

Fuchs, Dieter; Rucht, Dieter

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**Support for New Social Movements
in Five Western European Countries**

Dieter Fuchs and Dieter Rucht

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Wissenschaftszentrum Berlin für Sozialforschung gGmbH (WZB)
Reichpietschufer 50, D-1000 Berlin 30,
Telefon: (030) 25 49 1-0

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Abstract

On the basis of the Eurobarometer survey data of 1982, 1984, 1986, and 1989, trends as well as levels of support for new social movements are analysed comparatively. The countries involved are France, the Netherlands, Germany, Italy, and Great Britain. The analysis is based on a concept of support combining a behavioral and an attitudinal dimension. With respect to the levels, there are considerable differences between countries over the whole period of time. The strongest support can be clearly found in the Netherlands and in Germany whereas it is quite low in Italy and France. In the course of the eighties the support in all five countries has been relatively stable with a slightly increasing tendency.

Zusammenfassung

Auf der Grundlage von Eurobarometer-Umfragen der Jahre 1982, 1984, 1986 und 1989 werden die Trends und Niveaus der Unterstützung neuer sozialer Bewegungen vergleichend analysiert. Die untersuchten Länder sind Frankreich, die Niederlande, Bundesrepublik Deutschland, Italien und Großbritannien. Die Analyse basiert auf einem Konzept von Unterstützung, das eine Einstellungsdimension mit einer Verhaltensdimension verbindet. Hinsichtlich der Niveaus der Unterstützung ergeben sich beträchtliche Unterschiede zwischen den Ländern für alle vier Untersuchungszeitpunkte. Die eindeutig höchste Unterstützung finden die neuen sozialen Bewegungen in den Niederlanden und in der Bundesrepublik, die niedrigste in Italien und Frankreich. Im Verlauf der achziger Jahre blieb die Unterstützung relativ stabil und wies insgesamt eine leicht steigende Tendenz auf.

Support for New Social Movements in Five Western European Countries¹

Introduction

In different Western democracies, several waves of collective protest have superimposed themselves on each other and coalesced in the wake of the student revolts of the late 1960's to form a relatively stable type of movement. This is usually denoted with the concept "new social movements." Along with these movements, collective actors in the system of political interest mediation have come into being, which differentiate themselves in essential ways from established collective actors - political parties and interest groups. These differences are in relation to some of the goals, but most of all to the forms of action, the organization and the resource base (Rucht 1991). Whether the structure of the system of political interest mediation changes with the new social movements (Offe 1985; Roth 1989), or whether there may even be a challenge to the entire political order in connection with them (Dalton/Kuechler 1990) depends essentially on the extent to which they are supported by the mass publics. Social movements are dependent to a greater degree on the willingness of citizens to become involved in them than are the established collective actors, which can rely on professional apparatuses and direct access to the political system.

Conceptions of the amount and stability of support for new social movements diverge greatly, especially in the political discussion. Whereas some consider it to be more of a peripheral and cyclical phenomenon, other observers assume it to be a politically meaningful and long-term occurrence. Such positions are often based on selective observations or data that refer only to a single movement or a single country. Additionally, corresponding assumptions are often derived from mobilization campaigns of movements which vary greatly in scope, which then typically leads to overestimations and underestimations of the mobilization potential. Statements which can be generalized are, however, only possible if they are based on measurements of the mobilization potential of several movements in several countries at several different points in time.

¹ Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the British Sociological Association, Canterbury, April 6-9, 1992. An earlier version of this paper was presented at the "ESF/ESRC conference on Political Participation in Europe," Manchester, January 5-8, 1990. A selection of some empirical results has been published in WZB Mitteilungen, No. 48 (June 1990), pp. 11-15. We are grateful to Robert Rohrschneider, Edeltraud Roller and colleagues in our research unit for their comments on earlier drafts of this paper and to Sherri Sokerland for translating the manuscript.

We intend to analyze the extent of support for these movements on the basis of representative samples from a perspective which compares different movements, countries and points in time. Four Eurobarometer surveys, each carried out during the 1980's in five countries (France, the Netherlands, the Federal Republic of Germany, Italy and Great Britain) provide the data base. These are countries which are undergoing a process of transformation from industrial to post-industrial or highly modernized societies, although they are at different points in this progression (Fuchs/Klingemann 1992). If the formation of new social movements can be understood to be one expression of this transformational process (Raschke 1985; Inglehart 1989 and 1990), then similar patterns in the support of these movements in the five countries that have a certain stability over time should also result. This assumption provides the starting point of our study.

The following question is central to our considerations: What trends and levels of support can be determined for the new social movements in the five countries during the 1980's, and how are variances to be interpreted? In answering this question, we will examine not only the *proponents* and specifically the mobilization potential², but also the *opponents* of new social movements, a group which has been neglected in previous studies. Further, we will address the relations between mobilization potential and opponents.

The analysis begins with a clarification and operationalization of the central concepts: the kinds of support and new social movements as the object of reference. Then the empirical trends and levels of support for new social movements will be presented. The most important results will be summarized and interpreted in a final section.

2 For the definition of proponents and mobilization potential, see section 2.2.

1. Concepts and Operationalization

1.1 Concepts

Under *support* we understand in reliance on Easton (1975:436) first of all a fundamental disposition of a person toward an object: "Support refers to the way in which a person evaluatively orients himself to some object, either his attitudes or his behavior." Thus this concept defines a quality of relationship between a subject and an object. Whereas the subject of support - a person or an aggregate of people - can be clearly determined, categories of support and of the object of reference, "new social movements," are in need of further clarification.

This general concept of support borrowed from Easton is without directed content, and can be based on either a positive or a negative attitude toward an object. The question is also left open, whether support is simply a matter of an attitudinal dimension *or* a matter of a behavioral dimension. A more exact definition of the different types of support can only be undertaken in regard to the specific character of the object in question.

Established politics is essentially channelled into the form of parties, which interpret the passivity of citizens as agreement and can continue along in their routine on the basis of the strength of their own resources. In contrast, social movements are in need not just of mere toleration, but rather of the active support which manifests itself in concrete mobilizations. Without the commitment and participation of many people in a movement's actions and campaigns, the movement would sink into insignificance. Thus it makes sense to make the behavioral dimension into a necessary rather than a possible criterion, at least in regard to the mobilization potential of social movements.

The concrete definition of *mobilization potential* is one of the most important questions in the context of studies of the support of (new) social movements (Klandermans/Oegema 1987; Kriesi 1989; 1990; Schmitt 1990). With such a definition, an attempt is made to gain insights into the anchoring of a movement in the mass public in a way that is also independent of the various individual and current collective actions on the one hand, and to get information about the mobilization chances for possible future actions on the other. In this undertaking, it is insufficient to regard all of the people who have a positive attitude toward a goal that a movement is (also) trying to achieve as the mobilization potential of this movement. In the case of the ecology movement in the Federal Republic of Germany in 1989 for example, to the extent that one were to apply the importance of environmental protection in the eyes of the citizens as a criterion, that would be more than three-fourths of the populace (Hofrichter/Reif

1990:130). If one were to compare a potential determined in that way with the relatively small actual participation even in large campaigns, it would become clear that such a definition of potential carries little weight. If the concept of mobilization potential is to be imbued with a greater prognostic ability, then it must be defined in closer accordance with behavior. According to that model, only those people who at least evidence a fundamental willingness to participate could be defined as part of the mobilization potential. The considerations of Klandermans/Oegema (1987) and Kriesi (1990) also tend in this direction. The first of these authors relate the mobilization potential of a movement to "the people in a society who could be mobilized by a social movement. It consists of those who take a positive stand toward a particular movement. Attitudes toward a movement involve the means and/or goals of a movement." (1987:519)³ The mobilization potential is, then, the reservoir from which a movement can draw for its collective actions. In contrast to Klandermans/Oegema, however, we are of the opinion that the reference points of this stance cannot be formed by "means and/or goals of the movement," but rather that a positive evaluation of the goals *and* the means is necessary (Fuchs/Kühnel 1990)⁴.

For a mobilization to actually come into being, other conditions must be met in addition to a positive stance toward the goals and means of a movement. The mobilization potential must thus be directly or indirectly achieved on the micro- and mesolevels by the mobilizing actors (Gerhards/Rucht 1992); motivation and expectations of success must be present for participation and certain barriers which argue against participation must be overcome (Klandermans/Oegema 1987; Klandermans 1989).

