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**Becoming citizens in late modernity: a global-national comparison of young people in Japan and the UK<sup>i</sup>**

## **Citizenship and modernity**

It is a sociological truism that transformations associated with the emergence of modern societies were disruptive to traditional ways of life and inherently individualizing as people were released from fixed roles and all-encompassing belief systems. For classical social thinkers, such developments were inherently paradoxical as individual freedoms and technological advances were accompanied by intense existential insecurities and chronically dehumanizing social relationships. Nevertheless, modernity was also profoundly mediated by social change in ways that reproduced relatively stable forms of social relationships. From the individual and the personal to the institutional and the public, the complex temporality of human experience enters into social reality as determining and constitutive. In the comparative exploration of young people's citizenship in Japan and the UK set out in this article, we claim that the deep pluralisation of late modern societies creates a disjuncture in the ways in which the past is reproduced in the present at a specific point in the life-course. In applying Connolly's distinction between the politics of being and becoming (2005, 2011), we propose that citizenship for young people should be viewed as inherently transitional as they encounter different citizenships, those 'of being' that no longer work for them alongside those moments and possibilities 'of becoming' citizens that do.

Giddens (1991 p.145-6) refers to 'the 'binding' normative character' of tradition that enables the 'coordination of the past with the present' 'through adherence to the normative precepts tradition incorporates'. This has particular resonance when looking at age-groups as in traditional contexts 'the life-cycle carries strong connotations of renewal, since each generation in some substantial part rediscovers and relives modes of life of its forerunners'. The persistence of patriarchal relationships for women and children, stable local communities, and religious authority placed significant normative restrictions on the extent to which new generations could re-make themselves in opposition to their predecessors. There

is a close relationship between these traditional social forms and the dominant paradigm of citizenship associated with political modernization. For instance, Marshall's (1950) classic analysis of the historical development of citizenship, both implicitly and explicitly, demonstrated how it was grafted on to rather than displaced pre-existing social hierarchies and solidarities particularly those of gender, race and nation. As such citizenship provided an ideal that gave a new dynamic to social relationships but it was often modified and adapted to fit with more conservative forces. It is this relatively fixed and static facet of citizenship that is associated with *being* as opposed to *becoming*.

In establishing social integration, modern societies have therefore particularly relied upon a form of citizenship that is primarily concerned with reinforcing bonds and obligations between those who share religious, ethnic, linguistic and moral traditions. This is sedimented over time by establishing continuities across generations through predictable forms of socialization. It is this form of citizenship that has reached its limits in late modernity. As Giddens points out with the 'maturation of modernity', the 'sequestration of experience' is radically transformed and, crucially, individualized (Giddens, 1991 p.145). He suggests this is an experience of personal crisis in which the self can, in principle, 'achieve greater mastery over the social relations and social contexts reflexively incorporated into the forging of self-identity than was previously possible' (Ibid, p.149). However, it is also characterized by a variety of 'moral dilemmas' as the 'more we return to existential issues, the more we find moral disagreements' (Ibid, p.231).

On this view, change through the life-course is increasingly experienced as a matter of individual existential choice and self-determination. Moreover, intergenerational conflict becomes a chronic feature of advanced societies (Edmunds and Turner 2002 p. 11) as young people confront changed global situations for which 'adults and the institutions they direct have no answer' (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim, 2002 p.160). In contexts of rapid social change, a generation may quickly become distanced from past generations and the connectivity to social and political institutions has to be recreated afresh. At the same time, a generation may have little consciousness of its own shared history unless this collective memory is itself institutionalized (Edmunds and Turner, 2002 p.10). The experience of belonging to a 'new' generation under late modernity implies an intensely paradoxical experience with the potential for acute individual isolation and alienation, distanced from their own and other

generations, alongside the possibility to re-make themselves and the world around them in ways that fundamentally break with the past

According to Honneth (1995, 2001) the ‘moral dilemmas’ of modernity are most cogently understood and explained in terms of struggles for recognition that arise from experiences of injustice. A positive relation to self needs inter-subjective relations that affirm an individual’s moral autonomy and personal integrity. The corollary to this is the moral injuries of injustice, humiliation and disrespect that are ultimately a denial of recognition of another human being. The individual’s self-relation is dependent on how they perceive their capabilities and rights that are in turn the consequence of how they have or have not been recognized by others. Recognition is then essential for the individual to develop self-confidence, self-respect and self-esteem. For Honneth then, recognition requires effective institutions (family, state and work) and corresponding social relationships that can provide the inter-subjective understanding between individuals that allows the self to develop. Honneth’s theory of recognition problematises the analysis of social change outlined by Beck and Giddens as he suggests it is possible to understand the intense forms of social change witnessed in late modernity as fundamentally dislocating and fragmenting relationships in ways that chronically limits the deeper forms of interpersonal recognition. The dis-embedding of individuals from tradition does not necessarily lead to new forms of empowerment for individuals but an intensified moral sensibility that requires new structures of recognition without which the uncertain biographies and ‘do-it-yourself’ identities of late modernity are at risk of being broken, damaged and atomized. A central proposition therefore is that late modernity fundamentally disrupts the experience of *being a citizen* for young people to a point where re-integration in to existing communities of recognition becomes significantly restricted. If, as we assert, globalization is a process creating local conditions in which *being a citizen* is increasingly closed off for new generations, conventional policy responses that proved more effective in the past are increasingly reinforcing these exclusions.

