

CHAPTER 5

Encountering Nomads in Israel Defense Forces and Beyond

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YOTAM FELDMAN, JOURNALIST, 2007: What do you think Deleuze would think about your use of his ideas?

BRIGADIER GENERAL (RET.) SHIMON NAVEH, OPERATIONAL THEORY RESEARCH INSTITUTE (OTRI), 2007: He would be enthusiastic, go wild over it.

BEN ZWEIBELSON, JOINT SPECIAL OPERATIONS UNIVERSITY (JSOU) SOF DESIGN AND INNOVATION PROGRAM DIRECTOR, 2016: D&G likely would be most pleased with it, and find it ironic that current post-modernist defenders of their work would try to deny the application by the military. D&G might call those defenders of their concept as the new establishment—the guardians of an assemblage that they cannot begin to guard or protect. It is all an illusion. . . . When radical concepts work, they radicalize in all directions.²



In October 2016, I organized a workshop gathering sixteen current and retired military commanders, planners, defense scientists, and instructors.³ They had one point in common. They had all used critical theory and reflexive informed concepts in the classroom, in headquarters, and/or on the battlefield in the last decade. While some had worked together in the past or knew each other's publications, this was the first time these defense professionals had met as a group. Perhaps because this was a prime opportunity, these defense professionals sought to find a concept consoli-

dating their collective identity, implicitly. Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari's (1980) nomad became, surprisingly or not, one of the most reiterated concepts to represent group members. Yet, "nomad" was not specific enough for some defense professionals. Ben Zweibelson, the SOF design and innovation program director at the Joint Special Operations University (JSOU), was the first to suggest pandas, a wildlife metaphor, to gain in specificity. For Zweibelson, this metaphor captured the solitary intellectual life of group members, and an "embarrassment of pandas," rare and unexpected gatherings such as this workshop. Later, Dr. Alex Ryan, a praised military and public policy systemic design consultant, suggested a metaphor he deemed more precise.⁴ He compared the group's history to a journey of giraffes: "Contrary to a flock or a herd, giraffes will come together and travel together for a while and depart on another path. So, there is a sense of community, but no obligations to remain part of the herd." Beyond a great sense of humor, these defense professionals had another point in common. In the last two decades, most had crossed the path of retired Israeli brigadier general Shimon Naveh. Against all odds, this general contributed in diffusing the least expected concepts in the least expected organizations, some in operational language, some in doctrinal form, and some as a farce. In echo of the introduction of this volume, this chapter will nonetheless take these concepts seriously.

Two decades earlier, Naveh and his colleagues founded the Operational Theory Research Institute (OTRI) in Israel. For a growing number of senior officers, conventional concepts used by the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) proved more and more obsolete from 1973 onward.⁵ These concepts were not adapted for asymmetric conflicts becoming the norm rather than the exception for the IDF, leading to an impression of failure. As Luke Campbell, Brent J. Steele, and Anna Geis offer in this volume, the concept of success/failure in war is contingent and deeply political. In this case, it provided organizational political legitimacy for an alternative. And OTRI was tasked with providing such an alternative. To do so, Naveh and his colleagues sought to develop a methodology and a course for senior officers called the Advanced Operational Command and Staff Course (AOCSC). Both aimed at unleashing the critical and creative capacities of officers.⁶ As the traditional rationalist military literature was partly to blame for IDF failures to adapt, Naveh and his colleagues departed from it. They found inspiration in various subfields sharing a more or less reflexive and neo-pragmatic epistemology such as complex systems thinking, architec-

ture, and postmodern social theory. The IDF was not alone in exploring this radical turn. Again, the impression of failures in Iraq and Afghanistan pushed the US Army to also undertake this turn. Senior officers found in OTRI's products a promising remedy. The US Army School of Advanced Military Studies (SAMS) recruited Naveh in 2005 to develop a variant of his methodology now called the US Army Design Methodology (ADM). US Special Operations Forces (SOF) also hired Naveh in 2007 to translate this methodology at the strategic level, that is, to practice the art of anticipating, adapting, and preparing a military organization to face future contingencies. Both the US Army (2015) and SOF (2016) made their preferred version of design mandatory in 2015—the former for planning officers and the latter for general staffers.

Of all the hundred concepts inspiring design-informed defense professionals (hereafter defense professionals), Deleuze and Guattari's concepts seem to withstand the test of time for a small number of enthusiasts. Once central to Naveh's methodology, these concepts turned into footnotes, and footnotes into analogies. While some in military and business circles still perceive Deleuze and Guattari's concepts and postmodern social theory more broadly as the cutting edge to be further developed, the content and functions of these concepts are still unclear to both users and observers. As these concepts are used to manage violence, bringing their multiple functions to consciousness is more important than ever.

As caveats, defense professionals building on Deleuze and Guattari, and design and system thinking more broadly, do not linearly apply theory to practice as some may assume in academia. As I explore elsewhere, they rely on a craft or tinkering attitude toward knowledge using what they find useful to build their way of thinking and acting without necessarily being consistent with the philosophy (Beaulieu-Brossard 2019). Sometimes, what is seen as useful is only the mental representation, the "sound-image" according to Ferdinand de Saussure (1916). This is the case for most defense professionals explicitly or implicitly referring to the concept of nomad. For instance, Ofra Graicer and Ben Zweibelson are among the few exceptions who are explicitly and substantially using the concept in this chapter. Second, and contra Eyal Weizman (2007), only a minority of a minority of a minority is finding inspiration in Deleuze and Guattari in comparison to the growing military design movement's preference for more accessible seminal sources, especially in professional military journals & blogs, doctrine or in management.

