



How to Celebrate Kwanzaa

Kwanzaa is a holiday invented in 1966 by Ronald Karenga (founder of the Black Power group "Us Organization") through which African Americans can connect with their heritage and culture. It's celebrated from December 26 through January 1, with each of the seven days focusing on one of seven core values, or *Nguzo Saba*. A candle is lit on each day, and on the last day, gifts are exchanged. Since Kwanzaa is a cultural holiday rather than a religious one, it can be celebrated alongside Christmas or Hanukkah, or on its own, although Karenga wished for it to be celebrated instead of Christmas and Hanukkah, as he felt these holidays were simply symbols of the dominant cultures in America.

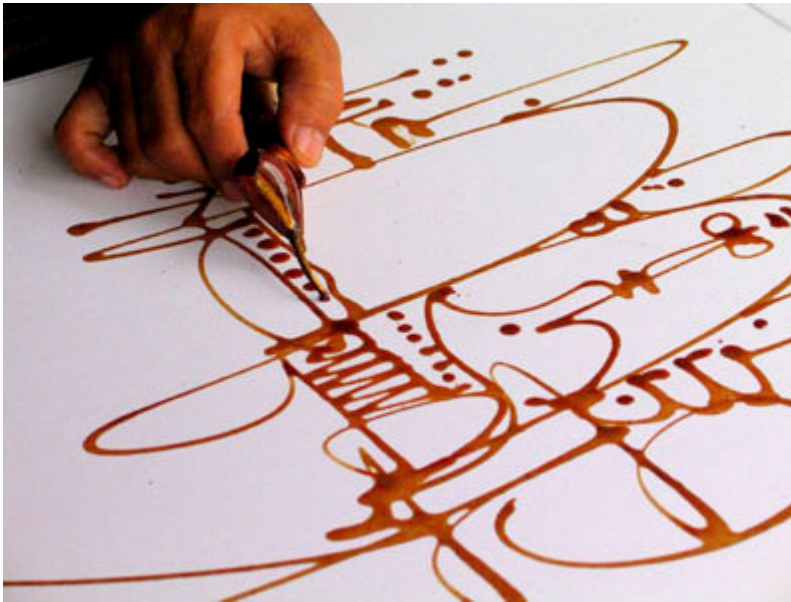
Steps

- 1 **Decorate your home or the main room with the symbols of Kwanzaa.** Put a green tablecloth over a centrally located table, and on top of that, place the *Mkeka* which is a straw or woven mat that symbolizes the historical foundation of African ancestry. Place the following on the *Mkeka*:



- **Mazao** — fruit or crops placed in a bowl, representing the community's productivity.
- **Kinara** — a seven-pronged candle-holder.
- **Mishumaa Saba** — the seven candles which represent the seven core principles of Kwanzaa. Three candles on the left are red, representing struggle; three on the right are green, representing hope; and one in the center is black, signifying the African American people or those who draw their heritage from Africa.
- **Muhindi** — ears of corn. Lay out one ear of **corn** for each child; if there are no children, place two ears to represent the children of the community.
- **Zawadi** — various gifts for the children.
- **Kikombe cha Umoja** — a cup to represent family and community unity.

- 2 **Decorate around the room with Kwanzaa flags, called *Bendera*, and posters emphasizing the seven principles.** You can purchase or make these, and it's especially fun to make them with the kids.



- See [How to make a flag](#) for details on flag making. Click [here](#) for detailed instructions on how to color in the Bendera.
- If you or your children enjoy making flags, try making [African national or tribal](#) flags in addition to the Bendera.

3 **Practice the Kwanzaa greetings.** Starting on December 26, greet everyone by saying "Habari Gani" which is a standard Swahili greeting meaning "what is the news?" If someone greets you, respond with the principle (Nguzo Saba) for that day:

- December 26: "*Umoja*" — Unity
- December 27: "*Kujichagulia*" — Self-determination
- December 28: "*Ujima*" — Collective work and responsibility
- December 29: "*Ujamaa*" — Cooperative economics
- December 30: "*Nia*" — Purpose
- December 31: "*Kuumba*" — Creativity
- January 1: "*Imani*" — Faith.
- Non African-Americans are also welcome to participate in greetings. The traditional greeting for them is "Joyous Kwanzaa."

