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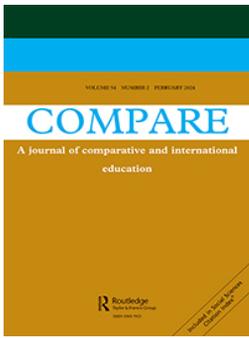
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# Towards an historical sociology of global citizenship education policy in Australia

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## ABSTRACT

'Global citizenship' has gained traction as a policy objective across school systems in recent decades. It has been defined as education for the development of a sense of cosmopolitan moral virtue, planetary identification and 'global competencies'. In this paper, I argue that historical sociology can help explain why this goal has gained prominence in citizenship education policy since the late twentieth century. Focussing on the Australian case, I propose an analytical model where changes in citizenship education policy for schools are articulated to concurrent transformations of nation-state citizenship within a shifting international conjuncture. This approach reveals that the rise of neoliberal statecraft and the diffusion of human rights discourses since the 1970s are pertinent analytical coordinates to make sense of the growing presence of global citizenship within government policy agendas for schools. The Australian case illustrates the relevance of historical sociology to make sense of contemporary education policy.

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Global citizenship education; neoliberalism; human rights; citizenship; historical sociology

## Introduction

Global citizenship education (GCE) has increasingly become part of citizenship education agendas internationally. This particular variety of citizenship education has been promoted by nation-state educational authorities (Davies et al. 2018; Petrovic and Kuntz 2014), international and local non-government organisations (Hartung 2017; Maire 2020), and higher education providers alike (Friedman 2018; Engel and Siczek 2018). Despite a growing body of research internationally, however, few studies to date have explored how this kind of citizenship education agenda fits within the broader historical arc of citizenship education.

In this paper, I argue that setting recent GCE policy within its socio-historical context is essential to understand this educational phenomenon sociologically. To do so, the paper proposes an historical sociology of GCE in Australian schooling. Historical sociology offers important tools to analyse the social conditions of possibility of GCE policy, based on temporal comparisons. Like spatial comparisons (e.g. between countries

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or school systems), comparisons across periods allow us to grasp the significance of context in the emergence and diffusion of educational policies.

Using this approach, I analyse GCE as a specific element of state-led citizenship education, which can be compared and contrasted to across periods. To explain why GCE has gained prominence as a recent policy phenomenon in school systems, I argue that dominant models of citizenship education need to be related to prevailing forms of nation-state citizenship and to forces shaping the international conjuncture. The application of this analytical framework to the Australian case illustrates the relevance of temporal comparisons to make sense of the social embedding of public education policy. This principle has general applicability and can be adapted to study citizenship education across school systems, periods and institutions.

### **A global citizenship education moment**

Deep transformations in citizenship regimes and associated education policies have taken place in the last 40 years, in a context of significant expansion in international migration, global finance, global supply chains and transnational corporations, and worldwide cultural phenomena (Mitchell 2016). In addition to their emergence in private schools and higher education institutions, GCE agendas have arisen in a growing number of governments' education policies and programs in recent decades, ranging from Europe and the Americas to Asia and the Middle East. They have often taken place alongside other citizenship education objectives, such as those seeking to foster active citizenship (Bessant, Mesinas, and Pickard 2021) and patriotism (Curren and Dorn 2018).

'Global citizenship education' has been used to capture a diverse range of interests and conceptions inspired by various philosophies, worldviews and political agendas. Although more detailed typologies have been proposed (Mannion et al. 2011; Oxley and Morris 2013), global citizenship discourses in education have been shaped by two main ideological currents: ethical understandings of 'citizenship sentiments' extending beyond the nation state, and entrepreneurial understandings of the global citizen as a person taking advantage of the economic opportunities of global capitalism (Pais and Costa 2020; Camicia and Franklin 2011). In the cosmopolitan (first) definition, the global citizen is a virtuous citizen, a moral and open-minded human being who cares for others beyond her own country (Pashby 2011). For instance, UNESCO sees tolerance, justice and world peace as central to its definition of global citizenship (UNESCO 2014). In more instrumental understandings of the concept (second definition), found in contexts such as elite schools, global citizenship refers to aspirations and practices of competitive advantage on a global scale, illustrated by individual prospects of international mobility for university study and work (Loh 2016; Gardner-McTaggart 2016).

