

IMTO – Italian Mission to Oman

University of Pisa

SUMHURAM

Preliminary Report

February - March 2019 (SUM19A)



PRELIMINARY REPORT (SUM19A)

February - March 2019

The first IMTO's campaign of 2019 (SUM19A), under the direction of prof. A. Avanzini, started on February 2nd and ended on March 14th 2019.

Excavations were performed in two areas:

- Area H;
- Area F.

Excavations were conducted on the field by the archaeologists Giulia Buono, Cleto Carbonara, Cristina Pappalardo, Carlotta Rizzo and Fadhiah Saleem. Mr. Said al-Mashani was also present on the site. All the archaeological works were carried on under the supervision of the prof. Alexander V. Sedov and dr. Vittoria Buffa.

All the archaeologists were responsible for the documentation of pottery finds and objects.

Architects Michele Lillo and Liborio Manno, under the supervision of arch. Stefano Bizzarri, were responsible for the restoration activities carried on the site.

Arch. Alessandro Massa was responsible for the architectural survey, the CAD digitization and the updating of the plans of the city.

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 Ghanim al-Shanfari, Said al-Mashani, Ali al-Kathiri, Said al-Amri, dr. Said al-Salmi, Hassan al-Jabri. We thank them all, together with all the Museum's team, for their kind helpfulness.

Sumhuram Preliminary Report SUM19A

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Archaeological Report

Area H, l/m 7-8: street A295, South part of BA20 and East of BA20 (trench supervisor: Cristina Pappalardo)

The archaeological investigations in Area H have been carried out during six weeks, from February 2nd to March 14th.

This area was been partially excavated during three previous campaigns: SUM2013B, SUM2016A and SUM2017A.

Street A295

During the SUM19A campaign it was decided to investigate particularly the street A295, which runs from East toward West, with the purpose to understand the connection between Area H and the well documented Area A.

The excavation started with the removal of the accumulation layer US856 (brown-reddish loam with mortar) and its related floor (US856 floor, compact and plastered), which covered all the area delimited by the walls M774 to the East, M792 to the West, M807 and M809 to the South and M843 to the North. Some ash lenses were located in special way in the northern part of the street. The presence of iron slags, bronze scraps and of a re-worked stone vessel with iron remains in these burnt lenses could be related to working activities.

US856 returned also a big amount of animal bones, four coins (Co1203, Co1204, Co1205, Co1206), four bronze objects (MB1059, MB1062, MB1063, MB1064), a fragment of crucible (G264) whit traces of bronze scoriae inside and on the external wall, and a conspicuous number of pottery shards, thus divided: ninety-five belong to storage vessels, of which ten shards of amphorae; twenty-seven belong to table vessels and eighteen to kitchen vessels. Furthermore, a pottery shard with traces of bitumen and two pottery walls with traces of purple are to be reported.

The removal of US856 put in light along the south part of the wall M843, in the North-East portion of the street, the layer US857 made of earth and ash, greyish in colour, mixed with stones of medium and small size.

US857 returned not many materials: few animal bones, few pottery (eight shards of storage vessels and three fragments of kitchen vessel) and some stone artefacts of which a tripod incense burner of Type III.1.2, half complete, with grey burnt substance at the bottom of the cavity.

Removing the layer US857 a new wall, M943, has been identified. The wall, located to the South-East of the wall M843, is made of a row of burnt reddish mud brick, bad preserved on the upper part and of a row of stones, medium in size. It is oriented North-South and it measures 1.15 m long, 0.55 m in wide and, at the moment, just 0.11 m high.

Furthermore, to the South of M843, US857 covered US1065. It is a compact layer, still *in situ*, made of white plaster mixed with stones, small and medium in size, probably deriving from the collapse of the wall M843.

The removal of the accumulation layer US856 and its related floor from the street A295, allowed tracking down US953, the earliest level reached in the street during the previous campaigns. Before now, it was investigated in a very small area located to the North of the wall M774 and interpreted as an accumulation layer. According to the current excavation, it rather seems an intentional filling, perhaps the preparation for US856 floor. It is made of loose loam, brownish-grey in colour because of the presence of ash lenses, especially concentrated in the eastern part of the street. US953 returned a large amount of animal bones, with a huge presence of mussel shells, bronze scraps and iron slags, thirteen coins (Co1208, Co1209, Co1210, Co1211, Co1212, Co1213, Co1214, Co1215, Co1216, Co1220, Co1221, Co1222, Co1223), and one hundred ninety-nine pottery shards (of which one hundred and fifty eight belong to storage vessel, twenty to table vessel and twenty-one to kitchen vessel).

Removing US953, the work stopped at the level of US953 floor, made of greyish compact surface; it was detected at an elevation of 27.32 m.

The situation of the street A295 appears now quite changed.

The wall M774 consists now of three rows of large limestone slabs (high 0.60 m). At its South-West, the removal of US953 put in light the wall M944. It is oriented East-West, made by stone slabs of which it is possible to see at the moment only the wall crest (128 cm l. x 70 cm w.) because of it is at the same level of US953 floor.

In the space delimited by the wall M944 to the North and M809 to the South, a threshold (probably of a staircase) is located. It is M945, oriented North-South, parallel to M944, made of a polished stone slab measuring 0.40 m long.

Moreover, the removal of US953 defined the new limits of the street, bringing to light the walls M841 and M946 that belong to the building BA20 respectively to its East and South side, and the wall M947 that delimited the street to the South-West part.

The wall M841, previous discovered only by the crest in its northern portion is now made by two rows of well preserved stone slabs, medium in size and oriented North-South. It measures 8.10 m in length and 0.30 m in high. It presents also a door (length 1.20 m) located 3.60 m from the South corner, the main entrance of the building.

M946 is the South wall of BA20, oriented East-West (length 10.50 m, high max 0.40 m). It is made by three rows of stone slabs well preserved for about half part. The west portion shows instead

signs of collapse, confirmed also by the stones of medium and big size found in the street A295 in the same direction. Of both walls (M841 and M946), only the external face is visible.

M947 is a wall oriented East-West, made by four rows of stone of medium and big size, well disposed on the external face (length 4.30 m, high max 0.80 m) with a door (width 0.90 m) located at 1.95 m from the eastern corner.

In this western area, a big collapse, named US1100, has been removed. It is made of stones of big and medium size and it was covered by US953 and covered US953 floor. Actually, it is difficult to define to which walls, M946 or M947, it belongs because of both of them are located in the same area (western part of A295, respectively to North and South) and show collapse signs.

At last, also three other walls, superficially investigated during the previous campaigns, appear now different:

- The wall M807, oriented East-West, is now made of four rows of stone blocks (high 1.05 m), with a threshold (width 0.90 m) situated at 3.40 m from the East corner;
- The wall M808, oriented North-South, is made of five rows of stone blocks 1.05 m high;
- The wall M809, oriented East-West, is made of four rows of stone block 0.85 m high.

All of them constitute the southern limit of the street A295.

The ancient street A295 that linked the areas H, A and F, constitutes also the modern path for visitors. For this reason, we decided to facilitate the passage with a step made of stones and loose loam.



Area H, street A295 before excavation



Area H, wall M943 and US1065



Area H, wall M944 and threshold M945



Area H, view of the walls M841 and M946 of the BA20



Area H, wall M947



Area H, collapse layer US1100 between walls M946 and M947



Area H, view of the southern limit of the street A295



Area H, view of the street with modern step

East of BA20

During the last week we decided to remove the section situated to the East of building BA20, reaching the level of US953 floor, in order to expose the external side of the wall M841.

As in the rest of the street, also here the situation appeared quite homogeneous. It was possible to identify the same layers (for further explanations see above): US953 floor was covered by US953, in turn covered by US857.



