

The Editors are proud to present the first issue of the fifth volume of the *JIEWS*. This issue represents a number of innovations in IOW studies and for our journal.

Firstly, we present a special feature on port-towns in the IOW, organized and guest edited by Vidhya Raveendranathan and Duane Corpis. This special feature stems from an interdisciplinary conference held at NYU Shanghai in 2019 and adds perspectives focusing on labour and infrastructure to our understanding of the IOW's port-towns, past and present. Raveendranathan has written a historiographical primer and has introduced the four articles contained within the feature in the Guest Editors' Introduction. We are also thrilled to announce that she has agreed to join the permanent editorial team as a Managing Editor following the publication of this issue. We look forward to continuing our work together moving forwards.

Secondly, we present two articles dealing with separate issues in IOW studies. Nancy Wright engages the work of Lindsey Collen, a Mauritian novelist, to challenge the thematic paradigms of 'centre' and 'margins' in the literature of the IOW. She argues that, through using the English language and folklore in her writing, Collen brings the margins to the centre, thereby obviating an assumed analytical dichotomy. Collen's work transforms this and other dichotomies by narrating the human condition across gender, class, and nation. Meanwhile, Heena Mistry re-visits the repatriation debate in India following the abolition of indenture in 1917. By drawing on the work of an 'ocean-crossing activist' and a journalist with significant links to South Africa, she sheds new light on Indian diasporic perspectives of late colonial India and the IOW. Here, the IOW perspective challenges better-known histories of Indian Nationalism and anticolonialism that focus largely on developments occurring within India itself.

Finally, we are proud to launch the Book Reviews section of the *JIEWS* with Zozan Pehlivan as Book Reviews' Editor. As Pehlivan is a former postdoctoral fellow at the IOWC, we are especially excited to renew our formal collaboration with her in this new role. In this issue, we present reviews of two exciting publications in IOW studies: Wilson Chacko Jacob's *For God or Empire* and Laleh Khalili's *Sinews of War and Trade*. We hope to build on and expand our book reviews section moving forwards, making the *JIEWS* the prime location in which scholarship pertaining to the IOW is discussed and analysed.

The *JIEWS* Editorial Team