

Results of the 2008 Valley of Peace Archaeology Project: Non-Temple Summit Excavations

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National Institute of Culture and History
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Chapter 1 The 2008 Season at Yalbac: Goals and Results

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The major goals of the 2008 Valley of Peace Archaeology (VOPA) project consisted of exploring non-temple ritual activities at Yalbac and to finish collecting settlement data from the Cara Blanca area. The long-term goals of the Valley of Peace Archaeology (VOPA) project are to explore the life histories of Maya temples (e.g., Lucero 2007), thus it is critical to collect as much data from associated areas as possible. To accomplish this, we focused our efforts at: 1) the 2 x 2 m test pit on the platform of Temple 2F; 2) Str. 3C (7 x 3 m, 1 m tall); and 3) two 2 x 2 m units near Temple 2A. For Cara Blanca, we measured the dimensions and depths of several of the pools to collect necessary data to plan an underwater diving expedition in 2010 that will be organized by Dr. Patricia Beddows, one of the top freshwater divers in the world. Patricia Beddows and Edward Mallon spent one day visiting the pools we plan to dive in 2010; Andrew Kinkella spear-headed collecting information on the pools, as well as collected the final settlement data for his dissertation (see chapter 4).

The 2008 staff consisted of myself as PI and two University of Illinois TAs: Melissa Baltus and Sarah Otten. In addition, as mentioned, Andrew Kinkella came to Belize June 2-11. Project members included nine field school students from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (Anth 454/455): Cassidy Britton, Andrew Crawford, Peter Diebold, Becky Gates, Molly Haneberg, Katherine Kramer, Eleonor Olszewski, Sara Schroder, and Susan Wachowski. Finally, I hired five excavation assistants from the Valley of Peace Village: Cleofa Choc, Don Luna, Ernesto Vasquez, Stanley Choc, and Juan Antonio Lópes. Mr. Scott maintained our equipment.

Funding for the 2008 season was provided by an Arnold O. Beckman Award (\$22,264; subtract \$8500 for a total station not yet purchased) and Center for Latin American and Caribbean Studies research travel grant (\$1500); total of available funds is \$15,264. The amounts listed below include project expenses only. Students paid their own expenses (airfare, tuition, food, IOA fees, transportation, etc.). Of the total, \$2960.26 was for round-trip airfare for the PI and two TAs; \$1970 was paid to the Institute of Archaeology for the permit application fee and administrative and consolidation fees; \$2904.60 for labor costs (including social security); \$3250 for vehicle rental; \$1478.43 for fuel; \$1133.97 for food for PI (and Beddows and Mallon); \$802.94 for lodging and lab at Banana Bank for PI, two TAs, and Beddows and Mallon; \$385.90 for the Belize conference (hotel, conference registration fees); and \$3481.41 for supplies including internet, phone cards, field equipment, copying, etc. Total expenses for the 2008 season were \$18,367.51 (PI dept. funds covered the remaining balance).

Yalbac: Background

Yalbac is located in the uplands near pockets of good agricultural land along a perennial stream, Yalbac Creek, in central Belize (Figure 1). It is a medium-size major center with at least six pyramid temples, several range structures, a ball court, a possible *sacbe*, three large plazas, and a royal acropolis over 20 meters tall (Figure 2) (Graebner 2002a, 2002b; Lucero et al. 2004). The excavated 1 x 2 m test pits in the centers of Plazas 2 and 3 both had 13 natural levels, or at least six construction phases (plaster floors and cobble ballasts) with ceramics dating from c. 300 B.C. to A.D. 900 (Conlon and Ehret 2002).

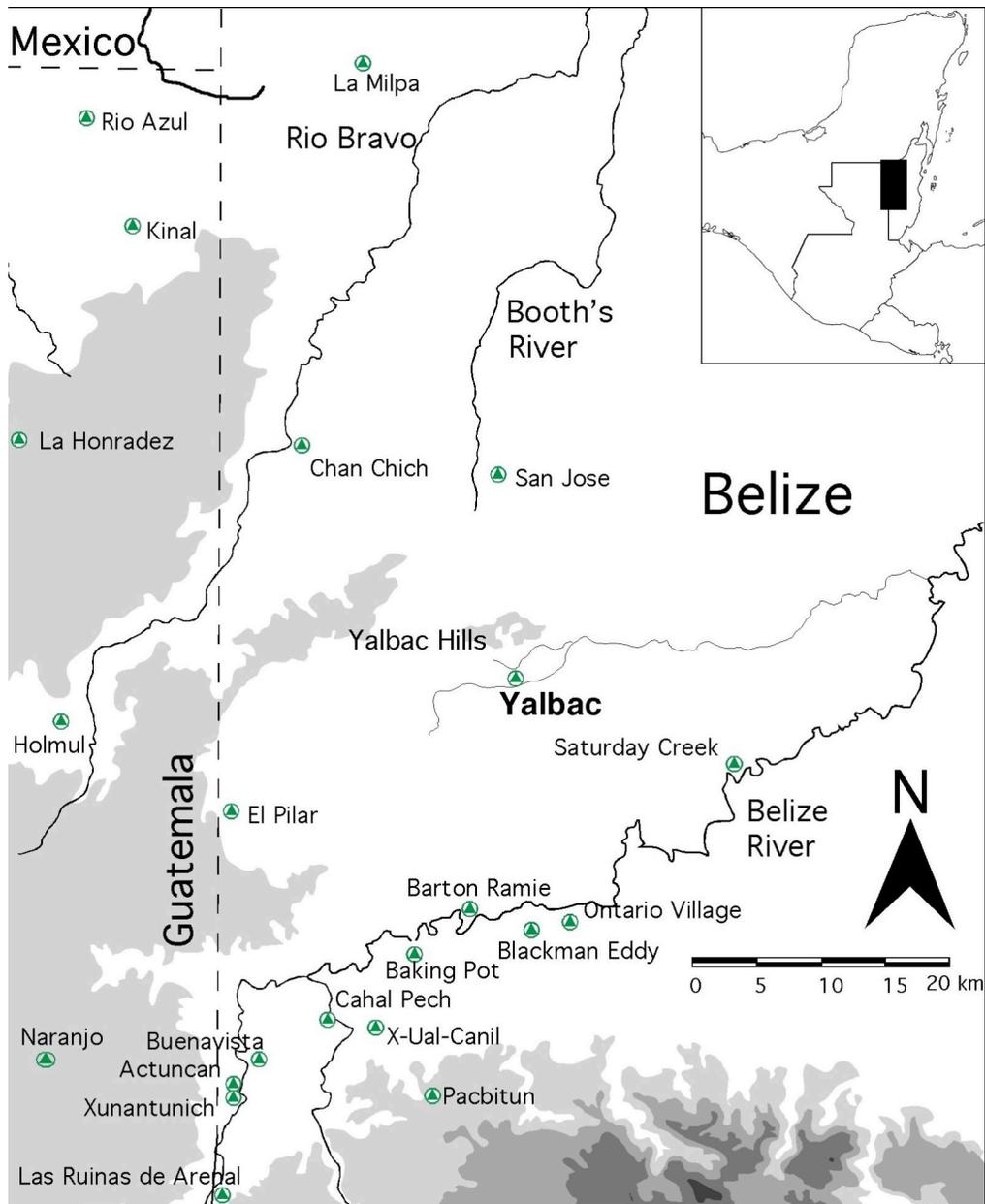


Figure 1 The Belize River area and location of Yalbac and Cara Blanca pools

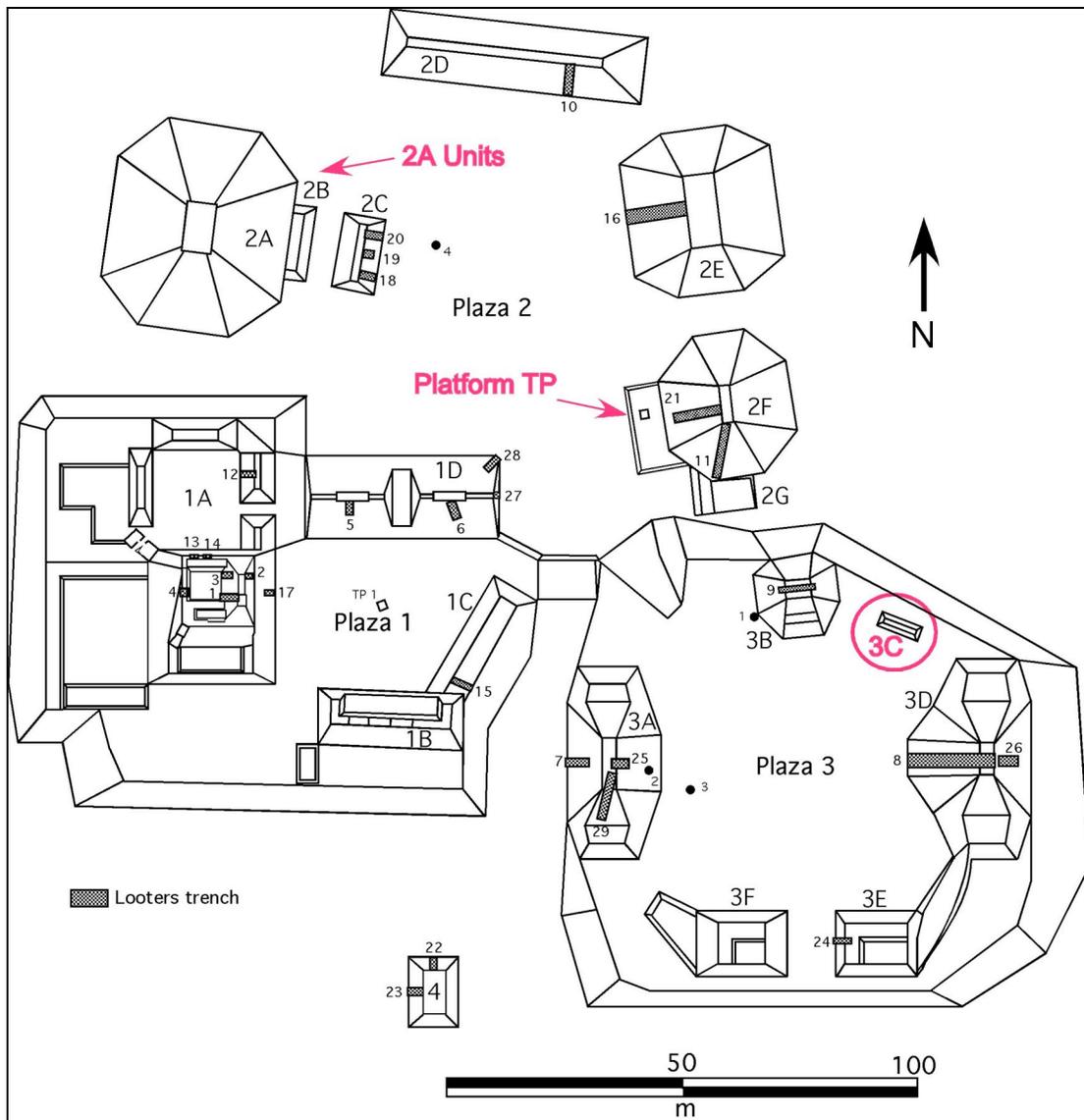


Figure 2 Yalbac with excavation areas noted

2008 Results

Excavations

The major goals of the 2008 excavation units were to explore non-temple public ceremonial activities. We spent most of our time excavating a 2 x 2 m unit at the platform of Temple 2F and Structure 3C, a relatively small structure (7 x 3 m, 1 m tall) in an intriguing location between two major temples (Strs. 3B and 3D) on a large semi-restricted plaza, Plaza 3 (see chapters 2 and 3). Cross-culturally priests live near or in temples (e.g., Aztec Mexico, Medieval Europe, ancient Egypt, etc.). Colonial documents (e.g., Tozzer 1941) write of Maya priests discarding ceremonial objects once they are done conducting rites. If we find such 'ceremonial trash' (Walker 1995), it would provide us an idea as to the types of rituals conducted. Was this the case for the Classic Maya as well? Could Str. 3C have been a priest's house? Or did it house ceremonial objects? Preliminary lab analysis, conducted at Banana Bank, indicates feasting activities, and perhaps a living space. Sarah supervised Str. 3C excavations (Chapter 2), while Melissa ran things at the Platform 2F test pit (Chapter 3). At the latter, excavations began in 2005 (Lucero 2006) in an effort to find *stelae*; instead, we exposed several plaster floors and steps. This season, Melissa and her crew removed 2005 backdirt and continued excavations. They exposed several burned floors and platform steps; at first we were not sure what was going on until one of the sidewalls revealed a chamber! The Maya, at c. 200 B.C. had buried something, likely an

important individual; they continued to visit the chamber and make offerings (expressed via burned floors built against the chamber walls) for centuries. Sometime, perhaps c. A.D. 250, they removed whatever was in the chamber, conducted more rites involving burning, and covered the entire chamber with platform steps. We are pretty sure it was the penultimate resting place for someone who was important to the inhabitants of Yalbac—perhaps for their first king. Unfortunately for us, the Maya had removed any objects that would have indicated its actual function. Finally, we excavated two units near Temple 2A; one 2 x 2 m unit (unit 3) on the north center edge of this temple, and a c. 3 x 2 m pit (units 1 and 2) on a rock pile near the juncture of Strs. 2A and 2B (ballcourt).

Permission was granted by the Institute of Archaeology to line the units before backfilling with non-diagnostic artifacts (chert chunks and non-utilized flakes, undecorated body sherds) after having been recorded, labeled, and bagged in 2 mm museum quality plastic ziploc bags (labeled on the outside with Sharpie markers and the inside with tags). Artifacts were placed in the units from which they had been excavated. Diagnostic artifacts (rim sherds, decorated body sherds, obsidian, jade, faunal and human bone, marine shell, etc.) were recorded, labeled, and bagged the same way for storage in the Institute of Archaeology. See appendix for provenience and curation information. We also conducted preliminary ceramic analysis (type-variety) for chronological purposes and relied heavily on Gifford et al. (1976).

Architectural data from Yalbac will be compared to temple data from other centers to assess the political role of temples within and among different centers. Results will be disseminated through major peer review outlets and will contribute to our understanding of the politics of temple construction cross-culturally.

Cara Blanca Pools

Andrew Kinkella, a PhD student at the University of California, Riverside, collected the last of the survey data he needed for his dissertation on the settlement patterns between Yalbac and the Cara Blanca pools to the north and northeast. We also had a brief visit by one of the top freshwater divers, Dr. Patricia Beddows, who started a new position at Northwestern University in fall 2008 (and her dive partner, Ed Mallon). Robert Cavness was kind enough to provide us with a Polaris ATV and two of his crew, Winston and Renaldo, to show us around; we ended up visiting several pools (#1-6 and 16) (Figure 3). Beddows was quite impressed with their location and geological significance, and has agreed to help me organize a diving expedition. We will collect geological information and plot any ancient Maya artifacts. Several pools have ancient Maya structures nearby, indicating that the Maya likely made offerings into the pools. They, like caves, are portals to the underworld or Xibalba.



Figure 3. Cara Blanca pools

Beddows and Mallon evaluated water visibility and collected water samples to test salinity and types of minerals present (e.g., sulfur). If salinity is too high or there is too much sulfur, this could cause health problems over the long term; the 65 million year limestone formation might result in enough sulfur to cause health problems (Beddows, pers. comm.). To make sure water samples were not contaminated by surface debris, a strict protocol was used to collect water:

1. the plastic sample tubes were rinsed three times (fill ¼ full, cap, shake)
 2. the tube was inverted into water at a sampling depth of 0.3 meters; it was then turned upright, lifted out of the water quickly, and capped and labeled with a sharpie
 3. samples were kept out of sun; and no refrigeration was required to store samples
- Beddows and Mallon took GPS readings of buildings (e.g., Yalbac guard house), roads, pools, and so on. Table 1 only includes the pools coordinates.

Table 1. Pool UTM coordinates

Location	UTM easting	UTM northing	Elevation (m)*
Pool 1	301026	1927140	56
Pool 2	300140	1926909	50
Pool 3	301300	1927158	56
Pool 4	301683	1927021	58
Pool 5	301942	1927021	62
Pool 6	302795	1927154	47
Pool 16	302174	1927176	70

*uncertain accuracy

The previously unknown pool, #16, is not on any of the British UTM maps. It has steep white walls, and might be relatively recent in geological terms. Visible from the north edge was a turtle; sightings of a crocodile have also been reported.

Beddows and Mallon were also struck by the lack of noticeable caves in the cliff walls. The soft limestone might explain this, and led Mallon to suggest that the ancient Maya may have relied on other types of portals—the pools or cenotes (vs. the lake-like water bodies that exist on the east and west edges of the string of 23 water bodies).

Beddows, who has a background in geochemistry and hydrology, was not surprised when I informed her about the lack of obvious quarries near settlement (i.e., Class II soils; see Lucero et al. 2004). Limestone is more exposed in areas where soils develop; there might be less insoluble residue, which may result in limestone being exposed (i.e., quarries). Poorer quality limestone is found in areas with soils because it is porous.

San Jose

Loggers working for Yalbac Ranch and Cattle Corporation (Belize) Limited located the site of San Jose 20 May 2008. I was able to visit the site 28 June. Robert, Paula and Cody Cavness and crew drove us in two ATVs on logging roads. According to Thompson's 1939 published map, no looters' trenches were present. Of course, this fact had changed; in the brief amount of time we were able to walk around—only in Group A, I recorded at least three looter's trenches (Figure 4).

Unfortunately, due to dense canopy, we were unsuccessful in obtaining a GPS reading. However, Yalbac Limited crew can easily find the site again. We did not collect any artifacts. I sketched the location of the looters' trenches and took digital photos. The distance was 22 miles (35.4 km) from the guardhouse at Yalbac Creek.

Concluding Remarks

The proposed excavations provided additional information about ritual and religious practices at Yalbac, which will contribute to the long-term goals of the project to assess the roles of temples in Classic Maya society. Further, collecting the necessary information as a foundation to explore the Cara Blanca pools in 2010 will add to the growing body of data that Kinkella has collected from this area over the last several years. This research projects ties in excellently with broad project goals to better appreciate the role of ritual in politics in Classic Maya society. Results, especially once integrated with ongoing work at Yalbac and other sites in the VOPA area, will also reveal ceremonial interaction spheres, an aspect that has not been investigated at the regional level in the Maya area.

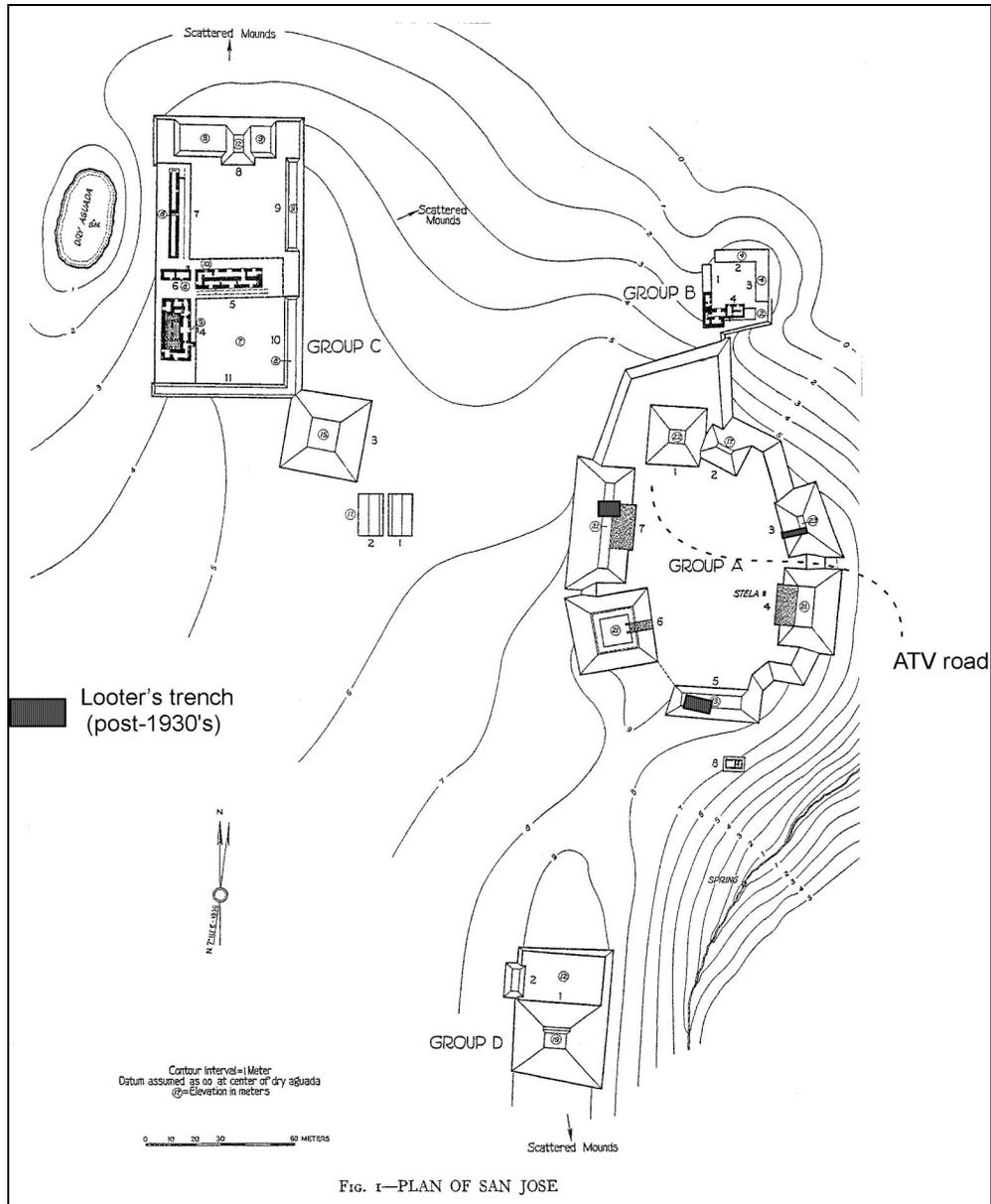


Figure 4. Original Thompson map with looters' trenches added in Group A (adapted from Thompson 1939:Figure 1).

Acknowledgements. As always, I appreciate the support the IOA as extended to VOPA over the years. And it was great staying at Banana Bank again. John, Carolyn, and Leisa Carr and their staff treated us like family, which was greatly appreciated. We also owe lots of gratitude to Nathan Jaeger at Banana Bank; his expertise with vehicles and ownership of lots of critical tools and equipment (e.g., car battery charger) permitted us to make it to Yalbac and beyond. Robert and Paula Cavness (and crew) always were supportive of our efforts on Yalbac Limited properties; and their taking me to San Jose was the icing on the cake. Special thanks are due to Hunter Jenkins and Mike Hincer of Forest Land Group for allowing us to work in the Yalbac area. Special thanks are also due to Patricia Beddows and Ed Mallon for taking time from their work in the Yucatán to visit and assess the Cara Blanca pools. Mrs. Choc kept us well fed; nobody can make breakfast and lunch like she can. And we so appreciate the Choc family welcoming us every morning at their house in the Valley of Peace. None of the work and teaching could have been accomplished without our experienced excavation assistants: Clefo Choc, Don Luna, Ernesto Vasquez, Stanley Choc, Juan Antonio López, and Mr. Scott. The students from the University

of Illinois field school were just fabulous, as were my two TAs, Melissa and Sarah. Finally, the 2008 season would not have been possible without the support of the Arnold O. Beckman Award and the Center for Latin American and Caribbean Studies; this support was greatly appreciated.

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Appendix
2008 Artifacts and curation information

Cat#	Site	Unit	Stratum/ Context	Description and comments	Curation location
900	3C	12	101	Probable burial vessel; Kaway Impressed bowl (late facet Spanish Lookout)	IOA
900	3C	12	101	3 rims, 4 bases, 2 diagnostic sherds, human bone (collected before realized it was a burial)	IOA
900	3C	12	101	34 body and 4 neck sherds, 1 chunk, 1 jute	Backfill
901	3C	3	101	22 rims, 1 base sherd, 1 triangular sherd, 1 diagnostic sherd; McRae Impressed (Spanish Lookout) or Kaway Impressed (late facet Spanish Lookout)	IOA
901	3C	3	101	75 body, 8 neck sherds, 1 pink quartzite hammerstone, 1 core, 2 blades, 13 flakes (1 ls), 1 obsidian blade frag	Backfill
901	3C	3	101	89 body, 4 neck sherds	Backfill
901*	3C	3	101	15 flakes (2 FC), 2 blades, 3 cores, 1 hammerstone, 7 rims, 26 body sherds, 2 <i>Nephronaias</i>	Backfill
902	2F	Platform TP	118	2 rims, 1 body sherd, 3 flakes (2 FC), 1 quartzite chunk, 1 FC chunk; tanish-pink paste w/ remnant red slip and noticeable calcite inclusions—could be Aguacate Orange	IOA
903	3C	8	101	6 cores (1 granite), 4 flakes (1 FC)	Backfill
903*	3C	8	101	1 chunk, 6 flakes (FC), 1 <i>Nephronaias</i> , 5 rims, 1 ring base, 24 body and 3 neck sherds	Backfill
904	3C	1	10	45 rims, 12 diagnostic sherds, 13 bases, 1 figurine fragment, 1 handle, 1 burned bone frag, 1 biface, 1 biface tip; ceramics range from large, thick-walled jars to small jars to thick-walled bowls to thin-walled bowls. The three largest jars are Late Classic; others also Late Classic wide-orifice jars; one red slipped narrow orifice small jars; possible that three shreds are Yalbac Smudged Brown: Yalbac Variety (Spanish Lookout)	IOA
904	3C	1	101	3 jutes, 59 flakes (3 FC), 3 chunks, 8 cores, 16 blades	Backfill
905	3C	6	101	16 rims, 5 bases, 3 decorated sherds, 7 blades, 1 metate frag	IOA
905	3C	6	101	43 body (1.15 cm thick), 11 neck sherds (1.20 cm thick), 2 jutes, 17 chunks, 10 cores, 38 flakes (2 FC)	Backfill
906	2F	Platform TP	119	1 body sherd; thin-walled (4 mm) VA thick black core; dark red slip on one side, the other (interior?) pinkish-orange; glossy slip; could be Aguacate Orange: Privaccion (Floral Park)	IOA
907	3C	10	101	20 rims (~lid), 8 bases, one impressed bowl sherd found on NE building corner—McRae Impressed (Spanish Lookout) or Kaway Impressed (late facet Spanish Lookout), 2 diagnostic sherds	IOA
907	3C	10	101	93 body, 4 neck sherds, 4 jutes, 3 cores, 1 mano frag, 8 blades, 5 chunks (2 FC), 35 flakes (7 FC)	Backfill
907*	3C	10	101 and extension	15 rims, 1 flange, 1 solid foot frag, 2 ring bases, 43 body sherds, 1 quartzite core, 1 core, 5 blades, 49 flakes (9 FC)	Backfill
908	3C	4(?)	101	5 bases (ring base 1.77 cm thick), 23 rims, 7 diagnostic sherds, sherd disc, 2 bone frags; everted jar rim w/ black interior neck (slip?)	IOA
908	3C	4(?)	101	200 body sherds (1.36, 1.06, 1.72 cm thick), 17 neck sherds, 3 jutes, 4 blades, 5 cores, 31 flakes	Backfill
908*	3C	4	101	2 cores, 1 chunk, 2 flakes (1 FC)	
909	3C	2	101	8 rims, 1 base, 1 bone frag—Kaway Impressed (Spanish Lookout late facet)	IOA
909	3C	2	101	57 body, 1 neck sherds, 3 jutes, 19 flakes (2 FC), 3 cores, 1 blade, 1 chunk, 1 obsidian blade frag	Backfill
909*	3C	2	101	1 ring base, 2 necks, 3 flakes, 18 body sherds	Backfill
910	3C	5	101	11 blades, 5 chunks, 5 cores, 91 flakes (1 FC), 1 <i>Nephronaias</i>	Backfill

