

Education and the Policy: A Comparative Historical Analysis of the Discourse on Education and Citizenship, from the Ancient Polis to the Modern Ethnopolis and the Cosmopolis of Late Modernity

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ABSTRACT

This is a comparative historical analysis of the discourse on citizenship and citizenship education, a subject of contemporary significance the world over, as it is articulated in three historical contexts: (a) the ancient Athenian *polis* (b) the modern *ethnopolis* (nation-state), and (c) the late modern *cosmopolis*. It is argued that in the Athenian *polis* a citizen was one who participated actively in public life, and one who belonged to the political community. The citizen's education consisted mainly of "humanistic" studies (e.g. "music", which also included literature, drama and history). In the modern *ethnopolis*, the main discourse was the development of a national democratic citizen, who possessed certain rights, not an active citizen as in the Athenian *polis*. The education of the modern citizen was carried out through cognitive areas such as history, geography and civics. In the *cosmopolis* there is a tendency to construct a multicultural rather than a monocultural active citizen. Citizenship education is centered in the cultivation of knowledge, skills, attitudes and dispositions through the open school curriculum, especially history and civics, the hidden curriculum, extra curricular activities, including community activities, school councils and relevant rituals.