

Analyzing Chat GPT Essay on the Arab Spring and Occupy Wall Street

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COMM 179 - Media and Resistance

November 3 2024

Section I, Prompts

Prompt 1: Write a 1000 word essay on The Arab Spring and the Occupy Wall Street movement. Focus on how each movement was influenced by social media.

Prompt 2: Write a 1000 word essay on The Arab Spring and the Occupy Wall Street movement. Focus on how each movement was influenced by social media and the culture of the people that participated.

Prompt 3: Write a 1000 word essay on The Arab Spring and the Occupy Wall Street movement. Focus specifically on the impact social media had on the movements and the strengths the platforms provided.

Prompt 4: Write a 1000 word essay on The Arab Spring and the Occupy Wall Street movement. Focus specifically on the usage of social media platforms during this time, and how the politics of that time influenced the message and motivations.

Prompt 5: Write a 1000 word essay on The Arab Spring and the Occupy Wall Street movement. Focus heavily on the prevalence of social media, and compare the two events.

Prompt 6: Write a 1000 word essay on The Arab Spring and the Occupy Wall Street movement. Focus on the use of social media in order to achieve the goals of the movement organizers, along with the possibility of the movements taking inspiration from each other.

Prompt 7: Write a 1000 word essay on The Arab Spring and the Occupy Wall Street movement. Focus on how social media was used as a tool to strengthen each movement, as well as the reasons that these movements happened.

Prompt 8: Write a 1000 word essay on The Arab Spring and the Occupy Wall Street movement. Focus on how social media was used as a tool to strengthen each movement, as well as compare and contrast the movements

Prompt 9: Write a 1000 word essay on The Arab Spring and the Occupy Wall Street movement. Compare and contrast them, and focus on how social media was used as a tool to strengthen each movement, as well as

Prompt 10: Write a 1000 word essay on comparing The Arab Spring and the Occupy Wall Street movement. Focus on how social media was used by the populations as a tool to strengthen each movement, determine what makes them similar or different from each other, the political and cultural motivations behind each movement, the instance that set each movement off, and if each movement inspired the other.

Section II, Unedited Generated Response

Comparing the Arab Spring and Occupy Wall Street: A Study of Social Media, Motivations, and Impact

The Arab Spring and Occupy Wall Street (OWS) movements emerged in the early 2010s, capturing global attention and sparking discussions about the power of grassroots activism in the digital age. Both movements utilized social media as a crucial tool for organization, mobilization, and communication, but they differed significantly in

their political and cultural contexts, motivations, and outcomes. This essay will explore how social media functioned in each movement, identify their similarities and differences, examine the specific events that catalyzed them, and assess any potential inspiration between the two.

Social Media as a Tool for Mobilization

Social media played a pivotal role in both the Arab Spring and Occupy Wall Street, allowing activists to disseminate information rapidly, organize protests, and connect with a wider audience. In the Arab Spring, platforms like Facebook and Twitter were instrumental in mobilizing protests against oppressive regimes across the Middle East and North Africa. Activists used these tools to coordinate demonstrations, share live updates, and amplify their messages to a global audience. The hashtag #Jan25, for instance, was central to the Egyptian protests that began on January 25, 2011, signaling the uprising against President Hosni Mubarak.

In contrast, Occupy Wall Street emerged from a more localized context in the United States, with social media serving as a means to organize grassroots efforts against economic inequality and corporate influence in politics. The movement's use of Twitter and Facebook facilitated the spread of its core messages, particularly through the hashtag #OccupyWallStreet, which helped unify diverse groups under a common cause. Social media allowed OWS to connect with similar movements worldwide, thereby fostering a sense of global solidarity against capitalism and corporate greed.

Similarities and Differences

While both movements utilized social media for organization and awareness, they diverged in their goals and outcomes. The Arab Spring aimed primarily at political change, seeking to overthrow authoritarian regimes and promote democratic governance. The protests were fueled by longstanding grievances such as political repression, economic hardship, and social injustice. In many cases, these movements led to significant political upheaval, as seen in Tunisia and Egypt, though the aftermath often resulted in chaos and conflict.

