

Israeli Strategy for What Follows the Sykes-Picot Era

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The Rise and Fall of the Sykes-Picot System

Over the past hundred years, much of the Middle East was arranged according to a state-based rationale outlined by Sir Mark Sykes and François Georges-Picot, for what was then the Arab periphery of the collapsing Ottoman Empire. Pursuant to the 1916 agreement,¹ arbitrary borders were drawn that grouped adverse ethnic groups and competing religions together into states of a loose identity. Organizing in state frameworks was new to the region, which customarily grouped itself into local clan, tribal, ethnic, and religious frameworks under the remote rule of foreign empires.

What sustained the Sykes-Picot system were tough regimes that acted for their own benefit. The state was not a means for the self-determination of a nation, but primarily a framework for enabling opportunities and legitimacy to exercise force in the service of ruler interests. In the first wave, the system was based on kings, headed by the Hashemite family, with its origins in Saudi Arabia. This family was alternately given control over Syria, Iraq, and Jordan. The second wave to visit the Middle East consisted of military regimes, secular and ostensibly socialist. Both the kings and the generals promoted the idea of unique Arab national identities in order to strengthen the legitimacy of the state and the person at its helm.² This was especially obvious in states where the generals were part of a religious or ethnic minority (as in Syria and Iraq).

The third wave to visit the region was Islamic. The rationale of religious reorganization does not necessarily comply with the nation-state orientation

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and is likely to ignore borders or redraw them. At the same time, the label “Islamic” is itself misleading and comprises polarized elements. There is more that divides than is common between Sunni and Shiite movements; between the old guard of the Muslim Brotherhood and the new jihadist movements (such as ISIS); between organizations with national and territorial orientation (such as Hamas) and global organizations (such as al-Qaeda); between conservative establishments seeking to safeguard the status quo (such as the Saudi Wahhabi) and those seeking to destroy the existing system.

The weakness of the idea of distinct Arab nations has led to Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, Yemen, Sudan, and Libya undergoing different stages of disintegration, and additional states are liable to join them. Such disintegration has created the conditions for the ascent of other forces, such as jihadist Sunni movements, Shiite movements, ethnic groups such as the Kurds and the Druze, and groups of local or tribal identity.³ In contrast with military regimes of the second wave, which preserved the state frameworks that were consigned to kings of the first wave, the third wave is characterized by ambivalence, if not outright hostility, toward the notion of separate Arab nation states.

A more likely interpretation than the jihadist movements having caused the fall of the states is that the rise of the jihadist movements is the outcome of a vacuum left by the collapsing state frameworks. The state frameworks underwent an artificial birth and never gained any substantial collective content. Their resistance to challenges was in any case weak, and it was evident that sooner or later elements destined to erode them would emerge. Accordingly, while there is no certainty that it is precisely the players currently on the field, such as ISIS and Jabhat al-Nusra, that will continue to dominate the game in coming years, there is certainly a basis to assume that non-state actors (whether existing or new) will continue to challenge the Sykes-Picot rationale.

Four Nation States, the Southern Monarchies, and the Storm Surrounding Them

In the Middle East there are four nation states characterized by a well-grounded identity and a level of functioning and governance that allows for sufficient state coherence. These four states, Israel, Egypt, Turkey and Iran, are most likely to continue to play a central role in the future as well. Each of the four faces significant challenges, but all possess sufficient

national solidarity and state tools to enable them to deal adequately with those challenges. Even with shockwaves to the regimes (Iran in 1979, Egypt in 2011 and 2013, and Erdogan's slow motion revolution in Turkey) the state structure remains coherent.

Each of the four nation states borders one other nation state. In other words, generally speaking one can define the dynamic as between states that for the most part do not border each other. Israel and Egypt are currently status quo players that seek to prevent shockwaves, while Iran and to a lesser extent Turkey seek to reorganize the regional system in their favor. Iran stands out in its activation of a proxy apparatus and clandestine forces, which by now are dominant players in Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, and Yemen. Tehran stretches its long arms elsewhere as well, and they already reach East Africa and Central Asia and affect the other three nation states.

