

Miguel Ventura

An unemployed cultural engineer discovered the following anonymous manuscript in the year 2645 among the ruins of the Mexico City NILC Trans Corporate Library. The following is a fragment of:

Something About Coatlicue

The Museum Director and Her Board
Members: A Novel in a Still Unknown Number
of Chapters

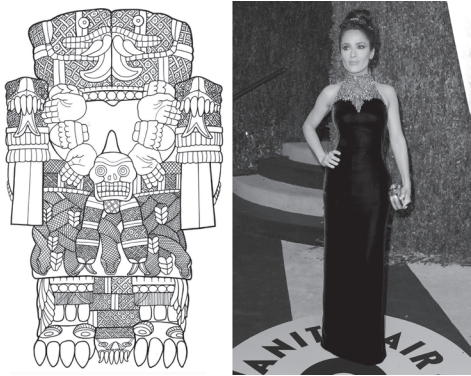
Dedicated to the great Mexican
cultural bureaucrats of our times.

**NILC and NILC culture will be destroyed!
NILC dispenses culture in order to rule. NILC
promotes its own form of beauty which only
enslaves. They have been very successful
in creating a literate ignorance among
their privileged classes. Everything is well
conceptualized and designed; nothing is left
to chance. Chains! Everything they do forges
chains and enslaves. But slaves always revolt!**

The year is 2114, sixty years have passed since the existing balance of power on the planet Earth was destroyed during the NILC Wars of Appropriation; the result was the creation of a new world order dominated by NILC (The New Interterritorial Language Committee) and its corporate allies. NILC elites had consolidated their power base in the year 2054, creating a genuinely transformed society characterized by racial, linguistic, and social equality based on models of apartheid practiced in South Africa, Israel, and Guatemala before the revolutionary NILC Wars. NILC linguists created a special hierarchical language system based on a

strict caste system like that employed in the Spanish American Colonies for three hundred years, and in Old India for thousands of years; each different caste was instructed in the specific dialect of its class; infringing linguistic regulations was a seriously castigated crime and, after many decades, became one of the main reasons for the existence of social tension within the NILC world. After the NILC Wars of Appropriation, Mexico, the principal setting of this narrative, becomes the central force of the NILC Empire. Successful revolutionary NILC economic, racial, and linguistic practices guaranteed well being and the continuation of a neo-colonial NILC form of life for the financial and cultural elites comprising .75% of the population of the great empire; the other 99.25% was predominately made up of dark-skinned workers, displaced peasants, unemployed migrants and other forms of lesser subject beings. In the great cities of the NILC emporium, the rich lived among their kind safely guarded in well-designed, bunker-like housing settlements on the periphery of every NILC urban centre, in oases of comfort and security within the city proper. These housing settlements, opulently graced with swimming pools, private schools, universities, museums, libraries, and their own exclusive shopping and entertainment districts, catered to the sophisticated whims and tastes of the rich oligarchy accustomed to centuries of privilege and pampered existence. In Mexico City, one of the great NILC urban centres of the NILC emporium, the upper-class neighbourhoods of La Condesa, La Roma, and Polanco survived the Wars of Appropriation intact; shortly afterwards, thick walls were built to allow in only residents and a few domestic workers: maids, gardeners, masseuses, sex workers, chauffeurs, cooks, and the like. On the other hand, displaced peasants from all over the country had joined the legions of poor workers living in massive tenements comprising most of the urban mass of Mexico City and other cities in the NILC Empire; even though NILC doctors had enforced the use of new contraceptive practices aimed at controlling

population growth among the working classes of the empire, the “mongrel” population continued to rise every year. Everyday, millions of poor workers entered the efficient subway system, developed by NILC industrialists, bankers, and urban planners, traveling from their distant homes on the fringes of Mexico City to their jobs at distant factories, businesses, and, of course, the homes of the rich, where many were employed as servants, sex workers, gardeners, and day labourers. The well-devised program of social and racial apartheid had brought prosperity to the land for several decades, but the NILC Empire was again on the verge of another revolution. Even though the powerful drug cartels of the empire had been successfully integrated into the NILC social and economic fabric, the recent development of

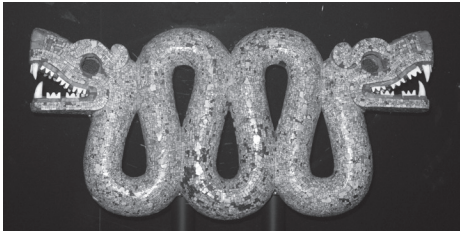


new drugs aimed at halting the human ageing process and enhancing the mind-control powers of those in certain elite NILC circles had created commercial tensions among the powerful NILC pharmaceutical corporations, and a new generation of drug lords and their supporters were no longer willing to share their profits with NILC officials and corporations. The liberal theoretical naiveté and complacency of the NILC elites had only served to disguise the enormous frustration of the masses and the escalating decadence of the lifestyle of their elite leaders. This is the story of the fall of the NILC empire, and how it was precipitated by several heroic figures whose exploits are here remembered.