4 **Light the Kinara daily.** Since each [candle](#) represents a specific principle, they are lit one day at a time, in a certain order. The black candle is always lit first. Some people light the remaining candles from left to right (red to green) while other people alternate as follows:



- Black candle
- Far left red candle
- Far right green candle
- Second red candle
- Second green candle
- Last red candle
- Last green candle

5

Celebrate Kwanzaa in a variety of different ways. Pick and choose some or all of the following activities throughout the seven days of Kwanzaa, saving the feast for the sixth day. Kwanzaa ceremony may include:



- Drumming and musical selections.
- Readings of the African Pledge and the Principles of Blackness.
- Reflections on the Pan-African colors, discussions of African principles of the day, or recitations of chapters in African history.
- The candle-lighting ritual of the Kinara.
- Artistic performances.

Have the Kwanzaa Karamu (feast) on the sixth day (New Year's Eve). The Kwanzaa

- 6 feast is a very special event that brings everyone closer to their African roots. It is traditionally held on December 31st and is a communal and cooperative effort. **Decorate** the place where the feast will be held in a red, green, and black scheme. A large Kwanzaa setting should dominate the room where the feast will be held. A large Mkeka should be placed in the center of the floor where the food is placed creatively and made accessible to all to serve themselves. Before and during the feast, an informative and entertaining program should be presented.



- Traditionally, the program should involve welcoming, remembering, reassessment, recommitment and **rejoicing**, concluded by a farewell statement and a call for greater unity.
- During the feast, libations are to be shared from a communal cup, the *Kikombe cha Umoja*, passed around to all celebrants.

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- 7 **Give out the gifts of Kuumba.** Kuumba, meaning **creativity**, is highly encouraged and brings a sense of self-satisfaction. The gifts are usually exchanged between the parents and children and are given out traditionally on January 1st, the last day of Kwanzaa. Since the giving of gifts has very much to do with Kuumba, the gifts should be of an educational or artistic nature.

Video

Tips

- Kwanzaa means "first fruits of the harvest" in the African language Kiswahili. Many of the phrases used in Kwanzaa are in Swahili, which was the language chosen to represent African heritage.

Things You'll Need

- Mkeka (woven mat)
- Flag materials
- Corn
- Green tablecloth
- Black, red, and green candles
- Gifts of different principles

Related wikiHows

- [How to Celebrate Hanukkah](#)
- [How to Celebrate Christmas](#)
- [How to Celebrate Diwali](#)
- [How to Be Proud to Be Black](#)
- [How to Find Long Lasting Candles](#)

Sources and Citations

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- <http://www.melanet.com/kwanzaa/whatis.html> – research source
- <http://www.history.com/minisites/kwanzaa/> – research source

Kwanzaa

Three Wikipedia Articles

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Kwanzaa

| Kwanzaa | |
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|  | |
| 2003 Kwanzaa celebration with its founder, Maulana Karenga, and others | |
| Observed by | African Americans, parts of African Diaspora |
| Type | Cultural and ethnic |
| Significance | Celebrates African heritage, unity and culture. |
| Date | December 26 to January 1 |
| Celebrations | Unity Self-Determination Collective Work and Responsibility Cooperative Economics Purpose Creativity Faith |
| Related to | Pan-Africanism |

Kwanzaa is a week-long celebration held in the United States and also celebrated in the Western African Diaspora in other nations of the Americas. The celebration honors African heritage in African-American culture, and is observed from December 26 to January 1, culminating in a feast and gift-giving.^[1] Kwanzaa has seven core principles (*Nguzo Saba*): Unity, self-determination, collective work and responsibility, cooperative economics, purpose, creativity, and faith. It was created by Maulana Karenga, and was first celebrated in 1966–67.

History and etymology

Maulana Karenga created Kwanzaa in 1966 as the first specifically African-American holiday.^[2] Karenga said his goal was to "give Blacks an alternative to the existing holiday and give Blacks an opportunity to celebrate themselves and their history, rather than simply imitate the practice of the dominant society." The name Kwanzaa derives from the Swahili phrase *matunda ya kwanza*, meaning first fruits of the harvest. The choice of Swahili, an East African language, reflects its status as a symbol of Pan-Africanism, especially in the 1960s, despite the fact that most East African nations were not involved in the Atlantic slave trade that brought African people to America.^[3]

Kwanzaa was a celebration that has its roots in the black nationalist movement of the 1960s, and was established as a means to help African Americans reconnect with their African cultural and historical heritage by uniting in meditation and study of African traditions and *Nguzu Saba*, the "seven principles of African Heritage" which Karenga said "is a communitarian African philosophy".