In this chapter, I seek to expose three of the numerous functions Deleuze and Guattari's concepts can take in the military, mostly in the IDF but also in US SOF. Building on the sociological perspective presented in the introduction of this volume, I argue that these concepts offer mental representations to conceptualize the "world around us . . . *and* ways to act in the world to achieve one's goals" (see Ish Shalom, this volume). These concepts do so in the IDF and beyond inside at least three functions: narrative framing, political, and instrumental. Narrative framing means that these concepts allow so-called military designers to generate a plot giving intent to actors, giving meaning to artifacts, and weaving sequences of events, constituting stories that enable them to make sense of their community in time and space. In other words, the concept of the nomad contributes in consolidating the identity of the community of military designers and gives it a purpose (Bruner 1991; Roberts 2006). As advanced in the introduction of this volume, concepts are not only socially but also politically meaningful in three senses: concepts "offer normative stands and commitments" dovetailing in political measures, concepts enable the inclusion and exclusion of individuals in communities, and concepts can be a vehicle of persuasion. I would add to this that conceptual language may amplify or undermine the authority of defense professionals in military or civilian decision-making processes. This political function is especially observed in organizational politics, and exceptionally, in domestic politics. Last but not least, the instrumental function means that defense professionals directly apply these concepts to improve military practices related to planning in most instances and to tactics in rare instances (Eriksson and Norman 2011, 418). The instrumental function remains the explicit rationale for adapting Deleuze and Guattari's concepts. For defense professionals and observers, the narrative framing and political functions are most often implicit, unconscious, and therefore nonintentional. As a caveat, the simple move of assigning a function to a concept is a political gesture in itself. Neither this chapter nor defense professionals can escape it, as expressed in the introduction of this volume. For instance, skeptics often accuse supporters of seeking political or economic gains over instrumental ones in contrast to supporters stressing the instrumental potentials of a concept. The narrative, political, and instrumental functions are the few central ones among several functions possible to understand how concepts work in military practices.

In this chapter, I first offer a brief introduction to Deleuze and Guattari's nomad in relationship to the concepts of war machine and smooth space. This introduction reveals how these opaque concepts provided clues

to the IDF to make sense of their environment, on the one hand, and to an idealized self, on the other. In so doing, I seek to clarify these concepts and nuance the impression of incommensurability between the military profession and post-1968 postmodern philosophy. I then move on to expose what Deleuze and Guattari's concepts can do once translated from philosophy to military contexts. I develop examples for each of the three functions summarized above. For the narrative function, I show how several defense professionals found inspiration in Deleuze and Guattari's nomad to make sense of organizational suppression despite bringing the very same organization closer to professional excellence, from their perspective. For the political function, I focus mainly on how these concepts may enhance or reduce authority in civil-military relations. For the instrumental function, I present the examples of walking through walls in the IDF and of goal setting in the US Special Operations Forces Command (SOCOM) white paper on design thinking of 2016.

Deleuze and Guattari's Nomad(s)

In order to achieve desired Degrees of Freedom one must first identify his/her biases, prejudices and axioms carved in institutional "stone." These are the borders they must transgress in order to be liberated. And this is why I coined that phrase the nomadic one. For nomad people have no baggage, no shackles that tie them to their place, no doctrines or dogmas to adhere to, no fortresses to defend but their own individual freedoms: of movement, of thought, of identity. Nomad people have no ego.

—Dr. Ofra Graicer (2017), IDF Generals' Course co-instructor

In the midst of the occupation of Southern Lebanon (1982–2000) and the first intifada (1987–93), a puzzle became of pressing importance for the IDF. While the IDF could easily win battles, these seemed pointless in changing the political status quo over time. For Naveh and his colleagues, discovering Deleuze and Guattari's (1980) radical proposition about war provided clues to resolve this enigma from the late 1990s onward.⁷ This proposition lies on a counterintuitive understanding of the relationship between organizations, conventions, and war. Naveh and his colleagues found inspiration in this proposition, especially for making sense of asymmetric conflicts and for developing a military professional ideal based on an essence of movement.

Deleuze and Guattari lay their proposition on a close reading of Carl von Clausewitz's (1976) aphorism "War is the continuation of politics by other means." In contrast to the numerous interpreters of Clausewitz, Deleuze and Guattari found their proposition on the very semantic of this aphorism. In this reading, organizations such as states seek to use war to continue politics by other means (Reid 2003). For Deleuze and Guattari, this means that war is an external phenomenon to politics. In turn, politics seek desperately to use war despite never fully controlling it. History abounds with examples not only of states that failed to appropriate war but also of states transformed deeply in attempts to use war (Tilly and Ardant 1975). Some states even collapsed in the process, such as Russia in the midst of World War I. For Deleuze and Guattari, this shows that states are powerless in comparison to the power of war. For this reason, they understand war as the most powerful phenomenon in transforming the human condition as a whole, including political realities.⁸ In other words, war makes more the state than the state makes war.

Deleuze and Guattari rely on a heuristic move to better take this proposition seriously. This move locates war as an extrinsic phenomenon to the state.⁹ This results in the concept of war machine in the sense that war is its own machine escaping appropriation from any organization, including the state. This is especially the case as war may demand disrupting all conventions in the struggle for survival. The state is the opposite in this regard as it lies on a set of more or less rigid conventions to continuously actualize its existence. These conventions may include a fixed territory, a national identity, and a set of rules in the form of a constitution, to name a few. As states depend on these conventions, using war involves translating these conventions to the battlefield. States develop formal military institutions for this purpose. For Deleuze and Guattari, the objective of military institutions is to mediate between conventions sustaining the state, on the one hand, and the absence of conventions in war, on the other hand. Military institutions do so by disciplining soldiers with rigorous procedures, training, and education. These efforts, however, can only be in vain when faced with the contingencies of war. Sooner or later, war will disrupt conventions and, by extension, military institutions and the very states they seek to serve.

Yet, not all organizations require the same respect for conventions. Deleuze and Guattari found inspiration in the anthropology of nomadic tribes to better appreciate nuances in relationships between organizations, conventions, and war.¹⁰ If the essence of the state depends on sustaining conventions at all costs, the essence of nomadic tribes lies on the

opposite. Movement in all respects—from one space to the next, from one identity to the next, or from one rule to the next—is both literally and figuratively the essence of nomadic tribes for Deleuze and Guattari. Being a nomad depends on perpetually refusing conventions as they formalize. The essence of nomads and the essence of war are therefore the same. They are both based on an absence of conventions. Nomads are in harmony with war for this reason. War disrupts the emergence of conventions that may lay the groundwork for state formation within or outside nomadic groups. In other words, as the conventions of nonstate actors such as nomads are more flexible than state conventions in general, the conventions of the former tend to be more moldable to the contingencies of war. This proposition provided an understanding as to why Israel could not leverage war to change political realities especially when fighting against nonstate actors. Sooner or later, war would become too disruptive for state conventions in contrast to nonstate actors. War, in itself, would end up tearing down all conventions of the Israeli state before politically defeating nonstate adversaries once and for all. Naveh (2002) and his colleagues feared asymmetric conflicts more in the long run than conventional conflicts in part for this reason.

