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# Children's Citizenship: Revolution and the Seeds of an Alternative Future in Egypt

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## 4

## CHILDREN'S CITIZENSHIP

Revolution and the Seeds of  
an Alternative Future in Egypt

Chiara Diana

Children must be seen as actively involved in the construction of their own social lives, the lives of those around them and of the societies in which they live. They can no longer be regarded as simply the passive subjects of structural determinations.

(James & Prout, 1990, p. 4)

## Introduction

Suleiman is an Egyptian child aged 6, and he is one of the child protagonists of a report dealing with feelings and experiences of children during Egypt's political uprising. Suleiman describes how he came to know about the revolutionary mobilizations from home, and his strong concerns when his family members took part in street protests. Like Suleiman, Aya, aged 14, also inquired about the street protests from her home and was explicitly prevented by her family from taking part in demonstrations. Despite her family's refusal to let her go to the streets, she was determined to find a way to support mobilization movements, so she turned to the internet. She created a Facebook group called *Thawra ma'hash bitaqa* (Revolution has no identity card) to disseminate information, and opinions, and to enter into dialogue with other online groups. Children like Suleiman, who have been emotionally affected by the uprisings, and others, like Aya, who have been politically involved, are becoming commonplace in Egyptian society.

The political involvement of children in the events leading up to and following Egypt's January 25 Revolution of 2011 has gone almost unnoticed. A handful of journalists and international organizations have written about the presence of children in public squares during the uprising. Yet, no valuable analysis has been made about how experiencing the uprising could have an ongoing impact on the personality and political preferences of these children as they enter different life

stages. This chapter seeks to give voice and visibility (Brighenti, 2007) to a social group whose opinions are not usually taken into account and whose initiatives do not always reach the headlines. It explores the role of children in recent political changes and how they inspired a novel political and civic consciousness in public, private, institutional, and digital spaces. The uprising has stimulated children's imaginations, creativity, and sense of initiative, and expanded their awareness about issues such as political corruption, social justice, human rights, educational equity, and inequality. It has also strengthened children's sense of their own Egyptian citizenship and sense of community.

This chapter begins with the social, economic, and political reasons that sparked off revolutionary events in Egypt. Then, using the theoretical framework of the new social studies of childhood (NSSC), I highlight children's status, their attitudes to citizenship, and political practices. Egyptian children experienced the revolution in different settings, both virtual and physical, at school, in social media spaces, in the streets, and at home. Did any of their political attitudes and action derive from the formal teachings they were exposed to in school about citizenship education and "education for democracy"? How did revolutionary events affect their daily lives? Did they bring children into the world of politics and lead to a new citizenship consciousness?

## Egyptian Children: New Social Actors in Revolutionary Times

In Egypt the image of children was traditionally used by the state to serve political ends and to show how their lives were integral to the process of nation building and national development (Karimi & Gruber, 2012). In the years leading up to the revolution, another experience of children, outside this normative development model, has been emerging. Children of Egypt today have not directly witnessed war or anti-colonial struggles, but they have grown up under the dictatorship of the Mubarak regime and experienced the ravages of the neo-liberal economic and political reforms. These reforms, which dismantled the social welfare state and exacerbated inequality, have been applied through Structural Adjustment Programs (SAPs) imposed by global financial institutions, among other means. Children, especially from the lower and middle classes, bear witness to their families' everyday life troubles and the deprivations of their basic rights. They are affected by economic reforms that result in the reduction and privatization of government services like education and health. Indeed, the economic reforms aimed at developing economic liberalization and promoting political liberalization in the Arab states since the middle of 1980s have led rather to a political stagnation, a so-called "political deliberalization" (Kienle, 2001).

At the same time, these policies have Janus-faced results. Simultaneous with the deterioration of basic civil rights and pauperization of the lower social classes, school enrolments in pre-school, primary, preparatory, secondary as well as higher education have risen throughout the Arab world in the last decades (Assaad &

Roudi-Fahimi, 2007; Filiu, 2011). In Egypt, it is worthwhile highlighting the significant progress in enrolling pre-school children into kindergarten education between 2001/2002 (13.69%) and 2008/2009 (25.12%) (Ministry of Education, 2010, p. 67). What bearing do all these economic, social, and educational indicators have on the lives and socialization of children? Such a question is difficult to answer with any authority since the topic of childhood and children's citizenship has been neglected in research and in the social history of the Middle East.<sup>1</sup> This chapter seeks to highlight these still unexplored issues by situating Egyptian children in the theoretical framework of the new social studies of childhood (NSSC) to help to clarify concepts about children, citizenship, and political participation.

