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In the last 10 years or so, the discipline of human geography has given rise to lively debates dealing with the politics of scholarly publication and their implications for the ways in which contemporary academia works within an increasingly globalized world. Issues of academic entrepreneurialism, Anglophone hegemony in the social sciences, and the commodification of knowledge have been at the core of such discussions. The imperatives behind scholarly productivity and the increasingly sophisticated intellectual and institutional technologies of scientific evaluation have led peer-reviewed journals to acquire unprecedented centrality within the publishing agenda of human and social scientists. Human geography has been at the forefront of these processes, witnessing a fierce competition among journals (in terms of citation and Impact Factor indexes).

In this context, scholarly books (research monographs and essays) appear to be marginalized from the academic landscape, being regarded as ‘outdated’, ‘time-consuming’, and less profitable outlets in terms of career prospects compared to the highly rewarding publications in refereed journals (Ward et al., 2009). In a polemical intervention, David Harvey lamented the current scarce commitment to publishing ambitious books as a consequence of short-term pressures deriving from periodical assessment procedures such as the paradigmatic Research Assessment Exercise in Britain (Harvey,

2006). A few years earlier, writing as a member of the geography’s RAE panel, Nigel Thrift made a similar argument in his otherwise positive evaluation of the state of affairs in human geography (Thrift, 2002).

This journal responds to this situation by offering a book review section in which recently published books are discussed by commentators who either specialize in the related field or are in a position to provide fruitful insights into the subject from other points of view. A number of existing journals already organize book review forums on an occasional basis. *Dialogues in Human Geography* institutionalizes this approach to book reviewing with the aim of providing the international community of human geographers (and the scholars of neighbouring disciplines) with a set of polyphonic reflections on innovative research monographs that potentially open new avenues of investigation and theoretical elaboration. Within each issue, a number of commentators (up to six) provide critical interpretations of each work, and the author of the volume under scrutiny is afforded the opportunity for a rejoinder.

The books reviewed in the section will be found within geography but also outside the discipline. The book review editors look at contemporary geography as an intrinsically postdisciplinary field of inquiry, one that escapes the narrow disciplinary confines of the traditional academic division of

labor. For this reason, geographical books will often be balanced by books published in other domains, with special (but not exclusive) reference to those more concerned with theoretical experimentation such as Continental philosophy, critical social thought, postcolonial studies, and radical political theory. 'Postdisciplinary geography' might sound like an oxymoron but it is in fact a definition that arises from a pragmatic understanding of how academic disciplines are changing, intersecting, and often merging. An intellectual domain is no longer defined by its fixed status as a mechanism for the accumulation of codified knowledge, but should be understood as a mobile and fluid terrain of investigation and debate drawing on a contingent repertoire of institutions (journals, associations, learned societies), scholarly practices (ways of doing research and disseminating ideas and knowledge) and events (meetings, conferences, etc.). On the basis of this view, this

section is intended to throw light on books that make contemporary geography a lively and intellectually challenging field of postdisciplinary inquiry, one capable of contributing in innovative ways to the broader evolution of the human and social sciences in times of unresolved economic turbulences and fluctuating geopolitical order.

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