

# The Omani Falaj System

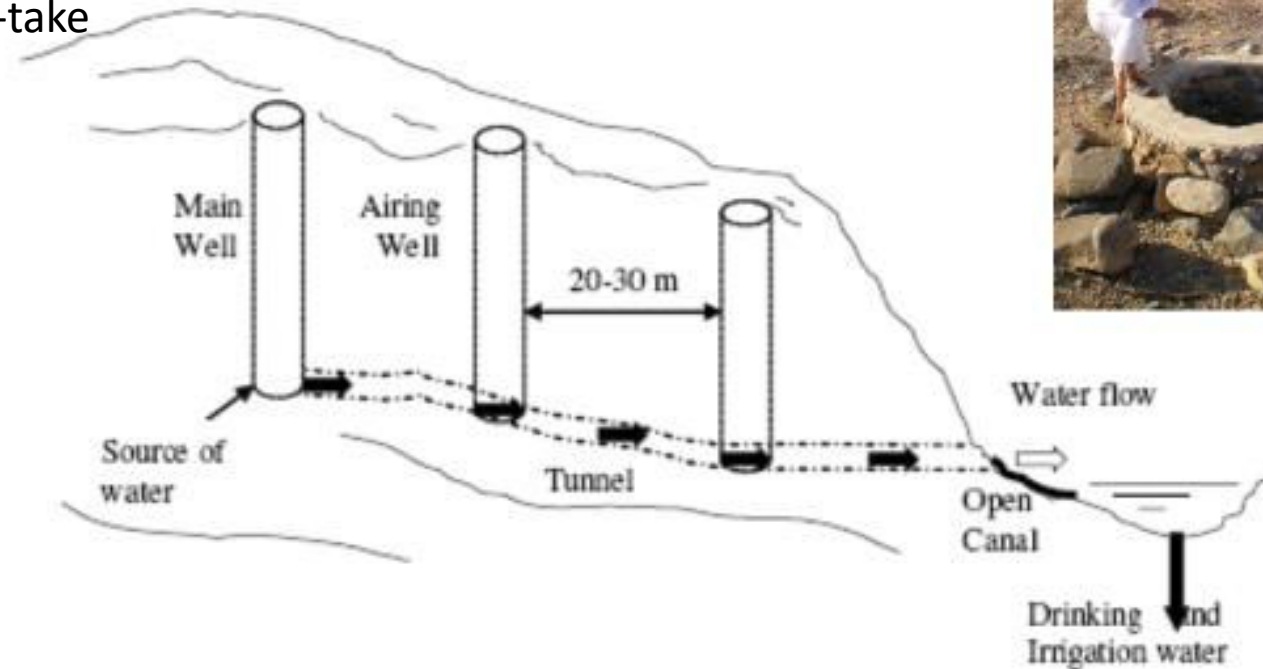
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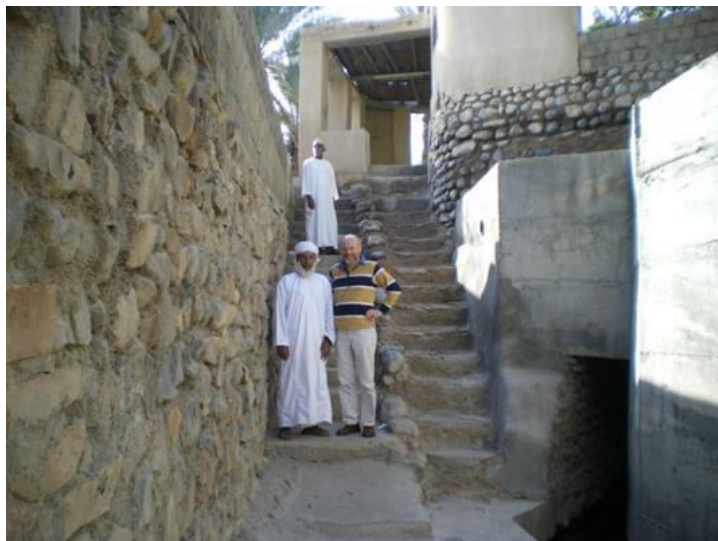
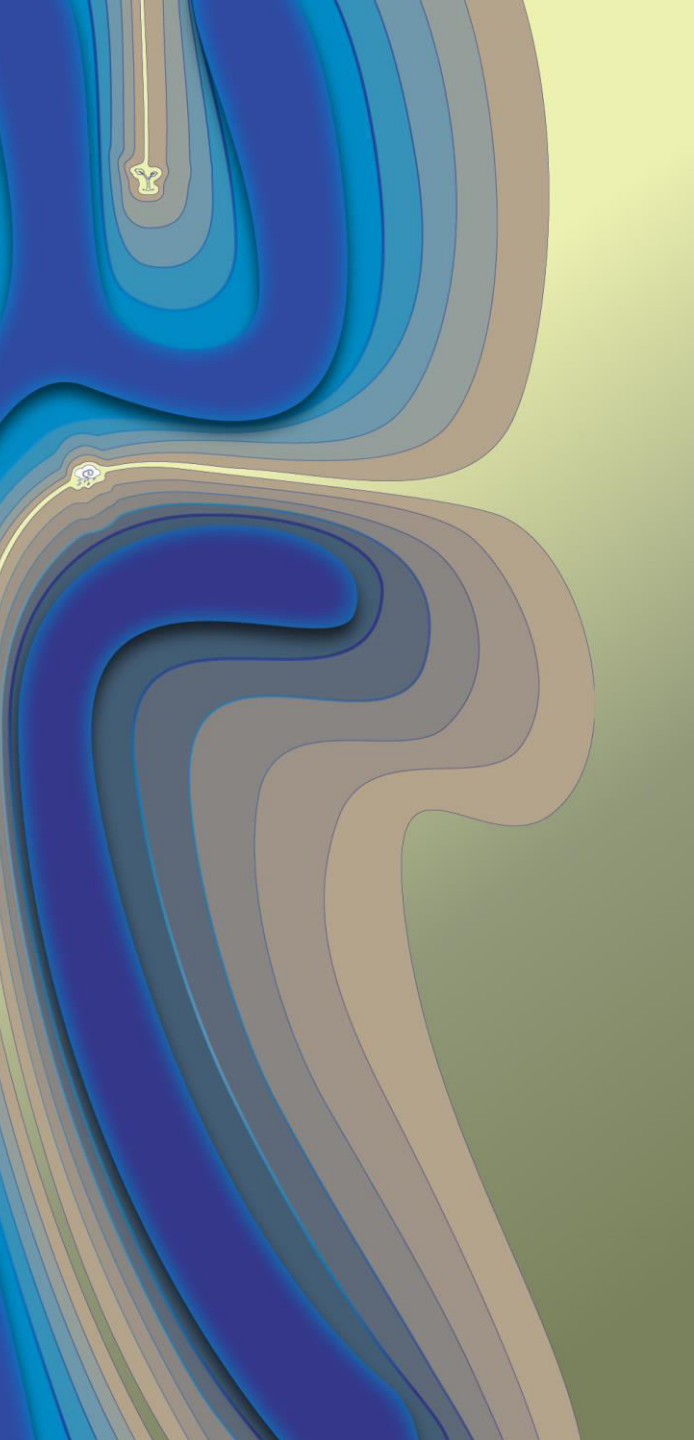
# The Falaj system

