



Maulana Karenga: An Intellectual Portrait

Molefi Kete Asante

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In this book, the most prolific contemporary African American scholar and cultural theorist Molefi Kete Asante leads the reader on an informative journey through the mind of Maulana Karenga, one of the key cultural thinkers of our time. Not only is Karenga the creator of Kwanzaa, an extensive and widespread celebratory holiday based on his philosophy of Kawaida, he is an activist-scholar committed to a "dignity-affirming" life for all human beings. Asante examines the sources of Karenga's intellectual preoccupations and demonstrates that Karenga's concerns with the liberation narratives and mythic realities of African people are rooted in the best interests of a collective humanity.

The book shows Karenga to be an intellectual giant willing to practice his theories in order to manifest his intense emotional attachment to culture, truth and justice. Asante's enlightening presentation and riveting critique of Karenga's works reveal a compelling account of a thinker whose contributions extend far beyond the Academy. Although Karenga began his career as a student activist, a civil rights leader, a Pan Africanist, and a culturalist, he ultimately succeeds in turning his fierce commitment to truth toward dissecting political, social, and ethical issues. Asante carefully analyzes Karenga's important works on Black Studies, but also his earlier works on culture and his later works on ethics, such as *The Husia*, and *Odu Ifa: The Ethical Teachings*.

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