

# Political Consequences of Mass Mobilization for War: A Theory of War, Unionization, and Democratization

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## Motivation and Summary

Emergence of mass democracy coincided historically with industrialization, the formation of the working class, and its organization into parties and unions on a national level. However, significant number of countries democratized after their engagements in major wars (e.g., WWI and WWII).

### Does war influence democratization?

Wars require governments to raise armies and revenues, which places substantial demand on society. In exchange for meeting these demands, citizens press for democratic reforms. But wars may also militarize society, centralize power, and restrict civil liberties, and thereby promoting the rise of authoritarianism and the establishment of garrison states.

### Puzzle: Why do some countries democratize after experiencing mass interstate wars while others don't?

### The political role of organized labor

- Working class has been depicted as “the most consistently pro-democratic force” by scholars such as Moore (1966) and Rueschemeyer et al. (1992).
- It also has been argued that the critical role of the working class explains both the general correlation between capitalism and democracy and the uneven and oft-reversed pattern of democratization.

### War and organized labor

- Policy bargain occurs during wartime to effectively allocate labor for the war effort
- War increases government's demand for labor, which in turn increases
  - Collective bargaining power of unions
  - Incentives for workers to join unions
- Strong unions increase the probability of democratic transition

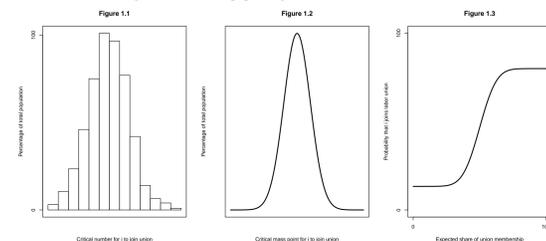
### Building blocks of my argument

- Government is highly dependent on the working class (or labor) during wartime.
- Labor needs to be **organized** as a group to increase **collective bargaining power**.
- Organized labor needs to be **sustained** and **unified** to maintain that sudden increase in collective bargaining power due to war.
- Democracy** lock in increased collective bargaining power of organized labor while economic/political concessions (without democratic reform) doesn't.
- Democracy and unionization are **mutually reinforcing**.

## Labor Organization as a Network Game

**Motivation:** Individual decisions by workers to join labor unions affect the incentives of others to do the same. Thus, I examine labor organization as a network game instead of analyzing these decisions in isolation.

Figure 2: Tipping/Threshold Model

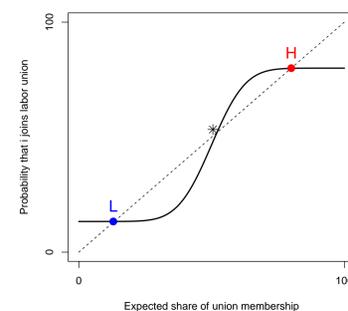


(Schelling(1978) and Granovetter (1978)'s “tipping” or “threshold” model)

### Diagrammatics of critical mass

- Plot a histogram of critical mass points assuming that the distribution of various critical mass points is normal (Figure 1.1).
- Idealize the histogram into a smooth frequency distribution (Figure 1.2).
- Convert the frequency distribution to cumulative form (Figure 1.3).

Figure 2: Threshold Model of Unionization



- Small set of actors would join the labor union even if no one else is expected to do so
- Small percentage of actors at the top of the curve will not join even if they expect everyone else to join
- Intersections of the s-curve and the identity line ( $x = y$ ) demonstrate the equilibria (low (stable), medium (unstable), and high (stable) levels of unionization)
  - For a given a group of actors (workers), an individual will participate in an activity (joining a union) only if a critical mass of others participate.

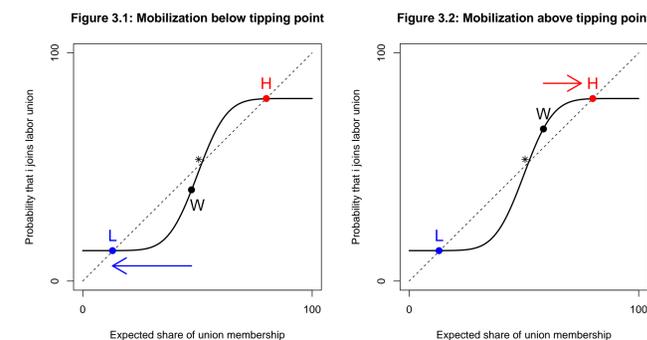
## Application of the Network Game

### Assumptions:

- Democracy generates redistribution
- Free and fair elections, extension of suffrage, and freedom of association are proxies for democratization

### The Effects of War Mobilization on Democracy

Figure 3. The Extent of Wartime Unionization



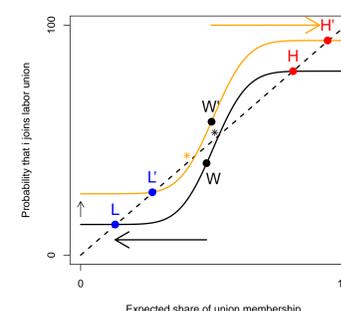
- Level of war mobilization ( $W$ ) must be above the tipping point ( $*$ ) for labor unions to be highly mobilized
- Figure 3.1:  $W$  is **below** both tipping point and identity line →  $L$  equilibrium
- Figure 3.2:  $W$  is **above** both tipping point and identity line →  $H$  equilibrium

The extent of labor mobilization during wartime has political consequences:

- High** unionization (= **High** collective bargaining power of labor) → **political inclusion** of labor
- Low** unionization (= **Low** collective bargaining power of labor) → **no** or **partial political inclusion** of labor

### The Effects of Democratization on Unionization

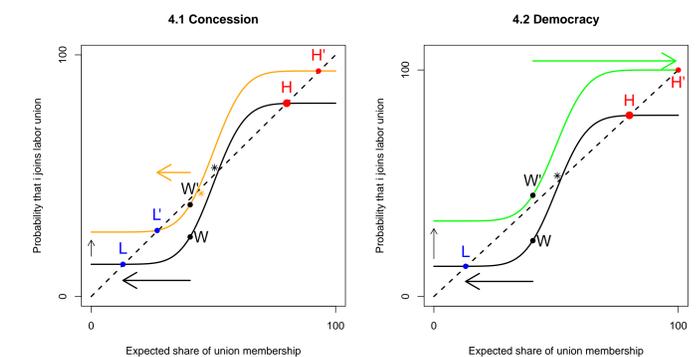
Figure 3: The Effects of Wartime Concession



- Political/economic concession during wartime shifts the s-curve upward
- No concession:**  $W$  is below the tipping point and identity line →  $L$  equilibrium
- Concession:**  $W'$  is above the tipping point and identity line →  $H'$  equilibrium

→ State strategy for labor compliance (e.g, recognition of labor unions, legalization of strikes, extension of suffrage) shifts the s-curve upward.

Figure 4: The Extent of Democratization



- Figure 4.1: **Concession**
  - Upward shift in the s-curve due to political/economic concession made during wartime
  - $W$  and  $W'$  are both below the identity line and tipping points ( $*$  and  $*$ )
  - Yields  $L'$  equilibrium
- Figure 4.2: **Democracy**
  - Upward shift in the s-curve is **greater** with the extension of democracy
  - $W$  is below but  $W'$  is above the identity line and  $*$
  - Yields  $H'$  equilibrium

## Future Directions

- Collect data and conduct empirical analyses as well as case studies
- Model the effects of intensity of war as well as the degree of government reliance on workers for war effort
- Application to non-labor intensive (i.e., technology/intelligence-based) wars and prospects for democratization