910	3C	5	101	2 obsidian blades, 1 shaped serpentine; diagnostic sherds early facet Late Classic; McRae Impressed (Spanish Lookout); possible that one sherd is Yalbac Smudged Brown: Yalbac Variety (Spanish Lookout); distinctive 'grater' dishes that could be Mopan Striated: Mopan Variety (early Hermitage, Tzakol 1); VA plate sherds, everted LC jars,	IOA
911	2F	Platform TP	128	4 body sherds, 1 yellow-orange flake (~serrated); 2 burned sherds (carbon); thin striations on one sherd, ~Aguacate sherd with remnant red slip	IOA
912	2F	Platform TP	114	7 rim, 5 diagnostic sherds, 1 body sherd, 1 biface tip; Bullet Tree Red-Brown bowl (Mount Hope; 0-A.D. 300), Barton Creek rim (300-100 B.C.), Happy Home Orange (300-100 B.C.), LC vase sherd!??, Aguacate sherd; about half of 144 artifacts likely mixed with 114 artifacts	IOA
912	2F	Platform TP	114	6 cores (2 FC), 2 chunk, 12 flakes (5 FC), 1 small coarse laterite boulder, 1 Nephronaias, 1 <i>Pomocea</i> , 14 ridged and 22 smooth jutes	Backfill
913	2F	Platform TP	104	1 rim, 7 body sherds (1.95 cm thick); everted jar (~Tu-Tu Camp Striated—Spanish Lookout); c. 2 cm thick pinkish paste sherd, thin-walled red slipped VA sherd, thin-walled sherd w/ black core w/ VA and calcite paste.	IOA
913	2F	Platform TP	104	2 cores (1 FC), 2 flakes (2 FC)	Backfill
914	2F	Platform TP	124	5 body sherds; 1 orangish paste	IOA
915	2F	Platform TP	108 clean-up	3 rim, 6 diagnostic sherds; ~Lucha Incised body sherd (c. 4) (Hermitage, A.D. 300-600), ~Aguacate neck sherd, 2 VA incurving bowl sherds, both w/ noticeable calcite inclusions (~Late Preclassic)	IOA
915	2F	Platform TP	108 clean-up	56, 1 neck sherds	IOA
916	2F	Platform TP	110	1 rim, 15 body sherds (4 orangish), 1 jar neck; Late Preclassic bowl (c. A.D. 100-300)	IOA
917	3C	13	101	21 rims, 3 bases, 3 ring bases, 2 flanges, white hafted end of biface	IOA
917	3C	13	101	62 body and 13 neck sherds, 10 jutes, 13 cores (2 FC), 75 flakes (48 FC), 4 blades	Backfill
917*	3C	13	101	6 rims, 1 handle, 7 neck and 13 body (2.12, 2.15 cm thick), 4 flakes (2 FC), 2 chunks, 1 ~laterite quartzite stone	Backfill
918	2F	Platform TP	109	Mixed with 3C 101 stuff; only one red-slipped bowl rim sherd known to be from 109—Hillbank Red: Hillbank variety (late Barton Creek; 200-100 B.C.)	IOA
918	2F	Platform TP	109	Obsidian flake, 4 flakes, chunk of black chert, white quartzite pebble	Backfill
919	2F	Platform TP	120	1 bowl rim; Aguacate Orange bowl (Floral Park)	IOA
920	2F	Platform TP	115	1 orangish body sherd w/ tanish brown paste and calcite inclusions, 1 flake	IOA
921	2A	1	101	56 rims, 11 bases, 1 nubbin, 3 diagnostic sherds (one appliquéd, likely from vase), 1 ceramic disc; large, wide orifice, everted jar sherd; VA bowls (e.g., Kaway Impressed, etc.); 1 vase base	IOA
921	2A	1	101	x body sherds (1.91, 1.21, 1.35, 1.17 cm thick) and 2(?) neck sherds (1.56, 1.44 cm thick)	Backfill(?)
921	2A	1	101	1 flake, milky white quartz stone, 2 pulleys, 1 ~pulley	IOA
922	2A	2	101	32 rims, 4 necks, 24 body, 2 bases, 1 handle, 3 diagnostic sherds, 5 small bone fragments, 1 black quartz flake, 1 shaped flake, 1 biface, 1 shaped serpentine, 1 granite mano frag; Late Classic everted jar, VA red slipped bowl	IOA
922	2A	2	101	127 body (1.44, 1.30, 1.68, 1.11 cm thick), 25 neck sherds, 1 chunk, 1 flake, fossiliferous ls, 1 hammerstone, 14 cores, 6 chunks, 30 flakes, 2 blades	Backfill
923	2F	Platform TP	107	1 rim, 2 jar neck, 8 body sherds (1 orangish slip w/ calcite and VA paste, 1 red slip), 3 smooth jutes, 3 ridged jutes, 1	IOA

				<i>Nephronaias</i> ; ~Aguacate Orange bowl sherd (Floral Park, A.D. 100-300)	
923	2F	Platform TP	107	7 flakes (~1 Colha), 2 chunks (1 FC), 1 core, 1 blade, 1 jute, 1 <i>Nephronaias</i>	Backfill
924	2F	Platform TP	108	2 jar rims, 2 necks, 7 body sherds; 2 everted jar rims w/ grooved lip—~Cayo Unslipped (Spanish Lookout); 2 orange paste sherds	IOA
924	2F	Platform TP	108	1 chunk, 1 core, 3 flakes	Backfill
925	2F	Platform TP	111	3 rims, 9 body sherds, 1 obsidian blade fragment, 3 flakes, 1 pink/white quartzite pebble, 3 burned ls chunks; Sierra Red bowl (Barton Creek), Hillbank Red: Rockdondo variety (Barton Creek, pp. 104-5) or Aguacate Orange (Floral Park)	IOA
925	2F	Platform TP	111	2 jute, 1 possible marine shell frag	Backfill
926	2A	3	101	5 rims, 8 body sherds, 4 flakes, 3 blades, ls pulley; narrow orifice jars, bowl (~Vaca Falls—late facet Spanish Lookout), Roaring Creek Red dish (late Spanish Lookout), VA and calcite sherds	IOA
926	2A	3	101	6 flakes (1 FC), 4 chunks, 2 cores	Backfill (3C)
927	3C	7	101	3 bone, 1 obsidian blade 1 quartzite flake, 7 rims, 1 base, 4 diagnostic sherds	IOA
927	3C	7	101	50 flakes (9 FC), 4 blades, 22 cores, 9 chunks, 66 body (2.02 , 1.39 cm thick) and 1 neck sherds	Backfill
928	3C	11	101	7 rims, 2 flange, 1 ~slab foot frag, 1 <i>Nephronaias</i> , 12 blue flakes, 1 blue biface, 6 blue cores	IOA
928	3C	11	101	45 body and 4 neck sherds, 28 flakes (12 FC), 7 cores, 2 chunks	Backfill
928*	3C	11	101	13 rims 1 slab-foot support, 4 flanges, 2 ring bases, 5 neck and 26 body sherds, 4 jutes, 5 flakes, 2 cores, 2 chunks, 2 bone frags, 1 <i>Nephronaias</i>	Backfill
929	3C	12	101	Non-burial artifacts: 6 rims, 4 necks, 28 body (1.05, 1.29 cm thick), 1 handle, incised shaped ls, 1 blue core	IOA
929	3C	12	101	2 blades, 2 chunks (FC), 1 <i>Nephronaias</i> , 17 flakes, 5 cores	Backfill
929*	3C	12	101	3 rims, 1 ring base, 24 body sherds, 1 bone frag, 1 jute, 7 flakes (2 FC), 3 cores, 2 chunks	Backfill
930	3C	16	101	6 neck and 49 body (1.49 cm thick) sherds, 1 hammerstone, 3 blades, 12 cores, 8 chunks (2 FC), 59 flakes (14 FC)	Backfill
930	3C	16	101	18 rims, 4 flange, 1 ring base, 1 handle, 1 brown quartz stone, 2 obsidian blade frags; Tu Tu Camp Striated jar (Spanish Lookout); late facet Spanish Lookout Roaring Creek Red dish	IOA
930*	3C	16	101	8 rims, 2 ring bases, 32 body and 2 neck sherds, 2 ~burned bone frags, 1 <i>Nephronaias</i> , 1 ridged jute, 2 blades, 2 chunks, 15 flakes (2 FC)	
931	2F	Platform TP	112	1 rim, 1 jar neck; Cayo Unslipped (Spanish Lookout)?	IOA
932	2F	Platform TP	113	3 handles, 1 spout, 1 figurine or solid support frag, 3 bases, 43 rims (~drum base), 16 diagnostic sherds, 1 bone frag, 1 ~shaped laterite, 2 obsidian blade, 1 chert blade, 1 white quartz flake, 1 ~worked flake blade, 6 <i>Pomocea</i> , 9 <i>Nephronaias</i> , 88 smooth and 28 ridged jutes; Savanna Orange spout (early Jenny Creek)?, small narrow orifice jar (Pinola Creek Incised—late Jenny Creek), Sierra Red impressed sherd?, 5-6 Sierra Red bowls (everted, designed rims), Sierra Red Fluted (similar to one at el museo Tikal).	IOA
932	2F	Platform TP	113	221 body and 10 neck sherds, 5 chunks, 22 flakes (7 FC), 1 ~smoothing stone	Backfill
933	2F	Platform TP	123	1 FC flake	IOA
934	2F	Platform TP	125	3 rims, 1 jar neck, 26 body, 7 smooth and 2 ridged jutes, 1 <i>Pomocea</i> , 2 brown quartz stones; Sierra Red: Variety	IOA

				Unspecified bowl (Barton Creek); angled-neck jar sherd (~Aguacate Orange), ~Aguacate Orange bowl	
934	2F	Platform TP	125	3 chunks, 8 flakes (3 FC)	Backfill
935	2F	Platform TP	127	1 base w/ dark red-orange slip—Aguacate Orange? ~waxy	IOA
936	2F	Platform TP	129	1 rim, 1 diagnostic sherd, 1 smooth and 1 ridged jute, 1 <i>Nephronaias</i> , 3 neck, 13 body sherds, 1 flake, 1 small core; Sierra Red Z-angle bowl sherd (no rim)	IOA
937	2F	Platform TP	131	2 burned plaster samples	IOA
938	2F	Platform TP	131/132 window	7 body and 2 diagnostic sherds, 3 smooth jutes, 1 faunal bone frag, 2 flakes (1 FC); one black slipped sherd w/ orange paste on other side; thin-walled (4 mm) coarse calcite paste orange sherd; Savanna or Aguacate	IOA
939	2F	Platform TP	132	1 dark orange handle, 9 body sherds, 1 ridged jute, 1 chunk; well-fired red slipped VA sherds w/ some calcite inclusions	IOA
940	2F	Platform TP	134	2 rims, 1 neck, 20 body sherds, 2 FC flakes, 2 smooth and 3 ridged jutes; incised flared bowl/dish sherd (Savanna Orange? P. 75), VA straight-sided bowl w/ eroded slip (very gritty), several striated body sherds—some look deep enough to be considered incised, one dark red-brown well-fired slipped sherd on one side (~waxy)—almost red-black on other side	IOA
941	2F	Platform TP	135	4 rims, 1 neck, 4 body sherds, 1 smooth and 1 ridged jute; everted jar rim (Tu-Tu Camp Striated or..?), flared bowls, dark-brown/maroon slipped sherd, ~Aguacate Orange sherd, waxy slipped sherd, VA sherd w/ orang-red slip w/ a few calcite inclusions.	IOA
942	2F	Platform TP	137	3 body sherds, 1 ridge sherd, 1 ring base; Aguacate Orange basal base (Floral Park, 0-A.D. 300)	IOA
943	2F	Platform TP	138	1 notched red-slipped sherd w/ some calcite inclusions, 2 body sherds; 	IOA
944	2A	1	102	3 rims, 1 base, 1 foot, 12 body and 3 neck sherds; VA sherds w/ red slip; VA foot; jar sherds	IOA
945	Pool 15 area	Cave #3	Outer 'hearth', cave opening surface	1 rim, 1 slipped sherd, 4 body	IOA
946	3C	7	102	4 rims, 1 basal ridge, 2 diagnostic sherds	IOA
946	3C	7	102	16 body and 1 neck sherds, 8 flakes (3 FC), 2 cores, 2 chunks	Backfill
947	3C	10	Above floor 105	1 painted sherd, 3 body sherds	IOA
948	3C	7	Top 110 floor	7 body and 2 neck sherds (includes 3 stacked sherds bagged together)	IOA
949	2A	2	104	6 rims, 1 ring base, 2 neck, 4 body sherds, 3 flakes, 1 obsidian blade frag; 2 everted rims (Late Classic); Tu-Tu Camp Striated jar (Spanish Lookout); VA and calcite bowl sherd	IOA
950	2A	1	105	3 flakes (2 FC), 8 body (1.78 cm thick) and 2 neck sherds	Backfill
950	2A	1	105	10 rims, 1 diagnostic sherd, 1 flange; bowls and jars; VA bowl sherd; Mediation Black bowl (Spanish Lookout), Cayo Unslipped: Variety unspecified—jar neck appliqué (Spanish Lookout), Dolphin Head Red dish (but paste description different; early facet Spanish Lookout)	IOA
951	3C	7	112	11 rims, 1 flange, 1 ring base, 1 foot pod, 1 handle, 4 diagnostic sherds, 1 bone frag, 1 metate frag; Pascua Impressed: Pascua Variety (Tiger Run)	IOA
951	3C	7	112	charcoal sample	IOA
951	3C	7	112	83 body and 3 neck sherds, 2 chunks, 3 cores, 24 flakes (3 FC)	

952	3C	8	114a	13 body sherds, 3 flakes	IOA
953	3C	9	114	16 rims, 1 ring base, 1 disc, 1 ridged jute, 1 obsidian blade, 1 <i>Pomocea</i> , 1 FC chert blade	IOA
953	3C	9	114	charcoal sample; thin-walled bowl/vase; Achote Black (Spanish Lookout)	IOA
953	3C	9	114	1 chert blade, 2 flakes, 1 chalcedony flake, 59 body and 7 neck sherds	Backfill
954	3C	14	114	4 rims, 3 diagnostic and 1 notched sherd, burned bone frag,	IOA
954	3C	14	114	6 flakes, 2 blades, 1 obsidian blade, smooth jute, <i>Pomocea</i> frag, 43 body and 1 neck sherd	Backfill
955	2F	Platform TP	128	carbon	IOA
956	3C	15	101	18 rims, 4 diagnostics, 2 flat bases, 2 flanges, 4 bone frags, 4 ~tapir bones	IOA
956	3C	15	101	61 body (1.92, 2.07, 2.10 cm thick) and 6 neck sherds	Backfill
956*	3C	15	101	2 rims, 2 body sherds, 1 mano frag, 1 laterite stone, 1 ~laterite quartzite stone, 1 hammerstone, 5 chert blades, 1 obsidian blade, 6 cores, 5 chunks, 32 flakes (8 FC)	
957	3C	14	101	9 rims, 1 nubbin, 1 flat base, 1 flange, 1 jute, 1 <i>Nephronaias</i> , animal jaw bone	IOA
957	3C	14	101	47 body (0.9 cm thick) and 5 neck sherds	Backfill
958	3C	8	121	1 flake, 2 neck and 19 body sherds	Backfill
958	3C	8	121	4 rims, 1 diagnostic sherd, 2 obsidian blades	IOA
959	3C	3, 4	122	2 rims, 1 diagnostic sherd, 2 bone frags, 1 smooth jute, 5 body and 1 neck sherd, 1 chert blade	IOA
960	2F	Platform TP	140	2 rims, 6 body sherds, 1 light blue chunk; ~Aguacate Orange sherd	IOA
961	2F	Platform TP	142	7 body sherds, 4 chunks (3 FC), 1 ls core; Savanna Orange sherd, ~thick Aguacate Orange sherd w/ calcite inclusions, black slipped sherd on one side—other side unslipped brown, smooth surface	IOA
962	2F	Platform TP	144	1 rim, 2 body and 1 neck sherd, 1 <i>Pomocea</i> , 1 chert blade, 1 FC core; Jocote Orange-Brown jar sherd (Jenny Creek); about half of artifacts likely mixed with 114 artifacts	IOA
963	2F	Platform TP	145	Charcoal sample	IOA
963	2F	Platform TP	145	5 rims, 1 handle, 1 diagnostic sherd, 15 body and 1 neck sherd, 2 flakes (1 FC), 3 smooth and 1 ridged jute; Jenny Creek, but w/ VA temper; Jocote Orange bowl	IOA
964	3C	3, 4	108 stair extension	Sherd with hieroglyph, 8 rims, 2 bases (~foot, ring); VA bowl sherds with red slip	IOA
964	3C	3, 4	108 stair extension	1 core, 1 chunk, 5 flakes (1 FC), 2 chert blades, 1 jute, 19 body and 1 neck sherd	Backfill
965	3C	3, 4	Cache 108A associated artifacts	15 rims, 2 possible figurine frags, 2 ring bases, 3 burned bone frags (includes turtle neck bone), 2 obsidian blade frags, 1 <i>Nephronaias</i> , metate frag	IOA
965	3C	3, 4	Cache 108A associated artifacts	7 flakes (1 FC), 2 chert blades, 1 core, 47 body sherds (1.40 cm thick)	Backfill
966	3C	3, 4	Cache 108A	Upside down ring-base bowl, nearly complete—possible Yalbac Smudged Brown: Yalbac Variety (Spanish Lookout); 2 flakes, 2 jar rims, 1 jar neck	IOA
966	3C	3, 4	Cache 108A	Soil sample from under cache bowl	IOA
967	3C	3, 4	108 Stair (trench) renamed 147	1 obsidian blade (~1 notch), 1 burned bone, 2 flanges, 1 ring base, 1 flat base, 1 EC flange and rim, 7 rims, 3 painted sherds; post-fired incised orangish-red slipped thin-walled sherd (could be Orange-Walk Incised, Tiger Run), VA polychrome vase sherds	IOA
967	3C	3, 4	108 Stair	41 body sherds	Backfill

			(trench) renamed 147		
968*	3C	9	101	6 rims, 3 ring bases, 79 body and 3 neck sherds, 2 chunks, 4 cores, 30 flakes (3 FC)	
969	3C	17	101	Serpentine celt	IOA
969*	3C	17	101	8 rims, 26 body and 2 neck sherds, 1 chert blade, 5 flakes (1 FC)	Backfill
970	2F	Platform TP	110A	~wax	IOA
971	De Paz yard	Milpa	Surface	2 historic sherds	IOA

*counted and recorded only; all placed in backfill

Smooth jute: *Pachychilus indiorum*

Ridged jute: *Pachychilus glaphyrius*

Structure 3C

Structure 3C sits in between Temples 3D and 3B oriented 20° off of north with the front and back wall oriented horizontally east to west. The front of the structure faces the interior of Plaza 3, while its east side is relatively aligned with the west edge of the front of Temple 3D. Structure 3C is easily visible from the center of the plaza, from the tops of all the temples, as well as from behind the structure below the raised plaza. It is a rectangular building with a central staircase (south side) with a later addition consisting of a circular platform, and a staircase and dais on the west side (Figure 2.2a and b). The front wall is constructed of at least three courses of cut stone. The back wall (north side) was more difficult to define because of its location on the edge of the raised platform, where several wall stones fell off down slope. The back wall appears to have been built using largely uncut stone forming a rough wall. The west wall is constructed of cut and uncut stone that connects to the stepped dais and the back wall. The east side of the structure had been dug through at least three times by the Maya, as evidenced by the lack of a large portion of the east wall, and partial plaster floors with burned surfaces. The lower floor (107) is intact and expands past the east wall to the probable exterior of the structure. The upper floor (105) was excavated through by the Maya down to the lower floor (107) and finally topped by the uppermost floor (115) (Figure 2.3).

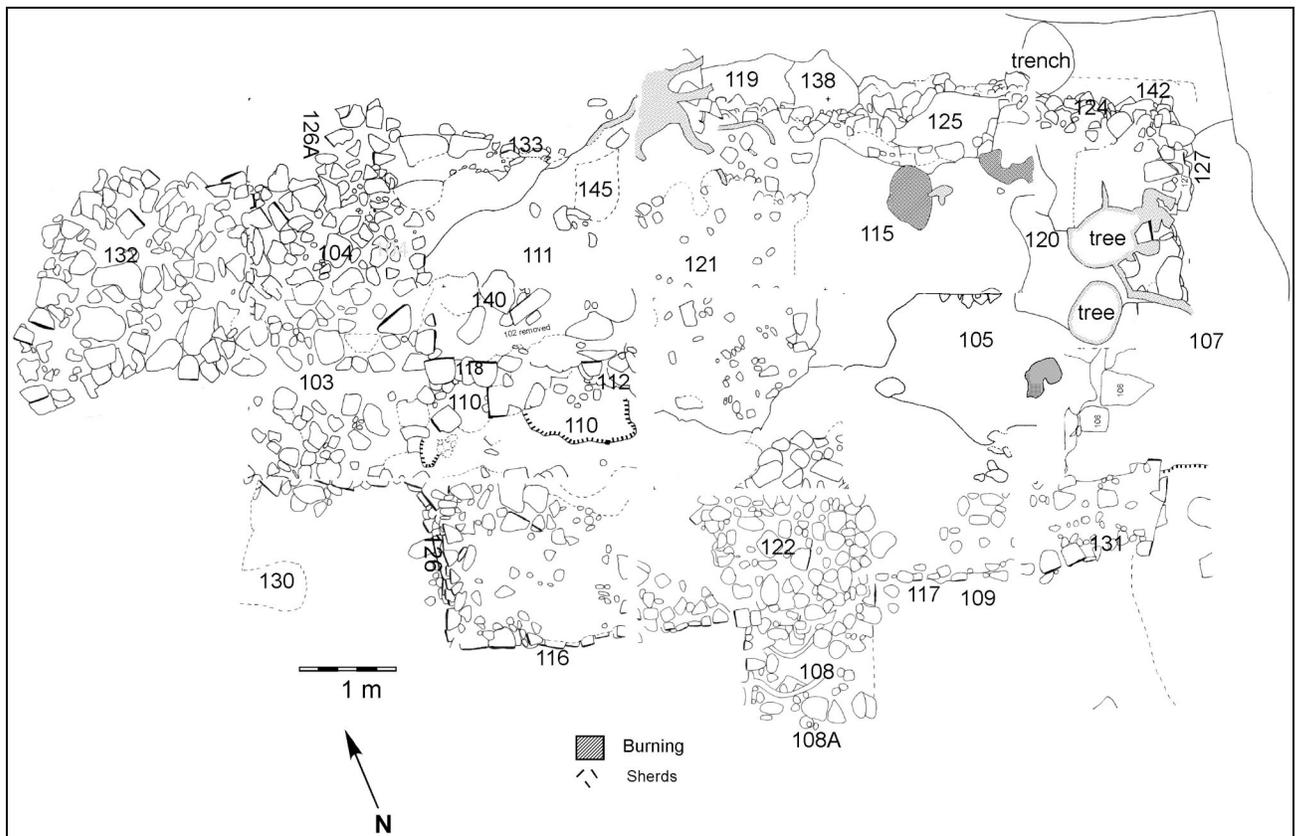


Figure 2.2a Structure 3C and strata

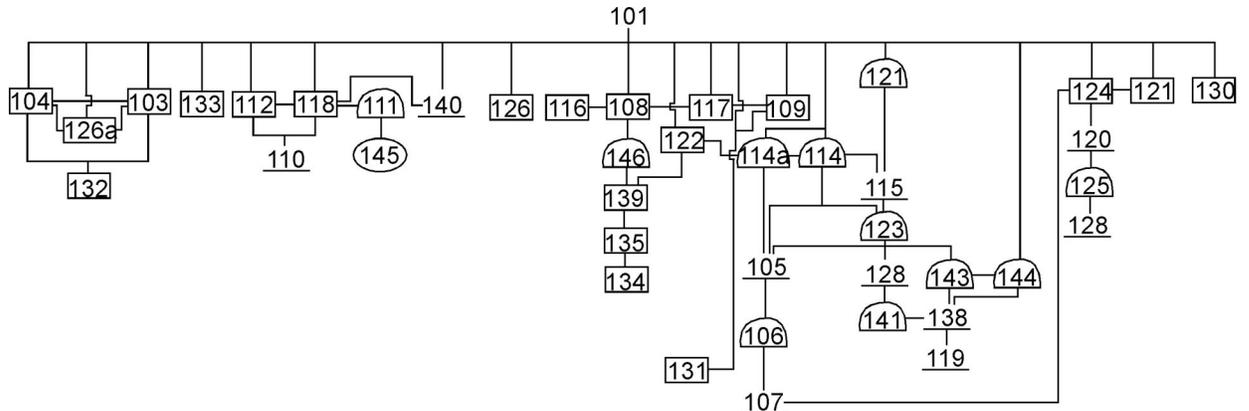


Figure 2.2b Structure 3C matrix



East side:
cut and burned floors



Figure 2.3 Photos showing floors 105, 107 and 115, as well as burning on floor 115

In what follows, I detail the excavations and then present our preliminary interpretations. Excavation of Str. 3C began by searching for the exterior walls. We located the south wall (strata 131, 132) oriented west to east first, followed by the west wall (strata 126, 126A) oriented north to south, then the east wall (stratum 127), and finally the north wall (strata 133, 124) separated by a modern tree and oriented west to east. The south wall faces the plaza and is separated by a central staircase (stratum 108), and a small armature (stratum 109). The front wall is constructed of three courses of stacked cut stone above a soil surface. The central staircase is approximately 3 m from the west edge of the south wall and 3.4 m from the stair to the east edge of the south wall. The central staircase consists of six courses of cut stone (Figure 2.4). Resting on top of the front stair is a circular platform of uncut limestone boulders (122).

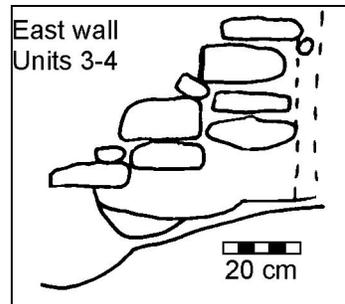


Figure 2.4 Stair 108 profile

Few artifacts came directly from this circular platform above stair 108 (Table 2.1). We recovered portions of smashed vessels in front of the south wall on the east side of the stair. They were concentrated in front of this portion of the south wall and consisted of large, thick jar rims and body sherds presumably from thick storage jars, bowls, and serving vessels (Figure 2.5). These large Late Classic vessels were all broken and smashed presumably as part of a termination ritual, although no burning was noticed. Two angled McRae Impressed sherds with fingernail impressions around the shoulder, one with red slip and one with no slip, were recovered on either side of the central stair at its base. Originally, we thought these two sherds were from the same vessel, but they are not, just similar in shape and design (Figure 2.6). It appears that the Maya intentionally placed these two sherds on either side of the central stair. Another of these sherds was located close to the top northeast corner of the structure wall (127).

