

Mapping the Material World— Logistics in the Historical Narratives of Fernand Braudel

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This article examines the influence of logistics on economic and social structures, drawing on the work of French historian Fernand Braudel. Braudel emphasizes the crucial role of logistical facilities in managing the technical aspects of flow and shaping human societies throughout history. He notes that logistics impacts everyday life, particularly through the availability of goods and transportation costs. For example, the advent of railroads significantly transformed social and economic dynamics. Logistics also serves as instruments of power, allowing elites to control the flow of goods and capital, reinforcing social hierarchies. Technological innovations such as the telegraph and steamships have greatly enhanced the efficiency of logistical networks, promoting the integration of global markets. However, while Braudel underscores the importance of logistics, his analysis has certain limitations, particularly in overlooking the effects of political and cultural factors on societal transformation. To deepen the analysis, future research could explore global supply chain dynamics or the impact of logistics on contemporary social hierarchies.

Keywords: Fernand Braudel, history, logistical facilities, social hierarchies, structures, world economy (économie-monde)

INTRODUCTION

Fernand Braudel (1902–1985), a distinguished French historian and co-founder of the renowned *Annales* school alongside Lucien Febvre and Marc Bloch in the 1930s, profoundly shaped historical narratives with his introduction of the concept of the “*longue durée*” (Braudel, 2009). This approach emphasizes the slow-moving yet decisive forces that continuously shape human societies over extended periods. Unlike traditional history, which focuses on events, Braudel’s method highlights persistent factors such as geography, maritime networks, and political structures that play a crucial role in historical development. In this context, logistics—encompassing infrastructural and commercial networks, as well as methods for managing human and material resources—takes on a central importance. By examining logistics in Braudel’s historical narratives, one can observe its significant impact on economic and social structures, and its key role in shaping long-term historical dynamics. Braudel’s analysis offers a deeper insight into how historical processes unfold over time and how various factors influence the broader course of history. His influence on logistics management research remains substantial (see, for example, Ducruet [2008]).

Braudel says logistics transcends mere resource management to become a fundamental structuring factor. Facilities like roads, ports, waterways, and storage systems are crucial for improving trade and play

a key role in organizing societies and their long-term development (Kinser, 1981). For example, ancient trade routes like the famous Silk Road not only enabled the movement of goods between East and West but also facilitated the exchange of ideas, technologies, and cultures between civilizations. This cultural interchange significantly contributed to the formation of complex commercial networks and regional economic growth, fostering long-lasting economic and social ties. Similarly, in the 16th century, Mediterranean trade highlighted how Italian ports were pivotal in delivering goods between Europe and the East, thereby profoundly shaping economic relationships and regional dynamics. The integration of these logistical systems into broader historical processes illustrates their critical role in facilitating and directing global interactions. Consequently, understanding logistics allows us to appreciate the interconnectedness of societies and the transformative impact of trade on their development over time.

Braudel's concept of the "world economy" (*économie-monde* in French)—or "world system" as referred to by Wallerstein (2004)—emphasizes a global economic system where exchanges and interactions extend beyond national and regional borders. Logistics is central to this system, playing a crucial role in structuring the flow of goods and economic relations worldwide. It also has significant implications for local economic and social structures. The impact on daily lives is notable: logistical facilities affect the availability of consumer goods, transport costs, and access to essential resources like food and energy. These factors collectively influence regional development and quality of life. For example, as Chandler (1977) observes, the advent of railroads in the 19th century revolutionized delivery methods, reducing costs and improving goods' physical distribution, impacting product prices, living conditions, and accelerated urbanization. This transformation illustrates the strong interplay between logistics and socio-economic change.

In summary, logistics is integral to major historical transformations. Technological advancements, such as the introduction of steam locomotives and steamships during the Industrial Revolution, fundamentally redefined economic dynamics by enabling quicker and more efficient movement of products and information. These innovations spurred economic expansion and globalization and reshaped social hierarchies, creating new economic elites and fostering accelerated urban growth. Braudel's analysis is powerful for exploring how changes in logistical systems and organizations significantly influence economic and social structures. By highlighting the importance of goods circulation in historical change, this analysis offers valuable insights into contemporary issues, particularly those related to shifts in international trade centers over the past four decades and the resulting geopolitical tensions. Understanding these dynamics is crucial for navigating current global challenges and predicting future trends.

