

IMTO – Italian Mission to Oman

University of Pisa

SUMHURAM

Preliminary Report

October-December 2017 (SUM17C)



PRELIMINARY REPORT (SUM17C)

October-December 2017

The third IMTO's campaign of 2017 (SUM17C), under the direction of prof. A. Avanzini, started on October the 1st and ended on December 15th 2017.

Excavation was performed in different areas

In Area B, the works were focused on the building BB3, with the aim of exposing the previous structures on which it was built. The store A285 was excavated.

In Area F, the excavations focused on the area to the south of BF7 to expose the limits of the building and to find the connection between Area F and Area H.

In Area G, the square A260 and the street A284 were excavated.

In Area H the works were focused on building BH1.

Excavations were conducted on the field by dr. Cleto Carbonara, dr. Giulia Buono and the senior student Michael Faccini under the supervision of Prof. Alexander V. Sedov and dr. Vittoria Buffa. Mr. Said al Mashani was also present on the site.

Dr. Cleto Carbonara and dr. Giulia Buono were responsible for documentation of pottery finds and objects.

Arch. Alessandro Massa were responsible for the AutoCad digitalization and updating of the plan.

Arch. Emiliano Mura and Arch. Michele Chimienti were responsible of the restoration activities on the site under the supervision of Arch. Stefano Bizzarri.

The work of IMTO has been possible thanks to the collaboration of the Office of the Adviser of His Majesty the Sultan for Cultural Affairs in Salalah and in Muscat, in particular Ghanem al Shanfari, Said al Mashani, Ali al Kathiri, Said al Amri, Said al Salmi, Hassan al Jabri. We thank them all, together with all the Museum's team, for their kind helpfulness.

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Archaeological Report

Excavation in Area B, Building BB3, room A202, A280, A213 and new room A294 (trench supervisor: Cleto Carbonara).

The excavation of the building BB3 (fig. 1) during the last campaign of 2017, SUM17C, started on October 1st. The main aim of this intervention is to understand the real extension of the rooms A213 and A280 and if they belong to the southern part of the storehouses complex, as suggested by prof. Alexander V. Sedov. The northern part of the room A213 was already partially excavated during the campaign SUM13C. A280 was partially excavated during the campaign SUM17B¹. The wall M831 which separates it from A213 was unearthed and the room A280 to the west was excavated for a width of about 0.7 m.

A202/A280

It is a squared room belonging to the late structure BB3 and it is delimited by the walls M365 to the west, M573 to the south, M572 to the east and M571 to the north (fig. 2). As confirmed by the excavations of SUM17B, A202 was built above the earlier room A280 of which the eastern part was already excavated during SUM17B.

The excavation in A202 starts from the level of 30.40 m. The first layer to be removed is US569 floor. It is made of hard packed loam light brown in color, blackened by fire mainly in its northern part. The northern part of the room was also occupied by the remains of an installation made of scattered limestone blocks small in size, which was excavated in SUM13A. US569 floor has a thickness of about 0.07 m. US569 floor returned few fragments of pottery, a bronze coin (Co1126) and a fragment of a bronze thin plaque (MB1014).

Below the US569 floor, US996 was excavated. It was found at the level of 30.33 m. It is a very thick accumulation layer made of very loose loam with sandy consistence and brown in color. US996 has a clay matrix and few traces of lime in it. Very few limestone blocks were found in the layer. They were small and medium in size. Fragment of mudbricks were found along the western wall M365. Very light traces of ash were found in the center of the northern side of the room. US996 returned of animal bones and shells. A huge quantity of pottery shards come from US996. The layer returned a bronze clamp and a fragment of bronze nail (MB1016, MB1023), an iron hook (MI344), two Chlamys Townsendi used as oil lamps (Sh849, Sh852), a fragment of a glass vessel (G256), a handstone and a mortar (S3017, S3018), two fragments of a soft-stone vessel, a whetstone and a loom-weight (S3030-3033).

Simultaneously to the excavation of US996, the walls M572 and M573 were removed. Their foundation was found at the level of 29.10 m. the northern wall of A202, M571, was also removed. As already confirmed by the previous excavation in this area, M571 was set on the earlier wall M618, which is closing the rooms A213 and A280 to the north. US996 covered US1004 (fig. 3). The new layer was found at the level of 29.10 m. It is an accumulation layer with a clayish matrix. It has a medium compact consistence and a yellowish brown color. A slightly more compact consistence has been noted where the walls of the more recent room A202 were previously imposed. US1004 covered a rectangular-shaped structure made of mudbricks, M863, which is located immediately to the west of the wall M831. It runs parallel to M831 with a North-South orientation and it leans on it. M863 was interpreted as a bench and it is 2.48 m long, 0.50 m wide and it is preserved for a height of 0.35 m. US1004 also covered M844, a 2.64 m long and 0.56 m

¹ See V.Buffa: SUM13C Preliminary Report; A.V.Sedov: SUM17C Preliminary Report.

wide wall oriented North-South which divides the room A280 in two parts, connected by a passage about 0.80 m wide. It was found at the elevation of 29.05 m. It leans on M618, its upper part is made of mudbricks and the lower one of limestone blocks. Ashes and traces of burnt with a lot of burnt animal bones were found close to the southern end of M844 and in the south-eastern corner of the room. US1004 floor was found at the elevation of 28.73 m with a light slope from west to east. It is made of a light brown packed soil with a clay matrix well, preserved only in the south-eastern part of the room.

