

THE FIRST BIOREGIONAL GATHERING OF THE AMERICAS

PROCEEDINGS

PRIMER CONSEJO BIOREGIONAL DE LAS AMÉRICAS

MEMORIAS

NOVEMBER/NOVIEMBRE 17-24, 1996

TEPOZTLÁN, MORELOS, MÉXICO

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PREFACE

Capturing the essence of an event as multi-dimensional as the First bio-regional Gathering of the Americas borders on the impossible. Nevertheless, we have assembled here some of the written records describing the activities which took place during that magic week. Unfortunately, the decision to create these proceedings was not made until the event was already underway, resulting in incomplete coverage of some aspects of the gathering.

At Meztitla, Virginia organized the Documentation Center, where written materials and tapes brought by participants were shared with others. Here the idea of putting together the proceedings of the Gathering was birthed. Antonio and Marc Leger, two computer experts, volunteered to help.

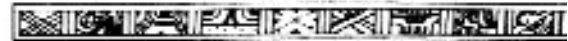
The team met for several days after the event, developing an outline entering data and assigning tasks. Beatrice joined the team at this time, lending her help with coordination and communications. This group of volunteers continued its work by email, dealing with seemingly endless problems of format, file transfer and translation, while juggling other personal and professional responsibilities.

The documents included here are the ones we felt best express the richness of the Meztitla experience. In keeping with the bilingual spirit of the event, we translated as many of the articles as possible. Some, however, have been left in original version. We apologize for this, but we ran out of time and translators.

We hope that this effort to document a part of our common history motivates future organizers of bioregional gatherings to plan ahead for this important task. An editorial team should be in place before the event begins and arrangements made for the reporting of each workshop and council.

We thank everyone who made the Gathering possible and especially those who collaborated with these proceedings.

Beatrice Briggs
Antonio López
Virginia Sánchez Navaro



Contact Information:

Beatrice Briggs
Turtle Island Office
4035 Ryan Road
Blue Mounds, WI 53517 USA
tel: 608.767.3931
fax: 608.767.3932
email: beabriggs@aol.com

PREFACIO

Capturar la esencia de un evento tan multidimensional como el Primer Encuentro Bioregional de las Américas raya en lo imposible. A pesar de lo cual quisimos juntar algunos testimonios escritos sobre esa mágica semana. La decisión de editar estas memorias se tomó durante el Encuentro mismo, es por esto que de antemano reconocemos la irregularidad en la calidad de los materiales que aquí ofrecemos, así en como en los temas y relatos ausentes.

En Meztitla, Virginia organizó el Centro de Documentación del evento, un lugar para acceder los materiales escritos o visuales que los participantes quisieron compartir con los demás. Ahí surgió la idea de publicar las memorias del evento y dos expertos en computación acudieron al llamado: Antonio y Marc Leger.

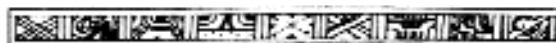
El equipo se reunió en Tepoztlán después del evento y compartió con Beatriz el primer índice, se repartió el trabajo y se continuó la tarea por correo electrónico, enfrentando luego problemas de formato, de transferencia y de traducción de los archivos. Además de los de disponibilidad de tiempo personal para dedicarle a nuestro pequeño equipo y su tarea.

Después de meses de intentos de coordinación electrónica juntamos algunos de los documentos que mejor expresan la riqueza de la experiencia. Tradujimos la mayoría de los materiales para poder ofrecer una versión bilingüe de esta memoria y decidimos dejar algunos en su versión original.

Deseamos que este primer intento documente una parte de nuestra historia colectiva y motive a muchos a superar nuestro esfuerzo mediante suficiente planeación desde el primer círculo. Recomendamos que para el siguiente Encuentro la publicación de las memorias sea considerado como algo prioritario y se asignen relatores para cada consejo/taller de manera coordinada con el equipo editorial.

Agradecemos la participación de todos los que hicimos posible este Encuentro así como en especial la de aquellos que colaboraron con materiales para la realización de esta memoria..

Beatrice Briggs
Antonio López
Virginia Sánchez Navarro



Para más Información:

Laura Kuri
Consejo de Visiones
A.P. 4-253
Cuernavaca 62431
Morelos Mexico
tel/fax 73.230963
email:
manzini@servidor.dgsca.unam.mx

INTRODUCTION: THE PATH TO MEZTITLA

Since time immemorial, humans have responded to a deep urge to gather periodically in large encampments. Driven by some genetic imperative, by Mother Earth's own wisdom, we travel long distances, despite all obstacles, to be with our tribe.

Different cultures have called these circles by different names: the Northern Amerindians, "Pow Wows," the Gypsies, "Kris," the Hindus, "Kumbha Mehla," the South American Andean people, "Inti Rames," the Huichole Mexican Indians, "Hikuri Neirra," the Scandinavians, "Ting." and the people from the Himalayas, "Putjas." Although each gathering has its distinctive characteristics, the general form of these events has remained essentially unchanged since the cave clan gatherings of the Ice Age. Various sub-groups come together to share ceremonies and celebrations, trade goods and knowledge, engage in friendly competition, continue ancient relations, settle disputes, meet in council, find partners, mate and plan for the future. The survival of our species has depended on these periodic meetings of the larger family.

During the times of coming together, truce is declared. Individual differences, real or fictitious, are set aside as we try to share the best of ourselves for the benefit of the whole circle, the hoop of life itself. In this atmosphere of openness and tolerance, cultural bonding and evolution takes place. In the magic of firelight and the glare of sunlight, the most diverse ideas, visions, and projects are articulated, often in very embryonic form, or shared wordlessly, in a dance or a dream. Gatherings are the womb in which experience is honored and the future is nurtured.

In modern times, the impulse to gather has been co-opted by the institutions of the dominant culture: church, state, and corporation. The ancient celebrations of solstice, equinox, moon cycle, beginning or end of rains, planting or harvesting of crops, or extraordinary galactic

events such as the sighting of comets, eclipses, or astronomical-astrological convergences have been replaced. The rhythms of the earth and cosmos have been obscured by a hectic parade of saints' days, independence days, revolution days, constitution days, war victories, heroes' birthdays and highly commercialized sports events.

But the genetic memory of the old ways has not died. The counter cultural movements of the fifties and sixties gave rise, in the early seventies of our century, to the Rainbow Family Gatherings for Peace and the healing of Mother Earth. First hundreds and then thousands came to annual encampments, seeking respite from authoritarian centralism, racism, sexism, classism, irrational consumerism, mass manipulation, institutionalized violence and systematic destruction of our collective health, human communities and ecosystems.

Ten years later, another "earth tribe" began to form at the North American Bioregional Congresses held in the United States and Canada. A self-governing assembly of peers, these events drew inspiration from diverse sources, including the moral, egalitarian principles of the Quakers, the passion for self-determination which fueled the first North American Revolution, utopian ideals of the libertarian-anarchist movements of the last two centuries and the democratic practices of the Six Indigenous Nations Confederation.

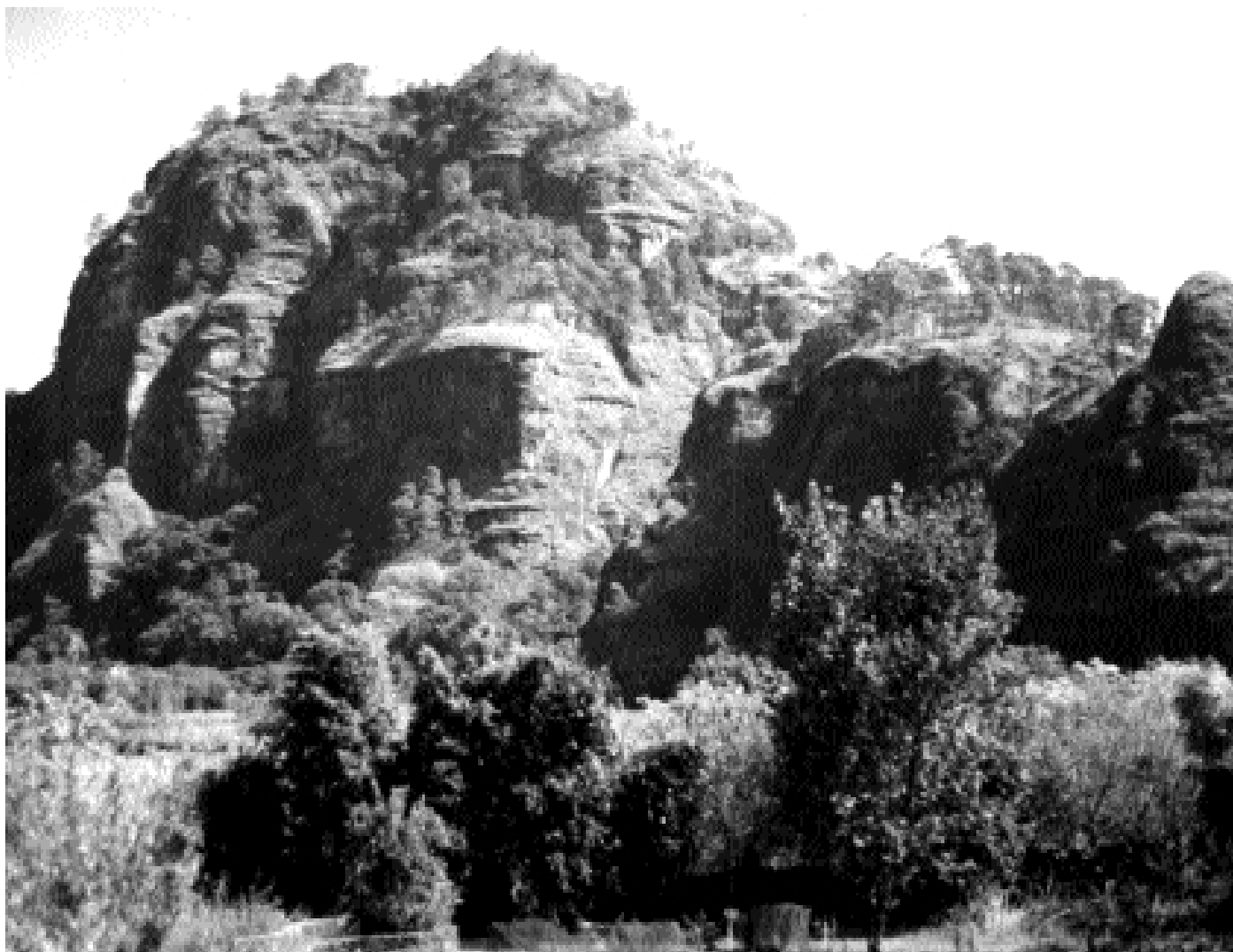
In the late 80's and early 90's another young tribe sprouted, this time in Mexico, called the Consejo de Visiones de Guardianes de la Tierra (Vision Council of Earth Keepers). Inspired by the example of the Rainbows and the bioregionalists, as well as by ancient Mayan and Aztec prophecies and their geographical position in the middle of the Americas, this group dreamed of bridging the widening gap between their northern and southern cousins. More specifically, they dreamed of bringing the people of the

eagle together with the people of the condor, in the land of the quetzal.

