

I N T E R V I S T E

Conversation with Pieranna Garavaso

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*Pieranna Garavaso is Emerita Professor of Philosophy at the University of Minnesota, Morris. Her research areas include epistemological and metaphysical issues in the philosophy of mathematics, philosophy of language, personal identity, and feminist epistemologies. She received her doctorate in philosophy from the University of Nebraska Lincoln in 1985. She has published *Filosofia della matematica. Numeri e strutture* (Guerini 1998), *Filosofia delle donne* (Laterza 2007, coauthored with N. Vassallo), and *Frege on Thinking and its Epistemic Significance* (Lexington Books 2014, coauthored with N. Vassallo). She edited *Philip Hugly and Charles Sayward, Arithmetic and Ontology: A Non-Realist Philosophy of Mathematics* (Rodopi 2006), a monographic issue of *Paradigmi* devoted to Contemporary Perspectives on Frege (2013), and *The Bloomsbury**

Companion to Analytic Feminism (Bloomsbury 2018). She has published articles in English and Italian journals and in edited collections. The University of Minnesota has recognized her teaching and research with three awards: the University of Minnesota, Morris Alumni Association Teaching Award in 2003, the Horace T. Morse University of Minnesota Alumni Association Award for Outstanding Contribution to Undergraduate Education in 2004, and the University of Minnesota Morris Faculty Distinguished Research Award in 2017. In this interview, she explains what led her to leave Italy in the early 1980's to study philosophy in the US. She also illustrates how her ontological anti-realism in the philosophy of mathematics has influenced her work in feminist epistemology and metaphysics. She defends analytic philosophy from the accusation of being less friendly than continental philosophy towards feminist philosophy.

1. *Let's start talking about yourself and what drew you to philosophy. How did your interest in philosophy develop? Why did you choose philosophy as a field of study?*

P.G.: I am very grateful to my birth country for the amazing education I received. My father started working when he was 12 years old, and my mother didn't finish high school (she threw an ink well against one of her teachers wearing a white dress, according to our family lore, and was thus summarily expelled from school!). I was one of what in the US are called "first generation college students." My family nickname was "la scienziata" (the scientist) because I was good in school and liked it. I went to the classical high school (Liceo Classico Scipione Maffei in Verona) where I took five years of Latin, three years of Greek, three years of art history, etc., i.e., what in the US is called a liberal arts education, perhaps a bit light on math and the sciences (only one year each of chemistry, biology, and physics). But those 5 years were very formative, and I discovered the enjoyment that is gained from an active intellectual life. My high school philosophy teacher unfortunately was not inspiring or engaging, but I read on my own the most accessible Sartre, Camus, Nietzsche, and other existentialist philosophers. At university I would have liked to study either physics or jurisprudence but could not take either one because each had strict rules for attendance, and I could not afford to live in Padua. In Verona, where I am from, we did not have those two majors at the local University. This limited my options and since I could not imagine myself teaching literature, I registered in philosophy at the University of Padua and studied

the texts for the exams either alone or with other philosophy majors who did not attend classes (students in Italy have the option of taking a course without ‘attending’ classes, compensating with an increased number of course readings). It was a purely pragmatic choice at that point.

2. *You graduated from Padua in the 1970s. What was the atmosphere like in the Faculty of Philosophy when you were there?*

P.G.: If I remember correctly, there were two Departments of Philosophy. One was connected with the program in *Magistero* (with a stress on pedagogy) and the other had a reputation for being more academic. I have no idea why there were two separate programs, as I had excellent teachers in both departments. My department had scholars working on Aristotle, Hegel, and Rosmini. Franco Chiereghin was an emerging scholar on Idealism; I remember Padre Poppi for Rosmini. Enrico Berti worked on Aristotle. I took exams with all these teachers and ended up working more closely with Franco Chiereghin, although I did not enjoy Hegel. Adriana Cavarero was a couple of years ahead of me and she also had Franco as her thesis adviser and for several years worked with/for him. I remember the department as welcoming to women students in the sense that there were not only male students in the program; however, when it came to the teachers, I do not remember any women. I remember preparing one exam on Immanuel Kant’s philosophy and reading Sofia Vanni Rovighi’s text and being quite impressed with the fact that it was a book written by a woman philosopher. I am not sure, but I believe Francesca Menegoni may have been the first woman member of the faculty or one of the first women philosophers among the faculty.

