2 Living the Intensities of the Privatized State: Informal Marketization across the System

Different intensities of informal privatization have become a defining feature of schooling experiences and represent a key component of the lived citizenship of different social strata. Informal privatization-by-tutoring affects almost every aspect of school life in Egypt, from whether the morning assembly ritual is performed to whether students and teachers come to school or enter classrooms at all. It ends up determining which subjects actually get taught and which get sidelined, which attract teachers, and which suffer shortages in the tens of thousands. It is however the *different* ways in which informal tutoring markets are established within and alongside formal institutions in the three types of schools that reflect the functioning of state institutions and differentiated modes of lived citizenship. This chapter provides vivid narratives of tutoring, teaching and cheating practices across a highly tracked system, featuring intimate portraits of exemplary public-school teachers, impoverished private-school teachers and millionaire star tutors presiding over private republics.

Informal Privatization in Egyptian Education

> Free education is a constitutional principle, necessary for maintaining social harmony.
>
> Hussein Kamel Bahaa Al-Din, Former Minister of Education[1]

> Greater efforts are being exerted to broaden the scope of the private funding of education, and to relieve the state budget of major financial burdens.
>
> Gamal Mubarak, Former Head of National Democratic Party Policy Secretariat[2]

Official statements in Egypt have consistently affirmed the inviolability of the constitutional right to free preuniversity education. Ministers of Education often voice harsh condemnation of private tutoring and the

[1] Cited in Tadros (2001). [2] Cited in Essam El Din (2003).

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teachers who engage in it because of its violation of the principle of equity and the burden it places on families. Nonetheless, the growth of private tutoring has continued unchecked and has spread across various parts of the system. In fact, household spending on private tutoring has long been projected to exceed government spending on education (MOE 2007). The decline over time in teachers' real salaries, coupled with a weak institutional environment, has led to the growth of private tutoring across the system, especially since the 1990s, leading in particular to a "de-facto privatization of secondary education" perpetuated through various forms of corruption and lack of oversight (Sobhy 2012). Tutoring enrollment has been recently estimated at 43 percent in the primary stage, 61 percent in the preparatory stage, 73 percent in general secondary, 33 percent in technical secondary and 22 percent in university (Elbadawy 2014).[3] Although tutoring is more prevalent in urban centers like Cairo, the nationwide prevalence of tutoring has been increasing over time across all levels (Sieverding, Krafft and Elbadawy 2019). Preparatory and secondary stage students who take tutoring often do so in four to five subjects (Sieverding, Krafft and Elbadawy 2019), while 70 percent of those who take tutoring do so over the entire school year (Elbadawy 2014).[4] Furthermore, almost 70 percent of students enroll in private tutoring with their own classroom teachers (ELMPS 2012). Tutoring as used across this text does not refer therefore to taking a few extra classes in a difficult subject, but to pervasive privatized parallel schooling that is driven by forms of permissiveness and corruption in the school system.

Tutoring has created a system that is both very inequitable and very expensive (World Bank 1996, Annex 2). Various studies have shown that private tutoring perpetuates and even exacerbates social stratification (Bray 2006, Akkari 2010, Bray and Kwo 2013) and that the marketization of education worsens learning disparities (Tan 1998, Alcott and Rose 2016). However, equity issues are relevant to teachers as well. In a recent survey of primary and preparatory stage teachers, 1 percent stated that they make 10,000–15,000 EGP per month from tutoring income, 3.7 percent made 5,000–10,000 EGP and 96.2 percent made less than 5,000 EGP (CAPMAS 2014). Such figures undermine the commonly

[3] It is not clear if there are gender differences in tutoring expenditures. Interestingly, Ersado and Gignoux (2014) found that families spent almost double the amount on tutoring for girls than for boys. A study published around the same time, however, found no gender differences in spending on tutoring (Sayed and Langsten 2014).

[4] According to one survey, 35 percent of preparatory students and 68 percent of general secondary students at the national level reported taking private lessons at some point, but the figures for Cairo were 59 percent and 77 percent, respectively (Sieverding, Krafft and Elbadawy 2019).

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voiced argument that no realistic increase in official wages would compensate teachers for their incomes from tutoring (e.g. World Bank 1996). While it is true that an adequate pay raise would not compensate the highest echelons of tutors for the profits they make on the informal market, this does not apply to the majority of teachers. Tutoring presents a very heavy financial burden for families across the socioeconomic gradient (Sobhy 2012).[5] Families in the highest wealth quintile spend about 10 times more than families in the lowest, and expenditures are much higher in urban areas (Ersado and Gignoux 2014). However, while the literature on shadow education has long recognized its impact on social inequality, only a handful of works have studied the multiple forms and dynamics of shadow educations across educational systems and levels (Manzon and Areepattamannil 2014). The rest of this chapter examines how tutoring works inside public *and* private schools in Egypt, how it transforms their functioning and the discourses and practices that explain, contest and perpetuate it.

Markets of Theatre in Technical Schools

It was time for two back-to-back computer classes for first secondary students in the girls' technical school. The whole class moved to the computer lab. There were two or three students per computer, but the fact that there was a computer lab, that classes were actually held there and that students actually sat at the computers is unusual in public schools.[6] The teacher started dictating the lesson, and the students started writing after her. The teacher said that the class was behind in the curriculum and that they had to complete the lessons in their notebooks. She dictated features of the computer and the steps for completing certain simple operations (copying and pasting into folders). With frequent stops to discipline chatting, latecomers to class and other forms of noncompliance, the dictation was prolonged. One girl who seemed to have significant knowledge of computer use was ignored or silenced

[5] According to a recent survey focusing on basic education, less than half the surveyed group (43.1 percent) of parents bears a cost of 51–100 EGP per year; 22.7 percent of parents pay 101–200 EGP per year; 17.5 percent pay more than 200 EGP; and the rest (16.7 percent) pay less than 50 EGP per year (CAPMAS 2014). Another study encompassing secondary education found that average expenditures on tutoring per pupil were EGP 35, 54, and 88 per month at the primary, preparatory and secondary levels, respectively, in 2007 (Ersado and Gignoux 2014).

[6] Where computers are introduced into schools, they are typically locked up "so that students do not damage them." Lab teachers are held responsible for any damage to the equipment and are simply not willing to take the risk or pay the costs of any damage or repairs.

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when she attempted to answer questions. Finally, the teacher demonstrated something on her computer, and students were allowed to replicate it on theirs. As this was the moment I had been waiting for, I looked at my watch. This lasted for about two minutes. Soon, they had to shut down the computers and the class ended. As we walked up to the classroom, I asked students how they felt about not spending more time working at the computers. They said this was normal. But how would they learn, I wanted to know. They said that those who wanted to could go later to the teacher to get an explanation; they would enroll in private tutoring with her. A couple of students went on to explain their understanding of the silencing of the knowledgeable student who was trying to answer questions and the prolonged disciplining and dictation as all related to "saving" the material and the explanation for the private tutoring. Similar situations of dictation and disciplining to avoid actual explanation were replicated in different classes and subjects.

