains and sites via enrich local communities' awareness of the sites significance through the outreach activities done by the archaeological missions.



FIGURE 6. 2: A GROUP OF LOCAL COMMUNITY MEMBERS WORKING WITH THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL MISSION IN GEBEL EL-BARKAL.

Photo by Author 2018

After havening an in-depth understanding of the local communities around Gebel El-Barkal social, culture, spiritual, aesthetic, historical, and economic associated value with Gebel El-Barkal and Napatan archaeological sites, beside comparing these local associated values with the national and international values, the following section will conclude the contents and the general ideas of the chapter.

6.6.3 The Impact of Merowe Dam Construction on Local Communities Associated Value

As with any significant construction project, the Merowe Dam construction has been accompanied by several socioeconomic and environmental concerns. Many existing socioeconomically vulnerable communities were displaced by the dam, straining the social fabric of the region, and bringing attention to concerns of structural violence. Furthermore, the reservoir of the dam was flooded with irreplaceable archaeological materials (International Rivers ND). This headed the local communities to refer to archaeological sites, including Gebel El-Barkal, as a cultural heritage in their resistance discourse: *"the dam has been resisted by many local people particularly those who will be displaced"* (Merowe local community informants group narrator code 48AAM). Resistance to the Merowe Dam causes a substantial conflict among the local communities: "*the traditional singer Issa Badawi has been beaten to a point of getting a physical disability because he sang a song that glorifies the dam for the local people in Hamdab area. He was beaten by members of his own tribe"* (local archaeologist informant group narrator code 74BBH). Regarding the development of the Merowe dam, local communities hold contrasting perspectives. Numerous members of the local community believe that "*local people will gain from the dam, and the infrastructures will make it easier for them to go from one location to another than in the past*." *(*El-Barkal local community informants group narrator code 53IBB). In addition, these members believe that the dam construction project entailed a shift in the geographical context of certain local communities and a change in their way of life and cultural practises. "*The dam brought electricity to the local area, the bridge that connects the two river sides, and the accompanying projects increased the local communities' incomes.*" *(*Merowe local community informants group narrator code 49MHM). Based on my interviews with the local communities those who opposed the construction of the dam, on the other hand, rejected their relocation from the Nile valley and preferred to be resettled along the banks of the new reservoir.

The opportunities that have arisen because of the construction of the Merowe dam have created a substantial new mode of engagement between both the local and national communities and the Gebel El-Barkal site. As a result of the new infrastructure that has come with the dam *"the visitors' numbers after the dam have increased, because the Opponents that use the archaeology as a mean for their resistance increase the local awareness of the importance of the archaeology, also the rescue campaign creates income jobs for local community"* (local archaeologist informants group narrator code 74BBH). Further, the management of Merowe dam organised a weekly free trip from the capital Khartoum to visit the dam as well as Gebel El-Barkal: "*the dam management board keep organising a weekly trip for the local and national communities to visit both the dam and the archaeological sites; these trips create a positive link between the locals and the archaeological sites." (*Merowe local community informant group narrator code 47MOM). In general, the construction of Merowe dam has changed the local communities' way of life, as well as their perceptions, engagement mode, and associated values towards Gebel El-Barkal and Napatan region archaeological sites.

6.7 Conclusion

In conclusion, assessing the local communities' associated heritage values is an essential to comprehend the diverse motivations for their interaction mode with the site/place, to develop the management plan, and to recognise their understanding of the past. Even though there is a shared perception of Gebel El-Barkal and Napatan archaeological sites across local groups, there is difference in the related values of the sites. This variety is formed by local communities' ethnic, gender, age, social class, and religious identities.

Local communities of Merowe region associated values with reference to social, cultural, and historical contexts include the social, cultural, spiritual, aesthetic, historical, and economic values. The social value of Gebel El-Barkal and Napatan archaeological sites, refer to the

opportunity that offer by the place for the local communities to facilitate social connection, among themselves as well as with others from national and international communities. Furthermore, Gebel El-Barkal and the archaeological sites encourages local values, retrieve individual and social memory, and encouraging the family and friendship as a social need. In addition to its social value, the Gebel El-Barkal site/place has a significant cultural value as it is the scene of several cultural activities on a daily basis. The cultural value of Gebel El-Barkal extended to the mode of reinforcing the community-building process and identity. The spiritual value of the place is embedded in fact that Gebel El-Barkal promotes insights in the meaning of religious, sacred, and inspirational practices and experiences for the local communities. While the historic value reflected from the connection with the past and a sense of continuity provided by the site/place of Gebel El-Barkal and Napatan archaeological sites. Finally, the economic values come from the contribution of the site to economic activities and the benefit associated with tourism.

Gebel El-Barkal sense of place for the local communities like the associated value has a different form from the national and global AHD. As local communities consider the sacred of the place has its power from *Wad El-Karsani* rather than from the ancient history of the site. Having said that the associated values is a changeable phenomenon, I have observed and informed that Merowe dam construction along with Gebel El-Barkal Festival for Tourism, Culture, and Investment and the Qatar-Sudan Archaeological Project (QSAP) have made a considerable social, cultural, economic change which subsequently impacts on local communities perceptions, engagement mode, and associated values with Gebel El-Barkal and the Napatan region’s archaeological sites.

Gebel El-Barkal associated value for the local community share some aspects and contradicting with other associated values in the national and international scale. Recognizing the absence of addressing the local community's associated value within the AHD and the implementation of

the site's management strategic plan, attention and ownership dispute have arisen and will be discussed in further detail in the following chapter.

CHAPTER SEVEN

LOCAL COMMUNITY IDENTITIES, OWNERSHIP CLAIM CONFLICTS, AND THEIR IMPACTS ON CULTURAL PRACTICE

7.1 Introduction

This chapter's overarching objective is to investigate the identification, affiliation, and ownership claim conflicts between the several communities around Gebel El-Barkal site/place and Napatan region archaeological sites. Furthermore, the chapter discuss the power relations constructed in/ through the conflicts and the impact of identity and ownership claim conflict towards local community engagement with Gebel El-Barkal and the Napatan region. In section (7.1) of this chapter, the chapter's objectives and organisational structure are presented. In the following section (7.2), I introduce the conceptual framework this chapter would use to explore identity concepts, the formation, reproduction, and articulation of identity narrative discourse, as well as the ownership claim, by discussing them from diverse angles. As discussed in Chapter two, the Literature Review, the significance of reflecting on this topic stems from the fact that heritage is closely associated with the concept of identity, as well as the connection between people living in the present and other people, groups, ideas, material culture, practices, events, or places from the past. Therefore, I have centered my research on the influence of identity on community engagement, with a particular emphasis on gender, ethnicity, social class, religion, and age. Thus, in section (7.3), I present an overview of how Gebel El-Barkal and Napatan region community engagement is influenced by the identity affiliation of local communities based on primary data. In section (7.4), I introduced the local communities around Gebel El-Barkal site/place and Napatan archaeological sites and their attachment to these sites as a source of identity. To further the discussion about the ways in which various tiers of identity interact, I discuss the significance of Gebel El-Barkal to both the local and national communities. Subsequently, in section (7.5), I compiled the ownership claim conflicts among

the various local, national, and international communities that engage with Gebel El-Barkal and the Napatan region and the consequences of these conflicts on the community engagement modes with Gebel El-Barkal, the associated values, and the management practices. This section will firstly examine the various forms of ownership claim conflicts among the local communities around Gebel El-Barkal (7.5.1), the current situation, and how these ownership claims influence the associated values and are shaped by the construction of power relations. Secondly the conflict between local communities with the national and local heritage authorities (7.5.2). Further, the ownership claim conflict occurs between the local and international communities, and for this part UNESCO has been taken as a lens to view the nature of this conflict. The ownership dispute among the national communities will be discussed in the next section (7.5.3). In addition, this section will examine the historical and fundamental arguments between the Sudanese and Egyptian communities over the origins of their respective civilizations. On this section, relations between the local community and other related national communities who claim Arab identity and the Nubian identity will be taken as an example to explore this conflict. The significance of combining these two concerns (identity and ownership claim conflicts) arises from the fact that identity and identity creation play a crucial role in ownership claim conflicts. Similarly, the ownership claim conflict has influenced the choices and opportunities individuals have for identifying themselves within social groups.

7.2 The Conceptualization of Identity and Ownership Claims Within Cultural Heritage Academic Discourse

Recognizing that identity and ownership claim concepts have been addressed and seen via a variety of lenses in academic discourse, this section seeks to illustrate which of these perspectives have been applied in this study. In reference to the prior discussion of chapter two's literature review, this section will examine the subject's definition and approaches.

7.2.1 Conceptions of Identity

Scholars from a remarkable range of social science and humanities fields have become increasingly interested in identity-related issues (Goffman, 1959; Werbner & Ranger, 1996; Hall, 1996; Mclean, 2006; Woodward, 2004; Ashworth, Graham, & Turnbridge, 2007; Graham & Howard, 2008; Marschall, 2008; Macdonald, 2013; Stephens & Tiwari, 2014). This intense attention has generated a substantial body of literature. Despite this substantially heightened and widespread interest in "identity," the term itself remains an enigma. In the research of cultural heritage, the concept of identity refers to the way markers such as heritage, language, religion, ethnicity, nationalism, and common interpretations of the past are used to generate narratives of inclusion and exclusion that define groups. This narrative of inclusion generates a set of symbols or lifestyle choices from which individuals make their own selections to be affiliated with groups of people (Macdonald, 2013 p.167). Consequently, the definition and significance of identity are fluid, variable, and multidimensional. It can be a force for 'identifying and locating individuals in the world via the lens of their collective character and culture' (Stephens &Tiwari 2014 p.104). Identity is therefore not immutable because it is "highly negotiable and changeable" (Graham & Howard, 2003 p.5). The ways in which we may (or may not) prompt and present our cultural identities and affiliations, along with the articulation and figuring out of a range of other cultural, social, and political experiences, are all central to our sense of belonging, which acknowledges that identity is fluid, subjective, and multi-dimensional. These experiences may be structured and understood by relations defined, for instance, by ethnicity, by class, by our religious beliefs (or non-beliefs), by age, and/or by sexuality and gender (Smith, 2008 p.160). Stuart Hall, in his contribution to the definition of identity concepts (Hall et al., 1996 p.597), identity and the way it is perceived is continuously shaped and reshaped in response to the various ways in which people and groups are acknowledged and represented in cultural contexts.

7.2.2 Ownership Claim Concepts

As discussed in more depth in Chapter two, the Literature Review, the concept of ownership in the cultural heritage literature has singled out different theories, each of which viewed the concept in distinctive perspectives (Bergerbrant & Sabatini, 2013). According to the internationalist perspective, cultural resources are the property of all humanity, unlike the moralistic theory arguing that cultural heritage should be owned by the creator. As the Gebel El-Barkal and Napatan region is a World Heritage Site, the internationalist theory from this perspective is significant to the chapter's themes. The nationalist theory claims that cultural property should belong to the nation and should be preserved at its place of origin. Gebel El-Barkal archaeological remains have been a source of ownership claim conflict particularly for those remains that have been taken to be presented in either the national museum or in international museums, as mentioned earlier and discussed in greater detail below. The defining of ownership notions in the theory of the primacy of science is centred on the right to produce knowledge and undertake scientific research. The theory of the primacy of the market, in Gebel El-Barkal case more related with dispute on the uses of the site as an economic asset and who own it and should benefit from it. Consequently, the revenue generated by these places has a significant impact on the ownership dispute between local communities, local heritage institutions, and national state heritage institutions.

Similarly, the debate around looting and trading in antiquities, which often begins with indignation and social alienation over the actual loss of material remnants, has also had an effect on the cultural heritage discourse and perceptions of ownership. From this point of view, discussions of ownership claims centre on issues of archaeological sites and artefacts, rights, access, and ownership (Schmidt, 1996; Prott, 1996; Hicks, 2020). As already mentioned, claims of cultural heritage ownership always exclude others in the process of determining in-groups and out-groups. From this perspective, ownership of cultural heritage is frequently more

about identity formation and less about control (McGuire, 2004). The problematic nature of ownership from the perspective of cultural heritage and identity formation stems from the power that traps individuals in categories from which they may feel it extremely difficult to escape. Thus, people may become identified with the categories placed upon them, encapsulated in the past, or rather in the past as someone wants it to be. While the legitimacy of ownership should not be determined by who was here first, who came from where, or who is a descendant of whom.

7.3 The Influence of Identity on Community Mode of Engagement with Gebel El-Barkal and Napatan Region

This section works towards understanding the connection between heritage and identity, by paying particular attention to social and cultural construction and boundaries in terms of interpretation of the past, access to the place, the rights and its negotiation process, and cultural uses of Gebel El-Barkal site/place and Napatan region archaeological sites among local communities. Acceptance, rejection, and/or contestation of pre-existing cultural and social meanings and values are all part of the negotiation process. Therefore, this section will enquire how the construction of identities shapes and influences modes of engagement by the local community with the Gebel El-Barkal site/place, and what are the consequences of identity construction on the site's uses, given that heritage is about the creation and expression of identity and there is a strong link between what motivates people's engagement with heritage and their identity. To accomplish this, gender, age, ethnicity, social class, and religious identification will be the major components of identity investigated. This will allow for a better understanding of how the local communities varied identity construct modes of engagement with Gebel El-Barkal site/place and the Napatan region archaeological sites.

Local communities around Gebel El-Barkal and Napatan region (as outlined in Chapter three) are traditional communities that holds a conservative set of values and beliefs. Consequently,

the gender construction from this perspective influences how individuals act and gender their social behaviour by distinguishing masculine and feminine discourses. However, masculine discourse is the dominant discourse with a core framework that guides both male and female modes of thought, knowledge of things, and social and cultural practise. According to my observations and interviews, gender construction has a variety of effects on how women and men perceive, value, and interact with Gebel El-Barkal site/place and Napatan region archaeological sites. This observation has been validated by a member of the local community who commented, "*As you know, we are a conservative social group, the tradition and standards here are very strict, and both women and men act in accordance with social values.*" (El-Kurru local community informants, narrator code 21YHK). Therefore, the creation and expression of gender identity rely heavily on the identification and differentiation of the 'other,' particularly on a local scale. That restricts people's thoughts and actions about Gebel El-Barkal site/place, in addition to who can visit it and what they may do there, and who has rights to and intellectual property in the region. There is a general agreement among the informants that *''visiting Gebel El-Barkal is prohibited for the girls after the sunset''* (El-Kurru local community informants, narrator code 7BHK). Similarly, an elderly woman from El-Kurru community also remarked, "*I have not visited Banat El-Shiekh since last month since the men (archaeologists) are working there, and I am currently waiting for them to depart so I can visit Banat El-Shiekh*" (El-Kurru local community informants, narrator code 4HFK).

One of the significant senses of place aspects for both Gebel El-Barkal and El-Kurru sites comes from the fact that both places have been associated among local communities with the traditional religions and beliefs. The practise of this conceptualization is much related to social and cultural gender construction, as local communities associated the cultural practise conducted in these two sites with women more than men. Gebel El-Barkal, as stated previously, is associated with *Wad El-Karsani*, whilst the El-Kurru archaeological site has a

powerful linkage with "*Banat El-Shiekh"* (the daughters of the holy man). The first similarity between the two narratives is that the spirit in both chose the archaeological site to appear in. Second, both places share a similar cultural practise, including frequent visits by elderly women. Third, residents of both places are certain that *Wad El-Karsani and Banat El-Shiekh* can fulfil their needs. The only difference between *Wad El-Karsani* and *Banat El-Shiekh* is dissimilarities of gender. In the process of negotiating gender construction, this variance has led to diverse assumptions and crucial questions. The rational assumption is that local females created the narrative of *Banat El-Shiekh* as a form of resistance against the prevalent masculinized discourse within the social and cultural aspect construction of all local communities. This argument can be backed up with two myths, *Nosaira Bit El-Gabal, Bit El-Dahab*, as mentioned previously in chapter five on the local Communities Engagement around Gebel El-Barkal Archaeological Site, in which women have played the role of the heroes of the narrative. Having the women as heroes of the myth narrative among the local communities cultural context can be explain through the claim that women are the preservative and the circulation point of the intangible cultural heritage within the local communities around Gebel El-Barkal. Accepting this claim, it is reasonable to interpret the domination of women in oral literature as a form of resistance and expression against the silencing of their voices in their society. In addition, this behaviour might be regarded as a form of nostalgia for the fundamental power women had in their past, when queens played a crucial role in the political system. Therefore, gender social and cultural construction has a significant impact on the local communities around the archaeological site of Gebel El-Barkal and the Napatan region. In conclusion, gender construction influences the right of access to the sites as well as the linkage of cultural practises with femininity.

