

AN EVALUATION OF THE NEW REGIONALISM

by

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INTRODUCTION

During the last thirty-five years there has been noticeable in the literature of the social sciences a rise and decline in emphasis upon regionalism, particularly "the new regionalism". The term "the new regionalism" will be used in this study to refer to the type of regionalism advocated by a group of men located principally in the universities of the southeastern United States. Howard W. Odum of the University of North Carolina was the outstanding spokesman and acknowledged leader of this group. His university supplied the facilities for the study and practice of the new regionalism, and the University of North Carolina Press has been one of the foremost publishers of the theories and studies of the new regionalists.

At the height of their enthusiasm the advocates of the new regionalism seemed to regard it as a sort of magic formula which would lead to the solving of all social problems. They claimed that social scientists working within the framework of this approach could provide knowledge in a form in which it could and would be used by social planners and administrators.

However, within the last two or three years there has been an apparent lessening of faith in the magic qualities of the new regionalism. Even Howard Odum himself seems to have decided reluctantly that regionalism is merely one special form of sociology.

It will be the primary purpose of this study to try to identify some of the reasons for the apparent difficulty the new regionalism experienced in attaining the position for which it was intended by its advocates, that position as guiding principle for all social science research.

Since it is the opinion of this writer that the obstacles preventing complete acceptance of the new regionalism lay within the approach itself, this paper will be devoted to a study of the literature of the new regionalism. This literature includes two types of writing. One kind deals with the theory of the new regionalism. It is in this group of writings that one finds the literature concerning what the new regionalism is and what it will do. The second type of literature consists of the results of research conducted within the framework of the new regionalism. An evaluation of the new regionalism in terms of the relationship of these two types of literature will be useful in accomplishing the primary purpose of this study. This evaluation will be based upon the extent to which the results of research by the new regionalists show that

the new regionalism is what the theorists say it is and that it does what they say it will do.

There are involved in such an evaluation certain analytical problems which must be resolved. The first of these is the confusion resulting from the many uses of the words "region" and "regionalism". Chapter I of this study will be given over to an analysis of these terms and an attempt to clarify the distinction between the new regionalism and its antecedents.

The second analytical problem is concerned with the dual nature of the new regionalism which emphasizes first, research and study and second, planning and administration. The primary interest of this paper lies in study and research within the new regionalism. However, since the goals of the new regionalists include the implementing of the findings of research, Chapter II will consist of an effort to identify the sources of these more practical aspects of the new regionalism and to make clear their position within this new concept. Chapters I and II should convey a fairly complete representation of what the new regionalism meant to its advocates at the height of its popularity.

Chapter III will contain a description of the current position of the new regionalism. Those writings which point to a lessening of ardor among its advocates will be examined

together with other writings which attempt to appraise the possibilities for progress for the social sciences within the new regionalism. It will become evident from this examination that some changes in the concept of the new regionalism have been taking place.

Chapter IV will contain a brief review of some of the work done by social scientists working within the framework of the new regionalism. Special attention will be given to the extent to which these studies contribute to the solution of social problems in line with the announced goals of the new regionalists themselves.

Chapter V will contain the conclusions of this writer concerning the reasons for the apparent changed attitude of the new regionalists toward their concept.

Aside from the primary purpose of examining the inherent possibilities and limitations in the concept of the new regionalism, this paper has a secondary purpose in presenting a case study of the growth of an idea. The new regionalism will be traced from its early beginnings in many different forms, through a period of enlargement during which a number of related ideas were brought together. The last period, during which the popularity of the total concept seems to be declining, is a period of refinement. Some phases of the concept of the new regionalism

are being dropped or deemphasized. Others are being brought to the fore. The conclusions reached at the close of this paper can only be tentative; the concept of the new regionalism is still changing, and it may yet emerge in such a form as to necessitate altering evaluations which have been reached at this stage of its development.

CHAPTER I.

WHAT IS THE NEW REGIONALISM?

"Regionalism" and related terms such as "regional planning" and "regional research" have become quite commonplace in the literature of the social sciences within the last thirty or thirty-five years. But many readers are still confused as to the specific meaning of these terms. This confusion appears to rest upon the tendency of both scholarly and popular writers to use these terms almost indiscriminately without definition other than that supplied by the context. It is the variety of contexts in which these terms appear which is confusing. However, all these terms, no matter which definition is used, do have one characteristic in common, their reliance upon some type of geographic unit or region.

Generally speaking, a region is a geographic area delimited by boundaries within which there is homogeneity of some physical or social characteristic. The size of the region and nature of the boundaries are determined by the characteristic or characteristics whose homogeneity defines the area. The nature of the region will be influenced also by the purpose for which the delimitation is made.

The variety of characteristics studied by regionalists and the many different purposes for which regional delineations are made are responsible, in the final analysis, for the varied definitions of the term region and its related terms.

Another factor contributing to the confusion surrounding these terms is the fact that they have crept into popular speech. "Regional" has become an adjective to describe any element of culture associated with a particular area. It may be used in connection with a locality or a much larger area indiscriminately. This one source of confusion will be minimized in this paper in that almost all writings dealt with are of a scholarly nature, so that terms relating to regions or regionalism will not be used without a specific purpose.

The problem of this chapter is to define one of these concepts of regionalism, specifically the concept of the new regionalism. This concept draws heavily from many different definitions of regionalism. Therefore, a brief review of the meaning of regionalism in the social sciences may be useful to this discussion for two reasons. First, it will demonstrate how the numerous differing definitions of the region and regionalism have contributed to the confusion surrounding them. Second, it will show something of the number and diversity of the roots of the new regionalism.

Regionalism in the Social Sciences.

Geographers, in describing the physical features of the earth's surface, were among the first to make use of regions. They delineated regions on the basis of similarity in the features of topography or climate. Even among the geographers there was variation as to the nature of the region in that some geographers limited their studies to the physical characteristics of the earth while others went on to study the effect of these natural characteristics upon man and his use of the physical environment in building culture. There were varying degrees of emphasis upon the influence of natural environment upon man, ranging from the "possibilists", who believed that there were many alternative uses man could make of the natural materials given him, to the geographic determinists, who believed that man's culture was directly determined by physical environment.

All of these geographers contributed to the theory of regionalism through their emphasis upon spatial distribution of geographic phenomena. The views of the new regionalists are most closely related to those of the possibilists in that they propose planning for the most efficient use of the environmental resources of the region.

Another form of regionalism came into use among the anthropologists studying and classifying the cultures of the American Indian. A form of regionalism was expressed in the concept of the culture area which was first given formal recognition in the writings of Clark Wissler.¹

The concept of culture areas is based upon the fact that certain culture patterns among the Indian tribes appear to have accompanied certain economic systems. Economic systems revolved around the principal source of food for a given group. When the culture of a tribe was viewed as a whole, it could usually be located in an area in which the cultures of all tribes showed great similarity.

The work of the anthropologists is particularly interesting in showing how the kinds of regions and types of boundaries used vary with the nature of the data studied. For instance, the boundaries of culture areas were actually transitional zones rather than definite lines of demarcation. Tribes having cultures typical of given regions were designated as culture centers, and other tribal cultures varied more and more from the typical one as the distance from the center increased until there was a gradual transition to the culture type of the adjoining area.

¹Clark Wissler, The American Indian (New York: D. C. McMurtrie, 1917).

Wissler believed that the natural environment offered several alternatives as to food supply. A region designated on the basis of the tribes' reliance upon hunting a particular animal as a source of food might lose its significance of interest to the economists. Their interest in regionalism when one is studying later cultures based upon some form of agriculture and the economists share with other regionalists.

The new regionalists have been particularly interested in the economic relationships between the south and other regions. Economists were led into regionalism through their interest in man as a goods producer and in his use of land as one of the factors of production. Particular interest in the economic relations of other regions, especially the regions was shown by the economic geographers whose field

of study was "the scientific task of dealing with the nature of world areas in their direct influence upon the production of commodities and the movement of goods."¹

The study of the resources offered by the physical surroundings together with the technical aspects of culture which contribute to the usefulness of such resources has led regionalists to the concept of "resource patterns". Resource patterns are "combinations of resources which function as systems."² Areas possessing key resource patterns become economically dominant over other regions. From the concept

¹ Gatz, Quoted by Karl Sapper, article on "Economic Geography," Encyclopedia of Social Sciences, Vol. VI (New York: The MacMillan Co., 1931), p. 627.

² H. W. Zimmermann, "Natural Resources," Encyclopedia of Social Sciences, Vol. XI (New York: The MacMillan Co., 1931), p. 291.

of resource patterns was developed the study of metropolitan dominance and metropolitan regionalism. The economic dominance of some natural regions over others became a subject of interest to the economists. Their interest in metropolitan regionalism the economists share with other regionalists. The new regionalists have been particularly interested in the economic relationships between the south and other regions. Many of the south's difficulties, they feel, can be traced to the economic dominance of other regions, especially the northeast.

The emphasis upon regions among political scientists has been the outgrowth of the belief that administrative areas now in use, which were often delineated arbitrarily without regard to community of interests within their boundaries, are no longer the most efficient units for governmental administration. Regionalists stress the need for some new geographic unit smaller than the nation as a whole. These regions should be laid out so as to encompass within their boundaries areas having interests and problems common to the entire region. Ideally, these regions would also be homogeneous as to social background.¹

¹See R. E. Dickinson, City Region and Regionalism (New York: Oxford University Press, 1947), p. 2.

Recently, the increased interest of the federal government in natural resource planning which accompanied the rise of the "New Deal" further directed the attention of political scientists toward the regional differences which exist in this country. The federal government itself, as well as other institutions, has sponsored the efforts of political scientists to work out possible rearrangements of federal governmental agencies and policies which would take into consideration these regional realities.¹ There has also been a considerable amount of interest in regional planning which has originated within some relatively well established regions such as New England and the Pacific Northwest.² Because this type of activity on the part of political scientists has been more directly concerned with planning and the actual execution of planning, it will be discussed more fully in Chapter II, which is specifically directed toward delineating these practical aspects of regionalism.

¹National Resources Committee, Regional Factors in National Planning and Development (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1935).

²Charles McKinley, Uncle Sam in the Pacific Northwest (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1952).

The advocates of new administrative regions have been quick to turn to the theories of the historian Frederick Jackson Turner for support.¹ Turner pointed out that various frontier areas, regardless of state boundaries, tended to solidify into permanent sections possessing local loyalties and sentiments. The regionalism of those political scientists working with natural resource planning rests upon the areal distribution of those elements of the physical environment with which they are dealing. However, they seem to agree, generally, that the delineation of a region also depends upon general recognition by the inhabitants of the distinctness of the region as an entity, separate from other regions.

Some political scientists, as well as many others, have looked to regionalism as a means of combatting over-centralization in government. In France, particularly, this trend has been noticeable to the extent that one writer has stated that "regionalism" and "decentralization" have become almost synonymous.²

Still a third kind of regionalism has been stressed among political scientists working in the field of international organization. The world, as a whole, is viewed as

¹Frederick Jackson Turner, The Significance of Sections in American History (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1932).