3. *After your graduation, you decided to pursue your studies in the US. While many people decide to do that now, it was an unusual choice back in the day. What led you to do it? Would you do it again?*

P.G.: I never regretted leaving Italy, although I would love to find out that the reasons why I left are now gone. I decided to leave because I was working on my second *Diploma di Perfezionamento* (comparable to a Master, as there were no PhD programs in Italy in 1980), and there was no likelihood for me of obtaining an Assistantship with any of the faculty in Padova. I saw a colleague who worked for several years for a faculty member being passed over by a much less talented male colleague. I had no

“political” support in the department. I was offered only a 100 thousand liras monthly stipend if I wanted to stay and work full time as an Assistant to a faculty member. At that time, I was earning 800 thousand lire a month teaching Italian, history, and geography in middle school with a tenured position. In 1979 I qualified to teach history and philosophy in high school but did not yet have a post in a high school; it would have taken a few more years before I could teach philosophy in a high school. Despite all of this, and one could say out of despair to keep studying and staying somehow connected with the University, I started a second *Diploma di Perfezionamento* in philosophy of science. In contrast with the first *perfezionamento* led by Franco Chiereghin, which was a biweekly seminar with all participants working on their own research project, hopefully leading to a publication, the second *perfezionamento* was housed in the Department of Philosophy in the *Magistero* program and offered courses. I enjoyed and learned a lot in both programs. The first *perfezionamento* led to the publication in *Verifiche* of a rather long essay arguing for the continuity of Wittgenstein’s thought in contrast to those scholars who were arguing for the two Wittgensteins (and there are now those who argue for a third Wittgenstein!). I have always been on the side of those who see a development rather than a break in the different phases of Wittgenstein’s thought. As part of the second *perfezionamento*, I took courses in philosophy of language (Paolo Leonardi), logic (Pierdaniele Giaretta), mathematical logic (Enrico Martino), and modal logic (Mario Mignucci). I mention the teachers of these courses because they were excellent and prepared me very well for the doctoral courses I took in the US, especially in logic. During the whole time, I was still writing and presenting my work at conferences on Ludwig Wittgenstein. At one such conference, in Kirchberg am Wechsel, I met Edward Becker, a faculty member from the Philosophy Department at the University of Nebraska Lincoln, who told me that people doing what I was doing, i.e., studying, presenting, and publishing, could be better paid and continue doing research in the US. I learned then about PhD programs and I applied. I was first admitted without financial support, and I obviously declined. In April 1980 I was offered financial support and accepted the position. I believe I might have been the first or one of their first foreign doctoral students.

4. *After your doctorate at the University of Nebraska Lincoln, what brought you to the University of Minnesota (Morris), where you then spent the rest of your academic career?*

