

= Johannes Rebmann =

Johannes Rebmann (January 16 , 1820 ? October 4 , 1876) was a German missionary and explorer credited with feats including being the first European , along with his colleague Johann Ludwig Krapf , to enter Africa from the Indian Ocean coast . In addition , he was the first European to find Kilimanjaro . News of Rebmann 's discovery was published in the Church Missionary Intelligencer in May 1849 , but disregarded as mere fantasy for the next twelve years . The Geographical Society of London held that snow could not possibly occur let alone persist in such latitudes and considered the report to be the hallucination of a malaria @-@ stricken missionary . It was only in 1861 that researchers began their efforts to measure Kilimanjaro . Expeditions to Tanzania between 1861 and 1865 , led by the German Baron Karl Klaus von der Decken , confirmed Rebmann ? s report . Together with his colleague Johann Ludwig Krapf he also discovered Mt . Kenya . Their work there is also thought to have had effects on future African expeditions by Europeans , including the exploits of Sir Richard Burton , John Hanning Speke , and David Livingstone . After losing most of his eyesight and entering into a brief marriage , he died of pneumonia .

= = Early life = =

Rebmann was born to a Swabian farmer and winegrower on January 16 , 1820 in Gerlingen , Württemberg . The village he lived in was very small , with about 1 @,@ 500 inhabitants . Even at an early age , he aspired to be a " preacher and canvasser of the gospel " .

Later , when Rebmann became a young man , he chose to devote himself to being a missionary , and was trained in Basel . In 1844 he attended the Church Missionary Society College , Islington . The following year he was ordained as a priest by the Bishop of London and he became a member of the Church Missionary Society . Together with fellow missionary Johann Ludwig Krapf , Rebmann traveled in 1846 by a ship called " Arrow " to East Africa , where he worked in what is now Kenya , as well as at various other locations .

Their work was hard , and they had much trouble convincing tribal chiefs to let them speak to the people . Krapf noted (what he called) the " surge of Islam " that was going through Africa , and wanted to make some sort of Christian standing against its religious influence on the people of the continent . As the radius of the two missionaries work expanded , plans for Christian missionary outposts in the area began to develop .

During his time in Africa , Rebmann kept a diary from 1848 until the end of his life . In the diary , Rebmann writes of the way his trust in his Christianity kept him stable in the continent of Africa , where only very few Europeans had ventured before him . An extract from the diary , which Rebmann in turn took from the Bible (Psalm : 51 , 12) reflects Rebmann 's belief in his faith : " Restore to me joy of your salvation and grant me a willing spirit , to sustain me . "

= = Stumbling upon Kilimanjaro and Mt . Kenya = =

In 1848 , Rebmann was the first European to see Kilimanjaro . The following year , he saw Mt . Kenya together with his colleague Krapf .

On the October 16 , 1847 , the two men set out for the mountain of Kasigau . With them came eight tribesmen and a local caravan leader named Bwana Kheri . This expedition was designed with the goal of establishing some of the first mission posts in the region . The journey was successful , and the group of tribesmen and the missionaries returned to Mombasa on October 27 .

Sometime during their journey or their stay in the region , Rebmann and Krapf learned of a great mountain referred to as ' Kilimansharo ' , which reached the clouds and which was ' capped in silver ' . The two men , like most Europeans at the time , were under the impression that snow and ice could not exist so close to the equator , and failed to realize the significance of the mountain being ' topped with silver ' .

However , the two missionaries , who had become just as much explorers as they were

missionaries , became quite interested in Kilimanjaro , and Krapf sought permission of the Mombasa governor for an expedition to the land of the Jagga , a people now known as the Chaga , who lived and live on the actual slopes of Kilimanjaro . Krapf told the governor that this journey would be work @-@ based . Despite this , Krapf actually did not accompany Rebmann on the journey , so only Bwana Kheri and Rebmann left for Kilimanjaro on April 27 , 1848 .

Within two weeks , Rebmann and his guide were within sight of the mountain . He noted in his journal the strange white on the summit of Kilimanjaro , and he questioned his guide on what he thought it was . According to Rebmann 's log , the guide ' did not know what it was , but supposed it was coldness ' . It was then that Rebmann realised that Kilimanjaro , even though it was located in a region that was thought impossible to bear snow or ' coldness ' , as the guide referred to it , was in fact capped in it . In 1849 , these observations were published , but the findings were not truly accepted by most of the scientific community at the time . On November 10 , 1848 , Rebmann recorded an entry in his log about the mountain :

This morning we discerned the Mountains of Jagga more distinctly than ever ; and about ten o'clock I fancied I saw a dazzlingly white cloud . My Guide called the white which I saw merely ' Baridi , ' cold ; it was perfectly clear to me , however , that it could be nothing else but snow .

