

ŠTEFAN OČOVSKÝ*

GEOGRAPHICAL STUDYING SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE

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In the contribution opinions of both the definitions and delimitation of infrastructure appearing in geographical, sociological and economic literature are evaluated. A principle has been adopted that infrastructure comprises only the material-technical basis for socio-economic activities and not these activities as wholes and that it is impossible to lay it out on a branch principle. Possibilities of geographical studying social infrastructures are outlined and tendencies to form the so called geography of infrastructure as a self-standing scientific discipline to be false are reasoned.

Since its first applying in literature from the sphere of military strategy the term of infrastructure became extraordinarily frequent and spread to various scientific branches and spheres of social and economic life. Associate sign in both increasing frequency and spreading in applying spheres was the change of its original meaning and thus also the rise of several transformations as to its new content. Consequently the situation became complicated from both terminological and semantic aspects.

Along the meaningful obscurity and complicacy in particular use it is, however, indisputable that the term of infrastructure is needed and the phenomenon that it is expressed by it is unusually important for the life of society and the run of economics. It is only to determine precisely the place of infrastructure within the concept-terminological system and to delimitate its significance in the view of reality and in harmony with the needs of both scientific and application spheres. This task is topical also in geography, especially in its social and economic disciplines. In this connection it is significant to delimitate the concept of infrastructure, its division and also to establish principles of the geographical approach to the problems of infrastructure on the basis of an overview of relevant literature.

* RNDr. Štefan Očovský, CSc., Geografický ústav CGV SAV, Jozefská 7, 811 06 Bratislava, ČSSR.

CONCEIVING INFRASTRUCTURE IN LITERATURE

The problems of infrastructure in geography are not recent, nevertheless both in the ČSSR and also abroad a relatively small attention has been paid to them. In addition, infrastructure represents a wide set of objects that are closely connected with human activities and always have a relation to geographical phenomena. In up-to-date literature, whether of particular or theoretical direction, large diversity in infrastructure definitions, in its division and in this connection also in the ways of studying it manifests itself. From this lack of unity a necessity results before any research to deal with the problems of both working delimitation of infrastructure and elucidation of aspects of the study and interpretation.

The differences in conceiving the term of infrastructure are consequent to incessant widening its content as well as to the fact that several sciences have adopted it gradually. Therefore at present there are several approaches to the definition of infrastructure in dependence on respective scientific branch, in the framework of which it is formulated. In harmony with this fact also the problems kept under review by particular sciences within infrastructure are formed. Along the interdisciplinary differences in conceiving infrastructure they manifest themselves also in literature of the individual countries, scientific schools, or application spheres.

Nevertheless, not within one and the same scientific branch are opinions unified as to the meaning of the term of infrastructure. Such a state is also in geography, where differences appear also in publications within the same country. In addition, infrastructure as conceived is frequently not declared, on the contrary, it can be followed only indirectly, for instance, by means of the structure of studied objects by particular kinds. Such papers, it is true, contribute to fulfilling recognizing aims in investigating infrastructure, but they are not a contribution from methodic aspect and mostly they are not directed at the entire scale of objects that infrastructure comprises.

Analysis of infrastructural problems, from the aspect of its conceptual delimitation, consists of two fundamentally different spheres of problems. First of them are infrastructure definitions, the second the way of delimitating objects belonging to infrastructure. Although it would be desirable to solve both these problem spheres commonly in their mutual bond, it is not the matter in some works. Encyclopedic and dictionary entries are typical examples, since they give only infrastructure definitions.

In general, the substance of definitions, or that of conceptual delimitation of infrastructure has already been formulated on a unified platform in literature. For instance, in the work [2] infrastructure is delimitated as a set of existing establishments, buildings, networks and systems that do not apply directly to manufacturing material goods, but they are necessary for manufacturing process (manufacturing infrastructure) as well as for assuring everyday life of population (social infrastructure). Some authors lay out also further kinds of infrastructure. In the work [7] infrastructure is divided into social-manufacturing, social-service, manufacturing, institutional and psycho-social. In other works also the so called special infrastructure is distinguished, in connection with the defence of country. Along dividing into manufacturing

and social infrastructure also division into technological and social one is frequently used.

The social infrastructure represents a significant component of infrastructure. In harmony with the definition mentioned also in the work [22] social infrastructure is delimited more precisely as a set of material elements assuring general conditions for human activities within the spheres of labour, of social-political and intellectual life and with which human activity in the family and in everyday life connects closely. In that characteristic sociological aspect prevails in evaluating infrastructure. Non-traditional is the fact that conditions for working activities are assigned, where, however, the matter is social infrastructure and no manufacturing one.