²R. K. Coe, Regionalism in France (New York: The Century Company, 1931), pp. 17-18.

being too complex to lend itself to a centralized government. Regionalism, with its emphasis upon decentralization, accompanied by integration, seems, to some, to hold the solution.

Some significant contributions to the theory of regionalism have been made by the human ecologists. Basic to the theory of human ecology is the concept of the natural area. This concept originated in the biological sciences and is defined as a unit of the physical environment marked by some homogeneity of its physical characteristics and within which, as a result of competition for the limited means of subsistence, a symbiotic community is formed. Competition determines the number of individuals existing in the area as well as their spatial distribution, so that a condition of relative stability or equilibrium is produced. The configuration of the community, then, is the product of this equilibrium between the community and the resources offered by the natural area.

The attempt to apply the concepts of plant and animal ecology to the study of human beings has led to some alterations in the concepts.¹ The human ecologist studies the ways in which human individuals or human groups interact through dependence upon the limited supplies of their

¹Radhakamal Mukerjee expresses the view that the concepts of the biological sciences should be applied to the study of man without alteration. See his Regional Geography quoted in Odum and Moore, American Regionalism (New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1938), and his Regional Sociology (New York: The Century Company, 1926).

environment to produce (a) typical human space distributions and sustenance chains and (b) typical successions of these phenomena.¹

In pursuing these studies, the ecologists have, like the economists and political scientists, become interested in the study of the metropolitan region. Competition between individuals and institutions for a spatial position in which each can survive has produced typical patterns of distribution of types of individuals and institutions within large cities and in the areas surrounding them. The ecologists have tended to emphasize metropolitan regions which consist of the areas surrounding metropolitan centers in which the metropolis dominates activities and serves as the integrator maintaining the distinctiveness of the region.

Insofar as the ecologists have emphasized the natural area and the cultural and symbiotic relationships of communities, they have contributed to the theory of the new regionalism. The emphasis upon planning among the new regionalists uses as its basic criterion the concept of natural equilibrium. In this way, it is felt the most efficient use will be made of the available resources.

¹J. A. Quinn, "The Development of Ecology" in Barnes and Becker, Contemporary Social Theory (New York and London: D. Appleton-Century Co., 1940).

While sociologists have played a significant part in the recent development of the concepts of the new regionalism, there was no widespread effort in this direction before 1930. There were some attempts on the part of individual writers to point out the importance of geographic areas in the study of human groups. Franklin H. Giddings divided the North American continent into four major natural areas for study. He later emphasized his concept of the "sustentation field", "a region or part of the earth's surface which sustains life including the lives of human beings; which provides, as we say in business, the upkeep of life."¹

Radhakamal Mukerjee in his Regional Sociology² called attention to the need for a sociological synthesis of the findings of the other social sciences in relation to the influence of the physical environment upon divisions of labor and upon the ultimate formation of social types. He believed that geographic environment is deterministic, and, to be realistic, sociology must be based upon the acceptance of natural regions.³

¹Franklin H. Giddings, Elements of Sociology quoted by Odum and Moore, American Regionalism (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1938).

²Radhakamal Mukerjee, Regional Sociology (New York: and London: The Century Co., 1926).

³Ibid. p. vii.

Regionalism has been especially closely related to folk sociology, beginning possibly with LePlay's place-work-folk theory, which recognized cultural differences having their ultimate beginnings in geographic differences. Very recently, folk sociology and the new regionalism have come to be viewed as an inseparable pair by some writers, but this phase of their relationship will be discussed more fully later.

Although this resume of regionalism in the social sciences has, by no means, contained all forms of regionalism, it has, perhaps, conveyed to the reader some understanding of the many and varied regionalisms which preceded the new regionalism. Some of these earlier regionalisms have been confused with this new approach. Certainly they have contributed to the theory of the new regionalism. So it is at this point that some attention must be given to the development and definition of the new regionalism itself as distinguished from these other forms.

The Development of the New Regionalism.

The term "the new regionalism" has not been formally adopted by those who are most closely connected with this new approach. The foremost advocate of the new regionalism, Howard W. Odum, almost never uses this term to distinguish between his own concept or interpretation of regionalism

and that of other regionalists. He prefers to use the term "regionalism". However, this term seems, to this writer, to merely add confusion to an already confused issue. Odum speaks of regionalism as if there were only one regionalism. Of course, he is speaking of his own interpretation. Since Odum's concept is a particular kind of regionalism, this paper will recognize the distinction between the regionalism of Odum and his colleagues and other regionalisms by using the term "the new regionalism". This term has been used by others¹ and is appropriately used in referring to the Odum group in that it denotes the new interpretation which they have given to the older forms of regionalism.

Since the new regionalism is largely the product of a group of men working in the universities in the southeastern United States, particularly in the University of North Carolina, it is almost impossible to consider it apart from the institutions in which it grew. The theory of the new regionalists grew side by side with the physical structure of the Institute for Research in Social Science. This Institute was formed for the purpose of furnishing the organization for the furthering of research and the

¹Notably Donald Davidson in his Attack on Leviathan; Regionalism and Nationalism in the United States (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1938.)

implementing of the results of such research. The Institute became a tool for carrying out the practice of the new regionalism as well as the organization within which the theories and policies of the new regionalism were formulated.

Howard W. Odum seems to have furnished the inspiration for the Institute, and his works seem to voice its policies. The Institute is not confined to the University of North Carolina, but it has its headquarters there. The University of North Carolina Press has served as the chief dispenser of literature produced within the Institute. The Journal of Social Forces,¹ published by the University of North Carolina Press since 1922, has admittedly become the unofficial house organ of the Institute

The Institute was not in existence at the time of the publishing of the first issue of the Journal of Social Forces, but the interest of the magazine's editors in some sort of organization for conducting research and planning for the rehabilitation of the south was evidenced in articles by T. B. Eldridge² and Howard W. Odum.³ These articles described a North Carolina plan for a state bureau of municipal

¹Known since 1925 as Social Forces.

²T. B. Eldridge, "State Bureaus of Municipal Research and Information," Social Forces, Vol. I (1922), pp. 47-48.

³Howard W. Odum, "A University Plan," Social Forces, Vol. I (1922) p. 49.

research and information. This bureau was to conduct research on problems of municipal administration and distribute the results to officials of cities and towns. The bureau was to be under the direction of an advisory staff of faculty members of the university.

An article by L. A. Williams in the next issue of the Journal of Social Forces, January 1923, gives evidence of the continued interest of the faculty at North Carolina in articulate research. The opening paragraph of this article shows something of the nature of the problems to be studied. It also shows a growing consciousness on the part of these men that the problems they were working upon were regional rather than just state-wide.

As a part of the work of the Graduate Club in the University of North Carolina during the academic year 1921-1922, a committee was formed whose purpose was to make a survey of the fields at present unworked, or only partially worked, in which outstanding research work could be done. The points of emphasis were naturally fields immediately available in this one southern state. As the work of the committee proceeded, however, it was readily seen how the situation and conditions found in North Carolina were typical of the entire South. It was further discovered as the committee proceeded in its work, that the fields with sociological significance, or which had social and economic bearings, were the fields most consistently unworked or only partially worked and that it is in these fields particularly that outstanding research work needs to be done.¹

¹L. A. Williams, "The South as a Field for Sociological Research," Journal of Social Forces, Vol. I (1923), pp. 112-114.

The article then proceeds to describe more fully the areas in which research was needed.

Between the date of the founding of the Journal of Social Forces in 1922 and the first mention of the Institute for Research in Social Science in March 1925 there was an increasing consciousness of the South as a separate region and of its problems as a region. Howard Odum himself was greatly concerned with the problem of the lack of what he called "democratic balance" and "economic equilibrium" in the South. He felt, too, that the South lacked the leadership necessary to bring about the solutions to these problems. He contended that the South still was capable of producing great leaders, and he was seeking to bring about the conditions which would promote the recognition and encouragement of such leadership. At this time there did not appear to be, as yet, any formulation of his theory of the new regionalism which later was to dominate the Institute. Rather his writings were permeated with a defensive regionalism more closely approaching what he himself later called sectionalism. He was motivated by sectional loyalty and a feeling that the South had not assumed its rightful place in the nation.¹

¹See Editorial Notes and articles by Howard W. Odum appearing in the Journal of Social Forces during this period.

In the March 1925 issue of Social Forces there appeared in Odum's editorial notes a description of the Institute for Research in Social Science which was partly in operation and partly in the planning stage at that time.

The Institute was to emphasize two different fields. One field, encompassing research and study activities, included administrative and articulating functions such as analysis and publication of results and the recruiting of personnel and resources. The second field was that of technique and training for students and workers. The workers in each of these fields were to correlate their activities so as to effect both progress in the social sciences and contributions to public welfare in the form of actual service.

Administering the Institute was a Board of Governors, headed by the University of North Carolina President. This group was to do the general planning. A central office and secretary were to coordinate all efforts of the various departments. Research within each social science department was to be planned by the department itself. Odum implied that this planning would necessarily be done with an eye to integrating the activities of various departments and organizations cooperating within the framework of the Institute's program. He stated that efforts would be made to avoid duplication of effort and to select areas for research in which the South would provide the data as well.

as receive the benefits. Actual research would be conducted by research assistants under the supervision of faculty members.

This was the general outline of a plan for an organization which was gradually put into operation during the years that followed. As the plan became a reality, those working within the growing Institute developed the body of theory referred to in this paper as the new regionalism. Some attention will be given now to this body of theory.

Generally speaking, the new regionalism is a very broad concept. Howard Odum was apparently eager that all social scientists, planners and administrators feel at home within its framework. The definitions and premises of the new regionalism are so phrased as to include as many as possible of the earlier regionalisms. He even included among the earlier regionalisms many forms of administrative regionalism and regional planning, but these will be dealt with more fully in Chapter II. Perhaps this all-inclusive character of the new regionalism can be illustrated by a description of the new regionalists' conception of the region.

The Region of the New Regionalism.

The region, among the new regionalists, retains many of the attributes it had among other regionalists. Odum, instead of defining the region, lists seven characteristics

of regions in general. These are:

1. Space--the region is a geographic unit with limits and bounds.
2. Flexibility of bounds and border margins.
3. Some degree of homogeneity in a number of selected characteristics.
4. Some structural or functional aspect or aspects through which the region is to be denominated.
5. Relative composite homogeneity of the largest number of factors for the largest number of purposes in view, to the end that the region may be a practical, workable unit susceptible of both definition and utilization.
6. The region must be a consistent unit in an aggregate whole or totality.
7. A region has organic unity not only in its natural landscape, but in that cultural evolution in which the age-long quartette of elements is at work--namely, the land and the people, culturally conditioned through time and spatial relationships.¹

The region, to the new regionalists, then is broadly defined. It is a region which combines the characteristics of many different types of regions used before the development

¹Howard W. Odum, "A Sociological Approach to the Study and Practice of American Regionalism," *Social Forces*, XX (May 1948), p. 431.

of the theory of the new regionalism. The region which Odum advocates as the most practical type for the study and practice of the new regionalism is "a major, composite, multiple-purpose, group-of-states societal division of the nation, delineated and characterized by the greatest possible degree of homogeneity, measured by the largest practical number of indices available for the largest practical number of purposes and agencies, and affording the least possible number of contradictions, conflicts, and overlapping."¹

The group-of-states region is considered the most practical since the new regionalism, in addition to research, includes planning and action programs which require a governmental unit for administration.² Such regional organizations as do exist, with the possible exception of the Tennessee Valley Authority, have not been vested with executive authority.

