

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

Paroma Chatterjee, assistant professor of history of art, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts, is recommended for promotion to associate professor of history of art, with tenure, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts.

Academic Degrees:

Ph.D.	2007	University of Chicago
M.A.	2002	University of Chicago
B.A.	2001	Cambridge University
B.A.	1999	Jawaharlal Nehru University

Professional Record:

2012 – present	Assistant Professor, Department of the History of Art, University of Michigan
2009 – 2012	Assistant Professor, Department of Art, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill
2007 – 2008	Visiting Assistant Professor, School of Art and Art History, University of Florida

Summary of Evaluation:

Teaching – Professor Chatterjee has been an inspiring and dedicated teacher of undergraduate and graduate students. As a member of the university’s Presidential cluster initiative on “The Mediterranean Perspective on Global History and Culture,” she offers innovative courses on Medieval art in the Mediterranean, the arts of Byzantium, the status of the image, and the history of iconoclasm, often incorporating comparative perspectives between the Byzantine East and the Latin West. She has served as a member of two graduate committees, and she has developed a very important team-taught course that serves as the gateway to her interdepartmental cluster. An inspiring teacher who is dedicated to empowering her students, she offers seminars and lectures that explore cultural interchange in an interdisciplinary context.

Research – Professor Chatterjee has published a major book and three substantial articles (with two articles forthcoming) in prominent peer-reviewed journals. Her book, The Living Icon in Byzantium and Italy, explores how ethical behavior was modeled and taught to Christian believers through representations of saintly deeds and lives. Carefully researched and argued, it is causing scholars to rethink several foundational concepts of Byzantine art history. Professor Chatterjee has also made considerable strides on her second book, which deals with very different sources and concepts. By revealing important dialogues and cultural interchanges between East and West across the Mediterranean, her work as a whole is helping scholars to reassess the societies and politics of that region during the Medieval era.

Recent and Significant Publications:

“The gifts of the gorgon: A close look at a Byzantine inkpot,” *RES: Journal of Anthropology and Aesthetics*, forthcoming 2015.

The Living Icon in Byzantium and Italy: The Vita Image, Eleventh to Thirteenth Centuries, Cambridge University Press, 2014.

“Vision, transformation, and the Veroli casket,” *Oxford Art Journal*, 36(3), 2013, pp. 325-344.

“Francis’ secret stigmata,” *Art History*, 35(1), 2012, pp. 38-61.

Service – Professor Chatterjee has served the department on numerous committees, such as the Graduate Committee and the Michigan-Princeton Sinai Archive Advisory Board. She has also served the wider community as a member of the Medieval and Early Modern Studies Program (MEMS) and, most importantly, through her program-building work for the interdisciplinary Mediterranean cluster. Professor Chatterjee has also served the scholarly community as a member of the International Center of Medieval Art (ICMA).

External Reviewers:

Reviewer (A)

“...in the process of this rethinking of the *vita* category, Chatterjee has led us away from a static account of that icon and towards a far more dynamic understanding of such works. In her book, she also shows great range by putting the Byzantine *vita* icon into conversation with the *vita* icons that Latin artists developed for the cult of St. Francis. The dialogue that develops allows Chatterjee to draw some significant distinctions between apparently similar objects. It is this ability to invite us to think again and to think deeply about the seemingly familiar that gives Paroma Chatterjee’s work its originality and significance.”

Reviewer (B)

“Her research statement was a pleasure to read, and truly exciting, for now I see her moving for the second book beyond the well-defined areas of her teachers and the prevailing discourses in her field. ... This will be a major book, the work of a future full professor, and a major full professor at that.”

Reviewer (C)

“...Chatterjee exemplifies a certain kind of art history writing at its best in which the close analysis of a single object opens up an expansive world of cultural and conceptual concerns. ...[she] productively shifts the terms of analysis beyond iconography and style. In their place she promotes a new paradigm centered on modes of viewing and focused particularly on issues of transformation, movement, and stasis, concepts she demonstrates that are of particular concern to Byzantine audiences.”

Reviewer (D)

“...she goes well beyond archaeological positivism and the search for sources and models, and engages with difficult question of viewers’ response and viewers’ cultural context. She tackles these problems head-on and is not afraid to use her imagination where the primary sources do not directly give us the information or perspectives we want. ... Her work, then, takes the lead in the discussion of those topics.”

Reviewer (E)

“...her first published paper...offers a sophisticated analysis of a passage in the *Life of St Nikon*, which exposes the tensions between text and image, vision and representation. These tensions are shown to have survived in the Byzantine understandings of the relationship between a holy presence and its portrayal, even after the matter was supposedly resolved by the formal ending of iconoclasm. The greatest contribution Chatterjee makes here and in the book is in aiding a better appreciation of complexity.”

Reviewer (F)

“Chatterjee’s concern with issues of representation makes *The Living Icon* a fresh contribution on the *vita* icon and the book asks new and noteworthy questions of this intriguing material.”

Reviewer (G)

“...[Chatterjee’s scholarship] engages textual and material aspects of Byzantine culture with care and rigor... It is also imaginative in the degree to which she looks at material that has not escaped scholarly notice and given it new life—more deeply analyzed, more fully contextualized than it had yet been.”

Reviewer (H)

“Her book...is an important study of the ways in which the lives of specific saints played a part in constructing sanctity, but it also used the figure of the depicted saint as a means to discuss attitudes to representing the holy in a much broader context that explored ideas of representation...”

Summary of Recommendation:

Professor Chatterjee is an innovative and internationally recognized scholar, an inspiring teacher, and a committed citizen. The Executive Committee of the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts and I recommend that Assistant Professor Paroma Chatterjee be promoted to the rank of associate professor of history of art, with tenure, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts.



Andrew D. Martin, Dean
Professor of Political Science and Statistics
College of Literature, Science, and the Arts

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