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## PVN OP 079 Excavation Report

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## Site 79

Site 79 is located within 1km southwest of La Sierra. The settlement consists of 16 constructions, including five concentrations of rocks noted on the surface that are likely the remnants of former buildings. Structures 1, 2, 4-7 are sizable constructions that surround a plaza that measures 16x20m. These edifices are situated atop a platform (Str. 79-3) that covers 42x50m and rises 1.5m above the surrounding level terrain. A possible staircase measuring ca. 12m across projects 5m from near the center of Str. 3's south side while a possible ramp runs from Str. 3's base to the platform's summit on the latter's northeast corner. Structure's 79-10 to 79-16, lying 35m east of Str. 79-3, are concentrated in an area encompassing 50x55m. No clear patio focus was identified here. The fact that four of these six buildings were found as rock concentrations implies that any patterning among the seven buildings was disrupted before the site was mapped in 1988. Structures 79-8 and 79-9 are rock concentrations measuring about 3m in diameter that are found 11m southeast and 50m south of Str. 79-3, respectively.

Structures 79-1, 79-2, 79-5, and 79-6 were excavated in 1990. In addition, trenches were dug over the putative southern steps and northeastern ramp along with a test pit that was sunk in the approximate center of Str. 79-3. Altogether, ca. 318m<sup>2</sup> were cleared in the course of this work which was overseen by C. Siders during late April through May, 1990.

### Structure 79-1

Structure 79-1 occupies the north edge of the Str.79-3 platform, closing off this flank of the plaza that occupies the latter's summit. Digging here was carried out within Subop. 79B, G, and H, the excavations revealing all of Str. 79-1-1<sup>st</sup>'s summit along with most of the building's south, patio-facing side (ca. 121m<sup>2</sup> cleared in all). Structure 79-1-1<sup>st</sup>'s north flank was poorly preserved, excavations here being restricted to the 1m-width of Subop. 79B, the trench that cut across the approximate center of the platform from south-to-north. Digging was pursued to maximum depths of 0.92m and 1.23m below modern ground surface beyond and within construction, respectively. One major building phase was recognized in the course of these investigations which were overseen by C. Siders.

<u>Time</u>	<u>Construction</u>				
<u>Span</u>	<u>Phase</u>	<u>Units</u>	<u>Strata</u>	<u>Features</u>	<u>Dates</u>
1	-	U.1, 17	-	-	
2	-	-	S.2	-	
3	Str. 79-1-1 <sup>st</sup>	U.2-16, 18-25	-	F.1-4	
4	-	-	S.1-2	F.5	

### Time Span 1

The earliest activities identified in the vicinity of Str. 79-1 consist of the deposition of a white plaster on the building's south (U.1) and north sides (U.17). Unit 1 is 0.41m below the base of TS.3

architecture (U.2) and is 0.11m thick. Only the upper surface of U.17 was uncovered, lying an estimated 0.85m beneath F.1, the putative basal riser on Str. 79-1-1<sup>st</sup>'s north flank. Unit 1's upper surface is 1.44m above the uppermost exposed portion of U.17. This distinction likely reflects how far the summit of Str. 79-3 was above ancient ground surface north of that platform during TS.1. No other architecture is associated with U.1 and 17.

### Time Span 2

Fully 0.41m (on the south) and 0.85m (on the north) of a moderately fine-textured, dark orange-brown clay (S.2) blankets U.1 and 17 during TS.2. At least on Str. 79-1-1<sup>st</sup>'s south margin it is likely that lower S.2 constitutes fill introduced purposefully to cover U.1 and raise the surface of the Str. 79-3-1<sup>st</sup> platform prior to the erection of Str. 79-1-1<sup>st</sup>. The same is probably not the case on the north where S.2 may have been introduced by natural means. In addition, as deposition of S.2 resumed following Str. 79-1-1<sup>st</sup>'s abandonment it is difficult to be certain how much of this soil was laid down on the north and south during TS.2. We have provisionally taken the vertical distance between the plaster surfaces and overlying TS.3 architecture as a rough approximation of how much of S.2 would need to have been deposited to cover the former and support the latter.

### Time Span 3

Structure 79-1-1<sup>st</sup> is a platform the south side of which rests atop Str. 79-3-1<sup>st</sup> while its north flank rises above what was likely ancient ground surface. The building is ascended by seven stone-faced terraces on the south, all facing what was probably an earthen plaza surface. The basal riser, U.2, stands 0.32m tall and runs 14m southwest from its east corner with U.23. The latter was traced for 2.6m to the northwest at which point excavation ceased. The U.2 and 23 junction may mark Str. 79-1-1<sup>st</sup>'s east corner. At its southwest terminus U.2 turns back to the northwest for 0.35m where it intersects the next riser (U.3). Unit 2 does not precisely parallel U.3; its distance from the latter narrows from 1.4m on the northeast to the aforementioned 0.35m on the southwest. Unit 3 rises 0.41m above U.1's earthen tread and was exposed for 15.6m from its junction with U.23 on the northeast to the point where excavation ceased on the southwest. The width of U.3's earthen tread is 0.79m. A gap in the stones backing U.3 to the northwest measures ca. 1m northeast-southwest by 0.7m northwest-southeast (U.25). Unit 25 might mark the place where a sizable wooden post was erected near the center of the building, ca. 7m southwest of Str. 79-1-1<sup>st</sup>'s east corner. The next ascending terrace, U.4, stands 0.51m above U.3 and runs 0.61m back to the northwest where it is succeeded by U.5. The latter ascends 0.16m above U.4, is 0.46m wide, and ends at U.6. Unit 6 stands 0.24m tall, encompasses 0.74m southeast-northwest, and is succeeded by U.7. The fragments of a single, large shaped stone slab (about 1x1m; U.18) were found at about the midpoint of U.6's tread. Standing 0.3m high, U.7's stone-faced riser fronts a tread the is 0.53m wide. Unit 8, in turn, looms 0.14m above U.7 and extends 1-1.5m back (northwest) to the southeast wall (U.10) of a summit enclosure (see below for an explanation of this variance in the terrace's width). Unit 8 was followed for a total distance of 11m northeast-southwest. It joins with U.24 on the northeast, these two walls forming the east corner of the platform's summit. Unit 24 was traced for 2m to the northwest before all traces of it were lost. At a point 5m southwest of the U.8 and 24 junction the former terrace steps back northwest for 0.5m before

resuming its track to the southwest. The result is that the distance between U.8 and 10 varies from 1-1.5m. The fill underlying U.5-9 is a hard-packed, light brown, white-flecked soil (U.15).