Something about Coatlicue

Thousands of years had gone by since Coatlicue, a dozen of her 400 children, and a handful of loyal servants had decided to move into a series of apartments located several thousand feet below the Earth’s surface. Life hadn’t been particularly easy for Coatlicue, who thousands of years before had given birth to the moon, stars, and Huitzilopochtli, the god of the sun and war. Living conditions before the Spanish Conquest had been much better, and somewhat worse after that dreadful event. Of late, though, her quality of life had suffered immensely during the NILC regime. As a young woman, Coatlicue underwent a series of dramatic physical transformations. Having once been a beautiful woman, born into a family of wealthy chilli merchants from a small village in Puebla, not far from the great volcano Popocatepetl, Coatlicue, suddenly and for no apparent reason, turned into the double-headed serpent monster she’s commonly known as. After thousands of years and tired of wearing her unwieldy snake skirt, the goddess finally decided to undergo a complete physical make- over. Even though she was known throughout the world as one of the most hideous-looking goddesses of the Aztec world, those who knew her were immediately seduced by her warmth, wit, and genuine love for her subjects.

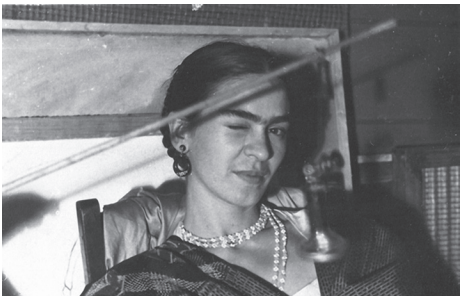
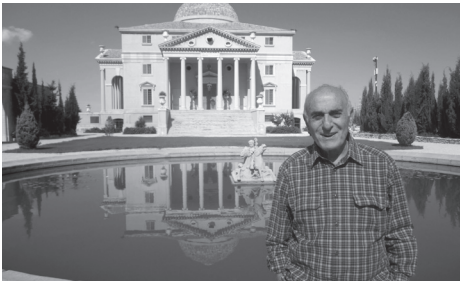
Nonetheless, it was time for a change. After a successful operation by one of the best plastic surgeons of the pre-NILC world, Coatlicue was again a beautiful woman and spent much of her time not only catering to the needs of her 400 children but also cleaning her spacious modernist apartment and tending her exuberant underground cactus garden. Money always



being a problem, Coatlicue was forced to make momentary appearances in NILC society and sell off parts of her extraordinary collection of pre-Hispanic jewellery, clothing, idols and textiles to rich collectors above ground. Luckily for her, the twentieth century Diego Rivera and Frida Kahlo studio complex in San Angel, that



continued functioning as an important site for NILC culture pilgrims, was located directly above her apartment. Coatlicue couldn’t understand why her apartment, built thousands of years before, was so similar to the famous painters’ studio designed by Juan O’Gorman in the early twentieth century. It was really no coincidence at all because, unknown to most, Tláloc Nortenecl, an enterprising and quite ingenious young Teotihuacano architect of the late classic period had devised buildings not so different from what Le Corbusier and his pupils, including Juan O’Gorman, would design a thousand years later. It wasn’t very hard for Coatlicue, wanting to keep a low profile in the centuries following the Spanish Conquest, to keep her home an architectural secret because as I’ve already mentioned before, it was built several thousand feet below the Earth’s surface. The Teotihuacano architect had first built a deep well into the earth’s upper crust. He then directed his workers to dig doorways every 100 meters along the well’s sides. The doors were meant to open into spacious glass and stainless steel apartments for other gods and goddesses tired of living above ground. The constant wars,



parties and other raucous celebrations had made pre-Hispanic Mexico a rather loud place. Coatlicue’s decision to live at least 55 floors beneath the Earth’s surface was a way of fleeing from the calamitous events taking place above. Similar to many of Le Corbusier’s apartments and homes from the 1920s, the spacious white apartment offered Coatlicue an elegant setting for her hectic social life. Well, at least, that was her situation in the early days. As the centuries went by, Coatlicue continued to visit friends on the surface. She was amazed to see Mexico City not only grow so quickly into one of the world’s largest urban centres but also into a great cosmopolitan city where cultural rituals had replaced the religious ones of her youth. One day she took the elevator up to the surface as she usually did every couple of months. The