Table 2.1 Structure 3C strata information

Unit	Stratum**	Description	Munsell Color	Associated artifacts*	Ceramic dates
1	101	Topsoil	10YR3/2	45 rims, 12 diagnostic sherds, 13 bases, 1 figurine fragment, 1 handle, 1 burned bone fragment, 1 biface, 1 biface tip, 59 flakes (3 FC), 3 chunks, 8 cores, 16 blades, 3 jutes	The three largest jars are Late Classic; others also Late Classic wide-orifice jars; one red slipped narrow orifice small jars; possible that three shreds are Yalbac Smudged Brown: Yalbac Variety (Spanish Lookout)
2	101	Topsoil	10YR3/2	8 rims, 2 base (1 ring), 75 body, 3 neck sherds, 22 flakes (2 FC), 3 cores, 1 blade, 1 chunk, 1 obsidian blade fragment, 1 bone fragment, 3 jutes	Kaway Impressed (possibly Terminal Classic)
3	101	Topsoil	10YR3/2	29 rims, 1 base sherd, 1 triangular sherd, 1 diagnostic sherd; 190 body, 12 neck sherds, 1 pink quartzite hammerstone, 1 chert hammerstone, 4 cores, 4 blades, 28 flakes (1 ls, 2 FC),	McRae Impressed (Spanish Lookout) or Kaway Impressed (late facet Spanish Lookout)

				1 obsidian blade fragment, 2 <i>Nephronaias</i>	
4	101	Topsoil	10YR3/2	23 rims, 7 diagnostic sherds, 5 bases (ring base 1.77 cm thick), sherd disc, 200 body sherds (1.36, 1.06, 1.72 cm thick), 17 neck sherds, 2 bone fragments, 3 jutes, 4 blades, 5 cores, 31 flakes; 2 cores, 1 chunk, 2 flakes (1 FC)	
5	101	Topsoil	10YR3/2	2 obsidian blades, 1 shaped serpentine; 11 blades, 5 chunks, 5 cores, 91 flakes (1 FC), 1 <i>Nephronaias</i>	early facet Late Classic; McRae Impressed (Spanish Lookout); possible that one sherd is Yalbac Smudged Brown: Yalbac Variety (Spanish Lookout); distinctive 'grater' dishes that could be Mopan Striated: Mopan Variety (early Hermitage, Tzakol 1, A.D. 278-357); VA plates, everted LC jars
6	101	Topsoil	10YR3/2	16 rims, 5 bases, 3 decorated sherds, 43 body (1.15 cm thick), 11 neck sherds (1.20 cm thick), 2 jutes, 17 chunks, 10 cores, 38 flakes (2 FC), 7 blades, 1 metate fragment	
7	101	Topsoil	10YR3/2	7 rims, 1 base, 4 diagnostic sherds, 66 body (2.02, 1.39 cm thick) and 1 neck sherds; 50 flakes (9 FC), 4 blades, 22 cores, 9 chunks, 3 bone, 1 obsidian blade 1 quartzite flake	
8	101	Topsoil	10YR3/2	5 rims, 1 ring base, 24 body and 3 neck sherds; 1 chunk, 6 flakes (FC), 1 <i>Nephronaias</i> , 6 cores (1 granite), 4 flakes (1 FC)	
9	101	Topsoil	10YR3/2	6 rims, 3 ring bases, 79 body and 3 neck sherds, 2 chunks, 4 cores, 30 flakes (3 FC)	
10	101	Topsoil	10YR3/2	20 rims (~lid), 8 bases, 2 diagnostic sherds; 93 body, 4 neck sherds, 4 jutes, 3 cores, 1 mano fragment, 8 blades, 5 chunks (2 FC), 35 flakes (7 FC)	one impressed bowl sherd found on NE building corner— McRae Impressed (Spanish Lookout) or Kaway Impressed (possibly Terminal Classic)
10	101 and extension	Topsoil	10YR3/2	15 rims, 1 flange, 1 solid foot, 2 ring bases, 43 body sherds, 1 quartzite core, 1 core, 5 blades, 49 flakes (9 FC)	
11	101	Topsoil	10YR3/2	20 rims, 6 flanges, 2 ring bases, 1 ~slab foot fragment, 1 slab-foot support, 71 body and 9 neck sherds, 12 blue flakes, 1 blue biface, 6 blue cores; 33 flakes (12 FC), 9 cores, 4 chunks, 4 jutes, 2 bone fragments, 2 <i>Nephronaias</i>	
12	101	Topsoil	10YR3/2	3 rims, 4 bases, 1 handle, 2 diagnostic sherds, 34 body and 4 neck sherds, 1 chunk, 1 jute; human bone (collected before realized it was a burial)	

12	101	Topsoil	10YR3/2	Probable burial vessel	Kaway Impressed bowl (late facet Spanish Lookout)
12	101	Topsoil; non-burial artifacts	10YR3/2	9 rims, 1 ring base, 4 necks, 52 body (1.05, 1.29 cm thick), 1 handle, incised shaped ls, 1 blue core; 2 blades, 4 chunks (2 FC), 24 flakes (2 FC), 8 cores, 1 bone fragment, 1 jute, 1 <i>Nephronaias</i>	
13	101	Topsoil	10YR3/2	27 rims, 3 bases, 3 ring bases, 2 flanges, 75 body (2.12, 2.15 cm thick) and 20 neck sherds, white hafted end of biface; 13 cores (2 FC), 79 flakes (50 FC), 4 blades, 2 chunks, 1 ~laterite quartzite stone, 10 jutes	
14	101	Topsoil	10YR3/2	9 rims, 1 nubbin, 1 flat base, 1 flange, 47 body (0.9 cm thick) and 5 neck sherds, 1 jute, 1 <i>Nephronaias</i> , animal jaw bone	
15	101	Topsoil	10YR3/2	20 rims, 4 diagnostics, 2 flat bases, 2 flanges, 63 body (1.92, 2.07, 2.10 cm thick) and 6 neck sherds; 1 mano fragment, 1 laterite stone, 1 ~laterite quartzite stone, 1 hammerstone, 5 chert blades, 1 obsidian blade, 6 cores, 5 chunks, 32 flakes (8 FC), 4 bone fragments, 4 ~tapir bones	
16	101	Topsoil	10YR3/2	36 rims, 4 flanges, 3 ring base, 1 handle, 81 body (1.49 cm thick) and 8 neck sherds, 1 brown quartz stone, 2 obsidian blade fragments; 1 hammerstone, 5 blades, 12 cores, 10 chunks (2 FC), 74 flakes (16 FC); 2 ~burned bone fragments, 1 <i>Nephronaias</i> , 1 ridged jute	Possibly Terminal Classic: Tu Tu Camp Striated jar; Roaring Creek Red dish
17	101	Topsoil	10YR3/2	8 rims, 26 body and 2 neck sherds, 1 chert blade, 5 flakes (1 FC); serpentine celt	
7	102	Interior of walled area	10YR5/3	4 rims, 1 basal ridge, 2 diagnostic sherds; 16 body and 1 neck sherds, 8 flakes (3 FC), 2 cores, 2 chunks	
6, 7	103	Stairs west side	10YR5/3	Not excavated	
6, 7, 11	104	Dais, west side	10YR4/3	Not excavated	
9	105	Floor	10YR5/3	Not excavated	
10	Top of 105	Floor	10YR5/3	Above floor 105: 1 painted sherd, 3 body sherds	
10	106	Fill w/ large boulders under 105	10YR5/3	Not excavated	
10	107	Floor	10YR8/1	Not excavated	
3, 4	Cache 108A associated artifacts	Artifacts near cache	10YR7/2	15 rims, 2 possible figurine fragments, 2 ring bases, 47 body sherds (1.40 cm thick), 3 burned bone fragments (includes turtle neck bone), 2 obsidian blade fragments, 1 <i>Nephronaias</i> , metate fragment; 7 flakes (1 FC), 2 chert blades, 1 core	
3, 4	Cache 108A	Deposit in front of 108 stairs	10YR5/3	2 flakes, 2 jar rims, 1 jar neck; soil sample from under cache bowl	Inverted ring-base bowl,—possible Yalbac Smudged Brown: Yalbac Variety

					(Spanish Lookout)
3, 4	108 stair extension	Near front (south) stair	10YR7/2	Sherd with hieroglyph, 8 rims, 2 bases (~foot, ring), 19 body and 1 neck sherd, 1 core, 1 chunk, 5 flakes (1 FC), 2 chert blades, 1 jute	VA ash bowls with red slip
4	109	Armature		Not excavated	
7	Top of 110	Floor	10YR5/3	7 body and 2 neck sherds (includes 3 stacked body sherds bagged together)	
12	111	Possible burial cap (plaster) of burial	10YR5/3	Not excavated	
7	112	Fill above floor 110	No Munsell	11 rims, 1 flange, 1 ring base, 1 foot pod, 1 handle, 4 diagnostic sherds, 83 body and 3 neck sherds, 1 bone fragment, 1 metate fragment, 2 chunks, 3 cores, 24 flakes (3 FC); charcoal sample	Pascua Impressed: Pascua Variety (Tiger Run, A.D. 580-680)
8	114A	Dark clay fill similar to 114 w/large boulders possibly from staircase 108	10YR5/3	13 body sherds, 3 flakes	
9	114	Clay (w/ a little sand) fill above floors 115 and 105	10YR5/3	16 rims, 1 ring base; 1 disc, 59 body and 7 neck sherds, 1 ridged jute, 1 obsidian blade, 1 <i>Pomocea</i> , 1 FC chert blade; 1 chert blade, 2 flakes, 1 chalcedony flake; charcoal sample	thin-walled bowl/vase Achote Black (Spanish Lookout)
9, 13, 14	115	Floor	10YR8/3 10YR6/1	Not excavated	
2	116	South wall west side	10YR5/3	Not excavated	
4, 5	117	South wall east side between 108 and 109	10YR7/2	Not excavated	
7	118	East West Wall	No Munsell	Not excavated	
13	119	Floor, north side, same level as floor 107	10YR8/2	Not excavated	
15	120	Floor	10YR8/3	Not excavated	
8	121	Plaster cap in units 8 and 13 consisting of a limestone mortar and limestone cobbles	10YR7/2	4 rims, 1 diagnostic sherd, 19 body and 2 neck sherds, 1 flake, 2 obsidian blades	
3, 4	122	Rock platform	10YR7/2	2 rims, 1 diagnostic sherd, 5 body and 1 neck sherd, 2 bone fragments, 1 smooth jute, 1 chert blade	
9	123	Floor 115	No	Not excavated	

		ballast	Munsell		
15	124	North wall east side	10YR6/2	Not excavated	
15	125	Floor 120 ballast	No munsell	Not excavated	
2, 6	126	West wall (N to S)	10YR7/2	Not excavated	
11	126A	West wall extension, north side	10YR7/3	Not excavated	
15	127	East wall	No Munsell	Not excavated	
15	128	Sloped floor, north wall (124?) under ballast 125	10YR5/3	Not excavated	
1	130	White plaster concentration	10YR5/2	Not excavated	
4	131	South wall, east side of 109	10YR5/3	Not excavated	
6, 16, 17	132	Stair platform attached to 103 and 104	10YR4/21 0YR6/2, 10YR5/3	Not excavated	
11, 12	133	North wall west side	10YR5/3	Not excavated	
3, 4	134	Floor under stairs 108	10YR6/2	Not excavated	
3	135	Bench under 108, 1 st stage	10YR7/2	Not excavated	
13	138	Plastered rock	10YR8/3	Not excavated	
3	139	Bench under 108, 2 nd stage	10YR7/2	Not excavated	
12	140	Flagstone surface north of wall 118	No Munsell	Not excavated	
15	140	Flagstone surface north of wall 118	No Munsell	Not excavated	
15	141	Floor 128 ballast	No Munsell	Not excavated	
15	142	Floor below the wall	No Munsell		
13, 15	143	Fill above 138 and below 123, north side	10YR6/2	Not excavated	
13	144	Fill abuts 143 below topsoil (~under	10YR6/2	Not excavated	

12	145	121) Burial	No Munsell	Not excavated	
3, 4	146 formerly 108 Stair (trench)	108 stair fill above bench 134	10YR6/2 10YR7/2	7 rims, 3 painted sherds, 2 flanges, 1 ring base, 1 flat base, 41 body sherds, 1 obsidian blade (~1 notch), 1 burned bone	EC flange and rim, post-fired incised orangish-red slipped thin-walled sherd (could be Orange-Walk Incised, Tiger Run), VA polychrome vase sherds

*ceramic analysis based on Gifford et al. (1976)

**strata numbers 113, 129, 136 or 137 were not used or turned out to be another strata.



Figure 2.5 Artifacts from in front of stair 108



Figure 2.6 McRae Impressed angled sherds

In front of the stairs we also found additional sherds that were not as large as the ones found in front of the south wall. One in particular was from a painted vase with a possible hieroglyph (Figure 2.7). No other portion of the vase was recovered, suggesting that the Maya curated this particular piece for a specific purpose. However, the hieroglyph is badly eroded and indecipherable. A cache was uncovered directly at the base of this central stair (cache 108A) (Figure 2.8). It consisted of a nearly complete inverted Yalbac Smudged Brown bowl with a red slip interior and a perfectly circular 8 cm diameter ring base. Small chert flakes, one obsidian blade, burned bone, and a turtle bone were found directly associated with the vessel, but only one chert flake and a flaked piece of limestone were located in the interior of the bowl. Nearby artifacts included 15 rims, 2 possible figurine fragments, 2 ring bases, 47 body sherds, a metate fragment and 1 *Nephronaias* shell. We took a soil sample from the interior of the vessel cache to check for the presence of organic material. The vessel was in pristine condition with no kill holes, suggesting that it was made specifically for the purpose of caching.



Figure 2.7 Sherd with remnant hieroglyph



Str. 3C stair cache

Figure 2.8 Cache 108

Another inverted vessel was found on the north side of the building close to the centerline of the structure—a Kaway Impressed bowl with a red slipped interior (Figure 2.9). This cache was associated with a human burial (stratum 145) represented by a leg bone, a rib bone, a piece of a mandible and other unidentifiable human bone fragments. The skull was located 20-25 cm to the east of the cache (Figure 2.10). A small red and blue chert flake was pushed up against the exterior of the cranium. The skull is in very poor condition and crumbled to the touch. There was a small circular superficial puncture mark on the top of the skull, probably post mortem. The skull was relatively close to the surface and only covered by a few centimeters of soil. We did not completely expose the entire skull or look for the rest of the skeleton due to time constraints. We photographed the skull in context, left it in place and entombed it (surrounded it with boulders) before we covered it with plastic and dirt.



Figure 2.9 Kaway Impressed bowl from burial 145



Exposed skull with puncture

Figure 2.10 Burial 145 skull

The burial was associated with stratum 111, a thick plaster floor or 'cap,' and was probably plastered over entirely at one point. Two large limestone blocks were imbedded in the cap and were located directly west of the skull. The Kaway Impressed vessel was located directly north of these limestone blocks and at the back of the structure. With the burial being so close to the surface it may have served as the final termination episode for this structure.

A large tree separates the north wall of the structure, pushed up to the edge of the sloped platform. It appears that the north wall (strata 124, 133) may have eroded off of the back of the building. We did not find any uniform blocks on the backside suggesting that they fell off the steep slope (Figure 2.11). The blocks we did uncover varied in size, shape, and construction. Walls 124 and 133 are composed of rough courses of limestone and mortar indicating that the north side is in

fact the back due to its non-uniform construction. Clean-up and excavation of topsoil (101) on the north side of Str. 3C yielded thick body sherds and some faunal remains (e.g., tapir bones).



Figure 2.11 Back (north) wall of Structure 3C

The east side of the structure consisted of a combination of burned and cut through floors. We began excavations on the east side by following the wall from the south side of the structure (131) around to the east side, in hopes of finding and continuing to follow the exterior wall of the structure. However, on the east side we encountered a series of floors cut through and burned by the Maya. Few artifacts were found on top of floors 105, 107, and 115. They appeared to be swept clean of any cultural material. In the fill above these floors, very few artifacts were recovered; most likely these were unintentional inclusions in the fill.

Floors 105, 107, and 115 were burned and cut through by the Maya (see Figure 2.3). Floor 107 was the lowest at an elevation of 76.05 m asl, topped by floor 105 at an elevation of 76.37 m asl, and floor 115 at an elevation of 76.52 m asl. During excavations, we removed the fill above each floor, screened and bagged this separately, before we mapped and photographed the plaster floor. The burned sections were small in size and revealed no particular pattern. Floor 107 is the lowest floor present and is almost completely intact, extending past the east wall (127) to the exterior of the structure. Floor 105 is above floor 107 and was excavated in antiquity until the Maya hit floor 107. Portions of floor 105 were burned, suggesting that the Maya re-excavated into the plaster floor in order to remove something—perhaps a dedicatory cache, or human remains (i.e., ancestors). Directly on top of floor 105 were a few burned pottery sherds; we only recovered a few artifacts in the above fill (123). Floor 115 was directly above floor 105 and fill 123. This floor has two burned areas; one on the northeast area of the floor, with the other is under cap 121 in the north central area of this floor. Floor 115 also continued underneath cap 111, near the burial (stratum 145).

The west side of the structure is composed of a completely different architectural style than the east side. A second circular stair (stratum 103) and a dais (stratum 104) were added on to the west wall. The stairs (103) circle around the north edge of the structure ending at an armature (stratum 126A), an extension of the west wall (126). A platform (stratum 132) extension was added on to the circular stair (stratum 103), much later and was constructed using uncut, rough limestone blocks of various sizes and shapes. This platform yielded very few artifacts making it difficult to date;

based on the construction techniques, it is fair to assume that this was a much later addition to the building.

The interior of the structure revealed little architecture. A small wall running east west (stratum 118) attached to the exterior west wall (stratum 126) was located in the interior of the structure. Another plastered floor (stratum 110) abutted this wall and the circular stair (103), but did not continue past a length of c. 1 meter east to west. Floor 110 was at an elevation of 76.27 m asl, only .10 m lower than floor 105. The interior of the structure was composed of fill episodes and plaster floor sequences. We did not remove any major features since the goal only was to expose the structure, which we accomplished.

We dug a central trench looking for cached vessels underneath stair 108. Our original goal was to excavate until we reached sterile soil, but were unable to due to time constraints. In the course of the trench excavation we exposed floor 134, and a possible bench (strata 135 and 139) oriented east to west (Figure 2.12). Floor 134 was the earliest plaster floor exposed in our excavations with an elevation of 75.97 m asl. The lower part of the bench had an elevation of 76.13 m asl (stratum 135), and the upper 76.39 m asl (stratum 139). A few sherds, orange paste with volcanic ash, were recovered from this trench, and likely come from early facet Late Classic. The bench appeared to have been partially dug through by the Maya, leaving stratum 139 slightly higher than 135.

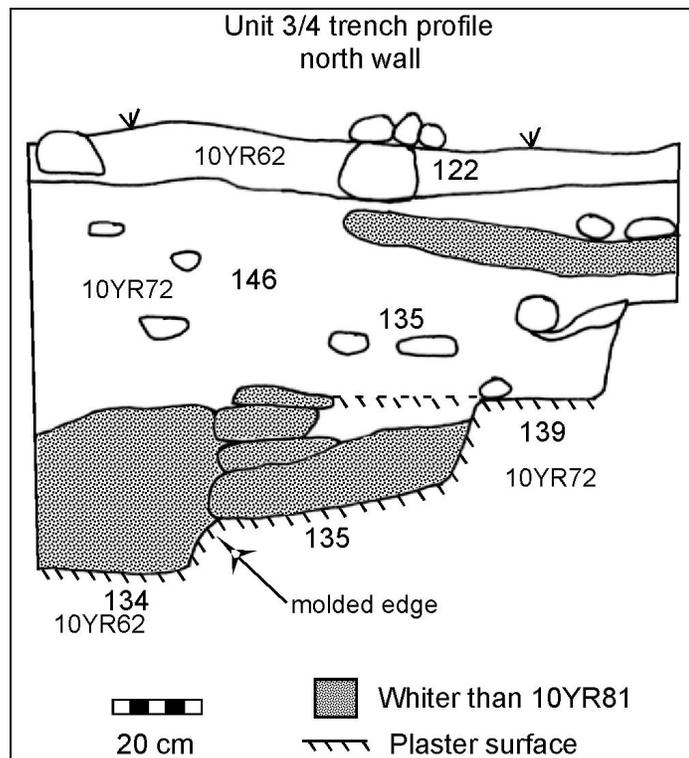


Figure 2.12 Profile of stair 108 trench

At the end of the season, we lined the units with bagged, labeled at tagged non-diagnostic artifacts, covered the entire area with construction plastic, and backfilled.

Discussion and Conclusions

Structure 3C was excavated because of its relatively small size and placement between two large temples on the semi-restricted Plaza 3. By the end of the season we had exposed the entire structure, but were not able to reach sterile soil in the center trench due to time constraints. We uncovered two cached vessels, a burial, and multiple episodes of floor construction and burning.

The artifact assemblage at Structure 3C includes Late and Terminal Classic ceramics (e.g., Belize Red, Roaring Creek Red, Vaca Fall, Cayo Unslipped, Yalbac Smudged Brown, McRae

Impressed etc.), a notable presence of red laterite and blue chert, obsidian blades, mano and metate fragments, human and animal bone, and one greenstone celt. The pottery assemblage consists mostly of large and thick jars with very few specialty wares. We recovered two nearly complete cache vessels, one dating to the Late Classic (stair cache), and the other to the Terminal Classic (burial cache). The presence of Terminal Classic ceramics suggests that this structure could have been a late addition to the plaza after the center was abandoned. However, Terminal Classic sherds were recovered in the 2001 Plaza 3 test pit suggesting that Structure 3C and the plaza area were possibly constructed and used contemporaneously. Terminal Classic sherds (Cayo Unslipped, Vaca Falls, Kaway Impressed, and Belize Red) recovered from the Plaza 3 test pit came from level 1 at an elevation of 75.66 m asl (topsoil) and level 2 at an elevation of 75.18 m asl (a plaster floor and ballast) (Table 2.2; Graebner 2002).

Table 2.2 Plaza 3 elevations

Structure 3 (2008)	Elevation (m asl)	Plaza 3 test pit (2001)	Elevation (m asl)
		Level 2 (floor w/ Terminal Classic sherds)	75.18
Floor 134	75.97		
135 (bench)	76.13		
139 (bench)	76.39		
Floor 107	76.05		
Floor 110	76.27		
Floor 105	76.37		
Floor 115	76.52		

In past seasons, VOPA crew have recovered Terminal Classic ceramics (e.g., Mt. Mahoney Black) in the looter's backdirt pile on the summit looter's trench (LT 25) at Temple 3A—as well as a Postclassic dish dating to A.D. 1150 or later (Paxcaman Red) (Lucero 2005). In the same year, they exposed a lip-to-lip burial cache with a Garbutt Creek Red bowl at LT 9 at Temple 3B.

Terminal classic sherds and a cache vessel were recovered from Structure 3C in topsoil at an average elevation of 76.82 m asl, a late burial context, and from fill in front of the structure near the central stairs at 76.101 m asl. Although the elevations for the floors in the Plaza 3 test pit and the structure do not coincide, topsoil contexts for both Str. 3C and the Plaza 3 test pit suggest that during the Terminal Classic period the Maya possibly returned to and re-plastered the plaza and added to Str. 3C for specific ritual and commemorative reasons. Figure 2.13 shows the various sized cut stone the Maya used to build up Str. 3C in the Terminal Classic.

The burial and the associated Terminal Classic vessel (Kaway Impressed) at the surface and back of Str. 3C supports the hypothesis that this building was possibly revisited during the Terminal Classic, specifically to return and bury an individual.¹ The Late Classic vessel cache (Yalbac Smudged Brown: Yalbac Variety) at the foot of the central stair possibly served as a termination rite suggesting that prior to the burial, the building was no longer in use. However, based on stratigraphy from the test pit in Plaza 3, it is possible that these spaces were used continuously as there is no obvious break in occupation. In order to fully understand the relationship between Str. 3C and Plaza 3, we need to excavate the structure down to sterile soil and look for relationships between the floors in the test pit and the last floor of the structure.

¹ While Str. 3C might not have functioned as a priest's house, it is interesting to note that Bishop de Landa wrote that the Maya buried priests "inside or in the rear of their houses" (Tozzer 1941:130).

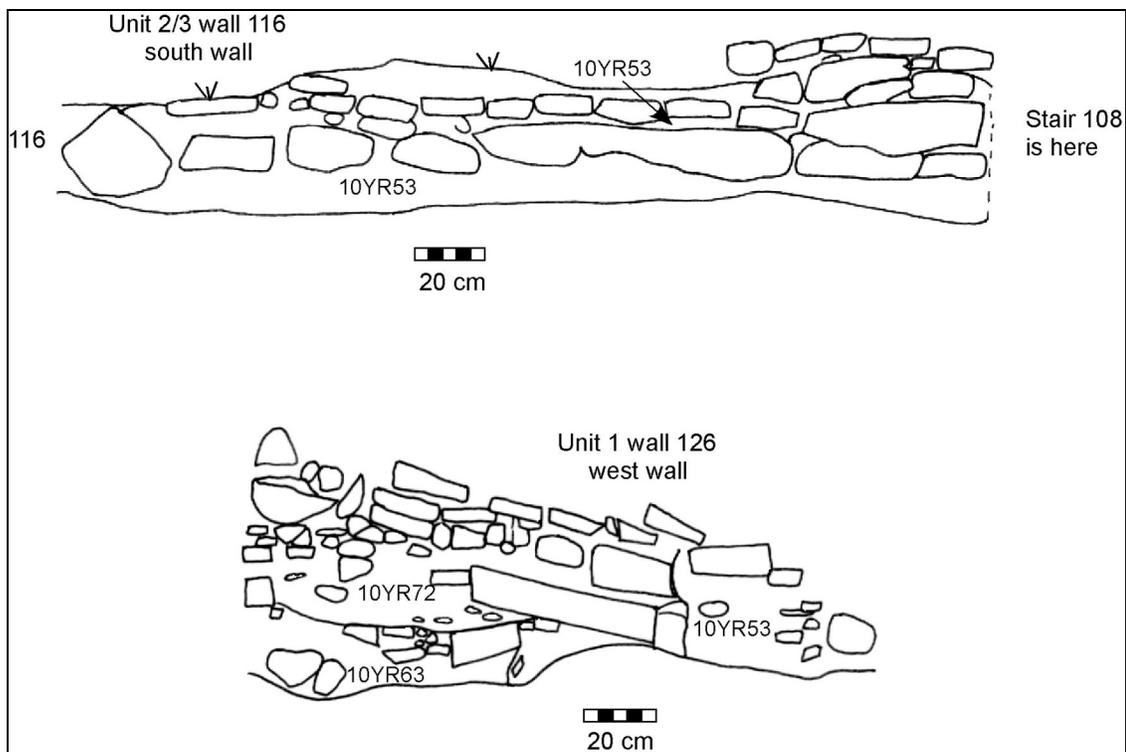


Figure 2.13 Wall profiles showing variety in cut stone shape and size

Distinguishing the Terminal Classic and late facet Late Classic is a major problem in the southern Maya lowlands; each area appears to have their own complement of probable Terminal Classic vessels (e.g., Aimers 2007; Chase and Chase 2005, 2007, 2008).

Overall, Str. 3C and the plaza were used and occupied at approximately the same time as indicated by the artifact assemblage. This is also indicated by the fact that it is located on the edge of the plaza (along with temples) versus in the middle of the plaza. The structure appears to have functioned as some sort of semi-public ritual space; there is no conclusive evidence to suggest that it served as a priest's house per se. Indications are that it may have served to prepare and/or store ceremonial paraphernalia. Structure 3C also may have served as a place of remembrance and ritual at various points in the history of Yalbac. Part of this practice may be reflected in how they dug through and burned the east side of the structure, while adding to its west side. Here, memory was enacted in the building, deconstructing, caching and burying of a possible important person in a presumably public ritual space between two large temples. This space was accessible from the plaza and could have easily been viewed from the temple tops and the jungle floor below. The uncharacteristic assortment of artifacts and the adding and removing of stairs, floors, and platforms suggests that Structure 3C was important in the everyday ritual and practice of remembering of the people of Yalbac during the Late and Terminal Classic periods.

In conclusion, for the Maya, rituals of life, death, and renewal appear to have been performed by commoners, elites, and royals alike – at least in practices of ancestor veneration, dedication, and termination rites (Lucero 2008). Archaeologists have explored Maya ritual as practices of memory- and history-making, though often focusing on **either** commoner **or** elite/royal contexts separately. In our 2008 field excavations at Yalbac, we attempted to investigate memory creation in non-temple summit ritual spaces – spaces that would have been more inclusive and may have been viewed by commoners and elites/royals alike. Structure 3C was accessible to both the elite and the commoner making this space an inclusive and important landmark in the performance and participation of public ritual.

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Chapter 3 Non-Temple Ritual and Commemoration at Yalbac: Structures 2A and 2F

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As discussed in chapter 1, the main goals of the 2008 season at Yalbac were to explore temple non-temple ceremonial activities. With this in mind, we placed several test units at the base of Temples 2A and 2F (see Figure 1.1). I discuss each in detail below.

Structure 2A Excavations

The 2008 excavations at Structure 2A (Str. 2A) were undertaken to investigate temple and supra-temple ritual, and to search for discarded ritual paraphernalia along the side of and near Str. 2A. These investigations included an anomalous pile of boulders in Plaza 2 adjacent to the northeast corner of the structure. As Plaza 2 was “noticeably absent of surface stones,” Lucero suggested that it might be the remains of a “broken stelae or small platforms” (Lucero 2006:15). Three test pits were placed over the rock-pile and along the northern side of Structure 2A. The measured points of Test Pits 1, 2, and 3 are tied in to the site map (Figure 3.1).

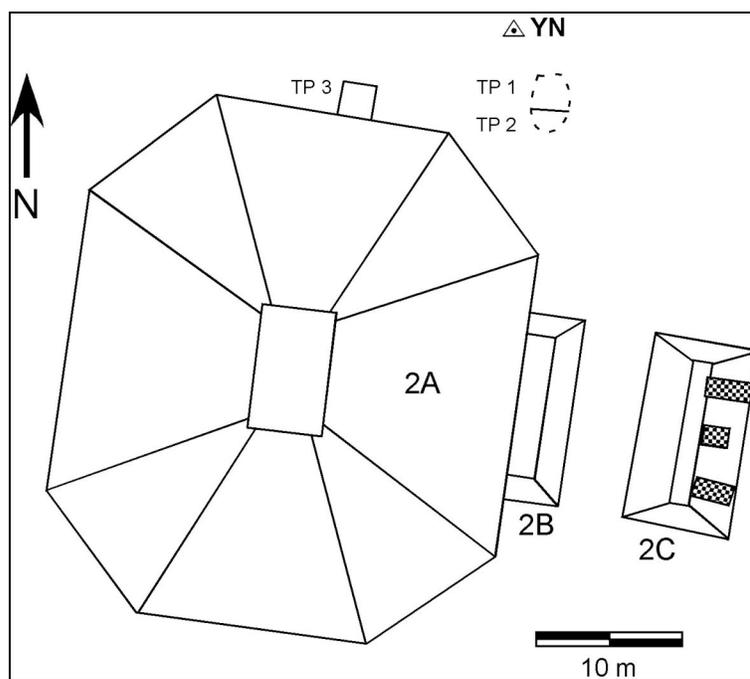


Figure 3.1 Str. 2A test pit locations

Temple-side Investigations

Initially, based on ethnohistoric descriptions of Maya disposal of ritual objects after the completion of ceremonies (e.g., Tozzer 1941), excavations to locate possible ritual middens were planned for the back (west) of the structure (the opposite side from the plaza and ballcourt). As these ritual middens would have been located close to the structure, we first needed to locate its edge. To do so, two excavation assistants cleared the undergrowth from the west side, but were unsuccessful in finding the edge of the structure—more excavation would have been required. After reconsideration of the orientation and appearance of Str. 2A, we thought that perhaps there may have been a staircase located on the north side of the structure. This suggestion was based on visual observation of a wide, slightly flattened area extending up that side of the structure at a slightly different angle than the north side.