Conversely, Occupy Wall Street focused on economic issues, challenging systemic inequalities and advocating for social justice rather than seeking to overthrow the government. Its slogan, "We are the 99%," encapsulated the movement's aim to highlight the disparity between the wealthy elite and the working class. While OWS raised awareness about economic issues and inspired various social justice movements, it did not lead to significant political change in the same way the Arab Spring did.

Political and Cultural Motivations

The motivations behind each movement were deeply rooted in their respective political and cultural landscapes. In the Arab Spring, the desire for freedom and democracy was amplified by a history of authoritarian rule, state repression, and corruption. The youth in these countries, particularly those educated and tech-savvy, felt a profound disconnect with their governments, which fueled their desire for change. The cultural context was

heavily influenced by regional dynamics, including the long-standing legacies of colonialism and foreign intervention.

In contrast, Occupy Wall Street emerged from the context of the 2008 financial crisis, which exposed the vulnerabilities of the American economic system and the increasing power of corporate interests in politics. The motivations behind OWS were grounded in economic frustration, particularly among young people facing unemployment, student debt, and a stagnant job market. The cultural context in the U.S. was characterized by individualism and a strong belief in the American Dream, which OWS critiqued as being increasingly unattainable for many.

Catalysts for Each Movement

The events that catalyzed the Arab Spring and Occupy Wall Street were distinct yet indicative of the frustrations that fueled each movement. The Arab Spring was ignited by the self-immolation of Mohamed Bouazizi, a Tunisian street vendor, in December 2010. His act of protest against police corruption and abuse became a symbol of the struggle against oppressive regimes, leading to mass protests across the region.

In contrast, Occupy Wall Street was triggered by a call from the Canadian activist group Adbusters, which proposed a protest against corporate greed and the financial elite. The movement gained momentum when protesters began occupying Zuccotti Park in Manhattan in September 2011. This spontaneous gathering of individuals frustrated with

economic injustice tapped into a broader discontent with the status quo, particularly among young people.

Inspiration and Influence

While the Arab Spring and Occupy Wall Street were largely independent movements, there was an undeniable flow of inspiration between them. The success of the Arab Spring, particularly its effective use of social media, influenced activists worldwide, including those in the U.S. Many OWS participants referenced the Arab Spring as a source of hope and a model for grassroots organizing.

Conversely, OWS also inspired movements across the globe, including similar protests in Europe and the Middle East, where issues of economic inequality were prominent. The interconnectedness of these movements highlighted a growing awareness of global issues and the role of social media in facilitating cross-border solidarity.

Conclusion

In summary, while the Arab Spring and Occupy Wall Street movements shared the commonality of using social media as a powerful organizing tool, they diverged significantly in their political and cultural motivations, goals, and outcomes. The Arab Spring sought to overthrow oppressive regimes in pursuit of democracy, whereas OWS focused on economic justice and challenging corporate power. Despite their differences, both movements exemplified the potential of grassroots activism in the digital age, highlighting the transformative power of social media in mobilizing change and fostering

global solidarity. As history continues to unfold, the legacy of these movements will undoubtedly shape future activism and the ongoing struggle for justice and equality around the world.

Section III, Evaluation of AI Response

Comparing the Arab Spring and Occupy Wall Street: A Study of Social Media, Motivations, and Impact

The Arab Spring and Occupy Wall Street (OWS) movements emerged in the early 2010s (*While saying that the Arab Spring and Occupy Wall Street movement began in the early 2010s is not incorrect, I would have given more specific dates. The particular months and days for each movement beginning in each Arab country is just as important as the movement itself, dating back to 2008. The same can be said for Occupy Wall Street, it has similar traits as being birthed out of an incident from the previous decade. Saying both are movements of the early 2010s is a bit of an oversimplification.*), capturing global attention and sparking discussions about the power of grassroots activism in the digital age (*This is true, the gravity of each situation, along with the Indignados movement and the Iceland's Kitchenware Revolution, is in large part why we are discussing them today. All of these events were breaking new ground in how social movements were being conducted which is a big part as to why they dominated the news cycle and why we are still talking about them to this day.*). Both movements utilized social media as a crucial tool for organization, mobilization, and communication, but they differed significantly in their political and cultural contexts, motivations, and outcomes. This essay will explore how social media functioned in each

movement, identify their similarities and differences, examine the specific events that catalyzed them, and assess any potential inspiration between the two.