goddess had selected an ancient plumed helmet that had been worn by her cousin Quetzalcóatl thousands of years ago to sell to an important collector from a major NILC corporation. Instead of the elevator opening discretely behind a several-hundred-year-old nopalera, Coatlicue found herself inside a closed dark space that turned out to be a closet in a building not too different from her own apartment. Coatlicue timidly peered out from behind the door. A group of people stood admiringly around a female figure dressed in a flowered huipil and long velvet skirt. The braided hair, punctuated with silver pins and multi-coloured ribbons, crowned a small dark face whose black eyebrows merged like one thick brushstroke above the eyes. “Who is this person standing here? Where am I?” wondered Coatlicue as she continued observing the social gathering. The person turned out to be none other than Frida Kahlo and the building turned out to be her studio. Coatlicue remained behind the closet door as Kahlo continued handing out autographed copies of photos of herself to the crowd of young people surrounding her. She also couldn’t help noticing a large mound of gifts donated by culture pilgrims placed along the walls of the studio. The gifts were made up of articles of antique clothing, ribbons, paintings, and drawings made especially for Kahlo. Coatlicue suddenly had flashbacks to her own youth, thousands of years previous, when she was cared for and worshipped by pilgrims in awe of her formidable powers and menacing physical appearance. The Spanish conquest had brought all of that to an end, substituting the old pantheon of gods with their European Catholic imports. But now, NILC had supplanted the old religion with a new one: the religion of culture and the deification of its great architects, artists, theoreticians, critics, and collectors. This was the first time Coatlicue had observed the activities inside a NILC culture temple. She knew of their existence but she had never shown any interest in visiting one. “Why should I visit one of these places of worship that no longer worship me and my colleagues? Not only have I been demoted and supplanted, I’ve

been eliminated from the roster of idols.” Putting aside her grievances, Coatlicue, elegantly dressed in a vintage Chanel mother of pearl chiffon dress and Jimmy Choo heels, slowly entered the studio room, blending in with all the other visitors of the privileged classes gathered there. What Coatlicue learned had a great impact on her perception of life during the NILC regime. The first thing she found out was that Kahlo had been a painter, married off and on to Diego Rivera, both of whom had been dead for hundreds of years. What Coatlicue couldn’t yet understand was why the painter had attained such worldwide fame over the past few centuries. Little did she know that the cult of Frida Kahlo had become a great money-making industry in the NILC world. The painter’s resurrection followed the social integration strategies of NILC cultural engineers bent on maintaining NILC hegemony at whatever price. Nonetheless, Coatlicue went on gathering information about the woman standing there in front of her. While reading one of the many texts on the walls of the culture temple, Coatlicue found out that NILC scientists had revived the painter’s body shortly after the seemingly endless NILC Wars of Appropriation. The reincarnated Kahlo was then forced to live in her recently restored studio, which had suffered heavy damage. After carefully informing herself about Frida’s life, reputation, and importance within the NILC cultural and social worlds, Coatlicue pretended to be a passionate culture pilgrim avidly seeking an interview with the legendary painter. “Hello Frida, my name is Coatlicue and I’m a reporter with NILC News. Tell me about what you’re doing right now, your latest passion, your favourite hobby, or your latest love.” “Nothing excites me more than furthering the cause of NILC culture and its positive impact on future generations to come.” Coatlicue couldn’t help noticing that Kahlo’s voice and expression seemed rather hollow, disembodied—even dead. “Who is this person really? I’ve been alive for so long, hidden away, perhaps, underground for hundreds of years but I’ve been alive. Frida seems so dead, like she’s been pickled. Her skin

