

# Introductory Lesson

Monday 20, March 2023



ALMA MATER STUDIORUM  
UNIVERSITÀ DI BOLOGNA

LEARNING AND TRAINING  
ERASMUS+ BLENDED INTENSIVE PROGRAMME 2022/23  
PART A: SHARED ON-LINE LESSONS (20 March-12 May)

## *Digitizing a Lexicon. How to Work with Words for the Study of Religions in the Graeco-Roman World*

*Seminar cycle planned for the Master's Degree in Historical and Oriental Sciences, University of Bologna (20 March-27 May)*

*Valid for the acquisition of Seminar CFUs as a closed-loop Seminar [6 ECTS]*

*Proposing lecturer: Prof. Giuseppina Paola Viscardi (Program Coordinator)*



# Meeting Schedule for the 1st online lesson

## **10:00 am to 10:40 a.m.**

- Presentation of the UNAEUROPA 2019 project : "LARES - Language and ReligionS" (<https://site.unibo.it/lares/en>): Rationale and Project aims
- Introduction to the LARES Learning and training pathway
- Start up of the Erasmus Plus Blended Intensive Programme (BIP) "Digitizing a Lexicon": content; knowledge and skills to be acquired; ultimate goal of the BIP.

## **10:40 to 11:10 a.m.**

- Brief individual presentation of participating students: course of study, training, current research (two minutes maximum per student).
- Possible exposure of the terms/lemmas on which students will work (in groups or individually) by the coordinators of the research units of the partner universities or individual students (ten minutes in all).

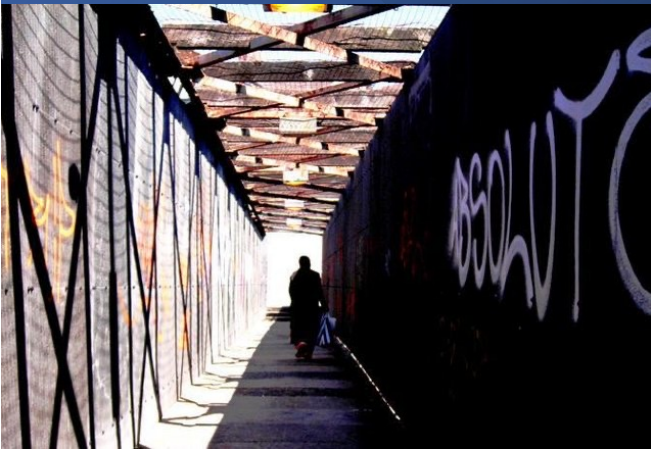
## **11:10 to 11:30 a.m.**

Final remarks and questions or requests for further information

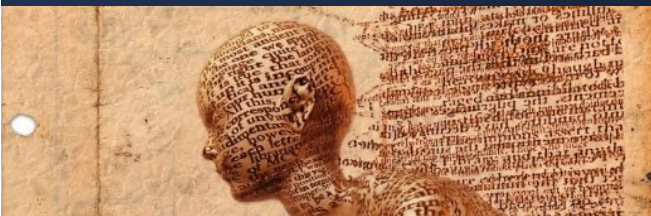


## Topic of the course

UNAEUROPA 2019 project: "LARES  
- Language and ReligionS"



M.A.K. HALLIDAY,  
*Learning how to mean:  
explorations in the  
development of language*  
(1975)



**"Religion manifests itself through *interaction* and *communication*. It is thus a relevant factor in the system of *civilization*."**

Religion both as a historical product and human phenomenon is our main field of interest. The manifestation of religion through interaction and communication makes religions eminently social facts. As such, every religious discourse becomes a decisive piece in the system of human civilizations. As an effective system of communication, the discourse on religion and religions cannot be separated from the analysis of language. and when we refer to language it is good that we keep in mind Michael Alexander Kirkwood HALLIDAY's linguistic theory for which, **"language doesn't just mimic meaning, it creates meaning."**

In his main work, *Learning how to mean: explorations in the development of language*, first published in 1975 (but which has undergone a series of reissues, the latest dated to 2008), Halliday (1925-2018) provides the first detailed model for a prospective "developmental sociolinguistic". It is most successful as a description of **the development of language functions and as an explanation of the relations in ontogenesis between language know-how and the dynamics of social interaction.** Halliday sociological approach is meant to complement and not to contradict more traditional psycholinguistic approaches.

developmental  
sociolinguistic  
&  
psycholinguistic  
analysis

Project of a developmental sociolinguistic as well as psycholinguistic analysis of religious terms' meaning in the acculturation/enculturation processes that affected ancient societies of the Mediterranean.

