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PSB OP 192 Excavation Report

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Site 192

The 10 structures and one sizable rock concentration making up Site 192 form two distinct aggregates; a nucleated cluster composed of Strs. 192-3/10 organized, roughly, around a patio and two, relatively large parallel platforms to the west on the same ledge margin supporting Site 187 to the south (Strs. 192-1/2 and the rock concentration). Site 187's main plaza group is 105m to the south while Site 193 is 64m to the northeast, separated from Site 192 by a seasonal stream channel. The perennial Rios Ulua and Cececapa are approximately 125m and 90m distant, respectively. Structures 192-1, 3, and 9 were dug from June 10-11, 1986, six person-days of labor resulting in the exposure of ca. 6.8m². The investigations were directed by E. Schortman, A. Carpenter, D. Marshall, and W. Teitz.

Structure 192-1

Structure 192-1 faces Str. 192-2 across 3m on the settlement's western margin. Both of these buildings, together with however many constructions are represented by the cobble concentration adjoining Str. 192-2 on the south, may be a northern continuation of the line of platforms noted on the western ledge margin in Site 187 (Strs. 187-5, 7, and 8). Suboperation 192D is a 1x1.4m trench dug into Str. 192-1's north side. Excavations here were carried down to a maximum depth of 0.46m below modern ground surface outside construction; architectural fill was not probed. A single construction phase was revealed in the course of this investigation.

Excavation Lots

| <u>Lot</u> | <u>Contents</u> | <u>Context</u> | <u>Date</u> |
|------------|-----------------------------------|--|--------------|
| 192D/1 | 3 sherds 92 ceramic roof tiles | Terminal Debris (Secondary) | LCL, HIST |
| 192D/2 | 35 sherds 1 chert piece | Terminal Debris (Secondary) and Preconstruction | LCL |

Time Spans

| <u>Time Span</u> | <u>Construction Phase</u> | <u>Units</u> | <u>Strata</u> | <u>Features</u> | <u>Date</u> |
|------------------|---------------------------|--------------|---------------|-----------------|-------------|
| 1 | - | - | S.1 | - | LC? |
| 2 | Str. 192-1-1st | U.1 | - | - | LC |
| 3 | - | - | S.2 | F.1,2 | HIST |

Time Span 1

Stratum 1, a light brown, fine-textured, hard-compacted soil, was exposed to a maximum

thickness of 0.14m and underlies revealed architecture (U.1). Stratum 1's base lies outside excavation limits. The layer ascends 0.04m over 0.9m north-to-south and may contain some artifacts. Unfortunately, material recovered from S.1 and 2 were mixed in the field, making it impossible at this remove to decide how much, if any, cultural material originally derived from S.1.

Time Span 2

Unit 1 apparently served as Str. 192-1-1st's northern basal facing. It rises 0.39m above S.1, on which it rests, and is aligned roughly 317 degrees. Unit 1 is built of cobbles and a few angular limestone rocks, all set in a brown mud mortar. Relatively little effort was devoted to placing the naturally flatter aspects of the rocks so that they faced outwards. No horizontal coursing or chinking stones were noted. Almost certainly, additional terraces rise above U.1 leading to Str. 192-1-1st's summit.

Time Span 3

Stratum 2, a dark brown, fine-textured, moderately hard-compacted soil, overlies S.1 by 0.23-0.32m and covers most of U.1. A moderately dense concentration of stones that fell from final-phase architecture was found up to at least 0.9m north of U.1, embedded in S.2 (F.1). Feature 2 is a dense concentration of ceramic roof tiles concentrated in a 0.03-0.05m-thick lens immediately below modern ground surface, beginning 0.24m north of U.1 and continuing northward beyond excavation limits. Like F.1, F.2's soil matrix is identical to S.2.

Structure 192-3

Structure 192-3 is in the center of the Str. 192-3/10 cluster, delimiting the northern flank of the patio defined by Strs. 192-3, 4, 7, and 9. Structure 192-4 is 3.5m to the southeast, Str. 192-9 roughly 4.5m to the southwest. Approximately 3.2m² was excavated in a single trench (Subop. 192B) sunk up to 0.74m below modern ground surface outside construction on the edifice's north flank. Architectural fill was not examined. A single construction phase was recognized in the course of this work.

Excavation Lots

| <u>Lot</u> | <u>Contents</u> | <u>Context</u> | <u>Date</u> |
|------------|-------------------------------|--|-------------|
| 192B/1 | 62 sherds 1 andesite piece | Terminal Debris (Secondary) | LCL |
| 192B/2 | 30 sherds | Terminal Debris (Secondary) | LCL |
| 192B/3 | 29 sherds 1 andesite piece | Preconstruction Occupation Debris (Secondary) | LCL |
| 192B/4 | sherds (few) | Preconstruction Occupation Debris | ? |

(Secondary)

192B/5 44 sherds Terminal Debris (Primary) LCL

Time Spans

| <u>Time Span</u> | <u>Construction Phase</u> | <u>Units</u> | <u>Strata</u> | <u>Features</u> | <u>Date</u> |
|------------------|---------------------------|--------------|---------------|-----------------|-------------|
| 1 | - | - | S.1 | - | LC |
| 2 | Str. 192-3-1st | U.1-5 | - | - | LC |
| 3 | - | - | S.2 | F.1 | - |

Time Span 1

Stratum 1, a light brown, fine-textured, hard-compacted soil, underlies exposed Str. 192-3-1st construction (U.1). This level ascends 0.08m over 1.31m north-to-south and was uncovered to a maximum thickness of 0.35m. Stratum 1's base was not encountered in excavation. Recovery of artifacts from this level suggests human occupation in the immediate vicinity prior to the raising of Str. 192-3-1st.