The architecture on Str. 79-1-1<sup>st</sup>'s northwest side is far less clear. No obvious constructions of any sort that date to TS.3 were identified here save for what looks to have been the upper-most terrace (U.9). The latter rises an estimated 0.5m and is 1.99m wide northwest-southeast. Unit 9 ends at U.11, the foundation that delimits the summit enclosure on the northwest. The fill supporting U.9 is a dark brown soil in which a moderately dense concentration of small to medium-size cobbles is embedded (U.16). Below U.9 to the northwest four putative risers have been very tentatively reconstructed based on the distribution of the rocks exposed in this area. These possible terraces (F.1-4) are estimated to have been 0.5m, 0.3m, 0.7m, and 0.8m tall (in ascending order) and are 1m, 1.2m, 0.8m, and 2m wide, respectively.

The exposed portion of Str. 79-1-1<sup>st</sup>'s summit is largely taken up by a rectangular construction defined by stone walls that are 0.12-0.4m high, 0.5-1.38m wide (U.10-13). Unit 10's northwest flank was followed down for 1.12m before excavation ceased (it is not clear that we encountered this wall's base). Over this depth, U.10's northwest face slanted out (northwest) continuously for 0.52m. Most likely U.10 is a fill retaining wall that contained on the southeast the hard-packed, light brown, white-flecked soil (U.14) that filled the platform's core. Whether U.11-13 delimited the other sides of this putative core is not known. Units 10-13 define an area that covers 2.72m northwest-southeast by 9.1m southwest-northeast. Its earthen-floored interior encompasses 0.8x8m. There are four spaces (U.19-22) in the stones topping U.10 (the summit construction's southeast wall). These gaps are situated near the center of U.10, measure roughly 0.5m in diameter, and are set 0.3m apart. The U.10-13 construction may be a small summit room or, perhaps more likely, it is a substantial earth-filled, stone-faced bench. The architectural significance of U.19-22 is unclear; they might mark the presence of vertically set posts.

Overall, Str. 79-1-1<sup>st</sup> is a stone-faced, earth- and, to a lesser extent, stone-filled platform that rose 2.5m on the southeast and 3.12m on the northwest, measured an estimated 15.2m northwest-southeast by at least 14.3m northeast-southwest (its southwest margin was not uncovered), and was aligned roughly 72 degrees. The structure was ascended by seven stone-faced terraces on the south and approximately five risers on the northwest. The southeastern risers ascend in increments of 0.32m, 0.42m, 0.51m, 0.16m, 0.24m, 0.3m, and 0.14m towards the summit; they are 0.35-1.4m, 0.79m, 0.61m, 0.46m, 0.74m, 0.53m, 1-1.5m wide. Their northwestern counterparts are 0.5m, 0.3m, 0.7m, 0.8m, and 0.9m tall by 1m, 1.2m, 0.8m, 2m, and 1.99m across. A stone slab measuring 1m on a side, now broken, was found near Str. 79-1-1<sup>st</sup>'s center on the tread of the fourth ascending southern riser (U.6). This large shaped rock may have marked the formal passage to the platform's summit. The lower elevations of the southeastern terraces further suggest that it was from this flank that the summit was reached. A rectangular construction, delimited by stone walls that are 0.12-0.4m high by 0.5-1.38m wide, covers 24.8m<sup>2</sup> on Str. 79-1-1<sup>st</sup>'s summit. These units may have bounded an earthen-floored room encompassing 6.4m<sup>2</sup> but only 0.8m wide. Alternatively, this summit construction could have been a massive stone-faced, earth-filled bench. Four, roughly circular gaps were noted in the stone surface of the southeast footing (U.10). These entities each measure about 0.5m across, are separated by 0.3m, and may mark the former positions of posts that were anchored in U.10. Another possible post support (U.25) is roughly in line with the southwestern-most of these gaps, measures 0.7x1m, and is set into the

southeast edge of the second ascending southern terrace. All exposed constructions raised during TS.3 are fashioned primarily of river cobbles set in a mud mortar. Unit 2, the southeastern basal riser, and U.9 on the northwest are exceptions to this pattern. They are made exclusively of large, cut stone blocks. Shaped stones are found mixed with cobbles in the faces of U.3 and U.6 while, as noted, U.18 is a cut block that was seemingly fragmented in-place.

Time Span 4

Following its abandonment, the deposition of S.2 resumed, eventually covering most of the basal risers on the northwest and southeast. A dark-brown humus horizon (S.1) covers S.2 by as much as 0.4m. A dense (on the northwest) to moderately densely packed (on the southeast) concentration of rocks that likely fell from final-phase architecture (F.5) overlies Str. 79-1-1<sup>st</sup> and extends for 2m southeast and 2.8m northwest of the building. On the southeast F.5 is primarily found embedded in upper S.2 whereas most of the F.5 rocks on the northwest are in S.1.

Structure 79-2

Structure 79-2 occupies the northeast corner of the plaza that tops the final version of the Str. 79-3 platform. Structure 79-1 is 10m to the northwest while Str. 79-4 on the plaza’s southeast corner is 12m to the south. Digging here was conducted in Subop. 79C and J, fully 71m<sup>2</sup> being cleared in the course of this work. Digging was pursued to maximum depths of 0.6 and 0.67m below modern ground surface beyond and within architecture, respectively. One major building phase was identified in the course of this work, all of which was overseen by C. Siders.

<u>Time Span</u>	<u>Construction Phase</u>	<u>Units</u>	<u>Strata</u>	<u>Features</u>	<u>Dates</u>
1	-	-	S.2	-	
2	-	U.21	-	-	
3	Str. 79-2-1 <sup>st</sup>	U.1-20, 22, 23	-	F.2-3	
4	-	-	S.1, 2	F.1	

Time Span 1

The earliest activity identified in Str. 79-2’s environs saw the deposition of an orange-brown clay (S.2) off the east side of the Str. 79-3 platform. Stratum 2 in this area is at least 0.29m thick (its base lies beyond excavation limits) and rose 0.36m east-to-west over the 3m it was exposed in this area.

Time Span 2

A fill composed of an orange-brown clay (U.21) that is identical to S.2 was introduced atop the Str. 79-3 platform prior to the building of Str. 79-2-1<sup>st</sup>. Unit 21 was revealed to a maximum thickness of 0.33m west of TS.3 construction; its base was not exposed. A very similar fill was laid down prior to the erection of Strs. 79-1-1<sup>st</sup>, 79-5-1<sup>st</sup>, and 79-6-1<sup>st</sup>, tentatively suggesting that all of these soils were introduced at about the same time, probably as part of a general renovation of the Str. 79-3 platform just before raising the aforementioned buildings.