The course incorporates the primary objectives of the UnaEuropa 2019 project, named LARES – “Language and Religion: Lexical Change and Variation in Religious Enculturation / Acculturation phenomena of the Ancient World”, which is a research foresight project funded by the action 'seed funding' of the [UNA- Europa Network](#).

The **final goal** of the LARES Project was finalized to build a Conceptual Lexicon of Religious Acculturation in Antiquity (and Late Antiquity).

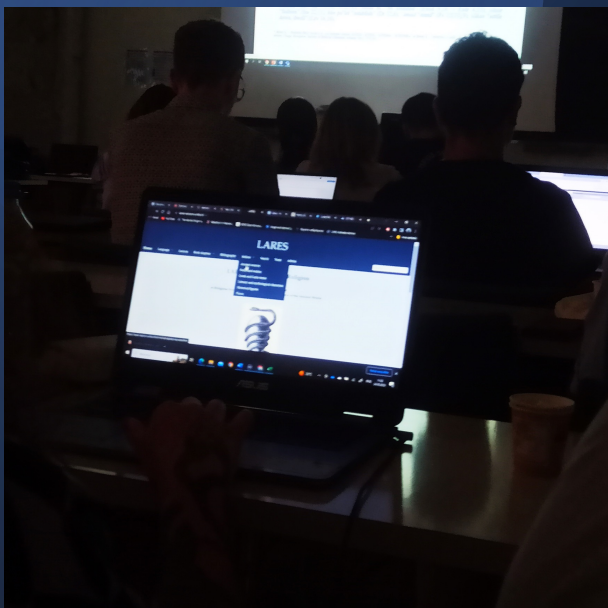
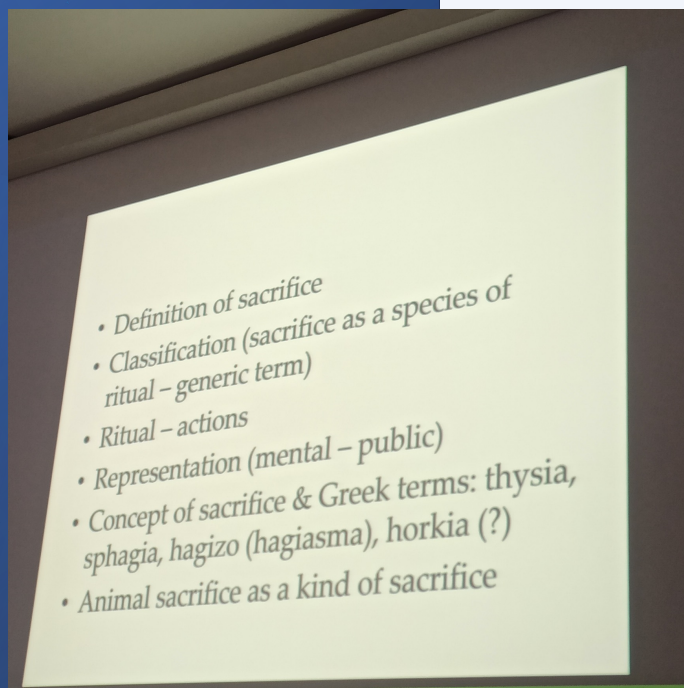
## Lexicon of Religious Acculturation in Antiquity

The Lexicon is conceived as a work-in-progress: inside the map, the heuristic paths and the hermeneutic prospective will be signaled by digital markers (i.e., tag clouds, pop-up), tightly linked to the two main components, namely religion and language

The primary aim of the Lexicon is to design a conceptual and socio-cultural map *in fieri*, a map that could be mobile and fluid both on the synchronic and diachronic level, open to ever new “combinations”.

