

# Thomas Sankara Speaks The Burkina Faso Revolution 1983 1987

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under sankara s leadership the revolutionary government of burkina faso in west africa mobilized peasants workers women and youth to carry out literacy and immunization drives to sink wells plant trees build dams erect housing to combat the oppression of women and transform exploitative relations on the land to free themselves from the imperialist yoke and solidarize with others engaged in that fight internationally sankara speaks as an outstanding revolutionary leader of working people and youth the world over second edition includes a new introduction by editor michel prairie foreword maps chronology and glossary as well as an index thirty two page photo section features many unpublished photos of the burkina faso revolution

of the first edition published by pathfinder in 1988 victoria brittain wrote in the london guardian the courage and originality which made him and burkina faso the inspiration they were to so many africans shine out of this collection of his most important speeches the originality of sankara s ideas along with his awareness of the social and economic realities of his country his understanding of the international relations of forces make this collection a highly useful tool expressed with passion and clarity his views on the necessity of a new balance between the city and the countryside on the crucial importance of the emancipation of women are in perfect keeping with the demands of the peoples of africa today le monde diplomatique

the leader of the burkina faso revolution recounts how peasants and workers in this west african country began confronting hunger illiteracy and economic backwardness prior to the 1987 coup in which sankara was murdered

in october 2014 huge protests across burkina faso succeeded in overthrowing the long entrenched regime of their authoritarian ruler blaise compaoré defying all expectations this popular movement went on to defeat an attempted coup by the old regime making it possible for a transitional government to organize free and fair elections the following year in doing so the people of this previously obscure west african nation surprised the world and their struggle stands as one of the few instances of a popular democratic uprising succeeding in postcolonial sub saharan africa for over three decades ernest harsch has researched and reported from burkina faso interviewing subjects ranging from local democratic activists to revolutionary icon thomas sankara the man once dubbed africa s che guevara in this book harsch provides a compelling history of this little understood country from the french colonial period to the compaoré regime and the movement that finally deposed him

our revolution in burkina faso draws on the totality of man s experiences since the first breath of humanity we wish to be the heirs of all the revolutions of the world of all the liberation struggles of the peoples of the third world we draw the lessons of the american revolution the french revolution taught us the rights of man the great october revolution brought victory to the proletariat and made possible the realization of the paris commune s dreams of justice thomas sankara october 1984thomas sankara led the revolution of 1983 to 1987 in burkina faso in the five speeches contained in this pamphlet he explains how the peasants and workers of this west african country established a popular revolutionary government and began to fight the hunger illiteracy and economic backwardness imposed by imperialist domination and the oppression of women inherited from millennia of class society in so doing they have provided an example not only to the workers and small farmers of africa but to those of the entire world

thirty two years after his assassination thomas sankara s name remains appealing throughout africa and beyond the revolutionary leader s legacy consists of a call to unity selfconfidence and good governance to the world s leaders sankara s concern for the less advantaged might serve as a reminder that sacrifice to humanity is a yardstick for assessing good leadership looking back at sankara s dynamic and visionary

presidency might his revolutionary spirit be relevant to burkina faso and to the african continent today as it was then

thomas sankara often called the african che guevara was president of burkina faso one of the poorest countries in africa until his assassination during the military coup that brought down his government although his tenure in office was relatively short sankara left an indelible mark on his country s history and development an avowed marxist he outspokenly asserted his country s independence from france and other western powers while at the same time seeking to build a genuine pan african unity ernest harsch traces sankara s life from his student days to his recruitment into the military early political awakening and increasing dismay with his country s extreme poverty and political corruption as he rose to higher leadership positions he used those offices to mobilize people for change and to counter the influence of the old corrupt elites sankara and his colleagues initiated economic and social policies that shifted away from dependence on foreign aid and toward a greater use of the country s own resources to build schools health clinics and public works although sankara s sweeping vision and practical reforms won him admirers both in burkina faso and across africa a combination of domestic opposition groups and factions within his own government and the army finally led to his assassination in 1987 this is the first english language book to tell the story of sankara s life and struggles drawing on the author s extensive firsthand research and reporting on burkina faso including interviews with the late leader decades after his death sankara remains an inspiration to young people throughout africa for his integrity idealism and dedication to independence and self determination

thomas sankara a revolutionary in cold war africa offers the first complete biography in english of the dynamic revolutionary leader from burkina faso thomas sankara coming to power in 1983 sankara set his sights on combating social injustice poverty and corruption in his country fighting for women s rights direct forms of democracy economic sovereignty and environmental justice drawing on government archival sources and over a hundred interviews with sankara s family members friends and closest revolutionary colleagues brian j peterson details sankara s political career and rise to power as well as his assassination at age 37 in 1987 in a plot led by his close friend blaise compaoré thomas sankara a revolutionary in cold war africa offers a unique critical appraisal of sankara and explores why he generated such enthusiasm and hope in burkina faso and beyond why he was such a polarizing figure how his rivals seized power from him and why t shirts sporting his image still appear on the streets today

the first book length analysis of military mutinies and their political impact in africa

emmanuel neba fuh in this comprehensive chronological compilation and thorough narrative of the history of white supremacy in africa provide an unflinching fresh case that african poverty a central tenet of the shithole demonization is not a natural feature of geography or a consequence of culture but a direct product of imperial extraction from the continent a practice that continues into the present a brutal and nefarious tale of slave trade genocides massacres dictators supported progressive leaders murdered weapon

