

# Hollow Land

Israel's Architecture of Occupation



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*IDF engineers in the refugee camp of Tulkarm. Nir Kafri, 2003*

## 7.

### Urban Warfare: Walking Through Walls

I have long, indeed for years, played with the idea of setting out the sphere of life – bios – graphically on a map. First I envisaged an ordinary map, but now I would incline to a general staff's map of a city centre, if such a thing existed. Doubtless it does not, because of the ignorance of the theatre of future wars.

*Walter Benjamin<sup>1</sup>*

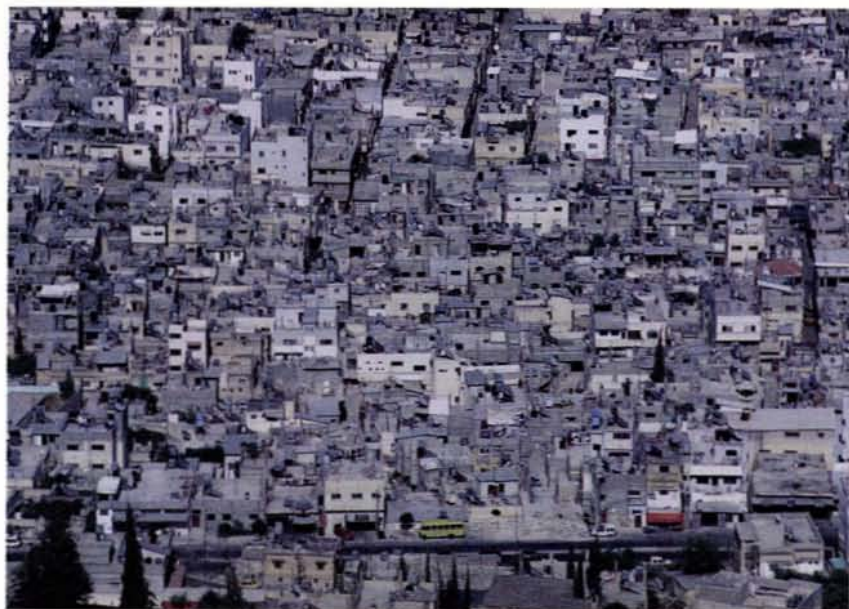
I no longer know what there is behind the wall, I no longer know there is a wall, I no longer know this wall is a wall, I no longer know what a wall is. I no longer know that in my apartment there are walls, and that if there weren't any walls, there would be no apartment.

*Georges Perec<sup>2</sup>*

Go inside, he ordered in hysterical broken English. Inside! – I am already inside! It took me a few seconds to understand that this young soldier was redefining inside to mean anything that is not visible, to him at least. My being 'outside' within the 'inside' was bothering him.

*Nuba Khoury<sup>3</sup>*

The manoeuvre conducted by Israeli military units in April 2002 during the attack on the West Bank city of Nablus, was described by its commander, Brigadier General Aviv Kochavi, as 'inverse geometry', which he defined as the reorganization of the urban syntax by means of a series of micro-tactical actions. Soldiers avoided using the streets, roads, alleys and courtyards that define the logic of movement through the city, as well as the external doors, internal stairwells and windows that constitute the order of buildings; rather, they were punching holes through party walls, ceilings and floors, and moving across them through 100-metre-long pathways of domestic interior hollowed out of the dense and contiguous city fabric. Although several thousand Israeli soldiers and hundreds



*Balata refugee camp. Nir Kafri, 2002*

of Palestinian guerrilla fighters were manoeuvring simultaneously in the town, they were saturated within its fabric to a degree that they would have been largely invisible from an aerial perspective at any given moment. This form of movement is part of a tactic that the military refers to, in metaphors it borrows from the world of aggregate animal formation, as 'swarming' and 'infestation'. Moving through domestic interiors, this manoeuvre turned inside to outside and private domains to thoroughfares. Fighting took place within half-demolished living rooms, bedrooms and corridors. It was not the given order of space that governed patterns of movement, but movement itself that produced space around it. This three-dimensional movement through walls, ceilings and floors through the bulk of the city reinterpreted, short-circuited and recomposed both architectural and urban syntax. The tactics of 'walking through walls' involved a conception of the city as not just the site, but as the very *medium* of warfare – a flexible, almost liquid matter that is forever contingent and in flux.

According to British geographer Stephen Graham, since the end of the Cold War a vast international 'intellectual field' that he calls a 'shadow world of military urban research institutes and training centres' has been established in order to rethink military operations in urban terrain.<sup>4</sup> The expanding network of these 'shadow

worlds' includes military schools, as well as mechanisms for the exchange of knowledge between different militaries such as conferences, workshops and joint training exercises. In their attempt to comprehend urban life, soldiers take crash courses in order to master topics such as urban infrastructure, complex systems analysis, structural stability and building techniques, and study a variety of theories and methodologies developed within contemporary civilian academia. There is therefore a new relationship emerging within a triangle of interrelated components that this chapter seeks to examine: armed conflicts, the built environment and the theoretical language conceived to conceptualize them. The reading lists of some contemporary military institutions include works dating from around 1968 (in particular, the writings of those theorists who have expanded the notion of space, such as Gilles Deleuze, Félix Guattari and Guy Debord), as well as more contemporary avant-garde writings on urbanism and architecture that proliferated widely throughout the 1990s, and relied on postcolonial and post-structuralist theory. According to urban theorist Simon Marvin, the military-architectural 'shadow world' is currently generating more intense and better funded urban research programmes than all university programmes put together.<sup>5</sup> If some writers are right in claiming that the space for criticality has to some extent withered away in late twentieth-century capitalist culture, it surely seems to have found a place to flourish in the military.

Seeking out the destiny of the discipline of architecture in another – the military – this chapter will examine Israel's urban warfare strategies throughout the second Intifada, and the emergent relationship between post-modern critical theory, military practice and institutional conflicts within the IDF that it brought about; in analysing these developments it will also offer a reflection on the ethical and political repercussions of these practices.

Following global trends, in recent years the IDF has established several institutes and think-tanks at different levels of its command and has asked them to reconceptualize strategic, tactical and organizational responses to the brutal policing work in the Occupied Territories known as 'dirty' or 'low intensity' wars. Notable amongst these institutes is the Operational Theory Research Institute (OTRI), which operated throughout the decade extending from the beginning of 1996 to May 2006, under the co-directorship of Shimon Naveh and Dov Tamari, both retired brigadier generals. OTRI employed several other retired officers, all at the rank of brigadier general, from the different corps of the IDF. Besides ex-soldiers, it employed several young researchers, usually doctoral candidates in philosophy or political science from Tel Aviv University. Until 2003, its core course, 'Advanced Operational Approach', was obligatory for all high-ranking Israeli officers. In an interview I conducted with him, Naveh summed up the mission of OTRI: 'We are like the Jesuit order. We attempt to teach and train soldiers to think . . . We

have established a school and developed a curriculum that trains “operational architects”.<sup>6</sup> Former Chief of Staff Moshe Ya’alon, who promoted the activities of OTRI, described the significance of the institute after its closure in May 2006: ‘The method of operational assessment that is used today in the Regional Commands and in the General Staff was developed in collaboration with OTRI . . . OTRI also worked with the Americans and taught them the methods we had developed.’ The collaboration between OTRI and the US armed forces was confirmed by Lt. Col. David Pere of the US Marine Corps, who is now writing the corps’ ‘operational doctrine manual’: ‘Naveh and OTRI’s influence on the intellectual discourse and understanding of the operational level of war in the US has been immense. The US Marine Corps has commissioned a study . . . that is largely based on Shimon [Naveh]’s [work]. One can hardly attend a military conference in the US without a discussion of Shimon’s [work] . . .’ According to Pere, the British and Australian militaries are also integrating the concepts developed at OTRI into their formal doctrines.<sup>7</sup>

One of the main reasons why Israeli military doctrine on urban operations became so influential among other militaries is that Israel’s conflict with the Palestinians since the Intifada has had a distinct urban dimension. The targets of both Palestinian and Israeli attacks were primarily the cities of the other. Israel’s new methods of ground and aerial raids were honed during the second (Al-Aqsa) Intifada and especially in ‘Operation Defensive Shield’, the series of military raids on Palestinian cities launched on 29 March 2002, following a spate of Palestinian suicide attacks in Israeli cities. The attacks targeted different kinds of Palestinian urban environments: a modern city in Ramallah; a dense historic city centre in the Kasbah of Nablus; an international holy city in Bethlehem; and the refugee camps of Jenin, Balata and Tulkarm. The urban setting of these attacks was why they were keenly observed by foreign militaries, in particular those of the USA and UK, as they geared up to invade and occupy Iraq.<sup>8</sup> Indeed, during ‘Operation Defensive Shield’ the West Bank has become a giant laboratory of urban warfare at the expense of hundreds of civilian lives, property, and infrastructure.

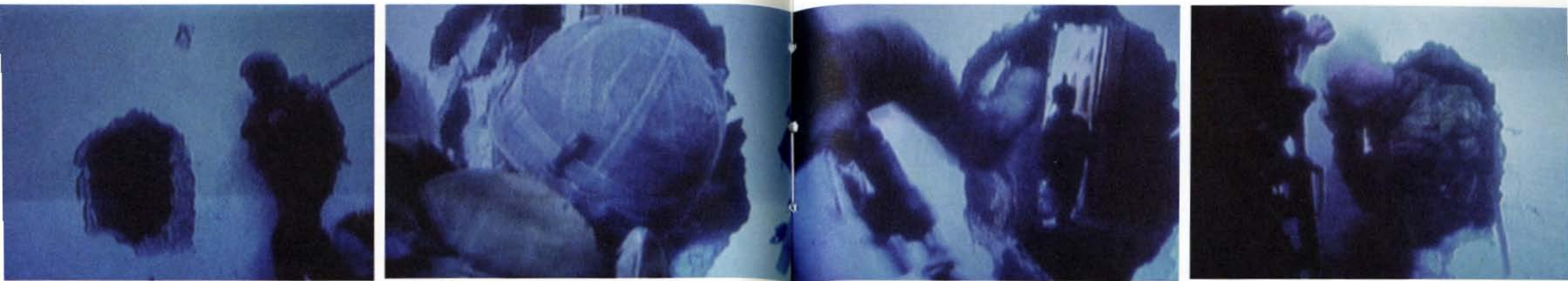
In my interview with Naveh, he explained the conditions that led the Israeli military to change its methods during the early years of the second Intifada: ‘Although so much is invested in intelligence, fighting in the city is still incalculable and messy. Violence makes events unpredictable and prone to chance. Battles cannot be scripted. Command cannot have an overview. Decisions to act must be based on chance, probability, contingency and opportunity, and these must be taken only on the ground and in real time.’<sup>9</sup> Indeed, as far as the military is concerned, urban warfare is the ultimate post-modern form of warfare. Belief in a logically structured and single-track battle plan is lost in the face of the



*Path of IDF attack on Nablus, April 2002. Diagram: OTRI, 2004*

complexity and ambiguity of the urban mayhem. Those in command find it difficult to draw up battle scenarios or single-track plans; civilians become combatants, and combatants become civilians again; identity can be changed as quickly as gender can be feigned: the transformation of a woman into a fighting man can occur at the speed that it takes an undercover ‘Arabized’ Israeli soldier or a camouflaged Palestinian fighter to pull a machine gun out from under a dress.

Indeed, military attempts to adapt their practices and forms of organization has been inspired by the guerrilla forms of violence that confront it. Because they adapt, mimic and learn from each other, the military and the guerrillas enter a cycle of ‘co-evolution’. Military capabilities evolve in relation to the resistance, which itself evolves in relation to transformations in military practice. Although the mimicry and reappropriation of military techniques represent the discourse of a common experience, the Israeli and Palestinian methods of fighting are fundamentally different. The fractured Palestinian resistance is composed of a multiplicity of organizations, each having a more or less independent armed wing



*Breaking through walls. Film Stills, IDF, 2002*

– *Iz Adin al-Qassam* for Hamas, *Saraya al-Quds* (the Jerusalem Brigades) for Islamic Jihad, *Al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigade*, *Force-17* and *Tanzim al-Fatah* for Fatah. These are supplemented by the independent PRC (Popular Resistance Committees) and imagined or real members of *Hizbollah* and/or *Al-Qaeda*. The fact that these organizations shift between cooperation, competition and violent conflict increases the general complexity of their interactions and with it their collective capacity, efficiency and resilience. The diffused nature of Palestinian resistance, and the fact that knowledge, skills and munitions are transferred within and between these organizations – and that they sometimes stage joint attacks and at others compete to outdo each other – substantially reduces the effect that the Israeli occupation forces seek to achieve by attacking them.