Social Media as a Tool for Mobilization

Social media played a pivotal role in both the Arab Spring and Occupy Wall Street, allowing activists to disseminate information rapidly, organize protests, and connect with a wider audience. In the Arab Spring, platforms like Facebook and Twitter were instrumental in mobilizing protests against oppressive regimes across the Middle East and North Africa (*The claim that the use of Facebook and Twitter during the Arab Spring were crucial in the formation of demonstrations is accurate. As per Networks of Outrage and Hope by Manuel Castells, he originally writes "[Hussain and Howard] found that the extensive use of digital networks by a predominantly young population of demonstrators had a significant effect on the intensity and power of these movements" (Castells, p. 106). More specifically, the people involved in the first sparks of revolution "created a Facebook group attracting 70,000 followers [...] that led to the occupation of Tahrir Square on January 25" (p. 54).). Activists used these tools to coordinate demonstrations, share live updates, and amplify their messages to a global audience. The hashtag #Jan25, for instance, was central to the Egyptian protests that began on January 25, 2011, signaling the uprising against President Hosni Mubarak (This final claim is also accurate. Demonstrators would use the numerous social media platforms available to them in order to get information to each other, "They deliberated on Facebook, coordinated through Twitter" (p. 58). When the AI said the point about #jan25, I verified that the specific hashtag was used via an article recounting the Arab*

Spring in Egypt by H.A. Hellyer in Bookings, "They are struggling for a revolution's success. That revolution continues. That revolution is #Jan25" (Hellyer, 2013).).

In contrast, Occupy Wall Street emerged from a more localized context in the United States, with social media serving as a means to organize grassroots efforts against economic inequality and corporate influence in politics (*I do not think that the use of social media in the context of Occupy Wall Street leads me to believe that they are different enough to make it noteworthy in this sort of way. As the AI later goes on to say, the sense of global solidarity was fostered through the use of social media, which is very similar to how it was used during the Arab Spring, "Thus, social media networks played an important role in the Egyptian revolution. Demonstrators recorded the events with their mobile phones, and shared their videos with people in the country at large and around the world via YouTube and Facebook" (p. 58). Both of the movements used social media in a local way, so using that as a point to contrast the two is not accurate*). The movement's use of Twitter and Facebook facilitated the spread of its core messages, particularly through the hashtag #OccupyWallStreet, which helped unify diverse groups under a common cause (*This is also true, just like in Egypt with #jan25, Occupy Wall Street demonstrators were using hashtags and key phrases like We Are The 99%, "The 99% theme was popularized, in large part, by the 'We are the 99%' Tumblr page [...] a platform for personal storytelling in anonymity [...] narrating their personal drama in coping with an unjust society" (Castells, p. 175).*). Social media allowed OWS to connect with similar movements worldwide, thereby fostering a sense of global solidarity against capitalism and corporate greed (*This conclusion, focusing on*

the global impact of social media's use during Occupy Wall Street, directly contradicts the premise of contrasting the two.).

Similarities and Differences

While both movements utilized social media for organization and awareness, they diverged in their goals and outcomes (*This is an incredibly vague way of comparing the two movements. They happened in different continents, consisting of different people, and one was concerned with an authoritarian regime while the other was about the response to a financial crisis.*). The Arab Spring aimed primarily at political change, seeking to overthrow authoritarian regimes and promote democratic governance. The protests were fueled by longstanding grievances such as political repression, economic hardship, and social injustice (*First, "longstanding" is not a word without the hyphen. Concerning the content of the claim itself, the AI is correct, the oppressive authoritarian regime in Egypt and Tunisia was a major reason for the Arab Spring in those countries. FIND QUOTE FOR THIS*). In many cases, these movements led to significant political upheaval, as seen in Tunisia and Egypt, though the aftermath often resulted in chaos and conflict (*This last line is also true, the aftermath of the Arab Spring, ironically known as the Arab Winter, led to a lot of infighting and brutal conflict across the Middle East and North Africa. A book by Noah Feldman, titled The Arab Winter: A Tragedy, explains how some of the consequences of the Arab Spring are still felt to this day, "The Arab Spring promised to end dictatorship and bring self-government to people across the Middle East. Yet everywhere except Tunisia it led to either renewed dictatorship, civil war, extremist terror, or all three" (Feldman, 2020).*).

