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CLAUDIO PACIFICO
ALONG THE NILE, THROUGH THE SAHARA



SHARQIYAT



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TRAVELS IN THE LAND OF THE PHAROHS
IN SEARCH OF THE UNKNOWN EGYPT



Claudio Pacifico is a career diplomat. His profession led him to live in various European countries, the United States and, above all, Asia, Africa and the Middle East, posted in a number of hot spots: in Iran during the Ayatollah's Revolution, in Somalia among its devastating tribal wars, and in the Indian Subcontinent, in Bangladesh, where he ranked as the youngest Ambassador in Italian diplomacy.

He has a long-term experience in Arab and Middle Eastern Affairs. For about eight years, from 1997 to 2004, he was Italian Ambassador first in Sudan, and then in Libya. Since 2007, he has been Italian Ambassador in Egypt and Italy's Representative at the Arab League.

Over his long career he has written extensively on international politics, publishing articles and books, among which *La rivoluzione iraniana* (The Iranian Revolution), *Libro Bianco sulla crisi israelo-palestinese* (White Book on the Israeli-Palestinian Crisis), *Principali sviluppi della Politica estera italiana verso l'Asia e l'Oceania nel 2006-2007* (Main Developments in Italian Foreign Policy towards Asia and Oceania in 2006-2007), *La diplomazia italiana verso la Corea del Nord* (Italian Diplomatic Policy Towards North Korea), *Il Vietnam del Doi Moi* (Doi Moi Vietnam), *Antartide: le ragioni della presenza italiana* (Antarctica. The Reasons for the Italian Presence).

His love for travelling and exploring has led him to organize innumerable expeditions off the beaten track, from the Persian to the Australian deserts, from the Hindu Kush to the Karakorum, from the Gobi to Papua New Guinea, from the Tibetan Plateau to the Himalaya Mountains, from the Andes Ranges to the Bengal and Yucatan jungles but, above all, into the Sahara, over a span of time of about forty years.

He has published several travel journals, among which *Somalia. Ricordi di un mal d'Africa italiano* (Somalia. Recollections of an Italian Mal d'Africa) and *Bengala. On the Sahara, his greatest passion as a traveller*, he has written extensively, publishing several articles and prefaces, books and travel journals, such as *Diario sahariano* (My Sahara Travel Journal), *Con i Tuareg, a Timbuctù* (With the Tuareg, in Timbuktu), and *Nel Sahara* (In the Sahara). His most important book about the Sahara is *Sabbie perdute* (Lost Sands), published by Edimond, while *Sahara, nel Regno della Fata Morgana* (Sahara in the Realm of Fata Morgana) is his latest Sahara volume, released in 2007 by Edimond. His last book, *Dieci Anni in Egitto Libia, e Sudan* (Ten Years in Egypt, Libya, and Sudan) was published by Sharqiyat in 2010.

He is also a valued contributor to various travel magazines, among which *Sahara*, *itinerari e passioni*.

He is committed to environmental conservation and has contributed to several projects for the preservation of the delicate ecosystem of the Sahara, supporting the establishment of national parks in the Acacus Mountains and Jebel Al Uweynat in Libya, and the Gifl Kebir Plateau in Egypt, while backing sustainable development projects in the oases of Siwa, Kharga and Dakhla, in Egypt. He has promoted research and restoration missions, particularly in the Gifl Kebir, in the world famous Cave of Swimmers and Foggini Cave, in Wadi Sura.