



ALMA MATER STUDIORUM  
UNIVERSITÀ DI BOLOGNA

DEPARTMENT  
OF CLASSICAL PHILOLOGY  
AND ITALIAN STUDIES

PhD Programme in *Literary and Philological Cultures*

DOCTORAL CONFERENCE

Bologna, 2–3 October 2024

**«ERRATA CORRIGE»?**  
***ERROR IN PHILOLOGY, LITERATURE AND LINGUISTICS***

**Call for Papers**

The PhD candidates in *Literary and Philological Cultures* of Alma Mater Studiorum – University of Bologna extend an invitation to participate in the inaugural edition of the Doctoral Conference of the Department of Classical Philology and Italian Studies, addressed to doctoral students and young researchers. The conference’s theme revolves around the concept of *error*, to be explored within the fields of Classical Studies, Italian Studies, and Linguistics. Below, we outline potential avenues of investigation for each thematic unit. These focal points aim to elicit contributions of both theoretical-methodological (historical debates, critical perspectives, influential paradigms) and empirical nature (encompassing insightful case studies or topics of considerable scholarly discourse).

**CLASSICAL STUDIES AND PHILOLOGY**

In the multifaceted landscape of research within Classical Studies, error emerges as a crucial tool of investigation. This is particularly evident in philological inquiry, in which error serves as the cornerstone of the stemmatic method. It represents both a blessing and a curse because it gradually distorts the “original” and it simultaneously serves as the principal means of approaching it. Moreover, within the literary domain, error represents both a privileged narrative device, triggering plot twists and developments, and a source of reflections of various kinds, extending from ethics to politics, as well as a useful testimony to the violation of established linguistic and behavioural norms. Consequently, it is unsurprising that both aspects continue to animate scholarly discourse. In the light of these considerations, we invite proposals that explore, but are not confined to, the following thematic focal points:

- i. *Ratio corruptelae* and types of errors: encompassing standard categories (‘mechanical’ *lacunae* and dislocations, common trivialisations) alongside more controversial ones (‘psychological’

- and, in particular, *lapsus*); ‘performance’ errors (*adiaphora* in the epic oral tradition; line attribution in drama and Platonic dialogue; actors’ interpolations);
- ii. Error and *stemma codicum*: recent findings concerning the relationship between textual witnesses; considerations on the Maasian “types” and “bifid” *stemmata*;
  - iii. Author’s variants: debate on the proliferation of textual variants in Antiquity; double redactions and missing author’s revisions; risks of assimilation of such variants to common scribal innovations;
  - iv. Error and (attempts of) correction: reconsideration of *loci vexati* with new proposals of emendation; debate on the necessity of supporting conjectures with palaeographical explanations; non-errors (textual tradition wrongly believed to be erroneous);
  - v. Error in indirect tradition: altering role of the cover-text; limitations and categorization of quoting strategies; exegesis of controversial terms, *loci* and (dia)critical signs in both scholiastic *corpora* and *lexica*; misattributions arising from deliberate modification or textual corruption; mistranslations and translations revealing underlying textual errors;
  - vi. Error in ancient literature: ἀμαρτία/*error* as a philosophical, religious, historical, political, and ideological concept; error as a plot engine (e.g., misinterpretation of oracles and divine signs; comedy of errors; error and moral dimension in fable); linguistic error as a marker of identity (barbarism, solecism);
  - vii. Error in the history of philology: treatment of errors by grammarians and philologists across different historical epochs, from Antiquity to Middle Ages; limitations and advantages of contemporary categorizations; terminological and conceptual reflections on the evolving role and significance of error within philological discourse.

## **ITALIAN STUDIES, ITALIAN PHILOLOGY AND ROMANCE PHILOLOGY**

As a traditional rhetorical device capable of unveiling new layers of meaning, error constitutes a significant area of inquiry within literary studies, lending itself to productive applications in both philological methodology and critical textual interpretation. Originating from Latin culture, where the verb *errare* encompassed both the notion of spatial wandering and that of making a mistake, this ambivalence persists and evolves in later literary traditions, acquiring manifold nuances. Error introduces novel dimensions to literary readings, fostering paratextual and (neo)avant-garde experimentalism by its capacity to subvert narratives and the texts they inhabit. As Sklovskij (1984) posits, the “vitality of delusion” lies in its pursuit of the truth of the novel: error is thus acknowledged not merely as an integral and indispensable component of a text, but primarily as an impediment, a gap, a flaw, or a disruption, without which the generation of innovation or movement would be inconceivable. To err encompasses both the aforementioned dimensions and serves as both method and content, for literature’s most dynamic aspect resides in its capacity to challenge our certainties, offering a cognitive opportunity wherein we engage with error, ambiguity, and incoherence (Bertoni, 2018). Naturally, error holds value as a critical juncture in methodology, a knot that tradition weaves and philology untangles in the pursuit of reconstructing the authenticity of the text.