It took more than a decade before the time was ripe for such an effort of cultural re-creation. After much coming and going between Canada, the United States and Mexico, many misunderstandings and mistakes, endless meetings and lots of music, consensus was reached on a date and a place. The tribes would gather from November 17-24, 1996, at a boy scout camp called Meztitla, located beneath of the Sierra del Tepozteco in the Cuahunahuac Bioregion, Free and Autonomous Municipality of Tepoztlan, state of Morelos, Mexico. A small, dedicated group of northern and southern visionaries volunteered to coordinate this event, for which, at first, they had no name. Eventually they agreed to call it "The First Bioregional Gathering of the Americas/Primer Consejo Biorregional de las Americas."

Now, that event, which was both ancient and new, is history. These proceedings are a humble attempt to document the abundance of experiences at Meztitla. Each of the estimated one thousand participants could tell a different story. We will never know the whole of what happened during that week, but this collection of writings and drawings captures some of the magic and power of Meztitla. It also points the way toward solving some of the problems that arose there and could not be solved in the moment. Many thanks to all who contributed to this publication, the hard-working team of editors, and to the Great Spirit for bringing us all together. May we meet again soon.

Alberto Ruz Buenfil and Beatrice Briggs
Cuahunahuac Bioregion, Winter 1996-97



INTRODUCCIÓN: LA SENDA HACIA MEZTITLA

Desde tiempos inmemoriales, los seres humanos han respondido a una necesidad imperiosa de reunirse periódicamente en grandes campamentos. Respondiendo a un llamado genético ancestral o a la sabiduría misma de la Madre Tierra, nos encaminamos y recorreremos largas distancias, a pesar de las distancias y los obstáculos, para juntarnos con nuestras tribus.

Las distintas culturas han tenido diferentes nombres para denominar estas reuniones del círculo tribal: los pueblos Indígenas de Norteamérica los llamaron "Pow Wows," los Gitanos, "Kris," los Hindus, "Kumbha Mehlas," los pueblos Andinos de Sudamérica, "Inti Rames," los Huicholes de México, "Hikuri Neirras", los Escandinavos, "Tings," y la gente de los Himalayas, "Putjas."

A pesar de que cada uno de estos eventos tiene características culturales particulares, la forma general en que se desarrollan ha seguido siendo prácticamente la misma desde los primeros encuentros de los Clanes de las Cuevas que tuvieron lugar durante la Edad del Hielo. Los distintos sub grupos humanos se reúnen para compartir ceremonias y para celebrar, para intercambiar sus mercancías y conocimientos, para realizar juegos y competencias amistosas, para continuar antiguas relaciones, arreglar disputas, confrontarse en los Consejos, encontrar parejas, hacer el amor, y sobre todo para elaborar planes para asegurar el futuro de la tribu en su conjunto. La sobrevivencia misma de nuestra especie ha dependido de estos encuentros cíclicos en los que la gran familia tiene la oportunidad de reencontrarse.

En los tiempos de la reunión, se declara una tregua que es respetada por todos los clanes. Las diferencias individuales, reales o ficticias, son dejadas de lado para tratar de compartir lo mejor que cada uno puede ofrecer en beneficio del círculo total, del anillo mismo de la vida. Y en esta atmósfera de apertura y tolerancia, los vínculos culturales y los procesos evolutivos se cumplen y se multiplican. Ante la presencia mágica de las fogatas y ante la luz brillante del sol, las más diversas ideas, visiones y proyec-

tos se articulan, a menudo en forma apenas embrionaria, o bien adquieren una primera forma, sin palabras, durante una danza o en un sueño. Los encuentros son la matriz en la que se reconoce la experiencia y en los que se nutre nuestro futuro.

En los tiempos modernos, este impulso ancestral para reunirnos, ha sido sutilmente cooptado por las principales instituciones de la cultura dominante: las iglesias, el Estado y las grandes corporaciones. Las antiguas festividades tribales para celebrar los solsticios, los equinoccios, los ciclos de la luna, el principio o el fin de las lluvias, la siembra o el cultivo de los alimentos, la recurrencia cíclica de eventos galácticos extraordinarios como el avistamiento de cometas, eclipses o convergencias astronómico-astrológicas, han sido todas reemplazadas por nuevas conmemoraciones. Paulatinamente las celebraciones populares del paso rítmico y natural de la Tierra y del Cósmos han sido opacadas por un desfile incesante de días de los Santos y las Vírgenes, días de la Independencia, de la Revolución y de la Constitución, victorias de guerra, cumpleaños de héroes nacionalistas y espectáculos deportivos absolutamente comercializados.

Sin embargo, la memoria genética de los viejos tiempos nunca ha desaparecido por completo. Los movimientos contraculturales de los años cincuenta y sesenta de este siglo, dieron lugar, a principios de la década de los setenta, a los primeros Encuentros de las Familias del Arcoiris para la Paz y por la curación de nuestra Madre Tierra. Inicialmente fueron grupos de centenares y después de millares de personas quienes comenzaron a reunirse en un nuevo tipo de campamentos anuales, buscando tener un respiro del centralismo autoritario, del racismo, sexismo, clasismo, consumismo irracional, manipulación masiva, de la violencia institucional y de la destrucción sistemática de nuestra salud colectiva, de nuestras comunidades humanas y de nuestros ecosistemas.

Diez años mas tarde, otra "tribu de la Tierra" comenzó a formarse a través de los Congresos Biorregionales de Norteamérica,

que tuvieron originalmente lugar en los Estados Unidos y en el Canadá. Esta nueva asamblea auto-gobernada entre iguales tomó su inspiración de distintas fuentes, que incluyeron los principios igualitarios y morales de los Quakeros, la pasión por la autodeterminación que prendió el fuego de la Revolución de Norteamérica, los ideales utópicos de los movimientos libertarios y anarquistas de los dos últimos siglos y las prácticas democráticas de la Confederación de las Seis Naciones Indígenas del Noreste americano.

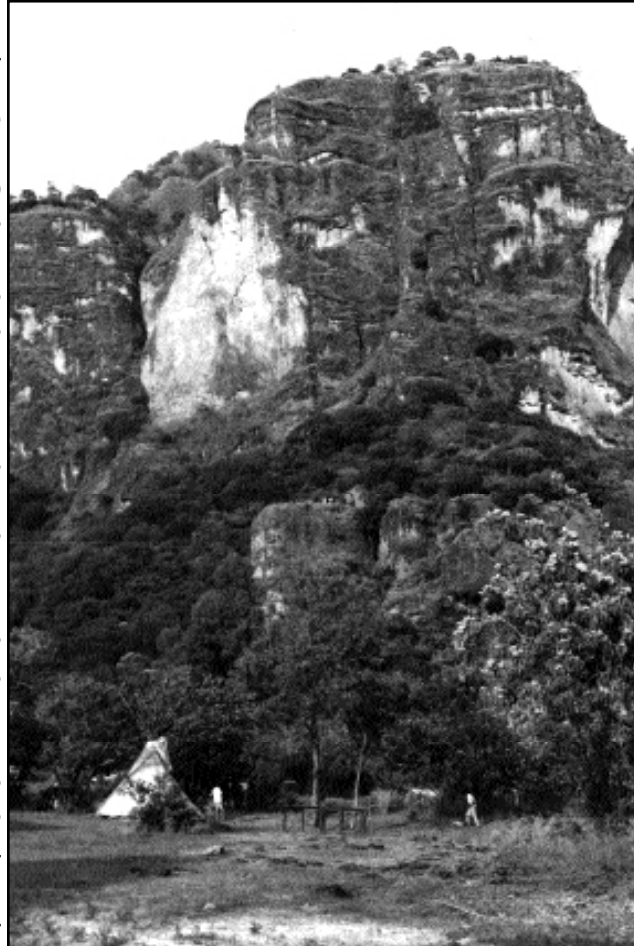
A fines de los años 80's y principios de los 90's una nueva tribu comenzó a germinar, esta vez en México, llamada el Consejo de Visiones de Guardianes de la Tierra. Inspirados por el ejemplo de los encuentros arcoíricos y biorregionalistas, así como por las antiguas profecías de los pueblos Mayas y Aztecas y por su posición estratégica en el corazón de las Américas, un grupo de comprometidos activistas soñaron con crear un puente para unificar las dos orillas de un profundo abismo histórico, y de contribuir al acercamiento cultural entre sus primos del norte y del sur. Y más específicamente, soñaron con unir a los pueblos del águila con los pueblos del cóndor, en la tierra del quetzal.

Tomó más de una década para que el tiempo madurase suficientemente como para permitir que este esfuerzo de re-creación cultural tuviese lugar. Después de muchas idas y venidas entre el Canadá, los Estados Unidos y México, muchos malentendidos y errores, mitines interminables y mucha música, finalmente logró llegarse a un consenso sobre una fecha y un lugar para el encuentro. Las tribus se reunirían del 17 al 24 de Noviembre de 1996, en un campo de boy scouts llamado Meztitla, situado al pie de la Sierra del Tepozteco, en la Biorregión del Cuahunahuac. En el Municipio Libre, Autónomo y Constitucional de Tepoztlán, esta-

do de Morelos, México.

Un pequeño pero dedicado y comprometido grupo de visionarios del norte y del sur se ofrecieron como voluntarios para coordinar este evento, que inicialmente careció de nombre hasta que fué finalmente bautizado "El Primer Consejo Biorregional de las Américas/ First Bioregional Gathering of the Americas."

Hoy día, este evento, nuevo y antiguo, tuvo ya lugar y puede considerarse como parte de la historia. Y estas Memorias son un humilde intento de documentar la gran abundancia de experiencias que se dieron en Meztitla. Cada



uno de los aproximadamente mil participantes que pasaron por ahí podría contarnos una historia completamente diferente. Nunca podremos saber, y mucho menos reunir todos los datos y testimonios de todo lo que sucedió durante esa semana, pero esta colección de escritos y dibujos reúne algo de la magia y del poder que experimentamos en Meztitla. Y también nos sirven como una guía para que en el futuro podamos resolver algunos de los problemas que surgieron y que no pudimos enfrentar en su momento. Agradecemos mucho a todos los que contribuyeron a esta publicación, al entusiasta y trabajador equipo de editores, y al Gran Espíritu, por permitirnos el haber

estado reunidos. Y que muy pronto nos volvamos a ver de nuevo.

Alberto Ruz Buenfil y Beatrice Briggs
Aldea Ceremonial de Huehucóyotl
Biorregión Cuahunahuac
Morelos, México, Invierno 1996-97

ANTECEDENTS/ ANTECEDENTES

JOIN THE CIRCLE From the original brochure

We invite you to join the circle of those who are creating a new human presence in “The Americas.” Grounded in the natural world, this new culture envisions a future which is both ecologically sustainable and socially just.

