

1985

## PSB OP 300 Excavation Report

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## Site 300

Site 300 is located at the northern edge of the Tenco pocket, 100m northeast and north of Sites 301 and 302, respectively. The Quebrada Aguacate/Zapote lies approximately 50m south of the settlement, the Rio Ulua runs ca. 375m to the west. Site 300 consists of 19 surface-visible buildings; three very large platforms (Str. 300-1, 300-7, and 300-13) set in a rough north-south line and 16 modest constructions raised on top of these edifices. Prior to excavation, we thought that the latter buildings dated to a different span than did the edifices over which they were built. Digging here during the 1985 field season, directed by Julie Benyo, was intended in part to test this proposition. Overall, these investigations resulted in the clearing of ca. 76m<sup>2</sup> in the course of which Strs. 300-1, 300-3, and 300-6 were excavated.

### Structure 300-3

Structure 300-3 is situated atop Str. 300-1, 7m southeast of Str. 300-6. Work here began with the digging of a 1x26m trench that ran northeast-southwest (Subop. 300B). Suboperation 300B exposed the east flank of Str. 300-1 and intersected Str. 300-3 near its center. An additional trench (Subop. 300F; 6.5m<sup>2</sup> cleared) was dug against Str. 300-3-1st's south side to expose this flank and the clay oven (U.9) buried by the platform's southeast corner. A total of 32.5m<sup>2</sup> was cleared here, digging being carried down to maximum depths of 1m and 2m within and outside Str. 300-3, respectively. Two major occupation phases and an equal number of renovations of Str. 300-3 were recorded in the course of this work.

### Excavation Lots

<u>Lot</u>	<u>Contents</u>	<u>Context</u>	<u>Time Span/Date</u>
300B/1	975 sherds, 2 censers, 3 shells, 17 lithics, 5 obsidian pieces	Terminal Debris (Secondary)	4/LCL
300B/2	283 sherds, 1 candelero fragment, 1 censer, 12 jute shells, 3 obsidian pieces, 1 shell, 2 bajareque fragments	Fill (Str.300-1)/Terminal Debris	4/
300B/3	190 sherds, 1 metate fragment	Terminal Debris (Secondary)	4/LCL
300B/4	4 sherds	Fill	4/
300B/5	20 sherds	Terminal Debris (Secondary)	4/
300B/6	unprocessed (few sherds, obsidian, 1 obsidian projectile	Terminal Debris (Secondary)	4/LCL,EPC?

point)

300B/7	190 sherds, 5 bajareque pieces	Terminal Debris (Secondary)	4/LPrecl, ECL?
300B/8	39 sherds, 1 censer, 1 mano fragment, lithics, 1 green obsidian blade	Fill	4/LCL,EPC?
300B/9	130 sherds, 2 obsidian pieces, 7 lithics	Fill (Str. 300-1)/Terminal Debris	4/LCL, EPC
300B/10	16 sherds, 1 figurine	Fill (Str. 300-1)	
300B/11	unprocessed (few sherds)	Fill (Str. 300-1)	
300B/12	1 sherd	Fill (Str. 300-1)	
300B/13	unprocessed (few sherds, 1 obsidian flake, bajareque)	Terminal Debris (Secondary)	4/
300B/14	empty	Fill (Str. 300-1)	
300B/15	190 sherds, 1 censer, 5 obsidian pieces, 7 lithics	Fill	4/
300B/16	85 sherds	Fill	4/
300B/17	15 sherds	Fill	4/
300F/1	250 sherds, 1 stone smoother our obsidian pieces, 6 bajareque fragments	Terminal Debris (Secondary)	4/
300F/2	unprocessed (sherds, obsidian)	Fill (Str. 300-1)	
300F/3	202 sherds, 1 bone, 8 bajareque fragments	Fill	4/ECL, LCL
300F/4	unprocessed (few sherds)	Fill	4/
300F/5	395 sherds (221 with burnt deposits), 1 candelero fragment, 16 shells, 10 jute shells, 1 metate fragment	Midden	2/ECL, LCL

300F/6	unprocessed (few sherds)	Fill (Str. 300-1)	
300F/7	7 sherds	Fill (Str. 300-1)	LCL?

### Time Spans

Time	Construction				
<u>Span</u>	<u>Phase</u>	<u>Units</u>	<u>Strata</u>	<u>Features</u>	<u>Date(s)</u>
1	-	U.9	-	-	LCL
2	-	-	-	F.1	LCL
3	Str. 300-3-1st	U.1, 3, 4, 6-8	-	-	LCL
4	Str. 300-3-1 <sup>st</sup>	U. 2, 5, 10	-	-	LCL
5	-	-	S.2	F.2	

Note: The fill units predating the erection of Str. 300-3 pertain to Str. 300-1 and are discussed under the latter's heading.

### Time Span 1

The first activity attested to in the vicinity of Str. 300-3 was the construction of a circular pit dug into Str. 300-1's earthen fill and measuring 1.67m in diameter and 1.2m deep (U.9). Unit 9 was uncovered off Str. 300-3-1st's south side where it was buried by architecture dating to TS.3 (U.1 and 7). Its walls are of fired earth, 0.06m thick, and are nearly vertical for 1.05m until they curve gently in to join the pit's concave base. The upper portion of U.9 may have been truncated during the building of Str. 300-3-1<sup>st</sup>. Unit 9 seems to have functioned as an oven (if the firing of its walls was a result of use) or could have served as a storage pit, its perimeter intentionally burned to enhance the declivity's impermeability.