In the sense of the general concept we use here, the support of a social movement can then be of positive or negative character. In contrast, the mobilization potential of a movement refers by definition solely to those people who evidence a *positive*, behaviorally-relevant disposition to the goals *and* means of a movement. That can be put into practice on the level of actual measuring technique by linking attitudinal and behavioral dimensions to one another.

The definition of the opposition to a movement is also a part of a complete consideration of the staging of this movement in the populace. This opposition can,

3 In their survey, Klandermans/Oegema (1987) did not investigate the mobilization potential for a movement, but instead for one of its prominent actions, in this case an important demonstration of the Dutch peace movement.

4 In their agreement to certain goals, say to the reduction of certain nuclear weapons systems, a government and a peace movement for example can agree, whereas they differ greatly in their choice of means. In this case it would certainly be false to include the government in the mobilization potential of a peace movement.

however, only be investigated symmetrically to the mobilization potential in exceptional cases. Whereas in regard to an actual, existent movement, inquiries can be made about a positive attitude as well as about a behaviorally-relevant disposition (actual participation or intent to participate), an analogous negative spectrum could only then be construed if a clearly identifiable antipode to the corresponding movement, especially an oppositional movement, existed⁵. In as far as this precondition is not met, it is sufficient in our opinion to determine opposition solely on the basis of a negative stance toward the movement. Answers to possible questions as to potential support of a purely hypothetical oppositional movement would, in contrast, be of doubtful value.

One condition of the empirical determination of a movement's support is that this object must also be known to the citizens in a way in which reference to supporting it even makes sense. Fundamental difficulties arise here in a parallel fashion to those connected with the specific object of study "new social movements."

Difficulties with the concept *social movements* already become apparent in the very different attempts at definition⁶. For the most part they have to do with general characteristics of social movements, for example their often rapid changes in scope and form over time and - related to that - their ambiguous boundaries. We assume that social movement as an object of perception is constituted for the citizens primarily by means of the perceptions - as a rule mediated by the mass media - of these movements' collective actions. At these collective actions, the fundamental dimensions of social movements appear again in a specific way. Certain goals are formulated that are articulated within the framework of certain forms of action and are organized by certain groups⁷. The attitude of the citizens toward a social movement is presumably formed by means of a generalization of the perception of the individual collective actions of this movement.

In the first instance, *new social movements* as a specific object of support is just a sociological construct. Difficulties in clarifying this concept result especially from the

5 An additional asymmetry results from the formulation of the choices of answers relevant to behavior ("am a member/might join/would not join"), which contain two positive values but only one negative.

6 See the compilation of different definitions of social movements in Schneider (1987).

7 Tilly (1978:8ff.) distinguishes between three fundamental dimensions that constitute a social movement: a group of people, beliefs or goals, and finally events or collective actions. We see the formal characteristic of the majority of social movements in that they exist as a relatively loose association of subgroups and organizations - as "mobilized networks of networks" (Neidhardt 1985:197). In regard to their beliefs, social movements typically stand in contradiction to some central elements of an established order (Melucci 1989:29). Since in our societies this order is politically legitimated and, as a rule, guaranteed by the state, social movements are always also political challengers. Finally, it is characteristic for them to rely - due to a lack of other resources and channels of influence - primarily on the means of collective protest actions (Neidhardt/Rucht 1991:452).

fact that it serves as an umbrella concept for quite heterogeneous individual movements in Western industrial societies (Stöss 1984). It is only from a more abstract viewpoint that the differing foci in the content of these movements can be brought to a common denominator⁸. The rather ambiguous adjective "new" implicitly refers to partial differences from the socialist movement as the "classic" movement since the mid-nineteenth century. Although the new social movements share a radical democratic orientation with the socialist movement, they share neither their belief in the worker as the revolutionary subject nor their trust in the role of central, bureaucratic avantgarde organizations. A further difference can be found in the fact that the workers appear neither ideologically nor socio-structurally as important carriers of new social movements. Their activist core is formed much more by the "new middle class" (Brand 1989a), whereby those employed in the area of human services receive special emphasis (Raschke 1985:415). Central individual movements included within the new social movements are, among others, the anti-nuclear power movement, the ecology movement and the second waves of feminism and the peace movement (Roth 1985; Brand/Büsser/Rucht 1986).

Since the justification of the umbrella concept new social movements is not uncontested within the social sciences, even its promoters emphasize the heterogeneity of the various individual movements, and finally the concept cannot necessarily be presumed to be familiar to many Western Europeans, it makes the most sense to collect data for several of the above-mentioned individual movements. Drawing on these results, the possibilities and limitations of more generalizing statements can then be discussed. The most important of these individual movements are familiar to most Western Europeans from the news reporting of the mass media at the very least. These movements can therefore be assumed to be objects toward which the citizens have developed certain attitudes and behavioral dispositions. These can be determined by means of direct questions in representative opinion polls (Pappi 1991). In a causal analysis of the support of new social movements in the Federal Republic of Germany, it was shown that in addition to the attitude toward the goals of movements, the attitude toward their modes of action was one of the strongest predictors (Fuchs/Kühnel 1990). This can be seen as an empirical indication that those questioned reacted not only to the inherent goal dimension of a certain movement (for example: peace), but that they in fact also had the actual movement in mind.

⁸ Kitschelt (1990:180f.) has suggested the label "left-libertarian" movements and explained this choice of concepts in greater detail.

1.2 Operationalization

In four Eurobarometers⁹ conducted in 1982, 1984, 1986 and 1989 in France, the Netherlands, the Federal Republic of Germany, Italy and Great Britain, the following two questions were posed about new social movements:

"There are a number of groups and movements seeking the support of the public. For each of the following movements can you tell me...

A. Whether you approve (strongly, or somewhat) or you disapprove (somewhat or strongly)?

B. Whether you are a member or might probably join or would certainly not join?"

Four movements were named that those questioned were to evaluate using the choices of answers in A. and B.:

"1. The nature protection associations

2. The ecology movement

3. Movement concerned with stopping the construction or use of nuclear power plants

4. Anti-war and anti-nuclear weapons movements"

We consider the formulation of these questions, which were drafted by other authors, to be less than optimal for a number of reasons¹⁰, but they provide a generally usable basis, which only leads us to qualify our statements in individual cases. In any event, there are no available alternatives, in other words surveys on social movements in which comparable questions were posed in several different countries at several different times.

Both dimensions of the support concept can at least approximately be empirically determined with the two quoted questions, namely the attitudinal dimension and the

9 Eurobarometers: 17 (spring 1982), 21 (spring 1984), 25 (spring 1986), 31a (summer 1989).

10 First of all, the positive and negative possibilities for answers are not always symmetrically constructed. Although the English version meets this criterion with the paired concepts approve/disapprove, the German version, with Unterstützung/Mißbilligung [support/disapprove] (instead of Billigung/Mißbilligung [approve/disapprove]), does not. Secondly, which can be shown in this as well as in other examples, some of the translations are inexact, if not completely false. This occurred in part because translations were not always done from the English original. Apparently the French translation served as a model for the Italian translation, whereby further ambiguities were created. Additionally, detailed descriptions were chosen ("anti-war and anti-nuclear weapons movement" instead of "peace movement") in some languages, but were, however, translated with simple categories (German: "Friedensbewegung" ["peace movement"]). In part, inappropriate stimuli were also presented out of ignorance of linguistic and empirical nuances. Thus instead of the French concept "mouvement de la paix," the concept "mouvement pacifistes," which has historically negative connotations and is for the most part associated with the communist party, was used. On the basis of this stimulus, it is likely that the potential of the French peace movement was not entirely determined, whereas at the same time the actual number of opponents may be smaller. Thirdly, important attributes are missing in some questions. For example, the French version of Eurobarometer 31a did not ask about nuclear power plants ("centrales nucléaires"), but instead only about power plants ("centrales"). Fourth, even within individual languages the formulation of questions was not kept completely consistent at different points in time. Fifth, the completely appropriate English concept "activist" was replaced in some languages with the category of membership, which in reference to movements is both theoretically and empirically problematic. For an additional flaw see footnote 14.

behavioral dimension. It remains in question, however, whether the membership question determines the behavioral dimension in a valid fashion. Strictly speaking, membership can only exist in formal organizations that have clear boundaries with their environment. In contrast, the organizational forms of new social movements are marked on the whole by a rather small degree of formalization (Gundelach 1984; Rucht 1984) and unfocused edges, although these movements also include regular membership organizations. The question of membership is, however, a valid indicator of the behavioral dimension only if those questioned understand "membership" not in this strict sense, but rather as a designation of forms of participation that are possible within the context of new social movements: participation in collective actions of these movements, or more or less binding membership in groups which organize such collective actions. We must assume this - certainly not implausible - premise not only because of a lack of other data, but we can also assume this understanding on the part of those questioned as long as they are not confronted with stimuli that are analogous to the membership question but more precise.

