

## Editorial

### *Postcolonial Text* Enters a New Phase

With this issue, *Postcolonial Text* enters a new phase in its relatively short history. There is, first of all, a change in the organization of the Editorial Team. The Editorial Board has approved the appointment of Heike H. Härting to serve as the journal's Editor. We are delighted to welcome Heike to this position, and are already enjoying the opportunity of working with her, as she takes on this leadership role. Previously an Article Editor on this journal, she teaches postcolonial studies at the Université de Montréal, with her scholarship focusing on this theme within Canadian literature. As well, we are shifting our roles, as Founding and Managing Editors. One of us, Ranjini Mendis, now serves as the journal's Associate Editor, and the other, John Willinsky, has joined the Editorial Board.

Yet another development for *Postcolonial Text* that we wish to note with this issue is its new affiliation with Open Humanities Press, an independent group of scholars, librarians, and publishers who are committed to developing innovative approaches to scholarly publishing in the humanities, backed by the most distinguished of editorial boards, and involving open access to cutting edge scholarly work. Sigi Jöttkandt, a researcher at the Jan van Eyck Academy, The Netherlands, and co-founder of Open Humanities Press, writes that ". . . open access sustains a diversity of critical voices that could otherwise easily be lost in today's increasingly fragile economic climate" (Press Release, October 23, 2008). We are proud to see this journal contribute to those voices.

This pivotal point for *Postcolonial Text* also provides us with an excellent opportunity, once again, to acknowledge the service of those who have contributed their time and expertise so willingly to this project. This journal continues to run on the enthusiasm, commitment and above all talent of its volunteers who continue to serve it so well at every step of the publication process. Only through such contributions can this journal make new work available freely to those who are unable to share their current scholarship easily or access other's work through purchased publications that are so scarce in many parts of the world. With the new editorial structure and new affiliation, the journal has passed its initial period of development, and has established itself as an important, sustainable vehicle for advancing postcolonial studies. The journal thus participates in a resurgence of independent journals that are run from within the larger academic community as a public good for the benefit of all, representing what is most innovative in scholarly publishing.

Certainly, there were skeptics among our colleagues who did not see the need for an open access journal in this area, but both of us had been repeatedly struck by the shortage of opportunities for scholars working in various countries, especially in the Southern hemisphere, to consult current publications, which, in turn, hampered their chances of contributing to this literature. Even here in Canada, Arun Mukherjee at York University had written to Ranjini Mendis about the problems she was experiencing accessing materials from South Asia for her courses. She wrote: “I find that I have to work twice as hard just to order the books for my course. They are coming from a different corner of the world and are often out of print. Often, the library does not have them either.” By the same token, Ranjini Mendis had noted that in Sri Lanka, bookstores carried very few literary publications (a situation that has subsequently improved, if only in one or two bookshops in Colombo). The time seemed ripe for a new kind of journal—one that was far more postcolonial in its practices.

*Postcolonial Text* was, then, part of a new wave of open access journals that provided access to scholarly work to the growing number of higher education institutions and others with Internet capability. It was one of the first journals to deploy the freely available Open Journal Systems software developed by the Public Knowledge Project directed by John Willinsky, with the lessons learned from those early years providing the basis for improving this system.

This peer-reviewed journal, which continues to break new ground in critical analysis and creative writing on a born digital, born open access basis, records a global readership in the eleven issues it has published. As we go into our sixth year of publication, we wish to thank again all who have contributed to the journal in various ways, and we very much look forward to the scholarly and creative work to come.

Ranjini Mendis and John Willinsky  
Founding Editors  
*Postcolonial Text*  
February 16, 2009