All purpose regions covering several states would obviously be unusable in studying or planning some aspects of culture which are very limited in scope. Accordingly, Odum proposed several types of smaller regions which might

¹Ibid.

²Howard W. Odum's Southern Regions of the United States (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1937) is an attempt to delineate a group of such regions on the basis of the clustering of some seven hundred indices.

be utilized for more limited projects within the framework of the more inclusive new regionalism. He called these smaller units the district, the subregion, the state and the zone.¹

By 1942 Odum felt that these terms, as he defined them, had become generally accepted, that some sort of standardization had been achieved. But the definition of the region accepted by the new regionalists does not tell everything concerning their theories. This body of theory had become quite large and complicated by 1945. Also in 1945 a book, In Search of the Regional Balance of America by Howard W. Odum and Katharine Jocher,² was published. This book

¹Odum defines these terms as follows:

"The district, for the purpose of scientific delineation and practical planning, is a subdivision of the major region, delimited and characterized by necessary homogeneity for functional administrative purposes, allowing for flexibility and for as many districts as functional, governmental or administrative agencies may need."

The subregion is defined as what has primarily been called the natural region, characterized by homogeneity of certain physiographic character or traits.

"the state....is one of forty eight standard constitutional, political divisions of the United States...."

"The zone.... is a local area created by legislation primarily for the purpose of utilization and control of natural resources in relation to conservation and human use ends." ("A Sociological Approach to the Study and Practice of American Regionalism," Social Forces, XX [May 1942] p. 33.

²Howard W. Odum and Katharine Jocher, In Search of the Regional Balance of America (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1945).

marked the completion of 25 years of work within the Institute for Research in Social Science. Since the new regionalism had become the guiding principle of the Institute, Odum felt called upon to present a clear picture of what the new regionalism had become. He did this by characterizing it in four ways, as a science, as an American frontier, as a tool or technique of government, and as a motivation or purpose. Let us proceed to a closer examination of these four characterizations.

The New Regionalism as a Science.

Whether or not social science can ever be scientific in the traditional sense of the method of the physical sciences is a question discussed at length in many books and articles. A discussion of this question falls within the scope of this paper only insofar as it has a bearing upon the evaluation of the new regionalism, and it would not be mentioned here at all were it not that the new regionalists claim that they have founded a new science.

Let it be said, to start with, that Howard Odum has not become embroiled, to any great extent, in these controversies concerning the application of the scientific method to the study of social phenomena. He has avoided them by stating, in effect, that what others have doubted could

be done, the new regionalists have done. He characterized the new regionalism as a science first, "in the sense that it represents a substantial body of scientific materials gathered by authentic research specialists using acceptable scientific methods."¹ He was referring, apparently, to the many articles, books and monographs which have been the work of the regionalists throughout the country and particularly those at the University of North Carolina.²

It is certain that these methods are acceptable to Odum and his colleagues and that they regard their materials as scientific. But the value of the new regionalism as a guiding principle for social science research will depend very largely upon whether or not these methods are acceptable and these materials scientific in the opinions of scholars generally.

Secondly, Odum wrote, "regionalism may well become a science in the sense that it represents a sound inquiry into the organic character of the relation between men and

¹Howard W. Odum, "From Community Studies to Regionalism," In Search of the Regional Balance of America by Howard W. Odum and Katharine Jocher (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1945), pp. 11-12.

²See list of these in Odum and Jocher, In Search of the Regional Balance of America (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1945).

resources, between areas and culture, between physical environment and cultural environment. . . . Regionalism lies at the basis of the larger ecology and helps to interpret sociology as a natural science in the sense of measuring the capacity of social organisms to function within the framework of their natural environment and inherent endowment."¹

This is the attribute of regionalism which has been criticized by some who feel that regionalism, in dealing only with the relationship of man to his physical environment, is too limited. They say that because of its concentration upon this one factor, the physical environment, and its influence upon society, regionalism cannot give a true picture of the nature of social phenomena.²

But there are other grounds upon which the new regionalism lays claim to being a new science. Still again Odum characterized the new regionalism as a science in the sense "that it comprehends what we call the folk-regional society, which is the smallest unit through which all society can be studied. . . . The folk-regional society, therefore, becomes

¹Howard W. Odum, "From Community Studies to Regionalism," In Search of the Regional Balance of America by Howard W. Odum and Katharine Jocher (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1945); pp. 11-12.

²See a further discussion of this criticism, specifically by Louis Wirth, in Chapter III of this paper.

the basis for folk sociology, which must inevitably become the general science of societal development."¹

This phase of the new regionalism has become increasingly important to Odum. There will be further discussion in Chapter III of this study concerning his recent tendency to stress this aspect of his new regionalism almost to the exclusion of his total concept.

In their emphasis upon the region and the folk-regional society as a laboratory for social science the new regionalists have made some progress toward the establishment of a science in that they have managed to bring some systematization into an otherwise confused area. Again, however, the social scientist is beset with the difficulties of fixing the boundaries of such a unit, as he always has been.

In actual practice the advances toward scientific method have not been carried to their conclusion. The problems analyzed have been in terms of specific historical, geographical and cultural antecedents. The conditions are southern, and the solutions, when found, are southern. In order to have their work accepted as scientific the new regionalists will have to generalize or define their units and processes in terms of general principles. It is quite

¹Howard W. Odum, "From Community Studies to Regionalism," In Search of the Regional Balance of America by Howard W. Odum and Katharine Jocher (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1945), p. 12.

possible that regionalists, working within each region, may find solutions for regional problems which may prove satisfactory within the unit under consideration, but the new regionalism is not likely to gain status as a true science of all society until generalizations are made and proven.

By accepting the folk-regional society as a basic unit, the new regionalism became a science on still another basis, according to Odum. This last claim he made on the basis of methodological approach when he wrote, "Regionalism may be interpreted in the scientific sense in still another way, namely as a methodological approach to research in this regional approach. It is not only possible to utilize the general cultural sociological approach alongside the descriptive and historical inquiries, but the folk-region affords the best possible laboratory for statistical and objective measurements within a frame of reference comprehensive enough to be complete but limited enough to insure thoroughness."¹

Like their concept of the region, the new regionalists' list of acceptable methods of social research is practically all-inclusive. In this characterization of the new regionalism as a science in terms of methodology, Odum names almost every method of social research known. Even the techniques

¹Ibid.

used by those engaged in the social survey and planning movements have been absorbed into the new regionalism.

In the beginning research upon the region was very closely related to the social survey movement. The social survey is named by Shelby M. Harrison as one of two forerunners of regional research. At first there were few efforts to programize the findings of surveys whose purpose was simply to supply information. Later surveys made recommendations tending to emphasize planning. The other forerunner of regional research was the city and regional planning movement, which required information in order to formulate programs. The two movements, both aiming at similar objectives, but beginning at opposite poles, stressed but a single method of work.¹ The social survey and the city and regional planning movements may be said to have provided the new regionalism with part of its methodological orientation. The survey method has not been discarded but has been retained as one technique to be used within the framework of the new regionalism. This is in keeping with the broadened concept of the new regionalism which also encompasses the entire planning movement. This aspect of the new regionalism will be discussed in Chapter II.

¹Shelby M. Harrison, "Some Forerunners of Regional Research," Proceedings of the American Sociological Society, XXXIX (1935), pp. 81-84.

Odum also believed that the new regionalism is a science in that his definitions of the region and other smaller divisions, as well as his group-of-states regional delineation, were coming to be generally accepted, so that some standardization of terms was being brought about. He himself admitted that the new regionalism would never be a science, in this sense, unless this general acceptance of his definitions and his regional delineation was accomplished. There is, as yet little evidence that this acceptance has taken place.

The New Regionalism as a Frontier.

In characterizing the new regionalism as a frontier, Odum seemed to be playing with words. He resorted to a confusing analogy involving the earlier American frontier, but his discussion in relation to this characterization finally can be reduced to a statement of the goals of the new regionalists, which, perhaps, may be considered a frontier in that they present new tasks for man to accomplish. These new tasks are "the conservation and development of the resources in relation to the people in each of these great regions" following a "universal pattern of building a great society from the many community, State, and regional units outward towards a total culture"; "the merging of the physical and social sciences in this balance of men and resources and in the development of wealth to be used for human weal";

"the discovery of a new balance and equilibrium between supercivilization and American culture in the balance between men and machines, between men and resources."¹

The New Regionalism as a Tool or Technique of Government.

The new regionalism is presented by its advocates as a tool of government in the sense "that there can be no planning American style except that it takes into consideration the fundamental principles of geographic representation. . . ."² This characterization seems to be a further statement of the contention that decentralization is a necessary aspect of future planning and administration. The impossibility of a central authority being well enough informed upon local problems to establish fair and efficient programs has been recognized the governmental officials themselves. Many governmental agencies have set up systems of regions to facilitate administration. The existence of regional planning commissions is also concrete evidence that government administrators have come to look upon regionalism, but not necessarily the new regionalism, as a tool. Odum envisaged

¹Howard W. Odum, "From Community Studies to Regionalism," In Search of the Regional Balance of America by Howard W. Odum and Katharine Joher (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1945), pp. 12-13.

²Ibid.

advisory boards at each level of government, making the new regionalism a sort of fourth wheel of government to be added to the present three branches.

As a tool for planning Odum saw the new regionalism being used in all regions for the redistribution of wealth and opportunity "because this can be done in the American way only by creating the capacity in each region to produce wealth and to consume it adequately in relation to the people and the region, and in relation to a balanced economy of man, resources, and regions in the perspective of the total national interest."¹ And so, the new regionalism became for Odum a great motivation encouraging the participation of all citizens in regional programs for their own welfare.

The New Regionalism as a Motivation.

Odum's characterization of the new regionalism as a motivation seems to consist in a belief that the new regionalism, both scholastically and practically, may provide the ideology and the administrative framework within which citizens may find expression through participation. The new regionalism's emphasis upon planning establishes goals to be worked for, which, Odum believes, may take the place of those furnished by communism or other ideologies.²

¹Ibid.

²Ibid.

In actual practice, however, the new regionalism as a popular ideology would be in danger lest it degenerate into sectionalism. Since Odum considers sectionalism to be the direct opposite of the new regionalism, it appears that the broadening of the concept of the new regionalism from a scholarly approach to a popular cause might well bring the results which the new regionalists most seek to avoid. Odum must surely have been aware of this danger, but, nevertheless, he has produced some rather concrete plans for bringing the new regionalism into the level of administration in government where individuals could participate in its programs. This particular phase of the new regionalism is discussed more in detail in the next chapter having to do with the more practical aspects of the new regionalism.

The New Regionalism as a Synthesizer.