P.G.: During my fifth and last year in the doctoral program at UNL, I was awarded a dissertation fellowship. This was a very generous support on the part of the Department and allowed me to focus solely on writing my dissertation. Although I had passed all the qualifying exams rather easily – the exams were on logic, metaphysics, epistemology, and ethics; I was allowed to skip the two history of philosophy exams because of my studies for my BA and MA in Italy – writing my own original proposal for a Wittgensteinian and anti-realist philosophy of mathematics turned out to be rather difficult. My background had prepared me very well to analyze and interpret the thought and writings of other philosophers, but not to develop an original contribution that could advance the debate on an issue. It was the most difficult year of my graduate studies. That same year I went through the typical process of job search that was customary for doctoral candidates in their last year, i.e., attending the American Philosophical Association Eastern Meetings (in New York, that year), hoping for a campus interview and an offer. I visited a college in Wisconsin and was offered a temporary position in West Virginia, where Virginia Klenk taught. At that time, she was one of the very few women philosophers who had written a book in the philosophy of mathematics and who defended a Wittgensteinian theory in philosophy of mathematics. I was thrilled to work in the same department as Virginia Klenk, but the Governor of West Virginia froze all hiring and in the meanwhile the University of Minnesota Morris came through with a phone interview first, and then an invitation for a campus interview. I came to Morris around the middle of March; there were at least two feet of fresh snow on the ground. My search committee thought that, as I was Italian, I would never accept their offer of a tenure track position in Minnesota, a notoriously cold part of the Midwest. I loved the university and the town (5,000 people including the students; 3,000 in the summer). I saw it as offering the opportunity of a “bucolic life.” Life is very simple in a small town. I liked the idea of teaching small classes and getting to know my students well. The tenure code required an active research agenda and publications for obtaining tenure as you were to get tenure anywhere in the University of Minnesota as a system. I liked the fact that I could do both teaching and research. Furthermore, the university provided ample support for research with conference and travel funds. Ted Uehling, my senior colleague, was one of the three editors of the *Midwest Studies in Philosophy*, and he was a very supportive and non-sexist colleague. Even though I was invited to apply for jobs at schools offering a graduate program, I never seriously reentered the job market, although not all my

subsequent male colleagues were as supportive and gracious as Ted had been.

5. *Your philosophical interests are quite broad, including the history of analytic philosophy, metaphysical and epistemological issues in philosophy of mathematics, philosophy of language, personal identity, and analytic feminism. But let's start at the beginning of your career. You debuted as a Wittgenstein scholar with a doctoral dissertation titled "Objectivity and Consistency in Mathematics: A Critical Analysis of Two Objections to Wittgenstein's Pragmatic Conventionalism." Why did you decide to start focusing on Wittgenstein (on whom you also wrote your MA dissertation)?*

P.G.: As to the first part of your question, I need to clarify that in many colleges and universities in the United States, you are often hired to teach a wide variety of courses. I am sure that this may seem strange and perhaps unprofessional to an Italian academic audience, as at least from what I remember of the Italian Academy, faculty are often very specialized scholars in one specific field. In the first two years of teaching in Morris, I taught nine different courses, so I had to study a lot. The main areas that were my responsibility were logic, philosophy of language, metaphysics, and epistemology. Slowly, I was able to add to the curriculum courses that matched my emerging research interests in feminist philosophy of science and epistemology, personal identity, and analytic feminism.

Back to my dissertation. I knew I wanted to work on a defense of a non-realist theory of mathematical truth and necessity; here I use “anti-realist” and “non-realist” as synonymous. I believed then, and I still believe now, that mathematical truths have a normative and not a descriptive function. They are rules governing our mathematical practices and not faithful representations of an abstract or Platonic mind-independent reality. After studying Wittgenstein’s *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* (1922) for my BA and the *Blue and Brown Books* (1958) and the *Philosophical Investigations* (1953) for my first MA in Italy, I found Wittgenstein’s views in the *Remarks on the Foundations of Mathematics* (1967) just right. Phil Hugly who taught logic and knew Wittgenstein well seemed the obvious choice as my dissertation adviser. Phil was a strong supporter of my efforts to defend Wittgenstein’s philosophy of mathematics even when some members of my committee were rather critical of them. My committee members were Robert Audi, Albert Casullo, and Ed Becker. Each of them contributed to strengthening my arguments, especially from the

epistemological point of view (Audi and Casullo) and regarding Quine's critique of conventionalism (Becker). I am grateful for their critical reading of my dissertation, which ultimately generated several published articles.

6. Could you briefly describe your attempt to defend Wittgenstein's ideas from "the objectivity objection" and "the consistency objection"? More generally, what do you consider to be the main advantages of Wittgenstein's philosophy of mathematics?

