

## **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 have authored a book on *Carthage in Virgil's Aeneid* for CUP (2018) and am currently writing a monograph on Dido of Carthage and a commentary on Virgil's *Aeneid* 5. I have been co-editor of various projects, including a special issue of *Vergilius* (67) on the theme of *Vergil and the Feminine* in 2021 (with Victoria Rimell) and *The Cambridge Companion to Classics and Race* (with Rosa Andújar and Jackie Murray). I am also currently planning a conference on Classics and Italian Colonialism (with Samuel Agbamu).

### **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 recipient of an Academic Fellowship from the Warwick Institute for Advanced Teaching and Learning, which allowed me to national and international public lecturers to contribute to it and interview some of them on their work.

### **Administration and other services**

Among other admin roles (Open Days Coordinator, Admissions Officer, Recruitment and Outreach sub-committee) I am the Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity Representative for Classics & Ancient History at the University of Warwick and co-founder and chair (with Victoria Leonard) of the CUCD EDI Committee.

### **Outreach**

As Open Days Coordinator and Admissions Officer 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.

These last two years have taken a strong toll on the mental health and wellbeing of everyone in HE, exacerbated by tone-deaf responses to students' and staff's requests for attention to equality and social justice, especially in terms of curriculum decolonisation following BLM protests, and with the continuation of industrial action. But the crisis has also propelled us to organise in a number of projects that may bring hope of change to the discipline of Classics, such as Sportula Europe, CripAntiquity, Queer and the Classical, Caring in Classics, Asterion and the Network for Working Class Classicists. 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 founded and am currently co-chair of the newly formed CUCD EDI Committee, which among other things attempts to work as a hub for all these organisations active in different aspects of equality and social justice. Among the aims achieved by the committee, we have created a list and meetings of EDI officers in Classics, helping the dissemination of the CUCD report across Classics departments; we have coordinated a survey on the pandemic that will help us evaluate, among other things, the different lack of support offered across universities in the UK; we have created a website and a blog to work as a platform for EDI matters in Classics, and we are currently in the process of coordinating another survey on Classics and class. We have also been working to fund and support 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 and non-binary people 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 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.