

sound assessment of the role of morals and ethics in international politics within the context of U.S. foreign policy since 1945. However, the scope of the research (focusing solely on the U.S. case in the post-WWII era) limits the applicability of the consequences on

a global scale. On the other hand, Nye suggests measurable modeling for evaluating the moral foreign policy. Within these advantages and limits, this book is highly recommended for IR readers and scholars as well as policy-makers and strategists.

## Road Warriors: Foreign Fighters in the Armies of Jihad

By Daniel Byman

Oxford University Press, 2019, 382 pages, \$29.95, ISBN: 9780190646523

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In *Road Warriors*, Daniel Byman explores an issue that has played a significant role in the destabilization of numerous countries for many years. In recent years, foreign fighters have become one of the key problems in the international security system. Byman's monograph analyses the genesis, history, and formation of foreign fighters in various terrorist organizations. Byman is a political scientist, an expert on international terrorism and the Middle East, and an academic at Georgetown University. In his research, the author uses scientific methodologies to explore the history of Islamist foreign fighters from their emergence during the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan in 1979 and before the civil war in Syria. The book is written using the narrative method of historical research and is based on numerous sources and statistical information. Byman also employs the academic methodology of conducting "interview[s] with numerous foreign intelligence officials" (p. 252). In addition, the author puts forward hypotheses for explaining the development of the foreign fighter phenomenon and offers



expert suggestions regarding how to combat it.

Byman provides several facts that demonstrate the issue's relevance. In Europe, foreign fighters who had fought for ISIS killed thirty-two in suicide attacks at the Brussels airport and metro in 2016. Russia, which had driven many radicals out of its country, also paid the price when ISIS in Sinai brought down a Russian passenger jet in 2015, killing 224 people (p. 215).

The monograph consists of 13 chapters. Chapter 2 begins the narrative with 1979—a milestone in the story of the foreign fighter because of three major events: the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) intervened in Afghanistan, the Islamic Revolution took place in Iran and fanatics seized the Grand Mosque in Mecca (p. 20). The history of the systematic use of foreign fighters began with the terrorist Abdullah Azzam. In Pakistan, Azzam met Osama bin Laden, and together they organized the Services Bureau, a structure that assisted militants in fighting against

the USSR in Afghanistan. The ideology was simple: “no negotiations, no conference, and no dialogues, jihad and the rifle alone” (p. 22).

The author hypothesizes that migration to Afghanistan played an important role in developing the phenomenon of foreign fighters and its legacy. Byman lists various militants and terrorists who at different periods participated in the war in Afghanistan, such as Mohammad Sidique (2005 bombings in London), the famous Zarqawi terrorists, and “Chechnyan” Khattab (pp. 63, 76, 105). According to Byman, the militants had state support from Saudi Arabia and Pakistan (p. 30). Continuing the thought, Byman writes that later Iraq played a similar role in the activation of the migration of radical militants (p. 138).

Chapter 3 tells about Barbaros, an Afghanistan veteran who seeded the battle with foreign fighters in Bosnia in the 1990s. Chapter 4 tells the story of Ali Mohamed, an American who joined al Qaeda and set up Afghanistan training camps. Chapter 7 chronicles Abu Musab al-Zarqawi and the foreign fighters in Iraq after the 2003 U.S. invasion. Zarqawi, who fought and trained in Afghanistan, became a jihadist legend. Chapter 8, examines the new leader of the foreigners in Iraq, the Egyptian Abu Ayyub al-Masri. Chapter 9 details how, just as Iraqi jihadists began to flail, another jihadist movement, the Shabaab in Somalia, captured many foreigners’ attention.

Chapter 5 and 6 analyze the war in Chechnya, which has become a cult for the radical Islamist movement. The author concludes that the war in Chechnya did not start as a religious one. The leaders of the Chechen resistance initially knew little about Islam, but they became radicals during the conflict, mainly under the influence of foreign fighters (p. 87). Byman presents an interesting idea that can be

traced through many chapters: that the goals of the radicals are always broader and more significant than individual regional conflicts. Byman writes that Khattab and Basaev wanted to do more than save Chechnya: they tried to liberate the entire Caucasus region. In support of this theory, Byman writes that Basaev had already fought for Abkhaz against Georgia, while Khattab had fought in Tajikistan and Afghanistan (p. 94).