From the linkage of the attitudinal and the behavioral dimensions, we construct a measuring instrument for the determination of the support of the movements addressed in the surveys. The environmental protection groups are, however, excluded¹¹. There is a series of suggestions linking these two dimensions (Watts 1987, Hofrichter/Schmitt 1990, Rohrschneider 1990; Schmitt 1990; Hofrichter 1991). We orient ourselves for the most part, although with two exceptions¹², on the measuring instrument of Rohrschneider (1990:14), which is constructed with consistency and also bases itself on the same indicators that form the basis for our analysis.

All of those questioned who declare that they are members of a certain organization and who simultaneously have a positive evaluation of this movement are labelled "activists." Those who "somewhat" or "strongly approve" of the movement but do not consider themselves to be members, but instead only "might join," are considered "potential activists." Those who evaluate the movement positively but would not join it

11 Most of the environmental protection groups cannot be included among the new social movements because the context of their emergence generally lies far back in time and because of their generally conservative orientation, which in any event is not left-libertarian.

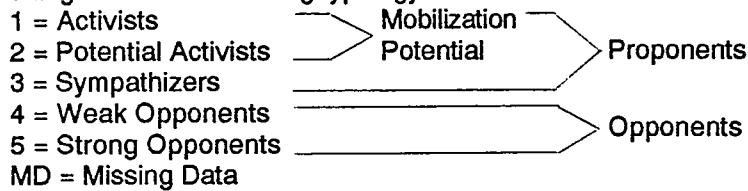
12 First of all, inconsistencies (when, for example, a person questioned claims to be a member of a movement and to simultaneously disapprove of it) are treated as measurement errors. Since it is impossible to determine which of the two underlying questions contains the error, we record these cases as missing values. Secondly, in contrast to Rohrschneider, we classify those people questioned who do not have valid values in either the attitudinal dimension or in the behavioral dimension again as missing, rather than as meaningful values. Rohrschneider (1990:14) categorizes them as "indifferent," and places them between the supporting and opposing ends of the spectrum. This procedure is in our opinion inadmissible, since at most missing values express indifference on the part of those questioned only in part; they could just as well result from ignorance of the object or from refusal to answer.

are called "sympathizers." "Weak opponents" are people who "somewhat disapprove" of the movement, and "strong opponents" are those who "disapprove strongly." In this way a typology of the support of a social movement is created with five categories, which form an ordinal hierarchical order ranging from activists of this movement all the way to its strong opponents.

Table 1: Typology of Support for New Social Movements - Construction of Variables

		Behavioral Dimension			
Attitudinal Dimension		Is a Member	Might Join	Would not Join	Missing Data
	Approve Strongly	1	2	3	3
	Approve Somewhat	1	2	3	3
	Disapprove Somewhat	MD	MD	4	4
	Disapprove Strongly	MD	MD	5	5
	Missing Data	1	2	4	MD

The categories of the resulting typology are:



Corresponding to the suggestion just explained to limit the concept of mobilization potential to those people questioned who have both a positive attitude toward the movement and who show a willingness to participate, we consider only the "activists" and "potential activists" from our typology to meet these criteria. If one adds the "sympathizers" to this potential, the group of "proponents" results. These are those citizens who, in one way or another, take on a positive stance toward the movement. Against the proponents stands the group of "opponents," which is formed through a compilation of the "weak" and the "strong opponents." In the presentation of the concept, we have already alluded to the fact that mobilization potential and opponents are not just linguistically or logically symmetrical constructs with different valences.

2. Trends and levels of support

2.1 Trends of support

The first step of the analysis is based on the data presented in tables 2a-c. There, the percentual distributions for the types of support described in the previous section (activists, potential activists, sympathizers, weak opponents, strong opponents) for four points of time per country are depicted. The decade of the 1980's is for the most part covered by these four surveys.

The numbers of activists and partially also of strong opponents are so small that the differences between the countries and between different points in time can only be imbued with a very limited meaning. For this reason, and also for the purpose of better clarity, the data from tables 2a-c are graphically presented in a somewhat condensed form (figures 1a-c, in other words the figures represent only the trends for the mobilization potential and for the strong and weak opponents). The trends for the mobilization potential have been placed above and those of the opponents below the central horizontal axis.

a. In regard to the trends of support, a homogenous pattern of development cannot be identified for the three movements either within one country or in cross-national comparison. This is the case for the differentiated support categories (see tables 2a-c) as well as for the condensed data which form the basis for figures 1a-c. In none of the five countries was there a monotonous increase or decrease in the support of the three movements; neither was there a monotonous increase or decrease in support for any of the three movements in all five countries. Clearly the development of the support of new social movements in the five Western European countries is determined by country-specific and movement-specific factors.

b. If the attempt is made to distill from the trend data at least some common, overarching characteristics for the movements and the countries, then this is most easily done with a comparison of 1986 and 1989. The general pattern can be seen in figures 1a-c: the mobilization potential of the three movements increased in 1989 in all five countries compared to 1986; at the same time the number of opponents decreased. But there are also two exceptions to this general pattern: in Italy, the mobilization potential of the peace movement actually decreased, and in Great Britain the number of opponents to the anti-nuclear power movement increased.

Table 2a: Support for the Ecology Movement (Percentages)

	France				The Netherlands				West Germany				Italy				Great Britain			
	1982	1984	1986	1989	1982	1984	1986	1989	1982	1984	1986	1989	1982	1984	1986	1989	1982	1984	1986	1989
Activists	0,6	0,3	0,4	1,0	3,2	2,4	2,8	4,4	1,9	0,8	0,7	1,1	0,5	0,9	0,9	0,8	0,4	0,8	1,1	2,7
Potential Activists	13,6	11,2	10,1	12,1	25,6	29,5	29,0	40,6	23,9	30,2	26,7	37,9	27,1	19,5	18,0	19,0	19,3	16,3	19,4	28,2
Sympathizers	56,9	66,6	64,9	71,1	54,3	51,5	56,8	47,6	20,6	21,7	25,1	25,7	64,6	69,9	71,9	72,0	47,6	54,5	52,7	53,8
Weak Opponents	22,8	18,0	19,5	12,6	11,0	11,8	8,2	6,0	34,9	25,5	29,7	19,7	6,7	7,7	6,6	6,4	24,6	23,6	23,5	12,8
Strong Opponents	6,1	3,8	5,0	3,2	5,8	4,7	3,3	1,5	18,7	21,8	17,8	15,6	1,1	1,9	6,6	1,7	8,2	4,9	3,3	2,5
	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Number of Cases	1069	1009	1003	1040	1088	1015	1001	971	1197	992	987	1202	1174	1060	1102	1011	1256	1042	1055	957
Missing Cases	24	26	39	12	25	37	24	28	207	149	117	123	91	57	60	28	167	56	116	107

Source: Eurobarometer 17, 21, 25, 31a

Table 2b: Support for the Anti-Nuclear Power Movement (Percentage)