From the 17th to the 24th of November, we will create a ceremonial village in the Cuauhnahuac Bioregion of Mexico. Here in the mountains and forests of Meztitla, in the free, constitutional and popular municipality of Tepoztlán, people from all over the western hemisphere will gather to share their dreams, wisdom, and experience. The process will be participatory, celebratory, and consensus-based. The program will include workshops, ceremonies, meetings and community service. Traditions and technologies, both ancient and modern, will be woven together in a new cosmology of peace and regeneration. For all our relations

O MTA KU OYASIM

VI Consejo de Visiones Guardianes de la Tierra & VII Turtle Island Bioregional Gathering

Sponsoring Groups

Arcoredes; Learning Alliance; C.I.C.S.H.; Planet Drum Foundation; Centro de Acopio Texalpan; Proyecto Milenio; Cielo y Tierra; Nomadic Gypsy Council; Ecosolar, A.C.; Realistic Living; Ecodesarrollo, A.C.; E.S.A.C.I.; Taller de Mujeres Luna Nueva, A.C.; Granjas Ecológicas Renovación; Taller Espacio Verde; Grupo de

Estudios Ambientales, A.C.; Taller Gota de Agua; Grupo Tamu Tariaticha; Teopantli Kalpulli; Huehuecoyotl, A.C.; Turtle Island Office; Iztac; Vegetalis; Viva Natura, A.C.



USING THE TERM “CEREMONIAL VILLAGE”

For many of us, the word “gathering” in Turtle Island Bioregional Gathering continues to trouble us, mostly because it does not accurately describe what we do. If the word does not accurately describe what we do every two years when we convene, then we have a subtle problem— for participants and organizers alike. To better define our complex, idiosyncratic and inspiring week-long event, we propose a new term, “ceremonial village.”

For our purposes, the term “ceremonial village” is an event that comprises all the aspects of human life, including cultural and natural components, an event that takes charge of all of our requirements— food, shelter, health, trade, ceremony, social and information sharing. The ceremonial village is itself the educational event and curriculum, comprising all sorts of educational activities from formal lectures to impromptu jamming to large consensus decision-making sessions. Informal discourse is as much a part of the learning experience as any formal meeting. The medium is the message and the mas-

sage— for us, it is often chaotic. But however chaotic it appears, it works in various ways to broaden our lives. The chaos of the ceremonial village is our constant reinvention of order. It is freedom in operation. It is our richness. Those who experience it experience their own health, consciousness, and freedom to create ceremonial villages wherever they go.

These are notes toward a definition of our particular kind of ceremonial village. They are

meant only for the purposes of discussion. All of us will have ways of describing what our ceremonial village is. For now, the question is: Is the term ceremonial village useful to us, and can it help us find the deeper meaning and sustenance in our work? Let us know.

Whitney Smith

Alberto Ruiz

Gene Marshall



THE GOLF WAR OF TEPOZTLÁN

Popular Defense & Ecological Struggle in the Heartland of Zapata

by Bill Weinberg

Peter Berg provided this up-to-date, in-depth report on the history and present status of Tepoztlan for the benefit of attendees at the Turtle Island Bioregional Gathering there in November. Author Bill Weinberg is an editor at High Times magazine who traveled in Mexico for this article under the auspices of Cornell University's journalism department.

It came at the cost of Indian lives-especially that of a 65-year-old campesino, killed by police 77 years to the day after the slaying of Emiliano Zapata. But the Mexican village of Tepoztlan this spring won its struggle against the golf developers who had appropriated lands and waters of the ancient municipio, held in common by the Tepoztecos according to a tradition that predates the Spanish Conquest.

The story is not, however, over. Tepoztlan remains "in rebellion" against an entrenched, corrupt and increasingly brutal political regime in the state of Morelos. Both sides remain unyielding. The rebel Tepoztecos want their land rights clarified, their prisoners released and the governor to step down. The governor, in turn, wants Tepoztlan's rebel Municipio Libre dissolved and its leaders arrested.

Now resistance is spreading throughout Morelos-the legendary heartland of Quetzalcoatl and Emiliano Zapata, where the ancient traditions of a people rooted in the Indian past are confronted by the mega-development schemes of a Mexican elite pursuing the NAFTA millennium.

While the developers who initially sparked it have pulled out, the rebellion in Tepoztlan seems only likely to spread.

Theft of the Sacred Waters Morelos is the spiritual heart of Mexico. The Tlahuicas, the

Indigenous people of the region, were instrumental in the rise of the high culture of the Valley of Mexico just north over the Ajusco mountains. The Tlahuicas called their land Cuauhnahuac, Land of Trees; the current state capital Cuernavaca is a corruption of this word. In the southern foothills of the Ajuscos lies Tepoztlan, one of Mexico's oldest towns. In one of its outlying pueblos, Amatlan, the god-king Quetzalcoatl who established the Toltec empire is said to have been born.

Morelos/Cuauhnahuac is the broad valley between the Ajuscos and the Sierra Madre del Sur, the great spine of the isthmus that continues south through Guerrero and Oaxaca. Water from both these ranges drains into the valley's Amacuzac River, a tributary of the Balsas, making it some of the most fertile land in Mexico.

The heartland of Quetzalcoatl is a triangle delineated by three archaeological sites: the little cerro-top pyramid overlooking Tepoztlan, the foreboding ceremonial center of Xochicalco to the south, and Malinalco just across the line in the state of Mexico to the west. Indian pilgrims still follow the waterways through the mountains to bathe in the sacred waters of Chalma, near Malinalco. They still speak the language of the Tlahuicas, Nahuatl. But the mountain streams the pilgrims follow ran all year round in the time of the Tlahuicas. Today they only run in the wet summers.

The shrinking of water resources is due to centuries of deforestation-for the sugar plantations of the old oligarchy and, more recently, for the luxury homes, corporate complexes and golf clubs of the new oligarchy. Just as Mexico City's smog now comes over the Ajuscos into Morelos, investment and development schemes aim to make the valley of Cuauhnahuac a suburban appendage of the megalopolis to the north.

There is now a golf club at Malinalco. But when Tepoztlan was targeted for golf and corporate development, the town rose in an uprising against the local functionaries of Mexico's long-ruling Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI).

The entire municipio of Tepoztlan is made up of communal lands which the Tepozteco Indians have defended for centuries. King Philip II of



16th century Spain issued reales cédulas recognizing Tepoztlan's land rights dating back to the "antiguo imperio megicano"- the Aztecs.

Encroachment of ranches and plantations onto Tepoztlan's legally recognized tierras comunales made the town of focus of rebel activity in the Liberal Revolution against Santa Ana in the 1850s-and then in the insurgency of Emiliano Zapata in the Revolution of 1910. Morelos was the heartland of Zapata's peasant insurrection, and Zapatista troops used the caves in the cerros north of town as a hideout.

Zapata was assassinated in a government ambush on April 10, 1919, and his followers subsequently crushed. But the new "revolutionary" government still had to buy peace. In 1929, Tepoztlan's communal lands were officially recognized under the protection of Article 27 of the new constitution.

Certain of these lands received another level of protection when President Lázaro Cárdenas declared Tepozteco National Park in 1937, covering El Tepozteco pyramid and its environs.

Across the Ajusco to the east and west, respectively, Popocatepetl and Lagunas de Zempoala National Parks were also established in 1937, the first protecting the towering volcano El Popo, the second protecting the high mountain lakes which are an important water source for Cuernavaca.

In 1988, El Tepozteco and Lagunas de Zempoala National Parks were linked by the Ajusco-Chichinautzin Ecological Corridor, transverseing the Ajusco range and affording another layer of protection to many of Tepoztlan's forested communal lands.

The corridor was established both to protect the Ajuscos' fauna and to slow the disappearance of water due to erosion and deforestation. There were seven lakes at Zempoala in 1937. Now there are two.

In addition to Tepoztlan's 25,000 hectares of communal lands, the municipio has 2,100 hectares of ejidal lands, constitutionally-recognized agricultural areas. The ejidal lands are in the municipio's Amilcingo Valley, to the east of town, while residential lands are in the closer Atongo Valley. But all of Tepoztlan is communal. Even the chilangosricos-wealthy Mexico City residents-who started building expensive homes in Atongo Valley in the 1970s, are on communal lands, and officially only have usufruct rights. Tepoztecos hold meetings on the first Sunday of each month to hash out land use decisions.

Last year, Grupo KS, a major Cuernavaca real estate developer with fashionable properties as far as Acapulco, unveiled development plans for Tepoztlan's communal lands with the backing of the state's PRIista regime presided over by the governor, General Jorge Carrillo

Olea.

This led to an official rebellion against the Morelos state government which has more than once spilled over into violence. KS has since pulled out, but the Tepoztlan rebellion never ended.

Grupo KS had ambitious plans for its 300 hectares to the west of town. The complex called for 800 luxury homes, a heliport and a "data center and business park" to be built by the gringo communications giant GTE, conceived a nerve center in Mexico's newly privatized telecom system. For the executive's pleasure, the corporate center would be adjacent to a golf lodge complete with a world-class 18-hole course designed by international golf champ Jack Nicklaus and his Golden Bear Course Management. That was the rub.

12,000 construction jobs and 3,000 service jobs were promised. But the 70 hectares for the golf green at a place of scattered trees and fallow ground called Monte Castillo were within the protected zone-in the "buffer" between Ajusco-Chichinautzin Ecological Corridor "nuclear zone" and Tepoztlan's agricultural lands. Tepozteco opponents of the project called it blatantly illegal, pointing to the 1929, 1937 and 1988 decrees protecting the land in question.

The overriding concern was water. In a town already facing seasonal water shortages, the specter of the water-guzzling golf course spurred the formation of the Comité de Unidad Tepozteco (CUT) to defend the town's land rights. It was calculated that the water consumed each day by a golf course of that size was equal to that daily consumed by Tepoztlan's 6,000 families. The Indian CUT was joined by Tepoztlan's environmentally-minded chilango colonists, Tepoztizos in local parlance, in opposing the project.

Water is at social and geographical center of Tepoztlan-the market next to the zocalo, where campesinos from throughout the municipio daily gather to sell their produce, arranged around a big round fountain that provides water for all. Even within the town there is still plenty of agriculture, with many families growing avocados, mangos or maize in their backyards.

The contamination of local water with the agro-chemicals needed to keep the golf green nicely manicured also raised fears. The US EPA has determined that golf uses an annual four kilos of pesticides per acre, compared to agriculture's 0.5 kilos.

A CUT statement against the golf project does not dismiss the problem of pesticide use by Tepozteco comuners: "This argument does not free from guilt the agricultural methods promoted by the dominant development model with extremely high inputs. It simply shows the awful example of a private enterprise which, allowing a handful of foreigners to chase a little ball with a stick, will pollute the soil and water to a much greater degree than does the current farming population of Tepoztlan in the production of food and respectable jobs."

Furthermore, KS's land rights were unclear. When approval of construction at Monte Castillo slipped through federal, state and municipal bureaucracies, the CUT claimed the pueblo had been betrayed. Claiming legality and the Mexican constitution on its side, the rebellion was on.

The Anti-Golf Uprising In August 1995, KS bulldozers uprooted trees at Monte Castillo to plant experimental grass plots for the golf course.

On August 24, Tepoztlan's municipal president Alejandro Morales Barragan signed approval of the land-use change at Monte Castillo. It had been voted down many times before. Just a few days earlier, an angry CUT march had passed the homes of both Morales and Abraham Lopez, the Tepoztlan comunero leader. Lopez capitulated with Morales, signing on with some other comunero leaders to the land-use change. Like most local public officials, Morales and Lopez are both PRIistas. The PRI majority among the regidores, the town councilors, signed on for the project as well.