In our virtual map, we will have to identify semantic markers of religious "fact" according to specific fields and realms of relevance.

- In this perspective, ‘field’ (sub. ‘conceptual’) means any consistent organization of the experience (= specific object of knowledge) or, according to Günter Radden & René Dirven (*Cognitive English Grammar*, Amsterdam 2007), the general area of belonging of a category in a specific circumstance, whereas ‘realm’ (sub. ‘constitutive’) means the area, system or restricted space of action, belonging, and extension (acted, experienced, conceptualized, enjoyed, shared).



# LARES

Home

MENU

## LARES - Language and Religion

Lexical Change and Variation  
in Religious Enculturation / Acculturation phenomena of the Ancient World



LARES Language and Religion: Lexical Change and Variation in Religious Enculturation / Acculturation phenomena of the Ancient World (<https://site.unibo.it/lares/en/>) is a research foresight project funded by the action 'seed funding' of the UNA-Europa Network and it is promoted jointly by: Alma Mater Studiorum – Università di Bologna, Helsingin Yliopisto, Uniwersytet Jagielloński w Krakowie, Universidad Complutense de Madrid.

This website includes also the database of the Research project "*Animal Sacrifice in Ancient Greece in the Light of Philological Testimonies*" funded by the National Science Centre (UMO-2013/09/B/HS2/01208), conducted in the Institute of Classical Studies of the Jagiellonian University (previously hosted at <http://www.sacrificium.filg.uj.edu.pl>; praca nad artykułem została sfinansowana ze środków Narodowego Centrum Nauki przyznanych na podstawie decyzji numer DEC-2013/09/B/HS2 /01208).

The following EpiDoc XML elements have been used for indexing and interlinking purposes:

- Greek and Latin terms (+ automatic links to Logeion): `<-w lemma="">`
- Ancient sources: `<ref type="lit/lit/pap">`
- Terms based on fields/realms: `<rs key="">`
- Literary and mythological characters: `<persName type="divine/hero/myth/literary" key="">`
- Historical figures: `<persName key="">`
- Places: `<placeName key="">`
- Links to TLG, Perseus, LARES entries, bibliography: `<ref corresp="">`



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# DIGITAL MARK UP



PRACTICE	BELIEF	DOCTRINE	INSTITUTION	AGENCY	RITUAL TIME	PERSONAL NAMES	PLACE NAMES
	Theogonies	Tanakh	Baptism	Cultic practitioner		biblical	ethnic
	Cosmogonies	Torah				mythical	demotic
	Anthropogonies	Bible				Greek-Hebrew	republican
	Cosmologies	Coran				Hebrew-Latin	imperial
	katastormoi	Apocryphal gospels				Hebrew-Arabic	ptolemaic

## SHEETS: STRUCTURAL SCHEME

1. Morphology [*Term/Noun*]
2. Etymology [*Etymology*]
3. Semantic definition  
[*Meaning/Significance*]
4. Attestations [*List of Sources*]
5. Conceptual Marking  
[*Conceptual Markers*]

## SEMANTIC TRAIT

- The semantic trait (or «seed») is the **minimal unit of meaning**.
- The union of several semantic traits composes the meaning of a **lexeme**.

## COMPOSITIONNAL ANALYSIS

- aims to describe the meaning of lexemes in a cost-effective manner because it tends to use a relatively small number of seeds for a comprehensive description.
- They are not, however, on the same level: some will be fundamental and universal, in that they are more general and all-encompassing, while others will be supplementary and particular, in that they are possessed only by one class of lexemes, and thus more specific and exclusive.
- The set of seeds necessary and sufficient to define the meaning of the minimal sign constitutes a bundle of semantic features, also called a sememe:
- the seeds are represented by names in small caps, in square or oblique brackets, called semantic indicators
- e.g., the semantic indicators [*semata*] of "man" are: [HUMAN] [MALE] [ADULT].