Area H, East side of BA20, before excavation



Area H, East side of BA20 after excavation

Excavation in area F: Building BF11; rooms A290, A304, A162 (trench supervisor: Carlotta Rizzo)

The main goal of this excavation was to clarify the overall structure of the so-called BF7 and if the southern rooms were part of the same building.

Previously BF7 was investigated in 2010C and 2018A campaigns with the aim to bring to light the whole plan with a central room A162 and others rooms A290, A304 and A305. During this campaign, it was clear that these rooms were part of another building, now named BF11.

Rooms A290 and A304

These rooms were previously investigated in SUM18C when US1019 floor was reached, left *in situ* (29.22 m) as the limestone basin above it. The works started with the removal of this layer in the whole room and the shift of the limestone basin in the area (S3058) of the *lapidarium* in the square near the southern part of the city-walls.

Below US1019 floor a new layer was investigated, named US1060, made by an accumulation and its related floor. The accumulation was made by loose soil, reddish brown in color with charcoals, animal bones and marine shells, some well-dressed stones from the collapse of the walls of the room. The floor covered by the accumulation is made by yellowish brown soil in the part of the room called A304 and greyish in A290. It consists in two compacted and mixed floors found at an elevation of 29.13 m in A304 and at 28.95 m in A290. The floor in room A304 presented some white inclusions and charcoals. Few pottery shards were collected: six storage fragments (one Black and Grey jar, one Indian jar), one fragment of kitchen vessel. During the removal of US1060 accumulation, two pillar's bases were found: one in limestone above the southern wall M849, and the other one in sandstone, below the wall M848. The measures of the pillars are:

- limestone: 0.30 x 0.30 m;
- sandstone: 0.30 x 0.34 m.

During the excavation a new layer was identified in the South-West corner of rooms A290-A304; it was made of loose soil, charcoals and ashes. This *stratum* seems to go under US1060 floor and for this reason it wasn't investigated and numbered.

The room A290 with the staircase M871 could gave access to the room A162 from the street A156. The room A304 and the staircase M870 could be the entrance to the rooms set westward of A290, that are part of BF11.

Room A162

This room was investigated in SUM10C and SUM18A campaigns when the removal of a layer (US1027=US434) made of medium compact loam with a huge quantity of stones started.

During this campaign we continued the removal of the stratum left *in situ*, starting from a level of 30.71 m. In the South-East part of the room, below the threshold between A162 and A290, US1027 covered a floor, US1027 floor, with an irregular slope from West to East (29.14-29.01 m). This layer had a flat surface and it was made of loam, greyish in color, with some white inclusions and charcoals.

In the North-West corner of the room, between M928 and M929, a pit was found. This pit, cut US1027 floor and it was filled by US1071 made by loose brownish soil with charcoals, fragments of plaster and some animal bones. A fragment of *soft-stone* vessel (S3135) was found.

The filling of the pit covered a base of pillar made of four dressed stones of limestone (fig.3).

The US1027 floor wasn't homogeneous in its extension and not completely preserved especially in the northern part of the room, in correspondence of the area where numerous walls were found.

In the western part of the room US1027 floor was covered by a hard compact yellowish gray sandy matrix layer (US1072) with several collapsed dressed stone of limestone or sandstone; this layer covered also some new walls found in the room (M934, M935, M937) and the space between them. Below US1072, US1027 floor was found in the space between the walls M936 and M938 and above the wall M939.

Below the collapse (US1027), in the South-East part of the room, US1027 floor was immediately found, without the layer US1072.

The removal of US1072 and US1027 allow discovering seven walls, parallel to each other.

The following findings were collected from the layer US1027: nine fragment of storage vessels (two amphorae, one black and gray jar, one straw tempered jar), four fragment of table vessel (one glazed), a stone tool (S3143), three game pieces (S3144), a fragment of stone vessel (S3145), two coins (Co1218, Co1219) and a bronze object (MB1073).

Below US1027 floor a new layer named US1092 was investigated. It was made of brownish crumbled reddish brown soil with grits. This layer filled the spaces set between the walls of room A162. Below it and especially below the threshold between the walls M848 and M851, US1092 floor was found with a slope from West to East (28.98-28.83 m). The floor is grayish in color nearby the threshold and the space between the walls and the section. Between the walls and the pillars it was yellowish in color.

After the removal of the layers, seven walls and three bases of pillars were found in the room.

Because of the hard digging conditions of the remaining space between the walls, the works were stopped at the level of US1092 floor.

From US1072, a fragment of stone vessel (S3163), one grinding slab (S3156), one limestone slab (S3157), two fragments of stone vessel with iron remains (S3162), two plaque's fragments (MB1074, MB1075), two bronze objects (MB1076, MB1077) were collected. From the northern wall of A162 a complete bronze clamp (MB1078) was unearthed.

Regarding the interpretation of this ambient, we can suppose that the structure and the walls inside this room were foundations for other kind of structure, in reason of the removal of the layer with collapsed dressed stones (limestone and sandstone). This hypothesis could be supported by the fewness of findings in relation to the size of room and to the related layers.

Preliminary remarks

It is possible to make some observation regarding the plan of the building BF11.

The entrance of the building is from the staircase M871. This staircase is related to a second phase of the building because it stands on US425 floor of street A156. Furthermore, the SUM19A excavation of A291 shows us that the wall M849 belongs to an earlier phase than the staircase.

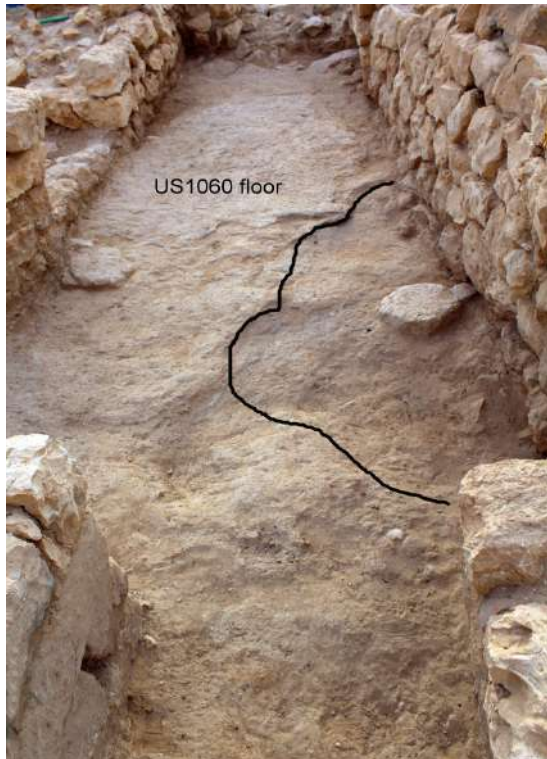
The deep sounding in A162 (see Preliminary Reports SUM17C, SUM18A) showed that the South-East wall, M466, and the eastern one, M464, stand on the bedrock. For this reason we can say that the wall M465 was probably made earlier than M377. This wall is leaned on wall M465. During this campaign we found a new wall parallel to M377 e M465, named M928; it is tied to the walls M465 and M339. The space between the walls M928, M377 and M465 was filled by soil and small sandstone stones. The western wall of A162, M339, is covered by M848, that is the eastern wall of A304. For this reason we can suppose that this room and the staircase were built in a later phase.

In the light of what has been said, it seems that:

- the main core of the building was room A162, a big room with several internal structures;
- room A290 was the access to the building;
- during the 3rd phase of Sumhuram, the staircase M871 was added to allow the access from street A156.

We don't know if the room A290 is related also to the 1st phase of Sumhuram, but it is clear that the staircase M871 and the western rooms of the building were related to a later phase to connect the eastern part of the building to the western one, such as rooms A304, A305 and probably the room A232.

The threshold between rooms A290 and A162 connects these two rooms. Room A304 is connected with room A305 by a door and with A232 by steps. The northern wall of room A232, M658, stands on US54 floor of the temple's square. If we interpret the wall found in A162 as foundation for other structures, we can imagine that the staircase M870 could have given access to the top of them.