That same day, Tepoztlan was participating in the national "consulta" called by the new Zapatista rebels in Chiapas when word spread that the town's leaders had caved in. The municipal palace was immediately surrounded by thousands of Tepoztecos, many armed with

clubs and machetes. The CUT militants finally seized the building itself, along with the regidores and officials there. The regidores were expelled, while six state officials were held captive, their hands bound behind them.

The siege began. A permanent vigil was maintained in the zócalo, the town square outside the municipal palace. The “seven traitors”—the regidores and comuneros who had voted for the project—were hung in effigy outside the municipal palace. The palace itself was hung with anti-golf banners.

The special anti-riot forces of the state Preventative Police—the Granaderos—were mobilized to Tepoztlan. On September 3, Granaderos surrounded the home of Abraham Lopez, and were confronted by protesting Tepoztecos. The police were driven off, and a high official of Governor Carrillo Olea was discovered in a meeting with Lopez in the house. Carrillo’s interior subsecretary Victor Manuel Saucedo joined the hostages in the occupied municipal palace.

CUT barricades went up on the two main roads into Tepoztlan—one at San Miguel barrio on the road from Cuernavaca, the other just outside the pueblo of Santiago on the road to Cuautla to the east.

September 5, the hostages were released in exchange for Alejandro Morales resignation as municipal president. Morales and the regidores who had voted with him fled into exile in Cuernavaca. The state police pulled out of Tepoztlan, withdrawing to kilometer 17 on the road to Cuernavaca, the municipio’s border. The Ayuntamiento Libre, Constitucional y Popular de Tepoztlan was declared—the Free, Constitutional and Popular Town Council.

The state government presence in Tepoztlan disappeared. The Ayuntamiento Libre and the CUT took over all municipal services.

September 24, the Ayuntamiento Libre held new municipal elections. It was determined that no member of any political party could run—neither the PRI nor its left and right opposition, the Democratic Revolutionary Party (PRD) and the National Action Party (PAN).

As the election was held, a mysterious Cessna flew overhead, dropping anti-CUT leaf-

lets on Tepoztlan.

Undaunted, Tepoztecos came out in unprecedented numbers to vote for the candidates selected by each barrio. The Mexican non-governmental organization Civic Alliance observed the elections, and said they were clean. There were no “carrousels” (voters taken from polling place to polling place to vote multiple times) or “tacos” (several ballots rolled together and deposited in the ballot box as one).

After new regidores were elected, one among them was voted in as municipal president. This was Lazaro Rodriguez Casteñeda of the barrio of Santa Domingo. Civic Alliance held Lazaro was elected by a higher proportion of the vote and with a higher voter turn-out than any in Tepoztlan’s recent history.

The ancient King Tepozteco ceremony, which had lapsed for generations, was revived, the passing of the baston de mando, the staff of authority, to the new presidente. The vows of office were spoken in Nahuatl as well as Spanish.

The state government has cut the phone lines to the municipal palace, and the place is now guarded round the clock by a citizen vigil. The famous Mexican cartoonist Rius, a Tepoztizo, has painted murals on the walls of the municipal palace. In one, a campesino in traditional garb says, “La dignidad vale mas que un pinche club de golf!”—Dignity is worth more than a stinking golf club!

The system established by the CUT for popular democracy and defense of the Municipio Libre is organized barrio by barrio. Each of the seven barrios in Tepoztlan has for centuries had its own organization for making costumes and music in the town’s annual religious fiestas. Each is represented by an animal spirit. Barrio Santo Domingo, where Lazaro lives, is represented by the toad, cacame in Nahuatl. Ancient stone toads adorn the fences and walls of the barrio’s church and homes.

Each day of the week a different barrio has responsibility for maintaining the roadblocks and guard at the municipal palace and public buildings, as well as providing food at these locations and patrolling the streets for public

security. Every midnight, in a ceremony called the Changing of the Guard, the Tepoztecos gather in the zocalo in front of the municipal palace. The Mexican national anthem is sung and responsibility is officially passed to the next barrio. The gathering is also an opportunity to publicly hash out problems and issues. There is frequently live music and speakers, usually representatives from Morelos campesino groups pledging solidarity with the Tepoztecos.

The rebel Municipio functions with a deceptive normalcy. The tourists with their cameras come and go, Tepoztecos and chilango hippies climb the ancient steps to the pyramid on the weekends. The municipal truck fleet is painted with an official and unassuming Ayuntamiento Libre, Constitucional y Popular de Tepoztlan. The Ayuntamiento Libre carries out all municipal responsibilities, from waste disposal to providing water. A private company is fixing the water system's pumps and pipes for the municipality. A program for composting organic waste at the municipal dump has been launched. No police, state or federal government officials have set foot in the town since early September.

Lazaro Rodriguez is something of a Tepozteco environmentalist. He founded Los Tejones, a reforestation, search-and-rescue and fire-fighting volunteer group, made up of Tepoztecos who have known the surrounding the mountain trails all their lives. The animal they take their name from, the tejón, is the local variant of the coati, a sort of Mesoamerican diurnal raccoon. A carpenter and craftsman by trade, Lazaro sells furniture in Tepoztlan's market. He has also worked as a local primary school teacher. With his muscular build, handle-bar moustache and impeccable campesino garb, he bears a striking resemblance to Emiliano Zapata-whose portrait adorns his office in the municipal palace.

I ask Presidente Rodriguez in what sense the rebel Ayuntamiento is "constitutional."

"The government doesn't recognize our constitutionality," he says. "But we didn't have participation in decisions over our own resources at either federal or state level, so we had no choice but to declare our own free municipality."

He cites two articles of the Mexican constitu-

tion from which the Ayuntamiento Libre draws its legitimacy: Article 115, recognizing municipal autonomy as the basis of a representative and popular government, and Article 39, stating that national sovereignty resides with people, who have the right to change the government when it does not represent their interests.

Lazaro is openly proud of Tepoztlan's experiment in direct democracy. I ask how Tepoztlan manages without police. "The police disturbed the tranquility of the pueblo," he replies. "Theives are now brought to kilometer 17 and turned over to the authorities."

He is equally vehement in his dismissal of Grupo KS's purported land rights. "How can a few people take lands needed for aquifers and subsistence for all the people of Tepoztlan?" he asks rhetorically. "Fortunately, the community does not accept this."

What is the economic future for Tepoztlan without KS and GTE, I ask? "We want development in agreement with the people and their traditions and the characteristics of the town. The government says we don't want progress. But we want progress which is appropriate for Tepoztlan, our pueblo."

"We have to take this responsibility," says Lazaro. "We are near the year 2000. If we don't protect the naturaleza, we will die. If there are no trees, there is no rain, and the land dries. The forests which protect biodiversity also protect our water. We need the bats and tejones because they spread the forest, carrying the seeds. I've seen the fauna of the Ajuscos move to different territories as water dries up. In this municipio we grow tomatoes, maize, every type of frijol, peanuts, chile-just no rice because we don't have enough water. The water is our future."

Lazaro has a special message he wants me to bring back to los estados unidos. "El Tepozteco is a reserve for all humanity-the naturaleza, the archaeological artifacts. We are the guardians. Tell your readers to write President Zedillo and demand a resolution to the problem of Tepoztlan. We will say thank for listening."

Geography Wars Grupo KS traces its ownership of Monte Castillo to a 1961 sale of the

land by a group of Tepoztlan comuneros. This despite the fact that Article 27 of the Mexican Constitution-before President Carlos Salinas' 1993 changes allowing privatization of communal and ejidal lands under NAFTA-stated that municipal agricultural lands are "inalienable, imprescriptable, unsaleable and untransmissible."

A Tepozteco schoolteacher, Esteban Flores Uribe, was killed by pistoleros in the conflict over development at Monte Castillo in 1962. Due to opposition, the development plans were dropped. But the Morelos state agrarian bureaucracy continued to recognize KS's rights to the land. For the next generation, the Tepozteco comuneros continued to work the land in question, even as the actual ownership was contested and ambiguous.

Then, in 1994, the federal Comision Nacional de Agua (CNA) approved KS's request to drill three deep-water wells on the Monte Castillo site. Permission was granted, and the new development plans unveiled.

KS maintains they own the land legally. Armando Mojica of the Cuernavaca environmental group Espacio Verde, which supports the Tepoztlan rebellion, calls the title transfer "obscure, dirty and illegal."

According to Espacio Verde's study of the project, the 540,000 gallons needed a day by the golf course would be five times the total consumption of Tepoztlan. The study also found 28 vertebrate species that live on the site would be threatened, and that the 600,000 cubic meters of soil needed for the golf project, slated to be taken from surrounding forests, would exacerbate local erosion.

The nearly 28,000 inhabitants of Tepoztlan require 3 million liters of water daily. Existing wells supply this up to the month of March, when water collected in the May-September rainy season is used up. In the dry season, the golf course will require over 5 million liters a day. A CUT communiqué states: "The water which is found within Tepoztlan should be used, first of all, to satisfy the needs of the community, and the use of the surplus should be decided by the community itself."

But KS countered that the Monte Castillo development would not affect Tepoztlan's waters at all.

Tepoztlan lies in a geologically complicated zone between the Cuernavaca and Cuautla aquifers. The wells which supply the town's water system draw from the Cuautla aquifer. Monte Castillo is believed to lie above the Cuernavaca aquifer to the west. Whether these two aquifers are linked has been subject to heated debate.

The environmental impact study for El Tepozteco golf club and industrial park was drawn up by Dr. Oscar Dorado Ramirez of the Morelos Autonomous State University (UAEM). It found that the aquifers are not linked, and that the "economic and development impact" of the Tepozteco complex would be "positive for the state of Morelos and especially in the region of Tepoztlan." The swimming pools likely to be built in the 800 luxury units were not mentioned in the study. It was approved by National Ecology Institute (INE), the federal environmental bureaucracy, in a record four days on July 31, 1995.

Salvador Aguilar Benitez, a geographer with Mexico's National Autonomous University (UNAM) who helped draw up the borders of the Ajusco-Chichinautzin Ecological Corridor, thinks INE acted too quickly. "We don't know if the aquifers are linked," he says. "Nobody knows. There are insufficient studies. But we do know that Chichinautzin's geology is extraordinarily porous."

Aguilar points to a 1991 UAEM report by geographer Henryk Niedzielski, Results of the Elaboration of the Hydrological Map of Cuautla, which found that the two aquifers are linked. If this study is accurate, the golf project would lower the aquifers that provide water to both Tepoztlan and Cuernavaca.

"KS has an interest in saying the aquifers are separate," says Aguilar. "It solves the problem." September 9, in response to the Tepoztlan uprising, INE instated a permanent ban on development in the wooded northern section of Monte Castillo where the 800 luxury houses were planned, and a temporary ban in the fallow

southern and central zones slated for the golf club and corporate complex.

CUT and the Ayuntamiento Libre decided to maintain their rebellion until permanent closure of the project. The temporary ban was subsequently lifted in November when KS promised to use “non-toxic” chemicals for the golf course.

While some point out that the Monte Castillo site is far from pristine, Aguilar believes it is biologically important. He says it is in the transition zone between the two types of forest found in Morelos, bosque and selva caducifolia-the highland coniferous forest of the Ajuscos and the lowland tropical brush of the Amacuzac Valley. Some species move from the bosque to the selva in the winter and back again in summer. The transition zone is home to pumas, deer, and such local birds as the quetzal café and migratory birds from Canada. The development site is home to cordonis (roadrunners), whose eggs are eaten by the Tepoztecos. There are also cuajote trees growing there, used by the Tepoztecos for medicinal purposes.

