



Jebel Misht, Physical Graffiti

Oman

In November 2013, I went to Oman with Andrea Migliano, planning a three-week climbing trip. We rented a car and drove to Jabal Misht, the most famous mountain in the country. We hiked along the huge south face and checked a line on the right side, apparently unclimbed, though attempted by a French team some years ago. (We didn't know this yet.) We planned a fast ascent, with two ropes, cams, a couple of pegs, and two bottles of water.

We started climbing the following day at dawn in a big corner with a good limestone. After a couple of pitches we started simul-climbing. The rock was quite solid, with good holds, and the line was clear. In the afternoon we arrived at the steepest part of the wall—in front of us was an overhanging corner. I started leading this scary pitch. The rock was rotten and covered by sand. After 20m virtually unprotected, I managed to place a peg with one hand (while I was hammering Andrea could feel the anchor vibrating below) and then I reached a good ledge.

After some steep but safer pitches, we arrived at the big ledge three-quarters of the way up the wall. It was too late to finish, so we lit a fire and bivied there; unfortunately, during the night it started raining. The next day Andrea led a corner with very nice features, then we simul-climbed fast to the flat summit. We descended a gully right of the wall. **Physical Graffiti: 1,000m, 6c.** [This route may share some ground with Riddle in the Sands (Barlow-Bishop-Chaudhry, 2001), but the key sections are completely independent and well to the right.]

After a couple of days exploring canyons, we opened a route on the northeast face of a tower northwest of Al Hamra that we later learned was called Jebel Ghul. The rock was good. We started in the middle of the wall and then trended to the right, where we found the steep crux pitches (650m, 6b+). We descended the opposite (southern) side, leaving one rappel anchor. [The Italians began climbing on the British Route (Davison-Hornby-Sammut, 2002, 650m, VII), of which they were unaware, before moving right on the upper pillar. The British descended the west ridge of the formation. In 2006, a French trio climbed another line in the same vicinity.]

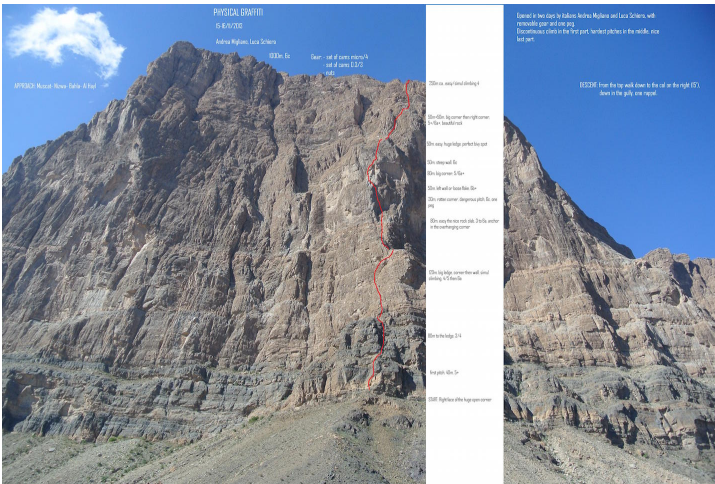
We moved to Musandam, in the northern part of the country, looking for other walls. The climate there is much different: less hot and rainier. We found a nice wall, climbed the first pitch, then bailed when Andrea dislocated a shoulder.

– Luca Schiera, Italy

Images



Unnamed tower northwest of Al Hamra.



Topo for the Italian route Physical Graffiti on Jabal Misht.



Approximate lines of the three known routes on the northeast face of Jebel Ghul. Black line: Original Route (650m, VII, Davison-Hornby-Sammut, 2002). Yellow line: A Trois Sans Vin Dans la Tour (VII+, Christophel-Rigaut-Toutan, 2006). Orange line: Italian Route (650m, 6b+, Migliano-Schiera, 2013). The blue line shows the 2002 descent route.

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