"LONGUE DURÉE" CONTEXT

Rather than focusing on one-off events, Braudel's work highlights the deep, enduring structures that mold societies over extended periods (Hufton, 1986). Far from traditional historical narratives centered on battles and revolutions, his approach favors a more subtle and complex analysis of economic and social dynamics. Among the key elements of the long term, logistics occupies a central place. More than a simple mechanism for efficiently managing the flow of goods and information, it is a structuring factor that significantly influences the organization of societies throughout the ages. From the ancient trade routes of Antiquity to the intricate port facilities of the Middle Ages, supply chains drive economic development, regional integration, and the spread of ideas across diverse cultures. Braudel offers a global vision in which logistics, far from merely a technical detail, becomes a fundamental tool for understanding the great movements of history. By examining how logistics interacts with cultural exchanges and technological innovations, we gain valuable insights into how societies adapt to changing circumstances and how their relationships evolve over time.

General Background

As early as the 1950s, Braudel transformed our understanding of history with his concept of the *longue durée* (see the contributions compiled by Lee [2012]). Unlike event-driven history, which focuses on singular occurrences and individual actions, the *longue durée* examines the deep-rooted, enduring structures

that shape societies over decades, or even centuries. Braudel introduced this approach mainly through five major books written in French: *La Méditerranée et le Monde Méditerranéen à l'Époque de Philippe II* (1949), *Navires et Marchandises à l'Entrée du Port de Livourne (1547-1611)* (1951, in collaboration with Ruggiero Romano), *Civilisation Matérielle, Économie et Capitalisme: XVe–XVIIIe Siècle* (1979a), *La Dynamique du Capitalisme* (1979b), and *Grammaire des Civilisations* (1987). Despite their thematic diversity, these works all converge in highlighting underlying forces that transcend a succession of isolated events. Braudel also stressed the importance of viewing events within their broader context, as they often represent the visible manifestations of slower, more complex transformations.

Braudel distinguishes between three levels of historical analysis: events, conjunctures, and structures (Perrot, 1981). Events are the discrete incidents that typically attract the attention of historians, such as battles or revolutions. Conjunctures refer to intermediate phenomena that influence events, such as economic cycles or political transitions. Finally, structures are the deep-seated and lasting factors that determine the *longue durée* of history, such as economic systems, social hierarchies, and infrastructure. Braudel emphasizes the constant interplay between these levels, with events frequently influenced by conjunctures, which in turn are rooted in structures. This multi-layered approach allows for a deeper understanding of history, not just through singular occurrences, but by considering the *longue durée* dynamics that affect the evolution of societies. This perspective is valuable in raising awareness of the unique features of today's world (Lee, 2018).

In this context, logistics—encompassing all methods and means used to manage the flow of goods, information, and resources—is fundamental at the structural level. This includes facilities such as roads, ports, and waterways and supply chain management methods. These elements are essential for understanding how human societies have been organized and evolved, in line with Diamond's (1997) analysis that integrates anthropology, geography, and history. For example, the road and port systems of antiquity were crucial in developing trade and exchanges between different regions of the Mediterranean. Roman trade routes, such as the *Via Appia*, not only facilitated the movement of armies and administrators but enabled the exchange of goods between Rome and its provinces. These facilities supported interconnected commercial networks that profoundly influenced the economic and social dynamics of the era. Furthermore, they laid the groundwork for later developments in logistics and trade, demonstrating how infrastructure and management practices have continually shaped the course of human civilization.

Logistics as a Structuring Factor

From a Braudelian perspective, logistics is not merely a tool or a set of operational procedures but a structuring force that profoundly influences long-term economic and social dynamics. Logistical facilities—such as ports, waterways, and systems for storage and distribution—are foundational elements that affect the organization of both societies and economies (Thue, 2008). These facilities enable efficient movement of goods, people, and ideas, catalyze economic development, and foster regional integration. A prime example is the Silk Road, which connected China with the Roman Empire. Far from being merely a trade route for luxury goods like silk, spices, and gems, it also facilitated the exchange of knowledge between diverse cultures. Andrea (2014) argues that the commodities transported were as many ideas as they were goods. The caravans that traversed the Silk Road carried not only merchandise but also served as conduits for the spread of religions, philosophies, and technological innovations. This vibrant interchange illustrates how logistics functioned as a catalyst for transformation, shaping civilizations by fostering mutual understanding and collaboration across vast geographical distances.

