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FALAJES OF AL-AIN AREA: GEOLOGICAL SETTING AND HYDROGEOLOGICAL CHARACTERISTICS

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT FOR THE MASTER DEGREE OF SCIENCE "GEOLOGY"

 \mathbf{BY}

GAMEEL AHMED ANTAR SHALATA (B.Sc. Geology, June 1980)

DEPARTMENT OF SEOLOGY
FACULTY OF SCIENCE
TANTA UNIVERSET?

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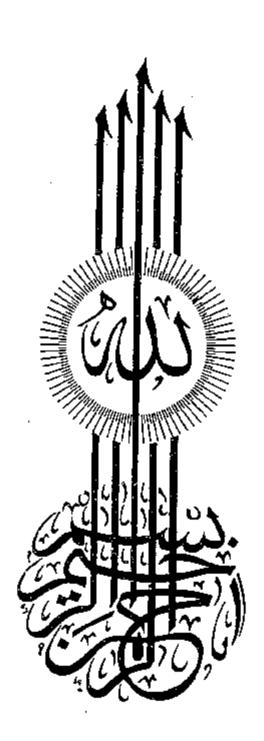
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ABSTRACT

In addition to their importance as a renewable water resource, falajes represent a part of the U. A. E. history. The Falaj is a man-made channel which intercepts ground water at the footslopes of high mountains and brings it to the surface for irrigation purposes.

The main objective of this thesis is to study the geological setting and their hydrogeological characters of the Al Ain falajes. The specific objectives are to: (1) study the climate of Al Ain area, especially rainfall, (2) investigate the geological setting of Falaj Al Aini and Falaj Al Daudi, (3) define the factors affecting discharge and water chemistry of Al Ain falajes and (4) determine the physical and chemical properties of water in the falajes and evaluate its suitability for different purposes.

To achieve these objectives, 73 water samples were collected from the Quaternary aquifer and Al Ain falajes in May 1995 and March 1996. Water samples were analyzed for major and minor chemical constituents in the Desert and Marine Research Center, U. A. E. University, and Al Sulaymat Laboratory of the Department of Agriculture, Al Ain.

Results indicate that the Al Ain falajes obtain their water mainly from the Quaternary alluvial aquifer. The sediments penetrated by the shafts of Falai Al Aini and Falai Al Daudi consists of, from base to top: crystalline limestone, calcareous mudstone, packstone, grainstone and ophiolitic conglomerate. The major rock-forming minerals identified by X-ray diffraction are calcite and dolomite. The minor minerals are lizardite, quartz, iron oxides and clay minerals. During the 1978-1995 period, the total falaj discharge in the U. A. E. varied between 9.0 x 10⁶ m^{3}/yr in 1994 and 31.2 x 10^{6} m^{3}/yr in 1982, which represented 2.8 to 9.7%, respectively, of the total water use in the country. The salinity and concentrations of Fe, Mn, Cu, Co, Ni, Zn, Pb and Cd in water of the Al Ain falajes are low and below the limits recommended by the World Health Organization (WHO) for drinking water. The dissolved salts in water of the falajes are Mg(HCO₃)₂ and Ca(HCO₃)₂ in the eastern part of the study area, and MgSO₄ and CaSO₄ in the west. The measured the electrical conductance (EC) and calculated sodium adsorption ratio (SAR) indicate that, except for the parts around and west of Jabal Hafit, the water of the Al Ain falajes are excellent for irrigation purposes.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Pi	age
CHAPTER I - INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Location of the study area	1
1.2 Objectives	3
1.3 Methods of study	
1.3.1 Field work	
L3.2 Laboratory analyses	4
1.3.3 Office activities	4
CHAPTER II - HISTORY OF FALAJES	6
2.1 Definition	6
2.2 Origin	
2.3 Design	
2.4 Construction	
2.5 Types	15
2.6 Water use	
2.7 Maintenance	17
2.8 Falaj-related problems	20
CHAPTER III - CLIMATIC CONDITIONS	22
3.1 Solar radiation.	22
3.2 Air temperature	24
3.3 Relative humidity	24
3.4 Wind speed	24
3.5 Pan evaporation.	27
2.4 Painfall	27

Page
CHAPTER IV - GEOMORPHOLOGY AND GEOLOGY30
4.1 Geomorphology30
4.1.1 Mountains30
4.1.2 Gravel plains34
4.1.3 Drainage basins35
4.1.3.1 Drainage basins of Oman
Mountains35
4.1.3.2 Drainage basins of Jabal Hafit37
4.1.4 Sand dunes
4.1.4.1 Linear dunes
4.1.4.2 Star dunes
4.2. Stratigraphy38
4.2.1 Semail ophiolites
4.2.2 Qahlah Formation
4.2.3 Simsima limestone
4.2.4 Muthaymimah Formation
4.2.5 Rus Formation
4.2.6 Dammam Formation45
4.2.7 Asmari Formation46
4.2.8 Miocene succession
4.2.9 Quaternary deposits48
4.2.9.1 Aeolian sand
4.2.9.2 Desert plain deposits
4.2.9.3 Fluvial deposits

	Page
CHAPTER V - PETROGRAPHY	50
5.1 Petrography	50
5.1.1 Crystalline limestone	
5.1.2 Calcareous mudstone	52
5.1.3 Wackestone	52
5.1.4 Packestone	52
5.1.5 Grainstone	
5.1.6 Ophiolitic conglomerate	
5.2 X-ray diffraction study	55
CHAPTER VI - HYDROGEOLOGY	63
6.1 Surface water	63
6.1.1 Springs	63
6.1.2 Falajes	64
6.1.2.1 Recharge	64
6.1.2.2 Discharge	69
6.1.2.3 Hydrogeologic cross section	70
6.1.3 Seasonal floods	71
6.2 Ground water	
6.2.1 Recharge	
6.2.2 Storage	77
6.2.3 Discharge	79
CHAPTER VII - HYDROGEOCHEMISTRY	80
7.1 Electrical conductivity	80
7.2 Total dissolved-solids	83