Feeling to live in a legitimate space: towards global citizenship and its education as an ethics of care.

Giulia Carozzi's PhD proposal, September 2020

<u>**General overview**</u>

In my proposed research, I intend to look at global citizenship as the feeling of living in a legitimate space. By briefly looking at the meanings enclosed in the concept of legitimate space, I will outline my proposed research in relation to the current debate regarding the relationship between cosmopolitanism and global citizenship (Fine and Boon, 2007); which kind of ethics might support an as yet non-dominant idea of cosmopolitanism (Robinson, 2013); and how informal educational practices might contribute to the development of a legitimate space.

First of all, I see global citizenship as a *feeling* (Alviar-Martin, 2018), as a sense of belonging to the context in which the individual finds her/himself to be. The sense of *belonging*, which characterizes the widespread notion of global citizenship, is generally associated with the one of *common humanity* (UNESCO, 2014). This makes, in my opinion, the meaning of global citizenship highly abstract. It allows global citizenship to fall in to the universalistic trap of not seeing "humanity in the concrete variety of its way of life" (Calhoun, 2003, p. 532). A sense of belonging, in my view, relates to how contextually situated people can experience moments of co-being, in which they "develop a sense of self because there are others who recognise and confirm their sense of individuality, who value their presence in the world" (Sevenhuijsen 2003, p. 184). It is in this contextual and relational recognition that, in my opinion, a legitimate space is co-created. By legitimate, I am not intending a form of legal recognition, which I appreciate might be helpful, but I don't see as a prerequisite of what I define as legitimate space. Instead, I understand the concept of legitimate space as a physical and metaphorical breathing space, in which people actively see, listen to, and value each other. I recognise that from this active attention (Sevenhuijsen, 2014*)*, a legitimate space becomes a space of reciprocal care, which I believe is necessary for human security and well-being (Robinson, 2013).

I see the co-creation of a legitimate space as the enactment of a relational ontology (Robinson, 2006; Sevenhuijsen, 2014) in which human beings are *recognised* and *valued* because they are physically and emotionally situated in relation to others (Robinson, 2006). Therefore, my research relates to one of the central aspects of what cosmopolitanism, broadly understood, seeks to address: valuing humanity (Calhoun, 2003) and contributing to its well-being (UNESCO, 2014). By looking at the concept of feeling to live in a legitimate space, I intend to distance myself from the dominant views associated with the meanings given to *valuing humanity* and its *well-being* and showing how those understandings "fail to make sense of the world as it is", providing an "abstract normative structure" as a way of making people's lives better (Calhoun, 2003, p. 532). My main misgivings with such cosmopolitanism relate to considering the well-being of humanity as a matter of "freedom from social belonging" (Calhoun, 2003, p. 532) and seeing the attainment of social justice as a distributive matter, making even non-material goods such as rights, opportunities and self-respect, looking like injustice-resolving possessions (Young, 2011).

By rooting my understanding of legitimate space within a relational ontology, I will be distancing myself from the above vision of cosmopolitanism. Such a decision is based on my personal experiences through which I perceive a *legitimate space* to be the outcome of daily relational practices of *voicing* and *listening* (Sevenhuijsen, 2014). I believe the co-creation of a legitimate space is the point of connection in which potential differences (of culture, ethnicity, economic status, and gender) are not only voiced but actively listened to, therefore not denied and rendered invisible, but acknowledged in the specific contexts in which individuals are located. Through active attention,

indifference is abandoned when differences are valued and respected (Sevenhuijsen, 1998). I believe cosmopolitanism, from the perspective of a feminist ethics of care (Robinson, 2006) can provide a valuable framework through which to develop the notion of legitimate space. Not only is the ethics of care grounded in a relational ontology (Robinson, 2006; Sevenhuijsen, 2014) but it also seeks to question and abandon the dominant view of who the abstract individual of humanity is (Hutchings, 2018). It argues that the discourse around well-being within the dominant "cosmopolitan liberalism" (Robinson, 2006, p. 12) is built around the needs of an adult man, not physically or emotionally dependant, recognised as a citizen by legal and political status through possession (Hutchings, 2018). An ethics of care shifts this understanding and focuses the attention on the intrinsic dependency and vulnerability each person faces. It seeks to find "new meaning and significance to human differences" (Hankivsky, 2004, p. 2), and tries to shed light on unquestioned dominant, socio-cultural systems of oppression which lead to societal invisibility and exclusion for many. A feminist ethics of care stresses the importance of care, mutual responsibility and relationality as a daily activities as well as moral judgments aimed at understanding relations as "healthy or nurturing or oppressive and exploitative" (Robinson, 2006, p. 15). I understand care both as a necessary moral disposition in the creation of a legitimate space, and as an under-valued and under-recognised practice which is at the source of gender, racial, North-South inequalities (Robinson, 2006).