### Time Span 3

Structure 79-2-1<sup>st</sup> consists of rooms built directly on the Str. 79-3-1<sup>st</sup> platform summit and that border a low stone platform on the south and east. Unit 3, a 0.3-0.4m-tall by 0.73m-wide wall, divides the edifice into northern and southern portions of unequal size. The southern segment contains two compartments set in an east-west line. The westernmost enclosure (Room 1) has an earthen floor, is bounded by foundations that are 0.13-0.4m tall, 0.3-0.73m wide (U.1, 12, 13, 16), covers 1.06x3.1m, and is entered through a 0.45m-wide door in the center of its western footing (U.14). Lying immediately to the east of Room 1 is a stone-floored (U.20) cubicle that covers 0.95x3.1m and which is delimited by stone footings that are 0.28-0.4m high by 0.2-0.73m wide (U.1, 9, 10, 12). Built against Room 2's west wall (U.12) is a 0.27m-high stone-faced shelf (U.11) that projects 1.25m east into the compartment and runs the full 0.95m-width of the enclosure. Unit 11 has a niche (U.3) set in its approximate center. That indentation measures 0.6m on a side and is open to the east into Room 2.

Immediately north of Room 2 are Rooms 3 and 5. These two compartments are arranged in an east-west line. Room 3, on the east, has a paved stone floor (U.6), is bounded by foundations that are 0.12-0.4m tall by 0.3-0.73m wide (U.1, 2, 4, 5), and is entered through a 0.95m-wide door in its northeast corner. The easternmost footing (U.2) rises only 0.12m above the U.6 floor though on its east flank the wall was traced to a (minimum) height of 0.78m. This and the substantial girth (0.7m) of U.2 suggests that it doubled as a support for a perishable upper wall and as a bulwark against erosion over Str. 79-3-1<sup>st</sup>'s steep east flank (see F.2 and 3 below). Almost certainly, some of U.2's original height has been lost to the inexorable attraction of gravity over this drop-off. Room 3's interior covers 2.2m east-west by 2.6m north-south. Room 5 is a narrow (0.49m across), earthen-floored compartment that is 2.35m-long north-south, and is bordered by stone foundations that are 0.37-0.47m-tall by 0.32-0.73m-wide (U.1, 4, 5, 8). The U.6 floor extends 0.21m west into Room 5, suggesting that U.5 which divides Rooms 4 and 5 was built atop the U.6 pavement. Room 4 borders the Room 3/5 complex on the north. This earthen-floored compartment is delimited by U.4, 7, and 8, footings that are 0.38-0.5m high by 0.42-0.79m-wide. The enclosure's east side is open, forming a 0.75m-wide entryway into the interior which encompasses 0.5m north-south by 2.25m.

Adjoining Rooms 4 and 5 on the west and Room 1 on the north is a 0.42m-tall stone platform (U.21) that is bordered by U.1, 15, and 8 on the south, west, and east. Unit 21 covers 2.5m east-west by at least 3.2, north-south (U.21's north side was not clearly recognized) and contains in its approximate center a construction defined by a circular wall (U.20). Unit 20 measures 1.35-1.7m across and is bisected by a 0.4m-wide by 0.2m-tall wall (U.19). Unit 19 is a late addition that divided U.20 into two more-or-less equal parts set in a north-south line; the southern segment covers 0.41m across while its northern analogue measures 0.54m wide. A yellow soil containing sherds and *Pachychilus sp.* shells

(U.23) was found beneath the U.20 stones on the north while an orange sandy clay with no included cultural material (U.22) was found underlying U.20 on the south. Unit 19 defines the border between U.22 and 23. What appear to have been two stone-faced and –surfaced risers lead up to U.20's summit from the west. The basal step (U.16) is 0.18m-high by 0.51m wide while its successor (U.17) ascends 0.24m to U.20's summit. Units 16 and 17 run the full exposed length of U.20's west side while U.16 continues south of the platform to define the west side of Room 1 (this extension is called U.14). A stone pavement (U.18) projects 1.2m west of U.16 at a point opposite and west of Room 1's northwest corner. Unit 18 encompasses 1.05m north-south.

Remnants of what might have been two stone-faced terraces (F.2 and 3) were recorded downslope and east of Str. 79-2-1<sup>st</sup>. Both were in poor states of preservation when excavated and are reconstructed from patterns noted in the distribution of rocks within the exposed areas. The putative basal riser (F.2) stands an estimated 0.51m tall by 1.56m wide and is set directly atop S.2. Feature 3 rises ca. 0.4m above F.2 and extends 0.5m to where F.3 terminates in U.2, the wall that borders Room 3 on the east.

Overall, Str. 79-2-1<sup>st</sup> consisted of a 0.42m-high stone platform around which on the south and east are arranged rooms set directly on the earthen summit of Str. 79-3-1<sup>st</sup>. The platform itself covers at least 8m<sup>2</sup> (its north flank was not uncovered though it is unlikely that the building was much larger), is oriented ca. 255 degrees, and contains near its center a circular construction that measures 1.35-1.7m across and is 0.45m deep. This circle is divided into north and south segments by a late wall; the northern portion covers 0.54m across north-south while its southern counterpart is 0.41m wide. The fill underlying the circle north of the central wall is a yellow soil rich in cultural materials while on the south a culturally sterile, orange sandy clay was found. Two stone steps ascend in increments of 0.18 and 0.24m towards the platform's summit from the west; the basal riser is 0.51m wide east-west. A stone pavement measuring 1.05m north-south projects 1.2m west from the southwest corner of the basal step. South of the platform is earthen-floored Room 1 which covers 3.3m<sup>2</sup> and was entered through a 0.45m-wide door set in the center of its west foundation. Stone-floored Room 2 borders Room 1 on the east and covers 3m<sup>2</sup>. This compartment contains a 0.27m-high stone-faced shelf that projects 1.2m east into Room 2 from its western footing and which covers 0.95m north-south. Set in the approximate center of the shelf is a niche measuring 0.6m on a side and open to the east. Rooms 3 and 5 border the platform on the east and Room 2 on the north. The former is paved with stones, encompasses 5.7m<sup>2</sup>, and has a 0.95m-wide door set in its northeast corner. Room 5, sandwiched between the platform on the west and Room 3 on the east, has an earthen floor and covers 1.2m<sup>2</sup>. It is entirely possible that what has been glossed as Room 5 is really a stone-faced, earth-topped bench that is 0.49m wide by 2.35m long north-south. Room 4 borders Rooms 3 and 5 on the north, has an earthen floor, and encompasses 1.3m<sup>2</sup>. As this compartment's east side was left open, its interior was easily accessed by passing through this 0.75m-wide gap. That Rooms 3 and 4 have entryways on the east suggests that, unlike in 1990, these enclosures did not directly overlook the steep drop off Str. 79-3-1<sup>st</sup>'s east flank. Most likely erosion down this slope has eaten away at Str. 79-3-1<sup>st</sup> right up to the doorways of Rooms 3 and 4. These natural processes have likely also contributed to the destruction of the stone terraces that originally graced this side. Two such risers were tentatively reconstructed below and east of Str. 79-2-1<sup>st</sup>. The basal ascent is estimated to have been 0.51m tall by 1.56m wide. It is succeeded on the west by a terrace that was ca. 0.4m tall by 0.5m wide. Room 3's east wall rises about 0.2m above this terrace

but plunges at least an additional 0.58m below that level, suggesting that this construction both defined the enclosure's east edge and served to slow erosion down the Str. 79-3-1<sup>st</sup>'s east flank. The foundations that delimit the rooms in this complex range from 0.12-0.5m tall by 0.2-0.79m wide. Constructions raised during TS.3 were made primarily of river cobbles though cut blocks were recorded in U.19 (the wall bisecting the circular construction), U.17 (the second ascending step on Str. 79-2-1<sup>st</sup>'s west side), U.8 (a foundation bordering Rooms 4 and 5 on the west), and the U.11 niche. All of these rocks are set in a mud mortar.

