

Guardians of the Arab state@when militaries intervene in politics, from Iraq to Mauritania

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Résumé ou extrait : Présentation de l'éditeur : "Guardians of the Arab state' explains clearly and concisely how and why military organisations become involved in politics across the Middle East and North Africa, identifying four key factors: a high degree of organisational capacity, clear institutional interest, a forgiving population and weak civilian control. Looking at numerous case studies ranging from Mauritania to Iraq, the book finds that these factors are common to all Arab countries to have experienced coups in the last century. It also finds that the opposite is true in cases like Jordan, where strong civilian control and the absence of capacity, interest, or a positive public image made coup attempts futile. Gaub also convincingly argues that the reasons are structural rather than cultural, thereby proving a counter-narrative to conventional explanations which look at Arab coups along religious or historical lines. In essence, the questions addressed herein lead back to issues of weak statehood, legitimacy, and resource constraints -- all problems the Arab world has struggled with since independence. 'Guardians of the Arab state' picks up where previous literature on Middle Eastern military forces dropped the debate, and provides an updated and insightful glimpse into the soul of Arab armies."

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