Both versions of GCE exist in Australian school systems. On one hand, Australian governments have been committed to integrating 'global dimensions' into the curriculum, understanding global citizenship as students' affective and cognitive commitment to a 'global community' (Peterson, Milligan, and Wood 2018). A comprehensive study of the last three decades of citizenship education policy has noted the cosmopolitan framing of global citizenship and highlighted 'the prevalence of moral [...] visions of the "global" and "citizenship"' (Maire *in press*, 18). On the other hand, the choice of international curricula (e.g. International Baccalaureate) in Australian schools tends to be associated

with neoliberal outlooks and practices of positional advantage in educational markets (Doherty et al. 2012; Maire 2021).

How have scholars explained the ascent and diffusion of GCE agendas? Some have claimed that the advent of GCE must be read as a response to globalisation (Walsh 2017; Myers 2006). Other have noted that affinities exist between GCE and neoliberal discourses in various contexts (e.g. Choi and Kim 2020). Camicia and Franklin (2011) have appealed to both neoliberalisation and globalisation as the driving forces behind GCE. In a systematic study of textbooks from over 70 countries spanning 1970–2008, Buckner and Russell (2014, 738) use neo-institutionalist theory to argue that the emergence of references to global citizenship is the result of the diffusion a ‘world culture’ made of shared norms and intensifying ‘interconnectedness in postnational society’. Beyond their divergences, these various perspectives converge in describing GCE as a uniquely recent phenomenon.

This literature has made important contributions to our understanding of the context in which GCE has emerged and gained traction. However, more research is needed to explain the social conditions that have underpinned the historical trajectory of GCE. While studies of recent decades are important to make sense of the uneven diffusion of GCE across contexts at a specific point in time, they are less helpful to identify what distinguishes the recent period from earlier ones with respect to citizenship education. More specifically, in the absence of comparison with periods preceding the diffusion of, say, ‘neoliberalism’ or ‘globalisation’, it is analytically problematic to draw causal inferences about the relationship between these social forces and GCE (see Ragin 2014, for a methodological discussion). In addition to documenting the temporal coincidence between GCE and these recent social phenomena, evidence and explanation for a lack of commitment to GCE *before* the unfolding of the phenomena are required to develop an adequate causal narrative. Developing such a causal argument requires historical comparison, by examining citizenship education before and during the current period seen as defined by ‘globalisation’ and ‘neoliberalism’.

In light of this argument, this paper seeks to answer the following question: Why has GCE gained prominence in Australian government policy for schools since the last quarter of the twentieth century? This question is both spatially and temporally circumscribed, with a specific focus on state policy. Its answer may not translate directly either to other places or to other actors involved in GCE. Nevertheless, sketching an answer in this specific context can be significant to efforts to develop a reflexive relationship with GCE as a research object (Pashby et al. 2020; Goren et al. 2020). This central question leads directly to a subsidiary one: which forms of GCE have been promoted by Australian authorities? Acknowledging that existing research documents the prevalence of moral and entrepreneurial conceptions of citizenship in schooling policy (Maire *in press*), how can we explain the adoption of these particular models (rather than alternative ones)? Answering this second question is necessary to make fuller sense of the recent history of GCE.

To develop the required causal argument, I propose to compare the recent period of citizenship education policy for Australian schools to the models of citizenship education of earlier periods. From this perspective, historical comparison between different periods makes it possible to link citizenship education transformations to shifting models of Australian citizenship and to changing international conjunctures. This sociological

approach helps draw attention to the social embedding of citizenship education policy – both within national and international contexts. I argue that this analytical framing enables researchers to provide better *explanations* for the emergence and forms of GCE policy in different places and times.

## Method

### *Historical sociology*

Historical sociology offers important resources to explore how citizenship education policy is constituted by the context in which it exists. It gives access to privileged instruments to take the ‘space-times’ of education seriously (Seddon, McLeod, and Noah 2018), i.e. the fact that education policy and practice exist in specific place(s) and period(s) and that these spatial and temporal locations contribute to making these phenomena what they are. With its focus on comparing structures and events across periods, historical sociology is ‘inherently comparative’ (Lachmann 2013, 4), but various analytical strategies are available to historical sociologists. The variety I use compares socio-historical configurations rather than engaging in chronological analysis. I do not seek to identify the sequence of events leading to the current position of GCE in state education policy for schools, but to identify the theoretically salient properties of the configurations in which GCE exists, by comparing its position in citizenship education agendas across three historical configurations. Using this method, ‘periods can be viewed as separate cases’ (Haydu 1998, 340) amenable to comparative analysis. This approach allows us to conduct one of the key tasks of historical sociology, i.e. ‘to explain why transformative events occur at particular times and places’ (Lachmann 2013, 10).