Likewise, age has a considerable influence in physical and emotional engagement with Gebel El-Barkal site/place and Napatan region archaeological sites. Thus, age markers played a

crucial role in shaping the sense of place and cultural practises and uses of local communities towards Gebel El-Barkal site/place and Napatan region archaeological sites. Based on my observation, local community youth constitute most visitors to Gebel El-Barkal. Gebel El-Barkal for the youth, particularly the male youth, is a place of gathering, a platform of cultural practise, and a place of hidden activities. *''Gebel El-Barkal, Sanam, and El-Kurru archaeological site is a perfect place for the youth to do their things [implying* the hidden activities]*''* (Merowe local community informants, narrator code 42EAM). In terms of the archaeological site interpretation and the cognitive ownership of the archaeological remains, youth refer it to the Nubian people, but when it comes to ownership claims they struggle to explain the confusion of the official history and their self-identity as Arab: ‘*'the archaeological remains is initially Nubian and our cultural material here show the impact of the Nubian culture as it is reflected in some of material culture names that has clearly show that they are come from the Nubian language''* (Merwe local community informant, narrator code 47MOM). Meanwhile the old women and men refer the history of the place to the Islamic period ‘*' Elatharat [the archaeological remain] is here since Elsaltana Elzarga [Funj Sultanate, the Islamic empire]''* (El-Kurru local community informant, narrator code 4HFK). Consequently, age identification has a significant impact on how local communities engage with a site/place, gain access to it, and perceive it.

Ethnic group, race, ethnicity, social stratification, and social identification as a concept are all associated to the social structure and boundaries. There are crucial facts around Gebel El-Barkal local communities that must be addressed in attempt to enhance our understanding of the influence of ethnicity on the mode of local community engagement with Gebel El-Barkal. Firstly, local communities around Gebel El-Barkal and Napatan region is a multi-diverse society in terms of ethnic group background. *''people here in Merowe region are considered as a small Sudan because they all live peacefully together although each of them come from*

different tribe and area'' (El-Zooma local community informants, narrator code 41AEZ). Secondly, even though local community consider themselves as a united social group and they are sharing a common language and religion, in practise they have powerful markers that often refer to the race background. Thirdly, local community around Gebel El-Barkal have a solid social construction which plays a substantial role in constructing individual choices, opportunities, and lifestyles based on their ethnic affiliation. Fourthly, *Shawiga/Shaigia* are the dominant social group who claim that they are Arab. As mentioned in the context chapter the term "Arab" has two connotations in local community social, semiotic, and cultural contexts: "Arab" as a positive connotation when used in an identification context to refer to the Arab world and "*Arab Rohal*" (travellers) as a negative connotation. Based on my observation, *Shawiga/Shaigia* as a dominant social and ethnic group has a considerable engagement with Gebel El-Barkal. One El-Barkal local community social leader states that "*as the history telling us we as Shawiga/Shaigia are the owner of the area's bright history. Therefore, we must have the access to benefit from this history*" (El-Barkal local community informants narrator code 64SAB). Conversely the other social and ethnic groups have less engagement with Gebel El-Barkal at the level of both site, heritage policy, and rights. One of the *"Arab Rohal*" informants acknowledged that "*our people don't visit Gebel El-Barkal and El-Kurru often unless we have to meet other people there*" (El-Kurru local community informants narrator code16SOK). On the contrary, ethnic identity has a substantial impact on the way individuals feel attached to the site/place, particularly among the Nubian people, whom are highly engaged with the archaeological sites. One of the informants who has a Nubian background and is a resident in Merwe region stated that '*'as a Nubian live by Gebel El-Barkal, we do organise a trip to visit Gebel El-Barkal, when I go there, I feel like I met with my Nubian ancestors''* (El-Barkal local community informants, narrator code 66ESB). In conclusion, the ethnicity within local communities around Gebel El-Barkal and Napatan archaeological sites, shaped the community

engagement mode with sites/place according to individuals and social group sense of belonging and ownership. In addition, the marginalised social group's has increased their economic value through their labour with the archaeological mission, while the dominant social group, the *Shawiga/Shaigia*, raised their economic values through the managerial level jobs as some of them have become archaeologists or have local heritage occupations.

Class identity, along with ethnic, age, and gender identities, had a crucial role in determining the local community's connection with Gebel El-Barkal, especially in terms of management. My observations indicate that the middle class, particularly the schools teachers, is the most active social group engaging with Gebel El-Barkal and Napatan regions archaeological sites. Some of these teachers have undertaken the role and responsibility of giving historical information to local communities using the official knowledge they obtain from their own reading. In an interview, one of these local teachers stated, "*I and my history-teaching colleagues continue to offer informal history sessions and discussions to the local community. Sometimes we do this at social gatherings in front of stores or at night in football clubs.''* (El-Barkal local community informants, narrator code 61 AAB). In conclusion, class identity and educational background among the local communities around Gebel El-Barkal and the Napatan region influenced their engagement mode with the archaeological sites more than the other parts of Gebel El-Barkal as a place and created an educational role to enhance the local communities' knowledge of their history.

Religious identity and religious discourse have produced within the local communities and nationally two social groups. Each of these groups has their own engagement mode with the site/place. *Sufi* as a religious group have got no negative view on the archaeological remains, but their attachment with the site situates the Islamic cemetery *Wad El-Karsani* as a holy place. Consequently, they visit *Wad El-Karsani* on a regular basis to organise a variety of cultural activities relating to this cemetery, particularly among the elderly women. This form of

attachment is seen at both El-Kurru and Gebel El-Barkal site/place. The other religious group is *Ansar El-Sunna El-Muhammadiya*, which is viewed as fundamentalist by the local communities. This group prohibits visits to either *Wad El-Karsani* or the archaeological sites, but they do visit Gebel El-Barkal as a mountain, arguing that a visit to the mountain and a contemplation of the manner in which Allah created it will strengthen people's faith. In an interview, a leader of this group remarked, "*When I pass by the pyramids on my route to town, I read the Quran to drive out the Jiin and ask Allah to pardon the archaeologists who do not respect the burial."* (El-Barkal local community informants, narrator code 69EBB). However, *Ansar El-Sunna El-Muhammadiya* cannot be considered a cohesive group because some of its members hold a less fundamentalist perspective of the archaeological remains and Islamic cemetery that the local communities have identified as having symbolic importance for the Sofi community. As noted before in this research, the local community's strong beliefs in Gebel El-Barkal as a holy place adds great value to the religious discourse, and consequently the religious identity plays a crucial role in the local community's engagement, notably with the Islamic cemetery. In addition to religious practise, the desire to remember relatives buried in the Islamic Cemetery is a strong cause for the El-Barkal residential community to feel a connection to Gebel El-Barkal. This desire symbolises memory and identity by attaching significance to the Islamic cemetery in comparison to other physical features of Gebel El-Barkal.

Following introducing the identity affiliation influenced towards Gebel El-Barkal and Napatan region archaeological sites, on the next section, I will present how Gebel El-Barkal provides the local communities with a sense of identity and promote their existing self and imagined identity.

7.4 How Gebel El-Barkal Provides the Local and National Community with A Sense of Identity

This section attempts to demonstrate how the Gebel El-Barkal and Napatan region archaeological site has provided the local and national communities with a distinctive sense of identity. Gebel El-Barkal provides a consistent sense of belonging to both local and national communities based on the obtained primary data. This positive cognitive and emotional attachment to Gebel El-Barkal gives the local and national community a sense of uniqueness and, consequently, a sense of identity. Local communities in the Merowe region have a widespread belief and perception that Gebel El-Barkal and its history are unique and well-known around the world due to the rich civilisation that draws tourists from around the world. A prominent member and social leader of the El-Kurru community stated that "*the history of our area is a gift from Allah. The richness of history of Gebel El-Barkal and El-Kurru makes us exceptional and unique"* (El-Kurru local community informants narrator code 2AEK). Likewise, a teacher from El-Barkal area stated that "*the people who come to see Gebel El-Barkal from all over the world verify how we are unique and have an outstanding civilization"* (El-Barkal local community informants narrator code 51SEB).

Gebel El-Barkal also fosters a sense of community and togetherness among the locals. A local archaeologist as well as a member of El-Barkal local community stated that "*when I travel away from El-Barkal, on my way back the first thing I do always see is Gebel El-Barkal, at this moment I feel I have reached the moon and I have a place that make me feel home and safe*" (local archaeologists informants group narrator code 75MEH). In a similar manner, an El-Zooma local community member informed me in an interview that "*our community here in Zooma has the same sense of belonging to archaeology and its history regardless of your ethnic background.*" (El-Zooma local community informants narrator code 35SMZ). The sense of belonging among the local communities around Gebel El-Barkal makes them proud of their area as well as their history. The honour of this archaeological site is reflected clearly in the

way that every family who has get a guest from outside will take them for a short visit to Gebel El-Barkal and Napatan region archaeological sites. Besides, the symbolic use of Gebel El-Barkal to connote identities is evident in using the site to name both streets and football clubs. Nationally, the mode of mass disconnection mode from archaeological sites, including those of Gebel El-Barkal and the Napatan region, has shifted in the very recent past, particularly since the Sudanese revolution of 2019. The archaeological sites and associated history were used as a symbol to represent the 2019 revolution. The revolution ended the nearly three-decade dominance of the fundamentalist regime that constituted the state as Arab/Muslim and, as a result, ignored the Sudanese history prior to the arrival of Islam in Sudan. The photograph (viz figure 7.1), which is regularly shared on various social media platforms, is one of the examples of this practice. The image represents a woman who has been given the title Kandaka by revolution supporters in attempt to associate her and all other female revolution contributors with Kandaka, The Kushite (Meroitic and Napatan) phrase for the Queen mother, Queen wife, and Queen (Lohwasser, 2001). The narrative associated with this image and incident has created an icon linking the appearance of the lady during the demonstration to the Kandaka image in order to strengthen the Sudanese's impressions of this association (viz figure 7.2). The use of this icon has spread after the success of the revolution as shown on figure 7.3. The Arabic text next to her photo reads: "My grandfather is *Taharka* [the greatest ruler of the Twenty-fifth Dynasty in Napatan Kingdom], my beloved grandmother is *Kandaka* [queen mothers of the ancient Napatan Kingdom]".



FIGURE 7. 1: THE 19 DECEMBER REVOLUTION KANDAKA IN ONE OF THE DEMONSTRATIONS.
https://globalnews.ca/news/5157192/sudan-protests-women-alaa-salah/



FIGURE 7. 2: STAMP CREATED ON THE FIRST ANNIVERSARY OF THE DECEMBER REVOLUTION



FIGURE 7. 3: THE 19 DECEMBER REVOLUTION KANDAKA ICON REUSED.

https://eu.usatoday.com/picture-gallery/news/2020/09/10/photos-sudans-uprising-leading-ousting-president-omar-al-bashir/3457764001/

Similarly, the third image (viz figure 7.4) is an official use of the pyramids as a symbolic marker for the revolution to enhance the national identity and nationalism. The picture is the first official picture of the transition government as the first government following the revolution. The political use of this image as a backdrop on this historical event comes as consequence of the high engagement with Sudanese history in the demonstration and December 2019 revolution. The engagement of Sudanese revolutionaries with the ancient history has come as resistance mode for the previous regime which was focused on Islamic/Arabic political identity as a means towards adapting and engage with the diverse history of Sudan.



FIGURE 7. 4: DECEMBER REVOLUTION TRANSITIONAL GOVERNMENT CABINET

https://www.arabnews.com/node/1702236/middle-east

The intangible cultural heritage, particularly the poems and songs reflecting archaeology in general and Gebel El-Barkal in particular, has been used to make a bridge and a sense of belonging to history and archaeology. One such poem is a popular song about Gebel El-Barkal. Figure (7.5) shows the singer of the song. The singer has used the historical way of dressing to associate herself with connotations of the ancient Queens in the Napatan and Meroitic period that the text of the song make a pride of.



FIGURE 7. 5: NADA EL-GALAA THE SINGER OF GEBEL EL-BARKAL SONG WEARING AN ANCIENT QUEEN DRESS

https://www.al2la.com/vb/t88103.html

By conducting a critical analysis of the song, the calling for a return to bridge the ancient history that is traced to more than seven hundred years ago, reflect how references to Gebel El-Barkal and other Sudanese civilization period symbols including Napatan, Kush and Karma, has come with the sound of 'I' and 'We' to emphasise the sense of national identity and nationalism. Furthermore, the ownership and the debate of the originality of the North African history and civilization between the Sudanese and their neighbours in Egypt has been reflected, where the text claims that '' First comes the south of the Nile valley, then the North *may follow lad''*. The song goes:

O' lad, you better beware.
Of the Kandaka Queen,
The drum of war,
Of the sword, and the shield
For I, am the queen Shakhit, and I am queen Rinas,
The breaker of the necks,
The roller of heads
For we, Kings Shebaka, Shabketo and Taharga

We are the war, and the worriers.
Have you not, O'lad, heard of over seven thousand years and more of history?
Karma, Napata, and Kush?
These are our roots, of which others can only dream of
First comes the south of the Nile valley, then the North may follow lad.
If you are not aware let me teach you, O'lad
Your roots and your origin and the history that was hidden.
If Gebel El-Barkal were to speak
He would have told you.
We are the kings.
The Pharaohs' the blacks
We are the lions, devouring whole and chewing our enemies.
O'lad, you better beware of the Kandaka Queen,
The drums of the war
Of the Sword, and the shield

The above song has a well spread and varied used in the local and national scale. The circulation of this song has a considerable contribution on boosting the knowledge of Gebel El-Barkal and Napatan region. Furthermore, the cultural use of this song is associated with a national event in which the users are attempting to build up a national identity.

Recognizing the intertwined relationship between identity and ownership claims, the following section aims to demonstrate the ownership claims conflict related to Gebel El-Barkal and Napatan region archaeological sites.

7.5 The Ownership Claims Conflict Towards Gebel El-Barkal and Napatan Region

This section approaches the examination of the numerous ownership claims conflict by looking first at the ownership associated with the place in terms of land uses, access, control, management, associated values, and the benefit derived from Gebel El-Barkal as a site/place. Secondly, the ownership claims conflict associated with the history of the place, in terms of interpretation, access,

and promotion. The aim of this section is to answer the questions of what the causes for are, and forms of ownership claim conflict among the local, national, and international communities concerning Gebel El-Barkal and Napatan region archaeological sites, in addition to who claims the ownership of Gebel El-Barkal and against whom, and on what basis they claim this ownership. The Importance of investigating the ownership claim conflict stems from the fact that ownership claim influenced the management practice, community engagement mode with site, conserving and safeguarding the site and its OUV. Although the answer to these questions is essential for theory and practice of management, it is extremely difficult to provide. This is because the multiplicity and intensity of conflicts arising on the ground around this issue demonstrates the extent of its complexity. In the case of Gebel El-Barkal, the ownership claim conflict has different shapes and forms, and the below sections introduces them as well as analysing their impact.

To address the ownership, claim conflict concerning Gebel El-Barkal and Napatan region archaeological sites, I will first discuss the conflict between the local communities, followed by the local communities attention with the heritage authorities in local, national, and international scale. Finally, I will introduce the conflict among the national communities with an assumption that local communities have taken a side within this conflict.

7.5.1 The Conflict within the Local Communities Themselves

Since the local communities around Gebel El-Barkal is ethnically and socially diverse, we may conclude that a conflict over ownership has arisen to reflect this diversity, '*'Our towns are home to people of many various racial, cultural, and linguistic backgrounds, yet we hold legal title to all of the land and historical resources in the area*'"' (El-Kurru local community informants narrator code 17NSK). Referring to chapter three, the Social, Cultural, Geographical, and Historical Context, I have introduced the broad structure of the social and cultural background of the local community, which includes varied ways of identifying the local community and their affiliation to the regional

land. The affiliation of the land in Merowe region is principally dominated by the major social and tribal group where they include their social members and exclude others. ‘"Others" in the context of the local community are the nomads, who have migrated from other regions of Sudan in pursuit of a better living. Those nomads are frequently referred to as "*Arab Rohal*" by landowners, as "*Rohal*" in Arabic refers to a nomadic social group that prefers not to have a permanent residence. The dominant Shawiga/Shaigia tribe believes they have complete ownership rights to the land. This claim is founded on the fact that they are the historical landowners, whereas the travellers have no land ties to the area. Gebel El-Barkal's significance for the "*Arab Rohal*" has grown as the economic value linked with the site has become more prominent among travellers. Historically, due to their labour skills, nomad travellers frequently work with the archaeological teams and derive their income from this kind of work. Consequently, their young males have a seasonal connection with Gebel El-Barkal site/place in order to generate revenue. As part of the archaeological teamwork, they perform seasonal labour during the winter months.