During the early years of Kwanzaa, Karenga said that it was meant to be an alternative to Christmas, that Jesus was psychotic, and that Christianity was a white religion which black people should shun.^[4] However, as Kwanzaa gained mainstream adherents, Karenga altered his position so that practicing Christians would not be alienated, then stating in the 1997 *Kwanzaa: A Celebration of Family, Community, and Culture*, "Kwanzaa was not created to give

people an alternative to their own religion or religious holiday."^[5]

Many Christian African Americans who celebrate Kwanzaa do so in addition to observing Christmas.^[6]

Principles and symbols

Kwanzaa celebrates what its founder called the seven principles of Kwanzaa, or *Nguzo Saba* (originally *Nguzu Saba*—the seven principles of African Heritage), which Karenga said "is a communitarian African philosophy," consisting of what Karenga called "the best of African thought and practice in constant exchange with the world." These seven principles comprise **Kawaida*, a Swahili term for tradition and reason. Each of the seven days of Kwanzaa is dedicated to one of the following principles, as follows:

- *Umoja* (Unity): To strive for and to maintain unity in the family, community, nation, and race.
- *Kujichagulia* (Self-Determination): To define ourselves, name ourselves, create for ourselves, and speak for ourselves.
- *Ujima* (Collective Work and Responsibility): To build and maintain our community together and make our brothers' and sisters' problems our problems, and to solve them together.
- *Ujamaa* (Cooperative Economics): To build and maintain our own stores, shops, and other businesses and to profit from them together.
- *Nia* (Purpose): To make our collective vocation the building and developing of our community in order to restore our people to their traditional greatness.
- *Kuumba* (Creativity): To do always as much as we can, in the way we can, in order to leave our community more beautiful and beneficial than we inherited it.
- *Imani* (Faith): To believe with all our hearts in God, our people, our parents, our teachers, our leaders, and the righteousness and victory of our struggle.

Kwanzaa symbols include a decorative mat on which other symbols are placed, corn and other crops, a candle holder with seven candles, called a *kinara*, a communal cup for pouring libations, gifts, a poster of the seven principles, and a black, red, and green flag. The symbols were designed to convey the seven principles.^[7]

Observance



A woman lighting kinara candles

Families celebrating Kwanzaa decorate their households with objects of art; colorful African cloth such as kente, especially the wearing of kaftans by women; and fresh fruits that represent African idealism. It is customary to include children in Kwanzaa ceremonies and to give respect and gratitude to ancestors. Libations are shared, generally with a common chalice, *Kikombe cha Umoja*, passed around to all celebrants. Non-African Americans also celebrate Kwanzaa.^[8] The holiday greeting is "Joyous Kwanzaa".^{[9][10][11]}

A Kwanzaa ceremony may include drumming and musical selections, libations, a reading of the African Pledge and the Principles of Blackness, reflection on the Pan-African colors, a discussion of the

African principle of the day or a chapter in African history, a candle-lighting ritual, artistic performance, and, finally, a feast (*karamu*). The greeting for each day of Kwanzaa is *Habari Gani?*^[12] which is Swahili for "What's the News?"^[13]

At first, observers of Kwanzaa avoided the mixing of the holiday or its symbols, values, and practice with other holidays, as doing so would violate the principle of *kujichagulia* (self-determination) and thus violate the integrity of the holiday, which is partially intended as a reclamation of important African values. Today, many African American families celebrate Kwanzaa along with Christmas and New Year's. Frequently, both Christmas trees and kinaras, the

traditional candle holder symbolic of African American roots, share space in Kwanzaa-celebrating households. For people who celebrate both holidays, Kwanzaa is an opportunity to incorporate elements of their particular ethnic heritage into holiday observances and celebrations of Christmas.

