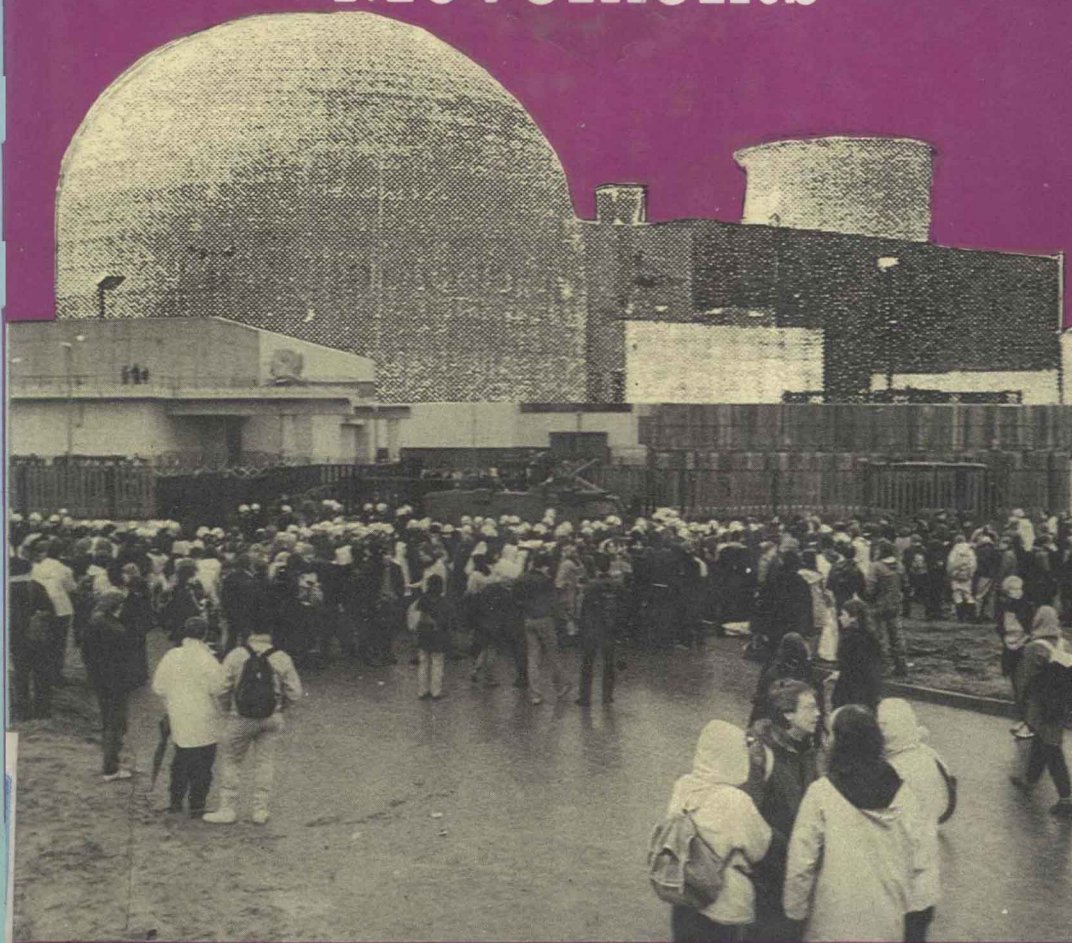


# **GREEN-ALTERNATIVE Politics in West Germany**

**Vol. I**

## **The New Social Movements**



**Saral Sarkar**

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## **Vol. I The New Social Movements**

**Saral Sarkar**



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**Vol. I**  
**The New Social  
Movements**

The United Nations University's Programme on Peace and Global Transformation was a major world-wide project whose purpose was to develop new insights about the interlinkages between questions of peace, conflict resolution, and the process of transformation. The research in this project, under six major themes, was co-ordinated by a 12-member core group in different regions of the world: East Asia, South-East Asia (including the Pacific), South Asia, the Arab region, Africa, Western Europe, Eastern Europe, North America, and Latin America. The themes covered were: Conflicts over Natural Resources; Security, Vulnerability, and Violence; Human Rights and Cultural Survival in a Changing Pluralistic World; The Role of Science and Technology in Peace and Transformation; The Role of the State in Peace and Global Transformation; and Global Economic Crisis. The project also included a special project on Peace and Regional Security.

## Preface

THIS book is the first part of the report on a research project commissioned by the United Nations University in 1983.