The conflict between the El-Barkal residential area and the South Kareema part (the residential area nearest to the site/place from the north) is another element of the local community's dispute over land ownership claims. As the nearest residential area to Gebel El-Barkal at the east, those who live in the Gebel El-Barkal residential area assert their land ownership based on their perception that they are the land's rightful proprietors. In addition, they are the owners of place history. This is because Gebel El-Barkal has historically been picked by *Wad El-Karsani* as the place of his supernatural appearance. They hold this claim because they are descendants of *Wad El-Karsani* and hence believe they should be the property's owners. In addition, this social group resides in El-Barkal, east of the Gebel El-Barkal site, and owns the land between the site and the Nile, which is the most significant land socially and economically. They claim that because of this ownership, they should have a permanent voice in all matters concerning Gebel El-Barkal. In the meantime, Kareema town in the north side of Gebel El-Barkal has placed a land ownership claim on the north

side of Gebel El-Barkal, since they claim they are the area's owners. Based on my interviews and unformal conversation other locals view this claim as weak due to the social, cultural, and ethnic diversity of this area's community. Therefore, the absence of a shared history and a common background make this ownership claim less influential compared to that of those who live in El-Barkal "*Foug*" (the El-Barkal Upper) area.

7.5.2 The Conflict Between the Local Community and Heritage Authority

The professional discourse on heritage and its management tends to dominate Gebel El-Barkal and Napatan region interpretation, access, value, and management. This discourse tended to dominate how Gebel El-Barkal and Napatan region has been defined, identified, valued, and preserved as officially recognised heritage. This section of the chapter emphases the interactions between professional archaeologists and the local community around Gebel El-Barkal and Napatan region, the historical landowners. The local communities of Gebel El-Barkal and Napatan region as defined here are not neatly or categorically different from descendant groups in other parts of Sudan, and they are not a racial category. Instead, they are culturally and politically defined, and they are quite different from each other. I have chosen to discuss local community here in this section as a one social unit primarily because they organise themselves in a unity mode in a case of conflict with "others". Pragmatically, that makes it easier to think about the ownership claim conflict in this aspect in terms of the varied interpretations of the past, the power of academic knowledge over the local knowledge, the land conflict and finally the attention between the archaeologists and the local community that has been introduced extensively in chapter six on Gebel El-Barkal's associated values.

The fundamental ownership claim to Gebel El-Barkal from the heritage authorities perspective comes from their belief that they have the right to acquire knowledge and thus the right to conduct scientific research, and that this role is much more important than any other considerations.

Furthermore, heritage authority ownership claims are based on the legal status they gain from the state authority as keepers responsible to protect and safeguard the archaeological remains, plus their duty on planning and directing the sources of this heritage, the right to access and participation, as well as their responsibility on manging the site. The ownership claim conflict in this aspect has increased as the state, with the notion of acting on behalf of the public interest has been doing so without inputs from local community points of view. The ownership claim conflict between local community and heritage authority is reflected in three aspects. The first ownership conflict concerns the land in terms of the boundaries and the uses of the land. The second ownership conflict plays out over the archaeological remains. The third ownership conflict is associated with local community cultural activities. The perception of the land value among the local community as explained in chapter three, gains its social and economic values according to its proximity to the river; while its value diminishes the further it is away from the river and the closer it is to the desert. The first sphere is the agricultural land by the Nile which is called ''*El-Sawagi*'' (The single is *El-Sagia*, it is a water wheel machine used by farmers to raise water from the Nile River to irrigate their fields). The connotation *El-Sagia* has been used within local communities to mean the land owned by a certain family. *El-Sagia* has been given to the local community members since the colonial period just for the ''*Shawiga/Shaigia*'', the traditional residents of the area. Since then, ''*El-Sagia*'' has been inherited through generations and each of these plots of land has a name related to the family name. This part of the land is often associated with identity in terms of the originality of the people who have a privilege of belonging to '' *Shawiga/Shaigia*'', the dominant social group. As dictated by local social norms those who own this land cannot sell their parts to any ''outsider''. Even if they do so the outsider will be excluded and will struggle to stay there. The second sphere of land is the part owned by the government, in which the government builds public facilities such as schools and streets. The third sphere is the new residential area for those who moved from their family land by the Nile because of the Nile flooding in 1946. The fourth and less valued sphere is

the land by the desert that is occupied by the ‘*’Arab Rohal’’*. Gebel El-Barkal and Sanam archaeological site lay in the second land sphere. Subsequently, the land ownership claim conflict on these two sites has seen the most disputes between the local community and heritage authority, as the Regional Manger stated in his interview. However, the disputes on the land for the other sites have started to increase because of the high demands for the local people to move further up away from the Nile because of the increase of the population. The other ownership conflict is the use of land within the archaeological sites by the local community either in their daily life, e.g., as a shortcut road as in Sanam archaeological site, as playground for the youth as at Gebel El-Barkal, as a litter area, or for hidden activities for the youth. In addition, the dispute and conflict between local and national developers with NCAM and UNESCO has occurred in varied occasions, in which the developer attempt to construct a hotel or visiting centre. The argument that NCAM and UNESCO used in this dispute is that the construction of a hotel will reduce the buffer zone of the site and will affect the site’s OUV (Cf UNESCO, 2010).

The archaeological artefacts as well as the land itself reflected an ownership claim conflict. Here the local community argue that taking the archaeological artefacts from their original area to the National Museum in Khartoum is not fair on them. This is because they believe these archaeological artefacts should be represented in their local museum so they can have the sense of belonging and the economic benefit of having them in their area. Removing, storing, or displaying these archaeological artefacts in a museum outside the country has also produced a considerable ownership claim between the Sudanese archaeologists and these institutions. Based on their sense of ownership over these archaeological artefacts, Sudanese archaeologists are particularly interested in gaining access to conduct research and retaining these artefacts.

Concerning the international scale, the local community around Gebel El-Barkal, based on the observations, have a lack of knowledge on why the site has been registered on the World Heritage list and what benefit, if any, the site, or they themselves may derive from this. Consequently, they

do not value the World Heritage status of the site, nor do they understand the supposed Outstanding Universal Values which form the basis of the inscription of the site on the list. Yet the involvement of a large international organisation such as UNESCO has raised expectations in the local community on their role at the site, particularly in terms of prospects for financial support (Cf (Bushell & Staiff, 2012; Viñals & Morant, 2012; Brown & Hay-Edie, 2014; Su & Wall, 2014; Magi & Nzama, 2009). Owing to the great gap between the UNESCO effort and local community high expectations, the ownership claim conflict has increased and has been reflected on local communities' remonstrance on UNESCO disregarding their role and responsibility on supporting local community and preserving the archaeological sites and remains. One of the local community informants expressed his view on this point heatedly: '*'since we heard that UNESCO put their hand in the archaeological sites, we have not seen any change, people still destroyed the archaeological remain, the foreigners are still taking our archaeological artefacts and represent it in the international museums, you know those people will do nothing to improve our heritage they only want to steal it''* (Merwe local community informants, narrator code 42EAM).

7.5.3 The Conflict at the National Community Scale

The ownership claim conflict among the national community is shaped by and because of the traditional conflict among the tribes and social groups in their interpretation of the history of Gebel El-Barkal's historical value. Although this ownership claim conflict has not appeared clearly in the last decades, recently it has come to play an essential part in local and national community engagement modes with history at large and Gebel El-Barkal's history specifically. Among the national community the local community has claimed their ownership as they are the owners of the geographical area, while the Nubians who live up north also claim their ownership over the history of the place. These ownership claims are widely spread on social media platforms, particularly Facebook (Figure 7.6). The local community along with those who live at '*Nahr El-Niel'* province

who claim the Arab original identity give themselves the name of ''*Kawahsa*'' to be identified as the descendants of a Kushite kingdom claim that the Nubians have no connection with this part of history, and that the archaeological sites of Gebel El-Barkal are belonging and inherited to them since a long time. The ownership claim conflict in this sense is reflected in academic discourse as each of the groups is joined by scholars from their ethnical background. The third national social group taking a part in this debate is voice that is calling for the cultural heritage to be considered as a national asset and national history.



FIGURE 7. 6: AN EXAMPLE OF ONE OF THE DISCUSSION GROUPS ON FACEBOOK
https://www.facebook.com/groups/849151905169779/?ref=share

The previous figure (7.6) exemplifies a group of Sudanese of Facebook social media platform with a translated name "Kush is The land of the Bow" to connotate the fighting power of the Kush people and their excellent skill as archers. The majority of the group members are youth from both gender s, but predominantly males. The members of this group, discussing the history of Sudan and associated issues. Based on my observation and analysis of the comments and posts, the group has a wide range of opinions and a considerable number of members and followers.

In the other hand the conflict between the national Sudanese community and their neighbour Egypt on the ownership claim has taken varied forms and bring wide-ranging questions. Awareness of the fundamental tension between Sudan and Egypt in interpreting the history events and in the civilization genesis is well spread among the youth. The discussion of these issues has taken place in Facebook and Twitter social media platform. This attention extended to the official national media particularly after the visit of *Sheikha Moza bint Nasser Al-Missned* to the pyramids of Sudan in 2017. On her public visit she wrote in the visitor memory book the phrase 'Sudan is the father of the world' in contrast to the well-known expression 'Egypt is the mother of the world'. The act heated up Egyptian public anger and social alienation. Subsequently, the Egyptian official media lead a campaign describing the pyramids of Sudan derisively as resembling the Laughing Cow brand cheese) and pressing the claim that the Egyptian pyramids are the origin of the pyramids architecture based on the size of the two pyramids . The conflict on demands for historical primacy between the two nations is of long standing and gives rise to popular misgivings and distrust about the recognition of their archaeological heritage; for instance, in my interview with a local teacher s/he stated that "*in nineteen eighty something there was a popular archaeologist who has conducted a comparison between the Egyptian and Sudanese civilization, and he get to the conclusion that Sudan is cradle of the human civilization. But while he is in his way to announce the outcome of his research he has been killed by the Egyptian government in Khartoum*" (El-Kurru local community informants narrator code 17NSK). Additionally, the conflict on the ownership claims and history between the Sudanese and Egyptian appear in other form namely in an official campaign leaded by the Sudanese archaeologists in which they wrote to the European Museum to relabel the Sudanese archaeological remains displayed in the European Museum under the umbrella term of "Egyptology" to give them a new designation as Sudanese archaeological remains. The Merowe regional manager stated that "*I am so glad that our campaign to put Sudanese archaeological remains in European museums in a separate category from Egypt has a successful outcome, and now they have two separate*

presentation space one of Egyptian and other one for Sudanese" (local archaeologist informants group narrator code 83MBH). Ongoing conflicts such as these illustrate that conflicting claims surrounding Gebel El-Barkal and its archaeological significance are the iconic tip of a larger iceberg of national identity politics and tensions regarding historical primacy and claims for antiquity in the region, but also illustrate the large symbolic value of this particular site.

7.6 Conclusion

In conclusion, even though social scientists and humanities scholars produced a remarkable contribution in the interrelation between identity and heritage, identity concepts remain something of an enigma. However, scholars in the cultural heritage field refer the identity concept to the ways in which categorized according to markers such as: heritage; language; religion; ethnicity; nationalism; and shared interpretations of the past. Likewise, the concept of ownership in cultural heritage literature has singled out six different theories, each of which viewed the concept in varied aspects. Heritage ownership from these theories is often collective, and it is often more spiritual than pecuniary, more about identity and less about control. For understanding the relationship between heritage and identity, special attention must be paid to social and cultural constructions and boundaries in terms of interpretation of the past, access to the place, rights and their negotiation process in management practice, and cultural uses of Gebel El-Barkal and the archaeological sites of the Napatan region by local communities.

In the case of Gebel El-Barkal and Napatan region , the archaeological sites have provided the local and national community with a sense of identity to differentiate them from others. This positive cognitive and emotional attachment to Gebel El-Barkal makes both local and national community feel they are unique, and therefore provides them with a sense of identity. Claims on this identity are, however, far from uncomplicated or uncontested, and the symbolic values and historical narratives associated with the site are subject to struggles at multiple levels,

ranging from that of relations between different local communities and within Sudan, to relations between Sudan and Egypt. At the level of the site itself, the ownership claim conflict has different shapes and forms, and has occurred to match the varied characteristics of the local community. In this context identity and self-identity in varied dimensions include gender, race, age, class, and religion, which all shape the local community attachment, access, rights, and cognitive process. The ownership claim conflict towards Gebel El-Barkal has been affected by local community identity in the local scale including the existing conflict on land, which is itself caught up in historical processes of differentiations and rights based on identity claims. In addition is the attention on the management practice and feeling of exclusion that local communities have because of the control of the sites exerted by the heritage authority. That the site is symbolically important for a wide constituency is reflected far beyond the locality itself, as the ownership claim conflict spreads over online communities with a national reach within the social media platforms because of varied interpretation of Gebel El-Barkal and Napatan archaeological sites. All in all, identity and self-identity play an essential part in local community social and cultural contexts and has a considerable impact on local community engagement modes with Gebel El-Barkal and Napatan region. Therefore, all these contexts are vital to understand to build an effective relationship between heritage authority and local communities around Gebel El-Barkal and Napatan region archaeological sites.

CHAPTER EIGHT

THE ROLE OF LOCAL INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE AND IDENTITIES IN UNDERSTANDING ENGAGEMENTS WITH THE Sites

8.1 Introduction

This chapter will analyse the findings of this thesis critically. It will also explore and discuss how the findings of this research relate to the larger body of literature on intangible cultural heritage, community engagement, associated values, identity, and ownership claims. This chapter's organisation corresponds to the order of the research questions, with the objective of shedding new light on the primary data's underlying themes. Using Gebel El-Barkal in the context of Sudan as a case study, this is the emphasis of the analysis. These research questions are firstly, How/which/why local communities from Merowe province engage with Gebel El-Barkal site/place and Napatan region archaeological sites? What are the values assigned by local communities to Gebel El-Barkal and Napatan region archaeological sites, and how do they differ from values associated on national and international scale? How does ethnic, gender, class, and age identities shape the local communities' mode of engagement and values associated with Gebel El-Barkal and Napatan region? What are the causes for, and forms of ownership claim conflict among the local, national, and international communities concerning the Gebel El-Barkal and Napatan region archaeological sites?

This chapter is divided into seven sections. The first section (8.1) serves as the chapter's introduction. The second section (8.2) examines how local communities are attached to the Gebel El-Barkal site/place and Napatan region archaeological sites through its intangible cultural heritage. The significance and value of understanding local communities' perceptions through analysing their intangible cultural heritage stem from two core facts. First, the method is consistent with the bottom-up approach, which I contend is an effective method for strengthening local communities' engagement mode with their cultural heritage, especially that

related to archaeological sites. Second, the intertwining and complexity of the relationship between tangible and intangible heritage often makes it difficult to differentiate between the two. The third section of this chapter (8.3) discusses how local communities interact with Gebel El-Barkal site/place and Napatan region archaeological sites. The fourth part of the chapter (8.4) discusses themes that emerge from examining the local communities' values in comparison to the national and international values introduced in chapters five and six, respectively. This section focuses on evaluating the significant values and interpretations that are mediated and recreated by local communities regarding Gebel El-Barkal and archaeological sites in the Napatan region. In addition, this section provides a comparative analysis of the local communities' associated values, the national Authorised Heritage Discourse (AHD), and the Outstanding Universal Values (OUV) as a global authorised heritage discourse. The fifth section (8.5) addresses how ethnicity, gender, class, religion, and age shape the manner of involvement and values of local communities in relation to the archaeological sites under study. This is accomplished by establishing a connection between the primary data emerging from the engagement mode of local communities, the identity politics literature associated with the social and cultural context introduced in chapter four, and how the broader cultural heritage literature considers the relationship between identity and heritage. The sixth section (8.6) examines the ownership conflict between the local, national, and international groups around the Gebel El-Barkal site/place and the archaeological sites in the Napatan region. The seventh section (8.7) concludes the chapter.