Logistics also exerts a central influence in molding local and regional economies. For example, in medieval times, ports and trade routes were critical to the rise of prosperous merchant cities. Ports such as Venice and Genoa developed sophisticated logistical facilities that enhanced trade management between Europe and the Orient, transforming these cities into hubs of international trade. Their strategic locations and advanced logistics allowed them to establish vast commercial networks that spanned continents, significantly impacting economic and social development. These networks facilitated not just trade but also cultural exchange, contributing to the period's broader economic and cultural evolution. According to Braudel, logistics as a structuring force goes beyond the mere management of material flows;

it encompasses the broader social, economic, and cultural dimensions of history. Transport networks are key to understanding how human societies have organized themselves and evolved over time, revealing patterns and processes that have shaped global history.

LOGISTICS–WORLD ECONOMY

The concept of the world economy originally explored by Braudel examines how human exchanges and interactions span extensive distances, linking diverse economic zones around the globe. Within this intricate “spider’s web,” certain economic centers are central, directing the flow of goods, capital, and information through elaborate networks. Thanks to their advanced logistical facilities, these hubs not only improved international trade but also shaped their respective eras’ economic and political trends. Braudel emphasizes the pivotal role of ports as focal points in each world economy. Positioned strategically, these ports enhance global exchange while significantly impacting economic relationships and the distribution of political power. Understanding port facilities is essential for grasping how economic dynamics evolve and transform worldwide. Additionally, the interplay between these centers and peripheral regions reveals patterns of dependency and growth, highlighting the interconnectedness of local economies with broader global systems. Such an understanding aids in comprehending contemporary economic challenges and the ongoing shifts in power among nations and regions.

Defining the Concept

Braudel’s concept of the world economy is crucial for representing the economic dynamics described above. A world economy represents a complex economic system that extends beyond national and regional boundaries, involving human exchanges and interactions over vast geographical distances. This concept highlights the interdependence and connections between various economic zones worldwide, demonstrating how they influence commercial, financial, and cultural relations worldwide. Within this system, certain centers of economic power exert a significant influence by directing the flow of goods, capital, and information across the globe (Fourquet, 1988). These centers, often specific cities or regions, leverage their strategic positions and advanced logistical facilities to play a disproportionately large role in global economic exchanges, thereby shaping international trade patterns and investment flows. By controlling key logistical hubs, the centers of economic power can set trends, dictate terms, and foster economic dependencies that impact global economic stability and development.

In the 16th century, for example, cities like Venice and Genoa occupied prominent positions as international trade hubs. Their significance extended beyond merely serving as transit points; it was also due to their strategic geographical locations and their sophisticated logistical facilities. Venice, with its extensive ports and commercial networks, and Genoa, with its advanced storage and distribution systems, facilitated trade between Europe and the Orient, contributing to developing a connected global economy. Both cities acted as pivotal nodes in the world economy, influencing trade flows and economic and political trends across Europe and beyond. Braudel’s concept of the world economy thus represents how interactions among distant economic centers are vital to the overall functioning of the economic system. This perspective remains highly relevant, offering a framework for understanding contemporary developments in globalized economies. The emergence of new trade routes and technological advancements in logistics continues to reshape global trade dynamics, echoing the historical patterns established by these early centers. Moreover, their legacy can be seen in today’s economic practices, emphasizing the enduring importance of connectivity in driving growth and cooperation among nations.

Port Importance

Braudel emphasizes that logistics is a vital component of any world economy. It encompasses the systems and facilities required to improve the movement of goods and capital through intricate networks. Elements such as ports, roads, waterways, and railroads are foundational to structuring and driving the global economy. These logistical components are essential for the physical transport of goods and managing supply chains and coordinating financial and informational flows between buyers and sellers

(Hexter, 1972). Moreover, advancements in technology and improvements in supply chain management are enhancing these processes, leading to reduced costs and shorter lead times. Efficiently managing the flow of goods and capital is crucial for maintaining the balance and fluidity of the global economy, as logistical facilities enhance both the export of goods from producing regions and their receipt and distribution in consuming regions. Furthermore, effective logistics can stimulate economic growth by fostering international trade relationships and enabling access to new markets, thereby promoting innovation and competition in various sectors of the economy.