	France				The Netherlands				West Germany				Italy				Great Britain			
	1982	1984	1986	1989	1982	1984	1986	1989	1982	1984	1986	1989	1982	1984	1986	1989	1982	1984	1986	1989
Activists	0,2	0,3	0,1	0,6	0,8	0,4	0,6	1,6	1,8	0,6	0,6	1,1	0,2	0,9	0,7	0,6	0,4	0,4	1,1	1,8
Potential Activists	7,8	4,0	5,1	6,6	14,7	16,2	13,7	18,3	20,7	22,7	23,8	36,3	14,7	10,2	10,2	10,8	19,3	9,5	14,5	13,9
Sympathizers	33,5	38,3	39,1	44,4	40,6	41,5	42,9	47,8	17,9	15,2	17,2	22,0	45,4	48,6	56,0	58,3	30,1	28,8	41,3	36,3
Weak Opponents	39,8	42,0	34,8	34,7	19,9	19,2	19,7	20,3	33,5	34,7	32,4	23,5	23,6	28,4	19,0	20,8	26,7	39,4	28,2	31,5
Strong Opponents	18,7	15,5	20,9	13,7	24,1	22,7	23,1	11,9	26,1	26,9	25,9	17,1	16,2	12,0	14,2	9,5	23,5	22,0	14,9	16,5
	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Number of Cases	1069	1009	1003	1040	1088	1015	1001	971	1197	992	987	1202	1174	1060	1102	1011	1256	1042	1055	95,7
Missing Cases	34	39	56	34	35	21	14	30	190	165	129	121	154	76	89	45	84	50	56	69

Source: Eurobarometer 17, 21, 25, 31a

Table 2c: Support for the Peace Movement (Percentage)

	France				The Netherlands				West Germany				Italy				Great Britain			
	1982	1984	1986	1989	1982	1984	1986	1989	1982	1984	1986	1989	1982	1984	1986	1989	1982	1984	1986	1989
Activists	0,6	0,3	0,1	0,6	1,5	2,2	1,0	1,6	2,4	1,8	1,5	2,7	1,4	1,3	1,2	0,7	1,4	2,1	2,6	2,5
Potential Activists	11,7	8,8	9,4	9,4	20,3	21,9	17,7	20,7	36,6	40,5	42,1	45,0	29,0	17,6	17,5	14,8	19,5	11,8	13,8	14,8
Sympathizers	45,4	50,1	48,1	58,8	46,3	43,9	43,9	50,7	24,3	24,6	22,1	24,9	63,1	65,4	66,0	72,5	28,9	30,2	39,5	41,5
Weak Opponents	27,4	27,0	25,4	18,0	16,0	14,6	16,9	14,8	21,2	19,8	19,9	15,3	3,8	10,4	9,7	7,7	24,3	32,0	25,4	24,9
Strong Opponents	15,0	13,8	17,1	13,2	16,1	17,5	20,4	12,2	15,6	13,4	14,4	12,1	2,6	5,3	5,7	4,3	25,8	24,0	18,7	16,4
	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Number of Cases	1069	1009	1003	1040	1088	1015	1001	971	1197	992	987	1202	1174	1060	1102	1011	1256	1042	1055	957
Missing Cases	31	35	42	27	20	16	15	19	169	122	106	117	65	57	60	32	76	39	51	58

Source: Eurobarometer 17, 21, 25, 31a

c. In a comparison of the first (1982) and the last point in time (1989), different pictures result for the individual countries: in Italy and France, the mobilization potential for all three movements decreased, whereas it increased in the Netherlands and the Federal Republic of Germany for all three movements; in Great Britain, it increased for the ecology movement and decreased for the other two movements. According to our data, the mobilization potential of new social movements in Italy and France was at its greatest in 1982, then dropped off and, even with the general upswing between 1986 and 1989, did not re-achieve its former level.

d. If we compare the data presented here with the survey data as to the importance of environmental protection and the risks of atomic energy (Hofrichter/Reif 1990), we get an indication that the development of support for new social movements does not depend solely on the extent to which those questioned accept their goals. A further important factor for support is presumably the perceived performance of the movements on the whole (among other things, the way in which they pursue these goals). In all of the five countries we analyzed, the number of those questioned who agreed with the development of atomic energy declined between 1982 and 1989. Conversely, the number of those people who perceived the risks to be unacceptable rose (Hofrichter/Reif 1990:137)¹³. The picture as to the importance of the environmental problem is clearer yet: in this case there was a steady increase in the eyes of the citizens in all five countries during the period from 1983 to 1989 (*ibid.*, p. 129).

Despite these positive trends on the level of goals or issues, which are also applicable to France and Italy, a reduction in the mobilization potential for the corresponding movements can be determined in both of these countries. This finding should serve as a warning against an unmediated inference of the size of the mobilization potential or even the manifest participation in social movements from the agreement with certain goals. Such a reservation is all the more valid in the case of the converse inference from the actual mobilization to the size of the mobilization potential and the attitudes of the mass publics regarding the corresponding level of goals.

2.2 Levels of support

In contrast to the trends described above, some rather clear patterns emerge both within as well as among individual countries (see figures 1a-c) for the levels of support for new social movements.

¹³ In the interpretation of this trend, the Chernobyl catastrophe in 1986 should also be taken into account. It, however, only had the effect of strengthening, not of creating the trend.

a. The *ecology movement* has the *highest mobilization potential* of the three movements, the *anti-nuclear power movement* the *lowest*. The peace movement lies between them. The converse is true for the opponents: the ecology movement has the fewest opponents; then the peace movement. The anti-nuclear power movement chalks up the most opponents. This picture holds true for almost all of the countries and almost all points in time. The Federal Republic of Germany is the primary exception: in this case at all four points in time the mobilization potential of the peace movement is larger than that of the ecology movement; conversely, there are more opponents to the ecology movement than to the peace movement. The low mobilization potential of the ecology movement can, however, presumably be led back to a methodological artefact¹⁴, and may well be markedly higher in reality. In Italy and Great Britain, the mobilization potential of the peace movement in 1982 was also somewhat larger than that of the ecology movement; this changed, however, at other points in time.

Thus it can be assumed that during the 1980's in the five countries we analyzed, the ecology movement had the largest and the anti-nuclear power movement the smallest mobilization potential, whereas the peace movement takes its place between them. This order of the three movements in the individual countries occurs however at very different levels. If one were to order the countries according to the size of the mobilization potential and the number of opponents to the individual movements, striking differences would become apparent. The mobilization potential of all three movements in the country which is ranked first is more than three times as large as that in the country which is ranked last. The same holds true, with the exception of the anti-nuclear power movement, for the opponents.

b. The ranking of the countries in regard to mobilization potential is almost identical for all three movements. The *highest mobilization potential* is present in the *Federal Republic of Germany*, followed by the Netherlands, Great Britain, and Italy; the *lowest* mobilization potential with respect to all three movements is found in *France*¹⁵. The ecology movement in the Federal Republic of Germany, which is ranked slightly behind that of the Netherlands, is an exception to the general pattern in the ranking of

14 In the Federal Republic of Germany, in the formulation of the question - in contrast to the other countries - the Green party was given as a supplemental example for the ecology movement. This addition surely caused some of those questioned who have a positive stance toward the ecology movement to give a negative answer, insofar as they adopt a critical or disapproving stance toward the Green party. The data from a representative sample collected in 1989 which contains questions regarding attitudes toward new social movements speaks in favor of this assumption. In this survey, the evaluation of the ecology movement was clearly better than that of the peace movement (Fuchs 1991).

15 Here, however, on the basis of an erroneous formulation of the question (see footnote 10), it should be noted that the potential of the French peace movement may well be somewhat higher in reality than is shown by the measurement.