The article proceeds by exploring how ‘citizenship of being’ operates for young people across Japan and UK insofar that it is characterised by exclusions and deficits arising from social and economic change. If, as Lockwood (1996 p. 534-536) argues, citizenship relations in political orders are mediated and individualized by markets and bureaucracies which are essential for the organization and legitimisation of status inequalities, this means the application of universal and abstract principles of citizenship within bureaucratic

relationships enables such inequalities to be effectively reproduced as well as modified. From this perspective, individuals are viewed as autonomous but their status in society is subject to the management and surveillance of the market and the state in dynamic contemporary capitalist democracies to ensure ‘citizenship remains an ideal whose actualisation is always less than complete’ (Ibid, p. 526). Citizenship has therefore enabled modern states to establish social integration by reproducing legitimate forms of civic stratification, open to modification in response to political demands, but clearly influenced by the structure of class and status. The argument here however is that when we consider young people, civic stratification generates deficits and exclusions that are increasingly incompatible with social integration.

In addition, civic stratification is particularly compounded by a model of ‘citizenship of being’ that denies young people’s autonomy and political agency. Their civic exclusion is related to the liberal model of citizenship that views young people as ‘not yet citizens’ particularly associated with their non-participation in ‘adult’ institutions such as the military, marriage and work as well as being excluded from formal democratic politics (Moosa-Mitha, 2005). While entering adulthood means that young people at defined points begin to accumulate the formal rights of citizenship, they continue to experience civic deficits as they are judged against the norms of adult citizenship. For example, lack of experience and credentials provides a basis on which to legitimately discriminate against them in employment. Moreover, markers of adulthood defined by ‘ages of consent’ are often subjective, informed by adult interpretations of juvenilia and maturity, and lack consistency or coherence in their application. Ambiguities in demarcating terms such as ‘young people’ and ‘young adults’ from the wider adult citizenry are further complicated by the increasingly expansive social and cultural application of terms such as ‘youth’ and ‘young’ which are often applied up to and sometimes beyond the age of thirty. It is difficult therefore to define a precise point when adulthood is attained meaning transitions from youth to adulthood are increasingly complex and fluid (Mycock and Tonge 2012). Nevertheless, the institutionalisation of disadvantage based upon age therefore gives the social category of youth a particular saliency in modern societies.

In substantiating our argument, we draw on a number of examples in relation to areas such as family, community, education and work to demonstrate how the ‘citizenship of being’ experience of young people in both Japan and the UK is defined by increasing restrictions on

the age related accumulation of prescribed rights and duties. We acknowledge that the differentiation within youth as a social group (by race, class, gender, sexuality, disability as well as age itself) inevitably creates problems in treating young people as an homogenous group and can downplay how youth intersects with other social divisions. Unfortunately, limitations on space do not allow us to explore in detail how the experiences and disadvantages of young people in the UK and Japan are further differentiated and compounded by social divisions, though such complexities require further scholarly attention within a comparative framework. Nevertheless, we do not believe this distracts from our central claim that it is becoming that much harder *to be* a citizen and this is the case in both the UK and Japan.

We go on to critically examine the policy responses to the problems of young people's citizenship which attempt to address concerns of marginalisation and disengagement. However, in both Japan and the UK, there is a convergence towards policies that are underpinned by problematic assumptions about the identities and behaviour of young people and their perceived deficits and failings. Proposed solutions then focus upon the requirements of social integration and the need to socialise young people into the norms and values of work and nation. The alternative, we argue, is to think beyond a 'citizenship of being' and embrace a 'citizenship of becoming' that is marked by a distinctly different relationship to political time and space (Connolly, 2005 p. 130). The final part of the paper then argues for a broader framework for a sociology and politics of citizenship that moves, both analytically and normatively, from being to becoming. This means that young people should no longer be considered as citizens in waiting or deficient citizens but instead viewed as occupying a unique historical position engaged in projects of personal and political autonomy that imply new forms and sites of citizenship.

A comparative study of Japan and the UK may imply a methodological nationalism that is sociologically myopic to the irreversibly transformative, multi-dimensional global processes that have altered the position of states within social worlds. Indeed, we are told that the 'national organization as a structuring principle of societal and political action can no longer serve as the orienting reference point for the social scientific observer' (Beck and Sznaider, 2010 p.384). Nevertheless, national societies consist of established and longstanding social solidarities that are organized by states with powerful territorial jurisdiction and these societies are often comparatively distinct. A global-national approach then understands the

processes of change associated with globalization as mediated by nationally embedded structures and institutions that continue to be causally significant.

In this sense, comparatively similar developments may be experienced and processed differently in different contexts. Sassen (2010 p.3) suggests researching globalisation thus requires us to address national frameworks but in new ways which explore the presence of ‘globalizing dynamics in thick social environments that mix national and non-national elements’. Although many of the existing nationally-located research techniques and data sets remain relevant, emergent research must be analyzed through new conceptual and interpretive frameworks that acknowledge ‘that the national can be one of the sites for the global’ (Ibid, p.2). This is central to the analysis of citizenship developed in this article. On the one hand, the problems of social integration of young people in both the UK and Japan exhibit national and local particularities but, on the other hand, are indicative of the generalised disruption of the prescribed rights, duties and identities of a state-centric ‘citizenship of being’ that arises from globalisation. In addition, such a framework is necessary if more expansive conceptions of ‘citizenship of becoming’ associated with new forms of belonging, civic competences and virtues are to be uncovered.

