

# In the Lion's Mouth: Black Populism in the New South, 1886-1900 (Margaret Walker Alexander Series in African American Studies)

Omar H. Ali

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Following the collapse of Reconstruction in 1877, African Americans organized a movement in the South for economic and political reform: Black Populism. Between 1886 and 1900, tens of thousands of black farmers, sharecroppers, and agrarian workers created their own organizations and tactics primarily under black leadership.

Growing out of the networks established by black churches and fraternal organizations, Black Populism found further expression in the Colored Agricultural Wheels, the southern branch of the Knights of Labor, the Cooperative Workers of America, the Farmers Union, and the Colored Farmers' Alliance. In the early 1890s African Americans, together with their white counterparts, launched the People's Party and ran fusion campaigns with the Republican Party. By the turn of the century, Black Populism was crushed by relentless attack, hostile propaganda, and targeted assassinations of leaders and foot soldiers of the movement. The movement's legacy remains, though, as the largest independent black political movement until the rise of the modern civil rights movement.



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