Despite the rivalry between some of the four nation states, the strategic mathematics do not dictate a specific deterministic relationship between them. Today one can indeed describe tri-polar dynamics, as Israel and Egypt (and Saudi Arabia)⁴ are coordinated in competition with Iran and with Turkey. However the spectrum of possible future dynamics is quite broad and may include a multilateral race for influence and footholds, a sort of Middle East "Great Game";⁵ the return of the "periphery pact" of the 1950s in which non-Arabs players formed a front against the Arabs; continuation of the current Sunni states-Israeli collaboration; an Israeli-Turkish strategic alliance (such as the alliance in the decade between 1992-2002); and perhaps even an Iranian-Israeli alliance (similar to the Israeli alliance with the Pahlavi dynasty). In fact, a look to the future reveals that any alignment of forces is possible based on the changing interpretation of the interests of each of the four nation states.

Situated in the south of the regional system is an additional array of players – the monarchies of Jordan, Saudi Arabia, and the Gulf principalities. The monarchies have thus far weathered the Arab Spring, but some have only a modest ability to withstand substantive challenges. In Jordan a family of Saudi origins rules over a Palestinian majority while the country is flooded by refugees from Syria and Iraq. At the same time the Islamic movement is gaining strength, thus raising fears over the survivability of the House of Hashim. Saudi Arabia is home to a large community of foreigners and a defiant Shiite minority. The state framework is looser and the survivability of the House of Saud is a source of concern. The monarchies (with the exception of Qatar) are also status quo players.

The area between the four nation states and the southern monarchies is witness to a mounting storm. Indeed, it is hard to sketch a dynamic analysis of this area, mainly with respect to the region's Sunni segment, which suffers from fragmentation, weak political and social structures, and turmoil. Moreover, the so-called Sunni "organizations" do not necessarily possess a lucid structure or an orderly decision making process. Loyalties and identities change frequently, stretching between localism and global jihad. Many of the activists in jihad organizations are not of the same ethnic background as the population in which they operate. It is uncertain whether the current actors will continue to dictate the future dynamic, but it is likely that the shakiness of the state frameworks, the prevalence of armed groups over the silent masses and public opinion, and instability will continue to characterize the Sunni segment of the region.

In contrast, segments that form more coherent organizational and political structures consist of distinct ethnic and religious groups such as the Kurds (and to a lesser extent the Druze and others), and certainly the Shiites and their allies (such as the Alawites). The region's Shiite

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segments define their political objectives clearly, pursue a rational strategy, embody a hierarchical structure, and are driven by a guiding Iranian hand. The Shiites face weighty challenges, mainly in places where they constitute a minority, but Iran provides them with strategic backing, industrial capabilities, and know-how. When it is practicable, the Shiite system aims to create territorial continuity; thus al-Qusayr, which connects the Shiite region in Lebanon with the Alawi region in Syria, has become a center of gravity in the current war.

The future dynamic of the Shiite system in the Sykes-Picot region might be shaped by the tension between its qualitative advantages and the possibility that Iran will overstretch itself in amassing footholds and allies. Overstretching in this context signifies the accumulation of excess commitments that exact heavy costs, including economic, military, diplomatic, political-internal, and legitimacy-related. This might result in Iran's weakening, its abandoning some of its efforts, or its becoming pinned down to specific commitments that constrain its freedom of action

or the attention it can devote to other matters. Iran's economy is similar in its resources to the economies of Argentina or the state of Maryland, but it operates simultaneously in a growing number of arenas laden with friction. At the same time, Iran's mode of operation, based on local populations and proxies, reduces the economic cost of its engagement in various arenas. In certain respects, from an Iranian viewpoint, friction is neither bothersome nor an encumbrance, but rather a preferred or at least tolerable course of action. Nevertheless, one cannot assert that there is no significant cost (of any type) to Iran, as it is involved at differing levels of intensity in a growing number of arenas; supports proxies and local populations; and rubs against Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Israel, Turkey, and other players. Iran must administer an intricate, growing weave of interests and strategies.

Naturally, the international powers also influence the future dynamics of the region. During the course of the 15 years following the 1991 Gulf War, the United States was the hegemon of the Middle East in a period that could be seen as dominated by a Pax Americana. However the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq brought the administration of George W. Bush (in its closing days), and even more so the Obama administration, to a point at which America's low willingness to bear costs and risks was the equation's constant. The variable consisted of US policy objectives. The Iranian nuclear challenge is an example of US consistency in its unwillingness to undertake risks and costs and the resulting inconsistency in its policy objectives; indeed its objectives are in a steady process of erosion. Similarly, the United States struggles with reading the map (for example, the Arab Spring), setting policy (toward Assad, for example), and translating policy into reality. It is not clear whether the US under Obama still views the world through a prism that reveals a front of allies to be strengthened in the face of an axis of adversaries that must be weakened. On the one hand, Obama has been critical of allies if not worse (Mubarak, for example), while on the other hand, he acts to placate his adversaries and those of his allies (Iran, for example). All this dilutes the value of American patronage. It is possible that Obama assesses that it is more cost effective to reach an equilibrium with his adversaries than to sustain his allies in their struggles.