We then decided to position a test pit (Test Pit 3) at the midpoint of the northwest side of Str. 2A with the hypothesis that perhaps ritual paraphernalia may have been discarded off of the side of

the structure as well as the back. We visually determined the northeast and northwest corners of Str. 2A and measured these points from Δ YN: the NW corner of Structure 2A was 268° and 22.85 m, the NE corner 188° and 7.76 m. Using a reel-tape we measured to the midpoint of these points and positioned a 2 x 2 m test pit—Test Pit 3 (TP 3)—oriented to the structure, about 20° west of north. The location and elevation of all corners of TP 3 were measured from Δ YN: NE corner 253°, 9.60 m, 69.02 m asl; NW corner 259°, 11.34m, 69.075 m asl; SW corner 250°, 12.33m, 69.695 m asl; SE corner 244°, 10.70m, 69.89 m asl.

Using pick-a-hoes and trowels, excavations at TP 3 began with the removal of boulders, wall fall and topsoil (stratum 101), which we did not screen. As we were unsure of its actual proximity to Str. 2A, TP 3 was also intended to help define a structure edge. Few artifacts were recovered, including some small sherds and few lithics (Table 3.1). Half of a broken pulley stone were also recovered from this unit. As excavations continued, the soil gradually became lighter, likely due to the presence of large amounts of weathering limestone wall collapse. Upon reaching a lighter soil, we assumed the excavation assistants were reaching a floor and began screening the matrix through ½" mesh.

Table 3.1. Structure 2A Test Pit 3

Stratum	Description	Artifacts	Ceramic dates
101	Topsoil; Clay loam with wall collapse	5 rims, 8 body sherds, 4 flakes, 3 blades, 1s pulley; 6 flakes (1 fire-cracked), 4 chunks, 2 cores	~Vaca Falls—late facet Spanish Lookout, Roaring Creek Red dish (late Spanish Lookout), volcanic ash and calcite sherds; narrow orifice jars, bowls

This unit was characterized by the presence of many boulders, as well as a number of faced stones. As there was no definable architectural integrity to the faced stone, these were likely wall collapse from higher levels of the structure. It was noted that the smaller stone in the unit tended to be more often faced, while the larger boulders were not, suggesting a size differentiation between loose fill and exterior wall stones. The soil near the north edge (plaza side) of the unit was darker than that closer to the structure, again likely due to the weathering of the limestone construction material. The majority of artifacts also appeared to be recovered from this area, including two conjoining sherds of a large bowl.

After digging below the assumed level of the plaza, a small piece of discontinuous floor was finally reached. Excavation continued, with the removal of boulders and wall collapse. A continuous floor was finally reached; rather than an even plaster floor, this was undulating and composed mostly of cobbles. This floor appears to have burned, with the largest evidence for burning from the north edge of the unit to about halfway to the south wall. The burning along the east wall was more intermittent than that noted along the north wall. A piece of burnt ceramic and fire-cracked quartzite was recovered, along with a small amount of burnt limestone, from the SE corner of the unit. In cleaning up the unit walls and floor in preparation for photographing, excavators noted a fair amount of pink and yellow sandstone embedded in the limestone. A piece of silicified sandstone was also recovered from the SW corner. Interestingly, the elevation of the center of Plaza 2 is 70.05 m asl, and the first plaster floor 60.785 m asl; the floor we exposed on the west side of Str. 2A is c. 68.50 m asl. Clearly the Maya built up the center plaza, and there may be some steps between TP 3 and Strs. 2B and 2C (the ballcourt; see Figure 3.1).

The burned plaster floor was photographed and drawn prior to its being lined with plastic and backfilled.

Rock-pile Investigations

The other area of interest near Str. 2A was an anomalous concentration of stones near the northeast corner of the temple—a feature that was noted during the 2005 field season as an anomaly due to the general lack of stone on the Plaza 2 surface. This concentration was fairly large and its longest portion was oriented nearly north-south, therefore we decided to set up two ‘natural’ test pits over the concentration. These units were oriented to the size and direction of the stones rather than 2 x 2 m squares. We measured to the midpoint of its longest side and set up a bisect line, creating Test Pits 1 and 2 (TP 1 and TP 2, respectively). The coordinates and elevations of the two points of the bisect line were measured from Δ YN: Point 1, the easternmost point, was 147°, 6.48 m, and 69.32 m asl, Point 2, the westernmost point, was 168°, 5.44 m, and 69.315 m asl. The bisect line

between Point 1 and Point 2 was 4° north of west. When these points were mapped, together with the points for TP 3 and Str. 2A, the map appeared incorrect—all points were re-measured and the problem was found with the Str. 2A corner points. The points measured for TP 1 and TP 2 were found to be correct and were retained.

Since they covered what we believed to be a continuous feature, excavations on TP 1 and TP 2 were carried out roughly simultaneously using pick-a-hoes and trowels. Excavations began with the removal of the top level of stone and topsoil (stratum 101), which was screened through ½” mesh. Many larger pieces of large ceramic vessels, two broken pulley stones, and a clear crystal quartz piece were recovered from TP 1 while TP 2 produced half of a mano, some crystalline pieces from the interior of a geode, as well as the larger pieces of ceramics similar to those found in TP 1 (Table 3.2).

Table 3.2: Structure 2A Test Pits 1 and 2

Unit	Stratum	Elevation (m asl)	Description	Munsell Color	Artifacts	Ceramic date
TP 1	101	69.24	Topsoil Clay loam w/ limestone flecks and small cobbles to boulders	10YR2/2	56 rims, 11 bases, 1 nubbin, 3 diagnostic sherds (one appliqué, likely from vase), 1 ceramic disc; 1 vase base; x body sherds (1.91, 1.21, 1.35, 1.17 cm thick) and 2(?) neck sherds (1.56, 1.44 cm thick); 1 flake, milky white quartz stone, 2 pulleys, 1 ~pulley	volcanic ash bowls (e.g., Kaway Impressed, etc.); large, wide orifice, everted jar sherd
TP 2	101	64.24	Topsoil Clay loam with limestone flecks and small cobbles to boulders	10YR2/2	32 rims, 29 necks, 151 body sherds (1.44, 1.30, 1.68, 1.11 cm thick), 2 bases, 1 handle, 3 diagnostic sherds, 5 small bone fragments, 1 black quartz flake, 1 shaped flake, 1 biface, 1 shaped serpentine, 1 granite mano fragment; 1 flake, fossiliferous limestone, 1 hammerstone, 14 cores, 7 chunks, 30 flakes, 2 blades	Late Classic everted jar, volcanic ash red slipped bowl
TP 1	102	65.29	Soil within wall 103; Clayey loam with limestone flecks; boulders and large cobbles	10YR4/2 to 10YR3/2	3 rims, 1 base, 1 foot, 12 body and 3 neck sherds	volcanic ash sherds w/ red slip; volcanic ash foot; jar sherds
TP 1	103	68.865 to 65.56	Large boulders and clay	10YR4/2	Not Excavated	
TP 2	104	65.48 to 65.29	Cobbles, boulders, and clay with limestone flecks	10YR5/2 (very wet)	6 rims, 1 ring base, 2 neck, 4 body sherds, 3 flakes, 1 obsidian blade fragment	Tu-Tu Camp Striated jar (Spanish Lookout); volcanic ash and calcite bowl sherd; 2 everted rims (Late Classic)
TP 1	105	68.70	Hearth/ burned pit; Clay with ashy deposit; few limestone flecks	10YR4/1 to 7.5YR2/ 0	10 rims, 1 diagnostic sherd, 1 flange, 8 body (1.78 cm thick) and 2 neck sherds, 3 flakes (2 fire-cracked)	volcanic ash bowl sherd; Mediation Black bowl (Spanish Lookout), Cayo Unslipped: Variety unspecified—jar neck appliqué (Spanish Lookout), Dolphin Head Red dish (but paste description different; early facet Spanish Lookout); bowls and jars
TP 2	106	68.915 to 68.08	Clay with limestone	10YR6/2	Not Excavated	

		flecks			
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In both TP 1 and TP 2 there appears to have been a fairly continuous layer of small to fist-sized cobbles interspersed among and below the boulders. As excavations continued in both units, the soil became lighter, likely due to the weathering of the limestone. Underneath the layers of boulders and small cobbles, an area of flat rocks was noted in TP 1 (Figure 3.2). A few of these flat stones, one in particular, appear to extend into TP 2. In the NE corner of TP 1, there were two cut stones, which appeared to be placed step-like—one superimposing the other and an apparent line of boulders appeared along the east wall of TP 1. As there was no apparent architecture related to the possible stepped stones, they were removed. The rim of a very large tecomate was recovered from this level.

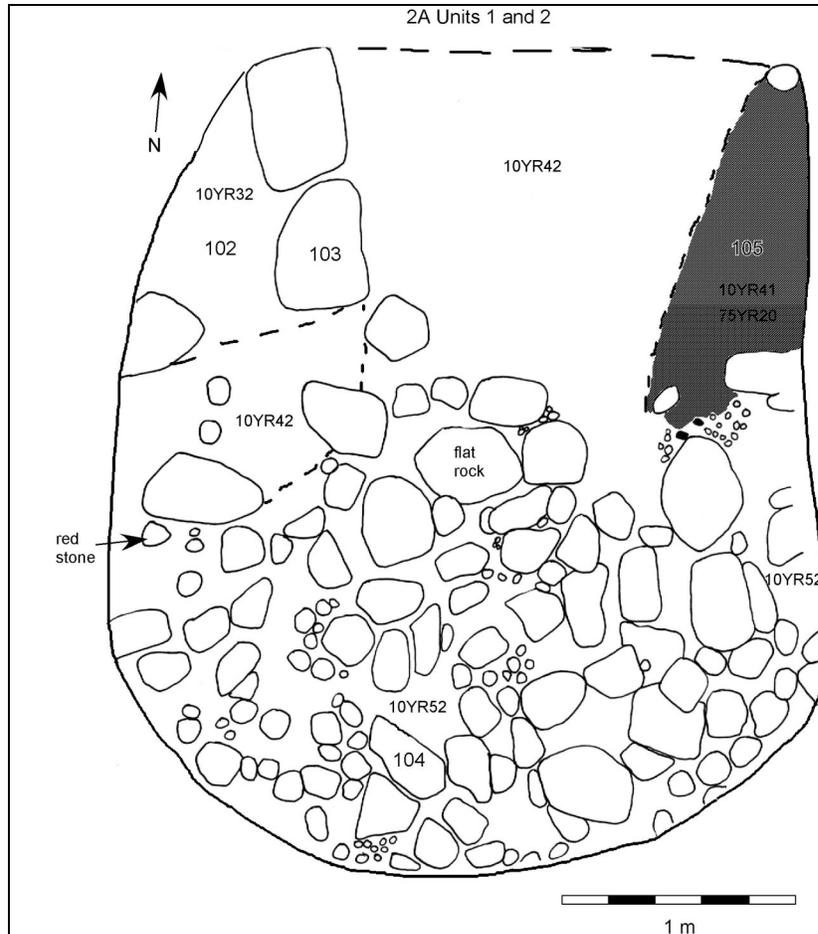


Figure 3.2 Plan of TP 1 and 2

The rock concentration extended further toward the west and south, but not the east and north. We extended TP 1 slightly to the west to expose a series of boulders, especially in the northwest corner, while TP 2 was extended to the southwest slightly to incorporate more of the rockpile. In the process, a small piece of shaped and unpolished serpentine was recovered. In clearing to the level of flat rocks noted in TP 1, fossiliferous limestone cobbles, pink sandstone pebbles and small cobbles, as well as a fairly large piece of burned limestone were noted. Apparent 'wedge stones' were also found within the intermixed cobbles; however no definite architecture was noted. Expansion of both units required the movement of Point 2, the western stake of the bisecting line for TP 1 and TP 2, 60 cm directly west along the bisect line from its original position.

The topsoil was removed in both TP 1 and TP 2, and the concentration of large flat stones first noted in TP 1 was also exposed in TP 2. In the center of TP 1, below the majority of boulders and cobbles, was an area of dark soil (stratum 103, 65.19 m asl); a darker soil was located to the east

(stratum 105, 65.155 m asl) and a grey soil was located to the west (stratum 102, 65.29 m asl), separated from stratum 103 by two boulders (see Figure 3.2). At this time, strata were drawn, elevations taken, and Munsell colors recorded.

Stratum 104, a fairly continuous layer of boulders interspersed with smaller cobbles and soil, was present in TP 1, but was more prevalent in TP 2 at about 69.24 m asl. It was removed, revealing a clay deposit with limestone flecks and a Munsell of 10YR5/2. This clay deposit (106) had an elevation between 68.915 and 68.08 m. Stratum 106 was not excavated due to the wetness of the area and the lack of artifacts.

Stratum 105 was a black/organic greasy clay—possibly burned—which had limestone flecks and few miniscule (about 1 mm) sherd fragments. A small circular test pit was excavated to determine depth of this stratum, which appears to exceed 30 cm (Figure 3.3). It exposed another clay feature (10YR3/0) which had limestone flecks and about 40% gravel. In profile, this resembled a refuse dump of clay and ash. Originally, stratum 105 was believed to be a burned area like a hearth, however after observing the stratigraphy of the small test pit, this stratum more closely represents a refuse pit filled with different dumping episodes of organic and ashy soils with few to no artifacts.



Figure 3.3 TP 1 and 2 showing artifacts and burned/refuse pit

Plan views were then drawn, elevations taken, and Munsells were assigned.

It is apparent that the greatest concentration of artifacts was located nearer to the surface and concentrated in the organic part of the topsoil above the lower layer of stones, with decreasing artifact density in lower levels. Despite the large amounts of large pottery vessels, there were no

faunal materials recovered, indicating that this is neither a domestic midden nor a cooking area. Nor did we find plaster floors.

After the second and final plan view was drawn of these test units, the bottoms were lined with non-diagnostic artifacts (body and neck sherds, chert flakes and debitage) in .2 mm curatation Ziploc bags with tags and labels. The entire unit, including sidewalls, was lined with construction plastic and backfilled.

Structure 2F Excavations

Str. 2F 2008 excavations are a continuation those started in 2005. In 2005, a 2 x 2 m test unit was placed on the platform of Structure 2F as part of a search for *stelae* (Lucero 2006). The unit was placed as close as possible to the center of the platform, just north of the LT 21 backdirt and aligned parallel with the platform edge (about 350°). The 2005 excavations removed about .50 m of topsoil (stratum 101) and revealed several plaster floors (102, 102B, 103, 105, 106 and 107), which superimposed or abutted a platform terrace (104). Neither this smaller platform nor stratum 107 was excavated in the 2005 field season due to time constraints. In her preliminary interpretation of this unit, Dr. Lucero suggested that the Maya added a platform (stratum 104) on top of the lower platform, as well as at least two floors that abutted it. These strata were then covered with “sloping plaster floors, evidenced by the different thicknesses between the north and east wall strata” (Lucero 2006:4). This platform was replastered and expanded several times through the Early and Late Classic periods. This purpose of this platform complex remained unclear, however, until this season.

In the following section, I first detail our excavations strategies, followed by a discussion of the construction sequence.

The 2008 excavations at Structure 2F began with excavation assistants locating the edges of the previous excavations. The datum point from previous excavations had been compromised and there was a possibility that stratum 107 had been cut into. Consequently, we began our excavations as if we were “starting from the beginning.” This included establishing a new unit datum. As it was not possible to shoot to the corner of the unit from any permanent site datum point using a handheld level, we arbitrarily placed a temporary datum point in the SE corner of the test pit and measured this new datum location from the old unit datum (the hole of which was still visible in the corner). The new datum point was 29° and 1.265 m from the old SE corner of the test pit. By measuring from stratum 104 (the small platform) to the ground surface and comparing that with the 2005 excavation profiles and notes, we determined that the elevation of the ground surface next to the unit had not changed noticeably. We then placed a string on the temporary datum point to use for taking elevations; this string was 0.20 m above ground surface from the SE corner of the unit and 0.28 m above ground surface from the NE corner. As the elevation for the NE corner of the unit was known from the 2005 excavations and as we determined that this elevation had not noticeably changed, we were able to determine that the elevation string for the new datum point was 72.28 m above sea level (asl).

During clean-up of the test pit, it became apparent that the walls of the original excavations sloped inward—we straightened the walls, and in so doing expanded the edges of the unit slightly beyond 2 x 2 m (by about 10-20 cm at the continuation of excavations, about 40 cm nearer the bottom of the unit due to large rocks and loose fill).

Once the edges of the test pit were located, we cleaned the walls and floor of the unit with the goal of relocating strata 104 and 107, where the 2005 excavations had left off. While the soil from clean-up was screened through ½” mesh, artifacts were not bagged but instead were used to determine importance of areas within the unit.

During cleaning, we noted a “hole” of darker, grayish, soil in the SW corner of the unit. A significant amount of sherds and some obsidian was recovered from this area, which we designated stratum 108. Upon further inspection, it appeared that this stratum extended along the west side of the unit about 40 to 50 cm wide (E-W). Since we were using a new datum elevation, we re-measured top elevations for strata 104 and 107 and took measurements for the new stratum. There may be minor discrepancies between the new elevations of platform 104 and floor 107 and the elevations recorded in 2005. After elevations were recorded, we began excavations using hand picks and trowels and screening soil through ½” mesh.

Fill 108, a grayish fill with few rocks, was the first level removed. This fill appeared in the south and west walls as something that was inadvertently excavated through in the 2005 excavations but had not been recognized as a continuous stratum. During 2008 excavations, I at first thought that this

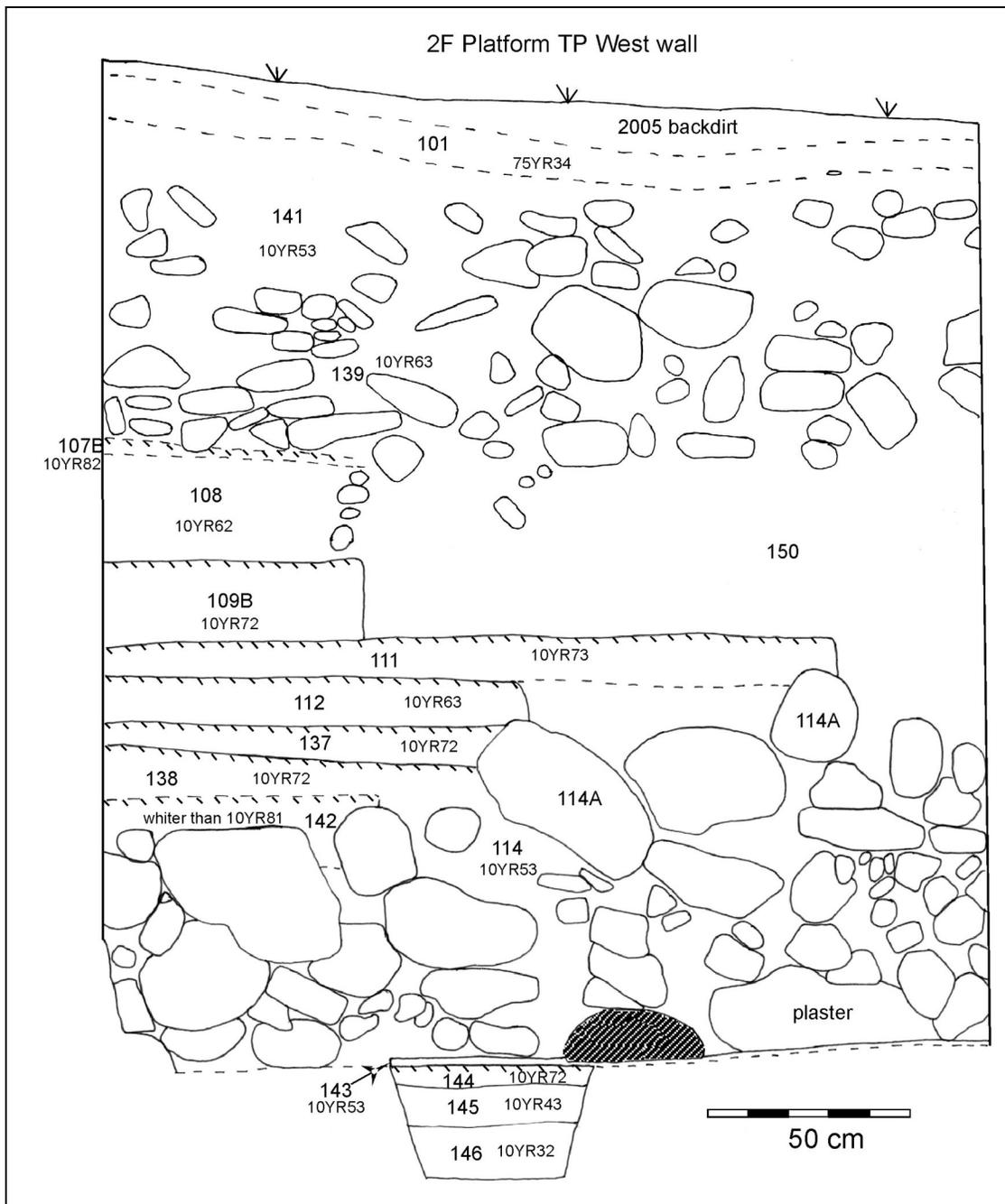


Figure 3.5 Profile of Platform 2F TP west wall

In order to determine how strata 108 and 109 were constructed, we next removed floor 107. Excavations began at the western edge of the strata and continued around the *in-situ* platform (104) (Figures 3.6 and 3.7). Floor 107 was a hard plaster floor, light in color with numerous small limestone cobbles. Some sherds, chert and shell were recovered, but not in large amounts (Table 3.3). This stratum was terminated at the next stratum (109), which we believed at that point to be a floor which continued across the unit and either abutted or was superimposed by the 104 platform which was now c. 50 cm above the level of 109.

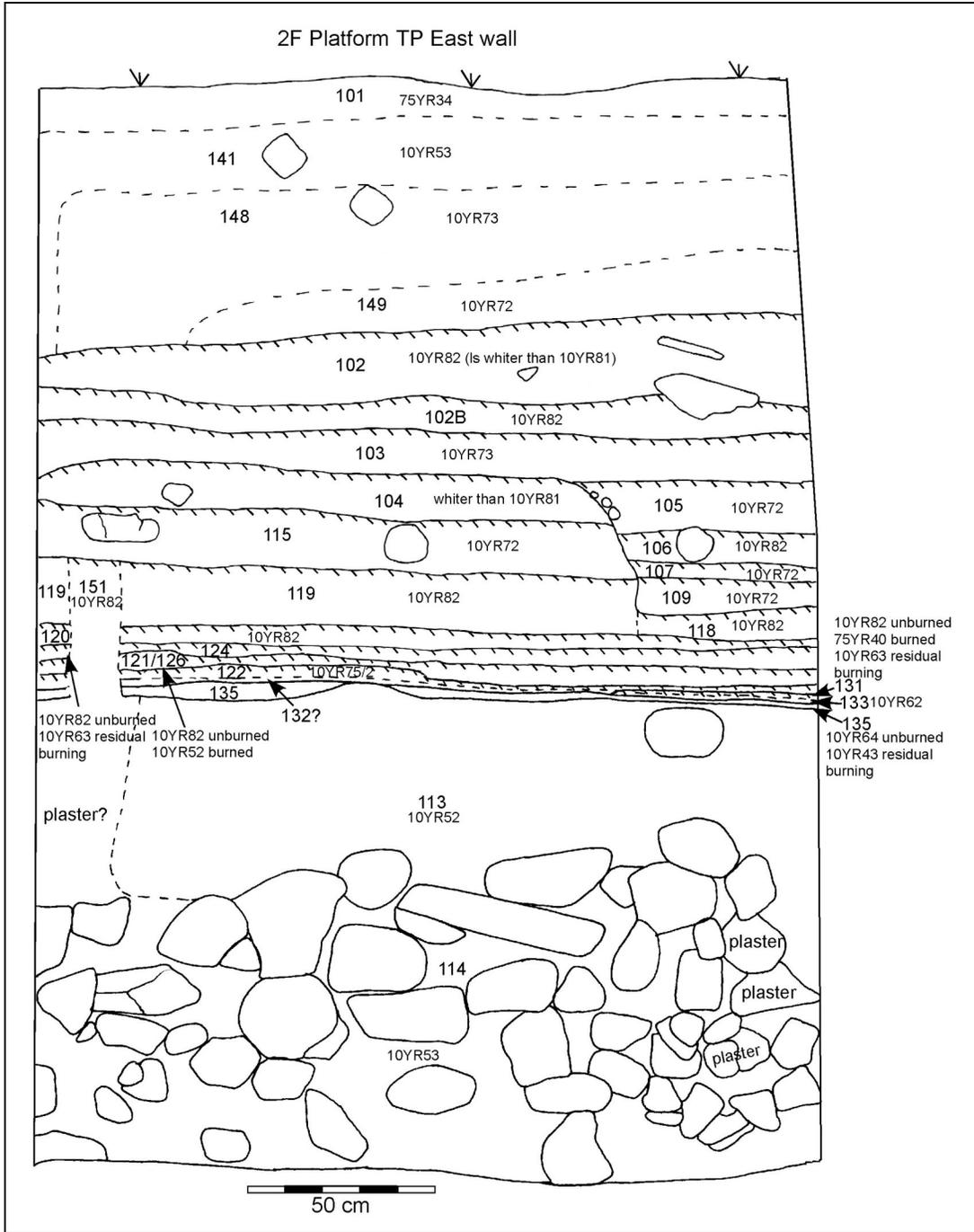


Figure 3.6 Profile of Platform 2F TP east wall

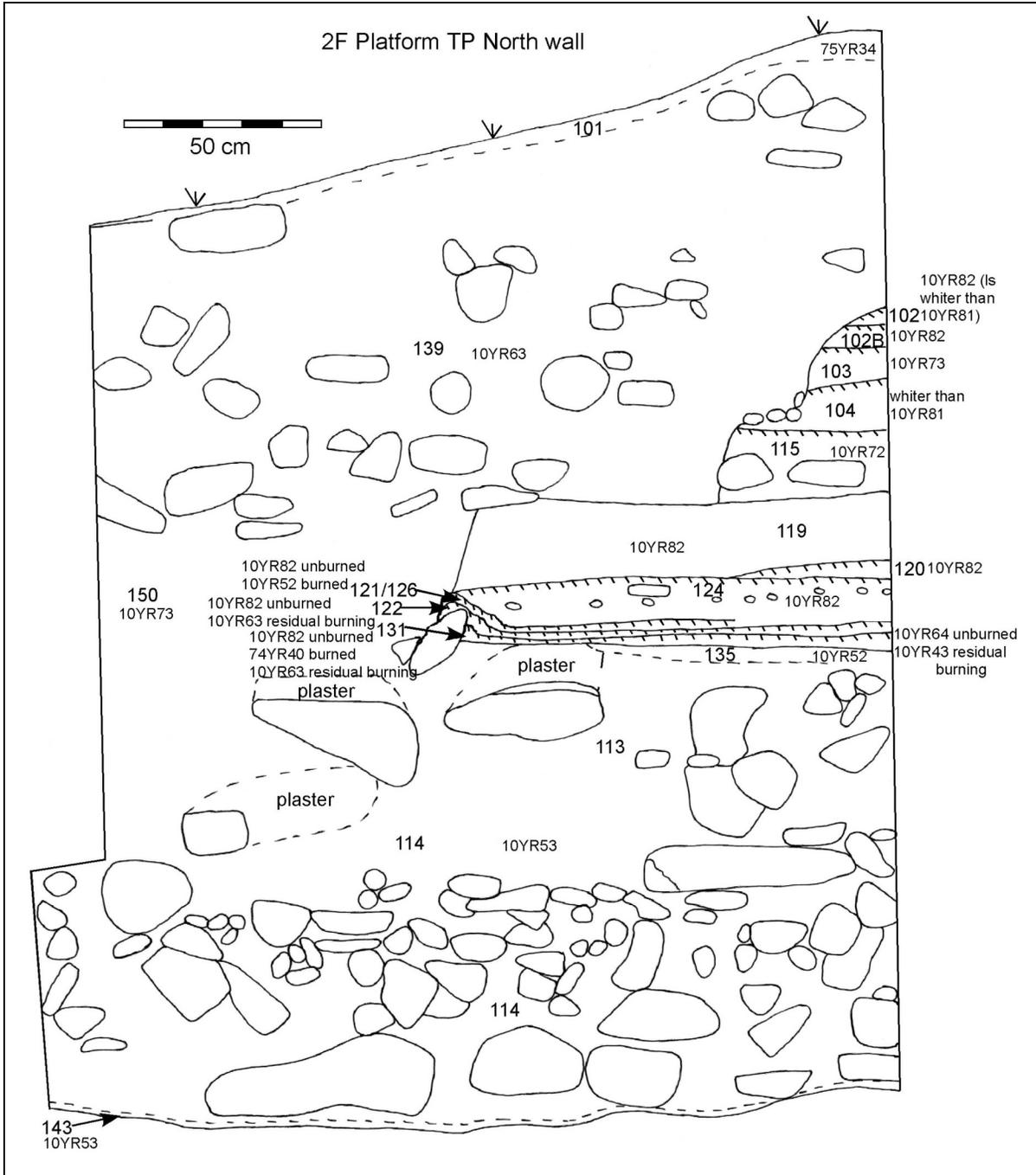


Figure 3.7 Profile of Platform 2F TP north wall

Table 3.3 Structure 2F Platform TP Strata (artifact data for Strata 101, 102, 103, 104, and 105 from Lucero 2006)

