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## PSB OP 67 Excavation Report

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## Site 67

The four diminutive structures comprising Site 67 form a rough line trending southeast-northwest atop the low southern terrace bordering the Rio Las Huertas. The river itself is 25m to the north while Site 66 is 150m to the east-southeast and Site 68 is ca. 225m to the southeast. Four test trenches (Subop. 67B/E) were excavated into areas lacking surface-visible construction to test for the existence of additional buildings. Suboperations 67B/D are located within 8.5m of each other, while Subop. 67E is 32m southeast of Subop. 67D, the southernmost of the first triad. Work was conducted from June 5-6, 1985 under the direction of Colleen Siders, Marie Hamilton, and Marie Selvaggio. A total of 18.6m<sup>2</sup> was cleared during 8 person-days of investigations here. Because of the non-architectural focus of the excavations, results will be summarized for the entire site rather than by individual trenches or structures.

### Excavation Lots

<u>Lot</u>	<u>Contents</u>	<u>Context</u>	<u>Date</u>
67B/1	-	Terminal Debris (Secondary) and Preconstruction	?
67B/2	empty	Preconstruction	-
67B/3	empty	Preconstruction	-
67B/4	empty	Preconstruction	-
67B/5	sherds	Terminal Debris (Secondary) and Preconstruction	?
67C/1	-	Terminal Debris (Secondary) and Preconstruction	?
67C/2	empty	Natural Soil Deposition	-
67C/3	empty	Natural Soil Deposition	-
67C/4	13 sherds 1 censer fragment	Terminal Debris (Secondary) and Preconstruction	EPC
67C/5	137 sherds 1 <u>bajareque</u> fragment	Terminal Debris (Secondary) and Preconstruction	LC, EC
67D/1	18 sherds	Occupation Debris (Secondary)	EPC
67D/2	empty	Natural Soil Deposition	-

67D/3	-	Occupation Debris (Secondary)	?
67D/4	-	Occupation Debris (Secondary)	?
67D/5	-	Occupation Debris (Secondary)	?
67D/5	-	Occupation Debris (Secondary)	?
67D/6	-	Occupation Debris (Secondary)	?
67E/1	empty	Natural Soil Deposition	-
67E/2	empty	Natural Soil Deposition	-

### Time Spans

<u>Time Span</u>	<u>Units</u>	<u>Strata</u>	<u>Features</u>	<u>Date</u>
1	-	S.1	-	-
2	U.1, 2	S.2	-	EPC, LC, EC
3	-	S.2	-	-

### Time Span 1

The seemingly natural deposition of S.1 is the first event attested to in the Site 67 excavations. This earth level is composed of tan, coarse-textured soil containing numerous small rocks; in many areas there are more stones than soil. Sizable rocks protrude from this level, suggesting that either bedrock lies close by or the S.1 stones represent the variably sized load laid down by the Rio Las Huertas. Stratum 1 was exposed to a maximum thickness of 0.41m though its base was not encountered during excavation. No artifacts or any other sign of cultural activity were incorporated within S.1, implying that there was no human occupation in the vicinity while this earth level was being formed.

### Time Span 2

The lower portions of S.2, a brown to dark brown, coarse-textured, organic-rich soil containing numerous small to medium-size rocks, was introduced into the Site 67 area at this time. The few architectural remnants identified in excavation (U.1, 2) sit well up within this level, U.1, the clearest construction, resting within S.2 at a point 0.22m above S.1 while U.3 is 0.25m above that stratum. It seems likely, therefore, that at least 0.25 of S.2 was deposited during TS 2 prior to construction. It should be noted that, though common, the rocks found in S.2 are far less numerous and densely packed than their counterparts in S.1.

Unit 1 is a 0.12-0.35m-high, 0.25m-wide wall built of angular stones (primarily) and

cobbles, oriented 24 degrees. Light gray, fine-grained angular fragments (probably andesite) make-up the majority of exposed U.1 rocks, though some vesicular basalt chunks were noted along with stones of unidentified materials. Stones are set in a brown mud mortar and range from 0.06x0.09m to 0.14x0.24m in size. Excavations in Subop. 67B exposed ca. 1.75m of U.1's northwest line, its north corner, along with 0.5m of the northeast line. The base of the northwest line slopes down approximately 0.08m from southwest to northeast, as though the wall was raised atop a gradual descent in this direction (no sign of this putative drop off was noted within S.2). Coursing and chinking stones are absent in U.1 and no effort was made to orient the flatter aspects of the component stones outward. Unit 1 seems to have been a foundation bounding a surface-level edifice. This tentative interpretation is based on the recovery of large rocks within S.2 behind (southeast of) U.1 that continue down 0.16m below the wall's base. It seems unlikely that fill rocks would extend both above and below their basal facing. The incorporation of such large rocks into a surface-level building is equally problematic, and we presume that they were introduced during such post-abandonment processes as flooding.

Unit 2 stands 0.16-0.26m high, measures 0.31m across, and is aligned 266 degrees, 30 minutes. This construction, exposed in Subop. 67C, might have served as the northern foundation for a surface-level building. Excavations uncovered a 1m east-west running segment of the wall; attempts to trace the line westward failed to relocate the unit. Unit 2 rocks are set in a brown mud mortar and the construction, as a whole, was poorly preserved. Its very existence as a purposeful construction remains in doubt.

### Time Span 3

The remaining 0.14-0.34m of S.2 exposed in Subop. 67B and C was deposited during this interval. It is likely that S.2 was laid down without human-introduced interruption in the areas investigated by Subop. 67D and E where this earth level overlies S.1 to depths of 0.21-0.43m. Suboperation 67E yielded no signs of ancient human occupation, while Subop. 67D excavations did uncover scattered evidence of human presence during S.2's deposition. Both revealed a few large rocks, ca. 0.54x0.57m, in S.2. We cannot discern when, within the latter process, use of that particular area was first manifest. It is not possible, therefore, to correlate events in the different suboperations, specifying how much of S.2's total thickness pertains to TS 2 and how much to TS 3 in each case.

### Chronological Summary

Occupation at Site 67 seems to have begun in the Early Classic, identified from a few diagnostic ceramics recovered in lot 67C/5. Habitation continued into the Late Classic and seems to have culminated in the Early Postclassic. Chronological placement of U.1 and 2 is problematic. Combination of material from terminal debris and preconstruction contexts in Subop. 67B and C make it difficult now to accurately date both constructions. The sizable collection of Late Classic artifacts derived from lot 67C/5 might hint at U.2's construction now; U.1 is not associated with datable materials. Site 67's overall form, particularly the absence of a clear patio focus, points to an Early Postclassic date for the principal period of occupation and construction. Units 1 and 2 could have been raised at this time, Early Classic and, less certainly, Late Classic occupation being unassociated with exposed buildings. No signs of site use

predating and postdating these intervals were revealed in excavations.

### Architectural Summary

Units 1 and 2 are both casually constructed stone foundations rising 0.12-0.35m, measuring 0.25-0.31m across, and oriented 356 degrees, 30 minutes to 24 degrees. Coursing and chinking stones are absent and all rocks are set in a brown mud mortar. The construction style is reminiscent of Early Postclassic units uncovered elsewhere in the middle Ulua drainage, a finding that generally conforms with the principal period of site use inferred from structure arrangement and recovered artifacts.