No matter the efforts states invest in appropriating war with military institutions, these efforts will always be in vain in comparison to nomad-like groups escaping the burden of sustaining rigid conventions. These groups will always be in a better position to innovate faster than state armies since their essence is in harmony with war. Deleuze and Guattari (1988, 368) compare state science with nomadic sciences to support this point. State science tends to forbid intuitions in order to develop so-called universal conventions to understand an independent reality. In turn, these conventions provide the required legitimacy for ordering the human condition over a territory in the form of state governance. Nomadic sciences have neither this pretension nor this desire. They are intuitive and holistic as they relate to all aspects of everyday life rather than acting as conventions for supporting an order. While states outmatched nomads by consolidating wealth, production, and technology from the late fifteenth century onward, they always lacked the critical and creative potentials made possible by more flexible scientific practices (De Landa 1991, 12). States ensured survival by co-opting nomadic innovations for their own interests in time of struggle. This co-optation is nonetheless a risky, if not a Faustian, bargain. The radical freedom that nomads demand for innovating is just not compatible with the exercise of governance. This radical freedom

may end up disrupting the very conventions that states require to govern. For this reason, state-nomadic partnerships can only turn into tragic cycles. Despite saving the state in critical moments, the state usually ends up suppressing all forms of nomadic essence until it has no choice but to enlist it again. In short, the critical and creative potentials of nomads spoke to defense professionals for making sense of insurgencies that proved more resilient, adaptive, and innovative than state armies in contemporary conflicts. For the same reasons, nomadic ways of thinking would become a professional model to emulate despite inherent risks of suppression from military institutions.

Movement as essence, the cornerstone of nomadic ways of thinking, became a core principle of Naveh's methodology from the late 1990s to this day (Graicer 2017).¹¹ As seen above, this means to continuously refuse military conventions as they formalize. Among those, movement as essence implies a radical understanding of space. Nomads never let the idea of a bounded territory formalize. Instead, they continuously reframe their understanding of territory as they travel. They continuously deterritorialize and reterritorialize in Deleuze and Guattari's terminology. Accordingly, they do not seek to respect predetermined routes but continuously adapt direction to evolving circumstances as they travel in between necessary stopping points for survival, such as oases, wells, or shelters. These points are always temporary in comparison to the movement in between. This is why Deleuze and Guattari (1980, 472) understand nomadic space as smooth: it is only defined by continuous movement in vast empty and unbounded space such as oceans, deserts, or steppes. States, in contrast, structure a territory—or striate space, in Deleuze and Guattari's terminology—in an attempt to hold and control it against evolving circumstances. They do so by imposing both material and ideational structures. For instance, the former can take the form of gridding space (urbanism) and the latter the form of fixed binary identities such as governors/governed, legal/illegal, and so on. States develop desperately against space, while nomads continuously adapt to spatial circumstances. This understanding inspired some defense professionals not only to think more in nonlinear ways about space for military operations but also to think about time as they set goals to accomplish in the future, as I will develop in instrumental functions below.

Although Deleuze (1978) repeatedly voiced opposition to the Zionist ideal, that is, the formation of an Israeli state in claimed historical lands, his professional ideal was not far from defense professionals' building on his writings (Dosse 2009).¹² Deleuze embraced movement as essence as a

life-work ideal, if not as an objective. He found in war the perfect metaphor for this. As Julian Reid (2003, 59) observed: “The possibility of a form of thought so radical that it wages the violence of war on existing orders of knowledge conditions Deleuze’s politico-philosophical project in its entirety.” Deleuze developed concepts with the aim of disrupting all conventions by building on war as a metaphor. In his own terminology, he sought to turn his work into a nomadic war machine against the state and its conventions, on the one hand, and against the order of thoughts in academia, on the other hand. This would, Deleuze hoped, bring to consciousness what was not thinkable before and, therefore, lead to continuous intellectual emancipation. In a nod to this ideal of philosophical excellence, Deleuze (1990, 103) called his colleague Michel Foucault a “warrior.” He saw in Foucault a formidable philosopher based on his capability to develop concepts “waging war” and disrupting taken-for-granted orders. This specific intellectual emancipatory project is in harmony with the intellectual emancipatory project of Naveh and his colleagues, albeit in different fields, as seen in Ofra Graicer’s (2017) quote that opens this section. While Deleuze’s vocation responds to his ideal of philosophical excellence, the vocation of defense professionals responds to an ideal of military excellence. Translating Deleuze and Guattari’s concepts to respond to this latter vocation nonetheless involves greater stakes even if these concepts are poorly understood or used superficially at first sight. Indeed, violence is not only metaphorical but actual in this vocation. Deleuze and Guattari’s concepts may fill multiple functions beyond intellectual emancipation in the military and society more broadly. The following sections provide examples of implicit (narrative and political) and explicit (instrumental) functions.

Narrative Framing Functions

If Doctrine stands for the State Apparatus (or institutional interiority), Systemic Operational Design (SOD) could be its War Machine (or explorer of institutional exteriority).

—Ofra Graicer (2017)

Deleuze and Guattari made available a rich pool of mental representations inspiring alternative narratives for making sense of selves and others in several sectors. For instance, several scholars rely on the nomadic war machine to make sense of phenomena escaping state control such as

viruses, self-organized armed groups such as ISIS, or globalized capitalism (Du Plessis 2017). Defense professionals rely on the nomadic war machine as a concept to make sense of the same elements as well. Naveh, for instance, portrays Israel and the West's elusive "other" as a Wahhabi war machine manifested in "nomadic terrorists" in several PowerPoint presentations. This mental representation stresses the lack of Saudi Arabian state control over violent extremists. Another narrative, however, seems more unique to the military. The nomad against the state provides a powerful mental representation for developing stories that provide meaning to a group at the fringe of military institutions risking suppression for a professional ideal. This professional ideal lies on becoming an "institutional war machine" (Graicer 2017). The institutional war machine is a mental representation of an idealized self across time saving the state from itself thanks to intellectual emancipation. Sooner or later, however, tragedy awaits those getting closer to this ideal in this narrative. The more this ideal appears within reach, the more the state will come to fear for its foundational conventions. As a response, the state will resist, co-opt, or purge the institutional war machine until a next crisis requires it. This narrative takes the form of a tragic cycle as it involves a rise in nomadic ways of thinking, then a resistance to them, and, finally, forgetting them in military institutions.