Tutoring in technical education could, however, be seen as a striking phenomenon given the low stakes in this track of education. It was nonetheless pervasive and costly. In the boys' technical school, about two-thirds of first- and second-year students and about half of the final-year third secondary students enrolled in in-school tutoring.[7] First- and second-year students seemed to be more vulnerable than third-year students to teacher pressure to enroll. Their marks had a larger component controlled by schoolteachers. Final-year students sit national exams that are not marked at school, although they still could not pass the year without obtaining marks for "applied" (*'amali*) skills determined by schoolteachers. The rates of enrollment were very similar in the girls' technical school, although in third secondary, some students took classes in tutoring centers instead of at school. The official price of in-school tutoring should be 12 EGP per subject per month, although students reported paying 25 EGP for four classes per month in each subject and a total of 100 EGP for four subjects per month.[8] Those who enrolled in

[7] Enrollment in these officially organized in-school reinforcement groups varies greatly across the country. In-school tutoring revenues are distributed across the system, with a percentage of profit going to different levels of educational administration, thus creating incentives to retain and expand these markets. The Ministry raised fees in 2016; fees were set higher for urban than for rural areas and were higher for higher levels of schooling. For example, fees for preparatory-level group lessons in urban areas were raised to 35 EGP (just under 4 USD at the time) for the first two years of preparatory and 40 EGP for the terminal year (Sieverding, Krafft and Elbadawy 2019).

[8] There is a more expensive variant of in-school tutoring that is described as Special Groups *magmu'at mumayaza*, where class sizes are reduced. It is a further form of tracking and privatization in the system, where those who can pay more can arguably secure better service.

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tutoring mostly took classes four days a week for the four core specialized subjects. They often took revision classes for other subjects as well before the exam, such as Arabic and English. Therefore, the average monthly cost of tutoring for technical school students varied between 50 and 100 EGP per month, with an average across the years of somewhere around 80 EGP per month.[9] This represents a significant burden on families, given that many households in informal areas are single-income and that incomes are low and often irregular. If the head of household earned 400 EGP per month, for example, tutoring for one child would already represent one-fifth of household income.[10] Apart from tutoring, students are also pressured to make other payments that do not fall under the schools' official regulations. Often framed as parental contributions to school improvements, in-kind contributions included air-fans, learning materials, clocks and wastebaskets. Students noted that many of these items were later removed from the classrooms to teachers' and administrators' rooms or outside the school. Students were also expected to pay for any photocopying demanded by teachers, including for their official monthly exams.

In addition to the accumulation of poor learning from earlier grades (Chapter 1), two forms of permissiveness drive tutoring enrollment in technical schools: teacher shirking and absenteeism. Even though many teachers attempted to improve their performance in my presence, there was very little teaching in most of the classes I attended in the boys' school. Most teachers did in fact come to school regularly and signed themselves into the school registers, which are closely monitored by educational authorities. They could still arrive late, leave for an errand or just not enter the classroom. Actual teacher absenteeism from the classrooms I observed was rampant in the four public schools. In fact, teachers did not arrive for at least one in every three classes, and often one in every two classes, during my time in the schools. Sometimes teachers arrived at the classroom but did not engage in much instruction. Most classes consisted of teachers dictating very short excerpts of lessons – a few sentences and key points to be written out in student notebooks, which are monitored by the Ministry supervisors – and disciplining every murmur from the students through verbal and physical punishment (see Chapter 3). Furthermore, in technical school, this

[9] All costs and fees discussed in this chapter precede the 2016 devaluation and should be seen in this light in making longitudinal comparisons.

[10] Many low-skill private-sector jobs in the city paid between 300 and 400 EGP in 2008–10. However, many of the male students held precarious informal jobs and were often expected to pay for their own tutoring costs and many households relied on community assistance schemes, typically run by religious charities.

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Figure 2.1 Students playing soccer in the boys' technical school, renovated by a donor agency

occurred in a very short school day of about four hours, during which many classes were cancelled. Some teachers did attempt to explain the material at hand, and a minority of students engaged with them. When this happened, it became apparent just how much of that material was beyond the level of the students, some of whom were effectively illiterate, many with very poor basic knowledge of the subjects being taught and others so irregular in their attendance that they could not possibly follow the material. The situation was somewhat better in the girls' school, which had both instruction and learning material that were better suited to students' abilities.

There was very significant student absenteeism in the two technical schools. In the boys' school, attendance was around 50 percent in most of the classes I attended (attendance rolls are called out at the beginning of every class). Students could attend the first four Applied Lessons in the year and skip the rest because this was sufficient to obtain a passing grade. Especially for boys in public schools, many students who did attend left the school in the middle of the day. Students made arrangements with teachers, who would cover up for them if an administrator or inspector checked the classroom. In addition to absenteeism and leaving school in the middle of the day (*katatan*, as students called it), if they stayed in school, students did not always enter classrooms but found other places in

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the school to hang out and engage in other activities, including playing soccer, running errands for teachers, smoking, trying to talk to girls across the fence or just chatting (see Figure 2.1). As part of the general dysfunction of these schools, students often did not even know the schedule of classes for each day because it was frequently changed without prior notice, as teachers shifted classes between them or did not show up to a class. Many students did not bring any notebooks, pens or other materials to school. In the girls' technical secondary school, there was higher actual attendance in classes as well as in tutoring, due in part to the fact that girls did not have work commitments as the boys did. Girls in the two types of public school attended school far more regularly than boys. Many girls wanted to come to school because it was their main arena of socialization outside the home. School allowed for legitimate mobility outside the home and entailed avoidance of household chores. "School is our outing" (*il-madrasa dih fushitna*), as one student put it.

Therefore, poor learning base, combined with truancy, might have led to tutoring as an understandable remedy to improving learning in technical schools, but tutoring did not actually perform this function. It was structured around memorizing only what was enough to pass the exam, which was very little indeed. The conditions of tutoring and cheating in technical education can be difficult to imagine for outsiders to the system. In the words of a student in the boys' technical school, "Students go to *magmu'at* [in-school tutoring groups] but they don't understand … they just take the *muthakirra* [tutoring summary notes]. That's 90 percent of the cases." It could be assumed that students then studied from these summary notes. He continued, however: "They just put it under the exam paper when they are solving." As another student put it: "[T]hey don't take these sheets to study them, they [enroll in in-school tutoring] and know that the teacher will allow them to cheat on the exam (*yighashishhom*)." Having access to the actual exam questions and avoiding discrimination by teachers was also the main purpose of tutoring in the girls' school: "[Y]ou have most of the exam questions, so you feel safe, otherwise the teacher singles you out."

While permissive assessment is a defining experience for technical school students, they are also subject to idiosyncratic influences. The extent of overt cheating can vary based on the school, the teacher and educational district. For example, although they devised many ways of cheating, students in the girls' school agreed that they could not openly use their tutoring summary notes or books. As one student explained, "Here they write the answers on the walls, on the desks, on their skirts, on the calculator. I learned cheating here." Another echoed: "Study and you'll pass, cheat and you'll get good grades (*zakir tengah, ghish tigib*

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magmu), that's the system of the school." Students also explained the dynamics of exam monitoring: "They don't care. They just put the question on the board and leave the room." However, when one student commented that "[t]hey should be invigilating," another immediately responded that "every student should monitor herself." Cheating was so entrenched that it was not easy for students to accept the idea of real assessment. Students were also aware that their exams were not really marked. Even in the girls' school, students noted that "the teacher marks one exam sheet and marks the rest the same," or that some teachers do not mark, "but they know the level of the school." Students reported being told explicitly by some teachers that they do not need to understand (and that the actual content of their answers does not matter) because all exam papers are marked similarly. This meant that the few students who entertained some aspiration to attain marks high enough to apply for university admission said that they had little faith that their marks would in fact reflect their performance in the exam. The overwhelming majority of technical school students were therefore concerned mainly with passing and said that their marks did not matter for either jobs or entrance into a two-year college. They were also not concerned about skills acquisition. Graduates typically obtain jobs entirely independently of their specializations, through connections and based on competences developed through work experience typically obtained while studying (see Antoninis 2001).

