

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

Pär Kristoffer Cassel, assistant professor of history, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts, is recommended for promotion to associate professor of history, with tenure, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts.

Academic Degrees:

Ph.D. 2006 Harvard University  
Magister 1996 Stockholm University

Professional Record:

2006 – present Assistant Professor, Department of History, University of Michigan

Summary of Evaluation:

Teaching – Professor Cassel’s classroom presence flows naturally from his skills as a scholar and lecturer. He has been a valuable contributor to the teaching mission in the department. He has made a strong commitment to the teaching needs at the undergraduate level in the area of East Asia, where he contributes regularly to the survey sequence. He has worked with colleagues in the Law School to create a new 400-level course on Chinese legal history. This has also been a resource for advanced undergraduate and graduate students in the College. He has participated in graduate student advising, and has been an active mentor for undergraduate honor’s theses.

Research – Professor Cassel has established a presence in the expanding field of new international history. His monograph, Grounds of Judgment: Extraterritoriality and Imperial Power in Nineteenth-Century China and Japan, and his articles have made impact in East Asian history, in the comparative study of empires and colonialism, and in the widening transnational study of all aspects of international law. This body of publication and his emerging second project represents a contribution to the next wave of scholarship in the field of modern China. With his expertise in legal and international history, Professor Cassel has brought new strengths to the department and to the China field at Michigan. His presence enables new cross-disciplinary synergies across the immediate East Asian region and more widely with our continuing global history initiative and comparative studies of international law.

Recent and Significant Publications:

“Spelling synarchy: Some thoughts on the Manchu origins of the Wade-Giles system,” in Calling the Ancient Spirits: Religion and Manchu Identity in Qing, Republican and Contemporary China (c.1600-Present), L. Laamann (ed.), Brill, forthcoming.

Grounds of Judgment: Extraterritoriality and Imperial Power in Nineteenth-Century China and Japan, Oxford University Press, forthcoming 2012.

“The legacies of Ming Taizu in Japan,” in Long Live the Emperor: The Uses of the Ming Founder across Six Centuries of East Asian History, S. Schneewind (ed.), Society for Ming Studies, 2008, pp. 329-44.

“Excavating extraterritoriality: The ‘judicial sub-prefect’ as a prototype for the mixed court in Shanghai,” *Late Imperial China*, 24(2), 2003, pp. 156-182.

Service – Professor Cassel has assembled a solid and dependable record of service in his department and across the university.

External Reviews:

Reviewer (A)

“...the book [Grounds of Judgment] is merely the first step in a career that promises to be productive, challenging, inquisitive, and ultimately distinguished. I would be very happy to have a colleague of Professor Cassel’s achievements and promise.”

Reviewer (B)

“Cassel’s willingness to stretch the limits of the field as it has been typically defined by casting his vision beyond the borders of the present Chinese state to the wider East Asian world – and indeed to the entire globe – puts him, in my view, also into the group of those scholars now working in what is sometimes called ‘international history,’ a field characterized, among other things, by a multi-archival approach and a curiosity about the connections and transmissions that have been hidden by the agendas of various national histories. ...Cassel represents the leading edge of a scholarly approach that will surely grow in importance in the United States.”

Reviewer (C)

“If I were asked to compile a list of significant publications in the field in which Pär works, his new book would be at the top of the list. I would also include his *Late Imperial China* (24:2, Dec. 2003) essay. ... In both cases, the topics are too important to ignore, but by the same token there has been so little that is anywhere near the quality of Pär’s work. ...his book would be at the top of any list that wants to re-examine the history of nineteenth-century China.”

Reviewer (D)

“There ought to be a place in the historical profession for the intelligent re-reading of existing sources, or the restatement of traditional questions in light of new concerns. ... Like every scholar [of his generation], he has his own vision of the field, and what sort of work it needs, and there should be room within the historical profession for new generations to re-shape discourse.”

Reviewer (E)

“Pär’s research is situated at the intersection of Chinese history and international law, with a particular focus on imperialism and a concern for the wider context of the East Asian world. His signature method is the investigation – and challenge – of historical and historiographical myths through close to the ground social and legal historical research. The interpretive effect is robustly revisionist.”

Reviewer (F)

“He has made two great contributions in this manuscript: first, linking extraterritoriality to the heritage of legal pluralism of the Qing dynasty, and, second, examining extraterritoriality comparatively, by looking extensively at how it functioned in Japan. It is a brilliant study that overturns many common prejudices about legal orders in East Asia, and I expect it to have a great impact.”

Reviewer (G)

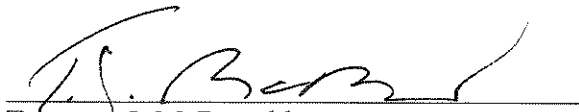
“...I believe that Professor Cassel in Grounds of Judgment achieves what most academics hope to do but in which few actually succeed. He provides an entirely fresh perspective on a topic that remains topical and that will force all of us to rethink how we have thought about the past. Grounds of Judgment is nothing less than a fundamental challenge to how historians have thought about imperialism in 19<sup>th</sup> century East Asia.”

Reviewer (H)

“Pär’s main field of expertise could be said to be Qing history or late imperial Chinese legal and diplomatic history, but both of these descriptions seem a bit too limiting. His book manuscript, for example, also engages with the history of the Republican period (1912-1949) and pays serious attention to Japan, as opposed to merely mentioning work on that country in passing. He is part of a generation of international historians and specialists in transnational or global history who have been breathing new life into diplomatic history, and he is one of the rare scholars of legal history who is perfectly at ease working discussions of law into debates more often associated with social, cultural and political history.”

Summary of Recommendation:

Professor Cassel is an award-winning researcher who has established himself as a dedicated and successful teacher. He has also recorded a strong record of service. The Executive Committee of the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts and I recommend that Assistant Professor Pär Kristoffer Cassel be promoted to the rank of associate professor of history, 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

May 2012