EMPIRES IN THE HISTORY OF THE MIDDLE EAST

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Documentaries

Architect Sinan
[Nakkas, 2004?] (80 min) Dubbed in English. Dir. H. Kubra Ablak
“Documentary about the life and work of Sinan, who served for 50 years as the Ottoman Empire’s chief architect and civil engineer, during the reigns of sultans Suleiman I, Selim II, and Murad III.”
Media Collection NA1373.S5 A8 2004

The Art of the Book: Persian miniatures from the Shahnamah = Miniyatur’ha-yi Shahnamah
[Films for the Humanities, 2008, c1980] (30 min)
"This program traces the development of Shahnameh painting over three centuries and under the patronage of three distinct Persian dynasties. Parallels between miniature painting and other art forms of the time are examined. This fascinating look at a unique art form was produced with the assistance of the Fogg Art Museum."
Media Collection ND3399.F5 A78 1980

Cairo: 1001 Years of Islamic Art and Architecture
[Fons Vitae, 1999] (103 min) Dir. Caroline Williams
"This four-part presentation offers an introduction to the art and architecture of a great medieval city. Certain monuments make several appearances and are viewed from different aspects. This arrangement is intended to give the viewer a better understanding of the structures, forms and functions."
Media Collection NA1583.C356 1999

Cities of Light: The Rise and Fall of Islamic Spain
"Over a thousand years ago, the sun-washed land of southern Spain was home to Jews, Christians, and Muslims, living together and flourishing. Their culture and beliefs interwined, and the knowledge of the ancients was gathered and reborn. Here were the very seeds of the Renaissance."
Media Collection DP99.C54 2007

Discovering the Music of the Middle East
[Barr Films, 1987] (19 min)
"Islam spread musical traditions from the Middle East as far North as the Balkans. This video introduces a variety of instruments and explains the concepts behind intricate melodic lines and asymmetrical rhythms."
The Gates of Jerusalem: a History of the Holy City
[Questar, 1996] 2 videocassettes (125 min) Dir. Rick Ray
"This fascinating video presents the story of Jerusalem and the Holy Land against the backdrop of history and prophecy. Of the eight gates found in the walls surrounding Old Jerusalem, one of them, the Golden Gate, is being watched continuously by Christians, Muslims and the Jewish faithful. Millions around the world believe it holds the key to world history and our futures."

al-Ghazali: the Alchemist of Happiness
[Matmedia, 2006] (80 min) Dir. Ovidio Salazar
"Explores the life and impact of the greatest spiritual and legal philosopher in Islamic history, and sets out to discover who al-Ghazali was and whether we, living in the 21st century can still find relevance in his teaching. The film examines Ghazali’s existential crisis of faith that arose from his rejection of religious fanaticism, revealing profound parallels with our own times. Ghazali became known as the Proof of Islam and his path of love and spiritual excellence overcame the pitfalls of the organised religion of his day."
Media Collection B753.G34 G43 2006

Glories of Islamic Art
[Landmark Media, 2007] 3 dvds (ca. 117 min.)
"This three part series is intended to showcase the glorious heritage left to us by Islamic artists and architects – and explain the close connection between the architectural splendor and the religious message of Islam."
Arts Library Circ. Desk NA2543.I74 G56 2007

Gönüller Sultanı Mevlana
[Gala, 2007?] (43 min) Turkish with English subtitles
“Documentary (including historical reenactment) about the 13th century poet and Sufi mystic Celaleddin-i Rumi.”
Media Collection PK6482.G66 2007

Heritage: Civilization and the Jews
[Home Vision, 2002] (540 min)
“Nine one-hour episodes present the history of the Jewish people and their interactions with, and influences upon, various civilizations.”
Media Collection DS117.H465 2002

The Hidden Pearl: The Syrian Orthodox Church and Its Ancient Aramaic Heritage
[TransWorld Film Italia, 2001] 3 v. (180 min.)
"A 2001 documentary created by the Syriac Orthodox Church. Volume 1 deals with the pre-Christian Old Aramaic period, covering the Aramaean city states, the Neo-Assyrian, Achaemenid and Seleucid periods, including the kingdoms of Palmyra, Petra and Hatra."
Volume 2 addresses Middle Aramaic tradition and literature, the Aramaic of Jesus and classical Syriac literature. Volume 3 focusses on the current situation of the Syriac Orthodox Church and the Syriac diaspora.