is greenish grey, and her eyes don’t sparkle like mine. And what is this about keeping NILC culture alive? She must be an impostor, a fake, receiving so much attention while I receive none whatsoever.” Feeling an irrational surge of anger and an insatiable taste for revenge, Coatlicue grabbed an old baseball bat lying on the floor and unknowingly invoked her own disused and forgotten powers of mass destruction. As the long-forgotten goddess ran towards Kahlo, still handing out autographed photographs of herself to her loyal followers, a bright red serpent’s head sprouted from her chest. The viper’s long tongue quickly wrapped itself tightly around Kahlo’s neck, as its eyes, sent out bright pink laser beams towards the painter’s eyes, tits, and pussy. Lifting the bat high over her head, Coatlicue took careful aim at the head of the living NILC icon. The bat fell squarely on her skull as a couple of laser beams blazed their way inside her sockets and another burnt a path to Frida’s heart, splattering the room and visiting pilgrims with blood and thousands of body fragments. As she attacked her rival, Coatlicue’s face was replaced by a mask of woven serpents whose tongues lashed out at whatever was left of the old pre-NILC artist, sucking up any of Frida’s body parts until nothing was left. Coatlicue then burned all the photographs, letters, paintings, and memorabilia accumulated in the culture temple. The studio was left totally absent of any trace of Kahlo’s existence. Even the shocked pilgrims’ bodies were licked clean by Coatlicue’s tongues as the goddess hypnotized them, clearing their minds of any memories of the bloody event. Coatlicue felt satisfied after having destroyed Frida Kahlo. It had been centuries since she’d killed anyone in that manner. The last time had been after giving birth to Huitzilopochli, when he waged war against her 400 children and unsuccessfully tried to kill them. After regaining her human aspect once again, Coatlicue remembered why she had decided to come up to the Earth’s surface. With Quetzalcóatl’s plumed helmet in hand, Coatlicue proceeded to her appointment with the very rich collector interested in acquiring

the precious pre-Hispanic artifact. Frida Kahlo’s mysterious disappearance made the news for several weeks as NILC police unsuccessfully searched for clues that might help explain the event. Having momentarily forgotten about Frida’s murder, Coatlicue spent the rest of the day sipping margaritas with Eustacio Carrera de la Fuente at a bar in a mall in Inter Inter Lomas Plus, the new exclusive district preferred by members of elite NILC society. A team of the most talented architects had spent years devising the shopping mall’s revolutionary design. Shortly after the NILC Wars of Appropriation, the American Embassy in Baghdad went up for sale. The gargantuan, 440,000 square-metre building complex, built at huge expense by the North American Colonial Army after their complete dismantling of the Iraqi nation had become a nesting ground for anti-NILC terrorists who found refuge there in the anarchic transition to NILC domination that followed the turbulent wars. Several years later, the NILC Army cleaned up the place that would no longer be needed because NILC leaders had decided to turn the entire Middle East into the world’s largest resettlement camp for displaced workers, farmers, and other NILC subjects whose lands and homes had been expropriated after the NILC Wars of Appropriation. The huge complex having been put up for sale, was bought up by the New Interterritorial Working Services Connection (NIWSC), a huge consortium of Mongolian, Paraguayan, and Namibian businessmen heavily invested in buying and selling Mexican displaced workers to interested business corporations throughout the NILC Empire. Once the former American Embassy came up for sale, NIWSC decided the huge complex could be transplanted in its entirety to a new location outside Mexico City. NILC’s new elites and privileged classes had moved out of the older neighbourhoods destroyed during the insidious NILC Wars of Appropriation. Inter Inter Lomas Plus became a new state built on the outskirts of what had once been Interlomas, and shopping facilities had not yet been built, so NIWSC saw this as



a great opportunity to invest, buying up the old embassy and selling it to the Inter Inter Lomas Plus City Investment Corporation. The complex was sold at an outrageous price, dismantled stone by stone, transported to Inter Inter Lomas Plus at great cost, and then rebuilt with a totally redesigned interior by Zaha Hadid Inc., in a fusion of high Modernist and Aztec styles. Shortly after its completion, the new shopping centre became the most fashionable and expensive installation of its kind in the dazzling new suburb. (The old American embassy in Iraq, a stately building designed by Josep Lluís Sert in the mid-twentieth century, was also bought up by NIWSC and reinstalled in Inter Inter Lomas Plus, properly restored in its pure modernist splendour as the central culture temple.)