From the economic viewpoint infrastructure is considered a system of material conditions for rational functioning of economy and for developing socialist way of life [9]. Infrastructure is mostly evaluated from the aspect of reproduction process, where social infrastructure is conceived as material basis for forming general conditions for population reproduction, for satisfying social-cultural needs and requirements as to everyday services for people out of the production sphere.

In spite of some differences in formulations and in division of infrastructure the mentioned group of definitions has a common sign, namely conceiving infrastructure as the material basis of manufacturing and the whole social life. For instance, in the work [15] in the overview of definitions it is emphasized that geographers assign only objects to the infrastructure, and no activities. In contrast with this principle, however, some authors conceive infrastructure wrongly as a complex of branches of national economy, which along with basic funds include also people and their activities.

In such a wide conceiving, however, infrastructure would be identified with national-economic branches and would lose *raison d'être* of the term. In the case of social infrastructure it would be substantially the sphere of services, non-productive sphere, or the tertiary sector. Several authors adopt such wrong attitudes to infrastructure and particularly to social infrastructure. Their works are totally, however, a contribution in recognizing some features of this phenomenon [7, 11, 12, 14, 21]. Even attempts to formulate geography of infrastructure as a self-standing scientific discipline appeared, which is a grave methodological mistake [20, 21].

Just in view of the mentioned disproportion in matters of principle of the scientific approach to infrastructure problems the terminological and methodological discussions continue fully justified, namely especially in conditions of Czechoslovak geography.

It is to emphasize above all that, with regard to the delimitation of the concept of infrastructure, no geography of infrastructure or social infrastructure can be called into existence as a self-standing scientific branch. Geographical studying material objects proper only would not bring constructive results, because it must be necessarily connected with utilizing these objects, with accepting them in the framework of given economic branches, activities, or some spheres of problems of an interdisciplinary character. Thus infrastructure is studied by geography in the framework of its own existing disciplines. This fact, however, does not exclude rise of works aimed at infrastructural problems

only by subject (for instance, topical maps), nevertheless, in general, such works incline to either complex or branch researches.

Incorrectness in conceiving infrastructure as national-economic branches results especially from the principle that infrastructure forms only the material-technical basis of these branches. It is represented by particular objects, buildings, establishment belonging to the basic funds of particular branches and forming conditions for economic activity and life of population of a certain territory. Infrastructure alone is not able to fulfil functions that are assured by particular national-economic branches. Similarly the development of infrastructure can be interpreted only as a component of the development of given branch. In harmony with this fact infrastructure cannot be considered a factor of development, or that of forming regions and so on, although some authors evaluate it in this way wrongly in their studies.

Particular example of wrong consequences in conceiving infrastructure as branches are problems that would appear in our conditions in connection with delimitating infrastructure of health services. If one would adopt a branch approach, only objects belonging to the branch of health services could be included into the set of infrastructure of health services. Nevertheless, a part of these services are provided also by establishments of other departments (works polyclinics, health centres, nurseries, incorporated organizationally all in branches of manufacturing, agriculture, building industry and so on). And thus not to omit this part of infrastructure it is necessary to adopt the principle of material basis of particular activities.

The second sphere of problems is represented by the ways of delimitating objects belonging to infrastructure. Differences within this sphere are not so much grave as it was in the case of the definitions, namely especially owing to the fact that in a particular study attention is paid only to certain sets of objects and it is not so much significant to what extent the sets are declared, which as whole are not objects of the study.

In the case of social infrastructure the delimitation used in Soviet literature [10, 13, 23] may be considered as sufficiently wide and satisfying. In harmony with it social infrastructure is formed by objects of housing services (flats and their assuring with light, heat, water etc., hotel services, public greenery and so on), by those of communal services (personal hygiene, repair shops etc.), by those of trade and collective feeding, by those of services of social security, those of health services, school and pre-school services, cultural services (including providing information), transportation services and objects of security forces, juridical protection and public service.