I intend to explore how in a legitimate space there are possibilities for the under-valued and under-recognised to be understood and questioned; in this light the legitimate space offers the possibility for what Young calls "internal inclusion" (2002, p. 54): a space in which people attend one another in order to reach reciprocal understanding. Formal rights might provide pro-forma social inclusion, but they don't reveal anything about the quality of such inclusion, in which people's claims are not always taken seriously or remain unheard as "the dominant mood may find their ideas or modes of expression silly or simple, and not worthy of consideration" (Young, 2002, p. 55).

I will look at how a sentimental and emotional education (Misco, 2018) towards creating a legitimate space is possible. It is something that already exists and is enhanced by informal caring practices (Carozzi, 2019a) as "the truly lifelong process(es) whereby every individual acquires attitudes, values, skills and knowledge from daily experience and the educative influences and resources in his or her environment" (Scheerens, 2009, p. 2). I recognise that these practices are led by hope as a response to something that, in the context lived, is missing (Anderson, 2006) and needs to be created.

The fact that global citizenship education is mainly discussed as a part of formal education programmes (Le Bourdon, 2018) is in itself a demonstration of the power of that "dominant mood" which Young (2002, p. 55) was writing about. The vacuum on this subject locates an emotional education towards global citizenship "in the marginalized and denigrated sphere of caring labour" and maternal[1] practices (Hutchings, 1999, p. 84). It is because of, and against this dominant mood, that I am carrying out my research.

Key research questions and reasons behind the choice

In this section, I present the main research questions I intend to address. Overall, my personal ontological values of *hope*, *responsibility* and *resistance* will be used as explanatory principles and relationally dynamic standards of judgments (Laidlaw, 2018) in addressing the questions. These three values resonate strongly with the ones advocated for in the ethics of care (Gilligan, 2017;

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[1] Please note that whenever I make use of the terms mother/maternal I refer to Ruddick's understanding of these terms: "Anyone who commits herself or himself to responding to children's demands and makes the work of response a considerable part of her or his life, is a mother" (Ruddick, 1995, p. xii)

Sevenhuijsen, 1998; Ruddick, 1995) and in Living Theory methodology (Mellett, 2020; Whitehead, 2018a) as outlined in the methodology section of this proposal.

1. **How can the concept of legitimate space be relevant in the academic discourse on knowledge creation and global citizenship education?**

The way in which knowledge is presented in Academia, tends to reflect a denial of legitimate space as it is the outcome of the marginalization and exclusion "of social experience and particularly (of) the massive destruction of ways of knowing which didn't fit into the western canon" (de Sousa Santos, 2016, p. 37). This is what de Sousa Santos calls *epistemicide* (ibid.). Global citizenship education can be seen as a resource to look critically at the exclusion of non-European knowledge systems (Shultz, 2018); in this light global citizenship education aims to answer de Sousa Santos' (2016) call for social justice through cognitive justice. Knowledge, in this perspective, is understood as "instrumental in influence and power and consequentially exploitation" (Horner, 2016, p. 25). Not challenging the dominance of the western, rational and scientific epistemology is key to the reinforcement of the western hegemony. I therefore intend to address the above question, grounding my understanding of global citizenship education in light of post-colonial theory (Mignolo and Walsh, 2018; de Sousa Santos, 2016; Freire, 2014). However, as a woman, I feel that the notion of *epistemicide* relates also to the exclusion of women's way of knowing from the dominant understanding of what knowledge is and what it stands for (Horner, 2016). A feminist standpoint perspective questions accepted knowledge as based mainly on man-made language and experience (Spender, 1985). As post-colonial theory, a feminist perspective is concerned with the exclusion and under-recognition of different voices (Horner, 2016) and experience, and seeks to challenge such exclusion. In answering the presented question, I will draw also on both standpoint and difference feminist theories in relation to knowledge creation (Robinson, 2018; Belenky *et. al,* 1997, Spender, 1985).