According to Naveh, a central category in the IDF conception of the new urban operations is ‘swarming’ – a term that has, in fact, been part of US military theory for several decades. It was developed in the context of the Revolution in Military Affairs (RMA) after the end of the Cold War and in particular in the doctrine of Network Centric Warfare which conceptualized the field of military operations as distributed network-systems, woven together by information technology.<sup>10</sup> Swarming seeks to describe military operations as a network of diffused multiplicity of small, semi-independent but coordinated units operating in general synergy with all others.

According to the RAND Corporation theorists David Ronfeldt and John Arquilla, who are credited with much of the development of this military doctrine, the main assumption of low-intensity conflict, particularly in cities, is that ‘it takes a network to combat a network.’<sup>11</sup> The term is in fact derived from the Artificial Intelligence principle of ‘swarm intelligence’. This principle assumes

that problem-solving capacities are found in the interaction and communication of relatively unsophisticated agents (ants, birds, bees, soldiers) without (or with minimal) centralized control. ‘Swarm intelligence’ thus refers to the overall, combined intelligence of a system, rather than to the intelligence of its constituent parts. A swarm ‘learns’ through the interaction of its constitutive elements, through their adaptation to emergent situations, and in reaction to changing environments.<sup>12</sup>

Instead of linear, hierarchical chains of command and communications, swarms are polycentric networks, in which each ‘autarkic unit’ (Naveh’s term) can communicate with the others without necessarily going through central command. The swarm manoeuvre is perceived by the military as non-linear in *temporal* terms as well. Traditional military operations are chrono-linear in the sense that they seek to follow a determined sequence of events embodied in the idea of ‘the plan’ which implies that actions are preconditioned to some degree on the successful implementation of previous actions. The activity of a swarm, by contrast, is based upon simultaneous actions which are dependent but not preconditioned on each other. The narrative of the battle plan is thus replaced by what Naveh calls ‘the toolbox’ approach, according to which units receive the tools they need to deal with emergent situations and scenarios, but cannot predict the order by which these events would actually occur. By lowering the thresholds of decision-making to the immediate tactical level, and by the encouragement of local initiative, different parts of the swarm are supposed to provide answers to the forms of uncertainty, chance and uncontrolled eventualities that the nineteenth-century military philosopher Carl von Clausewitz called *friction*.<sup>13</sup>

The concept of the swarm is a central component of the Israeli military’s



Left: Balata refugee camp, IDF image, 2002. Right: Nablus, Miki Kratsman, 2002

concerted attempt to adopt the language of 'de-territorialization' and transform what they perceived as their organizational and tactical 'linearity' into 'non-linearity'. In this regard, a major historical reference for the teaching of OTRI was the military career of Ariel Sharon. Not only was Sharon the prime minister, and thus visible as the 'commander in chief' throughout most of the Intifada, but his military career<sup>14</sup> has been characterized by attempts to break away from traditional military organization and discipline. The tactics for punitive raids on Palestinian villages and refugee camps that he developed and exercised in 1953 as commander of Unit 101, and later those that enabled his brutal counter-insurgency campaign in the Gaza refugee camps in 1971–72, in many ways prefigured Israeli tactics in dealing with the present Intifada. An indication of the historical interest that OTRI had in Sharon's military career was the last workshop organized at OTRI in May 2006, 'The Generalship of Ariel Sharon', which was a form of homage to the dying Sharon, and his influence on the IDF.<sup>15</sup>

### The attack on Balata

The Israeli security establishment has always tended to see the refugee camps as both the locus of and the urban condition for the 'breeding' of resistance. The camps have thus been projected in Israel's simplified geographic imaginary as evil and dangerous places, 'black holes' that the IDF dare not enter.<sup>16</sup> The IDF's avoidance of the Jenin and Balata refugee camps throughout the first (1987–91) and second intifadas allowed them to evolve into extraterritorial enclaves surrounded by Israeli military power; indeed, the military codename for the Jenin

camp, in which resistance groups were most strongly entrenched, was 'Germania'. Whether in reference to Tacitus' ambivalent description of the barbarians,<sup>17</sup> or in reference to the Nazi regime, this term encapsulates Israeli fear of the 'evil' it believes is bred. After becoming prime minister in March 2001, Ariel Sharon persistently mocked the military for not daring to enter the refugee camps: 'What is happening in the Jenin and Balata camps? Why don't you go in?' Sharon never tired of telling military officers how, in the 1970s, he 'made order' in the refugee camps of Gaza with a combination of commando raids, assassinations and bulldozers.<sup>18</sup>

The method of 'walking through walls' employed by the IDF in the attacks of 'Operation Defensive Shield' had already been part of its tactical manual in matters of small-scale operations and arrests where the doorway of a home was suspected of being booby-trapped. However, as the defining mode of military manoeuvre in large-scale operations, it was first tested out in early March 2002 in a raid commanded by Aviv Kochavi of the paratroop brigade on the refugee camp of Balata at the eastern entrance of Nablus, just a few weeks before Operation Defensive Shield commenced. It was employed in response to tactical necessity. In anticipation of an impending Israeli attack, militants from different Palestinian armed organizations had blocked all entries to the refugee camp, filling oil barrels with cement, digging trenches and piling up barricades of rubble. Streets were mined with improvised explosives and tanks of gasoline, and entrances to buildings on these routes were booby-trapped, as were the interior stairwells, doorways and corridors of some prominent structures. Several lightly armed independent guerrilla groups were positioned within the camp in houses facing major routes or at major intersections.

In a briefing called by Kochavi prior to the attack, he explained to his subordinate officers the problems they would encounter in the impending operation. Kochavi apparently told his officers (as paraphrased by Naveh): 'The Palestinians have set the stage for a fighting spectacle in which they expect us, when attacking the enclave, to obey the logic that they have determined . . . to come in old-style mechanized formations, in cohesive lines and massed columns conforming to the geometrical order of the street network.' After analysing and discussing this situation with his officers, Kochavi included the following instruction in his battle command: 'We completely isolate the camp in daylight, creating the impression of a forthcoming systematic siege operation . . . [and then] apply a fractal manoeuvre swarming simultaneously from every direction and through various dimensions of the enclave . . . Each unit reflects in its mode of action both the logic and form of the general manoeuvre . . . Our movement through the buildings pushes [the insurgents] into the streets and alleys, where we hunt them down.'<sup>19</sup> Israeli troops then cut off electrical, telephone and water connections to the

camp, positioned snipers and look-outs on the mountains and the high buildings surrounding the area, and cordoned off a large perimeter around the battle arena.<sup>20</sup> Soldiers departing from their assembly zones in the settlements of Har Bracha and Elon Moreh overlooking Nablus were greeted and hugged by the settlers. Divided into small units the soldiers then entered the refugee camp from all directions simultaneously, punching holes through walls and moving through the homes of civilians rather than along the routes where they were expected. They thus managed to take hold of the camp, but allowed the guerrillas to retreat.

For anyone who might imagine that moving through walls constitutes a relatively 'gentle' form of manoeuvre, it is worth describing the IDF's tactical procedures: soldiers assemble behind a wall. Using explosives or a large hammer, they break a hole large enough to pass through. Their charge through the wall is sometimes preceded by stun grenades or a few random shots into what is usually a private living room occupied by its unsuspecting inhabitants. When the soldiers have passed through the party wall, the occupants are assembled and, after they are searched for 'suspects', locked inside one of the rooms, where they are made to remain – sometimes for several days – until the military operation is concluded, often without water, sanitation, food or medicine. According to Human Rights Watch and the Israeli human rights organization B'Tselem, dozens of civilian Palestinians have died during the attacks.<sup>21</sup>

The Palestinian writer Adania Shibli described her visit to the Balata refugee camp and her meeting with Salma, an older lady, in the aftermath of the raid:

She took us around to see the holes that the soldiers had left behind as the house was set suddenly on fire when the main electric cable was hit by shrapnel from a hand grenade that they threw into the house, and they ran away, leaving behind them a fire that burnt up the half-finished wreckage. Along with her children and grandchildren, she had been forced to evacuate the house when the army stormed in, but her husband remained nearby watching the house, and when he saw it burning he rushed over and tried in vain to put out the flames. He was asphyxiated and lost consciousness but did not die; just something happened to his brain because it didn't get enough oxygen for a long while, and he lost his mind.<sup>22</sup>

The unexpected penetration of war into the private domain of the home has been experienced by civilians in Palestine, just like in Iraq, as the most profound form of trauma and humiliation. Aisha, a Palestinian woman interviewed in the *Palestine Monitor* in the aftermath of the attack in November 2002, described the experience:

Imagine it – you're sitting in your living room, which you know so well; this is the room where the family watches television together after the evening meal . . . And, suddenly, that wall disappears with a deafening roar, the room fills with dust and debris, and through the wall pours one soldier after the other, screaming orders. You have no idea if they're after you, if they've come to take over your home, or if your house just lies on their route to somewhere else. The children are screaming, panicking . . . Is it possible to even begin to imagine the horror experienced by a five-year-old child as four, six, eight, twelve soldiers, their faces painted black, submachine guns pointed everywhere, antennas protruding from their backpacks, making them look like giant alien bugs, blast their way through that wall?

Pointing to another wall now covered by a bookcase, she added: 'And this is where they left. They blew up the wall and continued to our neighbour's house.'<sup>23</sup>

The ability of Israeli soldiers to 'occupy' the Balata refugee camp led IDF Central Command (in charge of the West Bank) to adopt this form of manoeuvre as the mode of attack on Nablus old city centre (the Kasbah) and the Jenin refugee camp, which commenced on 3 April 2002.

An Israeli soldier described to me the beginning of the battle of Jenin: 'We never left the buildings and progressed entirely between homes . . . we carved out several dozen routes from outside the camp into its centre . . . we were all – the entire brigade – inside the homes of the Palestinians, no one was in the streets . . . we hardly ventured out . . . We had our headquarters and sleeping encampments in these buildings . . . even vehicles were placed in carved out areas within homes.'<sup>24</sup> Another soldier, who later wrote a book about his experiences during this attack, described in detail the movement through walls: 'We studied an aerial photograph to find a wall connecting the house we were in with the house to its south. Peter took the hammer and started working, but the wall wouldn't break – for the first time we faced a wall that was built of concrete rather than of cinder blocks . . . using demolition explosive was the most sensible way. We detonated at least four demolition blocks [of explosive] until the hole became big enough to go through.'<sup>25</sup> Since Palestinian guerrilla fighters were themselves manoeuvring through walls and pre-planned openings, most fighting took place in private homes. Some buildings became like layer-cakes, with Israeli soldiers both above and below a floor where Palestinians were trapped. For a Palestinian fighter caught in the crossfire of the Israeli attack on Nablus in April 2002, Israelis seemed 'to be everywhere: behind, on the sides, on the right, and on the left . . . How can you fight that way?'<sup>26</sup>

The IDF has recently completed the production of 3-D computer models of the entire West Bank and Gaza, which provide intricate detail of individual houses,



including the location of internal doors and windows. In 2002, however, soldiers were still using aerial photographs on which each house was given a four-digit designation number to facilitate the communication of positions. Orientation was aided by global positioning systems (GPS) and centrally coordinated by commanders using images from unmanned drones. When soldiers blasted a hole through a wall, they crudely sprayed 'entrance', 'exit', 'do not enter', 'way to . . .' or 'way from . . .' on the wall in order to regulate the traffic of soldiers and to find their way back through the labyrinth they carved out through the bulk of the city.

