# Supply Chain Disruptions, the Structure of Production Networks, and the Impact of Globalization

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#### BUSINESS

### **Tesla to Halt Production in Germany as Red Sea Conflict Hits Supply Chains**

Disruption related to attacks on ships by Houthi rebels raise risk of supply-chain crisis in Europe

By William Boston Follow, Costas Paris Follow and Benoit Faucon Follow Updated Jan. 12, 2024 1:45 pm ET

BERLIN—Tesla TSLA -3.67% ▼ plans to halt production at its only large factory in Europe for two weeks because of a lack of parts, a sign of how the fallout from recent attacks on ships in the Red Sea is starting to ripple through the global economy.

Yemen-based, Iran-backed Houthi fighters have launched successive attacks on



Tractable model of (global, complex) supply chains to:

- characterize short-run impact of a shock,
- contrast with long-run impact,
- investigate how impacts depend on network/complexity,
- examine impact of globalization on fragility.

### Some Related Literature

- Foundational work: Leontief (1936), Long Jr and Plosser (1983), Acemoglu, Carvalho, Ozdaglar, and Tahbaz-Salehi (2012)
- Surveys: Bernard (2018), Carvalho and Tahbaz-Salehi (2019), Baqaee and Rubbo (2022), Antràs and Chor (2022), Elliott and Golub (2022), Baldwin and Freeman (2022).
- Production networks: e.g., Dhyne et al. (2015); Magerman et al. (2016); Brummitt et al. (2017); Baqaee (2018); Oberfield (2018); Acemoglu and Tahbaz-Salehi (2020), Acemoglu and Azar (2020), Baqaee and Farhi (2021), Carvalho et al. (2021),Kopytov et al. (2021), Di Giovanni et al. (2022); Bernard et al. (2022), Elliott et al. (2022), Bui et al. (2022), König et al. (2022), Pellet and Tahbaz-Salehi (2023), Grossman et al. (forthcoming, 2023a,b)
- Trade networks: e.g., Furusawa and Konishi (2007); Chaney (2014); Bernard et al. (2019); Grossmand et al. (2021)
- Micro network structure: e.g., Bimpikis et al. (2018), Bimpikis et al. (2019), Amelkin and Vohra (2020)

Outline







3 The Impacts of Shocks: Contrasting Short and Long Runs

4 Complexity, Fragility, Globalization

### Model



- $n \in \{1, \dots, N\}$  countries,
- $\bullet \ m \in \{1, \dots, M\}$  intermediate goods,
- $f \in \{1, \ldots, F\}$  final goods,
- $L_n$  units of labor country n,
- $T_n$  (finite) set technologies country n.



Cobb Douglas Example











## Equilibrium



- Laborers/Consumers
  - supply labor inelastically,  $L_n$  in country n;
  - maximize homothetic preferences for final goods,  $U(c_1, \ldots, c_F)$ .
- Producers
  - maximize profits  $p_{\tau}y_{\tau} \sum_{\tau'} p_{\tau'}x_{\tau'\tau}$ ,
  - s.t feasible production:  $-\tau_k y_{\tau} = \sum_{\tau': O(\tau') = k} x_{\tau' \tau}$ .
- Markets clear standard Arrow-Debreu equilibrium.

Example w Cycles (Labor Omitted, Final Goods in Green)



Outline







The Impacts of Shocks: Contrasting Short and Long Runs

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## Impact of Shock



For  $\tau$  with output k, we normalized  $\tau_k = 1$ .

Let's vary  $au_k$  to capture shocks/disruptions

Analyze/contrast:

- Long run: new equilibrium using shocked technologies,
- Short run: work with existing supplies/shortages.



### Proposition (Hulten's Theorem)

Consider a generic equilibrium and technology  $\tau,$  with  $O(\tau)=k,$  used in positive amounts in equilibrium. Then

$$\frac{\partial \log(U)}{\partial \log(\tau_k)} = \frac{\partial \log(GDP)}{\partial \log(\tau_k)} = \frac{p_\tau y_\tau}{GDP}.$$

### Long-Run: Hulten's Theorem





• Sufficient statistic: fraction of GDP spent on shocked technology.

## Long-Run: Hulten's Theorem





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- Intuition—adjust by sourcing more of that input at its cost.

## Long-Run: Hulten's Theorem





- Sufficient statistic: fraction of GDP spent on shocked technology.
- Intuition—adjust by sourcing more of that input at its cost.
- Network matters in background as it determines equilibrium
  - but don't need to see network to estimate long-run impact.