US1004 returned 224 pottery shards divided in 153 fragments of storage vessels, 22 fragments of table vessels, and 49 fragments of kitchen vessels.

During the removal of the late room A202, its western wall M365 was also removed. It was imposed on an earlier wall, M365a, which probably closes the room A280 to the west. After SUM17C excavation, A280 is a rectangular room closed by the walls M831 to the east, M618 to the north and M365a to the west. An opening located at the southern end of M365a linked A280 to the structures already excavated to the west (fig. 4). To the south, the wall M588, now completely exposed after the removal of M573, cannot be the southern wall of A280. Its foundation was found at the elevation of 29.40 m. Below it there are the scanty remains of an earlier wall with the same orientation of M588, which probably closes the room to the south (fig 5).

A213 and the new room A294

Is located between the room A280 and the store A207. It is room rectangular in shape and oriented north-south. the room is delimited by the walls M618 to the north, M831 to the west and M611 to the east. M611 runs parallel to M591, which is the western wall of the store A207. The northern part of the room was already partially excavated in the campaigns SUM13C and SUM17B. the southern part of the room is occupied by the later wall M588 and M862 (fig. 6).

The first operation carried on in A213 was the removal of the section leant on the eastern face of the wall M862, in order to expose the whole length of M611. The upper layer in the section is US583, a compact accumulation layer grayish in color with few stones very small in size. Below US583, US584 was excavated. It is a sandy accumulation layer brownish in color with some charcoal pieces in it. US584 covered US590, a loose accumulation layer brownish in color with many ash lenses and charcoals, mainly located in the northern part of the excavated area. US590 covered the top of M611. After the removal of the section covering the eastern wall of A213, M611, the deposit against M588, left unexcavated in the previous campaign, was removed. It was denoted as US991, and it is an accumulation layer made of loam very loose in consistence and dark brown in color. Some lenses of ash and burnt loam have been noted in it. The portion of A213 between M611 and M862 was also excavated and some fragments of mudbricks were found in US991. The excavation stopped at the level of 28.90 m (fig. 7). US991 returned a total of 25 pottery shards, of which the major part belongs to storage vessels (18). 3 fragments belongs to table vessels and 4 to kitchen wares. US991 returned also a bronze coin (Co1132) and a Chlamys Townsendi used as oil lamp (Sh853).

It looks very probable that M611 and therefore the whole room A213 were built against the southern side of the city-wall, but at this point of the excavations it is still unclear where is the southern limit of the room. The southern portion of M611 is covered by a later structure denoted as A294 (fig. 8). It is a small rectangular room with a north-south orientation measuring about 3.56 X 1.55 m. It is delimited by the wall M858 to the north, M867 to the east, M862 to the west, and it

was closed to the south by a segment of the city-wall. The eastern wall of the room was built on the top of M611, and the northern wall M858 leans on M862. A294 has no entrance and the deposit inside it was left in situ. It consists of a collapse of limestone and sandstone blocks medium in size mainly located in the southern part of the room. It could be interpreted as a kind of tower.

Excavation in Area B. Area to the South of M588: new rooms A288, A289 and A293 (trench supervisor: Cleto Carbonara)

The area to the south of the building BB3 measures 7,14 X 5 m and it is delimited by the walls M588 to the north, M862 to the east, M868 to the west, and it is closed to the south by a segment of the city-wall of Sumhuran (fig. 9).

The deposit filling the area is characterized by a general sloping from north to the south. The excavation started from the eastern part of the area, in the corner between M588 and M862. Here the deposit was denoted as US1007. It is made of loam light brown in color and very loose in consistence and it covered almost completely the southern face of M588. A lot of limestone and sandstone blocks medium and small in size were found in this layer. US1007 is characterized also by the presence of a lot of fragments of mudbricks. US1007 covered the wall M846 oriented North-South, and the wall M847 oriented east-west, which respectively close the space to the west and to the south. The new room delimited by the walls M588 to the north, M862 to the east, M847 to the south and M846 to the west was named A288 (fig. 10). It is small in size (1,76 X 1.78 m) and squared in shape. Its floor (US1007 floor) was found at the elevation of 29.82 m and it was made of a hard packed soil light brown in color. US1007 floor is not preserved along the northern wall of the room. Two whale vertebrae were found along the eastern wall M862. The whale vertebra in the south-eastern corner of A288 is directly imposed on US1007 floor, while the vertebra in the north-eastern one has a base made mudbricks and sandstone blocks roughly worked.

US1007 returned a total of 30 pottery shards (22 storage, 7 table, 1 kitchen), several fragments of two bronze vessels (MB1027-MB1028), three oil lamps (Sh855), three handstones (S3037-3038 and S3045), a whetstone (S3039), a mortar (S3040), a pestle (S3043), a net-sinker (S3044), and three fragments of soft-stone vessel (S3041-3042 and S3046).