Stratum	Description	Top elevations SW corner (m asl)	Munsell Color	Artifacts	Ceramic Dates
101	Topsoil	71.70	7.5YR3/4	Chert items, quartzite chunk	Late Classic; everted jar, volcanic ash sherd, annular base
102	Plaster Floor	71.30	10YR8/2	Burnt limestone rocks, some covered w/yellow and orange	Late Classic incurving bowl (w/reddish-brown slip,

				ochre, chert blade, dark blue chert core, boulder with corner cut out	interior), volcanic ash sherd, flaring bowl with flat base
102B	Limestone	71.14	Whiter than 10YR8/1 to 10YR8/2		
103	Plaster floor	71.12	10YR7/3	Burnt limestone rocks, fire-cracked chert flakes and cores, chert hammerstone	Late Classic? – volcanic ash/limestone tempered sherd w/red slip; Middle Preclassic handles, nubbin, orange past sherd (coarse tempered)
104	Uppermost platform and floor	70.73	Whiter than 10YR8/1	1 rim, 7 body sherds (1.95 cm thick); 2 cores (1 fire-cracked), 2 flakes (2 fire-cracked)	everted jar (~Tu-Tu Camp Striated—Spanish Lookout); c. 2 cm thick pinkish paste sherd, thin-walled red slipped volcanic ash sherd, thin-walled sherd w/ black core w/ volcanic ash and calcite paste
105	Plaster floor	70.98	10YR7/2	Chert blade, flakes and cores	Early Classic incised Balanza Black vase; Preclassic orange-paste bowl
106	Floor	70.88	10YR8/2		
107	Floor (east)	70.60	10YR7/2	1 rim, 2 jar neck, 8 body sherds (1 orangish slip w/ calcite and volcanic ash paste, 1 red slip), 3 smooth jutes, 3 ridged jutes, 1 <i>Nephronaias</i> ; 7 flakes (~1 Colha), 2 chunks (1 fire-cracked), 1 core, 1 blade, 1 jute, 1 <i>Nephronaias</i>	~Aguacate Orange bowl sherd (Floral Park, A.D. 100-300)
107B	Floor (west)	70.70	10YR8/2		
108 clean-up	clean-up of fill 108			3 rim, 6 diagnostic sherds; 56 body, 1 neck sherds	~Lucha Incised body sherd (c. 4) (Hermitage, A.D. 300-600), ~Aguacate neck sherd, 2 volcanic ash incurving bowl sherds, both w/ noticeable calcite inclusions (~Late Preclassic)
108	Fill	70.66	10YR6/2	2 jar rims, 2 necks, 7 body sherds; 2 orange paste sherds; 1 chunk, 1 core, 3 flakes	2 everted jar rims w/ grooved lip—~Cayo Unslipped (Spanish Lookout)
109	Pit excavated into 119/118	70.72	10YR7/2	Mixed with 3C 101 stuff; obsidian flake, 4 flakes, chunk of black chert, white quartzite pebble	only one red-slipped bowl rim sherd known to be from 109—Hillbank Red: Hillbank variety (late Barton Creek; 200-100 B.C.)
109 B	Platform	70.46	10YR7/2		
110	Floor; might be the same as floor 123	70.45	10YR8/2	1 rim, 15 body sherds (4 orangish), 1 jar neck	Late Preclassic bowl (c. A.D. 100-300)
110A	Same as 124 (floor)	70.60	10YR8/1	~wax	
111	Floor	70.24	10YR7/3	3 rims, 9 body sherds, 1 obsidian blade fragment, 3 flakes, 1 pink/white quartzite pebble, 3 burned ls chunks; 2 jute, 1	Sierra Red bowl (Barton Creek), Hillbank Red: Rockdondo variety (Barton Creek, pp. 104-5) or

				possible marine shell fragment	Aguacate Orange (Floral Park)
112	Floor	70.12	10YR6/3	1 rim, 1 jar neck	Cayo Unslipped (Spanish Lookout)?
113	Fill	70.42	10YR5/2	3 handles, 1 spout, 1 figurine or solid support fragment, 3 bases, 43 rims (~drum base), 16 diagnostic sherds, 221 body and 10 neck sherds, 1 bone fragment, 1 ~shaped laterite, 2 obsidian blade, 1 chert blade, 1 white quartz flake, 1 ~worked flake blade, 6 <i>Pomocea</i> , 9 <i>Nephronaias</i> , 88 smooth and 28 ridged jutes; 5 chunks, 22 flakes (7 fire-cracked), 1 ~smoothing stone	Savanna Orange spout (early Jenny Creek)?, small narrow orifice jar (Pinola Creek Incised—late Jenny Creek), Sierra Red impressed sherd?, 5-6 Sierra Red bowls (everted, designed rims), Sierra Red Fluted
114	Fill w/ large boulders (114a upper part of fill)	114: 69.80 114a: 70.04	10YR5/3	7 rim, 5 diagnostic sherds, 1 body sherd, 1 biface tip; 6 cores (2 fire-cracked), 2 chunk, 12 flakes (5 fire-cracked), 1 small coarse laterite boulder, 1 <i>Nephronaias</i> , 1 <i>Pomocea</i> , 14 ridged and 22 smooth jutes	Bullet Tree Red-Brown bowl (Mount Hope; 0-A.D. 300), Barton Creek rim (300-100 B.C.), Happy Home Orange (300-100 B.C.), Late Classic vase sherd!??, Aguacate sherd
115	Platform floor	70.73	10YR7/2	1 orange-ish body sherd w/ tan-ish brown paste and calcite inclusions, 1 flake	
116	Burning	70.63	10YR6/2		
117	Brown fill	70.61	10YR7/3		
118	Floor pebbles (ballast) of floor 119	70.54	10YR8/2	2 rims, 1 body sherd, 3 flakes (2 fire-cracked), 1 quartzite chunk, 1 fire-cracked chunk	tanish-pink paste w/ remnant red slip and noticeable calcite inclusions—could be Aguacate Orange
119	Floor	70.61	10YR8/2	1 body sherd	thin-walled (4 mm) volcanic ash thick black core; dark red slip on one side, the other (interior?) pinkish-orange; glossy slip; could be Aguacate Orange; Privaccion (Floral Park)
120	Thin floor	70.56	10 YR 8/2	1 bowl rim	Aguacate Orange bowl (Floral Park)
121/126	Floor with burning	70.50	Burned portion: 10YR5/2 Unburned portion: 10YR8/2		
122	Burned floor	70.56	Residual burning: 10YR6/3 Unburned: 10YR8/2		
123	Unburned floor, might be the same as floor 110	70.47	70.47m	1 fire-cracked flake	
124	Floor, same as 110A	70.55	10YR8/2	5 body sherds; 1 orangish paste	
125	Floor/platform - cut through	70.35		3 rims, 1 jar neck, 26 body, 7 smooth and 2 ridged jutes, 1	Sierra Red: Variety Unspecified bowl (Barton)

	by re-excavation? 125 a, b, c=large boulders used to bridge 114a/129 gap			<i>Pomocea</i> , 2 brown quartz stones, 3 chunks, 8 flakes (3 fire-cracked)	Creek); angled-neck jar sherd (~Aguacate Orange), ~Aguacate Orange bowl
127	Floor 127a=plaster molding	127: 70.36 127a: 70.13	10YR6/2	1 base w/ dark red-orange slip— ~waxy	Aguacate Orange?
128	Re-excavated fill; might be the same as 132	70.485	10YR6/2	4 body sherds, 1 yellow-orange flake (~serrated); 2 burned sherds (carbon); thin striations on one sherd; charcoal sample	~Aguacate sherd with remnant red slip
129	Chamber floor	70.04	10YR7/3	1 rim, 1 diagnostic sherd, 3 neck, 13 body sherds, 1 smooth and 1 ridged jute, 1 <i>Nephronaias</i> , 1 flake, 1 small core	Sierra Red Z-angle bowl sherd (no rim)
130	Wall/support	71.00	Burned Limestone : 2.5Y6/0 Unburned: Whiter than 10YR8/1		
131/132 window	Heavily burned floor/Fill that could be the same as 128			7 body and 2 diagnostic sherds, 3 smooth jutes, 1 faunal bone fragment, 2 flakes (1 fire-cracked)	one black slipped sherd w/ orange paste on other side; thin-walled (4 mm) coarse calcite paste orange sherd; Savanna or Aguacate
131	Heavily burned floor	70.41	Burned: 7.5YR4/0 Residual burning: 10YR6/3 Unburned: 10YR8/2	2 burned plaster samples	
132	Fill that could be the same as 128	70.42	10YR7.5/2	1 dark orange handle, 9 body sherds, 1 ridged jute, 1 chunk	well-fired red slipped volcanic ash sherds w/ some calcite inclusions
133	Burned floor	70.43	10YR6/2		
134	Chamber wall	70.54	10YR7/2	2 rims, 1 neck, 20 body sherds, 2 fire-cracked flakes, 2 smooth and 3 ridged jutes side	incised flared bowl/dish sherd (Savanna Orange?), volcanic ash straight-sided bowl w/ eroded slip (very gritty), several striated body sherds—some look deep enough to be considered incised, one dark red-brown well-fired slipped sherd on one side (~waxy)—almost red-black on other
135	Brown fill	70.38	Residual burning: 10YR4/3 Unburned 10YR6/4	4 rims, 1 neck, 4 body sherds, 1 smooth and 1 ridged jute	everted jar rim (Tu-Tu Camp Striated or..?), flared bowls, dark-brown/maroon slipped sherd, ~Aguacate Orange sherd, waxy slipped sherd, volcanic ash sherd w/ orange-red slip w/ a few calcite inclusions
136	Platform slope	70.72	10YR7/2		
137	Floor	70.05	10YR7/2	3 body sherds, 1 ridge sherd, 1	Aguacate Orange basal

				ring base	base (Floral Park, 1-A.D. 300)
138	Thick floor	70.00	10YR7/2	1 notched red-slipped sherd w/ some calcite inclusions, 2 body sherds	
139	Flagstones	71.14	10YR6/3		
140	Floor	70.075	10YR7/2	2 rims, 6 body sherds, 1 light blue chunk	~Aguacate Orange sherd
141	Collapse	71.56	10YR5/3		
142	Partial floor and fill	69.73	Whiter than 10YR8/1	7 body sherds, 4 chunks (3 fire-cracked), 1 ls core;	Savanna Orange sherd, ~thick Aguacate Orange sherd w/ calcite inclusions, black slipped sherd on one side—other side unslipped brown, smooth surface
143	Thin dark fill	69.20	10YR5/3		
144	Floor	69.18	10YR7/2	1 rim, 2 body and 1 neck sherd, 1 <i>Pomocea</i> , 1 chert blade, 1 fire-cracked core	Jocote Orange-Brown jar sherd (Jenny Creek)
145	Dark fill w/burning and dense artifacts	69.13	10YR4/3	5 rims, 1 handle, 1 diagnostic sherd, 15 body and 1 neck sherd, 2 flakes (1 fire-cracked), 3 smooth and 1 ridged jute; Charcoal sample	Jenny Creek, but w/ volcanic ash temper; Jocote Orange bowl
146	Buried A horizon?	69.03	10YR3/2		
147	Floor to re-cap excavation?	70.62	Floor: 10YR7/2 Ballast: 10 YR8/2		
148	Fill (diffuse)	71.76	10YR7/3		
149	Diffuse fill	71.61	10YR7/2		
150	Fill in NW corner	70.64	10YR7/3		
151	Re-excavation	70.81	10YR8/2		
152	Re-excavation	70.62	10YR7/2		
153	Re-excavation	c. 70.80	10YR7/2		
154	Dark/burned fill	70.08	10YR4/3		

Excavations continued with the removal of stratum 109. The soil of this level was fairly loose and easy to dig, with the exception of a concentration of hard plaster near the 104 platform, which was designated 109a, left *in situ*, and pedestaled. Some ceramics and lithics were recovered, again, not in large quantities. A small piece of crystal quartz and some fire-cracked chert were also recovered. Stratum 109 appeared to continue deeper along the west edge of the unit where it was terminated at floor 111, while on the east edge it gave way to what might be another plaster floor (110) after ca. 10 cm. Floor 111 was about 20 cm lower than floor 110. Fresh water shell, the rim of a burnished red-slipped bowl, and an obsidian flake were recovered from the deeper area of stratum 109 to the west where it superimposed floor 111. No apparent difference in soil texture or color was noted during the removal of stratum 109; however, during later inspection of the south wall profile, it was apparent that the construction/fill episodes of the western portion of the unit were very different from those in the eastern part of the unit. The western portion was then designated 109b.

During the removal of stratum 109, it was noted that the hard plaster floor (110) did not extend all the way to the north wall of the unit, but rather ended roughly in the area that 109a was located. Stratum 109a appeared to be sitting on the corner of floor 110 (Figure 3.8). To the north of the corner of floor 110 was a darker, loose fill (113) which was left in place.

As floor 111 appeared to abut floor 110, we removed it (111) while strata 104, 109a and 110 were left in place. During its excavation, three fairly large boulders were discovered together in the

NW unit corner. As few boulders were noted in the recent strata, these were left in situ while stratum 111 was cleared around them. Once floor 111 was removed, there appeared to be loose fill (114) around the boulders. Floor 111 terminated at another floor (112), the edge of which was just to the south of the boulders (see Figure 3.8).

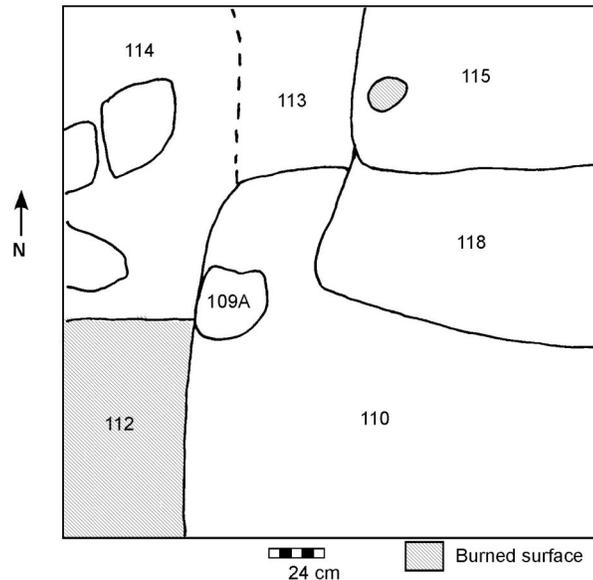


Figure 3.8 Floor 110 and associated strata

The western edge of platform 104 was cleaned up to better see its profile. In doing so, we uncovered a floor that appeared to have been about the same level as stratum 109 had been, suggesting that stratum 104 superimposed 109. In the profile of the western side of the small platform under 104, we noted a series of floors which did not quite match those which extended to the south of Stratum 104; these floors were assigned strata numbers and sketched (Figure 3.9).

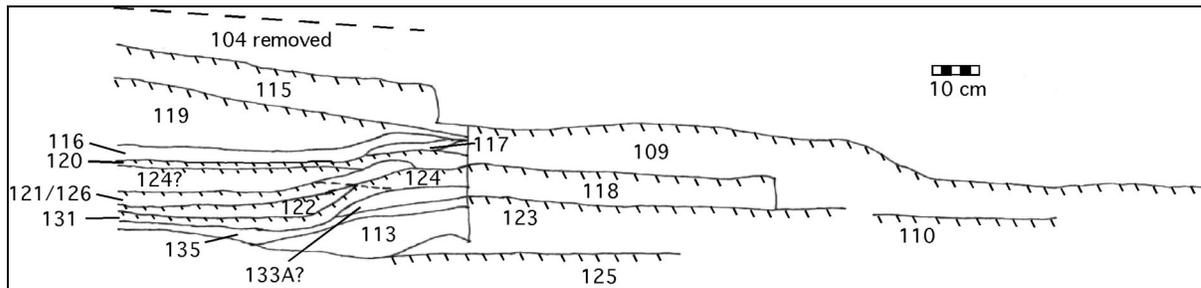


Figure 3.9 profile of floor sequence drawn c. 1.10 m from east wall

In order to better see the construction sequence of the 104 platform area, we next removed 104. Starting from the south part of 104, we removed this stratum moving from south to north. In doing so, we exposed floor 115. Floor 115 was higher than stratum 109, yet abutted it at the south edge; this floor appears to even-out with 109 along the east wall of the unit. Platform 104 yielded lithics, ceramics and burned limestone.

Floor 115 included burned surfaces and limestone. There is a distinct edge to the stratum near the southeast corner; however, it slopes up and evens off with Stratum 109 on the east side near the unit wall. At this level it appeared that stratum 109 may have wrapped around the east side of 115 where the two became roughly even.

The remainder of stratum 109 under platform 104 was removed, revealing yet another floor (118). This floor was thin and just barely distinguishable from floor 110. Floor 118 appeared to extend beneath the floor 115 burning episode (see Figure 3.6); however, in the partial profile this extension appeared to be a different floor (124, first noted as 110A), which sloped downward towards the north wall (see Figure 3.7).

We removed floor 115 next, as it appeared to superimpose stratum 118. Only one sherd and one lithic were recovered, along with a few small pieces of burned limestone. Floor 115 was thinner than recognized in profile and was terminated at a new floor (119), which sloped up to the northeast. Floor 119 was a fairly thick floor with small pieces of limestone. The floor was uneven and not very smooth; there was some burning. Few artifacts, including some sherds and some small pieces of burned limestone, were recovered. Upon its removal, we discovered an even floor (120) that appeared to be level with floor 118; however, there were distinct texture differences. The surface of this floor was very smooth and had a few small cracks—possibly from drying or sun exposure.

Floor 118 was carefully removed as it appeared to abut floor 120. There was a soft margin between the two floors, at which 120 angled southeast. Floor 118 sloped down to the south and was only 1-2 cm higher than floor 110. The surface of 118 was not very smooth and had some large cobbles that popped out when troweled. There was a concentration of burned limestone in its northeast corner. Red-slipped ceramic, fire-cracked chert, and some small pebbles of pink sandstone were recovered. After floor 118 was removed, it appeared to have abutted floor 110; under floor 118 was another floor (123) (Figure 3.10). Floor 123 had a clear burned area along the east wall and there was a clear boundary between floors 120 and 123 where the two abutted.

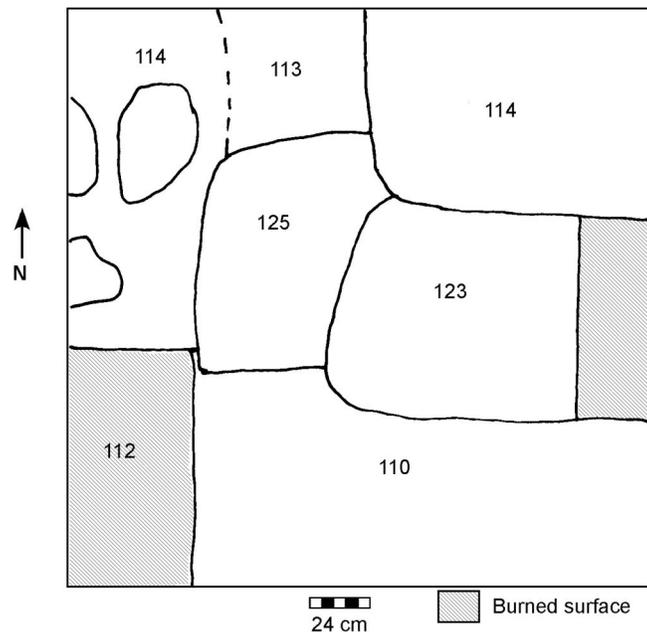


Figure 3.10 Floor 123 and associated strata

The smooth flat floor 120 was removed next. With the exception of burned limestone, it was sterile. The small drying cracks on the surface of this stratum suggested little foot traffic and perhaps a rapid covering of this floor. Its removal revealed a floor with a number of burned stones (124/110A).

At this point, stratum 109a was also removed. What had appeared to have been a concentration of plaster was actually one large plaster chunk. It was roughly 32 cm square with one corner missing and was about 13 cm high. Upon the removal of stratum 109a, it became apparent that there was a new floor (125) that extended north of stratum 110 rather than 110 extending in an 'L' shape around floor 123 (see Figure 3.10). This new floor appeared to be superimposed by floor 123, and possibly by floor 110.

As it was slightly higher than floor 123, floor 124 was next removed. It was a thin plaster floor with slightly more artifacts, including some red-slipped sherds, and fire cracked chert than the strata that superimposed it. Floor 124 superimposed a partially burned floor (126).

Floor 126 appears to be the same as 121 in profile, thus will be referred to as floor 121/126. Floor 121/126 was very flat and even, with horizontal roots across the surface. It was smoothed nicely to the north and east portion of it, but was uneven closer to the southwest corner of the stratum where there was evidence for burning.

At this level, it appeared that floor 110 did not extend as far to the west as we once thought, but actually ended about 55 cm from the east wall of the unit with a small lip that was approximately even with the edge of floors 123 and 121/126. Also, the far eastern portion of floor 110, extending about 15 cm to the west of the test pit wall, was much smoother and flatter than the area to the west. This flatter area is also slightly greyer than the rest of floor 110, and appears to align with the burning along the eastern part of floor 123. Given these differences, this area was designated as floor 110A; after cleaning up the profile along 110/110A where it abutted floor 123 it became very clear that floor 110A was a separate floor from stratum 110 with distinct texture differences between the two. Stratum 110 was soft with cobbles while floor 110A was quite compact and a seemingly homogenous plaster floor. In the east wall profile, it appeared that floor 124 continued further south than we previously believed and was likely the same floor as 110A (see Figures 3.6 and 3.7).

We began removing stratum 110; it was at this point that we noted in the southern profile wall that there was a limestone 'step' separating strata 105 and 109. It also appeared that stratum 109 stepped down and ended about the same place that floor 110 ended; stratum 109 on the west side was at that point designated 109b to distinguish it from the eastern portion (109). The wall or step (130) separating 109 from 109b was only apparent in the profile wall.

Stratum 110 contained much more ceramics and lithics than the other strata; it also contained fire-cracked chert and some fossiliferous limestone. While removing it, we came upon another plaster floor (127) under its western portion, but the central portion did not reach a floor at the same level (see Figure 3.4). Rather, there appeared to be a 'hole' in this area filled with soft, loose fill (128). The Maya appeared to have re-excavated through 110A/124 and the floors beneath it; they then plastered over the hole with floor 110. The loose fill of this re-excavated area contained cobbles and pebbles. Lithics and ceramics were also recovered, and a piece of fire-cracked quartzite was noted but not collected. Fill 128 rested on a clear smooth floor (129) that appeared to extend under floor 110 and fill 128 to the north.

We removed floors 110A/124 and 121/126 simultaneously. Floor 110A/124 was fairly hard and contained burned limestone; it seemed to pop fairly easily off of the next floor. Upon its removal, a new floor (122) was reached at the same level and with the same burning as floor 123; the burned eastern portion of floor 123 appears to have extended under 110A/124.

There was a fair amount of burning associated with floor 121/126; it also contained burned cobbles. No artifacts were recovered, which was terminated at the next floor (122). In elevation, floor 122 appeared to be the same as floor 123 and had burning that extended in a circular fashion from the north wall to the east with a circular unburned area in the northeast corner (Figure 3.11). Since this burned area appeared to correspond with the burning of floor 123, we initially assumed these floors to be the same.

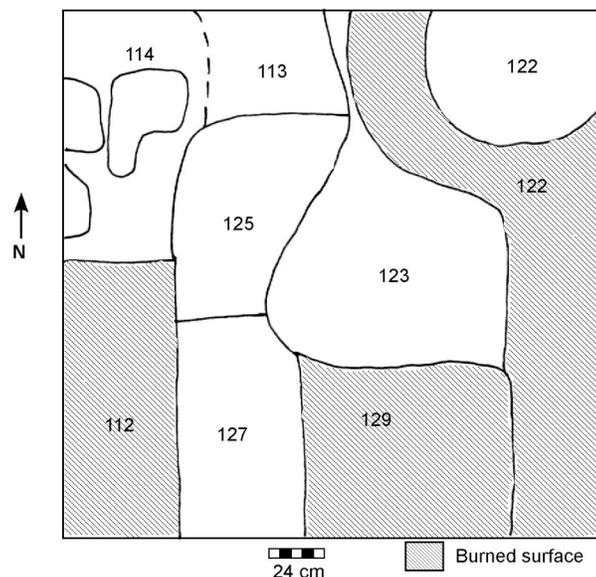


Figure 3.11 Floors 122 and 123

In removing floor 122/123, there appeared to be another burned floor underneath. Using a trowel, 122/123 also popped off of the next floor (131) fairly easily. Floor 131 was also a flat and smooth floor that was heavily burned. We noted that the heavy burning in floor 131 followed the east edge of the platform in a similar way that the burning of 122/123 did. The east-central area, which was originally designated part of 123, was not burned, and neither was the central area of it (see Figure 3.12). This burning pattern, together with a color difference of the central area suggested that floors 122/123 and 131 did not extend through this central area, but rather were present only in the northern portion of the unit and along the east wall. The unburned portion of floor 131 was re-designated as 132 and, although floor 122 and 123 had been excavated as stratum 123, we determined them to be separate strata—floor 122 containing the burned area, while stratum 123 the unburned central area. As such, floor 122 superimposed floor 131, both with evidence for burning; floor 123 superimposed fill 132, both being less-hard than 122 and 131 without evidence for burning. Detailed photos were taken of strata 131 and 132, during which a circular or rectangular concentration of burning was noted at the southwest corner of floor 131, near the edge it shared with fill 132.

