THE LEVANT: LEBANON, SYRIA, & JORDAN

Please note: UCSB Library videos are acquired for in-library and home use only. Showing them to groups, even non-paying audiences, is a violation of copyright. Please see the Library’s Video/DVD Acquisition and Use Policy http://www.library.ucsb.edu/collections/video-dvd/policy

Documentaries

Ahzab Lubnan: Harakat Amal, 1975-2002
[Arab Film Distribution, 2003] (180 min.) Arabic with English and French subtitles. Dir. Farid 'Assaf
"This documentary looks at the Shiite political party otherwise known as "The Movement of the Disinherited" in Lebanon. The party was founded in 1973 by Shiite cleric Mousa El-Sadr, drawing its initial political strength through its close ties with Iran. Amal evolved into a militia during the Lebanese Civil War, achieving national credibility during the reconciliation conferences in Geneva and Lausanne. The Amal Movement now holds a significant number of parliamentary seats, due largely to the number of people it represents and its successful resistance to the Israeli occupation of the south."
Media Collection JQ1828.A98 A23 2003

[Arab Film Distribution, 2003] (180 min.) Dir. Farid 'Assaf
"This documentary looks at The Syrian Social National Party (SSNP) in Lebanon. Its primary objective was to unify the people of greater Syria. Throughout the 1930s, the SSNP attracted numerous followers by expanding into Syria, Jordan and Palestine. The party gained popularity for its resistance to the Israeli invasions of South Lebanon. After a brief division in the 1980s, the party was reunited over the following decade and now has deputies in the Lebanese Parliament."
Media Collection JQ1826.A98 S877 2003

[Arab Film Distribution, 2003] (180 min.) Dir. Farid 'Assaf
"This documentary looks at The Progressive Socialist Party in Lebanon. Due to its secular social justice platform, the party drew together disparate factions of the Lebanese population and was able to claim 18,000 adherents in 1953. After the assassination of Joumblat in 1977, his son, Walid, took control of the party and steered it towards a more pro-Druze agenda. The Progressive Socialist Party continues to be the favored political party of the Druze and now has deputies in the Lebanese Parliament."
Media Collection JQ1828.A98 T37 2003

[Arab Film Distribution, 2003] (200 min.) Dir. Farid 'Assaf
"This documentary looks at The Kataeb Party (also known as The Phalange Party) in Lebanon. The party quickly emerged as a nationalist youth movement and a champion of the Christian cause in Lebanon. Throughout the 1960s the party was considered one of
the largest political organizations within the Lebanese political system. In the 1970s, The Kataeb Party evolved into a private militia under the leadership of Bashir Gemayel, the founder’s son. Bashir Gemayel was elected President of the Republic in 1982, following Israel’s invasion of Lebanon, but was assassinated eight days before he was to assume power.”

Media Collection JQ1828.A98 K37 2003

**Ahzab Lubnan: al-Quwat al-Lubnaniyah, 1984-2001**
[Arab Film Distribution, 2003] (83 min) Dir. Farid 'Assaf
"This documentary looks at The Lebanese Forces party in Lebanon. Their goal was to combat the Syrian presence in Lebanon and to counter-balance the perceived threat of armed Palestinian forces within the borders. Gemayel maintained close ties with Israel, visiting the nation on several occasions. It is also widely believed that he accepted military supplies and training from Israel. The Lebanese Forces received their official party license in the early 1990s, but their license was later revoked and the party eventually dissolved."

Media Collection JQ1828.A98 F67 2003

**Ahzab Lubnan: Hizb Allah, 1982-2002**
[Arab Film Dist., 2003] (180 min) Dir. Farid 'Assaf
"This documentary looks at Hezbollah (or The Party of God) in Lebanon. Though primarily Shiite, the party has drawn support from a broad range of organizations both religious and political; its primary appeal was to the disenfranchised Shiite youth in Lebanon. Hezbollah has relied on the Islamic government of Iran for military and monetary aid and was added to the U.S. State Department's list of international terrorist groups in October of 1997. The party has since gained political legitimacy in Lebanon, currently holding 12 parliamentary seats, while the civilian branch of Hezbollah runs schools, orphanages and a television station."