Figure 1a: Mobilization Potential and Opponents of the Ecology Movement

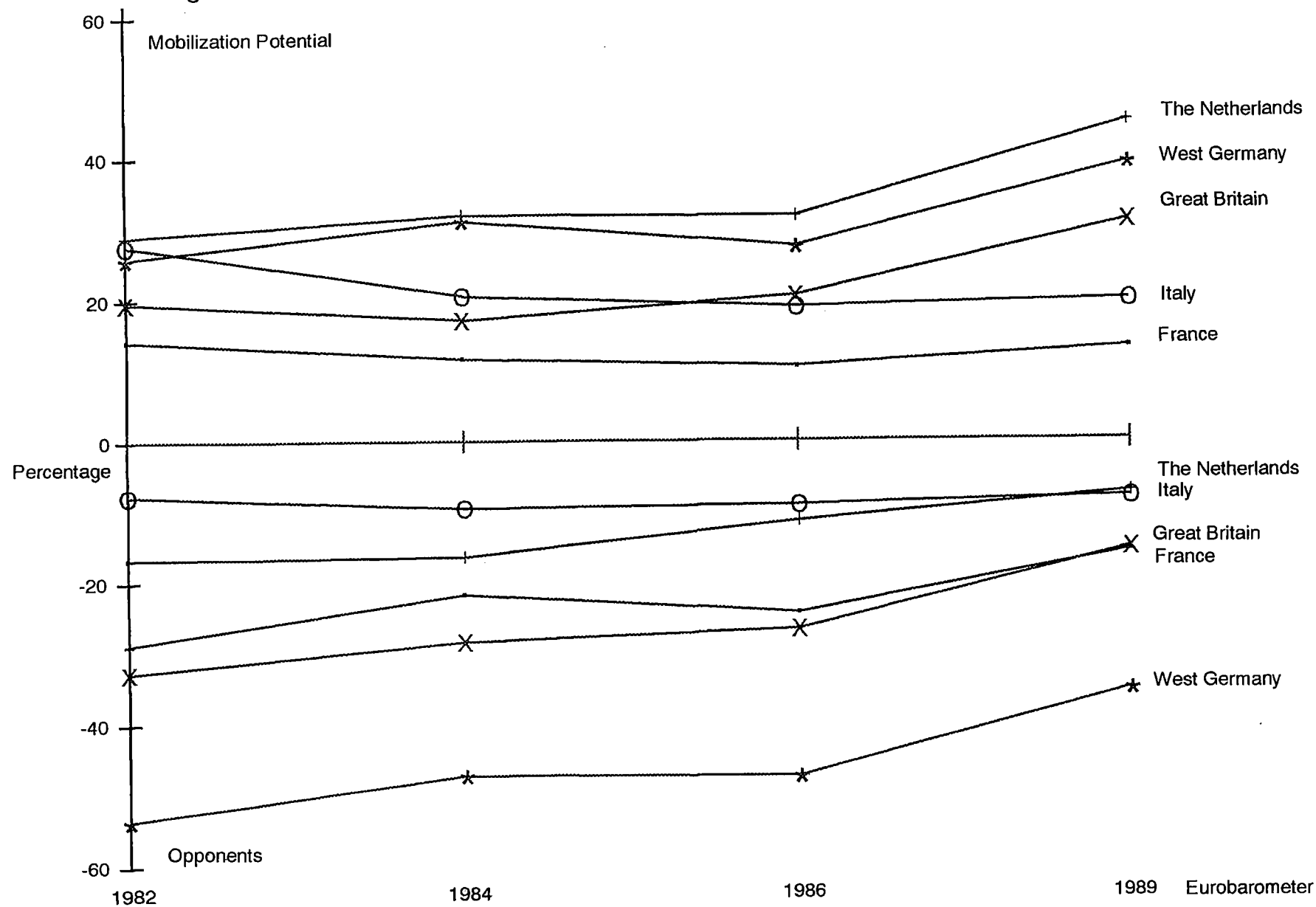


Figure 1b: Mobilization Potential and Oppents of the Anti-Nuclear Power Movement

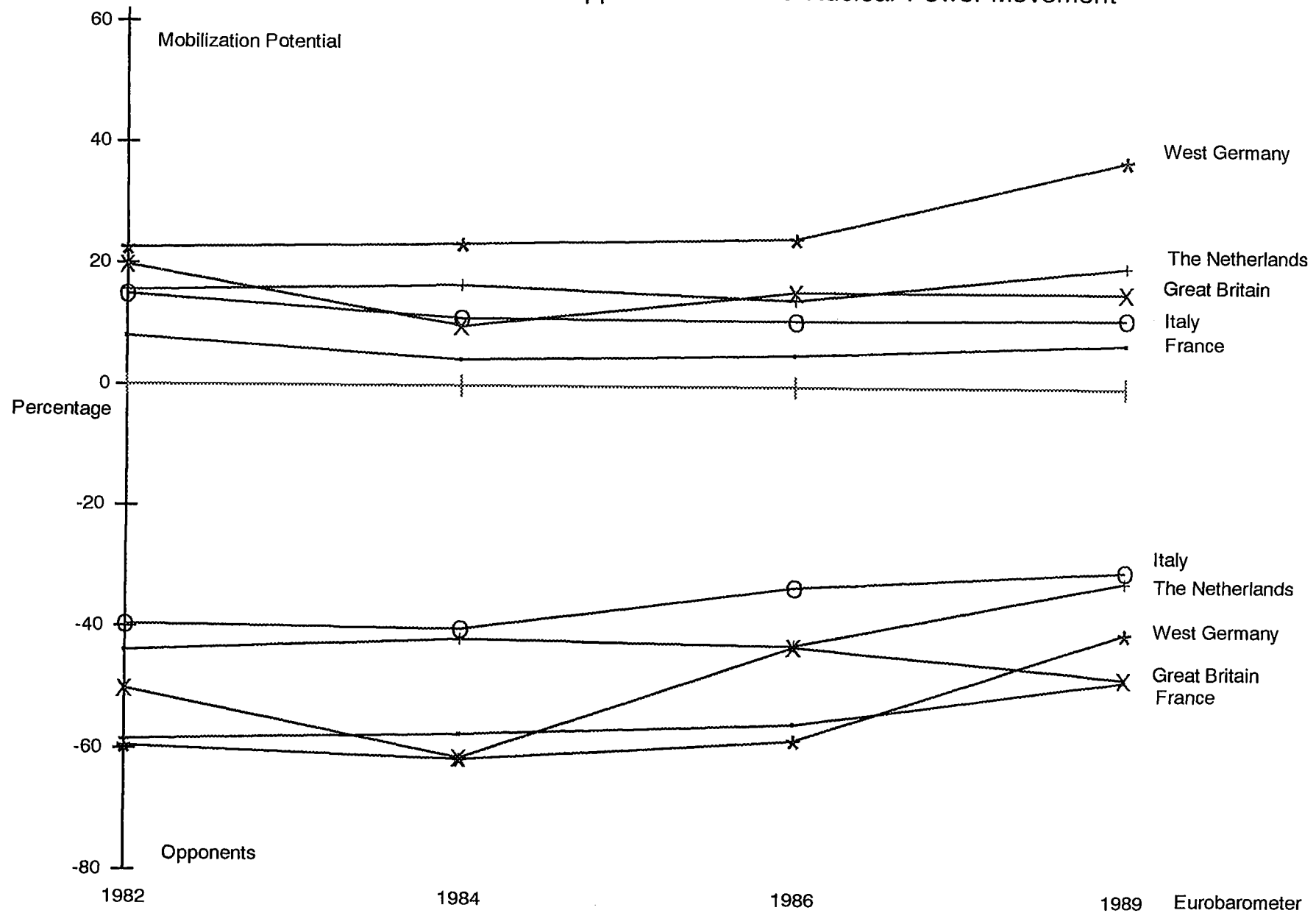
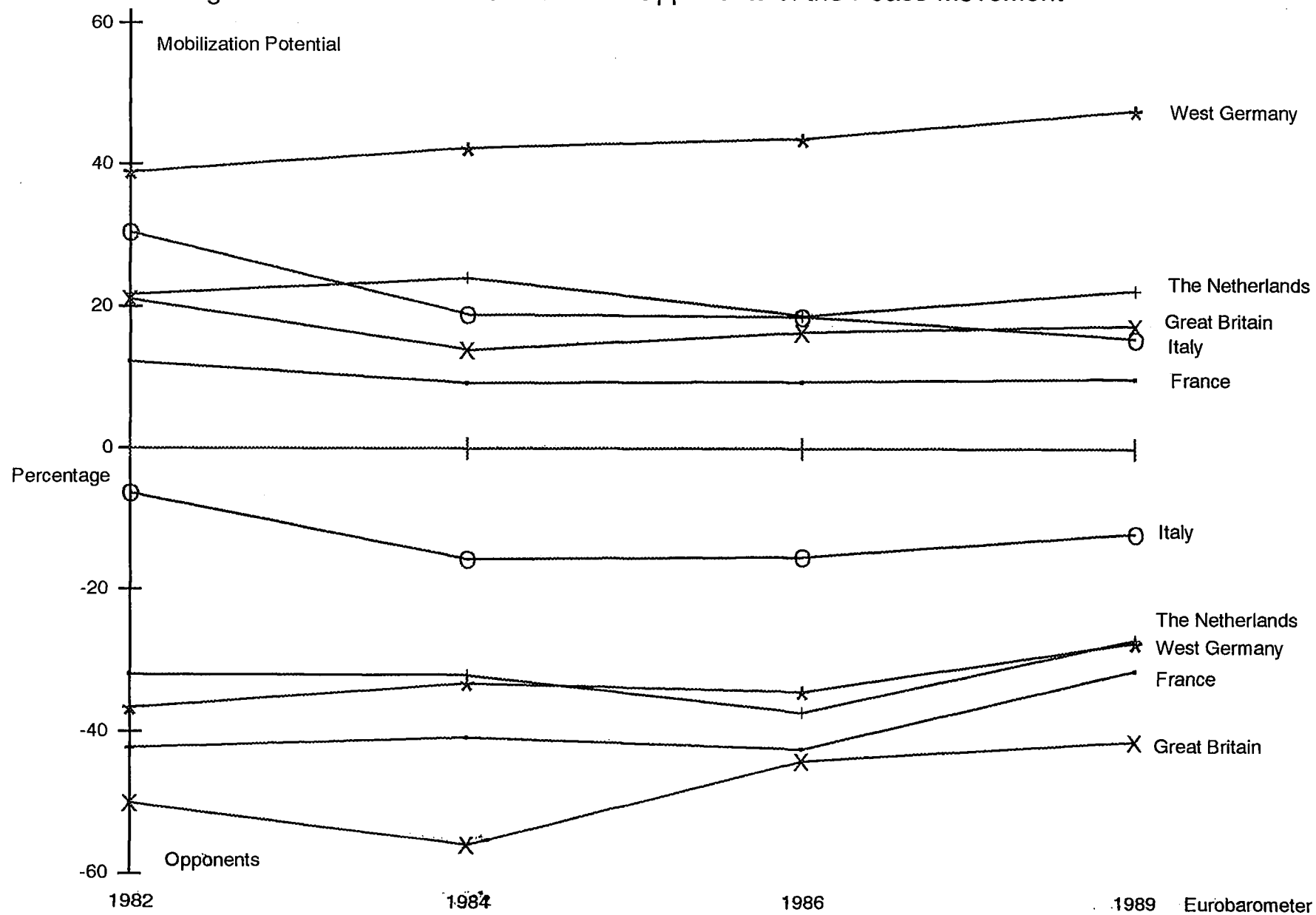