 $p_1 y_1 = 1/10 * 2;$  $GDP = \sum_f p_f c_f = 1;$ 

Marginal impact:

$$\frac{p_1 y_1}{\mathsf{GDP}} = \frac{1}{5}$$

Extrapolating for a 10% shock, (source more)

Long Run impact: 1/50th of GDP







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"There would be a set of economists who would sit around explaining that electricity was only 4% of the economy, and so if you lost 80% of electricity, you couldn't possibly have lost more than 3% of the economy...[However,] we would understand that [...] when there wasn't any electricity, there wasn't really going to be much economy."

# Short-Run Impact of a Shock



Hulten: Production is perfectly flexible and fully adjusts. (Marginal result.)

Now: Opposite benchmark with no adjustments. (Our result holds away from the margin.)

- Cannot adjust the technologies being used.
- Cannot source additional units from alternative suppliers.
- Prices cannot adjust—rationing of disrupted goods is proportional



#### Short Run Disruption 10%





#### Short Run Disruption 10%





#### Short Run Disruption 10%







Labor, endow 10

#### Long Run Disruption 2%































## Short-Run Impact: The Minimum Disruption Problem





subject to

- **()** shock constraints:  $\hat{y}_{\tau} \leq \lambda y_{\tau}$  for all  $\tau \in T^{shocked}$ ,
- 2 technology constraints:  $\hat{y}_{\tau} \leq \left(\min_{\text{Inputs used by } \tau} \frac{\text{New input level}}{\text{Original input level}}\right) y_{\tau}$  for active  $\tau$ ,

**③** proportional rationing:  $\hat{x}_{\tau\tau'} = x_{\tau\tau'} \left(\frac{\hat{y}_{\tau}}{y_{\tau}}\right)$  for active  $\tau'\tau$ ,

Inactive technologies stay inactive.

## Shock Propagation Algorithm

Define an algorithm that traces shock (like example): it converges to a solution of the minimum disruption problem.

Let  $F(T^{shocked})$  be the final goods on directed paths from shocked technologies.

### Proposition (Upper Bound)

Consider a shock that reduces the output of technologies  $\tau \in T^{shocked}$  to  $\lambda < 1$  of their original levels. The proportion of lost GDP is bounded above by

$$(1-\lambda)\left(\frac{\sum_{f\in F(T^{shocked})} p_f c_f}{GDP}\right)$$

### Sufficient Conditions for Bound to Bite



• All producers of given good and any "substitute" for it in a supply chain are shocked.

• Globalization/Low shipping costs: for low enough transportation costs generically get unique technologies used.

• Other sufficient conditions (graph-cut) in paper.

## Short Run vs Long Run

Long Run, Hulten's Theorem,

$$\frac{\partial \log(U)}{\partial \log(\lambda)} = \frac{\partial \log(GDP)}{\partial \log(\lambda)} = \frac{(1-\lambda)p_{\tau}y_{\tau}}{GDP}.$$

Short Run, when bound bites

$$\frac{\Delta \log(U)}{\Delta \log(\lambda)} = \frac{\Delta \log(GDP)}{\Delta \log(\lambda)} = \frac{(1-\lambda)\sum_{f \in F(\tau)} p_f c_f}{GDP}.$$



# Short Run vs Long Run

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• Long Run: shocking more expensive technologies has a larger impact.

 Short Run: shocking technologies that are used in more final goods has a larger impact.

### Long Run: Network Irrelevant, Impact 1%




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## Short Run: Network Matters, All Downstream Goods Impacted 5% or 10%





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## Short Run vs Long Run

 $\bigcirc$ 

Short Run:

- Network position matters,
- Disrupt all final goods downstream

Long Run:

- (Much) cheaper than Short Run,
- Relative cost of input matters,
- Network matters, but only to extent changes costs.

Outline



1 Introduction



3 The Impacts of Shocks: Contrasting Short and Long Runs

Omplexity, Fragility, Globalization

## Supply Chain Complexity and Disruption



Under the bound, randomly disrupt any technology to  $\lambda < 1$ :

- Probability  $\pi$  disrupt any given intermediate technology, independent.
- S = complexity: average # inputs used produce a final good.

## Supply Chain Complexity and Disruption





#### $\mathsf{SR}\; \mathbf{1}\pi(1-\lambda)$











 ${\rm SR}\; {4\pi(1-\lambda)i}$ 





SR  $16\pi(1-\lambda)$ 



 ${\rm SR}\; {4 \pi (1-\lambda) i}$ 



Under the bound, randomly disrupt any technology to  $\lambda < 1$ :

- Probability  $\pi$  disrupt any given intermediate technology, independent.
- S = average # inputs used produce a final good.
- RC = E[(cost of random input)/(costs of final goods impacted)].