The NSSC theories developed in the last decades of the twentieth century as an interdisciplinary approach to studying childhood. During the 1970s and 1980s concerns had been developing about the way in which the social sciences had traditionally conceptualized children and childhood. Those concerns resulted in the emergence of a new paradigm for the study of childhood (James & Prout, 1990).<sup>2</sup> It tried to give a voice to children who, for a long time, had been considered as "muted groups" (Hardman, 1973, p. 85), "passive receptors of adult culture," or "in progress" of becoming full, rational adults" (Caputo, 1995, pp. 22–24). The latter was strongly determined by the theories of development of Piaget (1964) and Piaget & Inhelder (1966).

The new paradigm attempted to analyze childhood in relation to socio-political contexts; it tried to study them as a social category rather than a group. Some of the main features of the paradigm are: understanding childhood as a social construction and as a variable of social analysis that can never be separated from other variables; considering children's social relationships and cultures worthy of study in their own right and independent of the perspective of adults; seeing children as active in the construction of their own social lives and not just passive subjects. This theory encouraged scholars to look at the multiple meanings of childhood across cultures and societies, time and space.

Variables such as gender, religion, responsibilities, class, race, and ethnicity play important roles in defining how individual children experience their childhood. Moreover, these variables also affect the transition out of childhood and into the next life phase. The transitions between childhood and youth, and youth and adulthood, are not the same everywhere; they vary across and within societies and cultures over time (Honwana & De Boeck, 2005). Therefore, in some social and cultural settings, the age of children and its temporal dimension can even lose their importance as factors such as the time that adult people give them responsibilities, work, and even military tasks become more significant.

The sociological concept of socialization, based upon adult concern for the reproduction of social order and social transformation from child to adult, deliberately erased children's present tense because of its orientation analysis towards the past or the future. According to Caputo (1995), children are not passive recipients of social structures and processes, but they actively construct the world. Children must be seen as agents involved in social interactions, citizen cultures, and political actions.

Assuming that children's cultural development takes place on the social and individual levels (Vygotsky, 1978), then social interactions play a fundamental role in the formation of a child's cognitive development, the time when children acquire basic cultural ideas and formulate their own views. Children's everyday social interactions with adults and peers can provide a key to knowing about their citizenship values and even political attitudes. Children are social and political actors very early in life and not only after they learn about government, adult political roles, and major political events (Maynard, 1985).

In light of these approaches and theories about child's development and participation in their social and cultural contexts, I will go on to analyze children's attitudes to citizenship and political practices during current revolutionary times in Egypt in different spaces: in public (in the street); in private (in the family); in institutions (at school); as well as in digital society (on the internet).

### Street Mobilization

During the initial and central period of the 25 January Revolution schools in Cairo were closed for half-term. Freed from school tasks and activities, children had the time to follow revolutionary events from home through television, radio, and adult conversations. They even attended protests, alone or together with their families. It was also common in the street mobilizations to find Cairo's homeless children wandering and sometimes taking part in demonstrations and clashes between pro-Mubarak and anti-Mubarak protesters (Fisk, 2011).<sup>3</sup>

Despite the scant attention paid to the role of children—whether school pupils or street children—in the revolution, a good number of them participated in events in Tahrir Square, the center of revolutionary events. The presence of children has been documented largely on amateur videos and mobile phones (Preston & Stelter, 2011), then uploaded on YouTube, Citizentube, or on the more militant Bambuser (O'Neill, 2011; Messieh, 2011).<sup>4</sup> The most common images in these homemade videos are of children carried by adults amidst the protesters, shouting out slogans against the (old) system (*nizami*) in order to demand Mubarak's resignation. Sometimes a child leads the protest from the shoulders of an adult, chanting slogans from a piece of paper, or improvising them on the spot.

The revolution was not the first time in recent history that children had been involved in street protests. In 2005, encouraged by a flurry of anti-Mubarak initiatives led by the *Kefaya* (Enough) movement, public demonstrations by the group "Children for Change" took place in Cairo. This group of children, aged between 5 and 16, was led by 13-year-old Mohamed El-Kazzaz following his father's arrest during a *Kefaya* demonstration (Howeidy, 2005).