Time Span 4

Following abandonment of Str. 79-2-1<sup>st</sup>, 0.3-0.4m of a dark brown soil (S.1) was laid down atop S.2 east of the building. As much as 0.27m of S.1 was noted overlying TS.3 construction atop Str. 79-3-1<sup>st</sup>. Embedded in S.1, and concentrated within 0.2m above the S.1/2 interface east of Str. 79-2-1<sup>st</sup>, is a dense concentration of rocks (F.1) that fell from final-phase architecture. Feature 1 was traced for 2.05m east of F.2; much less architectural tumble was recorded west of Str. 79-2-1<sup>st</sup> and overlying that building.

Structure 79-5

Structure 79-5 is located 21m southwest of Str. 79-1 on the southwest corner of the plaza defined by Strs. 1, 2, 4-7 atop the Str. 79-3-1<sup>st</sup> platform. Digging here within Suboperations 79D and K uncovered roughly 80m<sup>2</sup>. In the course of this work it became obvious that Str.79-5 consisted of two connected but distinct buildings set in a northeast-southwest-trending line. The northeast of these edifices is glossed here as Str. 79-5-Sub1 while its southwest neighbor is designated Str. 79-5-1<sup>st</sup>. Excavations in Subops. 79D and K reached a maximum depth of 0.9m below modern ground surface beyond Str. 79-5-1<sup>st</sup>; that platform's fill was not exposed. Two major building episodes were identified in the course of this work, which was directed by C. Siders.

Time Spans

Time Span	Construction Phase	Units	Strata	Features	Dates
1	Str. 79-5-Sub1-2nd	U.23-24, 32	-	-	
2	-	U.25	-	F.2	
3	Str. 79-5-1 <sup>st</sup>	U.8-17, 18-22, 27-29	-	-	-
4	Str. 79-5-Sub1-1 <sup>st</sup>	U.1-7, 30, 31	-	-	
5	-	-	S.1	F.1	



Note: There is no U.26

### Time Span 1

One of the first activities attested to in the vicinity of Str. 79-5 was the laying down of a hard, white plaster (U.32). Unit 32 measures 0.41m across and is at least 0.07m thick (Its base was not encountered). It was found 2.85m northeast of Str. 79-5-Sub1-1<sup>st</sup>, the unit's top sitting 0.73m below the base of Str. 79-5-Sub1-1<sup>st</sup>'s northeast foundation (U.2). It seems likely that F.3 is a fragment of what had been a more extensive prepared surface, though no other signs of this floor were noted.

Located 2.85m southwest of U.32 is a 0.39m-tall cobble wall (U.23) that looks to have been the northeast face of a low platform (Str. 79-5-Sub1-2<sup>nd</sup>). Unit 23 retains a fill (U.24) composed of a moderately dense concentration of medium-size cobbles set in a hard-compacted, orange-brown clay. The base of U.23 is at the same level as the top of U.32, tentatively suggesting that the two may be contemporary. Too little of U.23 was uncovered to determine the building's orientation or overall form.

Units 23, 24, and 32 seem to be the remains of constructions that were raised atop the penultimate version of Str. 79-3. It may be that they are contemporary with U.1 and 17 exposed south and north of Str. 79-1-1<sup>st</sup>. In all these cases the relevant pieces of architecture are situated beneath final-phase architecture and, for those located atop Str. 79-3, covered with an earth fill.

### Time Span 2

Units 23 and 32 were completely covered during this interval by a hard-compacted, orange-brown clay that contains a few small and (mostly) medium-size cobbles (U.25). Roughly 0.42m of U.25 was deposited now.

### Time Span 3

Structure 79-5-1<sup>st</sup> is a platform that is bordered on the northeast by a stone-faced riser that ascends 0.13m and is 0.3-0.9m wide (U.27). Unit 27 is succeeded on the southwest by U.8, a 0.4m-tall by 1.2-1.8m-wide terrace that is surfaced with stone (U.14). Unit 8 was traced for 3m northwest from where it emerges from the southeast trench wall at which point it steps back 0.6m to the southwest. From this point for the remainder of its length (6.3m) U.8 continues straight to its juncture with U.10, Str. 79-5-1<sup>st</sup>'s northwest basal facing. Unit 27 also runs back to the southwest to join U.10 at this corner. Unit 10 was followed for 1.35m to the southwest before excavations ceased. A roughly circular construction (U.9) was identified filling the distance between U.27 and U.8 at the approximate centers of these constructions; U.8 curves back at this point to define U.9's southwest side. Unit 9 measures approximately 0.6m in diameter and may have been the setting for a vertically-set post. Immediately southwest of U.8, directly behind U.9, is a large cut block (U.11) that is broken into four pieces and set even with the U.14 floor. This piece of masonry covers 0.4x0.6m and may have marked a formal passage up the middle of Str. 79-5-1<sup>st</sup>'s northeast side.

The next ascending terrace on the platform's northeast flank (U.12) rises 0.3m above its predecessor, measures 1.4-3m across, and its tread is surfaced with stone (U.15). Unit 12 was traced for 3.35m northwest from the southeast trench wall at which point the facing curves back to the southwest, defining a semi-circle that measures 2.4m across its open northeast flank and is about 0.5m deep northeast-southwest. This indentation is in line with the U.11 slab and the U.9 putative post support. The behavioral significance of the aforementioned change in U.12 construction is unknown. Unit 12 extends an additional 0.6m to the northwest where its corner with U.13 is inset 0.9x1.25m. Unit 13 is 0.3m tall and continues from its junction with U.12 for 2.3m to the southwest before stepping back 0.3m to join U.16. The latter is preserved to 0.13m high and projects 1.1m northwest of the summit's northwest facing (U.20) before turning to run for at least 3.5m to the southwest at which point U.16 left our excavations. Unit 16 intersects U.20 at a point 0.8m southwest of the latter's north corner. Units 16 and 20 define the northeast and northwest flanks of an area delimited by low stone walls on the remaining two sides (all glossed as U.19). Whether U.19 is a small cubicle or a low shelf is unclear. In any case, U.19 occupies the summit's north corner and encompasses 0.7m on a side.