Time Span 2

Structure 192-3-1st was ascended on the north by at least three stone-faced terraces (U.1-5). Each facing (U.1, 3, and 5 from north to south) is constructed of cobbles (primarily) and angular, light-colored chunks (possibly limestone), rising 0.17-0.29m high and built without coursing or chinking stones. Rock sizes range from 0.04x0.12m to 0.11x0.15m. Terrace surfaces (U.2 and 4, north to south) are paved with cobbles and, to a lesser extent, angular stones set ca. 0.1m below the tops of the facings bordering these floors on the north (U.1 and 3 respectively). A brown mud mortar was used as a binding agent in all exposed architecture. Another three to four unexcavated terraces probably rose above U.5, ascending to Str. 192-3-1st's summit. Overall, U.1-5 rise 0.59m over 1.34m north-south, are 0.73m and 0.57m wide (north-to-south), and are aligned roughly 268 degrees.

Time Span 3

Stratum 2, a dark brown, fine-textured, moderately hard-compacted, organic-rich soil buries S.1 by 0.38-0.43m and covers most of U.1-5. Feature 1 is embedded in S.2 and consists of a light concentration of stones fallen from Str. 192-3-1st final-phase architecture; it extends 0.57m north of U.1.

Structure 192-9

Structure 192-9 closes off the west side of the patio surrounded by Strs. 192-3, 5, 7, and

9. The first building in the preceding sequence is 4.5m northeast of Str. 192-9 while Str. 192-7 is ca. 3m to the north. A single trench, Subop. 192C, measuring 1x 2.2m was dug against the building's west side. Excavations were carried down to a maximum depth of 0.44m below modern ground surface outside construction; architectural fill was not probed. A single construction phase was identified in the course of this work.

Excavation Lots

| <u>Lot</u> | <u>Contents</u> | <u>Context</u> | <u>Date</u> |
|------------|------------------------------|--|-------------|
| 192C/1 | 51 sherds 1 mano fragment | Terminal Debris (Secondary) and Preconstruction | LCL |

Time Spans

| <u>Time Span</u> | <u>Construction Phase</u> | <u>Units</u> | <u>Strata</u> | <u>Features</u> | <u>Date</u> |
|------------------|---------------------------|--------------|---------------|-----------------|-------------|
| 1 | - | - | S.1 | - | LC? |
| 2 | Str. 192-9-1st | U.1-4 | - | - | LC |
| 3 | - | - | S.2 | F.1 | - |

Time Span 1

Stratum 1 is a light brown, fine-textured, hard-compacted soil that runs beneath Str. 192-9-1st construction (U.1). This level ascends 0.03m over 0.52m west-to-east and was exposed to a maximum thickness of 0.15m (its base lies beyond excavation limits). A few artifacts in lot 192C/1 may derive from S.1, though the S.1/2 distinction was not recognized during the initial excavation and materials from these layers were not segregated in the field. It is plausible, therefore, that people were living in the immediate environs prior to Str. 192-9-1st's erection, debris from that settlement becoming incorporated in S.1. This contention cannot be established based on current data, however.

Time Span 2

Structure 192-9-1st was ascended on the west by stepping on and over U.1-4. Unit 1 is a 0.12m-high terrace facing composed of a single line of stones resting on S.1. Backing this wall on the east, and resting 0.04-0.06m below the top of U.1, is a pavement (U.3) made up of flat-laid stone slabs, some of which may be limestone. Units 1 and 3, therefore, are components of a terrace that is approximately 0.12m high and 0.82m wide. Unit 2, the next riser to the east, runs down behind U.3, implying that the U.1, 3 terrace was added on to Str. 192-9-1st after construction of U.2. The latter, rising 0.26m above U.3, is fashioned of cobbles (in the majority) and angular chunks set on end. Extending at least 0.86m east from U.3 is a floor consisting of flat-laid cobbles (U.4). Unit 2 may mark the western limits of Str. 192-9-1st's summit, at least a

portion of which was paved. Insufficient excavation was pursued on the east to test this idea. Stones used in revealed construction range in size from 0.07x0.15m to 0.2x0.29m and all are set in a brown mud mortar. No chinking stones or clear signs of horizontal coursing were noted. Units 1-4, therefore, rise a total of 0.34m and are oriented 33-35 degrees.

Time Span 3

Stratum 2, a dark brown, fine-textured, organic-rich soil, mantles S.1 by 0.29-0.3m and covers most of U.1-4. A light scattering of stones tumbled from final-phase architecture extends 0.48m west from U.2, some of the rocks being found on top of U.3 (F.1). Feature 1 is embedded in S.2.

Chronological Summary

The earliest occupation attested to at Site 192 falls within the Late Classic. It was during this span that the exposed portions of Strs. 192-1-1st, 192-3-1st, and 192-9-1st were raised and in use. There is also good evidence, primarily from the Str. 192-3-1st excavations (Subop. 192B), that settlement predating erection of these edifices occurred at the site and also pertains to the Late Classic. Reuse of the settlement at some point (probably very late) in the Historic period is indicated by the dense concentration of fired clay roof tiles found in lot 192D/1 (F.2). Most likely, this occupation was limited in extent (no additional signs of the building from which the tiles may have come were noted on the surface or in excavation). There is no sign that Site 192 was used for permanent human settlement during the centuries separating the Late Classic and Historic periods.