A survey conducted by the Palestinian architect Nurhan Abujidi, after the Nablus and Balata attacks, showed that more than half of the buildings in the Nablus Kasbah had routes forced through them, resulting in anything from one to eight openings in their walls, floors or ceilings, creating several haphazard cross-routes. Abujidi saw that the routes could not be understood as describing simple linear progression; they indicated for her a very chaotic manoeuvre without clear direction.<sup>27</sup> Not all movement was undertaken through walls and between homes, many buildings were bombed from the air and completely destroyed, including historic buildings in the old city centre, amongst which were the eighteenth-century Ottoman Caravanserai of al-Wakalh al-Farroukyyeh, and both the Nablusi and the Cana'an soap factories. The Abdelhade Palace, the Orthodox Church and the al-Naser Mosque were also badly damaged.<sup>28</sup>

The Kasbah of Nablus was the site of a radical experiment that took military activity beyond that of a mere manoeuvre. IDF officers had expressed their frustration over the fact that the quick invasion and occupation of Palestinian urban areas, such as Balata, had led to guerrillas disappearing and emerging again after the IDF's eventual withdrawal. In a war council at IDF Central Command headquarters in preparation for 'Defensive Shield' at the end of March 2002, Kochavi insisted on the need to redirect the operation and make its aim the killing of members of Palestinian armed organizations, rather than allowing them to disappear or even to surrender. Kochavi's intentions were no longer to capture and hold the Kasbah, but to enter, kill as many members of the Palestinian resistance as possible and then withdraw.<sup>29</sup> Military operations with the sole aim of killing were in accordance with clear guidelines laid down at the political level. In May 2001, only two months after he assumed office, Sharon summoned Chief of Staff Shaul Mofaz, Avi Dichter and their deputies for an urgent meeting at his private ranch. Sharon was explicit: 'The Palestinians . . . need to pay the price . . . They should wake up every morning and discover that they have ten or twelve people killed, without knowing what has taken place . . . You must be creative, effective, sophisticated.'<sup>30</sup>

The following day Mofaz spoke to a gathering of field commanders at a 1967

war memorial in Jerusalem ('Ammunition Hill'). After ensuring that his words were not being recorded, Mofaz stated that he wanted 'ten dead Palestinians every day, in each of the regional commands'. In an exceptional bypassing of military hierarchy he later called lower-ranking field commanders individually on their mobile phones, saying that he wanted 'to wake up every morning to hear that you went on operations and killed . . .'<sup>31</sup> An atmosphere of indiscriminate revenge killing was in the air. On Mofaz's direct orders, 'unnecessary killing' and the killing of civilians was rarely investigated and soldiers who killed civilians were hardly ever punished.<sup>32</sup> The horrific frankness of these objectives was confirmed to me in an interview with Shimon Naveh. Naveh described how in this period 'the military started thinking like criminals . . . like serial killers . . . they got allocated an area and researched it . . . they study the persons within the enemy organization they are asked to kill, their appearance, their voice [as heard in telephone tapping], their habits . . . like professional killers. When they enter the area they know where to look for these people, and they start killing them.'

During the attack on Nablus, Kochavi ignored Palestinian requests to surrender and continued fighting, trying to kill more people, until Mofaz ordered the attack over. It was the political and international pressure brought to bear in the aftermath of the destruction of Jenin that brought the entire campaign to a quick halt. Gal Hirsh, another graduate of OTRI and Chief of Operations in Central Command during the battle, later boasted that 'in 24 hours [the Palestinians] lost more than 80 of their gunmen and they could never identify where we were.'<sup>33</sup> After the attack, Defence Minister Ben Eliezer called Kochavi on his mobile phone to congratulate him; another 'well done' was passed on from Sharon.<sup>34</sup> Kochavi later claimed that if the political establishment had allowed him to continue fighting, his troops would have killed hundreds. The attack on Nablus was considered a success, both in terms of the number of Palestinians killed and in demonstrating both to the Israeli military and to the Palestinians that the IDF could now enter Palestinian camps and city centres at will. Kochavi's forces went on demonstrating this and entered Nablus and the Balata camp eight more times in the same way. It is mainly, but not exclusively, his enthusiastic laying out and enacting of Israeli security objectives that explain international calls for Kochavi to face a war-crimes tribunal.<sup>35</sup>

### Inverse urban geometry

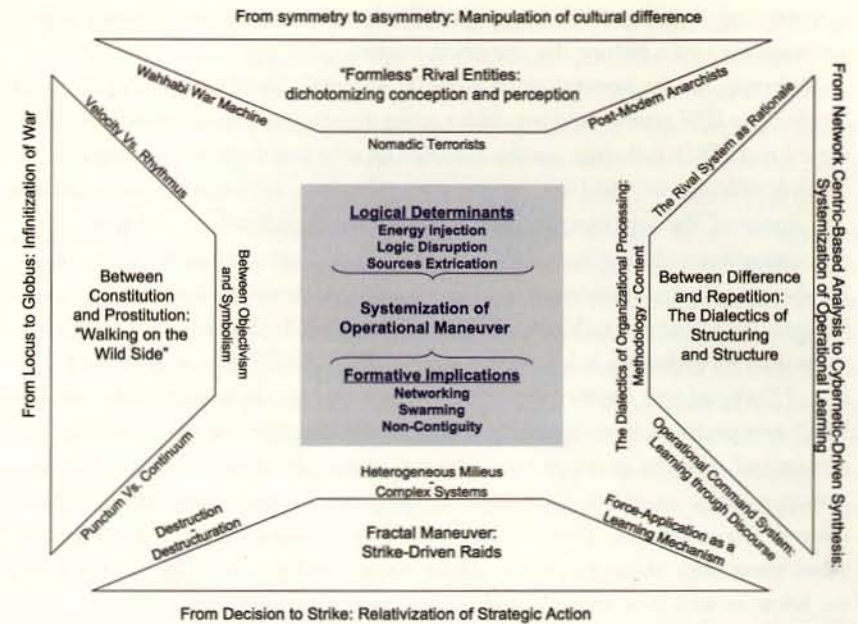
Like many other career officers, Kochavi had taken time off from active service to earn a university degree. Originally intending to study architecture, he ultimately pursued philosophy at the Hebrew University, and claimed that his military practice had been considerably influenced by both disciplines; as a military officer, he



The attack on Nablus, April 2002; the stars signify Palestinians killed. Diagram: OTRI, 2004.

also attended OTRI courses.<sup>36</sup> Kochavi's description of the attacks, delivered in the context of an interview I conducted with him, is a rare and astonishing manifestation of the relation between military theory and practice.

This space that you look at, this room that you look at [he refers to the room where the interview took place, at a military base near Tel Aviv], is nothing but your interpretation of it. Now, you can stretch the boundaries of your interpretation, but not in an unlimited fashion – after all, it must be bound by physics, as it contains buildings and alleys. The question is, how do you interpret the alley? Do you interpret it as a place, like every architect and every town planner does, to walk through, or do you interpret it as a place forbidden to walk through? This depends only on interpretation. We interpreted the alley as a place forbidden to walk through, and the door as a place forbidden to pass through, and the window as a place forbidden to look through, because a weapon awaits us in the alley, and a booby trap awaits us behind the doors. This is because the enemy interprets space in a traditional, classical manner, and I do not want to obey this interpretation and fall into his traps. Not only do I not want to fall into his traps, I want to surprise him. This is the essence of war. I need to win. I need to emerge from an unexpected place. And this is what we tried to do.



Presentation slide, OTRI, 2004.

This is why we opted for the method of walking through walls . . . Like a worm that eats its way forward, emerging at points and then disappearing. We were thus moving from the interior of [Palestinian] homes to their exterior in unexpected ways and in places we were not anticipated, arriving from behind and hitting the enemy that awaited us behind a corner . . . Because it was the first time that this method was tested [on such a scale], during the operation itself we were learning how to adjust ourselves to the relevant urban space, and similarly how to adjust the relevant urban space to our needs . . . We took this micro-tactical practice [of moving through walls] and turned it into a method, and thanks to this method, we were able to interpret the whole space differently . . . I said to my troops, 'Friends! This is not a matter of your choice! There is no other way of moving! If until now you were used to move along roads and sidewalks, forget it! From now on we all walk through walls!<sup>37</sup>

Beyond the description of the action, the interview is interesting for the language Kochavi chose to articulate it with. The reference to the need to interpret space, and even to re-interpret it, as the condition of success in urban war, makes apparent the influence of post-modern, post-structuralist theoretical language. War, according to the sophisticated, sanitizing language of Kochavi is

a matter of reading, and (conceptually) deconstructing the existing urban environment, even before the operation begins.

Referring to the context of Kochavi's 'success', Naveh explained that: 'In Nablus, the IDF started understanding urban fighting as a spatial problem.' With regard to OTRI's influence on these tactics he said that 'by training several high-ranking officers, we filled the system with subversive agents who ask questions . . . Some of the top brass are not embarrassed to talk about Deleuze or [the deconstructive architect Bernard] Tschumi.' When I asked him, 'Why Tschumi?!' (in the annals of architectural history a special place of honour is reserved to Tschumi as a 'radical' architect of the left) he replied: 'The idea of disjunction embodied in Tschumi's book *Architecture and Disjunction*<sup>38</sup> became relevant for us [ . . . ] Tschumi had another approach to epistemology; he wanted to break with single-perspective knowledge and centralized thinking. He saw the world through a variety of different social practices, from a constantly shifting point of view . . .' I then asked him, if so, why does he not read Derrida and deconstruction instead? He answered, 'Derrida may be a little too opaque for our crowd. We share more with architects; we combine theory and practice. We can read, but we know as well how to build and destroy, and sometimes kill.'

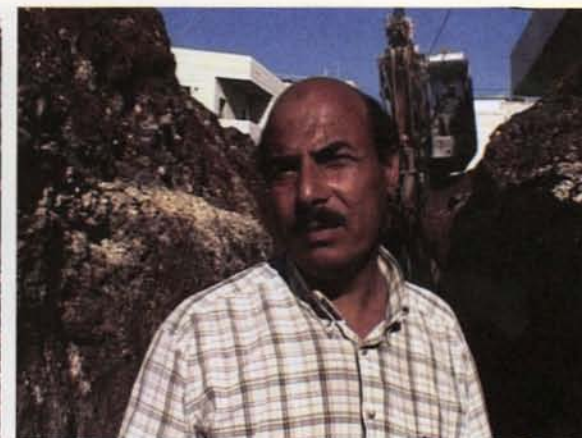
In a lecture in 2004, Naveh presented a diagram resembling a 'square of opposition' that plotted a set of logical relationships against certain propositions relating to military and guerrilla operations. Headings such as *Difference and Repetition – The Dialectics of Structuring and Structure*, 'Formless' Rival Entities, *Fractal Manoeuvre; Velocity vs. Rhythms; Wabbabi War Machine; Post-Modern Anarchists; Nomadic Terrorists*, and so on, employed the language of French philosophers Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari.<sup>39</sup> Reference to Deleuze and Guattari is indicative of recent transformations within the IDF, because although they were influenced by the study of war, they were concerned with non-statist forms of violence and resistance, in which the state and its military are the arch-enemy. In their book, *A Thousand Plateaus*, Deleuze and Guattari draw a distinction between two kinds of territoriality: a hierarchical, Cartesian, geometrical, solid, hegemonic and spatially rigid state system; and the other, flexible, shifting, smooth, matrix-like 'nomadic' spaces.<sup>40</sup> Within these nomadic spaces they foresaw social organizations in a variety of polymorphous and diffuse operational networks. Of these networks, *rhizomes* and *war machines* are organizations composed of a multiplicity of small groups that can split up or merge with one another depending on contingency and circumstances and are characterized by their capacity for adaptation and metamorphosis. These organizational forms resonated in themselves with military ideals such as those described above.

Naveh observed that 'Several of the concepts in *A Thousand Plateaus* became instrumental for us [in the IDF] . . . allowing us to explain contemporary situations

in a way that we could not have otherwise explained. It problematized our own paradigm . . . Most important was the distinction [Deleuze and Guattari] have pointed out between the concepts of "smooth" and "striated" space . . . [which accordingly reflected] the organizational concepts of the "war machine" and the "state apparatus". In the IDF we now often use the term "to smooth out space" when we want to refer to operation in a space in such a manner that borders do not affect us. Palestinian areas could indeed be thought of as "striated", in the sense that they are enclosed by fences, walls, ditches, roads blocks and so on . . . We want to confront the "striated" space of traditional, old-fashioned military practice [the way most military units presently operate] with smoothness that allows for movement through space that crosses any borders and barriers. Rather than contain and organize our forces according to existing borders, we want to move through them.' When I asked him if moving through walls was part of it, he answered that 'travelling through walls is a simple mechanical solution that connects theory and practice. Transgressing boundaries is the definition of the condition of "smoothness".'