Children from politicized family backgrounds, like young members of "Children for Change," show themselves to be more politically active than the average child (Dupoirier & Percheron, 1975). However, we see that young people from a more depoliticized milieu can acquire a "political socialization." Indeed, for them, political circumstances can prompt them to be involved in public protests, either

alone or with their families. Street children, in particular, spent time in Tahrir Square hoping that the uprising would change their everyday street reality and terrifying conditions. Alone on the streets they face the horrors of rape, abuse, and arrest, and are sometimes forced to pose as drug dealers or prostitutes by the police themselves (Ali, 2013; Itameri, 2011).

Hosni Mubarak stepped down as president on February 11, 2011 and in July, 2011 the second phase of the revolution began. In Tahrir Square the community set up a tent city that included a library, a school that took on the name "Tahrir School," and a playground for children (Doss, 2011). Tahrir School was an initiative of the protesters to allow children to keep learning and expressing themselves through games and drawings. A video posted on YouTube shows children enthusiastically taking part in the school's activities, particularly children who had never before attended an actual school (*Daily News Egypt*, 2011).

In another video, a school science teacher by the name of Rabah talks about her initiative for the children of Tahrir Square. She created a public tent-space where children could express their feelings about the revolution and the current political situation through drawings. The children, aged between 8 and 11, explain their drawings. Nine-year old Fatma talks about how she supports the revolution since it forced corrupt leaders to leave the government. According to Islam, an 11-year-old boy, although many things have already changed thanks to the revolution, he advocates continuing the protests because the corrupt people are still in power.<sup>5</sup> In yet other videos, children as young as 7 talk with clarity about Mubarak's incarceration, the complicity of his wife Suzanne Mubarak, and the need for justice and respecting the civil rights of poor people. They are also up to date on the young martyrs whose lives had been taken during violent clashes between the protesters and the police (Raheb, 2011b). These children come across as well informed about current events and they have strong opinions about political change, which they are keen to express.

Outside of Tahrir Square other initiatives took shape. *Al Fan Midan* (Art is a Square) was launched two months after the fall of Mubarak by the Independent Artists Coalition and it was supported by civil society volunteers. *Al Fan Midan* holds monthly workshops in cities all over Egypt. Thanks to this initiative, Abdeen Square in Cairo, the site where it was born, has become the public place of street art, cultural events, and exhibitions for artists, musicians, performers, including children (Habib, 2011; Montasser, 2012). Through these cultural and public experiences, organizers and volunteers explore ways of expressing democracy and citizenship through art.

### Student Initiatives

Soaked in revolutionary principles like justice and democracy, Egyptian school children organized their own revolution in schools, launching initiatives and calling meetings with other students and school staff in order to discuss and improve

school conditions (BBC News, 2011). Some of them created the movement *Harakat tullab madaris masr li taghyyr* (Egypt's School Students for Change Movement) with various sections in different Egyptian cities founded by primary, secondary, and college students. The movement, in coordination with other student associations and organizations, called for a general strike on February 11, 2012, the date that marked a year since President Hosni Mubarak had been ousted (Laila, 2011).

Students for Change represents another student initiative launched on September 5, 2011 by four high-school students aged between 16 and 17 from different schools. They united around a common enthusiasm to find viable solutions to educational issues, especially disparities between private and public schools. Their model is to work through a type of school parliament that includes students and teachers, to hold stimulating workshops for students, organize scientific debates, sports competitions, and collaborative activities with student groups from foreign countries.

### Online Action

Some children had the opportunity to experience the uprisings first hand in the streets and public squares, but many were confined to the home because of the risks of what was taking place in the streets. From their domestic and protected space, children experienced feelings of fear and danger towards their family and friends who were protesting in the street. They also felt feelings of happiness and enthusiasm for the successful moments of the revolution. Many children turned to the internet to participate in the revolution and they created groups and pages on social networks sites, Facebook and Twitter.

Fourteen-year-old Aya was forbidden by her parents to go down to the street, so she decided to support the revolution in her own way. She started by posting comments on the Facebook page of the Military Council (incidentally, her father is in the military). She then became more involved in revolutionary and political issues through her Twitter account, although she was technically too young to hold such an account. In collaboration with other children, she launched the Facebook page *Thawra ma'hash bitaqa* (Revolution has no identity card),<sup>6</sup> which is for Egyptian children and young people under 18 who wanted to contribute to the Egyptian revolution. Five boys and three girls served as the page administrators (admins). Even though they did not know each other, they worked together in order to plan activities and upload news and information onto the page. They also drafted a declaration in which they explained the reasons for creating the page. Some of these reasons were to use their creative capacities for the development of Egypt and to disseminate their messages, opinions, and remarks. Their only condition was that views expressed on the page did not "clash with religious values."<sup>7</sup> On February 15, 2011 the group was interviewed on *Akher Kalam*, one of Egypt's most popular talk shows, hosted by Yousri Fouda. They explained that one of the admins was a young Salafist, who had suggested they include the last sentence about religious values (ONTveg, 2012).