Developing my research from these understandings of cognitive justice (De Sousa Santos, 2016), I intend to show how global citizenship education, in the academic discourse, relates to the concept of legitimate space. Global citizenship education seeks to "give legitimacy to non-western epistemologies" (Shultz, 2018, p. 252) as well as to women's way of knowing (Sundaram, 2018). Again, my concern relates to *how* this legitimacy can be enhanced. In my view, it is not a pure matter of formal inclusion (Young, 2002) in Academia of other ways of knowing but it is a matter of internal inclusion (Young, 2002). Creating a legitimate space for other ways of knowing, through global citizenship education, relates to showing the *interactions* with people's different types of knowledge, resulting in what Freire calls "apprenticeships" (Freire, 2014, p. 11). These are moments in which "the soul is seared for good and for all" (Freire, 2014, p. 17). I believe that I can contribute responsibly to the creation of legitimacy if I make explicit *how* my knowledge has been influenced, challenged and shifted through encounters with different ways of knowing (Carozzi, 2019a; Carozzi, 2019b) as well as recognise that my experiences as a female researcher can be narrated in a different voice from the dominant one.

2. **What does an emotional education to global citizenship, enhanced by and informal practices, look like?**

I will address this question by looking at how my maternal practice and the maternal practices of other women are constituted by daily activities embedded in educational values, which provide practical scope for enabling what I've defined as a feeling to live in a legitimate space. With the term "educational values" Whitehead (2019) understands "values which carry hope for the human flourishing" (p. 15), such as "freedom, justice, compassion, respect for the persons, love and democracy" (Whitehead, 2018a, p. 76). What other mothers and I do on a daily basis, through our informal relationships and educating roles, is to enact our different yet relatable personal values and

maternal thinking in our small community, to challenge the "dominant creeds" (Ruddick, 1995, p. 21). Together, we seek to create a space in which we challenge the dominant anti-immigrant discourse (Colombo, 2013) as well as the "possessive individualism" (van der Walt 2017, p. 4) present in the schools. Together we perceive a strong sense of responsibility in trying to show the children that there is much to learn from the people who are targeted as *others* to be feared (Colombo, 2013; Foucault, 1972). It is in the enacted value of responsibility towards our children and resistance against those dominant discourses, that our maternal practice can be understood as an emotional education towards global citizenship. I understand an emotional education as those daily activities through which adults as well as children feel the relevance of active attention and care not as abstract principles but as lived outcomes of connected ways of co-being. It is an education rooted in small, daily, practical gestures, which helps the children to develop a sense of engaging participation in a world in which differences exist, but are not a threat.

In addressing this question, I will provide lived examples of the co-creation of legitimate spaces. I will draw on feminist ethics of care perspective to look at how maternal, concrete and attentive thinking (Hutchings, 2013; Ruddick, 1995) and informal education (Scheerens, 2009) can challenge what Foucault's defines as "regimes of truth" (Foucault 1980, p. 130). In giving relevance to how educational values do not necessarily belong to the formal education system, I aim to make a contribution to the knowledge on what Le Bourdon (2018) defines as currently lacking in global citizenship education: an understanding of global citizenship and its education enhanced by informal practices and roles.

3.   How can my research on feeling to live in a legitimate space contribute to challenging the dominant understanding of maternal work and thinking?

As a woman who is a mother, I feel myself to be that under-recognised and miss-recognised *other* when I perceive that my practice is under-valued because I don't hold a formally recognised position (Sant *et al.*, 2018; Honneth, 2012; Fraser, 2007; Ruddick, 1995). I will therefore address the above question, by looking at episodes in which, to other women and myself, has been denied a valid point of view based on our experiences, because we didn't hold a formal working position (Schreiber-Barsch, 2018). I am seen, with other women, *just* as a mother. Overall, I perceive my research as a gesture of resistance, hope and responsibility, for myself and towards others (Whitehead, 2014), to disclose that what I am, and others are doing is more than a mundane *just,* but, as an educational practice, it is significant and therefore must be made visible and must be valued (Sant *et al*., 2018; Ruddick, 1995). As Gilligan has written, the unheard and undervalued voices "are integral to the vitality of a democratic" (Gilligan, 2017, p. 22) and respectful society. Writing about these different voices, making these voices audible within Academia through my Ph.D. research, would mean to work towards a necessary "internal inclusion" (Young, 2002, p. 54), recognition and an establishment of legitimacy.

