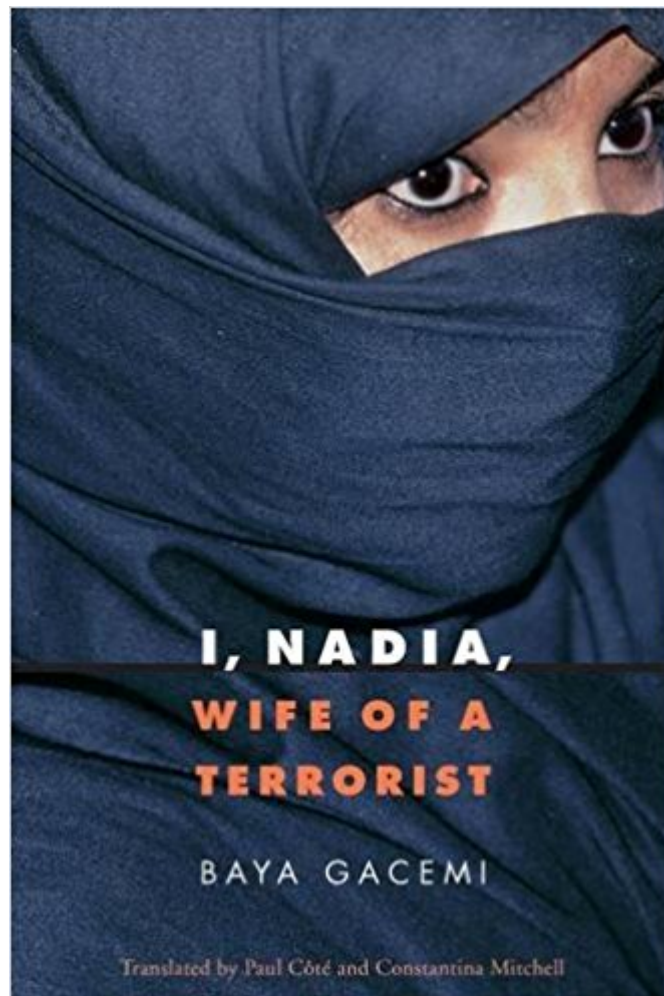




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# I, Nadia, Wife Of A Terrorist (France Overseas: Studies In Empire And Decolonization)



## Synopsis

The Algerian journalist Baya Gacemi takes a dangerous political step in writing the "autobiography" of a young Algerian woman whom she met through a program for female victims of Islamist violence in Algiers. Nadia, from a small town in central Algeria that has been especially affected by the struggle between Islamist terrorists and the authorities, married a local hooligan whose rebellious spirit she found irresistible. Unfortunately, her husband was already transforming himself from petty criminal to foot soldier and then local emir of the Islamic Action Group. Nadia's ensuing nightmare lasted over four years. As a result of the growing polarization between Islamists and the local government Nadia had become an outcast reviled by relatives and threatened by neighbors. By 1996, with Nadia pregnant and destitute and her husband hunted by government agents, her parents expelled her from their home. Gacemi provides a human face to the cultural wars that have torn Algeria and the Middle East apart, revealing the roots of terrorism and the impact of the nightmarish struggle of the women caught up in it.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

This first-person account of a young woman's seduction by Islamist extremism also offers an intimate look at the Algerian civil war. Journalist Gacemi interviewed "Nadia" (a pseudonym) in 1997 in Algiers, where she came seeking help at an organization for needy women. As a teenager in a poor village, Nadia fell in love with Ahmed, a charismatic hoodlum. Her persistence in sneaking out to meet him made her parents send her away to live with her uncles. Two years later, when her

father finally accepted Ahmed's marriage offer, Nadia returned home expecting her dreams to be realized. Since she'd last seen him, however, Ahmed had joined the Armed Islamist Group, or GIA—a terrorist group then at the height of its power in the town. Nadia's dream became a nightmare, as she found herself cook and slave to her husband's "brothers." Yet the status of being the wife of a terrorist leader was addictive, and she accepted enough of what Ahmed told her about the GIA's political vision that she even believed the beatings she received from him were legitimate. Gacemi's book received a lot of attention in France. Since Americans are less knowledgeable about Algeria, it will probably get less here—which is unfortunate, since her account of how a whole community can be seduced by terrorists is frightening and invaluable. (June) Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

Gacemi, an Algerian journalist, meets Nadia through an aid program for female victims of Islamist violence. Nadia's mind-boggling story begins in her small Algerian village, where she marries a local thug named Ahmed when she is 18. Ahmed progresses from petty thief to the explosives expert for a band of guerilla fighters. In painfully honest detail, Nadia explains how she changes her mind-set and stops criticizing Ahmed's activities and starts doing everything he tells her to do without complaining. Her revelations expose the special horrors associated with being a woman within an Islamic terror cell: she is forced to cook and clean for up to 20 hours a day and is whipped if she is caught reading a newspaper or listening to the radio. When government forces take reprisals against the terrorists, Nadia is shunned by her family and her in-laws and is often forced to sleep in the alley. Gacemi's unique and invaluable portrayal of this personal side of terrorism is shocking, poignant, and impossible to forget. Deborah Donovan Copyright © American Library Association. All rights reserved --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Very well written.

We already know that Muslim women are treated with little respect in any society. This rehashes the message in a lame story. Poor writing skills.

it's just not that good of a book. it will be swept away into the sand as so many other books that preceded it.

A sixteen-year-old girl under the pseudonym "Nadia," falls in love with "Amir," a dashing handsome

young man who, like many late adolescents, has a religious conversion which compels him to join the GIA, Algeria's terrorist movement. We read Nadia's testimonial as told through journalist Baya Gacemi in a fast-paced 150-page narrative that covers Nadia's initial infatuation with Amir, followed by Amir's cruelty toward all except for his gang of thugs who conceal their selfish narcissistic thuggery under the robes of fake Islamic piety. Nadia becomes essentially a slave and a cook to Amir and his terrorist friends. In detail she describes their draconian cooking rules: not too much spice, peel this, don't peel that, etc. She slowly sees the ruthless violence her husband commits and how, like the Mafia, it destroys communities. In fact, one lesson learned in this book are the many parallels religious terrorist organizations have with the mafia, except for the fact that Islamofacists are so obsessed with justifying their cruelty with religious verses, to the point that it's both laughable and terrifying. In the book's final third, Nadia describes how the town, suffering so many beheadings (five girls beheaded for wearing short skirts), turns against the terrorists and will no longer be sympathetic. By the book's end, Nadia must find refuge for she becomes "a wife of a terrorist" and such is a pariah. Her courage to tell her story is another important testimony in the literature about how society cannot be complicit in its most malignant underground communities. Readers who enjoy this theme will also want to check out Killing Pablo by Mark Bowden.

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