

Evan Keith Eppich

2006 WK-09: Excavaciones en el Grupo Tolok in *Proyecto Arqueológico El Perú-Waka': Informe No. 3, Temporada 2005*, edited by Hector Escobedo and David Freidel, pp. 302-389. Informe Entregado a la Dirección General del Patrimonio Cultural y Natural de Guatemala, Guatemala.

## WK-09: Excavaciones en el Grupo Tolok

*Evan Keith Eppich*

### Introduction

In the course of the third field season of the Proyecto Arqueológico El Perú-*Waka'*, archaeologists conducted a series of investigations in a hilltop cluster of structures termed the Grupo Tolok. These excavations consisted of 93 separate units with a total of 151 different lots. Excavations concentrated mostly in and around Structure M14-15 (Fig. 1). This report builds from and is intended to supplant the 2003 excavations detailed in Alvarado 2004. The 2005 excavations revealed the Grupo Tolok to be an elite residential compound dated to the Late to Terminal Classic, one that may have even been fortified. Structure M14-15 itself was revealed to be an important ancestor shrine, of the kind detailed in Leventhal (1983) and McAnany (1998: 278). Including the 2003 excavations, investigators uncovered a total of five elite cyst-burials from M14-15. This is in addition to the two internments discovered at the north end of N14-2, bringing the total burials in the Grupo Tolok to seven; almost a quarter of the internments uncovered at El Perú-*Waka'* to date.

Grupo Tolok is a collection of ruined structures located atop an artificially created

hillock that stands some 10 meters above the surrounding terrain and 20 meters higher than Plaza 2. The group possesses a spectacular viewshed, surpassed only by the pyramids of the Mirador Group (Rich 2004, 2005, this volume). The Grupo Tolok is physically located southeast of Plaza 2, astride quadrants M-14 and N-14 of the Harvard Map, created by Ian Graham and Peter Mathew (see Knight 2004: 355; Tsesmeli 2004: figs 1, 2, 5). The map offered here possesses much greater accuracy than any of those issued earlier (Tsesmeli 2004: fig. 5), due primarily to the comprehensive mapping effort undertaken in 2005 and discussed below.

For its prominent location, visible architectural features, together with the evidence from the 2003 excavations, designate the Grupo Tolok as an important element of the Terminal Classic cityscape of El Perú-*Waka'*. For these reasons, it was felt important to return to and to expand the excavations of 2003. The following report, while certainly not wholly comprehensive, sheds new light on the elite habitation and residence during the Late and Terminal Classic occupation of El Perú-*Waka'*.

## Objectives

There were several research objectives involved with the excavations in and around the Grupo Tolok, being designated Operation Wk-09. They were as follows:

- 1) To clean and clear low-lying underbrush and the numerous fallen trees from the Grupo Tolok in order to create a detailed and comprehensive map of the entirety of the structure group, to reveal potentially hidden features and to improve on previous mapping efforts.
- 2) To clean and clear Structure M14-15, to create a map of the architecture and to reveal, precisely, the location and disposition of the potential C-shaped bench reported from the 2003 field season (Alvarado 2004: 236).
- 3) To determine a chronological sequence for the construction of the group's architecture, to ascertain, if possible, the function of the investigated structures, as well as the construction of the artificial hillock itself.
- 4) To locate and excavate a midden associated with N14-2, the probable main residential unit of the group. This would provide information on the diet, ceramics, and patterns of consumption and discard for the relative periods of the group's occupation.

## Methodology

To best accomplish these goals, a number of different strategies were implemented in operation Wk-09. Firstly, the structure group had to be cleared of substantial amounts of low-lying underbrush and fallen trees. This required the cutting of a significant amount of undergrowth, chainsawing of large fallen trees, and removal of cut brush and debris. No cutting occurred of the protected trees proscribed by CONAP regulations. The excavators, hired from local communities, proved easily able to identify and avoid these species. Great effort was made to avoid cutting except when necessary. Since the 2003 field season, all major structures of the group had suffered significant damage from fallen trees. These large trees, uprooted by strong winds, tore significant cavities in the structures of the group as well as the plaza floor itself. In cases where it was feasible, we attempted to reset the still-living, fallen trees into their original location and minimize the damage they caused. The surface of the whole group was raked and swept and a surface collection taken to determine the final occupation phase.

Secondly, the 2003 excavations seemed to show Structure M14-15 as possessing an irregular and asymmetrical shape. Generally, Terminal Classic architecture at El Perú-*Waka'* is of much poorer quality than its Late Classic antecedent. Specifically, the walls use irregularly cut and differentially sized stone in their construction. Walls curve and bulge

and anything beyond the first course or two of stonework usually does not survive. Some walls, in fact, do not appear to use cut stones at all. The rather shabby Terminal Classic architecture does not weather the ten centuries of abandonment well in any case. For these reasons, the best approach to recover the poorly preserved and apparently asymmetrical architecture of M14-15 would be broad, direct, and comprehensive. A grid, consisting of one-meter squares, was extended over the entire structure. A stripping operation followed, removing the humic layer from across the entire building, subsequently accompanied by the removal of collapsed masonry to reveal the remaining walls and floors of M14-15. The majority of excavation units from the 2005 operation Wk-09 took place in this excavation grid (Figs. 1, 7).

Thirdly, to show the comparative chronological occupation of the potential residence, a series of test-pits were placed around Structure N14-2 in those places most likely to contain middens, being the areas between and behind residential structures (Figs. 4, 5). A deep test-pit was placed in the plaza floor to show the construction sequence of the floor and hillock itself (Fig. 2). The encircling line of scattered rubble and cut stones was investigated to reveal the potential wall feature (Fig. 3). Planned excavations in the center of Structures M14-16, N14-1, and N14-2 had to be cancelled due to the attention necessary for the multiple burials of M14-15 and shortness of the season.

Looters' holes, present in M14-16 and N14-2, seemed to indicate that both structures went up in a single construction episode, although this has yet to be confirmed archaeologically.

In this manner, the goals of the investigations into the Grupo Tolok could best be accomplished. To avoid confusion with the 2003 excavations, the first unit excavated in 2005 was Unit 30 and the first lot, Lot 100.

## **Description of the Investigated Area**

As noted above, the Grupo Tolok sits atop an artificially created hillock, 10 meters above the surrounding terrain, 20 meters higher than Plaza 2, and 120 meters higher than the base camp datum, four kilometers to the south. The Grupo Tolok itself consists of five major structures, M14-15, M14-16, N14-1, N14-2, and N14-14 and possibly a number of smaller structures visible only as piles of cut-stone protruding from humus (Fig. 1). There is some evidence that the group possessed a circumferential wall and existed as a highly restricted residential space. This potential wall feature is visible only as a line of cut-stones along the edges of the hill that have not suffered extensive erosion (Fig. 1). With the cleaning and clearing of the group, the orientation of the structures becomes apparent. All major structures appear to face a somewhat southern entrance, and a gentle grade and tumble of cut stone appear to indicate a potential stair as this original

entrance. In the clearing of brush back from the southern base of the hillock, a previously unknown structure was revealed, structure N14-14, a low and clearly rectangular pile of scattered rubble and cut limestone. N14-14 is situated at the base of the potential stair. This structure's precise function is unknown, but a role in supporting the encircling wall seems most likely. In addition, a smallish monument was uncovered lying facedown on the western slope of N14-2 (Fig. 1). The monument was uncarved and somewhat irregular, measuring roughly 45 by 30 cm in a rectangular shape. The monument was flipped to identify any possible carving, but returned to its original location when it was revealed to be blank. Piles of flat vault stones crowned the top of structure M14-16, a two-tiered structure with a potentially vaulted L-shaped gallery on top of a raised platform. It may have even been colonnaded. N14-2 is most likely the main residence, being a low platform with numerous substructures placed along it. N14-2 wraps around its own private courtyard, even more restricted than the main plaza of the group. The middens located to the north and east of N14-2 contained numerous kitchen debris, supporting a residential function. N14-1, a small pyramidal structure on the group's north edge, is uninvestigated and possesses no known function. Once the group was cleared and cleaned, project survey members were able to map all the structures quite accurately and the following

excavations plotted as per Figure 1 (see also Tsesmeli and Marken, this volume).

Results from the surface collections reveal a Terminal Classic Rax Complex affiliation for the recovered ceramics (Eppich 2004, Eppich *et al.* 2005). This would place the abandonment of the group towards the end of the Rax Complex, tentatively dated at A.D. 800-1000. The evidence for this includes a scatter of fine pastewares, the "waxy" monochromes of the Terminal Classic, Subin Red, Tinaja Red, *molcajete*-style grater bowls, and even a few scattered bodysherds of Tohil Plumbate. Despite this thin Terminal Classic overlay, much of the deposits occurred in the Late to Terminal Classic period, especially concentrating in the transitional phase and in the early facet of the Terminal Classic. Whether or not the site was abandoned mid-way through the Terminal Classic is unknown, although it certainly suffered a decline in the frequency and quality of the material remains.

## Plaza Excavations

To determine the construction of the hillock itself, two one-meter square test pits were sunk into the center of the group's plaza, being units 30 and 35 (Fig. 1, 2). The plaza testpits uncovered four separate layers and revealed the hillock to be not entirely artificial (Fig. 2). The initial level consisted of a rich humic matrix, roughly corresponding to those detailed in the 2003 excavations (Alvarado 2004: 231, Fig. 1). Smallish stones were scattered throughout the layer, indicating its slow formation over

time. Soil color was a dark greyish brown with a small degree of rootlet turbation. Ceramics recovered in this initial layer were small and heavily eroded but seem to indicate a Terminal Classic date, being quite similar to those recovered in the surface collection. This humic level terminates at about 40-50 centimeters below the ground surface at a series of fist-sized cobblestones, some of which are rectangularly cut and shaped. This layer of cobblestones is detailed in Figure 2. Smaller, ballast stones are mixed in among the large cobbles. The layer of cobblestones either represents the foundation of a long-decayed plastered plaza floor, or, more likely, simply represent the original plaza floor itself. Small patio floors comprised of cobbled surfaces with gravel ballast are known from other Maya sites, where the important structures are only skirted with formal plaster floors, leaving the majority of the plaza as rough-hewn cobbles (Traxler 2003: 49). This may be the case at *El Perú-Waka'*. The cobblestone layer incorporates a very large limestone boulder (Fig. 2). The cobbles circle the highest point of the boulder, leaving it to slightly protrude above the surrounding layer.

The layer of earth beneath the cobblestones consisted of a much darker brown sediment with smallish limestones scattered throughout. This is almost certainly bulk fill used for the construction of the hillock itself. The construction fill, similar to the material underneath the east midden

of N14-2, contains ceramics dating to the Early and Protoclassic periods, the site's Seq and Q'an Complexes, respectively. These sherds include a number of Sierra Red and Polvero Black sherds, together with Early Classic basal flanged sherds. The layer in turn overlies an outcropping of sterile bedrock, being part of whatever manner of natural formation preceded the construction of the hillock. The large limestone boulder is very similar to those observed eroding out of the northeastern side of the hill, where significant deterioration has taken place, exposing several very large limestone boulders (Fig. 1). This indicates that the hillock is not entirely artificial, but instead was originally a very irregular, natural outcropping of some kind. At some point in time, the outcrop was reshaped and leveled off using material from a Proto- / Early Classic deposit. The irregularity of the original outcrop is made more evident in the discovery of a very thick, dark black sediment layer underneath the limestone boulder mapped in Figure 2. This black sediment layer contained very few cultural materials and is similar to the mud of a dredged *bajo* (M. Rich, per. comm.). This "filler" material has been observed at other parts of the site.

The hillock and plaza floor itself was then originally an irregular and natural outcrop reshaped and graded at some point after the introduction of Early Classic ceramic traditions. The main plaza of the group probably consisted of a cobblestone floor that incorporated limestone boulders

too large to move. There does not appear to be any evidence that the floor was repaired or significantly replastered.

## **Excavations in the Potential Wall Feature**

To investigate the circumferential line of scattered rubble and cut stones along the edge of the group, eight one-meter square units were placed straddling the line of stones to see if, in fact, it represented a wall feature or small platform of some kind. These units are 97, 98, 99, 100, 101, 102, 120, and 121 (Fig. 3). Excavators removed the thick humic layer to expose a large wall feature approximately 1.2 meters thick and 60cm high. It appears to be a two-tiered construction with a smaller interior "step" on the northern side. The second tier is much larger and taller (Fig. 3). The construction of the wall feature consists of irregular limestone blocks, most of them uncut, packed into a core fill between two retaining walls. The outer, southern edge of the wall feature has rough and unsmoothed stones, jutting outward at awkward angles. This stands in marked contrast to the interior, northern surface, which possesses cut and smoothed limestone blocks, well joined together. Some effort, then, was exerted to make the interior surface presentable and no effort to make the exterior similar. The mode of construction seems quite similar to those used in M14-15, discussed below, but the stones of the wall feature seem much more compacted and a more durable construction than the rest of the group's

buildings. Also, an area in the middle of the excavations was left intact to prevent the cutting down of a small escobo tree, which survived the archaeology intact.

The materials recovered from the humic layer matched those of the humus from across the group, possessing small numbers of heavily eroded, highly fragmentary ceramic sherds. Recovered ceramic types included Tinaja and Subin Red monochromes with a few scattered fine orange bodysherds. Inside the wall construction itself, excavators found no diagnostic marker objects to date its construction. The well-constructed nature of the wall, however, mark it as being quite different from the impromptu fortification noted on the northwest palace group (Lee per. comm.). If it is, indeed, fortifications, and the Grupo Tolok a fortified residential group, then some degree of preparation, care and thought went into its construction. It is not a barrier thrown up quickly and in a panic, but one well planned and executed, probably conceived of as an integral part of the group itself. As such, it was probably constructed at the same time as the other buildings in the Grupo Tolok. The wall feature itself probably served as the stone foundation for a much taller, perishable, wooden barrier. However, positive confirmation of this cannot be stated at this stage.

Clearly, investigation of the wall feature is far from complete and will serve as a focus of the succeeding year's excavation strategy. The junction of the wall

feature and the potential stair will require especial attention in any successive excavations.

### **Excavations in the N14-2 east midden**

With N14-2 serving as the most likely residential structure, efforts were undertaken to locate and excavate associated midden deposits. Excavation units were placed in the areas considered most likely to contain trash deposits, being those areas between, behind, and around corners of residential structures (Escobedo, per. comm.). For these reasons, a total of nine units were placed around the edges of structure N14-2, successfully uncovering two large midden deposits.

East of N14-2, the excavations included units 106, 107, and 108 (Fig. 1, 4). The units lay on a slight eastward slope, neighboring an area that had suffered considerable erosion (Fig 1.). The three units were laid out roughly parallel to the back of N14-2 and excavated to sterile layers.

The initial level was a thick humic layer, similar to those encountered across the Grupo Tolok (Fig. 4). It contained a heavily turbated sediment matrix, resulting from a very large tree bordering on the west side of the unit. The soil color was a loosely packed grey-brown. Numerous cultural materials were encountered immediately. This humic layer contained a very large number of smallish, eroded ceramic sherds, totaling, from the first level of all units, some

2,935 sherds. The ceramics contained a number of diagnostic Terminal Classic ceramics, including some Tinaja Red, Subin Red, Achotes Black, Infierno Black, and a smaller number of fine grey, fine orange, and Palmar Group polychromes, among others. All these ceramics types tend to support an early facet Rax Complex affiliation for this layer, even as turbated as it is. Additional materials included 74 broken obsidian flakes and blade fragments, burned and broken shell fragments, and burned animal bone. Don Mateo Tot Paau, one of the K'echi Maya excavators, identified some of the animal bone as deer, numerous birds, and a single crocodile tooth. In the field laboratory, some of the shell was further identified as fragmented oyster shell. Despite the humic nature of the layer, all the recovered material seems to correlate to what would be expected from a midden, and an elite midden at that. This would seem to suggest that, up to the time of its abandonment, the Grupo Tolok served as residence for high-ranking members of Maya society. This is further explored in the discussion section below.

At the base of the initial level, excavators encountered another large limestone boulder similar to both the one discovered in the plaza test pit and those eroding from the northeastern slope. This emphasizes the irregularity of the natural formation that was reshaped in antiquity. A thick dark layer, identical to dredged *bajo* earth, was tightly packed around the irregular hollows of the porous limestone

boulder. It is the same matrix as that encountered in the plaza test pit (Fig. 2).

The second layer consisted of a loosely packed grey-brown matrix with fist-sized limestones scattered throughout. As with the layer above it, it contained material indicative of an elite residential midden. These materials included numerous chert fragments, obsidian flakes and blade fragments, shell fragments, including some oyster shell, and a number of burned and polished animal bones which Don Mateo Tot Paa identified as bird, possibly turkey. A large number of ceramics were recovered as well, totaling about 626 sherds from units 107 and 108. The sherds were smallish and fragmentary with no observed refits. Ceramic traits were consistent with Late to Terminal Classic attributes, probably being affiliated with either the Morai or early facet Rax Complexes (Eppich 2005).

The third layer consists of a hard-packed greyish-yellow sediment matrix, although it lightens, in places, to a distinct blue-grey color, probably caused by the degradation of the large limestone boulder that stretches across all three excavation units. Unit 107 terminates after a thin lens of this light-colored third layer, ending abruptly in a large limestone boulder. This same boulder curves to occupy the eastern half of unit 108, as well. Cultural materials were numerous, but quite different from the midden material that overlay them. Chert, obsidian and fragmentary shell were all present, but in low enough quantities to make their presence negligible. Ceramics

were largish sherds, some with refits, and dated to a much earlier period than the Late to Terminal midden material. The ceramics attributes included basal flanged bowl fragments and such well-known ceramic types as Balanza Black, Aguila Orange, and Sacluc Black-on-orange, indicating a Proto to Early Classic date for the level, probably placing it in the Q'an and Saq complexes. Given the difference in the density of the sediment, and this level's similarity to the material underneath the cobblestone floor of the plaza test pit, it is most likely that the third level of the east midden of N14-2 represents packed construction fill from the reshaping of the hill to support the Grupo Tolok. If so, then the evidence would indicate the reshaping of the hillock occurred at some point after the introduction of the Early Classic ceramics.

The fourth layer is little more than a filled cavity among large and partially decayed limestone boulders. The sediment itself is a hard-packed, chalky grey color with numerous limestone fragments scattered throughout. The layer itself may be little more than a mix of soils and decayed limestone. This layer possesses very few cultural materials and, while these materials have yet to be processed, field observation indicates they are very similar to those in the preceding level. The fourth layer terminates at a chalky white layer that is just decayed limestone bedrock. This fifth layer is culturally sterile.

It needs mentioning that laboratory analysis on much of these materials has yet



to be completed and ceramic observations are, to some extent, preliminary.

### **Excavations in the N14-2 north midden**

Six units were placed north of N14-2, in the small space framed by structures N14-1, N14-2, and M15-15 (Fig. 1). After a large tree fall uprooted a half dozen broken metate fragments, it seemed a likely place to find midden deposits. The units were one-meter squares with the sole exception of unit 116. The excavation units themselves were 103, 104, 105, 115, 116, and 117 (Fig. 5). The units were laid out in a grid and excavated until the discoveries of burials 18 and 19, detailed below. Upon excavation, it was revealed that the six units uncovered a pair of perpendicular walls, meeting in a corner in the southeast portion of Unit 117. A wall, visible once the humus was removed, runs through the eastern edge of Units 105 and 107. The north-south wall is easily discernible by the well made and smoothed cut masonry stones along it and is partially illustrated in Figure 5. The excavations revealed thick midden deposits sandwiched between plaster floors. The excavations encountered a pair of burials, 18 and 19, and a dense concentration of ceramics. It was felt that, given the limited time remaining, only Burial 18 would be removed. Both Burial 19 and the concentration of ceramics will wait for subsequent excavation in the upcoming 2006 field season.

The initial layer is, mostly, the same humic layer found across the group. It is an ashy grey-brown in color, lightly turbated with rootlet action. Limestone blocks from the collapse of N14-2 are found throughout the layer, being denser and thicker in the southern units, 115, 116, and 117, and lensing out altogether in the northern units, 103, 104 and 105. As anticipated, midden materials were encountered almost immediately. This included large numbers of recovered ceramics, with a combined preliminary estimate of 1,200 sherds from all six units. The sherds were even distributed throughout the level and showed some to considerable amounts of erosion. Attributes seemed typical for the early facet of the Rax Complex. These attributes included thick bolstered rimsherds, thin-slipped red and black monochromes, low-quality polychromes, and a smattering of fine orange. Flakes of chert and obsidian, as well as fragmented obsidian blades, were numerous as well. As with the east midden excavations, animal bone occurred fairly often. The bones were often burned and polished and excavators encountered an intact whole animal skull, identified by Don Mateo Tot Paau as tepezcuintle (*Agouti paca*). The midden material appeared mixed in with the humus, perhaps as a result of rootlet turbation. Alternatively, the discovery of a trash deposit so close to the surface may indicate that is a part of a larger sheet midden, known from other Terminal Classic sites (Adams 1971: 163; Sabloff 1975: 117-118) as well as El Perú-*Waka'*

itself (Arroyave and Martínez 2004). Such a hypothesis requires larger horizontal excavation, however. It may be that the material was deposited after the collapse of the architecture of N14-2.

Beneath the humus lay a large concentration of fallen rubble from the collapse of N14-2 (Fig. 5). Mixed in with this rubble was a darker layer of greyish-brown sediment, being similar to the coloration of the humic layer above. There is no sharp distinction between the two and in places lacking limestone rubble, they grade imperceptibly together. The relationship between this level and the fallen rubble remains an interesting one. Clearly, humic soils underlie some of the rubble from N14-2, indicating an abandonment prior to structural collapse. Yet, midden deposits overlie some of that same rubble, indicating either post-collapse deposition or substantial turbation. Given the amount of fallen trees observed since the 2003 field season, this degree of turbation is certainly possible. With the intact tepezcuintle skull in the layer above, erosion seems unlikely. Recovered cultural materials remain somewhat higher than usual, but with much less density than in the first layer. Recovered pottery seems roughly analogous, being those ceramic attributes usually associated with the Terminal Classic. Bones were recovered, as well. They included burned and polished bird bones, as well as marine shell, mother-of-pearl fragments, and a broken shell labrette. This layer terminates at a plaster floor. This floor is differentially preserved,

present in Units 115, 116, and 117, in portions in Unit 105 and not at all in Units 103 and 104. Either the fallen rubble preserved the plaster or the building had only a plastered floor “skirt” and blended into a packed earth plaza floor. In some places, the rubble from N14-2 lies directly atop this plaster floor.

A third layer lies between two plaster floors (Fig. 5). It is a moist clayey deposit of a dark “chocolaty” blackish-brown color. Rock and pieces of limestone are absent altogether. Recovered cultural materials were consistent to what would be expected from a midden deposit, numerous bones, oyster shell fragments, chert and obsidian flakes, obsidian blade fragments, and so forth. The quantity of recovered ceramics was significant, although not in the large quantities of the humic layer. Sherds number approximately 850 individual pieces and include known Late and Terminal Classic ceramic attributes. They have a high frequency of bolstered rims, thin easily eroded slips, and known ceramic types such as Tinaja Red, Subin Red, some polychromatic designs, and fine orange and fine grey bodysherds. Such a collection would seem appropriate for the Late to Terminal transitional Morai Complex (Eppich 2005) with its overlap of Late and Terminal Classic ceramic types and modes. Sealed between two floors, sherds intrusive to this midden deposit seem unlikely. Owing to the lateness of the season, Units 115, 116, and 117 were not excavated past this level.

The fourth level also lies between two sealed plaster floors (Fig. 5), thicker and less compact than the preceding layer. The sediment consists of a clayey, dense matrix, greyish-brown in color. Fist-sized limestone chunks are present throughout and increase in frequency towards the bottom of the layer. For such a large layer, recovered cultural material seemed low in frequency, numbering only about 160 individual sherds. While chert and obsidian flakes were present, faunal bone was absent. This level is, most likely, not a midden deposit so much as simple construction fill from a remodeling episode in the group's construction history. The lower numbers of recovered ceramics make a temporal assignation difficult and it remains, for now, unknown.

The fifth layer was only partially excavated, as, sealed beneath the lowest uncovered floor, lay a very dense layer of ceramic sherds and two intact human internments, Burials 18 and 19. The layer itself was excavated in Unit 103, to reach and remove Burial 18, and down to Burial 19. The sediment matrix itself is soft and a light grey-brown color. It contains a thin scatter of burned and fragmented animal bone and marine shell, including mother-of-pearl fragments. The floor that caps this level runs up to, and terminates at, a large angled limestone concentration on the east portion of unit 103 (Fig. 5). The floor itself rises with the limestone and was laid down to accommodate the limestone. Ceramic materials were distributed throughout, but

increase dramatically towards the bottom and the southern portions of the layer. Unit 103 alone recovered some 1,070 sherds in this small area alone. The sherds themselves were of remarkably high quality and represent an excellent example of the transitional Morai Complex, sealed beneath a plaster floor. Recovered sherds included a mix of very high quality cream and orange polychromes with frequent glyphic elements, fragments of codex-style cylinders, thin-slipped red monochromes, bodysherds with fluted and molded elements, "waxy" red monochromes, and fine orange and fine grey rim- and bodysherds. Identified ceramic types consisted of Chablekal Grey, Chicxulub Incised, Altar Orange, Balancan Orange, Trapiche Incised, Tinaja Red, Nanzal Red, Chaquiste Impressed, Achotes Black, Maquina Brown, Palmar Orange Polychrome, Zacatel Cream Polychrome, and Palmar Orange Polychrome: cream-ground Codex-style, among other less obvious ceramic types. A more precise composition of this sealed deposit's ceramics and their relation to the greater chronological sequence of El Perú-*Waka'* will be detailed in a subsequent report (see Eppich et al. 2004, Eppich 2005, Robles P. 2005, Robles et al., this volume). For now, the dense ceramic deposit must wait for excavation, mapping and analysis in the impending 2006 field season.

In unit 105, excavators exposed the intact femurs of an adult individual and began the process of working up towards the pelvis when excavation was halted.

Burial 19 was subsequently sealed and reburied for later excavation.

Burial 18 is an infant lying on his or her back (Fig. 6). The infant burial was laid directly at the base of a series of cut limestone blocks, a wall from N14-2, mixed in with the large ceramic concentration described above. The osteology of Burial 18, as with all the burials discussed in this report, will be reviewed in greater detail in a subsequent report. The observations here are intended only as preliminary. The infant possesses a fairly well-preserved cranium and long bones. Smaller bones, such as teeth, ribs and vertebrae, are present as well, indicating a primary internment. The apparent hollow shown in Figure 6 is only the outlines of the excavation. The infant was not specially interned in a cyst or intrusive burial, but instead placed on top of the garbage resulting from whatever event deposited the ceramic concentration. Burial 18 and Burial 19 are directly associated with each other and the dense ceramic concentration below. Some manner of termination ritual is unlikely, as the deposit lacks the desecration of architecture, intensive burning, burial disturbance, white marl, and non-ceramic elite artifacts usually associated with such (Pagliaro et al. 2003: 79-80). Albeit tentative, a feasting deposit could be a likely explanation (Reents-Budet 2000). Although, the deposits still waits for a complete excavation and even the material recovered to date has not had a comprehensive laboratory analysis. Precise interpretations of the deposit below the third

floor on the north midden of N14-2 cannot be provided at the current time.

## **Investigations in Structure M14-15**

Excavators placed a total of 72 excavation units in and under Structure M14-15 (Fig. 7). Large guidelines were placed over the structure and the grid excavated outward along perpendicular axes. This resulted in a grid of one-meter squares that extended across most of the structure and is detailed in Figure 7. The structure itself was heavily damaged from both the large treefalls that had occurred since 2003 and the erosion of the northwestern slope of the hillock (Fig. 1). The grid had to be shaped around both standing and fallen trees, as well as the edge of the hill itself. Sections of excavation Units 88 and 112 are actually off the edge of the hill on a very steep incline that greatly hindered excavation. Probably a quarter of the structure has eroded off of the northwest edge of the hillock. What was assumed to be irregular architecture was simply the result of differential and extensive erosion. M14-15 appears, physically, to be a long ranged structure atop a small platform. The structure orients along a roughly 69 degree east-west axis. It contains three rooms: an eastern, a western, and a central chamber, all facing a southwesterly direction. No vault stones were encountered in the course of investigation, strongly suggesting that a roof of perishable materials mounted atop limestone walls. Two large steps lead up to each of the chambers and all three

chambers were highly restricted in some manner. The back half of the eastern structure appears to be completely sealed off with no known entrance. Two elite burials, numbers 20 and 21, lay beneath the walled-off eastern chamber, oriented north-south. The central chamber possesses two steps rising towards a low bench which bisects the room. Burial 5, detailed in Alvarado 2004, was placed behind this divider, oriented east-west. The bench does not appear to be C-shaped (Rice 1986; Fox 1987). The western chamber is missing the North wall, but appears to have been walled off as well, with two steps rising up to it. However, the remaining architecture of the western chamber is too badly damaged to state this with any certitude. Burials 22 and 23 lay beneath the western chamber, both oriented north-south. The erosion of the eastern section of the structure had exposed the capstones for the cyst of burial 22. Several capstones were actually protruding through the humus. It is felt that without the excavations, these burials would have eroded out of the side of the hill in the next few years.

