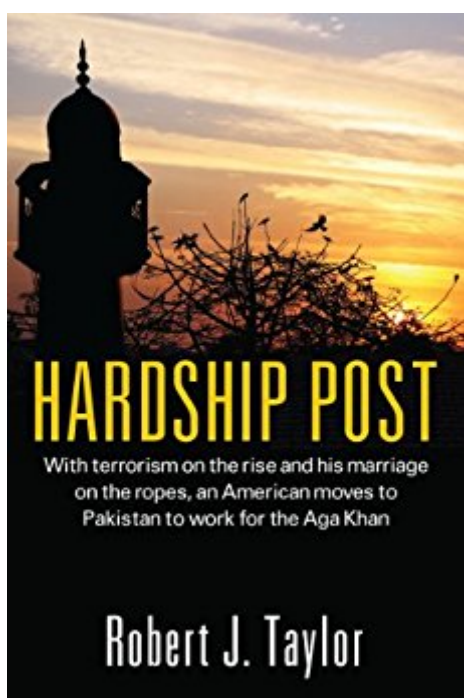


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Hardship Post: With Terrorism On The Rise And His Marriage On The Ropes, An American Moves To Pakistan To Work For The Aga Khan



Synopsis

Was It the Opportunity of a Lifetime or an Invitation to Disaster? The job was intriguing—working for the Aga Khan, the rich and influential imam of the Ismaili Muslims, building the Aga Khan University Hospital in Karachi. They said it would be a world-class institution, the best on the subcontinent. But he had his doubts. Yes, Pakistan was exotic, and mysterious, and full of adventure. But he had a good job and a shaky marriage, and Pakistan didn't seem like the right place at the right time. People were being kidnapped and killed over there—the American Embassy at Islamabad had recently been overrun and burned, and next door, Afghanistan had been invaded by Russia. They were making big promises to lure him there—could they pull it off, or was it just hype? In *Hardship Post*, winner of the 2012 Royal Palm Literary Awards Competition for unpublished memoir, Robert Taylor examines the complexities of being called to serve overseas in a foreign culture, with all the excitement, pitfalls, learning experiences, and challenging lessons. This compelling real-life adventure will keep you captivated from the first page to the last.

Book Information

File Size: 961 KB

Print Length: 306 pages

Publisher: Outskirts Press, Inc. (June 25, 2013)

Publication Date: June 25, 2013

Sold by: Amazon Digital Services LLC

Language: English

ASIN: B00DPX6Y90

Text-to-Speech: Enabled

X-Ray: Not Enabled

Word Wise: Enabled

Lending: Not Enabled

Screen Reader: Supported

Enhanced Typesetting: Enabled

Best Sellers Rank: #1,473,185 Paid in Kindle Store (See Top 100 Paid in Kindle Store) #65

in [Kindle Books](#) > [Travel](#) > [Asia](#) > [Pakistan](#) #2664 in [Kindle Books](#) > [Travel](#) > [Asia](#) > [General](#) #3107

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Customer Reviews

As soon as I downloaded "Hardship Post," onto my Kindle, I knew I had a bargain at any price. Probably most readers would consider what the Taylors did -- travelling to a far-off and exotic country not on a vacation but for a lengthy professional commitment-- was an act of audacity, if not insanity. But as someone who, together with his wife, had spent many years representing the United States as diplomats in 10 different overseas assignments, I felt instant empathy and even excitement as I read about the experiences the Taylors underwent. The lure of a strange culture, the opportunity to do good things, the camaraderie of the "expatriate" community leaning on and learning from each other, the slow realization that strange cultures often come with undesirable as well as admirable features; the quiet surge of good old-fashioned American Patriotism welling up in your heart, even as you sometimes start to realize that our own civilization has some weaknesses as well: these are some of the features of Robert Taylor's book that so reminded me of what it is like to live in someone else's country, for better or for worse. Bob and Sue had their children with them, as did my wife and I. It has been a great source of satisfaction to us that our children look back fondly on their nomadic childhood. The Taylor children similarly seem to value their Karachi adventure: and like our own children, quickly learned that when they return to the U.S. they are met with an extraordinary lack of interest in their exotic experiences. I have to admit to some envy of Bob Taylor, because his four or five years of work in Karachi left behind a concrete (even literally!) achievement: a state-of-the-art hospital that has served as an inspiration for other countries to try similar ventures. I can look back with the hope that my wife and I made a contribution to U.S. foreign policy interests. But with the shape the world is in today, such satisfaction more a hope than provable fact. But we knew people like the Taylor. Thank God such people continue to come forward! Congratulations!

I don't normally read autobiographies or memoirs, but this one came highly recommended and I'm very glad it did. The author tells a fascinating tale of his family's 4 years in Pakistan in the tumultuous 80s as the world rapidly changed around them. His story of the challenges, fears, risks and rewards they experienced in a spell binding manner, making this a hard book to put down. In addition to the issues facing an American family in a 3rd world Muslim country, he offers true insights into a world we know little about. I highly recommend this book.

The very name "Pakistan" is, for most Americans, off-putting; you automatically think: "Third world, dirt roads, sewage in the streets, begging children." Taylor shows us that we're mostly wrong; he portrays a land of wonderful people, a country struggling to enter the first world, a healthcare system

trying to come out of the 1800's. For every one of us that never had the opportunity to work overseas, this book is the ultimate window into what one man saw and experienced, what a team of good folks can do to lift their fellow humans up to a better life. Extremely well-written, a joy to read.

The Taylors bravely accept responsibility for a unique post and create a new life for themselves and their children while building a major health center and inspiring the role of women...no small task in any assignment. Taylor has a gift of explicit description which makes this true story so interesting. He is clear in describing the role of his wife, Sue, as she so aptly works with the women around her creating a myriad of experiences. This may have been a 'hardship post' but it tells the real story of expats who live real lives representing our country in so many foreign lands.

Taylor relates his experience working in Pakistan for three years. He, his wife, and their two children are completely immersed in the local society. He writes about their ex-pat life, which is often exciting, sometimes funny, sometimes sad, sometimes frustrating, and often satisfying, in an entertaining and sensitive way. Anyone who is interested in other cultures, especially an exotic one often in the news today, should find it worthwhile. Taylor is a good storyteller and the book is a pleasure to read.

This is an interesting story about an American hospital administrator trying to do an almost impossible job of setting up the management of a 700+ bed hospital being built in Pakistan. The author, Robert Taylor describes the frustration of a first world administrator working in a third world bureaucracy...living behind concrete walls, hospital sewer pipes dumping in a ditch behind the hospital...chaotic traffic. **HARDSHIP POST** is a good read.

I read this book to get a peek into the culture and lifestyle of the Middle East, through the eyes of Americans, and because I was lucky enough to meet the author at a concert. I enjoyed the story, and it was an easy read.

Kept me interested each day of reading, Was good to understand some of the culture without getting in too deep. They were so brave to take on such a project which turned into a way of life for them.

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