Book Proposal

**From Instability to Stability:**

**Studies in History, Society, and Culture in Jordan’s Hashemite Kingdom**

Editor: Ronen Yitzhak

Dear ……,

Edinburgh University Press

I would like to submit the book, *From Instability to Stability: Studies in History, Society, and Culture in Jordan’s Hashemite Kingdom* for consideration for publication with your press.

**Prof. Ronen Yitzhak** is Head of the Middle Eastern Studies Department at Western Galilee College in Acre, Israel. His academic interests include the modern history of Jordan, military intelligence, and terror during the 1948 Arab-Israeli War. From 2012–2015, he served as co-editor of *The New East* (*Hamizrah Hehadash*), the Hebrew journal of the Middle East and Islamic Studies Association of Israel (MEISAI).

He has published three books and over twenty articles in peer reviewed journals. His book *Abdullah al-Tall - Arab Legion Officer: Arab Nationalism and Opposition to the Hashemite Regime* (Brighton: Sussex Academic Press, 2012) was published in an Arabic version in Amman in 2016.

**Background**

The proposed edited book will include a number of new studies addressing a variety of aspects of the history, society, politics, and culture of modern Jordan. The studies will provide new, and occasionally controversial, perspectives on various issues pertaining to Jordanian society.

The studies included in the book examine the various reasons for the survival of the Hashemite rule in Jordan. The year of this writing marks the centenary of the Hashemite regime in Jordan, one of the oldest and most stable regimes in the Middle East. More than any other Arab regime, the Hashemites have faced challenges, threats, and rebellions, most recently surviving the Arab Spring and threats from the Islamic State (ISIS).

The book will address the Hashemites’ survival from different perspectives, and will discuss the historical, social, cultural, and political factors connecting these approaches. Applying this multidisciplinary approach to the question of the survival of the Hashemite regime, this book seeks to answer the following questions: Did the formation of a Jordanian-British alliance helped to maintain political stability? To what extent did King Abdullah II's liberal policy affect the stability of the regime? Did the Palestinians in Jordan succeed in integrating into the Jordanian state and cease to endanger political stability? Is the Hashemite regime’s connection to Jerusalem still important? To what extent and how are Jordan’s minorities involved in government? Why is Jordan considered one of the most stable countries in the Arab world despite its economic problems? Can the stability of the government be strengthened by promoting and preserving the environment?

**Key Features and Contributions**

The diverse studies in this book from multiple disciplines will be based on primary and secondary sources, including archives, newspapers, literary works, memoires, and more. The chapters will address a variety of issues, some already widely acknowledged as important, but nonetheless worthy of further discussion, and others which have yet been the subject of in-depth academic research. Examples of the latter range from the development of Jordanian literature to the Christian and Druze minorities in Jordan, which are generally under-researched in English-language scholarship.

**Keywords:** Jordan; Amman; The Hashemite regime; King Abdullah I; King Abdullah II; King Hussein; Palestine; Bedouin; Minorities in Jordan; Economic

Culture; Holy places; Jerusalem

**Synopsis of the aims, scope, argument, and approach of the book**

The book will examine the survival of the Hashemite regime over the years through new research on the historical, social, and political background of modern Jordan. Each chapter will present a separate aspect and point of view from the perspective of a different discipline, including Middle Eastern studies, history, politics, the social sciences, literature, and cultural studies. Together, the chapters will help clarify how and why the Hashemite regime in Jordan has survived for so long.

The book will be divided into two parts. The first part, edited by Ronen Yitzhak, will deal with the history and politics of Jordan. The five chapters in this part will discuss the establishment of Transjordan and the Hashemite regime, the choice of Amman as the capital, the Jordanian government and its liberal policies, Jordanian-Palestinian national identity, and the question of the legitimacy of Hashemite regime.

The second part, to be edited by Dorit Gottesfeld, will cover society, economy, and culture. This part will include four chapters on: the role of minorities in Jordan (the Bedouin, the Circassians, the Christians, and the Druze); the economy of Jordan; environmental cooperation between Jordan and Israel; and contemporary Jordanian literature.

The book will include a wide range of topics **–** history, politics, society, economics and culture **–** and hence will be suitable for researchers from different disciplines. The short length of the articles (up to 8,000 words) may also suit the wider public, giving the public exposure to a number of issues, while at the same time providing a unique reading and learning experience.

**Chapter Summaries**

**Introduction**

This section presents the purpose of the book and a brief description of its content and chapters.

**Part I - History and Politics**

**Chapter 1 – From a Town to a Capital City: The Transformation of Amman into a Capital City of Jordan (Marwan D. Hanania, University of California, Berkeley, USA)**

This chapter will analyze the political and strategic reasons for the choice of the Circassian town of Amman as the capital of the new state. Amman was originally the garrison for the Circassian military force tasked with the defense of the Hashemite regime. Therefore, over the years, Amman has played an important role in maintaining political stability in Jordan. Organized opposition to the regime always sprang up in other areas of the kingdom, but never from Amman.

**Chapter 2 – Establishment of Jordan and the Alliance with the West (Ronen Yitzhak, Western Galilee College, Acre, Israel)**

This chapter will describe the establishment of Transjordan and the ties that it created with Great Britain. It will argue that relations with Britain, and with the West in general, were influential in protecting the Hashemite regime during the first decades of Jordanian independence.