### Time Span 2

Whatever its original use(s), U.9 was eventually filled in with a light brown soil containing numerous artifacts (F.1). Feature 1 most likely represents trash, consisting almost exclusively of pottery sherds. That 56% of these fragments had burnt organic materials encrusted on their interiors suggests that the containers from which many of the sherds derived had been used in cooking.

### Time Span 3

The construction of Str. 300-3-1<sup>st</sup>'s south flank over U.9 strongly argues that the former's appearance post-dates termination of the latter element, though by how long is hard to say. Construction of Str. 300-3-1<sup>st</sup> apparently began with the excavations that removed about 0.44m of Str. 300-1-1<sup>st</sup>'s uppermost fill (U.1) from the immediate environs of the later platform, up to the earlier edifice's east edge. This red-brown clay was replaced with a distinctive dark brown clay (U.6) that extends from the western cut into Str. 300-1-1<sup>st</sup> fill for 2.44m eastward. Unit 6 is 0.44m thick, rests directly atop the penultimate fill layer of Str. 300-1-1<sup>st</sup> (U.3), and contains a few scattered, small cobbles. Unit 6 is retained on the east by a sizable stone facing (U.1) that is 0.53m tall by 0.42m wide and

intrudes 0.03m into underlying U.3 of Str. 300-1-2<sup>nd</sup>. The western perimeter of Str. 300-3-1<sup>st</sup> is delimited by a much less substantial stone wall (U.3). Unit 3 is one stone high (0.17m) and wide (0.33m) and sits on the western margin of the U.6 fill. It appears that there was no effort made to create on the west a retaining wall on the scale of U.1, most likely because the U.6 fill was not exposed to a significant threat of erosion here. Rather, U.1 of Str. 300-1-1<sup>st</sup> was probably left in place west of the U.6 excavation. In that case, U.3 served not so much to retain the U.6 hearting but as a wall that formally marked Str. 300-3-1<sup>st</sup>'s western margin and supported the superstructure's perishable upper walls. If this was the case, then Str. 300-3-1<sup>st</sup> rose 0.5m tall on the east but was flush with Str. 300-1-1<sup>st</sup>'s final summit level on the west.

The situation along the building's south side, as it is revealed in Subop. 300F, is less clear. This flank is marked by U.7, a cobble wall that resembles U.3 in both its low height and narrow width. Unit 7 runs past, and is not integrated with, the much more substantial U.1, which here stands ca. 1m tall and extends an estimated 0.5m below U.7's base. These relations suggest that: U.1 may have originally stood taller than it was preserved in Subop. 300B; and, that it predates the construction of U.7 and, most likely, U.8. The latter is a comparably low wall that intersects U.7 at its southeast corner and was traced for 0.5m to the north before we lost all signs of it. Unit 8 does not line up with constructions exposed in Str. 300-3-1<sup>st</sup>'s center (within Subop. 300B) and its architectural significance is unknown.

Structure 300-3-1<sup>st</sup>'s earthen-floored summit measures 2.7m wide east-west and supported a cobble wall (U.4) standing a preserved 0.12m tall by 0.6m wide. Unit 4 may have fronted a low shelf that was 0.78m wide east-west and was built against the superstructure's western wall. This putative shelf faced east towards the remainder of the superstructure that measures 1.32m across.

Overall, by the end of TS.3, Str. 300-3-1<sup>st</sup> was an earth-filled construction that rose 0.5m or more on the east, was built flush with the summit of earlier Str. 300-1-1<sup>st</sup> on the west and, probably, south, measured 2.7m across east-west, and was aligned roughly 1 degree. The 2.7m-wide earthen-floored summit may have contained one room against the west wall of which was raised a 0.12m-tall by 0.78m-wide stone-faced shelf. This compartment measured 2.1m east-west. All walls and facings were made of river cobbles set in a mud mortar. There was some effort expended in directing the flatter sides of these rocks outwards.

#### Time Span 4

During this span Str. 300-3-1<sup>st</sup> was expanded 2.8m eastward by the construction of U.2 and 5. Unit 5 is a fill composed of a dense concentration of small to medium-size cobbles packed against and covering U.1's east face. This hearting is retained, in turn, by a 0.5m high cobble facing (U.2) on the east. U.5 rests directly on Str. 300-1-2<sup>nd</sup>'s fill (U.3) for 1.1m east of U.1. From that point eastward, however, U.3 drops an estimated 0.16m over 1.84m. The space between Str. 300-1-2<sup>nd</sup>'s U.3 and Str. 300-3-1<sup>st</sup>'s U.5 is filled with a brown soil largely free of inclusions (U.10). Though there is no formal retaining wall on the east for U.10, it does appear that this earth was introduced to level out the surface on which U.2 and 5 were raised. It is possible that U.10 was held in place on the east by one of the terraces thought to have faced Str. 300-1-1<sup>st</sup>'s east flank (see the discussion of F.2 under TS.5).

The above changes greatly expanded Str. 300-3-1<sup>st</sup>'s east-west dimensions. The building now measured 5.5m wide along this axis. In other respects, however, Str. 300-3-1<sup>st</sup> remained much the same

as it had been during TS.3. Unit 2 was made of unmodified river cobbles set in a mud mortar, the flatter aspects of its rocks were directed outwards.