This study of the New Social Movements as well as the one on Die Grünen are mainly meant for non-German readers. The treatment of the subject matter is, therefore, slightly different from what it would have been, if I had written for German readers. My presentation is rather historical and descriptive in order to give the non-German readers a broad view of the developments in the last fifteen years. But I have also given my analysis of and judgement on the movements. Earlier studies by German social scientists have provided me much of the background material on the various aspects of the movements. For the rest, especially for the details of events and controversies, I had to draw on my own research in the vast materials available in newspaper reports, articles in magazines and journals, books, pamphlets, brochures, leaflets etc. My participation in some of the movements since 1982 brought me in direct contact with a number of activists and sympathizers. This helped me gather first-hand information which I could not find in the printed materials. I owe a deep debt to all the individuals whose association enabled me to get an insider's view of the movements. They are too numerous to be named. But the names of the authors to whom I am indebted can be seen in the references. I have quoted extensively from original German sources (in my English translation) because I believe that it is better to let people in the movements and first-hand observers and analysts tell their stories and express their views themselves. It is fairer and more interesting to give the readers a taste of the original.

I must also thank the United Nations University for the financial support extended. Personally, I would like to sincerely thank Prof. Rajni Kothari and Prof. Giri Deshingker of the Delhi centre of the UNU.

It is they who first suggested that I should do the study under the UNU's Programme on Peace and Global Transformation. I also thank Promilla & Co., Publishers for making the book available to interested readers and activists in the peoples' movements.

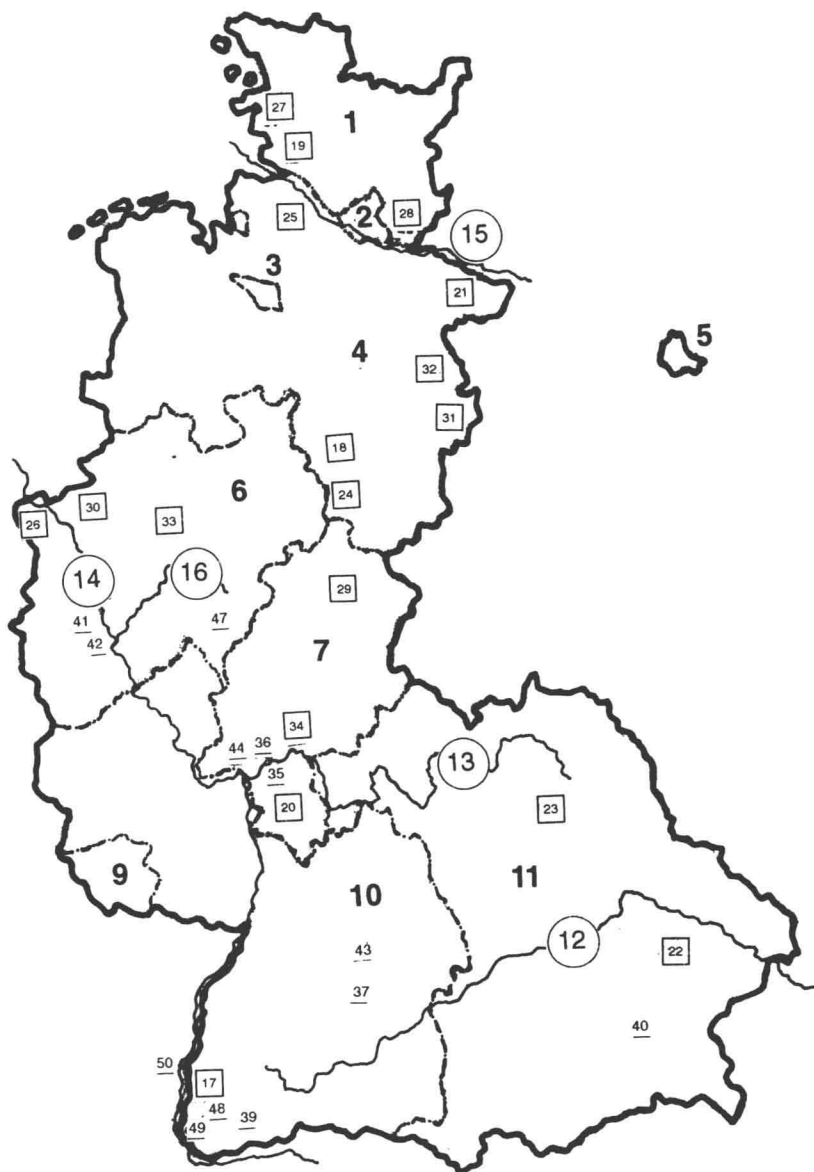
The manuscript of this book was concluded in December '85. Ongoing movements are such in nature that it is difficult to close a manuscript on them. Any book on them will always remain a historical study on a certain period of the movements. But I have updated the matter wherever necessary. For the rest, the picture in 1989 is more or less the same as in December '85.

This study, I believe, has a special significance and a lesson for the Third World. I wish it reaches a large number of the Third World people because it shows that the model of development and progress that has been (literally) sold to them is a model that has been rejected as evil by many people of the industrial societies of Europe and North America where it has originated. If my study can contribute even a little to loosening the fatal grip of this model, then I would consider my efforts to have been amply rewarded.