Supply Chain Complexity and Disruption



Proposition (Complexity and Fragility)

For small  $\pi$ 

Short-Run 
$$\mathbb{E}\left[\frac{\Delta GDP}{GDP}\right] \approx -S\pi(1-\lambda),$$
  
Long-Run  $\mathbb{E}\left[\frac{\Delta GDP}{GDP}\right] \approx -S\pi(1-\lambda)RC$ 

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Same probabilities of disruption, but different expected costs (much lower in long run)

Horizontal Supply Chain (all labor inputs = 1)



Labor endowment: 5



Complexity inputs/final good: S = 4.

Average input cost / final good cost: q = .2

Short Run expected impact:  $4(1-\lambda)\pi$ 

Long Run expected impact:  $.8(1-\lambda)\pi$ 









## Supply Chain Complexity and Disruption

Short Run:

- shape (breadth vs depth) of supply chain is irrelevant (S matters),
- $\bullet\,$  More final goods, lower S, impact compartmentalized.

Long Run :

- shape of supply chain matters as it affects relative costs,
- number of final goods does not matter, relative costs of inputs does.

## Trade Costs and Globalization



 $\theta_{\tau\tau'} \geq 1$  units of  $O(\tau)$  shipped from  $\tau$  for 1 unit to get to  $\tau'$ .

Effects of dropping costs:

- Increased specialization: only most efficient technology is used.
- Increased complexity: new technologies/goods become viable that source more inputs from more locations.

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Example:

- $\bullet~{\sim}90\%$  of most advanced computer chips assembled in Taiwan,
- Very complex supply chain and some materials cross borders > 70 times before final assembly.

## Fragility and Globalization: Consolidating Supply chains



Consider two supply chains for some final good f, and shocks that are independent across technologies with the same proportional disruption.

## Proposition

If the set of technologies that lie on a directed path to  $\tau_f$  is smaller in chain 2  $(\mathcal{G}^2(\tau_f) \subsetneq \mathcal{G}^1(\tau_f))$ , then the probability of a disruption to  $\tau_f$  is lower, but the expected short-run impact conditional on disruption is higher, in chain 2 than 1.

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Lower transportation costs lead to specialized production and consolidation (and the bound holds).

Consolidating supply chains leads to fewer chances of disruption, but each technology then accounts for a larger fraction of that input, and hence a larger disruption.

## Fragility and Globalization



- More specialized production—fewer, larger producers,
- Larger shocks, but fewer producers and so (possibly) less frequent.
- As cross more borders, could face more political/transport risk...





- Short and long run can differ dramatically, both very tractable.
- Short run depends on all downstream goods, long run only on cost of shocked goods
- Short run network 'rewiring' matters, not in long run
- Medium run depends on relative values of downstream goods
- Increasingly complex chains are more vulnerable
- Globalization/specialization leads to less likely but bigger shocks

## Externalities!



- Competition is inefficient (missing markets)
- Competition pushes to cheaper sourcing, low inventories
- Unless compensated for resilience, leads to excessive specialization/fragility
- Policy implications of model:
  - Short run:
    - ★ target 'central' technologies
    - ★ build inventories, substitutes (decrease centrality)
    - ★ build parallel chains
  - Long run:
    - ★ target 'expensive' technologies
    - ★ support diverse technologies for same goods
    - ★ favor technologies enabling shallower supply chains



# Discussion

## Medium Run



No new sourcing: existing supply chains in place

Prices can steer rationed goods to most needed technologies

*If* multiple flows affected:

- Different supply chains have similar final good values: looks like short run,
- Different supply chains have very different final good values: looks more like long run, only disrupt lowest value chains.

## Medium Run Shock Impact





Unequal-Valued Final Goods





Impact 1/10 Same as Short Run



### Impact 1/50 Close to Long Run

## Arrow-Debreu (1954) Technologies

Suppose country n can produce according to  $y=L^{\alpha}K^{1-\alpha}$ 

Then  $T_n = \{(-l, -k, 1) : l^{\alpha}k^{1-\alpha} = 1\}$ 



## Arrow-Debreu (1954) Technologies

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Then  $T_n = \{(-l, -k, 1) : l^{\alpha}k^{1-\alpha} = 1\}$ 



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