#### Time Span 5

Following Str. 300-3-1<sup>st</sup>'s abandonment as much as 0.32m of a brown soil (S.2) was deposited against and over all but the uppermost parts of Str. 300-3-1<sup>st</sup>. Embedded in S.2 was a moderately dense concentration of rocks that likely fell from final phase architecture (F.2). As was the case for Str. 300-6-1<sup>st</sup>, most of these stones were found littering the slope of Str. 300-1-1<sup>st</sup>. The quantity of the debris that makes up F.2 and its dispersal over ca. 15m downslope and away from Str. 300-3-1<sup>st</sup> strongly suggests that most of these stones did not derive from the latter edifice. More likely, F.2 contains rocks that were originally used sometime during TS.1-4 to face the earthen flanks of Str. 300-1-1<sup>st</sup>, possibly in a series of terraces. Clear evidence of such putative construction was lacking, however.

#### Structure 300-6

Structure 300-6 is on the summit of Str. 300-1, 7m northwest of Str. 300-3. Work here began with the digging of a 1x29m trench that ran north-south (Subop. 300C, 300D, 300G) and cut across the platform's approximate center. This excavation extended down Str. 300-1's north flank to its base. Subsequent excavations (all grouped in Subop. 300E) extended off this central trench to uncover Str. 300-6-1<sup>st</sup>'s south, west, and part of its north basal facings. In all, 43.7m<sup>2</sup> was cleared here, digging proceeding to maximum depths of 1.45m and 0.95m below modern ground surface outside and within Str. 300-6's boundaries. Two major construction phases were identified in the course of this work.

#### Excavation Lots

<u>Lot</u>	<u>Contents</u>	<u>Context</u>	<u>Time Span/Date</u>
300C/1	114 sherds, 6 shells, 3 obsidian pieces, 1 censer	Terminal Debris (Secondary)	2/
300C/2	unprocessed (sherds, lithics, 1 censer)	Terminal Debris (Secondary)	2/
300C/3	60 sherds, 2 bajareque pieces	Terminal Debris (Secondary)	2/
300C/4	4 sherds, 1 censer, 25 lithics, 1 projectile point (jasper?)	Terminal Debris (Secondary)	2/
300C/5	49 sherds, lithics, obsidian	Terminal Debris Secondary	2/
300C/6	unprocessed (sherds, lithics, bajareque)	Terminal Debris (Secondary)	2/
300C/7	60 sherds, 3 bajareque pieces, lithics, obsidian	Terminal Debris (Secondary)	2/
300C/8	NA		

300C/9	15 sherds, 5 lithics	Terminal Debris (Secondary)	2/
300C/10	28 sherds, 1 obsidian flake	Mix, Terminal Debris and Str. 300-1 Fill	2/
300C/11	83 sherds, 2 bajareque, obsidian	Fill	2/
300C/12	70 sherds, 2 shells	Fill	2/
300C/13	18 sherds, 2 obsidian flakes	Fill, Strs. 300-6-2 <sup>nd</sup> /300-1	1/
300C/14	unprocessed (sherds, obsidian)	Fill, Strs. 300-6-1 <sup>st</sup> /300-1	2/
300C/15	17 sherds, 4 bajareque pieces, 1 reconstructable bowl, 1 burial (SD 2)	Fill, Strs. 300-6-2 <sup>nd</sup> /300-1	1/LCL
300C/16	empty	Fill, Strs. 300-6-2 <sup>nd</sup> /300-1	1/
300D/1	543 sherds, 1 candelero, 2 bajareque pieces	Terminal Debris (Secondary)	2/
300D/2	412 sherds, 11 bajareque pieces, 1 mano fragment, lithics	Fill, Str. 300-1	
300D/3	275 sherds, 1 obsidian piece, 1 lithic	Terminal Debris (Secondary)?	2/
300D/4	1 mano fragment	Terminal Debris (Secondary)?	2/
300E/1	70 sherds, obsidian, lithics	Terminal Debris (Secondary)	2/
300E/2	38 sherds, 18 lithics	Terminal Debris (Secondary)	2/
300E/3	16 sherds, 1 censer, lithics	Terminal Debris (Secondary)	2/
300E/4	8 sherds, obsidian	Terminal Debris (Secondary)	2/
300E/5	5 sherds, 1 piece of glass, obsidian, other lithics	Terminal Debris (Secondary)	2/
300E/6	65 sherds, obsidian, 1 non- obsidian projectile point, other lithics	Terminal Debris (Secondary)	2/

300G/1 unprocessed (sherds)	Terminal Debris (Secondary)	2/
300G/2 62 sherds, obsidian, lithics	Terminal Debris/Fill, Str.	
300-1		
300G/3 2 reconstructable vessels, 1 clay bead, 3 sherds (lid?), 1 obsidian chip, 4 sherds	SD 1	2/LCL
300G/4 5 sherds	Fill, Str. 300-1	
300G/5 16 sherds, 1 jute shell, 1 bajareque fragment, several non-obsidian lithics	Fill, Str. 300-1	

### Time Spans

Time	Construction				
<u>Span</u>	<u>Phase</u>	<u>Units</u>	<u>Strata</u>	<u>Features</u>	<u>Date(s)</u>
1	Str. 300-6-2 <sup>nd</sup>	U.1-3	-	SD. 2	LCL
2	Str. 300-6-1 <sup>st</sup>	U.4-11	-	SD. 1	LCL
3	-	-	S.2	F.1	

Note: The fill units predating the erection of Str. 300-6-2<sup>nd</sup> pertain to Str. 300-1 and are discussed under the latter's heading.