Braudel focused on ports, where docks and warehouses are crucial for the continuous flow of valuable goods such as spices, textiles, and precious metals like gold. The effective management of these flows, supported by advanced port facilities, has not only contributed to the economic growth of their hinterlands but also strengthened their influence on international trade and regional economic dynamics. As hubs of global commerce, ports are instrumental in enabling efficient coordination between buyers and sellers worldwide. Kasaba *et al.* (1986) support this Braudelian view. Logistical facilities have a profound impact on economic relationships between different regions. These facilities are more than just technical tools; they are pivotal elements that shape how economic centers interact, develop, and establish strategic connections. Ultimately, they are fundamental in defining global power networks. Furthermore, integrating technology within these logistical frameworks enhances operational efficiency, facilitates real-time tracking, and enables better decision-making processes, reinforcing the importance of ports as vital nodes in the ever-evolving landscape of global trade.

LOGISTICS–ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL STRUCTURES

Though often overlooked, logistics is a silent yet omnipresent driving force in the history of human societies. According to Braudel, it is not merely a management technique but a strong dynamic that affects our daily lives and economic and social structures. His work illustrates how logistical facilities, despite their seemingly technical nature, are essential in structuring economies and social hierarchies. By exploring the impacts of logistical changes, Braudel reveals how they transform living conditions and power relations on a global scale, influencing everything from trade patterns to urban development. This comprehensive view underscores how logistics facilitates immediate economic transactions and drives long-term societal evolution and stability. Viewed through this perspective, logistics emerges as a fundamental factor in the evolution of human societies, molding economic exchanges and social structures in significant ways, and offering crucial insights into historical and contemporary global interactions.

Daily Lives

Logistics, often viewed through the lens of major infrastructural and commercial networks, also profoundly affects people's daily lives. Indeed, supply chains directly impact the availability and cost of goods, thereby influencing the lifestyles of human societies. Cameron (1973) introduced a periodization based on "logistics," highlighting how fluctuations in this domain affect food supply volumes. For Braudel, understanding this aspect of logistics is crucial for grasping how infrastructural transformations shape individual experiences and social structures. A notable example is the rise of railroads in the 19th century. The advent and expansion of railroads facilitated the faster and more efficient movement of goods, with significant repercussions for industrial regions' social and economic dynamics. Prior to railroads, the transport of goods was limited by road conditions and transport capacities, leading to high costs and delays. Consequently, railroads enhanced trade efficiency and contributed to urbanization, reshaping the demographic landscape and fostering new economic opportunities within burgeoning cities.

The development of railroads dramatically reduced transport costs, allowing for the distribution of goods at more affordable prices. This cost reduction directly impacted product prices and availability, substantially improving living conditions. For example, as Braudel notes, food prices in Europe fell due to more efficient transport, making it more accessible to poorer households. Savitt (2000) highlights that, from this perspective, Braudel's insights into daily lives are particularly pertinent to marketing. Additionally, in the 19th century, railroads enhanced mobility, fostering the growth of local and regional markets and

driving urbanization. Braudel explores how these logistical advancements transformed local societies and economies, noting that improved transport networks facilitated greater market integration, spurring economic growth and social innovation. Furthermore, the expansion of railroads connected rural areas with urban centers, enabling agricultural products to reach consumers more swiftly. This integration not only benefited producers and consumers alike but also led to the emergence of new industries and employment opportunities, fundamentally reshaping social structures.

Social Hierarchies

Supply chains facilitate economic exchanges and significantly influence and sustain social hierarchies. Braudel highlights in his five books that societies controlling networks for the circulation of goods within a global economy wield considerable economic and social power. This power is often leveraged to reinforce the dominance of commercial and political elites. A key contribution of Braudel's work is exploring how these elites exploit logistical facilities to enhance and maintain their influence. Transport networks and port facilities grant privileged groups the ability to control the flow of goods and capital, extending their control beyond mere economic exchanges to manipulate social structures and hierarchies on a broader scale. This dynamic results in the concentration of wealth and power, thereby affecting relations between different social classes within the global economy and influencing the distribution of resources and opportunities across diverse regions and societies. Consequently, these imbalances create systemic inequalities that can perpetuate cycles of poverty, hindering social mobility and entrenching disparities among populations.

A relevant historical example is the great trading companies of the 17th and 18th centuries, such as the East India Company (see Lawson [1993] for the company's history). These companies dominated international trade and used their strategic control over trade routes and ports to reinforce their economic and political power. Through their monopolistic practices, they molded colonial policies and exerted significant control over local and regional resources. Moreover, these companies established advanced logistical facilities, incorporating early supply chain management into their strategies. Braudel particularly analyzes how these major trading companies systematically integrated logistics into their strategies of dominance. According to Braudel, their ability to control and optimize logistical operations enabled them to sustain a hegemonic position on the global stage, effectively exploiting resources and markets to consolidate their power and maximize profits. Additionally, their influence extended beyond mere economic transactions, as they shaped cultural exchanges and governance structures, thus embedding their dominance deeply into the fabric of both local and global societies.

