

Second Xipe statue found in El Salvador

SAN SALVADOR (Karen Olsen Bruhns and Paul E. Amaroli). Continuing excavations at the archaeological site of Carranza, an outlier of the Early Postclassic city of Cihuatlan in north central El Salvador, have uncovered a second near life-sized ceramic statue of the deity Xipe Totec. Unlike the first Xipe, which was smashed *in situ* in his temple (*Mexicon* 25 (1):10–12, February 2003), this second Xipe was carefully dismembered and buried in an elaborate offering in front of Structure 2 (Fig. 4). The piles of body parts were accompanied by more



Fig. 4. The dismembered Xipe statue.

than 500 ceramic vessels and by abundant obsidian blades, mostly broken. Among the offerings were a Marihua Red on Buff ladle censer, large open bowls, a small clay statue of a feline with a warrior's head emerging from the mouth, and hundreds of miniature vessels, including tripod bowls, cylindrical vases, small *ollas* of various sizes, and disks (Fig. 5). Many of the disks were painted with the signs of Xipe, including spirals and the circle and dot of Xipe's shield. Other designs indicate that Xipe Totec, a new deity to earliest Postclassic El Salvador, was associated with Venus, the traditional harbinger of ill fortune in Maya culture. These designs include the Lamat sign, a red star, and a red star with an interior spiral. The discovery of this ceramic Xipe statue brings to a total of 7 the Xipes known to have been found in El Salvador and raises the number of scientifically excavated



Fig. 5. Painted ceramic disks.

ceramic Xipe statues to 5, of which only the Xipe excavated by Erland Nordenskiöld in the early 1930s at Teotihuacan, is of Early Postclassic date. The Xipe statues and the offering will be delivered to Concultura and the National Museum for conservation and eventual display.