### Design by destruction

The professed effortless 'smoothness' of the raids on Balata and Nablus must be compared with the difficulties, 'striation' and physical destruction that the IDF attack brought on Jenin. The refugee camp of Jenin is located on the hill-slopes west of the city of Jenin, in the north of the West Bank close to the Green Line. Its proximity to Israeli cities and villages was the reason many attacks on Israeli civilians and the military originated from it, and the military was under much government and popular pressure to attack the Jenin camp. In preparation for an impending IDF attack, the commander of the camp's defences, Hazam Kubha 'Abu-Jandel', a former police officer, divided the camp into 15 zones, and assigned each to several dozen defenders, including Palestinian police officers, who prepared hundreds of improvised explosives from fertilizers.<sup>41</sup> The attack began concurrently with that on Nablus, on 3 April, and started with Israeli soldiers employing rather similar methods. Military bulldozers drove into the edges of the camp, piercing holes within the external walls of inhabited peripheral buildings. Armoured vehicles then reversed into these homes, offloading soldiers through these openings directly into Palestinian homes, thereby protecting them from snipers. From there, soldiers tried to progress from house to house through party walls. As long as the fighting took place within and between homes, the Palestinian fighters, moving through tunnels and secret connections in the lower storeys where Israeli helicopter fire could not reach them, managed to hold back



*New routes carved through the Jenin refugee camp, stills from Palestinian 'home' video April 2002*

*Construction in Jenin. Construction works in the Jenin refugee camp (left): UNRWA engineer Ahmad A'bizari (right).*

an entire IDF division trying to break in through the edges. The Israeli soldiers who formed the vanguard of this attack were mostly a collection of random units of reserve troops, with less military experience than the force that attacked Balata and Nablus. Within the chaos of battle, civilians and fighters were intermingled, and fighting occurred in and among the ruins of daily life.<sup>42</sup> Much of the fighting consisted not of major assaults but of relentless, lethal small-scale conflicts, of ambushes among buildings and ruins. Palestinian snipers learnt to shoot from deep within the buildings, locating themselves a few metres away from walls and shooting through openings they had cut through them – sometimes shooting through holes cut through several layers of walls.

The massive destruction of Jenin's centre started after IDF attacks failed to bring about the rapid collapse of the camp's defence. On 9 April, about a week after the beginning of the attack and with the IDF making little progress, Palestinian militants had their biggest success, blowing up and collapsing a row of buildings on an IDF patrol, in the Hawashin district at the heart of the camp, killing thirteen soldiers. Unwilling to risk further losses and unable to subdue the resistance in any other way, IDF officers ordered giant armoured D9 Caterpillar bulldozers to start destroying the camp, burying its defenders and remaining civilians in the rubble. One of the bulldozer operators, Moshe Nissim, described his experiences: 'For three days, I just destroyed and destroyed. The whole area. Any house that they fired from came down. And to knock it down, I tore down some more . . . By the end, I cleared an area as big as [the Jerusalem football stadium of] "Teddy" [named after Jerusalem mayor Teddy Kollek].'<sup>43</sup> At times, bulldozers piled earth and rubble onto buildings or between them, sealing areas off and

changing the topography of the battle space. As the centre of the camp succumbed, a thick cloud of dust started to fill the streets and alleys, and lingered there throughout the remaining days of the battle. Only when the dust finally dispersed could international organizations and the media fully comprehend the scale of destruction caused by the IDF. Fifty-two Palestinians were killed, more than half of them civilians. Some, including those who were elderly or disabled, couldn't escape in time and were buried alive under the rubble of their homes.

Inspection of the aerial photographs taken after the battle revealed that the destruction of more than 400 buildings, in an area of 40,000 square metres, was informed by the logic of military planning.<sup>44</sup> This must be understood not only as the response to the contingencies of battle but also as the creation of a radically new layout for the camp. During the battle, the IDF widened the existing narrow alleyways and cut new ones through existing buildings in order to allow tanks and armoured bulldozers to penetrate the camp's interior. An open space was cleared out at the camp's core, where the new routes came together. This was also the area, the Hawashin district, where the resistance made its last stand, and which Palestinians later called 'ground zero'. Along these new and widened roads the Israeli military could easily re-enter the camp, a fact that undid its status as an impenetrable enclave and 'a haven for the resistance'.

UN-sponsored reconstruction efforts started almost immediately. The plans for reconstruction, however, sparked off a series of arguments between Palestinian representatives of the refugee camp and UN engineers concerning the direct relationship between design, military logic and destruction.<sup>45</sup>



All video stills, Nadav Harel, Anselm Franke, Eyal Weizman, 2004.

The United Arab Emirates' Red Crescent had donated \$29 million which was allocated to allow the UN Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) to implement a new masterplan for the camp's layout, and replace most of the destroyed homes with new ones. The project was dedicated to Sheikh Zayed Bin Sultan al-Nahyan, the late President of the United Arab Emirates. Upon the release of the reconstruction plans, a controversial issue concerning the road layout immediately became apparent. The UNRWA engineer in charge of the project's streets and infrastructure, Ahmad A'bizari, wanted to 'take advantage of the destruction and widen the roads to 4–6 metres across . . .'.<sup>46</sup> This new width of the roads would better serve the camp, he thought, but would also obviously provide enough space for Israeli tanks, if they returned, to move through without smashing into house walls, and getting stuck between the buildings. However, this widening of the roads meant that between 10 and 15 per cent of the original ground area of private properties along the roads would be re-registered as public land. In some cases the UNRWA plan sought to achieve road widening by pushing back the front walls of buildings at street level a metre or so into the boundary line of their respective lots, so that some of the upper floors would overhang parts of the street. The loss of private space at the camp's ground level was to be compensated for by the addition of more floors and by expanding the camp's overall size into surrounding agricultural land purchased by UNRWA.

Although UNRWA's proposal was argued as a simple improvement to the camp's traffic management, the camp's popular committee,<sup>47</sup> in which the armed organizations have crucial influence, protested that the widening of the roads would allow Israeli tanks to penetrate the camp easily whenever they wanted.

One of the committee members insisted that 'it should be made more, not less difficult for Israeli tanks to enter the camp'.<sup>48</sup> The debate ended with UNRWA exercising its sovereignty over the camp's affairs and pushing on with construction of the wider roads regardless of the residents' protests. In an apologetic afterthought, Berthold Willenbacher, UNRWA's second project director, observed that 'We designed a way for Israelis to get through with tanks and we shouldn't have done that because the armed guys have less chance of getting away than if it's narrow alleys. We didn't take their views into consideration.'<sup>49</sup>

A tragic demonstration of the dangers of facilitating tank access to the camp took place six months later in November 2002, when Israeli tanks re-entered the camp. One of their gunners shot and killed the first UNRWA project director, Briton Iain John Hook, claiming to have mistaken him for a Palestinian and his mobile phone for a grenade.

By taking responsibility for the well-being and maintenance of architecture in a situation of ongoing conflict, UNRWA's planning programme was exposed to one of the more obvious cases of the 'humanitarian paradox' – namely, that humanitarian help may end up serving the oppressing power. Moreover, the new homes were built to a standard not previously seen at the camp, and for the first time UNRWA had an opportunity to replace the inadequate water and sewage arrangements destroyed by the IDF.<sup>50</sup> It is in this context that we can understand a statement made by one of the members of Jenin camp's popular committee who, after seeing the UN's newly built cream-coloured permanent-looking homes, that seemed to him to undo the camp's very status of temporariness, declared: 'we have lost the right of return'.<sup>51</sup>

### 'Smart destruction'

Given the international outcry that followed the rampant destruction of the Jenin refugee camp, the Israeli military realized that its engineering corps had to improve its 'art of destruction' which had seemingly spun out of control. This led to further investment in alternative 'smarter' ways of urban warfare, such as, but not exclusively, those methods employed at the beginning of the battle of Jenin, and successfully in Balata and Nablus and in the work of OTRI.

As part of this new approach, two months after 'Operation Defensive Shield', in June 2002, the military started to upgrade a small mock-up town located at the IDF's base of Tze'elim in the Negev desert, named Chicago (invoking the bullet-ridden myth of the American city), turning it into what was then the world's largest mocked-up oriental city used for practising military assaults. Chicago includes an area called the Kasbah: a dense market area with narrow alleys, a



Urban warfare training site Chicago (Tze'elim base), in the Negev desert. The interior view shows pre-cast holes in walls (Adam Broomberg and Oliver Chanarin, 2005). The history of Chicago has shadowed much of the military history in the Middle East since the 1980s, reflecting changes in the IDF's conception of security and its relation to cities. Chicago's history can be understood in the gradual alteration of its signified environment. The core of Chicago was built in the mid-1980s as a small training site simulating a Lebanese village during the Israeli occupation of a Lebanon. It was later extended into a larger urban environment to provide a setting for the training of Israeli special forces before their aborted operation (abandoned after several Israeli soldiers were killed in an accident) to assassinate Saddam Hussein in the Iraqi town of Tikrit in 1992. In 2002, it was further expanded to simulate all different types of Palestinian urban environment, and now includes an area called the Kasbah, a dense market area with narrow alleys, a section simulating a refugee camp, a downtown area with broader streets and a neighbourhood resembling a rural village. In the summer of 2005 it was used to simulate the Jewish settlements of Gaza in training sessions for their evacuation.

section simulating a refugee camp, a downtown area with broader streets and tanks, and a neighbourhood resembling a rural village. Holes have been cut through the walls of homes to allow soldiers to practise moving through them. In certain training sessions the military enlisted the stage-set designer of a well-known Tel Aviv theatre to provide the relevant props and organize the special effects.

During this period other transformations were manifest in the realm of military engineering. At a military conference held in March 2004 in Tel Aviv, an Israeli engineering officer explained to his international audience that, thanks to the study of architecture and building technologies, 'the military can remove one floor in a building without destroying it completely [sic], or remove a building that stands in a row of buildings without damaging the others'.<sup>52</sup> However exaggerated, this statement testifies to the new emphasis placed by the military on what it perceives as the 'surgical' ability to remove elements of buildings supposedly without destroying the whole – essentially the military engineer's adaptation of the logic of 'smart weapons'.

### Un-walling the Wall

In historical siege warfare, the breaching of the outer city wall signalled the destruction of the sovereignty of the city-state. Accordingly, the 'art' of siege warfare engaged with the geometries of city walls and with the development of equally complex technologies for approaching and breaching them. Contemporary urban combat, on the other hand, is increasingly focused on methods of transgressing the limitations embodied by the domestic wall. Complementing military tactics that involve physically breaking and 'walking' through walls, new methods have been devised to allow soldiers not only to see, but also to shoot and kill through solid walls. The Israeli R&D company Camero developed a hand-held imaging device that combines thermal images with ultra-wideband radar that, much like a contemporary maternity-ward ultrasound system, has the ability to produce three-dimensional renderings of biological life concealed behind barriers.<sup>53</sup> Human bodies appear as fuzzy 'heat marks' floating (like foetuses) within an abstract blurred medium wherein everything solid – walls, furniture, objects – has melted into the digital screen. Weapons using standard NATO 5.56mm rounds are complemented by use of 7.62mm rounds, which are capable of penetrating brick, wood and sun-dried brick (adobe) without much deflection of the bullet's trajectory. These practices and technologies will have a radical effect on the relation of military practices to architecture and the built environment at large. Instruments of 'literal transparency' are the main components in the search to

produce a military fantasy world of boundless fluidity, in which the city's space becomes as navigable as an ocean (or as in a computer game). By striving to see what is hidden behind walls, and to fire ammunition through them, the military seems to have sought to elevate contemporary technologies to the level of metaphysics, seeking to move beyond the here and now of physical reality, collapsing time and space.

This desire to unveil and 'go beyond' the wall could itself explain military interest in transgressive theories and art from the 1960s and the 1970s. Most literally, the techniques of walking through walls bring to mind what the American artist Gordon Matta-Clark called the 'un-walling of the wall'.<sup>54</sup> From 1971 until his death in 1978, Matta-Clark was involved in the transformation and virtual dismantling of abandoned buildings. In this body of work known as 'building cuts', and his approach of *anarchitecture* (anarchic architecture) using hammers, chisels and bow saws, he sliced buildings and opened holes through domestic and industrial interiors.<sup>55</sup> This could be understood as his attempt to subvert the repressive order of domestic space and the power and hierarchy it embodies. The 'building cuts' of Matta-Clark were featured in OTRI's presentation material – juxtaposed with IDF holes cut through Palestinian walls.

