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Records of the Kurds Territory, Revolt and Nationalism, 1831-1979

British Documentary Sources

A documentary history of the Kurdish peoples' struggle for a recognised homeland, from disparate revolt to the rise of nationalism.

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Historical Background

The collection's recurrent theme is the pursuit of a Kurdish homeland and the related struggle for independence, offering the historical context for how the Kurds have found themselves the largest stateless nation in the world. The scattered nature of the Kurdish population, resident in varying numbers across Iran, Syria, Iraq and Turkey, and the relative differences in the proportion of Kurds to indigenous populations has meant that there has not been a single unified drive for a self-governing state, with movements tending towards more factional interests. Recent history demonstrates the longevity of the problems for the Kurdish populations in the absence of an official Kurdish state;

the collection provides a contextual viewpoint for this perennial question as it charts the progress of the Kurds from the Revolts of Bedr Khan at Van through to the expulsion of 400,000 Kurds by the Iraqi Government from 1970-76, and as far 1979 with the repressions of the new regime in Iran. As well as providing the wider context of the Kurdish peoples, the collection refers to many of the individuals most significant to the cause of Kurdish nationalism, including Sherîf Pasha, Seyîd Abdulqadir and Seyîd Taha, the Bedirxanis, Simko Agha, the Kurds of Dersim, Sheikh Mahmûd Berzencî and Sheikh Êhmed Barzanî.

" The wealth of historical documentation presented in these volumes will no doubt lead to new insights and greater understanding of the evolution of the Kurds and Kurdistan. Perhaps not so coincidentally, while referring to the cross border movement of tribes, one of the first documents included herein refers to the "Kurdish Question," while one of the last, dated March 1979, is entitled "The Kurdish Problem." In the hundred and fifty years covered by the *Records*, the Kurds went from being a question needing an answer to a problem urgently demanding a solution. Thus, considering the fact that the 'Kurdish question' has yet to find a solution, it seems that reassessing the *longue durée* development of the issue should constitute one of the most important tasks for scholars and academics with an interest in the region. In this regard, the documents to be found within these volumes will be of great importance. "

Dr Sabri Ates, and Djene R. Bajalan from the Foreword.



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978-1-84097-325-9 13 volume set including maps

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Images: (Doctor Mahmoud Osman, former general secretary of the Democratic Kurdish Party) and Mollah Mustafa Barzani - 4 December 1972.

Colonel Hussein Bey, Hamidiye; ©The National Archives, UK

Simko Agha with supporters; ©The National Archives, UK



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