

## Letter from the Editors

This issue introduces our readers to the world of sailors in the Indian Ocean and the Atlantic. Ali Raza and Benjamin Zachariah take us to the early twentieth century with a co-authored article on the political activities of Indian sailors in the 1920s. Matthias van Rossum discusses Asian labour in the service of the Dutch East India Company, while Karwan Fatah-Black has contributed an article on slaves and sailors on Suriname's rivers. The place of lascars in historical fiction is not forgotten either: this exciting collection of articles on the history of seamen is introduced by an interview with Amitav Ghosh, in whose recent novels the early-nineteenth-century Indian Ocean plays a key role. He spoke with Mahmood Kooria about his own research on lascars and his mission to give his readers insight into what life on board was like. Indeed, he also discussed how, in that sense, historical realities sometimes turn out to be harder to believe than fiction ever could be.

The issue then continues with two articles that came out of the FEEGI conference in Minneapolis in April 2012. First is Gayle Brunelle's imaginative analysis of encounters between Frenchmen and Galibí on the coast of Guiana. Second is Ernesto Bassi's prize winning paper "Turning South before Swinging East: Geopolitics and Geopolitical Imagination in the Southwestern Caribbean after the American Revolution." As always, Laura Cruz has created a great review section for you to enjoy.

The editors would like to use the remainder of this letter to announce a few changes in the journal's editorial board. After many years of service, Frans-Paul van der Putten has decided to step down as Editor-in-Chief. He has been a vital part of the running of the journal and his close involvement will be greatly missed. It was under his careful guidance that *Itinerario* made the brave step to transfer to Cambridge University Press. Alicia Schrikker, who has served as the journal's Managing Editor for the past six years, has kindly agreed to succeed Frans-Paul. Carolien Stolte, who has been a member of the editorial team for the past four years, has agreed to take over as Managing Editor. On behalf of the entire editorial team, we would like to extend our thanks to Frans-Paul for all the time and energy he has invested in getting each of our issues to press.

The Editors