### *Case selection and boundaries*

Since colonisation, relations with polities, economies, ideas and people outside Australia have been constitutive of the major structures of Australian society. This has been evident with respect to the central role of immigration (Sherington 1990), international trade (McLean 2013) and international relations (Brooklyn, Jones, and Strating 2023) in Australia’s history. In education, this has manifested in manifold ties with ideas, institutions and individuals from overseas, especially England and the United States (MacKinnon and Proctor 2013). This makes Australia a great case to explore the significance of international conjunctures in the historical (trans)formation of citizenship education policy.

To compare Australian models of citizenship education policy across time, I periodise the history of Australian citizenship education policy for school into three cases: (1) a first period ranging from the late nineteenth century to World War II; (2) a second era spanning the post-war years (from the end of World War II to the 1970s); and (3) a third period beginning in the 1980s. I choose this periodisation because it covers the history of Australian public school systems, making it relevant to explore citizenship education policies issued by public authorities (Campbell and Proctor 2014). I select this three-pronged periodisation as the boundaries of the selected periods correspond to meaningful transition points in Australian education (MacKinnon and Proctor 2013;

Campbell and Proctor 2014), Australian history (Macintyre 2016) and the international conjuncture (Mann 2013; Hobsbawm 1995). With respect to the periodisation of the history of citizenship education, my approach differs from Print's given his narrower focus on the citizenship education curriculum (Print 1999), and because I ascribe greater significance to contextual and conjunctural shifts in the history of citizenship education than he does.

### **Analytical model**

Given the centrality of 'citizenship' and the 'global' in GCE, the two main social institutions and forces I consider to study GCE from an historical sociology perspective are (1) domestic citizenship, and (2) international conjunctures. The focus on the relationship between citizenship education policy, citizenship and international conjuncture, on one hand, and the analytical division into three periods, on the other, means that the analysis proceeds by describing three different 'international conjuncture-citizenship-citizenship education' configurations. For each configuration, I seek to demonstrate how the prevailing model of citizenship education policy can be understood by relating it to dominant forms of citizenship and to the structure of international relations. In other words, I explore the shaping of citizenship education policy by its international and national contexts.

The analysis of Australian citizenship is guided by sociological theory defining citizenship as a form of group making that produces institutionalised forms of social solidarity by determining access to socioeconomic resources (Turner 1997). Based on this definition, rather than a generic overview of citizenship as a formal status, the analysis pays targeted attention to the shifting inclusiveness of citizenship – who is and who is not recognised as full member of the political community. Regarding international conjunctures, rather than a generic description of international relations, I focus on Australia's relation to dominant international forces and to its position within international structures (e.g. the League of Nations in the first conjuncture). Following Mann's historical sociology framework, I focus on internationally dominant forms of social power, i.e. military, ideological, economic and political power (Mann 2013). For each conjuncture, I mention salient forms of power shaping the international context (e.g. militarism is more significant to understand citizenship education policy in the first configuration than in the others).

### **Sources, method and narrative**

To gather information on the history of citizenship education in Australia, I draw on existing published sources. This approach is consistent with common approaches in the 'second wave' of historical sociology (Mayrl and Wilson 2020). The search for relevant sources was conducted using four databases: ERIC (66 results), Education Research Complete (71 results), Academic Search Complete (61 results), and ProQuest Education Database (20 results). I searched for the combination of the following three key terms: 'education' (and associated terms: 'curriculum', 'learning' and 'school'); 'citizenship' (and associated term 'civics'); and 'Australia' (and the list of the eight individual states and territories).

The title and abstract or summary of 123 unique sources (after removing duplicates and reviews) were checked manually to identify those in scope. A total of 80 sources were removed through this screening process, leaving a final list of 43 in-scope sources. Sources were removed when not relevant to examine the history of citizenship education in school (e.g. sources being non-research outputs; not about school education; without empirical content; or not about Australia). The remaining sources (38 journal articles, two book chapters and three conference papers, published between 1994 and 2021) were then read for substantive content and to identify other relevant sources cited that were not included in the initial search, including older sources not indexed in search engines. Sources were analysed using a policy sociology lens (Ozga 2021). The deployment of a policy archaeology approach, with a specific focus on mentions relating to school system goals, general orientations and curriculum, supports the analysis of the ‘conditions that regulate policy formations’ (Gale 2001, 379). Themes relating to (1) the desired attributes of Australian citizenship and to (2) Australia’s position in the world and to global contexts and events were identified in the selected sources to methodically map the national and international contexts deemed relevant to policymakers. The critical policy sociology lens helps analyse the role of ideology and social context in educational policy developments (Gale 2001).

