**A review of Silurian dispersed spore assemblages from the Arabian Plate: biostratigraphy and palaeogeography**

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Establishing a global Silurian dispersed spore biostratigraphy has been plagued by a number of long-standing problems: (i) spores are absent or rare in global stratotypes for the Ordovician-Silurian and Silurian-Devonian boundaries that are located in marine facies; (ii) spore endemicity is high on the dispersed Silurian continents hampering intercontinental correlation. Silurian spores from the Arabian Plate have been described from the Qalibah and Tawil formations. The Ordovician-Silurian boundary is difficult to locate due to the complicated stratigraphy (with downcutting, glacial tillite infill etc.) and extensive palynomorph reworking associated with the Hirnantian glaciation. However, rich Llandovery and Wenlock-Ludlow spore assemblages described from the marine deposits of the Qalibah Formation: Qusaiba Member and ~~Qalibah Formation~~: Sharawra Member, respectively. Spores are currently poorly documented from the continental deposits from the lower part of the Tawil Formation, but sparse assemblages recovered from cuttings samples indicate a probable Ludlow age. However, rich and well preserved mid Pridoli spore assemblages are now known from marginal marine deposits from a marine intercalation higher in the Tawil Formation. The exact location of the Silurian-Devonian boundary within the Tawil Formation a has yet to be pinpointed. The Silurian spore assemblages from the Arabian Plate show significant differences to those from beyond Gondwana highlighting the extent of palaeophytogeographical differentiation and hence problems of intercontinental correlation for Silurian spores. Statistical analysis of these differences, using coefficient of similarity (CS), will be reported in this presentation.

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