Virtual Museum and Virtual Exhibitions
Sharing History | Arab World–Europe | 1815–1918
The newest and most challenging MWNF project

In cooperation with
The League of Arab States

MUSEUM WITH NO FRONTIERS

www.museumwnf.org

Museum With No Frontiers (MWNF)
Virtual Museum and Virtual Exhibitions

Sharing History | Arab World–Europe | 1815–1918
www.sharinghistory.org

Press release
On the occasion of the presentation in the
Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna (Bassano Hall)
European launch
Thursday, 11 June 2015, 10:00 a.m.

Sharing History – the newest and most challenging Virtual Museum and Virtual Exhibitions project of MWNF.

The Project

Over the course of three years, museum curators and historians from 22 countries have worked together to depict, for the first time, a core period of their shared history as a common historical legacy that takes into account the specific perspectives of all parties. The results are ten international online exhibitions exploring themes of central importance to Arab–Ottoman–European relations in the 19th century. *Emigration* (in this case, Europeans who emigrated to North Africa and the Near East), *Economy and Trade*, *Great Inventions of the 19th Century* and *International Exhibitions* are among the themes agreed upon by the partners at the start of the project. The exhibitions show a rich spectrum of art works, documents, historical photographs and everyday objects as well as buildings and locations from the participating countries. Numerous objects have now been made accessible to the public for the first time, along with all of the material gathered within the framework of *Sharing History* that documents our common past.

The project initiated by MWNF is the first attempt to specifically address Arab–Ottoman–European history in a way that includes all parties. The research at the start of the project thus brought unexpected discoveries for many of the partners about the diversity and intensity of our relations in the 19th century and the cultural heritage documenting this period of our common history. A potential upon which we can build a common future, and an experience that bears witness to the fact that there is far more connecting us than we realise.

Database

To design the exhibitions the curators of the partner institutions had access to a database of 2,490 objects specially brought together for this project. Visitors to the virtual museum can use this database to conduct further research or compile personal collections (My Collection).

Target Audience

Sharing History is aimed not only at people with an interest in history, in particular students and teachers, but also at everyone in a wide range of professions – such as diplomacy, journalism, business or tourism – who engages with the Arab world.

Strategic sponsor partnerships

Yaşar University
İzmir, Turkey

Sharjah Museums Department
Sharjah, UAE

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Partners and Sponsors

Four partner meetings held between December 2012 and May 2014 enabled the team to develop every component of the project, define criteria and discuss critical issues in a collaborative effort. *Sharing History* has been largely financed by the partner institutions (travel costs and payments in kind). MWNF was responsible for coordination and the financing of joint costs, drawing partly on support from the Sharjah Museums Department and Yasar University Izmir (*strategic sponsors*) and on specific contributions from other project partners. On the Austrian side, *Sharing History* received grants from the Federal Chancellery, the Foreign Ministry and Ministry of Science.

Idea, Initiative and Background

The project *Sharing History* is the initiative of the international organisation Museum With No Frontiers and an idea from Eva Schubert, its founder and chief executive. Many years of experience in the planning and realisation of multilateral projects have enabled MWNF to build one of the most active cultural networks and establish the largest online museum to date. MWNF's working method follows precise criteria and is based on the fundamental principle of depicting history and culture from the perspective of each country.

Sharing History is the latest component in MWNF's goal of promoting mutual understanding through innovative interpretations of history and culture, which began with the thematic travel guides *Islamic Art in the Mediterranean* (1996–2004) and the virtual museum *Discover Islamic Art* (2004–2007).

Cooperation with the Arab League

Sharing History was established within the framework of the partnership between MWNF and the Arab League. The goal of this partnership is to promote knowledge of the Arab world and dialogue with the West, in particular Europe, through joint projects in the areas of education, culture and tourism.

For further information
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Links

MWNF Portal
http://www.museumwnf.org/

Sharing History
Homepage http://www.sharinghistory.org/
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http://www.sharinghistory.org/historical_background.php
Virtual Exhibitions http://www.sharinghistory.org/exhibitions/AWE/index.php
Timeline http://www.sharinghistory.org/hcr_home.php
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Partner Institutions http://www.sharinghistory.org/pm_partner_list.php

About MWNF
Profile http://www.museumwnf.org/atrium_about.php
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