Aya's experience shows how the boundaries between "childhood" and "adulthood" are becoming increasingly blurred. I dare add that in changing and unstable political contexts like the Egyptian revolutionary period, it is more difficult to distinguish boundary lines which are separating children's action and spaces from adult ones. The revolutionary context, combined with technological social media, has given children the opportunity to explore "adult" aspects of life such as politics, and instill some concepts and ideas necessary to build a political consciousness, and citizenship values.

### Raising Political Socialization and Citizen Consciousness

The results of the opinion poll "How to make a better Egypt," undertaken by Edrak for Edutainment Project Development<sup>8</sup> in the months following the 25 January Revolution, measured political concerns and commitments of the young generation during those crucial moments of Egyptian history. The poll, which contained 20 questions, targeted children between 6 and 15 years old. Those aged 6 represented the smallest portion of respondents (10), the 13–15 range the highest (312), followed by children aged 10 (188). The respondents were from public, national, and international schools in Cairo (85%) and in Alexandria (15%).

The poll revealed that children were highly affected by the revolutionary events. To the question, "What do you know about the revolution?" 52% answered that the population was protesting because people were angry, and 42% thought it was a Facebook revolution, because Facebook was the protesters' communication tool. Twenty-seven percent of the respondents had been present in Tahrir Square with their family or friends during the 18-day revolution, and 20% had been to Tahrir afterwards. Seventy-nine percent of the children answered that they would have taken an active part in the revolution had they been older. Sixty-five percent helped to clean the streets after the revolution, and 38% of them declared that dirt was one of the negative aspects of Egypt. One question asked about role models and many respondents pointed to the "youth of the revolution" (*shabab al-thaura*), while some others expressed their admiration for some important Egyptian bloggers. Since Mubarak's resignation, Egyptian children wondered about the personality of their next president. The majority (61%) asserted that the new president should help people solve their problems giving priority to the eradication of poverty (50%), to education issues (35%), and Egyptian foreign policy (14%). The question of national unity and nationhood were the major concern for the children, as was shown by the drawings with the symbols of the two main religions (Islam and Christianity) and expressive images of love for the country and its people. In the end, the most relevant point resulting from the opinion poll was that the revolution had instilled a strong sense of belonging and a political conscience in children (Helmy, 2011).

To put it in Durkheimian terms (1966), Egyptian children who experienced revolutionary moments have acquired a "collective conscience" that arises from the sharing of a "community of ideas and feelings" and an "ideological proximity" that

is indispensable to political socialization.<sup>9</sup> The development of this kind of consciousness endowed Egyptian children with strong partisan and political preferences that could last until adulthood (Hyman, 1959). As Cullingford argues, "children develop 'political' concepts at a very early stage, through their everyday experiences of institutions such as the school and the family: notions of authority, fairness and justice, rules and laws, power and control, are all formed long before they are required to express their views in the form of voting" (quoted in Buckingham, 2000, p. 177). The results of the opinion poll proved that Egyptian children possessed a well-developed conceptual understanding of current political issues, even if they lacked information on specific topics, or parents and other adults had influenced their views. Their political consciousness is not independent of the family and social milieu in which they are living and growing up. Moreover, as Aya's experience demonstrates, the new technologies and social media also contribute to the development of children's political personality and expression of their citizenship values.

### Citizenship Values in Egyptian Education?

According to the American philosopher and educational reformer John Dewey, the school is a small community where an embryonic society is formed (1916). Democracy can be achieved through the education system, if the political system establishes an educational system that incorporates norms and democratic values, one in which students are educated to participate actively in society. The acquisition of direct political knowledge represents an important step in the political socialization process (Campbell, 2008). The term "citizenship education" refers to institutionalized forms of political knowledge, values, and attitudes that take place within formal and informal educational frameworks. The content of citizenship education is complex and multidimensional in nature, time, and space.

Foucault takes an entirely different view of educational institutions. He views them as a "block of capacity-communication-power" in which relations of power and knowledge are legitimized and exercised. In this logic, teaching and learning are developed through "regulated communications" and "power processes," which adjust abilities and inculcate behavior producing effects of power (Dreyfus & Rabinow, 1983, pp. 217–218). In light of these perspectives, it is worthwhile to explore citizenship values and practices transmitted and experienced by children in Egyptian school contexts and evaluate how they differ from those experienced in other contexts, like the public sphere and digital spaces.