Excavators removed the initial layer from across M14-15. This initial layer consisted of a thin ashy grey-brown humus mixed in with the rubble from the collapsed architecture. Cultural remains were slight and similar to those recovered in the surface collection mentioned above. These ceramic markers include fine greys, fine oranges, the "waxy" monochrome red and blacks of the Terminal Classic, Tinaja Red, Subin Red,

Achotes Black, and a few sherds of Tohil Plumbate, among others. Comprehensive ceramic analysis will follow at a later date. The humic layer contained very few recovered faunal bones or lithic flakes, indicating that M14-15 was not used as a midden area after its abandonment, as is known from elsewhere on the site (Arroyave P. and Martínez 2004). Degrees of turbation varied widely across the structure, from virtually no turbation around the front of the structure to substantial mixing of material around the roots of the large trees to the west and to the collapsed structure's center.

Once removed, the humic layer revealed the remaining architecture of M14-15 and all the stonework shown in Figure 7 was exposed. The walls generally measured between 30-40cm high and were in greatly varying states of preservation. The technique of construction consisted of large rounded stones used as foundation with hard-packed earth in between. On top of this ran a retaining wall of largish, flattish stones, laid atop each other like pancakes. A rubble fill was added against the side of the retaining wall and tightly packed together. The very large Central wall, for example, possessed two large retaining walls and a thick core of rubble fill. The rubble fill included cut and shaped limestone blocks, indicating a use of scavenged materials in the construction of M14-15. A rear wall, the North wall on Figure 7, ran the length of the rear of the structure and remained fairly well preserved. It stood 50cm high in places and was of very sturdy

construction. It terminated just west of unit 67, where the fall of a large palo de chico tree had uprooted it there. Beyond the treefall, the North wall disappears off the edge of the hillock. It almost certainly ran the length of the structure. Since all other walls abut the North wall, it represents the earliest architectural feature of M14-15. This was subsequently confirmed in the deep excavations in the eastern chamber, in which the north wall extends downward to the earliest incarnation of the original structure (Fig. 8).

Remains of three walls extend southward from the North wall, themselves in varying states of preservation. Much of the East wall (Fig. 7) lies beneath a large puntero tree and could not be excavated. The tree had preserved large sections of the wall and its course was visible underneath the humus. The upper portions of the East Wall had collapsed to the east and were visibly scattered across the ground surface. The Central wall was the largest piece of surviving architecture and must have served as the main roof support of the structure in antiquity. The Central wall measured 1.4 meters thick in places and possessed a solid foundation, two retaining walls, and a thick rubble core fill. The Central wall's rubble fill consisted of various types and sizes of limestone, from small fist-sized chunks to largish boulders. Some of the large stones possessed pitted and weathered surfaces and some, from deep inside the core, indicated that the surfaces were pitted and weathered previous to their deposition.

Other core-fill stones were cut and smoothed stone blocks, scavenged from other, earlier structures. Since much of the ceremonial architecture of *El Perú-Waka'* is missing its outer courses of stone, it requires no great leap of logic to suggest that some of them were scavenged for use as residential fill. The Central wall collapsed to the east, burying much of the eastern chamber in fallen masonry and collapsing the eastern chamber's own interior wall. This interior wall, which abuts both the Central and East walls, sealed off the rear portion of the eastern chamber and was heavily damaged. It could only be discerned from the rubble that buried it by a series of smoothed limestone slabs that made up the southern wall surface. This interior wall was tilting at about a 65 to 70-degree angle from the ground. The patches of plaster floor that remain, Floor 4 in Figure 7, were grey in color, showing signs of burning directly in front of this interior wall, further supporting the theory that the building served as an important ancestral shrine. These shaped and smoothed limestone slabs were not, however, of uniform size, suggesting that they, as well, probably originated from another structure and were scavenged to be part of M14-15. A rectangular section abuts the Central wall and was probably added at the same time as the bench to further restrict access to the rear of the central chamber.

The third wall, the West wall on Figure 7, greatly resembles the East wall in its remaining sections. Unfortunately, a

large palo de chico tree grew in the junction of the West and North walls. This tree, standing in 2003, collapsed over the side of the hill since then, ripping out a great deal of both the West and North walls. Hence, it is unknown whether the West wall abutted the North wall, as the Central and Eastern walls do. However, sections of Floor 2 clearly extend beneath the West wall, indicating that its construction must post date the eastern and central chambers. The remaining sections of the West wall are heavily damaged and possess only a few courses of stone. It possesses only a single retaining retention wall on the eastern side and the western parts of the West wall are too damaged to determine if a second retaining wall existed. The wall collapsed to the west, burying the western chamber's own interior wall in masonry rubble. A bench abuts both the West and Central wall, restricting access to the rear section of the central chamber. The bench itself contained a smoothed plaster surface across one section of it, indicating its partial use as a seat. It is positioned in relation to Burial 5's east-west orientation.

The western chamber can only be loosely defined, due to the erosion of the western section of M14-15 off the edge of the hill. Faint remains of a far western wall, parallel to the other three can be detected at the western edge of excavation. Only a few courses of stone remain. The course of stone ends towards the hill's edge and, of course, the long-crumbled western section of the North wall. An interior wall, heavily

damaged as well, may have blocked off access to the rear of this western chamber. This interior wall was heavily damaged and could not, in places, be discerned from the piles of collapsed rubble covering it. The two lowest courses of stone and the smoothed cut stones facing outward finally indicated its presence. When it must have collapsed, both the far western wall and this interior wall appeared to fall inward and to the west, in areas long eroded off the top of the hill. It is most likely that the western chamber existed as a mirror image of the eastern chamber, with a step leading to a walled off chamber, under which were placed two elite burials, in keeping with ancient Maya concepts of symmetry. In fact, it was this hypothesis that led excavators to the discovery of burials 22 and 23 beneath the western chamber. The western chamber lacked a plaster floor at all and edges of the capstones from Burial 23 were actually protruding from the humus itself.

The plaster floors of M14-15 were differentially preserved, usually appearing only as flaking, crumbling patches. Some of the especially fragile patches would quickly dry and blow away and in a fierce rainstorm at midseason, disappeared entirely. Directly in front of M14-15, excavators uncovered sections of a thin plastered plaza floor, labeled as Floor 1 on Figure 7. These floor sections were all that remained of the plaza floor. It remains unknown whether a plaster surface covered the entire plaza and has since eroded away, or whether the plastered area merely skirted the structure. Floor 2

was the best preserved of all and covers the second step of the central chamber. While faint traces of a plaster floor were uncovered on the step below it, these areas are too small to show up on Figure 7. Behind the bench, Floor 3 covers the rear portion of the central chamber and is positioned above burial 5. The large rectangular floor-cut in it is Unit 25 from the 2003 excavations. It was placed atop an earlier ovoid floorcut used for the internment of Burial 5. Sections of Floor 3 actually extend under the bench and the Central wall, showing it to slightly predate the construction of both. Floor 4 was heavily damaged, appearing in some places as only disparate clumps of rotted plaster. Floor 4 was placed in front of the interior wall of the western chamber and extended slightly beneath both it and the Central wall. The floor was badly warped in places from the loose fill underneath it. On the area directly in front of the interior wall, the plaster was grey, flaked and burned. Directly beneath Floor 4 was the thick marl deposit that covered Burials 20 and 21. Floor 5 was located behind the interior wall of the western chamber, partially buried beneath the rubble from the collapse of the central wall and the thick white marl covering Burials 20 and 21. There is no material between the floor and the white marl deposit. This floor is substantially lower than Floor 3 (Fig. 8) and dates from an earlier construction. Much of Floor 5 was covered in a thick deposit of white marl that was, in turn, placed atop the cuts made for burials 20 and 21. Floor 5 was badly

warped in places as well, from the loosely packed fill underneath. This fill itself consists of loosely packed stones and dirt. Hollows in this fill were common and a misplaced boot could easily punch straight through. Floor 5 obviously dates from a period prior to the radical reconstruction of the structure and shows that some earlier building once occupied this space. Floor 5 even shows signs of having been replastered at some point (Fig. 8). The foundation stones for the Central wall were placed directly on top of this floor. Floor 6 was the plastered surface of the step that lay in front of the western chamber. It was very poorly preserved and was, in places, only identified as a thin layer of rotted plaster. Above and behind Floor 6 lay Floor 7 also in a very poor state of preservation. Floor 7 possessed pieces of greyed and burned plaster floor directly in front of the interior wall of the western chamber. It is very likely that the western chamber possessed a plastered floor above Burials 22 and 23, but the damage to that part of the structure was too extensive to determine this. Like much of the western chamber, its floor has, in all probability, washed off the side of the hill.

Using the relationship between these different architectural elements, a short construction history of M14-15 can be fashioned. The earliest elements include the North Wall and Floor 5, which probably served some earlier structure. This earlier structure was then heavily altered to the extent that its original form is impossible to



determine. The initial event that triggered this reconstruction was the internment of Burials 20 and 21. The initial building was then largely demolished, leaving only Floor 5 and the North wall. It should be noted that Floor 5 is roughly level with the plaza floor (Fig. 8). Two large oval cuts were made into the floor for the construction of the two crypts and much of the matrix beneath Floor 5 was cleared out, created a large hollow space. Large rocks and *lajas* were used to build the cyst-burials and the remaining space filled with a loose mix of soil, gravel and smallish stones. Numerous small hollows existed in the matrix fill. The internments were placed into the cysts and covered over with more of the loose construction fill. A thick deposit of white marl was then heaped over the two graves and the building reconstructed on top of the marl. A substantial amount of marl was used, leaving a deposit up to half a meter thick in places. Mixed in the marl were small bodysherds of both fine grey and fine orange, placing the internments in the site's Morai ceramic complex. Floor 3 and Floor 4 were laid down directly on top of the marl and the Central wall constructed atop of the two floors. Excavators discovered a thin lens of refuse between the plaster floor and the bottom of the wall. The Central wall was then constructed. Since the interior wall, the wall sealing off the eastern chamber, abuts both the Central and West wall, it must have been constructed immediately afterwards. Obviously this construction took place at nearly the same time, the structure being

conceived of as an integrated whole. The internment of Burials 20 and 21 turned an unknown older building into a formalized ancestor shrine and it is thought that the internments of Burials 5, 22, and 23 took place shortly afterwards. The superimposed elements suggest that Burials 22 and 23 followed 20 and 21, with Burial 5 being the final internment, Floor 3 being cut to allow its placement.

## **Burial 20**

Burial 20 is a cyst burial, approximately two meters long, and oriented along a north-south axis (Fig. 9). The northern half of the cyst was intact at the time of excavation and although the human remains were in poor condition, they had not been greatly disturbed over the past twelve centuries. The cyst itself was constructed using large unhewn limestones and capped with large plate-like stones called *lajas*. The cyst itself was located underneath a thick deposit of white marl and the foundation stones for the Central wall. It is impressive that, despite the enormous weight of the architecture resting upon it, sections of the burial remained intact.

The burial itself consisted of a single adult individual. The bones were in very poor condition, having mostly disintegrated inside the moist conditions of the crypt. Sex and age could not be determined. The individual appears in an extended supine position, lying on his or her back. The small bones of the hand are present, as well as fragmentary vertebrae and teeth, indicating

a primary interment. The cranium and upper chest region were found lying beneath a matrix of maroon-colored earth. This material could represent the remains of a wooden or cotton covering, or perhaps a heavy sprinkling of cinnabar. Much of the maroon-colored matrix was removed for a subsequent chemical analysis. The cranium itself disintegrated into a powdered concentration in the vague shape of a skull with the largely-intact teeth in the proper location. A more detailed report on the osteology of Burial 20 will follow in the future and will be considered necessary to supplement the material presented here.

The burial included two whole ceramic vessels and a small, carved shell disc. The two ceramic vessels were intact, but heavily distressed. The vessels are illustrated here in Figure 13a and 13b. Vessel 1 is a low bowl with outflaring sides typical of the Terminal Classic. The slip was thin and not well-bonded to the underlying paste. The slip had subsequently eroded away from much of the paste matrix. The slip itself was a light and watery greyish-black, identifying it, typologically, as an Achotes Black vessel. The second vessel was a taller, high-walled bowl, again, with outflaring walls. The slip was thin and poorly bonded to the paste below, which was exposed across the surface of the vessel. The slip coloration was a light yellow-cream, but the affiliated ceramic type has yet to be identified. Monochrome creams for the Terminal Classic and end of the Late Classic are very rare, but not wholly

unknown (see Sabloff 1976: 132, 221).

Despite the fact that they were in the uncollapsed portion of the cyst, both vessels were in a very delicate condition. Vessel 2, especially, virtually crumbled as it was removed from the interment and great care had to be taken to remove it without causing significant damage.

## Burial 21

Burial 21 represents one of the richest interments in the site as a whole, surpassed only by the royal tombs of Burials 8 and 24. It is a cyst burial, oriented along a north-south axis and was collapsed at the time of excavation (Fig. 10). The roots of a nearby *puntero* tree had penetrated the roof of the cyst and forced the *laja* capstones directly downwards. The pottery inside the burial, while broken, was not highly eroded. The collapse of the cyst, then, probably occurred at some point in the recent past. The thick roots of a neighboring *puntero* tree penetrated Floor 5 and had crushed the *lajas* over the burials. Excavators calculated the age of the tree at some twenty-odd years, which would fit with the collapse of the cyst. In all probability, the tree itself caused the capstones to collapse.

The bones themselves were in very poor condition, having deteriorated in the moist air trapped by the sealing of the cyst. The individual appears to be, roughly, a fully articulated adult skeleton. The individual is lying in an extended supine position, possibly with one arm folded over the abdomen. A ceramic vessel, vessel 3, was

placed directly over the cranium with a small kill hole in the base. The cranium itself was highly fragmented, although not so disintegrated as the cranium in Burial 20. Various teeth were recovered, one of which was drilled for a circular inlay and another tooth that still contained a circular ground jade inlay. Despite intensive screening, other jade inlays were not recovered from the cyst's matrix. A more detailed report on the osteology of Burial 21 will follow and must be considered necessary to supplement the material presented here.

A total of five ceramic vessels were recovered from Burial 21 (Fig. 14, 15). Though largely intact, the vessels were heavily distressed, having lost the slip over much of their surfaces. From what remains, it can be determined that these vessels represent some of the finest work of the El Perú-*Waka'* ceramic corpus. One of the vessels in particular, vessel 4, is of remarkably high quality, if not remarkably high preservation (Fig. 15). Vessel 1 is a low polychrome bowl with the design surviving around the rim lip and in upper portions of the vessel (Fig. 14a). The vessel was placed face down and the collapsed matrix of the cyst itself helped to preserve this upper section. The bowl has slightly outcurving walls and a creamy base slip, upon which were executed designs in dark red and black. The surface is well smoothed and the slips bright and lustrous. The typological affiliation is difficult to assign at present, but a designation of Zacatel Cream Polychrome seems the most likely (see

Smith and Gifford 1966: 164). Vessel 2 is a small, ovoid jar with molded elements on the side of the vessel (Fig. 14b). The surface is extremely well smoothed, polished and hard. Remaining slip clings to only a section of the vessel and is a highly polished whitish cream color. Typologically, this vessel is, for the present, undetermined. Vessel 3 was placed face down over the head of the individual and a kill hole punched through its base (Fig. 14c). Such kill holes have recently been interpreted as psychoducts, allowing "a channel for rebirth together with a route for the departing soul" (Miller and Martin 2004: 57). The vessel itself is a low bowl with slightly outcurving sides. The walls have a "lumpy," asymmetrical nature to them, as if the vessel sagged during the drying process. The exterior surface of Vessel 3 is highly distressed, being eroded down to the paste across virtually the entire surface. A faint polychrome design in red and black patterns on a creamy baseslip can be seen, but any further elaboration remains impossible. An interior slip remained in much better condition, being a well-smoothed and glossy with a dark red color. The interior slip is heavily worn in a circular fashion on the interior base, indicating a healthy use life for this vessel. At the southern end of the cyst, vessel 5 was inverted as well and was a third low bowl with slightly outcurving sides. Vessel 5 was highly distressed as well, with only faint traces of an interweaving cross hatch pattern remaining. The design appeared to

have been a black pattern executed on a bright red baseslip.

Vessel 4 is one of the more dramatic finds of the 2004 field season (Fig. 15). Vessel 4 is a cylinder vase with a slightly tapering waist. The vessel was broken, but reconstructable, and the scene, while very distressed, can be discerned. Artistically, the vase is an Ik'-style cylinder featuring a palace scene with multiple glyphic texts. The scene itself has five figures in a palace setting. The central figure, wearing a tall feathered headdress, is identified as Tayel Chan K'inich, a late eighth century ruler of Motul de San José (S. Guenter, per. comm.) He is facing two figures, a kneeling figure with a parasol and a standing figure behind. The parasols on the scene are twins of similar elements identified as "war banners" on other Ik'-style vessels, particularly vessel K3464. To the left of Tayel Chan K'inich are a pair of courtly retainers. The scene itself is reminiscent of other, better preserved "presentation scenes" all of which involves a figure kneeling before a king, usually in the process of paying tribute or presenting gifts or captives (Reents-Budet 2001). The glyphic texts are highly distressed, most indecipherable. Faint traces of a dedicatory text are visible around the vessel rim and one of the glyphs designates a figure with a *ba-ajaw* title. The *ba-ajaw*, or "first lord," title is a subroyal position of some importance, a title occasionally linked with warfare or personal military service to a lord (Houston and Stuart 2001: 62; Martin 2001: 177).

There is a strong temptation to assign the *ba-ajaw* title to the Burial 21 individual. After all, it is a subroyal internment containing significant wealth and an individual important enough to have structure built atop his resting place. Archaeological evidence certainly indicates an important noble of subroyal rank, one not incommensurate with what one would expect from the burial of a *ba-ajaw*. On the other hand, it is known that the text and scene on a vessel possesses no necessary relationship to the burial context in which it is uncovered. Vessels such as this one could have easily been gifted to a loyal subordinate who was neither a *ba-ajaw* or had ever traveled to Motul de San José. But the potentiality of a lord from El Perú-*Waka'* presenting the king of Motul de San José with a war banner remains one laden with interesting social and historical implications.

## Burial 22

Burial 22 is a fully-collapsed cyst burial, located underneath the western chamber of structure M14-15 (Fig. 11). Investigations commenced in the western chamber after the discovery of the twin burials of 20 and 21. Operating on the assumption that internments in the structure should follow a roughly symmetrical pattern, excavators reopened units here. After only a few moments of digging, the upper rim lip of vessel 2 came into view. So significant was the erosion in the western chamber, that the capstone *lajas* for Burial 22 lay only a few centimeters beneath the ground

surface. The cyst had fully collapsed, the stones comprising the walls of the cyst forced outward, and the human remains inside broken and scattered to a significant extent. Ceramic sherds were found inside the outline of the cyst, but are probably not associated with its deposition, more probably belonging to construction fill that eroded into it.

The human remains appear to be an adult individual, probably interned in an extended supine position. The fragmentation of the bones, however, renders this difficult to determine. The northern end of the cyst appears to have suffered a greater deal of damage. Indeed, some of the more fragmented human bones were actually located outside the crumbled cyst walls themselves (Fig. 11). These bones included both highly-fragmented vertebrae and the broken long bones of the arm. As with all the interned individuals here, much greater analysis of the osteological material will be included in a subsequent report. However, given the damaged nature of the Burial 22 bones, it remains dubious as to what information can be recovered.

The Burial 22 individual was interned with a pair of broken, but whole, ceramic vessels (Fig. 13c, 13d). Both vessels possessed a thin, orange-red slip. The slip was highly distressed and had eroded across the surfaces, leaving the ceramic paste matrix exposed. Both vessels contain post-slip, fine line incised decorations of fanciful, dancing monkeys

(Fig. 13c, 13d). On Figure 13, the eroded slip was not illustrated as not to obscure the incised designs. Such designs are not uncommon in the Late to Terminal Classic period. Incised monkeys feature on Seibal's Carmelita Incised type and have been known on fine grey vessels from other sites (Sabloff 1975: 120, 151). The vessels here seem, in fact, quite similar to an unnamed incised type described from Seibal (*ibid.*: 151). Vessel 1 is a small tripod bowl with slightly outcurving walls and solid nubbin supports. Two incised recumbent monkeys reside on the exterior surface. The monkey design has been detailed in Figure 13c. Vessel 2 is larger, being a wide-bodied vase with a slightly restricted mouth. Incised designs cover the exterior surface, including fine line cross-hatched pattern immediately below the rim and another pair of recumbent monkeys occupying a circumferential band on the main body of the vessel. In terms of ceramic types, both vessels are currently undesignated, but ongoing work on the ceramic typology of El Perú-*Waka'* will most likely place them in an incised type of the Tinaja ceramic group.

### **Burial 23**

Burial 23 is also a fully collapsed cyst burial, located beneath the eroded western chamber of M14-15 (Fig. 12). Many of the cyst walls have washed away or vanished and the *laja* capstones of the crypt themselves were exposed, protruding above the unexcavated ground surface. The capstones were lying directly atop the

crushed human remains. Excavation had to proceed in a very delicate manner as not to scatter the highly-fragmented bones and would have been completely impossible if not for the careful hands and patient manner of one excavator in particular, Hamin Ricardo Alvarado from Dolores.

The human remains were highly fragmented but appeared fully articulated and mostly in their original location (Fig. 12). The Burial 23 individual appears to have been an adult, interned in an extended supine position with the right arm extended and the left folded over the abdomen. The cranium, again, was badly crushed but appears to be in place and, based on the placement of the teeth, the head is turned to the left. Greater detail on this individual will be provided in an osteological report to be published at a later date.

Excavators discovered a curious ceramic scatter underneath the cranium and upper chest region. The scattered ceramics consisted of non-diagnostic, broken potsherds. They do not appear unique in any way, but their placement is most unusual. They simply could not have eroded into the burial from the surrounding construction fill because any hydraulic action strong enough to move these ceramics would have certainly dispersed the much smaller cranial bones as well. In other words, they had to be deposited at the same time as the internment. Possibly they represent the construction fill into which the burial was placed. Perhaps the scatter was intentional, especially given their placement

beneath the head and shoulders of the individual. At this stage, their relation to the Burial 23 individual is unknown. The burial also contained a pair of vessels. Vessel 1 was located to the east of the fragmented cranium. This vessel was almost certainly placed on top of the cranium and subsequently tumbled to the side, possibly when the cyst collapsed in antiquity. The vessel is a low flat-bottomed bowl with slightly outcurving sides (Fig. 13e). It possesses a thin, reddish-black slip, poorly bonded to the underlying paste matrix and has eroded off from a great deal of the exterior surface. There is a kill hole punched through the base of the vessel. Typologically, the vessel belongs to the Achotes Black ceramic type, a type known to straddle the Late and Terminal Classic periods. Achotes Black is part of a continuum of monochrome blacks with both the quality and quantity declining as the civilization passed from the Late to the Terminal Classic. Together with the monkey pots of Burial 22, both internments would be clearly placed into the site's Morai Complex, an issue to be discussed in greater detail below. Vessel 2 was a miniature jar, placed at the individual's left side. It probably is also a member of the Achotes Black ceramic type, possessing a thin reddish-black slip poorly bonded to the paste matrix.

## **Discussion**

In his 2003 article, Guderjan (2003: 19-21) identifies three main attributes used to distinguish elite residences. These

include the degree of architectural form and complexity, the spatial relationship of the architectural units themselves, and the material assemblages associated with the structure. Architectural form and complexity relates to the scale of the structure and the labor required to construct it. Spatial relationships involve the residence's proximity to the community center, degree of restriction of access, and viewshed, the degree and content of the built landscape that can be viewed from the residence (*ibid.*, Pendergast 1992: 62-63). Material assemblage includes those materials generally considered luxury items, artifacts rare at other contexts, and material representations of elite status (Guderjan 2003: 20). This also includes a higher frequency of animal bones, such as deer, turtle, and other game animals (Pendergast 1992: 68-71). The investigations at the Grupo Tolok would seem to support the conclusion that these buildings served as an elite residence. Architecturally, the group possesses a large residence platform in N14-2 and distinct ceremonial architecture in M14-15, and probably in M14-16 as well (Fig. 1). M14-15, of course, used no vaulted architecture, but collapsed vault stones were scattered across the top of M14-16 and the eastern portion of N14-2. The civic-ceremonial architecture at the Grupo Tolok is, of course, not operating on the same scale as the Mirador Group (Rich 2004, 2005; Rich and Piehl, this volume) or the Northwest Palace Group (Lee 2004; Lee, this volume) from elsewhere at El Perú-

*Waka'*. The chief difference, however, lies not in function, but in scale. Whereas the Northwest Palace group served a royal household and the Mirador Group the entire *civitas*, the Grupo Tolok seems engineered to serve a single kin-based corporate group. In other words, the group served but a single noble household.

Spatially, the structure group here is very restricted, probably wholly surrounded by a thick wall with the sole entrance passing directly through Structure N14-14. The residence itself, N14-2, contains its own private courtyard, a doubly restricted space. Also, the group is placed between the high pyramids of the Mirador Group and the center of the site in Plaza 3. Even with overgrown and uneven footpaths through the forest, Plaza 1 was only a mild ten-minute walk and the Mirador Group a slightly more challenging twenty-minute stroll. The Grupo Tolok possesses immediate access to both the sacred and administrative centers of the community. Sitting on an artificially shaped hillock, the group has a viewshed that is simply spectacular. A view to the east looks straight out over the tumble of structures below it and straight out over the escarpment itself. On clear days, the purple tops of the Sierra Lacandon appeared on the horizon and, during the fire season, distant plumes of smoke could clearly be seen on the far southern side of the San Pedro Martir.

In terms of the material assemblage, the east and north midden excavations uncovered those artifacts generally

associated with the elite class. Excavators recovered numerous animal bones, identified in the field as belonging to bird, turtle, and deer in the midden excavations, as well as the tepezcuintle head in unit 105. Oyster shell also turned up frequently in the middens. Whether the oyster shell was worked in some way or whether the oysters were themselves eaten can only be guessed at. In terms of ceramics, the midden produced fragments of very high quality material, cream and lustrous orange slipped sherds occur commonly, in addition to Codex-style and Ik'-style sherds. Glyphic elements occur somewhat frequently, the glyphs themselves having long been considered a strong indicator of elite status (Houston 2000: 150). Such elements are not uncommon in the material assemblages of the Grupo Tolok. The multiple burials of M14-15 themselves, of course, lend substantial support to the group as an elite compound. Elaborate care given to the honored dead is another strong indicator of elite status and benches and specific architecture devoted to the dead indicates a noble personage in life and an honored ancestor afterwards (Pendergast 1992: 67-68). The individual in Burial 21 possessed both a jade inlay in one tooth and hollows for inlays in others, as well as the elaborate vessel 4. Clearly this was an important subroyal. The multiple burials of M14-15 are not as rich as the site's royal tombs of Burials 8 and 24, but they are far richer than the majority of internments across the site. They are buried in simple cyst crypts, but

not vaulted tombs. They merited burial inside a specialized structure and not beneath a residence floor. Every aspect of the Grupo Tolok, then, argues for elite status of the level just below that of the royal household. Clearly then an important, though subroyal, noble family inhabited the Grupo Tolok. This must have been a family, who, while they did not rule directly, they knew those who did. Certainly the Burial 21 individual was potent enough to have been gifted by the lord of Motul de San Jose and to have, subsequently, an entire structure, M14-15, dedicated to his or her memory.

