

Digitized Comic: "Beyond Exceptionalism" - East/West and the Ties that Bind

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Goal

To create a digital comic book to tell parallel stories of past and present events in Egypt and the US—such as the drafting of the US and Egyptian constitutions, Tahrir Square, and the US Civil War. These stories would highlight the similarities in themes, challenges, and successes of Egypt and the United States in such areas as the role of minorities, use of violence, and the transition to a democratic system.

Issue

Many societies, including Egypt and the United States, face the challenge of balancing nationalism and cultural pride with respect for the fundamental shared experiences of much of humanity. Reconciling the two, particularly within countries holding strongly exceptionalistic outlooks such as Egypt (based on history) and the United States (based on present influence), is crucial if populations hope to learn from each other's mistakes. By carefully and accessibly organizing current events and placing them within the context of global history, the team seeks to give perspective and create an opportunity for that learning to occur.

The events of the Tamarrod have underscored the crucial role that youth movements and leaders can play in bringing about social and political change. By exploring issues and historical points such as these and tying them to parallel situations, the team will create a medium through which relevant ideas from the worlds of comparative law and political theory are made accessible to the young leaders of tomorrow in both countries: impassioned individuals who may benefit from better grounding in such areas but lack the time, resources, or will for intensive constitutional and historical study.

Project

This project aims to engage people at university age or slightly older who are politically conscious or inquisitive about history, and reflect a robust tradition of comics as a medium for making larger themes more accessible.

The plan is to develop the comic into digitized form, but options could be explored for developing into physical mediums and expanding into the social media sphere and a content-specific website.

