

Kisuludini, Jan. 2, 1854

Reverend & dear Sir!

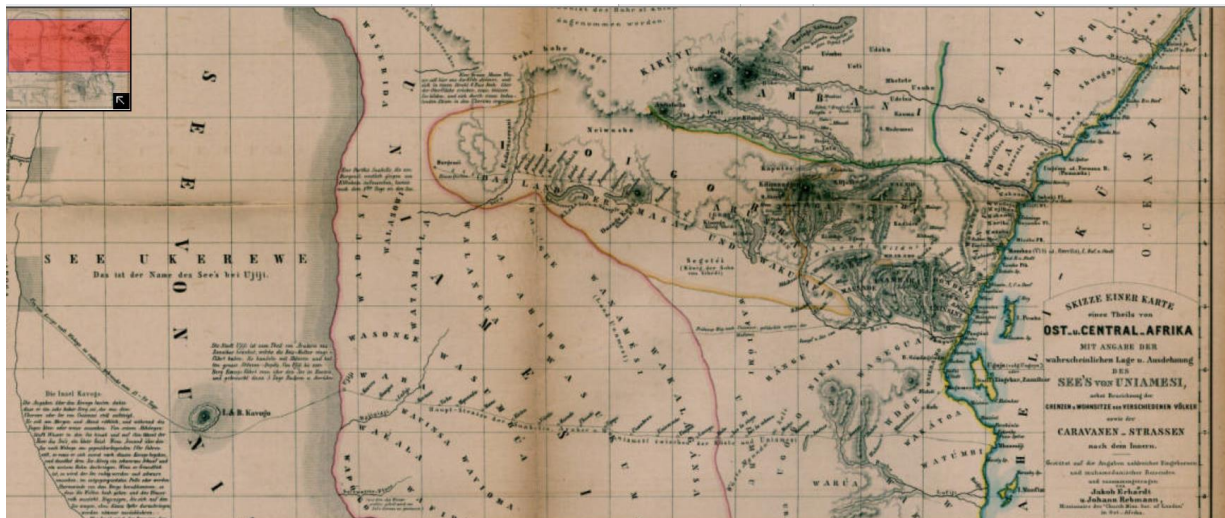
When in former years we found ourselves by the prospects of our East African Mission abundantly encouraged to apply to you for an increase of fellow labourers in our work, our position as to the relation to the Arabic Government, under whose protection we are, has within the last year so much altered that in fact I felt induced, though at an unusual time, to take up my pen to write for the very contrary, though indeed we have no intimation from yourself that any new Missionary is to join us – but I have found an intimation to that effect in Dr. Barth's circulars, which came to hand on the 22nd Dec. last, when we had the pleasure of welcoming back Mr. Erhardt after a three months stay in Usambara. Dr. Krapf also has left us with the intention of voting himself for a speedy reinforcement of our members. I am not going to enter into any particulars which will be fully told you by Mr. Erhardt himself, but will confine myself to a simple statement of this reason for which no new missionary ought to be sent out to East Africa at present.

1. The fatal breach of confidence of which we gave you information in our letters of last Spring & which I am sorry to say has been caused by one of our own members is not only still fully existing, but was increased by the consequences which have since made themselves obvious to H.H. the Imam, causing him a fearful augmentation of his expedition, in order to sustain the claims to countries which "the Missionary" has told other powers were not actually his. Who can doubt or wonder that the Imam will look with suspicion & resentment on men who have thus abused his friendship & protection. This is a breach which cannot be healed again as long as he will be acknowledged the independent rule of his countries – a breach that renders the stay in his dominions even of those doubtful & precarious, who are already there, while it must be feared that he will no more admit any fresh-comers.

Travelling seems to be at an end. We feel ashamed even to ask him to give us his subjects as guides & porters into any country in the Interior. Dr. Krapf himself already gave up his journey to the lake Njassa for no other reason but because he could not in honour ask H.M. for permission, aid & protection. We might perhaps be allowed to revisit, even to stay, in the countries we have been to, but that would not answer the instruction the Committee have given us, which made Uniamesi our aim, but which we shall not be allowed to reach as long as any displeasure from H.H. rests upon us.