A 0.1m-tall step (U.28) projects 0.65m northeast of the summit's northeast foundation (U.18). Unit 28 measures 1.1m across northwest-southeast and is in line with U.9 and U.11 on the platform's center-line. The summit itself is delimited by stone footings (U.17, 18, 20, 21) that are 0.14-0.4m high by 0.23-0.35m wide. They define a space that covers 2.4x4.4m and is surfaced with stones (U.22). No built-in furniture, with the possible exception of U.19, was identified atop Str. 79-5-1<sup>st</sup>. The fill underlying U.22 is composed of a moderately dense concentration of small to medium-size stones set in a dark brown soil (U.29).

Overall, Str. 79-5-1<sup>st</sup> is a stone-faced, stone-and-earth-filled platform that covers at least 7.8 by 9.1m, stands 0.93m tall on the northeast, and is aligned roughly 333 degrees. The building's southeast and southwest flanks were not uncovered. The platform is ascended on northeast by three stone-faced risers that ascend towards the summit in increments of 0.13m, 0.4m, and 0.3m. The treads of these terraces are 0.3-2.5m wide; the two uppermost treads are surfaced with stone. A 0.1m-high step set near the building's center provides access to the summit from the third terrace. What appears to have been the setting for a post measuring 0.6m in diameter is also located on Str. 79-5-1<sup>st</sup>'s centerline between the first and second terraces. A stone block, apparently broken in place into four pieces and covering 0.4x0.6m, was found embedded in the floor of the second ascending terrace immediately behind (southwest) of the putative post support. The third ascending terrace curves back to the southwest to form an arc measuring 2.4m across its open, northeast side and is 0.5m deep. The architectural significance of these features is unclear. Broken faced blocks frequently mark entrances elsewhere at La Sierra and it may be that the masonry found set in the second terrace's tread served a similar purpose, pointing as it does toward the summit step. Structure 79-5-1<sup>st</sup>'s summit is paved with rocks and covers 10.6m<sup>2</sup>. It is bounded by stone footings that are 0.14-0.4m high by 0.25-0.35m wide and is largely featureless. A cubicle or shelf measuring 0.7m on a side does occupy the summit's north corner. Architecture raised during TS.3 is primarily made of cobbles generally set with their flat faces directed outwards. Faced stones were noted in the summit pavement (U.22), the facings of U.27, 12, 18, 21, and U.11 is composed of a single masonry block. All of these stones are set in a mud mortar.

#### Time Span 4

Structure 79-5-Sub1-1<sup>st</sup> is a surface-level construction that was set against Str. 79-5-1<sup>st</sup>'s northeast flank. A hard-packed, orange-brown clay (U.30) fills the 0.44m between the two buildings and may have obscured Str. 79-5-1<sup>st</sup>'s northeastern basal terrace (U.27) where it runs behind (southwest) of Str. 79-5-Sub1-1<sup>st</sup>. Structure 79-5-1<sup>st</sup> apparently remained in use during TS.4, its summit still easily accessible by scaling the portions of its northeast terraces that remained exposed southwest of Str. 79-5-Sub1-1<sup>st</sup>.

Structure 79-5-Sub1-1<sup>st</sup>'s perimeter walls (U. 1-4) are 0.15-0.4m tall by 0.33-0.8m wide and enclose an earthen-floored space that covers 2.2x2.7m. The northeast foundation, U. 2, rests directly atop U.23, the northeast facing of Str. 79-5-Sub1-2<sup>nd</sup>. Structure 79-5-Sub1-1<sup>st</sup>'s interior consists of two rooms set in a northeast-southwest line and divided by U.5, a 0.1m-tall by 0.5m-wide stone wall. Unit 5 projects 0.9m southeast from the building's northwest foundation (U.4), thereby creating a 0.9m-wide door connecting the northeastern and southwestern cubicles. The former compartment encompasses 1.2x2.2m and was entered through a 0.9m-wide door set in the approximate center of Str. 79-5-Sub1-1<sup>st</sup>'s northeast footing (U.2). A 0.25m-high shelf (U.31) occupies the entirety of the northeast room's southeast side. Unit 31 is surfaced with stone, including a fragmented cut block. This construction projects 0.5m northwest from the structure's southeast perimeter wall (U.3) and is 1.2m-long. The southwestern room measures 1.1x2.2m. A 0.25m-tall construction (U.6) intersects U. 31's west corner and presents a curved, convex face to the northwest, describing an arc that comes within 0.9m of U.5 and joins U.3 at a point 0.1m northeast of U.4 (Str. 79-5-Sub1-1<sup>st</sup>'s southwest foundation). Unit 6 measures 1.5m on its longest, southeast side and is 1m wide at its broadest point. This construction may be a shelf though why it defines a semi-circle is unclear. Unit 7, a 0.2m-tall by 0.36-0.8m-wide shelf, runs for 2.6m from Str. 79-5-Sub1-1<sup>st</sup>'s west corner along the outer face of the building's northwest foundation (U.1).

Structure 79-5-Sub1-1<sup>st</sup> is a surface-level building that encompasses 3.6x3.9m and is oriented ca. 220 degrees. Its perimeter walls are 0.15-0.4m tall by 0.33-0.8m wide and enclose a total area of 5.9m<sup>2</sup>. This space is divided between two earthen-floored rooms set in a northeast-southwest line and connected by a 0.9m-wide door. The northeast example covers 2.6m<sup>2</sup>, was accessed through a 0.9m-wide entryway in the compartment's northeast footing, and has a 0.25m-tall by 1.2m-long stone-faced and -surfaced shelf running along the enclosure's southeast side. The southwest room encompasses 2.6m<sup>2</sup> and has a 0.25m-tall shelf set against its southeast wall. This construction defines a semicircle that is, maximally, 1.5m long northeast-southwest by 1m across. A 0.2m-tall by 0.36-0.8m-wide, by 2.6m-long stone-faced shelf was built against Str. 79-5-Sub1-1<sup>st</sup>'s northwest flank. This construction possibly provided a work and/or resting place sheltered beneath the building's eaves. Most of the constructions raised now were fashioned of cobbles the flatter faces of which were directed outwards. Faced masonry was found intermixed with these stones in U.1-3, 6, and 31. All of these rocks are set in a mud mortar.

#### Time Span 5

Following the abandonment of Strs. 79-5-1<sup>st</sup> and 79-5-Sub1-1<sup>st</sup>, between 0.31-0.38m of a dark brown soil (S.1) was laid down. Stratum 1 covers all but the uppermost remnants of architecture on

both buildings and contains a moderately dense concentration of small to medium-size stones (F.1) that apparently fell from final-phase construction. Feature 1 was traced for 3m northeast of Str. 79-5-Sub1-1<sup>st</sup>, its component rocks resting on the S.1/U.25 interface.