smuggling cloak and dagger secret services corruption international conspiracy and spectacular military operations he raised the most basic and fundamental question how was africa the world s richest continent raped and reduced to what donald j trump called shithole v mbanwie

in august 1983 captain thomas sankara seizes power in the former french colony of upper volta he is helped by a commando led by his friend and brother in arms blaise compaoré since the independence in 1960 it is the 4th coup d'état shaking the young nation to understand this instability it is necessary to go back up to the times of africans kingdoms and empires to that of the colonization and to the berlin conference in 1885 the tempestuous history of this continent carries the germs of the conflicts which punctuate even today the reality of the nations of this troubled continent contrary to the precedent attempts sankara s coup d'état has revolutionary objectives of marxist inspiration end the neo colonial hold of france on the country favor the equality of opportunity and the education of the masses launch an economic reform based on the rurality of the country one year later thomas sankara changes the name of his country to burkina faso the country of the honorable men signifying that revolution henceforth will rhyme with development solidarity and especially with the end of the corruption but what hope can the country and its people base on its militaries the implementation into reality of the fine principles declared in speeches is often difficult the policies of sankara sometimes considered too extreme dissidences appear and four years after the beginning of the august revolution at the very moment sankara starts to rectify some of his errors he is assassinated the country enters again the rank of the friendly nations of neo colonial france it s his brother in arms blaise compaoré who leads the counter revolution even using sankara s concept of the necessary rectification through interviews of eye witnesses and actors of this period as well as often new archive material and expert views this documentary makes us discover the real history of a country that is often quoted as an example of stability among the former french colonies in west africa while the inhabitants of burkina faso continue to live with the memory of a failed revolution the film reveals the price for the country s stability no democratic change compaoré is still in power since 1989 no access to the wealth of the country the ruling class owns it all and no real independence from the former colonial power of france certain observers even wonder will there be at some point a popular awakening following the example of the latest revolts in the arabic world

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this edited volume examines the cases of four african military leaders who had enormous impact on the continent and beyond these military officers and later heads of state jerry rawlings of ghana moammar

gaddafi of libya thomas sankara of burkina faso and gamal abdel nasser of egypt were provocative and polarizing figures beloved domestically but mostly viewed with suspicion and hostility by foreign governments this volume studies these leaders as a group engaging in a critical but systematic examination of their personalities leadership styles official performance legacies and their continuing impact on the future and political destiny of the continent providing a survey of controversial but important african political figures this volume will be of use to scholars and students in the social sciences especially those interested in african history african studies military science black studies political science leadership studies and the politics of developing nations

this ambitious volume examines revolutionary situations during a non revolutionary historical conjuncture the neoliberal era the last three decades have seen an increase in the number of political upheavals that challenge existing power structures many of them taking the form of urban revolts this book compellingly explores a series of such upheavals in eastern europe south africa indonesia argentina bolivia venezuela sub saharan africa including congo zimbabwe burkina faso and egypt each chapter studies the ways in which protest movements developed into insurgent challenges to state power and the strategies that regimes have deployed to contain and repress revolt in addition to empirical chapters the book engages in theorization of revolution dealing with questions such as the patterning of revolution in contemporary history the relationship between class struggle and social movements and the prospects of socialist revolution in the twenty first century

this groundbreaking handbook reviews consolidates and develops the growth of scholarship on ideology as it occurs as part of our political landscape and within the systems of thought and belief that collectively constitute our political subjectivity it presents ideology functioning on the level of imagination and representation not only as a written and verbal language but also as expressed through architecture art media technologies work ritual practices and other forms of material practice it suggests how there are critical material aspects whenever human beings interact with the world and how ideology serves to map that interaction bringing together a multidisciplinary team of expert contributors this handbook emphasizes the diversity of existing research and details the key developments in the area from across the globe the routledge handbook on the lived experience of ideology is an authoritative key reference text for students academics and researchers of ideologies critical theory feminism postcolonial theory affect theory political theory critical legal studies political science and more broadly sociology anthropology sociology philosophy and cultural and communication studies the routledge handbook on the lived experience of ideology is part of the mini series routledge handbooks on political ideologies practices and interpretations edited by michael freeden

thomas sankara was one of africa s most important anti imperialist leaders of the late 20th century his declaration that fundamental socio political change would require a certain amount of madness drove the burkinabe revolution and resurfaced in the country s popular uprising in 2014 this book looks at sankara s

political philosophies and legacies and their relevance today analyses of his synthesis of pan africanism and humanist marxist politics as well as his approach to gender development ecology and decolonisation offer new insights to sankarist political philosophies critical evaluations of the limitations of the revolution examine his relationship with labour unions and other aspects of his leadership style his legacy is revealed by looking at contemporary activists artists and politicians who draw inspiration from sankarist thought in social movement struggles today from south africa to burkina faso in the 30th anniversary of his assassination this book illustrates how sankara s political praxis continues to provide lessons and hope for decolonisation struggles today

there will be a victorious revolution in the united states before a victorious counterrevolution in cuba fidel castro march 1961 that judgment remains as accurate today as when it was spoken forty years ago on the eve of washington s ignominious defeat at the bay of pigs

there is no true social revolution without the liberation of women explains the leader of the 1983 87 revolution in burkina faso workers and peasants in that west african country established a popular revolutionary government and began to combat the hunger illiteracy and economic backwardness imposed by imperialist domination

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