M14-15 itself is a classic example of what McAnany (1998: 272-275) would term an ancestor shrine and was identified in the field as such by Jennifer Piehl. She provides a striking example of an Early Classic structure, Building B at Holmul, in which individuals were interred in a suite of vaulted rooms and the rooms then sealed closed (Merwin and Vaillant 1932, cited in McAnany 1998: 275). Freidel *et al.* (1993: 188-191) suggested that such lineage altars were known as *waybil* structures, Classic period buildings serving as both mausoleum and temple. Inside were placed deified ancestors who could be called upon to aid their descendents. Stuart (1998: 397-398) has written of this as well, in the context of rituals involving *muknal* locations. *Muknal* is a combination of **MUK-AH**, 'is buried,' with the **-NAL** suffix, 'house' (McAnany 1998: 289). Together they indicate a burial-house, which is usually glossed as 'tomb,' and this may apply to ancestor houses such as M14-



15. Certainly the functionality, if not the exact form, is remarkably similar. Stuart (1998: 397-399, 418) describes 'censing' or 'burning,' events at these *muknal*, in an effort to 'revivify' the dwelling of the deceased ancestor and bring their aid to those of their descent. This brings to mind the patches of burned stucco floor uncovered in front of the eastern chamber at M14-15. Classic period shrines appear in many different Maya sites, the most dramatic example being the North Acropolis of Tikal itself. Also, among the K'anjobal Maya of Huehuetenango, McAnany gives a pertinent example of a prominent structure termed a *yatut jichmen*, a house of the ancestor. There, the members of an inclusive lineage group called upon their dead to perpetuate the fertility of the land (Davis 1970, cited in McAnany 1998: 273). By calling upon such ancestors, they establish a proprietary claim to the landscape as well. In this manner, the construction of such a structure and the performance of ritual inside it contains overtly political claims (McAnany 1998: 271, 281). Among the Classic Maya, the honored dead justified the authority of their living progeny.

M14-15 distinguishes itself in two ways, the dramatic instance of its inception and the fairly brief period in which it was in use. M14-15 is entirely constructed over the internments of Burials 20 and 21. Of the two burials, Burial 21 is the richer of the two and, by extension, the more important. The Burial 21 individual was then a personage of

some importance in his or her own life, either mentioned directly on vessel 4 or having received that vessel as a kingly gift. This individual warranted significant attention upon death, being interned together with their companion in Burial 20, having a thick layer of marl poured over them, and having a large new building, M14-15, constructed over their resting place. The burial of this individual then, in all likelihood, was the triggering event for the placement of the ancestor shrine. This was a subroyal noble, powerful in his or her own lifetime, and influential enough to be venerated by succeeding generations of their own house. Judging by the examples given above, the surviving household, in venerating the memory of the Burial 21 individual, reaffirmed their own political claims and legitimacy and, therefore, their own group inclusiveness and cohesion.

Apparently, this group did not do so for very long. M14-15 held only five elite burials, all of which cover a fairly narrow period of time. This stands in contrast to ancestor shrines known from other sites, which can contain dozens of individuals and were in use for centuries (McAnany 1998: 275). The architectural features place Burials 20 and 21 as being interned at the same time. Burials 22 and 23, due to their relationship with the western interior wall and Floor 2, must have come later with Burial 5 coming last. The ceramics from all five burials position them within the site's Morai Complex, dated 770-850 (Eppich *et al.* 2005). The named lord of Burial 21,

vessel 4 is Tayel Chan K'inich, a known ruler of Motul de San Jose in the later half of the eighth century (S. Guenter, per. comm.). With all five burials being placed inside that fairly narrow window, they cannot represent more than two or three generations of the same lineage. With M14-15 as an inclusive ancestor shrine, with the potential political claims it engendered, there emerges a narrative of the rise of a subroyal, elite power. For a brief period, there emerged a subroyal lineage, with either its basis in power stemming from or enhanced by the Burial 21 individual, building an ancestor shrine and venerating their own. This occurred in a period of transformation at the site, at the end of the Late Classic Period. In terms of the epigraphic record, El Perú-*Waka'* is ruled by the "Stela 32 ruler" and Lady Pakal at the end of the eighth century with the epigraphy of the site itself falling silent after 801 (S. Guenter, per. comm.). The slow fading of the royal line may be concurrent with the rise of a subroyal elite.

The rise of subroyal nobles at the expense of the office of kings has been suggested in Maya epigraphy (Houston and Stuart 2001: 74-75). Mentions in the epigraphic record of nonroyal actors rises throughout Ninth Cycle monuments, immediately prior to the collapse of Classic civilization itself. It is interesting to note that, although occupation in the Grupo Tolok probably continues well into Terminal Classic El Perú-*Waka'*, M14-15 is no longer the resting place of an ascendant nobility. M14-15 could be an archaeological

manifestation of the epigraphic trends noted by Houston and Stuart, the rise of a powerful subroyal lineage, its florescence for a few decades, and then its disuse.

Nevertheless, the discussion presented here is not intended to be a comprehensive and scholarly analysis of the investigations at the Grupo Tolok. This will come in time. It is instead intended to be an investigation of some of the themes and implications of the evidence uncovered in the 2005 field season. The excavations here build to our existing knowledge sets, create profound arguments and implications of their own, and suggest fruitful avenues of future research. In this regard, the investigations at the Grupo Tolok have resulted in an overwhelming success.

### **Contribution to the Ceramic Chronology of El Perú-*Waka'***

In the previous reports on the potting traditions of El Perú-*Waka'*, researchers discovered a transitional period in which the traditions of the Late Classic overlapped those of the Terminal Classic (Eppich 2004; Eppich *et al.* 2005; R. Perez *et al.*, this volume). This period of transitional overlap was subsequently defined as the Morai Complex (Eppich *et al.* 2005: Fig. 1). The proposed dates for the Late to Terminal transitional period were to include very late eighth and early to middle ninth century, approximately A.D. 770-850. The excavations in the Grupo Tolok contribute to our understanding of this period in three ways. First, they provide a

series of sealed burials with intact vessels, all of which date to the Morai Complex and secondly, in the form of Burial 21, Vessel 4, they provide a calendar date, and, thirdly, providing large assemblages to elaborate the breath and variety present in the complex.

Not much time separates Burials 5, 20, 21, 22, and 23. They include a total of 11 whole vessels that date directly to the Morai Complex by the direct association of the high-quality polychromes of Burials 20 and 21, with the fine orange bodysherds found in the white marl that covers the burials. Since the individuals were interned and the building constructed atop them, both a high-quality polychrome and fine pasteware tradition had to be active at El Perú-*Waka'* at the same time. It is interesting to note that the fine pastewares were not, however, interned with these Maya elite. This association of polychromes and fine pastewares is, of course, one of the defining traits of the Morai Complex, especially as presented in Eppich *et al.* 2005. One of the principle questions of the Morai Complex, however, remained unresolved. Does the complex represent the persistence of a Late Classic tradition into the Terminal Classic or an early adoption of Terminal Classic traditions during the height of the Late Classic period? The burials of M14-15 seem to provide an answer. The resolution appears to lie in the fact that the high-quality vessels, those normally thought to be indicative of Late Classic potting traditions, occur in the same

context as simple monochromes associated with the succeeding Terminal period. In other words, the high-end material persists, while the simple everyday vessels become quite different. For instance, in Burials 20 and 21, there are very high-quality polychromes, specifically Burial 21's Ik'-style vessel 4, and the slip remains on Burial 21's vessels 1, 3, and 5 similarly show they once held elaborate, bright and glossy polychrome designs (Fig. 14, 15). However, Burial 20's two vessels hold attributes usually associated with a decline of the Late Classic traditions, these being thin, "watery" slips, poorly bonded with the underlying paste, and which easily erode off the vessel (Foias 1996: 478-479; Forsyth 1989: 93). The same is true of the vessels from Burials 22 and 23. The monochrome vessels would seem to place the vessels in the late facet of the Late Classic, if not directly in the Terminal Classic proper, while the decorated vessels, the "monkey-pots" of Burial 22, seem most similar to those from the Late Classic Seibal (Sabloff 1975: 120, Fig. 231, 151, Fig. 285). Combined with the very Terminal Classic material from the construction fill, the pattern appears to emerge of a dynamic ceramic tradition already heavily adopting forms that would be considered Terminal Classic, while a Late Classic decorative tradition continues to persist. If one consciously links the production of high-quality polychromes with the patronage of elite families, then an interesting social dynamic appears to emerge. This trend would seem to suggest

a divergent potting tradition, with elite patronage favoring older, more conservative, ceramic styles, while most Maya are using, for whatever reasons, those ceramics associated with the Terminal Classic. There are fine greys and fine oranges existent at the time all these burials were interned, but none of them appear as grave goods. Across the site as a whole, individuals do not tend to be buried with fine pastewares.

Burial 21 also provides a more precise calendar date for the Morai Complex. This is based off the epigraphic data from vessel 4, and represents the best means by which to assign calendar dates to ceramic complexes. It represents a departure from the approaches held by earlier ceramicists, which held that glyphic dates on ceramic vessel were inherently unreliable (R. Smith 1955: 107-108; Thompson 1962: 14-18; Rands 1973: 53). The approach utilized here is more along the lines of Houston, Stuart, and Taube (1989: 720, 724), in which epigraphic data from the glyphs on ceramics are fluidly incorporated into the heart of the ceramic analysis. Tayek Chan K'inich is a historically known individual who reigned at Motul de San José in the latter portion of the eighth century (S. Guenter, per. comm.). This would place the internment of vessel 4 at the very end of the eighth century or, more likely, at the beginning of the ninth century, confirming the period hypothesized in the 2005 ceramic report, if not later (Eppich *et al.* 2005).

As the typology for the site is currently underway (R. Perez, this volume), it can be expected that further information concerning the ceramics of the Grupo Tolok will be forthcoming in subsequent reports. Although preliminary, the Morai Complex ceramic types identified from these excavations include Achotes Black, Maquina Brown, Nanzal Red, Tinaja Red, Chaquiste Impressed, Palmar Orange Polychrome, Chablekal Grey, Chicxulub Incised, Altar Orange, Balancan Orange, Infierno Black, Subin Red, Anonal Orange Polychrome, and the Palmar Orange Polychrome, cream ground and orange ground Codex-style polychromes, among others. A number of as-yet undesignated ceramic types accompany these known ceramics, such as a Morai complex orange monochrome, an orange slipped incised monochrome, and an impressed Cambio group with thumbnail impression and a thick, bolstered rim, an unusual grey polychrome with designs similar to Anonal Orange Polychrome, and a highly lustrous cream polychrome which may be a local imitation of the codex-style ceramic types. Clearly much work remains.

## Unit Descriptions

### WK09-A-30

This unit is part of the plaza testpit (Figs. 1, 2). It was dug slowly and in careful layers, as not to miss any minute color changes in the sediment matrix. Unit 30 has six levels and six corresponding lots for each level. Levels 1, 2, and 3, being lots 100, 101, and 102, respectively, match to

the first layer in Figure 2, being the thick humic layer lying atop the cobblestone plaza floor. The matrix consisted of a dark greyish brown color with significant rootlet activity present. The matrix, when dried, became quite fine, even ashy in texture. Small and fist-sized pieces of limestone were suspended throughout the matrix, increasing in size and frequency as the depth of the level increased. Recovered ceramics number some 279 individual sherds and included bolstered rims, a small fine orange bodysherd and an undesignated polychrome bodysherd. A chert flake was uncovered as well.

Unit 30's Level 4 corresponds to the second layer in Figure 2, being the matrix located beneath the cobblestone plaza floor. The matrix itself is a dark brown color, well packed into place and moist to the touch. The matrix clung stubbornly to ceramic sherds during the washing process. Charcoal fragments were recovered in the matrix beneath the cobbled floor and was recovered as carbon sample #1. The recovered ceramics numbered about 64 individuals sherds that do not appear diagnostic.

Level 5 of Unit 30 is located beneath the limestone bolder that was incorporated in the construction of the hillock itself. The soil was a dark brown-black, moist and almost muddy to the touch. Numerous very small chunks of limestone were suspended in the matrix. It's similarity to dredged *bajo* soils was commented on by several observers. Excavators recovered roughly

26 ceramic sherds, none of which possessed diagnostic attributes. A chert flake was recovered as well.

Unit 30's Level 6 was the sterile layer located below the dark brown construction fill of Level 4. The earth itself was an ashy white color, highly compacted, and very hard to excavate. Very large pieces of broken limestone grew in frequency as the depth of the unit increased. Once it was determined that the level was culturally sterile, excavation ceased.

#### WK09-A-31

This unit is located in the excavation grid of M14-15 (Figs. 1, 7) and consists of two different lots, Lot 104 and 106. Lot 106 is made up of backfill from the 2003 excavations. Lot 106 made up the southern 18 to 10cm, measured west to east, of the unit and consisted of previously unexcavated material. It continues into the eastern unit, being Unit 32. Lot 106 contained fragments of fine orange and fine grey pottery in the layer above the plaza floor, dating this material to the site's Terminal Classic occupation. Recovered cultural materials numbered some 72 individual ceramic sherds and 3 small chert fragments. Both lots were removed, revealing a disturbed, but still visible, line of cut stones. Many of the cut stones were lying face down on the surface of the plaza floor. This course of stone is believed to be part of the first rise leading up to the bench in the central chamber. The plaza floor in this unit was fairly well preserved, with some

of the gravel ballast and underlying cobbles visible beneath eroded sections.

#### WK09-A-32

This unit is located in the excavation grid of M14-15 (Fig. 1, 7) and consists of Lot 103, backfill from the 2003 excavations. The southwestern corner comprises a small piece of Lot 106, which extends westward into Unit 31. Lot 106 contains fragments of fine grey and fine orange ceramics, dating the material above the plaza floor to the site's Terminal Classic occupation. Both lots were removed, revealing a course of cut stones running east to west. Many of the stones had fallen forward, the smoothed side lying facedown on the plaza floor. This course of stones is believed to be part of the first rise leading up to the bench in the central chamber. The plastered plaza floor was well preserved in this unit with rubble from collapsed masonry scattered across it.

#### WK09-A-33

Located in the excavation grid of structure M14-15, this unit is made up of a previously unexcavated humic matrix lying above the plaza floor. There was some slight root turbation in the upper layers. Cultural materials were fairly evenly distributed throughout this level, increasing very slightly in the area just above the plaza floor itself. The recovered material includes some 305 individual ceramic sherds, 2 fragments of faunal bone, and 3 obsidian flakes. Ceramics include a number of broken Palmar group polychrome sherds,

Achotes Black, Subin Red, Tinaja Red, a fine orange bodysherd, a large bolstered rimsherd. No architecture was found in the level, simply collapsed masonry from Structure M14-15 lying on the plaza floor. The floor itself was quite well preserved, the plaster of the floor retaining its brilliant white color.

#### WK09-A-34

This unit is located in the excavation grid of Structure M14-15 and consists of two separate lots. Lot 108 was backfill from the 2003 excavations while a section of the unit's westernmost side, being 21-24cm thick, measured south to north, was Lot 109. Lot 109 was an unexcavated humic layer above the plaza floor. The materials recovered from 109 included some 59 ceramic sherds, a chert flake, and 3 pieces of obsidian. Terminal Classic "waxy" monochrome red, Subin Red, and Achotes Black potsherds were among the recovered potsherds. No architecture was present in the unit, only a substantial amount of collapsed masonry from M14-15 itself. The plaza floor was very well preserved in this section, with no ballast or cobblestones showing. In Lot 108, recovered materials included some 21 ceramic sherds, a broken piece of chert, and four small, eroded human bones, possibly from Burial 5. Among the recovered potsherds was located a single fine orange bodysherd.

#### WK09-A-35

Together with Unit 30, this unit makes up the plaza testpit (Fig. 1, 2). It was excavated in four levels, with Lots 105, 110, 122, and 132 comprising the various levels. Level 1 corresponds to the first layer in Figure 2, being the thick humic deposit above the cobbled plaza floor. The matrix was a grey-brown color with substantial root action in the layer's upper portions. Smallish limestone chunks were discovered throughout. Level 1 produced a large quantity of material, being roughly 268 ceramic sherds, 6 chert, and 2 obsidian fragments. Observed diagnostic ceramic markers included the "waxy" monochrome reds of the Terminal Classic, a number of thick, unslipped bolstered rimsherds, and a small, unslipped thumbnail-impressed appliqué bodysherd.

Levels 2 and 3, Lots 110 and 122, consisted of the upper portions of the construction fill plying below the remains of the plaza's cobblestone floor. The distinction between Levels 2 and 3 was thought to be a slight change in soil color, a distinction that later turned out not to be true. The sediment matrix was a thick, darkish grey-brown with patches of a finer textured brown-black. The material was well-compacted. Recovered cultural materials were plentiful, including a total of 238 individual ceramic sherds and 2 chert fragments. Notable ceramic elements included no attributes of the Late or Terminal Classic and were restricted to such well-known Late Preclassic and Early Classic markers as Sierra Red and Polvero

Black with the Polvero Black materials possessing pronounced Early Classic characteristics, such as a higher gloss, decidedly firm bondedness to the paste, and a lesser "waxy" feel to them.

Level 4, Lot 132, consisted of a hard and well-compacted sediment matrix, being an ashy brownish white color. It was culturally sterile and represents the material lying directly atop a thick outcrop of limestone bedrock.

#### WK09-A-36

In the excavation grid of M14-15, this unit was comprised entirely of Lot 111, being backfill from the 2003 excavations. The backfill was removed, revealed a badly damaged line of cut stones. This is an especially heavily damaged section of the first rise leading up the dividing bench in the central chamber. Many cut and faced stones had fallen forward or had been turned around entirely. The plaza floor was poorly preserved, only visible in a single patch preserved by the collapsed masonry had fallen atop it. Other parts of the floor had disintegrated entirely, leaving a scatter of ballast and tumbled cobblestones. Recovered cultural materials included some 40 ceramic sherds, 2 fragments of chert, and one of obsidian. Diagnostic ceramics were limited to a single Subin Red basesherd.

#### WK09-A-37

Located in the excavation grid of M14-15, this unit consists of two different

lots. Lot 112 makes up roughly the western quarter of the unit, being the westernmost 22-27cm of the unit, measured south to north, respectively. Lot 112 consists of backfill from the 2003 excavations. The eastern three-fourths of the unit was designated Lot 117, being a layer of humus lying atop of collapsed masonry and remaining wall courses. Recovered cultural materials from Lot 117 consisted solely of two, small, eroded, and nondiagnostic ceramic sherds. The matrix was removed revealing the western forward corner of M14-15's central wall. A number of cut and smoothed stones, probably the southwestern corner of the central wall itself, had tumbled from their position and lay mixed with the collapsed masonry on the plaza floor. The plaza floor itself was not in good condition, visible only in two patches and absent from much of the unit altogether. A patch of the plastered floor that once covered the first rise was preserved along the westernmost edge of the central wall. Recovered materials from Lot 112 consisted solely of eight small, eroded and nondiagnostic ceramic sherds.

#### WK09-A-38

In M14-15, this is a mixed unit, known to be part of the 2003 excavations, probably Unit 13 (Alvarado 2004: Fig. 14). However, the humic activity had been intense enough to erase the unit walls from the 2003 excavations. The ashy grey-brown humus was uniform throughout the removed matrix. Once removed, a clear line of cut-

stones, the faced and smoothed sides still in their original location. This line of stones was in front of a large amount of collapsed masonry and construction fill from the crumbled central wall (Figs. 7, 8). At the base of the line of cut-stones, a section of the plaza was well preserved, protected by the mass of collapse masonry fallen on it. Recovered cultural materials consisted of an obsidian fragments and four small, eroded and nondiagnostic ceramic sherds.

#### WK09-A-39

In the excavation grid of M14-15, this unit is composed of two lots. Lot 115, made up of backfill from the 2003 excavations, measuring 18-12cm, south to north, runs through the western section of the unit. The remainder of the unit is Lot 119. Lot 119 is an unexcavated humic layer lying atop the plaza floor. The recovered cultural materials from Lot 119 consisted of a single fragment of chert and some 47 ceramic sherds, including a fine orange bodysherds, Achotes Black, and an undesigned cream polychrome. Together with an unslipped, bolstered rimsherd, these ceramics would indicate a Terminal Classic date. Once removed, the plaza floor was revealed, covered with fallen masonry from the collapse of M14-15. The plaza floor itself was somewhat well-preserved, but not so eroded that the ballast and cobblestones were visible beneath it. Recovered cultural materials from Lot 115 were very light and consisted of a pair of highly, eroded, nondiagnostic ceramic sherds.



#### WK09-A-40

Located in the excavation grid of M14-15, the matrix comprising this level consisted of a humic matrix resting atop rubble from the building collapse and the remaining sections of plaza floor. Recovered ceramic material numbered some 68 individual sherds, which included a thick bolstered rimsherd, Tinaja Red, Subin Red, and Achotes Black. The rubble from the collapsed masonry consisted of scattered construction fill and a few very well made pieces of cut limestone, almost certainly from the fall of the front of the central wall. The plaza floor was differentially preserved, the western section being in very good condition. The eastern section of the plaza floor was missing altogether with the floor foundations, ballast atop of fist-sized cobblestone, fully visible.

#### WK09-A-41

In the excavation grid of M14-15, this unit is made up of two separate lots, Lots 118 and 126. Lot 118 is backfill from the 2003 excavation and runs down the western southern side in an "L-shape" and extends slightly into Unit 44. Lot 126 is an unexcavated layer of humic material lying atop intact stonework. Recovered cultural materials included roughly 48 ceramic sherds and a single piece of broken chert. None of the ceramics were very diagnostic. Once the humus was removed, the

excavations revealed a very clear line of faced, smoothed and cut stones. This line of cut stones is part of the second rise leading up to the bench in the central chamber. Just below the step's rise, a well-preserved section of the plastered floor of the first rise is located in the eastern section of the unit. Above the line of stones, nothing remains of the plastered floor of the second rise except its foundations, the scattering of ballast stones, and a few scattered cobbles. In Lot 118, recovered cultural materials consisted solely of 7 broken, fragmentary, and nondiagnostic ceramic sherds.

#### WK09-A-42

In the excavation grid of M14-15, this unit was comprised entirely of Lot 120, being backfill from the 2003 excavations. The back fill was removed and this revealed a very clear line of faced, smoothed and cut stones. Many appeared to be their original location. The line of cut stones made up a portion of the second rise leading up to the bench in the western chamber. A section of a plastered floor, Floor #1, was preserved along the northern edge of the unit, but for much of the second rise, the plaster floor has deteriorated completely, exposing the ballast and cobblestone foundation. Recovered cultural materials consisted of a single fragment of obsidian and chert each and some 14 individual ceramic sherds. The sherds were small, fragmentary, and nondiagnostic.

#### WK09-A-43

Located in the excavation grid of M14-15, this unit consisted of a Lot 123, a thick humic layer lying atop the plaza floor with fallen masonry blocks suspended throughout (Figs. 1, 7). Cut stones, some with smoothed and faced sides, lay tumbled about the floor of the unit. The faced blocks greatly resemble those from Unit 38 and were probably part of the forward edge of M14-15's central wall (Fig. 8). The plaza floor was poorly preserved at the bottom of the unit, being visible only in irregular patches. Scattered ballast and cobbles were visible where the floor was eroded away. Recovered cultural materials consisted of three pieces of broken obsidian and about 13 ceramic sherds. Potsherds were heavily deteriorated and not diagnostic.

#### WK09-A-44

In the excavation grid of M14-15, this unit possesses two different lots. Lot 118, being backfill from the 2003 excavations, intrudes slightly in the southwestern corner of the unit and was excavated separately. Lot 124 comprised the vast majority of the unit and was made up of a thick humic layer lying atop intact masonry walls. Once removed, two lines of cut stone walls came into view. The first, running east-west, was the easternmost edge of the second rise leading up to the bench in the western chamber. The line of stones from the second rise abuts the western edge of the central wall, or the addition made to the western section of the

central wall. No section of plaza floor or plaster floor for the second rise was preserved with only a rough scatter of ballast being visible. Recovered cultural materials consisted solely of 11 ceramic sherds, all of which were small, eroded, and not diagnostic.

#### WK09-A-45

Unit 45, located in the excavation grid of M14-15, was excavated in three separate levels. Level 1, Lot 190, consisted of a thin humic layer lying atop the collapsed masonry of M14-15's central wall (Figs. 1, 7, 8). Once removed, excavators came down on the top of the remaining construction fill that made up the bulk of M14-15's central wall. The eastern edge of the central wall could barely be made out among all the fallen stones. One large and cut stone, with a smoothed and worked face was lying face-up, embedded in the construction fill. It could not have been part of the outer wall and so was the first evidence that worked and cut stones were incorporated into the structure's construction fill. This is almost certainly due to scavenging building materials from older structures in other parts of the site. Recovered materials consisted of only five ceramic sherds that were heavily damaged and included a single Terminal Classic "waxy" redware bodysherd.

Level 2, Lot 190, consisted of the bulk construction fill of M14-15's large central wall. The deposit of white marl, first encountered in Unit 63, was seen to extend beneath the central wall, necessitating the

removal of a large section of the central wall. The bulk construction consisted of large and small chunks of limestone, with hard-packed dirt surrounding them. The limestones included both well-shaped, rectangular masonry blocks tumbled together with irregular, heavily-weathered pieces of limestones, both buried deep within the bulk of the central wall. Recovered cultural materials consist of a small shell bead, a weather chunk of stucco, a piece of obsidian, four faunal bones, including turtle shell, and some 54 ceramic sherds. The recovered ceramics tended to be fairly well-preserved but did not possess any diagnostic ceramic attributes, save for a pair of Terminal Classic "waxy" redware bodysherds.

Level 3, Lot 199, consisted of the layer of hard-packed white marl overlying the twin burials of 20 and 21. The marl only extended over the northern two-thirds of the unit and was between 7.4 and 18.3 cm, with an average thickness of 11.1 cm. Only four ceramic sherds were recovered and included only a bodysherd of the as-yet undesignated Terminal Classic "waxy" blackware. No other materials were present. Underneath Unit 45, lay the western cut into Floor 5 that would lead to the discovery of Burial 20. Since excavating inside the ovoid floor cut required abandoning a one-meter square unit dimension, the decision was made to make succeeding material a different unit. Beneath Unit 45, Level 4, would be Unit 109, which would begin on Level 4.

#### WK09-A-46

Two separate lots make up Unit 46 in the excavation grid of M14-15. Lot 125 is backfill from the 2003 excavations and runs down the eastern side and southern side of unit in an "L shape" that measures 22-25cm thick. Lot 137 comprises the remainder of the unit and is a thin humic layer above the collapsed masonry of the western wall. Once the humus was removed, a well-defined line of cut stones came into view, being the forward edge of the remaining section of the western wall. Behind it, the bulk construction fill of the western wall could be discerned. No remaining section of plastered plaza floor was visible, having entirely eroded away. Recovered cultural materials for Lot 137 consisted of only seven individual ceramic sherds, none of which could be considered temporally diagnostic. In Lot 125, only seven nondiagnostic sherds were recovered as well.

#### WK09-A-47

In the excavation grid of M14-15, this unit was comprised completely of backfill from the 2003 excavations. Once this backfill was removed, the forward, southern edge of a bench could be made out. Excavators came down on the thick and well-preserved plaster floor of the central chamber, being Floor 2. The floor was in very good condition and had eroded only in one small section where a ballast stone could be discerned, poking through the floor. Floor #2, it should be pointed out,

extends underneath the bench. Recovered cultural materials consisted of over 77 ceramic sherds and 2 human bones, probably from Burial 5. Unfortunately, none of the ceramics appeared diagnostic.

#### WK09-A-48

In the excavation grid of M14-15, this is most probably a mixed unit, as the original excavation units from the 2003 investigations could not be located. This unit probably possesses both backfill returned after excavations were complete and previously unexcavated material. The excavators exposed part of a line of cut stones, comprising both the first rise of the eastern chamber and the southern edge of the central wall. This section of the central wall had collapsed completely, with its southeastern corner could not be distinguished amid all the fallen masonry and construction fill. The floor of the eastern chamber, Floor #2, had eroded away from much of the eastern section of this unit. Only a small and heavily eroded patch could be seen along the northern edge of the unit. Scattered ballast and cobblestones were visible where the floor had eroded away entirely. Recovered cultural materials consisted solely of about 32 ceramic sherds, all of which were weathered, small, and included only a small Terminal Classic "waxy" redware bodysherd.

#### WK09-A-49

Located in the excavation grid of M14-15, this unit is comprised entirely of

backfill from 2003 excavations. Once this backfill was removed, excavators revealed the very well preserved floor of the central chamber, Floor 2, and the collapsed southern edge of the bench. The floor was in very good condition with ballast stones poking through only in one small section in the middle of the floor. The smoothed and faced stones from the front edge of the bench had been pushed forward as the bench itself had compacted. The bench itself was constructed by stacking large flat stones atop one another and laying flat, slab like stones vertically in front. Recovered cultural materials consisted of a single human bone, probably from Burial 5, 2 pieces of obsidian, and about 35 ceramic sherds, which included a fine grey bodysherd.