It may be stated that the division mentioned is suitable, in general, for geographical investigations. Some deviations are shown in some authors, for instance, in incorporating housing fund into the technical infrastructure [21], or on the contrary, in widening social structure by objects of services provided within the sphere of labour and social life [22] and so on. In literature we frequently meet with a substantially closer delimitation, where, however, no wrong conceiving infrastructure is mostly the matter, but the selection of objects studied. In addition, also a relatively different way of separating social infrastructure (establishments serving for population only) from technical one (establishments serving for both population and manufacturing, as objects of transportation, power and water economy and so on) is applied, further im-

portant kinds of objects (administration, justice, institutions) not being taken into consideration [18]. This approach cannot be considered wrong, nevertheless, for the needs of most investigation, social infrastructure is purposeful to be conceived in the above mentioned wider extent.

ASPECTS OF GEOGRAPHICAL STUDYING SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE

Geographical studying social infrastructure and infrastructure in general must go out from the principle of its definition as material objects of certain kinds of activities, which are relatively precisely delimited. Studying these objects must possess its specific features and cannot be arbitrarily extended to another sphere of problems. Owing to that reason opinions that studying social infrastructure should be almost identical with the sphere of problems of services, non-productive sphere and so on are to be qualified as wrong. Although some authors declare in the titles of their works that they study social infrastructure, in fact they are engaged in problems of respective branches or in those of activities of service sphere. It is analogical also with manufacturing or technical infrastructure.

It is to be emphasized that in view of the above mentioned narrow delimitation of the concept of infrastructure also the extent of its geographical study is relatively reduced. Only such works may be assigned to the geographical research of infrastructure in an accurate sense of this term that study geographically relevant features of material objects forming infrastructure, namely their distribution, building character and capacity indices. On the other hand, studying problems of workers, users (customers), instrumentation, directions and intensity of using, and so on, exceeds already the framework of infrastructure and in addition, it is inaccurate to be considered for the study of it.

Such division of work and precise terminological differentiation are important particularly to prevent incorrect interpretations and wrong approaches, which make difficult particularly the international communicativeness of special literature. And what is most important: a new, non-existing geographical discipline not to be introduced without *raison d'être*.

With regard to the fact that the actual geographical sphere of problems of infrastructure, or also social infrastructure, is extraordinarily narrow by topics, it can be stated that only a small number of works devoted solely to the problems of infrastructure is determined by objective conditions. Nevertheless, it does not mean that these problems cannot be studied in combination with other spheres of problems. On the contrary, geographical studying these problems bears constructive results just in this direction.

On the basis of the existing geographical, economic and also sociological literature it may be stated that social infrastructure is studied most frequently in connection with the regional development or its planning [8, 9, 11, 19 and others]. Nevertheless, some authors [e. g. 15] do not recognize infrastructure as a factor of regional development, which surely is well-founded logically. In any case infrastructure is, however, a significant component of this factor, which thus is all the given activity. Establishment of a communication or trade shop can serve for an example. Both these objects in themselves are not able

to improve communication or buying conditions. The building proper of the shop is not able to improve supplying population, if there are no goods, employees in it, or if it is not open in certain hours. Nevertheless, just this building represents the basis where retail-trade activity can be realized. And analogically also communications serve only thanks to existence of transportation means, to organizational assuring the traffic and so on. At the same time they are significant in improving location conditions and spatial exchange.

In addition to considering infrastructure substantial component of the regional development factor, it is necessary to qualify it as a significant indicator of that development. For instance, in the work [18] a high degree of infrastructure concentration in large towns, or also in urban agglomerations, is emphasized. Stating the narrow relation between the distribution of infrastructure with proportions of its elements and the settlement structure can be applied to both social and technical infrastructure.

A striking dependence of the development of infrastructure and of settlement structure is one of the main and characteristic attributes of infrastructure [16]. To further of them belongs, for instance, the relative stability of objects, which along positive consequences has also some negatives [their relative, or moral outdateness, limited capacity, necessity of reconstructions and so on]. Infrastructure is significant in planning and projecting the development of settlements and settlement at all, further its function in residential environment and in material substance of the settlements.

If we consider assigning the study of infrastructural functions to investigations of respective activities as substantiated, then the above mentioned spheres of problems remain as examples for geographical approach to the problems of social infrastructure. Nevertheless, it is to emphasize repeatedly that it is only a constituent of more widely orientated investigations or approaches, so that infrastructure is only a part of both territorial and objectful context in studying the given geographical reality.

— Distribution of infrastructure, territorial differences in the number, in the structure by kinds and in the capacity of establishments, differentiation by types and size categories of the settlements; primary attention is paid to the sites of establishment concentrations.

— Relationships between establishment distribution and population, degree of saturating individual settlements with infrastructural objects, differences within the urban area (centre, local centres, periphery and so on). Determination of establishment location models.

