

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

Rita C.-K. Chin, 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.	1999	University of California, Berkeley
M.A.	1992	University of Washington
B.A.	1990	University of Washington

Professional Record:

2003 – present	Assistant Professor, Department of History, University of Michigan
1999 – 2003	Assistant Professor, Department of History, Oberlin College

Summary of Evaluation:

Teaching – Professor Chin has been a valuable contributor to the teaching mission of the Department of History. She has undertaken an extremely demanding undergraduate course and gained student respect for her rigorous integration of histories and historical documents. Her skills seem to flourish in courses where discussion can be integrated with lectures. Even in large, fast-moving lecture courses, however, her syllabi allow students to be reflective and critical about topics. Professor Chin has also offered graduate students the opportunity to do demanding work in fundamental fields—German history, twentieth-century history—and to think analytically about the concepts they are using.

Research – Professor Chin’s scholarship is marked by range, depth, and theoretical sophistication. Her articles and her monograph, *The Guest Worker Question in Postwar Germany* (2007), are having an impact in the field of German history and in the emerging field of transnational European history. The co-edited *After the Racial State: Difference and Democracy in Postfascist Germany* (forthcoming, 2008) represents a substantial contribution to an emerging scholarship that is establishing the centrality of racialization for the social, cultural, and political histories of contemporary Europe. Professor Chin’s current research, which is comparative in conception and scope, moves beyond national histories to explore the issues of migration, hybrid identity, and multiculturalism in Britain, France, and Germany.

Recent and Significant Publications:

After the Racial State: Difference and Democracy in Postfascist Germany, co-edited with H. Fehrenbach, University of Michigan Press, forthcoming 2008.

“Democratization, Turks, and the burden of German history,” in P. Gordon, et al. (eds.), *Charting Modernity: New Essays in Critical Theory and Intellectual History*, Berghahn Books, forthcoming 2008.

The Guest Worker Question in Postwar Germany, Cambridge University Press, 2007.

“Toward a ‘Minor Literature’? The case of *Ausländerliteratur* in Postwar Germany,” *New Perspectives on Turkey, Special Issue: 40th Anniversary of Turkish Guest Worker Migration*, 28-29, 2003, pp. 291-314.

Service – Professor Chin has compiled a diverse and impressive record of service. She has been involved in two searches in History, served on the postdoctoral fellowship committee, led the Department’s junior faculty colloquium, convened the dissertation colloquium, and played a central role in organizing and facilitating the Turkish-German Studies Reading Group. She has also represented the Department on the Center for European Studies’ Advisory Committee.

External Reviews:

Reviewer (A)

“What struck me in particular about this book [*The Guest Worker Question in Postwar Germany*]...is its rare interdisciplinary sweep, from literary studies to sociology and political science. ... There is no doubt in my view that this original book alone will put her prominently on the map as far as German studies in North America are concerned.”

Reviewer (B)

“Since the issues of immigration, multiculturalism and ethnic diversity have become crucial to the politics and cultures of most European nation states during the last 30 years, her field of expertise has moved from the margins to the center of scholarly attention. ...she is among the top 10 scholars (worldwide) in the field of post-1945 German immigration and ethnic history. ... Her book is meticulously researched, convincingly argued and brilliantly written.”

Reviewer (C)

“Her topic...is quite timely and she is one of the first scholars to have learned enough of the difficult language in order to follow some of the debates within Turkish subculture... Her first book [*The Guest Worker Question in Postwar Germany*]...is therefore a pioneering double study of ideas and concepts on the one hand and of the social history of so-called guest workers in West Germany on the other.”

Reviewer (D)

“She demonstrates that the labor migration of these years was not merely a marginal minority experience but an event that shaped German developments in fundamental ways from the economic miracle to German reunification and the emergence of a distinctively German form of multiculturalism. ... Her published articles and the publications in progress demonstrate her strong presence in the fields of modern German and European history.”

Reviewer (E)

“...to accomplish all of this is an interdisciplinary feat. ... Chin is able to...explicate the significance of ethnic diversity as a central narrative of German history in the 20th century... Chin’s transnational perspective and interdisciplinarity would be valued at my home institution.”

Reviewer (F)

“...she adds an enormously rich account of the ways in which the ‘guest worker’ was produced culturally—both in the mainstream press and in the writing of academic sociologists and political scientists and in ‘minority literature.’ ... The book...is really two books for the price of one, an analysis of the politics of immigration and an analysis of the cultural production of conceptions of ethnic difference and race.”

Reviewer (G)

“In its method the book is innovative. ... Well written and clearly argued, the book will reach a wide audience not just of Germanists, but of scholars from a range of disciplines interested in postcolonial theory or race and ethnicity.”

Reviewer (H)

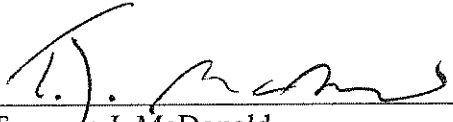
“...she achieves a fascinating ethnography of the ‘zeitgeist’ or mood of the age in various epochs of the history of the German Federal Republic. ... This is a completely new and sensational approach to the history of worker migration *and* to the history of the German Federal Republic.”

Reviewer (I)

“I believe Rita Chin to be a scholar [of her generation] of the first rank. ...a historian of the greatest seriousness, who has a brilliant career ahead of her. ... One of the most remarkable features of the monograph is that its theorizations are deeply embedded in the concrete, archival material, allowing the author to articulate them in her own voice.”

Summary of Recommendation:

Professor Chin had done groundbreaking work in her field and is a successful teacher of modern European history. She also has an impressive record of service. The Executive Committee of the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts and I recommend that Assistant Professor Rita C.-K. Chin 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

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