#### WK09-A-50

In the excavation grid of M14-15, two separate lots make up Unit 50. Lot 133, being backfill from the 2003 excavations, made up the westernmost quarter of the unit, measuring, from south to north, the 25 to 28 cm of the unit. Lot 143 was made up of a thick humic layer lying atop the collapsed masonry and construction fill of the central wall. Recovered cultural materials from Lot 143 were few in number, numbering only 6 ceramics sherds, and included a single Terminal Classic "waxy" redware bodysherd as the only diagnostic ceramic. Once these two matrices were removed, excavators revealed a line of cut stone running roughly north-south, being the

eastern edge of the central wall. A small part of Floor 1, the well-preserved plastered floor of the western chamber, was uncovered at the base of the line of cut stones. The rest of the unit was the jumbled remains of the collapsed masonry and bulk construction fill of the central wall. From Lot 133, the recovered cultural materials included only 23 ceramic sherds, all of which were small, nondiagnostic and heavily fragmented.

#### WK09-A-51

Located in the M14-15 excavation grid, excavators dug Unit 51 in three distinct levels. Level 1, being Lot 134, consisted of a mixed lot, incorporating some of the back fill from the 2003 excavations together with previously unexcavated material. Soil conditions had it very difficult to clearly define the western units from 2003 and this is in the vicinity of 2003's Unit 9 (Alvarado 2004: Fig. 14). The remainder of the unit was made up of a thick humic layer lying atop collapsed masonry and the remains of the eastern chamber's plastered floor. However, since this unit may contain backfill material it cannot be said for certain that these materials are directly associated with the humic matrix. Once removed, a tumble of collapsed masonry and bulk construction fill had made the western section of the unit. This is certainly from the fall of the upper portions of the central wall across the eastern chamber. At the base of the fallen masonry, a badly eroded plastered floor was visible along the center and eastern portions

of the unit. The plaster floor, designated Floor #2, was in very poor shape and disintegrated almost entirely soon after it was revealed. In other parts of the unit, scattered ballast and cobblestones showed that the floor once extended completely across the whole of the eastern chamber. Recovered cultural materials included some 47 ceramic sherds, including a pair of fine orange bodysherds, Tinaja Red, Infierno Black, and a small, largely reconstructable "inkpot" vessel.

Level 2, Lot 189, was a mix of the collapsed masonry from the fall of the central wall. These materials were removed to the level of the level of the hard white marl below. Recovered materials consisted of an obsidian fragment, a piece of turtle shell and some 44 ceramic sherds, among which was a bolstered rimsherd. Ceramic materials were overall very poorly preserved.

Level 3, Lot 197, consisted of the level of hard-packed white marl. This marl was deposited over the twin internments of Burials 20 and 21. Virtually no cultural materials were recovered from this level, save for some 8 small ceramic sherds, one of which was a fine grey bodysherd, and a Tinaja Red bodysherd. Since subsequent excavations beneath the level of white marl would involve abandoning the one-meter square grid, it was decided that the excavations below Unit 51, being the excavations of the ovoid floor cut that would lead to Burials 20 and 21, would adopt new

unit numbers. Below Unit 51's Level 3, excavator would begin Unit 109, Level 4.

#### WK09-A-52

In the excavation grid of M14-15, this unit consisted of a humic layer lying atop collapsed masonry from the fall of the central wall. Both cut and worked stone, together with irregular and weathered limestone blocks, were suspended in the humic material. Recovered cultural materials numbered about 23 ceramic sherds, all of which were heavily fragmented and non-diagnostic in nature. Once this lot was removed, little trace remained of the plastered plaza floor, with only scattered ballast stones marking its probable existence. A line of cut stones was visible along the northern edge of the unit, marking the rise leading to the eastern chamber.

#### WK09-A-53

Located in the M14-15 excavation grid, this unit is comprised of a thick humic layer atop collapsed masonry, most probably from the eastern wall. The difficulty in defining some of the 2003 excavation units has led to the possibility that additional backfill material might have been deposited among the unexcavated humus. Once removed, this material revealed a line of cut stones running along the southern edge of the unit, being part of the rise leading to the eastern chamber. No portion of Floor #2 was preserved in this unit. Recovered cultural materials consisted of roughly 24 ceramic sherds, all of which

were small, fragmented, and nondiagnostic, and a single human bone fragment, probably from Burial 5.

#### WK09-A-54

In the M14-15 excavation grid, this unit was excavated in three different levels (Figs. 1, 7, 8). Level 1, Lot 138, consisted of a thin humic layer lying atop of the collapsed masonry and construction fill of the central wall. Recovered materials of a single obsidian fragment, 2 chert fragments, and 5 ceramic sherds. None of the ceramics possesses recognizable diagnostic attributes. Once this layer was cleared, the tops of the outer edges of the central wall were visible, extending up from the construction fill in between them. In order to more clearly define the techniques used in the construction of the central wall, excavators removed the construction fill and most of the retaining walls. It appears that the central wall was built by running two courses of large, flat stones, stacked one on top of the other and then placing a mix of soil and differently sized pieces of limestones in between them as construction fill.

Level 2, Lot 169, consisted of the bulk construction fill of the central wall. The construction fill included cut and smoothed pieces of limestone, probably taken from older abandoned structures from other parts of the site. Also, highly weathered and pitted stones were included in the fill as well, showing the indiscriminate nature of the materials used in the construction. Once the

construction bulk was removed, sections of the well-preserved plaster surface of Floor 1 could be discerned. It extends both underneath the bench in the western chamber and underneath the central wall itself. Recovered cultural materials from the construction fill were largely absent, but between the bottom of the fill and Floor 1 was situated a thin lens of scattered garbage. The material in this thin lens included 28 burned turtle bones and some 27 ceramic sherds. Among the ceramics were a large, unslipped bolstered rimsherd and a pair of highly distressed cream polychrome sherds.

Level 3, Lot 195, consisted of the well-compacted white marl deposit that overlay the interment in the eastern chamber. The thickness of the marl ranged between 31 to 76.5cm with an average thickness of 54.6cm, a very thick deposit indeed. Recovered cultural materials consisted of only of about 13 ceramic sherds, two of which were highly damaged Palmar group polychrome bodysherds. Beneath Unit 54's Level 3, was located the ovoid floorcut of Burial 20. The material beneath Floor 5 and inside the floorcut would be off the one-meter square grid, and hence, were considered separate units, all of which would begin on Level 4.

#### WK09-A-55

Located in the M14-15 excavation grid, this unit was excavated in three distinct levels and four different lots. Level 1, Lot 139, consisted of a thin humic layer lying

atop of the collapsed masonry and bulk construction fill of the central wall. The recovered cultural materials consisted of a single fragment of chert and three ceramic sherds, all of which were heavily damaged and non-diagnostic in nature. Once the humic matrix was removed, excavators revealed a line of cut stones poking up above a mass of fallen rubble. The collapsed rubble matches exactly the kind of stones used in the construction fill as discussed above.

Level 2 possessed two different lots. Lot 166 was the collapsed bulk masonry from the fall of the central wall. The central wall had fallen mostly to the east, bringing down most of the interior wall for the eastern chamber. The rubble lay directly atop the burned patches of Floor #4 (Fig. 7). Cultural material was scattered throughout the fallen rubble, but increased sharply towards the base of the lot. Once the half-meter of collapsed masonry was removed, it revealed the interior wall for the eastern chamber still standing .48 to .55 meters high. This interior wall was in poor shape, probably being held up solely up the collapsed rubble on either side. It had to be stabilized as soon as this rubble was removed. The wall had a pronounced lean to it of about 75-80 degrees in relation to the floor at its base. The interior wall ran east west and continued on into Unit 56. Excavation also revealed a fairly well preserved floor, probably another section of Floor 4. In the area above this burned plaster floor, a number of largish sherds were recovered

and may be from a single vessel.

Recovered cultural materials included a single piece of animal bone and about 58 ceramic sherds, which included a Subin Red bodysherd but no other diagnostic potsherds. It was obvious that to uncover the large white marl deposit, all the interior wall of the eastern chamber would have to be removed. The section of this wall in Unit 55 was dubbed Lot 187, the lot, being then, the western section of the interior wall for the eastern chamber (Fig. 7). The material consisted of large, flat stones, shaped into squares with smoothed sides facing south. The northern side of the wall was made up of compacted rough-cut stones packed into place. Recovered materials from Lot 187 consisted solely of eleven shell fragments and eleven ceramic sherds, none of which possessed obvious diagnostic attributes. The wall stood directly atop sections of Floor #4 and the white marl deposit itself.

Level 3, Lot 191, was the well-compacted, white marl deposit itself. The thickness of the marl in this level was between 20 to 60cm with an average thickness of about 40cm. Some 80 ceramic sherds were recovered from the marl deposit. While all of these ceramic sherds were very small, they included a single fine orange bodysherd, examples of the Terminal Classic "waxy" redware, Tinaja Red, Subin Red, Infierno Black, and a highly distressed Palmar Group polychrome. Beneath Unit 55, Level 3 is Unit 109, the material below the ovoid floorcuts and Burials 20 and 21.

WK09-A-56

In the M14-15 excavation grid, this unit consists of three levels and four different lots. Level 1, being Lot 140, is made up of a humic layer lying on top of collapsed masonry. Recovered cultural materials included only 12 ceramic sherds, all of which were highly distressed and non-diagnostic in nature. In this unit, the line of cut stones protruding from the rubble was not visible as it was in Unit 55. After the removal of the collapsed masonry from Unit 55, it was decided to remove the rubble in the similar area of Unit 56 in order to follow the interior wall eastwards. This led to the full uncovering of the eastern chamber's interior wall and the abutment of it with the East Wall of M14-15.

Level 2, Lot 165, consisted of the masonry rubble from the collapse of the central wall. Scattered among the fallen stones, were five pieces of broken chert and roughly 54 ceramic sherds, with a large number of reddish-orange sherds. Most, if not all, of the large number of these sherds are probably from the same vessel, displaying similar wear patterns, similar paste makeup and the same dark reddish-brown slip, poorly bonded to the paste below. Once this material was removed the eastern section of the interior wall of the eastern chamber became visible. This section of the wall was heavily damaged by the roots of a large, nearby puntero tree. In fact, the wall possessed a 70-degree tilt to the south and only the fallen rubble held it



up. Excavators had to stabilize the wall with wooden supports to prevent it from immediately collapsing. A poorly-preserved plaster floor was revealed, but was only visible in one long patch in the western section of the unit. The plaster was identical to that found in Unit 55, the plaster floor being burned in place. The roots of the puntero tree effectively erased any floor in the middle of the unit, although traces of the floor, in the form of scattered ballast stones, could be observed in the eastern section of the unit. The white marl deposit, first observed in unit 64, ran underneath this interior wall and, once mapped, drawn and photographed, the interior wall was removed. The wall material comprised Lot 188 and consisted of a mix of largish limestones, cut masonry blocks, and the hard-packed medium that held them together, albeit loosely. Only 12, small, eroded, ceramic sherds were recovered.

Level 3, Lot 196, was the white marl deposit lying directly beneath floor 4 and the interior wall of the eastern chamber. The marl was hard-packed and well compacted, the result of sitting below limestone architecture for twelve centuries. The marl was colored an ashy grey-white with occasional streaks of browner soil. It was 14.6 to 55.6cm thick, with an average thickness of 25.28cm. The recovered cultural materials include an obsidian fragment, 5 pieces of shell and roughly 44 individual ceramic sherds. Among the ceramics was a fine orange bodysherd, and a Terminal Classic "waxy" redware

bodysherd, as well as some unusual polychrome sherds. One sherd being an undesignated cream polychrome with Anonal-like designs with a darker red and a thin red blended "wash" of the same applied as a neighboring decorative element, and another with very thin walls and hard, well-fired paste. The paste seems similar to the fine pastewares, but lacks the "chalky" features associated with it.

#### WK09-A-57

Located in the excavation grid of M14-15, Unit 57 was excavated in two different levels. Level 1, Lot, 141, consisted of a thin humic layer lying on top of collapsed masonry blocks. Recovered cultural materials included three fragments of chert and roughly 76 individual ceramic sherds, none of which appear to be diagnostic. Once these materials were removed, excavators uncovered fallen masonry blocks clustered in the eastern section of the unit, almost certainly from the fall of the eastern wall. It was hoped that with the removal of the fallen masonry, more of Floor 2 would be exposed. However, no traces of a plaster floor could be located other than a scatter of possible ballast stones. Such stones, it should be pointed out, could have easily originated with the collapse of the eastern wall. The level ended when excavators encountered a deposit of hard-packed white marl.

To keep the level numbers consistent, the white marl in Unit 57 was given a level number of three, as the white

marl was often the third level encountered in other units of the eastern section of M14-15. Hence, Level 3, Lot 198, is the succeeding level in the unit. It is made up of a well-compacted white marl lying beneath the faint remains of Floor 4. Cultural remains were scant, numbering only 13 ceramic sherds. Among these collected ceramics included Achotes Black and Infierno Black bodysherds and an unslipped hollow podal support. The layer of white marl averaged 26.14cm thick with the thickness in the northeast corner measuring an outstanding 74cm.

#### WK09-A-58

In the M14-15 excavation grid, this unit, Lot 142, consisted entirely of a thick humic layer. To maneuver around a young cedro tree, the unit had to be somewhat irregular shape and one large section of the unit was not excavated, giving the unit a clipped appearance. Recovered cultural materials, consisting of two fragments of chert and some 43 ceramic sherds, which were, unfortunately, small, heavily damaged, eroded, and did not appear to be diagnostic in nature. Once removed, excavators revealed two lines of cut stones. One, running east west was the eastern extension of the rise leading up to the eastern chamber and Floor 2. In the easternmost section of the unit, another north-south course of stones probably represents the western edge of the eastern wall. The two, of course, probably meet, of course, in the

unexcavated area directly beneath the cedro tree.

#### WK09-A-59

In the M14-15 excavation grid, this unit, Lot 144, is composed entirely of backfill from the 2003 excavations, being roughly equivalent to that investigation's Units 18 and 25. Once removed, excavators revealed the western portion of the bench and a large section of Floor 3. The bench itself, also described in Units 47 and 49 above, consisted of a series of large flat stones stacked atop each other and fronted with well-cut, regularly sized, and smoothed faces. The top of the bench was then smoothed over with a thick plaster surface. The westernmost section of the bench still had the plaster seat intact and easily visible. The plaster seat was completely eroded from the other parts of the bench. Floor 3 was well preserved and clearly visible on either side of the bench. Floor 1 can, in fact, be seen continuing underneath the bench. A large cut in the floor immediately behind the bench is from the 2003 excavations, equivalent to that investigation's Unit 25 and the local of Burial 5. Recovered cultural materials was limited to roughly 58 individual ceramic sherds, which included a Terminal Classic "waxy" redware bodysherd.

#### WK09-A-60

Located in the M14-15 grid, this unit, Lot 145, is composed entirely of backfill from the 2003 excavations, being roughly equivalent to that investigation's Units 18

and 25. Once removed, the bench in the central chamber was completely revealed. The eastern section of the bench is mostly intact, although not in as good a condition as the western section. The plaster seat was completely eroded away, revealing the large flat stone making up the bench's central mass. The construction of the bench abuts the extension of the central wall built to accommodate it. Floor 3 was very well preserved and the large cut placed into the northern section a result of the 2003 investigations. It corresponds with the location of that investigation's Unit 25. Recovered materials were very scant, confined to about eleven ceramic sherds, none of which were diagnostic.

#### WK09-A-61

In the M14-15 excavation grid, this unit, Lot 146, consisted of a humic layer atop surviving architecture. There is probably a small amount of backfill from the 2003 excavations scattered in the northern and western sections of the unit. However, soil conditions made it impossible to distinguish between the two. Recovered cultural materials were few in number, heavily damaged and non-diagnostic in nature. Once removed, excavators revealed the westernmost section of the bench discussed above. They also came down on the very well preserved plaster of Floor 3 and the outer course of stone for the central wall. The central wall itself was somewhat irregular in shape with a section, probably added on after the construction of the

central wall itself, forward and to one side of the bench. This addition probably dates to the construction of the bench. Floor 3, it should be noted, clearly extends underneath the bench, the central wall, and this possible addition. A large cut in Floor 1 corresponds with Unit 25 from the 2003 excavations. Part of the cut, however, does not correspond to the outlines of unit 25 as described in Alvarado 2004. This, in all likelihood, is the original cut made through Floor 1 when Burial 5 was placed behind the bench under the floor. Recovered materials were limited to four pieces of chert and 31 ceramic sherds, including a Subin Red bodysherd.

#### WK09-A-62

Located in the M14-15 excavation grid, this unit was excavated in three levels in four lots (Figs. 1, 7, 8). Level 1, Lot 147 consisted of a very thin humic layer lying atop of the collapsed masonry and construction fill of the central wall. The sediment was a grey-brown matrix, which became ashy and even powdery upon drying. Soil turbation was very slight. Recovered cultural materials consisted of six ceramic sherds, all of which were small, battered, and nondiagnostic. As in unit 54 above, the construction fill would be removed in order to determine the method of construction of the central wall and to expand investigations into the deposit of white marl that overlay Burials 20 and 21.

Level 2, Lot 167, consisted of construction fill and the two retaining walls of

the structure's central wall (Fig. 7). The central wall was apparently constructed by using two parallel courses of stones. These courses were made up of large, flat and generally unworked stones stacked one atop the other in a "pancake" fashion.

Afterwards, differently sized stones and dirt were poured between the two courses. As in Unit 54, in the core fill itself were both worked stones certainly scavenged from other structures as well as highly weathered stones, both types buried together deep into the central wall itself. Recovered cultural material from the construction fill of Level 2 was very light and heavily damaged, completely non-diagnostic in nature, being only five ceramic sherds. Once this construction fill was removed, excavators came down on a series of large limestone blocks deeply sunk into a hard-packed deposit of white marl. The marl spilled over the large limestone foundations and into the cut of Floor 5.

Since the large foundation stones and large pieces of the white marl deposit were, more or less, at the same degree of elevation, both were treated as separate lots on the same level, Level 3 in this case. Level 3, Lot 192, consists of the hard-packed, well-compacted white marl that lay directly beneath the central wall. It contained only a single battered and non-diagnostic ceramic sherd. The white marl was deposited directly on top of and inside the ovoid cut of Burial 20. Level 3, Lot 200, was the layer of very large foundation stones supporting the weight of the

construction fill of the central wall. The line of stones covered both the western side of Burial 20 and rested directly atop the marl above Burial 20. The foundation stones and the marl were intermixed to a large extent and could not have been deposited at different times. The white marl must have been laid down first, then the foundation stones laid across the top of Burial 20, and then more marl packing around those stones and above Floor 5. Obviously, the construction of M14-15 must have been conceived of as a whole upon the interment of the Burials 20 and 21 individuals. Recovered cultural materials were scanty, numbering only some 20 small, battered and nondiagnostic ceramic sherds. Beneath and inside the ovoid floor cut was placed Unit 109.

#### WK09-A-63

In the M14-15 excavation grid, Unit 63 was excavated in two distinct layers. Level 1, Lot 148, consists of a very thick humic layer atop Floor 5 and the collapsed masonry blocks suspending within it. The rubble fall here was much less than in other units, even lighter than that excavated in Unit 57. Once removed, excavators could clearly define the northern edge of the interior wall of the eastern chamber. A very well-preserved plaster floor was revealed, Floor 5, along the northern edge of the unit. Floor 5 is much lower than Floor 3, measuring 10 to 15cm lower, depending on which two points are comparing. Floor 5 had a clear oval-shaped cut in it that

continues onto Unit 64. Above and inside the cut is the deposit of white marl overlying the internments of Burials 20 and 21. The recovered cultural materials consisted of some 67 ceramic sherds, among which was a fine orange bodysherd and examples of Subin Red, Tinaja Red and a highly distressed polychrome bodysherd.

The succeeding level was the layer of white marl, however, to maintain consistency with the units described above, the layer was designated Level 3. Level 3, Lot 193, was a layer of white marl, an very fine greyish white color with occasional brownish streaks running through it. The marl clung to artifacts, making them difficult to wash. The cultural materials recovered here consisted of some 35 ceramic sherds, including Subin red rimsherd and Tinaja Red bodysherds. Below Unit 63 lay the internments themselves, being Unit 109.

#### WK09-A-64

In the M14-15 excavation grid, this unit was excavated in two levels (Figs. 1, 7). Level 1, Lot 149, consisted of a deep humic level lying on top of Floor 5 and a scattering of fallen masonry. There is significant root damage from a nearby puntero tree. The puntero tree has, in all likelihood, blown out the pieces of the eastern wall in this unit and collapsed the cyst of Burial 21. During excavation, fallen rubble from the collapse of the structure was much less in this unit than in the others and was significant only around the interior wall of the eastern chamber. A very well-preserved floor, Floor 5, was

revealed throughout the northern part of the unit. The plaster floor was in good shape, thick and a brilliant white when cleaned. The ovoid floor cut leading to Burial 21 curves around to the south and disappears beneath the crumbling interior wall. Associated with the cut in the floor is a large deposit of white marl. This deposit takes up most of the area of the cut and extends beneath the interior wall as well. Cultural materials recovered included a shaped ceramic bead, a fragment of obsidian, and roughly 27 ceramic sherds that include numerous refits of an undesignated red-orange vessel.

The succeeding layer, Lot 194, designated Level 3, for consistency, was the hard packed and well compacted deposit of white marl that extended over the southern two-thirds of the unit. It generally covered the area inside the ovoid floor cut and above Floor 5. Cultural materials recovered from this lot included 3 shell fragments and some 22 ceramic sherds, with a Subin Red rimsherd, Tinaja Red bodysherds, and a few very distressed Palmar Group polychrome designs. The white marl was between 35.7 and 8.9cm in thickness, with an overall average of 16.8cm. Beneath this level was Unit 109, the material immediately overlying the internments of Burials 20 and 21.

#### WK09-A-65

In the excavation grid of M14-15, Unit 65, Lot 150, consists of a thin humic layer lying atop the collapsed masonry and bulk construction fill of the western wall.

Once removed, excavators revealed a line of cut stones running north to south with an 8-11 degree orientation off of magnetic north. This is the eastern edge of the western wall. The western wall itself was revealed to be quite thick, measuring 52cm in places. It was constructed in the same manner of as the central wall, being two courses of stonework of large flat stones stacked one atop the other with construction fill placed between them. Floor 2 was revealed and extends beneath the western wall. In order to clearly define the western wall, excavators cleaned the western course of stones and discovered the edge of Floor 2, located on the *western* side of the wall, protruding 6-7cm past the western edge of the western wall. Recovered cultural materials were scanty, consisting of a piece of chert, one of obsidian, and some 31 ceramic sherds, including a pair Terminal Classic "waxy" redware bodysherds.

#### WK09-A-66

In the excavation grid of M14-15, this unit consisted of a single very thin humic level lying atop of the collapsed masonry and construction fill of the western wall. Once removed, excavators revealed the junction between the bench, described in Units 59 and 60 above, and the western wall and the courses of stone that make up the western wall. The western wall continues on its slightly diagonal course to abut the North wall of the structure. Similar to the central wall, the western wall contains both heavily weathered stones and nicely cut blocks of

limestone mixed together in the construction fill. Cultural materials consisted solely of some 16 ceramic sherds, which were wholly nondiagnostic.

#### WK09-A-67

Located in the excavation grid of M14-15, this unit, Lot 151, consisted entirely of backfill from the 2003 excavations. Once removed, excavators revealed the northern section of the well-preserved Floor 3 and its junction with M14-15's back wall. Floor 3 clearly abuts the North wall, ending at its base. The North wall was uncovered, and appeared to have been constructed in the same manner as all the major walls of M14-15, including the central wall and the western wall, being bulk construction fill sandwiched between two courses of stacked flat stones. This unit is slightly irregular, as the fall of a large chico tree tore out a large section of the structure, particularly the section where the western wall would have contacted the rear wall. A significant cut in Floor 3 was visible and corresponds with Unit 25 from the 2003 excavations.

Recovered cultural materials consisted of a nicely shaped biface point and some 22 ceramic sherds, including a Tinaja Red bodysherd.

#### WK09-A-68

In the excavation grid of M14-15, this unit, Lot 153, consisted entirely of backfill from the 2003 excavations. Once removed, excavators revealed a substantial section of the rear wall and of Floor 3. The

rear wall clearly runs east to west with a 95- to 97-degree orientation. The manner of its construction appears to be identical to that used in both the central and western walls. A section of Floor 3 was revealed along the base of the wall, where it clearly abuts the stones of the rear walls. A large cut through Floor 3 in this unit corresponds to Unit 25 from the 2003 excavations. Cultural material recovered from the level is made up of only some 54 ceramic sherds, including a fine orange bodysherd.

#### WK09-A-69

In the excavation grid of M14-15, this unit, Lot 154, consisted entirely of backfill from the 2003 excavations. Once removed, excavators came down on the southern course of stones from the North wall. The eastern course of stones from the central wall contacts the rear wall, clearly abutting it. Obviously, the North wall was constructed prior to the Central wall. A well-preserved section of Floor 3 was recovered as well, revealing two different cuts that penetrate it. One is the square and well-defined cut made by the intrusion of Unit 25 from the 2003 excavations. The other is an oval cut at the eastern edge of the 2003, cut and is the cut made through Floor 3 to place Burial 5 under the floor and behind the bench. Recovered cultural materials included a human bone, probably from Burial 5, and some 55 ceramic sherds, including a large fine orange basesherd, and an unslipped molcajete fragment, and

examples of both the Terminal Classic “waxy” redwares and Tinaja Red.

#### WK09-A-70

Located in the excavation grid of M14-15, this unit was excavated in two distinct levels. Level 1, lot 155, consisted of a thin humic lying atop of the collapsed masonry and construction fill of both the Central and North walls. Once removed it revealed the clearly defined junction of those walls. The Central wall clearly abuts, and therefore postdates, the North wall.

Recovered cultural materials consisted solely of some 12 ceramic sherds, which included a Tinaja Red bodysherd, but no other diagnostic pieces.

Level 2, Lot 168, was the construction fill and retaining wall for a large section of the Central wall. In Unit 62 and 63, it was noticed that the deposit of white marl extended beneath this section of the wall and therefore, to investigate what lay below the deposit, this section was removed. The rear wall, predating the deposit of white marl, was left untouched. Once removed, excavators revealed a substantial section of Floor 2 where it extends beneath much of the Central wall. There appeared a course of large limestone foundation blocks sunken into a deposit of hard-packed marl. This deposit, as described above, is associated with the oval-shaped cut in Floor 5, covering sections of the cut and overlapping parts of it, and extending beneath Floor 3 and the Central wall. The recovered materials were

restricted to seven fragmented and nondiagnostic ceramic sherds.

#### WK09-A-71

In the excavation grid of M14015, this unit, Lot 156, consisted of fallen masonry and rubble from the collapse of the central wall. Once removed, excavators revealed the southern course of stones that make up the North wall. The well-preserved surface of Floor 5 could be discerned. A large amount of the white marl deposit associated with the oval-shaped cut in Floor 5 from Units 63 and 64 was visible as well. There is a course of large limestone foundation blocks half sunk into this deposit that are well secured and difficult to remove. Recovered cultural materials consisted of three pieces of obsidian and chert each, as well as about 34 ceramic sherds, including a fine orange bodysherd and an unslipped hollow podal support.

#### WK09-A-72

Located in the excavation grid of M14-15, this unit, Lot 157, consisted mostly of the rubble and masonry collapse from the fall of the central and eastern walls. Once removed, the southern course of stones from the rear wall was revealed, giving a good view of the large flat stones comprising it. The northeastern corner of the unit is believed to be the northeastern corner of M14-15 itself, where the eastern wall contacts the rear wall. However, a very large puntero tree just to the east of the unit makes further exploration of this impossible.

