

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

Reginald R. Jackson, assistant professor of Asian languages and cultures, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts, is recommended for promotion to associate professor of Asian languages and cultures, with tenure, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts.

Academic Degrees:

Ph.D.	2007	Princeton University
B.A.	2001	Amherst College

Professional Record:

2015 – present	Assistant Professor, Department of Asian Languages and Cultures, University of Michigan
2009 – 2015	Assistant Professor, Department of East Asian Languages and Civilizations, University of Chicago
2007 – 2009	Assistant Professor, Department of East Asian Languages and Literatures and Theater Studies, Yale University

Summary of Evaluation:

Teaching – Professor Jackson is an inspiring teacher who has successfully taught across the curriculum in Asian Languages and Cultures. He has taught nine undergraduate courses in the department ranging from large introductory lecture courses to seminar style courses, and student evaluations have been very strong. His courses are interdisciplinary, drawing together literature, the visual arts, poetry, history, theater and performance studies, gender and sexuality studies, and critical theory. His courses encourage students to actively participate in the project of learning about pre-modern Japan by producing calligraphic handscrolls or drawing animated characters to accompany literary texts. Professor Jackson provides new perspectives and methodological tools to graduate students in Asian Languages and Cultures and affiliated departments.

Research – Professor Jackson’s scholarship exhibits a probing intellect and deep theoretical grounding in multiple disciplines, including bold and provocative readings of a complex 11th century canonical text, The Tale of Genji. His work is deeply interdisciplinary, drawing from literary studies, art history, performance studies, museum studies, and queer studies. Professor Jackson’s level of productivity easily meets the threshold for tenure in the humanities at Michigan, with one book already published and another under consideration at a second prestigious university press, alongside multiple peer-reviewed articles in top journals across several fields, including Asian studies, theater and drama, African American studies, and feminist studies. He is widely regarded as a prolific and creative scholar whose work has the potential to challenge the narrative and methodological conventions of pre-modern Japanese literary studies.

Recent and Significant Publications:

A Proximate Remove: Queering Intimacy and Loss in The Tale of Genji, University of California Press, *New Interventions in Japanese Studies Series*, manuscript under review. “Frayed fabrications: Feminine mobility, surrogate bodies, and robe usage in Noh Drama,”

Theatre Survey, accepted for publication with revisions, 2019.
Textures of Mourning: Calligraphy, Mortality, and the Tale of Genji Scrolls, University of Michigan Press, 2018.

“Gallows hospitality: Visiting hangman Takuzō’s garden theater,” *TDR: The Drama Review*, 62(3), 2018, pp. 162–168.

Service – Professor Jackson’s record of service goes well beyond the numerous committees he has served on in the Department of Asian Languages and Cultures and in the Center for Japanese Studies. He has been an active promoter of cross-disciplinary initiatives across UM’s campus, especially those involving performance studies and music. Particularly notable are the residential summer workshop on Japanese Performance Theory that Professor Jackson organized in 2017, which brought together scholars, performers, and students from a wide array of backgrounds. This year, he has served as the department’s faculty ally for diversity, a role that had been essentially dormant in the department for several years.

External Reviews:

Reviewer (A)

“The candidate’s field of expertise may be described as classical or premodern Japanese literature and culture, focusing on the Heian (794 – 1185) and medieval (1185 – 1600) eras. He also has a strong interest in literary and critical theory... ..the candidate is very highly regarded as a brilliant scholar, eloquent writer, and excellent presenter.”

Reviewer (B)

“The central work in Dr. Jackson’s tenure and promotion case is his forthcoming book *Textures of Mourning: Calligraphy, Mortality, and the Tale of Genji Scrolls*. To publish peer-reviewed work on *The Tale of Genji* is a difficult task. ... The primary text is lengthy and deeply nuanced; the secondary scholarship is crushingly numerous; the conservatism of the field, at times palpable. To publish something truly innovative on *The Tale of Genji* is a mark of endurance and of insight. Dr. Jackson will have made his mark with the appearance of his book later this year from the University of Michigan Press. ...it is an outstanding piece of scholarship.”

Reviewer (C)

“A student who wishes to concentrate on the study of *Noh* theatre would be better off studying it with R[eginald] J[ackson] than with just about anyone else I can think of in the US...”

Reviewer (D)

“...his work represents the pinnacle of interdisciplinary research that is fundamentally informed by critical theory. ...[his] writing is challenging in every positive sense of the word: it pushes the reader to think in new ways, reconsider assumptions, and grapple with complex and messy implications of analysis. His language is difficult and performative on purpose; the writing forces us to reframe and reinterpret texts and past scholarship through his relentless attention to contingency.”

Reviewer (E)

“...I have heard Jackson give talks, and know that he is a dynamic speaker, highly engaged and engaging. ... Clearly he is already an excellent teacher... ...with this level of scholarship, service, and teaching, Professor Jackson would be tenured at any institution in the country.”

Reviewer (F)

“...Professor Jackson’s dossier is overwhelmingly rich, not only in its quantity but also in its originality and critical urgency. It is indeed far more than sufficient for tenure at my home institution...”

Summary of Recommendation:

Professor Jackson is a highly regarded scholar in his field. His teaching is strong, and he has provided valuable service locally and to the wider research community. The Executive Committee of the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts and I recommend that Assistant Professor Reginald R. Jackson be promoted to the rank of associate professor of Asian languages and cultures, with tenure, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts.



Elizabeth R. Cole, Interim Dean
Professor of Women’s Studies, Psychology,
and Afroamerican and African Studies
College of Literature, Science, and the Arts

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