8.2 Local Communities' Intangible Cultural Heritage Associated with Gebel El-Barkal Site/Place and Napatan Region Archaeological Sites

Intangible cultural heritage particularly associated with tangible cultural heritage provides a hint of human actions and interactions in material contexts, such as buildings and historic sites; monuments; books; works of art; and artefacts (McKercher & du Cross, 2002; Harrison, 2010; Swensen, et al., 2013). Therefore, local communities' intangible cultural heritage associated with Gebel El-Barkal is a source of information that can offer an essential and in-depth knowledge for the local communities' social and cultural context. As outlined in the literature review, cultural heritage does not just involve direct engagement with the study of the past. Instead, it concerns the use of the past as a cultural, political, and economic resource for the demands of the present (Graham & Turnbridge, 2007). From this perspective, local communities' intangible heritage is thus more about the meaning, interpretation, and representation created by local communities to serve the performance and negotiation of identity, and to produce values as well as a sense of place. Based on the previous theoretical claim, analysing the intangible cultural heritage associated with Gebel El-Barkal assisted me in achieving my research objectives by expanding my understanding of the local communities' mode of engagement (8.3) and the associated values, as mentioned in section (8.4). Similarly, it aids me in identifying the identity politics that shape the connection between local communities and the archaeological sites in the Napatan region, as presented in section (8.5). Equally, analysing the intangible cultural heritage associated with Gebel El-Barkal contributes to my understanding of the characteristics and causes of the ownership claim conflict (8.6) among local communities, local communities and official heritage institutions, and local communities and global communities.

In addition, the intangible cultural heritage associated with Gebel El-Barkal is a way of engagement through which local communities attach themselves to the Gebel El-Barkal site/place and Napatan region archaeological sites. As evidenced in my research, local

communities around Gebel El-Barkal in Merowe province produce and reproduce their attachment to the site through their cultural practices, which include oral literature, traditions, and diverse everyday rituals, some of which may appear be mundane. The significance of this intangible cultural heritage arises from the fact that local communities in Gebel El-Barkal rely significantly on it to interpret the surrounding environments, find answers to their questions about the world, and give meaning to their behaviours and acts. Therefore, the intangible cultural heritage around Gebel El-Barkal is essential to the social knowledge of the place and archaeological sites in the Napatan region among local communities. As Zahra Hussain has noted based on her research in South Asian contexts, the intangible cultural heritage around archaeological sites must be acknowledged and should not be neglected (Hussain, 2019). Uzma Z. Rizvi highlighted in the same context that, through the Kalasha intangible cultural heritage associated with the archaeological sites in KP Province in Pakistan, local communities have formed and inspired safeguarding mechanisms for their sites and monuments. In the context of Gebel El-Barkal, the Jinn stories associated with the archaeological sites and circulating as part of their intangible cultural heritage play a key role in the process of preserving the archaeological sites. This is due to the fact that locals are always hesitant to remove any archaeological remains from their location because they feel they will be harmed if they do.

In addition, a deeper comprehension of the local communities' perceptions of the site is vital for enhancing their interaction with archaeological sites, instead of attempting to increase their engagement through outreach activities. Archaeologists frequently engage in a top-down process of communication and education, as well as management (Conan, 2009; Carman, 2018; Moser et al. 2002; Perkin, 2010). Such archaeologist-led community engagement can be very fruitful, but only if it considers the social and cultural context of the area being studied. Failing to do so can lead to unsustainable projects that lose the support of locals and undermine the communities' trust in archaeologists in the future (Perkin, 2010). One of the pieces of evidence

that can support this claim is the Replica Project in Syria which has been criticised for using a top-down approach which neglected the viewpoint of local communities and evidently excluded them from any decision-making process (Munawar & Symonds, 2022). By contrast, the Community Archaeology Project at Quseir, Egypt, is another prime example of a project that aims to go beyond these more conventional archaeological approaches to community engagement by building active social interactions with the local community. In addition, the project intends to employ locals and utilise members of the community for outreach initiatives. Moreover, ensuring the preservation of local archaeological artefacts in their original location (Moser et al. 2002, p.223). As John Carman, Laurajane Smith, and Emma Waterton importantly point out, archaeologists can often be seen as a self-serving interest group whose outreach activities are designed to enhance their own status and promote their activities to wider society (Carman, 2018; Smith & Waterton, 2009). Therefore, the approach taken by community engagement projects regarding an archaeological heritage site needs to consider the various ways in which meaning is derived from the site through the intangible cultural heritage that gives purpose to the daily lives of local social communities. Not least, understanding local communities' intangible cultural heritage associated with the archaeological sites and acknowledging it as an alternative discourse is an essential tool in reducing the domination of the AHD. Furthermore, understanding local communities through their intangible cultural heritage is an effective management practice of enhancing the bottom-up approach. For enhancing local communities' level of participation in archaeological management practice, as well as managing stakeholder relationships and competing interests, it is necessary to enhance the local communities' mode of engagement with archaeological sites. Accordingly, and based on the results of my research, I agree with Nour A. Munawar and James Symonds' (Munawar & Symonds, 2022) notion that the top-down approach to heritage reconstruction should be rejected and replaced with a bottom-up strategy in which progress and decisions can be

generated from across society. Similarly, Conan (2009) asserts that the bottom-up approach can assist in reimagining legacy as an inclusive and healing discourse, rather than retaining it as an instrument of political propaganda (Conan, 2009). Recent discussions in the international heritage literature have focused on reducing the dominance of the AHD on a national and global scale, including its heavy emphasis on materiality and monumentality, aesthetic value, and expert-defined authenticity as defining characteristics of heritage, and instead enhancing the engagement and participation of local communities in the decision-making process (Smith, 2006; Smith & Akagawa, 2009; Smith & Waterton, 2009).

To understand the nature of heritage and its use among local communities of Gebel El-Barkal site/place and Napatan region archaeological sites. It is necessary to map out their intangible cultural heritage, as well as its relationship to the other discourses surrounding these sites, such as AHD. Even though a well-established AHD identifies Gebel El-Barkal as a historical centre of trade between Africa and Egypt, a royal residence, and a religious centre, there are other competing discourses regarding Gebel El-Barkal and archaeological sites in the Napatan region. These competing discourses operate on three different levels. The first level is the international discourse that constructs Gebel El-Barkal as an exceptional archaeological site using criteria of OUV, as outlined in chapter four. The second is the national AHD, which is generated and supported by Sudanese national (and some international) experts and institutions (for further information on the distinctions between the two level and discourse see Table 6.1). The third level is the local, unofficial discourse which emphasizes local communities sense of place and the meaning they associate with Gebel El-Barkal and other archaeological sites of the Napatan region. This last level competes with the first two official discourses, which, however, determine the official heritage management and interpretations of the site.

As I argue, the local communities' intangible cultural heritage associated with Gebel El-Barkal is an alternate and dissonant discourse competing with the AHD discourse, but also mirroring

it in a few distinct characteristics and elements. On an international and national scale, the AHD is more powerful and authoritative than the local community discourse embodied in its intangible cultural heritage. This is due to the AHD's extreme self-naturalization, which prevents it from recognising the existence of alternative discourses or, if they are perceived, acknowledging their legitimacy (Smith, 2006 p.276). The power of the AHD in the Gebel El-Barkal and Napatan region archaeological sites, as in other places, lies in the fact that it perpetually legitimises the experiences and worldviews embedded in dominant narratives through the authority of the institutions and bodies of expertise that use and promote the AHD (Smith, 2006, p.299). Local communities and non-official local historians connected with Gebel El-Barkal have been active and persistent in their opposition to official ideas and discourses regarding their identities, their perceptions of the Gebel El-Barkal site/place, and the control of the place. Highlighting the global context of tensions between communities and AHD into which this study is also embedded, such a contradiction matches the context of Castleford, West Yorkshire, in England highlighted by Laurajane Smith (2006) in her analysis of AHD and competing discourse. What this example reveals is that the exclusion of heritage conceptions based on the experiences and values of the working class is the result of a dissonant discourse emanating from the AHD. In doing so, they are fighting the community's marginalisation and segregation in larger historical and cultural narratives of England by demonstrating a strong sense of community identification and solidarity.

In addition, geographically far apart though they are, Castleford and Gebel El-Barkal highlight the impact of isolation on the emergence of tensions between local discourse and the AHD in terms of resistance and assimilation with community definitions and heritage uses (cf Smith, 2006, p.247). Smith confirms, via her investigation of this competing discourse and the numerous ways in which Riversleigh is perceived, conceptualised, and utilised as a place, that each of the connected social groupings develops a sense of place from the landscape that

preserves their sense of identity. This, in turn, legitimises the perception of the landscape as a specific resource that can be utilised in specific ways (Smith, 2006, p.188). Riversleigh, as a World Heritage property, is a component of the Australian Fossil Mammal Sites World Heritage Area, which was inscribed in 1994 for its outstanding natural heritage values. According to Smith, Riversleigh has competing national and subnational interests, and in tracing the way diverse discordant interests use the AHD to establish their identities and claims to cultural resources, we find that these interests use the AHD to assert their identities and claims (Smith, 2006 p.162). This process is consistent with the Nubian social group's attempt to establish a national level claim of historical ownership over archaeological sites in Sudan based on the AHD, whereby the *Shawiga/Shaigia* establish their sense of place and ownership claim on the basis of their land ownership. In contrast to the AHD, *Shawiga/Shaigia* build their own narrative and associated intangible cultural heritage. Nevertheless, local discourses and identities are themselves embedded in relationships of domination, and the vast majority of Merowe province is occupied by *Shawiga/Shaigia* ethnic group. It is therefore the intangible cultural heritage of the *Shawiga/Shaigia* tribe (their actual everyday customs surrounding the place) that represents the dominant local communities' discourse, shaping their engagement mode with the sites. This intangible cultural heritage is inherited through the generations and has produced a discourse amongst the *Shawiga/Shaigia* that conceptualizes their sense of place and identify, their associated values and memories as well as their local cultural and social meanings. This local community' discourse which is embedded in their intangible cultural heritage associated to Gebel El-Barkal has shaped both *Shawiga/Shaigia* and other local communities' social knowledge and perceptions towards Gebel El-Barkal and Napatan region archaeological sites. Therefore, Gebel El-Barkal and Napatan region archaeological sites are not just operating under, and dominated by, official conceptualisations of AHD and OUV, but also by the locally dominant discourse prevailing among local communities. The unequal

power relationship amongst these three scales means that national heritage authorities wield the power to promote the AHD. This situation makes local communities the silent partner compared to the AHD, particularly on the official promotion channels for the sites and in the national education system. Meanwhile, the minorities groups within the local communities such as the *Arab Rohal* are the least influential in terms of how the site and its meaning are represented. Theoretically, the role of the *Shawiga/Shaigia* as a dominant social group within the local communities has created a need to revisit the multiple competing discourses to have a better understanding on the interaction of the varied discourses associated with Gebel El-Barkal site/place to identify the most effective means of management practice. Therefore, to understand how authority is constructed and challenged it is necessary to investigate the interaction of what is often a wider network of differently positioned discourses which define heritage. In conclusion, through examining local communities' intangible cultural heritage, I call for the official heritage institution and officers to step outside of the influence of AHD and reconsider Gebel El-Barkal and Napatan region archaeological sites not just as an archaeological site, but also as a place where local communities construct and reconstruct their sense of place in the face of AHD. This new theoretical perspective will open avenues for analysis because it considers multiple forms of hegemony: not only the AHD in the national and international level, which is based on social class division, but also including, locally specific discourse of domination based on ethnic identity.

8.3 Local Communities Modes of Engagement with Gebel El-Barkal Site/Place and Napatan Region Archaeological Sites

The study of local communities around Gebel El-Barkal and Napatan region archaeological sites reveal that local communities engage with the sites in two principal ways: firstly, directly through their physical presence on the site, and secondly through the narratives and imaginaries produced, circulated, used, and reused in their everyday life. However, as I have demonstrated,

the local community around Gebel El-Barkal site/place cannot be taken as homogeneous in terms of identities, interests, and uses of the sites. This is due to the multi-ethnic character of the social groups in Merowe province who have a varied attachment mode with the site/place, as well as to the vast economic gaps among them. Furthermore, local communities' engagement mode and attachment is varied within Gebel El-Barkal site/place from one part to another and differs among the Napatan region archaeological sites, as explained in chapter five. Local communities' engagement mode according to the findings of this research has also been changing in time because of more recent factors such as the Merowe dam construction (2003 - 2009), the creation of more archaeological departments within the high education institutions, the interaction of the local communities with others using new technologies and social media platforms, and the massive archaeological works done with the support of the Qatar-Sudan Archaeological Project (QSAP) between 2012 and 2018.

In addition to these spatial and chronological frameworks, the values, and motives behind specific forms of engagement with heritage are undeniably significant and influential factors in heritage construction (Jones, 2013). Therefore, as a natural consequence, local communities' approach to engaging with Gebel El-Barkal and other archaeological sites in the Napatan region has been shaped by the significance that these sites hold in their own perceptions. As I explain in greater detail in the following section, the values that local communities assign to the sites both align with and contradict the national and international authorised heritage discourse (8.4). Gebel El-Barkal local communities' sense of place for both *Shawiga/Shaigia* and those on the social margins differ from the authorized heritage discourse. Therefore, it is essential to bring into the discussions of the local communities' engagement mode with Gebel El-Barkal, the conflict between local communities and official heritage institutions in terms of the competing interpretation, competing claims on ownership, and the perceptions of the local communities towards the archaeological practice and management strategies adopted in safeguarding and

conserving the sites. In addition, the associated value and identity of the local communities is a significant aspect influencing the mode of local communities engagement with Gebel El-Barkal and Napatan region archaeological sites which is discussed in section (8.5).

8.4 Local Communities' Sense of Place and Associated Values

The recognition of what counts as "heritage" expresses the values of a society or a specific part of a society that holds the authority to declare what is significant or valuable as heritage (Jones & Leech, 2013; Torre, 2002; Carter & Bramley, 2002). Therefore, values are unquestionably a significant and powerful factor in heritage construction, as heritage construction occurs through social interaction, generation, and transmission of knowledge. To understand local communities' values associated with Gebel El-Barkal, I have analysed the related intangible cultural heritage and consulted the local communities who are the primary source of information about the site/place. To avoid representing a summary of the overall local communities' associated values I have adopted three approaches through which I present the associated values based on the significance, the meaning, and the uses of the site/place, respectively. The "significance" approach does not lie in the heritage itself, but with the heritage's benefit in achieving another goal that is considered valuable (Carter & Bramley 2002; Kobyliński, 2013). Meanwhile the heritage "meaning" approach refers to the meanings assigned by individuals or groups to the landscape they engage with, through the interpretation and conceptualization of that landscape (Jorgensen & Stedman, 2001, p.233). The "uses" approach (Walton, 1999) considers the wide-ranging direct uses of the place within the day-to-day life activities of locals.

TABLE 8.1: AN OVERALL VIEW OF THE LOCAL COMMUNITIES ASSOCIATED VALUES IN TERMS OF SIGNIFICANCE, MEANING, AND USES OF GEBEL EL-BARKAL SITE/PLACE AND NAPATAN REGION ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES.

Significance	Meaning	Uses
• Identity • Social memory • Social connection • Economic value • Live culture • Emotional attachment • Spiritual life • The significance of Wad El-Karsani and his cemetery surely to a considerable extent related to spiritual life. • Leisure • Professionalization	• The Conceptualization of Gebel El-Barkal site/place and Napatan region archaeological sites local communities • Sense of place	• Traditional singing and dancing platform • Local communities socialise with other families, neighbours, and other ethnic groups. • Social interaction and contact with national and international communities. • Sand baths • Burying the dead • Ritual and religious uses • Football playground for youth • Picnics • Illicit activities which would include, hashish, drinking alcohol, and sex.

The significance of Gebel El-Barkal in the local communities' day life stems from the fact that the site/place plays a crucial role in their day-to-day life in terms of constituting social groups through diverse cultural and religious practices, building their sense of identity. Local social groups engage with Gebel El-Barkal for varied and multiple objectives, according to their diverse identity formation in terms of ethnicity, gender, age, class, and religion (see next section for more detail).