- Brings groundwater from the mountains to the lower lying areas to provide water for agriculture and urban uses
- Are sustainable as overextraction cannot take place
- A farm that receives water from a public falaj is called amwal, which means 'public wealth'.
- A social system to direct revenue from water to support society
- Under threat from modern extraction technology
- Not unique to Oman, widespread throughout Asia and the MENA region.

# Groundwater mobilization systems – The qanat or the Falaj

System only extract from the top of the aquifer – no mining  
Threatened by modern deep tube wells lowering water table to below off-take





- Water arrives from mother well in the main canal and is split into
- two canals supplying two different areas. During droughts one canal
- Can be closed to secure sufficient flow in the second

First point of entry to village: access to water for drinking. Water then moves on to a place for washing of clothes and people



Before it enters the fields.  
Allocation defined as the right  
to available flow for a defined  
period of time delivered  
through a fixed gate.



- Significant effort put into infrastructure to support date palms
- Falaj Common rights, e.g. one day of flows a week are sold on auctions to secure funds for the operation of the falaj
- Annual rented rights: funds the maintenance of the main system
- Social contract to participate in maintenance work
- Institutions such as the mosque owns water right which is sold to fund school, the poor, religious feasts, the police etc
- Private right originating from those who created the system



Water markets an important institution to manage water access and generate revenue for system Maintenance and community expenses