Conversely, Occupy Wall Street focused on economic issues, challenging systemic inequalities and advocating for social justice rather than seeking to overthrow the government (*This claim is true. While the Arab Spring was generally against the authoritarian regimes across the Middle East and North Africa, Castells says how Occupy Wall Street was focused on the consequences of the American financial system, and how it was benefiting those at the absolute top instead of those at the bottom or middle, "The hardest was the fall. People became discouraged and enraged. Some began to quantify their rage. [...] No one was held accountable" (Castells, p. 159-160).*). Its slogan, "We are the 99%," encapsulated the movement's aim to highlight the disparity between the wealthy elite and the working class. While OWS raised awareness about economic issues and inspired various social justice movements, it did not lead to significant political change in the same way the Arab Spring did (*This claim is true, as explained in the Castells textbook, the reaction to the Occupy Wall Street movement by the American government left a lot to be desired by those that participated, "rather quickly, there was despair again in the country and among his most enthusiastic supporters. [...] 60 percent of occupiers voted for Obama in 2008 but 73 percent of occupiers now disapprove of the way Barack Obama is handling his job as president" (p. 201). However, as a conclusion sentence, I would rather have mentioned the Arab Winter to make a more striking contrast between the events.*).

Political and Cultural Motivations

The motivations behind each movement were deeply rooted in their respective political and cultural landscapes. In the Arab Spring, the desire for freedom and democracy was amplified by a history of authoritarian rule, state repression, and

corruption (*This claim is true. Much of the civil unrest in Egypt and Tunisia was due to many compounding issues that the population had with the ruling government, as laid out by Castells, "It had been preceded by political protests (after the rigged elections in 2005 and 2010), women's rights struggles (harshly suppressed as in the Black Wednesday of 2005) and workers' struggles, such as the strike in the textile mills of Mahalla-al-Kubra on April 6, 2008" (Castells, p. 54).*). The youth in these countries, particularly those educated and tech-savvy, felt a profound disconnect with their governments, which fueled their desire for change (*This claim is also true. As previously mentioned, a majority of the people that participated in the public demonstrations and used social media tools were in younger age demographics.*). The cultural context was heavily influenced by regional dynamics, including the long-standing legacies of colonialism and foreign intervention (*The aftermath of colonialism and decolonization in the Middle East and North Africa can be followed as being a root cause for many of the issues that plague the region to this day. In an article for Arab Center Washington DC by Yara M. Asi, she explains how many countries in the region fared in the wake of falling European empires in the mid 20th century, "Most countries did not transition to democratic systems of governance, and many still do not have responsive, representative, and credible governments, in large part because of the powerful ripple effects of colonial systems of domination that have seeped into every aspect of society" (Yasi, 2022, para. 7).*).

In contrast, Occupy Wall Street emerged from the context of the 2008 financial crisis, which exposed the vulnerabilities of the American economic system and the increasing power of corporate interests in politics (*This is true. As described by Castells,*

many economic systems were failing in unison, while the ones to break the fall were the people that could not afford to do so: the 99%, "suddenly, the real estate market plunged. Hundreds of thousands lost their homes, and millions lost much of the value they had traded their lives for. Then, the financial system came to the brink of collapse as a result of the speculation and greed of its managers. Who were bailed out. With taxpayers' money. [...] No one was held accountable" (Castells, p. 159).). The motivations behind OWS were grounded in economic frustration, particularly among young people facing unemployment, student debt, and a stagnant job market. The cultural context in the U.S. was characterized by individualism and a strong belief in the American Dream, which OWS critiqued as being increasingly unattainable for many (The American Dream has been cited as many people's frustration with the fallout of the financial crash, leading to Occupy Wall Street. Castells explains how citizens compared the two, saying "the old American dream about equality of opportunities on the basis of personal effort has been shattered" (p. 197).).