### Time Span 1

Structure 300-6-2<sup>nd</sup> was likely a low platform bounded by cobble facings on the north and south (U.1 and 2, respectively). Unit 1, the northern retaining wall, is preserved to 0.23m high and consists of a single course of unmodified cobbles. These rocks are fully embedded in the red-brown clay that serves as the uppermost fill unit in this portion of Str. 300-1-1<sup>st</sup>'s summit (U.1). Unit 2, Str. 300-6-2<sup>nd</sup>'s southern facing, is 0.2m high, consists of two rows of cobbles set on the same horizontal plane, and projects 0.12m above the red-brown clay fill (pertaining to Str. 300-1-1<sup>st</sup>'s U.1) into which its base is set. Though the evidence is far from clear, we tentatively infer that the builders of Str. 300-6-2<sup>nd</sup> took advantage of the rising slope of Str. 300-1-1<sup>st</sup>'s U.1 fill, ascending 0.3m over 1.2m south-to-north here, to construct their platform. In doing so, they set its bordering walls at varying depths in this fill to: stabilize it; provide support for the superstructure's perishable upper walls; and, delimit formally the building's northern and southern perimeters. Str. 300-6-1<sup>st</sup>'s summit supported at least one cobble wall (U.3) that divided the earthen floored surface into northern and southern enclosures. Unit 3 is 0.27m wide and projects 0.15m above the putative summit floor (like U.1, U.3 is one stone tall and wide). The northern enclosure measures 1.35m across, its southern analogue encompassing 2.18m.

Located 0.14m below Str 300-6-2<sup>nd</sup>'s U.1, 0.12m into a sandy light brown soil that served as part of Str. 300-1-2<sup>nd</sup>'s fill (U.3), is SD. 2. Special Deposit 2 is an extended burial of a sub-adult oriented roughly 143 degrees with the head to the southeast. A reconstructable pottery bowl was placed over the individual's right knee. The bones were in poor condition, only the larger examples surviving. Given SD. 2's stratigraphic location directly beneath U.1 we infer that this individual was interred immediately before the erection of Str. 300-6-2<sup>nd</sup>, possibly dedicatory to that building phase.

Overall, Str. 300-6-2<sup>nd</sup> measures 3.78m north-south, stood at least 0.12m tall on the south (it may have been flush with the top of Str. 300-1-1<sup>st</sup> on the north), and was aligned approximately due east-west. The platform's earthen-floored summit was divided into at least two rooms set in a north-south line and divided by a cobble foundation. The northern compartment measures 1.35m across, the southern enclosure encompassing 2.18m. An extended, on-the-back sub-adult burial was found directly beneath the northern basal facing accompanied by a single ceramic bowl. This interment seems to have immediately preceded the raising of Str. 300-6-2<sup>nd</sup> and might have been dedicatory to it. Units 1-3 were made with river cobbles set in a mud mortar. Some effort was apparently invested in directing their flatter faces outwards.

### Time Span 2

Structure 300-6-1<sup>st</sup> is fronted on the south by two stone-faced terraces (U.6 and 7). Unit 7, the basal riser, is 0.24m tall by 0.6m wide and gives way on the north to U.6. The latter rises an estimated 0.24m above U.7's tread and extends 1.63m northward. Unit 7's surface consists almost entirely of the upper portions of the facing's basal stones whereas U.6's tread seems to have consisted of earth. It is unclear how U.6 and 7 relate to the remainder of Str. 300-6-1<sup>st</sup>. As only a 1m-wide swath of U.6 and 7 was exposed we are uncertain if these risers enveloped Str. 300-6-1<sup>st</sup>'s core platform (defined by U.4, 5, 9, and 10) or were solely located on the building's south side. As was the case with Str. 300-6-2<sup>nd</sup>, Str. 300-6-1<sup>st</sup> is built over a south-to-north rise in Str. 300-1-1<sup>st</sup>'s uppermost fill (U.1); U.1 rises 0.79m over 3.3m here. Units 6 and 7 could have been restricted to the southern ascent, stabilizing this side of Str. 300-6-1<sup>st</sup>.

Structure 300-6-1<sup>st</sup>'s core platform is bounded by cobble facings (U.4, 5, 9, and 10). The most completely exposed of these constructions, the northern and southern basal walls, U.4 and 5, are 0.2m and 0.35m high. Unit 5, on the south, is somewhat taller in part because it is built over the south-to-north rise in Str. 300-1-1<sup>st</sup> fill (U.1). The earthen-floored summit measures 5.3m north-south. On the western edge of that space is a low stone wall (U.11) at least 0.3m wide that was exposed running 1.8m north-south, stopping 2m north of U.5, the core's southern basal facing. Unit 11 may mark a room divider, the space between it and U.5 providing an ample passageway between eastern and western compartments.

As was the case for Str. 300-6-2<sup>nd</sup>, the builders of Str. 300-6-1<sup>st</sup> took advantage of Str. 300-1-1<sup>st</sup>'s U.1 fill to reduce the workload involved in raising their platform. Unlike their predecessors, however, some fill (U.8) had to be introduced to raise the structure's height and expand its areal extent. Unit 8 consists of a brown soil in which only a few small rocks are suspended, and it directly overlies the distinctive red-brown clay of Str. 300-1-1<sup>st</sup>'s U.1. Unit 8 also underlies and backs the U.6 and 7 terraces on Str. 300-6-1<sup>st</sup>'s south side.

Special Deposit 1 is a collection of two complete, small jars that were found together 1.5-1.9m south of the basal southern terrace (U.7). These vessels were set in a northwest-southeast line 0.14m apart and rested 0.13-0.17m below the uncovered base of U.5, while the rims of these containers are 0.01-0.05m below that bottom of that facing. Though they were found extending 0.03-0.07m into fill associated with Str. 300-1-1<sup>st</sup> (U.12) it seems likely that SD.1 was put in place at about the same time as the erection of Str. 300-6-1<sup>st</sup>. These vessels were probably interred as part of events celebrating the dedication of that edifice.