### **Young people, civic deficits and exclusion in Japan and the UK**

In the UK, widening socio-economic inequalities, such as the sharp rise in income disparities for those of working age in the last three decades, have sharpened as they intersect with other social divisions, such as race and ethnicity (OECD, 2011). This has been underpinned by a significant increase in work in the periphery labour market (low paid, temporary and part time work) while those at the top end have benefited from wage increases and a relatively benign tax regime. As the British economy has de-industrialized, it has become acutely dependent on its service sector for job creation. Transnational businesses in particular have been attracted by on-going deregulation and liberalization of employment legislation. In this sense, the problems faced by young people in the UK have been reconfigured and redefined by processes associated with globalization allied with successive governments’ pursuit of a globalized neo-liberalism in response to post-imperial decline and the problems of national economic modernisation.

The rise in youth unemployment in the UK, with over one in five 16-24 year-olds currently



without work (OECD, 2012), highlights the potential for a ‘lost generation’. In this context, ongoing concerns amongst politicians and other commentators about youth crime and anti-social behaviour (Muncie, 2009) were intensified by the prominence of young people in the riots across England in August 2011. Furthermore, decline in levels of political participation and the perceived civic disengagement of younger citizens has raised concerns about the future of British democracy and youth citizenship (Mycock and Tonge, 2012).

Japan, meanwhile, successfully embraced a form of Western modernisation that has seen it become one of the most advanced and innovative economies in the world with considerable wealth and high standards of living. Even though in more recent years it has experienced a prolonged recession, Japan is viewed as a comparatively successful capitalist society which has avoided many of the social problems associated with Western modernity. Wilkinson and Pickett (2010) identify Japan as an archetypal case that proves their argument that high levels of equality are causally related to fewer social problems. Such evidence suggests that Japan may well be a more successfully socially integrated and cohesive society than the UK that could provide a model against which other societies should be judged. Japanese society exhibits the characteristics of an ethnic national community bound together by a subtle and complex web of obligations, etiquette and customs (Macfarlane, 2008). Willis (2006) notes that citizenship in Japan is an assumed birthright – *kokuseki* – which translates as ‘duty to the country’. This suggests that, despite undergoing aspects of modernization, high levels of social integration in Japan are underpinned by ethnicity. Whilst it is important not to overstate Japan’s distinctiveness and view it as some kind of mystical *gemeinschaft*, it remains important to be sensitive to a national society that is in key respects culturally distinct.

While the statistical ‘tools of social science’ may not be able to capture the texture of Japanese cultural life, it seems reasonable to see Japan’s social cohesiveness has at least in part been sustained by a combination of material success and institutionalised egalitarianism. However, the extent to which this can continue in the context of global economic restructuring is questionable. Indeed, OECD statistics of income equality indicate Japan has become more unequal since the mid-1980s when compared to other countries and is higher than average on measures of poverty (OECD, 2011). Moreover there is growing evidence that since the 1990s Japan’s ‘traditional structures of opportunity’ that enabled quite predictable and stable transitions to adulthood have begun to breakdown (Furlong, 2008 p.323).

Murakami (2010) argues that young people in Japan feel increasingly powerless, marginalised and even excluded as the ‘fluidisation’ of employment practices deny them the same opportunities and stability as their parents. The number of non-employed young people in Japan has also increased sharply since the early 1990s meaning nearly one in ten 15-24 year-olds is now out of work (OECD 2012). Rising levels of youth crime and anti-social behaviour are now seen by some as a serious social problem to the extent they are indicative of a broader national moral crisis (Nakanishi 2003, Fenwick 2007). This suggests there is a more acute and dramatic change in circumstances experienced by recent generations of Japanese young people which, whilst still distinct from the more chronic problem of youth transitions experienced in the West, suggests on-going convergence between Japanese and UK society.

It is the acute social withdrawal and self-exclusion of sections of young people from society that has received significant public attention in Japan where it is referred to as the *hikikomori* phenomenon. Psychiatrist Tamaki Saito (Saito, 1998) defined the *hikikomori* as a group of young people who after a long chronic truancy, retreated into their bedrooms to escape from social relationships other than the family. Masahiro Yamada (1999) identified in the late 1990s a considerable number of ‘parasitically single’ unmarried youth in Japan living with their parents. These young adults were described living a privatized existence within the parental home, experiencing continued parental nurturing and high levels of financial support that facilitated their consumption of branded goods and travel. While the actual size and composition of the *hikikomori* population is a matter of debate, there is nevertheless evidence that a section of Japanese young people are withdrawing from social and economic life for significant periods of time. This has become defined as a distinct social, psychological and medical problem in Japan, receiving considerable media attention. Furlong (2008, p.306) suggests the stigma attached to social withdrawal evident in Japan may be culturally specific when compared to many western societies as there is greater importance placed on the initial success of transition to adulthood with fewer opportunities for second chances and alternative routes.