Eustacio, the owner of a fabulous collection of pre-Hispanic art whose pieces had once belonged to none other than the legendary Coatlicue, was a very handsome man whose great great grandmother had been an Italian opera singer and his great great great grandfather, a Lebanese banker. What

had made this collection in particular so unique was that the objects were not only in mint condition but had never been seen before, which led many to suspect they were fakes. The pieces he had acquired from the collections that had once belonged to the British Museum, the Metropolitan, and countless other major museums—no longer in existence after the NILC Wars of Appropriation—paled in comparison to the marvellous pieces he had acquired from Coatlicue. After endless carbon-14 tests carried out by NILC archaeologists, the pieces proved to be originals. What Eustacio Carrera de la Fuente revealed to no one was from whom he had acquired these precious objects. Many NILC



society women considered Eustacio to be not only an attractive, eligible bachelor, but also a well-connected NILC businessman dedicated to culture and NILC’s civilizing crusade. Even though Eustacio’s encounters with Coatlicue to acquire new objects for his collection were far from frequent, the collector felt deeply attracted to the mysterious and beautiful woman who always appeared not only perfectly coiffed and dressed, but who also brought him some of the most exquisite pre-Hispanic objets d’art he had ever seen in his entire life. Never did he inquire about the whereabouts of the objects she seemed to pull out of a hat.

Emboldened by her exploits earlier in the day, Coatlicue exuded an accented aura of sensuality and desire never before felt by Eustacio.



“You’ve done it again Coatlicue. You’ve brought this fantastic piece. I’ve never seen anything like it before. Look at the thousands and thousands of hummingbird feathers in perfect condition, not like the moth eaten headdress, supposedly worn by Moctezuma, that I acquired several years ago. You know, I’ve never asked you to tell me where you find these things, but where did you find this? It’s priceless, it’s exquisite...” “Ha, ha, ha,” she laughed, “your head would fall off if you knew where it comes from. You’d never believe me anyway.” He then said: “By the way, Coatlicue, may I entice you to visit my home and see all the pieces I’ve acquired over the years? You might be amazed. Some of them, though only a few, are on loan to my private museum in the

old Interlomas. What do you say?” Feigning boredom and a certain fatigue, Coatlicue finally nodded in agreement: “I’m not too busy today. I did have an appointment with a few girlfriends but they can just wait. I’ll be nice to you today. Okay, let’s go. I’d love to see your collection.” In the back of her mind, Coatlicue continued thinking about having killed Frida Kahlo. She couldn’t help feeling that her nerves—and her entire body—were somehow on fire. Coatlicue felt exhilarated. It was great to feel the taste of blood again.

Coatlicue entered Eustacio’s private helicopter and in three minutes they had arrived at the hilltop Palladian mansion the collector had acquired from Munib al-Masri shortly before NILC forces attacked Israel and liberated Palestine during the NILC Wars of Appropriation. Eustacio had lovingly rebuilt the massive enclave, including Roman and Arab ruins, in his fortified enclave in Jumex Hills, Mexico City’s most exclusive neighbourhood. “This is an impressive installation you’ve got here. Wow, look at the view of the city from your terrace.” Coatlicue was not only overwhelmed by the city’s size but also by the countless fortified ghettos providing safe and luxurious housing to the privileged classes. Even though the city’s thick layer of smog blocked out almost everything else, the tall towers surrounding each walled enclave glimmered brightly like Christmas trees. Thomas Glassford, an accomplished and highly acclaimed NILC interior decorator, had designed the intricate patterns made up of different coloured neon and strobe lights. Thanks to Glassford’s decorative interventions, NILC citizens finally felt their city could finally boast having the necessary landmarks of a great metropolis, especially when seen from one of the many aircraft landing at all hours of the day. The buildings outside the walled enclaves were largely in ruins, or in a miserable, dilapidated state. To the east, Coatlicue could see the great wall separating the endless grey blanket of cinder-block constructions in Ecatepec, the workers’ dormitory ghetto, from the rest of the city. She felt no nostalgic

longing for the miniature Tenochtitlán, which had once reigned supreme in the idyllic lake setting of the spectacular Mexico valley hundreds of years earlier. She had accepted Tenochtitlán’s fall centuries ago, with a bitter sense of resignation that verged on indignation. But it was no use opening up old wounds. The only thing that mattered now was selling off her great collection of pre-Hispanic art in order to continue her centuries-old lifestyle.

Coatlicue couldn’t help feeling a certain déjà vu, sipping on a superbly prepared margarita, as she sat on a Mayan Chac Mol Eustacio had recently acquired from a Saudi NILC prince.