The mode of analysis, where the properties of context receive detailed attention across a few selected cases, generally makes a ‘case/narrative approach’ more appropriate than a ‘population/analytic’ one in substantiating the argument (Abbott 1992). Accordingly, the form of empirical proof I use is narrative rather than variable- or model-based (Passeron 2013), showing through detailed descriptions how citizenship education policy is related to forms of citizenship and international conjunctures that differ systematically across periods.

### **Late nineteenth century–1945: feeble internationalist citizenship education**

By the end of the nineteenth century, all Australian states had legislated compulsory schooling, developed a secular curriculum and established a Department of Education to oversee and administer their developing school system (Campbell and Proctor 2014). The conditions of Australian citizenship and international conjuncture over the next half-century would provide both opportunities and obstacles to the emergence of a public commitment to GCE in Australian schools, with the latter proving more powerful than the former throughout the period.

#### **Opportunities**

The ‘age of catastrophe’, stamped by the global reach of total war, defined the period until 1945 (Hobsbawm 1995), and it did not leave Australia outside its orbit. The scars of the world wars bred an important effort to promote international peace. This was especially evident in the interwar years. An ‘international society’ developed in the 1920s, after the shock of World War I (Gorman 2012). In this context, internationalism offered promises to institutionalise forms of global solidarity propitious to the emergence of GCE in schools. The League of Nations, an international consortium of independent states founded in 1920, represented the mainstream form of internationalism. The League of

Nations aimed to achieve peaceful and democratic conflict resolution, and Australia was granted membership as part of a broader group of British dominions, i.e. the formally self-governing nations of the British empire.

This model of internationalism transpired in the public education agenda of the period. In the twenties and thirties, peace and international understanding found their way in civics courses (Thomas 1994). Curriculum materials in Victoria placed greater emphasis on pacifism than hitherto (Musgrave 1994). Melbourne had its first League of Nations Schools' Day in 1932 (McLeod 2012), and Australia hosted the international New Education Fellowship Conference in 1937, with the proceedings including a section on 'Education and World Affairs' (McLeod and Wright 2013). The acceleration of communication across national borders, including through radio and newspapers, offered the technical means to promote international awareness (Musgrave 1979).

Rather than fostering inclusive internationalism, however, the League was dominated by the imperial and capitalist interests of major powers (Britain, France, Italy, Japan and the United States), even though the United States never joined the institution (Clavin 2013; Pedersen 2017). The League's operations were driven more by an attempt to 'secure the world economy' (Clavin 2013) and safeguard imperial interests (Pedersen 2015) than by a humanist internationalism of the kind observed in cosmopolitan models of GCE. As we shall see, the enduring strength of imperialism and militarism made internationalism a weak force in citizenship education throughout the period.

### Obstacles

As in other settler societies such as Canada and New Zealand, the history of citizenship in Australia has been marked by both its attachment to the British Crown and a national story linking a new society to a new land (Macintyre and Simpson 2009; Bashford and MacIntyre 2013). Despite the federation of the six Australian colonies into the Commonwealth of Australia in 1901 and the progressive assertion of a specifically Australian identity over the period, Australia retained strong political, cultural and economic ties with the British Empire and its Commonwealth successor in this period. The leading form of supra-national political imaginary remained Australia's attachment to the British Empire and Commonwealth, especially among the bourgeoisie and the developing middle classes, who would come to populate the state bureaucracies (Connell and Irving 1992). Australians were legally identified solely as British subjects until 1948, when the federal Parliament added the status of Australian citizen to their monarchical identity (Davidson 1997).

The centrality of imperial values in Australian citizenship education goals until World War II are evident in curricula and teaching resources. In the *School Paper* and other publications of the Western Australian Education Department until the 1910s, for instance, the promotion of imperial and national identities were complementary endeavours (Dermer 2018). The same could be said of syllabi in New South Wales (Firth 1970). The militarist and racist attributes of this imperial identity made it incompatible with visions of global fraternity and solidarity. In New South Wales, imperialist socialisation meant promoting patriotism, depicting colonialism as a civilising mission, glorifying imperial expansion and teaching about the hierarchy of races (Green and Reid 2012; Firth 1970). Externally, this racist ideology manifested in a 'White Australia' immigration

regime fuelled by fears of the ‘Yellow Peril’ (Macintyre 2016; Lake and Reynolds 2008). Internally, it underpinned the exclusion of Indigenous children from public schools, which persisted throughout the period despite the generalisation of primary school attendance for white children (MacKinnon and Proctor 2013). The colonial sovereignty that had enshrined the exclusion of Indigenous populations from political membership made them ‘citizens without rights’ on their own land (Chesterman and Galligan 1997). These internal and external aspects of Australian state formation were built on a narrow and exclusive model of citizenship that left little room for an inclusive model of national – let alone international or global – citizenship.