The very low academic requirements and lax assessment in technical secondary schools are driven by the fact that most technical schools are simply not equipped with the workshop materials, tools or specialized teachers to teach students the mandated curriculum. "Practical lessons" in the boys' industrial technical schools were often effectively cancelled due to a lack of materials, machinery or teacher preparation or motivation, as students moved to the workshop or lab to have a lesson consisting of a few sentences dictated to them. Several respondents also mentioned that when principals submit unsatisfactory completion results, they are personally penalized and rebuked, a clear incentive to inflate and falsify school results. As a senior administrator in the technical school recounted, when transfer and completion rates are still not high enough to be politically acceptable, the Ministry simply instructs districts and schools to raise their rates and the marks of students so that they can pass. Cheating and enforced pass rates become necessary based on the realization that real assessment would lead to most students failing (and expensive grade repetition and class densities).

The low quality and assessment permissiveness of technical education starts in disadvantaged basic education schools. Teachers in technical

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schools expressed that they had no faith in the marks presented by students in basic education – on the basis of which they were allocated to specializations within the school – as they did not reflect the abilities they encountered from each student. In fact, by the time they arrive in secondary school, many students are considered by teachers (and students themselves) to be "too used to cheating" and not accustomed to studying independently without tutoring or parental support. As one teacher explained, cheating "has come to be seen by students as a right they can shamelessly demand of teachers, who are also convinced that they cannot be protected from student intimidation or retaliation or the investigations and sanctions they would undergo if pass rates fall below 'the commonly accepted' levels." Students themselves were in fact keen to share stories of cheating and bribery as indications of the poor conditions of basic education and of their exploitation by school authorities across the different educational stages. As one student in the girls' technical school put it, "[I]n the school I was in, if the parents paid 450 EGP, the teachers gave them the exam answers." According to students in the girls' general school,

> [T]hey just keep passing us and passing us, even if you don't answer they pass you, until we get to the certificate year [the transition from one educational stage to another through national exams] and we know our real level, and even in the certificate, teachers told my dad, "Give me 500 EGP, and I will get her the answers …" It's the same in public and private schools … The answers were written for me on the board … My sister is in 4th grade. She told my mother, "[W]hy should I study? The teacher told me you are passing without studying."

In this context of poor service provision and permissiveness, coercion was the primary means through which teachers ensured student enrollment in tutoring. As one social worker explained, teachers use "all official and unofficial means" to harass students until they enroll in in-school tutoring. This ranges from physical beating to verbal humiliation, threats of expulsion and actual expulsion. These punishments are typically undertaken under the pretext of violations to official regulations, such as wearing noncompliant uniforms, irregular attendance, tardiness or misbehavior. After enrolling in tutoring, this disciplinary wave (in which administrators are largely complicit) ends, and many violations that were unforgivable at the beginning of the year are tolerated. As the social worker in the boys' technical school explained, "[T]hose who have money and can pay pass. The others don't pass … 75 percent of teachers do not explain because they save their energy for tutoring, or they make students not understand so that they need the tutoring … it all depends on tutoring." Because tutoring was normalized, students explained

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non-enrollment in tutoring to me simply in terms of whose father is deceased, does not live with the family or does not provide for his son. This is a clear testament of the impact of tutoring on equality. As a student put it, "the system of the school is 'you pay, you pass,'" and another completed the well-known motto: "[Y]ou cheat, you get a high score." Those students who did not enroll in tutoring had to rely on obtaining summary notes from friends, being able to cheat in the exam or just being passed because of unofficial ministerial policies that limit failure and repetition rates, although a small proportion of around 5 percent do fail (MOE 2007, 70).[11] As in many working-class households, most of the students in the boys' school worked in the informal economy. This is why some of them even enrolled in tutoring mostly on paper, effectively paying for the leniency required to have irregular school attendance in order to accommodate their working hours but securing the summary notes needed to pass the exam.

While pressure to enroll in tutoring can be explicit and severe, in many cases it is nonconfrontational, implicit and masked. As described in Chapter 3, in the girls' school there were lower levels of physical punishment, but the pressure to enroll in in-school tutoring was equally relentless. Tutoring coercion had become so normalized that students were more attuned to variations within the norm: "[T]here are some good teachers; they reduce the prices and take into account the student's circumstances," while "others just divide the students up into tutoring groups from the beginning." Girls described how, in the first weeks of school, many classes consisted of exhortations to enroll in tutoring, with the full support of the principal. In-school tutoring is, after all, a legal practice established by the Ministry of Education and could be promoted as being in the interest of students. The fact that promoting tutoring replaced actual teaching also sent a clear signal that no teaching would happen until enough students had signed up for tutoring.

Finally, the style and intensity of coercion into private tutoring enrollment varied among teachers and was arguably linked to their own class backgrounds, gender, educational training and even religious background. Students observed that female teachers, especially Christian teachers, were less coercive and more committed to their classroom teaching. In the case of women, this might have been linked to the fact that they were not considered the primary breadwinners and their dependence on the extra income from tutoring may not be a matter of survival for their families. Providing private tutoring and being absent

[11] In 2005–6, the official promotion rate was 92 percent, the repetition rate was 5.1 percent and the dropout rate was 2.9 percent (MOE 2007, 70).

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from the home is not considered appropriate for many women and competes with the various forms of unpaid labor and care for which they are responsible. In the case of Christian teachers, lower tutoring coercion may have been driven by their greater moral integrity, as the students and the teachers themselves often argued, or to a perception of diminished entitlement to engaging in extralegal practices. It was also argued that teachers who were university graduates were better teachers and were less likely to coerce students into tutoring and generally had a different approach than Higher Institute Diploma holders. This was linked to their class background, and also to the level of training they received in their respective subjects. As a teacher in the technical girls' school explained it:

> Diploma holders are the same as the students. They cheated and continued. There were shortages, so they hired them. There is no awareness, so forcing students into tutoring is a necessity. There is no choice. They even pay if they do not attend. One of the teachers told a student who does not take a lesson with him: *if you have a chicken and you raise it and feed it and it goes to the neighbor to lay its egg there, you would slaughter it*. You will find worse types in industrial schools. They are from workshops. The others [university graduates], we are embarrassed to even talk about this, because of our principles, values and shame. We need this too [the additional income from tutoring].

In sum, tutoring in the technical schools prevailed despite the lack of any sense of competition over consequential marks, without remedying the profound issues of poor learning, and at significant emotional and financial cost to students and their families. However, while the stakes may not have been high for students in the sense of final marks, they can be quite significant in terms of completion of technical secondary. Obtaining a secondary school certificate opens up the desired (but ever elusive) possibility of obtaining formal secure employment, employment in other Arab countries, possibly better marriage prospects (due to higher social status) and avoidance of more prolonged military conscription.