Chapter 11 tells about European terrorists who went to war in Afghanistan, Iraq, or Syria and, after returning home, committed violent terrorist attacks. Amer Azizi, a Moroccan who grew up in Spain and played a role in the 2004 bombings there, killed 191 people. Chapter 12 looks at a success story: U.S. efforts to hunt down al Qaeda propagandist Anwar al-Awlaki. Chapter 10 analyses the most popular jihad of all time in the modern era, the Syrian civil war, which broke out in 2011, and describes how ISIS, which grew out of the foreign fighter movement in Iraq, came to dominate the global foreign fighter movement. According to the author, Syria attracted a record number of foreign fighters—over 40,000 from more than 110 countries (p. 171). Another interesting figure provided by the author is the estimate that between 60 and 80 percent of the foreign fighters who ended up in Iraq were recruited by former foreign fighters (p. 119).

In Chapter 13, Byman offers his hypotheses regarding how to combat the foreign fighter phenomenon. He emphasizes the importance of deepening cooperation between foreign intelligence and internal security agencies, such as the CIA and FBI in the United States (p. 250). According to the author, it is essential to create counternarratives when the “government supports the local religious community that promote their moderation messages” (p. 253). Another option is to amplify the voices of

‘turned jihadists’ and propagate their stories to highlight jihadists’ negative experiences in the war zone. For instance, the Saudi government sought to discourage its citizens from traveling to Syria to fight by running interviews with returned and disillusioned jihadists on Saudi television (p. 255). Byman adds that the state should work side-by-side with religious leaders, families, and local organizations to monitor the returned individual’s progress and assist him or her in finding employment (p. 264).

In conclusion, it is worth noting that *Road Warriors* is a high-quality, monograph that includes a solid number of sources and references. The author uses various scientific research methods, including conclusions drawn from interviews with representatives of the intelligence community. However, the monograph is not without disadvantages. First, it does not pay enough attention to ‘Eastern’ sources. It would have strengthened the work

to include the views of representatives of the expert community and the governments of the countries of the region on the phenomenon of foreign fighters. The research is overly Western-centric in terms of its sources. In addition, it lacks sociological research methodologies. It would be valuable to understand the general population’s attitudes, both in the West and the East, to the foreign fighter phenomenon. For example, do foreign fighters in Kandahar, Afghanistan, consider themselves heroes? The answer to this question changes a lot in the development of a strategy to combat this phenomenon. In any case, the book deserves serious attention from political scientists, experts, and all readers interested in the Middle East, military issues, foreign fighters, and terrorism. It provides objective analysis and contains generally quite complete research on the phenomenon of foreign fighters and a general view of the important regional conflicts of the last decades.

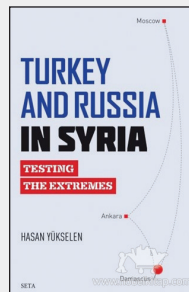
## Turkey and Russia in Syria: Testing the Extremes

By Hasan Yükselen

Istanbul: SETA Publications, 2020, 239 pages, 40€, ISBN: 9786257040860

Reviewed by Murat Poyraz, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan University

In recent years, much excellent research has been conducted concerning the Syrian War, which broke out in 2011. *Turkey and Russia in Syria: Testing the Extremes* is one of these studies. The author’s well-researched and well-designed work offers valuable insights into the relationship between Turkey and Russia after the Syrian War within the context of an oscillation between the extremes of war and alliances.



Hasan Yükselen adopts an approach that goes beyond the history of relations between nation-states. *Turkey and Russia in Syria* consists of five chapters. The first chapter examines the origins, escalation, and mutation of the Syrian War, which started with civilian protestors and turned “into an internal war and later into a proxy war” (p. 15). The second chapter, titled “Acts,” attaches importance