— Character of infrastructural composition in individual settlements (particularly in higher-order central places), with details aimed at the individual kinds of infrastructure.

— Factors exerting influence on the infrastructural development (except for relationships to the potential sphere of users), as relationship to normatives and standards, urbanization development, central-place functions of the settlements and their economic functions, development of the economic basis, structural changes in population (social and by age), improvement of the territorial organization of infrastructure and so on.

— Differences in areal demands of the individual kinds of establishments, in ecological influences on the environment and so on.

— Infrastructure as a constituent of the developmental factor in stagnating settlements and in economically relatively little utilized areas.

— Role of infrastructure (social) in forming conditions for the growth and the structure of consumption of population as well as for the rise of regional differences in the level of consumption, in the picture of life and housing.

— Principles of locating infrastructure as a tool of both regional policy and restructuralization of spatial arrangement of both economic and social activities as well as determination of infrastructural level in harmony with the potential of natural and socioeconomic resources of the territory that it is being located in.

— Monitoring negative consequences in infrastructure when underdimensioned as well as retardation in its building up to an economic and social sphere in particular settlements or regions.

— Conceiving infrastructure as systems from the viewpoint of establishment kinds and their hierarchic significance and in harmony with the international socialist integration as international systems whose national infrastructural systems are subsystems.

— Accessibility of infrastructure in its wide conceiving, namely not only as a transportation one, but also economic-organizational one; functioning control and establishment utilization control.

— Dynamics of infrastructural development, tendencies of quantitative indices of the changes in infrastructure and prognosing the changes.

— Specific infrastructural items, for instance, mobile establishments and their significance in peripheral areas, establishments of private sector and so on.

— Problems of acquiring numeric and subjectful information about infrastructural objects.

Alongside examples mentioned social infrastructure can be studied also in other connections according to topical requirements for scientific research. At the same time object of the study can be extended by technical and manufacturing infrastructure, which e. g. in connection with agriculture is studied in the work [4]. Similarly attention can be paid to general characteristics of infrastructure [3, 5], or to methodological problems of the study as well as to special problems, for instance, to the relationship to economic systems or models [1, 17].

In spite of the fact that in harmony with the desirable trend the number of works devoted to the problems of social infrastructure and infrastructure in general will evidently grow also in our special literature and these terms will be frequent more and more, it is necessary to emphasize that above all the study of infrastructure in context with the problems of certain socioeconomic activities will be the matter. In this way no self-standing literature will appear about infrastructure and no self-standing geography of infrastructure or social infrastructure will be formed.

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Štefan Očovský

GEOGRAFICKÉ ŠTÚDIUM SOCIÁLNEJ INFRAŠTRUKTÚRY

V súvislosti so zvyšovaním počtu prác venovaných problematike infraštruktúry sa ukazuje naliehavým doriešiť zásadné problémy definovania a reálneho vyčlenenia infraštruktúry, ktoré sa prejavujú v geografickej, sociologickej i ekonomickej literatúre. Pretrvávajúca nejednotnosť v týchto základných otázkach si vyžaduje zaoberať sa pred každým výskumom pracovným vymedzením infraštruktúry a objasnením aspektov jej štúdia. Pritom vznikajú disproporcie v prístupoch jednotlivých autorov, a to nielen v prácach z rôznych vedných oblastí, ale aj v literatúre z jedného odboru a toho istého štátu. Tým sa komplikujú možnosti medzinárodného porovnávania výsledkov štúdia infraštruktúry, sťažuje sa medziviedná komunikatívnosť a ich praktické využitie a navyše vzniká priestor pre chybné alebo neúplné interpretácie.

Analýza pojmového vymedzenia infraštruktúry pozostáva z dvoch problémových okruhov, ktorými sú definície infraštruktúry a vyčlenenie objektov patriacich k infraštruktúre. Ako správne alebo prijateľné možno hodnotiť len tie definície, v ktorých sa in-

фраструктура považuje za súbor materiálnych elementov (budov, sietí, systémov) ktoré majú určitý charakter a funkcie. Najčastejšie sa rozčleňujú na výrobnú alebo technickú a sociálnu infraštruktúru. Toto rozčlenenie súvisí s vyčlenením aktivít, ktorých materiálnotechnická základňa tvorí infraštruktúru. Za výstižné možno považovať členenie, uvedené v práci [23].

