



PANAF/ PAA

**13th Congress of the Panafrican Archaeological Association
for Prehistory and Related Studies PAA**


**13^{ème} Congrès de l'Association Panafricaine d'Archéologie
et Disciplines Associées – PANAF**

**20th Meeting of the Society of Africanist Archaeologists Safa
20^{ème} Réunion de la Société des Archéologues Africanistes – Safa**

**Preserving African Cultural Heritage
Préservation du Patrimoine Culturel Africain**

**Dakar, 1 -7
November / Novembre 2010**



MDG : F 

Promouvoir les initiatives et les industries culturelles au Sénégal
Pays Bassari & Delta du Saloum

Desert Parks in the Eastern Sahara: Aims and Reality

Rudolph Kuper & Stefan Kroepelin

Repeatedly UNESCO has stressed the need for a more balanced and credible List of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage and mentioned among the less-represented sites especially the desert landscape of the Sahara and the cultures that have developed in it. It has been stated that this part of the world has played a crucial role in that particularly important phase, between 10,000 and 5,000 BC, when favourable climatic conditions enabled the development of the first African pastoralist societies. At the end of this humid phase, around 5000 BC, the aridification of the Sahara and the consequent movements of people towards the Nile Valley and the Sub-Saharan areas set in motion the processes which led to the development of the Egyptian civilization and the great African migrations.

This view is not at least based on the results of archaeological and environmental research that has been carried out in the Eastern Sahara by the University of Cologne during the last 30 years. So scholars involved in these studies over the years tried to support the endeavours of concerned states to protect important sites of their cultural and natural history, among these some unique archives of rock art. Already 10 years ago Sudan has declared the "Wadi Howar National Park", in 2005 Egypt established the "Gilf Kebir National Park", actually Chad is promoting the concept of an "Ennedi-Ounianga National Park" and in 2004 UNESCO initiated the project of "Jebel Ouenat World Heritage Site" as a Transboundary Cultural Landscape of Libya, Egypt and Sudan. The realisation of the original aims of all these projects, however, is substantially hampered by a number of political, financial, bureaucratic and also personal issues that raise the question to what extent such projects under the actual circumstances make sense at all and what can be done to develop their effectiveness.