## IMPLICATIVE SCALE

Example of an implicative scale:

[HUMAN] implies [ANIMATED] which implies [CONCRETE]:

- the *sema* [CONCRETE] is more general and is therefore included in [ANIMATED]:


- what is animate is concrete, but not everything concrete is animate (the lexeme "chair" is [CONCRETE] but [ANIMATED]);

- the *sema* [ANIMATED] is more specific than [CONCRETE], but more general than [HUMAN], and therefore is included in [HUMAN]:

- what is human is animate, but not everything that is animate is human (the lexeme "ox" is [ANIMATED] but [-HUMAN], as [BOVINE]);

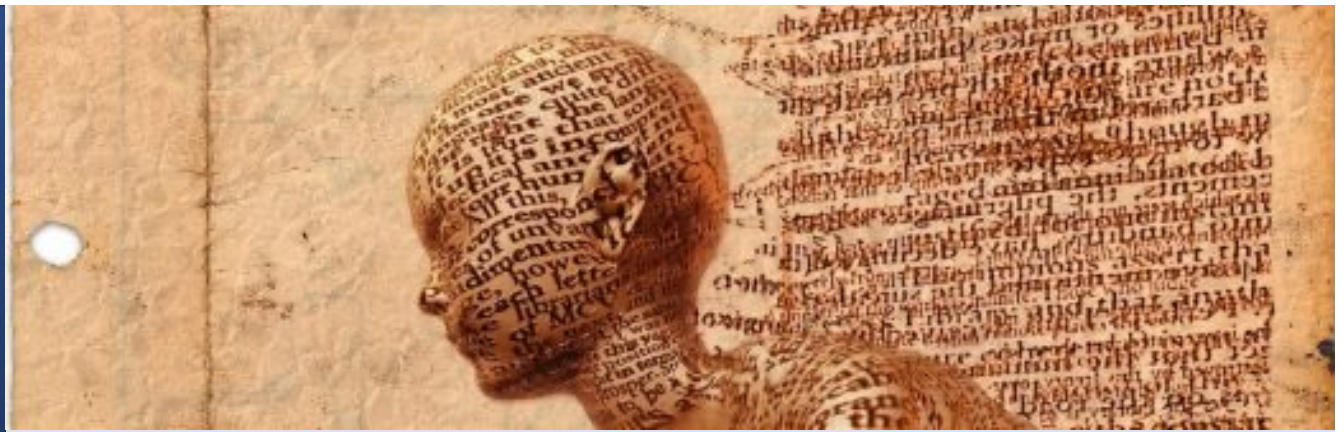
- the *sema* [HUMAN] is more specific than [ANIMATED] and [CONCRETE] and therefore includes both.

\* In the componential analysis of "man," therefore, the more general seeds, [ANIMATED] and [CONCRETE], which are hierarchically higher, are redundant.



The hierarchically higher trait is the one that expresses a more general meaning, which is included in the gradually more specific meanings expressed by other hierarchically lower seeds: the hierarchically higher seed or seeds are therefore redundant and may be omitted in semantic analysis.

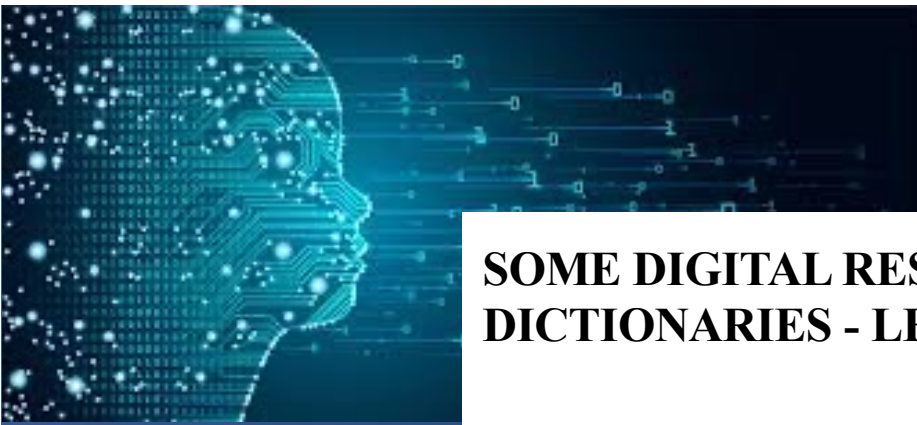
- **DOMAIN** (definition): is a taxonomic category that represents the highest level of scientific classification.
- A domain is a **TAXON** (plural *taxa*, from the Greek *ταξις*, *taxis*, "ordering") or taxonomic unit; it is a grouping of objects or organisms, distinguishable morphologically from others by a common characteristic and which can more precisely also be organized through systematics into a hierarchy, initiating a scientific classification. The science that defines *taxa* is called taxonomy



