Design of Solar Thermal Systems

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Preface

This book presents the design of solar thermal systems using mathematical modeling. The importance of mathematical modeling is continuously increasing because of the rapid spread in the use of computers as design tools. The book is thus prepared for those who are involved in the design, optimization, or evaluation of the performance of solar thermal systems.

The book is based on teaching notes for undergraduate and first year graduate courses for thermal engineering students. It is recommended as a text for senior undergraduate students or first year graduate students, and also as a reference book for engineers working in various solar thermal applications.

The book consists of 10 chapters. The first chapter reviews the world resources of energy and their classification and relation to solar energy. The second chapter reviews important topics in thermal radiation which are relevant to the subject of the book. The third chapter is concerned with the estimation of solar angles and the hourly, daily, and monthly average daily solar radiation. Mathematical equations are given to enable the designer of a solar thermal system to estimate the beam, diffuse, or total radiation on horizontal or tilted surfaces.

The transmission of solar radiation through transparent sheets of different material is treated in Chapter 4. This chapter gives mathematical equations to predict the radiation properties of multi-layer partially transparent sheets with or without an absorber plate. A computer program is included to enable the designer to estimate the radiation properties for several geometries of a stack of similar or nonsimilar transparent sheets with or without an absorber plate at any incidence angle. The program is useful in the design and optimization of flat plate collectors and solar concentrators, and can also be utilized by air conditioning engineers to estimate solar heat gain through transparent windows and doors.

Chapter 5 gives the design of flat plate collectors, and presents various types. Complete simulation of the collectors is given, and the various factors affecting their performance are discussed. A computer program is given to design and optimize the design parameters of the flat plate collectors. This program can also be used to evaluate the performance of flat plate collectors in off-design conditions.

Chapter 6 deals with solar desalination. The chapter will be helpful to those designing either roof-type or diffusion-type solar desalination systems, since it includes a more detailed description of these systems than most other solar energy text books. Analysis are given to predict the transient performance of the roof-type still. A computer program is given to assist the designer in predicting the effect of various design and operating conditions on the performance of the still. Various novel designs of roof-types stills are presented with the advantages and disadvantages of each. The chapter also gives the analysis of both the single effect and the multiple-effect diffusion-type still together with a brief presentation of the mass diffusion theory. Other methods of solar desalination are also discussed in the chapter.

The collection of solar energy at medium and high temperatures by solar concentrators is discussed in Chapter 7. Various types of concentrators are presented. Thermal analyses are given to show the important factors affecting the performance of solar concentrators. Different tracking modes are given. The material in this chapter will help the reader to select the type of solar concentrator most suitable for a particular application together with the adequate tracking mode. Details of the designing of intermittent tracking are given in the chapter. Readers interested in continuous tracking will find ample material in section 10.8 of Chapter 10.

In Chapter 8, the design of solar energy storage is considered. The first part of the chapter deals with storage methods, characteristics, location, and the evaluation of the storage process. Mathematical simulations of various types of sensible heat storage are carried out for low, intermediate, and high temperature applications. In particular, mathematical simulations are presented for the transient performance of the mixed liquid storage, underground liquid storage, and stratified liquid storage. With these simulations the reader of the chapter should be able to size the liquid storage tank required for a certain application. Designers of solid storage tanks will also find that the mathematical simulation of rock bed storage and its sizing are covered in the chapter. In addition, other techniques of solar energy storage such as low, intermediate, and high temperature phase change and chemical and mechanical storages are considered. The user of the simulation models given in this chapter should have a reasonable background in the finite difference numerical technique.

The solar-operated absorption cooling system is treated in Chapter 9. Both H_2O-LiBr and NH_3-H_2O absorption systems are considered. Different arrangements of solar-operated absorption cooling systems are given, together with the criteria to evaluate and compare these systems. Alternative combinations of absorption cooling systems, such as the dual series connected system and the two stage absorption cooling system, are presented. Mathematical simulations of both the H_2O-LiBr and NH_3-H_2O absorption machines are considered. A computer program is included to predict the performance of the absorption cooling machine in various design and operating conditions. An optimization procedure is given for the determination of the design parameters of the absorption cooling machine. The chapter also contains a brief description of the intermittent absorption cooling system.