The Ajuscos are a part of Mexico’s lateral Volcanic Range, which separates the Sierra Madre Oriental and Occidental to the north from the Sierra Madre del Sur. The Oriental and Occidental are contiguous with the Rocky Mountains, while the Sierra del Sur follows the isthmus all the way down to Central America. The bosque is similar to temperate forests to the north; the selva is related to the Mesoamerican rainforests.

“Monte Castillo is one of the only places in Morelos where there is a continuous corridor between the bosque and the selva, where animals can migrate between the two,” says Salvador Aguilar. “This is the critical meeting place of the biological zones of North and South America.”

Raising the Stakes In October, with Gen. Carrillo and the Ayuntamiento Libre still at odds, hundreds of Tepoztecos marched cross-country on Mexico City to demand that the federal government act on the situation.

October 26, Carillo attempted to install the old regidores (minus Morales) in power in Santa Catarina, the pueblo near the municipio’s west-

ern border, as a parallel municipal government. The entrance of the regidores met with 1,000 Tepoztecos armed with palos (clubs) and machetes, and they retreated back to Cuernavaca.

The Consejo de Comunidades Tepoztecos (CCT) was formed as PRlista alternative to CUT. Its base is more among the Tepozteco exiles in Cuernavaca than in the Municipio’s communities, but the emergence of the CCT indicated that Governor Carrillo was about to raise the stakes.

The move came with an escalation of violence. Two young Tepoztecos were shot and wounded by state Judicial Police on the edge of the municipio, reportedly while attempting to stop a clandestine arms shipment to the parallel government.

The Bishop Of Cuernavaca, Luis Reynoso Cervantes, who called the golf project a “blessing of God” in a sermon, had his car attacked in Santa Catarina. (The Municipio Libre has the local church on its side. Tepoztlan’s Padre Filberto Gonzalez Moreno is a CUT militant, facing charges for unlawful entry into the municipal palace during the uprising, when he “purified” the building of bad spirits from the betrayal.)

On November 3, the state government officially declared a “dissolution” of Tepoztlan’s powers.

Then, on December 2, as Tepoztlan was preparing for the following day’s Tepozteco Cultural Festival, Pedro Barragan Gutierrez, uncle of the deposed municipal president Morales, was killed in a gun-battle that erupted between PRlistas and CUT militants.

The conflict began in a local struggle between prominent town PRlistas and CUT supporters for space for street stalls. It escalated as a new PRlista paramilitary group formed in response to the crisis, the Ratones, jumped in. Five Ratones, armed with automatic pistols and an Uzi, appeared in the fracas, which may have been a provocation. CUT and the Ayuntamiento Libre claim Pedro Barragan was killed by his own men, who fired erratically behind them as they fled a Tepozteco security patrol. The fleeing gunmen were disarmed and apprehended

by the patrol after they took refuge in a house and were handed over to the state authorities at kilometer 17. They were shortly released to join the other Tepoztlan exiles in Cuernavaca.

Gen. Carrillo Olea shortly announced that he had 14 warrants for the arrest of Tepoztecos suspected in the slaying.

On December 26, CUT militant Fortino Mendoza was arrested by Judicial Police at a road checkpoint.

On January 4, CUT's José Carrillo Conde was similarly stopped and arrested-despite the amparo, the federal order protecting him, procured by attorneys for the Tepoztecos, temporarily suspending penal action against suspects in the shooting incident pending a federal investigation. Carrillo Conde said the police tore the amparo up when he displayed it.

On January 18, Gerardo Demesa Padilla, a CUT militant and schoolteacher who works with the National Union of Education Workers (SNTE), was arrested at the SNTE office in Cuernavaca.

José Carrillo and Gerardo Demsa both claimed they were beaten by officers after their arrests.

The Tepozteco prisoners were on hunger strike for 15 days. On January 26, while the prisoners were fasting, 20,000 march in Cuernavaca to protest the arrests-the biggest since the Mexican Revolution, and possibly in the city's history. In other actions that week, SNTE and CUT militants joined forces to block traffic in central Cuernavaca for hours.

Governor Carrillo's proposals for new elections in Tepoztlan was repeatedly turned down by the Tepoztecos in their nightly zocalo meetings which brought out up to 5,000.

Grupo KS remained equally unyielding in their development plans. But the situation was approaching a grisly climax.

Zapata's Bones When it came, it resonated like an inexorable echo from the Mexican Revolution, history repeating itself out of refusal to die.

The memory of Emiliano Zapata is a vivid and passionate one in Morelos. On April 10, 1979, President Jose Lopez Portillo attempted

to move Zapata's bones from his Morelos grave to Mexico City to officially mark the closing of the federal agrarian reform program. Hundreds of campesinos gathered in Cuautla's zocalo to stop police from carting off the bones.

April 10, 1996 President Zedillo was to be at Tlaltizapan, Morelos to commemorate the 77th anniversary of Zapata's slaying. The Tepoztecos planned to deliver a letter to him demanding action on their situation.

Ritual became protest as the annual commemoration caravan of buses and cars pulled out of Tepoztlan. The children and the old were there, the boys dressed as Zapatistas (the 1910 version, with outsized sombreros and handlebar moustaches, carrying cardboard rifles), the girls dressed as *adelitas*, village maidens in traditional 1910s garb.

The caravan retraced Zapata's route through Morelos to Chinameca Hacienda, where he was slain. At 1:30 PM it stopped outside Tlaltizapan-where Zapata had his headquarters, just a few miles from Chinameca. It was there that ritual protest re-enactment of history became the real thing

At Barrio San Rafael, just outside town, the Tepoztecos found their way barred by some 200 Granaderos in full riot gear. Refusing to turn back, the Tepoztecos started to argue with the police, assert their right to free passage. The troops charged, dispersing them with beatings-and bullets.

The road remained blocked for hours afterwards. Only at night, after the official commemoration presided over by Zedillo and Carrillo was finished, did the road open, allowing through ambulances to take away the wounded.

34 arrested Tepoztecos were released that night in Cuernavaca.

Seven hours after the violence, the body of Marcos Olmeda Gutierrez was found in Jojutla, 15 kilometers from Tlaltizapan where he died. There were two pistol bullets in his head.

Marcos Olmeda was a campesino who worked Tepoztlan's communal lands, a *comunero*. He was also a PRD supporter from the pueblo of Santo Domingo Ocotitlan, one of Tepoztlan's outlying hamlets. He was 65 years

old and had five children.

A state government press release issued on April 10 before Marcos' body was found said the police at Tlaltizapan did not have firearms. But a Tepozteco on the scene at Tlaltizapan caught the whole thing on video. The tape, released to the press and broadcast, shows Granaderos wading into the crowd with rifles. Juan Manuel Ariño, director of the Preventative Police, is shown menacing Tepoztecos with a pistol.

Of the 15 hospitalized in the incident, two still remained in the hospital months later. Nicanora Conde, a Tepoztlan schoolteacher, had her womb removed.

54 police were arrested in wake of incident. Three are still being held. Preventative Police Director Juan Manuel Ariño, also a captain in the federal army, is among them. Some of his own men testified against him for provoking the incident.

A banner at Marcos' April 13 funeral in Santo Domingo Ocotitlan read "FUERA CARRILLO ASESINO."

A similar incident in Guerrero last year in which a police massacre of 17 protesting campesinos was caught on video-caused that state's Governor Ruben Figueroa to step down. Gen. Carrillo Olea of Morelos remains in power.

April 29, Marcos Olmeda's birthday, has been proclaimed International Anti-Golf Day by the Malaysia-based Global Anti-Golf Movement which coordinates peasant struggles against golf development worldwide.

In the wake of killing, Grupo KS, citing the situation of "ungovernability," announced they have found a new location for the project, in Sonora-where there is even less water.

Morelos in Struggle After KS pulled out, the struggle only escalated. On May 13, 100 Tepozteco ejiditarios seized Quinta Piedra, a sprawling luxury home they said was illegally built on ejidal lands. The house belonged to one of Tepoztlan's more high-profile investors-Guillermo Occelli, brother-in-law of former President Carlos Salinas. The Occellis, their guests and staff fled as the campesinos pounded on the gate with machetes and palos. Now the ejiditarios say Quinta Piedra will become a

community center for the Tepoztecos.

A Tepozteco roadblock bars the driveway to Quinta Piedra. The outer gate of the estate is hung with a banner:

"EJIDO TEPOZTLAN CASA DEL PUEBLO AREA EJIDAL"

Guillermo, the ejiditario who guides me through the occupied complex, asks me not to use his last name. He carefully unlocks the gate and steps into a deserted playground of Mexico's elite. There's a swimming pool on one side of the house, a jacuzzi and ornamental fountain on the other. A new extension is still under construction, with its own pool and jacuzzi. But work has been halted, obviously. A bulldozer and pick-up truck lie abandoned nearby, and batshit accumulates on the floor of the half-built extension.

Water comes gushing out of a pipe on the lawn with the turn of a faucet. "That's more water than we have in our houses," says one of the ejiditarios with an ironic chuckle. An artificial lake is also left mid-construction; a dock for boats hangs over the big pit.

Occelli obtained permission from the federal CNA to dig the well for Quinta Piedra in just two weeks in 1993. The ejiditarios had been trying to obtain permission to dig another well nearby for several years.

Occelli owns 30 hectares in Tepoztlan, on top of the 10 hectares of Quinta Piedra. He has two more wells on his other Tepoztlan lands, awaiting construction.

As we enter the big house, the ejiditarios secure each door behind them with their own locks and chains. Plush furniture, a wide-screen television in the master bedroom, food in the refrigerator (including a big, long-wilted salad)-all untouched.

"We don't want to be accused of stealing," explains Guillermo. Tepoztlan ejiditarios have brought case against Occelli before the federal Attorney General's office, and negotiations are pending on the fate of the property. Gov. Carrillo has nonetheless issued arrest orders for the ejiditarios occupying Quinta Piedra.

Tepoztlan was, before the rebellion, the fashionable place for the Mexican elite to invest

in real estate. Carlos Salinas' (now imprisoned) brother Raul Salinas also has a house in Tepoztlan. So did Donald Colosio, the PRI presidential candidate assassinated in 1994.

There are an estimated 200 illegal wells in the Valley of Atongo for the gardens and swimming pools of the rich.

Tepoztlan is slated by the urban planning bureaucracy of the reigning PRIista political machine to become an upscale suburb for Mexico City yuppies and technocrats. In 1991, Tepoztlan saw protests against a "scenic train" monorail proposed by former President Luis Echeverria and group of Japanese investors. The plan was embraced by President Salinas and then-Mexico City Mayor Camacho Solis, who saw Tepoztlan as a ciudad dormitorio-bedroom community-for Federal District commuters. The scenic train would go directly over the wild Ajuscos, bypassing the ancient route of the Cima Divide between the peaks of Chichinautzin and Zempoala to the west, where the roads and rail lines go.

This came on the heels of a struggle against a proposed finicula which would bring tourists up to El Tepozteco pyramid.