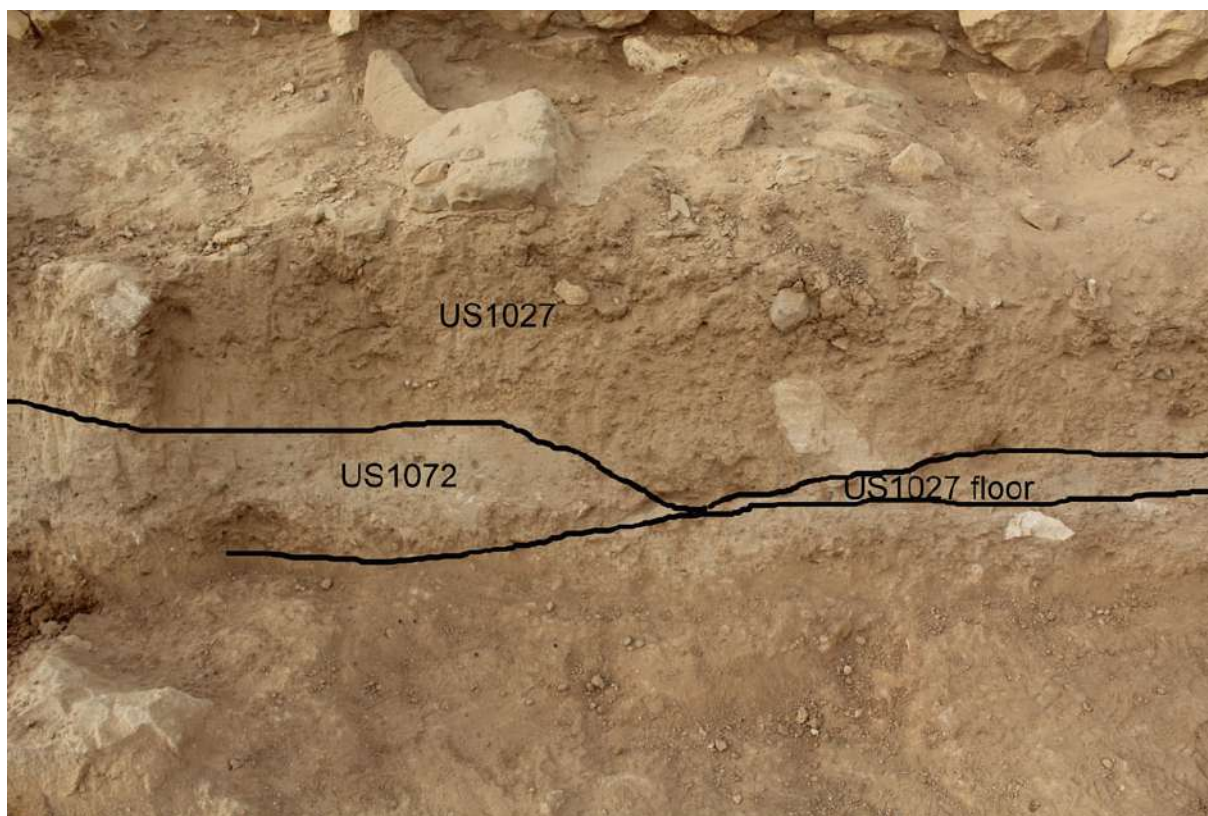
Room A290, US1060 floor



Room A304, US1060 floor



Room A162, US1071



Layers in room A162



Building BF11 after excavation

Excavation in Area F: room A291; the channel M926 of building BF10 (trench supervisor: Giulia Buono).

The room A291, in Area F, has been subject of previous archaeological campaigns. The area has been excavated during SUM17C, SUM18A and SUM18C campaigns. The investigation of the room A291 during this campaign, digging the earlier layers, had the purpose to understand the relationship between building BF10 and the eastern rooms set close to the Monumental Building 2.

Room A291

The excavation of the room started with the removal of US425 floor, left *in situ* during the last campaign SUM18C. Below it, the layer US1061 was identified. It consisted of compact loam, light greyish brown. The relative floor (US1061 floor) was detected at an elevation of 28.65 m and it consisted of hard packed soil, greyish in colour. Pottery was scarce. The following findings were collected from the layer US1061: a coin (Co1201), a fragment of soft-stone vessel (S3128) and a game piece (S3127).

The removal of US1061 revealed new structures:

- A channel (M924) runs from the southern corner of wall M875 towards the wall M879, with a West-East/South orientation. The channel is made of sandstone slabs defining the cut and limestone stones used as covering.
- Between the channel M924 and the wall M877, a sort of platform made of mud bricks (US1066) was identified at an elevation of 28.58 m. It could be in relation with the threshold set on the wall M877 that gave access to the room A327.¹
- A semi-circular structure (d. 1.44 m) named M925 and delimited by limestone stones was discovered set close to the eastern half of wall M849. The cut [US1068] was filled by a loose layer (US1069) made of loam and charcoals, dark brown in colour. No pottery shards or findings were discovered in the layer.

The excavation proceeded with the removal of US1061 floor. Below it, a very compact layer made of mud bricks and reddish brown in colour (US1067) was interpreted as the preparation for US1061 floor. This layer covered a floor made of hard packed soil and reddish brown in colour, named US1067 floor. Pottery shards recovered from the layer seem to belong to the 1st – 2nd phase of Sumhuram. Three fragments of stone vessels (S3138, S3139, S3140) were found in the layer.

¹ For the stratigraphic sequence of room A327 see pp 30-33

In the eastern part of the room, the US1067 floor was interested by the presence of a big fireplace; the cut [US1074] was filled by stones and charcoals (US1075) mixed with animal bones (no pottery shards or findings).

The excavation stopped at the level of US1067 floor (*in situ*).

Sounding west of wall M909 (Building BF10)

The aim of the sounding was to investigate the channel M926 connected with room A319 and set in the wall M909 of building BF10.²

The channel has a rectangular shape; their sides are made of two small well-worked limestone slabs with a third one set as covering. The bottom of the channel has been covered with plaster. Its filling, named US1076, was composed of compact loam, whitish in colour, mixed with small animal bones³ and remains of plaster.

The excavation proceeded West of wall M909 and channel M926. Below US1067 floor,⁴ the following stratigraphic sequence was identified:

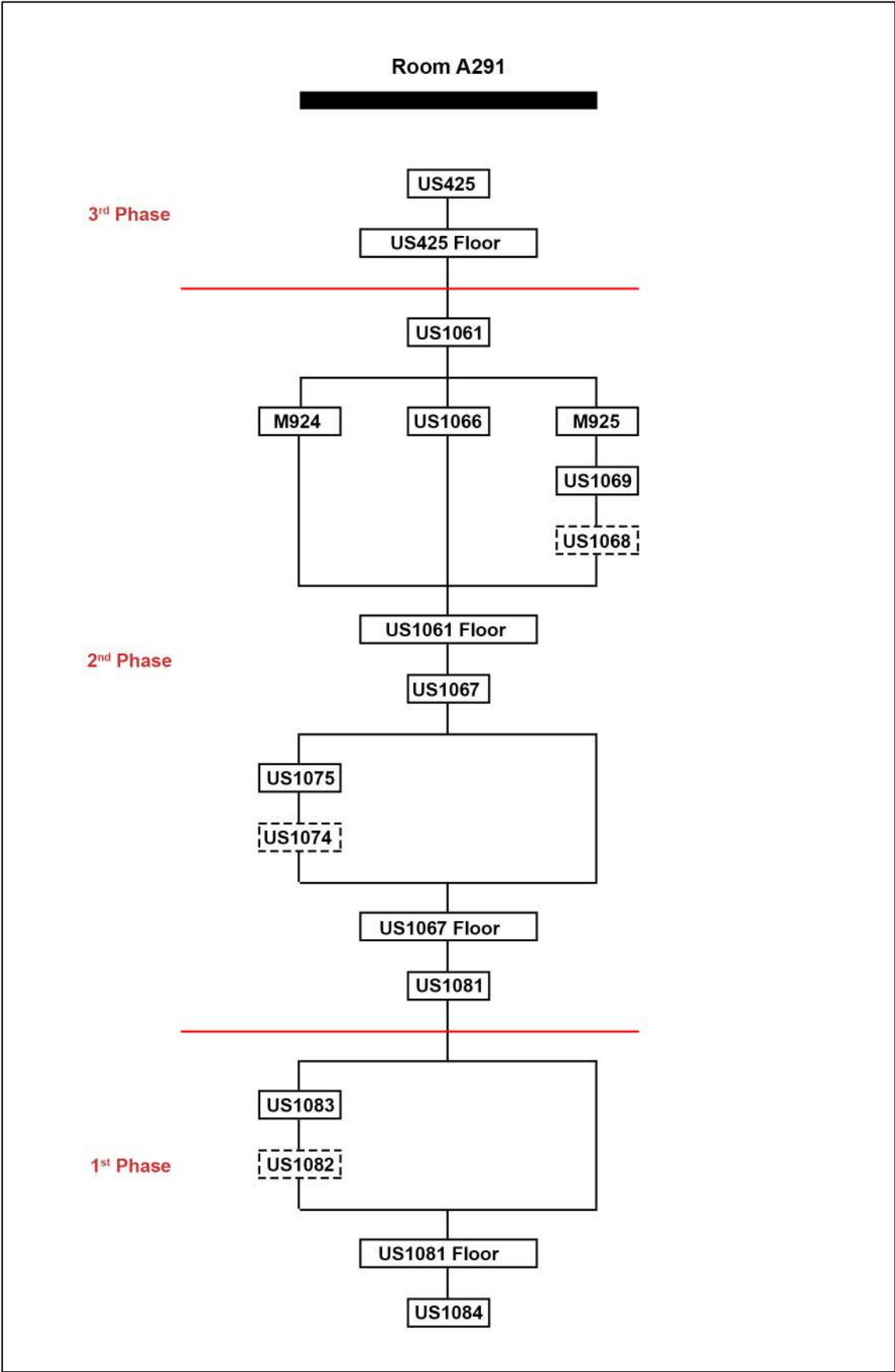
- US1081: layer made of loose loam, brown in colour mixed with charcoals, small stones and a high quantity of animal bones. Three fragments of stone vessels (S3151, S3152, S3153) and a whetstone (S3154) were found in the layer. The layer could be interpreted as a dump.
- Below it, the US1081 floor was detected at an elevation of 27.98 m. It consisted of packed soil, light brown in colour with charcoals. This floor was cut by [US1082], interpreted as the groove made by the drain of the channel. The groove was covered with two small limestone slabs on its North side. The cut was filled by a layer (US1083) composed of loose clayish loam, brownish grey in colour, mixed with animal bones (later drain of the channel).
- After the removal of US1081 floor, a new layer, named US1084, was identified. It consisted of loose clayish loam, brown in colour with white inclusions. Animal bones were discovered in the layer (earlier drain of the channel). The removal of this layer allowed discovering a broken rectangular basin made of limestone. It could be connected with the drain of the channel during its 1st phase of use.

US1084 was not totally removed and the excavation stopped at an elevation of 27.84 m.

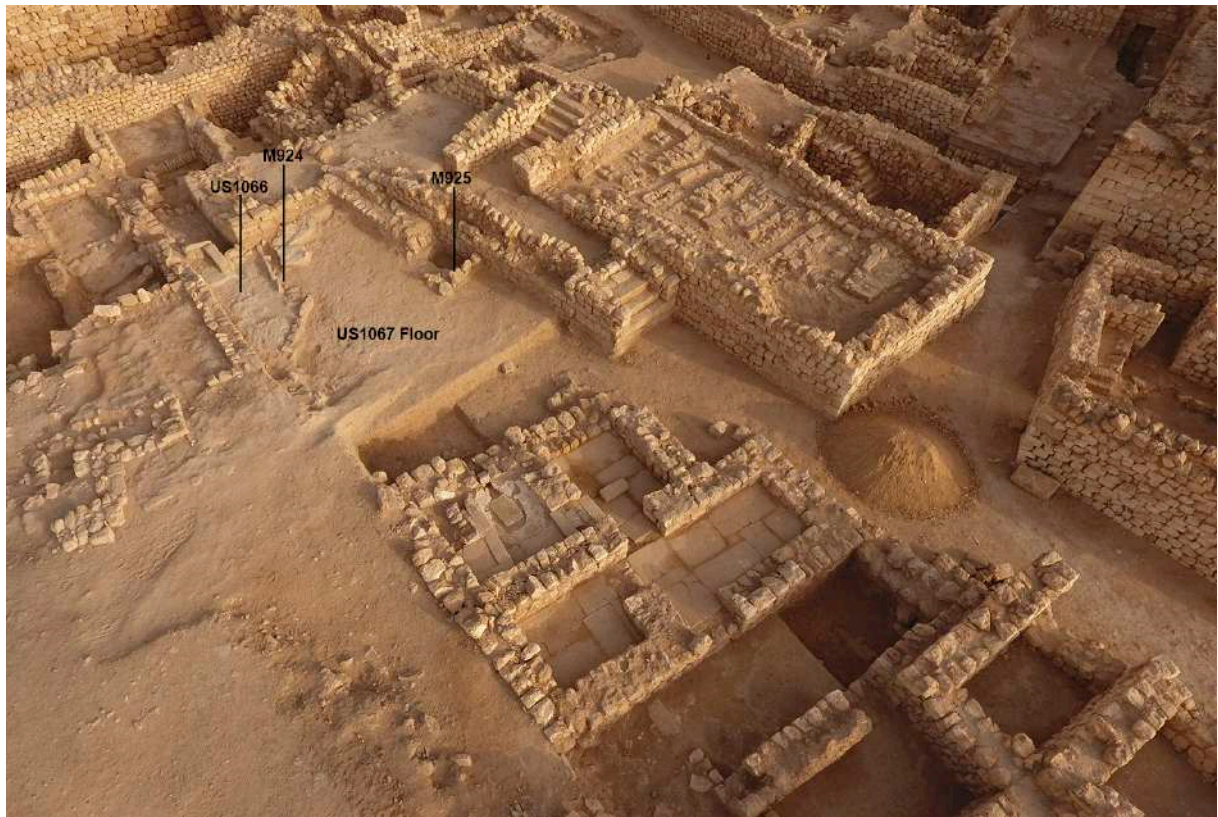
² The channel was already discovered during the past campaign (SUM18C).

³ The bones were collected as sample.

⁴ For the description see p. 17



Matrix of Room A291



General view of Room A291 from South-East, after excavation



Deep sounding in front of wall M909



Channel M926, West view

Excavation in Area F: deep sounding in room A322, building BF10 (trench supervisor: Giulia Buono).