The crisis of imperial capitalism had provoked heightened geopolitical rivalry and a global movement of militarisation at the turn of the twentieth century (Hobsbawm 1989). By 1911, compulsory military training was introduced for young men in Australia (Brown 1995, 413). The Commonwealth organised military training for boys through Cadet units in secondary schools (Musgrave 1979). The constitution of the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps (ANZAC) in 1914 engendered a distinctive model of ‘citizen soldier’ that soon became heralded as a leading example of ‘martial valour’ (Macintyre 2016). Although Victoria sought to curtail the bellicose elements in its teaching materials after World War I (Musgrave 1994), ‘military might’ was still an important aspect of citizenship education (Dermer 2018), after this educational goal had gained prominence in the early twentieth century (Barcan 1980). This model of the citizen soldier rested on an international vision made of allies and enemies rather than one structured around global fraternity, in contrast to what later visions of global citizenship would promote. The strength of imperial, martial and racist ideologies proved stronger than internationalist sentiments in governments’ citizenship education agendas. They positioned GCE as a marginal aspiration rather than as mainstream reality for most students.

### **The post-war decades: broadening citizenship education under conditions of cultural diversity**

In the decades after World War II, progressive distancing from Britain, the emergence of a more diverse and inclusive model of Australian citizenship and the advent of mass secondary education coalesced to produce a significant opportunity for the promotion of global dimensions in citizenship education. On the other hand, the polarised international scene of the Cold War and the dominant status of assimilationist ideology for immigrants and Indigenous Australians were strong forces undermining the generalised pursuit of GCE. The situation of citizenship education was mixed throughout the period, combining the diversification and international broadening of citizenship goals with the overall marginalisation of citizenship education.

#### **Opportunities**

After World War II, Australia embarked on a long capitalist boom sustained by domestic industrialisation and powered by large-scale immigration and the inflow of foreign (mostly American) capital (Connell and Irving 1992). The new state-led Fordist accumulation regime, encapsulated in ‘the Snowy Mountains Scheme, mass immigration and

General Motors- Holden' (McQueen 2004, 283), became established as Australia assumed greater independence from the waning British empire (Jones 2023). The central role played by refugee and labour migration in the prosperity of the post-war decades (Connell and Irving 1992; Davidson 1997), underwriting rising living standards and the diffusion of consumerism (Beilharz 1991), combined with the greater ethnic, linguistic, religious and cultural diversity of immigrants (Sherington 1990), offered important prospects for the diffusion of models of citizenship education oriented towards cultural, ethnic and linguistic diversity.

In the 1950s and 1960s, the structure and content of school curricula were 'modernised'. The international orientation of pedagogical materials became more explicit. In *The School Paper* issues of the period, published by the Victorian Department of Education, students 'were increasingly encouraged to look outwards, responsibly and beyond Britain', and official resources showcased the work of the young United Nations to support the conditions of children and refugee around the world (Musgrave 1994, 16). Less prescriptive approaches to curriculum design and delivery enabled teachers to explore contemporary issues of relevance to diverse Australian youth, promoting a more active model of citizenship education oriented towards participation in (multi) cultural and community life (Macintyre and Simpson 2009).

The new model of citizenship education dominating this period is illustrated by the diffusion of Social Studies, a new subject offering a combined approach to the study of history, geography and civics. The subject became a vehicle for a renewed approach to citizenship education, less focussed on the structures of the Australian political system and moral education, more critically oriented, and more attuned to citizenship as a cultural and social identity (Meredyth and Thomas 1999; Macintyre 1995). This new subject could support internationally oriented learning. In Queensland and Victoria, for instance, syllabi for high school students included content on contemporary international affairs (Connell 1993). Its appeal to boys and girls grew significantly between the 1950s and the 1970s, including in the senior years of high school (Musgrave 1979). These developments represented an important opportunity for the distillation of global perspectives in citizenship education.

