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Guardians of the state or the regime? Examining the behaviour of
the Egyptian military during the 2011 uprising.

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Abstract

The Arab military has long been a key player within the institutions of the state, particularly in Egypt. It was no surprise then that when the Arab Spring took hold in Cairo in January 2011 and President Hosni Mubarak was overthrown, that the military stepped in to fill the power vacuum. This thesis investigates the role of the Egyptian military in the 2011 uprising. To understand how this situation eventuated, it provides an in depth analysis of the role of the military in the Egyptian state since 1952 when Egypt first became a republic. It explores the deep roots that the military has set throughout the institutions of the state under the guidance of three authoritarian Presidents. By examining the modern institutional history of the Egyptian military, it provides tools for understanding why it is now behaving in the way it is. Primarily this is based on its attempts to either remain in power, or entrench itself further in Egyptian politics so that it is able to maintain its position of privilege once a democratically elected President comes to power.

Key words: Arab Spring, SCAF, Egypt, Military, New Institutionalism, Sultanistic regime, Non-democratic civil-military relations, Mubarak, Freedom and Justice Party, Muslim Brotherhood.

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