From Baghdad to Paris: 1897
Journal of a Journey to Europe by Land via Damascus and Beirut

On April 10th 1897, a young man of Eastern European origin named Alexander Svoboda set out with his parents and several other travelers on an arduous journey from Baghdad to Europe. The journey, began over land with a caravan through the deserts of Western Mesopotamia, then Syria, Lebanon and Egypt finally crossing the Mediterranean Sea by ship. Though only nineteen years old, and despite the difficulties of overland travel, Alexander-Richard Svoboda faithfully kept a daily travel journal documenting the conditions, events and high points of his journey to Europe.

Written in Arabic, and entitled “Journal of a Journey by Land to Europe via Damascus and Beirut, Starting on April 10th 1897,” the diary begins in Bagdad, with an account of the plans, the arrangements for supplies, and the farewells to friends; and ends abruptly on July 16th of the same year just as the writer is leaving Paris to travel to London with his parents.

Written more than a century ago when the Middle East was still part of the Ottoman Empire, these writings reveal the interaction of lives in disparate and remote societies; of European values that were incorporated into parts of the Middle East and the astonishment of Alexander Svoboda himself as he encounters a level of modernism not before seen in his home in Bagdad. It is a remarkable documentation of diverse aspects of a bygone and distant life.
From Baghdad to Paris: 1897
FROM BAGHDAD
TO PARIS:
1897

Journal of a Journey to Europe
By Land Road via Damascus and Beirut
By Alexander-Richard Svoboda

TRANSLATED by Nowf Abdul-Majid Allawi
EDITED and INTRODUCTION by Walter G. Andrews

Newbook Digital Texts in the Humanities
University of Washington, Seattle, WA
2013
Dedication

To the late Professor Henry A. Svoboda who for decades trusted me affectionately to share his passion and work on Joseph Mathia Svoboda’s diaries and the journal of Alexander R. Svoboda.

To my beloved late father Abdul-Majid and late mother Feriha who by their sincere and deep faith in Allah taught me to find inner peace of the heart and true love and respect for all humankind.

Nawf A. Allawi
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WORK ON Alexander's Journal of a Journey has been a team project spanning many years and involving a large number of people who worked on aspects ranging from historical and linguistic research to the development and application of digital methodologies for the production of a New Book. Very few of the people who worked with us were compensated financially for their efforts and those who were gave far more effort to the project than could ever have been repaid.

The vast majority of the hands-on work of the project was carried out by teams of exceptional undergraduate researchers, most University of Washington students. We consider the following students (and any we may have forgotten) co-authors of the project: Meg Ainsley, Jeffry Barton, Austin Bell (Carleton College), Alex Brooks, Rachel Elizabeth Brown, Jeremy Caci (Western Washington University), Tessa Carter, Emily Cimber, Jessica Claycomb, Camille Coe (Pomona College), David Cronkite, Selma Elgab, Rukia Fahim, Ariella Fish, Daniel Hart, Sara Hefny, Maggie Wollman Hellis, Shima Houshyar, Seunghae Jane Kim, Haley Lepp, Khanh-Hoa Huynh Luong, Jenessa Markland, Grace Mitchell (University Prep High School), Patrick Mullen, Kayhan Nejad, Evan Newton (The Center School), Mew Ophaswonge, Khadija Qader, Anna Robinson, Sophie Saouma (Scripps College), Davis Shepherd, Mileta Sorokovskaya, Cameron Sparr, Jessica Tarabay, Matthew Wright, Evan Wyse, and Kecen Zhou.

Much of the teamwork in the latter stages of the project was managed by our graduate student managing editors Connie Cannon (2009-2010) and Monica Meadows Morrice (2011-2012). Another University of Washington graduate student, Joshua Crowgey, was instrumental in building the on-line version of the Journal and the Svobodapedia. Work on the programs for the print on demand version of the Journal was originally undertaken by Jon Crump, and the original website was created by Shruti Santosh More and Padmavathy Nageshbabu Vaithyam. Jeremy Caci made significant improvements to our web display of the journal.

The support of the Svoboda family throughout the process has been invaluable. We are greatly indebted to them for allowing us to share their family story and for their
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In a project that depends on so many people for its success, we are certain that some people who richly deserve our heart-felt thanks will go unmentioned. We hope that they will accept our gratitude and forgive us for unwillingly and unwittingly omitting the recognition they merit.
Nowf asked that we mention that neither she nor any of the staff will profit financially in any way from the publication of this book. It has been our contribution and a labor of love.

Lastly we would like to dedicate our work to the memory of Professor Henry Louis Alexander Svoboda who is in most ways the father of this project.

Nowf A. Allawi

Walter G. Andrews
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ARABIC DIARY TEXT

يوميات السفر الى اوروبا بطريق البر
مروراً بدمشق و بيروت