While Naveh (2007a) developed this narrative to make sense of three Israeli experiences across time, some US, Australian, and Canadian defense professionals expressed a similar narrative to make sense of their experiences with design (Beaulieu-Brossard and Dufort 2017). Naveh's study of the evolution of operational art in the IDF is, perhaps, most explicit in using this narrative by weaving past, present, and future stories.¹³ Naveh develops this narrative into three episodes: the Palmach (1941–48),¹⁴ Moshe Dayan's paratroopers (1953–67), and Naveh's OTRI (1995–2005). The Palmach episode is most faithful to both the potential and the fate of the nomadic war machine in Naveh's narrative. This is more than a coincidence since this episode takes place during the early state formation of Israel. The Palmach found a mentor in the unorthodox British general Orde Wingate and inspiration in Russian military tradition. From Wingate, the Palmach borrowed the capability to transform its identity to adapt to changing circumstances, and from also the Russian a smooth understanding of space according to Naveh.

Rather than obeying to a “sedentary” approach “imposing a pre-designed grid of universal forms,” the Palmach would generate thinking and practices unique to each operation, making the survival and establishment of the Israeli state possible (Naveh 2007a, 41). Yet, tragedy — in the form of a “purge” — awaited this success as expected in this narrative. As part of the consolidation of the Jewish state, Prime Minister Ben Gurion rapidly disbanded the Palmach for a more cohesive IDF (Naveh 2007a, 51).¹⁵ Furthermore, Naveh (2007a, 52) claims that this “coup” turned into suppression as the state prohibited any discussion about Palmach’s operational excellence. Likewise, the British Army suppressed Wingate’s legacy despite enthusiastic praises for turning a likely defeat into a decisive victory in the Burma campaign in World War II, according to Graicer (2015, 5). Considering Wingate’s legacy as too “divisive,” army council members vowed to “write him down” to avoid any more “Wingates” in the British Army, based on Michael Calvert’s account (Graicer 2015, 239). For both the Palmach and Wingate episodes, mythical legacies to build on turned into legacies to be suppressed and suppression turned into amnesia in this narrative.¹⁶

Naveh’s journey toward developing an “institutional war machine” inside the IDF gains in significance when inserted as the third and last episode of this series between 1995 and 2005. While Naveh does not refer explicitly to the nomad in this episode, his narrative bears resemblance with the same tragic cycle. Toward the end of this episode, Naveh (2007a, 33) assesses that with OTRI, the IDF had the same ingredients that brought the Palmach to excellence. AOCSC-educated colonels and generals would prove worthy of this inheritance in Operation Defensive Shield in the West Bank in 2002 and in the disengagement of Gaza in 2005. Naveh reports an absence of civilian casualties during both and a near absence of Israeli casualties in the former (Matthews 2008). Naveh (2007a, 34) even praises the latter as “one of the most unique and successful operations in [IDF] history.” As Graicer (2017) observes, Naveh’s “private armies could run loose” as long as the institution did not feel threatened or feared an upcoming war. These two conditions did not last long. Some generals soon perceived AOCSC graduates as a threat to their authority, especially in light of operational successes in this narrative. As for war, the second intifada between 2000 and 2005 followed by the Second Lebanon War in 2006 sustained an emergency atmosphere that proved unfer-

tile for theoretical nuances. Major General (Ret.) Itzak Ben Israel offered that “sometimes we fight, and things become clear” to explain this lack of appetite for nuances when I met him.¹⁷ What became clear for Ben Israel and his colleagues against OTRI’s program was that the IDF could not operate properly with conceptual and terminological confusion in contrast to policy makers thriving on vagueness, as Neta Kramer observes in this volume. In the end, war is the only tribunal of military knowledge from Ben Israel’s perspective and as Barkawi and Brighton (2011) compellingly developed elsewhere.

Beyond confusion, Naveh’s (2007a, 6) narrative understands this episode explicitly as a purge awaiting the right event to be put into motion. He recalls the comments of Major General Moshe Kaplinski, the vice chief of the general staff, that the IDF must “get rid of Shimon Naveh and Dov Tamari because they could not be controlled.” As a result, the general staff gradually suppressed Naveh and OTRI’s supporters through financial irregularity charges, forced retirement, or organizational disbandment in this narrative.¹⁸ “Purging” the key agents did not completely suppress their concepts from the IDF but sent them back at the fringe, under censorship or in “exile.” Again, promises to build on would turn into promises to be suppressed and suppression into amnesia or what Naveh (2007a, 24) calls deliberate institutional “anti-learning” in this narrative.

In some instances, this tragic cycle narrative refers explicitly to Deleuze and Guattari’s nomadic war machine; in other instances, it bears resemblance with it. The nomad may well save the state from itself, but the more the state regains in confidence and develops, the more nomadic ways of thinking are suppressed as they run contrary to the possibility of governance. This cyclical narrative generates a symmetry between Naveh’s experiences and those of great military legacies, thus consolidating the nomadic war machine as an ideal and appropriating these legacies as part of the very same historical movement. This narrative ran in direct opposition to the official institutional narrative by turning what some perceived as “mumbo jumbo” into institutional conservatism, “charlatans” into avant-garde underdogs, and heretics into the very definition of military excellence. This narrative also provided group solidarity, a road map for renewing motivation and pursuing attempts at transforming the military despite likely rejection.¹⁹ This narrative was political at least at the institutional level, as the next section develops further.

Organizational Political Functions

When you come with this knowledge, with reasoned insights, to someone who feels helpless, . . . the political echelon is happy to buy what you offer it. Then you look for partners that will do it together with you, that will challenge you intellectually, and you don't find them.