The significance of Gebel El-Barkal site/place in local communities' everyday life is to strengthen their social interactions by providing an opportunity - as literally the most favourite physical place for social encounters of diverse kinds - to socialise with other families, neighbours, and other ethnic groups as well as strengthening the family as a social unit. By the same token, Gebel El-Barkal and Napatan region also enable and intensify social interactions among special interest groups who share common social values such as artists, singers, and religious groups. Overall, Gebel El-Barkal plays a major role in the life of local communities as their favourite place for varied leisure activities and cultural practices; the mountain, and not necessarily the archaeological remains, plays the most significant function here. In the same sense, it is the *Wad El-Karsani* cemetery as historical local cemetery and his *gubba* (shrine) that have a more significant value to Merowe region local communities compared to the archaeological site. One of the other significant roles the *Wad El-Karsani* shrine plays is as the centre for popular customs and traditions relating to women seeking fertility, whereby women visit the tomb and ask *Wad El-Karsani* to enable them to have children. After this, the women visit the great temple of Amon and sit on one of the ram statues so that their genitals touch the body of the statue.

Comparing the local communities' beliefs and perceptions with academic discourse on ancient religions in the area during the Napatan period, I conclude that this tradition has a strong association with past, particularly God Amon and Goddess Mut religious practice. The

Goddess Mut within the academic discourse is the wife of the God Amun and represents the female element as the goddess of fertility (Kendall & Mohamed, 2016). Therefore, I claim that the fertility cultural practice associated with *Wad El-Karsani* and Amon/Mut temple in Gebel El-Barkal reflect a significant cultural continuity. Crucially, these traditions relating to fertility have become a part of the Islamisation process as they became associated with *Wad El-Karsani,* the Muslim holy man, thereby showing both continuity, adaptation, and resilience in local cultural traditions, and demonstrating the role of the local communities as active agents in a continued process of heritage-making associated with the place.

Accepting that heritage is a selective practice which uses the past as a resource for the present and future (Smith 2006; Graham et al. 2000; Waterton & Watson, 2016; Carman 1996), it should be little surprise to find that local social memory and commemoration are strongly connected to Gebel El-Barkal site/place and play a significant role in constituting both individual and collective memory among local communities. This goes especially for the memory of relatives whom local families have buried in the *Wad El-Karsani* cemetery, as well as the remembrance of their prior visits and activities there. Overall, Gebel El-Barkal and Napatan region archaeological sites generate many forms of sensory and embodied (i.e., non-verbal) engagements, which include sand-bathing, fertility rituals, or illicit sexual encounters. The uses of the young for Gebel El-Barkal as a public site to conduct their secret activities and the consequent attention from the state and their elders parallel the uses of the youth for municipal parks in England. Tourism police and Merowe province police have fought against hidden activities - such as making love, smoking hashish, and drinking alcohol - indulged by youngsters in Gebel El-Barkal in accordance with state regulations and laws. To help improve the lives of the urban poor, governments in England and Scotland built municipal parks in the middle of the nineteenth century (Conan, 2009). Subsequently, however, the parks attracted a wide range of social groups who used the space for diverse activities, some of which were

viewed by the state as highly disturbing (Conan, 2009). In the same manner as Gebel El-Barkal, the park administration campaigned against these activities, particularly targeting young smokers and lovers. In both instances, the state continually failed to prevent these activities, highlighting the tenacity of even those social needs which may be less well regarded in formal governance and social norms. The two examples point to the marginalisation of certain social groups in public space based on factors such as age and social class, where tensions arise due to the lack of alternative places for conducting these activities elsewhere, making the two places - Gebel El-Barkal and the municipal park - an opportunity for performing these activities The result of these two cases is that the disagreement between actual place users and the state about the "appropriate" uses of the public spaces cannot be resolved just via the force of the law.

Forms of engagement and uses of the place should thus be viewed as negotiations of identity; in other words, as an ongoing process of asserting and negotiating cultural and social values and meanings in relation to Gebel El-Barkal. The diverse values and forms of engagement associated with the sites are difficult to pin down in abstract schemes of formal heritage valuation, just as they are hard to manage and control for both heritage management and local communities. Nevertheless, they need to be understood and acknowledged as they unfold on the ground, because the lived reality of the site is a core part of its meanings and values no less than any formal value statements such as those codified through, for instance, OUV.

In conclusion, the way people attach meaning to Gebel El-Barkal site/place and Napatan region archaeological sites differs according to the individuals' experiences, their social positions, and memories and differs from what has been ascribed by the authority of the national government and its apparatus of heritage management (cf Hawke, 2010). Thus, local communities' associated values, national AHD, and international OUV all address different identity claims, power relations, and purposes as each of them produces and uses varied discourses that define, interpret, and identify the associated values towards Gebel El-Barkal site/place and Napatan

region archaeological sites. Both AHD and OUV dominate the alternative ways of defining Gebel El-Barkal heritage values which is expressed by local communities in their intangible cultural heritage associated with Gebel El-Barkal site/place. This hegemony causes a considerable tension between local communities and official heritage institutions nationally and UNESCO internationally as I will discuss in section (8.6) later in this chapter.

8.5 The Influence of Identity on Gebel El-Barkal Local Community Mode of Engagement, Associated Values, and Ownership Claims

People in Sudan define themselves or are differentiated by others based on a variety of factors that overlap. This includes language, origin, and political or religious affiliation (Ryle, 2012; Bechtold, 2015; Muddathir, 1973). The dominant ethnic group is the *Shawiga/Shaigia* tribe, formed of mixed Arab and Nubian elements. *Shawiga/Shaigia* is one of the national dominant groups that are described by themselves and the rest of Sudanese social group as the so-called 'boys of the country', "*Awlad El-balad*", or 'the boys of the river', "*Awlad El-bahar*". The connotation always refers nationally and locally to those who belong to the Arab tribes or are identifying themselves as Arab. In Sudanese culture, the two words carries a superior connotation. Besides *Shawiga/Shaigia* there are the Nubian and three marginalised community "*Arab Rohal"* [i.e., Arab travellers] tribes, *Hassania*, *Manasier*, and *Hawaweer*.

Acknowledging that local communities in Merowe province and around Gebel El-Barkal are highly diverse in their customs and the nature of kin relations, economic practices and so forth, the local communities' engagement with the site/place varies according to this diverse ethnic context. The *Shawiga/Shaigia* are those most engaged with Gebel El-Barkal as a place, particularly in terms of its relationships with identity, leisure, culture practice and social interaction. The second most engaged with the site are the Nubians particularly the Nubian from up north, who claim their historical ownership of the archaeological site. The Nubians

from the north assert that the site is historically theirs, whereas the Shawiga/Shaigia, who are the majority/dominant group in Merowe province, use and dominate it the most.

To understand the role that ethnicity plays in these communities' engagement with Gebel El-Barkal, it is essential to take into consideration the site's physical landscape described in chapter four. I have indicated that the mode of engagement with the Gebel El-Barkal site/place varies from one part of the landscape to another. Similarly, the rest of the archaeological sites in the Napatan region have varying levels of active engagement from site to site. In chapter four, I divided the landscape into six main parts: (1) the mountain, (2) the top of the mountain, (3) the mountain sand slope, (4) the archaeological remains, (5) *Wad El-Karsani* cemetery and shrine, and (6) Gebel El-Barkal Museum. Local communities are more engaged with the mountain, the top of the mountain, the mountain sand, and *Wad El-Karsani* cemetery and tomb, compared with the archaeological remains and the museum. *Shawiga/Shaigia* in particular are actively engaged with *Wad El-Karsani* cemetery and shrine. Underpinning this physical and emotional attachment to *Wad El-Karsani*, is its significance as a source of spirituality for the local communities as he holds the answers to any question or dilemma one might have. Besides, he is considered as a holy man who dedicated himself to the study and teaching of the *Qur'an*, Islam's holy book. Furthermore, *Wad El-Karsani* was *Shawiga/Shaigia* tribe member, a fact which has extended the emotional attachment to him as an identity icon. In addition, the *Wad El-Karsani* cemetery is a local community cemetery where local inhabitants bury their relatives. All of this adds a distinctive value to the place as a site of social memory and a plethora of symbolic meanings.

Local communities have comparatively less engagement with the archaeological remains compared to the above landscape elements of Gebel El-Barkal. This has different reasons. The first, most essential one relates to the fact that interpreting and using history and archaeology has become one of the tools to strengthen the dominant social groups in Sudan, particularly

those who claim Arab identities (Deng, 1995), including the people who live in the area investigated in this research as one of those groups who identify themselves as Arab. My argument in this regard is that one of the factors that has shaped the disconnection between local communities in Merowe province and archaeological site from the history of the pre-Islamic period is the process of Arabisation and Islamization. After the arrival of Islam in Sudan, the historical process of Arabisation and Islamisation fought to establish dominance over others, providing a hegemonic vision of nationalism and national identity (Sharkey, 2008; Sharkey, 2012; Ryle, 2012; Deng, 1995). This identity politics and competition cannot be separated from the overall conflict over the interpretation of history and identity that has continued shaping modern Sudan. Sudan's "national history" has always been connected to the institution of the state and its ruling elites, and crucial to processes of modern nation-building and state-building (Idris, 2005 p.43). Therefore, we get to the conclusion that the meta-narrative of history in Sudan is a selective representation of the past that has been a fundamental part of the ideology of the dominant social groups and ruling elites (Idris, 2005 p.16). Subsequently, the official narrative of history in Sudan has created a particular discourse and visualisation of the past to legitimize the dominant ruling groups and their power. The archaeological sites of Gebel El-Barkal and its museum then ought to be understood as the material embodiment of these relationships of power and dominance on the national scale.

Given that heritage is not only sites, places, or events, but also social construction and cultural practice (Smith, 2006; Arizpe, 2013), it is crucial to identify the diverse purposes, values, and motivations underlying communities' modes of engagement with heritage. Taking this perspective into account is crucial for comprehending the relationship between identity and heritage values. In exploring the relationship between ethnic identity and the associated values of local communities, I consider that three key factors are at play: notions of memory, notions of place, and notions of utility. Among local communities around Gebel El-Barkal,

Shawiga/Shaigia value *Wad El-Karsani* shrine and cemetery more than the archaeological sites because these places are crucial to the way their local identity is experienced, realised, and remembered within the context of the family and tribe as a part of their own past. From this perspective, one of the key qualities of Gebel El-Barkal as a place is its association with *Wad El-Karsani* as the symbolic centre of social memory and a sense of belonging. Furthermore, Gebel El-Barkal has played (and continues playing) an essential role in the life of local communities over successive generations, and especially through its religious connotations as I will illustrate later in this chapter. Hence, *Wad El-Karsani* cemetery, shrine, and the associated narrative circulated among the local communities around Gebel El-Barkal play an essential role in the formation of social identities, in line with Benedict Anderson's (1983) notion of "imagined communities" and the importance of shared memories.

Beside ethnic identity, gender identity needs to be considered as another significant element which structures community engagement modes within heritage sites, particularly in the construction and expression of identity processes (cf Smith, 2008, p.160; Porter, 1998; Machin, 2010). In relation to heritage representation and how gender is articulated within the content and meaning of sites interpretation, I have argued that the history and imagination surrounding the Goddess Mut and the Queens of Gebel El-Barkal are highly celebrated and appreciated by local communities, and especially local women. The myth of the Queens represents a model and a source of motivation for female members of both local and national communities. However, looking at gender from the perspective of consumption (cf Porter, 1998; Machin, 2010), which includes the analysis of visitor numbers accessing Gebel El-Barkal site/place, it becomes clear that women and men are treated differently by both heritage authority and local communities. Local gender norms as well as official heritage legislation has worked in tandem to assign specific time for female visitors, as it also prescribes what they must and must not do. My observations are grounded in my interviews with different informants', including male

youth compared to the female cannot enter the sites at any time without restraint, besides they have not the right to practice their cultural activity included singing and dancing their traditional performing arts in Gebel El-Barkal as same as the male does.

Based on the myths and stories associated with Gebel El-Barkal, it is evident that the heroes of those stories are women: *Banat El-Shiekh, Nosaira Bit El-Gebel*, and *Bit El-Dahab*. Therefore, I argue that the female members of local communities have created and perpetuated these narratives as a form of resistance to counter-balance the dominant masculinized discourse prevailing in local social and cultural practices. Put differently, through these myths centring on female figures and their circulation, local women have in fact subtly claimed the site as "their own." This is not surprising, given that women are the principle preservers, or carriers, of oral storytelling and therefore also the main preservers of the intangible cultural heritage among local communities around Gebel El-Barkal. The dominance of women in oral literature can thus be seen as a form of resistance to, as well as accommodation within, a male-dominated culture; and a zone of female self-expression given the deactivation of female voices elsewhere in society dominated by male authority (Cf Abu-Lughod, 2016). Furthermore, this phenomenon can also be understood as a form of nostalgia for the dominant authority women used to hold in the distant past according to their perception of history. According to this perception, queens—and women in general—played an essential role in the political system of ancient Sudanese civilization. Therefore, the construction and expression of gender identity on the local scale rely on the identification and differentiation of the gender which leads to the maintenance of boundaries on people's behaviour towards Gebel El-Barkal as well as the access, rights, and cognitive ownership of the place.

Just as ethnic and gender identity dimensions, also class identity has a significant impact on the ways in which heritage is defined, interpreted, and engaged with, as I have previously discussed in relation to the Authorised Heritage Discourse. Class identity as a mode of grouping

together people who share common economic interests, experiences, and lifestyles (Woodward, 2004) has a significant influence on Gebel El-Barkal site/place and Napatan region archaeological sites in terms of communities' engagement, the utility of the sites, their interpretation, site management, and ownership claim conflict among local communities and between local communities and official heritage officers. Within the local communities, the middle-class social group is the most engaged with the archaeological sites either through their knowledge of, or their direct consultation with, management strategies conducted by official heritage officers. Therefore, they are the social group who have most social status and economic benefit out of their involvement in varied activities designed by the archaeologist and heritage officers. Likewise, I claimed that local and national heritage officers (themselves likewise middle class) are the social class group who, through their legitimized role, have dominated the site's interpretation, access, and economic benefit on the national scale.

In analysing the relationship between religious identity and Gebel El-Barkal, I adopted two approaches. Firstly, I examined the impact of religious discourse towards community engagement with Gebel El-Barkal and Napatan region archaeological sites. Secondly, I discussed the ways in which religious beliefs surrounding Gebel El-Barkal work to create a sense of place as a holy space. Given that Islam is the dominant religion in north Sudan, Islamic beliefs produce a form of identity and meaning that are shaped and exchanged through social interaction. These meanings further control and form individual and social groups' conduct and practices by helping them to determine rules, norms, and conventions (Ashworth et al., 2007, p.2). Accordingly, religious discourse for the local communities around Gebel El-Barkal site/place and Napatan region plays an important role in constructing identities and shaping the ways in which people imagine and represent themselves. Historically speaking, the coming of Islam during the fourteenth century (Berry, 2015; Holt & Daly, 2011; Karmer et al, 2013) introduced gradual change to the nature of Sudanese society. Moreover, the coming of Islam

facilitated the division of the Sudanese society into Arab Muslims in the north and African animists and Christians in the south (Berry, 2015). Additionally, the arrival of Islam eventually led to the emergence of Sufi thoughts and beliefs as a locally dominant form of practicing Islam. These processes of Islamization are crucial to understanding the existing disconnection between the Sudanese society and their early Napatan history before the coming of Islam and Arabs. Attempts to impose a new kind of national identity, one that saw Sudan's religious and cultural diversity as something to be overcome in the name of a single unifying belief system, have persisted throughout the country's early modern and modern history as part of the Islamization process that began with the arrival of Islam (Willis & Ryle, 2012). As result, local communities living around the archaeological sites of Gebel El-Barkal and the Napatan region have a more pronounced sense of divide between history as a kind of knowledge with its own disciplinary and collective memory due to the Islamization process through the institutional state power. Therefore, local communities have a more pronounced sense of divide between the ancient past and their Islamic/Arabic identity. The Islamization process has also worked to separate the national community, and particularly the communities of north Sudan, from their pre-Islamic past.

Moreover, religious identity continues shaping local communities' engagement mode with the Gebel El-Barkal site/place and Napatan region archaeological sites in terms of the practicalities of when and how they visit. Religious identity affects Gebel El-Barkal's visiting schedule by making Friday the busiest day of the week when Muslims are on holiday. In addition, Islamic values and rules of conduct shape the manner of visits by dividing males and females and demanding females to wear a specific wide dress and a "*tarha*" (scarf) to cover their hair.

