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Research and Writing Chapter 8

In the modern era, global networks are vast and ever-multiplying. Various companies and markets from all over make worldwide connections in order to generate wealth for themselves and their countries. In today's age, these network connections are far easier to make, with the power of air travel to import/export, industrial machinery to produce better products, and tools for social networking (instagram, facebook, going viral, etc.) In more ancient times, these connections were made by journeys on foot or across seas, by way of trade routes and national treaties and agreements – it was not as simple as it is today.

There are many things in my own life that would indicate my own access and usage of this global network. One very important part of my everyday life are my tech devices. I own an Apple laptop and phone. Though the Apple company is “American-made” and was founded/created by an American citizen, 90% of the product is built in China. Another important aspect of my daily life is my clothing. Much of my clothing right now is from the store, H&M. The tag of the coat that I have been wearing is labeled “made in Bangladesh,” which means that it has been sewn, dyed, and stuffed in the country of Bangladesh. Additionally, the boots I have been wearing all winter are Doc Martens; the leather used to make the boots is taken from various tanneries in both England and South America, while the manufacturing is mostly done in China, Thailand, and other Asian countries.

Regarding food, my family is Latino and we use Goya products like adobo to season the food we eat daily. Although the company headquarters is in New Jersey, U.S.A., the company was originally founded in Puerto Rico by Spaniards who emigrated there. My favorite ice cream brand is Talenti, whose ingredients are sourced from Argentina, the Philippines, South Africa and more, depending on flavor. However, the product is made in factories across the States.

As we can see, these connections to Asia, South America, Africa, Europe, and the Caribbean are maintained overseas by companies based in the United States. However, there are always third or even fourth-party connections that stabilize the overall network. For example, how could I buy my iPhone and MacBook which were assembled in China without the store planted in New York City? How could I receive my food products without the trucks that drive them from state to state, and the various grocery stores that house them until purchase? For wearable goods that are shipped overseas to my doorstep there must be a corresponding airline, trucking company, warehouses, and postal services being paid to get the product to its consumer. The networking connections overlap both nationally and internationally in order for all of the involved parties to benefit.

Although some of my everyday products are produced in the country that I live in, the United States is known for being a country with an extremely high export to import ratio. This means that many of the goods that we enjoy here in America are not locally sourced or assembled either. Much has been said about the country's growing dependence on exporting giants like China, and other small Asian countries. Though there are all-American made brands and companies, the elements of my daily life are fully dependent on these global connections – my life would be very different without them!

