**Brief History**

- Under the Ottoman Empire, Kirkuk functioned as an important military post.
- By 19th Century, Kirkuk became a very important cultural, economic, and political center, especially for its Turkmen and Kurdish population.
Ethnic Cleansing

- Counter-insurgency campaigns and ethnic cleansing of non-Arabs from strategic areas (especially Kirkuk) preoccupied the government in Baghdad after the 1968 Arab Nationalist Ba’th party’s ascension to power.
Border Disputes

- A 1970 Autonomy Accord failed as disagreements spawned between Mullah Mustafa Barzani’s Kurdish rebels in the North and the government in Baghdad over the borders of a Kurdish autonomous region.

- Barzani insisted on Kirkuk’s inclusion within the Kurdish region, while Baghdad refused to lose control of the oil fields of Kirkuk and surrounding areas.
Arabization

- In 1975, Baghdad embarked on an Arabization program for Kirkuk region.
- Kurds, Turkmen, and Christians were expelled from Kirkuk and other areas, and were replaced with Shiite Arabs.
Post–Saddam Contest over Kirkuk

- Iraqi Kurdish groups argue that people once expelled from Kirkuk must be allowed to return.
- One cannot correct an injustice with a new injustice by expelling current Arab settlers.
Iraqi Property Claims Commission (IPCC): was established to redress certain wrongful takings of real property in Iraq.

The passage of time, loss of documents, and multiple overlapping and contradictory claims for property made organizations task complex.

In March of 2006, IPCC was renamed to Commission for Resolution of Real Property Disputes.
Ethnicity’s Political Desires

- Kurds demand the preservation of an self-government, and want to extend the Kurdish autonomy region to include Kirkuk.
- Sunni Arabs have objections regarding Kurdish control of northern oil resources, as well as a Shiite autonomous region in southern Iraq.
- Turkmen wish that Kirkuk not become part of the Kurdish Autonomous Zone.
- Arab Shiites wish to see Shiite settlers in Kirkuk treated fairly, and are against Kurdish secession from Iraq.
Strategies for Governing Kirkuk

- In the case of Kirkuk, the city has become both a resource and a symbol for Kurds, Turkmen, and Arabs.

- How to Govern this land?
  - Various Iraqi ethnic groups wish to see the land of Kirkuk dealt with in different ways.
  - Settling the land to please everyone proves to be a difficult task.
  - Attempt to implement policies that satisfy all ethnicities.