

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

Youngju Ryu, assistant professor of Asian languages and cultures, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts, is recommended for promotion to associate professor of modern Korean literature, with tenure, Department of Asian Languages and Cultures, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts.

Academic Degrees:

Ph.D.	2006	University of California, Los Angeles
M.A.	2001	University of California, Los Angeles
B.A.	1998	Harvard University

Professional Record:

2007 – present	Assistant Professor, Department of Asian Languages and Cultures, University of Michigan
2006 – 2007	Post-doctoral Fellow, Academy of East Asian Studies, Sungkyunkwan University

Summary of Evaluation:

Teaching – Professor Ryu is an extraordinary teacher who is resourceful, creative, and dedicated to her students. Student evaluations are very strong and many comment that she is the best teacher they have encountered at Michigan. Her contributions to the curriculum are outstanding. She has single-handedly developed a variety of courses on Korean literature, history, culture, and film. These range from small first-year seminars through larger introductory lecture courses as well as upper-level courses to graduate seminars. Professor Ryu also pioneered a CIC course-sharing initiative with which she has been involved from the initial grant-writing stage. She has piloted the project to a class comprised of University of Michigan and Michigan State University students, half the class participating via television.

Research – Professor Ryu's research focuses on modern Korean literature and culture, an academic field that has come into being only since the late 1990s. She is emerging as a major figure in her field in the U.S. and her first book, Writers of the Winter Republic: Korean Literature under Authoritarianism, is hailed as a landmark work. Respect from her peers stems from an appreciation of her wide-ranging interests, her contributions to a growing academic field, her ability to address complex issues in an articulate and astute manner, and her thoughtful engagement with South Korean literature as well as recent developments in Korean-language scholarship. Her interests in the cultural connections among China, Japan, and Korea and her interdisciplinary approach (combining history, literature, and the visual arts) make her research essential to the larger aims of her department.

Recent and Significant Publications:

Writers of the Winter Republic: Korean Literature and Developmental Dictatorship, University of Hawaii Press, forthcoming.

Imperatives of Culture: Selected Essays on History, Literature, and Society from the Japanese Colonial Era, with C. Hanscom and W. Lew (co-eds.), University of Hawaii Press. 2013.
“Korea’s Vietnam: Patriarchy, popular culture, intertextuality,” *The Review of Korean Studies*, 12(3), 2009, pp. 101-123.

Service – Professor Ryu’s service contributions have exceeded the expectations of an assistant professor and are appreciated by her colleagues. At the department level, she twice served on the Graduate Program Committee, currently serves on the Curriculum Committee, and was a member of three faculty search committees. At the Nam Center for Korean Studies, she served on the Executive Committee and played an instrumental role in the center’s development. Nationally, she twice co-organized the North American Workshop on Korean Literature and is on the executive board of the Association for Asian Studies’ Committee on Korean Studies.

External Reviewers:

Reviewer (A)

“...her translations are many and her invited lectures numerous as well. She is known to everyone in the field, I am certain. ...Ryu writes beautifully. Her prose positively soars at times.”

Reviewer (B)

“Ryu’s work on Korean literature is the best I have read, surpassing in every way that of her mentors, collaborators, and peers. Indeed it has the power to attract wide interest in modern Korean literature and history. ...[she] has done much more than her share of translating Korean literature into English. This work, though often not counted as much as it should be in academic assessments, is of enormous importance to the field of Asian languages and cultures.”

Reviewer (C)

“Her book [Writers of the Winter Republic] will become required reading for any scholar working in literature, cultural studies, and history (perhaps even the social sciences) for not only Korea but east Asia as well, and its Introduction, Chapter 1, and Conclusion (epilogue) will be very useful if assigned for undergraduate courses.”

Reviewer (D)

“...it is important to appreciate how much Professor Ryu has done in terms of service teaching and other service work in the Korea program... ...she managed to complete a book manuscript, publish a very good article (and write another one which is forthcoming), participate in a book project as co-editor and author of a chapter, give many talks at major venues, and make good progress toward a second project.”

Reviewer (E)

“Among the Korean literary scholars of her generation that include those holding tenure track positions at...top-notch universities in the U.S...Professor Ryu stands out as the most knowledgeable scholar of modern Korean literature.”

Reviewer (F)

"Once published, *Writers of the Winter Republic* will stand as one-of-its kind and unparalleled in its conception, theoretical framework, and analysis. It will serve a wide range of students and specialists across different disciplines in Korean studies... I am convinced that any reader interested in contemporary Korea will be stimulated and enlightened by the study."

Reviewer (G)

"The first study of dissident literature in post-1945 South Korea, Ryu's book fills a major lacuna. *Writers of the Winter Republic* is a significant accomplishment, one of the best books I have encountered in Korean studies as a whole. The impact of this book will be lasting. Ryu completely revises our thinking about post-1945 South Korean literary history and the relations among politics, aesthetics, and ethics."

Reviewer (H)

"Professor Ryu's approach allows both South Korea and the individual writers she treats to be distinctive and singular, while also enabling them to be situated within a theoretical universe that links them to other historical and cultural sites. ... The ability to translate a 'local' history to a wider audience of literary scholars is rare..."

Summary of Recommendation:

Professor Ryu is already recognized as a leading figure in the field of Korean literature. In the classroom, she has developed a range of excellent and innovative courses to integrate Korea into the curriculum of the university. The Executive Committee of the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts and I recommend that Assistant Professor Youngju Ryu be promoted to the rank of associate professor of modern Korean literature, with tenure, Department of Asian Languages and Cultures, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts.



Susan A. Gelman

Heinz Werner Distinguished University Professor,
Professor of Psychology and Interim Dean,
College of Literature, Science, and the Arts

May 2014