—Moshe Ya'alon (Michael 2007, 441)

Naveh and his colleagues prefer contemplating how the nomadic war machine and other critical concepts could serve instrumental functions or provide mental representations for better understanding new phenomena. Despite this intent, these concepts could not remain isolated in a planning room. They would trickle down in transforming the everyday life of defense professionals inspired by them. Surprisingly or not, I was unable to find a correlation between defense professionals learning these concepts and their political views. Perhaps defense professionals refrained from disrupting deep ontological commitments in their private vocation despite the potential of nomadic ways of thinking to do so. Defense professionals seemed to be still able to compartmentalize in concordance with a military professional ideal separating military from civilian lives. This was less the case in terms of organizational politics. Nomadic ways of thinking turned into a perpetual reform agenda against military conventions, as already observed above. In other words, the nomad would serve a counter-hegemonic project in the military realm. In political and public realms, conceptual capacities made possible by the nomad and other concepts contributed in amplifying the authority of the IDF above civilian institutions. This was especially the case during the tenure of Moshe Ya'alon, general staff member (1995–2005), from regional commander to chief of general staff. In this section, I present the often implicit political functions of sophisticated concepts, including those from Deleuze and Guattari in civil-military relations.

Ya'alon, a key instigator, sponsor, and supporter, was aware of the multiple functions of these concepts, including the political ones. He understood these concepts as a tool for an “organizational revolution” in the IDF (Adamsky 2010, 103). These concepts would expand at the organizational levels following Ya'alon's progression in the IDF. In each new posi-

tion from Central Command covering the West Bank (1995–98) up to chief of the general staff, Ya'alon would integrate these concepts and seek to diffuse them to all general headquarters (Michael 2007, 434). Once these concepts trickled down (following Ya'alon's command) or trickled up from AOCSC graduates, the organization would be likely disrupted and would change. Adapting Deleuze and Guattari's nomadic war machine made this institutional political function possible. Naveh, like Graicer, was explicit about this function as a by-product. In an interview with Weizman (2007), Naveh claims that the primary purpose of using critical theory was "to critique the military institution itself—its fixed and heavy conceptual foundations" and that OTRI has "become a subversive node within it." In other words, the narrative function shared above provided purpose by informing a political function of perpetual reform.

Skeptics, however, understood this political function very well. For some like IDF colonel Yehuda Vagman, "The more those ideas were blurred, incomprehensible and non-implementable, the more creative they were considered, and accordingly, the more they enhanced their producer's status in the organization" (Michael 2007, 435). Most skeptics in the IDF and US armed forces followed Vagman in trading the instrumental function for this political function to make sense of defense professionals. As Neta Kramer suggests in this volume, vagueness, whether intended or not, does something. In this case, vagueness both hindered the effectiveness of the opposition to these concepts between 1995 and 2004 and bolstered the same opposition after the Second Lebanon War in 2005. Also in echo to Kramer and observed by several members of the military design community, the meaning of design has been enlarged to the point of making the concept meaningless and simply used as a cliché or slogan to dissolve its initial disruptive nature. The story of the translation of design in the US army is an expression of this phenomenon.

Using sophisticated concepts enabled performing an implicit demarcation that provided a higher status to those using them and a lower status to those not using them, skeptics observed. As a result, several officers attempted to follow these defense professionals to fulfill this political function without paying attention to the instrumental function. In so doing, sophisticated concepts turned into fashionable buzzwords uttered to be accepted as an equal, if not the avant-garde, in a well-respected group. Vagueness associated with these concepts could also consolidate authority by giving the impression to fellow officers that they did not understand



their profession despite years of experience, according to an interviewee requiring anonymity. In other words, speaking the language of sophisticated concepts made the difference between inclusion and exclusion from an elite group of military intellectuals, as presented in the introduction of this volume.

Some even claimed that these concepts served mostly political economic functions. Suspicious, they accused enthusiasts of making themselves indispensable in understanding and teaching incomprehensible concepts for economic gains. Others, like US Army Special Forces Lieutenant Colonel Grant Martin (2017), developed a similar argument with regard to the proliferation of sophisticated concepts as a means to legitimate more resources and promotions in military organizations.

For Naveh and his colleagues, these by-product political functions were a double-edged sword in retrospect. On the one hand, using sophisticated concepts including those from Deleuze and Guattari raised their status as unique experts able to develop cutting edge alternative methodologies. On the other hand, democratizing sophisticated concepts including Deleuze and Guattari to as many officers as possible turned it into ridicule in some cases. Ridicule damaged prospects for individual learning and changing the military institution in the end. When I met him in 2015, Naveh regretted distributing copies of a *Thousand Plateaus* in the IDF and listing it as a mandatory reading at SAMS for this reason.²⁰ Canadian Major general Jennie Carignan, once an international SAMS student, remembered the disdain of her colleagues for this opaque book.²¹ The production of SAMS student monographs provides evidence of this. Since 2007, an average of only a single officer student per year quoted Deleuze and Guattari, the peak being four students right after Naveh's tenure in 2009.²² This phenomenon not only occurred at SAMS but also cursed Naveh and some of his colleagues along their path, including during a contract with US SOCOM. An interviewee taking part in Naveh's SOCOM design- course relied on an infection metaphor to make sense of this phenomenon. For him, the opacity of these sophisticated concepts combined with Naveh's arrogance generated "antibodies" to the point that he abandoned the course after two classes. In short, the political function in the form of amplifying authority was limited to those curious enough to pay attention. Otherwise, these concepts were more counterproductive in this respect.

Consistent with Deleuze and Guattari's holistic assumptions, the political function of concepts applies beyond the military. Accordingly,

integrating sophisticated concepts can only bring operational successes with organizational change in the long run, defense professionals believe. Likewise, organizational change can only be sustainable with society-wide changes in the long run since organizations are not isolated. Therefore, defense professionals mobilize Deleuze and Guattari for holistic critiques and holistic transformation beyond the military. As Naveh put it: “Theories do not only strive for a utopian socio-political ideal with which we may or may not agree, but are also based on methodological principles that seek to disrupt and subvert the existing political, social, cultural, or military order” (Weizman 2007, 215). As these concepts are intrinsically holistic, they also incite defense professionals to include as many sectors deemed relevant as possible for a better understanding. This may or may not include political, economic, social, infrastructure, or cultural sectors, to name a few, although the military does not have jurisdiction over them. Indeed, defense professionals must think beyond the military sector since contemporary issues rarely, if ever, fall into a single sector in the twenty-first century. However, the temptation to move from understanding to influencing the political decision-making process into these sectors is often difficult to resist. This is especially the case in states without robust civilian institutions, as Yoram Peri (2006) observes in Israel. Concerned by this phenomenon, Ya’alon explains that this tends to naturally occur, especially when the gap of knowledge, in both qualitative and quantitative terms, is unbridgeable with civilian institutions (Michael 2007, 444). For instance, Ya’alon observes that political directives would become clearer once it could relate to a military plan rather than the other way around, from civilian planning to military planning. While the IDF already had the upper hand in civil-military relations in Israel for reasons beyond the scope of this chapter, developing a sophisticated methodology amplified its authority over civilian institutions.

