While extensive philological research work has made clear the usage and the semantics of the words εὐσέβεια (also θεοσέβεια), θρησκεία and religio in Greek and Roman literature, their prehistoric meaning, whence the later sense of these terms has developed, is not transparent at all. This is due to the fact that one has not paid too much attention to their etymologies, and thus the problems attached have not yet been definitely solved. By renewing these highly disputed questions the following paper hopes to contribute to a more appropriate understanding of the original sense of the Greek and Latin words for religion, which beyond any doubt belonged to the most important concepts of ancient Hellas and Rome.

Let us start with the word ‘religion’ itself which is derived from Latin religio, -onis. Examining the first occurrences and usages of this noun one can see that religio originally had a clear connotation: ‘holy scruples’, ‘awe’, Slovene ‘religiozen strah, svetna boječnost’, German ‘religiöses Bedenken’, ‘heilige Scheu’. In this sense the word can be attested for the first time in Roman Comedy: cf. Plaut. Curc. 350, where against the usual reading vocat me ad cenam: religio fuit, denegare nolui (Leo, Lindsay and others), one should rather change the comma and let the parasite say: ...religio fuit denegare; nolui, thus having the same construction and meaning as one finds in Fab. Pict. apud Gell. N.A.10,15,4 (= frg. 3 Huschke) equo Dialemflaminem vehi religio est “There exist religious scruples that the flamen Dialis should ride a horse (= the flamen Dialis must not ride a horse)”, or in German “Es gibt religiöses Bedenken (dagegen), daß...” The last example clearly shows, that the construction of religio + infinitive in the sense of “it is forbidden” has its origin in a sacred prerogative concerning the flamen Dialis. By making the parasite use the formula religio + inf. in Curc. loc. cit., Plautus wants the parasite Curculio to be solemn in a ridiculous way. There is also a passage in Plautus Merc. 881 which throws light on the original meaning of religio, and even more illustrative is Ter. Andr. 940 ff. and Acc. TRF 171f. ed. R3. In Terence the old Chremes expresses his doubts that he really might have found his daughter, saying to Pamphilus: At mi unus scrupulus etiam restat, qui me male habet, to what Pamphilus answers: dignus es cum tua religione – odium!: nodum in scirpo quaeris. And in Accius’ tragedy Astyanax Menelaus exclaims:

See the select general bibliography at the end of this paper, where you can also find the full bibliographical informations on the books and articles which in the following will be quoted only by their authors’ names.
Nunc, Calcas, finem religionum fac! Desiste exercitum morari meque ab domitione arcere tuo obsceno omine!

It is a matter of fact that awful fear of the supernatural were special characteristics of Roman religion. Therefore, according to the definition given by Nigidius Figulus (apud Gell. N.A. 4,9,2), a person who was not only anxious in that respect, but also too fearful and superstitious, was called ‘religiosus’.2

The verb itself, from which the nomen religio is derived, is only once to be found in Latin literature, and there – in the form of a participle – in an old carmen whose author is not certain and from which Nigidius Figulus apud Gell. N.A. 4,9,1 (= frg. inc. 148 R3 = p. 7 FPL ed. Morel-Büchner = frg. 4 Swoboda) quotes the following words as part of a sacred order: religentem esse oportet, religiosus ne fuas.

Most philologists and scholars of historical linguistics have derived religio from re+legere, not only because of the participle religens, but also with regard to Cicero, de nat. deor. 2,72: qui autem omnia quae ad cultum deorum pertinere diligenter retractarent et tamquam relegerent, <hi> dicti sunt religiosi ex religendo, ut eligentes ex eligendo, ex diligendo diligentes, ex intellegendo intellegentes; his enim in verbis omnibus inest vis legendi eadem quae in ‘religioso’.