A sounding was open in the northern half of the room A322. The aim of this work was to investigate the foundation of the walls M914, M917 and M918. The following stratigraphic sequence was unearthed:

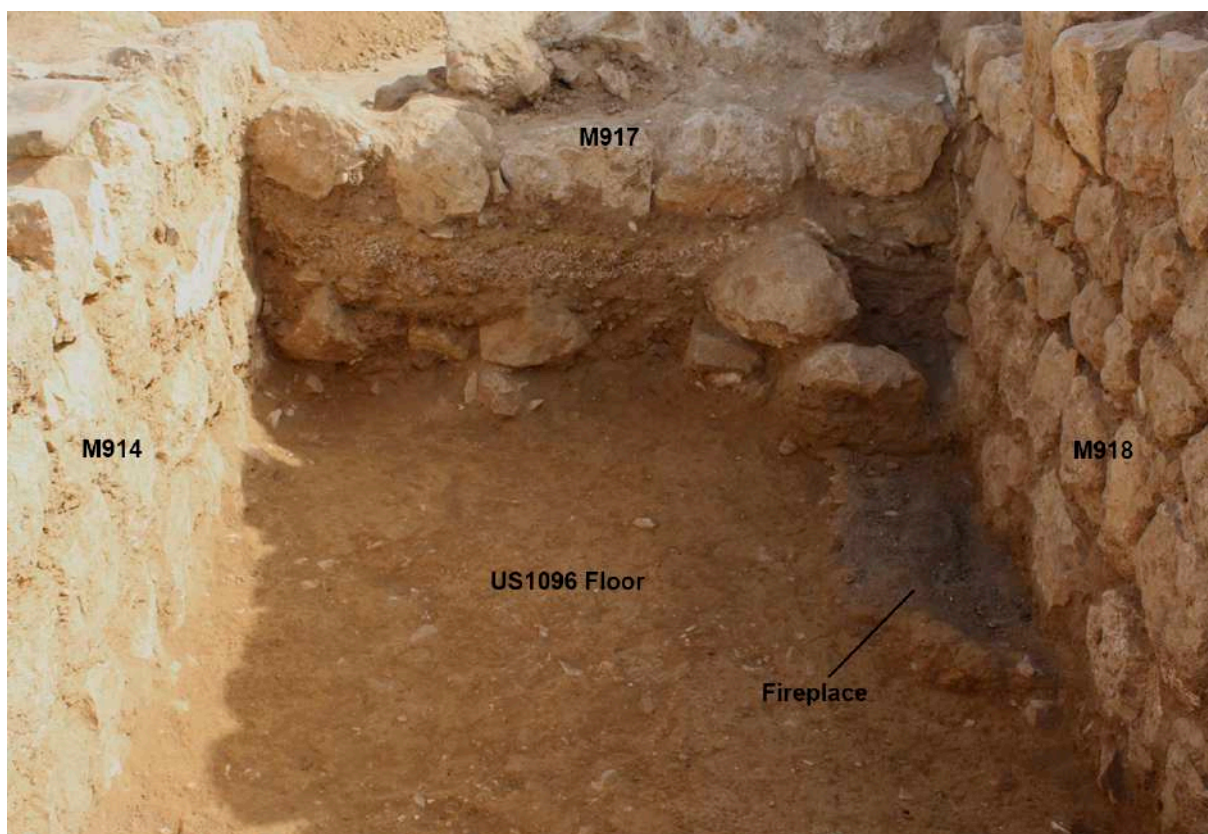
- US1058 floor: this layer was left *in situ* during the last campaign SUM18C. It is the foundation of the northern wall (M917) of room A322. This floor corresponds to the same phase of US440 floor of street A156. It means that the passage from street A156 to room A322 was interrupted at this time;
- US1093: below US1058 floor, a layer made of tiny yellowish grits and medium compact in consistence was identified at an elevation of 28.03 m. No findings.
- US1094: after the removal of US1093, a new layer was detected at an elevation of 27.96 m. It consisted of small grits of various colours (white, grey and red), medium compact in consistence. No findings.
- US1095: layer made of stones collapsed from the surrounding walls.
- US1096: the collapse covered a layer made of brown compact loam and it was detected at an elevation of 27.71 m. Few pottery shards and two nails (MI369) were found in the layer.
- US1096 floor: below its accumulation, a floor made of hard packed soil, brownish in colour with white inclusions and small charcoals was unearthed at an elevation of 27.51 m. A fireplace was located close the wall M918. This floor constituted the foundation of the walls M914 (27.53 m) and M918 (27.71 m).
- US1099: layer made of limestone chips that covered the bedrock. The **bedrock** was identified at an elevation of 27.40 m.

Preliminary remarks:

1. The buildings BF10 and BA13 were built during the 1st phase of the city. Surely, the building BF10 had two phases of construction and occupation, as the channel unearthed in room A319 testified. During the 2nd phase of the city, the building BF10 fell into disuse.
2. The access from room A322 to the street A156 was closed at the same time of US440 floor in street A156.



Deep sounding in Room A322, during excavation (South view)



Deep sounding in Room A322, after excavation (South view)

Excavation in Area F: deep sounding in room A324, East of Monumental Building 2 (trench supervisor: Giulia Buono).

The excavation of the room A234 started during SUM14B campaign and it stopped at the level of US703 but this layer wasn't totally removed from the room. The aim of this sounding during this campaign was the investigation of the earlier layers until the bedrock.

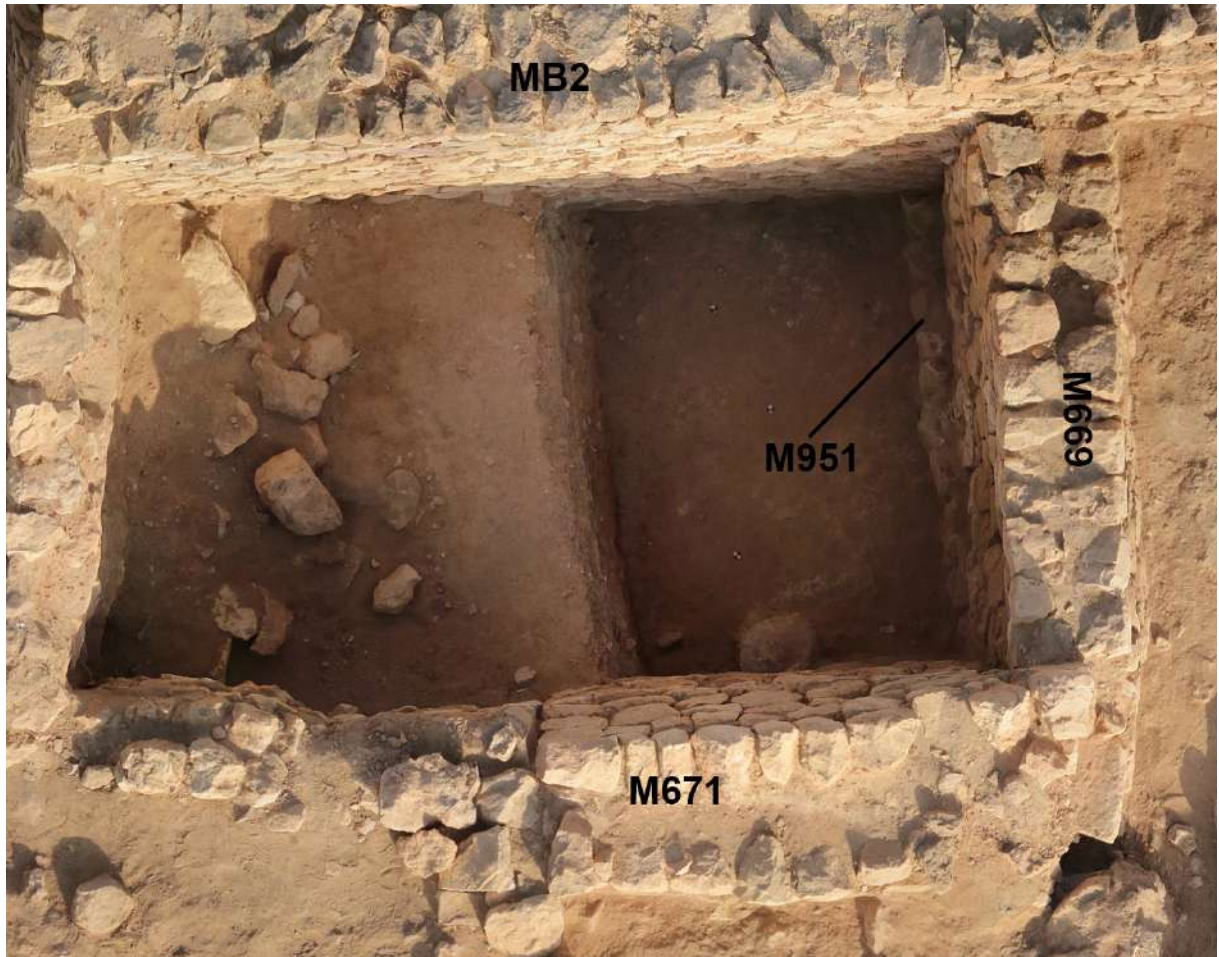
The following stratigraphic sequence was unearthed in room A234:

- US703: layer made of loose loam, brown in colour with ash lenses, animal bones and few pieces of pottery (elevation 26.85 m);
- US703 floor: hard packed soil with clay matrix. It showed red inclusions due to the presence of a big fireplace that cut the layer (elevation 26.62 m);
- US1085: layer made of medium compact loam, dark brown in colour with a large amount of animal bones and pottery shards;
- US1085 floor: hard packed soil, grey in colour mixed with mud bricks; a *Chlamys Townsendi* shell used as oil lamp (Sh868) and a clay stopper (CI91) were found in the layer;
- US1088: layer made of loose loam, reddish brown in colour with white inclusions (plaster), charcoals, a large amount of animal bones and pottery shards;
- US1088 floor: kind of floor, medium compact in consistence with clayish inclusions. Foundation layer of walls M669 and M671 (elevation 26.15 m);
- US1089: thin layer of loose loam, brown in colour with charcoals. Scarce presence of animal bones and pottery shards; a stone pendant (S3164) was found in the layer;
- US1089 floor: hard packed soil, brown in colour with tiny white inclusions and charcoals. Two big and flat stones stand on it, in the eastern part of the sounding (elevation 25.92 m);
- US1090: medium compact layer, brown in colour with charcoals. Foundation layer of wall M951; three stone tools (S3165, S3166, S3167) were found in the layer;
- US1091: layer made of limestone chips that covered the bedrock. The **bedrock** was detected at an elevation of 25.75 m.

Preliminary remarks

1. After a preliminary observation of the pottery discovered in the layers, it seems that the layers US1091 and 1089 belonged to the 1st - 2nd phase of Sumhuram, while the 3rd phase started at the level of US1088;

2. The layers US1088 and US1085 could be interpreted as intentional fillings (dumps) of the room A234;
3. The wall M951, of which only one row of stones is preserved, could belong to the earliest phase, after used as foundation of wall M669.



Deep sounding in Room A324

Excavation in Area F: area to the East of BF5 - Monumental Building 2 (trench supervisor: Cleto Carbonara)

The area located to the East of the so-called Monumental Building 2 have been excavated during several campaigns: SUM14B, SUM14C, SUM15A and SUM18A. The excavations of the previous campaigns reveled the presence of different structures belonging to different occupational phases of Sumhuram.

The main aim of the campaign SUM19A is to provide more information about the layout of the area through the history of the city.



General view of the area before excavation from South-East

Rooms A324 and A326

Rooms A324 and A326 form a complex of two rooms located *circa* 5 m to the East of the Monumental Building 2.

The more western one, A324, is an almost squared room measuring 2.90 x 2.45 m. delimited by the walls M921 to the West, M922 to the North, M890 to the East and M886 to the South. A door 0.60 m wide was located in the North-West corner of the room. US700 was excavated in A324. It is an accumulation layer made of loam grayish-brown in color and loose in consistence with collapsed stones big, medium and small in size, and fragmentary mud-bricks. US700 covered the northern

wall of the room completely made of mud-bricks, and a floor of well-trod soil very compact in consistence and grayish in color. The floor was found at the elevation of 28.53 m. US700 returned a fragment of a soft-stone deep bowl (S3122), and a set of two rounded shell beads (Sh866). Thirty-one pottery shards were found in A324: twenty-one belong to storage vessels, two to table vessels and eight to kitchen vessels.

The second room of the complex A326 is located to the East of A324, but it is not connected with it. A326 is an almost squared room covering an area of *circa* 2.60 x 2.25 m and it is delimited by the walls M890 to the West, M891 to the North, M952 to the East and M886 to the South. The entrance to A326 was located in the North-East corner of the room and it was *circa* 0.80 m wide, with two sandstone slabs marking the southern side of the door. In A326 US1035 was excavated. It is an accumulation layer mainly composed by fragmentary mud-bricks probably collapsed from the upper part of the walls, mixed with loam, reddish-brown in color. A well-trod soil grayish in color and compact in consistence was found at the elevation of 28.65 m. A small rounded fireplace is located in the center of the room and it is *circa* 0.20 m in diameter. Two stone tools were found in US1035: a complete pestle (S3141) and a fragment of a grinding slab (S3142). US1035 returned only three pottery shards and all of them belong to storage vessels.

M923 is a semi-rounded structure 1.60 m long and 0.80 m wide located immediately to the north of the room A324. It leans on the northern wall of the room M922 and is delimited by roughly worked sandstone blocks, big and medium in size. This structure was filled by loam loose in consistence and brown in color with traces of burnt and charcoals (US1063). At the bottom there is a floor made by mud-bricks. Traces of burnt have also been found at the exterior of the structure. US1063 returned several animal bones and shells and three fragments of soft-stone vessels (S3123, S3124, S3134) and a hand-stone (S3125). M923 could be interpreted as a kiln for the preparation of food.



Aerial view of the rooms A324 and A326 and the kiln M923 after excavation

Rooms A325, A327 and A328

The removal of US700 in the area located to the north of the complex formed by the rooms A324, A326 and the kiln M923 revealed the presence of three rooms arranged side by side and returned three small finds: a fragment of an inscribed bronze plaque (MB1057), a bronze coin (Co1202), and a crucible (G263).

The northernmost one is A325. It is a rectangular-shaped long and narrow space, which covers an area of 3.70 x 1.10 m, and it is delimited by the wall M876 to the North, which belongs to the room A306, and the wall M711 to the South. The room is open to the West and connected with another room A247, which was previously excavated during SUM15A campaign. Room A325 is closed to the East by a wall leaning on M876 and M877. This wall is made of undressed limestone blocks in its northern part and well worked sandstone blocks in its southern part. The southern half of the wall makes an offset toward West, narrowing the width of the room in its south-eastern corner.



General view of the area after the removal of US700 from South

US1064 was excavated in A325. It is an accumulation layer made of loam loose in consistence and grayish in color with a lot of animal bones, crushed shells and small sized limestone blocks. Fragmentary mud-bricks, probably fallen from the walls, were located along the southern wall of the room and near the passage connecting A325 to the rooms located to the West. A well-trod soil was found at the elevation of 28.30 m. It has been interpreted as floor (US1064 floor) but it was preserved only along the southern wall of the room. US1064 returned a fragment of an *unguentarium* and two fragments of a crucible (G260 and G261, G262), two worked bones (B118 and B119), a fragment of an iron blade (MI361), and five fragments of soft-stone vessels (S3129, S3130, S3131, S3132 and S3150). Sixty-nine pottery shards were found in US1064: fifty-seven belong to storage vessels, five to table vessels and seven to kitchen vessels.

US1064 diagnostic pottery

US1064	Fr.	Type
	1	Type I.1.1.2 ⁵
	2	Type I.1.1.1
	3	Amphore Egyptienne 3
	4	Type III.1.4
	5	Type II.1.8
	6	Type III.1.4.1
	7	Type III.1.2.2
	8	Type III.1.4.1

⁵ For the typology of the pottery from Sumhuram see: A. Pavan 2017; *A Cosmopolitan City on the Arabian Coast. The Imported and Local Pottery from Khor Rori. Khor Rori Report 3*. Arabia Antica 12, Roma.