Figure 1c: Mobilization Potential and Opponents of the Peace Movement



countries - probably for reasons of a methodological artefact which has already been elucidated (see footnote 14). The ranking of the countries (on the basis of the 1989 data) determined according to the values in tables 1a-c also results if one looks at the mean values for the mobilization potential or for the opponents over all four points in time. (The results will not be presented here.) Thus it is a matter of a stable pattern that can be generalized for the entire decade.

c. In addition to the determination of the mobilization potential of individual movements, an appropriate description of the resonance of new social movements for the mass publics also requires a systematic treatment of the *opponents* of these movements. This aspect has been neglected in prior research on movements.

If the numbers for 1989 are considered, it is true of the ecology movement in all of the countries that it has markedly fewer opponents than the peace movement and particularly than the anti-nuclear power movement within each individual country. In cross-national comparison, Italy and the Netherlands tend to have fewer opponents and France and the Federal Republic of Germany tend to have more, whereby the differences are considerable. (The average number of opponents to all three movements in the Federal Republic of Germany is more than twice that of Italy.) The relatively high number of opponents to the peace movement in Great Britain and their mid-range number in Germany are the only exceptions to this pattern.

d. The *relation between mobilization potential and opponents* is not necessarily transparent in the sense that a high mobilization potential corresponds to a low number of opponents (and vice versa). The reasons for this are found in the asymmetry of the two categories already discussed above and in the relatively high number of sympathizers who were not included in the mobilization potential, and who thus keep the distribution between mobilization potential and opponents from adding up to one-hundred percent.

The basic patterns that result from the relations of different orders of magnitude of mobilization potential and opponents can be illustrated in a simple four-fold-table. If one proceeds from dichotomous characteristics of strong/weak, then four different categories of movements can be distinguished. Borrowing from the concept of valence issue used in election research (Butler/Stokes 1969:390-94), Kaase (1990:93) has suggested the concept *valence movement* to characterize the case of high agreement and a low number of opponents. Analogously, one could characterize a movement that strongly divides the mass publics, thus in which a high mobilization potential as well as a high number of opponents but little indifference is found, as a *polarizing movement*.

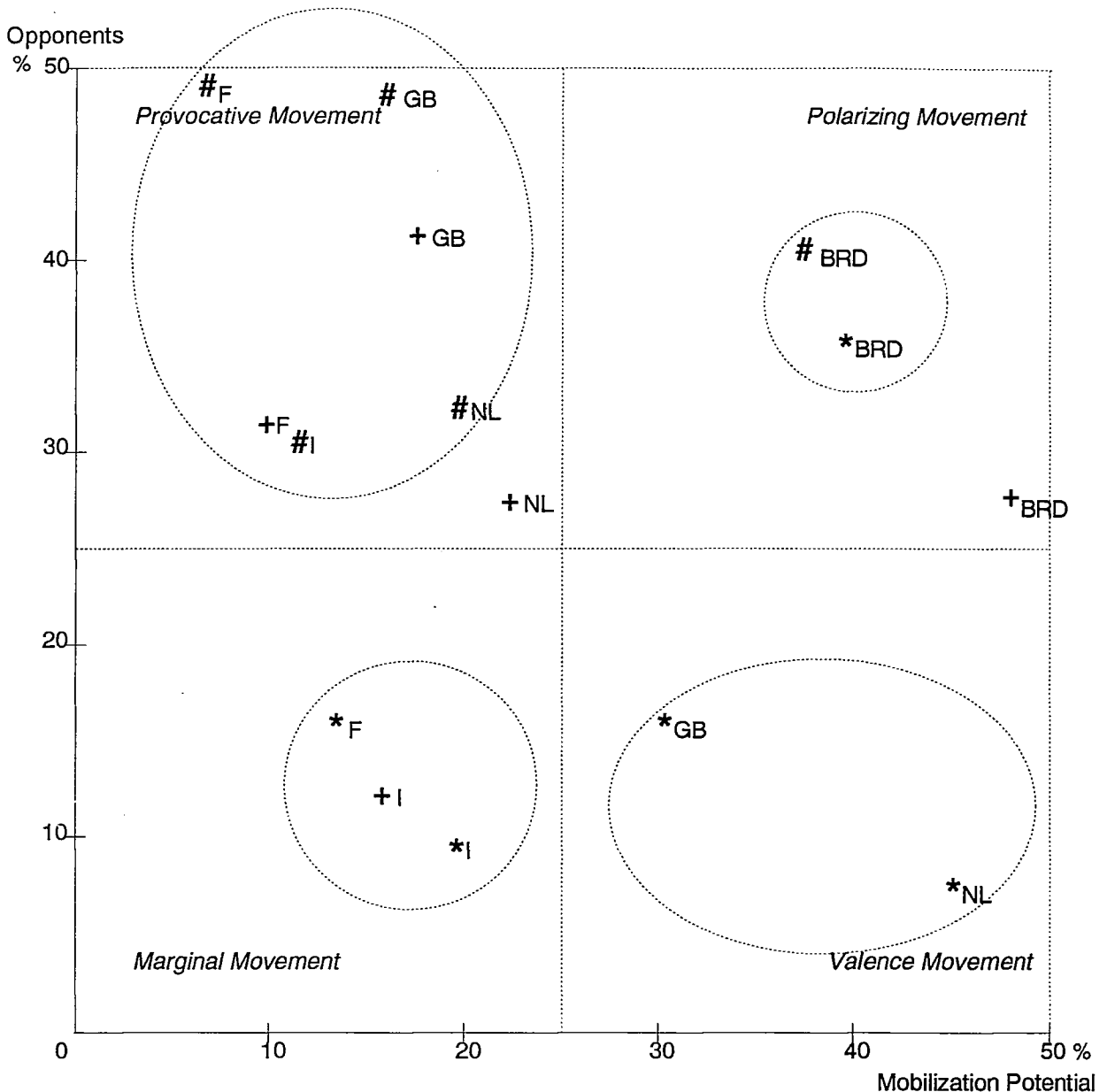
For movements with little mobilization potential and a small number of opponents in the mass publics we speak of a *marginal movement*. We call the case of a small mobilization potential with a large number of opponents at the same time a *provocative movement*.