A section of the very well preserved Floor #3 was revealed to closely abut the rear and eastern walls. Recovered cultural materials were virtually non-existent, being only two very small obsidian fragments

#### WK09-A-73

Located in the excavation grid of M14-15, Unit 73 is made up of two separate lots. Lot 158 is backfill from the 2003 excavations, probably the location with that investigation's Unit 4. Lot 158 takes up the northern two-thirds of the unit, being everything north of the line of cut stones described below. Lot 159, on the other hand, is previously unexcavated material, being a humic layer lying atop of the remains of the plaza floor. Once excavators cleared these lots, a line of cut stones was revealed, running directly east west, probably being part of a rise leading to the far western chamber of M14-15. The relative dearth of rubble and collapsed masonry do not argue for a standing wall, and a slight step seems a more likely scenario. This rise is divided from the rises leading to the bench by a low wall of cobbles and stacked limestone blocks. Scattered ballast and exposed cobbles indicate that a plastered floor probably once covered the area above this first rise. A very large palo de diable tree prevented further excavation to the west and introduced substantial intrusion into the unit from the roots of the tree. The recovered cultural materials from Lot 159 consisted of an obsidian fragment and some 64 individual ceramic sherds,



including examples of Subin Red, Tinaja Red, and Infierno Black. From Lot 158, some 57 ceramic sherds were recovered, which include examples of Tinaja Red and a partial vessel. The vessel itself is a smallish, baseball-sized tecomate. The surface treatment is smoothed and slipped in a monochrome reddish brown, but the original surface is highly distressed and color determination remains tentative.

#### WK09-A-74

In the excavation grid of M14-15, this unit, Lot 160, consists entirely of backfill from the 2003 season, most likely corresponding to that investigation's Unit 17. This unit was irregularly shaped, modified to avoid having to cut the roots of a tall celion tree on the unit's north side. For this reason, the unit is slightly lopsided, measuring 1 x 0.82 meters. Once the backfill was removed, excavators revealed a line of cut stones running east to west. This line is probably part of a second rise leading to another plaster floor located on the step above it. A poorly preserved, but still visible, plaster floor covers much of the unit. This was designated Floor 6. It was not in good shape with ballast stones scattered across it and foundation cobbles poking through its eroded surface. Recovered cultural materials consist of a fragment of alabaster and some 38 ceramic sherds with examples of Tinaja Red, and a large fine orange censer fragment.

#### WK09-A-75

In the excavation grid of M14-15, this unit, Lot 161, consists of a previously unexcavated humic layer lying atop collapsed rubble and a poorly-preserved plaster floor. Unit 75 is somewhat irregularly shaped, shaped in order to avoid having to cut significantly the roots of a nearby celion tree in the unit's southeastern corner. Once removed, excavators revealed the remains of a heavily-cracked but still intact plaster floor, a floor subsequently designated Floor 7. Floor 7 roughly measures 17 to 24 centimeters above Floor 6 on the step below it. Floor 7 is heavily-cracked and disturbed with ballast stones scattered across its surface and exposed foundation cobbles visible across its surface. The western side of the western wall was visible in the unit's eastern section. The interior wall of the western chamber was not recognizable in this unit, due to the large amount of fallen rubble. Only a few stones scattered at the bottom of the unit marked the passage of this wall. Recovered cultural materials consisted of a fragment of obsidian and some 40 ceramic sherds, including a fine orange bodysherd, probably a molcajete fragment.

#### WK09-A-76

In the excavation grid of M14-15, this unit, Lot 162, consists entirely of backfill from the 2003 excavations, being roughly equivalent to that investigation's Unit 11 (Alvarado 2004: Fig. 14). Once removed, the excavators uncovered a line of cut stone laid down along an east-west line. This line

of stones is the continuation from Unit 74, being the rise for a second step leading to the much decayed western chamber. The stones are well worked, of fairly uniform size, and have a worked and smoothed surface facing south. Behind this line of stones, in Unit 77 to the north, is Floor 7. Floor 6 extends into Unit 76 although its quality of preservation declines precipitously. The plaster floor itself exists only in two ragged patches, and scattered ballast and exposed foundation cobbles cover where the floor once extended. A very large Palo de Diablo tree prevented further excavation to the south, and the unit had significant intrusion from the roots of that tree. Recovered cultural materials include only 24 ceramic sherds with examples of Subin Red, Tinaja Red, and Infierno Black bodysherds.

#### WK09-A-77

In the excavation grid of M14-15, this unit, Lot 163, consists entirely of backfill from the 2003 excavations and is roughly equivalent to that investigation's Unit 11 (Alvarado 2004: Fig. 14). Once that material was removed, a large section of Floor 7 came into view. The plaster floor was in much better shape in this unit than in Unit 75. Fallen masonry and rubble collapse from the interior wall of the western chamber was scattered across the floor. It also uncovered the first course of stones for all that remained of the interior wall. Recovered cultural materials were light,

numbering only some 21 ceramic sherds, none of which proved diagnostic.

#### WK09-A-78

Located in the excavation grid of M14-15, this unit, Lot 164, is a thin humic level lying atop of substantial masonry collapse from the fall of the western wall. Once this material was cleared, the western section of the western wall was clearly visible. Little else remained, however. If the reconstruction given above is accurate, this would have been inside the sealed off western chamber, above the internments of Burials 22 and 23. The unit had obviously seen significant erosion. Recovered cultural materials included a complete high-quality chert biface and about 56 well-preserved, largish ceramic bodysherds. None of the ceramics, unfortunately, possessed diagnostic attributes.

#### WK09-A-79

In M14-15, this unit, Lot 170, consisted of a thick humic level lying atop the remains of the plaza floor. This unit was placed in order to find the continuation of the line of stones described in Unit 73. The unit was placed one meter to the west to avoid having to substantially cut the roots of the neighboring Palo de Diablo tree to the south. Unfortunately no architecture of any kind was revealed with the excavations and the line of cut stones uncovered in Unit 73 does not continue on the other side of the Palo de Diablo tree, or it has not been preserved in a

recognizable form. This unit was excavated to the level of the plaza floor. The degree of erosion close to the edge of the hill, together with substantial turbation from the tree seems to have effectively erased any architectural features here, if, in fact, they existed. Excavators did come down on a scatter of garbage which involved a pair of animal bones identified by Don Mateo Tut Paau as deer and turkey. This was in addition to six pieces of obsidian and roughly 116 ceramic sherds. The ceramics include examples of a fine orange bodysherd, Subin Red, Tinaja Red, and, Palmar Orange Polychrome. Glyphic elements are present on one of the polychrome bodysherds.

#### WK09-A-80

In the M14-15 excavation grid, Unit 80, Lot 171, is probably a mixed context, as the area was marked as having been excavated in 2003 as that investigation's Unit 14 (Alvarado 2004: Fig. 14). However, the exact limits of that unit could not be located and the rich brown soil color and copious number of artifacts would appear to argue against this. It cannot, at the current time, be clearly determined whether this was a backfilled unit or not. Once this material was removed, a line of cut stone was visible along the northern edge of the unit. This was the same line of stone continuing from Unit 76, being the second rise to the second step leading to the interior wall of the western chamber. As in Unit 76, the stones are well set, worked, fairly uniform in size

and possess a worked, smoother surface facing south. The plastered surface from Floor 6 did not survive in this unit and the floor itself is discernable only as a series of exposed ballast and foundation cobblestones. Recovered cultural materials were copious and included a pair of obsidian fragments together with 117 well-preserved ceramic sherds. Among the ceramics were examples of fine orange, Subin Red, Tinaja Red, Palmar Orange Polychrome, two unslipped hollow podal supports, and, single high-quality polychrome bodysherd bearing distinct glyphic elements.

#### WK09-A-81

In the excavation grid of M14-15, this unit consisted of a fairly thick humic layer lying atop the remains of Floor 7 between two set courses of stone. The plaster surface of the floor was present only in scattered patches, in places, the evidence of the floor itself consisted solely of scattered ballast and foundation cobbles. Two lines of cut stones, both oriented east-west, were uncovered along the northern and southern edges of the unit. The southern line of stones is part of the second rise that leads to Floor 7 as described above. Indeed, the course of stones along this unit's edge is simply a portion of the stones commented on across the north edge of Unit 80. This close to the edge of the hillock, the architecture becomes very distressed and difficult to read. Most likely, there was a wall, the mirror of the eastern wall, running along the far western edge of

the structure. This wall is discussed in Units 85 and 86, below. Recovered cultural materials include two pieces of obsidian, six of chert, and 54 ceramic sherds, none of which proved diagnostic.

#### WK09-A-82

Located in the M14-15 excavation grid, Unit 82, Lot 173, consists of a single layer of ashy grey-brown humus atop collapsed rubble. Once this material was removed, the northern side of the interior wall was revealed for the western chamber. The interior wall was in very poor condition, with only the first few courses of stone being present. No trace of a plastered floor remained inside the western chamber, if, in fact, there was one. The broken capstones of the collapsed cyst crypts of Burial 22 protruded up through the bottom of the unit. Because the burials were so unusual and did not fit into the excavation grid, each burial remains as its own unit. Below this unit is Unit 118, Burial 22. Recovered cultural materials of this unit include 5 pieces of obsidian and roughly 101 ceramic sherds, all of which were small, damaged, and nondiagnostic.

#### WK09-A-83

In the excavation grid of M14-15, Unit 83, Lot 174, consists of a single humic layer on top of the collapsed rubble and masonry of the western chamber. Once removed, the rear section of the interior wall was revealed, although the interior wall was so damaged, a detailed reading of it remains

impossible. Only the first few courses of stone have, in fact, survived. Recovered cultural materials include a ground chert disc, an obsidian fragment, an animal bone fragment, a piece of broken chert, and some 87 individual ceramic sherds. Among the ceramics were examples of the Terminal Classic "waxy" redwares and Subin Red.

#### WK09-A-84

In the excavation grid of M14-15, Unit 84 was comprised of two separate lots. Lot 176, which occupies the northern two-thirds of the unit, was backfill from the 2003 excavations while Lot 183 represents the thin ashy grey-brown humic layer present across Structure M14-15. Once this material was removed, excavators revealed the patchy remains of a plaster floor, possibly portions of Floor 6, and a north-south line of stones. This stonework only possessed its first course of stone and represents an unknown architectural feature in relation to M14-15. The stonework is reminiscent of the steps in front of each of M14-15's chamber, however, this step runs north-south and would have led to a potentially fourth room to the west. However, the edge of the hillock is so close and the erosion so severe, any additional architecture on the western side of the building would have long since tumbled down the hill. From the humic layer, Lot 183, the recovered cultural materials consist of a delicate shell earflare fragment, fourteen fragments of chert, and roughly 100 individual ceramic sherds, which includes a

both examples of fine grey and Tinaja Red. Recovered material from Lot 176 consists of two fragments of obsidian, 3 potentially human bones, possibly from Burial 5, two pieces of chert, and 64 ceramic sherds, which includes fine orange, Tinaja Red, and a hollow podal support.

#### WK09-A-85

Within the excavation grid of M14-15, Unit 85, Lot 177, consisted entirely of backfill from the 2003 excavations. Once removed, excavators uncovered a large patch of well preserved, but thin, plaster floor. The floor itself may be the step for another, far western, chamber that has since fallen off the hill. The state of preservation on this part of the structure is simply too difficult to tell. A line of cut stones runs north to south along the eastern side of the unit. Only a single course of stone has been preserved; it cannot be determined whether this is the remains of a wall for the rise on a step. The second possibility is the more likely, however. The stones themselves are rectangularly cut and shaped, smoothed and faced on six sides. It appears that this is the top surface and rise for a step that, currently, leads to nowhere. Recovered cultural material included a fragment of obsidian, a pair of animal bones, two pieces of chert and some 58 ceramic sherds, including a large, damaged fine grey bodysherd and examples of the Tinaja Red ceramic type.

#### WK09-A-86

Inside the M14-15 excavation grid, this unit, Lot 178, consists entirely of backfill from the 2003 excavations. Once removed, excavators revealed a large pile of hard-packed masonry, obviously the remains of a wall. This wall section probably represented the far western wall of M14-15, the back portions of which have fallen down the hill. The wall itself was constructed in the same manner as the central wall, a retaining wall with bulk construction fill piled alongside and packed together. An unusual feature with this wall was, however, a line of smoothed, cut and faced stone blocks. The masonry blocks were facing towards the east, facing the bulk construction fill. They may be scavenged block packed into the fill of the fitted stone exterior for a missing structure further to the west. Excavators recovered some 31 ceramic sherds, all of which were small, fragmentary, eroded, and nondiagnostic.

#### WK09-A-87

In the M14-15 excavation grid, this unit, Lot 179, consisted of a humic layer lying atop the collapsed rubble of the western chamber. Once removed, excavators uncovered the crumbled remains of a far western wall to M14-15. The wall had been reduced to its foundation stones and the top of the capstones to Burial 22 protruded above the unexcavated ground surface. The damage to this section of the structure was virtually complete. The line of faced and smoothed cut stone blocks, described in the Unit 86 description above,

continues until it reaches the same point at which all the building's architecture reaches. On Figure 7, the hill contours clearly mark the line at which any remaining architecture simply fell off the back of the hillock. Excavators recovered an obsidian fragment and some 33 ceramic sherds, all of which were small, eroded, and nondiagnostic, save for a single Tinaja Red bodysherd.

#### WK09-A-88

Located in the M14-15 excavation grid, Unit 88, Lot 180, is a thin humic layer lying atop the collapsed masonry of the western chamber. Once excavators removed the humus, virtually no architecture was revealed, only the large capstones of Burial 23 that protruded through the unexcavated ground surface. Whatever architecture had stood here, it has long washed off the back of the hill. Excavators uncovered a smattering of materials, including a pair of obsidian fragments, three pieces of chert and some 67 individual ceramic sherds, with examples of the Terminal Classic "waxy" redware, Tinaja Red, and a large, well-preserved fine orange molcajete fragment.

#### WK09-A-89

In the excavation grid of M14-15, Unit 89, Lot 181, is a thick humic layer lying atop the collapsed masonry of the western chamber. Once removed, virtually no architecture had survived, only large pieces of weathered limestone and the capstones of the collapsed cyst of Burial 22 protruding

from the surface. Excavators did recover numerous materials, however, including some 40 large shell fragments, a ceramic spindle whorl, an obsidian fragment, and about 106 ceramic sherds, all of which were small, weathered, and nondiagnostic.

#### WK09-A-90

In the excavation grid of M14-15, Unit 90, Lot 182, was a single level of humus lying atop a thin scattering of limestone blocks. Unit 90 was directly on the edge of the hillock and excavating it at such an angle proved difficult and awkward. Excavators removed the humus to uncover only a thin scattering of collapsed masonry and one large, smoothed metate fragment. Recovered cultural materials were three pieces of chert and some 56 ceramic sherds, among which included examples of Tinaja Red and Infierno Black types.

#### WK09-A-91

Inside the excavation grid of M14-15, Unit 94, Lot 184, consisted of a single level of humus lying atop the collapsed masonry and decayed plaza floor at the southeast corner of the structure. Excavators uncovered no remains of a plastered plaza floor, only the scattered ballast stone foundation. Tumbled masonry blocks, probably from the collapse of the step and the East wall lay atop the ballast stones. Some of the stones were cut masonry blocks, smoothed on one side but not oriented in any direction. Recovered cultural materials consisted of a single piece

of obsidian and some 67 ceramic sherds, including examples of Tinaja red and some highly distressed Palmar Group polychromes.

#### WK09-A-92

In the excavation grid of M14-15, Unit 92, Lot 185, consists of a single humic layer lying atop the collapsed masonry of the East wall. Excavators cleared away the humus to find scattered masonry blocks, probably from the front of the East wall. Much of the rubble was cut, rectangular limestone blocks, with smoothed faced pointed in random directions. Obviously, the front of the East wall must have consisted of these faced stones. The recovered cultural remains consisted of about 22 ceramic sherds, which included Tinaja Red bodysherds.

#### WK09-A-93

In the excavation grid of M14-15, Unit 93, Lot 18, consisted of a thin humic level overlying the remaining architecture of the East wall. The wall still possessed a well-defined, if somewhat weathered, front. Towards the base, the wall front still possessed a few courses of smoothed and faced stones, the smoothed side of the stones projecting outward. The construction fill had overwhelmed the higher portions of the wall and much of it is nothing more than a mass of hard packed construction fill. The East wall remains one of the best preserved of M14-15. The recovered cultural materials

consisted on some 26 ceramic sherds, which included a hollow podal support.

#### WK09A-94 to WK09A-96

These units were delineated and marked for excavation on the forward slope of structure M14-16. Due to the shortness of the season and the attention required for the multiple burials of M14-15, they were never excavated but must be left to a later field season.

#### WK09-A-97

Placed in the wall feature excavations, Unit 97, Lot 241, consists of a single humic layer lying atop the surviving architecture there (Figs. 1, 3). Once removed, excavators uncovered a mass of faced stones and construction fill, much of which is discussed above. The interior of the wall feature had compacted into a single mass of very well compacted, hard packed limestone and sediment. The wall itself is very solid. Recovered cultural material includes about 32 ceramic sherds, among which was a Terminal Classic "waxy" redware bodysherd.

#### WK09-A-98

Located in the wall feature excavations, Unit 98, Lot 242, was a single humic layer atop the remaining architecture there (Figs. 1, 3). Once removed, the excavators revealed a great packed mass of construction fill behind a line of well formed, cut limestone blocks. The northern surface of the blocks was well smoothed and still in

place. The construction fill itself was so compacted that tests to displace limestone chunks required two excavators and liberal usage of pickaxes. It is interesting to note that the limestones along the top of the fill are quite weathered and yet no rubble scatter was to be found to the north or south. This suggests that the stones at the top of the excavated wall feature may represent its original masonry surface. At any rate, the construction of the wall itself is very solid. Excavators recovered a piece of obsidian and some 74 ceramic sherds, all of which were small, heavily eroded, and nondiagnostic.

#### WK09-A-99

In the wall feature excavation along the southern edge of the group, Unit 99, Lot 243, consisted of a single humic layer lying above the surviving architecture of the wall feature. Once removed, excavators revealed a solid mass of construction fill taking up much of the unit. Along the northern edge of the unit, running east to west, ran a line of well-cut limestone blocks that made up the northern edge of the wall feature. The wall feature must have been constructed by erecting a faced retaining wall and then compacting a solid mass of limestone chunks and interstitial material behind it. To the north of this line of cut limestone masonry was a lower "step" leading up to the wall feature. This step will be discussed in greater detail in the Unit 121 description. Excavators recovered a pair of obsidian fragments and some 40 individual

ceramic sherds, all of which were small, eroded, and nondiagnostic.

#### WK09-A-100

Part of the wall feature excavations, Unit 100, Lot 244, consists of a single humic layer lying atop the surviving architecture there. Once this material was removed, excavators revealed the southern edge of the wall feature. A line of rough-hewn limestone blocks marked the southern edge of the wall feature itself. The southern, outward side of the wall feature does not have the smoothed, well-shaped blocks of the inward side, but rough-cut stones jutting outward at awkward angles. A large amount of cultural material was encountered on the outward side suggesting a thin lens of midden-like material. Recovered cultural materials include a worked piece of shell, three fragments of obsidian, eight fragments of marine shell, and about 349 ceramic sherds. Among the sherds are examples of Subin Red, Tinaja Red, and Achotes Black. A pair of bird bones was recovered as well, but whether they were deposited in antiquity is unknown. The faunal materials from the site have not yet been analyzed.

#### WK09-A-101

Located in the wall feature excavations, Unit 101, Lot 245, is a thin humic layer lying atop the surviving architecture there. Upon removing this layer, excavators revealed the southern edge of the wall feature. Facing outward, the line of stone stood about four courses



high and consisted of rough hewn limestone chunks protruding at random angles. In the remainder of the unit was a much softer soil and, possibly, the top layer of a midden deposit, thus accounting for the large amount of recovered cultural materials. Excavators recovered three fragments of obsidian, three pieces of marine shell, a piece of chert, and some 266 individual ceramic sherds. Among the ceramics were a fine orange bodysherd and examples of Subin Red, Tinaja Red, Infierno Black, Palmar Orange Polychrome, and an undesignated cream polychrome. Glyphic elements are present on some sherds.

#### WK09-A-102

Located in the wall feature excavations, Unit 102, Lot 246, is a humic layer lying atop the surviving architecture here. The wall feature bulges slightly in this section. The outward facing stones are rough cut and unsmoothed. The recovered cultural materials include a large medial biface fragment, two pieces of obsidian, an animal bone, two fragments of chert, and about 101 ceramic sherds, including a fine orange bodysherd, and examples of Tinaja Red and Palmar Group polychromes. The materials, especially the animal bones and number of ceramic sherds, suggest a midden deposit lying on the south side of the wall feature.

#### WK09-A-103

Located in the N14-2 north midden excavations, Unit 103 was excavated in four

separate levels. Level 1, Lot 207, is a humic layer atop a thicker, moist, blackish-brown midden deposit. Rubble from the collapse of N14-2 is scattered throughout the humic layer. The divide between the humus and the midden deposit below is fairly sharp, occurring an average of 35.2cm below the unexcavated surface. Excavators recovered a carved shell lip labret, a large chert biface fragment, nine pieces of obsidian, two burned animal bones, twelve chert fragments, and about 283 individual ceramic sherds. Among the ceramics were a Chicxulub Incised rimsherd and a fine orange bodysherd, but most sherds were small, eroded, and nondiagnostic.

Level 2, Lot 212, is the rich clayey midden deposit lying between the humus of the remains of a plastered floor. In Figure 5, this corresponds to both the third and fourth layers. No trace of the first plaster floor uncovered in Unit 115 could be discerned in Unit 103, not even a ballast stone foundation was detectable. This indicates either the plaster floor had decayed to a remarkable extent or that N14-2 was only skirted with a plaster floor in the area immediately surrounding the structure. Regardless, the soil matrix was a rich blackish-brown. The soil was so moist in places it could even be described as "chocolaty." It was rich midden soil. Excavators recovered six pieces of obsidian, three animal bones identified by Don Mateo Tut Paau as birds, nine fragments of chert, and about 152 individual ceramic sherds. Among these potsherds were included fine orange bodysherds,

examples of Tinaja Red, Subin Red, and several undesignated high-quality polychrome fragments.

Level 3, Lot 216, corresponds to the fourth layer illustrated in Figure 5. The deposit is positioned between a pair of faint plaster floors, barely discernable in this unit. The matrix itself is a dense clay-like material, being a moist grey-brown in color. Fist-sized pieces of limestone are present throughout. The layer ends with a significant number of limestone blocks and a substantial soil change. Excavators recovered a single piece of obsidian and around 79 ceramic sherds, including fine grey bodysherds, examples of Tinaja Red, Nanzal Red, Maquina Brown, and several undesignated types of high-quality polychromes.

Level 4, Lot 223, corresponds to the fifth and final layer on Figure 5. The material is a dense and clay-like greyish-brown matrix. Excavators uncovered a large pile of limestones along the unit's southern edge. The limestone concentration was virtually cemented together and may have been part of a bedrock outcropping. At one end of this outcrop, excavators uncovered a very dense ceramic concentration. The concentration included some very high-quality ceramics and the first layers of this concentration were collected. In the unit southeastern corner, excavators encountered Burial 18, an infant placed on top of this ceramic scatter. The recovered cultural material is consistent with a midden deposit and it is made up of seven obsidian

fragments, four pieces of shell of both oyster and a very large river snail, three animal bones, seven pieces of chert, and an outstanding 1,076 ceramic sherds. The sherds were mostly smallish and fragmentary, with no refits, and included numerous examples of fine grey, fine orange, Tinaja Red, Nanzal Red, Achotes Black, Maquina Brown, Palmar Group polychromes, and numerous other undesignated high-end polychromes, including some Codex-style designs. Glyphic elements are not uncommon.

#### WK09-A-104

Located in the N14-2 north midden, Unit 104 was excavated in three distinct levels. Level 1, Lot 211, is a dark humus that corresponds with the first layer in Figure 5. The soil color is a dark brown and the matrix is lightly turbated with some rootlet action. The level ends with the rich soil matrix of Level 2. Excavators recovered two animal bones, ten pieces of chert, and some 230 individual ceramic sherds. The sherds have not yet been analyzed.

Level 2, Lot 213, is a dark black-brown color and corresponds to the second and third layers in Figure 5. The uppermost plaster floor was not detectable in Unit 104 and the soil matrices in Figure 5's layers 2 and 3 remarkably similar. The matrix possesses a moist and clay-like texture and dries slowly in direct sunlight. Excavators recovered seven shell fragments, including oyster shell, six pieces of chert, and some

230 ceramic sherds. The ceramics have not yet been analyzed.

Level 3, Lot 217, corresponds to Figure 5's fourth layer. It is a dark grey-brown color and moist to the touch. Excavation stopped on the level when Burials 18 and 19 were uncovered and Unit 104 did not penetrate further.

#### WK09-A-105

Located in the N14-2 north midden, unit 105 was excavated in three distinct levels. Level 1, Lot 209, is a thick humic layer that corresponds to the first layer in Figure 5. The matrix was a dark greyish brown color. Numerous pieces of limestone were scattered throughout the level, most probably being the fallen rubble from the collapse of N14-2. Recovered cultural materials were plentiful, being two pieces of obsidian, eleven chert fragments, a complete tepezcuintle skull and attached vertebrae, and some 303 ceramic sherds. The ceramics have not yet been analyzed, but include at least two nearly-whole reconstructable vessels.

Level 2, Lot 214, is a thick, rich, moist matrix, being a dark blackish-brown in color. The uppermost plaster floor in Figure 5 did not preserve this far out from N14-2 and could not be detected. The result was that the second and third layers shown in Figure 5 were, in Unit 105, both excavated as Level 2. Once this material was removed, excavators uncovered a line of cut stones along the western side of the unit. These stones, running north-south, were

well-formed, being cut into rectangular masonry blocks with a smoothed surface facing outwards. This is obviously the remains of a wall of N14-2. Recovered materials included two pieces of obsidian, seven pieces of shell, five chert fragments, and some 172 ceramic sherds. The ceramics have not yet been analyzed in depth, but field analysis indicated a heavy number of Late to Terminal Classic attributes.

Level 3, Lot 224, corresponds to the fourth layer illustrated in Figure 5. The matrix is a dense greyish-brown in color, well compacted in places. Once removed, more of the wall became visible. At least three courses of the wall remain and, given by the collapsed rubble in Unit 117, the wall must have collapsed to the west and south. The midden deposits uncovered in these excavations must have been pushed right up against this wall in antiquity. Excavators recovered an oyster shell fragment, three pieces of chert, and some 90 ceramics. The ceramics have not yet been analyzed, but field notes indicate a generally Late to Terminal Classic affiliation.

Excavators encountered a dense concentration of high-quality ceramics discussed in the Unit 103 description. On investigating this, a set of human femurs emerged from Level 3. This was Burial 19 (Fig. 5). Excavations began on Unit 19, but due to the shortness of the field season had to be halted before much else of the individual could be uncovered. The relationship between Burial 19 and Burial 18

and the ceramic concentration is currently unknown and further exploration will be forced to wait for another field season.

#### WK09-A-106

Part of the N14-2 east midden excavations, Unit 106 was excavated in a single level, being Lot 218. This was a thick and rich humic matrix, being a dark, creamy brown color with greyish tints. The level was, however, heavily turbated by the large roots of nearby trees. The consistency of the soil is ashy and it was loosely packed. Excavators removed this humic layer to find a large limestone boulder only 11cm deep. The boulder was larger than the unit and excavation, of course, ceased. Excavators recovered a large amount of cultural material, including a worked and polished shell fragment; a small figurine of a dog's head; 27 pieces of obsidian; three burned pieces of animal bone; which Don Mateo Tut Paau identified as deer and peccary, 30 chert fragments and a tremendous 866 ceramic sherds. The ceramics have not, as yet, been analyzed, but field observations place them securely in the Terminal Classic.

#### WK09-A-107

Located in the N14-2 east midden excavations, Unit 107 was excavated in two levels. Level 1, Lot 219, was a heavily turbated humic layer, corresponding to the uppermost layer in Figure 4. Throughout the layer, excavators encountered fist-sized and larger limestone fragments. The matrix was a dark, creamy brownish-grey color. The

level ceased when the soil underwent an abrupt soil change. Recovered cultural materials included 26 obsidian fragments, two oyster shells, thirteen animal bones, a crocodile tooth, 27 pieces of chert, and an amazing 881 ceramic sherds. While this material has not been analyzed, field notes indicate it to possess a high frequency of Terminal Classic attributes and types.

Level 2, Lot 249, consists of a loosely packed greyish-brown layer. Fist-sized limestone fragments were evenly disturbed throughout. The consistency was slightly moist, though it dried quickly when exposed to air. The layer ended when excavators encountered the same limestone boulder from Unit 106. The boulder slant downward from Unit 106 and is vaguely shaped like a question mark, with the "hooked" end extending into Unit 108, creating a large circular hollow. The limestone is very decayed and quite chalky in places, and decayed limestone appears to have colored much of the matrices in the east midden a greyish white. Once the profile from Unit 107 had dried, it was discovered that the unit possessed a thin lens of a third level, carrying over from Unit 108. These materials were mixed with the materials from the level above. Recovered materials include two pieces of obsidian; sixteen shell fragments, some of which are oyster shell; eight chert fragments; and 276 ceramic sherds. These sherds have not been analyzed but field notes describe them as possessing many Late to Terminal Classic attributes.