### Obstacles

While the new forms taken by citizenship education offered richer opportunities for students to explore supranational identities and relations, this transformation coincided with the ebbing of policy interest in citizenship education over the period (Print 1999; Thomas 1994). Dedicated civics education programs were on the decline in the 1960s and 1970s (Barcan 1972) and, in high school, citizenship education became 'scattered into different parts of the secondary syllabus' (Meredyth and Thomas 1999, 6).

Endeavours to promote global citizenship continued to find an obstacle in restrictive visions of Australian citizenship. In the 1950s and early 1960s, large-scale immigration fed strong anxieties among Australians from British descent about Australian identity (Markus, Jupp, and McDonald 2009). This was reflected in a model of citizenship that handled diversity through expectations of assimilation and adaptation (Markus, Jupp, and McDonald 2009; Brown 1995). The assimilation of 'new citizens – not merely new migrant arrivals from overseas, many of whom came from non-British backgrounds, but

also Indigenous Australians and the new generation of young Australians caught up in the consumer society' (Sherington 1998, 332) was depicted as a means to achieving a cohesive Australian citizenry despite its ethnic and cultural diversity. In this context, citizenship education aimed to promote the cultural adjustment of the individual (especially among 'New Australians' and those whose participation in schooling was recent) to Australian society (Sherington 1990). As in society more broadly, assimilationism dominated citizenship education policy in the post-war decades (Healy 2015; Sherington 1998). With the main focus of assimilationism resting on an insular ideology of citizenry, citizenship education remained more inward- than outward-looking.

The international conjuncture of the post-war decades also acted as a force undermining the place of universalist perspectives in citizenship education. The new bipolar world compelled young nation-states and former imperial dominions to assert their international loyalties (Arrighi 2010). Once again, the global conjuncture was one of political antagonisms rather than one of global fraternity (Hobsbawm 1995), a state of affairs that offered little momentum for the ascendancy of GCE. Australia's experience of World War II and strengthening economic relationships with the United States in its aftermath underpinned a geopolitical rapprochement with the new global hegemon (Connell and Irving 1992). The fear of Japan and the Korean War of the early 1950s fed strong anti-communist sentiments among Australia's ruling class and politicians (Irving, Maunders, and Sherington 1995). This ideological bent was evident in education policy for schools. Anti-communism transpired in the 1955 Western Australian Social and Moral Education Curriculum, for instance (Down 2004). In the same vein, the federal government's 1963 decision to invest in modernising science classrooms mirrored Eisenhower's move five years earlier, a response to the display of technological power by the Soviet Union with its Sputnik launch of 1957 (Clark 2017). The adversarial nature of international relations in the Cold War – at least with the Eastern bloc – left little room for an inclusive internationalism to gain momentum in education policy beyond the margins of the curriculum.

### **1980S–now: global citizenship education between neoliberalism and human rights**

Globally oriented citizenship education in Australia has entered a new phase since the 1980s. In a context of renewed interest in citizenship education, robust Australian multiculturalism and the end of the Cold War, citizenship education goals reaching beyond the nation-state have achieved a more prominent status than hitherto. Yet, Australia's invigorated GCE agenda has remained ambiguous. The systematic subjugation of educational goals to economic imperatives, the triumph of neoliberalism in Australian governments and the resurgence of nationalist social forces in a stagnating and crisis-prone regime of global accumulation have undermined the chances of developing an expansive GCE policy.

#### **Opportunities**

State and federal efforts to develop a joint vision for Australian schooling culminated in the publication of the first national declaration of educational goals in 1989 (Rodwell

2020). Twenty-five years later, a protracted process of intergovernmental collaboration led to the adoption of the first national curriculum for schools. GCE goals have been consistently included in these and related policy sources throughout the period, appealing to a variety of more or less consistent cosmopolitan and internationalist goals (Walsh 2017; Maire *in press*).

A convergence of structural tendencies relating to Australian social diversity and recent domestic and international events spurred a renewed interest in citizenship education in the 1990s (Print 1999). Important citizenship education initiatives under successive federal governments epitomised this newfound interest. The formation of a Civics Expert Group (1994), with an explicit mandate to develop a national agenda for citizenship education in Australian schools, and the subsequent Discovering Democracy policy for citizenship education (1997), highlighted the significance of citizenship education to governments (Print, Kennedy, and Hughes 1999). GCE found a place in both initiatives. The models of citizenship championed by the Civics Expert Group and the Discovering Democracy program were more culturally pluralist and inclusive than earlier policies and curricula had been (Macintyre 1995; Meredyth and Thomas 1999), signifying a potentially more important role for GCE in schools.