As noted in chapter four, religious discourse in Sudan is split between two distinct social groupings - a fundamentalist/orthodox path on the one hand and a more relaxed, *Sufi* (mystical) path on the other - each with its own interpretation and practice of Islam. Consequently, these

two different interpretations produce different conceptualizations of, and modes of interaction with Gebel El-Barkal site/place. These two social groups include, firstly, the Islamic fundamentalist group known as *Ansar El-Sunna El-Muhammadiya*, or "followers of Prophet Muhammad". As strictly orthodox Muslims, this fundamentalist group view the archaeological remains as a witness to the dark history of humanity before the Revelation known as "The Age of Ignorance" (*Jahiliya*). As a result of this view, they prohibit visits to the archaeological sites, they have launched a campaign to end official and financial assistance to the preservation of archaeological works in Sudan; and they have even destroyed specific archaeological remains. Likewise, they perceive *Wad El-Karsani* and local communities' deep emotional and spiritual engagement with his shrine to be a sacrilegious act of distortion of ''real'' Islam. From this orthodox/fundamentalist perspective, *Wad El-Karsani* was an ordinary mortal man who has passed away, with no supernatural ability to fulfil the demands of his followers and bestow blessing upon them. The second and very different social group are the *Sufis* who practice Islamic mysticism. It is this group that exceedingly engages with *Wad El-Karsani* and *Banat El-Sheikh* in El-Kurru, and who hold deep believes in their supernatural powers in fulfilling their needs. Naturally then, the Sufis claim a privileged ownership of the place as a sacred place of *Wad El-Karsani* which must not be controlled and managed by the heritage authority.

Access to and participation in the management of Gebel El-Barkal and Napatan region archaeological sites are similarly influenced by the generational identity (the age) of different members of local communities where local community youth behaviour determined and constructed by the social and cultural values of the local community. The youth prefer to use the mountain and other sites as secret spots for illicit activities, such as consuming alcohol, meeting the opposite gender, or simply to have fun without being seen by social seniors. Other, more socially acceptable uses of the space include performing cultural activities such as singing and dancing. Although youth make up the largest percentage of the population, they are the

least participating social group in management initiatives. In this sense, local youth are marginalised by both their own elders and the heritage management.

8.6 Ownership Claim Conflict Towards Gebel El-Barkal and Napatan Region Archaeological Sites

This section of the chapter focuses on conflicting claims on ownership related to the uses of the place, its varied interpretations, disputes over control and management, and the debate associated with the ownership of archaeological remains. These diverse claims on ownership stem from multiple and competing interpretations of Sudanese history, the legacies of colonization, as well as inequities in power. All these factors have produced vastly unequal players and different heritage discourses.

Conflicts and negotiations over the ownership of cultural heritage are well known to scholarly literature in the field of heritage studies. The nationalist theory claims that cultural property should belong to the nation and should be kept in the place of its origin (Kobyliński, 2013). This theory contrasts with the internationalist theory which considers that cultural resources are the property of all humanity (Kobyliński, 2013). According to Carman (2005: 29-31) there are four basic forms of ownership: state ownership, private ownership, group ownership and free access. The variety of conflicts over the ownership of cultural heritage in my research can be characterised as firstly, conflicts concerning objects forcefully excluded from circulation in a living socio-cultural system such as the archaeological artefacts moved to ether Khartoum or outside the country ; secondly, conflicts over cultural heritage having associative-symbolic value for a certain identifiable ethnic or national group; and thirdly, conflicts over cultural heritage objects and remains which are being appropriated by individuals or groups such as looting and private sale of antiquities.

These conflicts over the ownership of Gebel El-Barkal site/place and Napatan region archaeological sites have multiple historical origins rooted in both Islamic (the Islamization

discussed above) and colonial history; they are then reflected in conflicting claims over access, control, and management of the site/place. The legacies of colonial - and later, post-colonial/national history - are evident in the case of archaeological remains that have been taken away or relocated either to the national capital Khartoum to be displayed as a national symbol, or to European countries where they have been taken legally or looted. "Legally" within this context refers to the sharing agreement between the foreign archaeological teams and Sudanese Antiquities Service (SAS), in which the two parts came to the agreement through which the foreign archaeological teams receive a certain percentage of the objects they discover.

Cultural heritage studies has traditionally viewed archaeological sites and places as the focus of administrative and legislative attention more than emphasizing the importance of understanding human behavior associated with the place (Boyd et al 1996). More recently, an alternative perspective on studying archaeological sites has emerged, emphasizing the complexity of interests involved in heritage sites and the need to understand these in depth. In the case of Gebel El-Barkal and Napatan region archaeological sites, there are varied uses of the sites/place not only among the local groups as discussed above, but also on the national and international scale. The understandings of these sites on these three scales, or among these three levels of communities, match each other in some aspect and differ or clash in other respects. For local communities, the site is a place where they bury their relatives, engage in day-to-day religious and cultural activities, practice their traditions and customs, or otherwise meet their social desires and interactions. Furthermore, Gebel El-Barkal site/place and Napatan region archaeological sites hold additional meanings for specific subgroups, such as women seeking fertility or the youth seeking a place where they can hide their illicit activities away from the eyes of others. By contrast, for the national AHD Gebel El-Barkal is an archaeological site with a significant historical value which must be preserved for next generations. Accordingly, Gebel

El-Barkal site/place and Napatan region archaeological sites represent places which should be controlled and managed to produce historical knowledge of Sudanese civilization through excavations, exhibitions, and scientific research. Additionally, from the national perspective, Gebel El-Barkal also represents a source of economic revenue through tourism activities. Likewise, the international community uses the place as a source of producing knowledge and provide pleasure. It is therefore clear that Gebel El-Barkal as a site/place attracts diverse and often competing interests among the different communities and produces ownership claim conflicts among these three different communities of interest.

The recognition of these realities has practical advantage in managing the place and reducing the implications of the ownership claim conflict caused by these different interests and uses. These diverse interests have witnessed conflict in the past, such as the extension of *Wad El-Karsani* cemetery which has resulted in a conflict between local communities and official heritage institutions. Other instances of conflict occurred between local developers, the National Corporation for Antiquities and Museums (NCAM) and UNESCO. In this case local developers intended to build a hotel in the buffer zone of the site, to which both NCAM and UNESCO strongly objected, arguing that the building will reduce the OUV. Clearly, Gebel El-Barkal attracts conflict because of the complexity of interests generated by the particular qualities of the place as holding high symbolic value; this symbolic value however differs between local communities' collective uses of the place on the one hand and, on the other hand, those who intend to legitimize their power through the uses of the AHD. As I develop below, ownership claim conflicts centering on these sites take many forms; they include conflicts between immigrants and residents, developers versus UNESCO and NCAM, or other forms of conflict between its local and national meanings, uses, and interests.

One of the principal causes of these ownership claim conflicts is that the Gebel El-Barkal site/place and Napatan archaeological sites generate multiple interpretations, conflicting

meanings, and diverse associated values among the three scales of attached communities. For local communities, the interpretation, conceptualisation, and values attached to the place are embodied in their intangible heritage. Through the mythology and beliefs associated with these places, local communities construct Gebel El-Barkal as an imagined space of longing and belonging that reflects a desire (or nostalgia) for a "Golden Age" located in the distant past, inhabited by ancestors who held exceptional powers (as we have seen above, such imaginaries are also strongly gendered). The almost supernatural power of these ancestors imagination included the capacity to build underground tunnels between Gebel El-Barkal and Old Dongola town one hundred ten kilometres away to the west-southwest, in a straight line. The strong emotional, nostalgic, historical, religious, and other forms of meaning that local communities attach to Gebel El-Barkal is reflected in their strong belief that the site is public property with no private ownership, and that everyone should have free access to it.

From another perspective, the interpretation and discussion of the site on social media platforms Gebel El-Barkal generates a considerable degree of contested ownership claims between those who claim their Arab identity affiliation on the national scale, and those of Nubian ethnicity living in north Sudan. The most essential point associated with this issue is the division of academic discourse as a part of the AHD in supporting and legitimizing each of these multiple interpretations. These debates reflect ongoing identity politics and tensions between Arabs and Nubians in modern Sudan, which are often played out through diverging interpretations of national history. This case demonstrates how interpreting and using history has become one of the tools to strengthen the hegemony of the dominant social groups in the country. Furthermore, this conflict between local communities around Gebel El-Barkal and the Nubians extends into official heritage practice through the disputes surrounding the ownership of Gebel El-Barkal Festival for Tourism, Culture, and Investment in which Nubians seek their right to have one of the annual festivals to be held in their area based on their stewardship claim

of civilization associated with Gebel El-Barkal site/place and Napatan region archaeological sites.

Besides the conflict between local communities and Nubians, the interpretation assigned to the sites in academic discourse reveals one of the major questions that has always been significant for the local community: notably what value has been added to humanity by the Napatan civilization. This question comes as part of the ongoing debate on which civilization had come first: Egyptian civilization or Sudanese civilization? In line with the commonly held perception among the Sudanese people in general (and Merowe region local community in particular) that civilization follows the same line as the Nile current, they strongly believe that human civilization started from Sudan, and reached Egypt only later. Such perception of human history and popular enthusiasm appears in varied narratives including songs about Gebel El-Barkal such as the song by the female Sudanese singer *Nada Elgalla*, which is widely known and appreciated among both national and local communities. The narrative of the song clearly indicates the primacy of Sudanese civilization compared with the Egyptian one. As a result of Egypt's canalization of Sudan between the mid-nineteenth and mid-twentieth centuries, tensions have arisen as a competitive neighbour and as a consequence of colonisation. Consequently, this tension is a postcolonial issue related to Sudanese national sovereignty.

In addition to the relevance of embassies, a greater appreciation of the historical richness of the Napatan region and other Sudanese civilizations must replace the current lack of interaction with the past.

Another form of ownership conflict occurs in terms of control, management, and access to the sites between the local, national, and international scales. Gebel El-Barkal is controlled and managed internationally through the World Heritage Site (WHS) code of practice according to UNESCO’s World Heritage Convention (WHC). Nationally, however, Gebel El-Barkal and Napatan region archaeological site are controlled and managed through the NCAM under the

guidelines for preserving and protecting archaeological remains as stated in the Antiquities Protection Law from 1999. The power struggles among the different parties on local, national, and international scales creates a considerable ownership claim conflict among these three. One of the major conflicts here involves disputes over land and the physical boundaries of these sites. Besides, the conflict over who has the authority to determine the rules of managing the place. Due to the multiple meanings associated with the sites as discussed above, local communities have shown their dissatisfaction with both UNESCO and NCAM management structures, calling for a meaningful partnership, including arrangements for co-management by both professionals and local community representatives.

Yet another conflict centres around the archaeological remains that have been moved away from the Napatan region archaeological sites and are located either in the National Museum in Khartoum or in European and American museums. Among local communities around Gebel El-Barkal there are growing voices calling for these artefacts to be returned to Merowe province their place of origin. This conflict of ownership and current custodianship of archaeological remains raises an important issue regarding the relationship between ownership and identity. Local voices argue that these archaeological artefacts belong to the local communities, and they should be kept in their place of origin. By contrast, the national ownership claims for these archaeological artefacts considers them to be a national cultural resource, therefore, they should be controlled and managed via national institutions. Similarly, the international ownership dispute is predicated on the assertion that these archaeological artefacts legally belong to their respective institutes, given that official Sudanese legislation grants European and American institutions the right to keep a certain proportion of the archaeological artefacts they uncover during excavations. Some of these disputes, however, concern material objects looted or taken legally in different historical contexts (i.e., well before the above legislation allowed and regulated such foreign ownership). This matter remains

essential and ongoing in Sudan, and should be addressed through mutual dialogue, negotiation, and collaboration over contested cultural property that would involve local, national, and international communities.

8.7 Conclusion

In order to have a better and deeper understanding of cultural heritage within its social context, it is essential to consider it through both tangible and intangible aspect, and to pay due attention to the processes of heritage making as well as recognizing the social significance of objects and expressions among multiple communities of stakeholders. Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) is a mode of expressions and a source of knowledge to understand the creation, transmissions, and process of associated tangible heritage. Besides, ICH is an effective way of enhancing a bottom-up approach which is concerned more with enriching local communities' engagement mode with associated tangible culture. Therefore, the local communities' intangible cultural heritage associated with the archaeological sites is a way of interaction and a mean of attachment to the archaeological site.

The conclusion is that the local communities' direct and imaginaries engagement with the Gebel El-Barkal site/place and the archaeological sites of the Napatan region is an attachment of individuals whose sense of identity or connectedness is derived from a shared historical and geographical relationship. The historical and geographical relationship that is embedded and transmitted within their intangible cultural heritage. However, the process and the level of this engagement depends upon their feeling and knowledge that Gebel El-Barkal can play a significant social function as part of the cultural context because it has a key role in shaping the historical memory of their society (cf Vienni, 2014, p.97). Furthermore, the construction of the Merowe dam has made a considerable social, cultural, and economic change in local people's lives just as the massive archaeological works funded by the Qatar-Sudan Archaeological Project (QSAP) have made a substantial change in local communities'

engagement mode with archaeological sites in the present millennium because the community itself gains some cultural and economic advantage from it. Additionally, the roads and bridge infrastructure which followed the Merowe dam construction eased connectivity for visitors both in terms of transport modes and time, which subsequently brought them into contact with more visitors and related social and cultural activities. Furthermore, the presence of a substantial archaeological mission raises both public awareness and interest in the sites, which in turn raises their perceived value and the likelihood of profiting from them.

Having investigated the intangible cultural heritage associated with Gebel El-Barkal site/place and the Napatan region archaeological sites, my research has concluded that the local community around these sites cannot be considered a homogenous whole with a single point of view and interest. This is because local communities' modes of engagement and forms of attachment to these sites varies within and between these sites themselves, as well as, importantly, among different social groups within these communities. Within these communities, ethnicity, gender, class, religious practice, and age all play a crucial role in determining the ways in which individuals engage with and attach meaning to these archaeological sites. Furthermore, these diverse forms of engagement and use among locals differs significantly from what has been ascribed by the AHD on the national level. In addition, the multiple meanings, and uses of the site on the one hand, and the resulting struggles over control, management, and access on the other, have produced mutual mistrust and conflict between national AHD and the international concept of OUV. This tension has created an overlapping ownership claim conflict that involves the local communities themselves as well as between local communities and national, international communities.

CHAPTER NINE

CONCLUSION

9.1 Introduction

This is the final chapter of the research, which contains the concluding remarks. The chapter has six sections. The following section (9.2) presents an overview and summary of the research findings. The third section (9.3) presents the contributions of this research to both theory and practice. The fourth section (9.4) reflects on the strengths and the limitations of the study both in the data collection process and analysing the primary data. The fifth section (9.5) offers suggestions for further study based on the knowledge gaps identified in this research. The final section (9.6) is the general research conclusion.

9.2 An Overview of the Research Findings

This section contains a summary of the findings presented in chapters five, six, and seven. The structure of the presentation is determined by the individual research questions and the manner in which the collected primary data and existing literature contribute to answering them. This research had four core questions, How/which/why local communities from Merowe province engage with Gebel El-Barkal site/place and Napatan region archaeological sites? What are the values assigned by local communities to Gebel El-Barkal and Napatan region archaeological sites, and how do they differ from values associated on national and international scale? How does ethnic, gender, class, and age identities shape the local communities' mode of engagement and values associated with Gebel El-Barkal and Napatan region? What are the causes for, and forms of ownership claim conflict among the local, national, and international communities concerning the Gebel El-Barkal and Napatan region archaeological sites?

As discussed in Chapter Five, there are two modes of engagement for local communities: direct engagement, which requires the physical presence of participants, and imaginary engagement. Both of these community interaction forms produce, circulate, use, and reuse intangible cultural

heritage associated with the Gebel El-Barkal site/place and archaeological sites in the Napatan region. This powerful and widely disseminated intangible cultural heritage connected with Gebel El-Barkal site/place has been dominated by the *Shawiga/Shaigia*. Moreover, local communities' connection with archaeological sites in the Napatan region differed according to their identity, personality, interests, and associated values. Similarly, the engagement mode and attachment of local communities vary from one part of the Gebel El-Barkal site/location to the next. Overall, however, they engage with the museum and the archaeological remains less than with other parts of the site.

