As is obvious, it has not been possible to organize an account of American sociology of religion as a simple chronology. So in the first chapter the universities at which dissertations in the field were written, who wrote them, whom they cited as theorists and as sociologists of religion, how they collected and analyzed data, and what they studied comprised one kind of narrative, up to the year 1959. With the establishment of journals in the field, especially *Sociological Analysis* (now *Sociology of Religion*), the *Review of Religious Research*, and the *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, comparable information from journal articles provided a similar narrative for the twenty-five years after 1959. However, what was going on in the field was broader than what could be seen from dissertations and articles. There were, for example, the community studies reviewed in Chapter 3. A major development was the organization of multiple albeit precarious research institutes. Certain names turned up in multiple settings. Warren Wilson’s dissertation made an appearance in Chapter 1, and Wilson was a Presbyterian denominational researcher in the era of the Institute for Social and Religious Research and the U.S. Department of Agriculture surveys on rural churches. C. Luther Fry helped as an undergraduate with James H. Bossard’s dissertation and served on the staff of the Institute for Social and Religious Research. Edmund DeS. Brunner and Robert S. Lynd at Columbia University appeared in connection with both the Institute of Social and Religious Research and the Bureau of Applied Social Research. This raises the question of the social network or networks behind what was occurring in American sociology of religion.

Among professionals, networks or circles usually occur in professional societies and university departments. Seldom do departments have multiple persons in one narrow specialty; rather they tend to have a balance of specialists in a discipline; thus a sociology department may have at most one or two people who work in the sociology of religion, and if two they would most likely engage in quite different kinds of inquiry into religious phenomena. Consequently it is beyond the university department, in the professional society, that people who engage in similar kinds of inquiry into religion hear one another’s presentations and meet one another, compare notes and learn about funding and publication opportunities. It is in the professional associations that widespread needs, such as the need for journals, come to be identified. It was in fact in the professional associations that the three journals named above were
established. The professional associations, together with university departments, provide a social infrastructure for such a phenomenon as an American sociology of religion and give it a stability that was never to be found from foundations, denominational research offices, or governmental research units. The relevant professional associations emerged in the mid-twentieth century, though two of them grew out of earlier entities. They are the Association for the Sociology of Religion (formerly American Catholic Sociological Society), the Religious Research Association, and the Society for the Scientific Study of Religion.

**American Catholic Sociological Society**

Because the records of the American Catholic Sociological Society were lost in a truck fire in 1968, our account must depend on what was published in the *American Catholic Sociological Review* (predecessor of *Sociological Analysis* and *Sociology of Religion*), the research Loretta Morris did (Morris 1989) by interviewing participants in the significant events in the life of the organization, and a decennial anniversary history of the organization written as a thesis for the Master of Social Administration degree by Richard M. Rosenfelder (1948). In the 1930s, Catholic sociologists perceived themselves to be out of place in the American Sociological Society. Other sociologists suspected that they were incapable of scientific work because they had a religion. The A.S.S. was characterized by a natural science model and by unacknowledged value positions. Moreover, the A.S.S. neglected teaching as a field of interest, while most Catholic sociologists worked in teaching-centered four-year colleges. Four Catholic sociologists discussed their misgivings over this situation at the 1937 meeting of the A.S.S. and decided to convene a meeting for March 26, 1938, to discuss forming their own organization. The four were Francis Friedel, S.M., of the University of Dayton, Ralph Gallagher, S.J., of Loyola University of Chicago, Louis Weitzman, S.J. of John Carroll University of Cleveland, Ohio,

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1 Rosenfelder (1948:iv) noted back in 1948 that the records of the American Catholic Sociological Society were disorganized and notable for lacunae; he relied heavily on interviews. Ever with an eye on the history of the sociology of religion, William H. Swatos, as editor of *Sociological Analysis* in 1989, fortunately organized a fiftieth anniversary issue (*Sociological Analysis* 50: 4) that included reprints of historical documents, historical studies, and notes and reminiscences. The account in this paragraph depends greatly on the study by Morris (1989) that was published in that special issue.