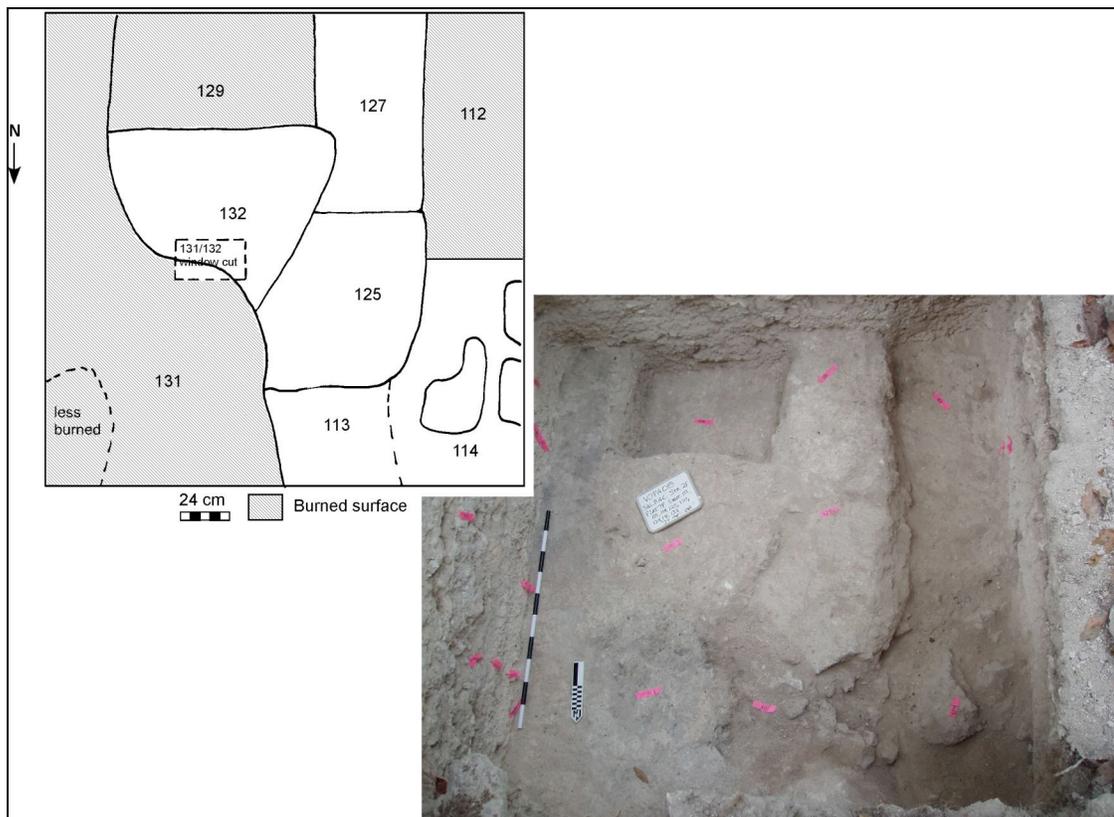


Figure 3.12 Burned floors

After photographs were taken of the 131/132 area, we cleaned up the walls of the re-excavated area in the south-central part of the unit. The profiles of the 'hole' which had been filled with stratum 128 were drawn and it was at this point that we suspected that the fill 128 area that had been cut into and re-filled by the Maya may have extended to the north to include floor 123 and fill 132. This would explain their differences from strata 122 and 131 that were present to the north and east.

A small (c. 20 x 30 cm) window was cut between floor 131 and fill 132 in order to determine their relationship. During the window cut, we noticed a strong sulfur smell; it appeared that this was a result of the heavy burning of floor 131; a sample of this burned floor was collected. In this window cut, a dark brown sandy soil was present under floor 131 (fill 113); this same soil was noted in the mid-unit partial profile, but did not appear to extend to the south (again supporting the likelihood that the central area of the unit had been re-excavated in antiquity and refilled with different soils). Ceramics were recovered from this brown sandy soil, and lithics, shell, small pieces of ceramics, and

small mammal bone (likely rodent) were recovered from the slightly lighter brown soil directly underneath the darker sand.

The window cut showed that floor 131 and fill 132 abutted each other and that 132 was likely part of the Maya re-excitation; we therefore removed fill 132 next. We expected to hit a floor about the same level as floor/platform 125, if not before, but it appeared that the re-excavated area may have continued deeper than 125. As no floor was found, it became apparent that soil differences noted in the small 'hole' profiles reflected differences in fill color or were small floors that we inadvertently excavated through (see Figure 3.12). In looking at the profile sketches, it would appear that another floor possibly covered just the re-excavated area with 128 fill (and would suggest that what was labeled 127 in the north and east walls should actually be 125 as is labeled in the west wall). Ceramics were recovered from fill 132, including a sherd with a handle and sherds with orange paste—likely Middle Preclassic ceramics.

The edges of floors 125 and 131 that surrounded fill 132 were very solid and hard floors, while 132 was soft and easy to dig; its composition and color suggest crushed limestone and soil. This supported the idea that this was used to fill in the Maya re-excitation. As we followed out the area of soft fill, it appeared to have filled in a rectangular area that abutted strata 125, 127, and 131. The floor (129) we reached under floor/fill 132 appeared to be the same floor that was noted under fill 128 (Figure 3.13). Floor 129 also showed evidence for burning, which was concentrated along the southern edge. Burning was also noted in the profile of the south wall of the unit, suggesting that there had been a burned stratum through which a hole was dug and then filled with strata 128/132 fill and plastered over with floors 110 and 123.

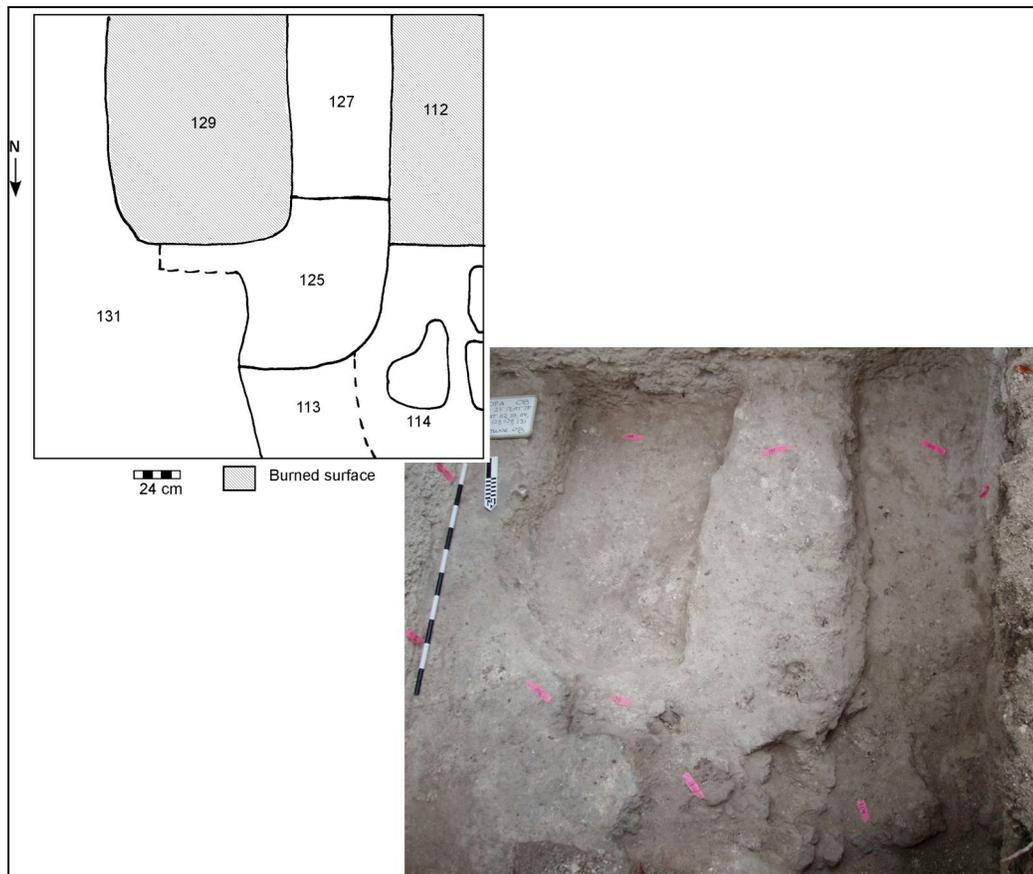


Figure 3.13 Chamber floor 129 surrounded

After more samples were taken of floor 131—one of solid intact floor and one of loose floor scrapings—this floor was removed simultaneously with floor 127 (the floor which had been under the western portion of floor 110). Floor 127 was soft and loose with only a few ceramics. We had expected it to superimpose floor 125, but as the southern portion of 127 was being removed, no floor

was reached at the same level of 125. Rather it appeared that floor/platform 125 sloped down to the south and terminated at an apparently stepped or molded edge which began about 10 cm from the south profile wall and angled to the northwest; this molded edge (127a) may have been cobbles or collapse directly under floor 127 (see Figure 3.4). Sloping strata were also visible in the south profile wall of the unit, suggesting that the plaster of strata 125/127a may have been related to wall/step 130 somehow.

Since the dark brown sand noted under floor 131 in the window cut did not appear to extend to the south, its removal began in the southeast corner. A new floor (133) was noted about 5 cm under 131 in the southeast corner, which we followed to the north. Floor 133 appeared to end about halfway to the north while the fill under floor 131 north of 133 was soft and loose. This soft, loose fill north of floor 133 was removed in the northeast portion of the unit in order to see how it related to the dark brown fill under floor 131. The dark brown fill appears to be fill 113, which was noted in the window cut and extended to the south under floor 131. In the initial stages of removing 131, some of fill 113 artifacts directly under the floor were mixed with 131 during screening; we were able to separate them however as the excavator remembered where the artifacts had been coming from (mostly from fill 113). Floor 131 was terminated in the southeast portion of the unit at stratum 133—a lightly-burned plaster floor, and at the loose dark fill, 113, to the north.

Stratum 113 was very soft, loose fill which was easily removed. The portion of fill under floor 131 to the north and east of floor 133 was partially removed, yielding a large amount of ceramics and shell. It also revealed an uneven floor/fill area (134) just to the north of floor 133. In cleaning around what we believed to be a remnant of floor 133 in the northern part of the unit, we noted that this appeared to be a plaster 'chunk' similar to 109a; we thus reassigned it as 133a. In the profile wall of the northeast corner of the unit, we noticed a thin orange-tan layer (135) directly above fill 113; this layer appeared to extend to the south directly under stratum 131.

It was then necessary to attempt to isolate 133a to determine how it related to the platform floor 125. To do so, we needed to remove floor 133 and fills 135 and 113. As strata 113 and 135 were so loose, it was difficult to keep them separate and therefore they were not mapped separately. The extent of strata 113 and 135 was coeval with floors 131 and 133 except along the north wall where fill 135 appeared to peter out to the west. We removed the remainder of floor 133 in the southeast corner; under this hard, lightly burned layer was the thin orange-tan layer of fill (135), which was also removed. A few ceramics and shell were recovered from the fill 135, but not as many as fill 113 underneath it.

We continued removing fill 113, which was dark and loose with a large amount of artifacts, as well as some fist-to-softball size cobbles and pieces of limestone. Artifacts included large amounts of ceramics, shell, small fragments of mammal bone, a possible smoothing stone, and more lithics than so far recovered, including two obsidian blade fragments (Figure 3.14). Fill 113 was only found to the north and east of what we believed to be a Maya re-excavation. This fill terminated at wall 134, which ran north-to-south near the east wall of the unit, but continued deeper in the northeast corner and along the north wall; more cobbles were noted in fill 113 as we excavated deeper in the northern portion of the unit.

Due to a miscommunication, stratum 133a (the plaster isolate) was removed earlier than planned; however, it did not appear to have been as substantial as stratum 109a had been. Rather, 133a was only about 8-10 cm at its thickest and was easily broken apart; this may only have been a plaster or limestone cobble placed within the fill 113. While removing fill 113 around the northwest corner of platform 125, we noted boulders under or as part of the platform which appeared to be almost step- or foot-like. We originally believed we had found a new floor (stratum 136) under fill 113; however, this turned out to simply be an area of compacted soil rather than a new floor. Fill 113 continued across the entire northern portion of the unit and appeared to continue into stratum 114 (the large boulders and fill in the northwest corner of the unit).

We attempted to clear the remainder of the fill 113 from the top of stratum 134; at first 134 appeared as a ridge of plaster with what seemed to be pockets with fill 113. Stratum 134 extended from where it possibly lay under platform/floor 125 in the north all the way to the south wall. The termination of fill 113 was somewhat arbitrary as the loose fill itself continued to fall into the large boulders of fill 114 and into the small pockets among and to the east of wall 134.

Excavation then continued with fill 114 as it had similar soil as fill 113, only with large (30-40+ cm diameter) boulders. Along with ceramics and shell, we recovered chert cores and one small biface (a possible adze). The limestone in the fill, aside from the boulders, consisted of fist-sized

cobbles, flat tabular pieces, and a fair amount of fossiliferous ones. Fill 114 soil became lighter as we dug deeper, likely due to limestone weathering. Since excavating became difficult due to the presence of large boulders, we left it for the time-being and removed floor/platform 125 next.

Floor/platform 125 contained fist-sized and larger cobbles along the north sides of the level (see Figure 3.4). Under the cobbles along this edge was a somewhat loose fill (125 north) that connected through to the large stones of fill 114 underneath. Floor/platform 125 north is separate from the rest of 125 to the west. To the east of 125 north was a hard plaster area—which was left in situ while we cleaned around it. In cleaning around the hard plaster of 125 north, we were able to discern the northern edge of floors 112 and 129 directly below 125; floor/platform 125 appeared to slightly overhang 112 and 129 to the north.

Stratum 125 north appears to have consisted of a large boulder (125a) and two conglomerates of plaster and fist-sized and larger cobbles (125b and c) which were placed over fill 114 and floors 112 and 129 in order to bridge the gap; 125a and b were then plastered over to even out and create a new floor/platform. The removal of strata 125a, b, and c revealed floors 112 and 129 to be separate floors after all. Floor 129 served as the chamber floor.



Figure 3.14 Fill 113 artifacts including Sierra Red ceramics, shell, brown quartz, and wax

Floor/platform 125 west was removed beginning at the stepped/molded edge left by the removal of plaster molding 127a. Under this was a slightly raised area of harder soil and compacted cobbles. In this area the floors 112 and 129 appeared to extend under floor/platform 125 in a slight northeast to southwest angle, however when 125 west was removed, there appeared to be a ridge

between them with the center of the ridge directly under 125a (this ridge appears to be the remnant of chamber wall 134 discussed below). Upon closer inspection, there appeared to be a plaster lip between floor 112 and chamber floor 129; we were unable to determine however whether floor 129 was cut through and the plaster lip added before floor/platform 125 or whether floor 112 was in place first, 129 added and lipped, and then superimposed by floor/platform 125.

Ceramics, shell and lithics were recovered from the area of 125 north, while fire-cracked chert and burnt and pink limestone was noted from 125 west; the possible strata differences between west and north were not noted until after artifacts had already been bagged together.

After the removal of floor/platform 125, we noted a platform slope in the south wall of the unit. In profile, this slope appeared to divide east from west—a feature which had been suspected with the notice of wall 130 in the same profile wall. On the west wall of the unit, there appeared in profile a series of steps or platforms that were constructed up to the edge of the slope or structure noted in the south wall (see Figure 3.4). There also appeared to have been one episode of darker fill added to the exterior of the structure to create a level surface, which was then capped with a series of flagstones.

A closer inspection of the area in which 125b had been located revealed a darker area, roughly rectangular, that corresponded with the location of 125b. Around this darker area was the white plaster of chamber wall 134. After looking at the edge of wall 134 where it met fill 114, plaster from wall 134 extended over a boulder that was considered part of fill 114. The large 114 boulders appeared to abut floors 112 and 129, while floor 129 appeared to superimpose floor 112. In turn, Chamber wall 134 appeared to then superimpose chamber floor 129 and was cut through by the re-excavation event.

During this inspection of the northern edge of strata 112, 129, and 134, we noted that the fill around north and east edges of plaster ridge 134 was dark and loose, most likely remnants of fill 113. We began removing the 134 ridge, which appeared to superimpose both floor 129 and fill 114. Stratum 134 appeared to be composed mainly of small cobbles and pebbles held together with a white plaster mortar. This formed a rough ridge along the east wall of the unit, although at this point we believed the 'ridge-like' appearance was likely due to the Maya re-excavation, which removed the majority of the stratum.

After removal of about 10 cm of plaster ridge 134, we noticed it was actually part of a wall extending up into the south profile wall of the unit, curving up and to the west towards the plaza (Figure 3.15; see also Figure 3.4). This profile suggested that floor 129 and wall 134 together formed a cyst or crypt which had been commemorated with a series of floors (many of which had been burned) that abutted wall 134. At some point in the past, the Maya had excavated into this cyst or crypt, removed what had been interred there, burned floor 129 and then refilled it with 128/132 fill and capped with the 110/123 floors. The north and west walls of the chamber wall 134 appeared to have been removed more completely during this re-excavation than had the east wall; the east wall extends upward above the levels of strata 135, 131, 122, and 121/126. These strata terminate upon abutting the edge of wall 134. We discontinued the removal of wall 134 at this point in order to more easily determine its relationship with the remaining strata around it.

The ridge that ran between floors 112 and 129 that appeared after floor/platform 125 was removed appears to be the remnant of the 134 chamber wall (Figure 3.16). The plaster platform portion of 125 thus appears to have been added after the destruction of the chamber wall, while the molded plaster edge of the western portion of strata 125 and 127 appear to have been part of the original chamber. After the Maya re-excavated and removed chamber contents, they covered the western/northern wall remnants (and possibly the original floor of the chamber) with floor/platform 125; at some later time, they Maya re-excavated a portion of platform 125 during a re-visit of the chamber. The possibility of multiple Maya re-excavations is supported by the fact that floor 123 was soft as opposed to the hard plaster of floor 110, indicating another re-excavation through the floor 110 cap.

In order to determine the relationship between floors 112 and 129, we cut a small window into the northwest corner of 129 to see if 112 extended under it; there did not appear to be a floor, rather it was soft, but a line of plaster chunks and cobbles may have continued into or under 112 to the west. Based on this information, it was necessary to remove floor 112 so as to isolate strata 129 and 134, what we believed to be the remnants of the floor and walls of the chamber respectively. Floor 112 also had evidence for some light burning, with only a few ceramic sherds recovered. Floor 112 was terminated at a new floor (137).

Floor 137 was located closely (c. 5 cm) underneath floor 112 and was an undulating and uneven floor. There was no evidence for burning on this floor itself, but there were burned pieces of limestone incorporated within it. Removed next, this floor was thicker than floor 112 and was soft throughout.

Directly under floor 137 was yet another floor (138). Floor 138 was hard and fairly even with no evidence for burning. Upon closer inspection, there appeared to have been a lip in some places between floors 138 and 129, but this lip was not continuous. This floor was also removed; it was a fairly substantial floor, hard and thick and apparently placed directly on top of fill similar to strata 113/114—loose dark soil with “holes” which suggested 114 boulders continued below this series of floors. There were remnants of plaster, which capped 114 boulders; these were assumed to be part of floor 138, which we think sat directly on top of the loose fill of 114. Remnants of this plaster along the edge of chamber floor 129 were included in the plan map drawn after the removal of 138 (Figure 3.17).



Figure 3.15 Profiles of chamber and re-sealing and re-flooring; bottom right profile shows schematic of what complete chamber likely looked like.



Figure 3.16 Outline of chamber (134)

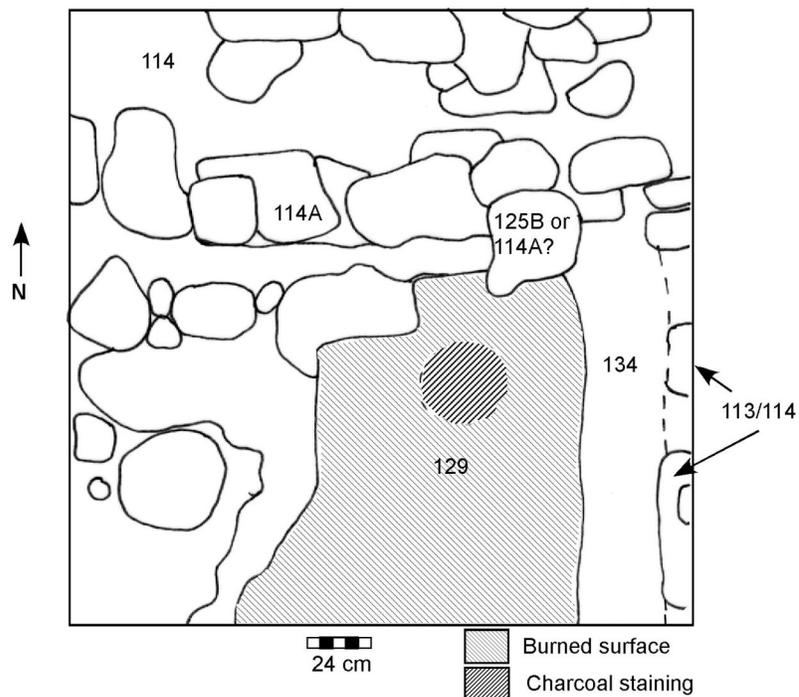


Figure 3.17 Remnant floor 129 and chamber 134, as well as exposed fill

At this point, the boulders in the northern part of the unit, which were originally designated fill 114, were at a higher elevation than those below floor 138; the boulders to the north which abutted the sequence of strata 112, 137, and 138 were then designated 114a, while the boulders which were superimposed by the floors to the south retained the 114 designation.

Chamber floor 129 was then excavated; this level appeared to lip up against chamber wall 134 and was likely one of the original floors of the chamber or cyst. In the south profile wall, there

appeared to have been a small portion of a floor below wall 134—possibly 129—but this was not encountered during later removal of chamber wall 134; perhaps this was plaster used as mortar during construction of the chamber wall. During excavations a heavily burned area was noted in the northern part of the level, which extended across the floor. At least one rim sherd was recovered from floor 129 along with a few lithics and shell. There was a tan-to-dark-brown soil directly under the burned of 129 which appeared to be part of another floor (140).

Floor 140 was left in place while we removed the remaining portion of chamber wall 134. After its removal, it appeared that wall 134 had superimposed floor 140. We began excavating the floor and the remnants of fill 113 simultaneously. During this, we noted an edge along the east side of floor 140, which became more apparent as fill 113 was removed. This edge appeared to have been a stepped or molded edge of stone or plaster bricks. Plaster floor appeared to have been added directly on top of a pebble/cobble/plaster-brick ballast, from which it was carefully removed. Floor 140 was a white plaster floor that was burned only in places; one area was so heavily burned that it extended vertically through the floor. We also noted that its southwest edge was harder than the central portion, although there seem to have been fewer stones. This may be a remnant of the wall 134 or part of platform slope 136. There was also an area of plaster remaining on boulders in the south central part of the unit; this plaster was fairly soft, but possibly corresponded with the plaster remnant found under floor 138, therefore we terminated floor 140 at this level and designated the plaster remnant stratum 142.

Based on the configuration of floor 142, we suspected that it had continued under floor 138 and we had inadvertently dug into it while removing 138. The discontinuous remnant of floor 142 was added on and among the large boulders of fill 114—it appeared that a number of large boulders and the plaster of floor 142 had been added to the top of the fill to create a level surface upon which to construct the platform.

As we removed the large boulders of fill 114, we noted that there were fewer artifacts, suggesting that the artifacts may have been part of the dark loose fill that was added on and among the large boulders. Few artifacts were recovered after about the first 20 cm; some ceramics, lithics, and shell were found from the east side of the unit near where fill 114 was superimposed by wall 134 and floor 140. We reached a lighter grey-tan soil and then a darker fill similar to that initially encountered as fill 114; perhaps this lighter soil was due to weathering limestone. Fill 114 included a number of large boulders of iron-rich fossiliferous limestone, a number of which were in the process of pedogenesis. Some small- to fist-sized pieces of burnt limestone were also recovered within the fill.

We reached a thin layer of darker soil (143) beneath the fill 114 boulders; this soil extended across the unit. Under this soil was a plaster floor (144) that was nearly missed until we had almost removed it. Fill 143 was a layer of dark brown, compact fill directly under fill 114. Floor 144 extended across the entire unit; about 1/3 to 1/2 of this level had been excavated through and artifacts had been bagged as fill 114 before the difference in strata was noted. Floor 144 had some burning as well as small pieces of charcoal and burnt limestone. Directly underneath floor 144 was a darker brown fill (145). It was in clearing this fill that we suspected we were digging/had already dug through the floor.

We placed a 50 x 50 cm window cut into fill 145 in order to determine the number of floors beneath. This window cut was placed midway along the west wall so as to more easily incorporate into the profile map (see Figure 3.5). In this window, fill 145 appeared to be a fairly thick and compact layer of dark clayey fill. It yielded a high artifact density, including charcoal, lithics, and ceramics (including a rim and a base). The color and texture of the fill 145 soil was very similar to that found in the topsoil, leading us to suggest that perhaps this was a buried 'A' horizon. We reached a darker layer (146) within this window cut; it appeared to be sterile. We terminated excavation at the Structure 2F Platform Test Pit at this point. The elevations for the bottom of the unit were 69.18-69.30 m asl, with the exception of the window cut along the west wall which extended to a depth of 68.69 m asl.

We drew profile maps of all four walls of the test pit; this was a difficult process due to the complicated stratigraphy and the difficulty in seeing certain strata in certain light. Photographs of the profile walls were often used as references as strata differences were more exaggerated in photographs, making them easier to distinguish from each other. Since the unit was so deep, two levels lines were placed around the walls: one line at 1.28 m below datum, and another at 2.28 m below datum. In the process of profiling the east wall, we noticed two new platform slopes at the top of the sequence. These platform slopes were located above the 102b stratum and had therefore

been inadvertently excavated through and not noticed during the 2005 excavation season. These new strata were designated 148 and 149, respectively, and are represented by dashed lines on the profile (see Figure 3.4).

We also had trouble distinguishing between floors 118 and 119 and pit 109, as they all seemed to share a floor at the same level. In looking at these strata on the profile photo, it became apparent that floor 118 was added next to floor 119 to create a level surface, and 109 was a pit that had been excavated into floor 118 and subsequently filled and capped to the same level as 118.

While profiling the west wall, we ran into some difficulties determining the extent of floor 112. While excavating this floor, it appeared to have extended about 2/3's of the unit to the north to where fill 114a boulders were. In profile, there appeared to be a distinct edge to floor 112 about halfway to the north of the unit (see Figure 3.5). After further investigation, we concluded that floor 112 had originally been constructed as a shorter platform that subsequently was extended further to the north. In making this observation, we also noted that these construction episodes were mirrored in additions to fill 114/114a; there appear to be nearly vertical stacks of boulders and plaster under floors 138, 112 and again under the floors 111 and 112 extension. If we are correct in deducing multiple construction episodes for portions of fill 114, then this may be reflected in the widely varying ceramic dates obtained from this stratum (see Table 3.3)

After completion of the four profile maps, we recorded Munsell colors and textures for all strata. While doing so, we made another final observation in the south profile wall. Under the chamber area, we noted two areas of plastered stone amidst the loose fill of 114. These plastered boulders appear to have been pillars or footings for the 134 chamber wall (Figure 3.18; see Figure 3.15). This wall was photographed again, showing the detail of the possible footings.

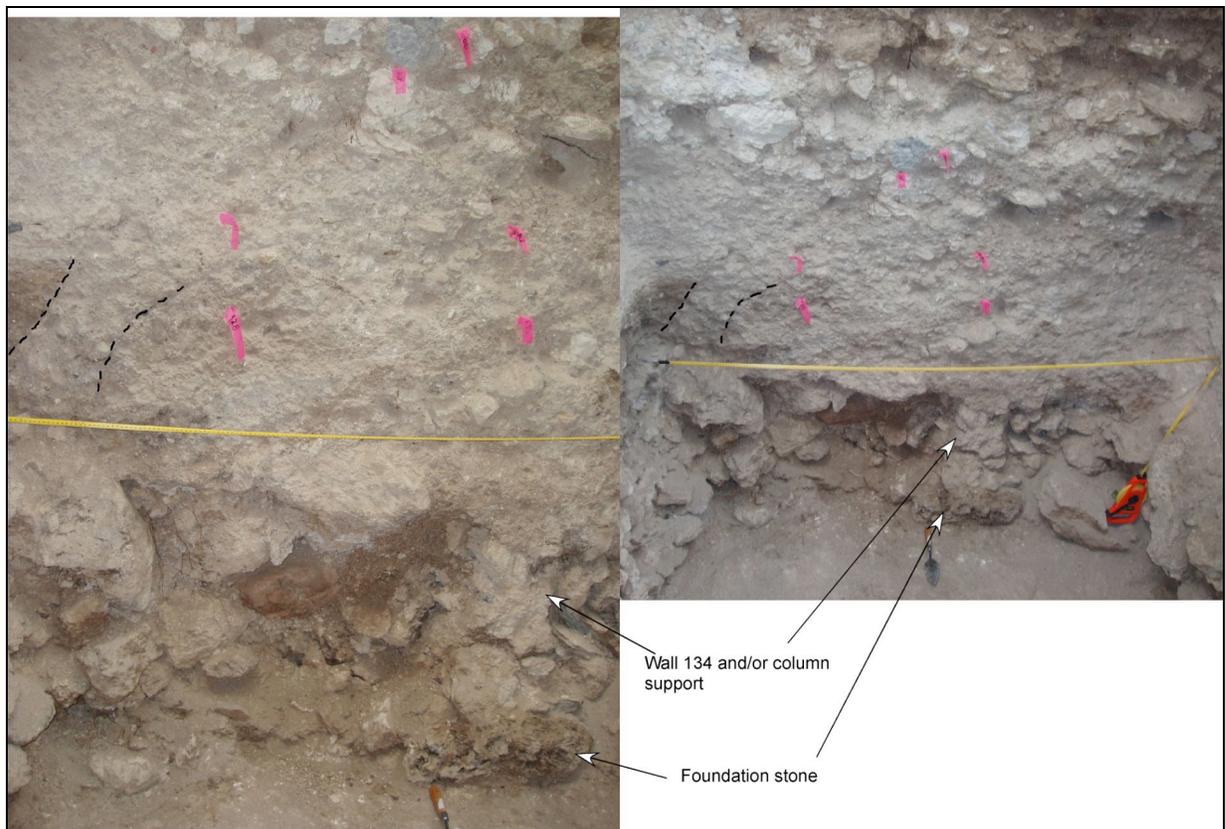


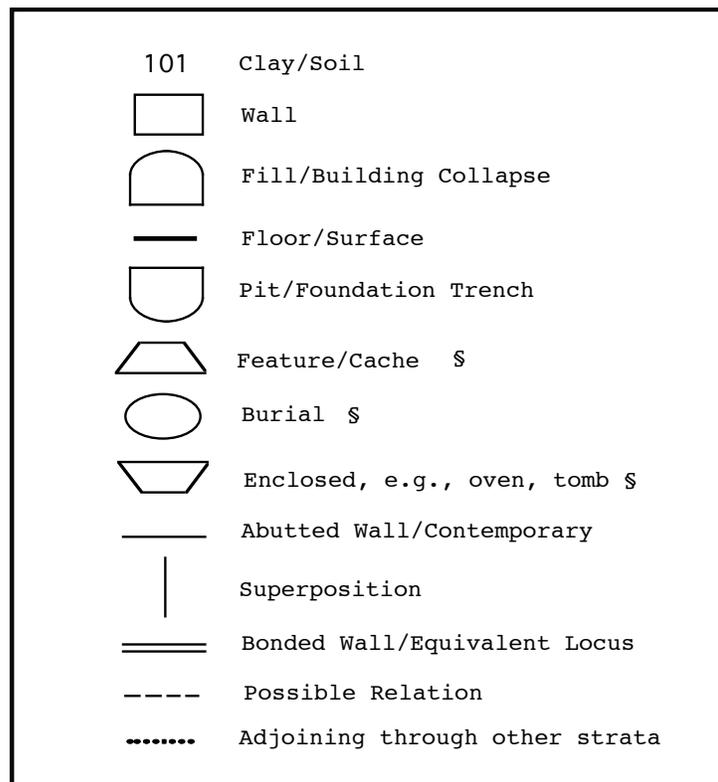
Figure 3.18 Foundation stone of chamber; dashed lines highlight chamber wall

The loose debris in the unit was swept into the window cut we had made along the west wall and non-diagnostic artifacts were placed in the bottom of the pit; a dedication was made of an earlier, incorrect, version of the unit Harris matrix inside of a plastic bag. The walls and floor were lined completely with construction plastic so that the edges were sticking out as we backfilled the unit. The

unit datum stick was wrapped with the elevation line and then carefully surrounded with soil/boulders to prevent it from being dislodged.

