



The New South, 1945--1980: The Story of the South's Modernization (History of the South)

Numan V. Bartley

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Almost three decades after publication of the tenth volume of *A History of the South* -- George Tindall's *The Emergence of the New South, 1913--1945* -- Numan V. Bartley now presents Volume XI: a masterly synthesis of the region's most complex years to date. From the close of World War II to the end of the seventies, the South underwent changes of such a radical nature and such tumultuous process -- from rural orientation to urban; from segregated society to racially commingled; from poverty-saturated economy to positively booming Sunbelt -- that the contrast between 1945 and 1980 almost defies cogent explanation. Bartley, however, meets that challenge, illuminating the intervening years both individually and collectively within one monumental work.

In a narrative that exhibits balance, clarity, and objectivity, Bartley traces developments in the political, economic, religious, cultural, and social realms of southern life. He follows the rise and fall of postwar liberalism, the role of the Dixiecrats, and the resurgence of southern conservatism. He discusses the depopulation of the countryside, the growth of urban areas, and the expansion of industry and services and how these changes affected the way southerners lived their lives, earned their livelihoods, and interpreted the world around them.

Here, perhaps for the first time in one volume, is the complete civil rights story. The movements both for black civil rights and for women's rights, Bartley shows, contributed to and benefited from the spread of modernist culture in the region. One effect of that culture was the dissolution of restrictive social norms and the furtherance of an individualism oriented toward self-fulfillment and self-achievement.

In his Afterword, Bartley offers an interpretative overview of events and also identifies trends since 1980. His Bibliographical Essay is a testimony to his superb command of the material of the period; it could stand alone as one of the finest available guides to primary and secondary sources on the modern South.

Long awaited, *The New South, 1945--1980* is a feat of historical detail and summation that will become the essential resource on the South's recent past.

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