# East africa's great rift valley: a complex rift system essay example

Science, Geology

# A Review

- Introduction

In summary, the article by James Wood and Alex Guth entitled “ East Africa's Great Rift Valley: A Complex Rift System” provides information about the East Africa Rift Systems. The geology of the rift system was described. Also, the formation of the said rift system was discussed by providing a model supporting the geology of the rift system. Overall, the article strikes as a journal with a theme that concerns the geology of the East Africa Rift System. However, it must be important to emphasize the strong and weak points of the article. Needless to say, this paper shall function as a review of the article by Wood and Guth by providing an overview and insights of its main points and the strengths and weaknesses of the article.

- Brief Overview and Main Points

The article discusses the East Africa Rift System (EARS), its formation, its relevance to human history and why it is necessary to be studied. The first part of the article describes the East Africa Rift System by stating its geology. The authors state that the rift was formed in the region where several tectonic plates are moving away from each other. The movement of the plates left several rifts forming the western branch and the eastern branch of the EARS.

On the other hand, the second part of the article states the relevance of the EARS to geologists. Basically, the EARS has two branches. The article suggests that these branches could be caused by the heat flow from the asthenosphere causing “ bulges” which are said to stretch and fracture the crust forming rift valleys. Furthermore, high volcanic activity was seen in the

region where the stretching process occurs. The lava flows from the fractures over a large area forming “ flood basalts”. However, this cycle of lava flows and stretching often leads to thinning of the crust, which eventually will sink underwater as the land drops below sea level. Lastly, the formation of the EARS must have had an effect to the development of the hominids in the early times. Thus, because of the fact that the EARS haven’t submerged under the sea, unlike most of the rift systems, studying the EARS is a very important task for geologists and geophysicists.

- Article Strengths

Since this article aims to provide information about the geology of the EARS, one of the strengths of the article is that the author managed to explain in a well-defined manner the geological processes that are stated in the article. Also, the article was written with an outline where the readers find the succeeding paragraphs easier to understand because of the concepts and details provided in the previous paragraphs. Moreover, for the readers to understand the article more clearly, the authors provided images.

- Article Weaknesses

One of the weaknesses of the article is that it lacks additional information about the specific rift valleys in the EARS. The EARS has two branches, however, the article stated that the EARS was formed with lots of geologic formations. It could have been reasonable if the authors managed to research about the other formations. Also, a comparison with other rift systems could have convinced the readers about the relevance of the EARS.

- Conclusion

In conclusion, the article with the title “ East Africa's Great Rift Valley: A

Complex Rift System" was written aimed to provide information about the EARS. The authors were successful in explaining the geology of the EARS and its formation. Also, the outline of the article was written in a way where the readers would understand the article more clearly. However, the article lacked information about the other formations in the EARS, while a comparison with another rift system could have made the article better. Nonetheless, the article can be considered well-written and the purpose of the authors were achieved.

## Reference:

Wood, James & Guth, Alex. (n. d.). East Africa's Great Rift Valley: A Complex Rift System. Geology. com. Retrieved from http://geology. com/articles/east-africa-rift. shtml [5 December 2014]