On more and more critical issues, such as the Iranian nuclear issue, Operation Protective Edge,⁶ the chemical weapons crisis in Syria, or the backing of President el-Sisi, Washington and Jerusalem have disagreeing viewpoints. One cannot assess what United States policy will be under the next president, but the American reality is changing in a manner that

makes it dangerous to assume that what came before Obama is likely to return after him. The US is undergoing a geostrategic transformation in its becoming independent in terms of energy and a leading energy exporter. In addition, American demographics are changing, and with them, also the country's world view. Israel must prepare for a reality of lessening American interest in it and in the Middle East.⁷

Israeli Strategy for a Turbulent Environment

Israel is a status quo player that seeks to prevent non-agreed upon changes in reality and the emergence of threats. As such, it is currently challenged in two ways. The first consists of actors that seek to compel a nonconsensual change in reality through direct, indirect, or soft power. These players today include nation states such as Iran and to a lesser extent Turkey; players defined as non-state actors but that constitute part of an organized supra-state system with abundant capabilities (such as Hizbollah); some Palestinian organizations; and players that are a symptom of the disintegration of the Arab nation state. And indeed, one must distinguish between players that are themselves the root cause of a challenge (such as Iran) and players that are a symptom of another problem (such as ISIS). The second threat to Israel is the current reality of the regional system, with its shaky political and strategic structures and high volatility. In such an environment, any working assumption is liable to find itself challenged and in fact, nothing can be taken for granted.

Israel's goals and the threats it currently faces align its interests with those of other status quo players such as the pro-military government in Egypt, the House of Saud, and the House of Hashim. However, there is a risk of a third revolution in Cairo and the fall of the kings in Riyadh and Amman; thus it is dangerous to turn the present snapshot into a working assumption. Nonetheless, one can argue that the current primary fault line in the region no longer relates to the Arabs against the Israelis, and that the Arab-Israeli conflict now remains primarily the Palestinian issue.

Countries like Syria were foes of Israel but also partners in forming strategic systems that generally sought stability. The vulnerability nodes of the Alawite regime, for example, were well known and militarily accessible to Israel. Israel established deterrence vis-à-vis the regime, which was the basis for a strategic equilibrium. The Alawite regime behaved rationally and predictably, and up to 2011 had the power to impose its authority upon all of Syria. Thus it fulfilled its assigned role in the strategic system. In addition,

the artificial and weak Sykes-Picot states insulated Israel somewhat from the stronger forces on their other side, mainly Iran and Turkey.

Such being the case, the disintegration of the Arab nation states creates two challenges for Israel: the upsetting of local stability on its border, and deepened penetration, both direct and indirect, of Iran and other distant players all the way to Israel's border. Clearly Israel is not able to decide (as opposed to influence) who sits on its border, but the alternatives seem to be either to have strong opponents that are rational and coherent or weak opponents that are loosely defined and unpredictable.

Israel suffers a competitive disadvantage in political engineering beyond its borders, and when it has tried this route, it has for the most part failed.⁸ Therefore even if the decline of both Arab nation states and American hegemony are producing a vacuum being filled by numerous players – from the Iranians and Turks to the jihadists and Russians – Israel should not attempt to politically engineer the spaces beyond its borders. Due to this consideration as well as cost considerations, Israel should not take part in a Great Game of the Middle East, i.e., seizing regions of influence and footholds. However, the Great Game is liable to reach areas near Israel in which it has vital interests. Accordingly, Israel is likewise unable to turn a blind eye to what is emerging beyond its borders.