While the UK has no comparable *hikikomori* phenomenon, recent studies suggest that young people’s transitions towards adulthood have changed significantly (Holdsworth and Morgan, 2005). Increasing numbers of young people now continue to live in the parental home until their late twenties or even their thirties, often unable to afford to live independently. This

means that leaving home is no longer intrinsically linked to other indicators of adulthood such as going to university, getting a job or getting married. This has a transformative impact on how definitions of youth, adulthood and citizenship are understood by policy-makers and society more generally. However public debate has particularly focused on a perceived loss of independence for children and the problematic relationship of young people to their communities. High profile cases of child abduction and abuse have helped to perpetuate the idea of that the world outside the home is a place of danger to children and young people. Furthermore, media and government campaigns against anti-social behaviour construct young people as a threat to community harmony.

In a report for the UK's government's Youth Citizenship Commission (YCC), young people expressed feelings of disconnection and disenfranchisement from their localities and that they were often perceived negatively and sanctioned by their communities (Anderton and Abbott, 2009 pp. 48-49). When outside the home, young people separated themselves off from other members of the local community and away from 'adult spaces'. In a similar vein, Hart's (2009) research with young people in central England found experiences of age related discrimination, disrespect and lack of opportunities in their everyday lives which significantly prevented them from becoming included within their local communities. This suggests that young people in UK share feelings of dislocation from public spaces and disconnection of from the wider sources of sociality with their Japanese counterparts.

The *hikikomori* phenomenon has become particularly associated with a perceived 'breakdown' of an Japanese education system which has often been characterized as placing considerable pressures on pupils and demanding high levels of conformity (Asahi-Shimbun, 1999; Furlong, 2008 p. 315). More recently it has come in for criticism for its rigid and traditional teaching methods that focus on knowledge acquisition at the expense of creativity and are geared towards formal exams and University entrance. Japanese schools can be polarizing environments with a significant section of children and young people increasingly alienated and resistant to formal education, this finding expression through truancy, bullying and poor classroom behaviour (Cave, 2001 p. 175). By the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the extent of school truancy had become a significant cause for concern for the *Monbu-kagakusho* (Japanese Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology MEXT), leading to the introduction of a programme of counselling and moral education known as the *Kokoro-no Kyoiku* (Higashi, 2008 p. 42).

The problems associated with state education in Japan also find parallels in the UK. While resisted by teachers, reform of the four national curricula across the devolved UK state has evidenced a significant extension in the use of testing and examinations in an effort to improve achievement. These techniques increase the regulation and surveillance of pupils' learning and evidence suggests that they create considerable anxiety and discomfort amongst young people as well as operating as an effective mechanism for fixing working class failure (Reay, 2006 p. 299). This leads to passive withdrawal in the face of persistent injuries to the self or retreat into the world of the peer group where opposition and resistance to schooling may be rewarded. In addition, institutional reforms in the UK promoting parental choice and greater autonomy for schools from local authorities have been socially divisive with considerable competition amongst middle class parents to ensure places for their child at a 'good' school (Archer, 2007; Sutton Trust, 2008). However, for many families there is often very little choice other than the local school (Vincent, 2006). While there have been genuine attempts by schools to foster a sense of community and inclusivity, they are operating within a system organized in ways that often reproduces social exclusion (Reay, 2011).

There is now considerable evidence that education systems in advanced capitalist societies such as Japan and the UK, strongly influenced by neo-liberalism, are effective regimes for the protection of privileges and the reproduction of social inequalities (Furlong, Inui, Nishimura, Kojima 2011). However, school failure has to be processed according to the liberal norms of individual achievement. This can be particularly injurious to the self in contexts where other sources of self-esteem may be equally problematic. In such a context, it is unsurprising that a high degree of anxiety and self-blame is witnessed amongst both Japanese and UK young people who do not achieve within their respective education systems. More broadly this represents a narrowing of the ideal of equality of opportunity central to a progressive conception of citizenship.

In addition, changes in work and employment patterns, associated with a shift from Fordism to post-Fordism, can have dramatic consequences for young people's access to citizenship. Furlong and Cartmel (2007 p. 8) suggest that in Fordist societies, young people could often draw on experiences of family members or peers from similar social or educational backgrounds for guidance. The rapid social change of late modernity has however fragmented these experiences and compromised such educative or guiding processes. In the

case of Japan, the post-war employment system was profoundly influential in enabling the transition of young people to adult life and citizenship. Japanese companies provided stable and lifetime employment, a salary system based on seniority and trade union recognition. In providing salary systems based on seniority, companies effectively tailored salaries to the life-course providing support for housing, children and care of the elderly. In Japan the material basis for child rearing was more dependent on the company than on the state. Furthermore, the *Jisseki-Kankei* system linked companies and schools, thus establishing highly structured pathways from school to work, including teachers undertaking recruitment for companies (Furlong, 2008 p. 315). This system began to break down during the recession of the 1990s in the context of an overall decline in employment alongside the abandonment of the life-time employment model. The opportunities for young Japanese people to go from School or University in to employment has radically declined in the last twenty or so years, with unemployment rates most drastic amongst high school graduates (Kreitz-Sandberg, 2007 p. 504). In the UK, established transitions into employment for the working class began to breakdown by the 1970s as many traditional large-scale industries such as mining and textiles closed down. New forms of production based on advanced technologies have not emerged on a scale that would compensate for the loss in skilled manual work and instead employment has often focused on (often low skilled) service work. The extension of post-compulsory education in the UK has also masked the decline in opportunities for young people to enter in to stable work. Consequently, many activities associated with adult life such as having a family and owning a home have to be deferred.