Governor Jorge Carrillo Olea repeatedly complains, "The Tepoztecos don't want progress."

He is echoed by Grupo KS, whose JosÈ de los Rios told the press: "You can't stay isolated in this world anymore. This project would be progress for Tepoztlan."

He asked a question that lies at the heart of NAFTA's future: "How are foreigners going to invest in Mexico if there are problems like this?"

Traditional Indigenous campesino culture is clashing with the cultural encroachment of Mexico's free trade technocratic elite over the landscape throughout Morelos. Most of the land in Morelos is communal or ejidal. But much of it has come under private or state control, either through institutionalized corruption or outright government grabs for highway construction.

The Cuernavaca Valley Industrial City (CIVAC) was declared in 1977, and foreign firms like Nissan started moving into the outer ring of

the city. Morelos was to make the leap from an agricultural to industrial society.

Twenty years later, the state government announced a new highway circumscribing the Cuernavaca industrial belt. The Periferico Industrial was to cut right through the Tepozteco pueblo of Santa Catarina. On August 8, 1994, Santa Catarina campesino leader Mauricio Franco Sanchez was arrested for blockading bulldozers and detaining workers at the construction site, and sentenced to 20 years. The highway was eventually cancelled due to opposition, but Franco remains in prison.

Now, as Morelos makes the next leap to a post-industrial corporate landscape, new highways are to be the arteries for suburbanization. The giant Mexican firm Civil Engineers Associated (ICA), which started construction of the scenic train before the project was dropped, recently completed the new privately-maintained highway linking Mexico City and Acapulco through Morelos, the Autopista del Sol. This private highway has much higher tolls than the old federal highway, but goes much faster. The federal government indemnified much campesino land for the Autopista del Sol, then turned it over to the private interest that runs the project. ICA's jefe Gilberto Borja Navarrete is head of the Nacional Financiera bank, financially linked to both Governor Carrillo and President Zedillo.

Autopista Siglo XXI, yet another artery under construction through Morelos-this one lateral, linking the Pacific and Gulf coasts-is also meeting campesino resistance.

Environmental degradation is driving unrest in Morelos. The Texcal Ecological Zone is water-rich patch of selva under official protection near the Cuernavaca industrial park. Fed by streams that come down from the Ajuscos, Texcal is now contaminated by seepage of wastes from CIVAC's textile, pharmaceutical and chemical plants run by such giant firms as Upjohn and Syntex. In Emiliano Zapata and other local communities which take their water from Texcal, residents are plagued by health problems.

Joining Tepoztlan in rebellion against the state government is Temixco, a little municipio south of Cuernavaca where the city's garbage

dump is located and local water is contaminated by Cuernavaca's sewage. There is still some agriculture there, but the campesinos have long switched to growing roses since contamination made growing food impossible. After the PRlista municipal president was jailed for fraud, local party jefes attempted to impose a new PRlista, and the people revolted.

Other Morelos towns in rebellion are Huitzilac, near Zempoala National Park, over voting fraud, and Xoxocotla, over police violence.

The SNTE joins with CUT, the PRD and other opposition groups in demanding the resignation of Carrillo.

The Zapatista National Liberation Army (EZLN) of Chiapas has expressed full solidarity with the Morelos movement. A September 10, 1995 EZLN public communique to the CUT read, "Your struggle is our struggle."

Both the CUT and the EZLN sent representatives to the May, 1996 Indian and campesino conference in Acapulco of the Open Front for the Creation of a National Liberation Movement (FAC-MLN).

A popular Tepozteco t-shirt reads "tEpoZt-LaN."

The Carrillo Regime Grupo KS announced

development of El Tepozteco golf club and corporate complex three weeks before the March 1994 elections that brought Governor Jorge Carrillo Olea to power.

General Carrillo had a high post in Gobernacion, the federal interior ministry, under President Carlos Salinas. He was chief of the National Institute of Anti-Drug Combat.

Salinas, who dreamed of being the first chief of the World Trade Organization after he left the presidency is instead hiding, disgraced by the peso crash and mired in scandal involving the assassination of two top PRI figures. Newspapers have reported him to be in Cuba, New York or Canada. His brother Raul is in jail in Mexico on charges of masterminding a political murder, and Swiss police are investigating him on charges of laundering drug money. Opposition leaders call for Carlos Salinas to be tried for treason.

The suburbanization of Morelos is fueled by drug investments, charge the state's opposition leaders. And Grupo KS is at the heart of the allegations.

The respected Mexico City daily El Financiero reported on April 28 that it had procured a DEA document calling El Tepozteco golf club "the



biggest system for laundering drug profits” in Mexico.

David Ibarra Muñoz, KS financial manager and father of a KS partner, is linked by the DEA investigation to money laundering. He was Finance Minister under President José López Portillo, when *El Financiero* says the DEA suspects he had numerous “business connections” with Panamanian narco-dictator Manuel Noriega.

The KS partners, who collectively put up \$300 million for the project, include:

- Ricardo Salinas, owner of Television Azteca, Mexico’s recently-privatized number two network, with a strategic alliance with NBC. Federal officials looking into the source of Raul Salinas’ secret fortune are investigating nearly \$30 million in Swiss bank transactions by Ricardo Salinas.

- Luis Slim Sayeg, cousin of Carlos Slim, the Mexican billionaire who is co-owner of the privatized communications giant Telmex with Carlos Salinas.

- David Ibarra Cardona, son of David Ibarra Muñoz and a convicted trafficker in endangered species.

- Enrique Gonzalez Garrido, brother of Patrocinio Gonzalez Garrido, the former Chiapas governor and Gobernacion chief who denied that there were any guerillas in Mexico, and was sacked after the EZLN revolt for this embarrassing intelligence error.

- José de los Rios Hernandez, private secretary of former President Luis Echeverria and a purported “prestanoombre” (frontman) for various Echeverria business interests.

- Rafael Haran Achar, an engineer who has done construction work for Luis Echeverria.

- And, of course, Juan and Francisco Kladt Sobrino, scions of the family for whom the corporation is named. Francisco, the president of Grupo KS, is married to the daughter of David Ibarra Muñoz.

El Financiero sites the “real brain” behind the project at Monte Castillo as Maurizio Raggio, a purported Sicilian mafia capo once based in Cuernavaca and now on the lam from

Italian money-laundering charges in Tunisia. *El Financiero* names as “his accomplice” one Pablo Antonio Hernandez Garza, who worked in the federal police herbicide-spraying program against marijuana and opium when Carrillo was Gobernacion’s counter-narcotics chief. The DEA characterizes Garza as “rude, dangerous and violent.”

El Financiero names Salinas brother-in-law Guillermo Ocelli as the top lobbyist for the Monte Castillo project with the federal authorities.

KS partner Hugo Salgado is a veteran attorney in the service of Luis Echeverria, Guillermo Ocelli and Cuernavaca real estate figures linked to Maurizio Raggio by Mexican federal authorities. His father, Margarito Salgado, another KS partner, was the target of an attempted kidnapping this spring. The kidnappers only got his brother, Bernardo Salgado.

Luis Echeverria was head of Gobernacion under President Gustavo Diaz Ordaz when the army gunned down hundreds of UNAM students in the 1968 Tlatelolco massacre. He is nonetheless credited with defusing the Mexican student movement with a well-timed tilt to the left when he succeeded to the presidency in 1970. Now a business tycoon and top Morelos real estate investor, he developed suburban Cuernavaca’s Hacienda San Gaspar golf club and the Sumiya luxury housing complex, built with KS investment.

Governor Jorge Carrillo Olea is credited with saving Echeverria’s life when he served in his presidential guard. In 1971, President Echeverria went to UNAM to placate angry students after a massacre of some 30 protestors by the Halcones, a rightist paramilitary group linked to the security forces, and was attacked with rocks. It was the timely intervention of his security chief Carrillo that saved the president.

Jesus Miyazawa Alvarez, Governor Carrillo’s chief the Judicial Police-the plainclothes investigative police-resigned from his post as federal security chief in 1979 after he was linked to the “White Brigade” rightist paramilitary group and the notorious Rio Tula scandal, in which a band of criminals (including ex-federal police) were

summarily slaughtered and dumped in a riverbed by federal police. Miyazawa worked closely at that time with Carrillo, who was then a sub-secretary of Gobernacion under President José Lopez Portillo.

The KS partners are also well ensconced in the Morelos state environmental bureaucracy. David Ibarra Muñoz' ex-girlfriend, Ursula Oswald Spring, is the Morelos state Ecology Secretary who approved the Monte Castillo development. She was also the top investigator for Luis Echeverría's private eco-thinktank, the Centro de Investigaciones del Tercer Mundo.

Environmentalists on the wrong side of these elite circles are targeted by the state security forces. Armando Mojica of Espacio Verde had his house fired on last June after he started distributing anti-golf information. He received the Morelos version of a telephone death threat-the Scott Joplin music from The Sting. The break fluid was drained from his car in September as the Tepoztlan struggle escalated. This prompted him to hold a press conference, and the threats stopped. But Judicial Police vehicles still lurk on the street outside his house with disturbing frequency.

Governor Carrillo is now introducing legislation to the PRI-controlled state legislature to "deregulate" environmental standards, urban development and health laws.

Aftermath Governor Carrillo Olea insists that the Tepoztlan elections and Municipio Libre are invalid, and that the arrest orders against nearly all the CUT militants-on charges ranging from usurpation of government to murder of Pedro Barragan-will eventually be carried out.

The Ayuntamiento Libre, in turn, demands written documentation of the golf project's cancellation; freedom for the "political prisoners" Gerardo Demesa Padilla, Fortino Mendoza, José Carrillo Conde and Mauricio Franco Sanchez; lifting of the warrants against over 100 other Tepoztecos involved in the anti-golf struggle; official recognition of the Municipio Libre; and damages to be paid to the family of Marcos Olmeda Gutierrez and others hurt in the struggle.

Rebel Municipal President Lazaro Rodriguez

CasteOeda is among those wanted for usurpation of government functions, kidnapping and several other charges. "I have no fear because I am struggling for a just cause," he says.

"If these demands are met, possibly we can have new elections," says Lazaro. "This situation will persist until the government agrees to resolve it in favor of the people."

"CUT has made mistakes," says Armando Mojica. "That's normal; they were unprepared for this situation and they are under siege. These are very tense and difficult moments. The CUT is working with people they know well. Tepoztlan has been struggling for its land and cultural traditions since the Conquest. The one big mistake is the failure to include the pueblos. Now the government is trying to play the people of the municipality against each other like gallos in a chicken fight."

In the outlying pueblos of San Juan Tlacotenco, Amatlan, Santo Domingo Ocotitlan, Santiago, San Andres, San Pedro and Santa Catarina, Nahuatl may be spoken more frequently, but the PRIista CCT has more influence, exploiting the ancient envy and animosity of the municipal center.

Zenon Cuevas Medina is a campesino from San Juan Tlacotenco, in the mountains directly above Tepoztlan. He grows nopales, the edible cactus which is San Juan's economic mainstay. He says San Juan is 90% PRIista, and complains bitterly of the CUT. He says the barricades block their freedom of transit. The pueblo's women have to go all the way to the Cuernavaca market to sell their nopales since they were thrown out of their place at the Tepoztlan market, he says.

