

The Zelikovitz Centre for Jewish Studies presents a
Virtual Lecture with Ruth Nisse

Alexander the Great's Jewish Scribe: Translation and Transgression



Ruth Nisse teaches in the English Department at Wesleyan University. Her most recent book is *Jacob's Shipwreck: Diaspora, Translation, and Jewish-Christian Relations in Medieval England* (Cornell UP, 2017). She is currently working on multilingualism in Northern European Jewish texts from the 12th-13th centuries.



When

Date: Thursday April 7

Time: 7 pm EST

Registration

To attend, email

Registration.Jewish.Studies@carleton.ca
to get the Zoom link

Alexander the Great was a popular if unlikely hero for medieval Jewish readers. While some rabbinic texts portray him as a protector of the Jews, they are by no means all favorable to the emperor. Moreover, they do not explain why the "Alexander Romances," originally Greek fantasy versions of a pagan ruler, had such an enduring appeal in Hebrew translations.

Alexander's Eastern empire interested Jewish writers as a place to imagine a historical and ideological alternative to Rome and the destruction of Jerusalem. One inventive and fanciful version introduces a new character: Menachem, Alexander's Jewish chief scribe. Despite the emergence of Menachem as a tragic figure, his role also illustrates the Jewish diaspora in Alexander's empire.



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