

BOOK REVIEWS

MAP READING FOR EAST AFRICA – D.N. McMaster, Third Edition, Longman, Price Shs. 8/75

The 1st and 2nd editions of this book have deservedly become standard texts in most secondary schools in East Africa. The 3rd edition, whilst retaining the same general format, has a revised and expanded text, a completely different selection of 21 map extracts and 5 photographs.

The map extracts, varying in scale from 1:5,000 to 1:250,000, have been carefully selected to include the main landscape and settlement patterns seen in the three countries of East Africa and to make available to schools maps not previously included in either existing map reading books or School Certificate examinations.

Changes in the introductory sections of the text include more reference to metric measurements, suggestions for local work, additional information on 'direction', hill shading, place names, photographs, settlements and grid references. There is, however, still no detailed explanation of East Africa's grid system(s), perhaps because several different systems (even within Uganda) can still be found on E.A. maps and further discussion might prove confusing at this level. In amending the exercises integrated with the text, to refer to the new map extracts, a few errors have crept in: on p. 12, Q(v) should refer (twice) to fig. 12 not fig. 10; also on p. 12 the reference to 10KM grid lines on map 15 (which has none) presumably should refer to map 6. The 'simple geometrical method' used in fig 11 is not adequately explained, nor is it clear how much information is assumed available when calculating the latitude of point Fig. 13 will not make the overlap of photographs clear to all pupils. The reference on p. 28 to confusion over 'plantations' and the botanical gardens on map 14, is a little misleading. On this (1968) map extract the botanical gardens are *not* marked with the 'plantation' symbol, though they *are* on Edition 2 USD (also 1968) which was perhaps the version the author used when commenting.

The section of text designed for 'A' level students has been greatly expanded, with particularly valuable material on slopes, drainage, communications and settlements, thus remedying one of the few weaknesses of the earlier editions. Fig. 36, however, shows a 'dry valley' extending to Amboni from the SW where map 21 clearly shows a permanent river.

The 'exercises at School Certificate level' and those for 'A' level, are refreshingly original and evocative and more numerous than in the 2nd edition. It would be difficult to improve on them.

The reproduction of photographs in this book is mediocre, so that the 'dead lakeside trees' in photo V and 'pastoral homesteads' in photo III referred to in the text, are not visible. Most of the questions set on photo III and some on I and II cannot be answered because of the small size and lack of clarity of the pictures. Presumably the original photographs used by the author were clearer.

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