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PSB OP 330 Excavation Report

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Site 330

Site 330 is 100m north of Site 322, 500m northeast of Site 349, and 325m south of the Quebrada Muigual. It was identified during survey as an artifact scatter that covers ca. 1,000m² and is rich in lithic debris. The settlement may have contained one ca. 0.2m-high platform and a stone wall line that did not protrude above ground level. The wall line is 1.5m northeast of the putative structure and neither wall nor edifice was excavated. Instead, digging focused on areas where artifacts were especially concentrated on ground surface. Five test trenches (10m² cleared in all), spread over 1,350m², were dug in the course of this work. All work here was directed by Thomas Melchionne.

Suboperation 330B

Suboperation 330B is a 1x2m trench oriented east-west and lying 9m east of Subop. 330C and 17m southeast of Subop. 330D. Digging here reached a maximum depth of 0.34m.

Excavation Lots

<u>Lot</u>	<u>Contents</u>	<u>Context</u>	<u>Time Span/Date</u>
330B/1	6 sherds, 15 obsidian pieces	Occupation Debris (Secondary)	2/
330B/2	empty	-	-

Time Spans

<u>Time Span</u>	<u>Construction Phase</u>	<u>Units</u>	<u>Strata</u>	<u>Features</u>	<u>Date(s)</u>
1	-	-	S.1	-	-
2	-	-	S.2	-	-

Time Span 1

The earliest activity attested to here is the deposition of at least 0.13m of a red clay (S.1; its base was not encountered). No artifacts were found in this layer, suggesting that human occupation in the area was scant, at best, when this soil was laid down.

Time Span 2

Overlying S.1 by 0.21m is a brown clay that contained artifacts (S.2). Stratum 2 is the source of the cultural materials that litter the surface of Site 330.

Suboperation 330C

Suboperation 330C is 9m west of Subop. 330B and the same distance south of Subop. 330D. This trench measures 1x2m, is oriented east-west, and was dug to a maximum depth of 0.54m below modern ground surface.

Excavation Lots

<u>Lot</u>	<u>Contents</u>	<u>Context</u>	<u>Time Span/Date</u>
330C/1	19 sherds, 23 obsidian pieces	Occupation Debris (Secondary)	2/

330C/2 empty - -

Time Spans

Time Span	Construction Phase	Units	Strata	Features	Date(s)
1	-	-	S.1	-	-
2	-	-	S.2	-	-

Time Span 1

Stratum 1, a red clay devoid of artifacts, accumulated to a thickness of at least 0.16m during TS.1 (its base lies beyond our excavation limits). Apparently there was very little, if any, human presence in the area while S.1 was being laid down.

Time Span 2

Overlying S.1 by 0.32-0.41m is a brown clay that contains cultural materials (S.2). Stratum 2 was the source of the artifacts found on ground surface in this area.

Suboperation 330D

Suboperation 330D is a 1x2m trench oriented roughly north south and lying 9m north of Subop. 330C and 17m northeast of Subop. 330B. Digging here was pursued to a maximum depth of 0.42m below modern ground surface.

Excavation Lots

Lot	Contents	Context	Time Span/Date
330D/1	14 sherds, 6 obsidian pieces	Occupation Debris (Secondary)	2/
330D/2	empty	-	-

Time Spans

Time Span	Construction Phase	Units	Strata	Features	Date(s)
1	-	-	S.1	-	-
2	-	-	S.2	-	-

Time Span 1

The red clay comprising S.1 collected to a depth of at least 0.18m during TS.1 (its base lies beyond excavation limits). Stratum 1 rises 0.12m over 1m north-to-south before leveling out for the remaining 1m it was uncovered south of that ascent. No artifacts were found in this level.

Time Span 2

Fully 0.22-0.36m of the brown clay that comprises S.2 was laid down atop S.1 during this interval. It was from S.2 that the artifacts retrieved in the course of this excavation derived.

Suboperations 330E and 330F

Suboperations 330E and 330F are 1x2m trenches aligned north-south, lying 11m from each other in an east-west line, and located ca. 23m due south of Subop. 330B and 330C, respectively. Digging in Subop. 330E reached a maximum depth of 0.33m whereas in Subop. 330F excavation achieved a depth of 0.38m. In both cases the red clay that had been free of artifacts in Subop. 330B/D was encountered in the base of excavation and was not investigated further.

Excavation Lots

<u>Lot</u>	<u>Contents</u>	<u>Context</u>	<u>Time Span/Date</u>
330E/1	5 sherds, obsidian	Occupation Debris (Secondary)	2/
330E/1	empty	-	-
330F/1	1 sherd, 10 obsidian pieces	Occupation Debris (Secondary)	2/
330F/2	empty	-	-

Time Spans

<u>Time</u>	<u>Construction</u>	<u>Units</u>	<u>Strata</u>	<u>Features</u>	<u>Date(s)</u>
1	-	-	S.1	-	-
2	-	-	S.2	-	-

Time Span 1

As noted above, a red clay (S.1) that appeared to be identical to the culturally sterile layer underlying artifact-bearing deposits in Subop. 330B-D to the north was encountered in the base of excavation in Subop. 330E and 330F. We presumed that further digging in S.1 would yield similar results to those achieved in excavations further to the north and did not pursue the matter further in Subop. 330E and 330F.

Time Span 2

A total of 0.33m to 0.38m of a brown clay (S.2) collected over S.1 during TS.2. Artifacts were retrieved primarily from the upper 0.2m of S.2.

Depositional Summary

The culturally sterile red clay found in all five excavations at Site 330 apparently rises slightly from east to west. On the north, S.1 dips up 0.58m over 9m east to west between Subop. 330B and 330C whereas further south this level ascends 0.37m across the 11m separating Subop. 330E and 330F in this same direction. In contrast, S.1 rises a scant 0.16m over 23m between Subop. 330E on the south and Subop. 330B on the north but ascends 1.11m south to north from its exposure in Subop. 330F to where it appears in 330C. By the time S.1 is revealed in Subop. 330D, ca. 37m north of Subop. 330F, it has risen an additional 0.51m. These limited tests tentatively imply that the ground during TS.1 rose

gently from east to west but more pronouncedly from south to north, that ascent being more marked the further west it is traced. Modern ground surface generally conforms to this pattern, ascending 1.5m from Subop. 330F on the south to Subop. 330D on the north

Excavated data strongly suggest that the artifacts scattered across the settlement's surface originally derived from the brown clay of S.2. By far the vast majority of the recovered cultural was concentrated in the upper 0.2m of this layer suggesting, as was the case at Sites 323 and 328, that the deposit supplying the surface artifacts was shallow. As was noted for Site 328, it may well be that erosion, down the southern slope in this case, led to soil deflation and the concentration of most of the surviving artifacts on ground surface.

Chronological Summary

No temporally diagnostic artifacts were identified in the course of our work at Site 330.