So far, the discussion in this paper has ranged from the use of regions for the organization of data in the social sciences to the incorporation of the theories of the new regionalists into the administrative framework of our government, but the general subject of this paper is still the new regionalism. The theory of the new regionalists has become so all-inclusive as to encompass nearly all research and planning. The new regionalism provides the framework

upon which to hang various activities. It has become, in effect, a synthesizer. The frame of reference provided by the new regionalism views the findings of various social and physical sciences in relation to the physical conditions which have influenced society.

Both Howard Odum¹ himself and Rudolph Herberle,² to mention just two writers, have assigned to sociology the task of being the synthesizing agent within the framework of the new regionalism.

The New Regionalism as Opposed to Sectionalism.

With all their tendencies to broaden the concept of the new regionalism, its advocates have taken some trouble to disclaim certain aspects of earlier regionalisms. While recognizing the contribution of Frederick Jackson Turner with his theory of sections to their body of theory, they hastily point out that sectionalism should not be confused with the new regionalism. According to Turner the sectional sentiments engendered by conditions on the frontier remained

¹Howard W. Odum, "A Sociological Approach to the Study and Practice of Regionalism," Social Forces, XX (May 1942), p. 426.

²Rudolph Herberle, "Regionalism: Some Critical Observations," Social Forces, XXI (March 1943), p. 283.

long after these conditions disappeared. According to Odum these sectional loyalties differed from the principles of the new regionalism in both motivation and expression.

The difference between the new regionalism and sectionalism appears, to the new regionalists, to lie in the frame of reference within which one approaches the study of phenomena peculiar to a given area. Howard Odum has outlined these differences in frame of reference as follows:

In the first place, regionalism envisages the Nation first, making national culture and welfare the final arbiter. On the other hand, sectionalism sees the region first and the nation afterwards. . . .

In the second place, sectionalism emphasizes political boundaries and state sovereignties, technical legislation, local loyalties, and confederation of states "with common interests menaced by federal action." Where sectionalism features separateness, regionalism connotes component and constituent parts of the larger national culture. . . .

In the third place, sectionalism may be likened unto cultural inbreeding whereas regionalism is line-breeding. . . . Sectionalism inbreeds to stagnation by ignoring time, technology, and collaboration; regionalism develops new strength from old power through progressive line-breeding of new cultures, built upon the old.

In the fourth place, regionalism by the very nature of its regional, interregional, and national cooperative processes implies more of a designed and planned society than sectionalism, which is the group correspondent to individualism. . . .

Finally, one of the most critical aspects of sectionalism is the fact that it must have its counterpart in a potential and in the full flowering of its development, an inevitable coercive federalism, which is contrary to the stated ideals of American Democracy.¹

¹Howard W. Odum, "Regionalism Vs. Sectionalism in the South's Place in the National Economy," Social Forces, XII (March 1933), pp. 338-354.

In view of these distinctions many works previously called "regional" now must be viewed as merely "sectional". The so-called regional novels and other artistic works, in many cases, portray a local culture and local loyalty. Also many historical studies and studies of folk cultures have been more sectional than regional in character, according to the new regionalists.

This rejection of sectionalism appears to be an effort to establish the objectivity of the new regionalists. This is, of course, to be applauded. However, objectivity is largely an individual matter, and no amount of assertion that one is being objective can, in itself, make this objectivity a fact. Indeed, it is often difficult for the reader to determine whether the works of Odum himself are the result of concern for the nation as a whole or concern for the welfare of the South as a separate region.

CHAPTER II

SOME PRACTICAL ASPECTS OF THE NEW REGIONALISM.

This paper has been concerned so far with identifying some of the many regionalisms of the social sciences which were brought together to form the theoretical framework of the new regionalism. There are still other forms of regionalism which have been incorporated into this newer concept. One of these other forms consists of regional delineations associated with the administrative procedures of various governmental and non-governmental agencies and institutions, sometimes called regionalism of convenience. Another of these forms includes the regional aspects of the planning movement. This chapter is dedicated to a definition of these forms of regionalism and to an explanation of their position within the total concept of the new regionalism.

Regionalism of Convenience.

Regionalism of convenience has arisen as a result of the size of the United States which makes it almost impossible to administer it as a single unit. So many national

organizations and institutions, such as churches and governmental agencies, have established areal delineations to simplify their administration, that most readers will be personally familiar with this type of regionalism. As early as 1935 J. W. Fesler reported that seventy-two federal agencies of bureau status or higher had territorially defined the jurisdiction of their agents. Some of the agencies had several functions, for each of which they divided the country differently, so that 106 different delineations were then in use.¹ It is probably accurate to assume that this number has increased considerably since that time. Howard Odum cited numerous other statistics to illustrate the wide-spread use of this type of regionalism as a tool for administration.² He pointed out that these delineations are not generally the result of any theory of regionalism, but rather, they are attempts to divide the country geographically, so that the particular function of each agency can be performed in a more efficient manner. Because these delineations are used every day in a practical way with little

¹J. W. Fesler, "Federal Administrative Regions," American Political Science Review, XXX (1936), pp. 257-268.

²Howard W. Odum, American Regionalism (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1938), Ch. VIII and IX.

attention to the theories of regionalism, they are included in this study as practical aspects of the new regionalism, separate from its theoretical aspects.

These practical regionalisms are interesting to the theorist in that they illustrate that there are regional differences between various sections of the country. For instance, administrative procedures often differ from region to region as the policies of the agency must change to meet local conditions. These regionalisms of convenience are also interesting in that they show that regional delineations tend to differ according to the purposes for which they were originated.

In 1936 Fesler reported upon a movement to set up a standard delineation of regions to be used by a number of federal agencies.¹ Odum himself had proposed a set of all-purpose regions which he felt would be acceptable for many purposes.² However, no standard delineation has been officially adopted, so that regionalism of convenience remains merely a confusion of different regional delineations used as tools for administration of a variety of functions.

¹J. W. Fesler, "Standardization of Federal Administrative Regions," Social Forces, XV (October 1936), pp. 12-21.

²Howard W. Odum, Southern Regions of the United States (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1936).

Although there seems to be little agreement upon a practical standard delineation of regions for administration, there is considerable agreement as to the selection of headquarters cities. This agreement arises from the number of facilities offered by a city as well as its strategic location. The number of organizations which choose a city as a regional or national headquarters city has sometimes been used as an index of the metropolitan character of the city.¹

Emphasis upon the metropolis and its dependent surrounding area, metropolitan regionalism, has been considered by some to be the entire meaning of regionalism. Since metropolitan regionalism was one of the early phases of the planning movement, this may be an appropriate place to consider the relationship not only of metropolitan regionalism but of the entire planning movement to the new regionalism.

The Planning Movement.

A large part of the earliest planning was related to metropolitan regionalism. Social planning at this level was certainly regional, but Odum viewed metropolitan planning

¹R. D. McKenzie, The Metropolitan Community (New York: McGraw Hill Book Company, 1933).

as too limited in both area and philosophy to be a fair representative of the new regionalism.¹ He did not exclude metropolitan planning from the new regionalism entirely. He recognized the need for planning at this level, and there was a place for planning at many levels within his concept. He merely deemphasized metropolitan planning and favored a larger concept.

It was mentioned in the last chapter that one writer, Shelby Harrison, considered the planning movement to be one of the forerunners of the new regionalism.² While Mr. Harrison was thinking primarily of the city planning movement, planning at other levels also found its way into this new approach. Some sort of planning boards at various governmental levels had been operating for a number of years, but by 1933 the federal government had taken definite steps to encourage the formation of such boards.³ The National Planning Board in its report of 1933 recommended the establishment of the National Resources Board as a permanent planning board. One of the duties of the National Resources Board was to encourage and

¹Howard W. Odum, American Regionalism (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1938), p. 251.

²Shelby M. Harrison, "Some Forerunners of Regional Research," Proceedings of the American Sociological Society, XXIX (1935), pp. 81-84.

³C. E. Merriam, "Planning Agencies in America," American Political Science Review, XXIX (1935), pp. 197-211.

and stimulate interest in various forms of planning. By 1935 there were one hundred county planning agencies and forty-three state planning boards in operation. The state planning boards had been grouped into twelve planning districts (regions), and two interstate planning commissions had been set up, namely the New England Council and the Pacific Northwest Regional Planning Commission.¹

These interstate planning commissions were designed to bring cooperation between local, state and federal agencies planning within a given region. To a certain extent, they were successful.² However, in 1943 legislative support for the entire planning program was greatly curtailed, so that the Pacific Northwest Regional Planning Commission was discontinued. Regional planning was firmly enough established in government circles by that time, so that other groups, such as the Columbia Basin Inter Agency Committee, rose to take the place of the regional commission.³

Many of those agencies of the federal government performing their services on a regional basis have been

¹Ibid.

²Charles McKinley, Uncle Sam in the Pacific Northwest (Berkeley and Los Angeles; University of California Press, 1952), Ch. XIV.

³Ibid.

responsible for planning within their restricted areas of jurisdiction. Due to the overlapping interests of some of these agencies there has arisen in some regions, particularly the Pacific Northwest, a considerable amount of duplication and conflict which indicate a need for some sort of coordinated planning.¹

One regional planning agency directly sponsored by the national government is the Tennessee Valley Authority which is an entity in itself, crossing state lines and having the authority to coordinate and enforce its policies. However, when actually carrying plans, such as the building of dams, roads or bridges, into effect, the Tennessee Valley Authority has found it necessary to work through and with state governments. The authority has become, in many instances, a coordinating and advisory body.² The controversy surrounding the Tennessee Valley Authority and possible Columbia and Missouri Valley Authorities is too involved to be discussed fully here. Suffice it to say, that theoretically there is much to recommend some sort of coordinated planning in some regions, but on the practical level there are many

¹Ibid.

²T. Levron Howard, "The Social Scientist in the Tennessee Valley Authority Program," Social Forces, XV (October 1936), pp. 29-34.

political obstacles to its accomplishment.

Several other regional arrangements have consisted of agreements or compacts between states for purposes of cooperation on a particular problem. Since there is no governmental unit comparable to the geographic region, planning at this level has, thus far, mostly been rather ineffective.

This paper is not intended to be a history of the planning movement. The preceding summary was presented for the purpose of showing the many governmental levels at which planning has been in operation. There seems to be a rather large jumble of planning agencies at many different levels. Some of them are effective, and some are not. However, just as Howard Odum defined the region in terms broad enough to include as many kinds of region as possible, so he proposed a system of planning boards which would include as many types of planning as possible. He indicated that there have been two major types of planning, that general planning done by state planning boards, regional and national composite planning groups, and that more specific planning which includes definite plans and their execution for such definite areal problems as floods, soil conservation, etc.¹

¹Howard W. Odum, American Regionalism. (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1938), p. 259.

His definitions of the region and of areal units other than the region, cited in Chapter I, would allow planning to proceed within the new regionalism at any of those levels indicated above. Indeed, planning for almost any type of unit the nature of a given problem demanded could come within the framework of his concept.

