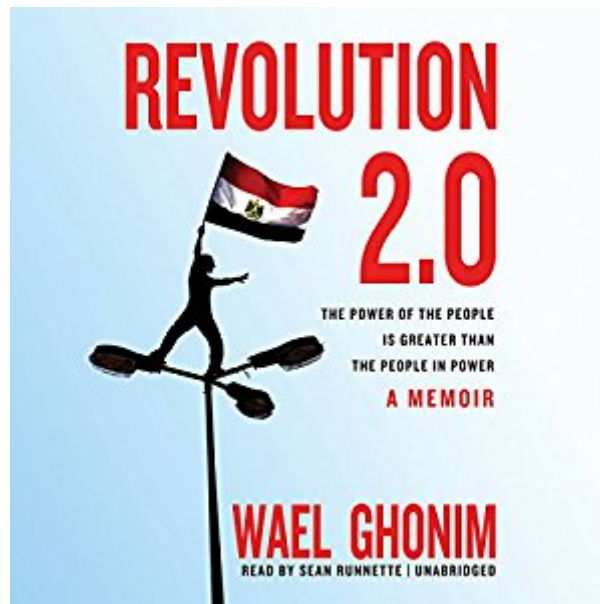# Revolution 2.0: The Power Of The People Is Greater Than The People In Power - A Memoir

Synopsis

The revolutions sweeping the Middle East in 2011 were unlike any the world had ever seen. Brutal regimes that had been in power for many decades were suddenly swarmed by unstoppable mobs of freedom seekers. Now, one of the key figures behind the Egyptian uprising tells the riveting inside story of what happened and presents lessons for all of us on how to unleash the power of crowds. Wael Ghonim was a little-known 30-year-old Google executive in the fall of 2010 when he anonymously launched a Facebook page to protest the death of an Egyptian man at the hands of security forces. The page's followers expanded quickly and moved from online protests to nonconfrontational public gatherings. Then, on January 14, 2011, they made history when they announced a revolution. Over 350,000 friends clamored to join. On January 25, as the revolution began in earnest, Ghonim was captured and held for 12 days of brutal interrogation - and when he emerged and gave a speech on national television, the protests grew even more intense. Four days later, Mubarak was gone. The lessons Ghonim draws will inspire each of us: Forget the past. Don't plan ahead. Let the crowd make its own decisions. Welcome to Revolution 2.0. Wael Ghonim was born in Cairo and grew up in Egypt and Saudi Arabia, earning a degree from Cairo University in 2004 and an MBA from the American University in Cairo in 2007. He joined Google in 2008, rising to become head of marketing for Google Middle East and North Africa. He is currently on sabbatical from Google to launch a nongovernmental organization supporting education and technology in Egypt.

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Customer Reviews

I could not put this down. The amazing thing, the author would describe a certain event, and I could look it up on the Internet and see the actual event on various videos. For example the initial "Silent Stand" protest. The original "We Are Khaled Said" webpages are still online. The book is written like a conversation with a good friend. You are having a beer/coffee with Wael Ghonim, and he is telling you his story. The author makes a complicated event very simple and human, and easy to understand, especially to westerners. Anyone who found themselves even remotely drawn to events in Tahrir will love this book. I have not been this eager to devour a book in long time, I was not disappointed. Thank you, Wael Ghonim.

