

James Milton Turner and the Promise of America: the Public Life of a Post-Civil War Black Leader

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increased their marketable surpluses so as to purchase more necessities. Poor families became dependent upon wage work. Greater reliance on cash transactions and short-term credit limited the utility of the older neighborhood exchanges. Whereas the impetus for change during the first phase of capitalist transition had come from within the household economy, it was now more the result of national economic forces.

Any work of synthesis begs the question of what has been left out or where to go next. Clark's achievement is considerable. Yet despite his insistence on the agency of rural people, *The Roots of Rural Capitalism* has an abstract, schematic quality. This is a local history in which process takes precedence over people. In the first place, as fundamental as local exchanges among households are to Clark's analysis, they are not well embedded in social and familial networks. An emphasis on network as well as system, moreover, would allow a deeper exploration of relations between farming families and local entrepreneurs of rural origin. Second, Clark's linkage of the decisions of rural women to limit fertility and to buy household goods is persuasive, but his patriarchal model of household relations is limited because it is so tightly focused on the contribution of women's labor to the household economy. As Laurel Ulrich has shown, women's participation in their own exchange networks was equally vital to the health of the household economy. Finally and relatedly, Clark stresses the relationship between rising rural expectations and patterns of household consumption, recognizing the role of women as consumers of store-bought goods. Here some attention to the changing varieties of material life in the countryside might have enriched his analysis of cash as a capitalist tool. It would have allowed, for example, an exploration of the relationship between the evolution of rural taste, shaped at least in part by women, and household maintenance strategies.

James Milton Turner and the Promise of America: The Public Life of a Post-Civil War Black Leader, by Gary R. Kremer. Missouri Biography Series. Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1991. xii, 245 pp. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, appendixes, index. \$32.50 cloth.

REVIEWED BY ARNOLD COOPER, DEPAUW UNIVERSITY

Gary Kremer seeks to reclaim from the shadows James Milton Turner, Missouri's most prominent nineteenth-century African-American political figure. As a case study of post-Civil War black leadership, his book provides a compelling account of the stony road to freedom for Missouri's African-American citizens.

Born a slave in St. Louis County, Turner (1839–1915) gained his freedom when he was four years old and received his education in a clandestine school run by a black minister. He studied for a time at Oberlin College in Ohio and served as a body servant to a Union soldier during the Civil War. As a young man of 26 he became secretary of the Missouri Equal Rights League; from 1865 through 1867 he canvassed the state on behalf of black suffrage. Kremer aptly details Turner's active engagement in establishing schools for blacks in Missouri between 1868 and 1870 as a representative of the state superintendent of education. Turner became an intrepid campaigner for black education and pressured the state legislature for funds to support Lincoln Institute (now Lincoln University), a black normal school.

Turner also gained notoriety as an active campaigner for Radical Republicans who governed Missouri until 1870. Although opposed by conservative, race-baiting Republicans, Turner gained enough recognition in the Republican party to be appointed Consul General to Liberia in 1871. His tenure overseas lasted seven years (1871–1878). Turner believed that Liberia could become viable only if it became more like America, yet he opposed colonizing American blacks in Africa. The black politician who immersed himself in the educational affairs of his people in Missouri distanced himself from the native population with "unrestrained paternalism" (67). He left disenchanted with native intransigence to western ways.

Turner returned to Missouri in 1878 only to discover that the Republican party had turned its back on black political and social aspirations. He never regained the prominence he had enjoyed during the early years of Reconstruction. His absence from Missouri politics for almost a decade made him a peripheral figure. He did not, however, remain inactive. He joined a relief effort aimed at helping black refugees fleeing the Redeemed South, and he sought legislative and judicial remedies for former slaves of the Cherokee Nation in Oklahoma who were attempting to secure full tribal rights, including a share of the federal funds paid for land cessions. Turner secured passage of a bill favorable to his clients with the help of Democrats; their support caused him to switch his party affiliation, an apostasy to most blacks. Turner subsequently lived his final years "in a desert of hostility and hate" (175), shunned by the Republican party and neglected by other black political brokers.

Kremer provides ample evidence that Turner was at his best as a leader in the early post-Civil War days in Missouri, when he articulated black hopes for civil and political rights. Turner lost his constituency after 1870. Kremer devotes four of his nine chapters to episodes

in Turner's career not directly related to Missouri—his diplomatic career and his involvement with freed blacks of the Cherokee Nation. The balance in this biography is one of its strengths, as we learn as much about a black diplomat in Africa as we do about a black politician in Missouri.

This is a well-researched and readable work with superb use of manuscript collections from the Bureau of Indian Affairs, the Freedmen's Bureau, and the Department of State. This volume is less a complete study of black Missouri politics after the Civil War and more an insightful portrayal of the public life of an African-American politician who ventured far from the domestic concerns of his people.

Knights of the Plow: Oliver H. Kelley and the Origins of the Grange in Republican Ideology, by Thomas A. Woods. Henry A. Wallace Series on Agricultural History and Rural Studies. Ames: Iowa State University Press, 1991. xxii, 254 pp. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. \$26.95 cloth.

REVIEWED BY STANLEY PARSONS, UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI, KANSAS CITY

During the past twenty years historians have relentlessly refined the interpretations presented in the classic history of the Grange, Solon Buck's 1913 work, *The Granger Movement*. Buck presented the Grangers as somewhat confused reformers who aimed to attack the farmers' enemies—railroads and the "monopolies"—but who could never quite decide on the right method of attack. Buck pictured the Grange as a rather conservative, partly educational, partly social, partly cooperative organization, which only reluctantly engaged in politics and reforms aimed to change the economic system they believed oppressed them. This reluctance to try to change the basic socioeconomic system causes many younger historians to label Grangers as conservative. In *Knights of the Plow: Oliver H. Kelley and the Origins of the Grange in Republican Ideology*, Thomas A. Woods adds several new dimensions to the debate concerning the Grange and reform movements in general.

The most important contribution of Woods's study is in the chapters dealing explicitly with Kelley's role in the Grange. In fact, Woods gets about as close to writing a full-fledged biography of the founder of the Grange as we shall ever see. Kelley did not leave a lot behind, and it is to the great credit of Woods, the former site manager of Kelley's old farm at Elk River, Minnesota, that he was able to uncover enough material to make a convincing case for Kelley's almost single-handed creation of the Patrons of Husbandry. At the core of this

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