A293

Located to the west of A288 and connected to it through an opening about 0.80 m wide in M846, A293 (fig. 10) is a rectangular room oriented east-west 4.68 m long and 1.78 m wide. US1010 was excavated in A293. Its features are very similar to US1008 excavated in A288. It is made of loam light brown in color and very loose in consistence and it covered almost completely the southern face of M588. A lot of limestone and sandstone blocks medium and small in size were found in this layer. US1007 is characterized also by the presence of a lot of fragments of mudbricks. US1010 covered a thin wall, M859, oriented north-south which divides in two parts. The eastern part of the room is longer than the western one. They respectively measure 3.24 and 1.14 m. the two parts of A293 are connected through an opening about 1.00 m wide. US1010 floor was found in both parts of A293. It is a hard packed soil light brown in color with a light slope from west to east. In the western part of A293 US1010 floor was found at the elevation of 30.00 m, while in the eastern one it has an elevation of 29.91 m. Close to the northern end of M859, US1010 floor is cut by an oval-

shaped pit (1.02 X 0.60 X 0.13 m) filed by a soil loose in consistence and brown in color with traces of ash and few burnt animal bones in it.

US1010 returned 20 pottery shards (18 storage, 1 table and 1 kitchen), an incense burner (S3053) and a handstone (S3054).

A289

It is a long room located to the south of A288 and A293 and to the north of the southern side of the enclosure wall of the town. It measures 7.14 X 2,81 m. The room is delimited by the walls M862 to the east, M847 to the north, M868 to the west, and to the south it is closed by the city-wall. The area indicated as A289 during SUM17C was already partially excavated by the AFSM, and interpreted by Albright as a “L-shaped” room with an opening in its north-western corner².

US1008 was excavated in A289. It is a huge collapse of limestone blocks medium and big in size. Sandstone blocks medium and small in size were also found in the layer. Stones are mixed with brown loam with some traces of ash. Thickness of US1008 is about 1.94 m. The huge collapse forming US1008 should come from the walls surrounding the area. The southern part of the walls M862 to the east, and M868 to the west it is almost completely collapsed. Only one face of the northern wall M847 is preserved.

US1008 covered the southern part of a mudbrick wall oriented north-south and leaning on the city-wall to the south, M861. Its northern part is covered by M868. M861 was found at the elevation of 28.95 m (fig. 11).

At the elevation of 28.45 m, M860 was found. It is a wall oriented north-south which divides the room A289 in two parts, the eastern part longer and rectangular in shape and the western one shorter and square-shaped. The southern part of the wall is not well preserved but it is probable that an opening connected the two rooms. The excavation of US1008 in the eastern part of the room stopped at the elevation of 28.21 m and the collapse was not completely removed. In the western part of the room the removal of US1008 was completed and the excavation stopped to the level of 28.10 m (fig. 12).

A big amount of pottery shards comes from the eastern part of A289. Here, US1008 returned 142 fragments (96 storage, 30 table and 16 kitchen). A fragment of a bronze nail (MB1031) was found in the same place. 33 fragments of pottery (28 storage, 1 table, 4 kitchen) come from the western part of A289.

The excavation in A289 revealed at least three constructional phases. Below the description of the three phases from the most recent to the most ancient one:

3rd Phase: A289 is a long rectangular corridor. It measures 7.14 X 2,81 m. The room is delimited by M847 to the north and to the south it is closed by the city-wall. The walls M862 and M868 closing respectively the room to the west and to the east had to be probably leant on the city-wall to the south. It is probable that A289 and the two rooms to the north A288 and A293 were used together during this phase.

2nd Phase: A289 it is a larger room closed to the west by the mudbrick wall M861 and to the east by the wall M611. The northern limit of the room it is still unclear, but it is sure that the rooms A288 and A293 didn't exist during this phase. The foundation of the walls M847 and M868 was found at

² F.P.Albright 1982: The American expedition in Dhofar Oman, 1952-3.

the elevation of 29.15 m, about 0.20 m above the top of the wall M861. Probably the western limit of the room was the wall found below M588, of which now only a small part is visible.

1st Phase: during the most ancient constructional phase, the room A289 is divided in two parts by the wall M860. As already said before, the top of M860 was found at the elevation of 28.45 m, few centimeters below the foundation of the mudbrick wall M861. Therefore it is possible to assume that this two walls belong to two different phases. The southern and eastern limit of the room in this phase are always the city-wall and M611. Regarding the northern limit, the situation is the same of that one described above. To the west, A289 is closed by a limestone wall located immediately to the west of M861, named M362.

Excavation in Area B: Room A285 (Trench supervisor: Abdulrahman Al maashni)

A285 is the westernmost bin in the northern part of the storehouse complex. The focus of the excavations carried on during this campaign is to expose the whole length of the western wall of the store. But the work was limited to the opening of a trench dimensions are 3.34x 4.45 m, in order to provide an easier path for visitors (fig. 13).

The works proceed excavating the room from north to the south. The northern part of A285 was already partially excavated in SUM17B removing the upper surface and part of US992 about 1x3m along the wall M214.

