

PROMOTION RECOMMENDATION
The University of Michigan
College of Literature, Science, and the Arts

Shachar M. Pinsker, associate professor of Near Eastern studies, with tenure, and associate professor of Judaic studies, with tenure, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts, is recommended for promotion to professor of Near Eastern studies, with tenure, and professor of Judaic studies, with tenure, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts.

Academic Degrees:

Ph.D.	2001	University of California, Berkeley and Graduate Theological Union
B.A.	1994	Hebrew University, Jerusalem

Professional Record:

2010 – present	Associate Professor, Department of Near Eastern Studies and Jean and Samuel Frankel Center for Judaic Studies, University of Michigan
2003 – 2010	Assistant Professor, Department of Near Eastern Studies and Jean and Samuel Frankel Center for Judaic Studies, University of Michigan
2002	Visiting Assistant Professor of Hebrew Literature, Ben-Gurion University
2001	Visiting Assistant Professor of Modern Hebrew and Israeli Literature, Harvard University

Summary of Evaluation:

Teaching – Professor Pinsker teaches Jewish literature and culture, Hebrew language, and comparative Jewish studies. His passionate commitment to teaching is reflected in the wide variety of courses he has taught. These are both undergraduate and graduate, as well as summer programs in Israel. He has also boldly moved to integrate digital humanities in his coursework. Student evaluations of his courses consistently include high marks on his performance as an instructor. At the graduate level, Professor Pinsker establishes a close and productive connection with his Ph.D. students. In total, he has served on eight dissertation committees and chaired five of them. Three of the Ph.D. students under his supervision now hold teaching positions at peer institutions in the U.S. and in Israel.

Research – Professor Pinsker’s research on modern Jewish literature is resolutely interlinguistic, touching on Hebrew plus Yiddish, German, and Russian. His research is also interdisciplinary, engaging history, literary studies, religious studies, art history, and political science. After an award-winning first book and a significant number of important articles, his second single-authored book, equally innovative, will be a significant contribution to the field with its wealth of information, innovative approach, and legible and lively style.

Recent and Significant Publications:

A Rich Brew: Urban Cafés and Modern Jewish Culture, New York University Press, forthcoming May 2018.

Where the Sky and the Sea Meet: Israeli Yiddish Stories, edited work in Hebrew, Magnes Press, forthcoming 2018.

Women’s Hebrew Poetry on American Shores, edited work, Wayne State University Press, 2016.

“(Modern) Hebrew literature,” in The Cambridge History of Judaism: The Modern Era, Vol. 8, T. Michels and M. Hart, eds., Cambridge University Press, 2017.

Service – Professor Pinsker’s service in Near Eastern Studies and the Frankel Center has made him a leading figure in both units. He has served on numerous standing committees and position searches, including the Executive Committees of Near Eastern Studies (2012-2013; 2014-2015) and Judaic Studies (2004-2006; 2014-2016). He has organized major scholarly events at Michigan, and served as the head fellow (2016-2017) for the Frankel Institute’s theme year of “Israeli Histories, Societies, and Cultures: Comparative Approaches.” Beyond the university, Professor Pinsker has a high profile with American Judaic Studies as the book review editor for the journal *Hebrew Studies* (2009-present) and editorial board member for *Shofar: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Jewish Studies* (2017-present).

External Reviews:

Reviewer (A)

“Shachar Pinsker’s record indicates a trajectory of robust and continued productivity (quality as well as quantity) which has earned him a strong international reputation. He has demonstrated leadership in the field as he continues to contribute to interconnected conversations about European Jewish and Hebrew culture.”

Reviewer (B)

“...Pinsker’s gift for both the wide-angle narrative view of the cultural historian and the fine-grained approach of the literary critic require us...to radically reimagine our view of the creation of modern European Jewish literature. ...[A Rich Brew] is a powerful book that will become required reading for anyone interested in Jewish literature, and, indeed, European Jewish studies.”

Reviewer (C)

“To sum up my impression of his work, I would say: How can anyone know so much? His publications have a tone of authority that reminds me of...one of the towering figures of Israeli criticism. Prof. Pinsker would be a worthy successor.”

Reviewer (D)

“...you have a wonderful colleague in Shachar Pinsker, someone whose research productivity and innovative scholarship put him in the forefront of work in Jewish studies. His approaches, methods, and critical sophistication allow him to engage productively with the broader field of literary and cultural studies in the academy, an engagement that is vital to intercultural understanding in today’s world.”

Reviewer (E)

“...*A Rich Brew* takes us to a new conceptual plane...where cafes emerged as the locus of modern and modernist Jewish literature in Russian, Yiddish, English, Hebrew, and other languages. Prof. Pinsker’s book enables us to see where and how the new form of Jewish culture emerged, by taking us to the spaces where it took on its specific formation. ...one hears the term ‘inter-disciplinarity’ a great deal, rarely do we see it actually embodied in practice. ...Pinsker’s work stands out, and not merely because of his control of three languages, if not four, but also because he examines the relation of place to culture in a theoretically informed and sophisticated way.”

Reviewer (F)

“Pinsker is an unusually prolific scholar. Since his last promotion seven years ago, he has completed a major monograph and two edited volumes, and he has submitted or published more than a dozen articles and book chapters. Several of these items have appeared in or been submitted to the most eminent peer-reviewed journals in various fields within modern Jewish Studies... In addition to his scholarly productivity, Pinsker also has laudable interests in disseminating scholarship to the general public...”

Reviewer (G)

“...[A Rich Brew] is a great achievement. First of all, it is simply a compelling story, which is rare in academic and scholarly books. ... Pinsker has succeeded in amassing and conveying a wealth of information in a style that is inviting and vivid. ...very few scholars in the field of Jewish studies can recreate the multilingual, transnational world of Ashkenazi Jewry as he has done so deftly. This is due to his acquiring the relevant languages and immersing himself in the world view of writers who saw themselves as part of a Jewish people dispersed and yet bound to each other by texts, languages, ideologies, and shared histories.”

Reviewer (H)

“In addition to a long list of publications in important scholarly journals, Pinsker has managed to create a public intellectual presence both in the U.S. and in Israel... His scholarly visibility on the national and international level is evident in his teaching appointments at leading universities in America and abroad, his publication in significant journals, newspapers and magazines, and his participation in conferences throughout the U.S., Israel, and Europe.”

Summary of Recommendation:

Professor Pinsker is an unusually erudite and prolific scholar, working in multiple languages central to Jewish literatures. He is a well-regarded scholar and teacher, nationally and internationally, as well as a respected colleague at the University of Michigan. He is a model citizen in both Near Eastern Studies and the Frankel Center for Judaic Studies. The Executive Committee of the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts and I recommend that Associate Professor Shachar M. Pinsker be promoted to the rank of professor of Near Eastern studies, with tenure, and professor of Judaic studies, with tenure, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts.



Andrew D. Martin, Dean
Professor of Political Science and Statistics
College of Literature, Science, and the Arts

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