Chapter 10 deals with solar power generation. The chapter includes the charac-

teristics required for the working fluids of the solar-operated Rankine cycle. Mathematical simulation is given for the Rankine cycle and selection of the various design parameters of the system is presented. The chapter also includes the performance of the solar-operated Rankine cycle (SORC) in various operating conditions. In addition, the engineering considerations for the selection of the various components of SORC are given. Analyses are also presented to select the optimum collector temperature for solar-operated power cycles. A sizeable section of the chapter is devoted to power tower technology, including material for the determination of the heliostat field layout, the determination of the tilt and orientation angle of each heliostat, and the sizing of the receiver.

The book adds considerably to engineering expertise in the design of solar thermal systems. Chapters 5 and 8 are relevant to the design of solar water heaters, swimming pool heating systems, and space heating. Chapter 6 will also assist in the design of solar desalination systems. Those involved in the design of solar operated absorption cooling systems should read Chapter 9 in addition to Chapter 8 and Chapters 5 or 7. Information on solar power generation is given in Chapter 10 and also in Chapters 7 and 8.

Authors

Jeddah
May 1986

Contents

Chapter 1: The World Energy Resources

1.1 The Sun 1
1.2 The World Energy Resources 2
1.2.1 Coal 2
1.2.2 Petroleum Oil and Natural Gas 3
1.2.3 Shale Oil and Tar Sand 4
1.2.4 Nuclear Fission 4
1.2.5 Fast Breeder Reactor 4
1.2.6 Nuclear Fusion Energy 5
1.2.7 Hydraulic Power 5
1.2.8 Wind Power 6
1.2.9 Geothermal Energy 6
1.2.10 Hydrogen Fuel 6
1.3 Solar Energy 6
References 10

Chapter 2: Thermal Radiation

2.1 Introduction 13
2.2 Radiation Properties 13
2.3 Opaque and Non-Opaque Materials 17
2.4 Selective Surfaces 19
2.5 Net Radiation Leaving a Gray Surface 24
2.6 Intensity of Radiation Leaving a Gray Surface 25
2.7 Radiation Exchange between Gray Surfaces 26
2.7.1 Exchange between Two Surfaces 26
2.7.2 Example: Four Surface Enclosures 28
2.7.3 Estimation of Shape Factor 28
2.7.4 Special Cases 29
2.8 Absorption and Emission of Radiation by Gases 34
2.9 Radiation Exchange between Two Gray Surfaces Through Absorbing and Transmitting Mediums 35
2.9.1 One Absorbing and Transmitting Medium 35
2.9.2 Two Absorbing and Transmitting Mediums 37

Nomenclature 38
Problems 39
References 40

Chapter 3: Solar Radiation

3.1 Introduction 41
3.2 Solar Angles 41
3.3 Extraterrestrial Solar Radiation 48
3.4 Depletion of Solar Radiation 51
3.5 Estimation of Solar Radiation Received by a Horizontal Surface 54
3.5.1 Clear Sky Models 57
3.5.1.1 ASHRAE Model (clear sky) 57
3.5.1.2 Hottel Model 58
3.5.2 Models Dependent on Local Solar Measurements 62
3.5.2.1 Hourly Radiation 62
3.5.2.2 Models to Estimate Daily Radiation 66
3.5.2.3 Models to Estimate the Monthly-Average Daily Radiation 68
3.6 Estimation of Solar Radiation on a Tilted Surface 69
3.7 Atmospheric Radiation 74
3.8 Measurements of Solar Radiation 75
Nomenclature 76
Problems 77
References 80

Chapter 4: Optical Properties of Materials and Radiation Characteristics of Surfaces

