students of economics, adult education and rural development, with my views taken into consideration.

Reviewed by E Matenga, Masters in Adult Education Student, University of Zimbabwe, Harare.

Reference

Chambers R (1983) ***Rural Development: Putting the last first***, Longman, London.

Urban Inequality Under Socialism: Case Studies from Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, David M. Smith, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

Although written before the fall and ultimate demise of state socialism in much of Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union _ indeed before the political restructuring of that entire region _ this book provides a useful and important reference in helping students of Geography and Urban Studies better understand the nature and characteristics of urban areas rarely studied by Western scholars. Comprehensive, concisely written and complete with detailed maps of many of the study areas, it relies primarily on geographical perspective. Drawing on secondary research sources (including some by the author) of the Soviet Union, Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Poland, the bulk of the book is devoted to the Soviet and Polish city case studies. With a focus on the spatial distribution of indicators of inequality, it is strangely prophetic of the events which have transpired in the two years since the book was published. Particularly haunting is the concluding paragraph of the book, referring to the case of Poland: "the disaffection of the masses has at least some of its origin in the inequality of urban life...".

Nonetheless, the changing geopolitical realities of the region do not by any means render the book irrelevant or even out of date. As students of urbanism are well aware, the built form of any city tends to be very enduring. In this way, just as the socialist cities of Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union inherited an urban form from the previous capitalist era, so will the emergent regimes _ however they eventually define themselves - inherit certain physical realities from the socialist period.

With the collapse, both literal and symbolic, of the barriers dividing East and West, what the author describes as the "relative inaccessibility of some of the countries concerned" along with the "difficulty which Western scholars and teachers often have in dealing with socialism dispassionately and objectively if at all" may dissolve as well.

This will, perhaps, open a new door to more extensive study of some of these cities in the years to come; thus the book will continue to be a major source of information.

What relevance does the book have for Zimbabwe or Africa in general? Many African countries have adopted socialism as the ideological force driving planning and policy formulation in all sectors and have, throughout the political transformation of Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, claimed that their form of socialism is distinct from that found in other continents. Whether this is true is not debated here. There is room, however, for careful investigation of the flaws revealed in the practice of socialist urban planning as it is described in this book, particularly given that we are now aware of the possible consequences of these flaws.

The author begins the book with an attempt to define the ideal socialist city. Quoting from Demko and Regulska (1987: 290), he refers to such attributes as "non-discriminatory, non-spatially differentiated housing" and "public services of all kinds, including transportation ... of equal quality, availability and accessibility" as those which distinguish the socialist from other types of cities. It is against these general yardsticks that the measures of inequality are later made.

Following a brief description of the population growth patterns and historical development of many of the major urban areas in Eastern Europe and the USSR, the author launches into the case study of Moscow as the "showpiece of the socialist city". Since pre-revolutionary Moscow was limited in size, most of the city is representative of the socialist period. Smith's review of the research literature concludes that although less pronounced and more complex a pattern than that found in typical capitalist cities, there is evidence of inequality in living standards in Moscow, with the better services and higher-quality housing found in the central part of the city, the area more heavily inhabited by the intelligentsia and other members of the Soviet elite. Smith attributes some of this inequality to the "hierarchical structure of service provision", which refers to the need for some central services to be located where population densities are highest, and thus further away from lower-density populations. The spatial differentiation of housing, often associated with residential groupings by occupation, is related primarily to period of construction, according to Smith. These patterns are more or less reinforced in the descriptions of the case studies of three other Soviet cities: Ufa, a city of over a million east of Moscow and west of the Urals; Kazan, roughly the same size and located almost halfway between Moscow and Ufa; and finally, Akademgorodok, the site of the Siberian Branch of the Soviet Academy of

Sciences and largely an academic town.