By the conclusion of TS.2, Str. 300-6-1<sup>st</sup>'s earth-filled and –surfaced core platform stood 0.2-0.35m high, measured 5.3m on a side, and was oriented roughly 358 degrees. The building's south flank was ascended by two terraces each 0.24m high and measuring 0.6m and 1.63m wide (from south to north). These ascents may have been limited to Str. 300-6-1<sup>st</sup>'s south side where they possibly stabilized soil overlying the south-to-north rise of the underlying Str. 300-1-1<sup>st</sup> fill (U.1). The platform's summit seemingly supported two earthen-floored rooms set in an east-west line and separated by a low cobble foundation. Insufficient space atop Str. 300-6-1<sup>st</sup> was cleared to determine the dimensions of these rooms with certainty though we infer that the eastern compartment covered 3.75x5.1m while its western counterpart encompassed 1.2x5.1m. A 2m-wide door may have provided passage between these enclosures. An apparent dedicatory deposit of two small ceramic jars was buried 1.5-1.9m south of Str. 300-6-1<sup>st</sup>'s southern basal terrace. All facings and walls raised during TS.2 were fashioned of cobbles set in a mud mortar. The flatter aspects of these rocks were consistently directed outwards. At least one large stone that made up the outer (southern) line of U.7's terrace facing seems to have been roughly shaped to create a flat outer aspect. In general, however, the rocks used to fashion Str. 300-6-1<sup>st</sup> were not obviously modified in this manner.

### Time Span 3

Following Str. 300-6-1<sup>st</sup>'s abandonment, as much as 0.33m of a brown soil (S.2) was laid down around and over all but the uppermost parts of TS.2 construction. A moderately dense concentration of rocks fallen from Str. 300-6-1<sup>st</sup> (F.1) were found primarily on the building's north side where they apparently cascaded down the north slope of Str. 300-1-1<sup>st</sup>; tumbled debris was much rarer on the south. There is a great deal of this detritus; it extends for at least 18.2m north of Str. 300-6-1<sup>st</sup>'s northern edge (U.4). Given the modest dimensions of that edifice, it seems unlikely that F.1 derived solely, or primarily, from Str. 300-6-1<sup>st</sup>. More plausibly, a series of cobble terraces were built into the steeply sloping north face of Str. 300-1-1<sup>st</sup> to preserve this flank by slowing erosion down its precipitous sides. No clear evidence of these putative terraces survived within the area we investigated but the former existence of such retaining walls seems likely.

### Structure 300-1

Structure 301-1 is the southernmost member of the three large platforms that form a rough north-south line at Site 300. This edifice is 60m south of Str. 300-7. Limited portions of Str. 300-1's east and north sides were exposed in the course of excavation Subop. 300B, C, D, and G, the 1m-wide trenches dug across Strs. 300-3 and 300-6 (described above). Digging was also pursued up to 2m deep into the platform's core at its summit. Very few clear architectural features were recognized in the course of this work and none were followed out beyond the limits of the excavations described thus far for the settlement. A total of five construction stages were defined in the course of this research.

Excavation Lots

<u>Lot</u>	<u>Contents</u>	<u>Context</u>	<u>Time Span/Date</u>
300B/2	283 sherds, 1 candelero fragment, 1 censer, 12 jute shells, 3 obsidian pieces, 1 shell, 2 bajareque fragments	Fill (Str.300-1-1 <sup>st</sup> )/Terminal Debris (Str. 300-6-1 <sup>st</sup> )	6/LCL?
300B/9	130 sherds, 2 obsidian pieces, 7 other lithics	Fill (Str. 300-1-1 <sup>st</sup> )/Terminal Debris (Str. 300-6-1 <sup>st</sup> )	6/LCL, EPC
300B/10	16 sherds, 1 figurine	Fill (Str. 300-1-1 <sup>st</sup> )	6/LCL?
300B/11	unprocessed (few sherds)	Fill (Str. 300-1-1 <sup>st</sup> )	6/
300B/12	1 sherd	Fill (Str. 300-1-1 <sup>st</sup> )	6/
300B/14	empty	Fill (Str. 300-1-1 <sup>st</sup> )	2-5/
300F/2	unprocessed (sherds, obsidian)	Fill (Str. 300-1-1 <sup>st</sup> )	5/
300C/10	28 sherds, 1 obsidian flake	Mix, Terminal Debris and Str. 300-1 Fill	6/
300C/13	18 sherds, 2 obsidian flakes	Fill, Strs. 300-6-2 <sup>nd</sup> /300-1	6/
300C/14	unprocessed (sherds, obsidian)	Fill, Strs. 300-6-1 <sup>st</sup> /300-1	5-6/
300C/15	17 sherds, 4 bajareque Pieces, 1 reconstructable bowl, 1 burial (SD 2)	Fill, Strs. 300-6-2 <sup>nd</sup> /300-1	5, 6/LCL
300C/16	empty	Fill, Strs. 300-6-2 <sup>nd</sup> /300-1	6/
300D/2	412 sherds, 11 bajareque pieces, 1 mano fragment, lithics	Fill, Str. 300-1	6/
300G/2	62 sherds, obsidian, Other lithics	Terminal Debris/Fill, Str. 300-1	6/LCL?