Since antiquity, however, there have been others, who in agreeing with Lactantius, inst. div. 4,28,2, and Servius, Verg. Aen. 8,349, have combined religio with re+ligare ‘to bind to’. Ernout-Meillet 569 seem to support the latter derivation rather than that one from re+legere in the sense of ‘to gather’. Nevertheless, considering the meaning of other verbs like diligo, neglego, intellego (the last two words sometimes appear also written as negligo, intelligo, which perhaps might be the older and more correct orthography, although later attested in Roman literature), the connection of religio with legere is much more plausible than that with ligare. So in his very thorough etymological and semantical investigation Lieberg 57 (following Walde-Hofmann 1 352 f.) rightly states: “Dobbiamo del tutto abbandonare l’etimologia da relegare e ritenere sicura quella da religere” (= relegere). The same scholar convincingly refutes the assumption of Pokorny I 658, Kaetzler 11 ff., and Szemerényi 149, who tried to show that the Indoeuropeans had two verbal roots *leɡ₁-: one of which ending in a palatal g had the meaning of ‘to gather’ (to be found in legere, relegere, eligere etc.: perf. lēgi), whereas the leɡ- with velar g originally had the sense ‘to heed’ and was the basis of religio, religens, religiosus and neglego (perf. neglexi), having its parallel in Greek ἄληγω. But since the explanation of the α in ἄληγω had caused difficulties – Hermann 171 and Seiter (1) 288 and (2) 8 ff. declared it to be the zero grade of the preverb εν(+ ληγω)–, this theory had been abandoned already by Frisk I 66 f., and also Chantraine I 56 regarded it as highly uncertain.

2 Further passages illustrating the original sense of religio and religiosus see especially in Lieberg 51 ff. and Benveniste (1) II 269 ff.
For the same reason Lieberg 50 also did not accept the theory of Wilt 13 ff., who, although denying any etymological connection of religio with relegere or religere, nevertheless did not see any obstacle to combine the word with Greek ἀλέγω.

But, to my opinion, there are good grounds for connecting religio, religere with ἀλέγω, if one assumes, as Rix 86 f. did, an Indoeuropean verbal root *h₁lege/o- with the sense of 'to respect, regard, care for or of, heed' etc. Benveniste (2) 152, Frisk I 66 f., Rix 86 f., and also recently Schrijver 21 f., tried to connect this verb with Greek ἀλγος 'pain, grief' and its derivations (e.g. δυσ-ἀλεγής etc.), and Frisk and Schrijver thought that the original sense of ἀλέγω must have been 'to feel pain'. But there is no evidence for this assumption. So Chantraine I 56 (following Seiler [2] 9) rightly states: "Il semble difficile de rattacher pour le sens cette famille de mots (scil. de ἄλεγω) à ἀλγος, encore que les deux séries aient pu agir l'une sur l'autre. (cf. sous ἀλγος)".

Examining the occurrences of ἀλέγω and its enlarged forms ἀλεγίζω, ἀλεγύνω one can see that, with the exception of Latin religere, religio etc., this verbal root cannot be traced elsewhere but in Greek, where these verbs obviously were expressions of archaic poetry: the last two words are only to be found in epics, whereas ἀλέγω occurs in archaic lyrics as well: cf. e.g. Pind. Ol. 2, 78: Πηλεύς τε καὶ Κόριος ἐν τοῖσιν ἁλέγονται and also later in IG 14,1389 II 6 (a metrical inscription found in the via Appia) ἐν ὀθονάτοις ἁλέγεσθον.

The meaning of ἀλέγω in the quoted passages is not, however, primarily 'to count among', as rendered by LSJ s.v. 61, but rather 'to respect' (scil. with reverence and awe), 'to adore'. Furthermore, the majority of testimonies, where the simplex ἀλέγω occurs, belong to a religious context (e.g. with accusative): Hom. II. 16, 388 θεῶν ὅπων ὄν ἁλέγοντες, Hes. Op. 251; (with genetive): Hom. Od. 9,115 οὗ γὰρ Κύκλοπες Δίας ..... ἁλέγουσιν etc.