In the Czechoslovakian capital Prague, housing is described as the source of the greatest differentiation. Although partly attributable to the built form inherited from the capitalist era, Smith identifies housing tenure as the factor most responsible for this, the four types being state, enterprise, co-operative and private. Since co-operative and private housing tend to be more expensive, it is these types of housing tenure which attract the urban elite. The situation is similar in the three Hungarian cities described in the book: Pecs, Szeged and Budapest. However, the distinguishing factor in Hungarian cities, according to Smith, is that up to three-quarters of the housing stock is privately owned, much higher than in most other socialist countries. Nonetheless, the pattern which emerges, like the other countries, is one where "the higher-status groups received the better housing, with the highest subsidies".

Warsaw provides an example of a city which had to be largely rebuilt after World War 2, having lost two-thirds of its population and 85% of its buildings. Once again, the research reveals that the co-operative housing, which is of higher quality and is more expensive, tends to be occupied by the professional groups. Data available on ten other Polish cities confirms this pattern. Although residential grouping by socio-occupational status is strongly demonstrated in the research literature, the spatial character is described as that of a mosaic rather than the strong segregational patterns typical of western capitalist cities.

The final chapters in the book are devoted to an attempt to explain the processes behind the patterns of inequality presented in the previous chapters. Briefly, the most important of these are: socio-economic disaparities arising from the division of labour; variabilities in housing stock as determined by period of construction and tenure (the co-operative was consistently identified as a source of differentiation); and housing shortages. As a way of synthesising all of this information, Smith proposes a systems model which incorporates all of the component factors contributing to urban inequality.

What is not described in any detail is the political process by which members of the elite manage to procure the better quality housing and services. This is one of the ironies arising out of the research reviewed in the book: that the allocation of housing, which is supposed to be an equalising factor in socialist societies, appears to create and reinforce inequalities. Particularly relevant for African countries is the tendency of co-operative housing, involving heavy government technical support and subsidies, to be provided not to the lower-income sectors of the population, but rather to the professional groups. Zimbabwe, Botswana, Tanzania and Kenya are among the African nations promoting housing

co-operatives as a means of improving the access and quality of housing to poor people. The lesson of the Eastern European and Soviet cities described in this book seems to imply that governments may not be the appropriate institutions to administer this process.

The concluding section of the book predicts the "future of the socialist city", describing the growing materialism evident in urban life and the increasing tendency of "Soviet and other socialist citizens...to ape their Western counterparts". Although the author acknowledges a "convergence" between the Soviet and the Western city, his prediction that "the socialist city, its past as well as the distinctive nature of its own changing society will ensure that it remains different", now seems questionable. Nonetheless, his book, along with its very useful bibliography, is a must for those interested in urban life in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union at the height of the socialist era.

Reviewed by Anna Vakil, Ann Arbor, Michigan, USA.

Thomas Sankara Speaks. The Burkina Faso Revolution 1983-87, Thomas Sankara (translated by Samantha Anderson), Pathfinder Press, London, 1988, 260pp, price #6,95, ISBN 0-87348-526 paper.

Coups have become part of Africa's crisis. While some coups have been condemned by the world in general, others have been celebrated by the citizens and in some cases the international community has been happy to see regimes fall. When Sankara came to power, the whole world took little attention of what had happened in Upper Volta. Sankara was virtually unknown outside West Africa hence the indifference he was greeted with. However, after a year "revolutionary minded people started to follow what was happening there (Burkina Faso) ...a deep revolution was unfolding". The preface of the book tells us The August 4 coup was not just one of the numerous coups experienced by the impoverished nation during the year.

As the title says,***Thomas Sankara Speaks*** is a compilation of 25 speeches and interviews which were delivered by Sankara between 1983 to 1987 just before he was assassinated. The first speech is a fiery attack by Prime Minister Sankara, on the enemies of the people both at home and abroad. He identified the enemies as the bourgeois, men in politics, people who keep the people in ignorance under the guise of spiritual guidance and tradition - all who are seen as furthering the interests of the imperialists. "When the people stand up, imperialism trembles" he