On a local scale, the modes of engagement of local communities with the Gebel El-Barkal and Napatan sites are impacted by their own associated values, which in some respects reflect the values expressed in the national and international authorised heritage discourse and contradict them in others. These values are fundamental to how local communities interact with the sites. In a social context, the Gebel El-Barkal site, for instance, is a means by which local communities cultivate their social networks and enact their values through socialising with other families, neighbours, and other ethnic groups. In addition, Gebel El-Barkal plays a significant role in the leisure and cultural practices of local communities, primarily on the mountain and not the archaeological remains. Similarly, the *Wad El-Karsani* cemetery and *gubba* (shrine) are of great significance to the Merowe region's local communities. *Wad El-Karsani* is the place that has social, cultural, and religious significance for both his followers and the local communities. The variable attachment form with Gebel El-Barkal site/place and Napatan region archaeological sites among the local, national, and international groups is thus due to the diverse values associated with it, as well as the influence of identity affiliation. Local communities' ICH, the national AHD discourse, and the international OUV all express various identity claims, power relations, and purposes, as each generates and employs a distinct discourse to define, interpret, and identify the associated values of the Gebel El-Barkal and

Napatan sites. Overall, and unsurprisingly, the AHD and OUV dominate over other, alternative ways of characterizing Gebel Elbarkal's heritage values articulated by local communities. Consequently, this dominance generates a considerable conflict between local communities and official heritage entities on a national and international scale.

Gebel El-Barkal site/place is used for a wide variety of activities by different local communities and national and international stakeholders, each of which has its own distinct identity formation based on factors such as ethnicity, age/generation, gender, socioeconomic status, and religious affiliation. Therefore, the manner in which individuals attach meaning and significance to the Gebel El-Barkal and Napatan sites and subsequently the use of the site varies according to the individual's experiences, attitudes, and memories; at the same time, such meanings and uses differ from what the national level authorities identify as "suitable" or "desirable." Moreover, local communities' social memory of Gebel El-Barkal is a crucial aspect of Gebel Elbarkal's, as it plays a significant influence in the creation of both individual and collective memories.

Local communities in the province of Merowe and in the vicinity of Gebel El-Barkal are quite diversified, with the majority of Merowe locals identifying as Arabs/Muslims. Consequently, the engagement of the local community with the sites varies according to the diversity of this ethnic setting. The *Shawiga/Shaigia* are the most connected with Gebel El-Barkal as a place, notably in terms of the site's role in articulating and enacting their identity, leisure, cultural practices, and social interaction. Another social group are the northern Nubians, who, in accordance with the AHD interpretation, claim historical ownership of the site. However, local communities in the vicinity of Gebel El-Barkal and the Napatan region archaeological site are less engaged with the archaeological sites compared to the other parts Gebel El-Barkal landscapes. The long historical process of Arabization and Islamization of Sudan is one of the elements that produced this disconnect.

Within local communities, the middle class is the most engaged with archaeological sites, either by their expertise or their direct engagement with management practices implemented by the official heritage officer and institute. Local and national heritage officers and researchers are a social group with a legitimate role bestowed upon them via the authority of the AHD, and who thereby control the interpretation of, access to, and economic benefit of the sites. As with other identity dimensions, religious discourse and gender constructions equally play a significant role in shaping the norms and behavioural patterns through which individuals interact and engage with the sites.

Regarding ownership claims conflicts, it is important to recognize that each local, national, and international community group has its own claim to ownership associated with Gebel Elbarkal. Broadly speaking, there are two types of ownership claims and related conflicts. First are those [material aspects] associated with the place in terms of the use of the land, its access, control, and the profit derived from Gebel El-Barkal as a site/place. Second is the [symbolic] ownership claim linked with the place's past in terms of interpretation, access to resources, and promotion. One of the major conflicts and concerns among the three scales (the local, national, and international) is the actual boundaries of the archaeological sites; whilst another is who has authority over creating rules and managing the sites. Due to the multiplicity of meanings, landscapes, and relationships associated with the Gebel El-Barkal site/place and Napatan region archaeological sites, local communities have shown their dissatisfaction to both UNESCO and NCAM management structures, in which local communities call for a meaningful partnership, including arrangements for co-management by both professionals and local communities. In addition to the issue over ownership claims, there is also a dispute over the archaeological remains that have been relocated from the Napatan site to either the National Museum in Khartoum or international European and American museums.

9.3 Contribution of the Study

9.3.1 Theoretical Contribution

Even though heritage studies research has given a significant amount of emphasis on the interrelation of local communities and archaeological sites (Brumann, 2015; Waterton, 2005; Waterton & Smith, 2016; Ahmad, 2006), local community intangible cultural heritage in conjunction with the archaeological sites as a tangible cultural heritage has not received a great deal of attention (Blake, 2008; Logan, 2016; Smith 2006; Waterton, 2005; Waterton & Smith, 2016; Ahmad, 2006; Bouchikhi, 2007; Verco, 2010).). This is due to the distinction between tangible and intangible cultural heritage which continues to inform the official discourse on heritage in international as well as national heritage management policies and legislation (Bouchenaki, 2003; Ito, 2003; Munjeri, 2004; Smith & Akagawa, 2009; Harrison & Rose, 2010). This division has been criticised on the grounds that the interrelationship between tangible and intangible cultural heritage is complex and both are entwined within the construction of heritage (Arizpe, 2013; Smith 2006; McKercher & du Cross, 2002; Harrison, 2010; Swensen, et al., 2013). However, this research has identified a gap in the theoretical framework associated with addressing the relationship between these two components of cultural heritage, particularly the intangible cultural heritage associated with the archaeological sites as a form of tangible heritage. The growing discussion in the heritage literature is focused on addressing this interrelation either in a separate form (Blake, 2000; Ahmad, 2006; Smith 2006; Bouchikhi, 2007; Verco, 2010) or in a manner of applying the ICH to confirm the historical interpretation of the archaeological remains. In their interpretation of the archaeological remains, archaeologists have utilised the material culture and oral history of the local community by employing ethnoarchaeology techniques to reinforce the AHD. Based on the findings of this research, I argue that it would be more beneficial to recognise the ICH of local communities associated with archaeological sites as a source of knowledge that local

communities use to construct their understanding and conceptualization of archaeological sites as a form of tangible cultural heritage. In addition, ICH is an alternative and competing discourse among the several other discourses—the AHD among them—through which the meaning and significance of the Gebel El-Barkal site/place and Napatan region archaeological sites is constructed, identified, and interpreted. Therefore, local communities' intangible cultural heritage, and particularly the one associated with the archaeological sites, is a local communities discourse accumulated and transmitted from generation to another in which local communities express their associated values, construct their perception, and give meaning to the archaeological sites and their landscape. In this research the ICH of local communities associated with the investigated archaeological site reveals their communities engagement mode, the associated values, the varied ownership claims, and their sense of place from local communities perspectives. According to my research, studying ICH in relation to archaeological sites, it is essential to distinguish between the ICH affiliated with the archaeological sites on the one hand, and, on the other hand, the ICH inherent in the cultural context of local communities that has no connection with the archaeological sites. On the basis of the complexity and nature of ICH, I argue that in order to better understand local communities' ICH in relation to archaeological sites, it is necessary to employ both an ethnographic and phenomenological approach to the data collection process, as both involve direct contact with the relevant individuals and locations and are attuned to understanding their perceptions, practices, and experiences. Ethnography and phenomenology provide this research with in-depth and detailed information that provides a great insight into the lifestyle and beliefs of the local communities and connects this to its social and cultural context. My claim on these aspects is that understanding ICH through ethnographical approach and phenomenological approach offer interpretation of the meanings, functions, and consequences of human action and institutional practices, as well as insight into how these are implicated in

local and wider contexts (cf. Hammersley, 2007). Furthermore, both approaches provides a description of human experiences and meanings that develop from local communities, as opposed to being imposed by the researcher.

In Sudan, an economically disadvantaged nation with a large number of uneducated people, performing research via questionnaire and surveys will produce inaccurate primary data. This is due to the fact that a substantial number of Sudanese people, particularly elders in rural areas, lack a complete education, which will impact the sampling and representation process. In addition, Sudanese have a fear of interacting with the government, and traditionally, state institutions have always gotten national and local communities' perspectives through questionnaires and surveys; therefore, questionnaires and survey are always associated with the government in the national and local communities perceptions.

Furthermore, this research also identifies and confirms that who controls the present controls the past (cf Smith 2006). This observation comes through the fact that local communities discourses are dominated by a certain social group based on ethnic identity and not just socio-economic status as Smith (2006) introduces. In Gebel El-Barkal's case, the hegemony of *Shawiga/Shaigia* has dominated the local community intangible cultural heritage associated with the Gebel El-Barkal site/place. The hegemony of *Shawiga/Shaigia* tribe rests in their position as a historical landowner of the region and as a dominant social group among the local communities around Gebel El-Barkal and Napatan region archaeological site. Therefore, doing discourse analysis when dealing with multiple overlapping and competing heritage discourses is an essential matter to look at both ICH as conventionally and more narrowly defined (e.g., by UNESCO), and wider issues of the daily life of communities.

In conclusion, this research contributes to the elaboration of the ICH concept and towards the best approach for understanding ICH, through emphasising the significance of considering the interrelation between intangible and tangible cultural heritage as two inseparable matters. In

addition, the research identifies intangible cultural heritage as overlapping/competing AHD discourses through which local communities develop their perception of tangible aspects, including the archaeological site. Furthermore, this research contributes to existing scholarly literature related to community engagement, heritage-associated values, and heritage ownership claims through examining these issues in a new context. The lack of scholarly attention to the crucial relationship between local communities and archaeological sites in Sudan creates a significant need to understand the relationship between local communities and their heritage in a more detailed manner; especially the question of how the relationship between these two aspects affect heritage values and the way local communities give meaning to and interpret their cultural heritage. Therefore, this research contributes towards new dimensions and perspectives for archaeological research in Sudan and provides crucial primary and secondary data to be compared worldwide.

Additionally, this research asserts the ignorance of local communities conceptualization of place can lead to a disconnection between the archaeological sites and local communities. Although local communities disconnection with Gebel El-Barkal and Napatan region archaeological sites is caused by diverse factors, the strong feeling among local communities that the uses and the associated values of the sites don't reflect their perceptions and needs create an unequal footing with professionals in the heritage making process. Therefore, representation of local communities and their sense of place in archaeological practice and projects such as Gebel El-Barkal Festival for Tourism, Culture, and Investment (presented in this research in chapter four), is an essential matter to reduce the disconnection between local communities and archaeological sites. This disconnection is viewed by the majority of my interviewees as one of the greatest issues facing archaeological practice in Sudan.

Through using archaeological sites of Gebel El-Barkal and the Napatan region as a case study, this research make an argument that the disconnection between local communities and

archaeological sites is the result of a variety of factors. Initially, local communities perceived archaeological practices as the work of foreigners, who have exported all of the country's precious archaeological artefacts abroad. Furthermore, the state and national identity politics emphasise the importance of Islam to national history over ancient history prior to the arrival of Islam in Sudan. As national history has been politicised, the education system in Sudan disregards the significance of other historical periods related to the archaeological sites of the Napatan region. Further, the absence of economic advantage from these archaeological sites has had a significant influence on the mode of disconnection with archaeological sites. The result is then the present lack of involvement of local communities with these archaeological sites, or with the conservation of archaeological sites, and the increase of ownership claim conflicts, particularly regarding the land uses of archaeological sites.

9.3.2 Contribution to the Practice

The interaction between local communities and archaeological sites in Sudan leaves many unanswered questions. Consequently, analysing the implications of local communities' discourses inscribed in their intangible cultural heritage will assist in developing and sharing new knowledge related to the site, and will ultimately improve its management and assist archaeologists working on this site to gain a better understanding of local complexities given that the majority of these archaeologists originate outside of this particular social and cultural context. Therefore, based on the findings of this research, I advocate for the need of studying local ICH connected with archaeological sites in order to create a better and more effective plan in the context of archaeological site management in Sudan and elsewhere. This assertion is informed by the fact that addressing the ICH provides a broader perspective of what constitutes value at the sites, which contributes favourably to interpretation, management, and engagement planning. Therefore, I recommended that state heritage practitioners and

institutions give a high level of consideration to local communities' ICH and the cultural practices associated with archaeological sites by providing an interpretation of local communities to visitors of archaeological sites alongside with the academic understanding that AHD reveals. Furthermore, based on my research with local communities, I recommend that a bottom-up approach and not just outreach activities to be the guidelines for enhancing the participation process among the local communities to provide an equal opportunity.

In addition, this research contributes to practice and implementation by presenting a theoretical investigative model that practitioners and academics can apply to other archaeological sites in Sudan. With the attempt to address the disconnection mode between local communities and archaeological sites as well as gaining a better understanding of the local communities' conceptualization and reinterpretation of archaeological sites, as well as their varied uses of the landscape of these archaeological sites. Furthermore, the challenge reflected in the lack of involvement of local communities in archaeological practice projects and the threat posed by local communities to archaeological sites creates high demand for research such as this one to provide guidance for fieldworkers and site managers on how to apply ICH associated with the archaeological site in understanding how local communities should be defined and constituted, and what the essential associated values are towards the archaeological site. Consequently, this research appealing to the state heritage agency to recognise that the archaeological sites have social and cultural 'lives' and meanings apart from the AHD. The approach enables heritage professionals to approach cultural heritage through a more holistic understanding. Similarly, the research emphasises the importance of considering the many uses of the archaeological site's landscape by the diverse groups associated with the archaeological sites. This research has introduced the idea of site/place to guide practitioners in addressing the sense of place of local communities and incorporating it into any relevant initiatives or strategic management plans.

In addition, this research has created a concentrated explanation of the diverse challenges and barriers facing local communities and preventing them from connecting fully with the site/place and the archaeological sites (cf chapter five). Through analysing the complexities of local communities' engagement, this research calls for the practitioners not to deal with the local communities around Gebel El-Barkal and Napatan region archaeological sites as simply one homogenous community. Therefore, it is important to be mindful that each local subgroup has their own interest, associated values, and engagement mode. Furthermore, the research produced an explanation for the wide range of ownership claim conflict that has a direct and indirect impact towards the archaeological practice and management implementation. Therefore, based on the findings of this research I argue that local social memory and ICH is a good place to investigate and understand the longer-term legacies and impacts of past archaeological practice as well as the present. Besides, this research provide the archaeologist with a new understanding of their own disciplinary practice from local communities perspectives as a beneficial exercise needed both in the wider world and in other discipline.

9.4 Strengths and limitations of this Research

9.4.1 Strengths

This research presents the first in depth investigation of local communities' intangible cultural heritage associated with Gebel El-Barkal site/place and Napatan region archaeological sites. The significance of this study lies in the fact that it is the first scholarly examination of the interaction of local communities with these archaeological sites in the region. Accepting that the nature of the collected primary data corresponds to people's feelings, experiences, knowledge, and constructed discourse, I consider that employing discourse analysis and adopting a mixed methods approach, as I have explained, assisted the research in gaining insight into local communities' attitudes, as well as in explaining the varied motivations for their modes of engagement with Gebel El-Barkal and Napatan region archaeological sites.

Additionally, my advantage as an insider fully aware of the local culture and discourse was a significant factor that allowed me to carry out in-depth research and to get rich primary data that reveal the complexities inherent in local community ICH, especially in terms of varying values, identity dimensions, and ownership claims. This has added strength to the outcome of my research and created the opportunity for new research directions, which in a long and a short term should assist in enriching the awareness and understanding of local communities involvement with heritage through better understanding of their perceptions and conceptualisations of archaeological sites. Moreover, the research conducted during the period of The Qatar-Sudan Archaeological Project (QSAP) was an opportunity that allowed me to observe the interaction between local communities and the archaeological missions, as well as to examine the changes this project (QSAP) has made on local communities engagement mode with Gebel El-Barkal and Napatan region archaeological sites. Furthermore, the decision to conduct this research on the Napatan region as a whole, rather than Gebel El-Barkal archaeological sites on its own, has opened the doors towards examining research questions from a broader perspective that includes five different archaeological sites (two big towns and five villages) and to include a much broader range of local communities and stakeholders.