We have already pointed out that the Latin word religio, in its earliest occurrences in Roman literature, also had the meaning of 'respect with reverence and awe'. Just as legio goes back to legere 'to gather', religio and religens (from religere) can be derived from the Italic prefix re- + *h₁lege/o-. Because of the usual quantity ṝ in religio the conjunction of the two elements must have taken place after the disappearing of the laryngal in the Italic languages; otherwise the Latin form would be *ralli-gio. On the other hand, the change of e to i in leg- points to an archaic period of the

3 Szemerényi 149 and Schrijver 22 (as already Seiler [1] 288 and [2] 9) are mistaken in assuming an ṝ in religio. Where the lengthening of the e in religio occurs (mainly in Latin poetry), it can be explained as a metrical liberty, which, however, has its origin in the pronunciation of everyday life. There the doubling of the l was optional, a custom which in later times became typical of the Latin speaking people in Africa, as attested by the Roman grammarians: cf. Isid. Etym. I. 32,8: labdacismus est, si pro uno l duo pronuntiantur, ut Afrī faciant; Pomp. GLK V, 282, 4 ff. labdacismis scatent Afri; raro est, ut aliquis dicit 'l'. But this phenomenon can be detected also in many metrical inscriptions outside Africa. Cf. Leumann 560.
Latin language. Furthermore, the prefix re- and the ending -io show that religio had become a typical Latin word. Since we have seen that from the very beginning *h₂lege/o- must have had the sense of ‘respectful awe’, we can understand why, in combination with re- denoting the iteration, this verbal root was used as basis to define the Romans’ attitude towards their gods.

Intensive and respectful awe for the supernatural is not only a typical feature of Roman religion – although there it is most obvious –, but it is common to man’s belief in divine powers in general. It was, therefore, also an essential part of the ancient Greeks’ religious feelings. This is expressed by the words ἐὐσέβεια and θεοσέβεια. These words, however, semantically do not cover the same large scope as the Latin word religio does, since, as already Wilamowitz 15 justly observed, the Greeks originally did not have a comprehensive proper term for this concept. ἐὐσέβεια occurs for the first time in Greek Tragedy, θεοσέβεια, however, not before Xenophon (Anab. 2,6,26): the latter word in the sense of ‘service or fear of God’, ‘religiousness’, whereas ἐὐσέβεια did not only signify the Greek’s reverence towards their gods, but also towards the parents, thus being in some way an expression corresponding to Roman pietas (cf. LSJ 731 s.v.).