P.G.: In my dissertation, I defended a Wittgensteinian conventionalist account of mathematical truth and necessity against two objections. The main thesis I support is that, with respect to two main objections that many critics have moved against anti-realism (e.g., Georg Kreisel) and conventionalism (e.g., Quine) in mathematics, Wittgenstein's conventionalism has a plausible answer. The first objection, the so-called objectivity objection, has two versions: an epistemological and an ontological version. It consists in the claim that any anti-realist account of mathematical truth cannot explain why mathematical truths are epistemically as well as non-epistemically objective. I appeal to social agreement on mathematical practices to ground the first type of objectivity, while I appeal to Hilary Putnam's notion of rational acceptability to ground the non-epistemic or ontological notion of objectivity. The second objection is the so called "consistency objection" raised by Hilary Putnam against any type of conventionalism in mathematics. My defense of Wittgenstein's views against this objection is rather elaborate and it is grounded in a close interpretation of Wittgenstein's views on following a rule. My conclusion is that a robust conventionalist account of the connection between rules and outcome of rules can reject Putnam's consistency objection. I suggest that Wittgenstein's views on rule-following provide an example of one such conventionalism.

Both responses to these two objections to conventionalism in mathematics produced three published articles. Ironically, the most important or controversial one, developed from a central chapter of my dissertation, appeared in print many years after I completed my PhD. I kept receiving encouraging reviews on that paper, but no journal wanted it. Michael Resnik, whom I met when I participated in his 1988 National Endowment for the Humanities Summer Seminar on Gottlob Frege's philosophy of mathematics told me that I should let go of Wittgenstein as it was not a topic/philosopher that would make it easy for me to publish. I then

discovered that there are fashions and fads also in philosophical writing and publishing! Nevertheless, I persisted and after a few years, eventually found a good journal for this piece.

As to what I consider the main advantage of Wittgenstein's philosophy of mathematics, I would point to the fact that he proposes a view of the truth of mathematical propositions that is not linked either to an abstract ontology being described by such propositions, nor to an implausible empirical basis like John Stuart Mill's mathematical empiricism. The idea that mathematical propositions are part of practices and that they gain their authority from those practices seems very plausible to me.

7. Of course, you have not only investigated the thought of Wittgenstein but also that of other preeminent figures in analytic philosophy, such as Frege, Russell, and Quine. In particular, you have written many articles as well as an important book (Garavaso, Vassallo 2015) on Frege. Would you like to tell us what aspects of Frege's thought have most piqued your interest? And what do you consider to be the most modern parts of Frege's philosophy?

P.G.: My answer here connects with what I just said in the previous answer. As I did follow Michael Resnik's advice, he became an important mentor for me despite our diametrically opposed views in the philosophy of mathematics. Thanks to Michael, I started working on Gottlob Frege, which was an obvious move given the impossibility of understanding Wittgenstein without having studied Frege's views on logic, mathematics, and language. Michael directed the already mentioned 1988 NEH Summer Seminar on Frege's philosophy of mathematics at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill. I learned a lot during that seminar and after so many years working on a philosopher like Wittgenstein concerning whose interpretation there always was some controversy, it was very refreshing to work on a thinker whose views – even those in my opinion less defensible – were at least much easier to express (and criticize, of course). I started working on an article that helped me focus my interest on the relationship between language and thought, namely on the issue whether for Frege thoughts, or the content of propositions, are internally and necessarily structured in a certain way or whether one and the same thought could have different internal structures. The main issue for me has always been the role that language plays in structuring our thoughts. At least at some time in the development of his views, Frege argued that language, especially a