Table 3: Typology of Social Movements According to the Relative Weight of Mobilization Potential and Opponents

Mobilization Potential	Opponents	
	Few	Many
Weak	Marginal Movement	Provocative Movement
Strong	Valence Movement	Polarizing Movement

The relations between the strength of the mobilization potential and the opponents, and thus the assignment of empirical movements to the four constructed types of movements, can be illustrated in a two-dimensional space.

Figure 2: Types of New Social Movements (1989)



In figure 2, the three movements in the five countries are localized in the two-dimensional space. This space is structured by two axes, of which the horizontal axis shows the quantity of mobilization potential and the vertical axis the quantity of opponents. The matrix created in this way is subdivided into four quadrants, that each characterize one type of movement. The closer a movement lies to the outside corner of

Table 3a: Overlap of the Mobilization Potential of New Social Movements (Percentages)

	France		Netherlands		Germany		Italy		Great Britain	
Movements	1982	1989	1982	1989	1982	1989	1982	1989	1982	1989
Ecology + Nuclear + Peace	28,0	25,0	23,9	24,2	31,4	52,6	30,6	36,0	19,8	27,2
Nuclear + Peace	6,3	8,4	7,9	2,0	11,8	11,0	5,4	7,0	28,2	6,4
Ecology + Peace	17,0	11,7	12,1	10,3	12,0	8,7	23,9	12,7	5,1	8,4
Ecology + Nuclear	6,7	5,8	3,7	9,0	5,9	1,5	1,2	0,9	3,8	8,0
Peace	14,9	12,6	12,0	8,0	27,7	13,6	21,0	7,9	10,8	5,5
Nuclear	2,3	4,2	5,0	3,5	2,5	4,3	3,0	2,6	7,3	1,7
Ecology	24,7	32,2	35,5	43,0	8,7	8,4	14,9	32,9	26,9	42,9
	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
N	190	166	393	474	400	562	372	228	347	289

Table 3b: Overlap of the Opponents of New Social Movements (Percentages)

	France		Netherlands		Germany		Italy		Great Britain	
Movements	1982	1989	1982	1989	1982	1989	1982	1989	1982	1989
Ecology + Nuclear + Peace	18,8	13,9	16,6	8,5	42,8	36,8	5,6	8,0	26,8	14,3
Nuclear + Peace	26,9	25,6	25,1	30,9	5,9	10,2	9,5	22,2	30,2	42,0
Ecology + Peace	4,3	3,8	3,1	3,0	2,3	4,2	0,0	0,9	5,8	1,0
Ecology + Nuclear	10,8	6,5	3,5	5,1	20,1	14,8	10,2	9,3	4,3	4,2
Peace	8,7	10,4	12,6	20,8	4,4	4,4	1,2	4,3	9,4	11,3
Nuclear	24,4	36,4	33,0	30,5	15,1	15,7	69,3	49,1	11,0	20,3
Ecology	6,1	3,4	6,1	1,2	9,3	13,9	4,1	6,2	12,6	6,9
	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
N	741	581	572	387	639	498	414	324	696	485

a quadrant, the more closely it corresponds to the type of movement characterized by the quadrant.

The anti-nuclear power movement in France and the ecology movement in the Netherlands each come closest to one of the constructed ideal types. For the former it is a matter of a provocative movement, and for the latter a valence movement. On the level of movements as well as on the level of countries, some patterns emerge. All three movements in the Federal Republic of Germany are in the quadrant for polarizing movements; in France, Great Britain and the Netherlands, two movements each are in the quadrant for provocative movements, and in Italy two movements are in the marginal movement quadrant. Thus in all five countries, a certain type of movement is dominant.

In regard to individual movements, the anti-nuclear power movement can be most clearly classified: in four countries it can be characterized as a provocative movement and in one country as a polarizing movement. The peace movement can be characterized least clearly: in one country it is a marginal movement, in another country a polarizing movement and in two further countries a provocative movement, whereas in the case of the Netherlands it lies on the border to other quadrants. The ecology movement is a valence movement in two countries, a marginal movement in one country and a polarizing movement in one country. In contrast to other quadrants, the one for valence movements only contains ecology movements, namely those of Great Britain and the Netherlands.

This structure of support makes it clear that the question of levels of mobilization potential and of numbers of opponents must be addressed quite differently for the five different countries. Even within the individual countries - with the exception of the Federal Republic of Germany - no uniform ordering of the individual movements can be performed.

e. Thus far we have carried out a separate analysis of the support of new social movements for each of the three individual movements. A question often discussed in the more recent research on movements is whether the individual movements are just different forms of expression for *one* type of movement, or whether they must be considered for the most part to be independent of one another¹⁶. In characterizing the ecology movement, the anti-nuclear power movement and the peace movement as "new

16 In regard to this, see the dispute between Greven (1988), Brand (1989) and Roth/Rucht (1989). Stöss (1984) and Rothgang (1990) also provide critical arguments, whereby in the meantime a majority of authors - including Stöss - have indeed endorsed the concept new social movements. See, for example, the contributions in Brand (1985), Wasmuht (1989) and Roth/Rucht (1991).

social movements," such a commonality is conceptually implied. In the following, we address this implication only insofar as we attempt to empirically determine how thoroughgoing the relationship between the three movements is. As an indicator for this, we draw on the average amount of individual mobilization potentials on the one hand and of opponents to the three movements on the other.

The basis of the percentages presented in table 3a is the total mobilization potential of new social movements, or in other words, all of those questioned who could be counted for the mobilization potential of at least one of the three movements. This total mobilization potential forms the combined amount.¹⁷ The percentages that refer to this then show how this total mobilization potential of the three movements is distributed. In table 3b, the same procedure is used for the opponents. In this distribution, seven classes are created: the average potential of all three movements (one case), the average potential for two movements each (three cases), and the exclusive mobilization potential which can be assigned in each case to only one movement (three cases). Table 3b operates in the same way in regard to the opponents. In order to be able to illustrate the changes in the subtotals, the percentages for 1982 and 1989, i.e. for the first and last samples which are available to us, are shown in the table.

First we will concentrate on the results from 1989. With the exception of the Federal Republic of Germany, a pattern among the other countries is identifiable: the first group that has a relatively large portion of the total mobilization potential for the three movements, consists in the first place of those questioned who form the common average of the mobilization potentials of all three groups. In this case we speak of the *consistent* mobilization potential of new social movements. Secondly, the mobilization potential that is exclusively ascribed to the ecology movement also has a large portion of the total mobilization potential.

In the Federal Republic of Germany in 1989, the consistent mobilization potential of all three movements at 52.6% is markedly higher than that of the other four countries. The portion of those questioned in the total amount of mobilization potential who exclusively form the mobilization potential of the ecology movement is, in contrast, at 8.4% markedly lower than in other countries. Thus in contrast to the other countries, the ecology movement has no special attraction in comparison to the peace and anti-nuclear power movements.

¹⁷ We did not take the total number of people questioned as a percentual basis because structures of overlapping become clearer with the described approach.

For the opponents, the movement-specific overlapping is less clearly marked. The comparatively largest overlapping of opponents to movements is found for the anti-nuclear power and the peace movements. (Because of the extent to which they are thematically related, a larger overlapping between the anti-nuclear power and the ecology movements would be expected.) The consistent opponents of all three movements also form, with the exception of Italy, a significant group, and are especially strongly represented in the Federal Republic of Germany. Comparable to the ecology movement in regard to mobilization potential, the anti-nuclear power movement takes on a special position for the opponents. Of the seven different categories, in almost all countries the portion of the group that is composed solely of opponents to this movement is either the largest or the second largest. Italy reaches the highest value with a proportion of almost 50%. Once again the Federal Republic of Germany is the exception here, where the group of consistent opponents is clearly strongest (although it drops from 42.8% in 1982 to 36.8% in 1989), whereas the portion of exclusive opponents to the anti-nuclear power movement is clearly the smallest.