Cultural exhibitions include the Spirit of Kwanzaa, an annual celebration held at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts featuring interpretive dance, African dance, song and poetry.^{[14][15]}

The first Kwanzaa stamp was issued by the United States Postal Service on October 22, 1997, with artwork by Synthia Saint James.^[16]

In 2004, a second Kwanzaa stamp, designed by Daniel Minter, was issued; this has seven figures in colorful robes symbolizing the seven principles.^[17]

The holiday has also spread to Canada, and is celebrated by Black Canadians in a similar fashion as in America.^[18]



Popularity

In 2004, BIG Research conducted a marketing survey in the United States for the National Retail Foundation, which found that 1.6% of those surveyed planned to celebrate Kwanzaa. If generalized to the US population as a whole, this would imply that around 4.7 million people planned to celebrate Kwanzaa in that year.^[19] In a 2006 speech, Ron Karenga asserted that 28 million people celebrate Kwanzaa. He has always claimed it is celebrated all over the world.^[1] Lee D. Baker puts the number at 12 million.^[20] The African American Cultural Center claimed 30 million in 2009.^[21] In 2011, Keith Mayes said that 2 million people participated in Kwanzaa.^[21]

According to Keith Mayes, the author of *Kwanzaa: Black Power and the Making of the African-American Holiday Tradition*, the popularity within the US has "leveled off" as the black power movement there has declined, and now between half and two million people celebrate Kwanzaa in the US, or between one and five percent of African Americans. Mayes adds that white institutions now celebrate it.^[8]

The holiday has also spread to Canada, and is celebrated by Black Canadians in a similar fashion as in the United States.^[18] According to the Language Portal of Canada, "*this fairly new tradition has [also] gained in popularity in France, Great Britain, Jamaica and Brazil*", although this information has not been confirmed with authoritative sources from these countries.^[22]

In Brazil, in recent years the term Kwanzaa has been applied by a few institutions as a synonym for the festivities of the Black Awareness Day, commemorated on November 20 in honor of Zumbi dos Palmares,^{[23][24]} having little to do with the celebration as it was originally conceived.

In 2009, Maya Angelou narrated the documentary *The Black Candle*, a film about Kwanzaa.

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- [11] Gale, Elaine (1998-12-26). "Appeal of Kwanzaa continues to grow; holidays: today marks start of the seven-day celebration of African culture, which began in Watts 32 years ago and is now observed by millions." (<http://pqasb.pqarchiver.com/latimes/access/37610058.html?dids=37610058:37610058&FMT=ABS&FMTS=ABS:FT&date=Dec+26,+1998&author=ELAINE+GALE&pub=Los+Angeles+Times&desc=Appeal+of+Kwanzaa+Continues+to+Grow;+Holidays:+Today+marks+start+of+the+seven-day+celebration+of+African+culture,+which+began+in+Watts+32+years+ago+and+is+now+observed+by+millions.&pqatl=google>). Los Angeles Times. . Retrieved 2007-12-24.
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External links

- The Official Kwanzaa Web Site (<http://www.officialkwanzaawebsite.org/index.shtml>)
- The Black Candle: a Kwanzaa film narrated by Maya Angelou (<http://www.theblackcandle.com>)
- Why Kwanzaa was created by Karenga (http://www.africanholocaust.net/news_ah/kwanzaa.html)
- The History Channel: Kwanzaa (<http://www.historychannel.com/exhibits/holidays/kwanzaa/>)
- Interview (<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=1571259>): Karenga discusses the evolution of the holiday and its meaning. Tavis Smiley (NPR)
- Kwanzaa at History.com (<http://www.history.com/topics/kwanzaa-history>)
- Camille Jackson, "Kwanzaa: A threat to Christmas?" (<http://ndn.nigeriadailynews.com/templates/?a=1642>)", *Nigeria Daily News*, 23 December 2005.

Maulana Karenga

| Maulana Karenga | |
|---|--|
|  | |
| Karenga, center, with wife Tiamoyo at left, celebrating Kwanzaa at the Rochester Institute of Technology on December 12, 2003 | |
| Born | Ronald McKinley Everett July 14, 1941 Parsonsborg, Maryland |
| Occupation | Professor Philosopher Author Scholar ^[1] |
| Spouse(s) | Brenda Lorraine "Haiba" Karenga (Divorced) Tiamoyo Karenga (1970-present) |
| Website | |
| http://www.maulanakarenga.org/ | |

Maulana Ndabezitha Karenga (born **Ronald McKinley Everett**^{[2][3][4]} on July 14, 1941) is an African-American professor of Africana Studies, activist and author, best known as the creator of the pan-African and African-American holiday of Kwanzaa. Karenga was a major figure in the Black Power movement of the 1960s and 1970s and co-founded with Hakim Jamal the black nationalist and social change organization US.