The western half of the wall closing A325 to the South could have had some problems of stability and it was strengthened adding another row of stones (M712) along its northern face. A door 0.80 m wide is located in the southern wall of A325 and linked it with A327, another room located to the south of A325.



A325 after excavation from East

A327 is a long rectangular room delimited by the walls M711 to the North, M878 to the East, M713/930 to the South and M671 to the West. The room was connected to A325 to the North through a door in M711 and was connected to the room A328 to the South through a passage between the walls M713 and M930. Two layers were excavated in A327. US1073 in the eastern part of the room and US1062 in the western one. Both layers were covered by US700 and were found respectively at the elevations of 28.70 m and 28.58 m. US1073 is an accumulation layer medium compact in consistence and dark brown in color with a lot of traces and lenses of burnt and few stones medium and small in size. It returned a good amount of iron slags and animal bones. Several objects were found in US1073: an iron rod and a fragment of an iron plaque (MI362 and MI363), two fragments of soft-stone vessels (S3146 and S3147), a grinding slab (S3148) and a fragment of a handle made of limestone (S3149). US1073 partially covered US1062, an accumulation layer very loose in consistence and red in color with a lot of sandstone and limestone blocks small and medium in size. A bronze coin was found in US1062 (Co1207).

US1062 covered the western part of the walls delimiting the rooms A327 and A328, so it is probable that they formed a large open space separated only in its eastern part by the wall M930, during the latest occupational phase of the city. This space was accessible from an opening located at the eastern end of the wall M711.

US1073 diagnostic pottery

US1073	Fr.	Type
	1	Glazed vessel
	2	Fine Gray Pottery Type 4 ⁶
	3	Dressel 2-4 Amphora (Tyrrenian)
	4	Dressel 2-4 Amphora (Tyrrenian)
	5	Similar to type II.1.35
	6	New Type
	7	Type I.1.1.1

US1062 diagnostic pottery

US1062	Fr.	Type
	1	Dressel 2-4 Amphora (Tyrrenian)
	2	Glazed vessel

US1073 and US1062 covered another layer, US1077, found only in the center of the room. It is a clay layer very compact in consistence and red in color, which did not return any material. After the removal of these layers, US1073 floor was reached at the elevation of 28.25 m. It is a compact well-trod soil grayish in color and preserved only in the eastern part of the room. A large sub-circular 1.90 m long, 1.50 m wide and 0.18 m deep pit cut US1073 floor. It has oblique walls and a rounded bottom and was filled by US1080, a layer very loose in consistence and brown in color with few small stones, animal bones, and a lot of charcoals and iron slags.

⁶ For the description of this type see: H. Schenk 2014; “Tissamaharama pottery sequence and the Early Historic maritime Silk Route across the Indian Ocean”, in *Zeitschrift für Archäologie Aussereuropäischer Kulturen* 6



US1073 floor with the pit in A327 from North-East

In the western part of the room, US1062 covered US1078. It was found at the elevation of 28.18 m and its eastern part was covered by US1073 floor. It is an accumulation layer made of loam medium compact in consistence and red in color with limestone blocks medium in size mainly located in the western part of the room. The layer was found in the whole room but its thickness changes between the western part where it is 0.18 m and the eastern one where it is 0.08 m. US1078 returned only few animal bones and two pottery shards, together with an almost complete whetstone (S3161).

The removal of US1078 reveled a different situation. Two rooms were unearthed. The western one, A238, was partially excavated during SUM15A campaign. It is rectangular in shape and delimited by the walls M711 to the North, M671 to the West and M713 to the South. It is separated from A327 by the wall M950 having a North-South orientation. A238 is connected to A327 with a door located in its South-East corner and opened in the wall M950. A second door permitted the passage from A238 to the room located to the South. The door was also located in the South-East corner, but opened in the southern wall of the room M713. In A238, a new layer light brown in color and medium compact in consistence was found below US1078 at the elevation of 28.00 m. The excavation stopped at this level.

A327, after the removal of US1073 floor and US1078, is a rectangular shaped room delimited by the walls M711 to the North, M878 to the East and M950 to the West. The wall M930 was removed because of its higher foundation related to US1073 floor, set at the elevation of 28.00 m on its

southern side and 28.30 m on its northern one. Another wall with the same orientation, M949, was found below it. It closed the room A327 to the South and it was built with limestone and sandstone slabs. US1087 was excavated in A327. It is an accumulation layer brownish in color and medium compact in consistence with few stones small in size. US1087 is characterized by the presence of a lot of charcoals and traces of burnt mainly located in the western part of the room and in its North-West corner. It also returned a good amount of animal bones and shells. US1087 covered a structure composed by three rows of limestone and sandstone slabs sloping from North to South. These structures are placed at a distance of *circa* 0.30 m from each other, filled by US1087, and all of them lean on the wall M949 to the South. The two westernmost rows also lean on the wall M711 to the North, while the eastern one is separated from it by a distance of *circa* 0.40 m. This structure could be interpreted as a group of drain channels. US1087 returned a fragment of an iron knife (MI368), a bronze coin (Co1217) and a fragment of a stone vessel (S3160).



Group of drain channels in A327 leaning on the wall M949 to the South

The room A328 is located to the South of A238 and A327 and it is delimited by the wall M878 to the East, M949 to the West. A328 is closed to the North by the wall M930, but after its removal the northern limit of the room is M949. It is not possible to determinate the real extension of the room because it is partially covered by the more recent structure of the room A326. The southern side of the room is partially closed by the wall M940 which forms a corner with the wall M890 extending

southward. The room could have an irregular shape, with its eastern part enlarging toward South. A door in the North-West corner of the room connected A328 with A238. Another door was located in the middle of the western wall of A328, M942, and connected the room with A237, a small squared room located to the West of A328. A third door was located in the eastern wall of A328, M878. US1086 is the first layer excavated in A328. It is an accumulation layer made of loam loose in consistence and grayish-brown in color mixed with a lot of limestone and sandstone blocks small, medium and big in size. US1086 covered the two higher steps of a staircase leaning on the eastern wall of the room M878. This layer rests on a well-trod soil, US1086 floor, compact in consistence and brownish in color with several traces of burnt on it. US1086 floor was found at the elevation of 28.12 m.



US1086 floor in A328 from East

US1086 returned a good amount of animal bones and shells, several iron slags and a *Chlamys Townsendi* shell used as oil lamp (Sh867).

US1086 diagnostic pottery

US1086	Fr.	Type
	1	Type III.1.18.1
	2	Type I.1.1.5
	3	Type III.1.2.1
	4	Amphora

The wall M930 was related to the US1986 floor and, after its removal, the room A328 was delimited by the wall M949 on its northern side. US1097 was excavated below US1086. It is an accumulation layer made of loam with clayish matrix, medium compact in consistence and brown in color. It is characterized by the presence of small limestone blocks and charcoals. It returned few animal bones and shells and three fragments of soft-stone vessels (S3168, S3169 and S3171) and a whet-stone (S3170). US1097 returned nineteen pottery shards among which eight belong to storage vessels, seven to table vessels and four to kitchen vessels. US1097 covered three limestone slabs with a very smoothed upper surface located along the wall M949. Two of them are squared in shape and the third one is rectangular.

US1097 diagnostic pottery

US1097	Fr.	Type
	1	New type. Similar to II.6.4 but without the black internal surface

US1097 covered a more compact level found at the elevation of 27.85 m and US1098 was excavated below it. US1098 is an accumulation layer very similar to that excavated above it. US1098 is made of loam with a clayish matrix reddish in color and medium compact in consistence. US1098 returned a big amount of animal bones and shells and a lot of iron slags. A fragment of quarts was also found in US1098. Several objects come from US1098: two *Chlamys Townsendi* shells used as oil lamp (Sh869 and Sh872), two fragments of soft-stone vessels (S3172 and S3173), two hand-stones (S3175 and S3179), a grinding slab (S3174) and a whet-stone (S3180). US1098 returned thirty-one pottery shards: seventeen belong to storage vessels, three to table vessels and eleven to kitchen vessels.

