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The transport geography of logistics and freight distribution

Markus Hesse ^a ... Jean-Paul Rodrigue ^b

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Abstract

Goods movement and freight distribution are widely underrepresented in regional science and geographical research. This is surprising since a large body of traditional spatial theory has been developed with respect to transportation costs or to trade areas: those aspects that were originally closely connected with the exchange of goods.

Growing attention is being paid in geography to related subjects, such as the emergence of global production networks, to structural changes in retail or to the commodification of modern consumption. To a certain extent, these processes depend upon the efficient transfer of information, finance and physical goods. Yet, with a few exceptions, the freight sector appears to be neglected in contemporary research. This paper provides an overview of the emerging transport geography of logistics and freight distribution. It challenges the traditional perspective where transportation is considered as a derived demand with the idea that logistical requirements underline transportation as a component of an integrated demand. The paper provides an analysis of the evolution of logistics as it pertains to the core dimensions of transport geography (flows

logistics as it pertains to the core dimensions of transport geography (flows, nodes/locations and networks). The concept of logistical friction is also introduced to illustrate the inclusion of the multidimensional notion of impedance in integrated freight transport demand.



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Keywords

Logistics; Geography; Freight Transport; Physical distribution; Globalization

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