Evidently, young people's relation to employment has become more fragmented and insecure in ways that challenge many of the existing ways of categorizing and understanding transitions to work. For many young workers, employment is no longer necessarily stable and full time, with work often deregulated and insecure without benefits such as sick leave and holiday entitlements. A particular cause for public concern is the section of the youth population not in education, employment or training (NEETs). In Japan, Genda (2007) defines this group as unmarried 18-24 year olds who do not attend College or University and can include those young people in high-income households who actively choose not to work or, in the case of females, may be actively discouraged from doing so. NEETs have also become a significant focus for researchers and policy makers in the UK as they attempt to understand and address the changes in youth employment patterns (Furlong, 2006 p. 557). However, Furlong raises questions about the extent to which disadvantaged people, who

might lack the resources to navigate transitions or exercise choice, should be combined with more privileged young people who are able to exercise a significant degree of choice in managing their lives. Inui (2005) raises similar concerns about the way in which the government and the media in Japan assume that young people who have left education but are not in work (NEETs), or are in part time or insecure work (so called FREETERs), have consciously chosen to avoid the commitment of full time employment. They are often portrayed as a group coming from relatively affluent backgrounds and avoiding adult commitments yet, as Inui shows, the evidence suggests that the problem is not one of motivation but of lack of opportunities, particularly for groups that are more likely to experience structural disadvantage.

Inui (2003 p. 222) notes the convergence between Japan and Europe in the prolonging of youth transitions but argues that Japan has been distinctive in terms of the small role played by the state in the lives of young people. The role of the company in the provision of support and welfare was atypical for advanced capitalist societies introduced in order to ensure loyalty and commitment of the workforce. In this sense the loss of stable employment transitions for young people is in this sense a double blow as it involves not just the loss of an opportunity for an occupational identity but also the withdrawal of a system of welfare. Historically, the UK has been characterized by a more comprehensive infrastructure of youth services as part of the post-war welfare state. However, with the move away from welfare universalism access to benefits and welfare by young people has become increasingly restricted with a greater emphasis on conditionality that has consequently reinforced dependence on families. Moreover, young people have become the subjects of intensified state surveillance as concerns over anti-social behaviour have resulted in a raft of social control policies (Hart, 2009). This has been fuelled by a culture of exclusion and symbolic violence experienced by many young people in British society. Notably, certain sections of working class youth have been depicted in popular discourses, perpetuated by the media as 'Chavs', a derogatory label frequently used to stigmatize them as a 'race' apart (Nayak 2009 p. 35). The centrality of leisure and consumerism to young people's lives raises questions about genuine opportunities for more creative forms of self and collective expression. Dominant discourses of individualism can certainly mask the extent to which cultural practices are also markers of class and status used to differentiate young people and judge their societal value (Skeggs 1997).

Issues of social disadvantage and inequity experienced by young people in Japan and UK are fundamentally problems of citizenship. We are witnessing a range of restrictions and exclusions on participation in sites of civil society where citizenship has been traditionally experienced and consolidated. Considering the dramatic rise in the unemployment of young people across OECD countries, more than double the rate of the general population (OECD, 2012), it is difficult to view these trends as only a problem for particularly disadvantaged groups although there are important class differences in both countries (Furlong, Inui, Nishimura, Kojima 2011). Importantly, citizenship is by definition relational and the narrowing of the citizen community has significant implications for those who are included.

Globalisation means that young people must interact and encounter existing social and institutional forms such as family, school, community and work in ways that make recognition increasingly problematic and uncertain. 'Citizenship of being' fundamentally relied upon a sense of progress that each generation would be in a position to expand their rights and entitlements by building on the stable conditions established by the previous generations. The comparative examples of Japan and the UK illustrates the extent to which being a citizen has potentially become non-progressive, experienced as a loss of rights and security relative to parents and even grandparents. Yet whilst dislocation and fragmented individualization appears common within these advanced capitalist societies, there is also a specificity associated with national and local structures and cultures that must be considered. For instance, the evidence from Japan suggests an inter-generational divide characterized by a generalised focus upon, and stigmatization of, new generations arising from an acute period of economic decline. Indeed, young people's responses to late modernity, whether positive or negative, imply confrontations with the local and national that also indicates distinctive outcomes and developments. Nevertheless, the accumulated social disadvantages and challenges experienced by young people in the UK and Japan can be conceived as a crisis in the 'citizenship of being'.

### **The failure of conventional national policy**

The response of governments to the problems of young peoples' citizenship has demonstrated the limitations and failure of conventional policy. Despite claims to the contrary, governments have often displayed a 'deliberate rigidity in the management of the labour market and provision of welfare' (Coyle 2000: 143). In the name of social cohesion, they

have attempted to secure the citizenship statuses of certain groups at the cost of the marginalization of others. In addition, in the absence of effective government responses, responsibility has been shifted on to the individual to fulfil a normative citizenship agenda. Robertson (2006) convincingly argues that the direction of globalization gives rise to an intensification of state interventions into social identity formation that has parallels with developments in the first half of the twentieth century. The other side of the global integration of states is the assertion of their historical significance in the form of national justification which he interprets as forms of 'civil religion'. Hence, interventions into identity formation are a particularly important feature of state activities as their overall efficacy becomes constrained by globalization. From this perspective, in contexts that are increasingly characterized by quite profound uncertainties, it is seen as essential that young people are oriented to adopt state prescribed values. Conventional policy responses therefore reassert the prescriptions of a 'citizenship of being' but in a context in which the institutions that supported this form of citizenship have been chronically destabilised.