symbolic one, plays a crucial role in organizing and directing our thinking. I particularly like this idea and agree with Frege that language has a central role in shaping out thoughts not only in their content but also in their development. In the summer 1994 I participated in a second NEH Summer seminar on Frege, this time focused on his philosophy of language, organized by Richard Mendelsohn at the City University of New York. After those seminars and the articles that ensued from them, in the mid 1990s, I met Nicla Vassallo at a conference entitled “Thought and Ontology” at the University of Genoa. Nicla and I shared an interest in feminist epistemologies, and we subsequently co-authored one article on this topic (Garavaso, Vassallo 2003). However, we also held some divergent positions, as Nicla was very critical of Quine’s naturalized epistemology while I thought that Quine’s naturalism might provide a point of contact with the feminist empiricism of Lynn Hankinson Nelson (Nelson 1990; Garavaso 1999). So, my friendship with Nicla helped me deepen my understanding of feminist epistemologies and was the basis of a new experience for me as I never had before worked on a philosophical problem or text with a woman colleague. Later on, we found out that we both shared a way of reading Frege that was different from the reading tied to Michael Dummett’s interpretation, at that time prevalent in Europe and in the US. Nicla’s work in epistemology and her interesting reading of George Boole’s brand of psychologism led to the idea of working together on a volume that presented our reading of Frege and from this collaboration *Frege on Thinking and Its Epistemic Significance* was born. Reading this volume, it is apparent how much of its discussion of Frege’s epistemological views is grounded in Nicla’s work, while my contribution was mostly in the introduction and in the development of the fifth chapter on language. What both Nicla and I thought was a crucial purpose of our book was to point out the importance for Frege of *thinking* as the mental process in contrast to *thought(s)* as the product of thinking and thus to refute the image of Frege as disinterested in any epistemological issue, in sharp contrast with Dummett’s reading of Frege as only interested in the philosopher of language. So, in answer to the last two questions of yours, what has mostly fascinated me regarding Frege’s thought has been his attention to language and to its epistemological role; furthermore, because of his conviction that language, whether ordinary or symbolic, is a crucial, indispensable instrument for human thinking, Frege’s works help us figure out the complex and epistemically significant ties between human thoughts and their expressions.

8. *As I anticipated, much of your writings, especially your more recent ones, focus on analytic feminism (Garavaso, Vassallo 2007; Garavaso 2018a). Can you explain to us what is analytic feminism? How does it differ from other kinds of feminism?*

P.G.: I love your question as one of my articles that seems to have had some readers – if we trust Academia.edu data – is entitled “What is Analytic Feminism?” (Garavaso 2018b) and it is part of the introductory section of *The Bloomsbury Companion to Analytic Feminism* (Garavaso 2018a). It was important for me to write that essay for many reasons. First, there has been much debate about what differentiates analytic and continental philosophy (see just for the Italian landscape, the successful D’Agostini 1996), and it is valuable to at least try to clarify what is central to a particular tradition. Tim Crane has an enlightening article entitled “Understanding the Question: Philosophy and its History” (2015) that has helped me to think about feminist philosophies as philosophical traditions. Crane lists three features to characterize a philosophical tradition: (1) a canon, or selected set of texts; (2) a way of reading those texts; and (3) the acknowledgment that only within the context of those texts with that way of reading them, the specific questions that arise within that tradition can be understood. I think Crane’s features work well for any tradition including feminist philosophies, on the condition that the first feature is understood as a family resemblance class rather than as a rigid set. For example, if you look at different texts on the history of Analytic philosophy, such as Avrum Stroll’s *Twentieth Century Analytic Philosophy* (2000), Scott Soames’s *Philosophical Analysis in the Twentieth Century* (2003), Michael Beaney’s *The Oxford Handbook of the History of Analytic Philosophy* (2013) or Barry Dainton and Howard Robinson’s *The Bloomsbury Companion to Analytic Philosophy* (2015), you can see that there is no agreement on a rigid set of core texts: some authors exclude Quine’s or even Wittgenstein’s from the set of canonical texts of analytic philosophy and the discussion about the methodologies of analytic and continental philosophers is still ongoing. Analogously, some feminists have told me they would not include Simone De Beauvoir’s works among the core texts. This is clearly very confusing for beginning philosophy students and I wanted to focus my feminist philosophies course mostly on writers from the UK, Australia, and the US, rather than from France and Italy – with the exception of Simone De Beauvoir. Most of these feminist scholars grew up in the tradition of analytic philosophy, while feminists such as Luce Irigaray or Julia Kristeva have grown within a cultural milieu deeply influenced by continental philosophy. Thus, I “owed” to my students