Catalysts for Each Movement

The events that catalyzed the Arab Spring and Occupy Wall Street were distinct yet indicative of the frustrations that fueled each movement. The Arab Spring was ignited by the self-immolation of Mohamed Bouazizi, a Tunisian street vendor, in December 2010 (*This is true. In an article by Al-Jazeera, they recount the moments leading up to and after his shocking display of protest, saying "On the morning of December 17, 2010, police had confiscated Mohamed's scales because he was working as a street vendor without a permit. He went to complain to the governor at the provincial government building in Sidi Bouzid, but he refused to see him" (Langeman,*

2020, pg. 10). Also, describing the self immolation of Mohamed Bouazizi as “igniting” the Arab Spring is ironic at best and horribly insensitive at worst). His act of protest against police corruption and abuse became a symbol of the struggle against oppressive regimes, leading to mass protests across the region (*This is true. Not only did his actions inspire the uprisings in Tunisia, but also across the entire Middle East, as detailed in a timeline of events by Manuel Castells, “In the wake of the Tunisian and Egyptian revolutions, Days of Rage (Youn al-Ghadab) surged across the Arab world in 2011” (Castells, p. 95).*).

In contrast, Occupy Wall Street was triggered by a call from the Canadian activist group Adbusters, which proposed a protest against corporate greed and the financial elite (*This is true. Manuel Castells also credits the first instance of the rallying phrase “#occupywallstreet” to the same Canadian journal (Castells, p. 162).*). The movement gained momentum when protesters began occupying Zuccotti Park in Manhattan in September 2011. This spontaneous gathering of individuals frustrated with economic injustice tapped into a broader discontent with the status quo, particularly among young people (*This recounting of the event is true. In an article for TIME magazine by James A. Anderson explains how an event that affected so many middle class Americans such as the 2008 financial crisis helped push the younger generations into getting active in social movements, “Millennials, many of whom participated in the movement’s Manhattan launch or any of the similar protests around the country. The sustained protest also left a lasting impression on Generation Z, a cohort that was just becoming aware of a turbulent world around it” (Anderson, pg. 7.).*).

Inspiration and Influence

While the Arab Spring and Occupy Wall Street were largely independent movements, there was an undeniable flow of inspiration between them. The success of the Arab Spring, particularly its effective use of social media, influenced activists worldwide, including those in the U.S (*This is true. As previously mentioned, the early incidents across Egypt and Tunisia that helped realize their revolutionary aspirations also inspired the same in many other countries in the Middle East and North Africa, Castells would go on to list the countries that would follow in Tunisia and Egypt's footsteps and participate in making change to their society, "January 7 in Algeria, January 12 in Lebanon, January 14 in Jordan, January 17 in Mauritania, January 17 in Sudan, January 17 in Oman, January 27 in Yemen, February 14 in Bahrain, February 17 in Libya, February 18 in Kuwait, February 20 in Morocco, February 26 in the Western Sahara, March 11 in Saudi Arabia, March 18 in Syria" (Castells, p. 95-96).). Many OWS participants referenced the Arab Spring as a source of hope and a model for grassroots organizing (This is true. Castells explains how the restlessness from the Arab Spring translated in the American society and laid the groundwork for activism, "It came from Tahrir Square [...] images and sounds of people's determination to bring down dictatorships against all odds, at whatever cost, rekindled faith in people's power" (p. 161).).*

Conversely, OWS also inspired movements across the globe, including similar protests in Europe and the Middle East, where issues of economic inequality were prominent. The interconnectedness of these movements highlighted a growing awareness of global issues and the role of social media in facilitating cross-border solidarity (*The start of this paragraph was a bit rocky. Occupy Wall Street being*

inspirational to other movements across the world is not in contrast to the global influence of the Arab Spring. Despite this, the claim is still true. Despite Occupy Wall Street coming after the majority of the Arab Spring uprising and the Icelandic Kitchenware Revolution, there were still many places that took what they saw in the States and used it as fuel to amplify their messaging. In an article for NPR by Claire Harbage and Hannah Bloch, they show a collection of images from protests across the globe, some of which were directly inspired by Occupy Wall Street, "A protester waves a red flag in front of anti-riot police in Rome in October 2011. Tens of thousands marched as part of a global day of protests inspired by Occupy Wall Street" (Harbage, Bloch, 2019).).

Conclusion

In summary, while the Arab Spring and Occupy Wall Street movements shared the commonality of using social media as a powerful organizing tool, they diverged significantly in their political and cultural motivations, goals, and outcomes. The Arab Spring sought to overthrow oppressive regimes in pursuit of democracy, whereas OWS focused on economic justice and challenging corporate power. Despite their differences, both movements exemplified the potential of grassroots activism in the digital age, highlighting the transformative power of social media in mobilizing change and fostering global solidarity. As history continues to unfold, the legacy of these movements will undoubtedly shape future activism and the ongoing struggle for justice and equality around the world.