4.1 Introduction 83
4.2 Reflectances and Transmittances of Interfaces and Plates 84
4.2.1 Interface and Material Properties 84
4.2.2 Effective Properties for a Plate 86
4.3 Effective Properties of a Stack of Plates 89
4.3.1 Incident Radiation on the Outer Surface of the Stack 89
4.3.2 Incident Radiation on the Inner Surface of the Stack 91
4.4 Effective Properties of an Absorber Plate with N-Cover: Incident Radiation on the Absorber Plate 96
4.4.1 An Absorber with One Cover Plate 96
4.4.2 An Absorber Plate with N-Covers 97
4.5 Effective Properties of an Absorber Plate with N-Cover: Incident Radiation on the Top Cover 99
4.6 Computer Programming 104
Nomenclature 116
Problems 117
References 117

Chapter 5: Flat Plate Collectors

5.1 Introduction 119
5.2 Types of Flat Plate Collectors 120
5.2.1 Liquid Flat Plate Collectors 120
5.2.2 Gas Flat Plate Collectors 121
5.3 Thermal Analysis of Flat Plate Collectors 122
5.3.1 Introduction 122
5.3.2 Specifications of the Collector and the Meteorological Parameters 124
5.3.3 Radiation Processes in the Collector 126
5.3.4 Energy Balance of Différent Elements of Collector 130
5.3.5 Analytical Method of Solution 135
5.3.6 Emperical Formula for Top Loss Coefficient 144
5.3.7 Total Loss Coefficient 145
5.3.8 Local Temperature Across the Plate 146
5.3.9 Collector Efficiency Factor 148
5.3.10 Fluid Temperatures and Heat Removal Factor 149
5.3.11 Average Plate Temperature 151
5.3.12 Outlet Fluid Temperature 151
5.4 Factors Affecting the Performance of FPC 154
5.4.1 Introduction 154
5.4.2 Cover 154
5.4.3 Absorber Plate 156
5.4.4 Liquid Tubes 156
5.4.5 Operating Conditions 156
5.4.6 Conclusions 157
5.5 Simulation, Design, and Optimization of FPC 157
5.6 Simulation and Algorithm of Solution for Liquid FPC 158
5.6.1 Nomenclature 159
5.6.2 Data 161
5.6.3 Steps of Calculation 161
5.6.4 Algorithm for Assisting Subroutines 162
5.6.5 Checked Program List in Basic Language 165
5.6.6 Sample Output 177
5.7 Analysis of Solar Air Heaters 178
Problems 181
References 184

Chapter 6: Solar Desalination

6.1 Introduction 187
6.2 Definitions 188

6.3 Roof-Type Solar Stills (Basin-Type) 189
6.3.1 Construction 189
6.3.2 Thermal Analysis of the Still 193
6.4 Performance Prediction of Roof-Type Stills 198
6.4.1 Generalized Procedure 199
6.4.2 Morse-Read Chart 209
6.4.3 Approximate Solution 211
6.5 The Maximum Efficiency of The Still 213
6.6 Effect of Various Parameters on the Performance of Roof-Type Stills 215
6.6.1 Effect of Solar Radiation 215
6.6.2 Effect of Ambient Temperature 215
6.6.3 Effect of Wind Velocity 215
6.6.4 Effect of Edge and Base Loss Coefficient 216
6.6.5 Brine Depth 216
6.6.6 Vapor Tightness 216
6.6.7 Condensate Leakage 216
6.6.8 Effect of Cover Slope 216
6.6.9 Effect of Gap Distance between Water Surface and Cover 216
6.6.10 Effect of Build-up of Reflecting Layers of Salt on Water Surface and Basin Linear 217
6.7 Novel Designs of Roof-Type Stills 217
6.7.1 Double-Basin Still 217
6.7.2 Basin-Type Stepped Solar Still 217
6.7.3 Wick-Type Collector-Evaporator Still 219
6.7.4 Vertical Microporous Evaporator Solar Still 220
6.7.5 Cascade Solar Still 221
6.7.6 Roof-Type Still with Treated Cover Surface 221
6.7.7 Roof-Type Still with Cover Cooling 222
6.7.8 Double-Effect Tilted Solar Still 222
6.8 Diffusion Stills 224
6.8.1 Introduction to Mass Diffusion 224
6.8.2 Thermal Analysis of Diffusion Stills 227
6.9 Multiple-Effect Diffusion Stills 231
6.10 Comparison of Transient Performance Predictions of a Single-Effect Diffusion Still with a Roof-Type Still 237
6.11 Economics of Solar Stills 243
6.12 Other Types of Solar Desalination Systems 246
6.12.1 Forced Convection Stills 246
6.12.2 Multiple Effect Humidification-Dehumidification 246
6.12.3 Solar Water Recovery from Air 247
Nomenclature 248
Problems 249
References 253