300G/4 5 sherds	Fill, Str. 300-1	6/
300G/5 16 sherds, 1 jute shell, 1 bajareque fragment, several other lithics	Fill, Str. 300-1-1 <sup>st</sup>	5, 6/

### Time Spans

Time	Construction				
<u>Span</u>	<u>Phase</u>	<u>Units</u>	<u>Strata</u>	<u>Features</u>	<u>Date(s)</u>
1	-	-	S.1	-	
2	Str. 300-1-5 <sup>th</sup>	U.8, 9	-	-	Precl
3	Str. 300-1-4 <sup>th</sup>	U.6, 7	-	-	Precl
4	Str. 300-1-3 <sup>rd</sup>	U.4, 5	-	-	Precl
5	Str. 300-1-2 <sup>nd</sup>	U.2, 3, 11	-	-	Precl
6	Str. 300-1-1 <sup>st</sup>	U.1, 10, 12	-	-	Precl
7	-	U.13	S.2	F.3	

### Time Span 1

Deposition of at least 0.28m of light brown clay containing a dispersed collection of very small stones (S.1) occurred during this interval (S.1's base was not encountered during excavations). No artifacts were recovered from S.1, suggesting the absence of a significant human presence in the immediate area when this soil was being deposited. Stratum 1 was only exposed at the base of Subop. 300B, off Str. 300-1's east flank. We presume that it underlay all subsequent construction here because of its lack of included cultural material and stratigraphic position below the projected level of at least TS.6 construction (U.10 in this case).

### Time Span 2

What we can surmise of Str. 300-1's construction history is based primarily on the results of probes dug into the platform's summit as part of Subops. 300B and 300G. The test conducted at the west end of Subop. 300B is the deeper of the two (2m as opposed to 1.45m below modern ground surface for Subop. 300G) and serves as the basis for inferring the nature of the earliest building phases.

Structure 300-1-5<sup>th</sup> was exposed over an area measuring 1x1.4m and is represented here by a fill composed of a light brown sand devoid of stones and cultural materials, that is minimally 0.34m thick (U.9; its base was not revealed). Unit 9, in turn, is capped by a 0.02m-thick level of soft white pebbles set in sand (U.8). Unit 8 appears to have served as a formal floor for what we presume was Str. 300-1-5<sup>th</sup>'s summit. If the top of S.1 revealed in Subop. 300B to the east represents the ground surface on which this version of the platform was raised, Str. 300-1-5<sup>th</sup> would have stood ca. 3.82m tall.

### Time Span 3

The summit of Str. 300-1-5<sup>th</sup> was buried by 0.35m of light brown sand devoid of stones and artifacts (U.7). This fill, in turn, was capped by a 0.04m-thick level of sand mixed with ash and containing numerous small pebbles (U.6). Unit 6 closely resembles U.8, both seemingly representing summit floors for their respective versions of Str. 300-1. Unit 8 was exposed over an area measuring 1x2.8m at the western end of Subop.300B. By the conclusion of TS.3, Str, 300-1-4<sup>th</sup> was seemingly an earthen platform standing ca. 4.21m high.

#### Time Span 4

In the next building phase Str. 300-1-4<sup>th</sup>'s summit was covered by 0.13m of light brown sand devoid of stones and cultural material (U.5). This fill was then capped by a 0.04m-thick level of sand containing many small pebbles (U.4). Unit 4 resembles its predecessors U.6 and 8 in appearance and, we presume, in function; i.e., serving as a newly refurbished summit floor. This floor was exposed in an area covering 1x2.8m at Subop. 300B's western end. Structure 300-1-3<sup>rd</sup>, by the end of TS.4, was an earthen platform that now loomed 4.38m above the presumed ancient ground level.

#### Time Span 5

The summit of Str. 300-1-3<sup>rd</sup> was blanketed by the addition of 0.36-0.41m of a light brown, culturally sterile, stone-free soil (U.3). Unit 3 was exposed in several areas. It appeared as the lowest fill deposit uncovered in Subop. 300G, 8m to the northwest of the deep probe in Subop. 300B, where its top is 0.17m lower than it is in Subop. 300B. Unit 3 was also uncovered further east in Subop. 300B. It runs more-or-less even for 5.6m at which point U.3 starts sloping down to the east, dropping 1.58m over 6.9m in this direction. Unit 3 was not encountered in clearings conducted further downslope but we did not dig deeply enough in these areas to test for its existence. Most likely, U.3 continued its relatively regular eastward descent at depths we did not plumb in our investigations. Within Subop. 300C and G, U.3 rises 1.07m over 5m from south to north after which it levels off for 2.6m before dropping 0.27m over 1.3m northwards. At that point we lost all signs of U.3 though it likely continued its northward descent beyond the reach of our excavations. A lens of gravel embedded in a sandy clay matrix (U.11) was found extending for 1.07m north-south at the point where U.3's south-to-north ascent levels out. U.11 is maximally 0.11m thick and tails out on the north and south. Most likely this gravel deposit is a distinctive fill lens and not part of a floor or other summit construction.

Capping U.3 as it is exposed in Subop. 300B is a moderately dense concentration of pebbles and small cobbles set in a red-brown clay (U.2). Unit 2 is about 0.05m thick and seems to have been the summit floor for Str. 300-1-2<sup>nd</sup>. This surface is not as well preserved as U.4, 6, and 8, as though it had been left exposed for longer periods than its antecedents before its burial by the next fill level. Unit 2 was tentatively traced within Subop. 300B over U.3's full east-west extent, even topping U.3 on its eastward descent. Unit 2 was not found overlying U.3 in Subop. 300C and G.