Z prijatého pojmového vymedzenia infraštruktúry vyplýva, že nemôže jestvovať geografia infraštruktúry ako samostatná vedná disciplína. Štúdiom len samotných objektov, bez zohľadnenia ich výkonov, smerov a intenzity využitia a pod., by neprineslo konštruktívne výsledky. Infraštruktúru študuje geografia v rámci jednotlivých problémových okruhov, pričom sa samotná infraštruktúra musí interpretovať len ako báza, ktorá súvisí s realizáciou určitých aktivít, ktoré sú predmetom vedeckého štúdia. Nesprávne je tiež chápanie infraštruktúry ako národohospodárskych odvetví a v prípade sociálnej infraštruktúry jej stotožňovanie so sférou služieb alebo nevýrobnou sférou. Zavádzanie termínu infraštruktúra v takomto širokom význame nie je účelné.

Infraštruktúru pri dôslednom prístupe nemožno považovať za faktor regionálneho rozvoja, ale len za súčasť takéhoto faktora, ktorý predstavuje celá daná aktivita. Infraštruktúra môže vhodne slúžiť aj ako indikátor rozvoja sídel, regiónov a štátov. V geografických výskumoch sa môže problematika infraštruktúry uplatniť v rámci viacerých tematických okruhov. Ich príklady sú uvedené v závere predloženého príspevku. Súvisia predovšetkým so štúdiom sídelného systému a centrálnych miest, rozmiestnenia obyvateľstva a iných podmienok rozvoja jednotlivých aktivít a s konkrétnymi otázkami jednotlivých druhov infraštruktúry.

Штефан Очовски

ГЕОГРАФИЧЕСКОЕ ИЗУЧЕНИЕ СОЦИАЛЬНОЙ ИНФРАСТРУКТУРЫ

В связи с ростом численности трудов, посвященных проблематике инфраструктуры, становится насущным решить основные проблемы определения и реального выделения инфраструктуры, появляющиеся в географической, социологической и экономической литературе. Именуемая место несогласованность в этих основных вопросах требует каждый раз перед началом исследований заниматься рабочим определением инфраструктуры и пояснением аспектов ее изучения. При этом возникают диспропорции в подходах отдельных авторов, работающих в разных научных отраслях, но эти диспропорции наблюдаются также в литературе в пределах одной отрасли и даже в пределах одной и той же страны. Этим самым осложняются возможности международного сравнения результатов изучения инфраструктуры, затрудняется междисциплинарная коммуникативность и их практическое применение и, кроме этого, возникает возможность для ошибочной или неполной интерпретации.

Анализ понятийного определения инфраструктуры состоит из двух проблем: из дефиниции инфраструктуры и из выделения объектов относящихся к ней. В качестве правильных или обстоятельных можно считать такие дефиниции, в которых инфраструктура определяется как совокупность материальных элементов (зданий, сетей, систем), имеющих определенный характер и функции. Они чаще всего подразделяются на производственную или техническую и на социальную инфраструктуру. Это подразделение связано с выделением деятельностей, материально-технический базис которых образует инфраструктуру. В качестве достаточно верного можно считать подразделение, приведенное в источнике [23].

В результате принятого понятийного определения вытекает, что не может суще-

ствовать география инфраструктуры как самостоятельная научная дисциплина. Изучение лишь самых объектов, без учитывания их мощностей, направлений, интенсивности использования и т. п., не принесло бы конструктивных результатов. География изучает инфраструктуру в рамках отдельных проблемных сфер, причем сама инфраструктура должна интерпретироваться лишь как базис, приуроченный к реализации определенных деятельностей, являющихся предметом научного изучения. Неправильным также является понимание инфраструктуры в качестве на-роднохозяйственных отраслей и, в случае социальной инфраструктуры, ее отождествление со сферой обслуживания или же непроизводственной сферой. Внедрение термина инфраструктура в таком широком понимании не является целесообразным.

При последовательном подходе инфраструктуру нельзя рассматривать в качестве фактора регионального развития, а лишь в качестве составной такого фактора, который представляет вся данная деятельность. Напротив этого, инфраструктуру можно и уместно считать индикатором развития населенных пунктов, регионов, государств. В географических исследованиях проблематику инфраструктуры можно применять в рамках нескольких тематических сфер. Примеры такого использования приведены в заключении данной статьи. Они связаны, прежде всего, с изучением системы населенных пунктов и центральных мест, распределения населения и других условий развития отдельных деятельностей и с конкретными вопросами отдельных видов инфраструктуры.