"Revolution 2.0 -- The power of the people is greater than the people in power: A Memoir" by Wael Ghonim (Jan. 2012). The author was a `Google' website executive who `launched a Facebook page to protest the death of one Egyptian man at the hands of [Egyptian] security forces. His on-line advocacy against Pres. Mubarak's autocratic regime significantly assisted in mobilizing Egyptian youths in driving Mubarak from power. As the author relates in this fast-paced, suspenseful book, he was arrested several times by Egyptian security forces in attempt to coerce him into revealing the names of other protestors and how his internet pro-democracy movement operated. The author noted how, before his arrests, that he coordinated with other website friends and told them how they could change his website passwords if they suspected that he had been arrested, and thereby, foil state security agencies from hacking into his website accounts and learning the names of other pro-democracy advocates. The author details how he was able to use Facebook to coordinate pro-democracy street rallies and share pro-democracy (and anti-authoritarian) tactics with other protestors in other despotic Arab countries. The author circulated (and reprinted in this book) `Protesting Guidelines', `Time and Place of Protests', & `Chants' info online in organizing protests (p. 167-168). The author reprinted numerous emails that he shared with fellow pro-democracy agitators, whether they were fellow Muslims, or even Christians, who shared dreams for political democracy. This book ends with the fall of Pres. Mubarak. There is no discussion of the potential impact of pro-sharia Muslim Brotherhood should this fundamentalist group (or other groups) achieve political power in late 2011. It remains to be seen whether or not the author's dreams for `democracy' are to be shattered in early 2012, if anti-secular and anti-democratic forces take over the Egyptian government. A MUST READ ! ! The author, Wael Ghonim, a courageous proponent for democracy in a historically undemocratic region -- hopefully he will survive future political unrest.

Wael Ghoniem spoke from his heart in this book, you get this feeling in every page of the book. I bought the Kindle version started reading it at 9:00 pm and could not stop reading till I finished it at 4:00 am. Although I am an Egyptian living abroad who knew about many of the events in the book and followed it closely over past year. Yet Wael gives the general aspect of the event and jumps into details behind the scene that not every person knew about the revolution. It gets a little personal about Wael in some cases yet still interesting to understand the personality of this guy, which I see him as a reflection of this generation. Well done Wael.....and thanks for documenting it in such a nice way. In many instances I felt you were expressing my own feelings. May Allah bless you and reward you for the good that you have done and will do through publishing this book.

This is a very good, first person account of how Google employee Wael Ghonim accidentally became a revolutionary. Ghonim was a family man with more knowledge than most about technology, who lived in Cairo and worked for Google. Like many other citizens of Egypt, Ghonim was proud of his heritage and his country, but not so proud of its government under Hosni Mubarak.The main problem cited by Ghonim and others seems to have been that the secret police had run truly amok. Although the citizenry tolerated Mubarak's 30-year dictatorship for a very long time, eventually people ran out of patience as the secret police became increasingly corrupt and disruptive to the lives of average Egyptians who were no threat to the state. (Congress and Homeland Security, take notice.)The trigger event was the murder of a young man named Khaled Said, who was beaten to death in Alexandria by two secret police agents. Ghonim saw news of the death online and, in spite of fears for the safety of himself and his family, created a Facebook page to protest what he calls "a grave injustice." The popularity of the page snowballed and eventually Ghonim and a handful of others succeeded in taking the popular outrage off line and into the streets.I do not think it is incidental that one can draw comparisons between Ghonim's story and the recent story of Trayvon Martin, whose alleged killer was not arrested until there was an overwhelming groundswell of popular demand for it via social media. It is true that the Martin case was aided and abetted by traditional, corporate media, which did not happen in Egypt. And it is also true that the US is not Egypt. I am not saying that I believe the Martin case will spark a revolution in the US. But there is no escaping that the Martin case would have played out differently if average people did not have an avenue of protest such as that provided by Twitter and Facebook. I wonder if these social networks are today's equivalent of pamphlets such as Common Sense, which played a major role in the American Revolution.Revolution 2.0 is an easy read about a difficult question and that is, "How exactly did a few men start a revolution using social media?" I think the answer is that

the Egyptian people were at the breaking point and had already been energized by the revolution, of sorts, in Tunisia. Facebook was a tool, smartly used, to mobilize a population that was ready to roll.Ghonim's telling of the tale sheds some light on why and how it all happened, but there is much more to be studied and learned about how social media and political action are entwined. This book will, I believe, motivate inquiry and research that promises fascinating and sobering results.

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