#### WK09-A-108

Located in the N14-2 east midden excavations, Unit 108 was excavated in four distinct levels. All four levels correspond with the different layers given in Figure 4. Level 1, Lot 220, consists of a humic layer rich with midden materials. The level is heavily turbated from the neighboring tress. The loosely-packed soil matrix is an ashy grey-brown color. Excavators recovered numerous materials from this level, including 21 fragments of obsidian, seven oyster shell fragments, two burned and polished bones, and 1,188 ceramic sherds. These ceramics have not yet been analyzed, but field notes indicate a heavy Late to Terminal Classic presence for them.

Level 2, Lot 225, was very loosely packed as well, but the sediment possessed a moist matrix, greyish-brown in color. Once removed, a large piece of a limestone boulder came into view. This was the southernmost section of the tilted boulder described in Unit 106. The boulder, shaped somewhat like a question mark, circles the northern, eastern and, eventually, southern sides of Unit 108, leaving a distinct hollow in the center. The surface of the boulder was very soft and the decay of the limestone boulder probably contributed to the much lighter soil color for the east midden, especially when compared to the dark blackish-brown of the north midden. Recovered cultural materials were plentiful and included an animal bone fragment, seven chert fragments, and 350 ceramic

sherds. While these ceramics have not been analyzed, field notes comment on the presence of multiple attributes of the Late and Terminal Classic. The level ended with a marked change in both sediment color.

Level 3, Lot 240, consisted of a blue-grey matrix, with patches of a streaky yellow running through it. Once removed, the decaying limestone boulder took up two-thirds of the unit. This material is probably construction fill used in the original construction of the hillock, due to its relation to the boulder and the type of artifacts recovered from it. The excavators recovered seven pieces of obsidian, two stucco fragments, ten shell fragments, ten pieces of chert, and 575 ceramic sherds. While these ceramics have not been analyzed, field notes comment on their heavy Proto- and Early Classic character. Chronologically, these materials match the construction fill encountered beneath the cobblestone plaza floor described in Unit 30.

Level 4, Lot 248, is a blue-grey sediment matrix, tending towards greyish-white in places. This is probably due to the large decaying limestone boulder that surrounds the unit on three sides. The level was, for the most part, culturally sterile, with some odd exceptions. A large jar rimsherd was embedded in the profile wall (Fig. 4) and with three other ceramics made up the entirety of the recovered materials from this section. Once removed, excavators encountered a chalky white layer completely devoid of cultural materials. This fifth level was nothing more than decayed limestone

bedrock and so excavation ceased in this unit.

#### WK09-A-109

Located beneath the excavation grid of M14-15, Unit 109 was excavated in two distinct levels. Because Unit 109 was an irregularly shaped ovoid, its outline determined by the dimensions of the floorcut, it was given a different unit number but begun on Level 4 to maintain the level sequence in order. Unit 109 has two levels, Level 4 and Level 5.

Level 4, Lot 203, consists of the mix of construction fill and white marl that was directly inside the floorcut and immediately above the internments in the western chamber. Once removed, excavators revealed the collapsed capstones for the cyst on Burial 21. Excavators removed a thin smattering of artifacts, including a small figurine head of a monkey and 36 ceramic sherds. The ceramics have not yet been analyzed, but field notes comment of their small, eroded, and highly nondiagnostic nature.

Level 4, Lot 205, is Burial 21 (Fig. 10). It contains the remains of a supine individual, five whole vessels (Figs. 14, 15), a jade inlaid tooth, and a mix of smaller sherds that probably formed part of the surrounding construction fill. When the cyst collapsed, they were part of the material that proceeded to fill the hollow cyst. These smaller sherds numbered around 68 and are commented on in the field notes as being very small and fragmentary. They have not

yet been analyzed. Burial 21 has been discussed in much detail above.

#### WK09-A-110

Located beneath the excavation grid of M14-15, Unit 110, Lot 206 was excavated in a single level. Unit 110 is a very irregular unit, measuring roughly 3 by 3 meters square. It lies underneath Units 62, 62, 64, 54, 55, 56, 45, 51, and 57 and, to some extent, represents the fourth level to those units. When work commenced on the twin internments of Burials 20 and 21, it became too difficult to work just within the confine of the ovoid floorcuts placed in antiquity. The plaster surface of Floor 5 itself proved problematic. The plaster floor warped and sank under the pressure of the excavators' feet, leaving shallow depressions across the surface and, in one memorable case, an exactly boot-shaped hole punched through the floor. When excavators reached the capstone *lajas* of the burials, it was noticed that these stones were larger than the cut in the floor. The burials could simply not be excavated without creating much greater access to them. For these reasons, much of Floor 5 was removed and the material from around the burials removed. In this process, it was discovered that the material surrounding the cyst crypts consisted of a very loose fill of small rocks and scattered earth with small hollows being quite common. Much of the area beneath Floor 5 must have been removed in antiquity, hollowed-out to permit the construction of the cysts for Burials 20 and 21. The cysts

were constructed, the individuals interned, sealed in, and the area around filled with the material described above. Excavators recovered only scanty cultural materials, especially for a unit measuring almost nine square meters, being a single piece of chert and obsidian together with 129 individual ceramic sherds. These ceramics have not yet been analyzed in the laboratory, but field notes indicate several Late to Terminal Classic attributes being present.

#### WK09-A-111

Located beneath the excavation grid of M14-15, Unit 111 was excavated in a single level, being Lot 208. Unit 111 was the area cleared around Burial 22 to fully expose the collapsed cyst and bring it above the level of the surrounding area. Because Burial 22 was a badly collapsed cyst, it was felt that its very irregular edges had to be clearly established before the cyst itself was opened. Unit 111 is underneath Units 89, 90, 82, 83 and 112 and is a very irregular shape. Excavators recovered two pieces of obsidian, an oyster shell, two chert fragments, and some 87 ceramic sherds, a low number for such a largish unit. The ceramics have yet to be analyzed, but field notes indicate a very low quality of preservation being present.

#### WK09-A-112

Located on the M14-15 excavation grid, Unit 112, Lot 210, was excavated as a single level. Upon beginning excavation around Burials 22 and 23, it was soon

noticed that the burials may extend to the north farther than the grid. However, extending the excavation grid by a full meter in that direction was patently impossible, as that would have placed excavators off of the hill proper and digging on a steep slope. The grid would have to be extended by a thin 3 by 0.5 meter strip, necessitating Unit 112. Unit 112 consists of a thin humic layer, possess a loose consistency and an ashy greyish-brown color. Turbation and erosion is significant, as the unit rests directly against, and, in some places, over the edge of the hillock. Excavators recovered a single piece of obsidian, an animal bone, two chert fragments, and some 33 ceramic sherds. The sherds have yet to be analyzed, but field notes comment on their small and high eroded state.

#### WK09-A-113

Located beneath the M14-15 excavation grid, Unit 113 was excavated in two distinct levels. Unit 113 lies beneath Units 81 and 77 and was cleared away to define the southern edge of the cysts for Burials 22 and 23. It measures roughly 2.25 by 1 meter. Level 2, Lot 215, consisted of a mix of eroded humus and deteriorated construction fill from the heavily damaged western chamber. Excavators recovered some 100 ceramic sherds, six chert fragments, and four pieces of obsidian. The ceramics have not yet been analyzed, but preliminary field notes suggest a vast majority of small, highly distressed, and nondiagnostic sherds.

Level 3 was extended downwards in an attempt to determine any potential construction stratigraphy for the western chamber, in order to compare it with the stratigraphy uncovered in the eastern chamber (Fig. 8). Unfortunately, the uncovered profile revealed only the construction fill for the hillock and large pieces of decayed limestone. Literally, the portions of the western chamber have eroded down to the original hillock surface. Excavators recovered three pieces of chert and 25 ceramic sherds. The ceramics have not yet been analyzed in the laboratory, but field notes comment on their eroded and fragmentary state.

#### WK09-A-114

Located far beneath the excavation grid of M14-15, Unit 114, Lot 204, consists of the intact cyst internment of Burial 20 (Fig. 9). The northern section of the cyst was intact, regardless of the line of heavy foundation stones for the Central wall that lay across its top. The internment, described in great detail above, consists of the supine remains of a single adult individual, two whole ceramic vessels (Figs. 13a, 13b), four pieces of shell, a single chert fragment, and some 86 individual ceramic sherds. It is thought that much of this material is intrusive, having settled in through the numerous cracks and holes in the cyst's lid after deposition. The ceramics are virtually identical to those from Unit 110 and almost certainly originate from the loosely-packed construction fill that surrounds the burial.

#### WK09-A-115

Located in the N14-2 north midden excavations, Unit 115 was excavated in three distinct levels. Level 1, Lot 227, consists of a humic layer lying atop the collapsed masonry of N14-2. The soil is a lightly turbated, light greyish-brown matrix, loosely packed and ashy to the touch. Once removed, excavators uncovered a solid mass of compacted rubble probably representing the remains of an east-west running wall. This wall would correspond to the furthest wall of the initial platform step of the N14-2 structure. Excavators also recovered six fragments of obsidian, an oyster shell fragment, eight pieces of chert, and some 153 ceramic sherds. The ceramics have not, as yet, been analyzed, but field notes indicate a pronounced Terminal Classic aspect to them.

Level 2, Lot 231, corresponds to the second layer on Figure 5. It is a dark brown-black color, moist and clay-like to the touch. Once removed, larger portions of the rubble concentration were revealed to rest directly atop the uppermost plaster floor shown in Figure 5. This is, most likely, collapsed architecture from N14-2, tumbling down the slope of the building and concentrated about its base. The rubble was left intact at this stage in the excavation and took up the southern third of the unit. The recovered cultural material consisted of an obsidian fragment, a broken shell labrette, four other



shell fragments, and some 77 ceramic sherds. The ceramics have not been analyzed at this point, but field notes indicate a heavy presence of Late and Terminal Classic ceramic attributes.

Level 3, Lot 236, corresponds to the third layer in Figure 5, the material between the first two plaster floors. The plaster floors themselves are well preserved underneath the fallen rubble from N14-2. The material is a dark blackish-brown material, moist and clay-like to the touch. Excavators recovered a single fragment of shell, five chert fragments, and some 150 ceramic sherds. The ceramics have not yet been analyzed, but field notes indicate a strong Late to Terminal Classic presence. Excavation halted at Level 3 to preserve to profile intact for the succeeding field season.

#### WK09-A-116

Located in the N14-2 north midden, Unit 116 was excavated in three distinct levels. Unit 116 is itself only 1 by 0.5 meters, made half size to avoid the cutting of a young tzulute tree. All three levels match up to the uppermost layers shown on Figure 5. Level 1, Lot 228, was a humic layer, being an ashy grey-brown color and somewhat powdery to the touch. It was lightly turbated with rootlet action and possessed smallish pieces of limestone suspended throughout it. Once removed, excavators revealed the heavy mass of concentrated rubble fallen from the collapse of N14-2 and noted in the Unit 115 description above. Excavators recovered a

single obsidian fragment, some 132 shell fragments, five pieces of chert, and some 101 ceramic sherds. While the ceramics have not yet been analyzed, field notes indicate a strong Late to Terminal Classic presence among them.

Level 2, Lot 232, consists of the same thick black-brown midden materials described above. The matrix is a soft, moist material, very clay-like to the touch. Once removed, excavators revealed a smooth and well-preserved plaster floor, being the uppermost plaster floor shown in Figure 5. Excavators also recovered four fragments of obsidian, a piece of shell, a single animal bone, one chert fragment, and some 96 ceramic sherds. These sherds have not, to date, been analyzed but field observations suggest a Late to Terminal Classic affiliation.

Level 3, Lot 234, is made up of a similar dark brownish-black midden matrix. It remains similar to the level above it in color, consistency, and texture, separated only by a plastered floor. Excavators removed this material and cut through the plaster floor to reveal a second plaster floor not far below the first. Excavations halted at this stage to preserve to profile for the succeeding year's excavations. The remainder of the profile illustrated in Figure 5 comes from the excavations in Unit 104. From this level, excavators recovered a single piece of animal bone, seven chert fragments, and some 106 ceramic sherds. The ceramics have not been analyzed but

field notes strongly suggest and Late to Terminal Classic affiliation.

#### WK09-A-117

Located in the N14-2 north midden excavation, this unit was excavated in three distinct levels, each level corresponding to the uppermost layers illustrated in Figure 5. Level 1, Lot 229, consisted of a humic layer atop the fallen rubble of N14-2. The soil matrix was a loosely-packed greyish-brown material with numerous limestone pieces suspended throughout. Once excavators removed this material, they uncovered a soil mass of compacted rubble clustered about the remains of a north-south wall running through the eastern side of the unit. Faced and smoothed masonry blocks were embedded in the rubble. As the goal was the recovery of midden materials and not the exposure of architecture, excavators worked around the rubble. They recovered two pieces of burned and polished bird bone, five chert fragments, and some 114 ceramic sherds. The ceramics have not been analyzed, but field notes suggest the presence of many Late and Terminal Classic attributes.

Level 2, Lot 233, was made up of a thick, rich brownish-black midden matrix. The material was soft and moist to the touch, appearing "chocolaty" at times. Due to the large amounts of compacted rubble along the southern and eastern side of the deposit, only the sections in the center, northern, and western sides could be

excavated. Here the excavators recovered a single obsidian fragment; two shell fragments; one of which was identified as an oyster shell; two pieces of chert; and some 76 ceramic sherds. While these ceramics have not yet been analyzed, field observations suggest a Late to Terminal Classic affiliation for them. The level stops at a well-preserved plaster floor, the uppermost floor illustrated in Figure 5.

Level 3, Lot 235, is the material beneath the uppermost floor and above the succeeding floor. Excavation in Unit 117 halted at this second plaster floor in order to preserve the profile for the succeeding year's excavation. In Figure 5, the rest of the profile shown below this level derives from the excavations in Unit 103. To preserve a lip of the plaster floor, much of it was left in place and the result was that this level of Unit 117 occupies only the northwestern quarter of the unit, with the remainder having to wait for further excavation in subsequent field seasons.

#### WK09-A-118

Located beneath the M14-15 excavation grid, Unit 118, Lot 226, was excavated as a single level. Unit 118 is Burial 22, the collapsed cyst burial underneath the western chamber (Fig. 11). The internment itself is described in great detail above and consists of a single adult individual in an extended supine position and two whole reconstructed ceramic vessels with incised monkeys on them (Figs. 13c, 13d). The cyst did collapse quite

dramatically in Burial 22 and a good deal of intrusive material from the construction fill was found inside the crypt walls. This included a single obsidian fragment and some 81 individual ceramic sherds. While the sherds themselves have yet to be analyzed, field notes indicate that they are almost uniformly small, highly eroded and nondiagnostic.

#### WK09-A-119

Located beneath the M14-15 excavation grid, Unit 119, Lot 247, was excavated as a single level. Unit 119 is Burial 23, the collapsed cyst burial next to Burial 22 in the western chamber (Fig. 23). The internment consists of a single adult individual lying in a supine position. Two ceramic vessels were recovered, a large black-slipped bowl and a small miniature jar (Figs. 13e, 13f). The burial itself is described in much greater detail above. A number of intrusive materials were found as well, especially with much of the cyst walls missing entirely. Three pieces of obsidian, a shell fragment, and some 61 ceramic sherds were recovered as well. These ceramics have not yet been analyzed but field notes comment on their small, eroded, and probable nondiagnostic nature. Some 22 polychrome ceramic sherds were recovered from directly beneath the fragmented cranium, but their relation to the internment remains unresolved.

#### WK09-A-120

Located in the N14-2 north midden excavation, Unit 120, Lot 230, is Burial 18 (Fig. 5). Burial 18 consists of a single infant lying in a supine position above a thick concentration of high-quality ceramics (Fig. 6). The burial is discussed in greater detail above. Because the relationship between the infant and the ceramic concentration is still unknown, and the size and dimensions of the ceramic scatter have yet to be determined, no ceramic materials were collected. The ceramic bed that the infant was lying on was left in place to await more detailed excavation in a subsequent field season.

#### WK09-A-121

Located in the N14-2 north midden excavations, Unit 121, Lot 251, is Burial 19 (Fig 5). Due to the depth of the excavations, the density of the associated ceramic concentration, and the lateness of the field season, it was decided that Burial 19 would not be excavated in the 2005 field season. The exposed femurs were carefully covered with Tyvek bag, soft soil, and the internment reburied, left in place.

#### WK09-A-122

Located in the wall feature excavations, Unit 122 consists of a single humic layer lying atop the surviving architecture of the small platform of the wall feature. The humus itself is greyish brown in color with a powdery consistency, especially when dry, and a small degree of

turbation from root action in the soil. A large section of this unit was left unexcavated to avoid cutting down or significantly harming the roots of a small escobo tree (Fig. 3). Once removed, excavators uncovered a single step leading up to the rear of the wall feature. The outward face of this step is made up of smoothed and faced limestone blocks. The stones of the step clearly abut the rest of the wall feature, indicating their subsequent construction. It was hoped to find some remnant of the plaza floor as well, but this proved elusive, uncovering only a largish limestone boulder lying close to the unexcavated ground surface. Excavators recovered a cat claw, probably from a medium sized feline such as a jaguarundi; a single piece of chert; and some 100 ceramic sherds. These ceramics have not yet been analyzed, but field notes confirm a strong Terminal Classic affiliation.

#### WK09-A-123

In the wall feature excavations, Unit 123, Lot 251, consists of a humic layer lying atop the surviving architecture of the wall feature. Once removed, excavators revealed the northern face of the wall feature, as well as a forward “step” placed in front of it. The outward face of the step consisted of well-crafted limestone blocks, smoothed and faced on the northern side. Excavators recovered three obsidian fragments, four pieces of chert, and some 127 ceramic sherds. These ceramics have, again, not been analyzed, but field notes

indicate numerous attributes of the Terminal Classic.

### **Future plans and recommendations**

There are two set of future plans and recommendations for researchers continuing to work at the Grupo Tolok and the site of El Perú-*Waka* in general. Inside the Grupo Tolok itself, there should be plans :

- to broaden and deepen the north midden of Structure N14-2, to map and recover Burial 19, to map and recover the Qeq' Complex ceramic concentration and to fully excavate those levels to a sterile level;
- to broaden the excavation on the wall feature, especially investigating the relation of the feature to the proposed stair;
- to search for a cache related to the monument found on the western slope of N14-2 and to attempt the location of the butt of the monument to determine its original location and orientation; and
- to place additional testpits in all the related structures of the Grupo Tolok, including M14-16, N14-1, N14-2, and N14-14.

To attempt to understand the place of subroyal elite households within the context of the larger site, the following goals are presented:

- to excavate the nearby large residential units, especially Structure M14-13, to determine any patterns of the rise of subroyal elites;
- to broaden the excavations within the known royal palaces of the site, especially the proposed residential structures of the royal palaces; and
- to create a database comprehensive of the initial efforts of a ceramic typology, survey, and the already extensive test-pitting operations.

### **Acknowledgements**

The investigations at the Grupo Tolok would not have been possible without the skilled commitment of the local men who served as the excavators. They includes Don Mateo Tot Paau, Quenaldo C. Lopez

Rodríguez, Yovany Nájera Carrilla, Hamin Ricardo Alvarado, Edvin Tista, and all the people of Paso Caballo, Dolores, Buen Samaritano, and Centro Campesino. Special thanks goes to Arturo Godoy for making sure the project did not starve in the field and to Madelyn Zimmerman for advice with Adobe Illustrator and to Holley Fenusova for helping to proofread the final report and to Fabiola Quiroa Flores and Héctor Escobedo for the translation into Spanish. It is also with profound gratitude that I realize I am given the opportunity to explore the cultural patrimony of the Republic of Guatemala. It may be melodramatic to thank an entire country, but it certainly seems appropriate.

## Cited Sources

- Adams, Richard E. W.  
1971 *The Ceramics of Altar de Sacrificios*, Papers of the Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology, vol. 63, no. 1, Harvard University, Cambridge.
- Alvarado Ortíz, Marco Tulio  
2004 WK-09: Excavaciones in el Grupo N14-1. In *Proyecto Arqueológico El Perú-Waka': Informe No.1, Temporada 2003*, edited by Héctor L. Escobedo and David Freidel, pp. 227-256. Informe Entregado a la Dirección General Del Patrimonio Cultural y Natural de Guatemala, Guatemala.
- Arroyave Prera, Ana Lucia and Horacio Martínez  
2004 WK-05: Excavaciones in la Estructuras L13-17 y L13-19. In *Proyecto Arqueológico El Perú-Waka': Informe No.1, Temporada 2003*, edited by Héctor L. Escobedo and David Freidel, pp. 119-144. Informe Entregado a la Dirección General Del Patrimonio Cultural y Natural de Guatemala, Guatemala.
- Eppich, Evan Keith  
2004 Análisis Preliminar de la Cerámica de El Perú-Waka'. In *Proyecto Arqueológico El Perú-Waka': Informe no. 1, Temporada 2003*, edited by Hector Escobedo and David Freidel, pp. 369-384 Informe Entregado a la Dirección General del Patrimonio Cultural y Natural de Guatemala, Guatemala.  
2005 Estudio Cerámico, la secuencia de la Tradición Cerámica de El Perú-Waka' In *Proyecto Arqueológico El Perú-Waka': Informe no. 2, Temporada 2004*, edited by Hector Escobedo and David Freidel. Informe Entregado a la Dirección General del Patrimonio Cultural y Natural de Guatemala, Guatemala.
- Fox, John W.  
1987 *Maya Postclassic State Formation, Segmentary Lineage migration in Advancing Frontiers*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
- Freidel, David A., Linda Schele and Joy Parker  
1993 *Maya Cosmos, Three Thousand Years on the Shaman's Path*. Quill-William Morrow, New York.
- Foias, Antonia E.  
1996 *Changing Ceramic Production and Exchange Systems and the Classic Maya Culture in the Petexbatun Region*. Ph.D. dissertation. Vanderbilt University, Nashville, TN.
- Forsyth, Donald W.  
1989 *The Ceramics of El Mirador, Petén, Guatemala. El Mirador Series, Part 4*. Papers of the New World Archaeological Foundation, No. 63, Brigham Young University, Provo.
- Guderjan, Thomas H., Robert J. Lichtenstein, and C. Colleen Hanratty  
2003 Elite Residences at Blue Creek, Belize. In *Maya Palaces and Elite Residences, an interdisciplinary approach*, edited by Jessica Joyce Christie, pp. 13-45. University of Texas Press, Austin.
- Houston, Stephan D.  
2000 Into the Minds of Ancients: Advances in Maya Glyphic Studies. *Journal of World Prehistory* 14: 121-201.

- Houston, Steven D. and David Stuart  
 2001 Peopling the Classic Maya Court. In *Royal Courts of the Ancient Maya, vol. 1 Theory, Comparison, and Synthesis*, edited by Takeshi Inomata and Stephen D. Houston, pp. 54-83. Westview Press, Oxford.
- Houston, Steven D., David Stuart, and Karl A. Taube  
 1989 Folk Classification of Classic Maya Pottery. *American Anthropologist* 91(3): 720-726.
- Knight, Melissa  
 2004 El Mapa Preliminar de El Perú-Waka'. In *Proyecto Arqueológico El Perú-Waka': Informe No. 1, Temporada 2003*, edited by Héctor L. Escobedo and David Freidel, pp. 355-368. Informe Entregado a la Dirección General Del Patrimonio Cultural y Natural de Guatemala, Guatemala.
- Lee, David  
 2004 WK-06: Excavaciones en la Estructura L11-38. In *Proyecto Arqueológico El Perú-Waka': Informe No. 1, Temporada 2003*, edited by Héctor L. Escobedo and David Freidel, pp. 145-172. Informe Entregado a la Dirección General Del Patrimonio Cultural y Natural de Guatemala, Guatemala.
- Leventhal, Richard M.  
 1983 Household Groups and Classic Maya Religion. In *Prehistoric Settlement Patterns: Essays in Honor of Gordon B. Willey*, edited by Evon Z. Vogt and Richard M. Leventhal, pp. 55-76. Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology: Harvard University, Cambridge, MA.
- Martin, Simon  
 2001 Court and Realm, Architectural Signatures in the Classic Maya Southern Lowlands. In *Royal Courts of the Ancient Maya, vol. 1: Theory, Comparison, and Synthesis*, edited by Takeshi Inomata and Stephen D. Houston, pp. 168-194. Westview Press, Oxford
- McAnany, Patricia A.  
 1998 Ancestors and the Classic Maya Built Environment. In *Function and Meaning in Classic Maya Architecture*, edited by Stephen D. Houston, pp. 271-298. Dunbarton Oaks Research Library, Washington, D.C.
- Miller, Mary and Simon Martin  
 2004 *Courtly Art of the Ancient Maya*. Fine Arts Museum of San Francisco, Thames and Hudson, New York
- Pagliari, Jonathon B., James F. Garber, and Travis W. Stanton  
 2003 Evaluating the Archaeological Signatures of Maya Ritual and Conflict. In *Ancient Mesoamerican Warfare*, edited by M. Kathryn Brown and Travis W. Stanton, pp. 75-90. Alta Mira Press, New York.
- Pendergast, David M.  
 1992 Noblesse Oblige: The Elites of Altun Ha and Lamanai, Belize. In *Mesoamerican Elites, an Archaeological Assessment*, edited by Diane Z. Chase and Arlen F. Chase. University of Oklahoma Press, Norman and London.
- Rands, Robert L.  
 1973 The Classic Collapse in the Southern Maya Lowlands: Chronology. In *The Classic Maya Collapse*, edited by T. Patrick Culbert, pp. 43-62. University of New Mexico Press, Albuquerque, NM.

- Reents-Budet, Dorie  
 2000 Feasting Among the Classic Maya: Evidence from Pictorial Ceramics. In *The Maya Vase Book VI* edited by Justin Kerr, pp. 1022-1038. Kerr Associates, New York.  
 2001 Classic Maya Concepts of the Royal Court, An Analysis of Renderings on Pictorial Ceramics. In *Royal Courts of the Ancient Maya, vol. 1: Theory, Comparison, and Synthesis*, edited by Takeshi Inomata and Stephen D. Houston, pp. 195-233. Westview Press, Oxford.
- Rice, Donald  
 1986 The Petén Postclassic: A Settlement Perspective. In *Late Lowland Maya Civilization: Classic to Postclassic*, edited by Jeremy A. Sabloff and E. Wyllys Andrews V, pp. 301-344. University of New Mexico Press, Albuquerque.
- Rich, Michelle  
 2004 WK-08: Excavaciones en la Estructura N14-23. In *Proyecto Arqueológico El Perú-Waka': Informe No.1, Temporada 2003*, edited by Héctor L. Escobedo and David Freidel, pp. 193-226. Informe Entregado a la Dirección General Del Patrimonio Cultural y Natural de Guatemala, Guatemala.  
 2005 WK-08: Excavaciones en la Estructura O14-4. In *Proyecto Arqueológico El Perú-Waka': Informe No.2, Temporada 2004*, edited by Héctor L. Escobedo and David Freidel. Informe Entregado a la Dirección General Del Patrimonio Cultural y Natural de Guatemala, Guatemala.
- Sabloff, Jeremy A.  
 1975 *Excavations at Seibal: Ceramics*. Memoirs of the Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology, Harvard University, volume 13, number 2. Cambridge, MA.
- Smith, Robert E.  
 1955 *Ceramic Sequence at Uaxactun, Guatemala*. Middle American Research Institute, Tulane University Publication, no. 20. Tulane University, New Orleans.
- Thompson, J. Eric S.  
 1962 *A Catalog of Maya Hieroglyphs*. University of Oklahoma Press, Norman, OK.
- Traxler, Loa P.  
 2003 At Court in Copan, Palace Groups of the Early Classic. In *Maya Palaces and Elite Residences, an interdisciplinary approach*, edited by Jessica Joyce Christie, pp. 46-68. University of Texas Press, Austin.
- Robles P., Griselda  
 2005 Estudio Cerámica. *Proyecto Arqueológico El Perú-Waka': Informe No.2, Temporada 2004*, edited by Héctor L. Escobedo and David Freidel. Informe Entregado a la Dirección General Del Patrimonio Cultural y Natural de Guatemala, Guatemala.
- Smith, Robert E. and James C. Gifford  
 1966 *Maya Ceramic Varieties, Types, and Wares at Uaxactun: Supplement to Ceramic Sequence at Uaxactun, Guatemala*. Middle American Research Institute, Tulane University, Publication 28, pp. 125-174.



