

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

Kristin Dickinson, assistant professor of Germanic languages and literatures, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts, is recommended for promotion to associate professor of Germanic languages and literatures, with tenure, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts.

Academic Degrees:

Ph.D. 2015 University of California, Berkeley  
M.A. 2007 New York University  
B.A. 2003 University of Rochester

Professional Record:

2020-present Affiliated Faculty, Center for Middle Eastern and North African Studies, University of Michigan  
2019-present Affiliated Faculty, Department of Comparative Literature, University of Michigan  
2015-present Assistant Professor, Department of Germanic Languages and Literatures, University of Michigan

Summary of Evaluation:

Teaching: Professor Dickinson is a superb teacher and mentor. With a stated goal of “unlearning,” she aims to help students first recognize what inhibits learning, and only then engage with the complex histories of racism, xenophobia, Islamophobia, and anti-Semitism—all of which she addresses in her course selection—from an intersectional approach. She has developed four new graduate seminars and two new undergraduate courses since arriving at Michigan. Professor Dickinson contributes to her unit’s core curricular offerings as well, including courses that meet the R&E and ULWR requirements. She teaches in both German and English languages, depending on the course. Her courses have broad appeal across units and majors. Moreover, Professor Dickinson is one of the most sought-after graduate advisors in the department, currently advising eight doctoral students. She has served on four doctoral committees in German, co-chairing one of them; two in Comparative Literature (co-chairing one); and one each in English, Slavic, and Art History. Combined with her participation on nine prelim committees (co-chairing three) and her role as advisor of two Graduate Certificates in Translation Studies, this is a remarkable commitment to graduate education across the humanities division.

Research: Professor Dickinson is a comparatist specializing in the history of Turkish-German cultural exchange from the late eighteenth century to the present. Proficient in German, modern Turkish, and Ottoman, she has strong expertise in translation studies, migration studies, world literature studies, and post-colonial theory. Professor Dickinson’s work explores the history of German-Ottoman-Turkish literary and cultural relations through the detailed study of translation practices conceived as a locus and medium of transcultural exchange. This rich conception of translation as “omnidirectional” cultural transfer is spelled out in impressive detail in her first monograph, DisOrientations: German-Turkish Cultural Contact in Translation (1811-1946). Combining delicate textual analysis with rich historical contextualization, the book marks a significant intervention in Turkish-German Studies, expanding the field’s historical scope back to the early nineteenth century and shifting its guiding conception of cultural contact from “migration” to the more capacious category of “translation.” Professor Dickinson’s deep historical archive

constitutes a significant departure from the narrow focus on post-war culture in current Turkish-German Studies. Already a highly visible scholar in the field, DisOrientations will cement her status as an intellectual leader of her academic generation.

#### Recent and Significant Publications:

DisOrientations: German-Turkish Cultural Contact in Translation (1811-1946). University Park: Penn State University Press, 2021.

“Strange Stars in Constellation: Özdamar, Lasker-Schüler, and the Archive.” In Minorities and Minority Discourses in Germany since 1990: Intersections, Interventions, Interpolations, edited by Ela Gezen, Priscilla Layne, and Jonathan Skolnik. New York: Berghahn Books, forthcoming.

“Where Language Is Ripped Apart: Absence and Illegibility in Bilge Karasu’s *The Garden of Departed Cats*.” *Critical Multilingualism Studies*, Vol 2.1 (Spring 2014):106-128.

“Three poems by Zafer Şenocak, translated from the Turkish by Kristin Dickinson.” *Another Chicago Magazine*, July 20, 2021.

Service: Professor Dickinson’s service has exceeded expectations of rank and focused heavily in the area of diversity, equity, and inclusion. In GLL, she has served as a faculty diversity ally for six years and as the chair of the DEI committee for three. In both roles, she brought about lasting change at the curricular level, in departmental climate, and more. Her departmental service includes membership on the executive committee, the curriculum committee, and a lecturer review committee. Professor Dickinson has also organized multiple Rackham Interdisciplinary Workshops and recently opened a public, curated exhibition, “Visualizing Translation: Homeland and Heimut in Detroit and Dortmund,” which is scheduled to show in several towns around the state, internationally, and most recently, at the Ann Arbor Public Library.

#### External Reviewers:

Reviewer (A): “[Professor Dickinson’s] monograph [DisOrientations] signals outstanding scholarly achievement and secures Dickinson’s status as an innovative intellectual leader of her academic generation.”

Reviewer (B): “The most unique, and remarkable, aspect of Prof. Dickinson’s (inter-)disciplinary background is that she is a comparatist with in-depth linguistic, literary and historical training in modern *and* Ottoman Turkish and Turkish Studies in addition to German and German Studies, affording her a set of competencies that is still extremely rare in our field. Her scholarly focus on translation, migration, multilingualism and world literature makes the most of these competencies, as her work addresses different historical moments of trans- (and inner-) cultural contact from the eighteenth to the twenty-first centuries.”

Reviewer (C): “In sum, Prof. Dickinson is the kind of scholar that tenure and promotion were envisioned for. She will chair the department aptly in a few years’ time, build a strong learning community wherever she goes, and likely serve as President of one of our disciplinary organizations within ten years.”

Reviewer (D): “[...] the trajectory of her scholarly output shows sophistication, and exciting cross-fertilization between disparate research areas and disciplines. The kind of intellectual limberness that allows her, for example, to make literary criticism productive for an analysis of transnational exchange will no doubt continue to produce valuable and unexpected results. Her work embraces the kind of cross-disciplinary, historicized, and transnational approaches that keeps the field viable. The

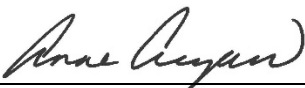
benefits to scholars such as myself, working on exile and migration, are palpable: here we have a productive dialogue partner who can help us think in more nuanced ways about the intellectual dimensions of our own work on literary production, transnational exchange, migration, and a host of other topics.”

Reviewer (E): “When published, this book will garner much critical attention. Among the several accomplishments of this book, the most outstanding for me is how Dr. Dickinson rejuvenates our understanding of ‘Turkish-German’ contexts—mostly understood through the labor migration starting with 1961—through her inclusion of a much longer history of translations and cultural exchange. Dickinson creates a dizzying array of authors, translators, institutions, and texts, all tightly sutured into the larger context of what I would describe as intersectional transnational and translational histories.”

Reviewer (F): “Dickinson is a specialist in the field of Turkish German studies, and deeply engaged with and knowledgeable about the debates within that field. But even more significant is how she turns her critical eye to the larger issues of ideology and language, as she reveals the potential of literature and literary translation to create new ways of understanding the interplay of language and multilingualism in formations of national identity, ethnicity, and in minority writing in majority cultures. This is the crux of her work which, I hope, will spark interest in scholars of world literature beyond German studies.”

Summary of Recommendation:

Professor Dickinson’s scholarship, teaching, and service contribute to several fields of inquiry in German studies and translation studies, and to the communities those fields examine and engage. She is cementing her status as an innovative intellectual leader of her academic generation and a prominent voice in Turkish-German Studies. Professor Dickinson has proven herself to be an innovative and engaging teacher, and has contributed significantly to DEI work in her department. The Executive Committee of the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts and I recommend that Assistant Professor Kristin Dickinson be promoted to the rank of associate professor of Germanic languages and literatures, with tenure, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts.



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Anne Curzan, Dean  
Geneva Smitherman Collegiate Professor of  
English Language and Literature, Linguistics,  
and Education  
Arthur F. Thurnau Professor  
College of Literature, Science, and the Arts

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