9.4.2 Limitations

In chapter three of this study, I discussed the methodological limitations in detail. These limitations are, primarily, the lack of literature focusing on the complexity of the Sudanese cultural and social context in relation to the research issues. This scarcity of available information limited my ability to examine in further depth the connection between the closely related phenomenon and the Sudanese social and cultural context to clarify specific questions and provide an in-depth response. Secondly, the limited time allowed for completing the research can be consider another limitation. Throughout the research process, I was required to

conduct this research within a specific timeframe, from the beginning of the research to its conclusion, covering all the necessary related cultural practices of the local communities, as well as allowing sufficient time for the research to have a high level of engagement, which would not have been possible if conducted in more and different places. Therefore, time constraints prevented me to include the capital city of Khartoum in my research, to examine the immigrant local communities originally from the Napatan region, for the impact of the new social context on their conceptualization of the archaeological sites. Similarly, time constraints restricted my ability to conduct fieldwork with Nubian communities up north of Sudan in order to gain a better understanding of their mode of engagement, their associated values, the impact of their identity on their mode of engagement with the archaeological sites in Sudan, and, most importantly, their historical ownership claim towards Gebel El-Barkal and Napatan region archaeological sites.

The investigated area is home to a conservative society with strict gender divisions between males and females. Given my gender (male), this has slightly limited my ability to access and conduct interviews with females to some degree or may have impacted the quality of information I was able to obtain from females. In addition to this limitation was the limitation of getting access to certain potentially valuable informants because according to the necessary ethical procedures I could only conduct interviews with people who responded to my request to interview them. Some of my potential informants never responded to this request, given the sensitive nature of the investigated topic in terms of its political and religious implications. The sensitivity of this research, plus the complexity of the social and cultural context and especially the presence of minority social groups, posed a limitation on the depth of discussions I was able to have, and may have restricted their scope. There is a strong mistrust among local communities towards official heritage officers as well as towards the archaeologists, which often leads the informants to hide information; I have managed such limitations through

adopting a discourse analysis approach, which has allowed me to understand both what was said and what was not said to some degree. Another potential limitation was the classification I have been given by a few local informants as an archaeologist. Some of them did this in order to avoid disappointing me as they genuinely wanted to help me; while others took this opportunity to express their views and grievances towards archaeological practices and archaeologists, as if I had the power to change the situation.

9.5 Area for Further Research Directions

The findings of this research, including some of its more unexpected results as well as the areas that I was unable to pursue here given the above limitations, all create an opportunity for further research in the future. Such topics include:

- This research reveals an ownership claim conflict over the Gebel El-Barkal site/place among the local communities, and between the local communities and heritage institutions. While I have investigated here the causes and characteristics of such conflicts, the question remains of how to address them. The effects of such conflicts on the preservation, management, and conservation of archaeological sites from the perspectives of both local communities and heritage authorities should be investigated.
- This research has covered multiple aspects associated with local community ICH connected with the Gebel El-Barkal and Napatan region archaeological sites; however, the research should ideally be expanded to include other sites in Sudan in order to assess how generalizable its findings are, and comparable and applicable they are to other sites both locally and regionally.
- This study has also raised new questions regarding the impact of modern technology (especially social media) on cultural practices and identity formatting. Therefore, it is necessary to explore a research strategy for understanding the trans-local discourse that

has emerged as a result of the massive dispersion of Sudanese immigrants both within Sudan and globally, in order to assess the dynamics that occurs when a community itself becomes intangible and less bounded by geography. Additionally, the high engagement mode among especially the second-generation Sudanese immigrants in Europe and North America is significant and plays an important role in their search for self-definition as response to the identity crisis they have experienced as emigrants. This aspect is in further need of investigation.

- One of an essential finding of this research is that communities attached to archaeological sites are not necessarily only located locally because of processes of historical change. This factor needs to be considered in future research focusing on communities' engagement in order to refine our understanding of what "attachment" and ICH really mean in both theory and practice.
- Awareness of the local communities' perspectives investigated in this research has created a need for studying the archaeologists as an important group of stakeholders in further depth, in order to examine how they position themselves within the AHD and within any localised heritage discourses that they may or may not also subscribe too.
- The heritage management policy in Sudan has so far failed to address or even identify strategies for answering the needs of local communities in relation to the archaeological sites. Therefore, in light of my research findings, I confirm that there is a pressing need to investigate how local communities can be better integrated into policy, legislation, management, and interpretation of the sites.
- The conflicted modern political history of Sudan and its implications for archaeological heritage management in the country create obstacles for fuller communities engagement. Therefore, the question of how Sudan's national histories and understandings of identity can accept and include alternative histories and identities—

especially those connected to minority groups—remains an essential research area for the future.

9.6 Conclusion and Final Remarks

Gebel El-Barkal and Napatan region archaeological sites are one of the largest and most significant archaeological sites in Sudan as they represent a significant period in Sudanese history. However, in both research and heritage management practice these archaeological sites suffer from a lack of understanding of, and consideration for, the concerns of local communities, and the values and meanings they associate with these sites; this neglect then produces competing forms of engagement as well as conflicting claims on ownership. Therefore, I genuinely call for the archaeologists and heritage professionals to start working together with local communities, as all concerned parties can and must learn from each other.

This research has shown that local communities around Gebel El-Barkal site/place give less value to the archaeological sites in comparison with the other elements of the sites and landscape of the Napatan region. This has varied reasons. Firstly, the absence of local communities' consultation and involvement in the archaeological projects related to the sites from official heritage institutions results in the alienation of local communities. Second reason is the insufficient research focusing on understanding the interrelation between local communities and archaeological sites. Third reason is the focus of management institutions on the official heritage discourse, which has heavily emphasised national historical values over other possible social, cultural, and economic values that are of significant relevance to the local communities. Fourth, the contrasting conceptualizations of the local communities of the place, which manifested in the ownership claim conflict between local communities and state heritage institutions. Even though local communities around Gebel El-Barkal have a solid feeling of belonging to the place because of its crucial significance in their daily life, this lack of engagement creates their disconnection from the archaeological sites. Therefore, to have a

better understanding of the diverse motivations and values held by local communities in respect to the sites, this research calls for approaching local communities through their intangible cultural heritage associated with Gebel El-Barkal. This is supported by the theoretical argument that the intangible cultural heritage associated with the sites represents a source of information that can be drawn on in order to enhance the bottom-up approach through which scholars and heritage practitioners can gain a better understanding of local communities sense of place, the role of identity differences on local communities' engagement, and the causes and forms of ownership claim conflict among diverse social groups attached to the sites.

The methodological framework applied in this research provides detailed and in-depth information, thus allowing a real insight into local community's lifestyles, perceptions, as well as wider social and cultural contexts. The ethnographical and phenomenological approach employed in this study allowed me to address the research questions relating to the experiences, feelings, and local knowledge among diverse social groups. It has allowed me to examine in depth the cultural values associated with, and ways of seeing, the region's archaeological sites from the perspective of local communities. Therefore, this research has done a significant work to fill the knowledge gap in our understanding of the relationship between local communities and archaeological sites, the values these communities assign to the sites, and the impact of social and cultural identity construction on their mode of engagement with the Gebel El-Barkal and Napatan region archaeological sites. Ideally, this research will assist in resolving the many challenges related to the management practices at these sites, especially the lack of involvement of local communities as stakeholders and will afford them further opportunities to express their voice, practice their identity, and become part of the sites' future planning and management.

Acknowledging that concepts of cultural heritage can have different meanings depending on the context in which they are used, the intangible cultural heritage plays an essential role in giving the tangible cultural heritage meaning and value. Therefore, defining, conserving, and

managing heritage should not be constituted solely through the Authorized Heritage Discourse (AHD); the AHD should not be the sole source that informs heritage management in international as well as national cultural heritage legislation and policies. Due to the unfamiliarity of the conflicting discourses expressing the local communities' definitions and uses of this cultural heritage assets, doing so has implications for how communities can access and exercise control over the spaces formally recognised as heritage. Hence, communities' involvement, participation, and engagement with cultural heritage is constituted differently depending on varied perspectives and diverse social context.

Accepting that communities are networks of people who share together a sense of identity and a specific understanding of historical events and associated values, then local communities have a strong association with Gebel El-Barkal. This is the result of two facts. Firstly, Gebel El-Barkal plays a central role in the creation of identity on the local scale. Secondly, local community ethnic, gender, class, religious, and age identity has a massive influence on shaping communities' engagement mode towards the archaeological site and their associated values. Each of these identity dimensions has been socially and culturally construed through markers of similarity and difference, inclusion and exclusion. This creates a deep link between the associated values of cultural heritage associated with Gebel El-Barkal and ownership claim conflict among local communities themselves as well as the national and international communities as claiming an ownership always excludes others and determines in-groups and out-groups. Claiming ownership of Gebel El-Barkal is a way in which local communities construct their sense of time and/or of place; it is an essential part of social memory that gives Gebel El-Barkal its local significance and meaning.

Sudan has countless challenges in terms of its multi-ethnic society in which a dominant social group continuously forming and reforming the creation of national and regional identity. These great challenges produce tensions in Sudanese society that have resulted in civil war in south

Sudan 1984 – 2009, and conflicts in Darfur 2003 – 2019, in the Nubba mountain 1984 – 2019, and the Blue Nile 1984 -2019. Histories and sites remain being used and continue to be used politically for the purpose of national identity politics. In the case of Northern Sudan and the Merowe Province, the area investigated here, the intangible cultural heritage of local communities produce a discourse constructs the local communities social, cultural, and political uses of history/past/archaeological remains. This discourse along with local knowledge creates norms that constrain people's acts and behaviours. Accordingly, this discourse plays a crucial role in local communities setting in terms of their social structure, cultural practise, and their values. Therefore, having a better understanding of local communities through their intangible cultural heritage brings many benefits in reducing and solving the varied challenges and obstacles facing the interrelation between the local communities and their archaeological sites. It has the potential to make local communities into a positive stakeholder contributing into preserving, safeguarding, and managing these archaeological sites and remains.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Interviews Questions and Themes

In-depth interview schedules

Local community interview schedule

Main question 1:
What can you tell me about this archaeological site?
Sub-questions:
How long have you been living close to the site?
What do you know about this site?
What do you like/dislike about it?
Do you go there, why, how often, with whom, what do you do there?
Do you speak to each other (friends, family, neighbours) about the Site? What do you say?
Main question 2:
How do you feel about the work conducted in the site?
Sub-questions
Who works in the Site? What do they do? What do you think of that?
How do they deal with the you as a local community?
Do you think this work can contribute something to the local community? If yes, then how? If no, then why?
How do you see the site in the future?
Main question 3:
To whom do you think this site belong to?
Sub-questions:
When you visit the site, do you go with others sharing you same interest?
What is your action when someone break/move/take any of the archaeological remains?
What do you think/feel when the site is full of tourist?
Do you think this is a Nubian site and therefore belong to Nubian tripe and why?
Who do you think should maintain and look after the site and why?

Local Oral Historian interview schedule

Main question 1:
What can you tell me about this archaeological site?
Sub-questions:
What is the historical background of this archaeological site?
How do you tell other local community members with this history?
To what extent they take this history as the right past event?
How do you tell them this history?
From where did you know this history?
How do you teach this history for the following generation?
Main question 2:
To whom do you think this site belong to?
Sub-questions:
What is your action when someone break/move/take any of the archaeological remains?
Do you think this is a Nubian site and therefore belong to Nubian tripe and why?

Local community leader and Official heritage officers and archaeologists from the investigated research area interview schedule

Main question 1:

What can you tell me about this Archaeological site?

Sub-questions:

How do you often visit this site?

Why do you visit this site?

What do you tell other local community member about this site and what do they tell you?

Main question 2:

What are the local community's active social groups that have a direct involvement with this site?

Sub-questions:

What is their role?

What is their activities?

Are they competing or collaborating with each other?

How does each of these groups seen/view the site and its past?

Is any of this groups belong to one tribe?

Is any of this groups excluded the membership to one gender than other?

Main question 3:

To whom do you think this site belong to?

Sub-questions:

What is your action when someone break/move/take any of the archaeological remains?

Do you think this is a Nubian site and therefore belong to Nubian tripe and why?

Appendix 2: The Participants Consent Form

Participant Consent Form

Research Project Title

Local Community Intangible Cultural Heritage Associated with Gebel El-Barkal and Napatan Region Archaeological Sites: Values, Identity, and Ownership Claims

I, the undersigned, confirm that.

1. I have read the study's information sheet and fully grasp its contents. I was given sufficient time to think about the material, ask questions, and get satisfactory responses.. ☐
2. Since my participation is entirely optional, I know that I can stop at any time within the first month without having to give a reason. ☐
3. I agree that the University of Birmingham may review my research data if it is considered necessary for the purposes of this study. My data may be accessed by these parties with my consent. ☐
4. I understand that this project has been reviewed by, and received ethics clearance through, the University of Birmingham, UK. ☐
5. For my part, I am aware of who will have access to sensitive information, how that information will be stored, and what will happen to it when the project concludes. ☐
6. I understand how this research will be written up and published. ☐
7. I understand how to raise a concern or make a complaint. ☐
8. I consent to being audio recorded ☐
9. I consent to being video recorded ☐
10. I consent to having my photo taken ☐
11. I understand how audio recordings / videos / photos will be used in research outputs ☐
12. I agree to take part in the above study. ☐
13. I give my permission for my information to be stored in a database so that I may be contacted again in the future for potential research opportunities. ☐

Name of Participant	Date	Signature

Name of person taking consent	Date	Signature

1. **Personal information**

Name: Ismail Hamid Mohamed Elnour
Telephone Number: [redacted]
Email Address:
[redacted]

Names of Supervisors:

1. Lead Supervisor: Dr. John Carman
   Senior Lecturer in Heritage Valuation
   Ironbridge International Institute for Cultural Heritage, School of History & Cultures, College of Arts & Law
   [redacted]
2. Co-Supervisor: Dr.Helle Jørgensen
   Lecturer in Cultural Heritage Studies
   Ironbridge International Institute for Cultural Heritage, School of History & Cultures, College of Arts & Law
   [redacted]

Appendix figure 3: The Participants Information Sheet

Participant Information Sheet

2. **Research Project Title**

Local Community Intangible Cultural Heritage Associated with Gebel El-Barkal and Napatan Region Archaeological Sites: Values, Identity, and Ownership

3. **Personal information**

Name: Ismail Hamid Mohamed Elnour
Telephone Number: [redacted]
Email Address:
[redacted]

Names of Supervisors:

3. Lead Supervisor: Dr. John Carman
   Senior Lecturer in Heritage Valuation
   Ironbridge International Institute for Cultural Heritage, School of History & Cultures, College of Arts & Law
   [redacted]
4. Co-Supervisor: Dr. Helle Jørgensen
   Lecturer in Cultural Heritage Studies
   Ironbridge International Institute for Cultural Heritage, School of History & Cultures, College of Arts & Law
   [redacted]

4. **Invitation**

I would like to invite you to take part in my PhD research project. Before you agree to do so, it is important to read the following information and discuss it with me if you have any concerns or if there is anything that is not clear. Your participation is voluntary so please take time to decide whether you wish to take part or not.

5. **What is the project's purpose?**

The aim of this research is to investigate and examine your intangible cultural heritage, which is associated with Jebel El-Barkal archaeological site, particularly your oral history, oral literature, traditions, customs, story-telling, and your cultural practices, to identify the cultural values and the ways of seeing for the archaeological sites of the region. Furthermore, the project aims through studying of your intangible cultural heritage of Jebel El-Barkal to investigate how you are experiencing your new way of life after the construction of the Merowe dam.

6. **Why have I been invited?**

You have been chosen because either you are a member of the local communities, official heritage manager, local communities leader or local historian, you have

knowledge about research data and furthermore, can represent a variety of positions (official and non-official) in relation to the research topic.

7. Do I have to take part?

Taking part within this project is a voluntary option. If you do decide to take part, you will be able to keep a copy of this information sheet and you should indicate your agreement on the consent form which will be provided. However, you have the right to withdraw within a month from the end of the interview without giving a reason.

8. What will happen to me if I take part?

You will be asked to be interviewed either in individual or group. I estimate the interview will take you one to one and half hour.

9. What are the possible disadvantages and risks of taking part?

Participating in the research is not anticipated to cause you any disadvantages or discomfort.

10. What are the possible benefits of taking part?

This research will have a better understanding of your communities needs and experience which may feed into future benefits.

11. Will my taking part in the study be kept confidential?

All the information that I collect about you during the course of the research will be kept strictly confidential. Any data collected about you in the interview will be stored and protected by passwords and other relevant security processes and technologies. This data will be kept in the same data storage system according to the university code for ten years after the end of the research project.

12. Who is sponsoring the research?

Ironbridge International Institute for Cultural Heritage, School of History & Cultures, College of Arts & Law, University of Birmingham, UK

Thank you for Taking Part in this Research.