

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

Christi Ann Merrill, assistant professor of comparative literature and assistant professor of Asian languages and cultures, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts, is recommended for promotion to associate professor of comparative literature, with tenure, and associate professor of Asian languages and cultures, with tenure, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts.

Academic Degrees:

Ph.D.	1999	University of Iowa
M.F.A.	1999	University of Iowa
B.A.	1987	University of Michigan

Professional Record:

2001 – present	Assistant Professor, Department of Comparative Literature and Department of Asian Languages and Cultures, University of Michigan
2000 – 2001	Assistant Professor, Asian Literature and Middle Eastern Languages and Cultures Division, University of Virginia
1999 – 2000	Visiting Lecturer, Asian Literature and Middle Eastern Languages and Cultures Division, University of Virginia

Summary of Evaluation:

Teaching – Professor Merrill is a dedicated teacher of graduate and undergraduate students. She has served on thirteen dissertation committees (chairing one and co-chairing another) and taught classes both large and small. She emphasizes writing at all levels of the curriculum, and has developed a new undergraduate course in comparative literature that fulfills the first year writing requirement. She received CRLT grants for Multicultural Teaching Innovations and Teaching with Technology, and was a senior fellow in the Sweetland Writing Seminar. In the Department of Asian Languages and Cultures, she helped develop a new gateway course required of all concentrators.

Research – Professor Merrill specializes in the modern literature of South Asia, focusing on northern India and literature composed in Hindi and Rajasthani. Trained in literary translation and critical translation studies, she is also well situated to analyze the complex relationships between language and power in postcolonial contexts. She has produced two books which are collections of translations. Her first book is the most sustained and challenging study published to date on the issue of translation as it pertains to modern South Asia. The companion volume was published in 2008 and evaluators were impressed by the accuracy and evocativeness of the work. She is completing a collection of essays on the practice of translation, and is beginning a new translation of the literature of the “untouchables” in modern India.

Recent and Significant Publications:

Riddles of Belonging: India in Translation and Other Tales of Possession, Fordham University Press, 2008.

A Straw Epic and Other Stories by Vijay Van Detha, translated with K. Kabir, Katha Press and Fordham University Press, 2008.

“Laughing Out of Place: Humour Alliances and Other Postcolonial Translations in *In an Antique Land*,” *Interventions: International Journal of Postcolonial Studies*, 9, 2007, pp. 106-123.

“Playing the double agent: An Indian story,” *The Translator*, 8(2), 2002, pp. 367-384.

Service – Besides service in her two departments, Professor Merrill was elected to the Executive Committee of the Center for South Asian Studies and served on the selection committee for graduate student applicants to the Institute for the Humanities. In Asian Languages, she was elected as the sole junior member of the Executive Committee and served on the Curriculum Committee. In Comparative Literature she has taken an active role in undergraduate curriculum development and participated in third term reviews for graduate students. In both units she has been active in graduate admissions and faculty searches.

External Reviews:

Reviewer (A)

“In the major work submitted, *Riddles of Belonging: India in Translation and other Tales of Possession*, the two salient qualities of Professor Merrill’s work have been, firstly, a courage to challenge conventional perspectives and secondly, a rare ability to combine advanced theoretical speculation with the most rigorous textual scholarship based in part on Professor Merrill’s knowledge of the working problems of the literary translator.”

Reviewer (B)

“It is a rare critic who can combine such personal reflections with a deep analysis of literary texts and at the same time a broad, even encyclopedic, account of the theoretical implication of her work and her authors’ writing, positioning herself and her authors within postcolonial south Asia and the wider world.”

Reviewer (C)

“Professor Merrill’s writing is more playful and, well, literary, than what I am accustomed to encountering in a tenure file. . . . Her quicksilver moves from the intimate to the political give her work rare immediacy and potency. Her own uses of humor and irony complement her ability to convey the humor and irony in the texts she translates even while pondering the impossibility of doing so.”

Reviewer (D)

“Her thoughtful probing of every aspect of the creation and reception of a translation and her attempt in *Riddles of Belonging* to reach out beyond a South Asian focus to more general theoretical matters pertaining to translation make her work important for students of the other major theorists on translation. . . .”

Reviewer (E)

“I am confident that with her works to come Professor Merrill will emerge as an important international voice in the field of comparative and translation studies.”

Reviewer (F)

“I consider Dr. Merrill as the foremost scholar in the field of translation and translation theory working with South Asian materials... She has advanced translation theory significantly to include Indian cultural and textual practices as no one else to my knowledge has done and her translations are literary and faithful at the same time.”

Reviewer (G)

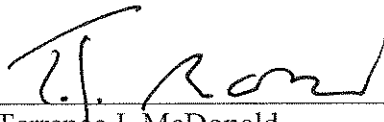
“While she is clearly an immensely productive writer and scholar, what I find most impressive is her ability to bring together all these interests—to publish excellent translations while also theorizing the practice of translation, and, at the same time, to extend the reach of translation theory by posing questions concerning postcolonialism and globalization.”

Reviewer (H)

“Christi Merrill combines a range of qualities and aptitudes unusual to find in one individual. She is an outstanding scholar, with well-developed research skills, at ease with the most recent developments in postcolonial theory. ...Merrill has been able to bring her own voice—both literally and metaphorically—to critical theory.”

Summary of Recommendation:

Professor Merrill is a productive and original scholar, a dedicated teacher, and a thoughtful colleague who is able to work within and across several disciplines. The Executive Committee of the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts and I recommend that Assistant Professor Christi Ann Merrill be promoted to the rank of associate professor of comparative literature, with tenure, and associate professor of Asian languages and cultures, with tenure, in the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts.



Terrence J. McDonald
Arthur F. Thurnau Professor,
Professor of History, and Dean
College of Literature, Science, and the Arts

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