US992 is made of soft light brown soil mixed with different stones medium in size. It was found in the whole area of the trench opened in A285 and it is sloping from E to W (20cm to 4 8cm). Stones were mainly found along the walls M241 to the north, M838 to the east, M839 to the west. There are some remains of ashes on the east wall (M838). US992 returned also some shells and 93 pottery shards (62 storage and 31 table).

Below US992, US993 has been individuated. The layer is made of light brown loam with a lot of shells. These shells are mainly concentrated in the southern part. It is sloping from E to W from 30 to 43cm.

US994 is covered by US993 (fig. 14). It is composed of many stones mixed dark brown soil. This layer is sloping from E to W (28 to 50cm). These stones were distributed throughout the layer and concentrated along the three walls M214, M838 and M839. Most of them seems fallen. The size of the stones ranging from (30 x 25 x 12 cm) – (20 x 15 x 8 cm). A good amount of bones and shells comes from this layer. US994 returned also 31 pottery shards (18 storage and 13 table).

Below US994, US995 (fig. 15) has been individuated. The layer is made of light brown soil mixed with stones medium and small in size. A small copper piece, needle (MB1016), coin (Co1127), bones, shells, two bead, iron slags, five pearl beads (Sh846) have been found. US995 returned 35 pottery shards (32 storage and 3 table).

Area B, sounding West of building BB4 (trench supervisors: Giulia Buono and Cleto Carbonara)

During this campaign we decided to make a sounding in front of the western wall of BB4 (M865) in order to understand the masonry for its restoration.

The cleaning permitted to see that the wall M865 was built with the inner side in mud brick and the outer side in stone.

The excavation in the trench followed the stratigraphic sequence identified during SUM15A campaign starting from the layer US774:³

- US774 was a layer composed of very compact loam, brownish in colour. It covered the floor made of hard packed soil (US774 floor's elevation: 28.99 m).
- Below it, US780 was a layer made of loam, medium compact in consistence and brownish in colour. The floor, made of hard packed soil was reached at an elevation of 28.65 m. It could be interpreted as the earliest floor of the street A284.
- The last layer, US781, was just exposed.

The layers US774 and US780 covered a small wall (M866) set West of M865 and close to it. M866 consists of a single wall facing made of three rows of stones. Its foundations stand on US781.

A limestone basin (S3036) was discovered after the removal of the layers US774 and US780. It was placed close to the North-West side of the wall M865 and it stands on the earliest floor of the street (US780 floor). The basin 1.08 x 0.52 x 0.50 m (fig. 19-20) shows a four-lines ASA⁴ inscription in low relief (lh. 7 cm) on its West side. Unfortunately, the inscription cannot be translated due to its bad state of preservation. The basin has a depth of 0.33 m and it was filled by loose loam light brown in color with some light ashes and many fish bones. Its bottom was covered by plaster. The filling of the basin was denoted as US1000.

³ See the section of the deep sounding in front of buildings BA12 and BA15 in Preliminary Report SUM15A. The layer US774 was left *in situ* during SUM15C campaign.

⁴ ASA=Ancient South Arabian

Area F, South of building BF7: rooms A290, A291 and A292 (trench supervisor: Giulia Buono)

During the SUM17C campaign it was decided to investigate the area south of the building BF7 with the purpose to understand its general layout.

The excavation started with the removal of the modern accumulation. It covered a big collapse (US680) that interested all the area in question.⁵ US680 was a layer made of medium compact loam with a large amount of limestone blocks, medium-big in size, fallen from the surrounding walls (fig. 21). The removal of this layer permitted to expose the complete profile of the southern wall of BF7 (M466) and the rooms A290, A291 and A292.

A huge quantity of iron slags (5200 gr) was collected. It could be related with many fireplaces unearthed in the underlying layer (US316). Few bronze objects were discovered, such as two nails (MB1020, MB1025), a clamp (MB1021), a pin (MB1024) and a coin (Co1128). A bronze object (MB1026) cannot be identified without a restoration. Many fragments belonging to soft-stone vessels were discovered and taken as samples. One of them presents a diagnostic shape and it is catalogued (S3051). Some bones and shells, including two *Chlamys Townsendi* shells used as oil lamp and a *Tutufa Bardeyi* shell were collected.

The pottery recovered from this layer is characterized by the 62% of storage vessels, the 36% of table vessels and the 2% of kitchen vessels. After a summary overview of the diagnostic shards, the types attested seem to cover a range that goes from the 3rd to the 5th constructional phase.⁶

	Shard's number	Type
STORAGE VESSELS	US680, 7	III.1.16.1
	US680, 4	III.1.33
TABLE VESSELS	US680, 2	II.1.28
	US680, 8	II.1.37
KITCHEN VESSELS	US680, 3	I.1.1.6
	US680, 5	I.1.1.7

tab. 1 – Pottery from US680

A fragment of rim of table bowl cannot be assigned to a specific type. US680, 6 is similar in shape to type II.6.6 but it presents a double coloring (dark and red) on the external surface and a series of cuts on the external edge of the rim (fig. 22).