4.   How can the concept of legitimate space contribute to the wider debate on security?

I will answer this question by drawing on literature that looks at the relvance of an ethics of care in relation to security in international relations (Robinson, 2011a; Hutchings, 1999). I'll engage with two recent events to show how the concept of legitimate space might be valuable in the current dabate on security (UN, 2020; Robinson, 2011a).

The murder of George Floyd and his unheard words "I can't breathe" will be analysed as a denial of a legitimate space, due to socio-historical, dominant ways of framing the *other*. I will then look at the Black Lives Matter movement as a response to this denial and as a call for being heard. Whilst in contemporary society there seem to be an increasing incentive to speak-up, far less seems to be broadcast about the importance of listening (Robinson, 2011b). Listening, in the creation of a

legitimate space, is a central aspect of attentive care, it is crucial in understanding and being responsive to the other and necessary for human security and well-being (Robinson, 2013).

As I was writing this proposal, the COVID-19 hit Italy at the end of February. Schools closed, I found myself in charge of two small children and the writing of my proposal stalled. It seemed *natural* that I dropped my plans in order to absolve my maternal responsibilities. I soon realised that what I was experiencing wasn't an individualised situation, but a common one: "we knew that our choice had to be the children" (Banjo, 2020, n. p.). I am planning to show how the concept of legitimate space, which was denied to many women during the pandemic, can enhance a critical understanding of many women's response to the COVID-19 emergency and how it might be helpful in the future to tackle a patriarchal understanding of what are women's perceived-as-natural choices (Gilligan, 2017).

Methodology and methods

Overall I intend to carry out my research using a Living Theory methodology, a form of educational self-study research, which places the *I's* ontological values and practices at the centre of the enquiry (Mellett, 2020; Whitehead, 2019; Laidlaw, 2018). Through the development of their own living-educational-theory, practitioners develop their own "unique explanations (of their behaviour) rather than deducing it from the conceptual abstractions of a general theory" (Whitehead, 2019, p. 3). In using a Living Theory methodology, I will ground my research in the value of relatability and not generalisability (Whitehead, 2019). I believe that it is in the value of relatability that the precious uniqueness of the personal knowledge (Polanyi, 1962) is respected while at the same time made akin to the one of others (Mellett, 2020). My main concern lies in how the value of relatability can be made explicit. This aspect is connected with a feeling of discomfort I perceive in creating an I-based research, whereas I've stressed that the self exists in relation to others (Sevenhuijsen, 2014). I intend to give relevance to how, whilst recognising the contextual differences in which each individual is situated, there is still a point of mergence between the personal experience and the other's. In looking at how informal practices can contribute to global citizenship education, I wish to show, that values might be named differently, due to different socio-historical backgrounds, but there is a merging desire to "have a room of our own, as Virginia Woolf calls it, in a family, and community and world that we helped making liveable" (Belenky *et. al,* 1997, p. 152). Hence, I will employ different enquiry methods, used within Living Theory methodology (Whitehead, 2018b), to enhance the value of relatability. I will engage in an authoethnography to show my "multiple layers of consciousness, connecting the personal with the cultural" (Ellis and Bochner, 2000, p. 739), as a way of contributing from the *inside* to the research topic. I will use narrative research, collecting the "experiences as lived and told stories'' (Creswell, 2007 p. 53) of others that through the years have contributed to the creation of a legitimate space for our children and for our own to be in. Finally, I will make use of phenomenology to create the walls of the "room of our own" (Belenky *et. al,* 1997, p. 152) in which, differences as well as affinities will create the patchwork wallpaper of our room.

By basing my research on the interactions I have with other people, I must pay particular attention to the best ways to represent those interactions (Smith, 1999). I believe special care should be given to respecting and understanding the feelings of those involved in the research (Brownlie, 2019). I will follow the overarching ethical principle to see always my research as a means to understand better and improve the daily practices and relationships I've with others, and never see those as means to gain objectified data to present in the Academia. Permission about reporting personal conversations and episodes will be always sought through extensive dialogue. I see dialogues as a means of enhancing the validity of my research (Lather, 1993). In asking research participants to review how I have interpreted the data, and giving an account of their responses (Lather, 1993), I will try to enact in my methodology, the value of attentive care.

Timetable

Year 1	Mornings: engagement with literature and theoretical debates	Afternoons: field work. Looking at informal practices and creation of legitimate space
Year 2	Mornings: engagement with literature and theoretical debates	Afternoons: collecting the data and discussing it with research participants
Year 3	Writing of the thesis	Writing of the thesis and collaboration with research partecipants for inclusion of their responses on validity

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