Amid the increasing visibility of global issues (Caradonna 2014; Piccini 2016), including the Vietnam War, environmental degradation and nuclear proliferation, the 1970s had seen the emergence of large transnational movements for human rights and global causes. Following comparable developments internationally (Moyn 2018), the 1980s then saw human rights ‘enter the Australian mainstream in an unprecedented way’ (Piccini 2019, 154). In this context of widespread diffusion of human rights discourses, human rights became a mainstream element in curricula and citizenship education agendas (Maire *in press*; Thomas 1994). From then on, human rights and environmental care would offer discursive and moral resources for considering cosmopolitan forms of citizenship education in schools, as both aspects became central to students’ understanding of citizenship (Mellor and Kennedy 2003). The potential for human rights to be used for addressing issues of global social justice, through a focus on global equality and a globalisation of national welfare schemes (Moyn 2018), positioned it as a possible instrument for the development of an ambitious GCE agenda.

### **Obstacles**

In parallel with the ascent of human rights as a discursive force, a new global regime of capitalist regulation emerged, soon described as ‘neoliberalism’. In a context of crisis of the US-centred global system of capital accumulation (Harvey 2005), the doctrine of economic rationalism that became dominant in the 1980s imposed a neoliberal form of statecraft throughout the Australian bureaucracies (Pusey 1991). The reorientation of citizenship towards economic participation became the leading force in successive governments’ education policies (Down 2009). The sustained efforts to recast education goals as a propaedeutic to workforce preparation, as exemplified by the persistent appeal of ‘skill’ and ‘competence’ terminologies, illustrate the power of this agenda (Marginson 1997).

The neoliberal transformation of Australian citizenship has had uneven implications for GCE. On one hand, governments’ obsession with citizens’ economic contribution has

left little room for considering expansive forms of global solidarity, such as those advocating for greater economic redistribution within and across countries, in citizenship education. The minimalist approach to solidarity characteristic of the intersection of neoliberalism and human rights (Moyn 2018) can accommodate a moral model of GCE that casts aside more political questions (Maire *in press*), such as those relating to global economic redistribution. Meanwhile, the centrality of economic participation in governments' reconfiguration of Australian citizenship has underpinned the emergence of a more entrepreneurial model of GCE, focussed on individual dispositions to seize transnational economic opportunities (Maire *in press*).

The ingredients of the new citizenship education agenda also bear the mark of the resurgence of neo-conservative social forces, which have advanced internationally (Bergmann 2020) and in Australia (Macintyre 2016) over the period. Already in the late 1970s, conservative activism had pushed the Queensland government to ban 'all materials on social education' from their schools (Musgrave 1979, 84). The two main citizenship education initiatives of the 1990s also owed more to a moral panic of perceived youth civic deficit than to any other factor (Tudball and Henderson 2014; Print 1996–1997), including a supposed commitment to expanding the citizenship horizons of young Australians. And despite its greater commitment to cultural pluralism and improved recognition of Indigenous rights and contributions, the new Australian curriculum has retained a robust nationalist lens inimical to making GCE more central to its model of citizenship (Fozdar and Ann Martin 2020).

### **Discussion: the social and temporal contexts of global citizenship education**

Historical research on citizenship education in China (Fairbrother 2004), Singapore (Hill and Fee Lian 1995), the United States (Stratton 2016) and other Western countries (Tröhler, Popkewitz, and Labaree 2011) shows that changes in citizenship education policies are connected to shifting visions and agendas for nation-state citizenship. However, research exploring how GCE policy fits within the broader history of the relationship between citizenship education policy and nation-state citizenship has been scant (see Stratton 2016, for an exception). Popkewitz (2008) has shown that cosmopolitan principles have been an important aspect of citizenship education in the United States throughout the twentieth century, but he uses the term to describe ideals of individual emancipation rather than aspirations for international or global solidarity.

In this paper, I have sought to address this gap by developing an historical sociology of GCE in Australian schooling policy. Using a 'citizenship education-citizenship-international conjuncture' analytical device, I have endeavoured to show not only why GCE has gained prominence in the most recent period in Australia, but also why it did not gain as much traction in earlier periods. Understanding why GCE has received greater attention since the late twentieth century requires paying attention to the transformation of citizenship as a social condition and to the broader international conjuncture that may sustain or thwart its appeal and significance.