Dr. Krapf indeed throws the whole blame upon H.M.'s Consul. He being an enemy of God could not in his heart be the true friend and protector of the Missionaries. But the simple question is this – does the Consul being an unconverted man expose him to the censure of political interference, would not the most Christian Consul be obliged to look upon it in the same light & even

more so? And is the Imam as the Independent ruler within his dominions to be looked upon as nothing? Does he not with perfect justice look upon us as political offenders? Shall we now look for French or American protection as our colleagues seemed inclined to do? But such a step even if we were prepared for it, would not be of any benefits to us whatever, but would make evil worse – for as long



as the Imam is per treaty independent, he will also act independently. Such my dear Sir is the view, our E.A. Mission has unhappily assumed. Our wings are cut short –we may stay where we are & even of this we have no more any further assurance. The Interior seems shut upon us & strange to say by the instrumentality of the very man who had been the foremost in exertions for laying it open. Such is the imperfection even of those whom God has owned as His servants. We have abundant cause to humble ourselves before Him & to pray: O Lord enter not with us into judgment, for in thy sight shall no man living be justified. Have mercy upon us & pardon our transgressions. He knows to bring good out of evil – though this does never excuse our conduct, still it keeps us from despair – I must (?) can not help here telling you that it becomes more & more our conviction, that no Missionary work can be carried on in East Africa to any great extent before the sons of Japhet have taken it under their rule & government. Humanly speaking there is indeed no other way of extensively benefitting these poor wretched countries. The final question will therefore be this: Shall we leave E.A. till such a change will have taken place, which certainly is not to be brought about by our instrumentality, or shall we content ourselves with that kind of missionary work, which was for so many years the lot of Morrison in China – in learning languages and reducing them to writing. For such a more quiet & unsatisfactory stay within the Imam’s dominions, we should, we have not any reason to doubt, be sufficiently protected - & as in the slaves on the coast you have representatives of almost every Nation & tribe in the Interior, there would be abundance of work for at least 10 years. Just at present we have a man in our service who as a Native of a country bordering on the lake Njassa,

& who having been captured as an adult, still fully remembers the Native language, a vocabulary of which I am about to gather. Even from Uniamesi you can find men for the same purpose.

2. Another reason that makes against a new missionary to be sent to E.A: at present lies in the state of the Heathen Nation which are the immediate neighbours of the Mohamedans on the coast. As far as Usambara is concerned, Mr. Erhardt's letter will afford the illustration required. As to the various Wanika tribes & especially those which border on & partially occupy the wilderness that spreads between them & the countries farther in the Interior – the fury & madness with which Dr. Krapf was lately opposed on his way to Kadiaro, shows more than anything we have before experienced, what poor & helpless strangers we are as soon as we turn our back to our abodes & have, as is were, delivered ourselves into their power. Having repeatedly seen, that, after they had got us into the wilderness & to the countries inland, they may break agreements, refuse assistance, make unreasonable demands with perfect impunity, they are now emboldened to acts of direct hostility. I do not mean to say that it has become actually impossible to pass through them –for 15 Dollars which the Durumas tumultuously demanded as a present from Dr. Krapf, is after all still a small sum but such things tend more & more to expose to the Natives our utter weakness & helplessness with regard to the Government under which we are. It is therefore clear that our position & our advantages in E.A. are no more the same which they were before Said-Said & H.M.'s Consul's return from Mascat in the beginning of last year & the Lord only knows when the doors of E.A. for the Interior will again be opened even more effectually than they had ever been before. In the mean time (I feel it on my conscience to tell you) you far better sent all your Missionaries to such Nations as by Providence have already been made to cry with the Macedonians: Come over & help us!

Commending myself & Mrs. Rebmann, who – thank God – is quite well, to your Christian prayers & sympathy

I am Sir

Yours respectfully

J. Rebmann