Markets of Illusion for the Middle Classes

The dynamics of tutoring are very different in general secondary education, and they represent different challenges and serve different purposes for students and teachers in these more competitive markets. While students were usually not directly coerced, beaten or humiliated in order to enroll in tutoring, a variety of more subtle techniques, an accumulation of poor learning in basic education and the shortage of good quality jobs created a strong sense of injustice, exploitation, competition and despair. Here we enter the high-stakes realm of the infamous *thanawiya ʻamma*: the terrifying certificate exams of the secondary stage that

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determine which faculty and university a student can enter, the ultimate doorway to middle-class status. Because there are significant similarities between tutoring in general and private schools, this section describes the shared trends, while the next focuses on the idiosyncrasies that relate specifically to private schools.

In the two public general schools, enrollment in tutoring was near universal and student absenteeism rampant. Apart from some exceptions, all students in first secondary enrolled in private tutoring in all key subjects. This excludes subjects such as religious education, national education, art, music and physical education, which are not included in the student's final marks. Almost all students enrolled in tutoring in nearby tutoring centers (*marakiz*). Private tutoring centers are prominent in cities and urban centers and are more likely to enroll secondary school rather than younger students. As for *thanawiya ʿamma* students (second and third secondary),[12] their enrollment in tutoring was similarly universal, but they tended to combine tutoring in centers for some subjects with more expensive, higher quality private lessons (*durus*) in smaller groups for other subjects. School attendance differed greatly between first-year and *thanawiya ʿamma* students. First secondary students attended school fairly regularly, despite their enrollment in tutoring, because a proportion of their final scores is determined by monthly exams marked by schoolteachers and in-school performance. *Thanawiya ʿamma* students, on the other hand, tended to attend school for the first couple of weeks and then work their way through reaching minimum and variably enforced attendance requirements for the rest of the year. Beyond the first weeks, most came to school once every one or two weeks. Often, boys came only to jump the fence a couple of hours later. Some were more attached to school, as they came to play soccer in the playground, meet friends or attempt to talk to girls from the adjacent girls' school. For most of the school year, attendance in most *thanawiya ʿamma* classrooms was no more than one-tenth of the enrolled numbers. In many cases, *thanawiya ʿamma* students from different classes were placed together in one classroom so that only one teacher would have to enter the classroom and they would not be left alone. Students also noted that, if I had not been present, no teacher would have entered the classroom in the first place.

Although some teachers attempted to organize in-school revision sessions, there was almost no enrollment in the officially sanctioned in-school tutoring in the public general schools (and none in the private

[12] This two-year system was changed back to a one-year system in 2014 and was changed again in 2018.

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schools). However, while this ensures far better profits for teachers, it deprives administrators in public schools of their percentages of in-school tutoring revenue. Teachers explained that in many schools there was an understanding that informal arrangements had to be made to redistribute the financial benefits across the school, mainly through periodic gifts to key administrators, primarily the principal. In some schools, principals reportedly imposed "fees" on teachers – a kind of private tutoring tax or protection fee – in return for overlooking teacher absenteeism, complaints of poor teaching or veiled coercion of students to enroll in tutoring. A significant subset of teachers did not or could not take part in the tutoring industry, either because they were teachers of non-tutoring subjects or they had moral objections to the practice or faced limitations in fruitfully engaging it (like many women). Some expressed dismay at the prevalence of tutoring because it left them in the classroom with disinterested students who came one day and skipped a week or two, effectively rendering any attempt at teaching on their part futile. Overall, those who did not engage in tutoring also had to withdraw their investment from the classroom and devote their energies to other income-generating or social activities, as entering the classroom would not serve any clear purpose, except if a supervisor was conducting an inspection visit. This means that tutoring, in cases when it becomes so prevalent, renders a large part of the teaching workforce redundant and massively redistributes income, work and prestige across teachers.

Tutoring costs are effectively 8 to 10 times higher for general secondary students than for technical secondary, revealing the prohibitive real cost of general secondary and the large income and status differences between students in the two tracks of secondary schooling. The cost of tutoring for public general secondary students was around 500 EGP per month, typically paid over a greater number of months and involving a host of additional expenses. The average cost of tutoring per subject per month for general secondary students was 70 EGP; and students typically enrolled in tutoring in five to seven subjects. The total monthly expenditure was 350 EGP at the minimum and 500 EGP on average, especially when significant additional expenses for private textbooks and workbooks, summary sheets, photocopying, revision sessions and commuting are included. Students and parents also had to factor in the associated costs of a meal or snack in long tutoring sessions and additional clothing costs. If students paid an average of 80 EGP per month for about seven months in the technical track (amounting to 560 EGP per year plus small additional costs), students in the public general schools paid an average of 500 EGP per month for an average of nine months (amounting to 4,500 EGP per year, plus considerable additional costs). The cost of

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tutoring in general secondary is indeed considerable. It is greater than many public-sector employees' salaries, including the salary of a starting teacher in the Cadre System. Several students noted that their parents had fallen into debt in order to pay for tutoring. Many students explained the huge burden of tutoring on their families, where, as was typical, more than one child was receiving tutoring; commuting across neighborhoods required much time, cost and energy; the mother was not employed; and the father had to work two or three jobs. As one student described it:

> My father tells me you could support a whole family [with your tutoring expenses]. My mother drives all of us to the lessons. There are four of us. One in KG … Yes, she takes lessons too. Where else would she learn? And the higher the fees of the school, the more expensive the tutoring … Two of us are in certificate years. And my father, he is "happy". He does not come home from happiness.

In stark contrast to the technical schools, the quest for rigorous exam preparation was the main reason general secondary students gave for their enrollment in tutoring, although it became clear that this was not so straightforward. Students found my questions about why they enrolled in tutoring counterintuitive, as tutoring had become the norm. They did not refer to coercion by teachers as the main reason, although teacher practices clearly played a role. However, they did try to explain to me that tutoring offered regular follow-up, homework and quizzes and more instruction time to cover the very long curricula. This more-intensive teaching geared toward exam preparation and memorization of the right way to answer the expected questions was simply only available in tutoring. Most teachers, who did provide it in their own tutoring groups, clearly did not offer it at school. According to students, this rigorous exam preparation was available especially in more expensive tutoring of smaller groups and with more personalized help and follow-up, rather than tutoring in large classes in local tutoring centers. In this sense, students typically linked the quality of tutoring to how much it cost. Some also lamented that their families could not afford even more expensive small group tutoring "that was actually good," which they believed was offered in more affluent neighborhoods.

With enrollment in tutoring almost universal and absenteeism among students the norm, most teachers, when they actually arrived in class, did not invest in communicating the material at hand, but mostly dictated key points and touched on small sections of the material. Some teachers gave religious advice to students or let them read the Quran, study for tutoring exams or listen to music. Alternatively, some teachers did not really *teach* the lessons but rather quizzed the students about their

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existing knowledge in a manner that would exclude students who did not enroll in tutoring. However, in stark contrast to the technical schools, student participation in classrooms, especially in *thanawiya ʿamma*, reflected a relatively strong knowledge base. To give one example, in an English language class, the teacher quickly skimmed over the lesson and began asking questions. A number of students shot back the answers and translations of difficult vocabulary, and not one student complained or asked for an explanation or repetition. The teacher asked about the meaning of the word "exhausted," and a student shouted out the translation "*mutʿab*"; then he asked the meaning of "sail," and another called out "*yubhir*." As one student explained after class, "they take a private lesson with him, so this is kind of a revision for them."

