

**EVOLUTION AND ORIGIN OF SABKHA SOILS AND THEIR
GEOMORPHIC FEATERS WEST OF SHATT AL-ARAB
BASRAH AREA- SOUTHERN IRAQ**

Abdul-Mutalib H. Al-Marsoumi*

Taghlab J. Dawood**

Nameer N.M.A. Al-Khait***

*** College of Science, Basrah University, Basrah-Iraq**

**** College of Education, Al-Mustasiriyah University, Baghdad-Iraq**

***** College of Art, Basrah University, Basrah-Iraq**

abdmars@yahoo.com

Summary

Basrah area comprises the lower part of Mesopotamia plain, most of this area were covered with the quaternary sediments brought by the activity of Tigris and Euphrates and dust fallout. The low level of Basrah area, besides the aridity of the climate involved in the existence of sabkha environments. Two types of these environments were observed; coastal and inland sabkha. The surface feature of sabkha are among the most ephemeral geomorphic features, moreover, the surface morphology of sabkha pan is the product of periodic flooding, desiccation, and ground water movements. The cycle of the sabkhas in the study area passes through three stages of the geomorphic cycle, these stages are basically connected to the climate and geomorphologic conditions, theses are; the youth stage during the wet season, the mature stage during the transitional period between wet and dry season, and old stage at the end of dry season, the most prominent phenomenon on last stage is the establishment of the salt crust which is characterized by the polygons, saucers and multiple thick salt layers.