Early life

Ron Everett was born in Parsonsborg, Maryland, the fourteenth child and seventh son in the family. His father was a tenant farmer and Baptist minister who employed the family to work fields under an effective sharecropping arrangement.^[5] Everett moved to Los Angeles in 1959, joining his older brother who was a teacher there, and attended Los Angeles City College (LACC). He became active with civil rights organizations CORE and SNCC, took an interest in African studies, and was elected as LACC's first African-American student president.^[6] After earning his associate degree, he matriculated at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) and earned B.A. and M.A. degrees in political science. He studied Swahili, Arabic and other African-related subjects. Among his influences at UCLA were Jamaican anthropologist and Negritudist Councill Taylor who contested the Eurocentric view of alien cultures as primitive.^[7] During this period he took the name *Karenga* (Swahili for "keeper of tradition") and the title *Maulana* (Swahili-Arabic for "master teacher").^[5] While pursuing his doctorate at UCLA, he taught African culture classes for local African-Americans and joined a study group called the Circle of Seven.

1960s activism

US

The Watts uprising broke out as Karenga was a year into his doctoral studies. Karenga and the Circle of Seven established a community organization in the aftermath called US (meaning "Us black people").^[8] The organization joined in several community revival programs and was featured in press reports. Karenga cited Malcolm X's Afro-American Unity program as an influence on the US organization's work:

Malcolm was the major African American thinker that influenced me in terms of nationalism and Pan-Africanism. As you know, towards the end, when Malcolm is expanding his concept of Islam, and of nationalism, he stresses Pan-Africanism in a particular way. And he argues that, and this is where we have the whole idea that cultural revolution and the need for revolution, he argues that we need a cultural revolution, he argues that we must return to Africa culturally and spiritually, even if we can't go physically. And so that's a tremendous impact on US.^[9]

As racial disturbances spread across the country, Karenga appeared at a series of black power conferences, joining other groups in urging the establishment of a separate political structure for African-Americans.

US became a target of the FBI's COINTELPRO and was put on a series of lists describing it as dangerous, revolutionary and committed to armed struggle in the Black Power Movement.^[10] US developed a youth component with para-military aspects called the Simba Wachanga which advocated and practiced community self-defense and service to the masses.

Kwanzaa

Karenga created Kwanzaa in 1966^[11] to be the first pan-African holiday. He said his goal was to "give Blacks an alternative to the existing holiday and give Blacks an opportunity to celebrate themselves and their history, rather than simply imitate the practice of the dominant society."^[12] It is inspired by African "first fruit" traditions, and the name is derived from the name for the Swahili first fruit celebration, "matunda ya kwanza."^[13] The rituals of the holiday promote African traditions and *Nguzo Saba*, the "seven principles of African Heritage" which Karenga described as "a communitarian African philosophy":

- Umoja (unity)—To strive for and maintain unity in the family, community, nation, and race.
 - Kujichagulia (self-determination)—To define ourselves, name ourselves, create for ourselves, and speak for ourselves.
 - Ujima (collective work and responsibility)—To build and maintain our community together and make our brother's and sister's problems our problems and to solve them together.
 - Ujamaa (cooperative economics)—To build and maintain our own stores, shops, and other businesses and to profit from them together.
 - Nia (purpose)—To make our collective vocation the building and development of our community in order to restore our people to their traditional greatness.
 - Kuumba (creativity)—To do always as much as we can, in the way we can, in order to leave our community more beautiful and beneficial than we inherited it.
 - Imani (faith)—To believe with all our heart in our people, our parents, our teachers, our leaders, and the righteousness and victory of our struggle.
-

Conflict with the Black Panther Party

US engaged in violent competition with the Black Panther Party in their claim to be a revolutionary vanguard. This heightened level of conflict eventually led to a shoot-out at UCLA in 1969 in which two Panthers were killed and a Simba was shot in the back. Following the UCLA shootout, Panthers and US members carried out a series of retaliatory shootings that resulted in at least two more murders of Panthers.^[14]