The overall form of Str. 300-1-2<sup>nd</sup> is hard to reconstruct from the few places where it appears in our excavations. This earthen filled platform apparently had a relatively flat summit that gave way, at least on the east, to a sloping surface canted at very roughly 20 degrees from horizontal. The building's summit was floored on the south with a layer of small stones, this surface continuing to cover the exposed portion of the eastern sloping zone. No such surfacing was recorded 8m north of the Subop. 300B summit exposure. Here, Str. 300-1-2<sup>nd</sup> may have supported a 1.07m-high platform on the north edge of the main structure's top level. The gradually ascending south flank of the putative

superstructure gives way to a summit measuring 2.6m-wide north-south. Overall, the latter construction encompasses an estimated 5.8m across north-south. Excluding the aforementioned summit platform, Str. 300-1-2<sup>nd</sup> stood approximately 4.83m tall by the conclusion of TS.5.

#### Time Span 6

Structure 300-1-1<sup>st</sup> is represented by a distinctive red-brown clay fill (U.1) that blankets all earlier building efforts. Unit 1 covers Str. 300-1-2<sup>nd</sup>'s summit floor (U.2) in Subop. 300B to a thickness of 0.49m and runs flat for 2.77m east of the west trench margin where it encounters U.3, the western perimeter wall of Str. 300-3-1<sup>st</sup>. As noted in the discussion of that building, it seems that U.1 was dug out down to underlying U.2 and 3 in the process constructing Str. 300-3-1<sup>st</sup>. The distinctive red-brown clay was next encountered 6.63m to the east where it is designated as U.10. This distinction was made because we could not trace U.1 continuously over the area occupied by Str. 300-3-1<sup>st</sup> though we are convinced that U.10 is the eastward continuation of U.1. Unit 10 descends 3.63m without obvious breaks over 9.8m west-to-east. Like its predecessor (U.3), the slope of which it closely mimics (at ca. 20 degrees off horizontal), U.10 seems to define the eastern flank of the Str. 300-1-1<sup>st</sup> platform.

The situation on the north (as uncovered in Subop. 300C, D, and G) parallels that seen in this area during TS.5. In this case, U.1's top is 0.27m lower than its manifestation in Subop. 300B. This difference in elevations may be due to the introduction of a 0.12-0.16m-thick layer of small stones and gravel set in clay (U.12) that caps U.1. Unit 12 retains a fairly even upper surface over the 1x2m (north-south) it was revealed in Subop. 300G and may be part of a floor introduced to formalize part of Str. 300-1-1<sup>st</sup>'s northern summit. No sign of any flooring was noted to the south in Subop. 300B nor did it reappear to the north in exposures of U.1 made in Subop. 300C and 300D.

In the latter area, as was the case during TS.5, a low earthen platform was apparently erected on the edge of Str 300-1-1<sup>st</sup>'s northern summit. In this case, U.1 rises 1.04m over 5m south to north before leveling off for ca. 3.6m. The descent on the north is fairly steep, dropping ca. 6.1m over 16.9m south-to-north. The angle of the slope is roughly 20 degrees off horizontal, the same rate of descent noted for U.10 in Subop. 300B. Stratum 1, the top of which may mark the ground surface when Str. 300-1-1<sup>st</sup> was in use, was not found north of the platform within Subop. 300D. Instead, at least 0.2m of the red-brown clay that coats Str. 300-1-1<sup>st</sup>'s north flank (designated here U.10) accumulated next to the building. It is unclear if this clay collected here by natural means or if it represents run-off from Str. 300-1-1<sup>st</sup>.

We estimate that Str. 300-1-1<sup>st</sup> now stood an estimated 5.32m high (exclusive of the platform built on its north summit edge) and was capped and surfaced on its steeply sloping sides by a red-brown clay largely free of stone inclusions. A stone floor graced an undetermined portion of the building's northern summit. This area also supported a ca. 1.04m-high earthen platform that encompasses 7.6m north-south and supported a summit measuring roughly 3.6m across in the same direction.

#### Time Span 7

As noted in discussions of Strs. 300-3 and 300-6, these buildings and, most likely, their near neighbors were raised atop Str. 300-1-1<sup>st</sup> well after the latter had been abandoned. The post-depositional histories of those buildings are described above. We wish simply to note briefly some of these late events that pertain specifically to Str. 300-1. Stratum 2, the brown soil grading into a humus horizon as it nears modern ground surface, accumulated to as much as 0.35m on Str. 300-1-1<sup>st</sup>'s summit

and 0.6m off its exposed sides. A stone wall (U.13) was built in relatively recent times against the platform's east flanks. Unit 13 runs roughly north-south, is 1.22m wide, and is embedded ca. 0.3m within S.2 below current ground level. Feature 3 consists of rocks likely fallen from that wall, extending 0.56m west and 0.93m east of U.13.

### Architectural Summary

Structure 300-1, in all of its known versions, was a sizable earth-filled platform that achieved its final estimated height of 5.32m through a series of at least 5 construction efforts that left as many superimposed building levels. Most of these episodes involved the deposition of 0.13-0.41m of light brown sand capped in the first four known cases with what seem to be floors composed of small rocks set in sand or, in the case of Str. 300-1-2<sup>nd</sup>, clay matrices. These floors are 0.02-0.05m thick. The last recorded construction effort (Str. 300-1-1<sup>st</sup>) saw the introduction of a radically different fill unit, 0.49m of hard-compacted red-brown clay. Unlike its predecessors, this fill contained some artifacts though other materials, such as stones, were very rare.

Structure 300-1-2<sup>nd</sup>'s and 300-1-1<sup>st</sup>'s east and north flanks apparently consisted of sloping zones canted at ca. 20 degrees from horizontal. Structure 300-1-2<sup>nd</sup>'s eastern face was possibly surfaced with a 0.04m-thick layer of small stones very similar to the floor that sealed that building's summit. There are slight hints that Str. 300-1-1<sup>st</sup>'s eastern façade was also coated with a comparably thin level of small stones but this was far from clear. Exposed portions of Str. 300-1-2<sup>nd</sup>'s and 300-1-1<sup>st</sup>'s flanks suggest that they sloped continuously from base to summit and were not broken by terrace treads.

