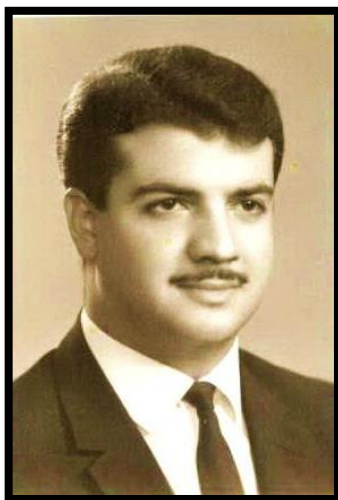


# Obituary

## Dr. Wissam Al-Hashimi, PhD.

### (1942-2005)



A celebrated Iraqi Geoscientist, [Wissam Shakir Al-Hashimi](#) was **kidnapped** while being driven to work at 7.15am on the 24<sup>th</sup> of August 2005, Just 5 days before his planned trip to Paris to attend the [AAPG International Conference and Exhibition](#) and present his last paper "**Porosities of Carbonate Reservoirs of The Mesopotamian Basin: An Insight into their Origin**" to the Diagenetic Modelling in Carbonate and Siliciclastic Reservoirs Session, at 11.55am on the 14<sup>th</sup> of September 2005. Instead of presenting his paper, a small memorial was held at the session to commemorate him and his lifetime achievements. Although a ransom was paid, but two weeks after his abduction his dead body was found with **two bullets wounds in his head** among several unidentified bodies of murdered Iraqis at one of Baghdad's mortuaries.

Born in Al-Aadhamia district of Baghdad, he studied for his Baccalaureate (Sciences) at the Al-Aadhamia High School (1961), and for his BSc in Geology-Physics (1965) at the College of Sciences, University of Baghdad, Iraq. He joined the Department of Geology of Mosul University, North Iraq to work as a demonstrator after completing his military service in 1967, and left Iraq to England in 1968 on an Iraqi postgraduate research scholarship to the University of Newcastle to study carbonate sedimentology under the supervision of the late Professor J. Hemingway. Wissam produced a key paper on the porosity of dolomite under the SEM (**York GSP V38, 1972**), and on recent dedolomitization (**JSP V43, 1973**) while researching his PhD.

Dr. Al-Hashimi returned to Iraq in early 1972 to head the Mineralogy division at the DG of Geological Survey of Iraq, only to publish another key paper on recent carbonate cementation within dolostones (**JSP V47, 1977**). Wissam was headhunted to Iraq National Oil Company (INOC) in 1981 to head the underground storage team responsible for the underground hydrocarbons storage project of Iraq, which he successfully completed by 1990. Following the 1991 Gulf War he was put in-charge of unconventional petroleum storage project, which he successfully completed within 3 years. Between 1994 and 2005 Wissam progressed in INOC (then renamed Iraq Oil Exploration Company) from head of Sedimentology Division, to Chief Geologist then Consultant Geologist to the DG of Iraq Oil Exploration Company and Board Member of Iraqi Drilling Company.

Professionally, Dr. Al-Hashimi was actively participating in: **Local Geological Society-** Dr. Al-Hashimi was the elected Secretary General of the Geological Society of Iraq (1973-1974) and the President of the Geological Society of Iraq (2001-2005). **Regional Geological Associations-** Dr. Al-Hashimi represented Iraq in the Arab Geologists Association (AGA) (1975-2005), elected as the Secretary General of the AGA for two terms (1993 & 1998), and was until his murder the elected Secretary General of the Arab Geologists Association. He organised several Arab Geologists Associations Conferences (GEOCOME) under difficult conditions in Baghdad, Ankara, Amman, Cairo and Beirut, and he was planning another GEOCOME Conference in Abu Dhabi in 2006.

**International Geological Congresses-** Dr. Al-Hashimi was elected twice as Council Member of the International Association of Sedimentologists (1982-1990). He co-organised a symposium on Dolomitization and Dedolomitization in Hamilton, Canada during the 11th International Sedimentological Congress in 1982. In 1996 he was elected Vice President of the IUGS, chaired the Petroleum Geology and Reservoir Analysis session of the 2000 International Geological Congress in Rio, and served as a member of the Advisory Board of the 32<sup>nd</sup> International Geological Congress in Florence, Italy in 2004. Wissam also represented Iraq in several regional and international geological, energy, and water resources meetings and committees.

Dr. Al-Hashimi persevered in serving Iraq throughout his career, and helped improve the co-operation between geologists in Iraq, Middle East and the entire globe. He edited the AGA bilingual magazine "Geoscience and Arab Development". Wissam published many scientific papers on sedimentology and diagenesis of carbonates and evaporites rocks, geo-archaeology, engineering geology, underground storage, and Middle East water resources in Arabic and English. He also regularly published analytical articles on Arabian political and resources issues, such as his famous 1999-2002 articles ["The Future is Water: Zionists Scheme for Arab's Waters"](#), ["Turkey's GAP Project: Its' Negative Impacts on Tigris and Euphrates Waters"](#) and ["America and Iraq's Oil: The Past is the Key to the Present"](#) in Geoscience and Arab Development magazine.

Due to the terrible circumstances surrounding his death, the sad news of his murder in late August reached his friends outside Iraq in mid September. In an e mail addressed to one of his colleagues, Dr Al-Hashimi's daughter described the lamentable circumstances of his murder: "I am Tara Al-Hashimi the daughter of the late Dr. Wissam Al-Hashimi. I'd like to inform you that my father has died. He was **kidnapped** early in the morning on the 24th Aug 2005 while going to work; his recent ID papers were stolen. **A ransom was given** but unfortunately he was shot twice in the head and died, may his soul rest in peace. As his ID was taken from him it took us about 2 weeks to find his body in one of Baghdad's hospitals. Lately he was very busy preparing a paper that he was going to talk about in a meeting in Paris; unfortunately he will not be able to attend the meeting. On behalf of myself and the family we would like that at least the abstract of his paper remains in the meeting's agenda and to be lectured by someone else."

[Thousands of Iraqi scientists, university lecturers, doctors, engineers, air-force pilots, army officers, civil servants and imams have been kidnapped, tortured, murdered, terrorised out of Iraq, died or dying in prisons since the 2003 USA-led "liberation" of Iraq](#), while others, who persevered in their country throughout the past decades -like Dr. Al-Hashimi, are being systematically murdered by death squads, sectarian terrorists and re-moulded criminals. His murder is another number in the spinning body counter of murdered Iraqis since the "liberation"; which ranges from 25,000 to more than 1,400,000 depending on your side of the political fence.

Dr. Wissam Al-Hashimi survived by his wife Mu'tabar Pasha-Amedi and daughters Tara, Farah and Balsam. The geological fraternity lost a dynamic, dedicated, patriotic and ethical scientist; his kindness, wisdom, diplomacy and good manners will be long remembered by whoever knew or worked with him. His published and unpublished scientific achievements will continue to benefit his soul, his family and future knowledge seekers in and outside Iraq, and will surely outlive his direct and indirect murderers.

**Muhammad W. IBRAHIM, PhD, MSc, DIC, BSc.**

London, UK.

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