The FBI attempted to aggravate the conflict. Tactics used to foment and aggravate conflict between US and the Panthers included poison-pen letters, defamatory cartoons, agents provocateurs, and creating suspicion of members of each organization as agents.^[15]

Conviction for assault

In 1971, Karenga was sentenced to one to ten years in prison on counts of felonious assault and false imprisonment.^[16] One of the victims gave testimony of how Karenga and other men tortured her and another woman. The woman described having been stripped and beaten with an electrical cord. Karenga's estranged wife, Brenda Lorraine Karenga, testified that she sat on the other woman's stomach while another man forced water into her mouth through a hose.

A May 14, 1971, article in the Los Angeles Times described the testimony of one of the women:

"Deborah Jones, who once was given the Swahili title of an African queen, said she and Gail Davis were whipped with an electrical cord and beaten with a karate baton after being ordered to remove their clothes. She testified that a hot soldering iron was placed in Miss Davis' mouth and placed against Miss Davis' face and that one of her own big toes was tightened in a vise. Karenga, head of US, also put detergent and running hoses in their mouths, she said. They also were hit on the heads with toasters."^[17]

Jones and Brenda Karenga testified that Karenga believed the women were conspiring to poison him, which Davis has attributed to a combination of ongoing police pressure and his own drug abuse.^{[5][18]}

Karenga denied any involvement in the torture, and argued that the prosecution was political in nature.^{[5][19]} He was imprisoned at the California Men's Colony, where he studied and wrote on feminism, Pan-Africanism and other subjects. The US organization fell into disarray during his absence and was disbanded in 1974. After he petitioned several black state officials to support his parole on fair sentencing grounds, it was granted in 1975.^[20]

Karenga has declined to discuss the convictions with reporters and does not mention them in biographical materials.^[18] During a 2007 appearance at Wabash College he again denied the charges and described himself as a former political prisoner.^[21] The convictions nonetheless continue to generate controversy during Kwanzaa celebrations.^[18]

Later career

After his parole Karenga re-established the US organization under a new structure. He was awarded his first Ph.D. in 1976 from United States International University (now known as Alliant International University) for a 170-page dissertation entitled *Afro-American Nationalism: Social Strategy and Struggle for Community*. Later in his career, in 1994, he was awarded a second Ph.D., in social ethics, from the University of Southern California (USC), for an 803-page dissertation entitled "Maat, the moral ideal in ancient Egypt: A study in classical African ethics."

In 1977, he formulated a set of principles called *Kawaida*, a Swahili term for normal. Karenga called on African Americans to adopt his secular humanism and reject other practices as mythical (Karenga 1977, pp. 14, 23, 24, 27, 44–5).

Karenga is the Chair of the Africana Studies Department at California State University, Long Beach. He is the director of the Kawaida Institute for Pan African Studies and the author of several books, including his "Introduction to Black Studies", a comprehensive Black/African Studies textbook now in its fourth edition. He is also known for

having co-hosted, in 1984, a conference that gave rise to the Association for the Study of Classical African Civilizations, and in 1995, he sat on the organizing committee and authored the mission statement of the Million Man March.

Karenga delivered a eulogy at the 2001 funeral service of New Black Panther Party leader Khalid Abdul Muhammad, praising him for his organizing activities and commitment to black empowerment.

In 2002, scholar Molefi Kete Asante listed Maulana Karenga on his list of 100 Greatest African Americans.^[22]

Films

- Karenga starred in *Motherland*, a sequel to *500 Years Later*.
- He is featured in the 2008 Kwanzaa documentary, *The Black Candle*.
- In 2005 Karenga appeared with other African academics featured in the multi-award winning film *500 Years Later*, directed by Owen 'Alik Shahadah.
- *USA the Movie* - Voice only.

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External links

- Official Maulana Karenga Site (<http://www.maulanakarenga.org/>)
- Faculty web page (<http://www.csulb.edu/colleges/cia/departments/africanastudies/faculty-and-staff/maulana-karenga/>)
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Co-operative economics

Co-operative economics is a field of economics, socialist economics, co-operative studies, and political economy, which is concerned with co-operatives.