In order to facilitate planning at many different levels, Odum proposed a system of planning boards coordinated as far as possible with governing bodies at national, state and regional levels. The following excerpts may help to illustrate more specifically how Odum proposed to get the new regionalism operating within the framework of existing governmental units:

The constitution of the national research and planning council would provide that it be authorized by Congress, with due referendum to the people, as a regular American constitutional form of procedure. Appropriations would be made by Congress, including cooperative arrangements with state and regional councils on the general precedents of federal services to agriculture, highways, and public health. It would be a major administrative and functional procedure without coercive power, but implying the prestige and distinguished service analogous to the Supreme Court. It would be adequate for research, planning, emergency defense, or normal democracy.

The personnel suggested for the national council would consist of nine members, full time, whose services should correspond to those of the members of the Supreme Court, heads of major commissions, or members of the Cabinet. In general, one member of the council would be from each of the regions and one or more at large. There would be a central office with a staff of research and engineering experts. A fundamental principle is regional representation, with, in general, one member from each region finally designated.

The function of the national council, in general, would be threefold: first to insure a continuous scientific inventory of the state of the nation and to provide essential information for the President, the Congress, the Supreme Court, and special needs; to coordinate research and approximate a clearing house; reduce overlapping and economize on congressional committee investigations; second, to act as a buffer between the President and other branches of government and to provide a safeguard against overcentralization and power through government by persons to serve in emergency situations; third, to act as buffer and democratic interpreter between the national government and states and regions, and necessary federal centralization.¹

His outline provided for councils or boards at state and regional levels, each constituted similarly to the national council, described above. The functions of each council, although confined to its own level of government, correspond to those of the national planning council. The functions of the regional council would be of a slightly different nature because there is no governing body at that level. Odum outlined the functions of the regional planning council as follows:

The function of the regional board, in general, would be threefold: first a clearing house of conferences and procedures rather than research, enabling the states within the region to keep mutually informed and to avoid conflicting procedures; second, to act as a buffer between states, on the one hand, minimizing the trends

¹Howard W. Odum, "A Sociological Approach to the Study and Practice of American Regionalism," Social Forces, XX (May 1942), pp. 425-436.

toward extreme state rights and interstate barriers, but on the other, also advising and protecting the individual states in fundamental matters; third to act as buffer between the federal, centralized government and the individual states; to avoid conflict between state and federal authorities, and to create wholesome understanding and relationships between the states and federal government.¹

Thus Odum tied regionalism and planning together by proposing a regional planning board in his system of planning boards. He completed the incorporation of planning into the new regionalism by defining its goals as almost identical to those of the new regionalism. Specifically, he wrote,

There is yet, however, one basic principle which underlies that sort of planning implied in the framework of American institutions. Like regionalism again, the key to planning is found in the need for balance and equilibrium. Whereas regionalism is a tool for attaining equilibrium in specialized ends, planning finds equilibrium and balance the basic principle upon which its major premises are based.²

While he proposes here that regionalism is merely a tool for planning, at one other place, at least planning of this sort appears to be the goal or end product of the new regionalism.³ Whether one is a new regionalist, looking

¹Ibid.

²Howard W. Odum, American Regionalism (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1938), p. 258.

³Discussed in Chapter I of this paper, p.

at planning as the end product, or a planner looking at the new regionalism as a tool, the essential fact seems to be that Odum considers the two inseparable. Planning is an integral part of the new regionalism, and it is one aspect of the new regionalism which distinguishes it from the older sectionalism, according to Odum.¹

¹Discussed in Chapter I of this paper, p.

CHAPTER III.

RECENT TRENDS IN THE NEW REGIONALISM.

The first two chapters of this paper have been devoted to an attempt to define the new regionalism. This definition has been effected through an identification of the theories and movements which have contributed to this new approach. Further, an attempt was made to show how these diverse theories and movements have been integrated into one body of theory, and lastly, some attention was given to the goals of the new regionalism and its place in the administrative framework of our nation, as seen by its advocates. This third chapter will acquaint the reader with a number of recent works which indicate that a change in the attitude of the new regionalists toward their concept has been taking place. However, the first book is mentioned here not because it reveals a change in attitude on the part of its author but because it shows that as recently as 1947 Howard Odum held to his new regionalism as it was defined in chapters one and two.

In 1947 Howard Odum's work The Way of the South¹ was published. This book, coming out after several decades of research within the framework of the Institute for Research in Social Science, is largely a statement of the history and present state of the resources and culture of the south. The author was apparently prompted to write this work by a rebirth of sectional animosity which he observed during and following World War II. Odum outlined what he considered to be some of the major points of tension and listed types of planning necessary to overcome these difficulties. He did not attempt to arrive at specific solutions. Perhaps the most outstanding facts in connection with the book are first, the immense amount of information about the south that regional research produced and second, Odum's continued insistence that the only way that the problems of the south, and consequently those of the nation, can be overcome is through the application of the new regionalism. Planning which will bring about regional balance and equality, the integration of all regions, is the key to the solution of most, if not all, problems. Odum ended his work, after summing up years of research, with a restatement of the importance of regional research and

¹Howard W. Odum, The Way of the South (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1947).

planning in bringing about a more efficient use of resources and helping to overcome cultural conflicts.

In spite of Odum's insistence upon the importance of the new regionalism in solving the world's problems, his approach had not yet gained widespread acceptance among scholars as recently as 1951. In that year a group of papers edited by Merrill Jensen was published under the title Regionalism in America.¹ Included in this group were two papers of particular interest to this evaluation. One of these, "The Promise of Regionalism," was written by Howard Odum. The other, "The Limitations of Regionalism," was by Louis Wirth.

Odum and Wirth did not seem to agree at all upon the nature or possibilities of the new regionalism. Odum attributed this disagreement to the fact that Mr. Wirth was badly informed, but it is difficult to believe that a sociologist of Wirth's stature was entirely ignorant of the volume of literature Odum had produced in defining and supporting the new regionalism. It seems more likely, to this writer, at least, that he simply did not accept Odum's definitions.

¹Merrill Jensen, Ed., Regionalism in America (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1951).

This exchange between the two scholars resulted in Odum's being placed in the position of having to defend his form of regionalism by defining it again. For instance, one of Wirth's principle criticisms is as follows:

. . . The view of man in society, however which singles out the interconnections between the human habitat and the complex fabric of social arrangements, ways of life, ideas and ideals, must be recognized for what it is, namely, a one factor theory, which taken alone will furnish only a one-sided and hence distorted, picture of social reality, and which, to be scientifically valuable, must be supplemented by and integrated with other perspectives affording other equally plausible and meaningful interpretations.¹

Odum's answer to this was simply that the new regionalism is not a one factor theory. He repeated that, ". . .it is not regionalism or but regionalism and."²

Wirth did not entirely discount the new regionalism. He recognized the facts of the existence of some regions and the value of the demarcation of regions in securing data. However, he cautioned lest regions, so defined, be used as explanations in accounting for further interrelationships. He also pointed out that boundaries are,

¹Louis Wirth, "The Limitations of Regionalism," Regionalism in America, ed. by Merrill Jensen (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1951), p. 380.

²Howard W. Odum, "The Promise of Regionalism," Regionalism in America, ed. by Merrill Jensen (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1951), p. 402. Odum's use of this expression is made clearer in the discussion of his distinction between regionalism and sectionalism in Chapter I of this paper.

at best, compromises since no set of regions can be entirely acceptable for all purposes. There is danger that these compromise boundaries may come to be regarded as fixed and thus lose their value through failure to change to meet changing conditions. He warned that regional sentiments, which can produce interest and activity within the region, can also lead to regional chauvinism, or, as Odum would say, sectionalism. Finally, he stated that regionalism is no safeguard against falsification of facts and that it can lead to an effort to "squeeze life into a rigid mold, and it can become a vain gesture to retard integration of life on a wider and more inclusive scale."¹

Odum met most of these criticisms by returning to his definition of the new regionalism. He reiterated the differences between sectionalism and the new regionalism and stated again that the new regionalism is not divisive but looks to the integration of regions as its goal.²

The essence of this difference of opinion appears to lie in Wirth's refusing to accept Odum's definitions of the new regionalism and its related terms. If he accepted most of Odum's writings upon the subject, it is quite

¹Wirth, op. cit., p. 393.

²Odum, "The Promise of Regionalism," op. cit.

possible that Wirth would withdraw most of his criticisms. But Louis Wirth is not the only social scientist refusing to accept Odum's concept. In his article Odum indicated that his definitions were not being accepted generally as he thought they should be and hoped they would be. He began the article by stating that the promise of regionalism depends, in part, upon this widespread acceptance. He wrote,

More specifically, the promise of regionalism will depend upon the adequacy of our definitions of regionalism; upon the realism with which we define the region in terms of structure and function; upon our success in having these definitions accepted by professional students and leaders; upon the degree to which they can be made articulate in actual situations. That is, our definitions must provide, first, a construct for the conceptualization of regionalism as a multiple approach to the study of total areal-cultural situations, and second, as a tool for both research and planning through the integration of the several social sciences and some of the physical sciences and the action agencies available for practical work.¹

In closing his article Odum attributed the reluctance of scholars to accept his definitions to the complexity of his concept and to the large amount of cooperation between disciplines which it calls for. He said, finally, that America cannot seem to grasp his new regionalism, that it looks upon it as sectionalism.

¹Odum, "The Promise of Regionalism," op. cit., p. 395.

In spite of this apparent lack of acceptance for the new regionalism, Odum was firm in his belief that it is the only answer to many of the problems facing the leaders of the world. The strength of his conviction in this matter is shown in the following passage:

It seems clear that a great many, perhaps most, of the tragic situations of maladjustments, disorganization, and pathology, the world over are due to regional inequalities and imbalance, whether in terms of the lack of balance between plant and animal resources or between man and nature, or whether in terms of the "haves" and "have nots" in advanced civilization. . . .

By the same token, the main strategy of planning will be found within the framework of regional balance and equality, which must include not only economic opportunity but cultural development and the thing now so much stressed, namely, justice in world organization. Yet justice, admittedly basic to adequate and enduring arrangements, is not primarily something on the level of abstract morality and moralistic principles, but something on the level of the essential regional equality and balance of opportunity in the places where people live, set in a framework of national or world standards and interrelationships.¹

In his reference work, American Sociology,² also published in 1951, Odum's stand on the new regionalism

¹Odum, "The Promise of Regionalism," op. cit., p. 402.

²Howard W. Odum, American Sociology (New York, London, Toronto: Longmans Green and Co., 1951).

was much the same as that he took in Regionalism in America.¹ There appears to be one difference. In American Sociology² Odum did not stress the importance of the new regionalism as an overall guiding principle, but he treated it as merely a special type of sociology inseparably joined with folk sociology. In this work there is no long definition of his regionalism, not even a chapter devoted to it. It is discussed in Chapter 20, "Special Sociology, Population, Demography, Ecology, Regionalism". In this chapter Odum reiterated his belief that his new regionalism, with its ultimate goal of equilibrium of regions is of prime importance in the contemporary world. But he apparently bowed somewhat to the general lack of acceptance which has met his concept. This excerpt from his chapter may help to convey what he considered to be the current position of the new regionalism.