The summits of Strs. 300-1-2<sup>nd</sup> and 300-1-1<sup>st</sup> were variably paved with floors composed of small stones set in clay. During TS.5, the southern portion of the building seemed to have received this treatment whereas in TS.6 the situation was reversed and the exposed portion of the northern summit was surfaced with a stone floor while this was not the case further south. Both Strs. 300-1-2<sup>nd</sup> and 300-1-1<sup>st</sup>, however, did support 1.04-1.07m-high earthen platforms perched on their north margins. The earlier of the two measured 5.8m across and had an earthen floored summit that encompassed 2.6m north-south. Its successor covered 7.6m north-south, its earthen summit measuring 3.6m across. These two eminences looked directly over the north flanks of their respective substructures, supported no known superstructure architecture, and were bordered on the south by gently sloping sides.

Stones of all sorts, save for small examples used in making floors and cappings for the eastern terraces, are very rare in all versions of Str. 300-1.

The known versions of Strs. 300-3 and 300-6 differ architecturally from the various recorded iterations of Str. 300-1. In each case, these later buildings are modest stone-faced platforms that were built into pre-existing constructions most of which were associated with Str. 300-1-1<sup>st</sup>. In the case of Str. 300-3-1<sup>st</sup>, the western perimeter wall was apparently set even with the surviving summit of Str. 300-1-1<sup>st</sup> whereas Str. 300-6-1<sup>st</sup> was built over the earthen platform found on Str. 300-1-1<sup>st</sup>'s north margin.

Structures 300-3 and 300-6 seem to have started out as platforms unadorned with flanking terraces (Strs. 300-3-1<sup>st</sup>, TS.1 and 300-6-2<sup>nd</sup>). These constructions are relatively modest in size, measuring 2.7-3.78m across and standing 0.12-0.5m tall on the one exposed side with elevation. Despite their small sizes, the summits of Strs. 300-3-1<sup>st</sup> (TS.3) and 300-6-2<sup>nd</sup> are divided by low stone foundations into two earthen-floored rooms measuring from 1.32-2.18m wide. Additions made to both

edifices greatly expanded their sizes, Str. 300-3-1<sup>st</sup> measuring, by TS.4, 5.5m across by 0.5m high on the east while Str. 300-6-1<sup>st</sup>'s core platform is 0.2-0.35m high by 5.3m on a side. The former's eastern summit compartment now encompassed 3.12m east-west whereas Str. 300-6-1<sup>st</sup> supported two rooms covering 19m<sup>2</sup> and 6m<sup>2</sup> on the east and west respectively.

Structure 300-6-1<sup>st</sup> was the only excavated building that had evidence of terraces. It is not clear if these low (0.24m tall) constructions were integral to the core platform (Str. 300-6-1<sup>st</sup> and, maybe, Str. 300-6-2<sup>nd</sup>) or stood apart from it. In either instance, they seem to have been built to stabilize a slope below, and south of, the core construction as well as to provide access from that side to the summit.

All three of the investigated buildings (Str. 300-3-1<sup>st</sup>, 300-6-2<sup>nd</sup>, and 300-6-1<sup>st</sup>) were aligned within two degrees of cardinal. Ritual deposits were only associated with Strs. 300-6-2<sup>nd</sup> and 300-6-1<sup>st</sup>. In the first case a burial with one ceramic bowl was seemingly dedicatory to that construction stage whereas two small pottery jars were probably interred 1.5-1.9m south of Str. 300-6-1<sup>st</sup> as parts of events involved with its erection.

The walls and facings associated with the known iterations of Strs. 300-3 and 300-6 were made of cobbles set in a mud mortar. The flatter aspects of these rocks are directed outwards. At least one stone incorporated in the southernmost terrace of Str. 300-6-1<sup>st</sup> (U.7) may have been modified to create a vertical outer face, otherwise the stones seem to have been unshaped.

The circular pit lined with burnt earth walls buried by Str. 300-3-1<sup>st</sup>'s southern facing (U.9) finds no parallel at Site 300 or elsewhere in our middle Ulua investigations. Unit 9 is 1.65m in diameter, at least 1.2m deep, and may have been an oven or used for storage.

### Chronological Summary

Structure 300-1, in all its manifestations, seemingly dates to the Preclassic. The dearth of artifacts recovered from this building's fill make it difficult to establish its construction dates. Organic samples that might be subjected to C-14 assays were also lacking. The assignment of Str. 300-1-1<sup>st</sup> through -5<sup>th</sup> to the Preclassic is, therefore, based on: its use as a base for much later construction; and, its general form, resembling the large earthen platforms that are dated to this period in surrounding areas (Baudez and Bequelin 1973; Joyce 2004; Urban et al 2002). It seems reasonable to infer that the comparably large Strs. 300-7 and 300-13 also were raised in this phase as they make up a north-south-running line of buildings of similar forms and dimensions. Structures 300-3-1<sup>st</sup>, 300-6-2<sup>nd</sup>, and 300-6-1<sup>st</sup> were built during the Late Classic. They and the other comparable buildings found atop Strs. 300-1, 300-7, and 300-13 most likely represent a late reoccupation of a site that had long been abandoned by the 7<sup>th</sup> century AD. There are hints of continued use of Str. 300-3-1<sup>st</sup> into the Early Postclassic. It is unlikely, however, that this building or the site in general supported significant occupation during this span.

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