Media Collection JQ1826.A98 H623 2003

**Children of Shatila = al-Atfal Shatila**
[Arab Film Dist., 2009] (50 min) English and Arabic with English subtitles. Dir. Mai Masri & Jean Khalil Chamoun
Two documentary films by Mai Masri. *Children of Shatila* (50 min.) traces daily life in the Shatila refugee camp, filmed through two video cameras given to two Palestinian refugee children. *Frontiers of dreams and fears* (56 min.) relates the friendship of two Palestinian refugee girls, tracing their hopes and fears and the quality of life in refugee camps.

Media Collection DS80.55.P34 C48 2009

**The Crossroads of Lebanon**
[Landmark Films, 2000?] (26 min) Dir. Robert Golden
"Explore Lebanon’s unique interplay of geography, history, and culture (art, architecture, music, religion) and learn to cook local dishes."

Media Collection GT2853.L4 S28 2000
**al-Duruz = The Druze**
[Arab Film Distribution, 2003] (3 hrs. 30 min) Arabic with English subtitles. Dir. Mohammed Abou Feleh
"Compared to the other religions of Lebanon, the Druze, who originated in Egypt and settled in Syria, Palestine and the mountains of Lebanon, have gone relatively unnoticed. Using rare footage, gripping interviews and reliable historical documents, this fascinating documentary presents a vivid portrait of this little-known community."
Media Collection DS80.55.D78 D878 2003

**Frontiers of dreams and fears**
[Arab Film Distrib., 2009] (56 min) Lebanon. Dir. Mai Masri & Jean Khalil Chamoun
Two documentary films by Mai Masri. *Children of Shatila* (50 min.) traces daily life in the Shatila refugee camp, filmed through two video cameras given to two Palestinian refugee children. *Frontiers of dreams and fears* (56 min.) relates the friendship of two Palestinian refugee girls, tracing their hopes and fears and the quality of life in refugee camps.
Media Collection DS80.55.P34 C48 2009

**Harb Lubnan: So that History Does Not Repeat Itself**
"A extensive documentary on the Lebanese war and the turbulent events that took place in Lebanon between 1976 and 1990. In addition to archival footage, the program draws from the testimonies of Lebanese, regional and international politicians, warlords, analysts and diplomats in order to provide as complete a picture as possible of the intricate details and behind-the-scenes politicking."
Media Collection DS87.5.W37 2001

**'Indama ya'ti al-masa = Nightfall**
[Arab Film Distribution, 2000] (70 min) Arabic with English subtitles.
Mohamed Soueid draws from his diaries, recounting the time he spent in "The Student Squad" of the Palestinian Resistance Movement "Fatah" during the Lebanese Civil War. He recounts stories of old friends fallen during the war and of others still living with their memories and solitude.
Media collection DS113.7 .S88 2000

**Jasad & the queen of contradictions**
[Women Make Movies, 2012] (40 min)
"Lebanese poet and writer Joumana Haddad has stirred controversy in the Middle East for having founded "Jasad" (the Body), an erotic quarterly Arabic-language first of its kind in the Arab world and has caused a big debate in the Arabic region not only for its explicit images, erotic articles and essays on sex in Arabic but also for the fact that an Arab woman is behind it all. Despite Beirut’s external appearance of freedom portrayed through its infamous nightlife and women’s stylish and open revealing fashion sense, this is all still taboo. JASAD tackles the subject of sexuality in Lebanon, giving insight on the rare use of the Arabic language to discuss sex and erotica. Different views regarding the magazine and sexuality are also given by the head of a women’s rights organization, a
sexual health educator and a doctor who performs hymen reconstruction surgeries. Despite the debates, the threats and the lack of funds, one passionate woman shows no sign of slowing down her small steps towards a "sexual revolution" in the Arab world.

