

Elena Giusti

Employment history

I am currently Associate Professor in Latin Literature and Language at the University of Warwick, which I joined in 2017. I was previously Research Fellow in Classics at St John's College Cambridge and University Teacher in Classics at the University of Glasgow.

Research

I am broadly interested in Latin literature, with a specialism in Augustan poetry. My publications engage with ideology critique, postcolonial studies, feminist theories and curriculum decolonisation. I am currently writing a book on Dido of Carthage and co-editing a few volumes, including a special issue of *Vergilius* on the theme of *Vergil and the Feminine*, and a special issue of BICS on the theme of *Decolonising Classics in Africa*. I am also in the first stages of co-planning a conference on Classics and Italian Colonialism.

Teaching

I have been teaching a wide range of modules in both Latin and Greek language and literature at the University of Warwick, Cambridge and Glasgow. My 2018-2019 module on 'Africa and the Making of Classical Literature' was the subject of an Academic Fellowship from the Warwick Institute for Advanced Teaching and Learning, which allowed me to invite a number of public lecturers to contribute to it and interview some of them on their work.

Administration and other services

Among other admin roles, I am currently Open Days Coordinator and Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity Representative for Classics & Ancient History at the University of Warwick. I am also co-chair of the CUCD EDI Committee.

Outreach

As Open Days Coordinator I work closely with outreach and recruitment, especially with the help of the Warwick Classics Network, through which I have been recording lectures and interviews and participated in school and teachers' days. I have also participated in podcasts and written blogs for the Cambridge School Classics Project and for the journal *Eidolon*.

Education

(2011-2014) PhD: King's College Cambridge

(2009-2011) Laurea Specialistica: Sapienza University of Rome

(2005-2009) Laurea: Sapienza University of Rome

For more information, you can visit my page on the University of Warwick website:

<https://warwick.ac.uk/fac/arts/classics/intranets/staff/giusti/>

Statement

When the pandemic hit, I had just come out of maternity leave and was struggling to reduce my research backlog while attempting to settle my child in nursery. In around one month, I found myself again at home with a toddler. I was grateful to my university for instituting a term of research leave for returning mothers, but I was equally shocked to be asked to provide a detailed report of my research achievements from February to July 2020 with no explicit recognition of those months' extraordinary circumstances.

I have heard of similar experiences all over the sector, with employers offering little to no recognition of the difficulties faced by colleagues and students in this crisis. Insistence on face-to-face teaching, lack of access to furlough in the face of school closure, cancellation of research leave, hiring and promotion freeze, refusal to grant funded extensions to (post-)doctoral programs were all measures that disproportionately affected women, especially early career researchers under precarious contracts. As with race and class, in the case of gender too the pandemic only exacerbated and magnified already existing inequalities, from the little financial support for childcare to the unequal distribution of domestic labour.

This last year has also been particularly tiring, especially in Classics, for derogatory to tone-deaf responses to students' requests for attention to equality and social justice, especially in terms of curriculum decolonisation following BLM protests. But the crisis also propelled students to organise in a number of projects that may bring hopes of change to the discipline: from Sportula Europe to CripAntiquity, to Queer and the Classical. 2020 also saw the publication of the Council and University Classical Departments (CUCD) Report on Equality and Diversity in Classics, which finally provided quantitative data on discrimination and lack of progression in Classics due to gender and race.

Together with Victoria Leonard, I am currently co-chair of the newly formed CUCD EDI Committee. Among our main short-term aims are the dissemination of the CUCD report across Classics departments, a collection and digest of 'pandemic stories' across the discipline that will help us evaluate, among other things, the different lack of support offered across universities in the UK, and the institution of an annual meeting of EDI Classics officers from the CUCD member institutions. We also intend to fund and support a number of events to promote equality and inclusivity in Classics.

I believe it is important to encourage dialogue among different committees doing social justice work, and I would be honoured to serve on the WCC steering committee, which has always been a crucial beacon of support, mentoring and healing for women in classics.

If I were to join the committee, I would be especially interested in ensuring that the WCC is liaising effectively with students' organisations and continuing to offer support to women across a wide intersectional spectrum. In particular, I would like to help with mentoring schemes, especially tailored around specific needs and difficulties (e.g. advice re job and postdoc applications or else work/life balance; tailored mentoring support for those dealing with caring responsibilities, disabilities, gender dysphoria, experiences of racialisation). I would also like to organise a number of reading groups around feminist and gender theories, which would help us raise our cultural literacy in both fields while also adding an opportunity for socialisation and mutual support.

Thank you for your consideration.