Room A290

Room A290 is delimited by the walls M466 to the North, M848 to the West, M849 to the South and M850 to the East. The removal of the collapse (US680) permitted to identify two passages, one along the West end of wall M466 and one along the South end of wall M848. The layer below US680 was just exposed and left *in situ* (fig. 23).

⁵ US680 was previously identified during SUM14A campaign, in the western part of BA13.

⁶ The typology of these pottery shards is based on Pavan, A. 2017, *A cosmopolitan city on the Arabian coast. The imported and local pottery from Khor Rori. Khor Rori Report 3*, Roma.

The study of the pottery types in relation to the constructional phases and absolute chronology is carried out by V. Buffa. See Buffa, V. (ed.), *The Administrative Complex in Area A: BA6, BA12, BA15, BA16. Khor Rori Report 4*, (forthcoming).

Room A291

Existing research suggests that room A291 could be an open space between the buildings BA13 and BF7. The collapse (US680) covered the layer US316, previously identified during SUM11A campaign. US316 was made of soft loam, light brown in color with scattered remains of ash, charcoals and burnt bones. The floor was reached at an elevation of 21.15 m and it was interested by many fireplaces. A big one was identified in front of wall M857 and left *in situ*. In US316 two fragment of soft-stone vessels (S3047, S3052) and a stone axe made from a pebble (S3048) were discovered (fig. 24). Pottery collected from US316 was characterized by the 68% of storage vessels, the 28% of table vessels and the 4% of kitchen vessels.

In the corner between the walls M854 and M855 and delimited to the North by a row of stones placed with a bowed profile (M856), US316 floor was cut by US1009 (fig. 25). The filling (US1006) was composed of medium compact loam, dark brown in color with clear traces of burnt, bones and iron slags. Pottery was scarce; three shards, belonging to storage vessels, were just collected. The layer wasn't completely removed.

Room A292

Room A292 is delimited by the walls M853 to the North and M854, M855 and M857 to the West. Further investigations will clarify the southern limit of the room. The topsoil (US682) was totally removed from the room. US682, excavated in part in front of the western wall of BA13 during SUM14A campaign, was a layer made of soft loam, grayish-brown in color with collapsed stones (principally sandstones), ash and iron slags. Some objects were recovered from the layer: two coins (Co1133, Co1134), a bronze object (MB1029), a fragment of glass vessel (G257), two fragments of soft-stone vessels (S3055, S3056) and a fragment of clay strainer (Cl83) in straw-tempered fabric (fig. 26). In total, 23 pottery shards were discovered in the following proportion: 61% of storage vessels, 35% of table vessels and 4% of kitchen vessels. A fragment of rim of table dish (US682, 4) could be in Fine Grey fabric and identified as "Type 5" in the Tissamaharama's assemblage (fig. 27).⁷

⁷ "Type 5" corresponds to "Wheeler type 141" in the Arikamedu's assemblage. See **Schenk, H. 2014**, *Tissamaharama Pottery sequence and Early Historic maritime Silk Route across the Indian Ocean*, *Zeitschrift für Außereuropäischer Kulturen*, 6: 95-118.

Excavation in Area G: Square A260 and street A284 (trench supervisor: Michael Faccini with Giulia Buono and Cleto Carbonara)

A260 (fig. 29) is a huge square located in the north-eastern corner of the city (Area G). It is delimited to the east by the city-wall, to the south by the two buildings BG1 and BG2, to the north by a big building partially excavated by the AFSM and named BG3 during this campaign. A260 is connected to Area A through the street A284 which run in east-west direction. The street A266 located between BG1 and BG2 links A260 with the storehouse complex. The main aims of the excavation in this area were to clearly expose the southern limit of the building BG3, represented by the wall M294 and to open the passage connecting Area G and Area A.

The first layer to be removed was US279. It is the surface layer which covered the whole area at the beginning of the excavations. It is made of loam with some light traces of ash loose in consistence and light brown in color. Scanty remains of a probable wall related to a very late structure were found running in east-west direction (fig. 30).

Below US279, US874 was excavated. It was light brown in color and medium compact in consistence. Few small limestone blocks were found in this layer. US874 returned very few pottery shards and a lot of animal bones and shells.

US875 is located below US874. It is dark gray in color and very friable in consistence. It is also characterized by the presence of charcoals and traces of burnt. A lot of iron slags and very numerous shells were found scattered in this layer. US875 covered the top of M294 to the north and US874 floor mainly in the eastern part of the square. US874 floor (fig. 31) is characterized by a light brown color and a compact consistence.

Below US874 floor, US280 was excavated. It is characterized by a dark grey color and the presence of small limestone blocks mostly close M294. The removal of US280 in the southern part of the square revealed the presence of the last two steps of a staircase used to enter the BG1 (fig. 33). US280 floor was found at the elevation of 28.83 m. It was not completely exposed. In the southern part of A260 the excavation stopped at the level of US874 floor. Here the floor shows a slope from west to east (fig. 34).