What we find is that in both Japan and the UK, education systems have been given responsibility for inculcating the values of citizenship whereby fundamental elements centre upon work and nation. Ikeno (2005) notes that approaches to citizenship education in Japan in the post-Second World War period sought to reject nationalism associated with the imperial past and instead prioritise the inculcation of democratic literacy, values and actions. But Parmenter (1999 p. 455) argues a renationalization of the Japanese school curriculum, particularly evident since the late 1980s, has increasingly stressed the idea of fundamental knowledge acquisition as necessary to becoming a Japanese citizen. This includes respect for the national culture and traditions and the development of self-awareness as a Japanese person. He believes that the *Monbu-kagakusho* have subscribed to an ethnic conception of national identity that propagates the idea of a homogeneous Japanese nation and that this is an overt aim of Japanese education policy. At the same time, this has often been couched within a broader focus upon morality and culture that is careful about the implications of more overt expressions of nationalism in areas such as the social sciences, history and geography.

However, recent developments suggest a less cautious approach and there is some evidence that pupils are expected to display patriotism such as in the more extensive use of the flag and national anthem to address concerns about a perceived dilution of Japanese identity (Willis



2002). Following reforms under the Education Reforms Plan for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (the ‘Rainbow Plan’), the social studies curriculum was redesigned to place a greater emphasis on national loyalty and foster ‘love of country’ (Higashi, 2008, p. 40). The delivery of civic (*komin*) education in Japanese schools has mirrored such shifts in emphasis but has also seen greater focus on the responsibilities of young people with regards to citizen activism in creating ‘empathetic communities’ (Murphy-Shigematsu, 2002). In seeking to connect individuals with the nation, tensions are revealed though in the framing of citizenship in Japanese education. The stress on a traditionalist model of community places restrictions on individual freedoms or expressions of diversity meaning the emphasis on Japanese homogeneity can prove an obstacle for the acceptance of citizens from other countries and cultural backgrounds (McCullough 2008).

Drawing upon deep cultural traditions, the Japanese state has a strong basis on which citizenship is framed within a sense of social order and hierarchy. Education has therefore been utilised to reassert notions of duty and obligation amongst young people as a solution to social problems. Alongside these developments, since 1998 there have been reforms of Japanese high schools to incorporate more explicit vocational elements within the curriculum with the aim of adjusting young people’s attitudes and behaviour to unstable labour market conditions. In this sense, the problem of young people and work is considered to be an issue of individual attitudes and behaviour to be addressed through education. There is a perceived ‘waning enthusiasm towards work and careers’ identified by the *Monbu-kagakusho* and the ‘high turnover rates and growing numbers of part-timers and those without employment, education or training’ are viewed as a significant social problem (MEXT online). Outside of the education system, a structure of state intervention to support youth training and employment is largely absent in Japan (Inui 2003: 224). Instead, the aim is for young people to acquire more positive and aspirational attitudes towards work through the introduction of a developmental approach to career-orientated, vocational education. In line with this, initiatives have included increased opportunities for pupils to undertake work experience. However, the so-called ‘Rainbow Plan’ seeks to establish community-based service learning as part of a broader agenda of civic education that aims to ‘foster openness and warm heartedness among Japanese through participation in community activities’ (Higashi, 2008 p. 46). It is therefore evident that education for citizenship seeks to inculcate a common sense of national identity founded on a shared culture but which also seeks to create responsible citizens who are economically independent and active in their communities. In this respect,

the structural dislocation and disadvantage experienced by Japanese young people is redefined as a problem of individual character and cultural instruction i.e. of not being Japanese.

There are interesting parallel developments in the UK, however these have occurred in the absence of any underlying British *ethnie*. For different reasons, the UK has also lacked any clear concept of national citizenship. This is indicative of a state that for much of the modern era was defined by Empire and for which concerns with discrete nation-building have been a relatively recent phenomenon. The UK has emerged as a multi-national state consisting of, at least, four distinct 'nations' with varying degrees of autonomy as well as regions with distinct identities and characteristics. In comparison to Japan, British national identity is defined by its plurality, being explicitly multiethnic, multinational and multicultural. However, survey evidence suggests that a common ascription to a shared Britishness has diluted in recent times (*inter alia* Muir and Stone, 2007), raising concerns about the political and social cohesion of British society.

Following the publication of the Crick Report (QCA, 1998), the UK government introduced statutory citizenship education in schools in England to address growing concerns about young people's political apathy and their perceived lack of social, particularly associated with a moral panic about 'anti-social behaviour' amongst the young. The Crick Report spoke eloquently of changing the political culture in ways that would enable young people to think of themselves as an active citizen. Nevertheless, the Report and the curriculum initiatives that followed were widely criticized for promoting a largely 'a statist (and nationalist) view of citizenship' (Hoffman, 2004 p.168). For instance, political activity was primarily conceived as individual participation within the institutions of the state, the clearest example of which is voting (Hoffman, 2004 p. 166, Faulks, 2006a p. 66). In this sense, UK citizenship education is viewed to be liberal assimilationist focused on individual rights and responsibilities albeit enriched by civic republican notions of active citizenship (Faulks 2006b). As a basis for social integration, however, state based citizenship education in the UK remains weak as it seems not to be underpinned by any coherent or legitimate idea of a national community (Andrews and Mycock, 2008). This has not discouraged UK politicians from promoting citizenship education in England as a political and educational panacea to emerging concerns about British national identity, community cohesion and the threat of 'homegrown' terrorism in the wake of the London bombings of July 2005 (Tonge *et al.*, 2012).

