



ABSTRACT SUBMISSION

Along the Fertile Coast. Exploring the maritime cultures of the Arabian Neolithic - the late 6th and 5th millennia BCE in the United Arab Emirates

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Abstract

The purpose of this presentation is to provide a re-examination of the late 6th and 5th millennia BCE Arabian Neolithic, focusing specifically on the perspective of the coastal United Arab Emirates (UAE). The investigation centres on the settlement sites located on Delma Island and around the Umm al-Quwain lagoon, highlighting the development of intensified maritime economies and the diverse exploitation of marine resources. These sites exhibit thick layers of faunal remains, including molluscs, fish, crabs, sea urchins, and marine mammals, often forming substantial shell middens. The dwellings at these sites are constructed from perishable materials, although associated with a predominantly sedentary lifestyle made possible by the abundant coastal ecosystems of the UAE's 'Fertile Coast'. The archaeological evidence suggests the presence of seemingly egalitarian fishing communities engaged in personal ornament production and exchange networks. Despite regional variations in material culture, both micro-regions participate in regional exchange networks involving Mesopotamian pottery, dates, domestic animals, raw materials, and individual mobility. Interactions between Neolithic groups occasionally resulted in violent confrontations, suggesting heightened tensions over land control, ecosystems, resources, and access routes.

Keywords

Coastal, Island, Maritime , Material culture, Regional exchange

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