Ancient Religions and the Materiality of Danger

Leiden, 14–16 December 2026

Day I / Monday 14 December 2026

13:00 – 13:15
Introduction
Organisers: Kim Beerden, Patricia Kret, Rafal Matuszewski, Miguel John Versluys

***Panel 1*: 'Ritual Responses to Uncertainty'**

13:15 – 14:00
The Hazard-Precaution System and Graeco-Roman Apotropaic Magic: Testing the Theory against Material Evidence
Juraj Franek

14:00 – 14:45
Going to Trial, East and West: On Different Strategies for Combatting Prosecution in the Roman World
Celia Sánchez Nataliás

14:45 – 15:15 Coffee Break

15:15 – 16:00
The Perils of Dedication in Ancient Greece: Vows, Objects, Transgressions
Rebecca Van Hove

16:00 – 16:45
When Protection and Power Looked Like Magic: Women's Ritual Strategies in Ancient Greece
Jessica L. Lamont

[Pizza reservation/quick dinner at own costs for who wants]

19:30 H.S. Versnel Memorial/Keynote lecture by David Frankfurter, followed by drinks at RMO Museum of Antiquities

Day II / Tuesday 15 December 2026

10:45 – 11:00 Coffee

***Panel 2*: 'Dangers and Materiality in Ancient Oneiromantic and Iatro-Magical Treatises'**

11:00 – 11:45
Dangerous Dreams: Materiality and Agency in Graeco-Roman Oneiromancy
Michiel van Veldhuizen

11:45 – 13:00 Lunch

13:00 – 13:45
Dangers and (Ritual) Materialities: Apotropaic Means in the *Cyranides*
Maria Patera

***Panel 3*: 'Artefacts in the Mediation of Danger'**

13:45 – 14:30
Because Prayer Is Not Enough
Christel Veen

14:30 – 15:00 Coffee Break

15:00 – 15:45
The Ithyphallic Herm as Apotropaic Artifact in Attica: Materiality, Spatial Liminality and Uses
Pelayo Huerta Segovia

15:45 – 16:30
Between Reverence and Risk: Protective Devices in Greek Ritual and the PGM
Athanassia Zografou

16:30 – 17:00 Coffee Break

17:00 – 17:45
Playing with Uncertainty: Dice, Knucklebones, and Risk in Ancient Greek Polytheism
Marco Vespa

18.15 Conference dinner

Day III / Wednesday 16 December 2026

***Panel 4*: 'Spatializing Danger and its Remembrance'**

09:15 – 10:00
Divine Protection and Maritime Danger: Aphrodite, Venus, and Isis in Ancient Seafaring
Bernadette Descharmes

10:00 – 10:45
The Materiality of the Dangers of the Sea
Jenny Wallensten

10:45 – 11:15 Coffee Break

11:15 – 12:00
What Lies Beneath the Floor: Protective and Malicious Ritual Deposits in the Classical Greek House
Hannah Smagh

12:00 – 12:45
Coping With the Dangers of Life in the Artemision of Ephesos: Literary Evidence and Interpretation of Votive Offerings
Michael Kerschner

12:45 Coffee / Closing Remarks