

GEOLOGICAL CULTURE AND PIONEER FEMALE GEOLOGISTS IN IRAQ

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ABSTRACT

Geological Sciences in Iraq, as in many other countries in the world, is a traditionally male dominated profession. Many scientific studies, in Arabic language, regarding the subject of women and science professions had been published, but none of the articles was covering the role of women in Earth sciences. No credible and trusted sources in the geologic institutions, is available to give us any information and highlighted the history of women with geology in Iraq, and where there are, they are only anecdotes.

First Geology department in Iraq was founded in 1953 in Baghdad university, followed by the geology department in Mosul University in 1963 and the Basrah University in 1988. At the beginning, the department of geology of Baghdad University, not encouraged female students to study earth sciences. Admission was dedicated for male students only, while prevented female students. There was no female geologist in Iraq until the graduation of the first female student. Fortunately, and regardless of any thing, there are few female geologist pioneers starting from the beginning of the sixteenth of twentieth century.

Miss Sahirah Abdulkareem was the first pioneer female geologist who graduated from the University of Baghdad at 1962, that is to say nine years after the geology department was established. After that, the department of geology did not allow female students to study earth sciences till 1968 when two female students managed to finish their study after long struggle with the college deanery where written permission was required from parents; interviews were required with family members and there was a big show of determination from the female students. Therefore, pioneer female graduation followed by the second and the third graduated women geologists at 1972, Miss. Anba Jawi Farhan Alkhmisi and Miss. Suha Hasib Alrubaie. The three pioneering female Iraqi geologists mentioned have taken different paths, and although all three have managed to take at least some of their studies into a career; all have struggled along the way.

The most important foundations occupied female geologists was geological survey of Iraq, petroleum companies and, water resources directorate. Initially, Female geologists were given the responsibilities of office works only, while prevented from field works. In the present day, although she have reached high ranks, for example a Dean of college or a foundation director; but still is limited.

Iraqi female geologist Lady Anba Jawi Farhan Alkhamisi which she awarded an MBE Efficiency Medal by the Queen Elizabeth II – UK in 2004, is the biggest pride for all the Iraqi geologists, male and female.

Keywords: Female geologist, Geological culture, Iraq, pioneer geologist.