One of the more recent trends in regionalism in American sociology has been the integration of regionalism with folk sociology, primarily by the North Carolina group, to provide a realistic and dynamic framework for the analysis of societal structure, to construct sound theory of process and of measured social change, to set the incidence for social planning and to meet the need for better understanding

¹Merrill Jensen, Ed., Regionalism in America, op. cit.

²Odum, American Sociology, op. cit.

and direction of contemporary global intercultural relations. Although relatively new and not widely accepted in 1950, both folk sociology and regionalism may be said to have a relatively distinguished heritage in both European and American sociology.¹

He continued with an outline of the heritage of folk sociology and regionalism. The lack of acceptance of the new regionalism as a sociological construct he blamed upon the fact that no adequate treatment has been presented, so that there is a general misunderstanding of the main core of regionalism. Considering the number and length of his own works, in which he seemed to be trying to treat the new regionalism in its entirety, one cannot refrain from speculating as to what Odum would require as an adequate treatment of the subject.

In December, 1952, Social Forces carried an article "Regional Sociology as a Special Discipline" by Alvin L. Bertrand,² who indicated that a breaking down and refining of the new regionalism had been taking place. While this article was not written by Howard Odum himself, it must be remembered that he and his colleagues still dominated the

¹Odum, American Sociology, op. cit., p. 355.

²Alvin L. Bertrand, "Regional Sociology as a Special Discipline," Social Forces, XXXI (December 1952), p. 132.

editorial board of Social Forces. There is no editorial note accompanying this article, but Odum's later works, which will also be discussed in this chapter, appear to be based upon a view of the new regionalism not unlike that expressed by Bertrand. He felt, and properly designated Mr. Bertrand's main thesis was that regional sociology is a legitimate special discipline, but regional sociology is not, of course, the same as the new regionalism. He wrote, ". . . Regional sociology thus has the same claim of validity that other special sociologies have, which devote themselves to the study of a particular type of social group. This discipline concerns itself with the study of social phenomena within such groupings as may be identified as regional entities."¹ He listed the contents of regional sociology as the study of data useful in the delineation of regions; the study of all forms of human association within a given regional environment, including the origin, development and functioning of such associations; and the comparative study of regional social systems.² Study of these phenomena could easily take place within the framework of the new regionalism as it was defined earlier

¹Bertrand, op. cit., p. 133.

²Ibid., p. 134.

by Odum, but Bertrand made it quite clear that he considered that the content of regional sociology should be separated from other aspects of the new regionalism, such as planning and administration. The writings advocating specific measures for social planning, he felt, are properly designated as regionalism, as distinguished from the discipline of regional sociology. Regionalism was, to Bertrand, an "ism".

Following the publishing of Bertrand's article by a few months was another by Howard Odum, "Folk Sociology as a Subject Field for the Historical Study of Total Human Society and the Empirical Study of Group Behavior".¹ In this article Odum appears to have assumed that the close relationship of regionalism and folk sociology was generally accepted. In speaking of regionalism he referred, of course, to his own regionalism, or the new regionalism. He continued his insistence that the folk regional society is the best possible unit for the empirical study of all cultures. It is to be noted that in this article, devoted to a clarifying of sociological concepts, he did not attempt to stress the planning and administrative aspects of his new regionalism.

¹Howard W. Odum, "Folk Sociology as a Subject Field for the Historical Study of Total Human Society and the Empirical Study of Group Behavior," Social Forces, XXXI (March 1953), pp. 193-223.

He mentioned that folk sociology is based upon the study of real situations and continuing needs, and he wrote briefly of the need for planning to bring the population and resources, folk culture and technology into harmony, but he left the formation of planning programs out of the discussion. He was more concerned with ways of conducting research in these needed areas. In his earlier writings, he appeared to consider research and planning inseparable and seldom wrote about one or the other aspect exclusively.

So it appears that Odum himself has come to feel that the functional aspects of the new regionalism, while important to society, should be separated from the theoretical aspects which are useful to social scientists. The extent to which social scientists, using the theoretical concepts of the new regionalism contribute knowledge in a form to be used by administrators in meeting actual situations will provide a measure of the usefulness of regionalism. This paper is more directly concerned with the failure of the new regionalism as a whole. In completing any analysis of the total concept, it is necessary to give some attention to the results of the research which has taken place within its framework. The next chapter will review some of these studies.

CHAPTER IV

SOME RESULTS OF RESEARCH UNDER THE NEW REGIONALISM.

It was mentioned earlier in this paper that the new regionalism has had a particular value in stimulating research which has produced a great quantity of information concerning the South as a region. In the final analysis, the test of any approach is in the usable knowledge which it produces. In any effort to determine the extent to which the new regionalism has contributed to our fund of knowledge one must give some attention to the studies which have been produced within the concept.

Much of this research has been conducted by the Institute for Research in Social Science which was discussed previously in connection with the definition of the new regionalism.¹ The Institute flourished along with the new regionalism itself. In 1945 Howard Odum and Katharine Jocher published their book In Search of the Regional Balance of America² which was a sort of stock-taking of the

¹See Chapter I.

²Odum and Jocher, In Search of the Regional Balance of America, op. cit.

new regionalism and the Institute after twenty-five years. The physical plant of the Institute had grown, and considerable space in the book is given over to a description of these facilities.

The use of the regional laboratory had become an established fact by 1945. The South was looked upon as a general laboratory, and thirteen counties in the neighborhood of the university were accepted as a testing laboratory for research methods and planning methods.

Odum and Jocher did not overlook the results produced by those working within this laboratory. In Search of the Regional Balance of America contains a list of some eighty-eight books, three hundred fifty articles and chapters and numerous unpublished manuscripts produced within the Institute. The authors classified these listed studies into four groups. The first of these groups contains those "studies of folk culture which emphasize primarily the more primitive elements of society. From these studies come materials and methods which throw light upon social capacities, racial capacities, and the development of culture patterns and areas."¹ Some typical titles in this group are Folk Culture on St. Helena Isle, Folkbeliefs of the Southern Negro, and

¹Ibid., p. 9.

The Negro and His Songs.

The second group is concerned "more nearly with materials for the study of that sort of folk society which, comprehending the whole culture life of the region, reflects the peculiar civilization which still transcends the state-ways of government."¹ Included in this group are The Human Geography of the South, An American Epoch, Factory Master of the Old South, and many others.

The third type of study is concerned "more nearly with materials for the study of practical social problems of economic or social policy, or of social planning, whether of local or national import."² King Cotton is Sick, Welfare Work in Mill Villages, and Wages and Income in the South are some of the characteristic titles in this group.

The fourth type emphasizes "cooperative, methodological and theoretical studies, partly incidental to the regional portraiture of the special studies and partly as an objective in the development of social science, social research, and personnel within the given region."³ Some typical titles in this group are Black Yeomanry, Social History of the

¹Ibid.

²Ibid.

³Ibid.

Sea Islands, and Folk Culture on St. Helena Isle.

In order to give a more accurate account of the type of research conducted within the Institute and within the frame of reference of the new regionalism, this paper will include a detailed review of several of these works.

The first of these is An American Epoch¹ by Howard Odum himself. He placed this volume in the second category outlined above consisting of those works concerned "more nearly with materials for the study of that sort of folk society which, comprehending the whole culture life of the region, reflects the peculiar civilization which still transcends the stateways of government."²

An American Epoch.

In An American Epoch the author appears to be striving to present his materials in such a way as to give a comprehensive word picture of the South. The book is almost entirely description. However, some attention is given to the derivation of attitudes and group behavior patterns which are a part of the description and to an evaluation of these

¹Howard W. Odum, An American Epoch: Southern Portraiture in the National Picture (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1930).

²Odum and Jocher, In Search of the Regional Balance of America, op. cit.

attitudes and behavior patterns based upon the inefficiencies and waste which occur as the result of the inconsistencies, contrasts and inequalities in the culture.

In the beginning the author establishes two "typical" personalities existing in the antebellum South, namely, a wealthy planter and a small scale independent farmer. The physical surroundings as well as the fundamental beliefs and attitudes of the men are described. By following these men and their families and their descendents through the war, the reconstruction and later periods, the author attempts to show the changing attitudes of the South as a whole. In the personalities of some of the descendents, particularly, one recognizes the rise of new types of individuals within the changing social and physical conditions accompanying the reconstruction and industrialization of the South.

Although these men are supposed to be "typical", at many points they seem to differ in their opinions from large groups of their neighbors. For instance, the independent farmer is a stout defender of the Negro. The book does not make clear whether he represents a large segment of the population which opposes another large section of the population or whether he is not so typical as the reader has been led to suppose. Where these differences occur, the author's chosen characters are often less prejudiced, more reasonable, than their opponents. The reader is left with some doubt

regarding the typicality of the cases cited, and he wonders how much wishful thinking is involved.

The style of presentation in this work is especially interesting in that it is unusual in sociological literature. It consists largely of calling forth a mental picture of the total situation through the use of a series of image words and phrases. The following passage is typical of the presentation throughout the book, and, it might be mentioned, common to several of Odum's other works:

And throughout the land simple farm houses with front yards clean swept with broom and wind. . . . Box borders. . . large box-woods in formal array inclosing the little paradise of flowers. . . old-fashioned flowers--Zinnias, petunias, vari-colored phlox, red feather plush, blown in the wind, hollyhocks, stately, graceful, majestic, guardians of home and tradition. . . and the honey bees always in profusion and all manner of birds and butterflies. . . harmonies of nature and life, realities of the bucolic scene. . . and figs and grapes, big round red plums, blue little plums, apples, May apples and June, Yates and wine-saps. . . peaches, early June and Georgia Belle and Golden Elbertas. . . scuppernongs and muscadines. . . watermelons and muskmelons. . . Spanish peanuts and goobers. . . popcorn and hickory nuts. . . chestnuts and chinkapins. . . jellies and preserves. . . backbone and spare ribs. . . sausage, hashlet, and chitterlings. . . new wheat bread and water-ground meal for corn pone with cracklings. . . milk and honey. . . blackberry wine and apple cider. . . locust and persimmon beer. . . and inside clean rooms, simple in old fashioned plainness and elegance. . . mottoes over the doors. . . Bible and family portraits. . . feathery beds of ease and sheets of immaculate whiteness. . . family prayers. . . the singing of hymns. . . simplicity with natural loyalties and emotions. . . "loyalty, liberty and service". . . "God bless our Home!"¹

¹Howard W. Odum, An American Epoch, op. cit., p. 60.

In this book, Odum, as a new regionalist, seems to be fulfilling the function of synthesizer. The scope of the book is as broad as the concept of the new regionalism. The materials presented within the work itself are the results of many other studies conducted mostly between 1920 and 1930.¹

The facts which serve as the basis of this synthesis may have been secured by objective methods, but the presentation of the material, relying as it does upon the imagery of colorful words, has an aura of nostalgia which arouses doubts as to its objectivity.