In the north-eastern corner of the square US851 was excavated. It is a reddish brown and medium compact layer. It covered a stone alignment placed between the eastern wall of BG3, M845, and the city-wall. This alignment and the stones found immediately to the north of it could be interpreted as the remains of the staircase which led to the tower in the north-eastern corner of the city-wall (fig. 32).

Street A284

A284 is a 3,57 m wide street located between the buildings BB2 and BA10. From the street A113 it runs eastward for 8,57 m and after a short curve northward, A284 continues for other 5 m until it reaches the square A260 and the Area G (fig. 35). The excavation of the street A284 brought to the light a wall oriented east-west, which closes the street to the north and could be part of a building located between BA10 and BG3. Where the street curves to the north it is visible the corner of a building built below BG2. The entrance to this new building is also visible. It has two jambs made of sandstone block set in a vertical sense, and a horizontal block used as threshold. In front of the entrance a cone-shaped limestone basin was found. Its maximum diameter measures 0.50 m and it

is 0.55 m deep. Its holed base and its smoothed internal surface led to the hypothesis that it was related to the draining of the water (fig. 36).

Area H: new building BH1 (trench supervisors: Abdulrahman Al Maashni and Giulia Buono)

The area South of BA13 was partially investigated during SUM16B campaign. The aim of this campaign was to search the continuations of the walls and to clarify the limits of the structure.

The new building BH1 was exposed. It consists of several rooms of which five were brought to light. It's not currently possible to determine where the entrance is located; it could probably set along the South side of the building, not excavated during this mission.

Room A268

The room A268 is delimited by the walls M791 to the North, M796 to the West, M842 to the South and M840 to the East. It covers a surface of 2.95 x 3.20 m. The entrance to this room is set on wall M842.

The excavation in room A268 started with the removal of US997. The layer was composed of compact loam, gray in color. Bones, shells, iron slags and charcoals have been found. The floor was made of hard packed soil and it had a thickness of 10 cm *circa*. The removal of US997 permitted to expose the East wall (M840) of the room. It was covered with plaster.

Below US997, the new layer US998 has been partially excavated. It is made of very compact loam, grayish in color, mixed with small stones, scraps of mud bricks, bones, shells and few pottery shards.⁸

At present, the walls M840 and M842 seem to be tied and built with the inner side in mud brick and the outer side in stone. The inner side of both walls is covered with plaster.

Room A286

The room A286 is delimited by the walls M791 to the North, M840 to the West, M864 to the South and M841 to the East. It is set in the North-East corner of the building.

The first layer excavated in this room is US1003. It consisted of loose loam, dark-brown in color, with remains of ash and charcoal. Limestone and sandstone blocks fallen from the walls, fragments of plaster and some iron slags were found in the layer. Below the accumulation, the floor (US1003 floor) has been identified and left *in situ*.

The walls M797 and M798, previously identified in SUM16B campaign, were removed. They were built on walls M791 and M841, probably during a late phase when the city was occasionally occupied.

Room 287

The room A287 is delimited by the walls M842 and M864 to the North, M794 to the West, M843 to the South and M841 to the East. The works started with the excavation of US999. The layer was made of compact grayish-brown loam mixed with stones, ash and charcoal. It gave back some shells, bones, iron slags and few bronze objects, such as a nail (MB1022) and a coin (Co1130). The US999 floor has been detected 15 cm *circa* below its accumulation.⁹

⁸ For the pottery see below.

⁹ The floor was left *in situ*.

Sounding South of walls M793 and M794

A small trench (1.40 m x 1.55 m) was opened in front of the corner of the walls M793 and M794 with the purpose to find the south wall of the building. The top layer US1001 was removed. It consisted of medium compact loam, brown in color, with scattered small stones. A tripod cylindrical incense-burner (S3034) decorated with an incised criss-cross pattern of oblique lines on the external surface was discovered in this layer (fig. 37).¹⁰

Below it, the layer US1002, made of compact loam and light brown in color, was identified. The excavation stopped after the removal of this layer. No wall has been found at this level.

Brief note on the pottery

Pottery shards were recovered in US998 from room A268 and in US999 from room A287 with the following proportions:

Room A268, US998

- 67% storage vessels
- 33% table vessels

Room A287, US999

- 73% storage vessels
- 19% table vessels
- 8% kitchen vessels

Few fragments present a diagnostic shape. Nevertheless, the majority of them could be assigned to specific types attested during the 3rd and the 4th constructional phase.¹¹

A fragment of rim of table jar (US999, 1) cannot be assigned to a specific type but it is similar in shape to type II.1.8. No pottery shard was found in other rooms or layers.

	Shard's number	Type
STORAGE VESSELS	US998, 2	Dressel 2-4 amphora
	US998, 3	Amphore égyptienne 3 (Egyptian Nile Alluvium)
TABLE VESSELS	US998, 1	II.6.27

tab. 1 – Pottery from room A268, US998

	Shard's number	Type
STORAGE VESSELS	US999, 2	III.1.8.1
TABLE VESSELS	US999, 1	Similar to II.1.8

tab. 2 - Pottery from room A287, US999

¹⁰ Type III.1.2; see for comparison Lombardi, A. *et alii* 2008, *Small finds*, p. 320 in Avanzini, A. (ed.), *A port in Arabia between Rome and the Indian Ocean (3rd C. BC-5th C. AD). Khor Rori Report 2*, Roma.