to define as clearly as I could why my course is entitled “Analytic Feminism.” I don’t think I can give you a one-liner on why analytic feminism is different from other feminist traditions; the answer requires to look at a set of texts, to explain what does it mean to use gender, class, and other systems of social oppression as lenses to read these texts, and finally to focus on the questions that emerge from that reading of the texts. I’ll give you a concrete example. In my course we read the fifth book of Plato’s *Republic* and we ask who are the female humans Plato argues must be educated just like the male humans, if we want them to become guardians. We also ask who the female humans are who were given as prizes to the winners of battles or races just like gold and cattle. Are women of the same class or race intended in both cases? Before using gender, race, and class as tools to read philosophical texts, I would not have asked those questions while reading Plato. Yet, what I say here addresses only the “feminist” part of analytic feminism. What makes it analytic? I “force” my students to express their positions by means of arguments stated rather rigidly in the form of valid arguments, with premises and conclusion. I am not saying that continental philosophers do not use arguments, but they do not use explicit argumentation as an ordinary methodology to teach their students how to argue their views. I do so because I believe that this approach to philosophical argumentation strengthens and sharpens our thinking and writing. I also enjoy it and use it both in my scholarly writing and in my teaching. I never felt as confident that I could teach a continental approach to philosophy. At most I could perhaps teach history of philosophy as it was taught in Italian high schools; but that historical approach does not force us to ask what “we” think of the biological argument Plato rejects in the fifth book of the *Republic*, for example.

9. What, in your case, drew you from philosophy of mathematics and philosophy of language to analytic feminism? What connections do you see between this field of studies and the ideas of the "fathers" of analytic philosophy?

P.G.: In philosophy of mathematics, I was interested in epistemological and ontological questions: how do we know mathematical truths and what makes mathematical propositions true? My interest in Frege strengthened my attention to language and its role in constructing our concepts and our logical rules. Wittgenstein was right in the *Tractatus* when he thought logical and mathematical propositions are not descriptive of any reality. So,

one could say that all throughout my philosophical development I have been an anti-realist when it comes to non-empirical truths, such as the propositions of logic, mathematics, and ethics. The social dimensions of race, gender, class, and other features of social discrimination, what we call “social constructs,” also fascinated me. I am interested in how we learn these systems and I am interested in all efforts to reveal the fake realities that unwarranted systems of beliefs have created to allegedly underlie these concepts, for example the idea of a biological basis for racial distinctions or the idea that biology determines our social gendered roles. In analytic feminist philosophy, the work of Sally Haslanger, Elizabeth Barnes, Jennifer Saul, and of younger feminist philosophers such as Mari Mikkola, Esa Diaz-Leon, Katharine Jenkins, Amanda Roth, and Ayanna De’Vante, just to name a few who contributed to the *Bloomsbury Companion* (Garavaso 2018a), raise epistemological and metaphysical questions just like the so-called originators of analytic philosophy, but they ask questions concerning concepts that have political and often discriminatory weight. The debate on the ameliorative definition of “woman” is a perfect example of a debate that is very much in line with the traditional content and methodologies of analytic philosophy. Jennifer McKittrick’s question about the compatibility between metaphysics and feminism or the debate between Ted Sider (2017) and Elizabeth Barnes (2017) on what is truly “fundamental” in metaphysics and whether Sider’s definition of fundamental rules out feminist philosophy from metaphysics are important questions about reality as much as any questions about the reality of numbers as abstract entities or structures.