Analysing ἐὐσέβεια or θεοσέβεια etc. from the etymological point of view the main question is: What was the original meaning of the verbal root σέβ- which is the basis of σέβω, σέβομαι, σέβεσθαι, σεμνός (*σεβ-νος), εὐ-σέβ-ής etc. But before trying to give an answer to this question it must be stated that the verb for the first time occurs in Hom. Il. 4, 242 in the middle form, which is the only evidence of this word in epic literature at all. The active form σέβω, however, can be found from post-Homeric times onwards (since Pindar and Trag.). For LSJ, the original meaning of σέβομαι is ‘to feel awe or fear before God’, ‘feel shame’, Il. 4, 242 as the earliest example quoted, whereas the active σέβω is rendered ‘to worship, to honour (mostly scil. the gods)’. For Frisk II 686 f. the etymology of σέβομαι is not clear. He says: “Lautlich möglich, aber wenigstens beim ersten Anblick wenig überzeugend ist die Zusammenstellung mit altind. tyajati ‘verlassen, im Stich lassen, aufgeben’” (this connection had been put forward by Brugmann 301 ff., Pokorny I 1086 and others), thus sharing the doubts which had been uttered already by Mayrhofer I 529. But in regard to the causative σοβέω Frisk thinks that the original meaning of σέβομαι could have been: “wegeilen, davonfliehen” ... daraus ‘(scheu) vor etwas zurücktreten’, ‘zurückweichen’. Burkert 408 in his thorough analysis of ἐὐσέβεια declares, quoting Frisk and Aesch. Pers. 694: “Der Wortstamm seb-...weist etymologisch auf ‘Gefahr’ und ‘Flucht’ zurück”, and Chantraine II 993, rejecting Mayrhofer’s doubts, states: “La diversité remarquable des emplis réduit à la signification unique ‘se retirer’ ou ‘faire se retirer’, confirmée par l’étymologie, cf. skr. tyájati ‘quitter, abandonner’ de *tyegʰ-.” Also Rix (1) 90, without any comment, connects σέβεται with sanskr. tyájate.
Comparing the usage of σεβ- and σοβ- one can see that according to the statements given in the relevant dictionaries, the stem σεβ- is restricted to the religious sphere, whereas σοβ- is used in profane context. An examination of σοβ-, however, clearly shows that the sense was not only 'to move away, to drive away', but also 'to move towards, to drive towards, to walk towards', especially in an impressive, often pompous or fierce manner: cf. the relevant passages in LSJ s.v. σοβέω and, above all, the meaning of σοβαρός 'rushing', 'violent', 'haughty' etc. Thus the earliest sense of σοβ- must have been a neutral one: simply 'to move in an impressive way', and the indication of a direction cannot have been original (just as fero first had the neutral sense of 'to bring', either to or away [for the latter cf. φθέρ, fur]). The very same also holds good for σέβομαι, and this can be proved by Sanskrit, where tyájati on the one hand means 'to quit, to abandon', whereas tanu-tyáj- has the sense of 'to offer one's body and life to'. Thus we can see that the common Indo-European verbal root *tiég-*, from which sanskr. tyáj- and σεβ-, σοβ- can be derived, originally had the neutral meaning 'to move either to or away from somebody or something'. The Greeks, however, seem to have given to this word of moving the special connotation of impressiveness.

This original sense of σέβεσθαι, to my mind, is obvious in Hom. II. 4, 242 ff., where Agamemnon encourages his kinsfolk to rush again into battle, exclaiming:

'Ἀρχέτοι ὁμώροι, ἐλέγχεα, οὗ νυ σέβεσθε;
τιφό' οὕτως ἐστινε τεθηπότες ἦντε νεβροί,
αἱ τ' ἐπεὶ οὔν ἐκομον πολέος πεδίοιο θέουσαν,
ἐστάσο', οὔδ' ἄρα τις σφι μετὰ φρει ἤγνετα ἡλική.

Most translators render οὗ νυ σέβεσθε with “why don't you feel shame?”, but, in my opinion, the question “why do you stand here so shocked as the young deer stand...” imposes rather an encouraging exhortation to rush into battle than to be ashamed. Therefore, I would propose to translate here οὗ νυ σέβεσθε “why don't you move now?” (= “why don't you rush into battle?”).

That this was the original meaning of σέβομαι can also be proved by a passage in Aristoph. Nub. 291ff., where Socrates first addresses the Clouds and then asks Strepsiades:

οδι μέγα σεμνοι Νεφέλαι, φανερός ἡκουσατε μου καλέσαντος.

The form θεοσέπτου has caused problems of understanding, so that Wilamowitz changed it to θεόσεπτου, to which Dover in his commentary replied: "I wish (with Wilamowitz [SPAW 1921, 741] that Ar. had written θεόσεπτον (or –ται), an internal accusative characterizing the roar of the thunder; but emendation cannot be supported by adequate stylistic evidence.” Bearing in mind, however, what σέβομαι originally
meant, one can see that the genitive ἑοσέπτου here yields good sense: the βροντή is ἑοσέπτος, ‘moved, sent by the gods’, i.e. ‘the Clouds’. And Strepsiades picking up –σεπ- (–σβ–), as Dover accurately observed, answers:

καὶ σέβομαι γ’, ὁ πολυτιμητοί, καὶ βούλομαι ἀντοπαρδείν πρὸς τὰς βροντάς.