History

Notable theoreticians who have contributed to the field include Robert Owen,^[1] Pierre-Joseph Proudhon, Charles Gide,^[2] Beatrice and Sydney Webb,^[3] J.T.W. Mitchell, Peter Kropotkin,^[4] Paul Lambart,^[5] Race Mathews,^[6] David Griffiths,^[7] and G.D.H. Cole.^[8]

Co-operative federalism versus co-operative individualism

A major historical debate in co-operative economics has been between co-operative federalism and co-operative individualism. In an Owenite village of cooperation or a commune, the residents would be both the producers and consumers of its products. However, for a co-operative, the producers and consumers of its products become two different groups of people, and thus, there are two different sets of people who could be defined as its 'users'. As a result, we can define two different modes of co-operative organisation: consumers' cooperative, in which the consumers of a co-operative's goods and services are defined as its users (including food co-operatives, credit unions, etc.), producer co-operatives, in which the producers of a co-operatives goods and services are defined as its users. (Some consider worker co-operatives, which are owned and run exclusively by their worker owners as a third class, others view this as part of the producer category.)

This in turn led to a debate between those who support Consumers' Co-operatives (known as the Co-operative Federalists) and those who favor Producers Co-operatives (pejoratively labelled 'Individualist' co-operativists by the Federalists^[9]).^[10]

Co-operative federalism

Co-operative Federalism is the school of thought favouring consumer co-operative societies. Historically, its proponents have included JTW Mitchell and Charles Gide, as well as Paul Lambart and Beatrice Webb. The co-operative federalists argue that consumers should form co-operative wholesale societies (Co-operative Federations in which all members are co-operators, the best historical example of which being CWS in the United Kingdom), and that these co-operative wholesale societies should undertake purchasing farms or factories. They argue that profits (or surpluses) from these co-operative wholesale societies should be paid as dividends to the member co-operators, rather than to their workers.^[11]

Co-operative Individualism

Co-operative Individualism is the school of thought favouring workers' co-operative societies. The most notable proponents of this latter being, in Britain, the Christian Socialists, and later writers like Joseph Reeves, putting this forth as a path to State Socialism.^[12] Where the Co-operative Federalists argue for federations in which consumer co-operators federate, and receive the monetary dividends, rather, in co-operative wholesale societies the profits (or surpluses) would be paid as dividends to their workers.^[11] The Mondragón Co-operatives are an economic model commonly cited by Co-operative Individualists, and a lot of the Co-operative Individualist literature deals with these societies.

Please note that these two schools of thought are not necessarily in binary opposition a priori, and that hybrids between the two positions are possible.^[11]

Other schools

Retailers' cooperatives

In addition to customer vs. worker ownership, retailers' cooperatives also utilize organizations of already constituted corporations as collective owners of the produce.

Socialism and left-wing anarchism

Socialists and left-anarchists, such as anarcho-communists and anarcho-syndicalists, view society as one big cooperative, and feel that goods produced by all should be distributed equitably to all members of the society, not necessarily through a market. All the members of a society are considered to be both producers and consumers. State socialists tend to favor government administration of the economy, while left-anarchists and libertarian socialists favor non-governmental coordination, either locally, or through labor unions and worker cooperatives.

Utopian socialists feel socialism can be achieved without class struggle and that cooperatives should only include those who voluntarily choose to participate in them. Some participants in the kibbutz movement and other intentional communities fall into this category.

Co-operative commonwealth

In some Co-operative economics literature, the aim is the achievement of a Co-operative Commonwealth; a society based on cooperative and socialist principles. Co-operative economists - Federalist, Individualist, and otherwise - have presented the extension of their economic model to its natural limits as a goal.

This ideal was widely supported in early-twentieth century U.S. and Canadian leftist circles. This ideal, and the language behind it, were central to the formation of the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation in 1935, which became Canada's largest left-wing political party, and continues to this day as the New Democratic Party. They were also important to the economic principles of the Farmer-Labor Party of the United States, particularly in the FLP's Minnesota affiliate, where advocacy for a Co-operative Commonwealth formed the central theme of the Party's platform from 1934, until the Minnesota FLP merged with the state Democratic Party to form the Democratic–Farmer–Labor Party in 1944.

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