It appears that, while the author has gained much of his material from regional studies, he considers the science of the region to be still young. He summarizes the results so far, brings them together to show what can be known, but he makes little attempt to apply the knowledge for future programs. Rather, he seems to admit that this is the beginning point. One finds the questions asked at the end, rather than at the beginning of this book. The writer suggests that this book is to serve as a point of departure for further study. He shows the progress the South has made in overcoming its difficulties and points out the changes in attitudes within and without the South which are necessary

¹Ibid. p. 143.

to accomplish the greater things yet to come which are to be part of the new American Epoch. He makes no attempt to show how these necessary changes can be accomplished. Indeed, he does not even express an opinion concerning whether or not these changes can be accomplished at all.

The Human Geography of the South.

Another book which Odum placed in his second category of works concerned "with materials for the study of that sort of folk society which, comprehending the whole culture life of the region, reflects the peculiar civilization which still transcends the stateways of government"¹ is The Human Geography of the South by Rupert Vance.²

In his preface Rupert Vance himself states the general purpose and nature of his work. He considers himself a worker within the framework of the new regionalism; therefore, some idea of the concrete results of the new regionalism can be gained from an observation of his purpose in writing this book and the manner in which he attempts to accomplish this goal.

¹Odum and Jocher, In Search of the Regional Balance of America, op. cit.

²Rupert Vance, The Human Geography of the South (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1932).

He writes,

Regionalism and the new geography afford a point of vantage from which this volume views the American South as a test of human adequacy to master the resources of its region and to develop thereon a distinctive and competent culture.

However much he would have enjoyed it, the author has not written a regional sociology of the South. Nor does he contend that the relation of the resources of a region to the cultural adequacy of its population yet forms the subject matter of human geography. At such a point, however, converge the lines of force from geography, ecology, human biology, economics, and technology. Within this scaffolding of nature and culture has been erected the architecture of a region. With many a side glance at the historical development, this volume attempts to give a synthetic treatment of the interaction of men and nature in the American South.¹

He begins in true regionalist fashion by defining the concept of a region and naming the elements making up geographical regions. Then he proceeds to the matter at hand, that of establishing geographical sub-regions within the general region designated as the South. These sub-regions, as well as the general region, he establishes as realities on the basis of similarities or differences of statistical indices. Each of the physiographic sub-regions, the coastal plain, Florida, the Piedmont Plateau, the Appalachian Highlands, and the Ozark-Quachita Highlands

¹Ibid. p. vii.

is characterized according to size and geographic position, nature of soil, topography and native vegetation.

He then shows that Geddes' sequence of regions, known as the valley section, can be applied to some sections of the South. In this manner the area is divided into zones on the basis of topography, and distinctive cultures for each zone are found to exist.

The distribution of the southern population, Vance indicates, was influenced by topography from the beginning, as was the type of economic system and the type of culture which was developed. The easily accessible coastal plains provided the background for the first settlements. Their broad stretches of level, fertile land lent themselves to the plantation economy. From the coastal area the tide of immigration moved up the valleys through the mountains and spread out further inland to be joined by similar migrations down the valleys from the north. Here the ground was uneven, rocky and less fertile and became the home of the small-scale, independent, self-sustaining farmer. The isolation enforced by the difficulty of travel in the early years tended to perpetuate the differences in the cultures of these areas and to continue the influence of frontier conditions in the back country. Since the racial groups settling in the South, as well as the social groups, were similar to those settling in the North, Vance attributes the differences in culture

to the geographic environment through its altering of the native culture of the inhabitants. Later, the depletion of soils in the plantation region necessitated the migration of the plantation owners to new soil in the interior.

The inhabitants of the South were in continual touch with the culture of the frontier, and the dominance of agriculture in the South, through its spatial isolation tended to perpetuate the independence of spirit and the self sufficiency of the frontier as attitudes of the South.

The westward movement of the plantation led to a conflict between the plantation culture and the frontier culture. The plantation owner, with his systematic cultivation pushed the frontiersman from the more fertile lands. He regarded the haphazard methods of the small-scale farmer as a demoralizing influence upon his own laboring force. The frontier, continually retreating before the plantation, left in the upland areas the small-scale farmers who, even today are able to wrest a bare existence from their lands. The customs of the frontier remain to this day.

Having established the general relationship of nature and culture in the South, the author proceeds to the more specific discussions of the exploitation of given resources. First, he concerns himself with the classification of soils, their origins, and their adaptability for agriculture.

Then he designates soil regions within the South. The author is always mindful of the ways in which historical conditions or cultural forms have prevented or helped the efficiency of the methods with which the natural resources were utilized. He discusses the possibility of reclaiming worn out lands and the extent to which this has already been accomplished.

In a similar manner he discusses the exploitation of the piney woods and the technological advances which make possible the more efficient use of this resource. He suggests the reforestation of cut-over lands to restore vanished forests and to furnish a sustained yield.

Other chapters discuss livestock in the South, the cotton economy with its dependence upon a fluctuating market and the problems of depletion of the soil and the need for cheap labor, the fringes of the cotton belt with their intensive cultivation of tobacco and truck crops. Rice and sugar plantations and the fisheries, as well as the southern highlands and the plantation region with its adaptations of the antebellum economy all come in for analysis. In each of his analyses the author shows how the inefficient use of the resources has brought about the well known problems of farm tenancy, low income, ignorance, poverty, poor health, etc.

In addition to the difficulties involved in the inefficient use of the South's resources is the problem of the flow

of wealth from the South to other regions. The South is a debtor region.

The final chapter, "Reconstructing the Region," brings the reader face to face with the difficulty confronting the regionalist in the South and in other regions. Vance states the difficulty as follows:

Regional planning may then be defined for our purpose as an attempt at coordination of all regional changes and readjustments toward a desirable goal. . . . Thus a survey of the region-as-is is followed by a blue print of the region as it can be reconstructed. This plan is drawn with reference mainly to the possibilities of the area's natural features at the hands of the engineering arts. The practical task of the regionalist is to fill in step by step the gap between the survey and the plan. In its scientific aspects regional planning leans heavily on the engineering arts and techniques; in its policy making aspects it is a part and parcel of the political process.¹

It appears that the regionalist is limited in his contribution to the solution of society's problems just as other social scientists have been. Once the necessary information is available, it is beyond the scope of the social scientist to determine its use. Concentration on one region narrows the field and simplifies, to a certain extent, the problems and the nature of the inquiry, but

¹Ibid. p. 483.

whether findings on the basis of the region will be more acceptable to politicians than those based on more artificial units remains to be seen.

The Human Geography of the South does inspire more confidence in the reader seeking usable knowledge than does An American Epoch. Perhaps this is because the areas covered in the human geography are such that definite programs can be set up to remedy some of the difficulties described. Odum's work is so encompassing as to be vague, leaving the reader confused by the many problems outlined. There seems to be no place at which to begin to organize data and attack the problems.

King Cotton is Sick.

Among Odum and Joehner's third group of titles, those works concerned with materials for the study of "practical social problems of economic or social policy, or of social planning, whether of local or national import"¹ is found Claudius Murchison's King Cotton is Sick.² In his preface Mr Murchison indicates that his interest in the problem at hand was aroused by the fact that periods of prosperity

¹Odum and Joehner, In Search of the Regional Balance of America, op. cit.

²Claudius T. Murchison, King Cotton Is Sick (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1930).

and depression in the cotton industry did not coincide with similar periods in the total national economy. He asserts, however, that the motivation for the study "has been exclusively that of intellectual interest."¹

This study is purely economic. No attempt is made to analyze the derivation of habits and attitudes of the businessmen involved. The writer makes considerable use of statistics to illustrate the trends he describes. Dealing with the textile industry as a whole prevents limiting the study to the South. New England producers and New York traders and finishers could not be left out.

Having shown a long-run downhill trend in cotton industry profits he proceeds to show how the separation of various production and marketing levels increases risk and encourages speculation. In spite of his avowed intellectual interest the author arrives at a possible solution. He recommends the organization of vertical combinations within the industry. Although the vertical combination movement had already started, the author could offer no plans for furthering its progress. Some elements, particularly at those levels which had not yet felt the pinch, were reluctant.

This reorganization would come about automatically, in some cases, where factories were in the hands of creditor merchants. In this type of combination marketing information would be more readily available to the producer, reducing risk, and there would be less opportunity for speculation between levels.

His study could be useful in itself in that it shows clearly the reasons for forming such groups. If this information reached those in the industry, it might have helped to bring about such reorganization.

This book seems to be the type of work for which social scientists have been looking. It puts the problem and the solution in terms acceptable to those involved. However, it does not attempt to deal with attitudes and values, which are the factors most difficult to bring into solutions at the practical level.

Although this study was partly financed by the Institute for Research in Social Science, its problem is not entirely limited to one region. The solution, if achieved, will greatly benefit the economy of the South, it is true. However, New England manufacturers have difficulties similar to those found in the South, and Murchison included northern manufacturers in his investigation. Whatever the value of the paper may be, it could have been written without any knowledge or attention to the theory of the new regionalism.

The Way of the South.

Following his four types of studies conducted within the Institute, Odum lists still another group aimed "toward synchronizing and making practical applications of all these regional studies in terms of larger composite regional studies, of their application to teaching and research, and of their relation to regional national planning."¹ One such study is The Way of the South by Howard Odum himself.² This book was mentioned in the last chapter in connection with recent trends in the new regionalism. However, coming at the end of some twenty-five years of research activity and being, by admission, a synchronizing of this research, it is certainly worthy of a more detailed description at this time.

This work is, indeed, a synchronizing of Odum's earlier works. As one reads it, he has the feeling of having read it before. There is the same dramatic, nostalgic description of the physical background, of the people and their way of thinking and acting. An American Epoch appears

¹Odum and Jocher, In Search of the Regional Balance of America, op. cit.

²Howard W. Odum, The Way of the South, Toward the Regional Balance of America (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1947).

quite prominently in his descriptions as do his other works on Negro songs and folk culture.

It is difficult for one so far from the region discussed to pass upon the objectivity of the writer. Any such evaluation by the writer of this study must be made entirely on the basis of the literature produced by the new regionalists. It appears, at this distance, that Odum certainly makes a sincere effort to be objective. He points to the faults as well as to the assets of the South. He justifies some of the opinions of other regions in regard to the South, but the reader cannot help wondering if his sense of the dramatic has caused him to over emphasize the separation of the South from the rest of the nation and the strength of the attitudes involved both within and without the South. His constant assertion that the Way of the South is, after all, the Way of America, and the Way of America is the Way of the South leads one to wonder if he, too, is influenced by the defensive attitude he ascribes to other southerners. This appears to be an apology for the South in saying that it is no different from the rest of the nation, after all.

Part III of this book "Toward Regional and National Maturity", contains chapters in which Odum specifically defines the goals of planning in the South, the ways in which the South now falls short of these goals, and what must be done to overcome these shortcomings. However,

even the list of ways to overcome these shortcomings is in terms of what ought to be done rather than in terms of how to do it. There is a clear-cut analysis of the key problems and a classification of the types of planning necessary, but still the new regionalist apparently does not have the knowledge which allows him to say exactly what can be done to bring about these desirable changes. For instance, he states his own question, "How can the South get what it takes to bridge the distance between what it has and what it wants?"¹ He attempts to answer this question in his chapters on "A Planning South at Work" and the "Regional Quality and Balance of America".