Here σέβομαι can be translated as ‘I move myself in the proper way (scil. in front of the gods)’, which leads to the sense ‘I adore (scil. the gods)’, ‘I revere’. The original meaning of σβ-, however, evidently has been retained in the religious word ἑοσέπτος, a fact that might be explained by the conservative character of sacred language.

Now we also comprehend the construction σέβεσθαι θεοῦ, where θεοῦ can be defined as an accusative of direction (just as with ἅφηκέμοια: e.g. Hom. Od. 1, 332 μπο-τῆρας ἀφίκετο, etc., cf. Schwazer II 68). Thus σέβεσθαι could mean ‘to move towards (scil. the gods)’ or ‘to move back (scil. from their altars)’, ‘to quit them in a proper way’, which, of course, was done with reverence and awe. This then led to the use of σέβομαι, σέβω in the general sense of ‘to worship’ or ‘to fear the gods’.

Besides paying reverence to the gods by moving humbly and decently to or from their altars, a main characteristic of religion is, furthermore, the observance of the gods’ privileges, laws, rites and ceremonies as well as the handling of their statues and property with care and awe. The adequate expression for this careful handling was εὔλαβεμοι, εὐλάβεω, in which -λαβ-, the stem of λαμβάνω, leads back to Indo-European *slh₂₂u- ‘to grasp, to seize, to hold’. From the concrete meaning of ‘holding with care and awe’ the word εὐλάβεω achieved also the general sense of ‘fear of god’.

The importance of the careful observance of the divine privileges, laws and traditional rites, on the other side, is reflected in the term θησακεία. Although the usage of this noun, which in early historical times denoted ‘cult’, ‘ritual’, ‘worship of the gods’, and in the period of the Roman Empire had already achieved the general meaning of ‘religion’, has been investigated quite well, there are still some problems of its etymology to be solved. Hesychius’ notice θρήσκοι νοῦ, θρᾶσκεῖν ἀνομιμησκεῖν, ἐν-θρεῖν φυλάσσειν and ἀ-θρε-ές ἀνόητον, ἄνόισον can give a hint to the original meaning of the words θησακεία and θησακεόδω, which obviously belonged to the Ionian dialect. Therefore the α in Hesychius’ θρᾶσκεῖν is difficult to explain, unless one assumes here the influence of the Doric or a N.-West Greek dialect (just as in Hesychius’ τεθρόδεθαι instead of τεθρόδεθαι, the perfect form from θρόσικομαι). Another difficulty is not only to be found in the presumable aorist ἐν-θρεῖν instead of ἐν-θρεῖν, but also in Hesychius’ θρεσκης περιττός, δεισι−
δαῦμων, and Hymn. ad Isin 5 (=IG XII (5) 739,5) φιλόθρεσκος 'loving ceremonies', while we have θρησκός 'pious, religious' in the New Testament Ep. Iacob. 1,26.

The present θρησκευω, θρησκεύω, in which σκ just as in θρό-σκω, θνήσκω, is an infix, to my mind is to be derived from the Indo-European root *dherh₁-. Its full form can also be detected in Hesychius’ above mentioned ἀ-θερ-ές ἄνωτον, ἄνωσίων, and Homeric ἀ-θερ-ι'ω 'to take no notice of', whereas *dhērh₁ is the basis of θρή-(σκω) etc. (Cf. the similar development of *dherhs in ἐ-θερ-ον, θορ-εῖν; *dhērh₃ in θρω-ι-σκ-ω etc.⁶). There is no realization of this root in other Indo-European idioms.