Mt . Kenya was discovered by Krapf in the next year , on December 3 , 1849 . The finding of this mountain was also met with disbelief in Europe , but the effect of these discoveries was enough to trigger further investigation into other areas of Africa , thereby stimulating a growth of scientific (among other fields) knowledge of the regions , people , history , and geography of the African continent .

= = Other work in Africa = =

Rebmann stayed in Africa for almost thirty consecutive years . He kept to a policy that , in order to truly affect the African people , and to complete his task as a missionary , much patience was needed . It appears that this policy was the driving force behind his many years of work on the continent .

As well as visiting Kilimanjaro , Rebmann and Krapf visited other areas of Africa , including the African Great Lakes and Mount Meru . He even became married to a fellow missionary , Anna Maria , née Maisch , with whom he spent fifteen years doing missionary work in Africa before her death in 1866 , and with whom he had a child (who died only days after his birth) .

Also during his time in Africa , after his expeditions to Kilimanjaro and around the Great lakes , he learned to speak several native languages , and wrote the first dictionary of the (Chichewa) (Kinyasa) language , as well as completing a dictionary (started by his colleague Ludwig Krapf) of the Nika (Mijikenda) language , and a dictionary of Swahili (now lost , but of which some material may have been incorporated into Krapf 's Dictionary of the Suaheli Language (1882)) . He also translated the Gospel of Luke into Swahili .

= = = Slug map = = =

During their time in Africa , Krapf and Rebmann worked their way into the interior of the continent . They traveled to several areas in the regions of Central and Eastern Africa , including to what is now known as the African Great Lakes . The finding of one especially large lake (Unyamézi) is depicted in a map known as the ' Slug ' map . It was known by this name because the layout of the water body suggested a shape similar to that of a slug .

The basis for the map was prepared by the missionary Jakob Erhardt from the reports of his companions Krapf and Rebmann , and from verbal information that he had acquired from local people . Erhardt was struck by the fact that travelers who had gone inland from different points on the coast had all come to an inland sea . In November 1854 , while talking about the problem to Rebmann , " at one and the same moment , the problem flashed on both of us solved by the simple supposition that where geographical hypothesis had hitherto supposed an enormous mountain @-@ land , we must now look for an enormous valley and an inland sea . " On the map that he and

Rebmann drew the three lakes of Nyasa , Tanganyika and Victoria are shown as one very large S @-@ shaped lake .

On the map , several subtle but interesting things can be discovered , including , in the northeast section of the cartograph , a reference to a stream flowing through Lake Victoria , then known by the missionaries as " the Ukerewa " . A note is present describing how the waters of the stream were very sweet , but stained the teeth a sickly yellow . This note is probably the first known text referring to the drinking water , found primarily around and of Mount Meru , which has a high content of fluorine and causes a yellow @-@ brown stain to the incisors which cannot be removed . Among other things , another piece of writing on the Slug Map - " From where the Magad [soda] is bought " - provides evidence that the soda trade , the soda originating in Lake Natron (obviously not known by that name then) , was active at that time in those regions of Africa in which the map depicts .

In 1855 Erhardt was repatriated due to poor health , and took his map with him . It was first published in the Calwer Missionsblatt in 1855 , and then in the Church Missionary intelligencer in 1856 . The Slug Map based on Erhardt 's map has never been published . It is now in the care of the Royal Geographical Society in London . The map is described by the society as :

Sketch of a Map from 1 ° N. to 15 ° S. Latitude and from 23 ° to 43 ° E. Longitude delineating the probably position and extent of the Sea of Uniamesi as being the continuation of the Lake Niasa and exhibiting the numerous heathen @-@ tribes situated to the East and West of that great Inland @-@ sea together with the Caravan routes leading to it and into the interior in general . In true accordance with the information received from natives - Representatives of various inland tribes - and Mahomidan inland traders . By the Revd . Messrs. Erhardt and F. Rebmann Missionaries of the Church Miss . Society in East Africa Kisaludini March 14 , 1855 .

= = Later life and death = =

Having almost lost his eyesight for unknown reasons , Rebmann went back to Europe in September 1875 . He returned to Germany for the first time in 29 years after being persuaded to do so by a fellow missionary who was working in the area . He then proceeded to take up residence in Korntal near Stuttgart , where he was close to his old friend Krapf . In spring 1876 , upon the advice of Krapf , he married the widow of another missionary from India , Louise Rebmann née Däuble . The marriage did not last long , as on October 4 , 1876 , Rebmann died of pneumonia . Engraved on Rebmann 's tombstone in the cemetery of Korntal are the words " Saved in Jesus ' Arms " .

The legacy that he left behind him is preserved by the Johannes Rebmann Foundation , a religious society devoted to Rebmann and his memory . Rebmann 's work in Africa , both as a missionary and as an explorer , allowed other Europeans to follow in his footsteps .