10. Your Wikipedia page describes you as an analytical philosopher. What is analytic philosophy to you, and what does being an analytic philosopher entail?

P.G.: I have already explained in part that I felt more at ease in an analytic philosophical context than in a continental one; even if as a student of Franco Chiereghin, the most influential Italian teacher I had, I read Hegel and Heidegger, I never felt I could work on those thinkers. Franco was right in steering me toward Wittgenstein’s works. Although difficult and at times cryptic, Wittgenstein’s works reflected philosophical queries that I could understand and share. What can our language express of the world? Is there a limit to our thinking? What is nonsensical? Is part of our thinking expressible in the absence of language, as the contrast between showing and

saying suggests? And, finally, I loved Wittgenstein's interest in logic and mathematics. None of the continental philosophers I studied in Italy was as interested in classical logic. This is all on a personal level; the following may explain what analytic philosophy means to me on a more academic level. There are a lot of unsubstantiated myths about analytic and continental philosophies. Lots of bad jokes: "I am an analytic philosopher. I think for myself." (Searle, as reported by Mulligan 2003, p. 267; cf. Glock 2008, p. 211). Analogously, it is false that analytic philosophers do not care about history and that they study a philosopher's work disconnected from the cultural milieu from which those ideas emerged. Or at least good analytic philosophers do not do so. Think of Hilary Putnam's work. He was a great example of an analytic philosopher, and he certainly knew history of philosophy. I mention Putnam because his work was important for my thinking and because he is well known and esteemed in Italian philosophy circles. Analytic philosophers, however, may extract an argument from a text and state it as best they can and discuss it without necessarily talking about the cultural and historical origins of that piece of reasoning. All that information is important to understand how the argument is expressed and the terms that are used in it. But once the argument is stated in its premise(s) and conclusion form, it can be discussed regardless of its historical location, as a piece of reasoning that we want to accept, support, or reject. We do ask ourselves whether Plato's argument against the biological destiny of female humans is or is not a good argument, or whether Plato's reasons are still good reasons and, surprisingly, they still are.

Michael Beaney's discussion in his *Oxford Handbook of the History of Analytic Philosophy* (2013) is very helpful on this point and consistent with my use of "analytic philosophy" as both a methodology and as a tradition à la Crane: "While the methodologically based conception makes sense of many of the uses of 'analytic', however, it does not do justice to all those uses, and in particular, to when we talk of analytic philosophy as a tradition or movement. Perhaps we should simply distinguish two meanings of 'analytic philosophy', depending on whether we have in mind the activity ('analytic philosophizing') or the tradition ('the analytic tradition'). But the two are clearly related, both historically and conceptually." Beaney's explanation is so clear and plausible. It allows us to distinguish between philosophical traditions without disparaging one or the other and without giving up the effort to recognize and identify differences in the actual activities of reading and interpreting philosophical texts.

11. As you know, analytic philosophy can appear to be self-referential and disconnected from present societal problems at times. But is it so? Could you share some of your opinions on the role of analytic philosophy in contributing to a better understanding of the world?