Israel must act to curb players that seek a forcible change in the regional system and contain the emergence of threats, in part through cooperation – even if temporary, fragile, and discreet – with a maximum number of possible players. Israel must certainly continue to cooperate with Egypt (with respect to Gaza, Sinai, and other common interests), contribute to Jordan's security in the face of internal and external threats, and maximize the advantage of the common interests with Saudi Arabia. It should arm and participate in the funding of ethnic groups such as the Kurds,⁹ Druze, and others. Israel and Russia have limited conflicting interests, and thus dialogue is possible, for example, over the manner of stabilizing Syria such that it would not impact adversely on Russian or Israeli interests. Furthermore, there is the possibility of attaining equilibrium, even if temporary and fragile, with local groups such as Jabhat al-Nusra in the south of the Syrian Golan Heights. For both Israel and Jabhat al-Nusra's local group it appears more important to prevent Iran and Hizbollah from establishing footholds in that area; thus it is possible to at least attain a state of mutual disregard (as "non-fighting opponents"). While such a possibility is tenuous and liable to unravel at any moment, it is illustrative of the approach of striving

for a maximum of restraining and stabilizing measures, even if temporary. Furthermore it is necessary to conduct ongoing situation assessments, for if ISIS, for example, threatens to base itself in the Syrian Golan, it might be that a Hizbollah presence is actually preferable. Hizbollah is a more threatening force, but could be a more suitable partner in forming agreed upon game rules. In an unstable environment one cannot assume that a move of any sort will produce a stable and fixed reality; however, a series of temporary measures may help ride the waves of the tumult.

Military power also needs to conform to the post-Sykes-Picot reality. The IDF has already executed long range operations, but they have been pinpoint in nature and limited in their resources and goals. It is possible that alongside its traditional capabilities, the IDF will be required to project force, and for the first time even wage an extensive campaign against Iran, a strong and non-bordering nation state. In addition, the spectrum of non-state enemies is widening. At one end there is Hizbollah, which is expanding beyond the scope of a guerrilla organization and is acquiring the capabilities of a strong state. It has capabilities that make it ready to operate from deep inside its territory, which today stretches across much more than merely Lebanon. Therefore a campaign against Hizbollah has new implications in terms of theater size and borders and the threat this organization poses to Israel.

Furthermore, one must recognize the limitations of power against jihadist-like non-state threats. Military force is capable of removing concrete threats, but is hard pressed to deliver end states that represent another reality. When the root cause is the disintegration of the state system, with the threat that emerges merely being a symptom, military force is capable of treating the symptom, but cannot rebuild the state system beyond the border. Moreover, due to the looseness of political structures and the multiplicity of players, it is difficult to evaluate ahead of time the outcome of a military act and the political reality that would ensue. Accordingly, in this context, military operations that seek to change reality are of questionable feasibility.

Iran Penetrates the Arab Vacuum

While the strategic mathematics do not predetermine rivalry between Iran and Israel, Iran has decided to position itself as Israel's arch adversary, and the weakening of the Sykes-Picot system offers a ready context for turning Iran into Israel's primary strategic challenge. On the one hand, a once-primary threat is dimming, i.e., the symmetrical threat from a

bordering state that enjoys backing from an antagonistic superpower. On the other hand, Arab weakness is producing the conditions for Iran's deep penetration into regions where Israel has vital interests (the Syrian Golan, Lebanon, Gaza, the Red Sea, Bab-el-Mandeb Straights, and others).

But the main challenge is the nuclear issue. It is beyond the scope of this article to elaborate on this issue, but suffice it to say that Iran's nuclearization, or its becoming a threshold state (with breakout capability for a weapon whenever it decides) has two implications. The first is the direct threat. The greater part of the conceptualization of nuclear relations originates from the Cold War, but that conceptualization is less relevant for an embryonic nuclear system among regional players in which a "first strike" may be feasible and could constitute a rational step.¹⁰ The second implication is the negative effect on the regional dynamic. Popping out of a Pandora's Box are intensifying Iranian hegemony, the strengthening of Iran and its proxies in sub-nuclear conflicts, a multilateral nuclear arms race, nuclear arming of fragile regimes, and the loss of control over nonconventional weaponry.

Israel erred in the orchestration of the internationalization of the nuclear challenge. Its influence over the outcome of the crisis diminished, and de facto it invited an arrangement that does not reach Israel's minimum criteria as it will be formulated by risk-averse diplomats with fewer interests at stake. All of the actions taken up to now by the various players have not led to Iran abandoning its nuclear objective, and Iran continues to maneuver tactically toward achieving that objective. In the background, the Obama administration hints at striving for a grand bargain with Iran that will contribute to arranging the Middle East in the era of diminishing Sykes-Picot rationale and a diminishing Pax Americana.¹¹ The grand bargain may address not only the nuclear issue but also Iraq, Syria, ISIS (which was promoted from the rank of a symptom to the rank of a root problem), certain aspects in Afghanistan, and more. It is possible that Obama is striving for equilibrium with Iran and for a regional political map that is fundamentally different. Should Iran indeed change its spots, then such a reality would likely also change Israel's strategic map. However in the absence of a deep reason to change, it is more reasonable to assess that Iran will only exploit the carrots

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offered by the US as well as the opportunity to evade American sticks in order to advance its current objectives.