This political function was therefore a by-product, as it was unintentional in this specific Israeli case. In other cases, the contrary can be easily imaginable depending on the intents of defense professionals. For instance, some skeptics trade the instrumental for the political function to explain the development of the US Army counterinsurgency manual of 2006 also relying on social scientific concepts (Price 2011). Skeptics claim that the objective of the manual was intended more to sell the “surge” to the US Congress than to develop counterinsurgency operations. In short, the political functions of Deleuze and Guattari’s nomad and other sophis-

ticated concepts must be nuanced. While using or promoting these concepts may amplify authority in some instances, it may also contribute to the contrary, especially when the audience is skeptical. Further research needs to be conducted to investigate the extent to which nomadic ways of thinking contributed to IDF political support for the disengagement of Gaza in 2005. While these concepts clearly reinforced Naveh's conviction that Israel should not actualize a fixed territorially bounded space based on past historical narratives, rare are those who took a Deleuzian detour to take this controversial position (Rynhold and Waxman 2008).

Instrumental Functions

Our movement through the buildings will push them into the streets and alleys, where we will hunt them down. By doing that we will smoothen the intrinsic striation of the enclave.

—Colonel Aviv Kochavi,
IDF 35th Paratrooper Brigade, 2002 (Naveh 2005)

For defense professionals, the primary function of Deleuze and Guattari's nomadic war machine is instrumental. They seek to apply these concepts directly to inform better military practices, especially for developing operational and strategic approaches. This function aims at provoking a reimagination of military practices away from military conventions perceived as a source of failures in contemporary conflicts. For some, applying these concepts enables increasing efficacy manifested in minimal casualties, destruction, and use of force. For others, applying these concepts contributes to radical humanist ideals in the form of emancipation from structural constraints to reach individual and professional potentials more fully. In this section, I develop two examples of instrumental functions. The first example illustrates how the IDF 35th Paratrooper Brigade built on smooth space during the Second Intifada in 2002. The second shows how specific individuals relied implicitly on nomad-like analogies for goal-setting purposes when explaining the US SOCOM white paper on design thinking of 2016.

Deleuze and Guattari's nomadic war machine in a collision course with striated space became operational concepts in the development of Operation Defensive Shield in the West Bank in 2002. Before this episode, the

IDF refrained from conducting operations in dense urban environment. The urban environment posed heavy casualty risks either in IDF soldiers or in civilians, as fighters would easily set ambushes and hide among civilians. Colonel Gal Hirsch (2016, 166), the chief of operations (J-3) and an AOCSC graduate, was convinced of the opposite. He saw operating in Palestinian urban environments as the proper response to heightening violence in the form of suicide bombings and as a stepping stone to controlling the West Bank as a whole. Hirsch was alone in sharing this perspective. Against all odds, he disrupted the general staff's assumptions to the point that his operational concept was accepted. This decision set a precedent by disrupting the taboo of operating in a dense urban environment. By operating in an urban environment, the IDF sought to signal that there would be no safe haven anymore for fighters seeking to use violence. This, they hoped, would provide incentives for a peaceful settlement. The more time passed, the more what is now called urban warfare would become the "new normal" for the IDF.

Understanding the urban environment as striated space and the IDF as a nomadic war machine transcending it contributed in setting this precedent. Aviv Kochavi, the 35th Paratrooper Brigade commander (now deputy chief of general staff) and also an AOCSC graduate, commanded the operation in Balatta camp in the Nablus area. Naveh's (2005) dramatization of a brainstorm session between Kochavi and his officers suggests how they implemented nomadic ways of thinking. The script begins with Amir, an IDF officer, reminding the group that the IDF had never seized an urban area since 1982, that this instance was not successful, and that this contradicted training. Kochavi replies by finding reinforcement in the concepts of smooth and striated space. He portrays Palestinian fighters as respecting a striated understanding of space in the very act of fortifying an urban environment. The brigade would surely be unsuccessful by respecting the same logic. Rather, IDF soldiers would be more effective by transforming the striated space into a smooth one. To concretely turn striated space into smooth space, IDF officers generated the military tactic of "walking through walls" on an unprecedented large scale to bypass ambushes set by Palestinian fighters (Weizman 2006). Officers reinterpreted the battle space by reversing training habits. Opening doors and moving along roads and sidewalks were now forbidden. Instead, soldiers would ignore the urban structure by piercing holes in apartment walls and ceilings and move from block to block until they gained military control

of an area. Israel recorded a single casualty. The United Nations recorded 497 Palestinian casualties and large-scale destruction of nongovernmental properties (Annan 2002). Deleuze and Guattari's concepts proved useful to make sense of and operate in unfamiliar contexts such as asymmetric conflicts. In this specific case, these concepts contributed in enabling the IDF to reengage urban space instead of abandoning it. In other words, and in a nod to Anna Geis in this volume, these concepts "serve[d] to (de) legitimate certain types of violence," bringing an impression of potential control, superiority, and orientation in a complex urban space.

After departing Israel for the United States in 2005, Naveh joined Booz Allen Hamilton's Centre for the Application of Design (CAD). This military contracting firm acted as a medium enabling Naveh, Ryan, and other internationals to work for American defense organizations. In return, CAD became the highest concentrated pool of intellectual capital on the application of sophisticated concepts for military purposes in the United States at the time.²³ Naveh would first teach and conduct research at SAMS under this organization between 2005 and 2007. In late 2007, William "Joe" Miller, the director of strategy, plans, and policy (J5) at US SOCOM and Naveh's personal friend, requested assistance as his office lacked a methodology for strategic projection.²⁴ SOCOM contracted CAD to assist in the form of research, development, and courses taught by Naveh, James Schneider, and Timothy Challans. A few years later, SOCOM departed from this team to develop their own design teaching and research capacities at JSOU. When I met Miller, his team, and JSOU faculty in 2016, none referred to Deleuze and Guattari's nomad explicitly, to the exception of Ben Zweibelson, quoted at the beginning of this chapter.