In all six schools, there was a minority of teachers who actually taught classes. They were present in almost every grade. Using a recurrent moral trope, students often referred to them as conscientious [*ʿanduhum damir*]. This meant not wasting class time, not withholding material or obscuring it, not discriminating against students who did not enroll in their private tutoring classes and not trying to encourage or force them to do so. The use of this moralizing rhetoric is significant in that it overlaps with the construction of the citizen as immoral and needing reform, discussed in Chapter 6. It also implies that even if tutoring was indeed normalized, it was not perceived as just or moral. Students often condemned the situation as ultimately unjust to them, and they placed significant moral blame on the teachers especially for its existence. This is partly because they were in a position to witness the discrepancies between the teachers' performance in school and in tutoring, or when supervisors or guests like myself were present. Students in the girls' general school told me that to understand this I would have to come to school as a student: "You will see the teachers for what they really are. When a supervisor comes, we don't believe ourselves. They never explain conscientiously (*bi-damir*), except when we have someone in the class." Unfortunately, conscientious teachers are not always good teachers capable of communicating the material to students. On the other hand, some conscientious teachers are very good at communicating the material, but not interested in teaching to the exam, wanting students instead to understand the material and develop a real appreciation for it. The following description of a teacher in the girls' general school sheds light on the construction of a conscientious teacher and its complex intersections with social class, notions of learning, gender norms and possibly even religious identity.

Mrs. Mirvat immediately stood out. She taught Ordinary Level English at the girls' general secondary school. Her style of dress was

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different than the other teachers and her hair was always styled in an elegant bun. She was perhaps the only teacher in the school who had a car. This, her demeanor and her elegant style placed her in a different social class than the students and the rest of the teachers. She was widely admired by the students. She came across as strict and did not allow much joking in class. However, she betrayed a certain tenderness and expressed sincere concern whenever a student was experiencing problems. She was not scared of intervening or helping out in such instances. She also stood out as probably the most respectful teacher toward the students in all six schools (including the private schools). She never used rude, accusatory or humiliating language, and always called students "miss" or "daughter." She navigated the school, classroom and students with confidence and grace. She had a reputation as an excellent teacher and as one of those who taught "conscientiously" in the classroom. "Unfortunately, the Christians are better than us in this," one student told me, referring to Mrs. Mirvat and other "conscientious" teachers in the school. In contrast with many public-school English language teachers, Mrs. Mirvat had a real command of English. She also had a real command of the curriculum and the way questions were asked and marked in the final exam. Her classes were rigorous, and students were expected to know all the answers by heart, as demanded by the exam. In the story class, students read in turn from the book and were expected to know by heart ideal answers to factual questions they might encounter in the exam about situations in the short story: for example, "why did Manal get upset when she heard about the scientist's discovery?" Mrs. Mirvat therefore taught to the expected learning outcomes that involved the rote learning that the Ministry demanded, while also expecting students to actually read aloud in English and understand the content well. Several students explained that they sometimes only came to school to attend her class, regretting that they frequently could not do even that, as it was difficult to come to school just for one class and disrupt one's tutoring and homework schedule. The normalized reliance on tutoring therefore paradoxically implied that students could enroll in tutoring even when their own classroom teacher was excellent and conscientious.

Finally, Mrs. Mirvat gave private tutoring on a regular basis, including to some students from the school. Although she was not one of the famous star tutors in affluent neighborhoods, this probably meant that she secured adequate income to maintain her distinct style and living standard. Not all students wanted to enroll in tutoring with her, however. While some viewed her as too strict or academically demanding, it was also implied that she was morally demanding. If a student was late or did not show up to class (to go out with female friends, a male friend and/or

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in order to spend the tutoring fees on another item), Mrs. Mirvat would make sure to inform her parents. Many girls were not seeking that kind of academic or moral rigor.

Tutoring served multiple purposes for students in ways that revealed their increasingly precarious middle-class status and aspirations and their dilemmas over gender norms. Despite student narratives about seeking rigorous exam preparation, it is not entirely clear what role competitive high-stakes examinations play in the universality of general secondary tutoring in disadvantaged schools. First secondary students, whose marks have very low stakes, overwhelmingly enrolled in tutoring, even while expressing a lack of interest in marks and frequently articulating first secondary as a break between the stressful third preparatory and *thanawiya 'amma* certificate exams. However, some students stated that they would simply fail if they did not enroll in tutoring. Like their counterparts in the technical schools, many students conveyed that their education in the earlier stages had required no real effort on their part and, that most answers were accepted, cheating was commonplace, exams were easy and everyone passed. One driver of tutoring was therefore the weak foundational skills and fear of failing their subjects, rather than striving for high scores on a competitive exam.

Although some *thanawiya 'amma* students in the public schools did show an interest in their final marks, many students are not really competing for university. Other than the highest achievers, the chances of the other students in these public schools to do sufficiently well are bleak indeed. Public university entrance scores (centralized and based solely on general secondary exam scores) have been continually rising to the point that top faculties have effectively restricted their admission to students who score higher than 90 percent and in fact over 98 percent for faculties like medicine. Almost 30 percent of those who successfully complete the general secondary stage are not accepted into any Egyptian university or institution of higher education, apart from the large numbers of students who are not placed in faculties based on their abilities, aptitudes or labor market needs (MOE 2014, 64–5).

Most students therefore exhibited paradoxical attitudes about competition for grades. It was as though they could not easily come to terms with the loss of their middle-class status. On the one hand, they were enrolled in general and not technical secondary (an expensive route that is meant to lead to university). On the other hand, they stated that they would never get the high marks needed to enter their desired faculties, nor university at all. They often reproduced the dominant middle-class narratives that they would like to become doctors or engineers, but they also recognized that this was highly unlikely. For example, after starting

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with "me too, my choice for university is engineering," one student in the boys' general school continued: "Well … all of this they are saying is nonsense … We will all end up in an institute [low-status two-year college accepting low scores] anyway." Others then echoed his assertion. Despite the bitter sense of despair, a significant proportion of these students would probably enter university, although their grades would not allow them to access the more prestigious faculties and universities or to study the disciplines of their choice. Among girls, there seemed to be even less interest in marks. For example, when one high-achieving student explained her tutoring enrollment in terms of the importance of every mark, other students countered that students who care about one-tenth of a mark are rare and that "most girls want to get married," implying that they would not seek employment or further education after marriage. In fact, many of the girls were already engaged to be married.

Student narratives also reflect the declining returns to education and high unemployment among educated youth, as described in Chapter 1. The level of frustration with unemployment was palpable. Many students felt that university enrollment was no longer worthwhile. They referred to acquaintances who were university graduates but were unemployed or severely underemployed and provided examples of law-school graduates working as cleaners or commerce graduates working as security guards in malls. Many considered education, and not only their own marks, as futile, because "we will all end up 'on the sidewalk' [jobless] anyway." They also perceived university as a continuation of the effectively privatized system of de facto compulsory tutoring and low-quality instruction. In a sense, these young people were stuck between their theoretically middle-class background and expectations that they enroll in general secondary before seeking university admission, and the knowledge that there were very limited opportunities for them among the multitude of graduates from schools in more affluent neighborhoods who were competing for the same university places and the same jobs.