Other canonical references of urban theory, touched on by OTRI, are the Situationist practices of *dérive* (a method of drifting through the different ambiances of the city that the Situationists referred to as psychogeography) and *détournement* (the adaptation of buildings to new sets of uses or purposes, other than those they were designed to perform). These ideas were conceived by Guy Debord and other members of the *Situationist International* as part of a general approach that was intended to challenge the built hierarchy of the capitalist city. They aimed to break down distinctions between private and public, inside and outside, use and function, to replace private space with a fluid, volatile and 'borderless' public surface, through which movement would be unexpected. References were also made to the work of Georges Bataille, who spoke of a desire to attack architecture: his own call to arms was meant to dismantle the rigid rationalism of a postwar order, to escape 'the architectural straitjacket', and liberate repressed human desires. These tactics were conceived to transgress the established 'bourgeois order' of the city as planned and delivered, in which the architectural element of the wall – domestic, urban or geopolitical (like the Iron Curtain that descended upon Europe) – projected as solid and fixed, was an embodiment of social and political order and repression. Because walls functioned not only as physical barriers but also as devices to exclude both the visual and the aural, they have, since the eighteenth century, provided the physical infrastructure for the construction of privacy and bourgeois subjectivity.<sup>56</sup> Indeed, architectural discourse

tends to see walls as architecture's irreducible givens. If the walls attempt to harness the natural entropy of the urban, breaking it would liberate new social and political forms.

Although representing a spectrum of different positions, methods and periods, for Matta-Clark, Bataille, the Situationists and Tschumi it was the repressive power of the capitalist city that should have been subverted. In the hands of the Israeli military, however, tactics inspired by these thinkers were projected as the basis for an attack on the little protected habitat of poor Palestinian refugees under siege.

In this context the transgression of domestic boundaries must be understood as the very manifestation of state repression. Hannah Arendt's understanding of the political domain of the classic city would agree with the equating of walls with law and order. According to Arendt, the political realm is guaranteed by two kinds of walls (or wall-like laws): the wall surrounding the city, which defined the zone of the political; and the walls separating private space from the public domain, ensuring the autonomy of the domestic realm.<sup>57</sup> The almost palindromic linguistic structure of law/wall helps to further bind these two structures in an interdependency that equates built and legal fabric. The un-walling of the wall invariably becomes the undoing of the law. The military practice of 'walking through walls' – on the scale of the house or the city – links the physical properties of construction with this syntax of architectural, social and political orders. New technologies developed to allow soldiers to see living organisms through walls, and to facilitate their ability to walk and fire weapons through them, thus address not only the materiality of the wall, but also its very concept. With the wall no longer physically or conceptually solid or legally impenetrable, the functional spatial syntax that it created collapses. In 'the camp', Agamben's well-known observation follows the trace left by Arendt, 'city and house became indistinguishable'.<sup>58</sup> The breaching of the physical, visual and conceptual border/wall exposes new domains to political power, and thus draws the clearest physical diagram to the concept of the 'state of exception'.

### Lethal theory

Military use of contemporary theory is of course nothing new. From Marcus Aurelius to Robert McNamara,<sup>59</sup> power has always found ways to utilize theories and methodologies conceived in other fields. The 'soldier-poet-philosopher' is also a central figure of Zionist mythologies. In the 1960s, when an academic education became the standard component of a career in the Israeli military, high-ranking officers returning from studies in the United States invoked

philosophy to describe the battlefield, sometimes literally the Spinozan concept of 'extension' with respect to the 1967 battles of occupation.

Military use of theory for ends other than those it was meant to fulfil is not dissimilar to the way in which progressive and transgressive theoretical ideas were applied in organizing post-modern management systems in business and as efficiency indicators in technological culture. Education in the humanities, often believed to be the most powerful weapon against capitalist imperialism, could equally be appropriated as a tool of colonial power itself. This is a particularly chilling demonstration of what Herbert Marcuse warned of as early as 1964: that, with the growing integration between the various aspects of society, 'contradiction and criticism' could be equally subsumed and made operative as an instrumental tool by the hegemony of power – in this case, the absorption and transformation of post-structuralist and even post-colonial theory by the colonial state.<sup>60</sup>

This is not to place blame for Israeli's recent aggression in the hands of radical theorists and artists, or to question the purity of their intentions. It is also not my aim here to try to correct imprecisions and exaggerations in the military 'reading', use and interpretation of specific theories. I am concerned primarily with understanding the various ways by which theory, taken out of its ethical/political context, may perform within the military domain.

The practical or tactical function of theory, the extent to which it influences military tactics and manoeuvres, is related to more general questions about the relation between theory and practice. However, if the new tactics of the IDF are the result of a direct translation of post-modern theory to practice, we should expect to see these tactics amounting to a radical break with traditional ones. However, they rather constitute a continuation of many of the procedures and processes that have historically been part of urban military operations. Describing acts of war as new, unprecedented, or claiming that military strategy is deeply rooted in contemporary or ancient philosophy illustrates how the language of theory itself could become a weapon in the contemporary conflict, and the institutional ecologies that sustain them. Although the concept of 'walking through walls', 'swarming' and other terms referring to military non-linearity may indeed imply some structural changes in military organization, claims that these developments constitute radical transformations are largely overstated. This, in itself, should bring into question the real place of theory as a generative source for the actual transformations of military practice.

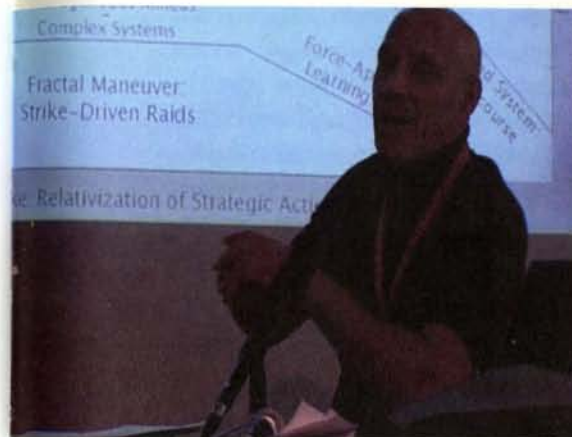
The defenders of the Paris Commune, much like those of the Kasbah of Algiers, Hue, Beirut, Jenin and Nablus, navigated the city in small, loosely coordinated groups, moving through openings and connections between homes, basements and courtyards, using alternative routes, secret passageways and trap-doors. Gillo Pontecorvo's 1966 film *The Battle of Algiers*, and Alistair Horne's



book on Algeria, *A Savage War of Peace*,<sup>61</sup> both describe such manoeuvres and are both now part of US military and IDF curricula.

The technique of moving through walls was first recorded in writing by Marshal Thomas Bugeaud's 1849 military manual, *La Guerre des Rues et des Maisons*, in the context of anti-insurgency tactics used in the class-based urban battles of nineteenth-century Paris. 'Are the barricades too strong to be broken down by the *tirailleurs* [light infantry manned usually by soldiers drawn from France's colonies]? Then one enters into the first houses that line either side of the street, and it is here that the detonator is a great advantage because he quickly achieves the goal. One climbs up to the top floor and systematically blasts through all the walls, finally managing to pass the barricade.'<sup>62</sup> On the other side of the barricades and a decade later, Louis-Auguste Blanqui wrote this micro-tactical manoeuvre into his *Instructions pour une prise d'armes*.<sup>63</sup> For Blanqui, the barricade and the mouse-hole were complementary elements employed for the protection of self-governing urban enclaves. This was achieved by a complete inversion of the urban syntax. Elements of circulation – paving stones and carriages – became elements of blockage (barricades), while the existing elements of blockage – walls – became routes. The fight in the city, and for the city, was thus equated with the ability to interpret and re-interpret it. No longer merely the locus of war, the city became its medium and finally its apparatus. Similarly, the idea of walking through walls, as Israeli architect Sharon Rotbard insisted, has been invented anew in almost every urban battle in history, and in response to local necessities and battle conditions.<sup>64</sup> In Palestine it may first have been used during the April 1948 battle for the occupation of Jaffa by the Zionist *Irgun* or 'Begin Gang', as the British called it. Its sappers cleared 'overground tunnels' between house walls through the city's contiguous built fabric, planted explosives along its path and blew it up to make a wide swathe of rubble all the way to the sea, cutting off Jaffa's northern neighbourhood, Manshiya, from the rest of the city.<sup>65</sup>

Claims for the 'non-linearity' and the 'breakdown of vertical hierarchies' in contemporary warfare are also largely exaggerated. Beyond the rhetoric of 'self-organization' and the 'flattening of hierarchy', military networks are still largely nested within traditional institutional hierarchies, units are still given orders, and follow plans and timelines. Non-linear swarming is performed at the very tactical end of an inherently hierarchical system.<sup>66</sup> In the case of the West Bank, some non-linear manoeuvres could be undertaken because the Israeli military still controls all linear supply lines – the roads within the West Bank and those that connect it to its large bases within Israel proper, as well as the ever-increasing multiplicity of linear barriers that it has constructed throughout the terrain. In fact, what the military refers to as 'networks' (implying non-hierarchical cooperation



Left: Shimon Naveb. Right: Aviv Kochavi. Video stills, Nadav Harel and Eyal Weizman, 2004

of dispersed parts) should technically be referred to as 'systems', which are distributed structures with centralized command.

Furthermore, 'swarming' and 'walking through walls' may be successful primarily when the enemy is relatively weak and disorganized, and especially when the balance of technology, training and force is clearly on the side of the military. During the years of Intifada, the occupation forces went on imagining the attack of poorly armed Palestinian guerrillas and attacks on frightened civilians in their ramshackle homes, as 'battles', boasting of their achievements as significant military accomplishments. The hubris of those crowned as the heroes of these operations can only temporarily conceal the very impasse and long-term futility of this strategizing, the political stupidity, the military crudeness and the waste of life and dignity.

The years spent attacking the weak Palestinian organizations, a sort of 'Great Game' for the IDF, was no doubt one of the reasons for the incompetence demonstrated by the same Israeli soldiers and officers when they faced the stronger, better armed and well-trained Hizbollah fighters in Lebanon in summer 2006. Indeed, the two officers most implicated in these failures in both Gaza and Lebanon are none other than the two Israeli military 'whizz kid' graduates of OTRI and veterans of the 2002 Balata and Nablus attacks, Aviv Kochavi (in summer 2006 commander of the Gaza Division) and Gal Hirsh (in summer 2006 commander of the Northern Galilee Division 91). The abduction in June 2006 of an Israeli soldier by Palestinian guerrillas who were tunnelling under IDF fortifications was undertaken when Kochavi was in command, and Hizbollah's kidnapping of two Israeli soldiers the following month was undertaken in Hirsh's

area of command. Kochavi, who directed the punitive attacks on Gaza that followed, insisted on sticking to his obfuscating language: 'we intend to create a chaos in the Palestinian side, to jump from one place to the other, to leave the area and then return to it . . . we will use all the advantages of "raid" rather than "occupation."' <sup>67</sup> Although he succeeded in inflicting hundreds of civilian casualties, and destroying essential infrastructure, the attack failed to bring back the soldier or put an end to Palestinian rocket fire. In a remarkable echo of the Lebanon front, Hirsh too called for 'raids instead of occupation', ordering the battalions newly attached to his command (and unused to the language he acquired at OTRI) to 'swarm' and 'infest' urban areas in south Lebanon. However, his subordinate officers did not understand what these terms meant, and were left clueless as to what they were expected to do. After the 2006 Lebanon war, Hirsh was criticized for arrogance, 'intellectualism' and being out of touch, and was forced to resign from military service.

Pondering the results, Naveh himself publicly admitted that 'the war in Lebanon was a failure and I had a great part in it. What I have brought to the IDF has failed.' <sup>68</sup> The Israeli campaign in Lebanon was indeed in chaos. Continuous and intensive bombardment by the increasingly frustrated Israeli military gradually transformed Lebanese villages and border towns into a jagged topography of broken concrete, glass and twisted metal. Within this alien landscape, the hills of rubble were honeycombed with cavities of buried rooms, which offered more cover to the defenders. Hizbollah fighters, themselves effectively swarming through the rubble and detritus, through underground basements and the tunnels they had prepared, studied the movements of Israeli soldiers, and attacked them with anti-tank weapons at precisely the moment when they entered the interior of homes and tried to walk through walls in the manner they were used to in the cities and refugee camps of the West Bank.

### Institutional conflicts

Although, as I showed before, the Israeli military hardly needed Deleuze to attack Nablus, and in the reality of military operations, as Paul Hirst once sarcastically remarked, 'war machines run on petrol and coal' <sup>69</sup> and 'bodies without organs' denote casualties, theory, in the case of its contemporary transformation in the IDF, did provide the military with a new language with which to speak to itself and others. It has helped articulate new ideas and sensibilities, but it was primarily used to help explain, justify and communicate ideas that emerged independently within disparate fields of military experience and practical knowledge. If we leave aside for the time being the operative aspect of practice-based theory, we can

perhaps understand the way in which the military's use of theoretical language reflects upon the military itself as an institution.

