on these findings, Givens concludes that the French *strategically deserted the FN in the second round*. This conclusion is far too strong. First, the participation rate should have been controlled for, and second, the majority of the FN-voters stuck to voting FN. The question that comes to mind is, hence – why are so many voters willing to vote FN, even when they know that the FN has very little chance of obtaining the majority in these elections? Have they all turned irrational?

Concluding, Givens’s study addresses interesting questions, and explores the role of coalitions and the supplier side from a different angle than previous research has done. Some of the analyses are promising but, in general, more could have been made of them than is being offered now. Nonetheless, this research seduces other researchers in the field to continue the outlined path and to test the formulated hypotheses more stringently, and with better data.

MARCEL LUBBERS
*Radboud University Nijmegen*
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This book is a translation of Anat Berko’s 2004 Hebrew book, *Ba-derekh le-gan ‘eden*. The author, a former serving officer of the Israeli Defense Forces, analyses the approximately two dozen interviews conducted with Palestinian inmates in Israeli prisons with the aim of discerning their motives. Despite the book’s subtitle, only about half of the interviews were conducted with those actually involved in suicide attacks, while the others are with security offenders of varying degrees (including Shaykh Ahmad Yassin, the founder of Hamas). Berko’s book is for the most part quite engaging and personal in tone. It is easy to note her biases as an Israeli and in some cases her very personal interaction with the interviewees (such as on pp.126 and 134 when Berko’s daughters write letters to some of the female prisoners inquiring as to why there ‘need’ be a conflict between Israelis and Palestinians). The material that she produces is valuable in an anecdotal scholarly manner, although she rarely provides detailed sources (such as dates or actual transcripts of the interviews) for the material she interprets. The book is thus probably best seen as an Israeli attempt to grapple with the reality of Palestinian attacks and their motivations rather than a final scholarly answer thereto.

Berko is at her best when dealing with the female prisoners. Literature on female suicide attackers has burgeoned during the past years out of all proportion to the actual number of attacks carried out by women. Half of the chapters in *The Path to Paradise* are devoted to interviews with female prisoners, most of whom had nothing to do with suicide attacks. The one failed female suicide attacker, Shafiqa, gives an almost moment-by-moment account of the process by which she chose to become a martyr before finally rejecting the idea. Her moral dilemmas are interesting enough to make the book worth reading in many cases. (Although it is not the subject of the book, the material covering the social relations from the women’s point of view inside a conflicted Muslim society are almost as fascinating as the primary focus on suicide attacks, as well as the in-depth treatment of the politics inside the women’s prison.)
The sections dealing with the male prisoners, most of whom (other than Ahmad Yassin) were involved in either recruiting suicide attackers or facilitating those attacks, is mixed. Berko often notes that the male prisoners did not feel comfortable talking to her in the same way that women did. However, her interviews are quite interesting, and she probes the Palestinians on a number of different levels: when did they commit themselves to violence against Israel? What was the ‘trigger’ for their activities? How did they choose different suicide attackers? How did they prepare them for their attacks from an ideological and a military point of view? Some of the prisoners are surprisingly open and even non-ideological, a number knew Hebrew, had worked in Israel, and even had Israeli friends. But some were quite closed and clearly did not want to be interviewed by an Israeli, let alone an Israeli female officer.

From a factual point of view, for the most part the book is difficult to check. Some of the female interviewees were also interviewed by Barbara Victor in her Army of Roses (which might profitably be read with Berko, as it focuses more on the Palestinian side). Page 1 has a misprint (Ayat al-Akhras blew herself up in 2002, not 2003, which is listed correctly in the Hebrew original). I think that the example given of Osama bin Laden (pp.25–26) as an example of ‘paternal’ and ‘maternal deprivation’ is a bit of a stretch. There is very little careful analysis of the interviews, although the author frequently comments on her reactions to what the interviewees say. For the most part the book is raw material that would be best put through a secondary analysis in order to place it within the context of the larger field of suicide attack studies. No major studies of that nature are referred to other than Barbara Victor’s journalistic account.

The interview with Ahmad Yassin is quite interesting (chapter 6) and makes reading the book worthwhile. Although Yassin gave a number of interviews, this one in Israeli prison, which took place about a year before he was released (as the result of a prisoner exchange in 1997) and shortly after the first Hamas and Islamic Jihad suicide attack campaigns in 1994–1996, is revealing in that Yassin indicates his ambivalence towards the (at that time) developing tactic. The interview is made all the more valuable as longer passages of the transcript are provided, and the author makes very few intrusions.

Evaluating The Path to Paradise is complicated. While one can say that the author began the book as a personal journey to understand the motives driving Palestinian suicide attackers, it is difficult to say at the end whether any positive conclusions are reached. The Palestinians are consistently portrayed as complex people, with widely varying motivations, and although Berko at times harbours anger against them, she also seems to make a genuine effort to understand them. For this reason, the book is best understood as a personal journey published for a nation like Israel which is intensely interested in the suicide attackers, but unable to understand them in the end.

DAVID COOK
Rice University
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Notes
1. See, for example, Clara Beyler, “Chronology of Suicide carried out by Women,” at ict.org (12 February 2003); Joyce Davis, Martyrs: Innocence, Vengeance and Despair in the Middle East (New

Anderson examines the Christian Bible’s main effects on the American and British political cultures which, in turn, have influenced the foreign policies of both countries towards Israel and the Palestinians. He stresses that Protestant evangelical trends have largely based their views of the Holy Land on passages found in the books of Genesis, Exodus, Joshua, Daniel and Revelation. In Genesis, it is presumed that God had executed a covenant with Abraham promising his ancestors the Promised Land. This promise was then reaffirmed through Abraham’s second son, Isaac, and later again by Isaac’s son, Jacob. Under the leadership of Moses and Joshua, the Israelites had managed to control the Holy Land. In Daniel and Revelation, it is believed that there will be a time when the Jews will return to the Holy Land and thus establish a new state as part of God’s prophesies. Based on this and other similar biblical stories, Anderson highlights the increasing role Protestant evangelicals’ play in U.S. and British policies at both the official and the public relations levels. He also assesses the experiences of various evangelical groups, notably the Christian Zionists, along with their critics, who have influenced official and public debates on the Holy Land over much of the past century in both the United States and UK.

Throughout his book, Anderson pays particular attention to the ‘Historical Critical Approach,’ which challenges evangelical puritan and literalist interpretations of the Bible. The critical approach generally assumes that the Bible was not intended to be taken literally. Prominent philosophers such as Hobbes and Spinoza were among the early ones to express scepticism about Puritan interpretations of the Bible. Ongoing advances in scientific discovery and critical analysis conducted at various European universities also encouraged the pursuit of a more secular and critical perspective of the study of religion. Evangelicals who resisted such secular criticisms became increasingly defensive of their belief system. They soon came to develop their own educational institutions as a counter-balance to the growing secularization of their societies. Advances in the fields of evolution, archaeology and geology have resulted in particularly serious backlashes led by evangelicals who played a pivotal role in motivating believers, both in the United States and Britain, to embrace policies that favour Israel at all costs. Furthermore, Protestant evangelicals continue to view the Bible as the ‘proof-text’ that enjoys eternal validity and continuity. Their formation of the ‘Sunday School Movement’ reveals the strength of the pro-Israeli social and political agendas of the Protestant evangelicals in the United States and Britain.

Evangelicals generally express a strong belief in dispensational premillennialism, which entails adherence of biblical stories concerning, among others, Christ’s