Resources and Trade Routes

Natural resources and trade routes are fundamental in shaping economies over the long term, and Braudel places significant emphasis on their roles in his writings (Kinser, 1981). As Diamond (1997) observes, early human societies developed logistical facilities to exploit and transport goods, profoundly impacting economic development and the establishment of key exchange nodes. The trade routes of Antiquity, such as the Silk Road, exemplify the crucial role of logistical facilities in resource exploitation. This route not only facilitated the transport of valuable resources between East and West but also served as a conduit for exchanging ideas and technologies, linking production centers with consumer markets. Exchanges along this route helped forge powerful, interconnected commercial networks, enhancing economic and cultural dynamics worldwide. Furthermore, these interactions often led to the diffusion of innovations, influencing local practices and contributing to the evolution of societies, ultimately shaping the trajectory of global economic history.

Logistical facilities such as caravanserais, warehouses, and paved roads addressed geographical and climatic challenges, fostering the growth of prosperous cities and extensive commercial networks (Liu, 2010). This interconnectedness spurred economic growth and facilitated rich intercultural exchanges, influencing political, social, and economic developments in the regions involved. For example, improved logistical facilities allowed for better management of travel and trade risks, thereby enhancing their efficiency. According to Braudel, logistics is a pivotal factor in the evolution of economic and social structures (Schouten *et al.*, 2019). While it impacts everyday life by facilitating access to goods, it primarily

influences social hierarchies, enabling global elites to control flows and maintain enduring dominance over international commercial networks. Additionally, the strategic use of logistics can exacerbate inequalities, as those in power leverage these systems to prioritize their interests, often marginalizing less privileged groups and communities within the broader economic framework.

Vitali's (1993) unpublished doctoral dissertation is particularly illustrative of Braudel's contributions to the significance of logistical facilities. The study focuses on the economic space within the city systems of northern Italy in the 14th century, a region characterized by the interconnectedness of land, river, and sea routes. As Vitali (1993) highlights, a series of technical advancements significantly reduced transport costs. The lower *ad valorem* freight rates expanded the space for trade, and opening a sea route between Italy and Flanders, which was cheaper than the land route, provided a substantial boost to commerce. Thus, it can be concluded that the true measure of distance in economic spaces is determined by the speed at which goods (and people) can be moved. In the Middle Ages, and at least until the 14th century, transport was so slow that large territories remained isolated. Only northern Italian cities such as Venice and Genoa ultimately overcame the constraints of distance (Vitali, 1993).

LOGISTICS–HISTORICAL DISRUPTIONS

Supply chains are constantly evolving in response to economic, technological, and political upheavals experienced by human societies. Braudel explores how these upheavals influence economic and social structures in his five books, emphasizing the interplay between logistical advances and major historical disruptions. One of the most significant periods for these transformations was the Industrial Revolution, which marked a radical overhaul of logistical facilities and economic dynamics (Szostak, 1991). Before the Industrial Revolution, supply chains relied primarily on traditional means of transport such as horses and sailing ships, which constrained the speed and capacity of goods transport. However, the Industrial Revolution introduced technological innovations like steam locomotives and steamships, which profoundly transformed supply chains. These new technologies facilitate faster and more efficient movement of goods and information, significantly impacting economic and social structures.

There is no need to revisit the railroads, which revolutionized economic dynamics by transporting large quantities of goods and people over long distances, thereby enhancing market access and reducing transport costs. However, it is worth focusing on telegraph lines, another crucial innovation of the Industrial Revolution. These lines profoundly altered the supply chains of the era, reshaping how information and goods were managed. Telegraphs were pivotal in transforming supply chain management by enabling better coordination of economic activities and precise tracking of shipments. The rapid exchange of information greatly improved the efficiency of routing operations, facilitating more agile responses to market fluctuations and fostering quicker decision-making. According to Braudel, the communications revolution played a significant role in market globalization, making commercial transactions not only smoother but also more interconnected on a global scale, and promoting a more integrated world economy.