For others working for JSOU in 2016, this concept turned into footnotes and footnotes into analogies, where its sound image seemed sufficient to achieve a specific function. This was the case for defense professionals taking part in developing the US SOCOM white paper on design thinking (2016) or teaching from it. They relied on nomad-like analogies to explain an alternative to the traditional practice of goal setting (i.e., the end state) in the US military. In conventional planning, officers usually reverse engineer the commander's end state to develop a linear path toward achieving it, according to Colonel (Ret.) Richard Newton, the lead author of the SOCOM white paper on design thinking.²⁵ Then, officers seek to respect this path at all costs as if the context would be as fixed as the preestablished "end state." To show progress, officers rely on as many

quantifiable elements as available from body counts to square miles under control for instance. Newton saw this practice as counterproductive. Several officers also confessed that this practice leads them to tweak reports to give the impression of consistency with the linear path and preestablished goal. The linear path as the fixed end state would end up being irrelevant to the emerging context, thus leading to fight in a world that no longer exists on the ground.

Newton suggested alternatives following the literature on foresight. Instead of the end state, he suggested imagining a range of acceptable and unacceptable futures. Instead of the linear path, he suggested becoming familiar with unexpected detours. Newton relied on a seventeenth-century navigation analogy. Reaching a destination was possible only by muddling through rather than by following a linear path. While nonlinearity navigation may seem ineffective, ships reached their destination more effectively by continuously adapting to external circumstances, thus leading to a more flexible goal-setting process, according to Newton. For Zweibelson, who became the design and innovation program director at JSOU in 2017, Newton's vision was at odds with poststructuralism, including Deleuze and Guattari, despite relying on nomad-like analogies to explain the US SOCOM white paper on design thinking of 2016. From Zweibelson's perspective, Newton as well as several contractors for JSOU taught and applied design in a more linear way and closer to mainstream design thinking developed in the US Army before 2017. In a struggle over defining the future of design education at JSOU in 2016, some individuals may have used nomad-like analogies not only for instrumental functions but also for organizational political ones as developed in the section above.

In contrast, Zweibelson attempted to develop JSOU's design and innovation program as consistently as possible with design philosophy and also by explicitly building on poststructuralism, including Deleuze and Guattari's concepts of rhizome, assemblage, and the nomad, as he developed elsewhere (Zweibelson 2017). For instance, Zweibelson found in Kenneth Stanley and Joel Lehman's (2015) studies on artificial intelligence a more persuasive analogy of the unconventional practice of goal setting presented above. According to Stanley, artificial intelligence proceeds more effectively toward a desired end state when they are not programmed to reach it. Stanley found that simply assigning a fixed goal incites both artificial and human intelligence to filter out elements that may not directly lead to the goal at first sight. Yet Stanley showed how these very dismissed aspects

may provide stepping stones leading to a satisfactory goal. Both this goal and the means to reach it were more or less thinkable before. This analogy provided an intelligible way to translate Deleuze and Guattari's nomad introduced in US SOCOM a few years earlier by Naveh and reintroduced by Zweibelson in 2016. Only time will tell whether this new understanding of time and space will prevent, minimize, or enable more violence in the years to come.

Deleuze and Guattari's nomad is among several sophisticated concepts that may serve instrumental functions in the military and other professions. In most cases, implementing deliverables resulting from these concepts remains the greatest challenge for defense professionals. Cultural, institutional, and idiosyncratic logics often lead to filing and forgetting these deliverables despite their promises. For products surviving these logics, they may make the human condition worse or better depending on one's viewpoint. On the one hand, the military instrumentalization of these concepts may contribute to further violence by enabling operations that were unthinkable before such, as in the Ballata camp case. On the other hand, these concepts may provide less violent alternatives than conventional military concepts, especially by familiarizing officers with more flexible ways of thinking such as in goal setting in US SOCOM. The greatest danger may lie in literally taking war as an extrinsic phenomenon to the state, thus dispelling state responsibility in contemporary conflicts or romanticizing the unique disruptive capacities of war found in Deleuze and Guattari.

Conclusion

Deleuze and Guattari contributed to the military design- movement by making visible alternative ways of thinking about the relationship between organizations, conventions, and war. This perspective is far from consensual in the literature. Several contributors are quick to denounce the militarization of social sciences and humanities, and especially post-1968 post-modern social theory (Weizman 2006, 2007; Feldman 2007; Price 2011; Levine 2012). They find defense professionals and postmodern social theorists to be at extreme odds in terms of vocation. The former aims at executing the state monopoly over the legitimated use of physical force, to borrow Max Weber's (2004) terms. The military institution is respon-

sible for making sovereign power possible over a territory and beyond. On the contrary, postmodern social theorists seek to disrupt the state apparatus and especially the oppressive means making it possible. Despite these differences of vocation, I sought to demonstrate that both groups share the will to disrupt any convention potentially hindering respective ideals of professional excellence. In other words, both communities share an essence of movement. Translating this essence in military contexts nonetheless enables different functions than academic ones. As the military profession involves managing violence, these concepts fulfill functions that may profoundly transform the human condition for better or worse.

Once translated into narratives, Deleuze and Guattari's nomad provided alternatives to make sense of selves and others. The nomad collapsed into an idealized self, contributing to group formation that provided a purpose and to a political program of continuous reform. Translated into the logic of politics, the holistic nature of these concepts incited defense professionals to take into account all spheres of human existence and to contribute to decision-making processes in some instances, such as in Israel. While these concepts could provide authority and a higher status in some cases, their opacity also led to the contrary and even to ridicule, depending on the audience. The act of associating functions to these concepts, such as political economic ones, was also an integral part of political struggles within and beyond the military institution. Moreover, the nomad provided inspiration for reimagining movement in time and space. On the one hand, unthinkable military operations became thinkable, and even normal. On the other hand, the nomad contributed to opening less violent possibilities by legitimating flexibility over prized ontological commitments such as holding a fixed territory at all costs, as in the case of the disengagement of Gaza in 2005, for example. Last but not least and from the perspective of Gramscian theory presented in the introduction of this volume, military design is both counter-hegemonic and hegemonic. Military design is counter-hegemonic as it compels people to "critically reflect on the social, economic, and political structure into which [human beings] are locked" and find ways to disrupt these structures to change the status quo. Yet, design could be understood as attempting to manipulate human beings in following specific frames without involving their agency in the process, thus strengthening the agency of military designers over subalterns, again from a Gramscian perspective.