The Israeli strategy for general containment of Iran must stand on three legs. First, it is necessary to exploit the new opportunity for collaboration with actors from the region in order to curb the expansion of Iranian hegemony. It is even possible to look into the possibility of cooperating with elements that in any case operate in the theaters of friction in which Iran also operates – this in order to increase the price exacted from Iran due to its commitments in these various theaters. Second, it is necessary to project force directly at Iran (and not only at its proxies) and develop the ability to conduct an extensive campaign against it. Third, Israel must “kinetically” thwart selected concrete threats in regions in which it has vital interests. As for the nuclear issue, Israel must aim to defend its vital interests diplomatically. However if it becomes apparent that the US is consistent in ignoring Israel’s positions, then having no other choice, Israel must seek the circumstances and method that would allow it to attain unilateral influence over Iran’s nuclear program.

A Palestinian State and the Anti-State Wave

The diminishment of the Sykes-Picot system and, in its wake, the strengthening of Arab anti-state forces and Iranian hegemony, has a number of implications for the Palestinian issue. First, despite the absence of a solution to the Palestinian problem, Israel and the surviving Arab regimes have come closer to one another. It seems that a solution to the Palestinian problem is no longer a precondition for cooperation (although this is primarily a tacit change); indeed, the majority of those surviving Arab regimes even sided with Israel in the latest conflict in Gaza.

Second, the regional changes and the rise of anti-state forces weaken the premise that calls for the immediate establishment of a Palestinian state. The Fatah movement took the stage during the second regional wave together with Nasserism and the Ba’ath Party; however, today it is an aging bureaucracy suffering problems of internal legitimacy and perceptions and accusations of corruption. What is surprising is that Fatah still survives, and ironically, the force that to a large extent sustains its rule is the IDF. Despite all of the rhetoric, diplomacy, and even violence, two strong and hidden equilibriums support the status quo. The first is the question whether Fatah will survive an IDF withdrawal from the West Bank. The second is the fact that the status quo is more convenient to Hamas than an accord with Israel.

Hamas is affiliated with and part of the Muslim Brotherhood (and enjoys partial Turkish backing), and the Palestinian Islamic Jihad movement is an Iranian proxy. The notion that it is possible to package the three mutually hostile organizations, which represent such contradictory agenda, together with strong local Palestinian elements into a coherent, stable, and peace-seeking state seems far removed from the empirical conditions.

Third, the weakness and volatility of the political structures strengthens the school of thought that the defense of Israel cannot be based on international agreements. And indeed, the security arrangements proposed in the past vis-à-vis Syria would collapse today had they been implemented.¹² The IDF's withdrawal from Gaza in 2005 also provides important lessons, for it brought about the fall of the Fatah regime in the Gaza Strip and loss of Israeli freedom to prevent the emergence of threats. The threat that resulted from the loss of boots on the ground has to date drawn Israel into three military campaigns in the Strip, whose accumulated official cost totals more than NIS 20 billion (the actual cost is much higher). The threat, however, has not been removed, and Israel is forced to continue living under its shadow. There are threats whose emergence may be thwarted, but it is a challenge to remove those threats at a tolerable cost once they have already emerged. It follows that future Israeli strategy must be based on the unilateral prevention of the emergence of threats between the Mediterranean Sea and the Jordan River – and not on risk taking and dealing with threats after they have emerged.

Nonetheless, one cannot ignore the fact that the Palestinian issue continues to disturb Israel's relations with the West and is exacting an increasing price. The settlements, which are perceived as frustrating the possibility for a future political arrangement, are liable to result in Israeli overstretching and the need to pay a disproportionate political and economic price. Therefore, Israel must present the long term objective of a Palestinian state and bestow it with credibility through a unilateral and unconditional cessation of settlement activity. At the same time, Israel must recognize that the objective is not attainable in the existing reality and insist that even in peacetime Israel will maintain the freedom to prevent unilaterally the emergence of threats in the area between the Mediterranean Sea and the Jordan River.