In Egypt a juridical framework mandates an important relationship between education and citizenship. The Education Law 139 of 1981 states, "the purpose of basic education is to develop the students' abilities and readiness [. . .] to prepare the individual to be a productive citizen in their environment and community." During the 1990s, the Ministry of Education introduced important innovations in the curricula of primary schooling, with particular attention to democratic education. Governmental education policies have been founded on the slogan: "From democratic education to education for democracy" in order to encourage educating

students to acquire democracy and citizenship values in the school, the family, and society (Mourad, 2010, pp. 48–49). There are nevertheless no programs with specific goals for teaching citizenship in public schools. They are still traditional institutions based on traditional curricula that do not prepare citizens for social participation.

Social sciences curricula, for instance, rather than encouraging freedom of thought and critical thinking instill obedience and submission to the regime in order to produce dependent and submissive students. The teachers, curricula, activities, and administration in public schools have failed to promote or support democratic values and practices. Basic concepts in citizenship education are rarely mentioned. The term “authority” prevails in the social studies textbooks over the term “citizen” (Baraka, 2007; Qasim, 2006, quoted in Faour & Muasher, 2011, p. 11). Discipline, obedience, oppression, and commitment are the principal aspects of the educational system, which begins with the decision makers at the top level and extends to pupils in the classrooms. As a consequence, the concept of citizenship education disappears from the Egyptian education system (Moughith, 2002, quoted in El-Nagar & Smolka, 2009, pp. 48–49).

In Egypt educational institutions represent a hideout of power and authoritarianism on behalf of obedience (to the regime) and discipline, imposed by the highest actors to the lowest actors. Although young generations do not acquire democratic and citizenship attitudes in the school institutions, that does not mean they do not have democratic or citizenship attitudes and leanings. The young generations’ active engagement in public life as citizens rises from different learning venues (family, extra-school activities, and associations) and through platforms like social media. The media, and social media in particular, are strongly implicated in changing the nature of the younger generation today. In the digital era, children are increasingly spurred to develop imagination, creativity, and awareness by electronic and technological means.

By using the new communication and information tools, children shift from being passive recipients to active producers of knowledge, and become themselves messengers of information (Herrera, 2012). Indeed, the flourishing of educational, cultural, and informative content on the internet is a visible demonstration of the new media’s capacity to play a significant role in helping children become informed and engaged citizens for the future. In some cases, they can also fill the gap left by the school institutions concerning civic and democratic education, and be able to build new forms of knowledge and learning, which is an expression of informal education.

### Conclusion: Being the Seeds of an Alternative Future

The events leading up to and following Egypt’s January 25 Revolution in 2011 permanently changed the political path of the Egyptian society as a whole, including the everyday life of its youngest citizens. Like adults, children from 6 to 17 have been emotionally and politically involved in Egypt’s revolutionary movement.

They have experienced and participated in it in different settings, both virtual and physical. Since 2005 when children were actively involved in the *Kefaya* movement and anti-Mubarak initiatives, they have been familiarizing themselves with issues commonly considered to be adult domains, such as corruption, cronyism, social justice, human rights, and inequality.

New initiatives launched by Egyptians under 18 in various settings, public, private, institutional or virtual, reveal children’s capacities for the development of the country. The *Harakat tullab madaris masr li taghyyr* (Egypt’s School Students for Change Movement), organized in the post-revolution period, called for a general school strike on the first anniversary of Mubarak being ousted. Moreover, children’s participation in protests in Tahrir Square demonstrates how revolutionary experiences can concretely mold the youngest generation’s political socialization—understood as the process by which citizens acquire their attitudes and beliefs about the political system in which they live and their roles within that system (Rimmerman, 2011, p. 19). They have also been articulating their visions for the future.

Digital social media have also contributed to the development of children’s political personality. The new media allow children to develop imagination and awareness and make the shift away from being passive recipients to active producers of knowledge and messengers of information. New technological and digital tools have also filled the gap left by the school institution regarding citizenship and democratic education. Schools continue to work to instill in children dispositions of discipline and obedience to authority, rather than freedom of thought and participation in decision making.