Stuart, David

1998 The Fire Enters His House: Architecture and Ritual in Classic Maya Texts. In *Function and Meaning in Classic Maya Architecture*, edited by S.D. Houston, pp. 373-425. Dumbarton Oaks, Washington, D.C.

Tsesmeli, Evangelia

2004 Ireconociendo y Levantando el Mapa de El Perú-*Waka'* y *Chakah*. In *Proyecto Arqueológico El Perú-Waka': Informe No. 1, Temporada 2003*, edited by Héctor L. Escobedo and David Freidel, pp. 339-354. Informe Entregado a la Dirección General Del Patrimonio Cultural y Natural de Guatemala, Guatemala.

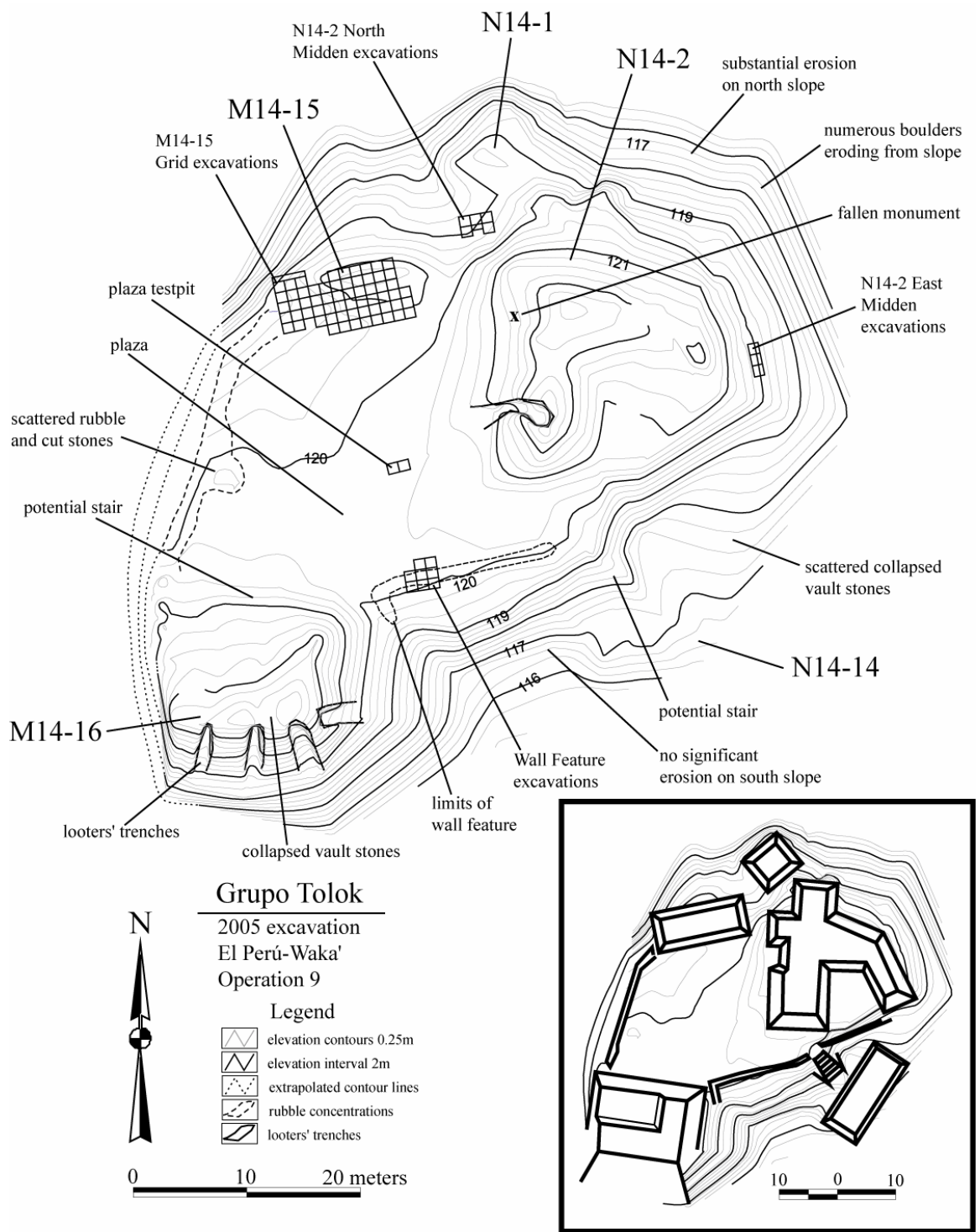


Figure 1. Map of the Grupo Tolok

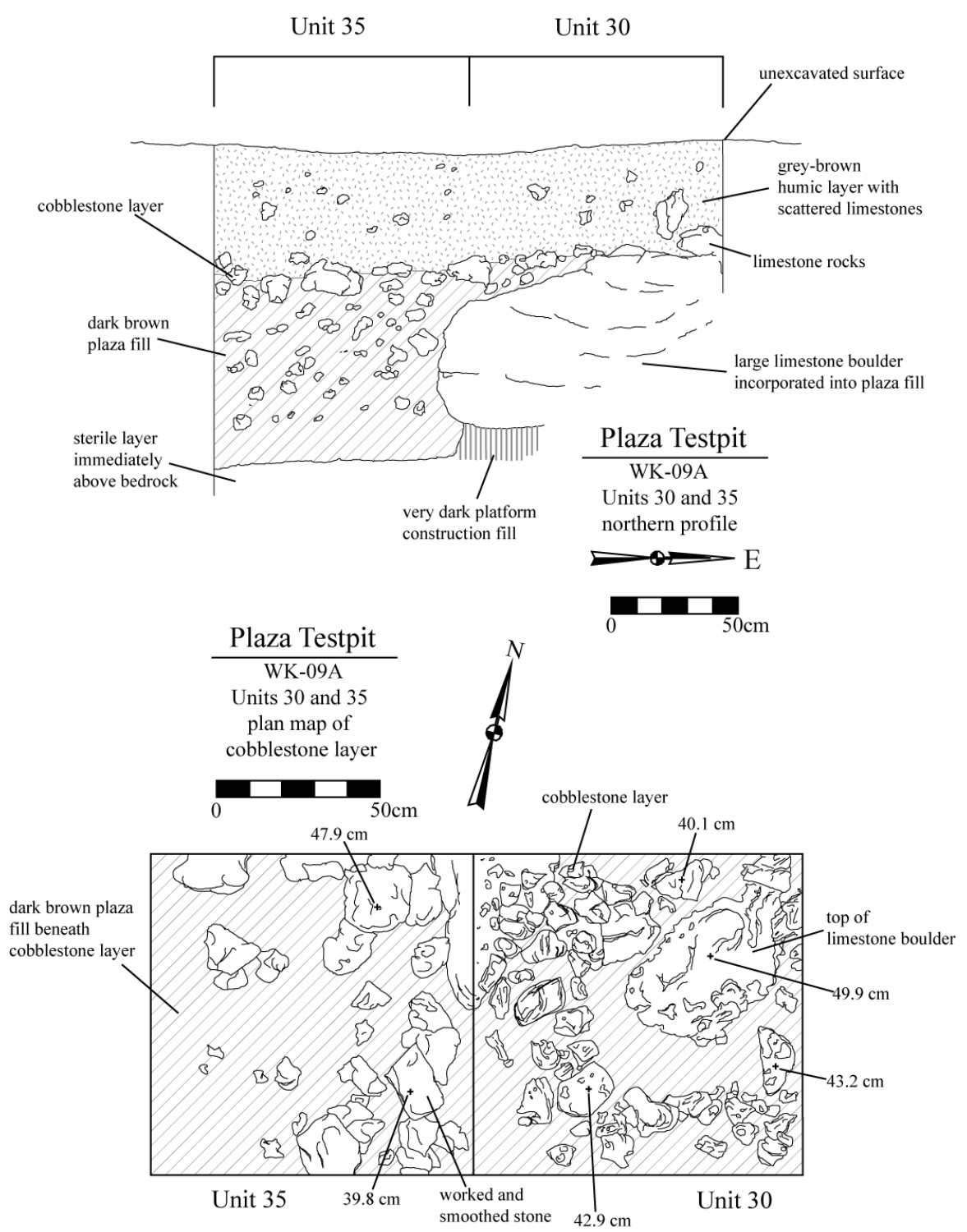


Figure 2. Plaza testpit excavations

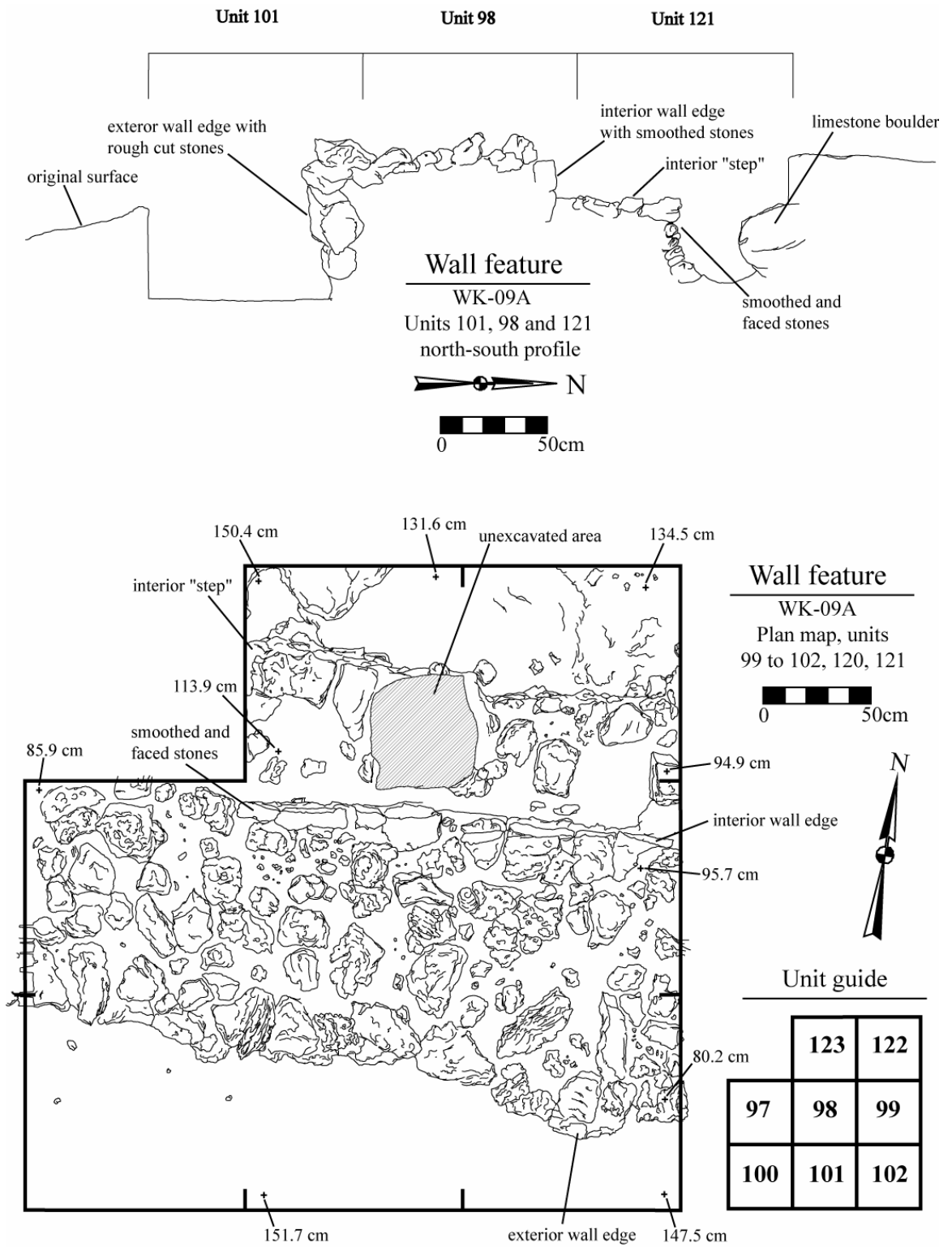


Figure 3. Wall feature excavations

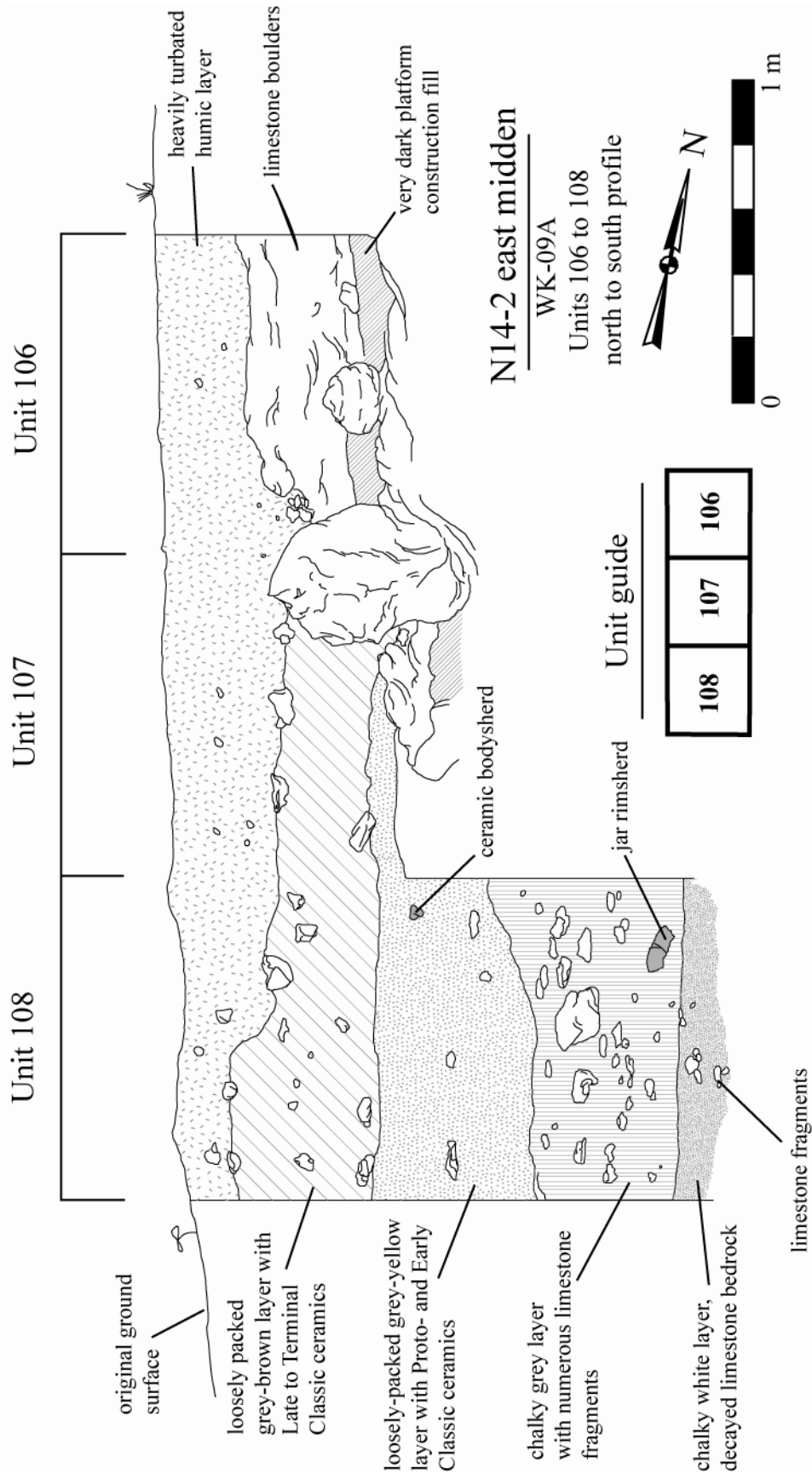


Figure 4. N14-2 east midden excavations

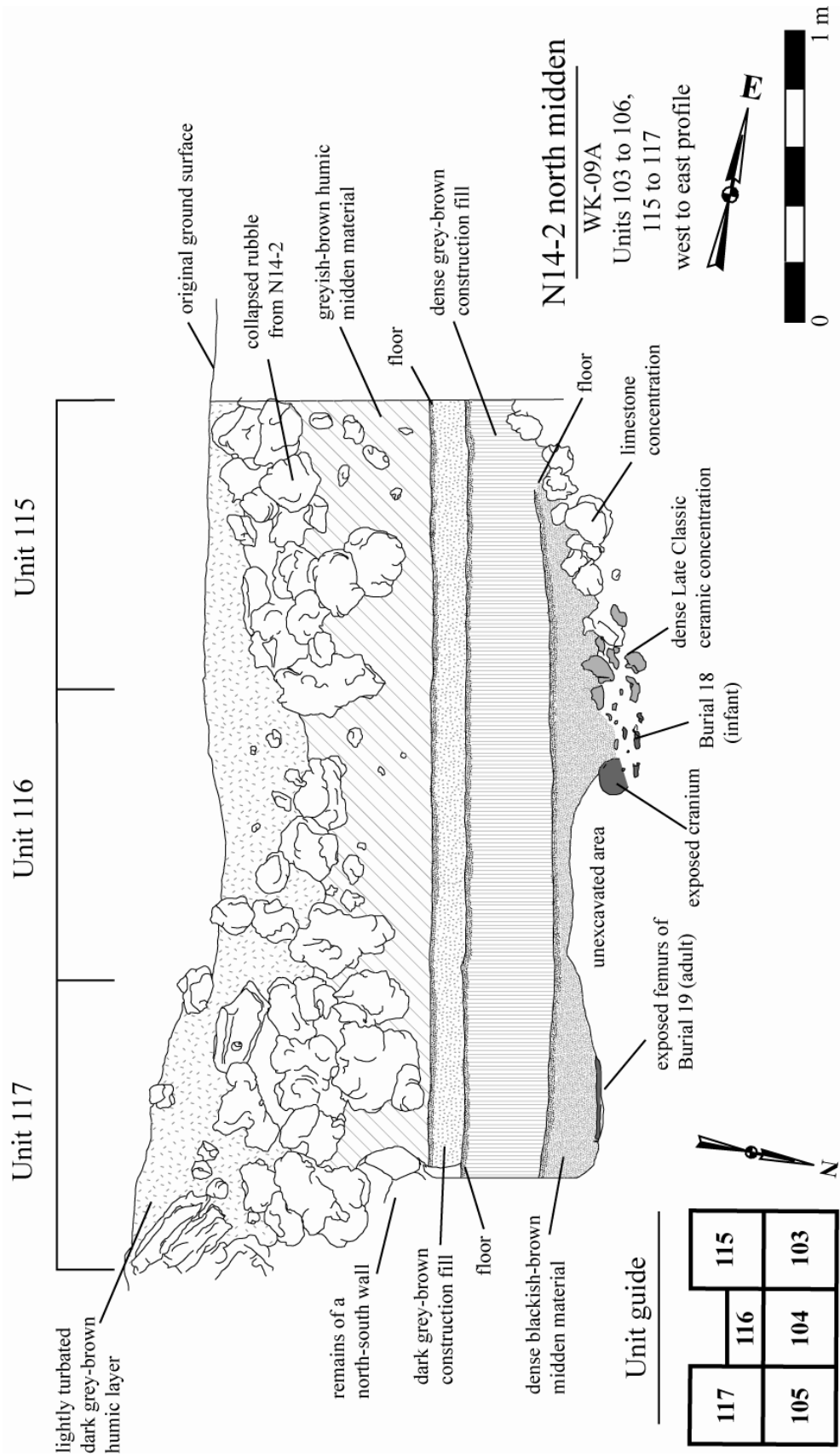
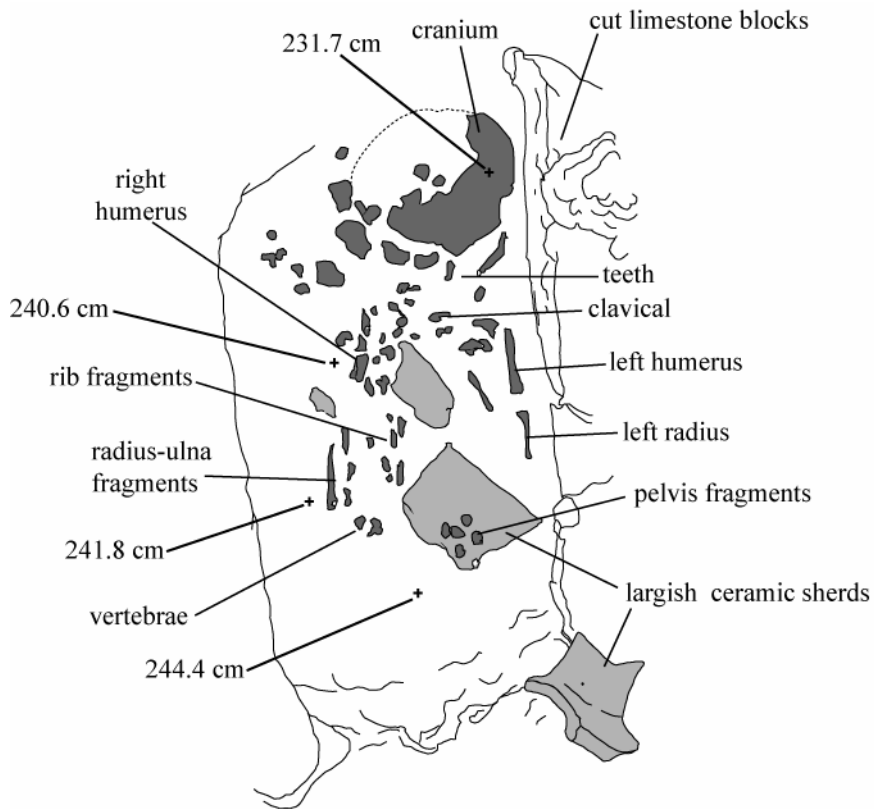
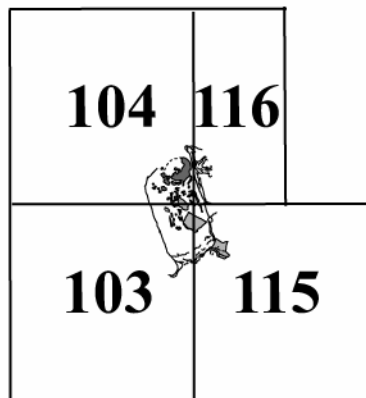
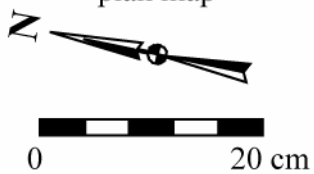