The formation of the Conservative-led Coalition government in 2010 has seen a renewed emphasis on developing young people's civil behaviour. Their commitment to statutory citizenship education in schools is, however, questionable having raised concerns about its potential for political indoctrination. Young people's citizenship has instead been increasingly aligned with the promotion of the idea of the 'Big Society' championed by UK Prime Minister David Cameron in an attempt to redefine British conservatism and, with its emphasis on the small state, to differentiate the current government from its predecessors. From this perspective, the responsibility for the UK's 'broken society' is now a concern for the British people as a whole, not just government, to be tackled through a renewal of social responsibility and active participation in communities. For young people, this has found expression in the government's National Citizen Service (NCS) programme. A pilot was launched in the summer of 2011 to provide 11,000 places for 16 year olds based on a two month summer programme that involves a combination of residential and at-home activities including physical challenges and a thirty hour per week commitment to a project in the local community. The expectation is that this will eventually become a nationwide programme in which all 16 year olds will have the opportunity to participate.

Mycock and Tonge (2011 p. 63-64) argue NCS is though fundamentally a conservative initiative with no explicit attempt to link service learning with democratic citizenship and political participation. They assert that the motivations behind NCS lie in the belief of an organic view of society whereby politically passive citizens and communities adhere to elite-defined norms of citizenship through voluntarism and community participation. There are also implicit themes of the militarization of young people. Cameron has drawn parallels with British military service that ended in 1963 and takes inspiration from his time in the cadet service at Eton, England's foremost public school. However the ethos underpinning NCS is increasingly focused on the enhancement of participants employability by providing evidence to employers that young people have demonstrated attitudes and pro-social behaviours considered to be compatible with the workplace such as hard work and self-discipline. Ultimately NCS seeks to frame young people's social and economic citizenship within a common British national framework, even though it is only available in England and Northern Ireland, to develop a shared sense of national identity through being positively engaged in activities that are for the good of the country.

It is clear that, despite their distinctiveness, both in Japan and across the UK citizenship education and service learning programmes are indicative of the extent to which the social integration of young people continues to be dominated by national, statist political agendas. Such programmes are primarily oriented to a ‘citizenship of being’ where the principal focus is upon young people’s socialization into work and nation despite the chronic instabilities of both these in late modernity. In this sense, despite protestations to the contrary, they promote passive and non-deliberative form of citizenship based upon a set of fixed normative principles and static institutions into which young people have a responsibility to integrate. In turn, their failure to do so legitimates the perpetuation of their civic and civil deficits and exclusions.

### **From being to becoming citizens**

In both Japan and the UK, the current climate for young people is one of intensified competition for economic and cultural resources. They face individualized struggles for recognition within environments of social and political injustice and limited opportunities for genuine collective expression. This suggests the potential for the emergence of generations who may be chronically excluded from meaningful work and are therefore judged as failures against the norms of individual achievement. These generations may well engage in political actions that cannot be accommodated by liberal democracies represents a development that has outstripped the standard progress model of modern societies. In this context, our central proposition is that a radical citizenship analysis must be sought that takes us beyond conventional approaches to social integration and policy formation. Below we aim, albeit tentatively, to set out what this agenda might mean in terms of a radical sociology of citizenship.

In Connolly’s complete rethinking of pluralist thought, a rather conservative theory of political behaviour has become a radical theory of democratic contestation and a comprehensive rethinking of democratic values (Chambers and Caver 2008). Pluralism is reworked as pluralisation in which the relationship between identity and difference is ontologically constitutive of social worlds:

To alter your recognition of difference, therefore, is to revise your own terms of self-recognition as well. (Connolly 1995 in Chambers and Caver 2008: 90-91)

This agonistic understanding of identity as both against and *with* otherness, resonates with a sociological reality in which the confrontation and negotiation of difference has intensified to the point where the existing standards of political life rooted in fixed and exclusive categories of the state and associated presumptions concerning territory, the nation and sovereignty are comprehensively challenged. From this viewpoint, ‘established interpretations of goodness, justice and legitimacy’ are insufficient when confronted by ‘protean moments’ of ‘surprising events and movements that throw aspects of our previous projections into disarray’ (Connolly 2005, p.128). Hence, a rethinking of citizenship takes on a particular urgency for new generations who are deeply affected by events that are overtly global in cause and effect (global terrorism, financial crisis, climate change etc.) but seem beyond the control of mainstream political elites, values and institutions.

New forms of citizenship are dynamic and critical, potentially empowering young people and encouraging intergenerational exchange founded on deliberative approaches that are more flexible and creative in meeting shared national and global challenges. Following Connolly, multi-dimensional pluralism is conducive to practices of democratic becoming that critically and flexibly responds to the confrontations with difference generated by rapid social change (Connolly 1995). A ‘citizenship of becoming’ shifts the focus away from how young people are to be integrated into a territorially based society to how they are actively creating new sources of belonging and recognition in response to globalised experiences and events.