Media Collection HQ1784.J376 2012

*Katidra‘iyat al-Qiddis Jawurjiyus lil-Rum al-Urthudhuks fi Bayrut*
[Bayrut: al-Katidra‘iyah, 200-] (40 min) Arabic & French
The film chronicles the restoration of St. George’s Orthodox Cathedral (Beirut) after it was extensively damaged during the Lebanese civil war.
Media Collection: NA5976.7.B4 K37 2000z

*Lebanon: Bits and Pieces*
"an exquisitely beautiful and profoundly moving exploration of the myths and realities of present-day Lebanon, as reflected through the voices of women."
Media Collection HQ1728.L433 1994

*Majnunak = Crazy of You*
[Arab Film Dist., 1997] (26 min) Arabic with English subtitles. Dir. Akram Zaatari
"This video is a disturbingly funny documentary about the sexual conquests of three men from the industrial suburbs of Beirut. The men recount in explicit detail their most memorable sexual relationships and their tactics of seduction."
Media Collection HQ232.14 M34 1997

*al-Mawarinah = The Maronites*
[Arab Film Dist., 2003] (4 hrs, 35 min) Arabic with English subtitles.
“Constituting the largest Catholic Christian group in the Middle East, the Maronites of Lebanon are the devout followers of Saint Maron (d. 410). They were particularly influential in the creation of the modern state of Lebanon and its independence from the French in 1948. Despite various instances of oppression and persecution throughout their history, the Maronites have managed to remain a dominant force in Lebanese political and cultural life. Using rare footage and insightful interviews, this absorbing documentary traces the history of this ancient community to modern day Lebanon, capturing its substantial contribution to religious and cultural diversity in the Middle East.”
Media Collection DS80.55.M37 M393 2003

*Recycle = I‘adat khalq*
[First Run/Icarus, 2008] (90 min) In Arabic with English subtitles
“In a place where extremes are raised, a tough choice has to be made. An ex-mujahideen struggles to reconcile his faith and reality. But he faces setbacks at every turn as he is forced to collect cardboard in the streets of Zarqa, an occupation barely sustaining his family. As his situation deteriorates he has to make a radical decision to save himself from humiliation. Abu Amar found himself disillusioned with the chaos Afghanistan was left in during the 80’s and tried to clear this confusion by writing a book on Jihad."
However insightful and moderate, he has failed so far to publish his work. In the meantime his attempts to build a normal life in the impoverished town where Iraq Al Qaida leader Al Zarqawi grew up are failing. While the locals share their insights on Al Zarqawi and the current situation in the Middle East, the effects of their constraining environment become clear as Abu Amar heads towards a life-changing decision. Recycle is a documentary with an insider’s view on the community of al Zarqawi’s hometown, hereby addressing the intricate realities of life in the Middle East during spiralling international tensions.” (From IMDB)


**Sayyidat al-qasr = Lady of the Palace – Dame du palais**
[Arab Film Dist., 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."
Media Collection HQ1236.5.L4 S29 2003

**al-Sharit bi-khayr = All is Well On the Border Front**
[Arab Film Dist., 2008] (43 min) Arabic with English subtitles. Dir. Akram Zaatari
"Issues of representation within the occupied zone of South Lebanon are explored in this documentary. The film’s three staged interviews with Lebanese prisoners in Israel illustrate aspects of life under occupation with convincing poignancy."
Media Collection DS87.53.S567 2008

**Sheikha Stories**
[Arab Film Distribution, 2009] (37 min) Dir. Brigid Maher
Five films about Muslim women who are leaders and teachers in their mosques: “The Modern Sheikha”, “Magda’s Calling”, “The Socratic Sheikha”, “Ladies of Brilliance”, “Mosque of Light”
Media Collection BP173.4.S482 2009