As far as the Greek origin is concerned, the words θρησκεύω, θρησκεύω etc. belong, as stated above, to the Ionian dialect. They occur for the first time in Herodotus (2,18,2; 2,37,3; 2,64,1), and after disappearing in the literature for centuries, they emerged again in the period of the Roman Empire and proved to be most vivid terms. Thus they became also central expressions in Ancient Christianity, and in later ages θρησκεύα turned out to be the common word for 'religion' in general, the result of which can be seen in modern Greek.

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⁶ Cf. Petersmann 44 (note 25).
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Povzetek
Ei secretive, ϑηπηκεία in religio
ETIMOLOŠKA ANALIZA TREH SPORNIH TERMINOV

Obsežne filološke analize so pojasnile rabo in pomen leksemov ei secretive (tudi θεοσβητω), ϑηπηκεία in religio v grški in rimski literaturi. Njihovi predhistorični pomeni pa niso zadovoljivo pojasnjeni, ker se pri raziskavah premalo upošteva etimologija. Z etimološko analizo se tu zato skozi prispevati k bolj primeremnemu razumevanju prvotnega pomena omenjenih treh religioznih terminov.

Lat. samostalnik religio, -onis je bil prvotno konotiran z "religiozen strah", "sveta boječnost", angl. "holy scruples", "awe", nvn. "religiöses Bedenken", "heilige Scheu", z religiosus pa je bila označena oseba, ki ni izražala le zaskrbljenosti do nadnaravnega, ampak je bila v tem oziru tudi preveč boječa in praznoverna. Glagol, iz katerega je bil samostalnik religio izpeljan, je izpričan le enkrat in posredno z deležnikom v zvezi religion esse oportet, religiosus ne fias. Lat. religio, religere se zato povezuje z gr. glagolom ἀμίρα "spoštovati, častiti", ki ga je potrebno izvesti iz ievr. glagolske osnove *h2lege/o- s pomenom "spoštovati, upoštevati, skrbeti za/o, paziti". Lat. glagol je moral biti z iterativnim re- iz te ievr. glagolske osnove tvoren šele po izpadu vzglavnegararingala v italskih jezikih.

Stari Grki so močan in spoštljiv strah pred nadnaravnim izražali z leksemoma ei secretive in θεοσβητω. Medtem ko zadnji leksem pomeni "služba božja, strah pred bogom, pobožnost", označuje prvi "spoštovanje do bogov" pa tudi "spoštovanje do staršev" in ustreza lat. pietas. Glagolska osnova σηβ- je za razliko od σοβ- v σοβέω in σοβαρός omejena na rabo v lekseh, ki so omenjeni v σέβωσις, σέβομαι, σέβος, σέμυνος, ευ-σεβ-ης itd. Ievr. glagolska osnova*tyeg-, od koder je možno izvajati sti. τυάδ- in σεβ-, σοβ-, je imela prvotno nevtralen pomen "premikati k oz. od koga ali česa", o čemer je možno sklepati na podlagi analize grškega gradiva in pomenkega razmerja med τυάδ- "opustiti, zapustiti" ob τανυ-τυάδ- "ponuditi, darovati telo ali življenje komu". Kaže pa, da so Grki temu izrazu premikanja dodali posebno konotacijo izrazitosti.

Na osnovi Hesychijeve glas je gr. ϑηπηκεία, ki v zgodnjih historičnih časih pomeni "kult; ritual; čaščenje bogov" in v času rimskega imperija pridobi splošni pomen "vera", možno prepoznati za ionsko besedo. Sedanjika ϑρησκία in ϑηπηκεία z medpono σκ je potrebno izvesti iz ievr. osnove *dherh1-. Polna stopnja te osnove se ohranja v Hesychijevi glosi α-θηρ-ες ανόητον, ανώτον in v homerskem α-θηρ-ίω "prezirati", ničiostopenjska *dhrh1- pa v ϑρη-(σκω) itd. Te ievr. osnove v drugih ievr. jezikih ni zaslediti.