A final note is warranted about the impact of tutoring on the school as an institution of socialization and for the development of diverse forms of knowledge, skills and abilities. Teacher tactics to promote tutoring in key subjects did not liberate the school as an arena for other forms of socialization in non-tutoring subjects. "Activities" (*anshita*) classes in art, music and sports were usually cancelled, ignored or taken over by other teachers. Many school activities from debating clubs to art competitions and student representation exist on paper and appearance only. For example, on one occasion, the principal entered one class I was attending, asked the teacher about the "good students" in the classroom and took them to be presented to school guests as the school's

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supposedly elected Student Union. In another instance, a teacher asked students to write a research paper "off the Internet" and to put it in a good-quality binding so that it could be submitted to a district contest. Then he turned to me and asked if I could actually perform that task (to showcase good work to supervisors). Other ways of upholding appearances included parents executing artwork for display in the school corridors, with a teacher's signature underneath to indicate he had supervised the activity with the students. The existence of activities on paper only is a key feature of the permissiveness and institutional collapse resulting from declining social spending (Chapter 3). The only real activities where students actually participated in the public schools were the seminars and trips organized and funded by the NGO sponsoring the school.

Emperors and Republics for the Highest Income Groups

The preceding discussion provides an idea of the diverse meanings of *mafish ta'lim* (no education) in public schools, which enroll over 90 percent of students. However, in many experimental and private schools, the quality of education is markedly higher. This means that students' literacy skills, their learning, their grasp of the material, the expectations placed on them and the modes of instruction and assessment are all more advanced. The private schools where I conducted my research are English language schools,[13] which already represent the more privileged portion (about 40 percent) of private schools. Despite enrolling fewer than 5 percent of secondary students, these schools represent the most vocal subset of the middle and upper classes. Their grievances are focused on the failure of official national curricula and examinations to equip them with the skills and competences they need. Almost universal enrollment in *private* tutoring by students in these *private* schools represents distinct additional dynamics and paradoxes.

The private schools not only had lower class densities and far better learning conditions but also employed some of the most famous star tutors, with whom students in other private schools aspired to reserve a place. Students exhibited even lower attendance rates than general schools, despite the fact that they were paying the regular school fees. They still had almost universal enrollment in tutoring in second and third secondary and at least 60 percent tutoring enrollment in first secondary. However, students enrolled in far more expensive tutoring with famous teachers, usually in nearby tutoring centers in the affluent neighborhoods

[13] I conducted observations and interviews in a number of different private schools before focusing on the two main research schools.

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in which the schools were located. As there are many costs related to tutoring, from transport (usually by taxi) to additional revision classes, to having to pay a large registration fee to reserve a place with a good tutor, overall costs are both hard to estimate (including for the students and parents themselves) and vary significantly between students. My estimate is that the average total private tutoring cost for private language-school students was about double that of general school students at around 9,000 EGP (1,000 EGP per month for 8–10 months).[14] Some students were able to reduce their costs below this figure, while others in higher-end private schools paid more. When factoring in school fees of around 6,000 EGP per year, the yearly private expenditure on education per student of 15,000 EGP is three times the spending in general secondary and 25 to 30 times the spending in technical secondary.

In contrast to the public schools, teachers entered classes even when only a handful of students attended. *Thanawiya ʿamma* students usually stopped attending school altogether beyond the beginning of the year, so there was less need for entering classes. Investment in teaching quality was arguably low in the *thanawiya ʿamma* years because students attend so irregularly and because teachers know that students obtain their learning elsewhere. Overall, however, many teachers deliberately lowered the quality of their instruction in the school to encourage tutoring enrollment. As one teacher put it delicately, most teachers "leave something" for the private lesson. A teacher in the private girls' school, who taught in school the same way she did in tutoring, explained that her colleagues criticized her practice of giving out revision sheets and frequent quizzes in school. Although she was the most senior subject supervisor, they blocked her attempt to spread this practice across the school, one of them asking her explicitly: "What would we offer in the private tutoring?"

The near universality of private tutoring created further remarkable dynamics, including the fact that teacher salaries were lower in many private schools than in the public schools. Some teachers in private

[14] Private school students mostly had a two-hour class every day of the week, including weekends, and frequently had special revision or exam classes that lasted up to four hours and sometimes much longer. They could mix between 25 EGP classes, for the easiest subject: O Level English; and 100 EGP or more for subjects like Physics and Mathematics, especially as they are taught in English for most private school students. Private tutoring in Arabic usually cost around 50 EGP. A proportion of private school students have the foreign language of instruction as French, not English. For them, tutoring is typically more expensive. More intensive tutoring with sought-after tutors often begins in September or even in August, before the official start of the school year (in late September), and most tutoring lasts till the night before the exam (the exam period typically starting in early June).

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schools received pay as low as 300 EGP. Because the revenue obtained from tutoring can be very high indeed, teachers are seen as being allowed to "use the school" to build up a clientele so that schools do not need to attract them with good salaries. As one teacher put it, "it's like in the gas stations, you know [where people work for tips]; the school's attitude is: 'I'm giving you access to a livelihood.'" In fact, not only were their wages very low but also they incurred various additional costs, and their financial rights were frequently violated, a pattern noted by teachers across different private schools. With salaries effectively under the poverty line, even in private schools, this clearly reinforced private tutoring and forced any teacher who wanted to have a decent teaching job with regular working hours (especially women) to turn to tutoring. This also had the damaging impact of expanding the practice in lower grades where there are no competitive exams. Beginner teachers in the girls' school received 400 EGP per month, while teachers in the mixed school received salaries based on the Teachers Cadre rates at around 500 EGP as a starting salary (because the school is a National Institute governed by MOE regulations). Over the course of my research, teachers in the girls' school were eventually given the right to Cadre pay rates as well. More experienced teachers received higher salaries, and star tutors received even higher salaries, although the school was still a client and status base, rather than a source of income, for them. Furthermore, many costs, including pay for cleaners or photocopying sheets for students, are passed on to teachers and students. This has had a strong impact on teaching quality, especially in foundational stages where tutoring is not universal. As one teacher in the girls' school vividly explained:

> We had to pay to use the teachers' toilet. The supervisor had the key to the toilet, and to have a copy of the key made for us we had to pay. We paid 5 EGP each every month to get it cleaned by the school cleaners. We also had to pay for the teachers' room to be cleaned. We bought our own wastebaskets and anything else we used, like materials or resources for any activities or class decoration or photocopying sheets. It was up to each teacher really [what costs they invested in]. I did the photocopying of extra sheets thing once, but not again. In the beginning of the year, I bought materials for about 400 EGP [laughing] … my salary.

Private school students saw tutoring as fundamentally driven by the ways in which exams and curricula were designed, as well as the short length of the school year relative to the volume of the curriculum, regardless of how well teachers taught at school. As a student in the private girls' school put it, "[P]erhaps we could rely on school if they explained and corrected homework and held quizzes, but if the curriculum is too long, it still won't work." Tutoring was about exam preparation above all else,

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above learning the material and above even obtaining valuable marketable skills for them, such as English language proficiency.