- i. The dialectic between *error* and *wander*: motion and research in textual content and forms spurred by the subversive power of error;
- ii. Errors stemming from slips determining the development and structure of a text: narrative/poetic errors, unconscious writing forms and thematic developments;
- iii. Apparent errors, ambiguities, and omissions within the narrative framework, including considerations of the narrator's perspective;
- iv. Erroneous editorial or advertising strategies impacting an author's inclusion/exclusion from literary canon;
- v. The *topos* of error in the plot: misunderstandings and errors (psychological, political, ideological, moral, religious) driving narrative progression; errors as "nature's mistakes";
- vi. Errors regarding language varieties viewed as minorities due to historical, cultural, political and gender-related factors, serving as assertions of cultural or identity claims;
- vii. Interpretative errors;
- viii. Textual critique: notions of 'error', 'innovation', 'variation', and 'archetype'; *stemma codicum* definition; polygenesis and monogenesis considerations; error aetiology; innovation dynamics and dynamic factors; diffraction; error as a generative moment; variations in authorship perceived as errors;
- ix. Error's role in the creative process within authorial philology and digital philology.

## LINGUISTICS

We often hold the belief that language operates within the confines of rigid rules, with any deviations from these rules seen as errors necessitating correction. However, linguists approach errors with a different perspective, viewing them as indicators of linguistic variation in all its manifestations. For instance, what may be deemed as a departure from the norm at one point in the evolution of a language could evolve into an established rule in later stages; what is condemned in one linguistic context may be embraced in another. Errors made by language learners offer valuable insights into the processes of first and second language acquisition, as well as language disorders. Furthermore, error analysis serves as a valuable starting point for various applications, ranging from the development of effective language teaching strategies to the enhancement of computational models. On this basis, we invite contributions that, by adopting different approaches or analysis techniques, focus particularly (though not exclusively) on the following areas:

- i. Errors in language acquisition (L1 or L2) among monolingual and multilingual speakers; the influence of individual factors (e.g., cognitive, age, extralinguistic factors), interlingual influence, and varied learning environments;
- ii. Pedagogical approaches, theories, models and techniques for detecting, interpreting, and correcting errors in classroom settings; contrastive error analysis; learners' responses to error feedback;

- iii. Errors from the perspective of impaired or atypical speech or writing, as well as challenges in production and comprehension skills;
- iv. Sociolinguistic, typological, or diachronic perspectives on error; the role of error in linguistic change or deviation from the social norm; the use of language varieties or dialects in association with social prestige;
- v. Parsing errors, sense interpretation (disambiguation) errors, machine translation errors; biases in the model training data; lemmatization and POS-tagging errors; limitations of algorithms as sources of error;
- vi. Textual (coherence and cohesion) and pragmatic errors leading to misunderstandings; errors in performing linguistic acts; violation of conversational norms; disregard of cultural norms; control and correction mechanisms.

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### **General Information**

Doctoral candidates and PhD graduates who have obtained their degree within two years of the abstract submission deadline are invited to submit an original abstract (maximum 350 words, excluding title and up to 10 bibliographical references), accompanied by a brief academic profile (maximum 100 words), **by 15 April 2024**.

Kindly forward your proposal to the e-mail address **convegnoficlit24@gmail.com**, indicating in the subject line “Communication proposal Doctoral Conference” and specifying your reference section (*Classical Studies and Philology; Italian Studies, Italian Philology and Romance Philology; Linguistics*). The following information should be included in the text of the e-mail: abstract title, name and affiliation, and e-mail address for communications. Proposals, in Italian or English, should be submitted in *.doc(x)* and anonymised *.pdf* format. Notification of acceptance will be provided by 15 June 2024.

Each presentation will be allotted 20 minutes, and speakers are expected to present their contributions in person. All thematic units embrace an interdisciplinary approach, and individual panels will be organised according to the principle of thematic or methodological affinity. Key-note speakers are anticipated. The Scientific Committee will consider a possible publication of the Conference Proceedings.

The conference will be held on Wednesday 2 and Thursday 3 October 2024 at the University of Bologna. No registration fee is required. Further details regarding registration, conference venue, accepted abstracts, and the detailed programme will be duly communicated on the website: <https://phd.unibo.it/culture-letterarie-e-filologiche/it/attivita/convegno-dottorale-2024>.

For further inquiries, feel free to contact the Organizing Board via e-mail at [convegnoficlit24@gmail.com](mailto:convegnoficlit24@gmail.com).

## Organising Board:

Section *Classical Studies and Philology*: Giuseppe Izzo, Sara Martino, Elena Mencarelli, Claudia Nuovo.

Section *Italian Studies, Italian Philology and Romance Philology*: Gina Bellomo, Lara Bernardi, Giacomo Bruni, Nicola Chiarini, Jacopo Malenotti, Camilla Pinto.

Section *Linguistics*: Giorgia Albertin, Nike Francesca Del Quercio, Ivan Lacić, Chiara Lanzoni, Cristina Li, Nicola Perugini, Anna Raimo.

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