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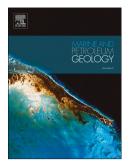
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High-frequency cycles and sequence stratigraphy of the Lower Jurassic Marrat Formation, central Saudi Arabia

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ABSTRACT

Well-exposed stratigraphic sections of the Toarcian siliciclastic /carbonate deposits of the

Marrat Formation exposed at the Khashm adh Dhibi area (southwest of Riyadh city, Saudi

Arabia) were studied for their facies association and controls on sequence development.

Seven facies associations from tide-dominated deltaic to inner carbonate ramp were

recognized. Inferences based on facies relationships, characteristics of the sequence boundary

and other characteristics suggest deposition of the Marrat Formation during three 3rd order

sequences. These can be further classified into seventeen 4th order shallowing-upward small-

cycle sets. Correlation of the recorded sequences boundaries within the Arabian/African

Plates, Europe, and global schemes, reflect a strong eustatic control during the early Jurassic

age with recognizable tectonic signature of the Gondwanland rift effects that caused a long

period of regional uplift and non-deposition across the Triassic/Jurassic and early/middle

Jurassic unconformities.

Key words: Toarcian, Lower Jurassic, Marrat Formation, Arabian plate, Gondwanaland.

1. INTRODUCTION

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