**Chapter 3 – Liberalism in Jordan (Laszlo Csicsmann, Corvinus University of Budapest, Hungary)**

This chapter will discuss the connection between King Abdullah II's policy of liberalization and the survival of the Hashemite regime. It will show how the relatively high level of liberalization in Jordan, compared to other Arab countries, contributed to the survival of the Hashemite regime.

**Chapter 4 – Jordanian or Palestinian? The Question of National Identity in Jordan (Nur Koprulu, Near East University, Nicosia)**

This chapter will discuss the question of Jordanian identity, with special attention to the Palestinians. Since the Palestinians have a history of actively opposing the Jordanian regime, often posing a threat to its stability, the author will examine whether the Palestinians have finally adopted a Jordanian identity or remain a threat to the stability of the Hashemite regime.

**Chapter 5 – Jordan and Jerusalem: The Legitimation to the Hashemite Regime** **(Bartosz Wroblewski, Krakow University, Poland)**

This chapter will examine whether the influence of the Hashemite family in Jerusalem is indeed the basis for the legitimacy of the Jordanian government and the source of stability of the kingdom.

**Part II – Society, Economics and Culture**

**Chapter 6 – Minorities in Jordan (Muhammad Sawaed, Western Galilee**

**College, Acre, Israel)**

This chapter will review the integration of ethnic and religious minorities in Jordanian politics, society, and economy. These minorities, including Circassians, Druze, and Christians, are well integrated into Jordanian society and hold key positions in the country. For example, Christian Jordanians control close to half of the country’s economy despite comprising of only two percent of the Jordanian population. The chapter will illustrate how the integration of minorities into Jordanian society plays an important role in the stability of the kingdom.

**Chapter 7 – Jordanian Economics (Onn Winckler, University of Haifa, Israel)**

Maintaining the economy is the biggest challenge for the current Jordanian government. While the country faces ongoing economic crises, it has thus far maintained its stability. This chapter endeavors to explain the reasons for this paradox.

**Chapter 8 – Environmental Cooperation between Jordan and Israel and the Geopolitical Meanings (Yael Teff-Seker, University of California, Davis, USA)**

Non-governmentalenvironmental cooperationbetween Jordanians and Israelis can contribute to improving political relations in the Middle East. Economic projects, environmental preservation, efforts to restore the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aqaba, water desalination, and gas transportation are just some examples of projects that can help improve relations between Jordan and Israel while also strengthening the Hashemite regime.

**Chapter 9- Contemporary Jordanian Literature (Dorit Gottesfeld, Bar-**

**Ilan University, Israel)**

This chapter will examine contemporary literary works in Jordan and their unique style of writing. The discussion will focus on questions such as whether writers enjoy a free and liberal climate, whether they write exclusively about social matters, or also about political issues, and how this is related to maintaining the country’s stability.

**Conclusion**

**List of authors**

**Bibliography: Research on Jordan**

**Index**

**Potential Readership**

The proposed book is intended for a wide audience, including academics and scholars. Since it is an interdisciplinary volume including the fields of history, international relations, social sciences, and literature, it should attract a wide and varied audience In addition to the world of academia, the book can prove important for diplomats, statesmen, military personnel, and journalists.

**Market Survey**

In recent years, a number of books have been published on various issues regarding Jordan, including the Muslim Brotherhood, the status of women, Jordanian-United States relations, and more. One edited book published in 2019 that includes a wide range of topics is *The Palgrave Handbook of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan*, 2019, edited by P.R. Kumaraswamy. This book, non-academic and easy to read, seems intended for the general public. The drawbacks of the book include the short length of the articles (averaging 5,000 words each), the lack of cohesion between the articles or an overarching thesis. Finally, this edited volume lacks certain themes that we intend to include in our book, such as Jordanian literature and environmental cooperation.

**Comparable Edinburgh University Press titles**

1. Lorraine Charles, Ilan Pappe and Monica Ronchi (eds.), *Researching the Middle East: Cultural, Conceptual, Theoretical and Practical Issues* (2020).
2. Anthony Gorman and Didier Monciaud (eds.), *The Press in the Middle and North Africa, 1850-1950: Politics, Social History and Culture* (2019).

**Book’s Elements**

The proposed book consists of eight chapters. Each study averages 7,000**–**8,000 words. With the introduction and summary, the book will amount to 75,000 words.

**Anticipated Completion**

July 2022 **–** Submission of chapters for peer review

August **–** Review

October **–** Resubmission of chapters (after reviewers’ comments, if there are any comments)

March**–**April 2023 – Publication

**Research funding**

The academic institutions with which we are associated will contributed to funding the book. As researchers, we also have designated budgets for this purpose. We will also seek additional funding sources.

**CV**

**Edited collection – special requirements:**

As mentioned, the edited book will include eight chapters. All the scholars have agreed to write new studies specifically for this edited book. This book will be a unique collaboration between Jews, Christians, and Muslims, with men and women equally represented among the contributors who represent five different countries, as seen in the chapter summaries above.

To ensure the quality of the articles, we will review them internally prior to submission and will work in close consultation with colleagues and experts. As a former journal editor and after publishing a special issue in the *Middle Eastern Studies* *Journal* (Vol. 57, Issue. 3, 2021), I have extensive experience in reviewing and editing articles and in making informed decisions regarding acceptance or rejection.