¹¹ See note 2.



Fig 1: BB3 before excavation



Fig. 2: A202 before excavation



Fig. 3: A280 after removal of A202. US1004.



Fig. 4: A280 after excavation from east.



Fig. 5: A280 after excavation from north.



Fig. 6: A213 before excavation from north.



Fig. 7: A213 after excavation from north.



Fig. 8: eastern side of the area after excavation.



Fig. 9: Area to the south of M588 before excavation from south.



Fig. 10: A288 and A293 after excavation from south.



Fig. 11: western limit of A289



Fig. 12: A289 after excavation from east



Fig. 13: A285 before excavation



Fig. 14: US994 from north



Fig. 15: US995 from south.



Fig. 16: section in A285

SUM17C, AREA B, A285

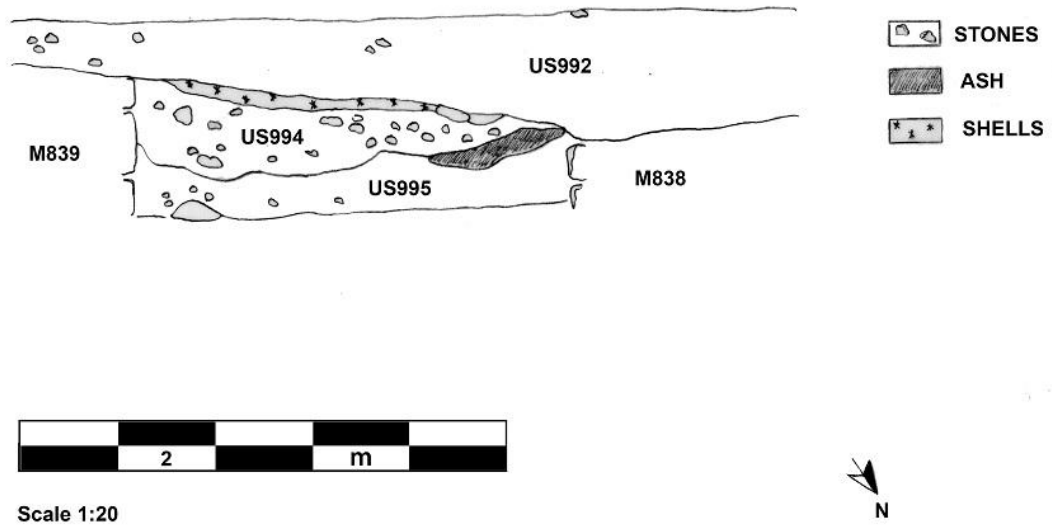


Fig. 17: drawing of the section in A285.



Fig. 18: Inscription on basin S3036



Fig. 19: 3D Basin



Fig. 20: The emerging basin



Fig. 21: Limestone blocks from US680



Fig. 22: US680, 6

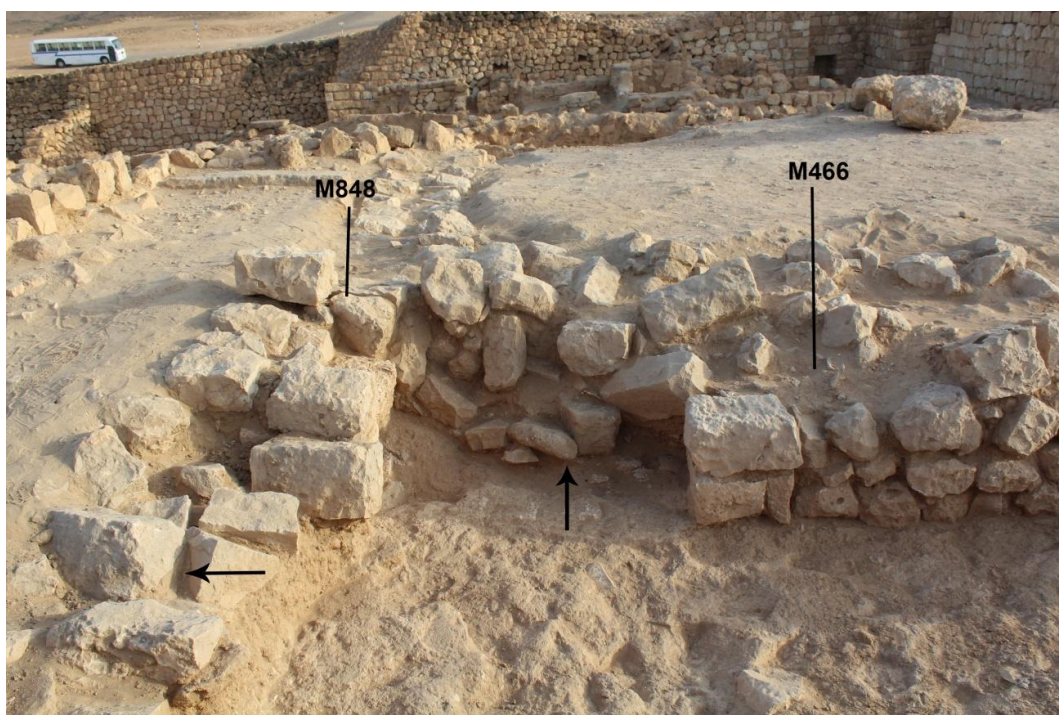


Fig. 23: Room A290



Fig. 24: Stone axe (S3048)