Supported by new forms of informal education and thanks to such an early political and citizenship consciousness, children could well be the vectors of change and the bearers of an alternative future for Egyptian society, as well as for educational institutions. The latter could become the place where all newborn aspirations and experiences find an immediate application. Such a case has already occurred in a school where a group of children brought their experiences from Tahrir Square into their school. They presented the authorities with a list of demands to improve the structure and the management of their school (BBC News, 2011). Following the spirit of the revolution, the teachers are bound to change their vision about students, who until now have been considered as second-class citizens without rights to express their opinions, and to give them a whole new place in their schools as well as in their society. The school can become a laboratory for developing long-lasting democratic skills and values such as freedom, equality, social justice, and respect for basic human rights, which are the main demands of the Arab uprisings.

### Notes

1. A reference book about contemporary children’s experiences and childhood in Middle East still remains the book edited by Elizabeth Warnock Fernea (1995). Avner Giladi’s

- (1999) work has also contributed to the development of childhood studies in Islamic contexts. Recently, the latest edited volume entitled "Images of the child and childhood in modern Muslim contexts" (2012) of the journal *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and Middle East* seems to bring new scientific interest to the issue, as will Heidi Morrison's monograph (currently under peer review).
2. Recently some researchers have raised the question of whether a "new paradigm" or an "epistemological break," as some leaders of the NSSC have usually called it, has really occurred in the study of childhood (Ryan, 2008). Nevertheless, this chapter does not intend to come down in favor of one school of thought over another, or engage deeply in this kind of debate because it is not its main focus.
  3. According to a report on the situation of street children in Cairo and Alexandria (WFP, UNICEF & UNODCCP, 2001), the general profile of street children in Cairo is the following: children less than 18 years old, males or females, who spend all or most of their time on the street, with minimal or no contact with their families, who lack supervision, protection, or guidance, are vulnerable to a wide range of health and psychological hazards. At governmental level, street children in Egypt have historically been labeled as "delinquents," and "juvenile delinquents," until recently when they were recognized as "children exposed to delinquency," according to the Child Law 12/1996, in order to change the negative attitude of society towards street children and consider them as victims and at risk rather than as criminals.
  4. Interviewed in Cairo during the revolutionary protests, the founders of Bambuser described their platform as a tool used by citizen journalists, friends and family not only to disseminate information, but also to act as a vanguard of justice. When Egyptian activists like Ramy Roof started to use the service to live-stream the protests, the Bambuser staff contacted Egyptian users in order to better understand what they could do to improve the service for them on the ground. Moreover, Bambuser was also used to monitor the Egyptian parliamentary elections and over 10,000 broadcasts from the one-day election were disseminated by its platform (Messieh, 2011).
  5. The *Children of Tahrir Square* video was uploaded on December 22, 2011 but it was shot before the military's recent attacks on protesters and the dismantling of the tent city in Tahrir Square (*The Real News*, 2011).
  6. From when it was started in 2011 to April 2013 the Facebook page *Thawra ma'hash bitaqa* of the group of young people under 18 ([www.facebook.com/Thawra.ma3hash.beta2a](http://www.facebook.com/Thawra.ma3hash.beta2a)) was followed by more than 52,300 people.
  7. During an interview in the TV program *Akher Kalam* (The Last Word), one of Egypt's most popular talk shows, hosted by the presenter Yousri Fouda on February 15, 2011, members of the group explained that a Salafist young member had suggested the last sentence (ONTveg, 2012).
  8. The Edrak for Edutainment Project Development Company is an Egyptian shareholding company established in Cairo in 2010. It manages three international brands: KidZania, a real city for playing for kids from 4 to 14 years old; The Little Gym, a space where children between 4 months and 12 years old can develop motor skills in a fun and supportive environment; and Jazzercise, a workout program that fuses jazz dance, resistance training, pilates, yoga, and kickboxing movements for women of all ages. According to the managing director, Tarek Zidan, the ambition of the company is "to reach out to the community in order to create positive change through innovative and life changing development projects" as the three innovative brands described above. For more information, see the Edrak website [www.edrak.com.eg/web/edrak](http://www.edrak.com.eg/web/edrak). This kind of company is an example of trans-nationalization and globalization of education

- concepts such as "edutainment" (a combination of "education" and "entertainment"); "this concept gives children aged 4-14 role-play opportunities and exposure to real world professions." It has branches in different countries of the world: the United Arab Emirates, Mexico, Japan, Indonesia, Portugal, India, and so on (AME info, 2010).
9. According to Annick Percheron, "ideological proximity" is actually the only explanatory concept of "political socialization" (Reginensi, 2005).

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