### Structure 79-6

Structure 79-6 is located along the west side of the plaza delimited by Strs. 79-1, 2, 4-7. It is 5m north of Str. 79-5 and 14m south of Str. 79-1. On the surface it appeared that Str. 79-7, lying 3m to the north, was connected to Str. 79-6 by a low construction measuring 2.5m across. Time did not permit investigating this possible linkage. Investigations here, conducted in Subop. 79E, consisted of a 1m-wide trench that was dug for 9m across Str. 79-6-1<sup>st</sup> from its northeast flank to what looks like a terrace surface that borders the summit on the southwest (9m<sup>2</sup> cleared in all). Due to the building's poor state of preservation, further clearing of the edifice did not seem warranted. Digging was pursued to maximum depths of 0.64m and 0.72m below modern ground surface within and beyond architecture, respectively. Two major periods of occupation were identified in the course of this work which was directed by C. Siders.

<u>Time Span</u>	<u>Construction Phase</u>	<u>Units</u>	<u>Strata</u>	<u>Features</u>	<u>Dates</u>
1	-	U.12	-	-	
2	-	U.1	-	-	
3	Str. 79-6-1 <sup>st</sup>	U.2-11	-	-	
4	-	-	S.1	F.1	

### Time Span 1

The first activity revealed in Subop. 79E was the creation of a white plaster surface (U.12). Unit 12's upper surface was traced for 1.2m southwest from the northeast trench margin at which point it apparently terminated; the plaster over this area fills the excavation's 1m width northwest-southeast. Unit 12, like Str. 79-5's U.32 and U.1 and 17 recovered beneath Str. 79-1, pertains to what looks like to have been the penultimate version of the Str. 79-3 platform. No other architecture directly related to U.12 was identified in Subop. 79E.

### Time Span 2

During this interval U.12 was covered by 0.12-0.2m of an orange-brown clay (U.1). Unit 1 rises 0.71m northeast-to-southwest over the 4.8m it was exposed in Subop. 79E. As TS.3 architecture (U.2) rests on the top of U.1 it appears that the latter is a fill unit laid down as a foundation for Str. 79-6-1<sup>st</sup>.

### Time Span 3

Structure 79-6-1<sup>st</sup> is a stone-faced platform that is bordered on the northeast, plaza-facing side by a facing that is roughly 0.6m tall (U.2). Unit 2 runs southwest for 1.7m at which point it is succeeded by U.9. The latter stands 0.18-tall and its stone-paved tread is 1.07m wide. Unit 3 ascends 0.12m above U.9 and borders the summit on the northeast. The summit is surfaced with rocks (U.6) and is delimited on the southwest by U.4. Unit 4 rises 0.4m above a stone pavement (U.7) that is probably part of the tread of the uppermost southwestern terrace. We did not locate U.7's southwest riser though a 0.12m-tall stone outset (U.5) that projects 0.7m southwest from U.4 was identified. Unit 5 does not continue across Subop 79E's full width but stops 0.3m southeast of the northwest trench wall. The fill underlying U.2 consists of a dense concentration of medium-to-small cobbles laid flat and set in a dark brown soil (U.10). A very similar hearth (U.11) was noted beneath the summit surface (U.6) and U.5 (U.8).

By the end of TS.3, Str. 79-6-1<sup>st</sup> was a stone-faced, stone-and-earth-filled platform that stood 0.9m tall on the northeast, measured at least 6.6m northeast-southwest (its southwest margin was not revealed), and was oriented very roughly 330 degrees. The building is ascended on the northeast by two terraces that rise in increments of 0.6m and 0.18m towards the summit. These terraces are 1.7m and 1.07m wide, the tread of the second riser being paved with stones. It appears that the uppermost southwestern terrace was surfaced with stones as well. The summit is bordered by step-ups of 0.12m and 0.4m on the northeast and southwest. A 0.12m-tall, stone-faced outset projects 0.7m southwest of the southwestern summit step-up. The summit itself measures 2.21m across and is paved with rocks; no other elements of superstructure architecture were revealed in our limited clearing of the summit. Architecture erected during TS.3 primarily consists of cobbles the flatter sides of which are directed outwards (in walls) and upwards (in floors). Faced blocks were recorded in U.2 and 3 while a schist slab was noted sliding off the northeast side of U.3. All of these rocks are set in a mud mortar.

#### Time Span 4

After Str. 79-6-1<sup>st</sup>'s abandonment as much as 0.83m of a dark brown soil (S.1) was laid down northeast of the platform. Embedded in S.1 is a dense concentration of small-to-large stones (F.1) that apparently fell from final-phase architecture. Feature 1 extends for 1.1m northeast of Str. 79-6-1<sup>st</sup>.

#### Northeast Entry Feature (Feature 1)

During the initial mapping of Operation 79 in 1988 a possible earthen ramp was identified in the northeast corner of the Str. 79-3 platform. Designated Feature 1, this putative construction runs southwest from the base of the Str. 79-3 platform issuing onto its summit between Str. 79-1 on the northwest and Str. 79-2 on the southeast. Feature 1 was investigated by digging a 1m-wide trench (Subop. 79F) along the full northeast-southwest length of the possible construction (the trench is 13.8m long, 13.8m<sup>2</sup> was cleared here in total). Excavations were pursued to maximum depths of 1.3m and 0.72m below modern ground surface into and beyond architecture, respectively. Two clear construction episodes were recognized as a result of these investigations which were overseen by C. Siders.

Time	Construction				
Span	Phase	Units	Strata	Features	Dates

1	Str. 79-3-Sub2-1st	U.1-5	-	-
2	Str. 79-3-1 <sup>st</sup>	U.6-16	-	F.2-3
3	-	-	S.1-2	F.1

### Time Span 1

The first activities attested to in Subop. 79F consisted of the building of what appear to have been a series of adjoining rooms erected on ancient ground surface (Str. 79-3-Sub2-1<sup>st</sup>). Suboperation 79F cut across three of these putative compartments near their east corners. Very little can be said about them save that their foundations (U.1-4) were 0.3-0.6m high by 0.28-0.45m wide and oriented 303 degrees, 321 degrees, and 351 degrees. In general the rooms seem to be set in a north-south line, the exposed portions covering about 4.3m northeast-southwest. What little can be said of the interiors of these compartments suggests that the two northern enclosures were floored with dirt while the southernmost in the line has a white plaster floor (U.5). Unit 5 is at least 0.05m thick—its base was not encountered—and covers 2.3m of the southern room as it was exposed within the 1m width of Subop. 79F. All TS.1 architecture was fashioned of river cobbles set in a mud mortar.