Chapter 7: Concentrating Collectors

7.1 Introduction 255
7.2 Types of Concentrating Collectors 255
7.2.1 Planar Reflector 259
7.2.2 V-Trough Reflector 259
7.2.3 Parabolic Reflector 259
7.2.4 Compound Parabolic Concentrator 259
7.2.5 Dish Reflector 261
7.2.6 Heliostat Reflectors 262
7.2.7 Lens Refractor 263
7.2.8 Fresnel Lens Refractor 263
7.3 Important Factors 263
7.4 Concentration Ratio 263
7.4.1 Definitions 263
7.4.1.1 Aperture Area (A_{ap}) 264
7.4.1.2 Absorber Area (A_{abs}) 264
7.4.1.3 Acceptance Angle and Acceptance Half Angle 264
7.4.1.4 Theoretical Concentration Ratio C 264
7.4.1.5 Actual Concentration Ratio C_a 265
7.4.2 Maximum Theoretical Concentration Ratio 265
7.4.3 Ideal Concentrators 268
7.4.4 Actual Concentrators 268
7.5 Tracking Modes 268
7.5.1 Solar Profile Angle 270
7.5.2 No Tracking Mode 270
7.5.3 Intermittent Adjustment of Tilt Angle 272
7.5.4 Continuous Tracking About One Axis 276
7.5.5 Continuous Tracking About Two Axes 277
7.6 Thermal Analysis 277
Nomenclature 280
Problems 281
References 284

Chapter 8: Solar Energy Storage

8.1 General Concepts 285
8.1.1 Storage Methods 285
8.1.2 Storage Characteristics 287
8.1.3 Storage Location 287
8.1.4 Storage Efficiency 288
8.2 Low Temperature Sensible Storage 288
8.2.1 Introduction 288
8.2.2 Storage in Liquids 290
8.2.2.1 Above Ground Liquid Storage 290

8.2.2.2 Underground Liquid Storage 291
8.2.2.3 Enhancement of Stratification 293
8.2.3 Simulation of Storage in Liquids 294
8.2.3.1 Simulation of Mixed Storage 295
8.2.3.2 Simulation of Underground Storage 297
8.2.3.3 Simulation of Stratified Liquid Storage 299
8.2.3.4 Sizing of Liquid Storage Tanks 302
8.2.4 Storage in Solids 303
8.2.4.1 Rock Bed Storage 304
8.2.4.2 In-Ground Storage 304
8.2.5 Simulation of Storage in Solids 305
8.2.5.1 Simulation of Rock Bed Storage 305
8.2.5.2 Sizing of Rock Beds 313
8.3 Intermediate and High Temperature Sensible Storage 314
8.3.1 Sensible Storage in Fluids 314
8.3.2 Sensible Storage in Solids 316
8.3.3 Sensible Storage in Fluid-Solid Media 316
8.4 Low Temperature Phase Change Storage 316
8.4.1 Phase Change Materials 317
8.4.2 Systems and Problems 317
8.5 Intermediate and High Temperature Phase Change Storage 320
8.6 Chemical Storage 320
8.7 Mechanical Storage 322
Nomenclature 323
Problems 325
References 325