**Siraj al-wadi = The lamp of the valley**
[al-Rahbaniyah al-Basiliyah al-Mukhallasiyah, 2009] (119 min)
“The life of Father Bshara Abu Mrad, Salvatorian monk. From a book by Qustantin Basha.”
Media Collection BX4711.395.A28 2009

**Sous les décombres = Under the Rubble**
[Arab Film Dist., 201-] (40 min) Dir. Jean Chamoun & Mai Masri
“Documentary of the sufferings of the Lebanese and Palestinians of South Lebanon and West Beirut under Israeli army shelling; a protest against modern warfare as well as against the Israelis.”
Media Collection DS87.53.S68 2010z
**Suspended Dreams**  
[Arab Film Dist., 2000?] (50 min)  
English and Arabic with English subtitles. Dir. Jean Khalil Chamoun & Mai Masri  
"A courageous documentary from Lebanon about the effects of 16 years of civil war on what was once the intellectual, cultural and commercial center of the Arab world. The film tells the story of four Beirut citizens from very different backgrounds as they struggle to reconstruct their homes and lives amid the chaos, the broken buildings, and the unexploded mines of their once beautiful city."

Media Collection DS89.B4 S877 2000

**Tala’in ‘al-Junub = Up to the South**  
[Arab Film Dist., 2004] (60 min) Arabic with English subtitles. Dir. Jayce Salloum & Walid Ra’ad  
"Explores the Israeli occupation of Southern Lebanon and the powerful resistance to this occupation. It also examines several popular discursive notions such as "the land," "culture," and "identity" in relation to both the East and the West."

Media Collection DS87.53.T35 2004

**Tea on the axis of evil: a film about real life in Syria**  
[Arab Film Dist., 2009] (67 min)  
"In 2003, the Bush Administration and the US media began referring to Syria and Iran in the same terms that had been used to justify the US invasion of Iraq ... After hearing reports about the friendliness of the Syrian people that conflicted with what was being presented in the news, filmmaker Jean Marie Offenbacher decided that this contradiction deserved further exploration. She moved to Syria, alone, to record a portrait of life from all across the country -- from the rural regions to the large urban centers and even to the halls of power in Damascus."

Media Collection DS94.6 .T43 2009

**Veiled voices**  
[Arab Film Distribution, 2009] (60 min) Dir. Brigid Maher  
"Women in the Arab world are redefining their role as leaders in Islam. Veiled voices investigates the world of Muslim women religious leaders through the eyes of three women--in Lebanon, Syria and Egypt. ... The stories featured in the film give insight into how Muslim women are now increasingly willing to challenge the status quo from within their religion, promoting Islam as a powerful force for positive transformation in the world. Each [of the three women featured] triumphs over difficult challenges as they carve out a space to lead--both in Islam and in their communities"

Media Collection BP173.4.V45 2009

**War Generation Beirut**  
[Arab Film Dist., 2011] (50 min) English and Arabic with English subtitles. Dir. Jean Khalil Chamoun & Mai Masri  
"This brave documentary filmed on the streets of Beirut traces the life experiences of three generations of young people as they struggle to survive in their war-torn city."

Media Collection DS87.5.W373 2011
Zahrat al-qandūl = Zahrat el Kindoul = Women of South Lebanon
[Arab Film Distribution, 200-] (75 min) Dir. Jean Chamoun & Mai Masri
“Women played a crucial role in fighting the Israeli invasion of southern Lebanon. This film preserves their stories on camera. The result is a poignant docu-drama about resistance and hope.”
Media Collection DS87.2.Z34 2000z