In this respect, one of Naveh's answers to my question in the interview was revealing. When I asked Naveh about the incompatibility of the ideological and political foundations of the theories he employs, he answered: 'We must differentiate between the charm, and even some values within Marxist ideology and what can be taken from it for military use. 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. The disruptive capacity in theory [elsewhere Naveh talked of the 'nihilist capacity of theory'] is the aspect of theory that we like and use . . . This theory is not married to its socialist ideals.'

When Naveh invokes the terms *disruptive* and *nihilist* to explain his use of theory, something other than an attack on the Palestinians is at stake. Theory functions here not only as an instrument in the conflict with the Palestinians, but primarily as an instrument in the power struggles within the military itself. Critical theory provides the military (as it has at times in academia) with a new language with which it can challenge existing military doctrines, break apart ossified *doxas* and invert institutional hierarchies, with their 'monopoly' on knowledge.

Throughout the 1990s when Western militaries were undergoing restructuring and specialization through the use of high technology and computerized management, such as the transformation promoted by neo-conservatives such as Donald Rumsfeld, they faced strong opposition from within their respective institutions. Since the early 1990s the IDF has similarly undergone institutional conflicts in the context of its development and transformations. In the context of these institutional conflicts, the language of post-structuralist theory was used to articulate the critique of the existing system, to argue for transformations and to call for further reorganizations. <sup>70</sup> Naveh admitted this when he claimed that OTRI 'employed critical theory primarily in order to critique the military institution itself – its fixed and heavy conceptual foundations . . .'

Something of these internal conflicts within the IDF was exposed publicly in the context of the mediatized controversy that surrounded the closing down of OTRI in May 2006, and the suspension of Naveh and his co-director Dov Tamari weeks before the war in Lebanon broke out and culminated with Hirsh's resignation a few months after it. These debates brought to light existing fault lines within the IDF, between officers associated with OTRI, for whom Naveh functioned as a kind of guru, and officers who resisted him, his methods and language.

Officially, Naveh's suspension came as the response by Chief of Staff Dan Halutz to an early draft of the report of State Comptroller Michael Lindenstrauss on the state of IDF officer training. The report accused OTRI staff of delivering

their teaching orally, in lectures and seminars, without publishing a book or a lexicon of terms that would facilitate the comprehension of their complicated and ambiguous terminology, and that therefore their concepts remained vague and faced the 'danger of different interpretations and confusions . . .' (this in itself could be read as an implied compliment to post-modern scholars). Other sections in the report accused Naveh and Tamari of some management irregularities of which they were later cleared.<sup>71</sup> The closing of the institute had much to do with the fact that OTRI was associated with former Chief of Staff (and Halutz's rival) Moshe Ya'alon, who had placed the institute at the centre of the IDF's process of transformation. Halutz did not directly confront the theoretical concepts produced by OTRI, but the critique was articulated by the former commander of the National Defence Colleges, Ya'akov Amidror. Amidror, now a security analyst in civilian life, was one of the first IDF generals affiliated to the National-Religious movement and the right-wing settler movement. Amidror's position on territorial control is diametrically opposed to that of OTRI: he repeatedly claimed that 'there is no way to fight terror without physical presence and control of the territory',<sup>72</sup> and was therefore consistently opposed to territorial withdrawals in the Occupied Territories. Concerning OTRI, he believed that 'theoretical complexity' stands in absolute contradiction to the operational logic of power: 'It is good that the institute [OTRI] closed down, because its effects on the military were catastrophic . . . it talked "mumbo-jumbo" instead of clear language . . . it was unwilling to differentiate true from false according to the best of the post-modern tradition that it introduced into the IDF . . . I really envy anyone that does manage to understand [what they teach], as this is far beyond my capacity.'<sup>73</sup> In Naveh's view, Amidror conversely epitomizes IDF 'idealization of military empiricism, rejection of the value of theoretical study and critical inquiry . . . impatience for conceptual discourse, disregard for literary theory and intolerance for philosophical discourse'. Regardless of other reasons that may have been at play, Naveh presented his dismissal as 'a coup against OTRI and theory'.<sup>74</sup>

This military debate was thus tied in with current political differences within Israeli society at large. Naveh, together with most of his former colleagues at OTRI, are aligned with what is referred to in Israel as the 'Zionist left', which supports territorial withdrawals. Kochavi, who enthusiastically accepted the command of the military operation to evacuate and destroy the Gaza settlements, is similarly understood as a 'leftist' officer regardless of the atrocities of which he was accused in Gaza the following year. Some of the conflict about theory within the IDF resonated thus with political ones within the military.

But readers should not mistake the 'leftist' Israeli officers for a hopeful alternative to the brutality of the IDF at large; in fact, the contrary may be true. A

comparison between the two attacks in 2002, on Jenin and on Nablus, could reveal the paradox that may render the overall effect of the 'de-territorial', 'smart' officers more destructive: a hole in the wall may indeed not be as devastating as the complete destruction of the home, but if the occupation forces are not able to enter refugee camps without having to destroy them as they have done in Jenin, and considering local and international opposition, they will most likely avoid attacking refugee camps, or will at least not attack them as frequently as they do now that they had found the tool to do so 'on the cheap' – which is presently almost daily. In this way, the militaristic logic of the Israeli left has presented the government with a tactical solution to a political problem.

One of the primary aims of the new tactics developed by OTRI is to release Israel from the necessity of being physically present within Palestinian areas, but still able to maintain control of security. According to Naveh, the IDF's operational paradigm should seek to replace presence in occupied areas with a capacity to move through them, and produce in them what he called 'effects', which are 'military operations such as aerial attacks or commando raids . . . that affect the enemy psychologically and organizationally'. The tactics developed at OTRI and other institutes with IDF command, thus have the aim of providing tools for replacing the older mode of territorial domination with a newer 'de-territorial' one, which OTRI called 'occupation through disappearance'.

Israel's preconditions for any territorial compromise – partial withdrawal and the drawing of temporary borderlines – as the recent invasion of Gaza after its evacuation has demonstrated, are based on being able to annul it and enter the territories in the event of a situation it considers to be an emergency. Under the terms of the Oslo Accords, Israeli withdrawal from Palestinian cities and villages was accompanied by a clause of exception that guaranteed its right, under certain circumstances which it could itself declare, for 'hot pursuit', that is, to break into Palestinian-controlled areas, enter neighbourhoods and homes in search of suspects, and take these suspects into custody for purposes of interrogation and detention in Israel.<sup>75</sup>

On the Wall that may grow to mark out the border of a fragmented, temporary Palestinian state, Naveh claimed that 'Whatever path they [the politicians] can agree to build the fence [Wall] along is okay with me – as long as I can cross this fence. What we need is not to be there, but . . . to [be able to] act there . . . Withdrawal is not the end of the story.'

The IDF precondition for withdrawal – articulated by Naveh's comment ' . . . as long as I can cross this fence' – implies a conditional withdrawal that could be annulled as immediately as it is undertaken. This undoubtedly undoes much of the perceived symmetrical nature of borders, embodied by the iconography of the West Bank Wall, and in all the recent diplomatic rhetoric that would like

to regard whatever polity remains (fragmented and perforated as it may be) on the other side of this Wall as a Palestinian state. As long as the Wall is seen as constantly permeable and transparent from one side only, Israel should still be considered sovereign in Palestinian territories, if only because it is Israel itself that can declare the exception that would allow it to annul the legal status of this 'border'. In this respect, the large 'state wall' has been conceptualized in similar terms to the walls of houses within the territories: a transparent and permeable medium that allows the Israeli military to move 'smoothly' through and across it. When Kochavi claims that 'space is only an interpretation', and that his movement through and across urban fabrics reinterprets architectural elements (walls, windows and doors) and when Naveh claims that he would accept any border as long as he could walk through it, they are both using a transgressive theoretical approach to suggest that war fighting is no longer about the destruction of space, but rather is about its 'reorganization'. The 'inverse geometry' that was conceived to turn the city 'inside out', shuffling its private and public spaces, would now similarly fold the 'Palestinian state' within Israeli security conceptions and subject it to constant transgressions seeking to un-wall its Wall.

forty-one 'sterile' roads reserved for the use of Jews only. Yehezkel Lein, *Forbidden Roads: The Discriminatory West Bank Road Regime*, Jerusalem: B'Tselem, August 2004. [www.btselem.org](http://www.btselem.org).

- <sup>41</sup> Prime Minister Olmert's unilateral 'realignment plan', if ever implemented, does not aim to alter the principles of the West Bank's geography of archipelagos. The plan calls for the evacuation of only about twenty isolated settlements and for the consolidation of others into larger settlement blocks.
- <sup>42</sup> This was President Bush's 'reward' for Sharon's announcement of his plan to unilaterally evacuate the settlements and military bases of Gaza, unwittingly tying the evacuation of Gaza with annexation plans in the West Bank: 'it is unrealistic to expect that the outcome of final status negotiations will be full and complete return to the armistice lines of 1949, and all previous efforts to negotiate a two-state solution have reached the same conclusion.' See US International Information Programs at [usinfo.state.gov/mena/archive/2004/apr/14-125421.html](http://usinfo.state.gov/mena/archive/2004/apr/14-125421.html).
- <sup>43</sup> The Ministry of Defence provides some details on its website: more than 10 million square metres of earth were relocated and 3,000 kilometres of barbed wire laid out. The barrier has an estimated per-kilometre construction cost of \$2 million and is the largest national infrastructure project (in terms of both size and price) ever undertaken in Israel. See <http://www.securityfence.mod.gov.il/Pages/ENG/execution.htm>.
- <sup>44</sup> Aluf Benn, 'PM says would allow contiguous Palestinian territory in W. Bank', *Ha'aretz*, 5 December 2002.
- <sup>45</sup> Meron Benvenisti, 'An Engineering Wonder', *Ha'aretz*, 5 June 1996. This editorial later appeared in French in *Pre/occupations d'espace/ Jerusalem au Pluriel*, Marseille: Image En Manoeuvres Editions, 2001, pp. 171-3.
- <sup>46</sup> At the end of 2006, the southern continuation of the 'Tunnel Road' was extended into two parallel levels, the original ground-level road leads to the refugee camp of El-Arub while the upper-level road, supported over the lower one on columns, is an exclusively Jewish road leading to the Etzion settlement block.
- <sup>47</sup> OCHA, 'Closure Count and Analysis', January 2006. See [www.ochaonline.un.org](http://www.ochaonline.un.org).
- <sup>48</sup> The unnamed Israeli official quoted in the following article is Danny Tirza: Amira Hass, 'Israel asks PA donors to fund new, upgraded West Bank roads', *Ha'aretz*, 5 September 2004.
- <sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>50</sup> Similarly, the new railway connection between Tel Aviv and Jerusalem will run through tunnels when it passes through the West Bank.
- <sup>51</sup> Eyal Shahar, 'Bi-national road', *Ma'ariv*, 19 March 2005.
- <sup>52</sup> One of the earliest examples of such partition of sovereignty was proposed just prior to the outbreak of World War II. In March 1939 the Nazi Foreign Minister Joachim von Ribbentrop demanded that the Polish government return Danzig to the Reich and proposed the creation of an extraterritorial highway to connect Germany with its enclave city. The German highway would, however, divide Polish territory. A solution to this problem was to be achieved by building several bridges that would span the highway and on which there would be Polish sovereignty. On 26 March 1939, the Polish government rejected any such course of action. See Deborah Dwork and Robert Jan van Pelt, *Auschwitz*, New York: Norton, 2002, p. 109.
- <sup>53</sup> Eyal Weizman, 'The Politics of Verticality', at <http://www.opendemocracy.net/debates/article.jsp?id=2&debateId=45&articleId=801> first published on 24 March 2002.

## Chapter 7 Urban Warfare: Walking Through Walls

- <sup>1</sup> Walter Benjamin, *One-Way Street and Other Writings*, trans. Edmund Jephcott and Kingsley Shorter, London and New York: Verso, 1979, p. 295.
- <sup>2</sup> Georges Perec, *Species of Space and Other Pieces*, ed. and trans. John Sturrock, London: Penguin Books, 1999.
- <sup>3</sup> Nuha Khoury, 'One Fine Curfew Day', Jerusalem: Miftah ([www.miftah.org](http://www.miftah.org)).
- <sup>4</sup> I have witnessed some of these conferences. In January 2003 Stephen Graham passed on to me half of his ticket worth £1,000, to attend the second day of the Annual 'Urban Warfare Conference' organized by a security institute called SMI in London. This was a surreal event where military personnel, arms dealers and academics from NATO, the UK, the United States and Israel as well as representatives of the RAND corporation, exchanged practical and theoretical views on urban

military operations and essential equipment within the conference hall and over dinner. On another such military conference organized in 2002 by the Faculty of Geography at Haifa University, see Stephen Graham, 'Remember Falluja: Demonizing Place, Constructing Atrocity', *Society and Space*, 2005, 23, pp. 1–10, and Stephen Graham, 'Cities and the "War on Terror"', *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, 30, 2 June 2006, pp. 255–76.