The analysis has described the domestic and international framing of citizenship education over three periods. As a counterpoint to the existing literature (e.g. Buckner and Russell 2014), I have given particular attention to explaining why GCE was *not* as significant an element of Australian citizenship education before the 1980s (i.e. in the

first two periods). In the first period, imperialism and two world wars, combined with a model of domestic citizenship that offered full membership to only part of the Australian population, left little room for the fuller development of outward-looking and internationally oriented citizenship education policies. In the second period, while Australian citizenship gained in both scope and inclusiveness, the Cold War context, as well as assimilationist responses to large-scale immigration and budding multiculturalism, made national cohesion the key referent of citizenship education. In the third period, simultaneously characterised by the ascendancy of a minimalist version of human rights and the global diffusion of neoliberalism, GCE agendas have found a more central place in Australian schooling policy. They have promoted entrepreneurial subjectivities towards global economic opportunities and moral sentiments of care towards foreigners and the environment.

The analysis of three successive ‘international conjuncture-citizenship-citizenship education’ configurations supports the existing literature’s focus on human rights (Buckner and Russell 2014) and neoliberalism (Pashby et al. 2020) to understand the recent historical trajectory of GCE. On the other hand, I offer an alternative explanatory model to the invocation of the ‘world culture’ tide of globalisation as the leading cause for the emergence of GCE (Buckner and Russell 2014). Rather than supporting the neo-institutionalist argument that ‘world models exercise increasing force over time on national educational systems’ (Meyer and Ramirez 2012, 119), I have focussed on the changing nature of international and global forces. Rather than ascribing causal force to the supposed growing power of ‘world models’, I have argued that it is rather the changing *form* of socio-historical configurations that explains why GCE have become more important to Australian citizenship education policy in the third period. Indeed, in contrast to the neo-institutionalist model, I follow Mann (2013) in characterising the organisation of the world since 1945 as being increasingly structured by *both* the nation-state and global capitalism, rather than focussing on the latter alone. Using the contrast proposed by Schriewer (2014), my approach is thus more structural than cultural and highlights the need to consider changes in both international conjunctures *and* nation-state citizenship.

The analysis presented in this paper also offers greater analytical specificity about the relationship between neoliberalism and GCE. Two dimensions of this relationship have been described. On one hand, the way neoliberalism has reshaped Australian citizenship has supported the emergence of entrepreneurial models of GCE. On the other hand, the conditioning of GCE by neoliberalism is *channelled through* the neoliberal fashioning of human rights. It is a minimalist version of human rights, i.e. one divorced from the idea of global welfare and redistribution, that has become ‘hegemonic alongside neoliberal assaults on both the welfare state and postcolonial attempts to restructure the international economy in the interests of global equality’ (Whyte 2019, 6). These results suggest that analyses of GCE would benefit from further exploring the articulation of human rights and neoliberalism.

More broadly, the historical sociology of citizenship education proposed in this article highlights an important epistemological principle for the study of recent educational phenomena. Against arguments proposing a more categorical distinction between our educational times and earlier eras (Dale and Robertson 2009), the analysis shows that international conjunctures are relevant to understanding the shape of citizenship

education *across periods*. If the comparison of policies, events and formations ‘with reference to particular (and messy) space-times of education helps to account for globalising education’ (Seddon, McLeod, and Noah 2018, 9–10), it would be a mistake to assume that these globalising processes are unique to our times.

## Conclusion

In this article, I have attempted to make sense of the growing presence of GCE within citizenship education policy in Australian schooling. To do so, I have argued that it is important to re-situate it within its national and international contexts. Rather than a direct response to globalisation, the analysis suggests that the present status of GCE is better understood with reference to the dominance of a minimalist vision of human rights, on one hand, and to the diffusion of neoliberal statecraft, on the other. Overall, Australian state-led GCE appears to have added a relatively secondary concern for ‘global issues’ to traditional models of citizenship education increasingly reoriented towards narrowly economic ends.

Future research could put this explanatory model to the test by applying it to other countries, tracing the socio-historical movements in their citizenship education policies and relating these to transformations in nation-state citizenship (as has been done by Mardones (2020) in the Chilean case) and the international conjuncture. In particular, focussing on countries with different temporalities of state formation and trajectories of citizenship education (Green 2013), as well as different experiences in the recent transformation of citizenship (Isin and Nyers 2014), such as Southeast Asian and South American countries, would be particularly useful. These could nuance, correct or expand the analytical model proposed here and enrich our understanding of the transformation of citizenship education in school systems internationally.

## Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

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