The challenge for the sociology of citizenship is how to give empirical substance to its normative formulations. Central to this is the concept of autonomy understood as the capacity of an actor to define and organise projects around their interests and values and in ways that challenge the constraints of pre-existing institutional frameworks yet can generate new forms of collective agency (Castells 2012: 230-231). Connolly’s notion of political becoming is we would argue particularly associated with collective identities that are also profoundly individualised. Evidence suggests that projects of autonomy become increasingly important from an early age in response to structural change (Benedicto and Morán 2007; Castells, Fernández-Ardèvol, Qui and Sey 2008). Benedicto and Morán (2007: 607) point out that whereas in the past young people’s citizenship could not be achieved without economic independence, achieving personal and social autonomy now takes place in

conditions of dependence or semi-dependence and in ways that were previously unthinkable. In particular new communication, lifestyles and consumption patterns emerge in opposition to the experience of disadvantage and generate competences and virtues associated with new forms of participation within public spheres (Benedicto and Morán 2007, p.618). On this view, we can point to new media which offer young people forms of belonging and participation, creating new ways to represent themselves to others and to establish shared interests and concerns. In drawing together a range of evidence on mobile communication, Castells et al (2008) suggest ways in which young people use new media technologies transformatively in the pursuit of autonomy. The internet and mobiles phones permit the construction of peer groups through a networked sociability that is build around individual choice and affinity (2008: 273). A study of young people's internet use in Tokyo has highlighted the potential for young people to develop citizenship skills and knowledge by networking to discuss public affairs or to seek out civic or political information (Lin *et al.*, 2010, p. 852). Goy-Yamamoto (2004 p. 276) suggests that 'thumbing' on mobiles by young Japanese provides evidence that 'any individual activity can become collective and be shared, thus changing the concepts of space and time, as well as the uses of them'. Miyake (2007 cited in Kreitz-Sandberg, 2008 p. 512) has argued that there is a technological reinvention of Japanese community, as young people establish friendship communities that share emotions and the events of their everyday lives rather than just information. The extent to which young people must communicate in new and complex ways, many of which are globally networked, forces encounters with otherness that are immanent and constitutive of the self. Research on global youth cultures shows how young people are able to reflexively and creatively construct identities that draw upon and synthesise the local, national and global (Nilan and Feixa, 2006).

Youth culture in Japan and the UK provides opportunities for hybridizations which are often creative encounters which draw on transnational or globalized interactions which shape youth identities (Goy-Yamamoto, 2004, Murthy, 2009). However, as Castells et al (2008: 274) point out what is important about the use of new technology in these cultures is the extent to which personalisation and individualism is strengthened and expressed alongside the formation of new collective identities. They argue 'what is important to contemporary youth culture is the affirmation of each individual who shares the culture; it is a community of individuals.'

While underpinning this are societal changes, the technology is important in providing an organisational space that is also highly decentred thus enabling the ‘autonomous construction of social networks’ (2012: 231). In short, new media profoundly reconfigures public space.

In these new citizenship practices, alternative civic virtues appropriate for the contemporary world are emerging (Connolly 2005, pp.123-126). Agonistic respect, for example, extends notions of liberal tolerance, normally restricted to the private realm, to forms of public deliberation. It does not therefore leave differences where they are but develops an ethos of mutual appreciation based upon the recognition of the incommensurability of different creeds, faiths, philosophies and identities. New autonomously generated and digitally mediated forms of belonging expose young people to the comparative contestability of citizenship itself. This disrupts pre-existing assumptions of patriotism and cultures of national superiority as these are relentlessly judged against alternatives and challenged by the national penetration of transnational movements. For example, an agonistic ‘nationalism’ is witnessed in the globally connected but nationally organised movements that have confronted Arab dictatorships and Western economic failure that included a critical and passionate engagement with the nationalised ‘self’. In the face of national humiliations, many of these movements did not resort to reproducing the national ideologies of the past but took responsibility for maintaining trust and dignity in situations where resentment and disappointment could become the overriding features of national political life. In such contexts, citizenship learning occurs for young people as an emotionally charged process of becoming occurring within multiple sites, intimately connected to the local and the national, but open to the regional and global.

In conclusion, this article has demonstrated that young people in two advanced capitalist societies are deeply affected by common global processes, albeit mediated by the thick social environments of national cultures. We have shown that traditional sources of recognition for young people have been comprehensively fractured and debased and policy responses which reproduce ‘imagined communities of elite strategy’ (Stewart, 2001 p.129) are in the present context problematic. Institutions that once enabled the inclusion of new generations are, under conditions of global uncertainty, working against young people and excluding them from citizenship. Underpinning our discussion has been the proposition that a static and fixed citizenship of being is increasingly in tension with a citizenship of becoming characterised by new civic virtues that privilege immanent, self-determined and multiple

sites of engagement. Our central proposition is that a citizenship of becoming fundamentally challenges the deficit model of citizenship and citizenship education as it has been applied to young people. The structural conditions faced by young people puts them at the cutting edge of complex social and political change and generates new modes of active citizenship at which they are the experts. This requires an appreciation of civic virtues that are contextually and temporally specific and constructed through the digitally mediated ethical practices of young people's everyday lives.

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