<sup>5</sup> Simon Marvin, 'Military Urban Research Programs: Normalising the Remote Control of Cities', paper delivered to the conference, *Cities as Strategic Sites: Militarisation Anti-Globalization & Warfare*, Centre for Sustainable Urban and Regional Futures, Manchester, November 2002.

<sup>6</sup> One of the reading lists of the Operational Theory Research Institute, included the following titles: Christopher Alexander, *The Endless Way of Building: Patterns of Events, Patterns of Space, Patterns of Language*; Gregory Bateson, *Steps to An Ecology of Mind and Mind and Nature: A Necessary Unity*; Beatriz Colomina (guest editor), *Architecture Production*; Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus and What is Philosophy*; Clifford Geertz, *After the Fact – Two Countries, Four Decades, One Anthropologist*; Catherine Ingraham, *Architecture and the Burdens of Linearity*; Rob Krier, *Architectural Composition*; J.F. Lyotard, *The Post-Modern Condition: A Report on Knowledge*; Marshall McLuhan and Quentin Fiore, *The Medium is the Massage: An Inventory of Effects*; W.J. Mitchell, *The Logic of Architecture*; Lewis Mumford, *The Myth of the Machine*; Gordon Pask, *Cybernetics of Human Learning*; Ilya Prigogine, *Is Future Given? The End of Certainty and Exploring Complexity*; John Rajchman, *The Deleuze Connection*; Bernard Tschumi, *Questions on Space, Architecture and Disjunction and Event-Cities 2*; and Paul Virilio, *The Last Dimension*.

<sup>7</sup> Quotes are from Caroline Glick, 'Halutz's Stalinist moment: Why were Dovik Tamari and Shimon Naveh Fired?', *Jerusalem Post*, 17 June 2006.

<sup>8</sup> 'U.S. Marines uses Israeli Tactics in Falluja Baghdad', *Middle East Newswire*, 6 (418), 10 November 2004; Justin Huggler, 'Israelis trained US troops in Jenin-style urban warfare', *The Independent*, 29 March 2003; Yagil Henkin, 'The Best Way Into Baghdad', *New York Times*, 3 April 2003.

<sup>9</sup> Interviews with Shimon Naveh were conducted on 15 September 2005 (telephone), 7 March 2006 (telephone), 11 April 2006 and 22–23 May 2006 (at an intelligence military base in Gilot, near Tel Aviv). All transcripts and translations into English of the interviews were sent to Naveh for confirmation of content. All future references to the interview refer to those above unless stated otherwise.

<sup>10</sup> Non-linear and network terminology has had its origins in military discourse since the end of World War II and has been instrumental in the conception in 1982 of the US military doctrine of 'Airland Battle', which emphasized inter-service cooperation and the targeting of the enemy at its systematic bottle necks – bridges, headquarters and supply lines – in attempts to throw it off balance. It was conceived to check the Soviet invasion of Central Europe and was first applied in the Gulf War of 1991. The advance of this strand led to the 'Network Centric Doctrine' in the context of the Revolution in Military Affairs (RMA) after the end of the Cold War.

<sup>11</sup> John Arquilla and David Ronfeldt (eds), *Networks and Netwars: The Future of Terror, Crime, and Militancy*, Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2001, p. 15; see also David Ronfeldt, John Arquilla, Graham Fuller and Melissa Fuller, *The Zapatista 'Social Netwar' in Mexico*, Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 1998. In the latter book the authors explain that swarming was historically employed in the warfare of nomadic tribes and is currently undertaken by different organizations across the spectrum of social-political conflict – terrorists and guerrilla organizations, mafia criminals as well as non-violent social activists.

<sup>12</sup> Eric Bonabeau, Marco Dorigo and Guy Theraulaz, *Swarm Intelligence: From Natural to Artificial Systems*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999; Sean J. A. Edwards, *Swarming on the Battlefield: Past, Present and Future*, Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2000; Arquilla and Ronfeldt, *Networks and Netwars*.

<sup>13</sup> Friction refers to uncertainties, errors, accidents, technical difficulties, the unforeseen, and their effects on decision, morale and actions. See Peter Paret, 'Clausewitz', in Peter Paret, *Makers of Modern Strategy, From Machiavelli to the Nuclear Age*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986, pp. 197, 202. Clausewitz: 'The tremendous friction, which cannot, as in mechanics, be reduced to a few points, is everywhere in contact with chance, and brings about effects that cannot be measured . . . action in war is like movement in resistant element . . . it is difficult for normal efforts to achieve even moderate results.' See Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*, ed. and trans. Michael Howard and Peter Paret, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1976 [1832], pp. 119–21. The tendency for diffusing command in battle was already apparent in Clausewitz's account of the wars of the Napoleonic era. Napoleonic command was based on the assumption that even the best operational plan could never anticipate the vicissitudes of war and that commanders must be encouraged to make tactical decisions on the spot. This was made a central tenet with the nineteenth-century Prussian General

Moltke, in his *Auftragstaktik* or 'mission oriented tactics'. Moltke refrained from issuing any but the most essential orders: 'an order shall contain everything that a commander cannot do by himself, but nothing else.' See Hajo Holborn, 'The Prusso-German School: Moltke and the Rise of the General Staff', in Paret, *Makers of Modern Strategy*, pp. 281–95, esp. p. 291. According to Manuel De Landa, this encouragement of local initiative and diffused command is what allows a dynamic battle to self-organize to some extent. 'Manoeuvre warfare', as developed by several military theorists in the period between the two World Wars and practised by the Wehrmacht as well as the Allies in European battles of World War II, is based on principles such as increased autonomy and initiative. Manuel De Landa, *War in the Age of Intelligent Machines*, New York: Zone Books, 1991, pp. 71, 78–9.

<sup>14</sup> See Chapter 2.

<sup>15</sup> 'The Generalship of Ariel Sharon', a round table discussion at the Operational Theory Research Institute (OTRI) of the IDF's Academy of Staff and Command. 24–25 May 2006.

<sup>16</sup> Stephen Graham, 'Constructing Urbicide by Bulldozer in the Occupied Territories', in Stephen Graham (ed.), *Cities, War and Terrorism*, Oxford: Blackwell, 2004, p. 332.

<sup>17</sup> Tacitus, *The Agricola and The Germania*, London: Penguin Classics, 1971.

<sup>18</sup> Raviv Druker and Ofer Shelah, *Boomerang*, Jerusalem: Keter, 2005, pp. 197, 218.

<sup>19</sup> Quoted in Shimon Naveh, 'Between the Striated and the Smooth: Urban Enclaves and Fractal Maneuvers', *Cabinet Magazine*, July 2006, pp. 81–8.

<sup>20</sup> At least 80 Palestinians were killed in Nablus between 29 March and 22 April 2002. Four Israeli soldiers were killed; see [www.amnesty.org](http://www.amnesty.org).

<sup>21</sup> Amnesty International, *Shielded from Scrutiny: IDF Violations in Jenin and Nablus*, 4 November 2002; B'tselem, *Operation Defensive Shield: Soldiers' Testimonies, Palestinian Testimonies*, September 2002.

<sup>22</sup> Adania Shibli, 'Faint Hints of Tranquility', Anton Shammas (trans), *Al-Adaab Magazine*, May–June 2002.

<sup>23</sup> Sune Segal, 'What Lies Beneath: Excerpts from an Invasion', *Palestine Monitor*, November 2002; [www.palestinemonitor.org](http://www.palestinemonitor.org).

<sup>24</sup> Eyal Weizman interview with Gil Fishbein, Tel Aviv, 4 September 2002.

<sup>25</sup> Ofer Segal-Az K'ariel, *Fighting in Jenin 2002*, Tel Aviv: Ma'arachot Publications, Ministry of Defence, 2006, p. 45 [Hebrew].

<sup>26</sup> Quoted in Henkin, 'The Best Way Into Baghdad'.

<sup>27</sup> In the survey, Nurhan Abujidi found that 19.6 per cent of buildings affected by forced routes had only one opening, 16.5 per cent had two, 10 per cent had three, 4.1 per cent had four, 2.1 per cent had five and 1.0 per cent had eight. See Nurhan Abujidi, 'Forced To Forget: Cultural Identity and Collective Memory/Urbicide. The Case of the Palestinian Territories, During Israeli Invasions to Nablus Historic Center 2002–2005', paper presented to the workshop 'Urbicide: The Killing of Cities?', Durham University, November 2005.

<sup>28</sup> In an interview for the popular Israeli daily *Ma'ariv* at the beginning of 2003, Kochavi mused about the biblical beauty of the city visible from the windows of his headquarters: 'Look! Nablus is the prettiest City in the West Bank . . . especially pretty is the Kasbah that resembles the old city of Jerusalem, sometimes even prettier than it.' Following a long colonial, and certainly an Israeli tradition of military officers displaying curiosity about the culture of the colonized, Kochavi consulted Dr Itzik Magen, the IDF's Civil Administration Chief of Archaeology, before the attack, regarding the historical value of some of the buildings that happened to stand in his planned zone of manoeuvre. While acknowledging a certain list of 'must not destroy' (which he did not always adhere to), 'simple' homes were accepted as 'legitimate targets'. Amir Rapaport, 'City Without a Break', *Ma'ariv* Saturday supplement 10 January 2003; Eyal Weizman and Mira Asseo, in interview with Itzik Magen, 21 June 2002.

<sup>29</sup> Amir Oren, 'The Big Fire Ahead', *Ha'aretz*, 25 March 2004.

<sup>30</sup> Druker and Shelah, *Boomerang*, p. 213.

<sup>31</sup> Both quotes above are from *ibid.*, pp. 213–14, 220.

<sup>32</sup> Killing operations conducted by 'Arabized' (soldiers disguised as Arabs) or uniformed soldiers now take place almost daily in the West Bank. The most common legal basis for killings during these raids is that the victim 'violently attempted to resist arrest' (no such option even exists when killings are conducted remotely from the air). According to figures released by B'Tselem, between the beginning of 2004 and May 2006 alone Israeli security forces killed 157 persons during attacks referred to as 'arrest operations'. See 'Take No Prisoners: The Fatal Shooting of Palestinians by Israeli Security Forces during "Arrest Operations"', B'Tselem, May, 2005. [www.btselem.org](http://www.btselem.org); Al-Haq (Palestinian

human rights organization), 'Indiscriminate and Excessive Use of Force: Four Palestinians Killed During Arrest Raid,' 24 May 2006, [www.alhaq.org](http://www.alhaq.org).

<sup>33</sup> Quoted in Sergio Catignani, 'The Strategic Impasse in Low-Intensity-Conflicts: The Gap Between Israeli Counter-Insurgency Strategy and Tactics During the Al-Aqsa Intifada', *Journal of Strategic Studies*, 28, 2005, p. 65.

<sup>34</sup> Druker and Shelah, *Boomerang*, p. 218.

<sup>35</sup> Aviv Kochavi captured the attention of the media in February 2006 when the Chief Legal Adviser to the IDF recommended that he not make a planned trip to a UK-based military academy for fear he could be prosecuted for war crimes in Britain; for an earlier statement implicating Kochavi in war crimes, see Neve Gordon, 'Aviv Kochavi, How Did You Become a War Criminal?', [www.counterpunch.org/nevegordon1.html](http://www.counterpunch.org/nevegordon1.html).

<sup>36</sup> Chen Kotes-Bar, 'Bekichuvo' [Starring Him], *Ma'ariv*, 22 April 2005 [Hebrew].

<sup>37</sup> Eyal Weizman and Nadav Harel interview with Aviv Kochavi, 24 September 2004, at an Israeli military base near Tel Aviv [Hebrew]; video documentation by Nadav Harel and Zohar Kaniel.

<sup>38</sup> Bernard Tschumi, *Architecture and Disjunction*, Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1997. Naveh has recently completed the translation into Hebrew of some of the chapters in Tschumi's book.

<sup>39</sup> Terminology mainly from Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus, Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, Brian Masumi (trans.) New York and London: Continuum, 2004, and Gilles Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1995, among other works.

