

ORIGINAL ARTICLE

Israel's Periphery Doctrines: Then and Now

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Abstract

One of Israel's first political strategies was its establishment of relations with non-Arab states through its "periphery doctrine." As a means of balancing pan-Arabism and outflanking its hostile Arab neighbors, the strategy served to enhance Israel's security and economic ties, and reduce regional isolation. Today, Israel operates under a "reverse periphery doctrine," having recently formed or improved ties with several Arab Gulf states and Eastern Mediterranean countries. The basis for the current Israeli strategy is the understanding by the involved parties that, despite specific political disagreements, they share certain security and economic interests for which an alliance can provide concrete, mutual benefits, especially countering the growing regional influences of Iran and Turkey. In both peripheries, Israel's diplomatic efforts were largely related to the relative power of Iran and Turkey, countries with which Israel had allied itself in the initial periphery. Their present-day power is the reason Israel is aligned against them in the reverse periphery. As the United States continues to recede from the Middle East, members of the reverse periphery will be further emboldened to work together in managing shared threats.