Structure 2F Platform Construction Sequence

Having likely reached sterile soils in a portion of the Structure 2F excavation pit, we were able to devise a construction sequence from plaza-level through final platform level—a sequence that appears to have covered a span of nearly 1000 years (from the Jenny Creek phase of the Middle Preclassic through the Late Classic) (Figure 3.19; see Table 3.3). Ceramics from the lowest excavated level (L12) of the 2001 Plaza 2 center 2 x 1 m test pit date between 100 B.C. and A.D. 250; however, the earliest dates from Plaza 2 range between 300 and 100 B.C. based on ceramics recovered from Level 9 (Table 3.4; Conlon and Ehret 2002). The ceramics recovered from what was likely the lowest cultural level of the Structure 2F test pit date to the Jenny Creek phase of the Middle Preclassic. This may suggest that the Structure 2F platform was either used for a period of time prior to the use of Plaza 2, Plaza 2 had been ‘cleaned’ and reconstructed/replastered at some point prior to or during the Barton Creek phase of the Late Preclassic, or the ceramics for the lowest dated levels of the Plaza 2 test pit were intrusive. Comparing elevations for the Plaza 2 test pit with those from the lowest levels of the Structure 2F platform test pit, it is possible that floor 144 (69.18 m asl)—the one below the Structure 2F fill 114, may be the same floor as Level 10 of the Plaza test pit (see Figure 3.5). No dateable ceramics were recovered from Plaza Level 10 to verify this possibility however.



Legend for Figure 3.19

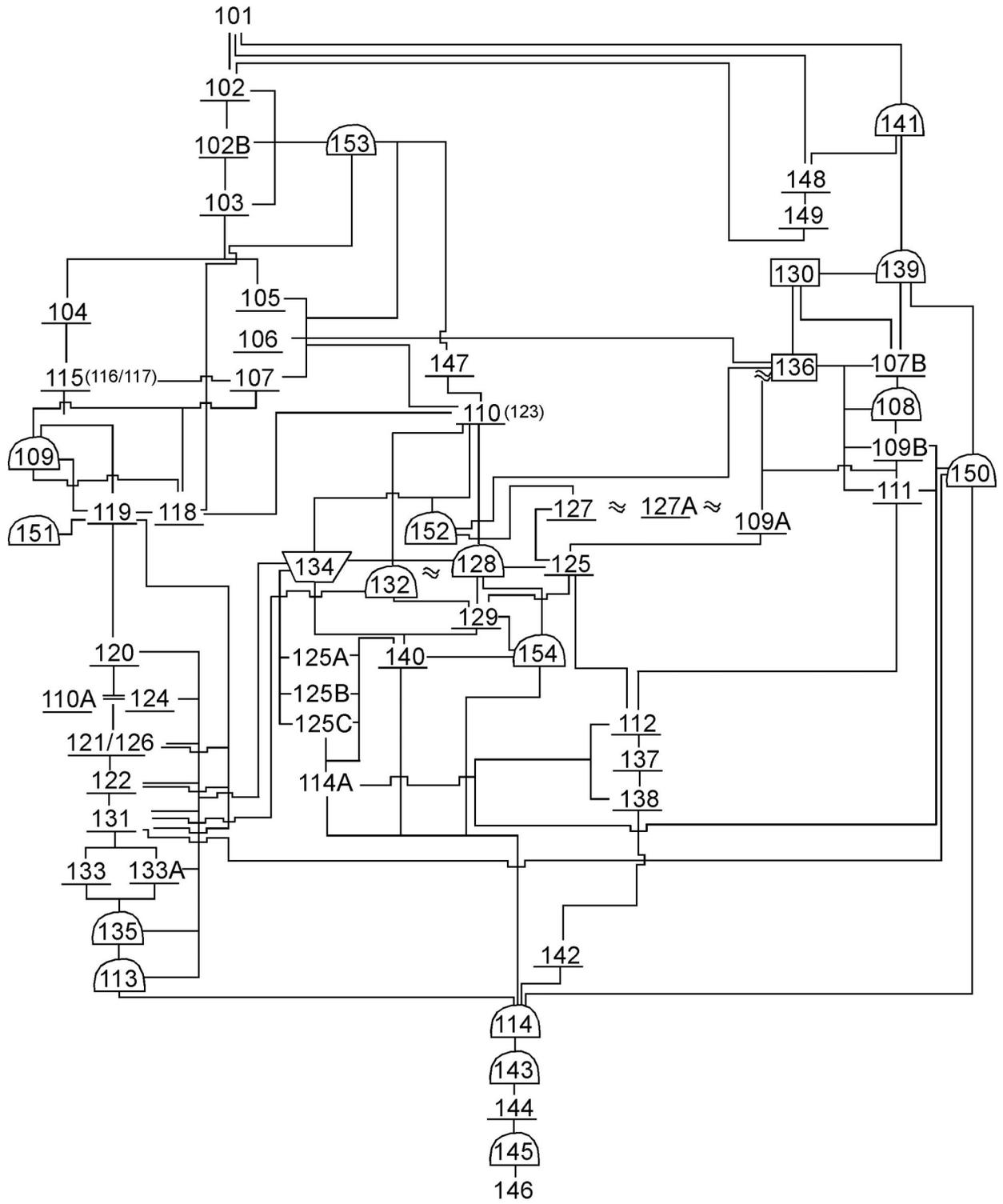


Figure 3.19 Platform 2F testpit matrix

Table 3.4 Plaza 2 Test Pit strata and dates (from Conlon and Ehret 2002)

Stratum	Description	Top Elevation (SW corner) (m asl)	Ceramic dates
1	Topsoil	70.05	A.D. 700-900
2	Topsoil	69.93	A.D. 700-900
3	Plaster floor and ballast	69.785	A.D. 400-600
4	Plaster floor and ballast	69.71	A.D. 250-400
5	Clay loam/ cobble fill	69.56	A.D. 250-400
6	Plaster floor	69.327	A.D. 700-800
7	Plaster floor	69.31	A.D. 600-700
8	Ballast	69.30	A.D. 1-250
9	Small boulder/cobble loam fill	69.245	300-100 B.C.
10	Plaster floor	69.11	
11	Cobble fill	69.085	
12	Plaster floor and ballast	68.66	100 B.C.- A.D. 250
13	Clay	68.58	

The earliest construction dates of the platform are unclear as the earliest deposits come from a 50 x 50 cm unit within the test pit. In this 'mini test pit', an apparently sterile level was superimposed by a dark-brown fill that was fairly rich in artifacts. It was this dark-brown fill that dated to the Jenny Creek phase between 900 and 300 B.C. A thin plaster floor superimposed this dark fill; this floor had some light burning, small pieces of charcoal and burnt limestone and also dated to the Jenny Creek phase. Upon this plaster floor a thin layer of dark brown compact fill was spread across the floor—possibly in anticipation of or in preparation for the next major construction episodes.

Large boulders were piled in the southern portion of the test pit with loose dark brown sandy-clay fill between. Part of this boulder configuration appears to have included deliberately stacked boulders, creating a support foundation that can be clearly seen in the profile of the southern wall and partially in the west wall. The loose fill deposited between the support foundations contained ceramics from the Late Preclassic (300-100 B.C.) and Protoclassic (A.D 0-300). This long time range appears to be due to a mixing of stratigraphic layers during excavations; in plan view, there was no apparent difference between fill from the southern three-quarters of the unit, which was the boulder platform, and the northern quarter, which appears to have been added to the exterior of the boulder platform at a later date. Once this difference became apparent in the profiles, it is likely that the fill from the boulder platform in the southern portion of the unit would date to the Late Preclassic.

This boulder platform was not the intended final product, but rather was meant to support a chamber that we believe to have been a possible burial crypt. The lowest platform floor contained ceramics dating to the late facet of the Jenny Creek phase (600-300 B.C.)—earlier than the large boulder fill which it superimposes. This is problematic and may suggest either: 1) there is an earlier portion of fill which lies under the platform floor from which we did not recover dateable ceramics, while the ceramics we did recover were from a portion of fill which was not superimposed by platform floor; 2) platform floor ceramics are from the latest part of the Middle Preclassic and lower fill ceramics are from the earliest part of the Late Preclassic, therefore, both use and discard of those ceramic types overlapped in time during the construction this platform; or 3) the earliest platform floor was constructed using material from an earlier deposit taken from elsewhere. In either case, this portion of the structure, together with the chamber wall yielded ceramics whose dates suggest construction and use during the later part of the Middle Preclassic (600-300 B.C.), while the dark sandy fill to the east of the chamber have both Middle and Late Preclassic ceramics.

This chamber or crypt, which may have been at least 90-100 cm from floor to ceiling, originally likely contained an important person and/or objects. The importance of its contents is inferred based on the series of floors that were constructed around the chamber, indicating that the Maya often revisited this spot and conducted rites.

Beginning in the Protoclassic (A.D. 1-260), the Maya constructed a series of thin floors to the east of the chamber, directly on the Late Preclassic sandy fill which had been placed around it. These floors, beginning with an orange-brown soil—similar to that which had been used to 'cleanse' the floor under the boulder platform, were thin (2-4 cm thick) and at times were discontinuous across the eastern side of the unit. Many of these floors were burned and then quickly plastered over, indicating that the Maya performed dedication or termination rites. This entire series of floors dated to the Protoclassic, also suggesting a rapid depositional sequence.

At multiple times during the Protoclassic period, the Maya re-visited this chamber, as indicated by a truncation of the chamber wall as well as a number of floors to the east. The original contents of this chamber remain unknown, as during one of these visits the Maya completely emptied the chamber. In revisiting the chamber area, they re-plastered and burned the floors, and then refilled it with loose soil. One such re-plastered floor (140) produced Protoclassic ceramics that date to the Floral Park phase (A.D. 1-260), as did the loose fill that was mounded inside of the re-excavated crypt.

As two distinct floors were visible, one inside of the chamber (129) and one plaza-side exterior (112), with a portion of truncated wall (127a) visible between the two, it is clear that the initial Maya re-excavation of this chamber occurred after the placement of these floors. The ceramic dates for floor 112 are problematic, however, and may represent either intrusive material, difficulty with stratigraphic control during excavation, or with chronological determination during ceramic analysis.

More of the chamber wall was removed on the plaza side than the eastern side of the platform, suggesting that the chamber was re-entered from the plaza side. If this was the case, the practice of re-entry, as well as the chamber's occupant/contents, would have been publicly visible. After the chamber was re-excavated, a platform was added, bridging the plaza-side floor and the chamber floors, as well as the large boulders on north side of the chamber. A series of platforms were constructed along the west side of the chamber, creating a succession of progressively larger platforms. The first of which appears to have been added at or just after the chamber was re-opened as it abutted some of the stone/plaster possibly associated with the original chamber wall. A sloped platform was also built at this time, starting on the truncated chamber wall and sloping up to the east.

The thin floors along the eastern side of the chamber were also capped with a series of thick additions and smaller floors, creating what appears to have been a shifting series of platforms. Most of these additions also appear to have been built during the Protoclassic, during which periodic re-entry of the chamber area continued to occur. To the west of the chamber area, fill and plaster floor were also added through the Late Classic (Spanish Lookout phase, A.D. 700-900). This fill and floor created a slope up to the re-excavated chamber area, using a short wall of boulders to support this floor within the re-excavated area.

Subsequent re-excavations cut through floors that abutted the east side of the chamber, as well as the platform slope. Loose fill was mounded inside of the re-excavated areas and was capped with thin plaster floors. These re-entry episodes appear to have continued at least through the Late Classic as what may have been a continuous slope (102b and floor 107b) appears to have been excavated through.

Another series of platforms were added to the pre-existing structure after the Late Classic; since no diagnostic artifacts were recovered, dating these strata was not possible. A thick fill deposit, consisting of loose dark soil, was added to the northwest of these platforms to level out the area and support what may have been a 'flagstone' level. This consisted of a number of flat rectangular stone that extended from the area over the chamber to the west and north. Two final platforms were added to the east side, possibly around the same time, since the latest abuts the 'flagstone' level.

The construction of the later platforms (Late Classic and later) appears to have occurred at longer time intervals than the earlier (Late Preclassic and Protoclassic) additions to this structure. Floor and platform constructions at and around the chamber during its use, as well as the initial re-excavation of the chamber, all occurred in within the 260 years of the Protoclassic. After the initial re-excavation of the chamber and the removal of its contents, construction activity occurred over 600 years of the Early and Late Classic. Perhaps what the chamber had contained had been an important focus of public and communal memory/history—one that remained important enough to continue commemorating, but which was no longer physically commemorated on a regular basis.

Discussion and Conclusions

While we recovered little ritual debris at and around Structure 2A, Structure 2F provided abundant evidence for non-temple summit, and possibly even pre-temple, rituals which began during the early part of Yalbac's founding and extended throughout the long history of the site. Plaza 2 is the most open and accessible at the site, likely acting as a gathering space within which a more-inclusive community idea was constructed. The chamber around which the Structure 2F platform was built had been placed on the plaza side of the structure and was clearly intended for public viewing by the community as a whole.

This chamber, built during the Middle or Late Preclassic, had been the center of communal ritual for years beyond its initial construction. Whether an important public figure had been interred in this chamber or whether it was a crypt in which ritual paraphernalia was stored was not determinable, as the Maya were apparently very thorough in their disinterment of the chamber's contents during the Protoclassic. During its use, this chamber was regularly revisited and commemorated with the construction and burning of a series of floors around it. After the chamber was re-entered and its contents removed, commemorative activities continued, suggesting a sustained importance of the chamber, even if its contents were no longer present. These commemorative activities slowed in the Late Classic as the chamber became incorporated within a larger platform constructed on the front of Structure 2F; in fact, this platform may have been the unintended consequence of the commemorative activities surrounding the chamber.

After being the center of community rituals of commemoration, the final Structure 2F platform created a fairly low stage facing the most inclusive plaza at Yalbac, and likely continued to be used in political ritual theater. It was through these ritual practices, especially repeated performances, in these places that memory was embodied, enacted and recreated, forging broader social histories – ones which may have included commoners, elite and royals alike.

Acknowledgements. I would like to thank Dr. Lucero for the opportunity to experience field work well outside of my usual region. I would like to thank the 2008 field school students for the hard work and personality they brought to the field; each had a turn excavating the "devil's pit," as they liked to refer to the Structure 2F platform test pit. I'd especially like to thank Ernesto Vasquez for his help at 2F; however a "thank you" is also necessary for Cleofo Choc, Juan Antonio, Stanley Choc, Isabel Ascencio (Don Luna), and Ernesto's son Jose for their help hauling literally tons of rocks out of (and back into) the test pit.

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Chapter 4 New Pools, New Caves: The 2008 Cara Blanca Settlement Survey

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The 2008 Cara Blanca settlement survey represents the final installment in the data acquisition for the Cara Blanca transect, the roots of which began during the 2002 and 2003 field season (see Kinkella 2004b). Since that time, a 400-meter-wide transect has been surveyed and mapped, beginning at the site of Yalbac and heading northeast for four kilometers to the westernmost Cara Blanca pool. The survey then turns east, following the Cara Blanca escarpment and ultimately mapping 16 of the 23 known pools, ending in an impassible swampy area immediately east of Pool 6 (Figure 4.1) (Kinkella 2008).

Previous research has shown that Pool 1 and its environs was used for water ritual during the Late Classic Period (Kinkella 2000, 2004a), consistent with watery locales in other areas of the ancient Maya world (see Andrews and Corletta 1995; Lucero 2006). The data presented here form a portion of my dissertation research on the Cara Blanca Pools, and will be used to explain the settlement choices made by the ancient Maya of the region, whether based on good quality soils (e.g., Fedick 1996), ritual pilgrimage needs (e.g., Andrews and Corletta 1995; Bassie-Sweet 1996), or a combination of these two factors. It will also serve to better integrate the settlement at the Cara Blanca Pools into the Valley of Peace region, showing how the pools related to the mid-sized center of Yalbac (Lucero et al. 2004).

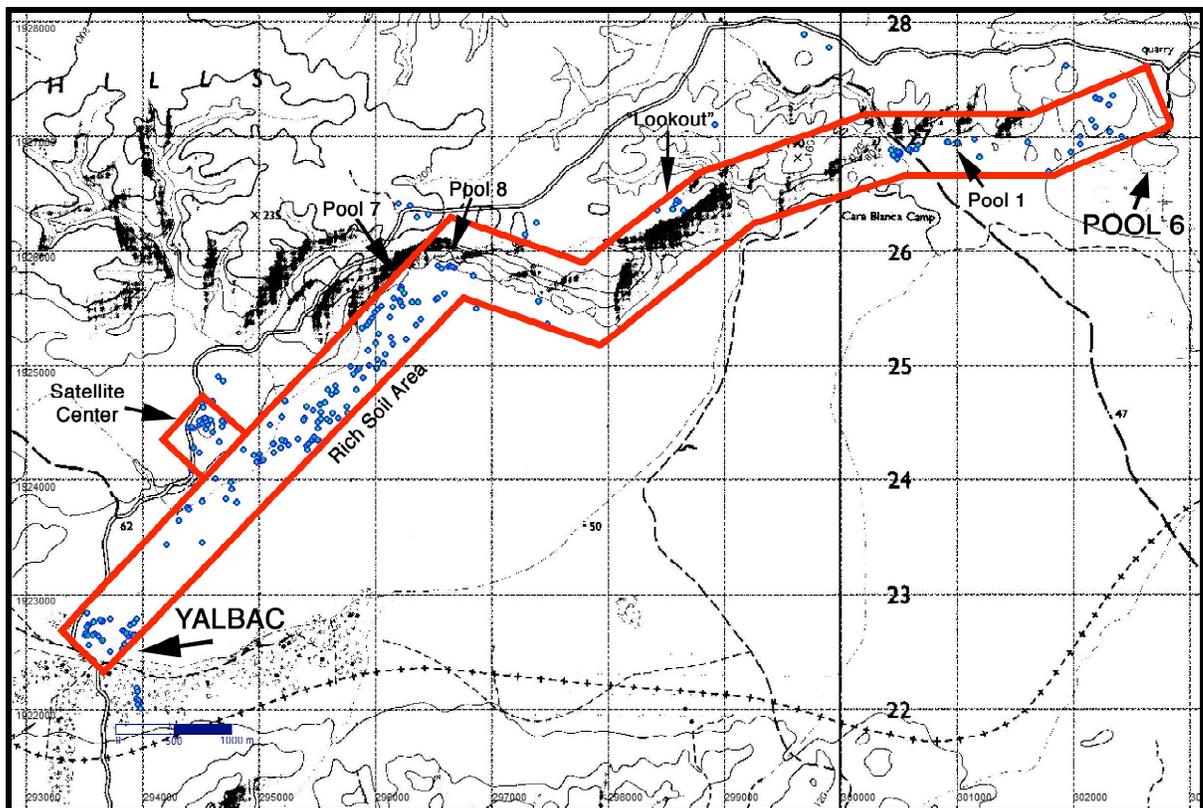


Figure 4.1. The complete Cara Blanca settlement survey with major mound clusters labeled.

Research Strategy

The work described here was undertaken during the week of June 2-10, 2008 (see appendix). The primary objective of these investigations was to fill in several areas on the transect that were deemed to have been incompletely surveyed, specifically a large drainage immediately above Pool

15. A second objective was to obtain detailed depth measurements at several pools (Pools 1, 9, 15 and 16), and collect water samples for analysis. The final objective was the completion of an underwater survey for cultural remains at Pools 1 and 16. The underwater survey consisted of free diving alongside the pool walls to a depth of five meters, moving across three meters to the right, and then ascending along the wall, always scanning the wall for evidence of underwater niches. This technique would be continued all the way around the pool until the entire underwater wall had been surveyed.

Pools and Caves 2008

Two new pools were visited during the 2008 season, numbered 15 and 16 (Figure 4.2). In addition, the drainage immediately above Pool 15 yielded three small caves, labeled M192, M193, and M194. Described below are both the location of these pools and caves along with the underwater explorations undertaken.



Figure 4.2. A Google Earth Image of the 23 Cara Blanca pools

Pool 15 and the Associated Caves

Pool 15 had been obvious on the 1:50,000 map, but was very difficult to get to due to its location at the southern terminus of a steep drainage. Because of its remoteness, Pool 15 was not surveyed until the 2008 season. The survey of the poolside turned up negative for any settlement, and the single depth measurement in the center of the pool gave a reading of 16 meters. Underwater visibility was gauged at approximately six meters, but it should be noted that this was recorded during a partially cloudy day. The importance of Pool 15 comes not from settlement directly on the edge of the pool, but from the settlement on top of the cliffs directly above (M112 – see Kinkella 2008), and from the caves in the drainage that terminates at the pool (the drainage can be seen immediately to the northwest of the pool in Figure 4.2).



Figure 4.3. Photo of Cave M192 in drainage area above Pool 15. Note dripstone next to machete.

The caves in this area are the largest yet discovered in the transect area (and in the entire VOPA project area). They are not of the grand scale of many of the other cave systems in the Maya area, but are definitely large enough for ritual purposes. Large cave systems have not been found yet in the Cara Blanca area, likely due to the soft marl limestone in the area—which would also explain the ‘white face’ of the cliffs (i.e., so soft that pieces broke off—i.e., ‘incompetent’ limestone). This being said, several of the noted caves contain cultural features that speak to their use in the past.

There are three of these caves that have been observed, all of which are situated one after the other on the west side of the Pool 15 drainage. They are approximately eight meters above the drainage bottom, several meters below the top of the drainage side, and would be easily missed if the researcher did not look up the side of drainage. Each cave is part of the same formation, although none of them interlock in any way. Although they are of different sizes, the roofs of these caves are all at approximately the same elevation, as the geological formation they are a part of terminates at a consistent level.

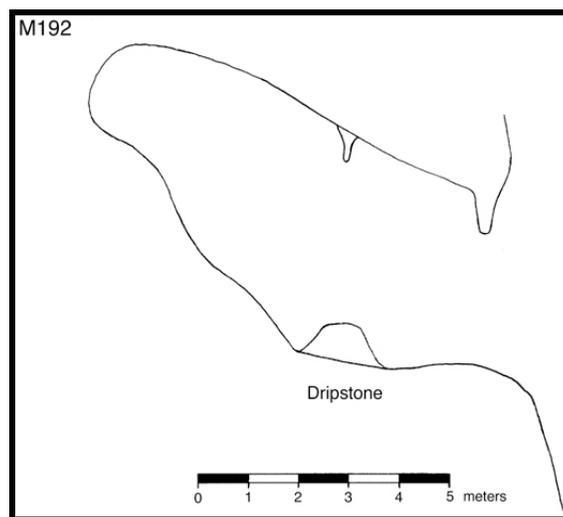


Figure 4.4. Profile of Cave M192

The largest of these caves is M192, at approximately eight meters deep from the dripline with a four-meter high ceiling (Figures 3.3, 3.4). M192 contains a dripstone, as well as several possible features inside including a possible “throne” cut out of the stone about half way up the steep rear elevation, behind the dripstone. This cut out is circular, and makes it possible for someone to sit comfortably on what is otherwise a relatively steep cave wall. This is pure conjecture, as this could also be a natural formation in the stone. Nevertheless, it is sure that the Maya frequented these caves, as the sherds in M194 attest to.

M194 is much smaller than M192, being approximately 1.5 meters wide at its circular mouth and only five meters deep (Figure 4.5). Nonetheless, it has two features in the floor where the floor had been artificially flattened and including sherds. I have called these features “hearth features,” although it is difficult to tell for sure if they were hearths unless further excavation is undertaken. This feature type was observed elsewhere on the Cara Blanca transect, in a rockshelter near Pool 10 (M191 – see Kinkella 2008). One datable rim sherd was found in the feature at the cave entrance, a large jar rim of the Alexander’s Unslipped Variety from 700-900 AD (Gifford 1976, also see appendix).

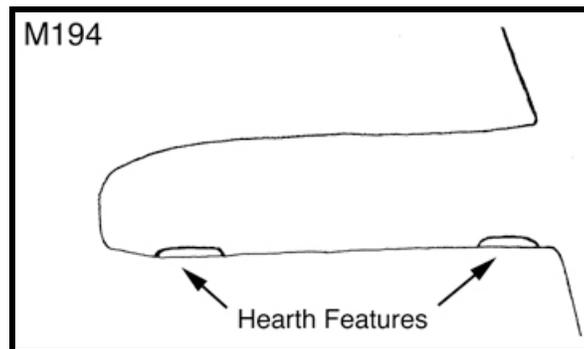


Figure 4.5. Profile of M194, a cave above Pool 15 with sherd-filled “hearth features”

Overall, the Pool 15 area provides an extremely interesting place to study the ancient interaction between the built environment and the natural environment. The presence of pools, caves, and difficult-to-access structures (M112 – see Kinkella 2008) may mark this as a location where ritual was undertaken as part of a pilgrimage that included the pools and caves. Whatever happened here, it dates specifically to the Late Classic period. To the east of Pool 15 lies the settlement at Pools 1 and 2, the most substantial poolside settlement encountered on the entire transect, and the area with the most evidence of ritual activity (including the M186 sweatbath – see Kinkella 2008). Past Pool 1 at the far eastern end of the transect lies Pool 16, the smallest pool yet encountered on the Cara Blanca settlement survey.

Pool 16

Pool 16 was an unexpected find, being so small as to not show up on the 1:50,000 government maps; it is barely perceptible on the Google Earth map (see Figure 4.2). Of all pools so far located, Pool 16 is the best example of a classic *cenote*, with sheer walls underwater and a water surface that is between a six-meter and a 30-meter drop below a sheer cliff (Figure 4.6). Instead of the sloping bottom noted at the other pools (as part of their scarp-foot spring heritage), Pool 16 has the flat bottom of a classic *cenote*. Of all the pools, Pool 16 has the clearest, bluest water; its appearance is striking to all who come across it. Its temperature was approximately 75 degrees, and the visibility was a solid eight meters.



Figure 4.6. Pool 16 looking southwest.

