



Beyond the Border: An Indian in Pakistan

Yoginder Sikand

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"I was born in India. You said your grandparents were born in what is Pakistan. But they live in India and I in Pakistan. Strange, is it not?"

Beyond the Border, based on two journeys that Yoginder Sikand undertook to Pakistan, covering Lahore, Multan, Hyderabad (Sindh), Moenjo Daro, Bhit Shah, and Islamabad, among others, is a strikingly unconventional account of what life is like for "ordinary" Pakistanis. The Pakistan he discovers only remotely resembles the stereotypical Muslim nation of the Hindu imagination. From Shiela, the daughter of a feudal lord, named after her mother's Indian best friend to a rundown local eatery owner who offers the author free food because Sikand is the first Indian to visit his stall, encounters with Pakistanis from all walks of life draws up a very different picture - that Pakistan is a country as diverse, paradoxical and rich in narratives as India.

Departing from the fiercely polemical rhetoric common in Indian and Pakistani accounts of each other, Yoginder Sikand, not only gives lie to the strategist's view of the India-Pakistan divide, but dispels the myths that have filtered into the Indian psyche about Pakistan being the terrible other. In this brilliantly perceptive and quirky travelogue, he illuminates the Pakistani side of the story, while telling his own tale of exploration and self-discovery.

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