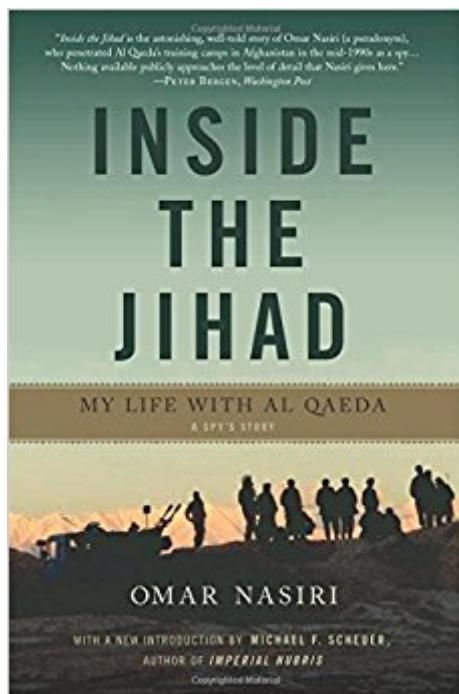


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# Inside The Jihad: My Life With Al Qaeda



## Synopsis

Between 1994 and 2000, Omar Nasiri worked as a secret agent for Europe's top foreign intelligence services-including France's DGSE (Direction Générale de la Sécurité Extérieure), and Britain's MI5 and MI6. From the netherworld of Islamist cells in Belgium, to the training camps of Afghanistan, to the radical mosques of London, he risked his life to defeat the emerging global network that the West would come to know as Al Qaeda. Now, for the first time, Nasiri shares the story of his life-a life balanced precariously between the world of Islamic jihadists and the spies who pursue them. As an Arab and a Muslim, he was able to infiltrate the rigidly controlled Afghan training camps, where he encountered men who would later be known as the most-wanted terrorists on earth: Ibn al-Sheikh al-Libi, Abu Zubayda, and Abu Khabab al-Masri. Sent back to Europe with instructions to form a sleeper cell, Nasiri became a conduit for messages going back and forth between Al Qaeda's top recruiter in Pakistan and London's radical cleric Abu Qatada.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"Inside the Jihad is the astonishing, well-told story of Omar Nasiri (a pseudonym), who penetrated al-Qaeda's training camps in Afghanistan in the mid 1990s as a spy for France's intelligence services. Al Qaeda defectors...have provided accounts of the Afghan camps, but nothing available publicly approaches the level of detail that Nasiri gives here." -- Washington Post, November 17,

2006 "Inside the Jihad reads like a John le Carre novel. It is replete with tales of phony passports, envelopes stuffed with cash and cloak-and-daggar meetings...Mr. Nasiri's account of the camps is detailed and chilling." -- New York Times, November 17, 2006 "A good read...the real value of Nasiri's memoir lies in the insight into the minds of young, mostly European Muslims." -- Middle East Quarterly "It is a fascinating story of a man who says he betrayed his brothers to the police and then had contact with senior al Qaeda leaders at a terror training camp in Afghanistan -- all the while spying for French, British and German intelligence" -- CNN.com

"A chillingly detailed portrait of life inside the Afghan training camps. Omar Nasiri's memoir offers a unique insider's perspective on the crucial years during which a loosely connected group of regional Islamist movements coalesced into Al Qaeda's global jihad." --Ahmed Rashid, author of the #1 New York Times bestseller Taliban "A terrific book. Omar Nasiri offers a groundbreaking account of the process by which young men became mujahidin. His description of life inside the Afghan training camps is more complete than any intelligence we had available to us in the 1990s. It indicates a level of professionalism within the camps that we were only able to infer from the fragmentary accounts available to us-- and which policymakers dismissed at the time as CIA scare-mongering. As a micro-level description of the whole training process within the camps, Nasiri's account has, I believe, no peer in the publications of the American intelligence community." --Michael Scheuer, former head of the CIA's Osama bin Laden Unit and author of Imperial Hubris: Why the West is Losing the War on Terror --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Excellent book. I found it at my nephews Beech House. Each time I'd go there I'd read a bit more when time would allow. Finally ordered it because it was a very exciting read...and I don't normally like this kind of stuff. Exciting story, unfortunately it's based on a true story. Want to know how the Terrorist operate? Informing yet, scary.

Best insider account by far of the military training camps for foreigners in Afghanistan in the 90s. Perhaps ghostwritten into coherence more than the narrator's self-understanding merits, but this is definitely real, not a work of fiction.