Marian and I had been discussing tutoring in a private girl's school, when she mentioned Ms. Naila. She was one of the most sought-after millionaire star tutors. Marian described with amusement the setting and organization of the lessons she enrolled in with Ms. Naila. First, there were "bodyguards" checking if the homework had been completed at the entrance of the tutoring center. They were part of Ms. Naila's staff, but Marian joked at how they seemed to be selected based on body size. They immediately called parents from the student's mobile phone if the student had not attended the previous class, if the homework had not been completed and sometimes if the student was obtaining bad marks in assignments or quizzes. Inside the lesson, silence and behavior were monitored by about six members of staff in a lecture hall of about 350 students. With such economies of scale, this was one of the cheapest lessons available to private school students at 25 EGP per lesson. Marian was not only interested in getting the highest scores on the exams but also seemed to value how the context of the tutoring helped and forced her to study and solve exams. Not only was there a quiz and homework in every class, there were also frequent, lengthy and fully monitored exams marked by assistants. These were then reviewed by Ms. Naila in sessions that extended well beyond class time and frequently involved extensive *tahzi'*: mocking reproaches for bad performers, stern reminders of the necessity of studying hard and the difference every grade could make between getting into your desired college or ending up in a provincial university or a low-status faculty. As the end-of-year exam approached, Ms. Naila held exams where students spent the whole day in the center solving hundreds of invented and previous exam questions. Actual exam questions never departed from Naila's revision questions, asserted Marian (not commenting on whether this implied special connections within the Ministry). Ending her vivid description, she came back to the issue of recent declarations by the Minister of Education about making students attend school and not rely on tutoring. She said that, even if he tried to close the tutoring centers, Naila could set up a whole school in seconds. Pointing to a building inside the school, she said, "[F]or sure Naila could buy any building like this, and tomorrow the lessons would continue; she's a republic on her own."

Ms. Naila teaches Ordinary Level English. The aim of her entire enterprise, however, has nothing to do with developing English language skills. O-Level English is decidedly below the level of most of Naila's English language-school students. In fact, their focus on O-Level English

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has arguably reduced their overall English language proficiency, as they stop attending school or studying for High Level English, which does not factor into their final grades. Naila's "Republic," as Marian called it, is an empty republic, an elaborate system of hours upon hours of intensive work by students whose skill levels in English supersedes that offered by the Republic. The purpose, however, is different: It is to chase after 20 marks out of the final total, achieved by memorizing almost word for word a short story on which students answer factual questions and by reproducing the way that examiners render controllable the rules of English grammar (ways that were not always grammatically correct). The citizens of this private republic will never be required to communicate in English throughout this process and most expect to enroll in even more private instruction in English throughout their university years in order to actually improve their language skills. Along their tutoring journey, these citizens endure grinding rebuke and reminders of the limited chances that exist for enrolling in good faculties. In her magnificent edifice, Ms. Naila and other Kings of Mathematics, Monsters of Chemistry and Emperors of Physics, as they advertise themselves, were selling nothing more than a slim slice of a chance to achieve the upper middle-class dream. Each neighborhood of the city has its own stars, whales and kings, vividly advertised on walls and buildings, across from schools or on the walls of metro tracks. Outside the affluent neighborhoods, however, what is being sold is increasingly an illusion rather than a small slice of opportunity.

But just as they create emperors and millionaires, tutoring markets also create impoverished and marginalized teachers. These are the teachers of subjects that do not enter official student totals, the arts, music and sports teachers who have seen their roles and statuses take a very deep dive in recent decades. These are also the teachers who want to teach differently, who do not want to teach to the exam, but who want to help students learn and acquire a wider range of skills, abilities and knowledge. They include teachers who think of their teaching as a mission, who have invested in nurturing certain civic, liberal or other values in their students. They include teachers who consider tutoring morally objectionable because it is already their job to offer good instruction, who see it as giving an unfair advantage to those who can pay more and as nurturing constant dependence among students and depriving them of critical skills and initiative. The way that tutoring had taken over the schools meant that instruction geared to higher or diverse skills and abilities – such as High Level English in these English Language Schools – was sidelined to focus on areas that determined student marks and university admission.

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The example of Ms. Huda, an exceptional English teacher in a girls' private school, reveals the skills, values, status, social recognition and livelihoods that are lost in this context. "She is one of the best teachers we have," a *thanawiya amma* student in the school told me. "She is like our friend. She really gets us working and participating … Well, we were really active in the first semester last year (first secondary) preparing the lesson and all this … but then … I don't know … we lost the energy … we stopped answering in class, stopped preparing … Well and this year we don't come to school, so …" Ms. Huda teaches High Level English, which uses classical novels, like *Jane Eyre* and *Great Expectations*, and focuses on writing, comprehension and more advanced grammar. Ms. Huda is a lively and highly sociable person with whom it was easy to develop a rapport. She also warmly invited me to visit her in her home. As soon as I arrived, the apartment struck me as an affluent home that had not been maintained for decades, with collapsing furniture and decaying walls. Ms. Huda quickly shared her reflections about this. She explained her inability to renovate the apartment, and that they "do not buy meat," as she cannot afford it. She is separated from her husband and is the main provider for herself and her two children. Despite her decades of experience, her private school salary was exactly in the range of public school teachers – embarrassingly low to state to me openly, but explained as lying within the general pay scale of the school. She did not offer private tutoring, although she sometimes gave extra help to students without charge.

She was very proud of her teaching and placed special importance on her close relationship with students. She tried to teach them well, to get them engaged with the material and to develop their English language and other skills. She talked and joked with them openly about their concerns and problems inside and outside school. She tried to teach them to be independent learners, for example, extracting their own questions from the novels, instead of giving them set questions and model answers as other teachers did, encouraging them to speak up and to express themselves in English. Ms. Huda knew she could have opted to develop mastery in teaching Ordinary Level English to the exam, but her ethic of teaching was diametrically opposed to the logic of dependency implied in tutoring and the focus on the lower skills and rote-learning required for the exam. Throughout my presence in that school, I understood that she was articulating a sense of herself as being "a rebel," in more ways than one: in defending students' interests, in talking openly with them about sensitive topics like religion and sexuality, in securing their trust, in teaching them in a different way, in being a "moderate" Muslim, in countering the "superficial" understandings of religion she felt her students were increasingly adopting, and in

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questioning the new trend of their seeming alienation from having a career and their preference to be housewives. But at different moments throughout my involvement in that school, a heavy feeling seemed to descend on her. She expressed a sense of futility or despair and a deep sadness about how things had become; about being devalued, excluded and unfairly impoverished. Apart from making a decent living or deeply engaging with students on critical social issues, the space for her to just be a teacher has almost evaporated in today's depopulated schools.

It is not only teachers like Ms. Huda who are dissatisfied with this situation, its financial and emotional consequences and the skills regression it represents. Affluent families are bitterly critical of the need to mobilize the whole family and its resources for questionable skills acquisition at the expense of athletic, artistic or cultural cultivation, or simply social and entertainment activities and adequate rest. Private school students often expressed dismay at having to abandon their sports practice and other social, intellectual and creative activities when reaching the secondary stage because of tutoring and studying commitments. As in public schools, all school activities and subjects aimed at a more holistic development of student skills and abilities were marginalized or effectively eliminated because of truancy and dependence on tutoring. The dynamics of marketization therefore created a sense of grievance and injustice even among the affluent classes who constitute an important part of the country's intellectual elite. In fact, their historical right to a decent and free university education has also been seriously compromised by similar forms of de facto privatization, high densities and the low quality of education in the public universities. Therefore, despite their greater financial means, many affluent families experienced this situation as unfair, corrupt and as placing a heavy financial burden on them. They often complained about the high prices charged by tutors and blamed the government for having let tutoring spiral out of control.