Features

al-Ajnihah al-Mutakassirah = The Broken Wings
[Arab Film Dist., 1995 (restored print); orig. release 1964] (95 min) Arabic with English subtitles. Lebanon. Dir. Yusuf Ma'luf
"Lebanese artist/poet Khalil Gibran reveals the same artistry and wisdom that have enshrined his name in the hearts of millions. With great sensitivity and lyricism, Gibran describes his youthful passion for his first love, Selma Karamy, the beautiful girl from Beirut. But theirs was a love doomed from the beginning: Social conventions and family tensions eventually force Selma to marry another man. American audiences got their first taste of this sensitive adaptation in the late sixties."
Media Collection PN1997.A31475 1995

al-Asar = Le Tourbillon
[Arab Film Dist., 2006] (90 min) Arabic with English subtitles. Lebanon. Dir. Samir Habchi
"In 1992, a young Lebanese director accomplished what many filmmakers considered impossible: a film about the Lebanese Civil War shot on location. Filmed with the help of the Lebanese government, this film narrates the story of a young Lebanese student on a visit home from the Soviet Union. While initially alienated by the war, he quickly finds himself an active participant."

Bufor = Beaufort
“After 18 years dug into a heavily fortified mountain deep in occupied Lebanon, the last Israeli soldiers enduring constant bombardment at the site of the ancient crusader stronghold called Beaufort receive orders to abandon their posts, detonate the warren of bunkers in which they have tenuously clung to life and victory, and come home. Amid redoubled shelling from Hezbollah, the fort’s brash, impossibly young commander Liraz (Oshri Cohen) struggles to keep himself and his men safe from a faceless enemy that would turn withdrawal into massacre, and transform a just cause into a lost cause.”

Et maintenant, on va ou? = Wa-halla’ la-wayn? = Where do we go now?
**Kabtin Abu Ra’id**
[Arab Film Dist., 2007] (102 min) Arabic with English subtitles. Jordan. Dir. Amin Matalqa

“An airport janitor makes a big difference in the lives of the children in his poor neighborhood when they mistake him for an airplane pilot. Using his imagination to weave stories of the wonderful places he has visited around the world, a friendship develops as he brings hope to their otherwise grim home life.”

Media Collection PN1996.K25 2010

**al-‘Alkah al-hamra’ = Red chewing gum**
[Arab Film Dist., 2007] (48 min) Arabic with English subtitles. Lebanon. Dir. Akram Zaatari


Media Collection PN1997 .A3228 2000z

**Sukkar banat = Caramel**
[Arab Film Dist., 2007] (93 min) Arabic with English subtitles. Lebanon. Dir. Nadine Labaki

A Beirut beauty salon becomes a treasured meeting place for several generations of women from various walks of life to talk, seek advice and confide in one another.

Media Collection PN1997.2 .S855 2008

**The Syrian Bride = ha-Kalah ha-Surit**

"Mona’s wedding day may be the saddest of her life. Once she crosses the border into Syria, she will never be allowed back to her beloved family in the Druze village of Majdal Shams. Told with great humor and compassion, its story provides an emotionally stirring look at the human side of political conflict, focusing on the hopes and dreams of one family trapped in a no-man’s land between two nations."

Media Collection PN1997.2 .S97 2006

**Tango al-amal**
[Arab Film Distribution, 1998] (70 min.) Arabic with English subtitles. Lebanon. Dir. Mohamed Soueid
"Relationships and cinema are the central themes in this very personal, endearing film. A marvelous tribute to the anguish and longing inherent both in human relationships and on the silver screen."
Media Collection PN1993.5.A65 T36 1998

*Tayyarah min waraq = Le cerf-volant = The kite*
In director Randa Chahal Sabbag’s fairytale for troubled times, sixteen-year-old Lamia must cross a border checkpoint between Lebanon and Israel to marry a man she has never met. Neither she nor her betrothed are eager to consummate the marriage, a matter further complicated by Lamia’s surprising admission that she is in love with the Israeli soldier guarding the border.
Media Collection PN1997.T359 2004

*West Beirut*
"This high spirited, funny and poignant coming-of-age tale takes us along the joyous journey of adolescence set against a city torn apart, proving that the restrictions of war are no match for the sheer exuberance of growing up."
Media Collection PN1997.W47 2001

SEE ALSO ISRAEL AND ISRAEL-PALESTINE