Section IV, Reflection

This final project has really been quite an interesting experience for me. Before, I had never really used AI for school work. I would often see it as a slippery slope, and feel that if I used it in a dishonest way, like for answering homework questions or doing assignments that I was too lazy to get done on my own, then I would be more willing to use it in similar ways in the future, and that would not help me in my academic career at all. However, this project has really allowed me to understand the use cases for AI by understanding places where it is valuable, places where it could still improve, and how it can fit into my life as a student in the future.

AI has had a lot of bumps and sharp turns to get through in order to become what it is today. The concept of a computer based artificial intelligence is nothing new, and is very prevalent in other media like video games, but nothing has really had the consumer reach like the Large Language Models like Chat GPT and others. But in order to get from an AI that acts in response to what a player does in a game, to one that can have billions and billions of unique responses to anything said to it, and to even generate new images instantly takes a lot of work. My clearest memories of AI are that from the past 2-3 years. In this time, it was extremely common to hear stories of Large Language Models spelling words wrong, having improper grammar, making up information in order to give a positive response to the prompt, and image generating AI was (and still is) known for giving people too many fingers and having a sort of uncanny valley effect. Even recently, Google's search result AI has been in the news with multiple instances of spitting out replies that are either inexcusably false or outright dangerous, like saying to add glue to pizza to make the cheese stick to the crust, or that

a pregnant woman should smoke a few cigarettes a day. This mental image was going through my mind when I was first posed with this project. I thought it was going to be trying to piece together all the different random claims and statements made by Chat GPT in order to form it into something somewhat coherent. However, I was pleasantly surprised.

The response that I was able to create through carefully crafted prompts was honestly way better than what I was expecting. I think this is in part due to the first section of this project requiring many new iterations of prompts to be submitted in order to get the most complete answer possible. Not only did it require us to work out the parts that were constructive and accurate to the points we wanted to make about the social movements, but it also allowed us to get more accustomed to using AI as a tool to aid in learning. Because of my preconceived notions about AI with its limitations and its frequent factual inaccuracies, I was able to learn a bit more about the topics of the Arab Spring and the Occupy Wall Street movement, as well as finding out that AI is significantly more stable than I had realized. While I was going through section 3 of this assignment, critiquing the AI paper to see if it was sound and factually correct, there were no instances of fabrications being presented as the absolute truth. The closest that the AI came to doing that was it getting too focused on contrasting two concepts and ended up contradicting itself a little bit. Other than that, everything that was generated was correct.

While a lot of the content present in the AI's writing was correct, there were still a number of issues with it that would not be very obvious. One relatively minor thing is some syntax errors in the writing. Some words required a hyphen between them that

were missing and came up as misspelled in my word processing application, which was a bit odd. I would think that one of the first things an AI model would get right would be spelling, but since it was something related to hyphens, I sort of understood as they are not absolutely crucial when it comes to properly conveying the meaning of a word or sentence. Another small thing that I noticed was that the final version of the essay that the AI gave was not actually 1000 words. It came out to be just 963 words with the title included, which came as a surprise to me as AI is usually really good at following instructions (for better or for worse for the AI), and I feel like this is a really simple instruction to keep track of. The last part of the AI writing that stuck out to me was just how each paragraph flowed together. AI is known for its ironic robotic writing style, making it feel like you are reading something from an End User License Agreement. Sentences would melt together and would have no charm or finesse, making it very hard to read, and not very interesting either. The technology required, developed, and innovated upon has certainly made significant advances in the last few years to become what AI is now is definitely nothing to scoff at, but it is nowhere close to being able to replace actual people and their endless unique writing styles.

This assignment has really opened my eyes on the actual function of AI. No longer do I think AI is strictly used for circumventing studying or getting around homework when feeling particularly lazy. Now, I can use AI as a tool to inspire what I might want to write about in the future, possible paths I could take when discussing a topic, or exploring options on how two topics may intersect one another. I am not sure how often I will use AI in the future for writing or any other situations, but it is good to know that it is a tool that I have at my disposal, and it will only get better with time.

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