### Time Span 2

The rooms comprising Str. 79-3-Sub2-1<sup>st</sup> were initially filled with large cobbles (each measuring 0.16-0.3m across) and then covered by as much as 0.9m of a yellow-brown, hard-packed soil containing both artifacts and shells of *Pacychilus sp* (U.6). Unit 6 may well represent materials re-deposited from trash deposits. Piled up against U.6's east side is a deposit of dark orange-brown clay (U.13) that is 0.53-0.74 wide east west and as much as 0.7m deep. Unit 13 borders Str. 79-3-Sub2-1<sup>st</sup> on the east and rises to a point equal to the top of U.6. Units 6 and 13 may represent two distinct fill deposits laid down sequentially proceeding west (U.6) to east (U.13). A fine-textured, hard-compacted sandy soil (U.7) was deposited against U.13's east side. Unit 7 rises 0.42m over 0.37m east-to-west and intersects U.13 at a point 0.27m below the latter's top. The architectural significance of U.7 is unclear; it may well be another fill unit added in the course of raising Str. 79-3-1<sup>st</sup>. Covering U.7 and the upper 0.27m of U.13 is a fine-textured, hard-packed, yellow-orange sand (U.15) that contains lenses of fine-textured, hard-compacted, gray-brown sand. Cut into U.15's east face are three earthen-faced and surfaced risers ascending towards Str. 79-3-1<sup>st</sup>'s summit from the east. The basal element in the series (U.8) has an eastern face that slants up 0.27m over 0.18m east-west. Unit 8's level tread is 0.51m wide after which it is succeeded by U.9. Unit 9's east face slants up 0.21m over 0.11m east-to-west while its tread measures 0.65m across. The next ascending terrace (U.14) also has an eastern face that is canted back to the west, this time rising 0.19m over 0.1m. Unit 14's earthen tread is 0.23m wide east-west and terminates at the U.13 fill. Based on the location of Str. 79-3-1<sup>st</sup>'s summit architecture (U.10) about 0.22m separates the base of U.10 from the top of the U.13 fill unit. It may be that U.14 was succeeded by a riser composed of the east face of U.13. The latter might have originally spanned the 0.22m needed to bring this series of risers up to the level of the final step-up to the Str. 79-3-1<sup>st</sup> summit. If that was true, this final terrace would have been approximately 4.7m wide east-west, riding atop the U.6 fill.

Unit 10, the summit step-up, is a 0.22m-tall stone riser that gives way on the west to a stone pavement (U.16) that is bordered on the west by a line of faced blocks (U.11). In all, U.16, including the stones of U.10 and 11, measures 1.65m east-west. This construction possibly served as a threshold providing access to Str. 79-3-1<sup>st</sup>'s summit from the northeast. Late in the occupation, a fine-textured, gray-black, sand (F.3) collected against U.8's east face. Features 3 reaches to the top of U.8 and slopes down 0.29 over 0.48m west-to-east. This deposit may be debris, possibly of organic origin, that collected against the basal ascent when the latter was no longer being kept clean. An artifact lens (F.2) extends from U.10 for at least 5m to the east overlying the inferred surface of the terrace fronting the U.10 summit step-up. Like F.3, F.2 may pertain to Str. 79-3-1<sup>st</sup>'s last occupation phase.

Overall, during TS.2 at least some of the Str. 79-3-Sub2-1<sup>st</sup> rooms were filled with stones and then covered by a variety of earthen fills that covered a revealed 6.53m east-west. At least three earthen terraces were cut into this deposit's east face, their risers slanting back and up to the west at rates of 0.27m over 0.18m, 0.21m over 0.11m, and 0.19m across 0.1m from top to bottom. The earthen treads of these constructions are 0.51m, 0.65m, and 0.23m wide. One final tread might have been 0.22m tall and given way to an earthen surface that spanned 4.7m east-west and ended on the west in a 0.22m-high stone-faced step-up to the summit. This last entity is the only stone construction in the series of terraces described above and the sole member of this set for which we could determine its orientation (ca. 348 degrees). A possible stone-paved threshold measuring 1.65m wide east-west and bordered by a line of faced blocks on the west likely provided a formal point of entry to the plaza raised atop Str. 79-3-1<sup>st</sup> from the latter's northeast corner. Altogether, Str. 79-3-1<sup>st</sup> rose 1.11m on this, its northeast corner. Occupation debris, including artifacts, was apparently allowed to accumulate atop the broad uppermost earthen terrace and against the east face of the basal riser near the end of the construction's occupation. As noted, most of the architectural units revealed in Subop. 79F were made of earth. The exceptions are the stone step-up (U.10) and the surface it borders on the east. That floor and U.10 were made out of river cobbles while faced masonry was used to delimit the floor's west edge. All of these rocks are set in a mud mortar.

### Time Span 3

Following Str. 79-3-1<sup>st</sup>'s abandonment the east face of the platform was largely covered by as much as 0.5m of an orange-brown clay (S.2) that slopes up 0.91m over 5.8m east-to-west. Covering S.2 by 0.17-0.24m is a dark-brown soil (S.1) in which is embedded a dense concentration of stones fallen from final-phase architecture (F.1). Feature 1 was especially concentrated overlying the U.6 fill dissipating rapidly after that to the east.

### Southern Steps (Structure 79-3-Sub1)

What appeared on the surface to be an outset staircase ascending the south face of the Str. 79-3 platform was investigated within Subop. 79I. This is a 1m-wide trench that runs 18.1m up that putative set of steps from its base to the summit (18.1m<sup>2</sup> cleared). Digging was pursued to maximum depths of 0.87m and 1.08m below modern ground surface within and beyond construction, respectively. Remnants of what might have been steps were recovered within Subop. 79I along with a summit wall that traversed at least part of the 15m separating Strs. 79- 4 and -5 on the south side of the principal

plaza. One construction phase was identified in the course of these investigations which were directed by C. Siders.

<u>Time Span</u>	<u>Construction Phase</u>	<u>Units</u>	<u>Strata</u>	<u>Features</u>	<u>Dates</u>
1	-	-	S.4	-	
2	-	-	S.3	-	
3	-	-	S.2	-	
4	Str. 79-3-Sub1-1 <sup>st</sup>	U.1-3	-	F.1-3	
5	-	-	S.1-2	F.4	

#### Time Span 1

The earliest activity revealed in Subop. 79I is the deposition of a fine-grained, ashy gray-brown soil (S.4) that was revealed in a deep probe dug in the south-most 1x1.9m segment of this trench. Stratum 4 is at least 0.53m thick (its base was not encountered) and slopes up 0.12m over the 1.9m it was exposed running south-to-north. The recovery of artifacts from S.4 points to a human presence in the area while this soil was being laid down.

#### Time Span 2

Stratum 4 was buried by 0.02-0.7m of S.3, a gray ash that contains numerous pottery sherds (S.3). Like its predecessor, S.4 rises from south-to north, ascending 0.23m over 1.9m in that direction. Most likely, S.3 represents debris derived from an occupation located upslope to the north under what would become Str. 79-3.

#### Time Span 3

Covering S.3 by 0.23-0.27m is an orange-brown clay (S.2) that slopes up 0.21m over 1.9m south-to-north. TS.4 architecture (Str. 79-Sub1-1<sup>st</sup>) was set 0.11m into S.2.