Further research needs to be conducted on the potentials, limits, and

dangers involved in the military use of concepts. Developing further this research program from the perspective of the sociology of knowledge offers promising ways to do so. This research program can focus on how the military produces and uses knowledge and, in return, on what this knowledge makes defense professionals think and do. This research is needed for a better understanding of how the military works, on the one hand, and of how some unexpected concepts may inspire more the military than others in various directions, on the other hand. Without this richer understanding, defense professionals as well as academics advising or criticizing the military may well contribute to aims contrary to their intents without being aware of it. While we will never know whether Deleuze and Guattari would “go wild over” the military use of their ideas, as Naveh put it, contemporary commentators criticizing this military movement, such as Eyal Weizman (2007), became seminal in contributing to it. In other words, more research needs to be conducted not only on extrinsic militarization but mostly on intrinsic militarization. While the former debates to what extent defense professionals made “children in the back” of social theorists, in Deleuze’s (2003, 15) own terms, the latter debates to what extent the logic of war is already embedded in social theories and, perhaps, in the human condition.

Notes

1. This chapter would not have been possible without the initiative, leadership, and patience of Piki Ish-Shalom. I also thank all interviewees who generously gave their time and stories, without which this chapter would have been impossible. Many thanks to all participants of the workshop on concepts at work held in Jerusalem in 2015 for their comments. Special thanks to Ofra Graicer and Ben Zweibelson for their comments on previous versions.

2. The first two lines are from Feldman (2007). The third line comes from the author’s personal interview with Ben Zweibelson, recalling his answer to the same question asked by a PhD student in Tampa, Florida, 6 March 2016.

3. Assistant Professor Philippe Dufort (Saint Paul University) and I organized this workshop, called Hybrid Warfare: New Epistemologies and Ontologies in Armed Forces, which was held at Canadian Forces College in Toronto, Canada, on 16–17 October 2016. The Canadian National Department of Defence’s Defence Engagement Program provided funding.

4. After several years adapting concepts in US Armed Forces, Alex Ryan became vice-president of the MaRS Solutions Lab, a prestigious innovation driven startups hub in Toronto in June 2017.

5. While some senior officers started to doubt IDF conceptual capacities after the Yom Kippur War of 1973, difficulties during the occupation of Southern Lebanon (1982–2000) and the first intifada (1987–93) accelerated this trend.

6. General Amnon Schachak, the chief of staff, and his deputy, Major General Matan Vil'nai, passed a resolution to launch both OTRI and the first AOCSC in 1995 (Naveh 2007b, 97). Four themes composed the curriculum: early Soviet operational art (e.g., Tukhachevsky, Isserson, Varfolomeev), epistemology (e.g., Kuhn, Cohen, Wilkins), systems theory (e.g., Capra, Maturana), and space perception (Virilio, Deleuze and Guattari, Tschumi) (Adamsky 2010, 101). Naveh and his colleagues named this methodology Systemic Operational Design.

7. Beaulieu-Brossard's personal interview with Brigadier General (Ret.) Shimon Naveh in Herzlya, 12 May 2015.

8. For Tarak Barkawi and Shane Brighton (2011), this phenomenon is so important that it deserves its own field of inquiry.

9. Deleuze and Guattari found in early mythology the ground to support this claim. In this mythology, the gods of war are in a deeply rooted opposition to the gods of sovereignty (Reid 2003, 63).

10. Deleuze and Guattari uses sedentary groups instead. This category includes states. I directly use states for clarity purposes.

11. Indeed, turning movement into essence into a core principle is a paradox, as this would imply moving away from this notion before it becomes a principle.

12. For instance, in an op-ed published by *Le Monde* in 1978, Deleuze (1978) condemned Israel not only for developing a repressive colonial regime but also for trying to sell this model around the world.

13. Andrew Marshall's Office of Net Assessment of the US Department of Defense, a key US military figure for launching the Revolution in Military Affairs in 1990s, ordered this study (Rosen 2012). In the study, Naveh reveals a thorough research of the nomad as a concept building on Bruce Chatwin's anthropological, Henri Lefebvre's geographical, and Deleuze, Guattari, and De Landa's philosophical perspectives, to name a few.

14. The Palmach was a group akin to a Jewish special force established during the British Mandate of Palestine between 1941 and 1948.

15. Naveh's (2007a, 51) narrative finds support in Eliot Cohen's study, according to which "Ben Gurion's decision to disband the PALMACH provided the most crucial condition for the institutionalization of the governmental apparatus and the professionalization of its military component."

16. Of all the great "nomadic-like" colonels and generals feeding this narrative, T. E. Lawrence seems to be the exception to the rule.

17. Beaulieu-Brossard's interview with Major General (Ret.) Itzak Ben Israel at Tel Aviv on 28 May 2015.

18. These charges were abandoned afterward.

19. In a design-tutorial at Canadian Forces College in May 2018, Brigadier General (Ret.) Gal Hirsch, an AOCSC graduate and leading military design practitioner, also relied on the nomad to reward disrupting rules and conventions for military effectiveness.

20. Beaulieu-Brossard's interview with Brigadier General (Ret.) Shimon Naveh at the IDF National Defense College in Herzlya on 12 May 2015.
21. Beaulieu-Brossard's interview with Brigadier General (now Major General) Jennie Carignan at Canadian Forces College in Toronto on 29 March 2016.
22. See SAMS monographs collection at the Ike Skelton Combined Arms Research Digital Library at Fort Leavenworth, <http://cgsc.contentdm.oclc.org/cdm/landing-page/collection/p4013coll3> (accessed 2 March 2017).
23. Interview with Rolly Dessert, Booz Allen Hamilton CAD's former senior associate, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, 22 February 2016.
24. Beaulieu-Brossard's interview with William "Joe" Miller in Tampa, Florida, on 14 March 2016.
25. Beaulieu-Brossard's interview with Colonel (Ret.) Richard Newton in Tampa, Florida, on 7 March 2016.

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