Fig. 25: US1006

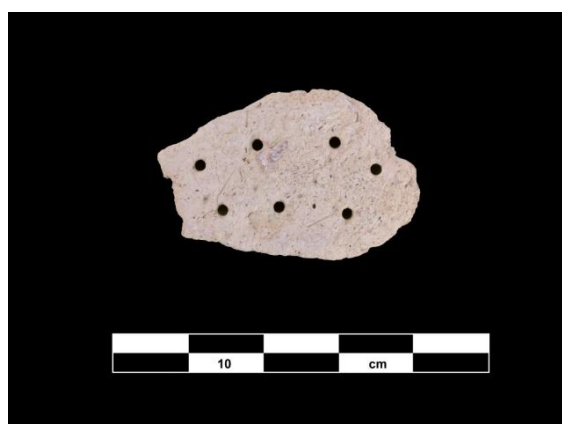


Fig. 26: Clay strainer (Cl83)



Fig. 27: US682, 4



Fig. 28: Rooms A290, A291 and A292 after excavation (West view)



Fig. 29: A260 before excavation



Fig. 30: US874 with late structure



Fig. 31: US874 floor



Fig. 32: probable staircase after removal of US851



Fig. 33: steps for the entrance to BG1

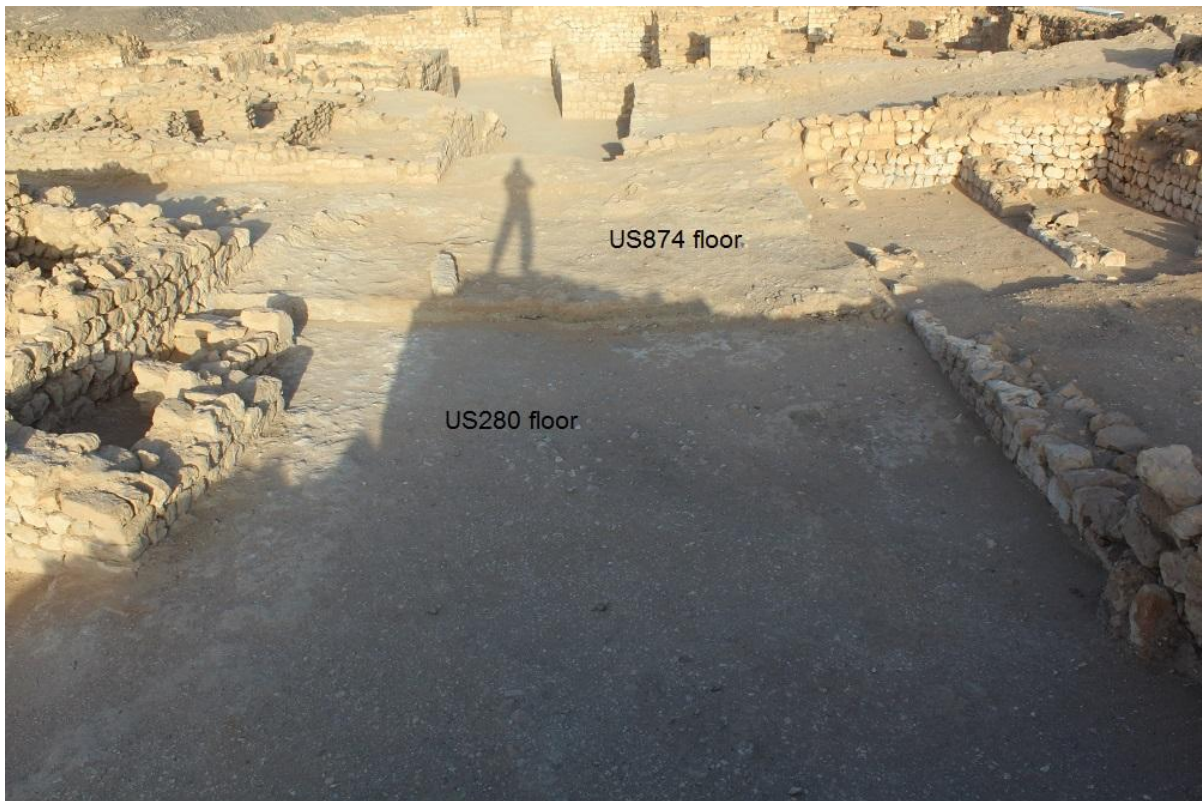


Fig. 34: A260 after excavation.



Fig. 35: A260 and street A284 after excavation.



Fig. 36: Limestone basin in A284 and entrance to a new building



Fig. 37: Incense burner (S3034)



Fig. 38: Building BH1 before excavation (West view)



Fig. 39: Building BH1 after excavation (South view)



Fig. 40: US999, 1