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Wall Strategy, Alliances, and Drawing Iran into Overstretching

After a hundred years, the Arab-Israeli conflict is losing its edge for several reasons. The Arab regimes that have survived – Egypt, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, and the Gulf monarchies – have become, practically speaking, Israel's allies; countries like Syria, Iraq, and Libya virtually no longer exist; adversarial relations with Hizbollah and its ilk stem from Iranian rather than Arab contexts; and as far as the Sunni jihadists are concerned, Israel is just another target from among many. That said, the conflict with the Palestinians remains.

The new primary fault line lies between the status quo players and those that seek a forcible, nonconsensual change of reality. This new fault line also enables alliances and cooperation with Arab states and with local and ethnic groups such as the Kurds and the Druze. An additional challenge is posed by the loose and stormy regional reality, where a question mark looms over everything and nothing can be taken for granted. Therefore, Israel must prepare itself for a graver spectrum of possibilities than the one presently visible.

Israel, as a player with limited resources and low capabilities for politically engineering third parties, must focus on a defensive "wall strategy." It does not need to entangle itself and waste resources on adventures in the Arab regions beyond its own borders. However, Israel must cooperate with whomever it can in curbing the shocks and in deepening Iran's descent into overstretching itself. Routinely, Israel must exert military force unassumingly in order to thwart selected concrete threats in regions where Israel has vital interests (with the exception of unique contexts such as an extensive campaign against Hizbollah, the defense of Jordan, and others).

Deepened Iranian penetration into Arab regions in which Israel has vital interests, as well as the nuclear threat, obliges Israel to build up force for projecting power and even conduct an extensive campaign against Iran, a strong nation state that does not border Israel. Presumably, Israel will need to ascertain the circumstances and the way of achieving unilateral influence over Iran's path to nuclear arms.

As for the Palestinian issue, the collapse of the Sykes-Picot system and current constraints limit Israel's navigational freedom to a narrow pathway. On the one hand Israel must preserve its relations with the West as much as possible, present the long term objective of a Palestinian state, and immediately freeze settlements; on the other hand, it must recognize and convey the practical difficulties of establishing a Palestinian state,

precisely at a time when Arab state frameworks are unraveling and the different Palestinian organizations are presenting conflicting and mutually hostile agendas. From the loss of its capabilities in Gaza in 2005 and from the three subsequent campaigns it fought in Gaza without having removed the threat, Israel must learn that there are threats that once extant are seemingly impossible to uproot at a reasonable price. Therefore the future Israeli strategy must be based on a military presence in the Jordan Valley and on the freedom to foil threats in the West Bank.

Notes

- 1 The Sykes-Picot agreement was never realized to the letter. However the agreement and the British and French mandates created in its aftermath laid the foundation for the organizing of states in the region.
- 2 What added to the confusion of identities at that time was the development of the notion of pan-Arabism, which led to a number of unification attempts between different Arab states.
- 3 Yoel Guzansky and Erez Striem, "New-Old Borders in the Middle East," *INSS Insight* No. 486, November 19, 2013.
- 4 Yoel Guzansky and Oded Eran, "Resuscitating US-Saudi Relations," *INSS Insight*, April 2, 2014.
- 5 The Great Game was a competition between the superpowers for acquiring land and influence in Central Asia in the early nineteenth century.
- 6 Ron Tira, "Operation Protective Edge: Ends, Ways and Means and the Distinct Context," *Infinity Journal*, IJ Exclusive, September 2014.
- 7 Mark Lander, "Rice Offers a More Modest Strategy for Mideast," *New York Times*, October 26, 2013.
- 8 From the attempt to replace Nasser with a friendly president, to the attempt to enthrone the Christians in Lebanon, through aid to the Palestinian "village associations" in order to produce a rival to the PLO.
- 9 Gallia Lindenstrauss and Oded Eran, "The Kurdish Awakening and the Implications for Israel," *Strategic Assessment* 17, no. 1 (2014).
- 10 Ron Tira, "Can Iran Be Deterred?" Hoover Institution, *Policy Review* No. 169, October 1, 2011.
- 11 Michael Doran, "Obama's Secret Iran Strategy," *Mosaic*, February 2, 2015.
- 12 Security arrangements proposed during negotiations with Syria in the 1990s at Wye Plantation and security arrangements formulated by General Allen for an accord with the Palestinians today seem irrelevant, particularly in light of the collapse of the Syrian regime and the danger regarding the future of the Jordanian regime. See Ron Tira, *Forming an Israeli Policy toward Syria* (Tel Aviv: Yediot Ahronot, 2000), pp. 146-51.