

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

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

Academic Degrees:

Ph.D. 2007 History of Art, University of Chicago
M.A. 2002 History of Art, University of Chicago
B.A. 2001 History of Art, Cambridge University, England (First Class Honors)
B.A. 1999 French Language and Literature, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, India (First Class Honors)

Professional Record:

2016-present Associate Professor, Dept. of the History of Art, University of Michigan
Core Faculty, The Mediterranean Perspective on Global History and Culture
2012-2016 Assistant Professor, Dept. of the History of Art, University of Michigan
Core Faculty, The Mediterranean Perspective on Global History and Culture
2010-2012 Assistant Professor, Dept. of Art, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill
2007-2008 Visiting Assistant Professor, School of art and Art History, University of Florida, Gainesville

Summary of Evaluation:

Teaching: Professor Chatterjee offers courses on medieval art in the Mediterranean, the arts of Byzantium, the status of the image, and the context of iconoclasm; she often incorporates comparative perspectives on the art of the Byzantine East and Latin West into her teaching. Since receiving tenure, Professor Chatterjee has developed the interdisciplinary reach of the department significantly, strengthening important links with the Departments of Romance Languages and Literatures, Classical Studies, and Judaic Studies. A thoughtful teacher, she is constantly reflecting about the ends and means of teaching undergraduates the histories of unfamiliar times and places and making these relevant to the present. She has won the allegiance of a great many graduate students in history of art and cognate disciplines, all of whom are grateful for her generosity and perspicacity in critiquing their work.

Research: Since her promotion in 2016, Professor Chatterjee has consolidated her position in her field. As her external reviewers emphasize, she stands at the forefront of the study of Byzantine art, her work regarded as progressive, challenging, and asking new questions. Highly productive over the last six years, she has succeeded in completing ten substantial articles as well as a second monograph, Byzantine Visual Culture between the Pagan Past and the Christian Present: Public Statuary in Constantinople, 4th-13th Centuries (published, like her first, by the prestigious Cambridge University Press). The book is the product of a decisive new turn in her scholarship: here, she shifted her focus from the religious and portable icons of her previous book to the plethora of magnificent statues of emperors, pagan gods, and mythical beasts that dominated the

skyline, streets, and squares of Constantinople until the city's pillage by the Crusaders in 1204 CE.

Recent and Significant Publications:

Byzantine Visual Culture between the Pagan Past and Christian Present: Public Statuary in Constantinople, 4th-13th Centuries. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2021.

"The Byzantine Icon of the Virgin in the Church of the Blachernae: Michael Psellos on the Problem of Miraculous Timing." *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 51, no. 2 (2021): 241-262.

"Iconoclasm's Legacy: Reinterpreting the Trier Ivory." *Art Bulletin* 100, no. 3 (2018): 28-47.

Service: Professor Chatterjee has contributed a great deal of service to the department, having served as the director of graduate studies and chair of the Allocations Committee, and is at present acting as the associate chair. Reform-minded, she has made many and admirable efforts to increase equity and transparency in departmental procedures. In the university, Professor Chatterjee is a longtime member of the Steering Committee of the program in Mediterranean Studies and has served on the Senate Assembly. On a national level, she has been a reviewer for numerous journals and presses, and, importantly, has worked in several capacities for the most significant organization in her field, the International Center of Medieval Art (ICMA), including their DEI committee; recently she was elected to the ICMA Board of Directors.

External Reviewers:

Reviewer (A): "Paroma Chatterjee's work is at the forefront of Byzantine studies. With absolute control of the visual and verbal evidence, she offers work that is theoretically sophisticated and that is fundamental for the future of the field."

Reviewer (B): "In my judgment, Chatterjee is a major, mature and leading scholar of Byzantine art and culture, one of the principal players in the world today."

Reviewer (C): "Professor Chatterjee's research recognizing the lasting importance of the secular past to the Empire's citizens, as well as their religious devotion, makes her now, and in the future, one of the most forward-thinking figures in her field."

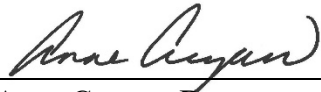
Reviewer (D): "I think I am right to say that this is only the second book to take Byzantine statues as its focus, and it offers a very different and less empirical view to the earlier monograph. I think it is a book that will make a mark...I rate Dr. Chatterjee as a scholar who is making distinctive contributions to the field of Byzantine Studies and has a voice more widely in art history."

Reviewer (E): "Most Byzantine art historians work with surviving artifacts (largely icons), and make them 'speak' to the religious and other concerns of Byzantine society. By contrast, Chatterjee works with material that is mostly lost but that we know existed because of references in texts. This means that she has to work through a diverse and difficult body of Byzantine Greek texts not only to uncover the basic facts (what was where) but also the wider cultural anxieties in which that now-lost collection was implicated."

Reviewer (F): “I am struck by the theoretical and conceptual sophistication that is present in Professor Chatterjee’s work, as for example in ‘Iconoclasm’s Legacy: Interpreting the Trier Ivory.’ This work is erudite, imaginative, assertive, and written in an engaging and lively style. As such [her essays] are also ideal readings for students, and I will in future assign them if and when I teach Byzantine art again.”

Summary of Recommendation:

Professor Chatterjee is a progressive and original scholar, with strong stature in the field and a track record of publicly oriented scholarship and quality teaching. The case for promotion rests on her productivity and theoretical sophistication, original research in Byzantine art, and her much praised ability to offer new and novel interpretations of both familiar and little-known works and to ask unexpected questions. She is a serious and committed teacher and mentor, and a colleague who has made substantive contributions to the department, the university, and the field at large. The Executive Committee of the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts and I recommend that Associate Professor Paroma Chatterjee be promoted to the rank of professor of history of art, with tenure, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts.



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

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