#### Time Span 4

Features 1 and 2, when first encountered, appeared to consist of stones that had fallen from architecture located upslope and to the north. On closer examination this did not seem to be the case. First, no extant construction from which F.1 and 2 might have tumbled was recorded any closer than 8.77m to the north (U.1). The space intervening between U.1, on the one hand, and F.1 and 2 on the other was largely free of any fallen architectural debris. Second, the stones comprising F.1 and 2, though somewhat disrupted, were largely flat-laid and not consistently tilting down to the south as



would be expected if they had fallen from somewhere upslope to the north. Consequently, we infer that F.1 and 2 represent the remains of architecture that had deteriorated *in situ*.

What F.1 and 2 might represent are two stone-faced and –surfaced risers ascending 0.33m (F.1) and 0.3m (F.2) from south-to-north. Feature 1 is 1.1m wide north-south while F.2 measures 3m in the same direction. The 8.77m separating F.2 from U.1 may have been surfaced with earth. Features 1 and 2 are underlain by an orange-brown clay (U.2) that is minimally 0.36m thick (U.2's base was not found). Unit 1 is a 0.61m-high rock wall that measures 1m across and is oriented ca. 77 degrees. This construction might have blocked entrance to the main plaza from the south or, perhaps more likely, channeled traffic passing up the putative F.1 and 2 steps through an as-yet-undiscovered door into that open space. Unit 1 is backed on the north by gray-brown earth that is at least 0.39m thick and contains white inclusions (U.3). Unit 3 covers the bottom-most 0.31m of U.1, the latter rising 0.3m above the earth surface that is the top of U.3. Lying 1.23m north of U.1 is a collection of flat-laid rocks (F.3) that are set 0.19m into U.3. Feature 3 rises 0.1m above U.3 and runs 1.06m northward at which point it left Subop. 79I. Though F.3 did not comprise a clear architectural unit on excavation, the dense concentration and horizontal disposition of its component rocks suggest that it was part of a purposeful construction. Feature 3 may be the remnants of a 0.1m-tall stone-faced and –surfaced platform of unknown dimensions.

Overall, the construction uncovered in Subop. 79I is tentatively identified as two stone-faced and –surfaced steps that rise 0.33m and 0.3m from south-to-north towards Str. 79-3's summit. The basal riser is 1.1m wide while its successor to the north covers 3m north-south. Both are underlain by an orange-brown clay fill. The 8.77m separating the uppermost tread and the U.1 summit wall was apparently surfaced with earth. Unit 1 rises 0.61m above this putative floor, measures 1m across, and was aligned ca. 77 degrees. This substantial wall may have formally defined the main plaza's southern limits, possibly directing traffic up the southern steps toward a passage through that wall, a door that we did not find. Unit 1 is backed on the north by a, minimally, 0.39m-thick gray-brown earth fill above which the wall projects 0.3m. Given this discrepancy in height between the south and north sides of U.1 it seems likely that the putative entryway would have included a step-up to Str. 79-3-1<sup>st</sup>'s summit of 0.31m. A 0.1m-tall by, minimally, 1.06m wide (north-south) stone-faced and –surfaced stone-faced platform is 1.23m north of U.1. All constructions raised at this time are primarily fashioned of river-worn cobbles set in a mud mortar.

#### Time Span 5

Following its abandonment, Str. 79-3-Sub1-1<sup>st</sup> was covered by the resumed deposition of S.2. Roughly 0.3m of this orange-brown clay overlies TS.4 construction. Stratum 2 was covered in turn by 0.2-0.33m of a dark brown, organic-rich humus horizon. Embedded in upper S.2 and, less so, in S.1 is a light scattering of rocks (F.4) that likely fell from final-phase architecture. These few stones are mostly concentrated between and above U.1 and F.3 on Str. 3's summit.

#### Plaza Test Pit

A test pit measuring 2x2m (Subop. 79A) was dug in the approximate center of the plaza raised atop Str. 79-3-1<sup>st</sup> to determine the nature and pace of the platform's construction. Suboperation 79A is 8.4m southwest of Str. 79-2-1<sup>st</sup> and 3.6m northeast of Str. 79-5-Sub1-1<sup>st</sup>. Digging here reached a maximum depth of 3.4m below modern ground surface. At least three construction phases were recognized in the course of this work, which was directed by C. Siders.

<u>Time Span</u>	<u>Constructions Phase</u>	<u>Units</u>	<u>Strata</u>	<u>Features</u>	<u>Dates</u>
1	-	-	S.3	-	
2	-	-	S.2	-	
3	Str. 79-3-3rd	U.1-2	-	-	
4	Str. 79-3-2 <sup>nd</sup>	U.3-7	-	-	
5	Str. 79-3-1 <sup>st</sup>	U.8	-	-	
6	-	-	S.1	-	

#### Time Span 1

During this interval at least 0.47m of a hard-packed, dark brown clay (S.3) was deposited (S.3's base was not encountered). The revealed portions of this soil were culturally sterile.

#### Time Span 2

Stratum 3 was blanketed by a dark brown clay (S.2) that is distinguished from its predecessor by the numerous small carbon flecks and the few cobbles scattered through it. In addition to the aforementioned pieces of carbon the artifacts recovered from this level point to a human presence here during TS.2.

#### Time Span 3

The core of Str. 79-3-3<sup>rd</sup> consists of two sequentially introduced earthen fill units. Unit 1, covering S.2 by 0.4-0.53m, consists of a light brown clay in which are embedded carbon flecks and pockets of fine-textured, hard-packed yellow soil and fine-textured, bright yellow sand. Capping this fill by 0.23-0.35m is U.2, which is identical to S.2. The platform created by the deposition of these fill units stood approximately 0.8m tall.

#### Time Span 3

A gritty, orange-brown clay (U.3) covers U.2 by 0.25-0.33m and serves as the foundation for a 0.07m-thick white plaster floor (U.4). Unit 4 was only recorded in the west trench wall and may be part of the U.12 plaster surface that was unearthed northeast of Str. 79-6-1<sup>st</sup>, roughly 6m to the west. Associated with U.4 were three stone walls (U.5-7) that are 0.2-0.38m tall and which define the east, north, and west sides of an earthen-floored room that may have been open to the south. This compartment's interior encompasses 0.5m north-south by 1.05m east west and is aligned approximately 73 degrees. Units 5-7 are made of cobbles set in a mud mortar. At this point in its history Str. 79-3-2<sup>nd</sup> stood about 1.17m tall.

#### Time Span 4

Unit 8, a light brown clay, caps the U.4 floor, blanketing it by 0.28-0.36m. This fill may be equivalent to the soils that covered remnants of plaster floors recorded near Strs. 79-1-1<sup>st</sup>, 79-5-1<sup>st</sup>, and 79-6-1<sup>st</sup> and atop which the final versions of these buildings were raised. If so, Str. 79-3-1<sup>st</sup> would have stood ca. 1.47m high by the conclusion of TS.4

#### Time Span 5

After its abandonment, Str. 79-3-1<sup>st</sup> was covered by 0.33-0.39m of a dark brown soil (S.1). No debris that might have fallen from the surrounding buildings was found here.