The pattern described for 1989 is also the case for 1982, albeit somewhat less clearly. The largest difference between 1989 and 1982 can be determined in regard to the mobilization potential in the Federal Republic of Germany. The consistent mobilization potential for all three groups increases from over 31% (1982) to over 50% (1989). According to this, in contrast to the other countries there was a clear broadening process of a consistent mobilization potential for the new social movements in the Federal Republic of Germany. In contrast, in France the consistent mobilization potential, clearly small in any event, decreased slightly between 1982 and 1989.

Thus on the whole it can be maintained that in all five countries a considerable portion of those who belong to the mobilization potential of one movement can also be included in the mobilization potential of all three movements. The differences that can be determined for 1989, at 25% in Italy and over 50% in the Federal Republic of Germany, are, however, considerable. In any case, the consistent mobilization potential in 1989 is considerably higher than the consistent opponents. Thus a significant and - with the exception of France - growing consistent mobilization potential is in evidence. This is presumably an indication that the individual movements, which clearly differentiate themselves in terms of concrete thematics, are seen as part of a larger whole by the citizens. The consistent mobilization readiness, or in other words, that which exceeds individual movements, indicates the perception of common, ideological background characteristics of the individual movements, and thereby supports the thesis of a single type of new social movements.

3. Summary and discussion of results

After clarifying the concepts to be used, we examined the trends and levels of support of three new social movements at four points in time in five countries.

a. *On the whole*, first of all a *considerable or even high mobilization potential* can be seen for all five countries and all three movements. Secondly, this pattern also remains *relatively stable* between 1982 and 1989. There are no dramatic changes in the mobilization potential or number of opponents. In general, the mobilization potential increases rather than decreases. Thus the position that is sometimes taken, that for the new social movements it is more a matter of a politically marginal and transitory phenomenon, is not confirmed. Even though we did not examine the reasons for the in fact surprising size and stability of the mobilization potential, our results lend more support to those authors who tie the unfolding of new social movements to structural rather than cyclical factors. If one considers the broad and stable mobilization potential of new social movements, it can be assumed that a new line of political conflict is indicated. Although the mobilization potential is broad and stable, only a small portion of this potential, within which wide variances over the course of time occur, is actually mobilized into concrete actions¹⁸. (The empirical conditions for the strongly varying mobilization quotas are primarily analyzed within the framework of a concept of political opportunity structures or one of these broader concepts of contextual structures, which is not discussed further here.) The mobilization cycle of new social movements determined by Koopmans and Duyvendak (1991:243) on the basis of protest event data, which culminates in the Federal Republic of Germany and in the Netherlands between about 1981 and 1986, is thus not accompanied by an analogous development in the mobilization potential. In the second half of the 1980's, a decrease in actual mobilization actually accompanies an expansion of the mobilization potential.

b. In *cross-national comparison*, however, clear differences in level of support can be seen. The Federal Republic of Germany and the Netherlands tend to have the highest and France the lowest mobilization potential, whereas Great Britain and Italy take on mid-range positions.

The country-specific findings regarding the level of mobilization potential corresponds to our expectations. Were one to place the countries on an industrialism/post-industrialism scale and take factors like the importance of the tertiary sector, the

¹⁸ The percentages of actual activists vary according to country, point in time and movement between .1% (anti-nuclear power movement in France in 1986) and 4.4% (ecology movement in the Netherlands in 1989). These percentages are too small to be interpreted.

defusing of the left-right cleavage and the number of post-materialists into account, the Federal Republic of Germany and the Netherlands would be more likely to be classified as "post-industrial" than the rest of the countries¹⁹. In both of these countries, especially favorable conditions for the development of new social movements seem to exist. The mobilization potential determined here speaks in favor of this, as does the actual mobilization power of the movements²⁰ as well as their more condensed and developed infrastructural basis in comparison to Great Britain, Italy and France²¹.

c. Clear differences also arise in a *comparison of individual movements*. The higher mobilization potential of the ecology movement on the whole in comparison to the peace movement and especially to the anti-nuclear power movement could be related to the fact that, first of all, there are hardly any relevant social forces anymore that speak out against ecological concerns, and ecological issues are also considered important at the level of the mass publics. Secondly, the ecology movement seems to have a more diffuse appearance than the other two movements. It is more fragmented, and disintegrates into a multitude of individual subtopics, partial movements and campaigns. That facilitates wider agreement, because the ecology movement is associated to a lesser degree with strongly polarizing issues - like the NATO double track resolution in the case of the peace movement and the construction of nuclear power plants.

d. On the basis of the relations of the *mobilization potential* for individual movements (low/high) and the number of *opponents* (few/many), we have constructed four movement types and set empirical movements in the five countries in relationship to them. In addition to inconsistencies, the following characteristic patterns emerge:

In *cross-national comparison* (data from 1989), a tendency toward polarizing movements (high mobilization potential and many opponents) in the Federal Republic of Germany and a contrary tendency toward marginal movements (low mobilization potential and few opponents) in Italy emerge.

¹⁹ We will discuss these factors in a separate paper, which will also treat the socio-structural and political-ideological characteristics of the support potential of new social movements.

²⁰ The results of the study done by Koopmans/Duyvendak (1991:236) in reference to the quantitative mobilization of different new social movements in the Netherlands, the Federal Republic of Germany and France show this quite clearly. With the exception of the solidarity movement (primarily for the Third World countries), the mobilization per million residents in France, at 86,000 people (per million residents, figures for the period from 1975 to 1989), is much weaker than in the Netherlands (154,000) and the Federal Republic of Germany (188,000).

²¹ For a comparison of the movements in Italy and the Federal Republic of Germany, see della Porta/Rucht (1991); for a comparison of France/Federal Republic of Germany, see Rucht (1992).

Comparing movements, the number of opponents to the anti-nuclear power movement is relatively high. The most marked provocative movements (low mobilization potential, many opponents) are the anti-nuclear power movements in Great Britain and above all in France. The most marked case of a valence movement (high mobilization potential, few opponents) is represented by the Dutch ecology movement.

The example of the Federal Republic of Germany shows that the quite active and strong movements in comparison to other countries not only draw on a high mobilization potential or actively create it, but can also simultaneously - against their will - assemble a relatively large number of opponents. This is especially true of the anti-nuclear power movement in the Federal Republic of Germany. The strong mobilization of this movement, which did not shy away from sometimes militant forms of action, has apparently also created a definite and broad opposition, so that the group of those who are indifferent is very small. The opponents to the anti-nuclear power movement in the Federal Republic of Germany in the 1980's did not, however, express themselves in larger-scale counter-mobilizations.

The relatively insignificant anti-nuclear power movements in France and Great Britain, which only have a low mobilization potential, have an even larger number of opponents than in the Federal Republic of Germany. We suspect that in the case of the first two of these countries, the (still) dominant political consensus of all of the parties on the question of nuclear power influences public opinion and brands the anti-nuclear power movements as outsiders. That they do not degenerate into marginal movements with little mobilization potential *and* few opponents despite their relative weakness could be related to the fact that Great Britain and France quite early and quite strongly backed the civil usefulness of nuclear power and tied it quite closely to their military nuclear power as well as to an industrially-rooted concept of progress. Under these conditions, the issue of nuclear energy gains great material and symbolic significance. In the face of the aim of certain brands of politics in other countries to leave the field of nuclear energy altogether, it is felt especially in France that indifference cannot be afforded in one's own country (Rucht 1992a). It also fits this picture that the peace movements in France²² and in Great Britain find the most opponents. In both countries, criticism of nuclear armaments is for the most part interpreted as an attack on national independence and strength, which is essentially rooted in their identities as nuclear powers.

e. As for the question of the *overlapping of mobilization potentials*, it was seen that significant portions of the mobilization potential of individual movements belong to the

²² For France's peace movement, however, a suspected overestimation of the opponents due to a problematic question stimulus should be taken into account (see footnote 10).

average of potentials for all three movements. With the exception of Italy, this consistent mobilization potential, as we have called it, increased between 1982 and 1989, and rose in the case of the Federal Republic of Germany from around 31% to over 52%. This indicator speaks in favor both of the hypothesis of a generalized mobilization potential of new social movements that exceeds individual issues, as well as of the consolidation of this type of movement. This finding, as well as the high and remarkably stable level of the total mobilization potential, support the expectation that the new social movements will remain a political factor in the 1990's as well.

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