



ABSTRACT SUBMISSION

Sasanian to Early Islamic Maritime Economy of the Gulf: New Insights from Ceramic Study at Siniya, Umm al-Quwain, UAE

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Abstract

Recent archaeological exploration has resulted in the discovery of an early Christian monastic complex and a nearby settlement on the island of Siniya in the emirate of Umm al-Quwain, United Arab Emirates. Excavations undertaken there between 2022 and 2024, have produced a wealth of ceramic finds dated to the late antique and early Islamic (LAEI) periods. This paper will set out a quantified study of the phased assemblage across this transition. Radiocarbon dates indicate that the settlement was occupied between the 4th and 6th centuries, while the monastery mostly appears to have developed during the 7th and 8th centuries. It is unclear whether the settlement of Siniya was under the direct jurisdiction of the Sasanian Empire. What is apparent is that it was very much within the orbit of the Sasanian economy. Both the settlement and monastery were strongly connected in the form of ceramic supply to the regions of southern Iran and Mesopotamia. The Siniya assemblage thus provides stimulating new evidence with which to consider the economic boundaries of one of the major powers of Late Antiquity in the Arabia and the Gulf.

Keywords

Siniya, Late Antiquity, Persian Gulf, Maritime trade, Pottery

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