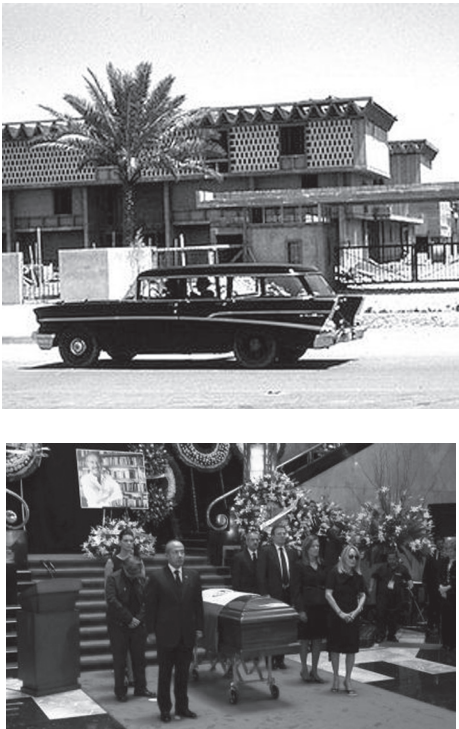


She said: “I feel I’ve seen this sculpture before. Of course! It reminds me a little of Tenochtitlán in the good old days. Funny city, how I miss it!” She knew she was lying as she spoke but she wanted to sound naively coquettish. “Coatlicue, come inside. I want to show you something,” said Eustacio. Coatlicue entered a high-ceilinged hall that housed Eustacio’s collection of pre-Hispanic art. “Did I sell Eustacio all this stuff? It really is quite a stash. And I still have so much of it left though,” she thought. The goddess couldn’t help noticing

that Eustacio was now not only dressed in a plumed Quetzalcoatl cape and headdress she had sold him many years ago but also sporting a massive Aztec cod piece in the shape of a plumed serpent’s head. Coatlicue was sexually aroused immediately. It had been centuries since she felt any form of sexual excitement. The cape, helmet and cod piece brought back memories of another time of her life so long ago when she had fucked great warriors and gods. Feeling that it was no longer possible to maintain her present human form, the goddess gave in to her sexual instincts and desires, transforming into her archaic Aztec form. The heavy mass of green, blue, and red gelatinous flesh, oozing purple and orange slime, slowly approached the handsome Eustacio who had already been paralyzed by the bite of a pair of vipers darting out from Coatlicue’s skirt, itself made of writhing serpents. She enjoyed sucking his thin cock and fucking him with her countless serpents until they came out his mouth. What might have been pleasurable really wasn’t really pleasurable at all because her partner was drugged and unable to respond in any satisfying way. Coatlicue’s sexual possession allowed complete control over her sexual pleasure and his eventual destruction, but that didn’t seem enough for Coatlicue. It was just about power. Feeling somewhat dejected and empty, Coatlicue left Eustacio’s apartment a half hour later. No traces were ever found of the collector or his collection.

Observations from Campamento
Libertad Revolucionaria

Spirits at Campamento Libertad Revolucionaria were uplifted as camp leaders and soldiers were informed of new and successful attacks aimed at destroying NILC infrastructure, and more importantly perhaps, debilitating NILC morale. As usual, Alex García the Squoonck reflected on the events perched on the old branch, alone in her room. She stared out the dirty windowpane that barely allowed her to observe an out of focus group of rebel children playing soccer in the small open space outside the simple log



structure where she spent countless hours ruminating about the state of the world. “I didn’t know about this character Coatlicue. I was sure she didn’t exist at all, but here she is killing off important NILC personalities. Why would she start now if she’s been around for so long. I can’t say how happy I am that she got rid of Frida Kahlo. The poor woman should have stayed dead. I sort of liked her when she was alive. I knew about her in the old days when I was at the Museum of Natural History. I’m pretty sure she came to visit the museum one day with her very fat husband; she stared at me for the longest time but we didn’t connect. I never kept in touch. What I found pathetic was how NILC scientists resurrected her after the NILC Wars of Appropriation.

She never really seemed like her old self, living and working in her old home, which is, or was, until her death, an important NILC culture temple. Yes, getting rid of Frida Kahlo was extremely important, but what worries me about Coatlicue are not only her motives but her origins as well. She might be real, but she

is a mythological figure. Her persona is charged with historical references that go back as far as human memory on this continent. If her existence becomes known among population in general, her presence could certainly be counter productive to our revolutionary interests. And her motives, well, her actions seem only motivated by sheer jealousy. Seeing Frida surrounded by sycophantic admirers only ignited her own feelings of being ignored for so long. I’m not sure we can use her image, so that means I’ll have to get rid of her somehow. I would like to use it though, as I did at the funeral ceremony of Carlos Fuentes, the great Mexican writer, at the Palacio de Bellas Artes. I think I carried out his widow’s death with great wit, using a pendant to burn her alive. I have to say that the recent destruction of at least part of the new Bellas Artes in Interlomas was a great success. Nonetheless, the goddess Coatlicue, must die!”