**SLIDE 1**

I’m focusing on Kurds in Iraq specifically, though there may be some spillover into Kurdish-Turkish relations.

History goes far back in the 20th century when the Ottoman Empire ended, but for the purpose of my paper I’m focusing on the 1970’s onward

Various topics I will address will include but are not limited to issues such as:

The non-homogenous Kurdish ethnicity which goes along with

The ethnic differences between the Kurdish and Arab populations,

Also, I’ll discuss the significance of Kirkuk for Baghdad and the Kurds which is linked to

The issue of oil exportation and revenues,

The American influence on the Iraqi Kurds as well as internal divisions within the Kurds

Furthermore, the essay will discuss in detail the fluctuating political and social conflicts that have addressed the issue of Kurdish sovereignty and independence

**SLIDE 2**

My topic is important today because of Iraqi elections and in general the War in Iraq

The presence of the US in Iraq and the changes that have been made highly affect the Kurds and have once again brought their story out to the rest of the world

The issue of Kirkuk is very important to the Kurds

For those of you who don’t know, but I’m assuming you all do, Kirkuk is where the oil is so every party in Iraq wants a piece of it

When Saddam was in power, the Kurds had no real power in Kirkuk

Now the Kurds run themselves, the Kurdish Regional Government carries out governing functions and Baghdad law doesn’t necessarily apply

Kurds essentially have effective control of Kirkuk, but they are completely landlocked so if they wanted to take oil out of Iraq they’d have to go through either Baghdad or Turkey

The whole issue of Kirkuk is very unresolved and has been for a very long time

The preliminary elections that happened in March were promising for the Kurds, but they don’t want to count their chickens before they hatch

Also, the separate parties, specifically the KDP (or Kurdish Democratic Party) and the PUK (Patriotic Union of Kurdistan), within the Kurdish population is posing problems for them

Jalal Talabani is President of Iraq and Member of PUK

In both parties, there are a lot of tension and corruption

**SLIDE 3**

There is a chronology and a timeline to my sources. I purposely found a source from different years soon after the US allied with the Kurds and then bailed on them.

It happened in 1971 and 1991 notably, and now after the invasion of Iraq

**Ethnic Conflict and the Kurds**

Discusses the steps Kurds have taken to gain autonomy or independence and why they have failed

It discusses in detail what the Kurds have done in the three countries in which they have significant populations: Iraq, Iran and Turkey

The article examines what obstacles the Kurds must overcome as well as discusses what battles they have already fought and the difficulties they have faced in their political and social movements

**The Fate of the Kurds**

Discusses how Kurds are seeking cultural and political autonomy and what regional conflicts they are causing because of this

Though the Kurdish population is not homogenous, the ethnic barriers that separate them are beginning to fall

Consequently the borders that separate them are also breaking down

The article explains how and why the countries housing the Kurds should allow for more federalism and acceptance

Argues that cooperation is necessary

**As Iraqi’s Celebrate, the Kurds Hesitate**

This is a more contemporary article from the New York Times expressing how the Kurds have been damaged by all the betrayals they have been through

The Kurds are basically now just trying to keep the power they have, but they still want more

They don’t want to be linked with Iraq anymore

**Invisible Nation**

This book reminded me a lot Chandraskaran’s book in how it was written

There is a clear bias towards Kurds and Lawrence definitely talks about how “Kurdistan has a strong hold on him”

This book basically goes into the knitty gritty of all the alliances and betrayals that the Kurds in Iraq have faced and how they were essentially used as pawns by the US

It also goes into the unresolved issue over Kirkuk and how it is the Jerusalem of Iraq

Unfortunately, Lawrence leaves a lot of lingering questions, which hopefully I’ll be able to answer

**Kurds no closer to taking Kirkuk after Iraqi elections**

This is an editorial article by Joost Hiltermann, who is a leading researcher in Kurdish relations

Hiltermann talks about the Goran Kurds and their gains and losses in the recent elections

He basically is really pessimistic about the preliminary Iraqi elections

**SLIDE 4**

There are a lot of directions I could go with my argument. I’m not 100% sure what my main focus will be, but here are a few questions that I will be asking in my paper.

Would it be beneficial for the Kurds to have an independent state? What problems would that cause?

How will the corruption that is linked to Kurdish leaders hinder the establishment of any sort of government? Why does it still continue?

How will the alliances and betrayals continue to affect the Kurdish people and is it still continuing?

My basic argument is that the Kurds have been continually denied their demands despite making many attempts towards them

Because of this the elections, I believe, in Iraq won’t change much for the Kurds

I am pessimistic and I agree with Hiltermann on some level

Based on past historical events and relationships, Baghdad will not allow Iraqi Kurds to have more freedom than they already do have

Turkey, if anything, will fight against it

Any agreements they make with different countries are only serving the benefit of the countries at the time being and those countries will drop the Kurds at the tip of hat

I’m not just blaming external factors, the Kurds are fractured themselves between two parties and three countries. They can’t seem to get it together

My explanation will include how the United States policies regarding the Kurds have been flaky and just filled with empty promises