There are obvious divide-and-conquer angles that are being played over control of water. San Juan has no indoor plumbing or pipes for potable water. The pueblo is dependent on a weekly tank truck. KS offered to build the pueblo a water system, and to pipe up any water left over from Monte Castillo's three wells left after keeping the golf course green.

The federal government and Canadian aid workers have a project for San Juan to provide cisterns to catch rainwater. Now San Juan campesinos complain these workers can't get to the village because of the Tepozteco barricades.

The CUT, meanwhile, maintains that San Juan's own village bosses, or caciques, kicked out the aid workers.

Like San Juan, Santo Domingo Ocotitlan is dependent on tank trucks for water. Amatlan only has limited piped water.

There are also tensions within the pueblo of Tepoztlan. Along with the ubiquitous slogan "NO AL CLUB DE GOLF!" which covers the walls of Tepoztlan, the words "FUERA TRAIADORES"- "traitors out"-is scrawled on a few homes and restaurants.

The hippies, back-to-nature chilangos fleeing Mexico City, New Age types, UFO freaks and guru-worshippers who live alongside the Tepoztecos initially supported the rebellion. But these transplants, the Tepoztizos, increasingly complain of CUT xenophobia and dogmatism.

The Tepoztizos come in many sub-categories: Tepoztricos (the rich), Jipitecos (the hippies), Tepoztposas (the gays). As always, the hippies came first, back when it was still cheap, and made Tepoztlan fashionable for the yuppies who followed.

The Indigenous Tepoztecos also have a sub-category: the Tepoztercos, the most hard-core and intransigent Tepoztecos.

Lazaro Rodriguez doesn't make much of the

elaborate local lingo, or the tensions. "Everybody who lives here is Tepozteco, as long as they are in the struggle with us," he says.

Tensions aside, all but the Tepoztricos stand as one against KS and Carrillo Olea. Litigation in federal court over the CUT's "usurpation of powers" may ultimately determine if the warrants against the CUT leadership will stand.

Armando Mojica says that the state government's legitimacy is increasingly questioned. "Its absurd. Its Kafkaesque. Quinta Piedra is private land even though its on ejidal territory."

In contrast, he believes that everything the CUT and the Municipio Libre have done has been within the law. "There is an illegal roadblock outside the governor's building in Cuernavaca," he says, where Preventative Police bar access to a public building. "The roadblocks in Tepoztlan are not illegal or unconstitutional. They are a form of popular defense."

Donaciones a Tepotzlan/Donations to Tepotzlan

BNACOMER BANK

Número de Cuenta 5010151-2

Plaza #192

Tepoztlan, Morelos

México

No Cuenta Cheques

Sucursal Tepoztlan

To: Javier Medina Torres and Amigos de Tepotzlan A.C.

Dom Gabriel Camara

tel/fax: (52)(739)51100

email: gcamara@laneta.apc.org

Contactos

Tepotzlan: Laura Donnadiou (91-739) 5-24-25

Cuernevaca: Laura Aguilar (91-73) 13-18-62

Mexico D.F.: Malu Cardenas (91-5) 688-27-19/605-83-79

Shere Villela (91-5) 570-66-89

Jalapa: Yuri Blanco (91-28) 18-66-09

Para informes de otros lugares dentro de la Republica o Internacionales comunicarse con Laura

REPORTS & RESOLUTIONS

COUNCILS, WORKSHOPS, CLANS

The core of the Bioregional Gathering were Councils that were organized into Youth, Kids, Art, and Culture, Education, Ecology, Tradition and Spirituality. The councils were set up months in advance, and have been an intrinsic part of past gatherings. These groups met for several days and issued a number of statements which we have been included here.

In addition, close to a 100 workshops were held, facilitated by dozens of talented people. Several of the workshops were summarized and printed as part of the proceedings.

Finally, it is important to recognize that a large part of the Gathering's activity was the actual work of maintaining the camp. The proposal of organizing work crews under the framework of José Arguelles' Dreamspell clans was not easily accepted. Nevertheless, groups formed in a spontaneous manner to give emotional support and to perform collective tasks like clean-up, kitchen, etc. It was an inspirational example of how a community can organize itself without an authoritarian structure.



REPORTES Y RESOLUCIONES

CONSEJOS, TALLERES Y CLANES

El corazón del Encuentro Bioregional fueron los Consejos de Jóvenes, de la Infancia, de la Cultura y las artes, de Educación, de Ecología y de Espiritualidad. Los consejos trabajaron durante meses antes del evento y han sido intrínsecos a los anteriores Encuentros. Estos grupos se reunieron durante varios días y emitieron algunas declaraciones incluidas en estas memorias.

Además se llevaron a cabo casi cien talleres, facilitados por docenas de personas talentosas. Solo algunos de los talleres hicieron su relatoría, misma que incluimos en este documento.

Finalmente, resulta importante reconocer que una gran parte de la actividad del Encuentro fue el trabajo de mantener el campamento. La propuesta de organizar equipos de trabajo bajo el esquema de clanes según el Encantamiento del Sueño de José Arguelles, no fue tan aceptada como se esperaba, sin embargo se formaron de forma espontánea grupos de apoyo emocional y de trabajo colectivo en las faenas de limpieza, de cocina, etc. Fue un ejemplo de cómo la comunidad se organiza a sí misma sin tener que recurrir a una estructura autoritaria.

COUNCILS/CONSEJOS

EDUCATION COUNCIL

The goal of this council was to create an educational agenda for the next century, or the Ecozoic Age. We need to prepare ourselves to educate the mega-population of the Bioregion of the Americas. We believe all the following ideas should compliment past work done by other bioregional congresses/gatherings.

Objectives

A - Formal Education

- 1) Develop bioregional curricula
 - Nature observation and survival skills
 - Regeneration Ecology/Permaculture and eco-technology design studies
 - Bioregional health practices/inner ecosystems
 - Comparative mythology and story in relation to nature
 - Systems ecology
 - Practical Economic Skills Programs
 - Arts and crafts - biocontemplative/community

2) Teacher Training Programs

Emphasizing the pedagogy of character respect, experiential, apprenticeship and heart, land soul.

3) Collaboration with educational institutions to promote change.

- Introduce the bioregionalist language and skills to teachers.
- Get adult learning going in leverage points
- Natural architecture, get children out of buildings.

4) Educational Outreach

As bioregional activists we need to take

advantage of every opportunity to educate by example, including being media savvy and learning to talk to our neighbors. Bioregional education also requires public outreach through mass forms of communication, i.e. media, culture, arts and architectural environments. Examples include creating alternative media, documenting positive examples, establishing consultants, using the Internet as a centralized information resource, all art forms, bioregional architectural forms, promotion of indigenous and autochthonous cultures, and elders as educators.

B - Nonformal Education

- 5) Support further network of non-formal learning programs
 - Media, public TV, public radio, local news people
 - Internet
 - Parent skills programs
 - Wilderness Programs
 - Bioregional movement programs

Fostering Networks and Outreach

How can networking educate people about bioregionalism going in to the third millennium?

Bioregionalists will strive to organize and unify the many different groups which, really, share one common future: survival of Mother Earth. This process involves: education, gathering, disseminating and distributing information and ideas; gatherings, conferences, workshops, etc.

Bioregionalists will be at the center of myriad splinter groups who strive to improve and give a voice to our assaulted ecosystems; will bring cohesion to these diverse interests which really have everything in common but often differ in philosophy, structure, needs, strategy and tactics.

In order to increase bioregional awareness, we recommend:

- 1) Become media

activists. Learn how to use the media to cover bioregional issues.

2) Create alternative media. Produce magazines, newsletters, write columns, develop radio and television programming.

3) Document positive examples that express bioregional values. Produce documents that show alternative forms of living.

4) Create bioregional consultants who will be available to the media in order to counter corporate public relations.

5) Promote the Internet as a centralized media activist resource. Set up web sites with bioregional organizations and informational documents, and e-mail networks.

6) Utilize art and artists as a tool for promoting bioregional values.

7) Promote public bioregional space and architectural design.

8) Promote indigenous and autoctonous* culture as a resource of bioregional culture and values.

9) Promote elders as bioregional educators.

10) Knowing our bioregions and the communities within which they live. Knowing your region means knowing its issues. One group's upcoming action can be forwarded to other splinter groups.

*Autoctonous is a term for land based communities that are not necessarily indigenous

CONSEJO DE EDUCACIÓN

El objetivo de este consejo fue el de crear una agenda para el próximo siglo, o Era Ecozoica. Necesitamos prepararnos para educar a la megapoblación de la Bioregión de las Américas. Creemos que las siguientes ideas deben complementar el trabajo pasado realizado por otros congresos/encuentros.

Objetivos

A - Educación formal

1) Desarrollar un diseño curricular bioregional al

- Observar la naturaleza y aptitudes para la sobrevivencia
- Ecología Regenerativa/Permacultura y diseño de eco tecnologías
- Prácticas para una salud bioregional y ecosistemas internos
- Mitología comparativa y historia de la Naturaleza
- * Ecología de sistemas
- * Arte y artesanías; Comunidad biocon templativa

2) Programas de capacitación a maestros

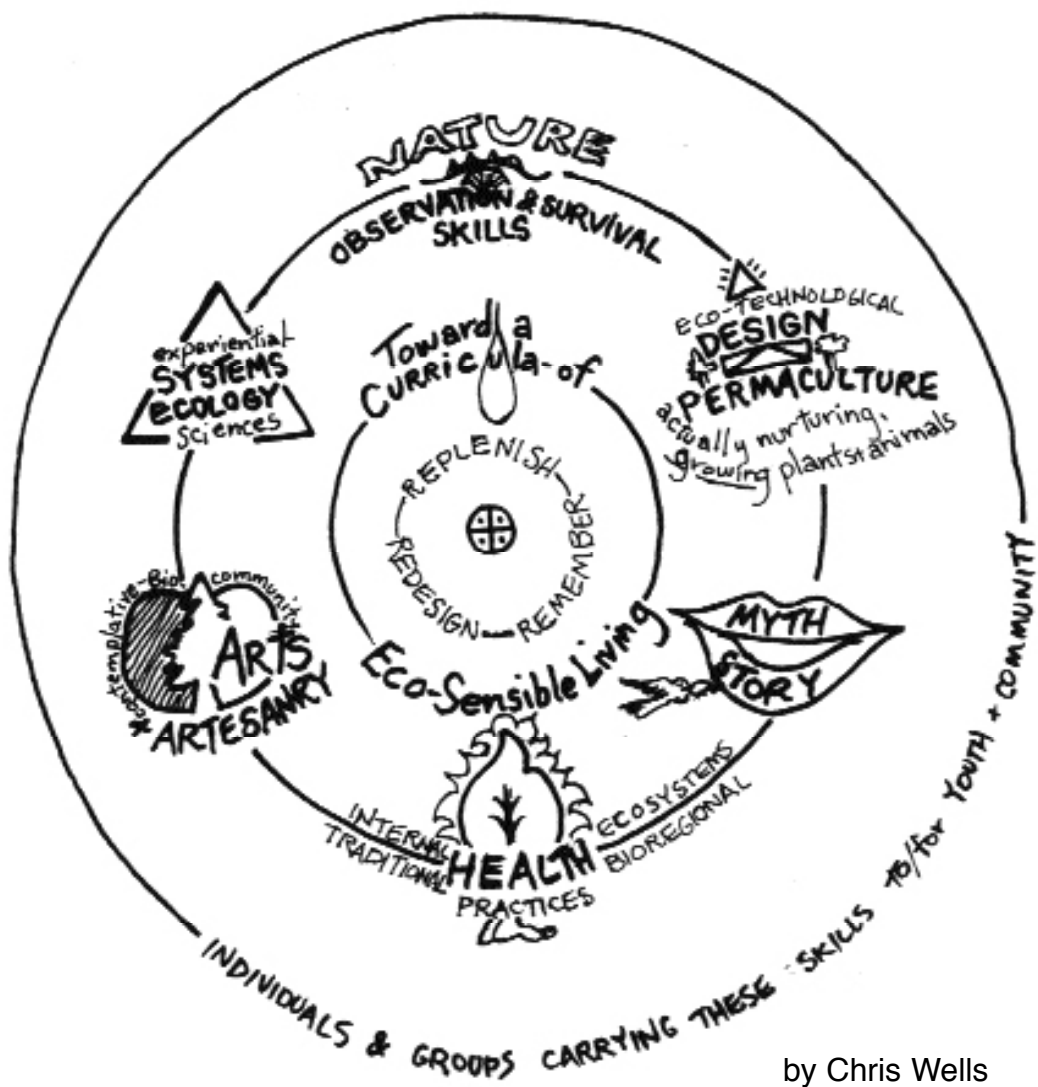
Pedagogía con énfasis en la experiencia, el respeto al carácter, aprendices y el alma y el corazón de la tierra.

