

disciplines. These undoubtedly will find the call for a 'topological turn' valuable and thought provoking.

References

- Allen, J. (2011) Topological Twists: Power's Shifting Geographies. *Dialogues in Human Geography*, 1(3): 283–298.
- Cragg, M. and Thrift, N. (eds.) 2000 *Thinking Space: Critical Geographies*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Euler, L. (1736) Solutio Problematis ad Geometriam Situs Pertinentis. *Commentarii Academiae Scientiarum Imperialis Petropolitanae*, 8: 128–140.
- Gregory, D. (1994) *Geographical Imaginations*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Lefebvre, H. (1991) *The Production of Space*. Donald Nicholson-Smith trans., Oxford: Basil Blackwell. Originally published 1974.
- Peet, R. (1998) *Modern Geographical Thought*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Yuval Karplus

Independent researcher

METHODS OF SUSTAINABILITY RESEARCH IN SOCIAL SCIENCES,
edited by Frances Fahy & Henrike Rau. London: Sage, 2013

Sustainability is a key concept when dealing with interactions between human society and the environment. This book is written from a social sciences' perspective and includes a comprehensive review of approaches and methodologies in the study of the sustainability concept. The editors highlight the challenges of sustainability research in the social sciences. The main question they ask is in which ways different research methodologies can lead to a significant integration of the sustainability issue in the social science. To achieve this goal, both interdisciplinary and trans-disciplinary studies are needed. Therefore, the studies presented in this book are characterized by this approach.

Each chapter contains a theoretical background as well as case study material and practical advice to enable readers plan and pursue their own interdisciplinary research. All book chapters contain three core themes: (1) The fact that views and actions of all individuals are both shaped by and reflected in their social, political and infrastructural context; (2) the need to connect the study of human social life to the assessments of its material foundations and impacts; and (3) drawing attention to features of the human behavior that have significant implications on the environment.

The book is divided into five parts. In the first one, the editors, Henrike Rdu and Frances Fahy introduce general concepts and methodologies of sustainability research in the social sciences. In the last part they summarize the current challenges and discuss the possible future developments of such research.

The other parts are allocated to three thematic areas. Part II deals with sustainability among Individuals, households and communities, part III deals with sustainability performances of cities, regions and nation-state, and part IV with the connections between time and sustainability.

The three chapters in part II cover methodological tools aimed at the investigation of attitudes and behaviors among individuals, families, households, organizations and communities. Those studies demonstrate how strong thematic and methodological focus on local or micro-level phenomena can offer important insight on social norms, conventions, processes and practices that are much less visible at a higher level of social organization. The first research, conducted by Barr and Pinrilwitz stresses the importance of behavioral changes for sustainability and then explores the way in which sustainability studies approach the challenge of understanding pro-environmental behaviors. This is demonstrated in a case study which analyzes travel behavior in the UK. In the second research Anna Davis presents the application of a focus group method to promote sustainability and collective decision making. She provides a critical appraisal of this approach in promoting sustainability in a range of geographical and administrative contexts. Her research demonstrates the use of a focus group in a case study of exploring public environmental values and planning for sustainability in the UK. This part ends with the Mark Garavan that presents the methodology of dialogic bond between researcher and local community as a tool to explore the local concepts of sustainability.

The next three chapters of part III present comparative approaches that measure sustainability performance in different geographical scales: cities, regions and nation-states. The authors offer a critical assessment of major conceptual and practical issues that affect sustainability. A major focus of this part is on the contested nature of sustainability concepts and indicators and their political relevance. Su-ming Khoo compares key indicators of human development and makes a critical examination of their connection with the wider sustainability debate. A main point in her review is the critic made on the overemphasis of GDP as an indicator for mustering the human welfare. Her critic is followed by a representation of some alternative concepts and indicators to measure human development, such as happy plant index (HPI) or environmental sustainability index (ESI) and demonstrates their advantage and limitations.

In the next chapter Gaube, Haberl and Erb represent three biophysical Indicators of society-nature interaction: material and energy flow analysis, human appropriation of net primary production and ecological footprint. They make a systematic comparison, highlighting their usefulness as well as their limitations. They demonstrate the use of those indicators in a case study that analyses the transition of

Austria's society from an agrarian one to a fossil fuel-dependent industrial society. This part ends with the presentation of mapping as a tool in the sustainability research while Murphy and King draw upon the issue of urban noise in Dublin.

Part IV explores the connection between time and sustainability as an important aspect in sustainability research. In the first chapter Melanie Jaeger-Erben focuses on the impact of life events such as, moving out of parents' home or the birth of a first baby, on consumption. Erben demonstrates the methodology of biographical research to explore this subject among forty persons in Berlin. In the second chapter of this part Rau and Edmondson deal with the question of how the way people spend their time influences sustainability.

As the editors point out, the purpose of the book is to deal with sustainability issues in the perspective of social science. Indeed, the book has a good collection of different researches and methodologies that present a wide variety of the sustainability field as well as various open questions presenting issues for further research. Since the book brings together studies from different disciplines it enables presenting the complexity of society-nature interaction and demonstrates the needs and the benefits of interdisciplinary approach in sustainability research. These qualities make this book useful for both social science researchers as well as students.

Zeev Stossel

Ben-Gurion University of the Negev

KEY CONCEPTS IN HISTORICAL GEOGRAPHY, by John Morrissey, David Nally, Ulf Strohmayer and Yvonne Whelan. Sage Publications: London, 2014

“The ‘claiming’ and ‘occupation’ of space is significant here, for territory in many ways is about claiming ownership, taking over and occupying a certain terrain” (page 53), writes Yvonne Whelan in her article on ‘Territory and Place.’ She argues that “the bounded social spaces that go hand-in-hand with territory are invariably a result of the adoption of strategies of territoriality, whereby people, groups or organizations exercise power and control over a particular place and its component parts” (page 53). This is a good example of the kind of analysis brought to us in the recent volume edited by Morrissey, Nally, Strohmayer and Whelan.

The editors bring together strengths from the study of geography and history in Europe, Canada and the US and respectively are experts in colonialism, human geography, social theory and aspects of heritage and memory. This situates them excellently to write an edited volume on concepts of historical geography. The discipline itself is not neatly defined. Although its origins go back to the 1950s, where it was criticized for impinging onto the hallowed discipline of history, it gained recogni-