Figure 4. N14-2 north midden excavations



El Perú-*Waka'*  
Burial 18

WK-09A  
N14-2 north midden  
plan map



Position in relation  
to excavation units

Figure 6. Burial 18

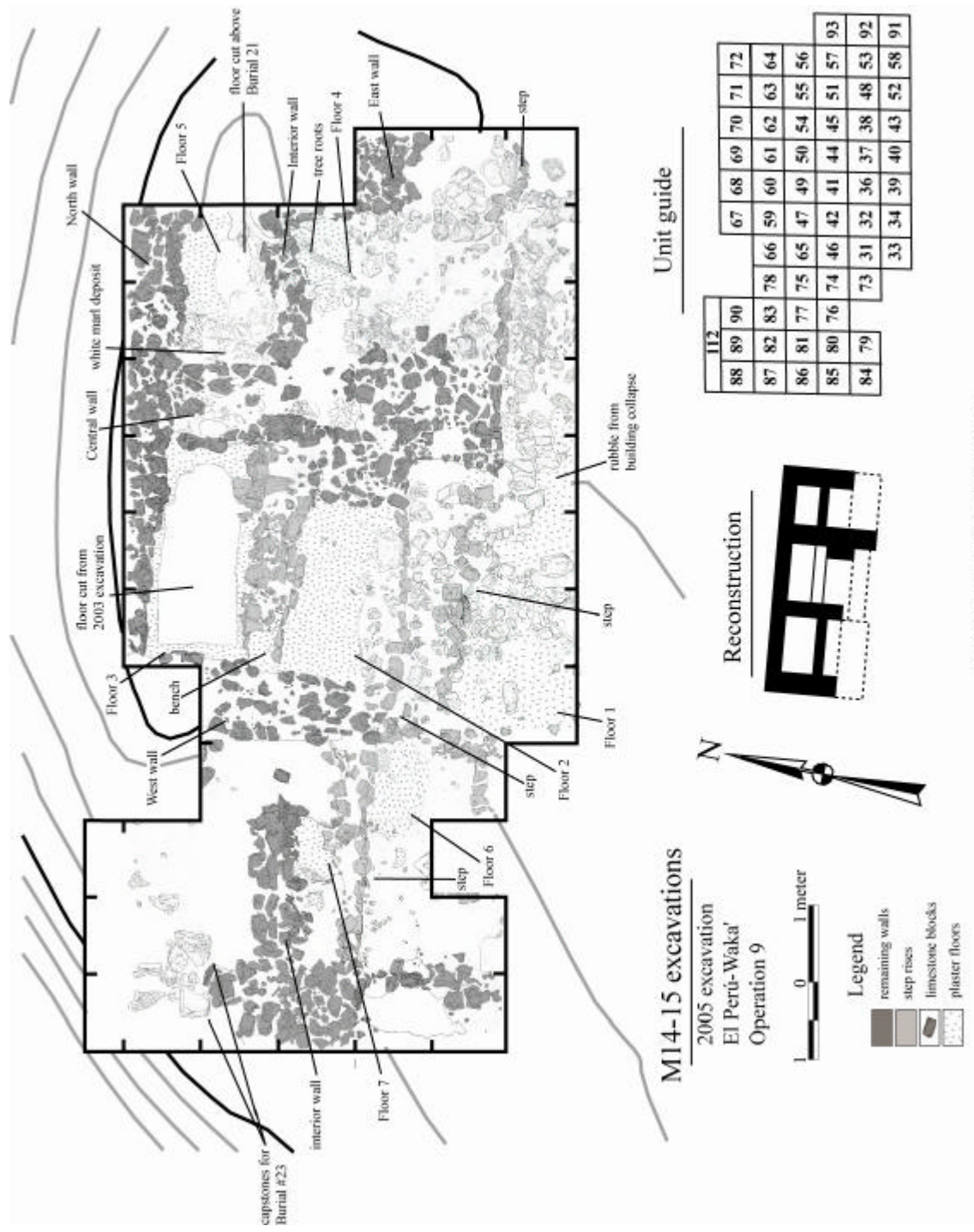


Figure 7. M14-14 excavation grid



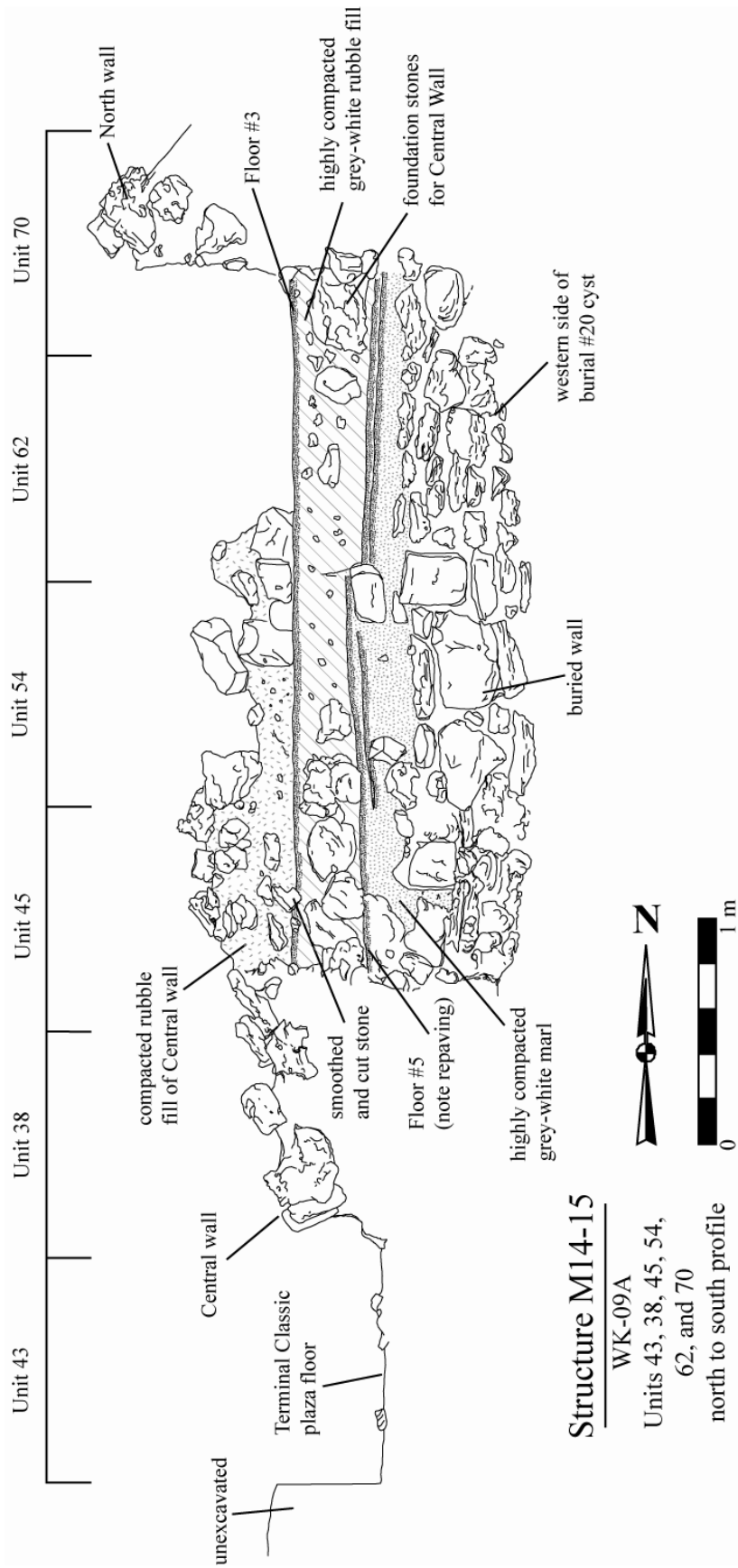


Figure 8. N14-2 north midden excavations

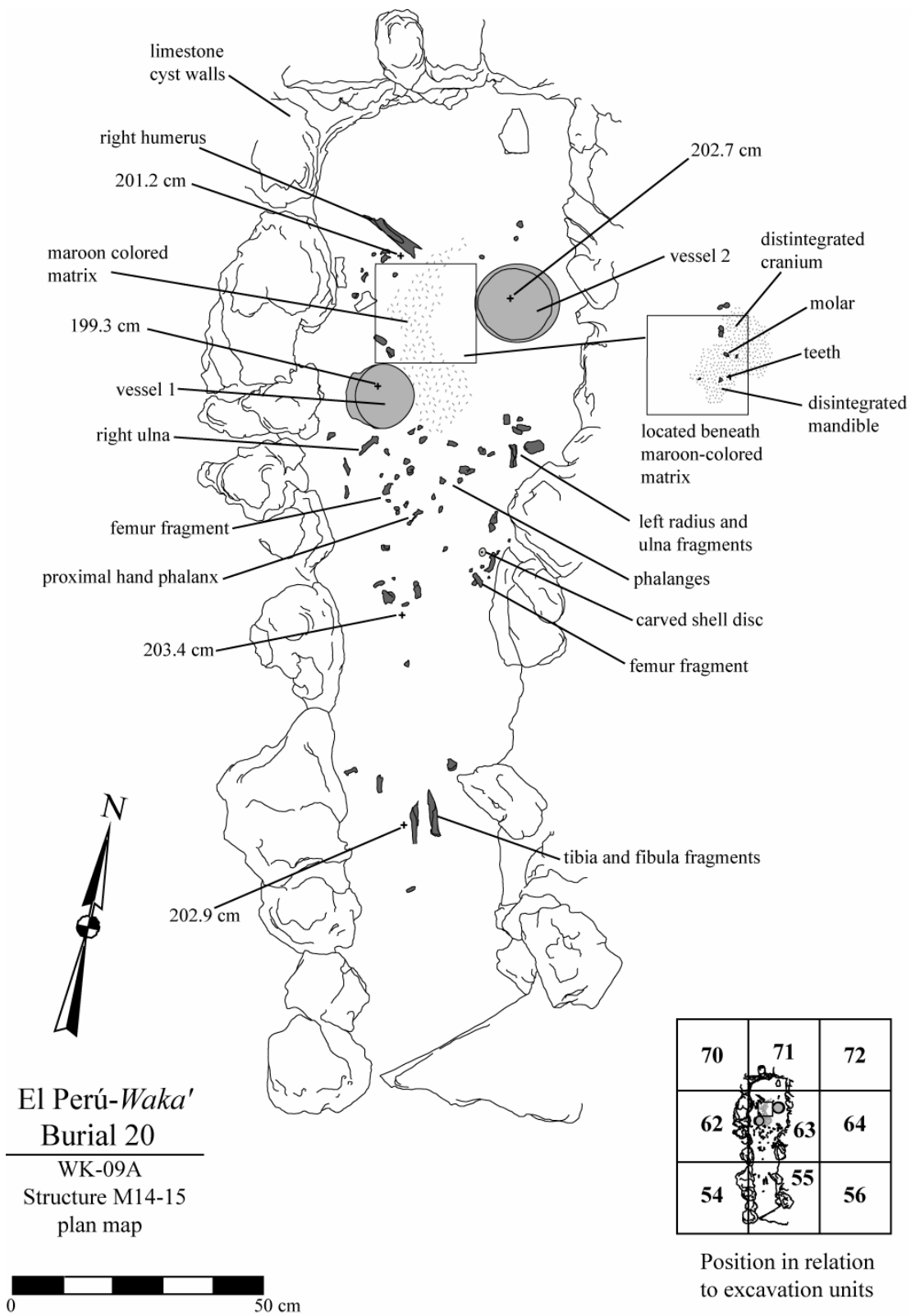


Figure 9. Burial 20

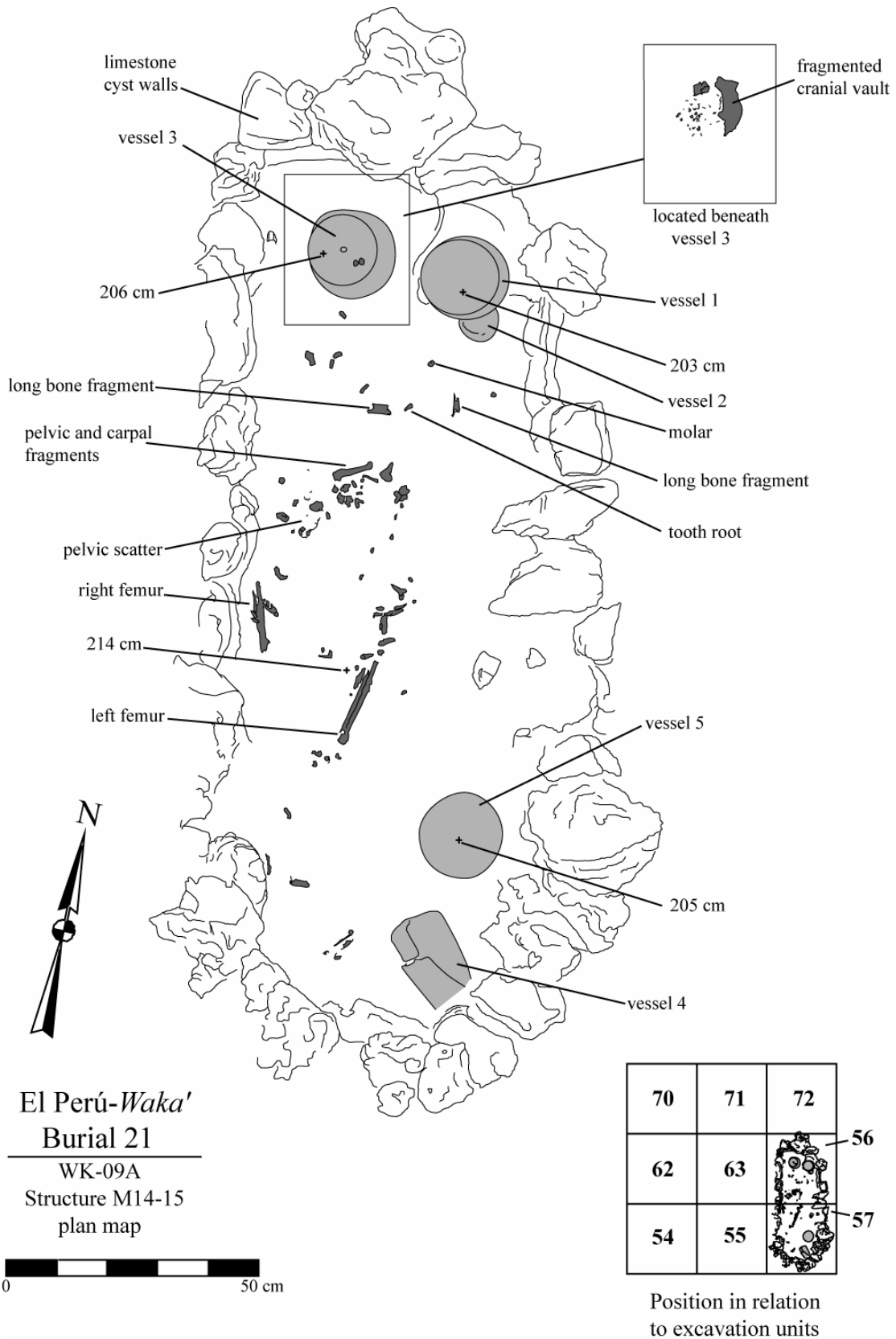


Figure 10. Burial 21

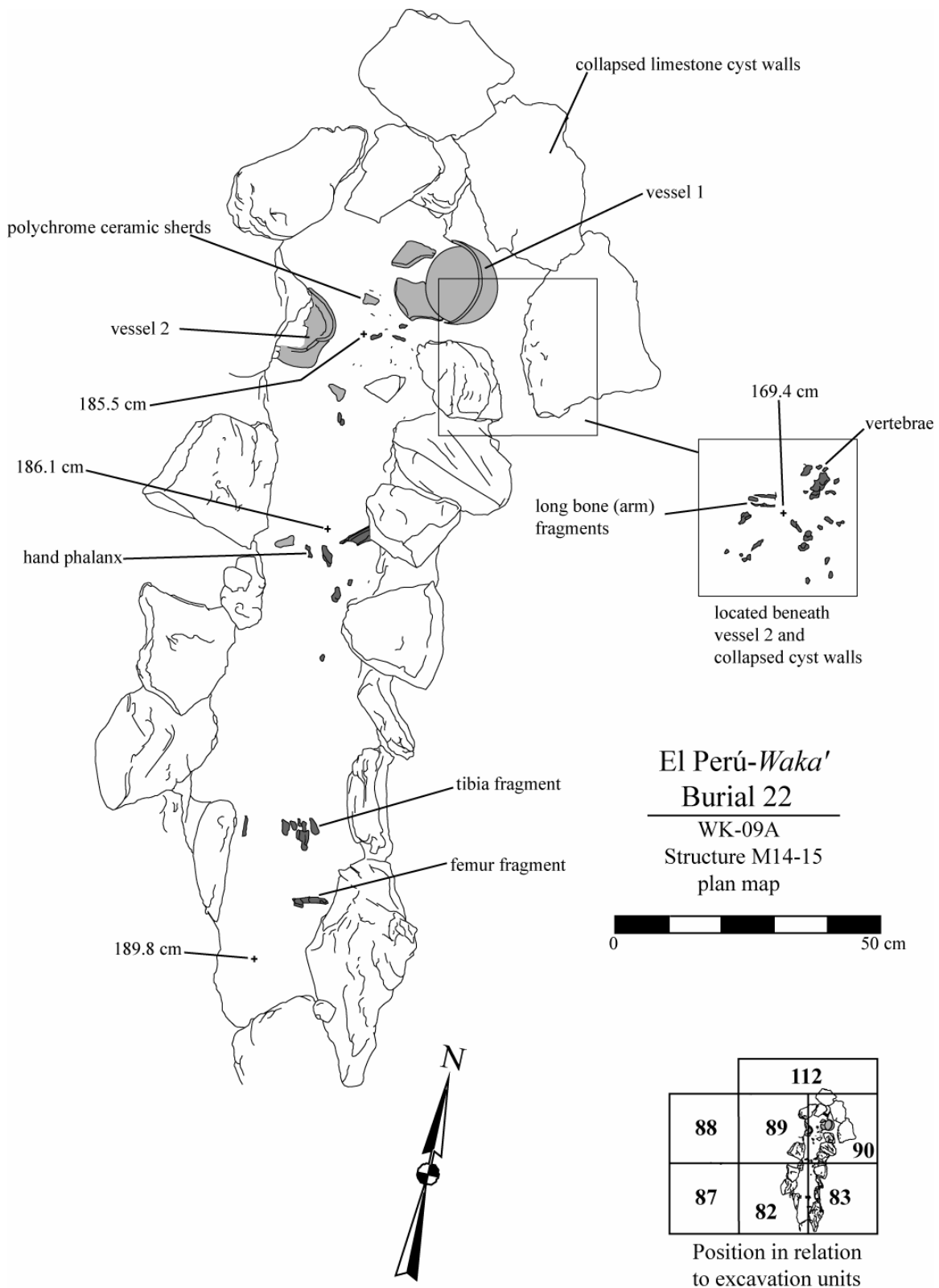
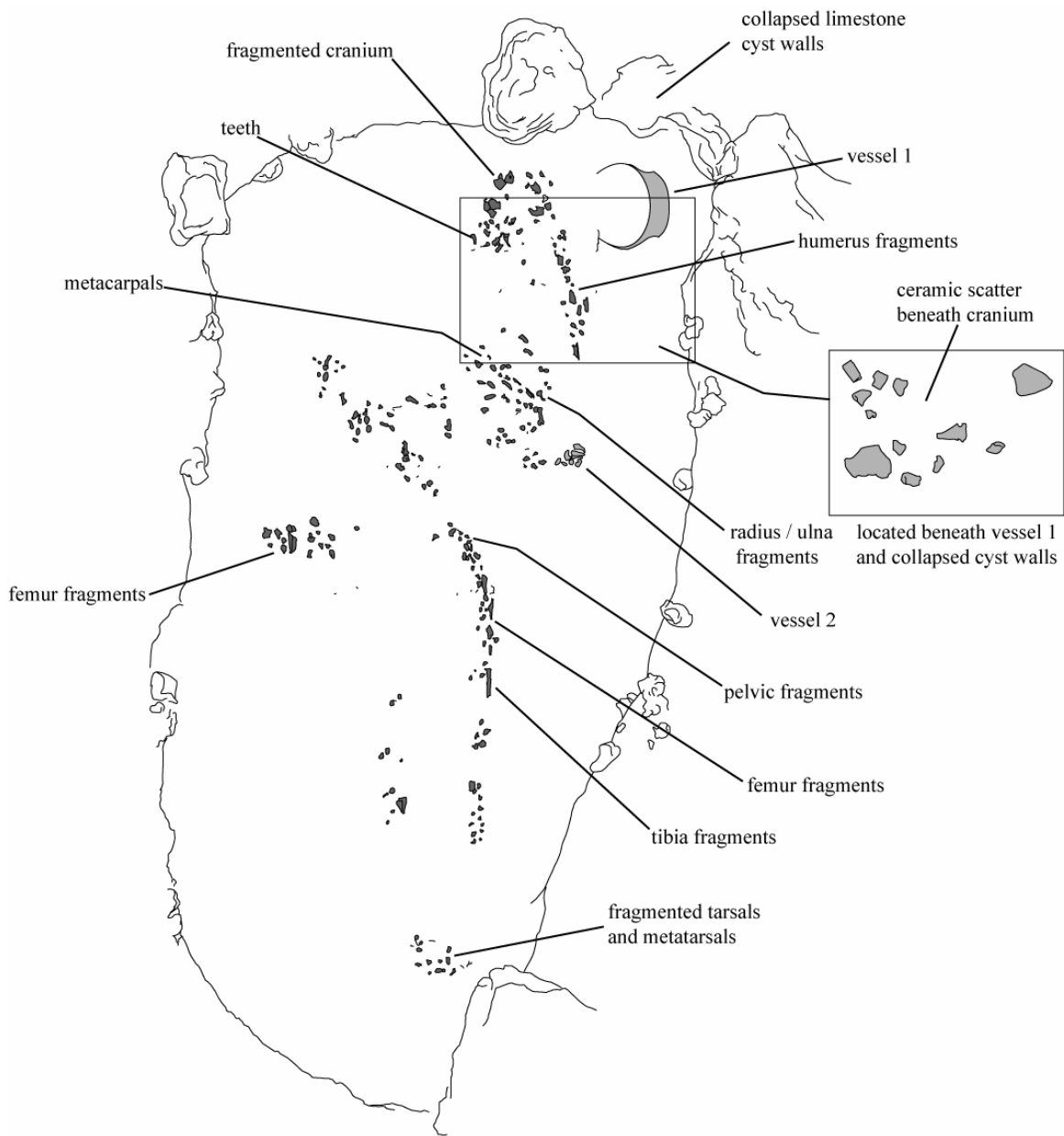


Figure 11. Burial 22



El Perú-*Waka'*  
Burial 23

WK-09A  
Structure M14-15  
plan map



	112	
88	89	90
87	82	83

Position in relation  
to excavation units

Figure 12. Burial 23

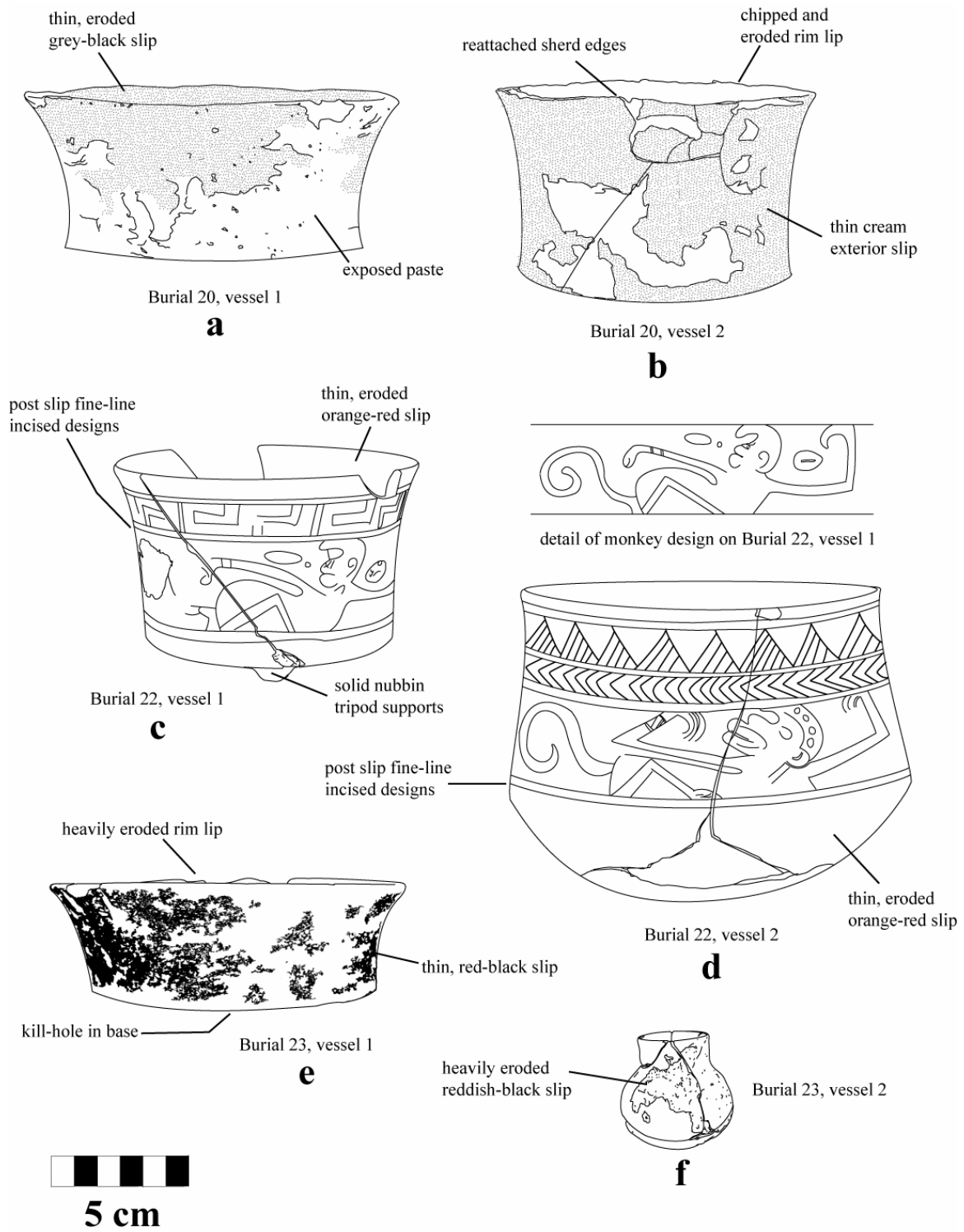


Figure 13. ceramic vessels of M14-15

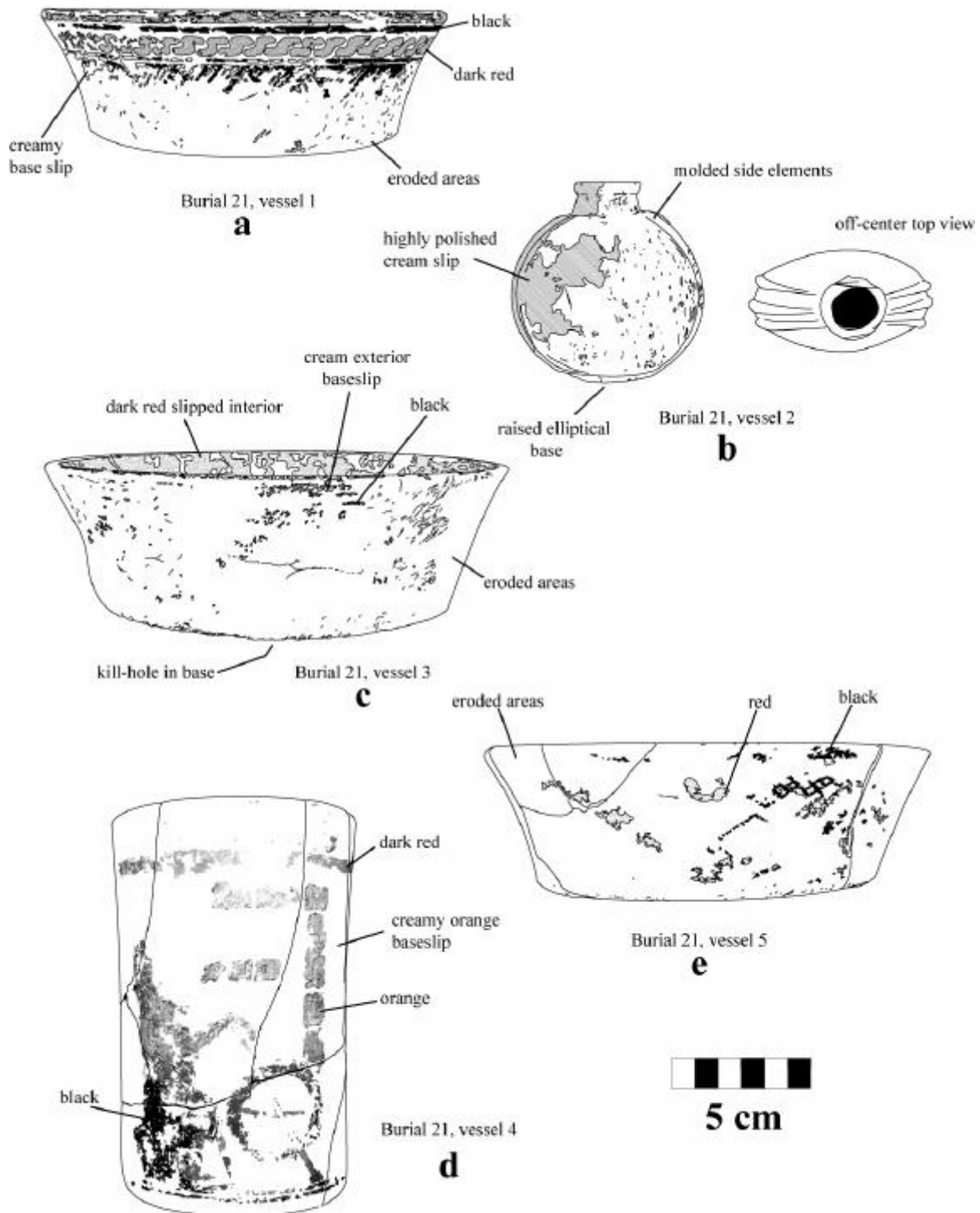


Figure 14. ceramic vessels of Burial 21

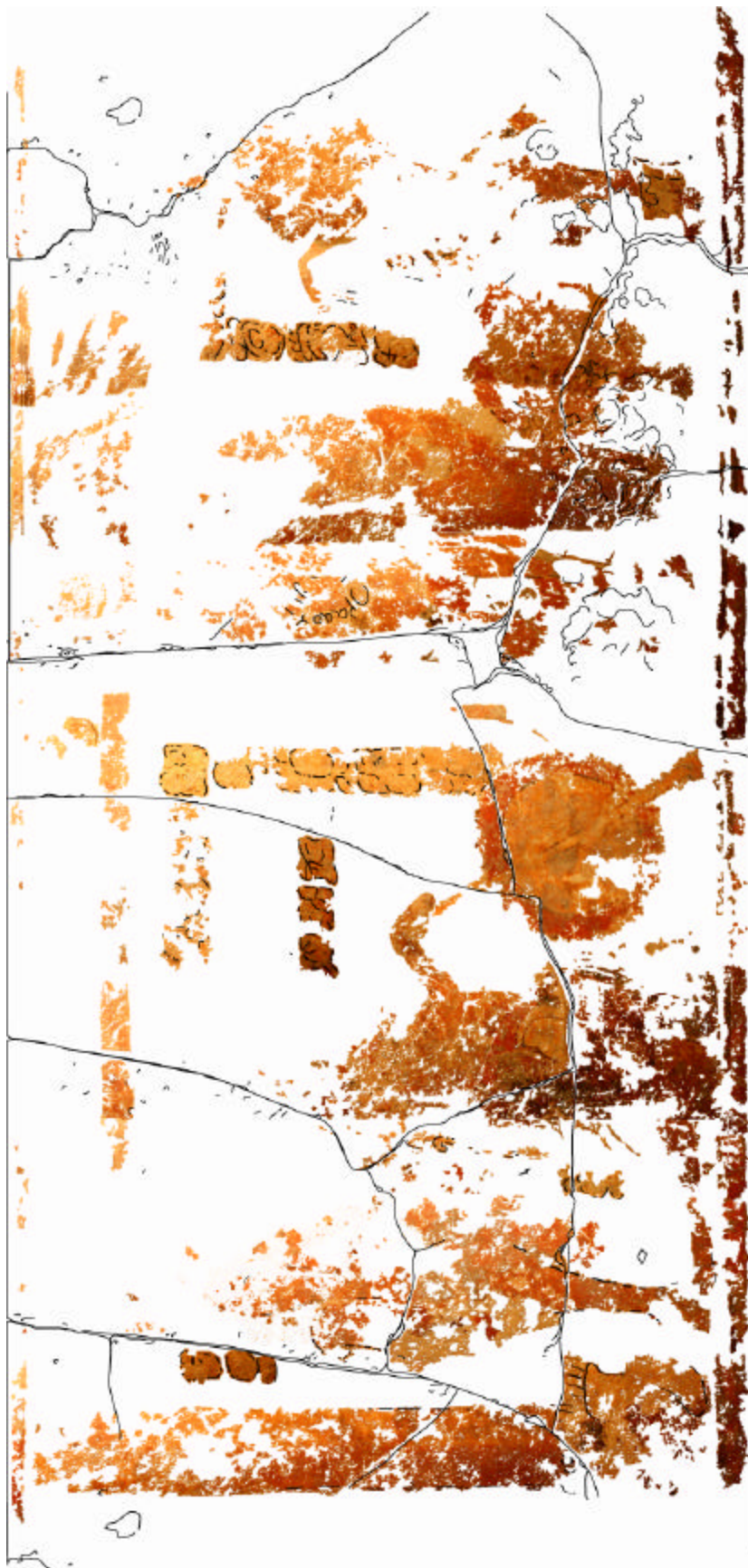


Figure 15. rollout of Burial 21, vessel 4