### CONCEPTUAL MARKERS


(to be defined and implemented based on the lemmas being indexed....)

- (SEMANTIC) DOMAIN OF BELIEF
- (SEMANTIC) DOMAIN OF PRACTICE
- DEFINING ADJECTIVES AND PERSONAL/GRUPPAL NAMES (e.g. *ioudaios*)
- ABSTRACT/CONCEPTUAL NAMES (e.g. *baskania*)
- CONCRETE/PRACTICAL/DERIVED NAMES (vd. *baskanos*) (from action verbs, see below)
- VERBS OF ACTION (RITUAL) (e.g. *baskanizo*) (e.g. *Kathierotenai/ dekateuein; arkteuein; bacchein; etc.*)
- INITIATORY REALM (e.g. *Kathierotenai/ dekateuein; arkteuein; etc.*)
- MYSTERICAL REALM (e.g. *bacchein; etc.*)
- ORGIASTIC REALM (e.g. *bacchein; etc.*)
- THERAPEUTICAL/ IATROMANTIC REALM
- DIVINATORY REALM
- ONEIRIC REALM



## **SOME DIGITAL RESOURCES: DICTIONARIES - LEXICONS - COMPUTERIZED ARCHIVES**

- *Checklist of Editions Greek, Latin, Demotic and Coptic Papyri, Ostraka and Tablets* [http://scriptorium.lib.duke.edu/papyrus/texts/clist\\_papyri.html](http://scriptorium.lib.duke.edu/papyrus/texts/clist_papyri.html)
- *Early Christian Writings* <https://www.earlychristianwritings.com/>
- *Lexicon iconographicum mythologiae classicae (LIMC)* <https://weblimc.org/>
- *Liddell Scott Jones (LSJ)* <http://stephanus.tlg.uci.edu/lsg/>
- *Logeion* <https://logeion.uchicago.edu/lexidium>
- *Neue Pauly* <https://referenceworks.brillonline.com/browse/brill-s-new-pauly>
- *Perseus Digital Library* <http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/>
- *Searchable Greek Inscriptions* <https://epigraphy.packhum.org/>
- *Sources chrétiennes online* <https://sourceschretiennes.org/>
- *Thesaurus Linguae Graecae (TLG)* <http://stephanus.tlg.uci.edu/>
- *Thesaurus Linguae Latinae (TLL)* <https://thesaurus.badw.de/tll-digital/tll-open-access.html>



Focusing on the amount of digital resources online to choose from, first consider if this material is an open educational resource (OER) or requires the consent of its owner or is under license. Teachers are most interested in OERs, which are available online for free and with immediate access. Therefore, they are digital tools for anyone interested in either teaching or learning.

The term digital resource refers to any kind of resource, e.g. database, book, report, which is available in electronic format (IGI Global Disseminator of Knowledge). But not only. The same online dictionary defines targeted digital resources as “technology-based materials that might include websites, online course content, video and/or social networks”.

To benefit from the use of digital resources and in order “to participate and take advantage, citizens must be digitally literate – equipped with the skills to benefit from and participate in the Information Society. This includes both the ability to use new ICT tools and the media literacy skills to handle the flood of images, text and audiovisual content that constantly pour across the global networks” (Europe’s Information Society Thematic Portal, 2007).