Pool 16 was intensively measured and surveyed underwater in 2008 using snorkel equipment. As its deepest depth was only 13.5 meters on average, it was possible for me to free dive to the bottom and make observations (Figure 4.7). As with all the other pools, the bottom of Pool 16 is full of dead leaves and large trees. This will make any attempt at underwater excavation very difficult, as the detritus will have to first be removed, and it is difficult to tell how deep it goes (although initial impressions are that the tree fall is only several meters thick). The edges of the pool were systematically surveyed to five meters below the water's surface (as was Pool 1), but unfortunately no niches with artifacts were observed during this expedition.

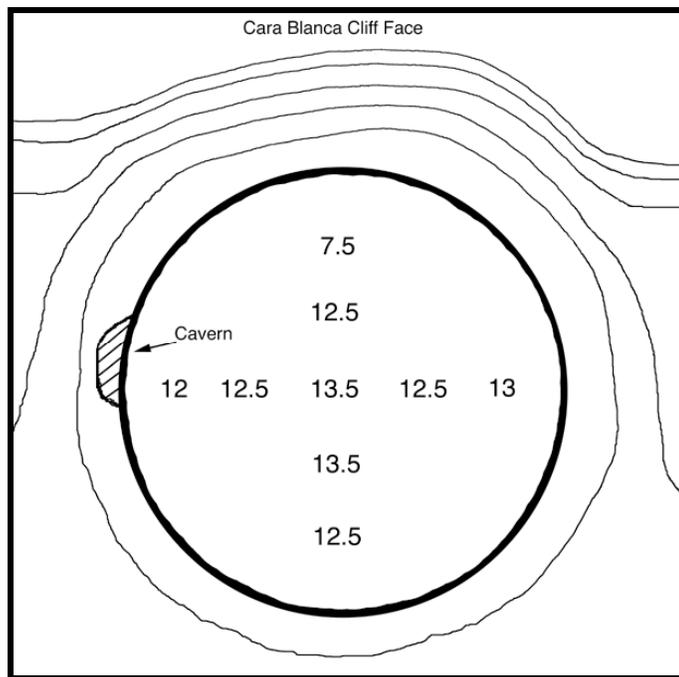


Figure 4.7. Pool 16 with depth measurements in meters

On the western side of the pool, there is a cavern just above the waterline that is currently deteriorating, with the disengaged limestone falling into the pool. This quick deterioration (we observed a large boulder break off while we were there) may argue for a relatively young age for Pool 16. The absence of artifacts (and associated settlement) may be because this pool simply did not exist during Classic Maya times.

Depth Measurements at Pools 9 and 1

In addition to the measurements taken at the two newly found pools, two additional pools were chosen for more exact depth measurements. Pools 1 and 9 were chosen in order to collect measurements at an eastern pool, a western pool, and one in the center of the transect. Pool 9 was on the western side, and Pool 1 was in the center (Pool 16 is on the eastern side of the transect). Pool 9 initially seemed similar to Pool 1 (cool and deep) but this was not the case. While we had initially planned on recording nine separate measurements (a la Pools 1 and 16), we were only able to record one in the center of the pool (Figure 4.8), as an unplanned swim near a crocodile (!) curbed our studies. The depth at center was very shallow (1.7 meters), putting Pool 9 in the same category as Pool 7 and presumably Pool 8 (a shallow scarp-foot spring).

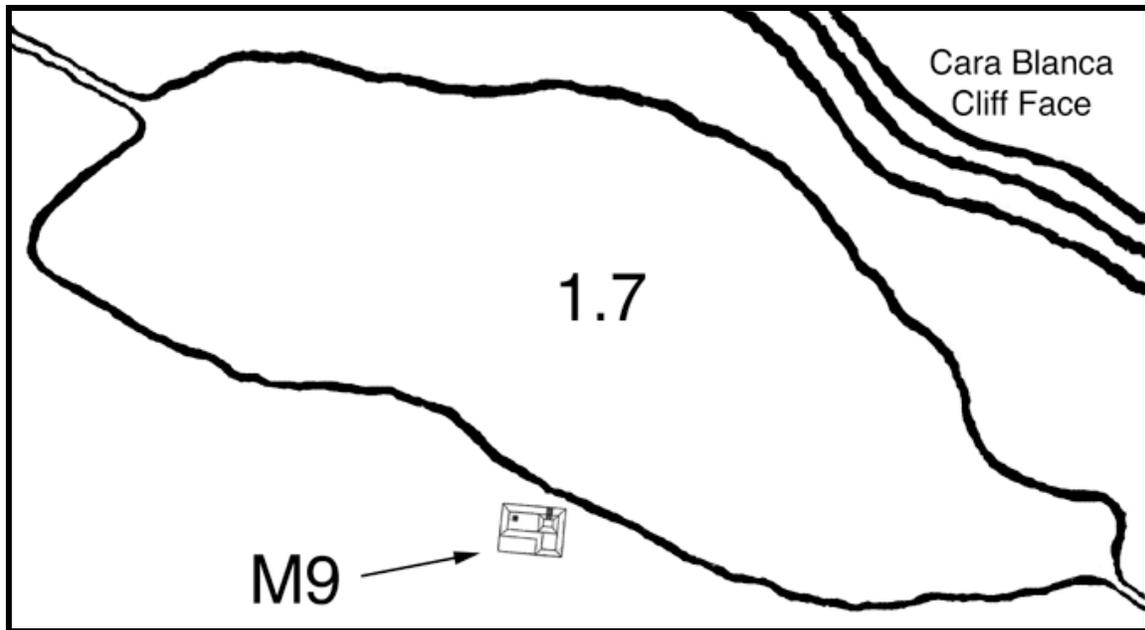


Figure 4.8. Pool 9 depth measurement in meters

Pool 1 has four structures immediately next to its edge. In 1998, one underwater sherd was found on a small (15 cm) shelf protruding from the side Pool 1 at approximately eight meters underwater (see Kinkella 2000), so I thought our chances of finding underwater material would be best at this pool. As with Pool 16, snorkel equipment was used to systematically examine the initial five meters of the sheer underwater wall, but no additional sherds or other cultural materials were encountered. The measurements taken gave a solid six meters of visibility, a temperature of approximately 75 degrees, and depths ranging up to 53 meters in the northern portion of the pool, abutting the steep Cara Blanca cliffs (Figure 4.9). The northern edge is a sheer drop into the depths, and the stone on the northern side appears granitic and tough. Pool 1 is also relatively full of marine life, with fish, reptiles, and crab (Figure 4.10).

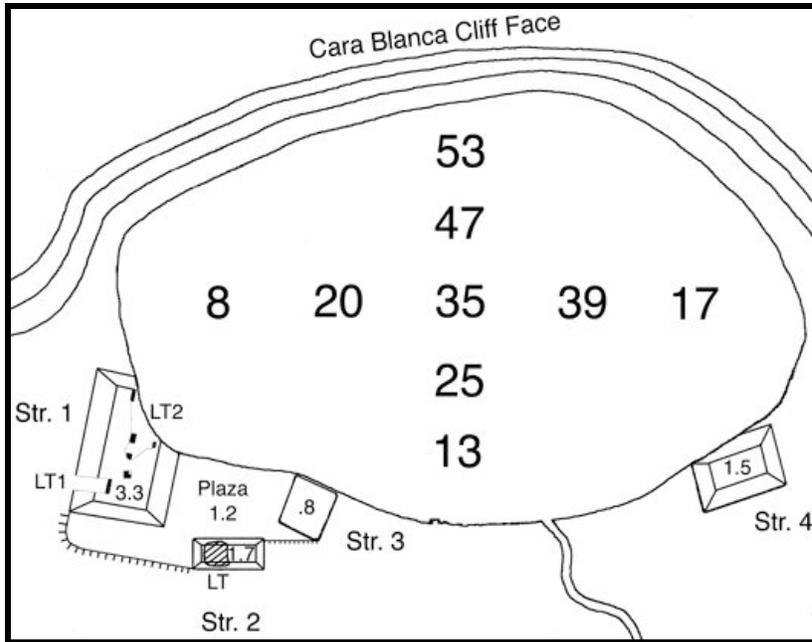


Figure 4.9. Pool 1 depth measurements in meters.



Figure 4.10. Crab underwater at Pool 1

Structure M195

M195 is located several kilometers to the northeast of the Cara Blanca transect on a hilltop above the Cara Blanca Cliffs (GPS coordinates: 1931544N, 305410E using a NAD27 Central datum to correspond to the Belize Government maps). I initially looked for settlement here because Google Earth showed promising mounds in this vicinity. Also, the site of Mun Diego may be in this general vicinity (this structure may in fact be it), and the hilltop that M195 sits on top of is the highest point for many kilometers around (170 meters asl at the top of the structure). The structure encountered is a massive 11-meter-high (approximate) construction with two major plazas that open to the north. M195 is built into the hilltop, which adds an additional sense of steepness and height, and creates an enviable view in all directions.

M195 possesses an initial plaza at approximately half way up the structure, and then a second, much more intimate plaza at the summit (Figure 4.11). The entire structure is aligned directly north-south. The site is almost entirely unlooted (there is a small cut at the very top, but this may be tree fall). As stated above, I have speculated that this may be the site of Mun Diego, as recorded by J. Eric

Thompson in the 1930's (Thompson 1939). It lies in the correct general vicinity (although several kilometers to the southeast of where older maps place it), and Mun Diego has not been encountered since its initial recording (it has been lost to current knowledge). Once this structure was discovered, a brief (2 hour) survey of the surrounding area was undertaken, but no additional structures were encountered. Whether M195 turns out to be Mun Diego or not, this structure must have held special significance to the ancient Maya, as nothing of this size has been found in the area.

M195

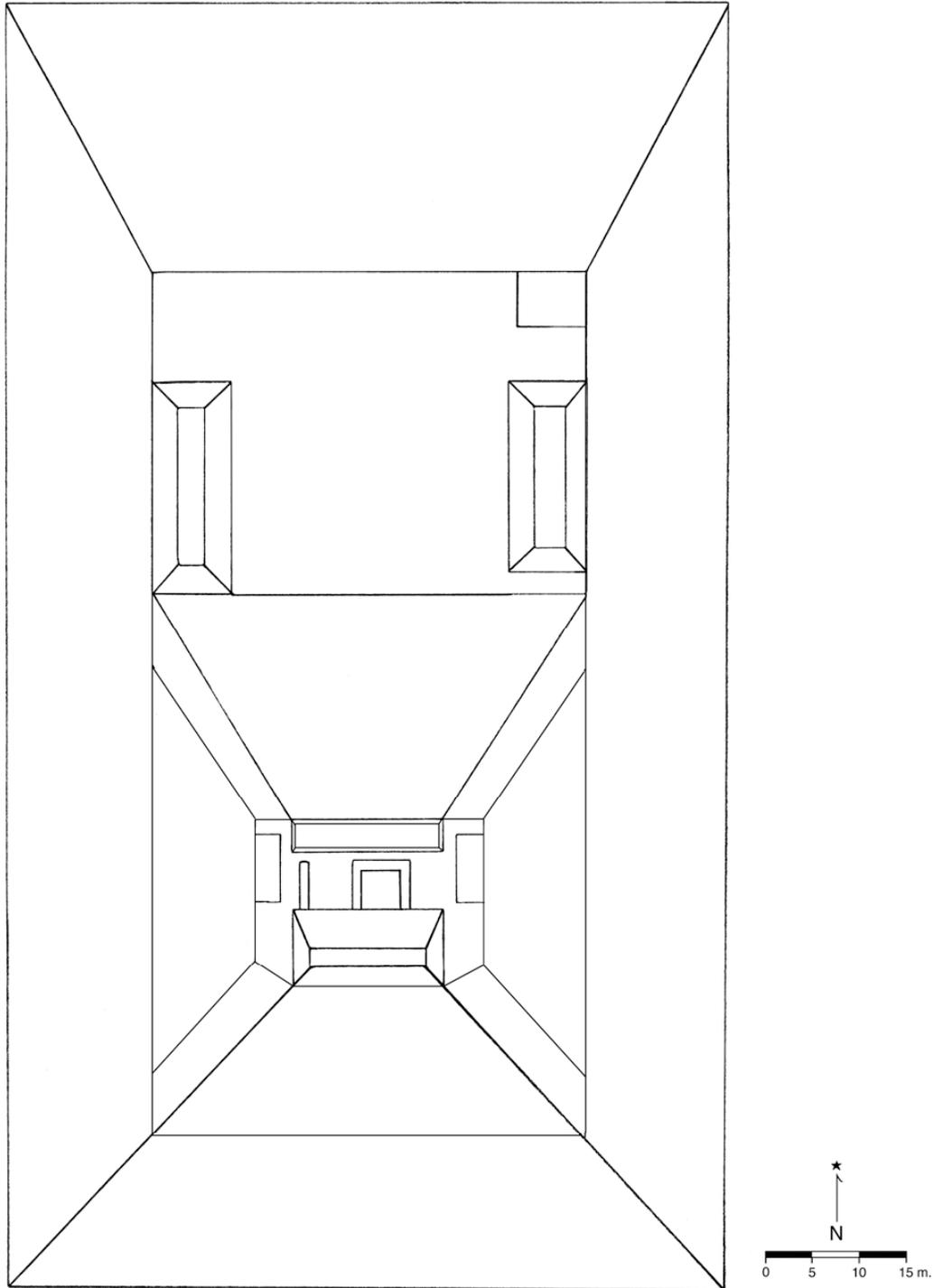


Figure 4.11. Structure M195, possibly Mun Diego

Results

The 2008 Cara Blanca Settlement Survey was successful in its primary objective of filling in several unsurveyed areas and completing the settlement transect. Depth measurements and water samples were taken at Pools 1, 9, 15, and 16, enabling us to better understand the composition of the Cara Blanca Pools, and how their geologic morphology changes from west to east. It can now be understood that the pools are shallowest and most scarp-spring-like in the western portion of the area, becoming deeper and more cenote-like as we travel east (Figure 4.12). No additional cultural remains were encountered underwater this season.

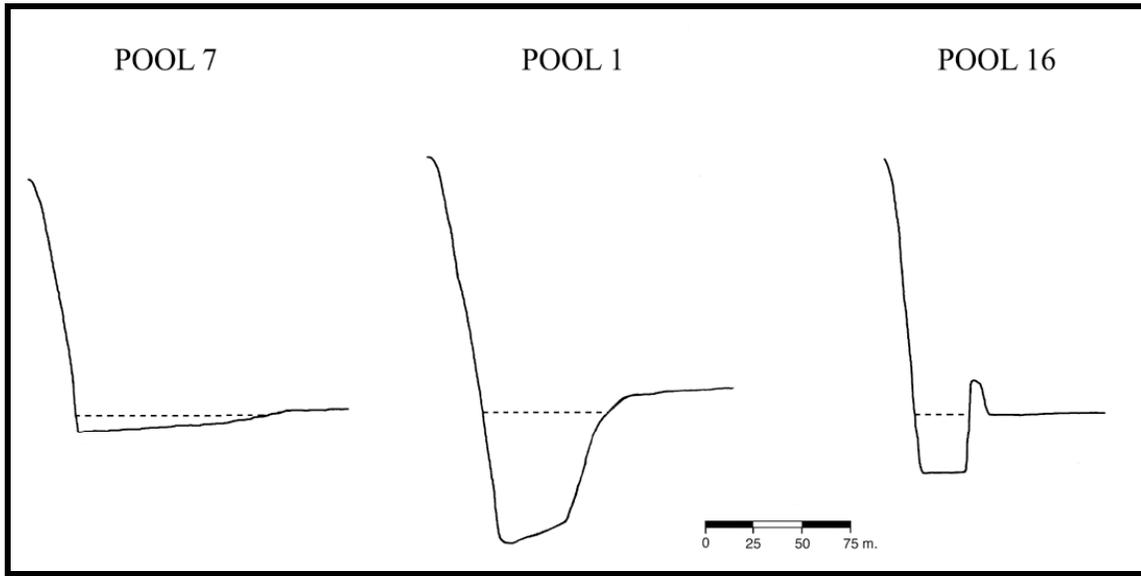


Figure 4.12. Pool cutaways, facing east, showing differences in underwater pool morphology and depth. Pools are organized from west to east, showing morphological changes from scarp-foot spring to cenote

The exciting off-transect find of M195 helps explain settlement groups that were encountered at the far eastern end of the Cara Blanca transect. M195 (possibly the site of Mun Diego) may represent the center of a community that lies directly to the east of Yalbac. When taken as a whole, we can see that settlement near the Yalbac and M195 cores are most often farming households, while sites defined as the most highly ritualized tend to lie in the areas furthest away from both centers (Figure 4.13). The distant location of these ritual sites (e.g., Pool 1, M186, caves M192-194 – see appendix) may earmark them as locations where members from both communities would pilgrimage to in order to practice water and cave ritual during the latter days of the Late Classic Period, away from the direct control of local leaders.

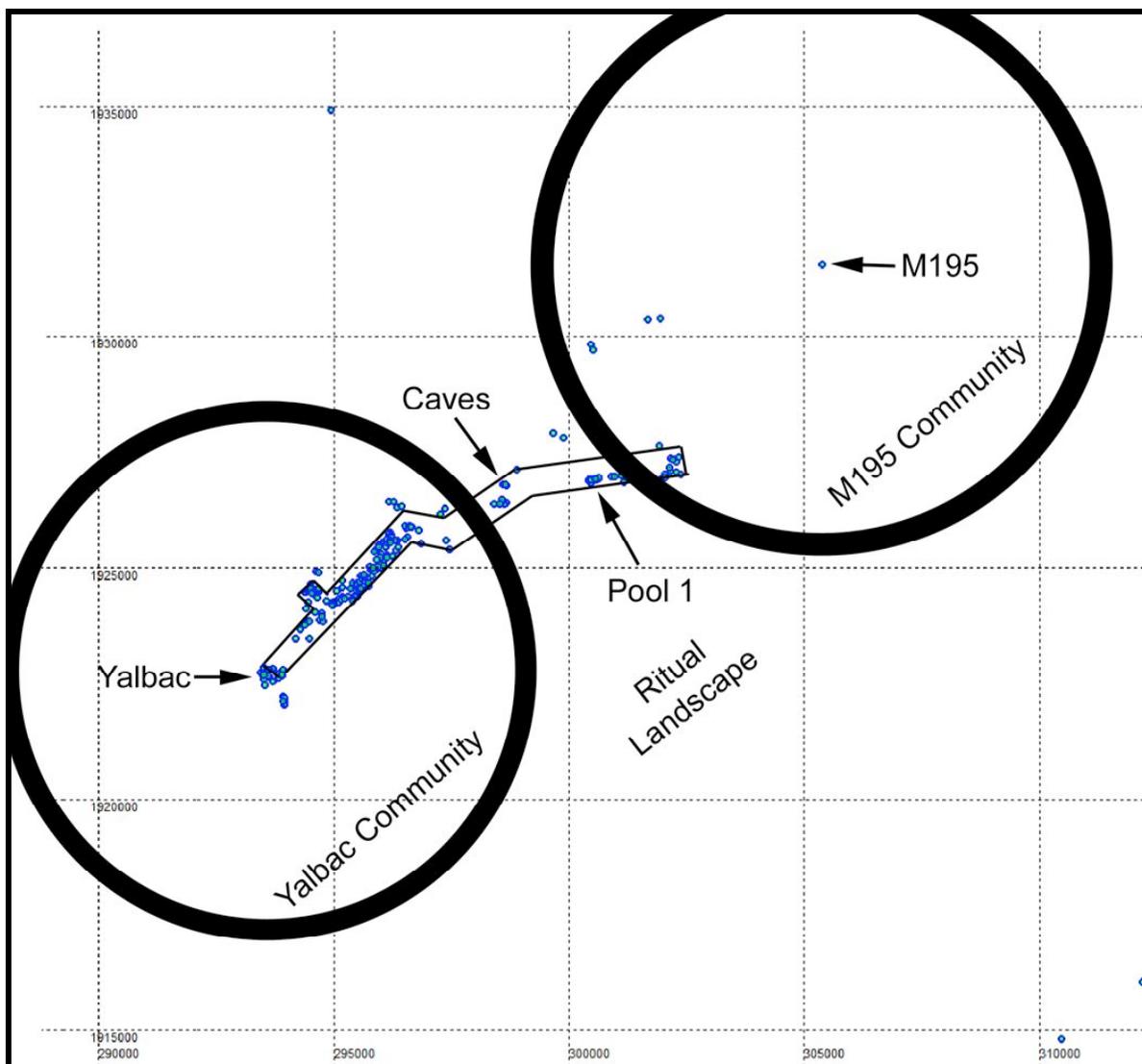


Figure 4.13. The Yalbac and M195 community spheres, with the ritual area In-between

Future Research and Concluding Remarks

There are many options for future research in this area. Some possibilities include an expansion of the settlement survey further east to include the remaining seven pools. A transect connecting the pools to the Belize Valley would also be informative (the riverine site of Saturday Creek would make an excellent terminus). Because of the settlement survey focus of this research, larger and more numerous excavations would be a welcome addition to the current data set. Of special consideration is Structure 1 at Pool 1 (M1); this structure may in fact be a second sweatbath, and an excavation focused on uncovering telltale sweatbath attributes would answer this question unequivocally.

Underwater research can be expanded as well in future projects, with more intensive explorations of the underwater environment. The data presented here provides an excellent basis from which to narrow down possible pools for further underwater exploration (I would suggest deep pools near settlement such as Pools 1, 2, and 16). Further study will increase our understanding of the relationship between the pools and the surrounding communities, as well as cement current ideas on the pools as pilgrimage destinations of ritual importance. Future research may also include exploring the region more thoroughly for caves. The several found during the duration of this dissertation fieldwork were often found by chance; a systematic survey for caves is sure to find more.

Whatever direction taken by future researchers at the Cara Blanca pools, they will not be disappointed with the diversity of archaeological material native to the area, and the volume of possible research questions able to be addressed.

Acknowledgements

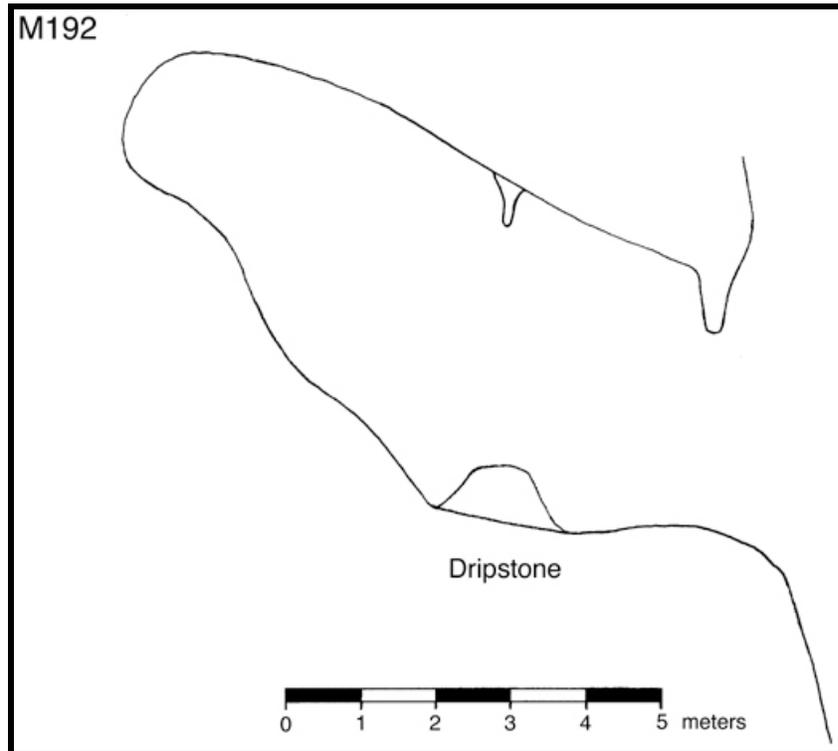
Special thanks go to the crew from Yalbac Ranch and Cattle Corporation (Belize) Limited for allowing us onto their property and then helping us once we were there, to Cleofo Choc of Valley of Peace Village for his unsurpassed jungle abilities, and to the Carr family at Banana Bank Lodge for their kindness and hospitality.

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Appendix: 2008 Cave Data

This appendix includes data on the three caves encountered on the western side of the Pool 15 drainage, which runs northwest from Pool 15 and directly below the M112 group. The caves are numbered M192-M194, and all are drawn to the same initial scale included with the M192 drawing. All drawings are cross-sections looking west.



VISIBLE FORM: Limestone cave. Approximately 3 meters tall at dripline, and 8 meters deep from dripline.

RECORDATION DATE: 2008

GPS LOCATION: 16 Q 298670 1926760

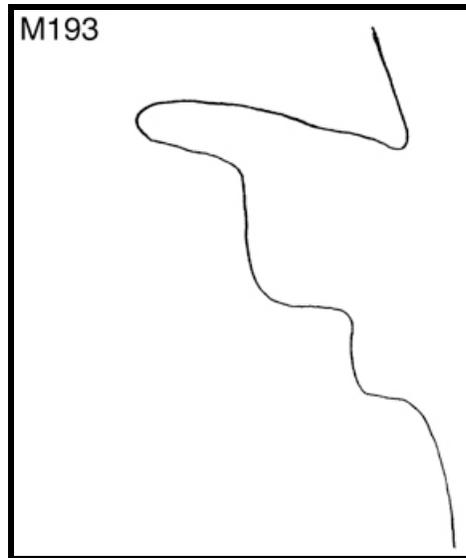
BASAL ELEVATION: 129 m.

CONSTRUCTION MATERIAL: Not applicable.

SURFACE COLLECTION/EXCAVATION: None.

CHRONOLOGICAL PLACEMENT: None.

DISCUSSION: Opens to the northeast. Interior may also include a “throne” feature – a circular dugout large enough for one person to sit in, located approximately halfway up the interior wall. Interior also includes a dripstone at the front-center of the cave entrance. This is the easternmost of the three caves in the area, located approximately 25 meters east of M193, and 85 meters east of M194. The cave is approximately 15 meters above the bottom of the Pool 15 drainage.



VISIBLE FORM: Limestone cave. Approximately 2.5 meters tall at dripline, and 3 meters deep from dripline.

RECORDATION DATE: 2008

GPS LOCATION: 16 Q 298623 1926768 Note - this number is approximate. Location is 60 meters down the drainage (east) from M194.

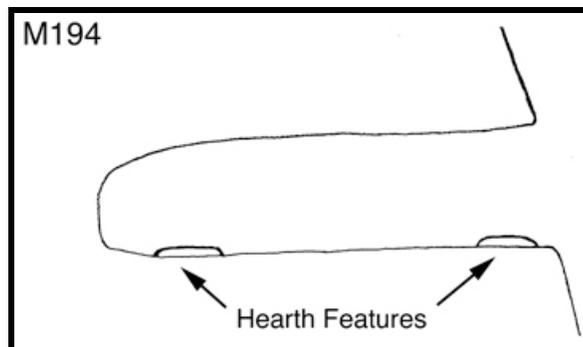
BASAL ELEVATION: 129 m.

CONSTRUCTION MATERIAL: Not applicable, but floor may have been artificially flattened with stone placement, as sherds were found interspersed with the stones on the ground.

SURFACE COLLECTION/EXCAVATION: None.

CHRONOLOGICAL PLACEMENT: None.

DISCUSSION: Opens to the northeast. Location is 60 meters down the drainage (east) of M194, and 25 meters up the drainage (west) of M192. The cave is approximately 15 meters above the bottom of the Pool 15 drainage.



VISIBLE FORM: Limestone cave. Approximately 1.5 meters tall at dripline, and 6 meters deep from dripline. Opens to the northeast. The cave mouth is generally circular in form.

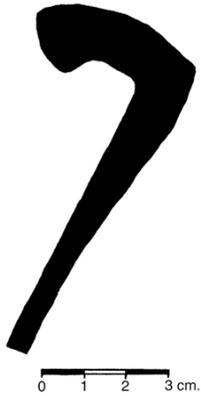
RECORDATION DATE: 6/3/2008

GPS LOCATION: 16 Q 298623 1926768

BASAL ELEVATION: 129 m.

CONSTRUCTION MATERIAL: Not applicable.

SURFACE COLLECTION/EXCAVATION: One jar sherd collected from surface of hearth feature near cave opening. Sherd was identified as Alexander's Unslipped.



CHRONOLOGICAL PLACEMENT: Late Classic (700-900 AD).

DISCUSSION: Located 60 meters west of M193 (further up the drainage). This is the westernmost of the three caves in the area. Unique in this area for the inclusion of sherds in two “hearth features,” one at the mouth of the cave, and one in the rear of the cave. The hearth features are approximately 1.2 meters in diameter. The cave is approximately 15 meters above the bottom of the Pool 15 drainage.

2008 Ceramic Sherds Collected

Cat #/ Year	Site	Unit	Stratum/ Context	Form	Type or Group	Complex	Dates
2008	M194	Surface	Cave feature	Jar	Rim – 34 cm. Alexander’s Unslipped Alexander’s Variety	Spanish Lookout	AD 700-900