Chapter 9: Solar Operated Absorption Cooling Systems

9.1 Introduction 329
9.2 Basic Absorption Cooling Cycle 329
9.2.1 Description of the Cycle 329
9.2.2 Upper and Lower Limits for COP of Irreversible Absorption Cooling Cycle 332
9.2.3 Desirable Characteristics of Refrigerant-Absorbent Solution .. 333
9.2.4 Selection of Working Fluids for Solar Operated Absorption Cooling Cycle 336
9.2.5 The H_2O-LiBr and NH_3-H_2O Absorption Cooling Machines .. 336
9.3 Different Arrangements of Solar-Operated Absorption Cooling Systems 341
9.4 Evaluation of Solar-Operated Absorption Cooling System 345
9.4.1 System Thermal Ratio 345
9.4.2 Specific Collector Area 348
9.5 Some Alternative Absorption Cooling Systems 348
9.5.1 Dual Series-Connected System 351

9.5.2 Two-Stage Absorption Cooling System 352
9.6 Simulation of the Solar-Operated Absorption Cooling Machine 355
9.6.1 Introduction 355
9.6.2 General Solar-Operated Absorption Cooling System 356
9.6.3 Simulation of H_2O-LiBr Machine 359
9.6.4 Simulation of NH_3-H_2O Machine 361
9.6.5 Mathematical Relations of Thermodynamic Properties 362
9.6.6 Design Parameters of Absorption Cooling Machine 364
9.6.7 Numerical Prediction of Performance of Absorption Cooling Machine 364
9.7 Optimization of Design Parameters of the Absorption Cooling Machine for Solar Applications 375
9.8 Solar-Operated Intermittent Absorption Cooling Systems 380
Nomenclature 382
Problems 382
References 384

Chapter 10: Solar Power Generation

10.1 Introduction 387
10.2 Thermodynamic Power Cycles 388
10.2.1 Ideal Rankine and Reheat Cycles 388
10.2.2 Ideal Air-Standard Otto and Diesel Cycles 389
10.2.3 Ideal Air-Standard Stirling and Ericson Cycles 390
10.2.4 Ideal Air-Standard Brayton Cycle 391
10.3 Solar-Operated Rankine Cycle 393
10.3.1 Selection of Working Fluid 393
10.3.2 Simulation of Solar Operated Rankine Cycle 395
10.3.3 Design Parameters of Solar Operated Rankine Cycle 398
10.3.3.1 Overall Fluid-to-Fluid Conductance of the Heat Transfer Elements 398
10.3.3.2 Thermal Capacity of External Flows 399
10.3.3.3 Efficiency of Rotating or Moving Elements 400
10.3.3.4 External Temperatures 400
10.3.4 Performance of Solar Operated Rankine Cycle 401
10.3.5 Engineering Consideration for the Selection of the Various Components of Rankine Cycle 401
10.3.5.1 Expanders and Pumps 401
10.3.5.2 Heat Exchangers 403
10.4 Power Generation Using Hybrid Heating of Rankine Cycle 404
10.5 Power Generation Using Organic Rankine Cycle Coupled to a Solar Pond 406
10.6 Power Generation Using the Brayton Cycle 406
10.7 Optimum Collector Temperature for the Solar-Operated Power Cycle .. 407

10.7.1 Low Temperature Solar Collectors 407
10.7.2 High Temperature Solar Collectors 408
10.7.3 Various Types of Solar Collectors 409
10.8 Power Tower Technology 409
10.8.1 Concept 409
10.8.2 Heliostat Field Layout 412
10.8.3 Tilt Angles and Orientations of Heliostats 420
10.8.4 Sizing of Receiver 424
10.8.5 Types of Receivers 429
10.8.6 Review of Some Central Receiver Systems 429
Nomenclature 429
Problems 432
References 433

Appendices

A. Hooke and Jeeves Pattern Search Optimization Technique 435
B. Equilibrium Property Data Equations for NH_3-H_2O Solution 439
C. Values of Latitude and Longitude Angles of Some Major Cities Around the World 441