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## The Superpowers and the Syrian-Israeli Conflict

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## The Superpowers and the Syrian-Israeli Conflict

also increase.

*Ruben M. Hernandez*

COBBAN, HELENA, *THE SUPERPOWERS AND THE SYRIAN-ISRAELI CONFLICT*; Praeger Publishers, New York, NY (1991); \$19.95; ISBN 0-275-93944-8; 208pp. (hardcover).

Cobban succeeds in offering a detached, unemotional analysis of the highly complex and controversial issue of the Syrian-Israeli dispute. Her analysis begins with the central premise that the dispute is a function of local rivalry, rather than the result of inter-power conflict. Encompassing the evolution of the military balance between Israel and Syria from 1978 through 1990, the book focuses on the effects of the close strategic ties that developed between the two and their superpower partners.

This work was intended as a historical case study of developments among Israel, Syria, the Soviet Union and the United States during this limited period. The goal of this approach was to illustrate valuable lessons for application in the 1990s. After the Gulf War, the work has particular historic relevance.

The book begins with an up-to-the-minute preface analyzing the effects of the Persian Gulf War on the balance of the Syrian-Israeli relationship. Miraculously, the Gulf War aligned Syria and Israel on the "same side" of the conflict, and dramatically altered relations between the two. Cobban analyzes the impact the Gulf war had on Syria and Israel, as well as the impact on the relationship between their superpower allies. Ongoing strife in Lebanon is also addressed, since it proved to be a crucial factor in the Syrian-Israeli relationship, and in that of the powers maneuvering for influence in the Middle East.

Cobban continues her analysis by examining the region's relative immunity to various diplomatic efforts, efforts successful in other areas of the world during the 1980s. Special note is made of the fact that the arsenals of Syria and Israel, now the preeminent powers in the Middle East, remain a serious global threat.

A formula for well-considered diplomacy in the 1990s that could lead to a lasting peace concludes the book. Cobban suggests that policymakers considering the challenge of Arab-Israel peacemaking in this decade can gain useful lessons from the Syrian-Israeli conflict of the 1980s. The most important lesson, says Cobban, is that the volatile conflict between Israel and her neighbors must be moved into real negotiations that address the concerns of all those involved.

MENDES, MARIO MARQUES, *ANTITRUST IN A WORLD OF INTERRELATED ECONOMIES*; Editions de l'Université de Bruxelles, Belgique (1991); ISBN 2-8004-1019-1; 267pp. Foreword by John H. Jackson, bibliography.

Originally written in 1983-84 as a requirement for an LLM degree from the University of Michigan, this work was expanded and extensively