P.G.: I have strong opinions on this topic, so thanks for the question. The following passage is a good starting point to clarify what I think of the criticism that analytic philosophy is too abstract, or as you aptly state, “self-referential and disconnected from present social problems.” Clearly, elaborating this same point, Miranda Fricker and Jennifer Hornsby say: “Analytic philosophy creates an intellectual climate in which it is especially problematic to acknowledge locatedness. This is surely an important part of the explanation why continental philosophy can seem more hospitable to feminist projects.” (Fricker, Hornsby 2000, p. 8, my underline). Fricker and Hornsby identify in the notion of locatedness the alleged greater strength of continental philosophy in being more hospitable than analytic philosophy to feminist thought. At the same time, Fricker and Hornsby’s collection of essays is a successful example of a set of articles several of which I would describe as written from an analytical feminist perspective and discussing pressing societal problems. Furthermore, much of the work I mentioned before, such as the works by Haslanger, Barnes, Saul, etc., are written by feminists who work in the analytic tradition and deal with various forms of social discrimination. Using formal/explicit arguments and/or being trained in philosophy on the work of historical figures such as Russell or Wittgenstein has not prevented these philosophers from contributing in many significant ways to a better understanding of our world. Finally, there are some statistical data that we should pay attention to. If continental philosophy were truly so much “more hospitable to feminist projects” as it is claimed, why do we not find any difference between the dominance of male philosophers in the US, Australia, the UK – areas supposedly dominated by analytic philosophy – and France and Italy – where continental philosophy is still dominant? There are no significant differences between the rates of women full professors in these countries. From what I hear from junior colleagues in Italy, there does not seem to be an easier career path for women philosophers in Europe. There is no doubt that the work of some continental philosophers provides useful concepts to analyze and interpret social discrimination, but their thought has certainly not been any more efficient than analytic philosophy in dismantling the patriarchal power structures in the academy.

12. Analytic philosophy has also been recently criticized for being dominated by white, English-speaking men. Has your personal experience as a non-native English-speaking woman in such a field influenced your research topics and/or the development of your ideas in any way?

P.G.: White men dominate pretty much everywhere in the academy, so this cannot be a criticism specific to analytic philosophy. Rather, it may be a point to keep seriously in mind when talking about any philosophical tradition. Philosophy everywhere seems to be a field dominated by men. Compare philosophy as a discipline with biology, mathematics, and jurisprudence and you will find how different and still male dominated our discipline is. In the three fields I mentioned, women are now the majority earning a doctoral or professional degree in the US. Clearly, change can happen, and we can work on it. I am sure my upbringing and my growing up in Italy has influenced my research, my teaching, and the development of my approach to philosophy. I may not be the best person to understand these influences, however. When I left Italy I had in my background some experience of active feminism, and this certainly helped me in seeing sexism and discrimination also in the US. Yet, one of the sources of uneasiness I had while studying philosophy in Italy was exactly the difficulty of merging my feminism with my interest in philosophy, especially logic and conceptual analysis. Working in the analytic tradition helped me to find a way to combine both of my commitments.

13. As a successful woman philosopher, how do you think the underrepresentation of women in analytic philosophy (and in many other fields of the academy!) can be fought and lessened? What would you suggest to a young woman who plans to pursue studies in philosophy?

P.G.: Work very hard: nothing will be given for free; be professional; create and maintain a wide and active network with other women and/or philosophers who are open to change; find and cultivate relationships with supportive mentors.

14. You are Professor Emerita as of 2019, but you are still actively engaged in philosophical work and publications. What plans do you currently have for the future?

P.G.: After they graduated, some of my students have told me that they miss the intellectual excitement and stimulation of studying philosophy, taking philosophy classes, and reading philosophical writings. I now know very well what they mean. I have been lucky that, after my retirement from the University of Minnesota Morris, I was asked for a few years to teach at the IUSS in Pavia a course on Analytic Feminism. I thoroughly enjoyed finally teaching philosophy to Italian students and supervising theses for their *triennale* (BA) or *magistrale* (MA) degrees. I have also been asked to be an external member on a couple of doctoral dissertation committees of Italian students and I have thoroughly enjoyed these roles as well. As for my own research, I have in mind two projects for the future. The first one concerns personal identity and the pernicious confusion on the use of the word “person” and its strict ties with our psychological life. While I believe that psychological continuity is a crucial notion to explain what we value in ourselves and in our interpersonal life, i.e., our relationships with other human and even non-human living beings, I believe we have erred in ascribing to this psychological notion a metaphysical reality. I would like to be able to show that we do not need to ascribe a metaphysical nature to everything that we believe makes our lives so important to us. Another project that I would love to work on is a collection of essays by Italian women philosophers to celebrate the work of those who have courageously remained in Italy to work and teach and to document what obstacles we still need to overcome to foster a more equitable representation of women in philosophy.

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