US1098 diagnostic pottery

US1098	Fr.	Type
	1	Type III.1.8.3
	2	Similar to Type II.1.9
	3	Type II.1.4
	4	Type I.1.1.5
	5	Dressel 2-4 Amphora (Campanian)
	6	Type I.2.4.3
	7	Type III.1.4.1 (red)

US1098 covered other two steps of the staircase in the western part of the room and the lower one still has a plaster coating. Immediately to the South of the staircase, in the section, has been noted a mud-brick wall with a East-West orientation leaning on the western wall of the room, M942. The

mud-brick wall also has a plaster coating partially preserved on its northern face. The excavation in the room A328 stopped at the elevation of 27.34 m and US1098 was not completely removed.

Room A237 and the staircase M704

Room A237 is a small 3.03 x 2.60 m room located to the West of A328, between it and the complex of rooms directly leaning on the eastern side of the so-called Monumental Building 2. A237 is squared in shape and it is delimited by the walls M670 to the West, M713 to the North, M942 to the East and M940 to the South.

The western part of the room was already excavated during the SUM14C campaign, when its North-West corner was unearthed. It was possible to excavate the whole room only after the complete removal of the later structures named A324 and the kiln M923. The first layer excavated in this area is US1062. It is an accumulation layer made of loam very loose in consistence and reddish in color, mixed with limestone and sandstone blocks small and medium in size. US1062 returned a good amount of animal bones and shells, some fragments of glass and several iron slags. A quite rounded fireplace was placed in the center of the room and it was probably used for cooking purposes. US1062 covered the walls delimiting A237 and rested on a well-trod soil compact in consistence and grayish in color interpreted as a floor. US1062 floor was found at the elevation of 28.20 m.

US1101 was excavated below US1062. It is an accumulation layer made of loam loose in consistence and brown in color with a lot of charcoals and traces of burnt. Few limestone and sandstone blocks medium and small in size were found mainly in the southern part of the room. US1101 was excavated till the elevation of 28.08 m. and was not completely removed. It returned only few animal bones and some shells.

The area in front of the staircase M704, located to the South of the room A237, was also excavated. US1062 was also removed in this area and it covered a wall with an East-West orientation, supporting the staircase M704 on its southern side. It is made of a single row of small squared sandstone slabs and it is making a corner toward South at its eastern end.

US1062 diagnostic pottery

US1062	Fr.	Type
	3	Type III.1.30 (?)

The area in front of the staircase M704 is a small corridor delimited by the walls M940 to the North, M890 to the East, and the wall supporting the staircase to the South. Probably the corridor was “L – shaped” because a large opening was placed between the eastern end of the wall supporting the staircase and the wall M890.

US1102 was excavated below US1062. It is an accumulation layer made of loam light brown in color and medium compact in consistence, with few fragments of mud-bricks and some limestone and sandstone blocks small in size. Several fragments of plaster were found in US1102, together with a good amount of animal bones and shells and few iron slags. US1102 returned only a glass bead (G267) and seven pottery shards: one belong to storage vessel, four to table vessels, and two to kitchen vessels. US1102 was excavated till the elevation of 27.81 m, but it was not completely removed. The excavation of US1102 reveled two more steps of the staircase M704, which was already partially unearthed during the campaign SUM15A, and the door linking the small corridor in front of M704 and the room A237. The door was located immediately to the East of the staircase and it has a threshold made by a step used to reach the higher level in A237.



Particular of the staircase M704 and the entrance to A237



General view of the area after excavation

Preliminary remarks

Several structures, which belong to different phases of the city's development, have been excavated during SUM19A campaign in the area located to the east of the Monumental Building 2.

At least three large periods have been recognized and it was possible to observe the change of the function of the area through the time. The three different phases will be described from the later to the more ancient one.


The first period is characterized by the presence of an isolated complex of two rooms A324 and A326, completed by the semi-rounded kiln M923 added to the northern side of the complex and probably used for the preparation of the food. This complex is imposed on previous structures and most probably it refers to the abandonment phase of the city.

The second phase recognized during SUM19A excavations includes several rooms connected to each other, which they should be part of a large building probably related to the iron working. This probable building has not been completely excavated and it will need further investigations. This phase can be divided in two sub-periods:

- The most recent sub-period is characterized by a large structure delimited to the North by the wall M711, to the East by the wall M878, and to the West by the walls M671 and M670. The internal space is divided in two large rooms A327 and A328, separated at least in their eastern part by the wall M930. Two entrances were individuated: one located in the North-East corner of the building, leading to the room A327; the other one located on the eastern side of the building, which opens in A328.
- In the earlier sub-period, the interior of the building is divided in several rooms: a large rectangular one, A327, in the northern part of the excavated area; and two smaller ones in the southern part of the excavated area, A328 rectangular in shape located to the East and A237 squared in shape to the West. Two stories can be supposed because the presence of a staircase in the eastern part of A328. The building still has two entrances also in this phase. The main entrance is located in the center of the northern side of the building. The secondary and narrower door is located in the eastern side. All the excavated rooms show the presence of fireplaces and pits, which returned a good amount of iron slags.

The function of the area is completely different in third phase, which is the most ancient one. The limits and probably also the dimensions of the building are the same of that ones described above. The two entrances were also located in the same place. The main changes occurred in the room A327: it is now divided in two different rooms by the wall M950 and the eastern one is occupied by a structure composed by three small walls delimiting a group of drain channels. The presence of small holes in the structure of the wall M711 and the incline of the three walls from North toward South can enhance the hypothesis of a building linked to the collection of the water or another liquid substance.


Object Index Card

Registration Nr. SUM19A, US1089, 1; S3164			
Provenance Area F, A234			
Drawing code Nr.			
Definition Pendant	State of preservation Good	Measures cm l. 9.1 w. 2.0 h. th. 1.6 diam.	Shape Elongated
Material Stone	Preserved part Complete		Section Squared
Description Elongated stone pendant with squared section. On the top there is a trough-rounded hole (diam. 0.7 cm). Horizontal incisions are at the four corners of the object. It could has been used also as a weight.			
Responsible Cleto Carbonara		Date 06/03/19	

Object Index Card

Registration Nr. SUM19A, US1064, 1; G260			
Provenance Area F, i/5, A325			
Drawing code Nr.			
Definition <i>Unguentarium</i>	State of preservation	Measures cm l. w. h. 4.4 th. diam. 2.0	Shape Date-shaped
Material Glass	Preserved part Fragmentary		Section
Description Fragment of a date-shaped decorated with wavy ridges imitating the date skin. Fragments of convex base.			
Responsible Cleto Carbonara		Date 10/2/2019	

Pottery Card

Index Nr. SUM19A; US1073, 2			
Provenance Area F; i/5, A237			
Photo			
Drawing code Nr.			
Category Table			
Shape Closed	Type Jar/jug	Preserved part Wall	State of preservation
Measures cm th. 0.5 d. of the wall 18.0	Colour inter. Surface Grey 2.5Y 6/1	Colour ext. Surface Grey 7.5YR 5/1	Colour section Greyish
Characteristic of paste Compact and fine	Inclusions Mica; some tiny black mineral inclusions		Method manufacture
Surface treatment (ext.) Burnishing	Surface type (ext.) Slip		Decoration (ext.) Rouletted
Surface treatment (int.) Smoothing	Surface type (int.) Plain		Decoration (int.)
Description/observations Two fragments not joining of table jar or jug, similar to Type 4 - Fine Grey Pottery (See Schenk 2014). On the external surface three band of rouletted decoration are visible.			
Date 26/02/2019		Responsible Carlotta Rizzo	