The first of these chapters is devoted largely to a description of two main types of planning, functional and administrative, with their subdivisions. Following this description there is a restatement of the importance of the participation of the rest of the nation in the planning of the South and a plea for the help of the rest of the nation in bringing about the desired regional balance both within the South and between the South and the rest of the nation. The last chapter, "The Regional Quality and Balance of America", is devoted in a large part to a restatement of

¹Ibid. p. 267.

the regional variations within the United States. Some specific attention is given to the race relations problem which is quite exclusively a southern problem. He offers a specific solution to the problem in terms of the planned migration of a portion of the Negro population from the South to other areas. Such migration must be based upon a number of assumptions such as the consent and cooperation of other regions, the consent and cooperation of the Negro people, and the consent and good will of the South.¹ He himself admits the "manifest unreality" of these assumptions. He ends with another statement of the benefit to the nation inherent in the solution of this Southern problem. It seems to this reviewer that after twenty-five years of work and many studies, the new regionalist is approximately where he started with the problems of the South which need to be solved for the benefit of the region and of the nation.

CHAPTER V.

CONCLUSION.

The introduction to this study pointed out that a lessening of emphasis upon the total concept of the new regionalism seems to be occurring. The purpose of this paper was to be that of finding the nature of this deemphasis and the reasons for it.

Chapters I and II were intended to define the new regionalism through tracing its many roots. Chapter III pointed out the changes in attitude noticeable among the advocates of the new regionalism. Howard Odum, its chief advocate, has not lost his enthusiasm for any part of the new regionalism, but he appears to be discarding his overall definition of the new regionalism in which research, planning and administration are inseparably intermingled. Instead, he apparently prefers a separation of these different aspects, so that regionalism as research becomes a special discipline integrated with folk sociology and more or less separate from regional planning.

Part of this change in emphasis can be attributed to the lack of general acceptance of the new regionalism as a whole. Certainly a concept such as this cannot accomplish

much if it is not used. Odum himself admitted that the future of the new regionalism depended upon its acceptance, but in 1951 he was still trying to sell it.

The lack of popularity is not the real reason for the failure of the new regionalism to gain acceptance. The ultimate causes must be found in those weaknesses which prevented this acceptance. To the writer of this paper there appear to be certain obvious weaknesses springing from the very definition of the new regionalism which may be responsible for its failure to become our foremost weapon for dealing with all social problems.

The first of these weaknesses consists in the concept of the new regionalism being too broad and all-inclusive. Chapter I indicated that the concept of the new regionalism had been defined so as to include as many as possible of previous regionalisms. Chapter II showed how planning and administrative functions were brought into the concept. The net result is that the new regionalism became so broad as to lose its value as an organizer. Older regionalisms were helpful in delimiting phenomena so they could be dealt with more easily, but the new regionalism includes so many possible kinds of areal units for so many possible purposes that it loses its delimiting function. Even when one has established a given area for study or planning,

he must look toward integration with all other regions. Odum insists that the new regionalism calls for cooperation between disciplines. This cooperation is to be desired. But when a breakdown of traditional disciplinary boundaries is viewed together with a concept as broad as the new regionalism, one has the feeling of facing a universe of phenomena and having no approach for reducing it to workable areas for study.

This feeling is particularly noticeable when one is reading the works of Howard Odum himself. Because of the breadth of his concept, he never seems to get beyond defining it. The Way of the South, for instance, should be an example of what the new regionalism has produced. This book brings together the findings of many studies, most of which are limited in area and subject. One cannot but think that these studies could have been conducted without any reference to the overall theory of the new regionalism. The Way of the South brings together the descriptive part of these studies to give a picture of the South and its complex problems. While maintaining that the new regionalism is the only means by which these problems can be met, Odum fails to show how the new regionalism can find and apply solutions. At one point, for example, he suggests possible programs for lessening racial tensions. These

are based upon assumptions which he admits are false. He does not offer any programs which he considers realistic. Having finished this book, the reader is left with a great deal of interesting information about the South. He is confused by the many complex problems found in such a large area, and he is still without any weapon for dealing with them. The author's concept of the new regionalism is so broad that it is almost impossible to organize activity toward a given goal. Even the ultimate goals of the new regionalism, equilibrium within and between regions, have not yet been reduced to specific issues which can be studied and dealt with effectively. Instead Odum returns again and again to his definition and insists that it must be put to work.

It may be argued that this apparent vagueness of these writings is the result of the synthesizing of many widely varying studies since synthesis is one of the functions of the new regionalism. It is true that the authors of some more limited studies, such as King Cotton is Sick and The Human Geography of the South, have presented concrete suggestions. However, since these studies are limited, the suggestions made often fail of accomplishment because of other factors such as attitudes and political processes. It is to be assumed that the new regionalism, as a synthesizer would bring the results of other studies to bear

upon these suggestions, so that programs could be formulated. However, there is no account in the literature of such programs having been put into operation. There is some mention of change for the better, but where this has occurred, it has not been shown that it can be attributed to the operation of the new regionalism.

The second weakness in the new regionalism is that it is almost certain to arouse doubts as to the objectivity of its advocates. Odum's insistence upon differentiating between the new regionalism and sectionalism appears to be closely related to his efforts to establish the objectivity of the new regionalists. His first criterion for distinguishing the new regionalism from sectionalism is that regionalism sees the national welfare and culture as the final arbiter within whose limits regional cultures must be integrated. Sectionalism, on the other hand, sees the region first and relies upon sectional loyalties, separateness and individualism, ignoring technology and planning¹. It appears to this writer that Odum implies here that sectionalism carries an emotional bias.

New regionalists have not always been entirely successful in convincing others that the national welfare and integration are their ultimate concern. The welfare of one region

¹See page 38 of this paper.

often appears to be achieved at the expense of another. There is, then, the possibility that regionalists may appear to be working for ends dictated by sectional sentiments which do not look at the problem objectively from the point of view of national integration.

Because of the identification of the new regionalism with the South the new regionalists have been particularly open to criticism on these grounds. This is not to say that southern regionalists could not be objective, but the history of the new regionalism in the South has given rise to some doubts as to whether the new regionalists are primarily interested in national integration or the progress of the South, perhaps at the expense of other regions and national integration. It was mentioned earlier in this paper that before Odum started to develop his theory of the new regionalism, he expressed great concern for the inability of the South to assume what he considered to be its rightful place among other regions. His objectivity should not be entirely discounted for this reason alone. Almost all inquiry begins with concern for some group or institution, but Odum seemed to adopt the defensive attitude he later described as one fault of the South which helped to set it apart from the rest of the nation. This defensive attitude apparently extends to his concept of the new regionalism. When the work of the new regionalists failed to convince other

scholars, such as Louis Wirth, that the viewpoint of the new regionalists was objective and comprehensive, Odum answered their criticisms by saying that they didn't know what the new regionalism is. The ultimate goals of integration of regions within a whole entity insure the objectivity of the new regionalism, he said.

This defensive attitude appears, at times, to almost prevent the achievement of results. Let us return again to Odum's discussion of racial tensions in The Way of the South for an illustration of this point. In this work, Odum suggests a planned migration of Negroes to other regions. This migration would proceed upon the assumptions that other regions would cooperate and not discriminate against the immigrants and that the South would cooperate. These assumptions, he says, are not valid, and other scholars would probably agree with him. But he offers no alternatives and, in effect, has done what he accused other defending southerners of doing. He has excused the South on the grounds that the rest of the nation would have done no better under similar circumstances. He certainly does not offer any means of achieving more equality of opportunity which he promised the new regionalism would bring about.

In the final analysis, it becomes difficult to determine how one can be an enthusiastic regionalist and not become a sectionalist in some degree since one must necessarily concentrate on a certain region to the extent of placing its

position in the total configuration second. One critic, Donald Davidson, himself a southerner, felt that this new regionalism is merely sectionalism under another name.¹ One does not change his outlook merely by saying he has done so, he says.

It is possible that one with entirely sectional motives could be objective within his own region and accomplish a good deal in this limited sphere. But Odum disclaims this type of activity. The new regionalist must be concerned with the ultimate integration of all regions. He does not even look at the region as a separate entity.

Howard Odum himself may be objective in his approach. At times he is convincingly so. At other times he is not so convincing. If the new regionalism engenders the objectivity he says it does, something else has gone amiss. The results of the new regionalism have not been what he forecast. At the time he wrote The Way of the South he still felt that the only way to meet the world's problems was to establish equilibrium between and within regions, but it is not possible to determine if any progress in this direction has been dependent upon his concept.

Some credit must be given to the new regionalists for the results of their efforts. Certainly they have made a contribution to the study of social phenomena in their voicing of a synthesis of theories and practices which was previously implicit in the thinking of social scientists.

¹Donald Davidson, Attack on Leviathan (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1938).

Their contributions through numerous studies made in relation to those problems facing the South surely must not be overlooked. But they have not, with all their elaborate writings and organization, been able to produce information which has been received without question as the basis for planning programs. Nor have they devised methods which command widespread respect for the validity of results obtained beyond that commanded by methods used previously. They have not put forth specific plans as to how to achieve their desired regional equilibrium, but they have removed some of the confusion as to the exact nature of the social problems involved in a complex social and economic system, and they have pointed out the interrelationships of these problems. In producing workable plans to overcome these problems they do not seem to have reached their objectives.

Some of the new regionalists may have realized the weaknesses in their concept, for they appear to be trying to overcome them. The trend which might eliminate these difficulties was described in Chapter III. The trend is the recent tendency on the part of the new regionalists to divorce the research aspects of the new regionalism from the planning and administrative aspects. The integration of regional sociology with folk sociology limits the field of inquiry. At the same time the retiring of researchers

from the planning and administrative fields may help to establish their objectivity.

If this trend continues, the new regionalism as the guiding framework within which all social research and planning take place will cease to exist. In its place would be two separate fields of activity. The first is regional sociology, which recognizes the existence and influence of regions upon culture and consequently upon social research. The second field is regional planning which makes similar allowances for the existence of regions in social planning programs.

This writer feels obligated to say that Howard Odum, the foremost new regionalist, would probably disagree almost entirely with the conclusions reached here. It was pointed out in the beginning of this study that "the new regionalism" is not Odum's term. It is used here to designate his kind of regionalism, but he himself never limited his definition sufficiently to apply a given term to his own regionalism. He spoke vaguely of regionalism as if all regionalists agreed. He brought more and more facets of the current of regionalism into his concept. Finally, it became clear to this writer that there was a great collection of region-connected activity and theory that entered into a concept distinct from the general

understanding of the meaning of regionalism. This is Odum's kind of regionalism, or the new regionalism.

Just as Odum never claimed a special brand for his regionalism, he would certainly disclaim any change in his attitude toward it. Actually, such a change has taken place in his writings if not in his own mind. His increased emphasis upon regional sociology has been accompanied by a lessened emphasis upon the new regionalism as a whole. It has been pointed out that this is partly the result of the new regionalism's being unacceptable to scholars in its entirety. Perhaps Odum's change in emphasis may be viewed as a necessary refinement of definition, but the direction and extent of the changes effecting the concept have not yet been fully revealed. Future developments may require a reexamination of conclusions reached at this time.

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