Another emblematic example is shipping, where technological innovations have significantly impacted supply chains. The advent of steamships revolutionized international trade by allowing goods to traverse continents more swiftly and reliably. Before steamships, sea voyages were at the mercy of wind and currents, leading to extended delays and substantial shipment risks. Steamships circumvented these uncertainties, providing greater predictability and regularity in maritime journeys. This technological advancement boosted trade and spurred the international expansion of supply chains, making foreign markets more accessible and enhancing the efficiency of international procurement and logistics. The development of steamships led to increased cargo volumes and a more extensive global network of trade routes. According to Braudel, innovations in maritime transport thus facilitated economic integration, contributing to the emergence and success of new trade routes, which he considers a major historical disruption with far-reaching effects.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Braudel's historical narratives, strongly influenced by his long-term approach, offer a unique perspective on the place of logistics in the evolution of human societies. Through his seminal analyses, he highlights the way in which the organization of supply chains profoundly influences economic and social structures (Lefort, 1952). Braudel emphasizes that logistical facilities go beyond their mere technical function to position themselves as crucial elements significantly influencing market exchanges, everyday living conditions, and power structures across different regions. However, for all its intellectual power, Braudel's analysis is not without its limitations, notably in downplaying the importance of various influential factors, such as political, cultural, and environmental dynamics that shape historical narratives. The result is several important research avenues which we hope will attract significant attention and enrich our understanding of the intricate interactions between logistics management, economic history, and social transformations over the *longue durée*.

Contributions

One of Braudel's significant contributions, which remains relatively underexplored by supply chain management researchers and students, is his emphasis on the crucial role of logistics in shaping societies and economies throughout history. By incorporating logistics into his *longue durée* analysis, including through specific events such as the siege of the port of Toulon in 1707 (Vézier, 2012), Braudel provides insights into how methods of transporting and storing goods withstand various historical disruptions. He illustrates how logistical facilities, such as ports, waterways, and railroads, transcend their technical functions. These essential elements play a formative role in economic and social systems, affecting trade dynamics, social relations, and daily living conditions. By exploring their impact on power structures and commerce, Braudel highlights the pivotal importance of supply chain management in the development of human societies over the centuries, and his historical narratives also offer valuable perspectives on some of the environmental challenges facing the planet (Moore, 2003).

Logistics as a structuring factor is particularly significant in Braudel's monumental work, which aims to demonstrate that efficient supply chains enhance the movement of goods, people, and ideas, thereby facilitating the expansion of a world economy. His historical examples effectively illustrate how logistical facilities have contributed to the development of complex trade networks and the economic growth of various regions. In contrast, the Covid-19 pandemic starkly exposed the vulnerability of global supply chains, threatening several world economies (Anekal, 2022). Braudel also highlights the crucial role of technological advancements in shaping innovative supply chains and their simultaneous impact on historical disruptions. The rise of railroads and steamships in the 19th century is a prime example of how logistical innovations redefined economic and social structures over the long term. These changes significantly affected product prices, the availability of goods, and social hierarchies, underscoring the connection between logistical progress and major historical shifts.

Limitations and Perspectives

Despite its significant contributions, Braudel's analysis has certain limitations. One major limitation is the tendency to place disproportionate emphasis on logistical facilities at the expense of other influential factors. While logistical facilities are crucial to developing a global economy, it is important to acknowledge that economic and social dynamics are also shaped by political, cultural, institutional, and even epidemiological factors, as Diamond (1997) noted. Furthermore, although Braudel's historical narratives were revolutionary for their time, they sometimes lack detailed examination of the specific mechanisms through which logistical facilities affect human societies and power structures. His analyses are often descriptive (Revel, 1986), which is common in economic history, and tend to overlook a more nuanced exploration of the causal relationships between supply chains and economic and social transformations. This includes a more "political" perspective on global capitalism, as Wallerstein (1974) discussed.

Three research avenues could be pursued to address these limitations and deepen our understanding of logistics in Braudel's work. Firstly, adopting a more integrative approach that examines the interplay

between logistical facilities and economic, political, and cultural factors could provide a more comprehensive view of historical developments. Analyzing the mechanisms through which logistical facilities impact economic and social structures would also be valuable, incorporating insights from supply chain management studies. Secondly, comparing the historical contexts explored by Braudel with contemporary challenges could yield fresh perspectives on the evolution of supply chains. Investigating the effects of digital technologies, global supply chains, and environmental concerns on logistical facilities would offer relevant insights. Thirdly, a more detailed exploration of how logistics influences social hierarchies and power structures could reveal how elites utilize—or manipulate—supply chains to maintain their dominance. Such analysis might clarify the connections between supply chain control and the formation of modern social hierarchies.

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