Hidden Turkey
[U.S.: PBS Home Video, 2005] (57 min)
“Presents the history of Turkey as it is mirrored in its ancient cuisine. Also, explores the traditional Turkish folk arts of carpet weaving, coppersmithing, and the Whirling Dervishes.”

ha-'Ir ha-levaneh = White city
[Spielberg Jewish Film Archive, 1999] (75 min) Hebrew and English
Original short films about Tel Aviv filmed from 1926 to 1964; some are silent

Images From The Qajar Dynasty
[Facets, 2005] (18 min) Persian with English subtitles. Dir. Muhsin Makhmalbaf
The Qajar (aka Ghajar) family ruled Iran from 1785 - 1925. The film shows rare photos and early film shot during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century at the Shah's court, along with family portraits and fabulous tile mosaics.

Islam: Empire of Faith
[PBS, 2001] (180 min) Dir. Robert Gardner
"Documents the rise and growth of Islam throughout the world, from the birth of Prophet Muhammad in the 6th century through the peak of the Ottoman Empire 1000 years later. Discusses the impact of Islamic civilization on world history and culture."

Islamic Art
[Films for the Humanities & Sciences, 1988] (30 min) Dir. Michele Arnaud
"Forbidden by Islamic law to represent the human form, Moslem art burst forth in the characteristic decorative style we know as arabesque. This program discusses the architecture and sculpture of mosques and Koranic schools, the illumination and calligraphy of sacred texts, music, the art of the garden, and the influence of the abstract arabesque on Western art."

Jerusalem
[History Channel and A&E, 1996] (135 min) 2 videocassettes. Dir. & prod. Herbert Krosney
"Documentary exploring the city of Jerusalem with historian Sir Martin Gilbert as guide. Gilbert uses aerial photography and models to show the growth of the city from biblical
times, profiles important Biblical figures, traces the rise of Islam and Zionism, discusses
Arab-Israeli relations and describes archaeological discoveries."

**Land of Sultans, Taste of an Empire: Turkey**
[Landmark Media, 2008] (23 min.)
"Turkey’s culture has a long and diverse history dating back to the Ottoman Empire and
has been enhanced by the foods of different people and regions. The dishes found in the
city of Sultans-Istanbul-are considered one of the world’s great cuisines along with
French and Chinese. This episode introduces us to the essence of this marvelous food
culture."
Media Collection GT2853.T9 T37 2008

**Muhammad: Legacy of the Prophet**
[PBS, 2002] (120 min) Dir. Michael Schwarz
"Tells the story of the seventh century prophet who changed world history in 23 years,
and continues to shape the lives of more than 1.2 billion people. Three years in the
making, the film takes viewers not only to ancient Middle Eastern sites where
Muhammed’s story unfolds, but into the homes, mosques and workplaces of some of
America’s estimated seven million Muslims to discover the many ways in which they
follow Muhammad’s example."
Media Collection BP75.M776 2002

**The Ottoman Empire**
[Films for the Humanities & Sciences, 1999] (47 min) Dir. Bob Carruthers
"The Ottoman Empire, from the sacking of Constantinople to the end of the 16th century,
encompassed Eastern Europe, the Balkans, Algeria, Lebanon, Egypt, Spain, and Turkey.
This program examines the structure of this empire, from the family to religion and
bureaucracy."
Media Collection DR486.O875 1999

**Persian Miniatures from the Shahnameh**
[Films for the Humanities, 1980] (30 min)
"This program traces the development of Shahnameh painting over three centuries and
under the patronage of three distinct Persian dynasties. Parallels between miniature
painting and other art forms of the time are examined. This fascinating look at a unique art
form was produced with the assistance of the Fogg Art Museum."
Media Collection ND3399.F5 A78 1980

**Sayyidat al-qasr = Lady of the Palace – Dame du palais**
[Arab Film Distribution, 2003] (58 min.) Arabic with English subtitles. Dir. Samir
Habchi
"Traces the history of Mount Lebanon’s Joumblat family from the 17th century to the
present, focusing on early-twentieth century leader and politician Nazira Joumblat. She
presided over the region as Lady of the Palace for twenty-five years while raising her son
Kamal, preparing him to take his place in a long line of Joumblat leaders."