<sup>40</sup> 'Sedentary space is striated by walls, enclosures and roads between enclosures, while nomadic space is smooth, marked only by "traits" that are effaced and displaced with the trajectory.' Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, p. 420. On the rhizome see Introduction, pp. 3–28, on the war machine see pp. 387–467: on the smooth and the striated see pp. 523–51. Deleuze and Guattari were aware that states or their agents may transform themselves into war machines, and that, similarly, the conception of 'smooth space' may help form tools of domination.

<sup>41</sup> Amos Harel and Avi Isacharoff, *The Seventh War*, Tel Aviv: Miskal – Yedioth Aharonoth Books and Chemed Books, 2004, pp. 254–5.

<sup>42</sup> Interview with Gil Fishbein.

<sup>43</sup> Tsadok Yeheskel, 'I Made Them a Stadium in the Middle of the Camp' *Yedioth Aharonoth* 31 May 2002, access also on: [http://gush-shalom.org/archives/kurdi\\_eng.html](http://gush-shalom.org/archives/kurdi_eng.html).

<sup>44</sup> Three hundred and fifty buildings, mostly homes, were destroyed, a further 1,500 were damaged and about 4,000 people left homeless. Twenty-three Israeli soldiers were killed. Amnesty International, *Shielded from Scrutiny: IDF Violations in Jenin and Nablus*, 4 November 2002; and Stephen Graham, 'Constructing Urbicide by Bulldozer'.

<sup>45</sup> The following information is largely based on filmed research that Nadav Harel, Anselm Franke and I undertook during the rebuilding of the camp on August 2004.

<sup>46</sup> Nadav Harel, Eyal Weizman and Anselm Franke, filmed interview, Jenin, August 2004.

<sup>47</sup> A popular committee is a form of political representation that emerged during the first Intifada. It is based on the participatory democracy that developed within the occupied villages, refugee camps and cities under occupation. In most places, political parties from the main factions in the PLO, as well as Hamas and Islamic Jihad, appointed representatives.

<sup>48</sup> Gideon Levy, 'Tank lanes built between new Jenin homes', *Ha'aretz*, 10 May 2004.

<sup>49</sup> 'We got blamed for doing it this way but we made the roads wider for cars and ambulances – it would be silly not to. We just wanted to make a normal living area . . . we see it from a technical aspect, not in terms of war; the Israelis will come in regardless.' See Justin McGuirk, 'Jenin', *Icon Magazine*, no. 24, June 2005, [http://www.icon-magazine.co.uk/issues/024/jenin\\_text.htm](http://www.icon-magazine.co.uk/issues/024/jenin_text.htm). Members of the popular committee believed, however, that the decision to widen the roads was undertaken consciously by UNRWA in order to protect the new homes and were related to conditions imposed by an insurance policy.

<sup>50</sup> Moreover, about a hundred families in the camp managed to obtain financial aid from Saddam Hussein, some months before he was overthrown: each family which had lost its home received \$25,000, which was generally used to refurbish interiors and add furniture and electrical equipment. Levy, 'Tank Lanes', Harel, Weizman and Franke, filmed interviews.

<sup>51</sup> Quoted in Levy, 'Tank Lanes'. This is not always typical of the position of other refugees who were delighted with their new homes.

<sup>52</sup> Quoted in Hannan Greenberg, 'The Limited Conflict, This is How you Trick Terrorists', *Yedioth Aharonoth*, [www.ynet.co.il](http://www.ynet.co.il).

<sup>53</sup> Zuri Dar and Oded Hermoni, 'Israeli Start-Up Develops Technology to See Through Walls', *Ha'aretz*, 1 July 2004; Amir Golan, 'The Components of the Ability to Fight in Urban Areas', *Ma'aravot*, 384, July 2002, p. 97; The American Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) launched the *VisiBuilding* programme to promote the development of sensor technologies to scan structures from a distance and create detailed views of their interiors. Ross Stapleton-Gray, 'Mobile mapping: Looking through Walls for On-site Reconnaissance', *Journal for Net Centric Warfare* C4ISR, 11 September 2006.

<sup>54</sup> Brian Hatton, 'The Problem of our Walls', *The Journal of Architecture*, Volume 4, Spring 1999, p. 71. Krzysztof Wodiczko, *Public Address*, Walker Art Centre, Minneapolis, 1991, published in conjunction with an exhibition held at the Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, 11 Oct. 1992–3 Jan. 1993 and the Contemporary Arts Museum, Houston, May 22–Aug. 22, 1993.

<sup>55</sup> Pamela M. Lee, *Object to Be Destroyed: The Work of Gordon Matta-Clark*, Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2001.

<sup>56</sup> Robin Evans, 'The Rights of Retreat and the Rights of Exclusion: Notes Towards the Definition of the Wall', in *Translations from Drawing to Building and Other Essays*, London: Architectural Association, 1997, esp. p. 38; Brian Hatton, 'The Problem of Our Walls', *Journal of Architecture* 4 (71), Spring 1999, pp. 66–67.

<sup>57</sup> Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998, pp. 63–4.

<sup>58</sup> Giorgio Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*, Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1998, p. 187.

<sup>59</sup> Robert McNamara is of particular interest in this context, because under JFK's administration of the so-called 'best and the brightest', a number of academics and business directors were promoted to executive power. With McNamara as secretary of defence, technocratic management theory became the ubiquitous language for all military matters in the Pentagon during the 1960s. Guided by theoretical 'models', systems analysis, operational research, 'game theory' and numbers-driven management, McNamara's group of 'whizz kids' believed war was a rational business of projected costs, benefits and kill-ratios, and that if only these could be maximized, war could be won. Although the Pentagon under McNamara put much effort into modelling, and then fighting, according to these models, the Vietnamese guerrillas refused to act as 'efficient consumers' in the Pentagon's market economy, or as the 'rational opponents' in the 'game theories' of RAND – indeed, opinion has it that this approach led to the unnecessary prolongation of the Vietnam war. Paul Hendrickson, *The Living and the Dead*, New York, Vintage Books, 1997; Yehouda Shenhav, *Manufacturing Rationality*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999.

<sup>60</sup> With the growing integration of industrial society, these categories are losing their critical connotation, and tend to become descriptive, deceptive, or operational terms . . . Confronted with the total character of the achievements of advanced industrial society, critical theory is left without the rationale for transcending this society. The vacuum empties the theoretical structure itself, because the categories of a critical social theory were developed during the period in which the need for refusal and subversion was embodied in the action of effective social forces.' Herbert Marcuse, *One-Dimensional Man, Studies in the Ideology of Advanced Industrial Society*, Boston, MA: Beacon, 1991 [1964].

<sup>61</sup> Alistair Horne, *A Savage War of Peace: Algeria 1954–1962*, New York: Viking, 1978.

<sup>62</sup> Marshal Thomas Bugeaud, *La Guerre des Rues et des Maisons*, Paris: J.-P. Rocher, 1997. The manuscript was written in 1849 at Bugeaud's estate in the Dordogne, after his failure to suppress quickly the events of 1848. He did not manage to find a publisher for the book, but distributed a small edition among colleagues. In the text, Bugeaud suggested widening Parisian streets and removing corner buildings at strategic crossroads to allow a wider field of vision. These and other suggestions were implemented by Haussmann several years later; see Sharon Rotbard, *White City, Black City*, Tel Aviv: Babel, 2005, p. 181. [Hebrew] See also Thomas Bugeaud, *The War of Streets and Houses*, Chapter 3: 'Offensive Against The Riot' on <http://www.cabinmagazine.org/issues/22/bugeaud.php>.

<sup>63</sup> Auguste Blanqui, *Instructions pour une Prise d'Armes*, Paris: Société encyclopédique française, 1972; see [www.marxists.org/francais/blanqui/1866/instructions.htm](http://www.marxists.org/francais/blanqui/1866/instructions.htm).

<sup>64</sup> Rotbard, *White City, Black City*, p. 178.

<sup>65</sup> Benjamin Runkle, 'Jaffa, 1948, Urban Combat in the Israeli War of Independence', in Col. John Antal and Maj. Bradley Gericke (eds), *City Fights*, New York: Ballantine Books, 2003, p. 297.

- <sup>66</sup> On this, see Ryan Bishop, 'The Vertical Order Has Come to an End: The Insignia of the Military C3I and Urbanism in Global Networks', in Ryan Bishop, John Phillips and Wei-Wei Yeo (eds), *Beyond Description: Space Historicity Singapore, Architect Series*, London and New York: Routledge, 2004, pp. 60–78.
- <sup>67</sup> Hannan Greenberg, 'The Commander of the Gaza Division: The Palestinians are in shock', *Ynet*, 7 July 2006, [www.ynet.co.il](http://www.ynet.co.il).
- <sup>68</sup> Amir Rapaport, 'Dan Halutz is a Bluff, Interview with Shimon Naveh', *Ma'ariv*, Yom Kippur Supplement, 1 October 2006.
- <sup>69</sup> 'Networks are generally nested in hierarchies, nomads stick to riding camels and raiding, and war machines run on coal and petrol'. Paul Hirst, *Space and Power: Politics, War and Architecture*, London: Polity, 2005, p. 4.
- <sup>70</sup> Naveh explained it with a metaphor from the world of Jewish theology: it is an 'institutional conflict between Hassidim and Mitnagdim . . .'. Mitnagdim, Hebrew for 'opponents', is a term used to refer to Ashkenazi Orthodox Jews who opposed, from the late eighteenth century, the new religious practices of Hassidic Judaism. The term is commonly used to refer to inner institutional conflicts within a Jewish context between innovators and conservatives.
- <sup>71</sup> The state comptroller requested explanations for the fact that Naveh also worked part time at Tel Aviv University, and for the high pay that researchers received for extra hours. An investigation by the deputy commander of human resources at the IDF later cleared OTRI of such suspicions, but the General Staff leaked information about the investigation to the press. See Caroline Glick, 'Halutz's Stalinist moment: Why were Dovik Tamari and Shimon Naveh Fired?', *Jerusalem Post*, 17 June 2006 and Rapaport, 'Dan Halutz is a Bluff'. Currently Naveh is employed by US Marine Corps Development Command as senior mentor (sage) for their operational experiment 'Expeditionary Warrior'.
- <sup>72</sup> Yaakov Amidror, 'There is no Remote Control Wars', *Ha'aretz*, 4 July 2006.
- <sup>73</sup> Yaakov Amidror, 'Catastrophe to Military Thought', Makor Rishon, [www.makorrishon.co.il; http://www.makorrishon.co.il/show.asp?id=13186](http://www.makorrishon.co.il/show.asp?id=13186).
- <sup>74</sup> Rapaport, 'Dan Halutz is a Bluff'.
- <sup>75</sup> In a press conference on the Hebron Accord, former Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu was quoted as saying 'Hot pursuit is a sub-issue. It's a specific instance of a generic issue, and the generic issue is the freedom of action of Israel to protect its citizens wherever they are. And against whatever threats emanate from anywhere.' Ministry of Foreign Affairs, [www.mfa.gov.il](http://www.mfa.gov.il).

## Chapter 8 Evacuations: Decolonizing Architecture

- <sup>1</sup> The information on which this chapter is based has been gathered mostly first hand in the process of my involvement with planners from the Palestinian Ministry of Planning in preparation for the evacuation, and in debates and plans regarding possible reuse of the settlements in case they were left intact by Israeli forces. I was invited by the ministry to take part in this project and did so during several meetings from April to August 2005, when it became clear that the settlements were to be destroyed. Some of the conversation and the quotes are taken from other meetings, including a round table discussion at Shaml, the Palestinian Diaspora and Refugee Centre, on 6 November 2004.
- <sup>2</sup> Esther Zandberg, 'A pile of garbage with a view to Gaza's beach', *Ha'aretz*, 1 September 2005.
- <sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>4</sup> Natan Gutman and Shlomo Shamir, 'Rice: there is no place for the wholesale destruction of settlers' homes in the Gaza Strip during evacuation', *Ha'aretz*, 7 April 2005; Erica Silverman, 'Getting closer, Settlers gone, Gazans look forward to the Withdrawal of Israeli military forces', *Al-Ahram*, 1–7 September 2005.
- <sup>5</sup> Yuval Yoaz and Aluf Ben, 'Sharon: Ideally I would have left the homes standing', *Ha'aretz*, 3 May 2005.
- <sup>6</sup> 'Arab Billionaire Offers to Buy Evacuated Gaza Settlements', *Ha'aretz*, 18 February 2005.
- <sup>7</sup> Quoted in Greg Myre, 'Homes of Israeli Settlers Pose a New Set of Anxieties', *The New York Times*, 23 January 2005.
- <sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*