The other review of this book is very good, but to me it misses the best thing about this book. Yes, it's a great 'can't put it down' thriller. No question. Even though I'd rate the quality of the writing as 'poor' the story is both true and so gripping that a movie is inevitable. Definitely a block buster. But

the book's high point for me is having an intelligent and independent look at the world of Muslim radicals. How do they think? Why do they do what they do? What do they think of us? And of each other?!! This book answers all of these questions and more, providing compelling, credible revelation of the Muslim extremist understanding of the world, their place in it, and their goals. This book is must read for anyone who is serious about wanting to know what's going on with the Muslim radicals in Europe.

Omar Nasiri's "Inside the Jihad" covers terrorism during the nineties in Brussels, London, and Afghanistan. Nasiri (not his real name) a Moroccan who became a spy for French intelligence, DGSE, after being recruited into a terrorist cell by his brother. He discusses the ammunition trade he did for his brother's "friends" or supplying the jihad. Nasiri never seems too concerned about the fight in Algeria between the GIA and the secularist regime. Nasiri's recollections should be taken with a grain of salt. There is no way to know his true intentions for writing the book. The reason I put this disclaimer in is the last sentence of his book is pretty straightforward on his feelings toward outsiders. Nasiri describes nerve wracking missions such as crossing heavily armed borders, Afghani terrorist camps, and mosque infiltration. The insider account he is able to publish at a great risk to his life should be read by all who want to further understand terrorism. Nasiri is eloquent in his manners and blunt with his stories and views. Us in the West will never truly understand how people kill in the name of religion, yet Nasiri clues us into some of the reasons terrorists kill innocents and foes alike. He does not agree with the killing of innocent lives, but does believe any force from a foreign force on Muslim land is a rational call for "jihad" in the name of Allah. He describes things that I had not heard about the Taliban and Al Qaeda. He does make clear the jihad started way before Osama Bin Laden showed his face to the world in the nineties. The loose structure of terrorism can be clearly seen throughout the book. Only cells know their actual job and not anyone else. He showed the cells to be living independent organisms. The description of Chechens, Saudis, and others at the camps training together affirms the loose connections between cells and brothers; the silence of the brothers' past and future also showed the independence of each person and group in the camps. Nasiri's account should be read by those wanting to understand the history of the nineties from the inside. He was never a high ranking member with knowledge of attacks and other plans; however, he did meet many of the players that would later raise their heads in the attacks against the West. Many of the main players of terrorism will be quickly recognized by readers of terrorism and the Middle East. This is not a hard book to approach by newcomers studying terrorism because Nasiri does a great job introducing the reader to the

characters in his book. Nasiri does end the book on a grim note stating that he would be open to fighting anyone that invades "his" land. So his accounts should be

I've read criticisms here and elsewhere questioning the validity or authenticity of this book. I kept that in mind when I started *Inside the Jihad*, but any doubts I had quickly disappeared. For a book that reads more like a spy thriller novel than anything else, Nasiri is too familiar with the subject matter to have made this up. Put simply, if this is a fake, then it is a grade A fake. In any case, it's a fantastic book that's incredibly hard to put down. Nasiri takes the reader through his career as a spy which begins after his betrayal of Islamic militants in Europe. He started out not as a militant himself, but rather as a weapons supplier. After stealing from his clients, Nasiri is forced to seek protection from French intelligence services and his career as a spy begins. His work keeps him in Europe for many months, but after his clients are arrested, Nasiri finds himself on the way to Afghanistan. This occurs in the post-soviet era of the country as Islamic militants began using the country as a base for global operations. After completing his training, Nasiri is sent back to Europe by his trainers to form a sleeper cell, which never happens. Nasiri comes across as a fascinating figure who constantly walks a moral tightrope, but his story is the perfect example of a slippery slope when one bad decision puts you in an even worse situation. Many readers will undoubtedly come away with a bad impression of Nasiri...as an extremist who facilitated the murder of innocent people. This is not an altogether unfair characterization, but in the end, I think he comes out ahead on the moral spreadsheet. *Inside the Jihad* isn't a theoretical or academic exploration of Islamic terrorism. Rather it's one man's (extraordinary) experience on the ground witnessing the fallout from the U.S. turning a blind eye toward Afghanistan after the Soviets withdrew. Nasiri's experience also demonstrates the West's inability to fully understand the forces gathering against it. Anyone even remotely interested in the subject matter should thoroughly enjoy the book. My only complaint is that I'm sure there's a wealth of information that was left out...for obvious reasons...but that fact in no way takes away from the overall experience.

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