**Storm from the East**  
[Films for the Humanities & Sciences, 1994] (200 min) 4 cassettes.  
"This series covers the life and accomplishments of Genghis Khan and examines the art, culture, science, and technology of Mongol civilization."  
Media Collection DS19.S823 1994

**Tihran anar nadarad = Tehran has no more pomegranates**  
[Iranianmovies, 2009] (68 min) Persian with English subtitles. Iran. Dir. Massoud Bakhshi  
"Blends satire with history to paint a portrait of the metropolis and its transformation into a metropolis of increasing urban mess, pollution, inadequate housing, class gaps, and the fatal destiny of its once delicious pomegranates. Aided by never before seen archival footage from the past 100 years and mock interviews with city officials, the film explains the complex life of Tehran’s inhabitants as they live side by side with the past, begging the question of whether anything has changed at all"  
Media Collection DS325.T3 T54 2004

**Turkey’s Sephardim: 500 Years**  
[Blue Flower Film, 1991] (75 min) Dir. Laurance Salzmann  
The story of Turkey’s Sephardim Jews as they are today, against a background of years 500 of uninterrupted and peaceful existence on the lands of the Ottoman Empire, ever since 1492, the year they were uprooted from the Iberian Peninsula by order of expulsion.  
Media Collection DS135.T8 T867 1991

**Features**

**Alf Laylah wa-Laylah = A Thousand and One Nights**  
[AVE, 1979; orig. release 1941] (120 min) Arabic with English subtitles. Egypt. Dir. Tuju Mizrahi  
"Depicts some of the tales from the classic Thousand and One Nights story collection."  
Media Collection PN1997.A32246 1979

**Le Destin = Destiny**  
"A bold, radiant and intelligent film from Egypt's master director, Youssef Chahine. After the disciple of a great 12th century philosopher is burned at the stake for heresy, his young son decides that he will study under his father's mentor. Soon he is caught up in a battle between the philosopher's students and religious fundamentalists who object to their enlightenment. "  
Media Collection PN1997.D45486 1999

**Hacivat Karagoz neden olduruldu?**  
[Palermo, 2006] (132 min) Turkish. Turkey. Dir. Bahadir Atay
“Karagöz and Hacivat lived and died during the first clashes of the decaying Eastern Roman Empire and the early Ottomans of the 14th century Anatolia. Their stories and characters have been adapted for the traditional shadow theatre of the later Ottoman Empire, in modern Turkey and all over the Middle East, Greece and western Asia. The film opens in 14th century Bursa, a city on the border of the Byzantine Empire. People who are exhausted from the Mongolian attacks immigrate to this city, which is also a shelter for the ruling class from various crumbling states and governments. Among those seeking refuge, are Karagöz and Hacivat. From the moment they meet, their conversations entertain those around them and eventually, they start to present stand-up shows.”

Media Collection PN1997.2.H335 2006

_Icimizden biri Yunus_
[Gala, 2007?] (47 min) Turkish with English subtitles. Turkey. Dir. Arslan Kacar
“Biographical film about the 13th century Turkish poet and Sufi mystic Yunus Emre.”

Media Collection PN1992.77.I2 2007

_Kahpe Bizans_
[Palermo, 2000] (99 min) Turkish with English subtitles. Dir. Gani Mujde
“A comedy featuring a Turkish tribe migrating to Anatolia and facing the Byzantines. The movie is a spoof of various low budget Turkish movies from the seventies depicting Turkish exploits against the Byzantines.”


_Kutulus_
[Gala, 2006] (354 min) Turkish with English subtitles. Turkey. Dir. Ziya Oztan
“The collapse of the Ottoman Empire and the rise of the modern Turkish republic are told in this historical epic. The Turkish revolution of 1918-1923 and the lives of those who took part, such as Kemal Atatürk, İsmet İnönü, and Halide Adıvar, are dramatized on a grand scale based on the actual events.”

Media Collection PN1992.77.K87 2006

_Mivtsa’ Yonatan = Operation Thunderbolt_
Special features: disc 2 is a 50 min. documentary entitled Operation thunderbolt.

Media Collection PN1997.M625 2004

_Nasir al-Din Shah, Aktur-i Sinima = Once Upon a Time, Cinema_
"A wonderful, fairy tale-like comedy set during the Qajar dynasty, which is a condensed history of Iranian cinema and a love letter to the cinema in general. The film tells the story of a Charlie Chaplin-like cinematographer who introduces the magic of movies to the Persian court. The Shah has 84 wives and 200 children, but after a screening he falls desperately in love with the film's heroine."