Inequality, Contested Marketization and Neoliberal Teachers

Enough enough enough enough	كفاية كفاية كفاية كفاية
This *Thanawiya Amma* is a nightmare for me	الثانوية العامة دي بالنسبة لي كابوس
For years we've been sitting dazed like bulls	بقالنا سنين قاعدين مبلمين زي التيوس
Enough means enough	كفاية يعني كفاية
I've been taken for a fool for too long	اتضربت كتير على قفايا
But I want to know the end of the story	لكن نفسي اعرف إيه آخر الحكاية
I will not catch up with any college	خلاص مش هلحق ولا كلية
There are no teachers	مافيش مدرسين

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There are no invigilators	مافيش مراقبين
If you have money, you will live like the others	لو معاك فلوس هتعيش زي الباقيين
I thought I'd leave the book and start to rap	قلت أسيب الكتاب وابدأ اغني راب
I might find the door to escape the agony	يمكن ألاقي الباب اللي يهربني من العذاب

Abridged lyrics from a popular *Thanawiya ʻAmma* rap song (Thanawiya Rap 2010)

Private tutoring has precipitated the disintegration of the secondary school as a site of learning and socialization for Egyptian youth. The technical schools reveal markets for the working classes, where students are effectively coerced by underpaid teachers to enroll in private tutoring in order to secure a passing grade and a formal qualification, under conditions where they receive very little education and pass their exams through open and systematic cheating. Tutoring markets for the urban working classes are created and perpetuated, not voluntarily or through an entrepreneurial spirit based on supply and demand, but rather through different forms of coercion by underpaid teachers. These involuntary markets fail to serve any purpose in providing educational value. In a track that enrolls more than half of the students in that stage, education is absent, cheating is pervasive, and students are forced to buy their degrees by paying for tutoring in return for no instruction. This payment for supposedly free education is being extracted from families that are already struggling to secure their basic needs and from boys below the legal working age juggling precarious, low-paid and sometimes dangerous work in the informal economy to support themselves and their families. Privatization through forced tutoring is a fundamental aspect of the lived citizenship of these young people and is essential to understanding the sense of injustice and inequality they expressed and the forms of non-compliance in which they engage (Chapter 4).

Tutoring for the more privileged students in public general secondary schools reflects markedly different realities of lived citizenship. Tutoring for general secondary students is a market of illusion in which the core of middle-class youth are pushed to participate despite the rapidly declining prospects of achieving the middle-class dream of university enrollment, formal employment, independent nuclear family residence and the semblance of a professional career. Here, the market theoretically presents itself to students as providing an edge in exam performance. This myth is perpetuated through a web of financial interests in what has become a multi-billion pound industry. The decreasing chances for university graduates to make the transition to modern adulthood since the 1990s (Chapter 1) are at the root of the spread of private tutoring in general secondary and from there to lower grades and to university. The risk of being reduced to underemployment, unemployment or precarious low-paid jobs in the informal economy structures the practices and choices of the

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core of the middle class in Egypt. Informal educational privatization is a means by which families trying to preserve their middle-class status attempt to improve their chances to make such modern transitions. Instead of direct coercion, marketization is made possible by the Ministry's curriculum, textbooks, examination policies and practices, and an overall absence of accountability. A short school year that is incompatible with an overloaded curriculum, teachers shirking their duties due to low pay, and alleged conflicts of interest have made tutoring the norm in general secondary. This has imposed a massive cost on middle-class families with limited and uncertain prospects for commensurate rewards.

There is an illusion of similarity between tutoring in public and private general secondary, but the realities are vastly different especially for the more privileged language schools studied here. Private schools in affluent neighborhoods represent the pockets in the system in which high-income families make a heavy financial and emotional investment in high-stakes examinations that provides a more viable route to a secure professional career. In this highly competitive, nerve-wracking track, they are required to learn and memorize vast amounts of material that equip them with few valuable skills. They have more realistic chances of joining better public and private universities and securing formal employment, but they must suffer the double or triple privatization of paying fees for schools they hardly attend, paying tutoring costs for instruction that is only geared toward exam success and paying for additional learning and developmental programs that their schools should provide.

Apart from inequality, poor learning and cheating, a key implication of the heterogeneity, arbitrariness and extralegality of these forms of privatization is that they are not hegemonic or accepted as legitimate across different social classes, even in the more affluent households. They are variably considered immoral, inequitable, corrupt, unfair and as repressing healthy childhoods and youthfulness. The lyrics and the voice of the rapper in the song highlighted in the beginning of this section, which students listened to on their mobile phones and shared with me, echoes this sense of injustice and indignation. Outside high-end private schools, tutoring in Egypt emerges as a phenomenon that is not easily explained as a remedy to poor education, or as driven by job competition and high-stakes examinations. Across most of the public school system, it is difficult to see it as much more than a deliberate strategy to subsidize low teacher pay outside the law. That is, it is an outcome of austerity and permissive governance that, as Chapter 3 will further demonstrate, is critically facilitated by different forms of violence.

As is the case for other public servants, informal and extralegal income is very unequally distributed among teachers. Although many teachers

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do rely on tutoring to supplement their incomes, the distribution of tutoring profits is highly unequal, varying greatly based on the subject taught, school location, educational stage and each teacher's entrepreneurial or coercive skills. Strictness in academic matters, the socioeconomic profiles of the teacher, leniency with gender mixing and the reporting of student performance or attendance to parents are all elements that vary significantly among teachers and that are valued by some students and parents more than others. Critically, this type of marketization fundamentally disadvantages women and deprives many of them of the decent livelihoods that were available to them in one of their key traditional occupations in the public and private sectors. Tutor lifestyles of working late and long hours, "jumping around" from one tutoring center or student home to another and dealing with clients, parents and diverse employees is seen as decidedly less appropriate, acceptable or feasible for women, and incompatible with their duties in the home and in caring for the extended family.

Finally, instead of the creation of a new kind of neoliberal teacher or subject, the marketization of education has led to the emergence of a diverse array of dispositions and new and widening regional and gender inequalities. In general secondary, and especially at the higher end of the tutoring market, teachers are now expected to build and maintain customer relations, craft and manage a market image and reputation, develop their performative style (including elements of entertainment and charismatic performance), use advertising and marketing strategies, have catchy slogans and offer special promotions and combinations of services: indeed "to make enterprises of themselves." Teacher and student practices in higher-end private schools are indeed embedded in a neoliberal market logic that has created very unequal highly stratified and gendered outcomes. However, many of the typical neoliberal dispositions do not seem to have materialized in the rest of the education system in Egypt. Instead of the active, enterprising self-help required of neoliberal citizenship, most students are becoming more dependent in their learning styles and unable to approach the learning of materials without direct assistance from an adult or tutor. They feel helpless and indignant in the face of bleak employment prospects and their narratives of citizenship contrast considerably with tenants of neoliberal citizenship (Chapter 6). Although not exactly those predicted by its proponents, the policies and practices of the privatization of education are indeed "creating new ethical spaces and new clusters of goals, obligations and dispositions" (Cribb and Ball 2005, 115).

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