Cologne, September 1989

SARAL SARKAR

**Map of the Federal Republic of Germany (1989)**  
 With some of the places mentioned in the text  
 (For the names represented by the numbers see next page)



## **Federal Republic of Germany (1989)**

### **The states:**

- |                        |                       |
|------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Schleswig-Holstein  | 7. Hessen             |
| 2. Hamburg             | 8. Rheinland-Pfalz    |
| 3. Bremen              | 9. Saarland           |
| 4. Niedersachsen       | 10. Baden-Württemberg |
| 5. West Berlin         | 11. Bayern            |
| 6. Nordrhein-Westfalen |                       |

### **The rivers:**

- |                        |               |
|------------------------|---------------|
| 12. Die Donau (Danube) | 15. Die Elbe  |
| 13. Der Main           | 16. Die Agger |
| 14. Der Rhein (Rhine)  |               |

### **Nuclear power plants and other installations of the atom industry:**

- |                 |                    |
|-----------------|--------------------|
| 17. Wyhl        | 26. Kalkar         |
| 18. Grohnde     | 27. Brunsbüttel    |
| 19. Brokdorf    | 28. Krümmel        |
| 20. Biblis      | 29. Borken         |
| 21. Gorleben    | 30. Ahaus          |
| 22. Ohu         | 31. Asse           |
| 23. Wackersdorf | 32. Schacht Konrad |
| 24. Würgassen   | 33. Hamm           |
| 25. Stade       | 34. Hanau          |

### **Other cities, towns and places mentioned in the book:**

- |                             |                 |
|-----------------------------|-----------------|
| 35. Runway West (Frankfurt) | 43. Stuttgart   |
| 36. Frankfurt               | 44. Wiesbaden   |
| 37. Tübingen                | 45. Not used    |
| 38. Not used                | 46. Not used    |
| 39. Freiburg                | 47. Othetal     |
| 40. Munich                  | 48. Kaiserstuhl |
| 41. Cologne                 | 49. Breisach    |
| 42. Bonn                    | 50. Markolsheim |

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# 1

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## Introduction and Background

WHEN the Germans speak of the new social movements they mean four broad kinds of movements: (1) movements related to the ecology and environmental pollution, (2) movements related to social and political issues, (3) movements related to experimentations with new forms of living and economic activity and (4) movements related to questions of war and peace — collectively called the Peace Movement. Some of the big and small social movements which have emerged during the last fifteen years in West Germany may not have been covered by this broad classification. For example, the movement against demolition of old, but still inhabitable houses and building of skyscrapers in their place for offices and banks should, strictly speaking, be classified under a separate category, under "movements pertaining to social environment". Similarly, some movements, for example, the Census-Boycott Movement (first half of 1983), should be classified under "democratic movements". I do not claim to have done an exhaustive study of all the big and small "new social movements". I have concentrated on the major ones in sufficient depth without going into details which may not interest a non-German reader.

A further classification of the new social movements is necessary: (1) *protest* movements that protest against a given situation or against certain decisions of the government and (2) *constructive* movements that want to create an alternative to the existing situation and put it into practice now.

Generally speaking, the movements covered by the first two categories in our first classification — the Citizens' Initiative Movement, the Ecology Movement, the Women's Movement, the move-

ments of the various marginal groups like homosexuals, old people, unemployed and physically handicapped people — are protest movements. And the Alternative Movement — the comprehensive term for the movements of the third category — is a constructive movement. But the protest movements also contain constructive elements and in the Alternative Movement one can see elements of protest also.

The Peace Movement is a category in itself. It is a collective movement, firstly, in the sense that the great majority of the West German people support the goals of this movement and a large number of people — at its peak about 3 million — took active part in it and, secondly, in the sense that all other social movements contributed their efforts to this movement — realizing that peace is the major and common condition of success of their particular movements. That the Peace Movement is not merely a protest movement, but, in essence, a constructive movement, is expressed in the slogan “peace is not just absence of war” or in the understanding that peace is a way of life, the alternative to the hitherto practised way of life of mankind — the way of strife, competition and war. The Peace Movement is therefore a people’s movement par excellence. But I have not dealt with it in this volume.

The movements dealt with in this volume are of system-transcending character. They are radical movements and their ultimate goal is to change the system or a part of it. If they were successful they would lead to a change in the system itself or in a part of it, although not all participants in these movements are aware of this ultimate consequence of their movements. That is also the reason why these movements — with the exception of the Citizens’ Initiative Movement which is marked by an ambivalent character — could not draw millions in their activities as the Peace Movement did. The Peace Movement, however, is not radical. It does not threaten the system. Its immediate goal is the prevention of war, and in any particular wave of the movement the goal has been still more limited — a sort of lowest common denominator or “the minimal consensus” — which made participation in the movement possible for those who have otherwise nothing against the present system and who would even actively defend it.

In its essence, the Citizens’ Initiative Movement criticizes a basic aspect of present-day Western society, the authoritarian and hierarchical political system of parliamentary democracy, and wants to replace it by an antiauthoritarian, antihierarchical grassroots democ-