3) Colaboración con las instituciones educativas para promover el cambio

- Introducir el lenguaje y las aptitudes bioregionales entre los maestros
- Promover enseñanza para adultos en puntos de palanca.
- Arquitectura natural, sacara a la infancia del salón de clases.

4) Extensionismo educativo

Como activistas bioregionales debemos de



by Chris Wells

aprovechar todas las oportunidades para educar desde el ejemplo, ya sea como expertos en comunicación de masas o como comunicadores con nuestros vecinos. La educación bioregional requiere de nuestro extensionismo a través de la cultura del arte de los ambientes arquitectónicos.

Algunos ejemplos incluyen: la creación de mensajes alternativos en los medios, documentar los ejemplos positivos y difundirlos, establecer consultorías, usar internet, promoción de las culturas indígenas y de los ancianos como educadores.

B- Educación no formal

5) Apoyar las redes de programas educativos no formales

- En los medios de comunicación: la TV pública, radio pública, periodistas educadores
- Internet
- Programas educativos para padres
- Programas de vida silvestre
- Programas del movimiento bioregional

Apoyo a las redes y al extensionismo

Como puede la formación de redes educar a la gente en bioregionalismo hacia el tercer milenio?

Los bioregionalistas luchan por organizarse y unificar a los diferentes grupos que comparten la preocupación de salvar a la Madre Tierra. Este proceso implica: educación, acopiar y difundir información en encuentros, conferencias, talleres, etc.

Los bioregionalistas estarán en el centro de miles de grupos luchando por mejorar y darle voz a los depredados ecosistemas; traerán cohesión a los intereses diversos que realmente comparten casi todo salvo la estructura, filosofía, necesidades, estrategia y táctica.

Para aumentar la conciencia bioregional recomendamos:

1) Coinvertirnos en activistas de los medios de comunicación para cubrir los temas y asun-

tos bioregionales

2) Crear medios alternativos. Editar revistas, boletines, escribir columnas, desarrollar programas de tv y de radio.

3) Documentar los ejemplos positivos que expresan valores bioregionales. Producir documentos que muestren formas alternativas de vida.

4) Crear consultorías bioregionales accesibles a los medios de comunicación para contrarrestar las relaciones públicas de las empresas.

5) Promover Internet como recurso centralizado de información para activistas. que las organizaciones diseñen sus paginas en la red y establezcan redes de correo electrónico.

6) Utilizar el arte como herramienta para promover valores bioregionales.

7) Promover espacio bioregionales a través del diseño arquitectónico.

8) Promover culturas indígenas y autóctonas* como fuentes de valores bioregionales.

9) Promover a los ancianos como educadores bioregionales

10) Promover el conocimiento de nuestras bioregiones y comunidades. Conocer la región significa conocer sus problemas. Las acciones de un grupo pueden ser difundidas entre los demás grupos

* Autóctona es un término para las comunidades cuyo referente es la tierra y que no son necesariamente indígenas

CONSEJO DE ECOLOGÍA

Relatoría de la Segunda Sesión

Esta segunda sesión del Consejo de Ecología fué espléndida. Comenzamos tarde, cerca de las 12 AM., y decidimos juntarnos con el Taller de Mapeo Biorregional, que impartieron Peter Berg and Doug Aberley. Ellos fueron los iniciadores del consejo, y nos dieron una explicación muy práctica y útil de cómo desarrollar esta actividad. El haber empezado tarde y el haber incluido las actividades de dicho taller hizo que nos retrasáramos mucho en nuestras actividades, y que dejáramos algunas pendientes para la tercera y última sesión, programada para el viernes 22.

Después de este taller, comenzamos con una excelente explicación de Iván Azuara, asesor parlamentario de la Comisión de Ciencia y Tecnología del Senado de la República Mexicana, que nos expuso una técnica científica para diseñar Ecorregiones.

Posteriormente, un grupo de ciudadanos que se han organizado en una comisión civil para la defensa de la Selva de los Chimalapas (Luis Bustamante, Luis Miguel García Robles y Miguel Angel García), nos expusieron de manera bella y penetrante la grave situación que atraviesan los pobladores, tanto del reino vegetal como animal (los 12,000 humanos incluidos), de este último bloque selvático tropical de grandes dimensiones que queda en México, país del mundo con mayor grado de destrucción de su reserva forestal y selvática.

Ya en la tarde, Guillermo Rico, presidente de la Comisión de Ecología del PRD, e Iván Azuara, hicieron una breve y sustanciosa descripción de como se había dado el proceso de reforma de la "Ley General de Equilibrio Ecológico y la Protección al Ambiente" (LGEEPA), donde aclararon que uno de las mayores debilidades de este proceso legislativo consistió en que no se logró el que la reforma de esta ley fuera acompañada por las reformas constitucionales indispensables para otorgarle un poder jurídico suficiente; también señalaron que no se logró la autonomía de la "Procuraduría Federal de

Protección al Ambiente" (PROFEPA), ni se logró un derecho a la información suficiente sobre las auditorías ambientales. Tampoco se logró que los municipios pudieran expresar sus puntos de vista al respecto, habiéndose modificado al último momento el artículo 33. Anunciaron, por último, que el PRD está organizando próximamente una reunión de todos los grupos ambientalistas civiles, con el fin de impulsar nuevamente una reforma mas profunda a la legislación ambiental en México.

Los demás integrantes señalaron que el proceso de consultas para la reforma a la LGEEPA había sido insuficiente, y que, inclusive, los talleres participativos impulsados por la Fundación Ebert (FES), el Centro de Estudios Mexicano sobre Derecho Ambiental (CEMDA), La Red Mexicana de Acción Frente al Libre Comercio (RMALC) y Desarrollo Ambiente y Sociedad (DAS), aunque alcanzó un cierto grado de participación, no fué representativo del conjunto del movimiento ambientalista mexicano. Además, al final, al integrar un producto, dichos talleres perdieron totalmente su carácter participativo, y colaboraron con el ejecutivo y con los partidos con representación parlamentaria en que el pobre resultado final fuera aprobado por consenso, sin informar a la opinión pública nacional e internacional sobre las profundas carencias de dicho proceso de reforma.

Por último, Iván Azuara sugirió que mandáramos una excitativa al Presidente del Senado, Senador Guillermo Ortiz Arana, para que le de un dictamen a la Reforma Constitucional propuesta, para que se turne a la Comisión de Ecología y de Puntos Constitucionales, para lo cual se nombró una comisión redactora compuesta por Juan Bozzano, Armando Mojica y Nacho Peón (posteriormente se sumó Yolanda Correa). Nacho Peón sugirió también que asistiéramos a la reunión de la RMALC el lunes 12 de diciembre, a las 12 AM, para comentar e impulsar los resultados de este consejo.

José Arias Chavez hizo una emotiva exortación a que los grupos ambientalistas no se hagan cómplices de los intentos gubernamentales por dividir nuestro movimiento, desarrollando al interior de nuestro movimiento un

espíritu de tolerancia que impida que alguien sea descalificado o excluido por su militancia radical o reformista.

Concluyó el consejo con una breve y sustanciosa intervención de Alejandro Calvillo, de Green Peace-México, sobre la negativa oficial mexicana a importar tecnología de refrigeración alemana que resulta muy conveniente para no dañar la capa de ozono, debido a que el gobierno ha optado por proteger las patentes de las transnacionales norteamericanas, mucho más contaminante

Relator: Juan Bozzano Barnés

CONCLUSIONES DEL CONSEJO DE



ECOLOGÍA

Subcomité de Tepoztlán

El Consejo de Ecología propone que el primer Consejo Biorregional de “Las Américas” se pronuncie por la solución a las demandas actuales del pueblo de Tepoztlán:

a.- Cancelación definitiva del proyecto del Club de Golf por escrito con las firmas del gobierno federal, estatal y la empresa KS.

b.- Liberación del preso político Gerardo Demesa Padilla.

c.- Cancelar las ordenes de aprehensión y las averiguaciones previas, incluyendo la orden de aprehensión de Refugio Marquina, dirigente de los ejidatarios.

d.- Castigar a los responsables de la represión del 10 de abril de 1996, e indemnizar a las víctimas y a los familiares de Marcos Olmedo asesinado en esa ocasión.

e.- Restitución de las tierras comunales que actualmente están en posesión de la empresa

KS y de las tierras ejidales de la “Quinta Piedra”.

f.- Detener el proyecto ecocida de la Laguna de Acolapa, Tepoztlán que incluye desecarla para construir el Fraccionamiento Habitacional Rinconadas de Acolapa.

Se sugiere que:

1. Hacer una campaña de envío de cartas, faxes y correos electrónicos dirigidas al Presidente Ernesto Zedillo y al gobernador del Estado de Morelos Jorge Carrillo Olea y a los inversionistas del Proyecto demandando solución a los puntos antes planteados.

2.- Realizar presión ante los consulados mexicanos en sus lugares de origen en apoyo a Tepoztlán.

3.- Brindar apoyo económico para saldar la deuda y gastos subsecuentes de los licenciados que tramitan los asuntos jurídicos, agrarios y de derechos humanos.

4.- Brindar apoyo en la búsqueda de financiamiento para los proyectos comunitarios sustentables tendientes a mejorar la calidad de vida que el Plan de Desarrollo Municipal considere prioritarios.

5.- Difundir a través de los medios de comunicación posibles la experiencia del pueblo tepozteco en su lucha por una vida digna, la defensa de sus recursos naturales y de sus tradiciones, y por que el pueblo sea gobierno y mande obedeciendo.

6.- Ofrecer apoyos técnicos y formativos a incluirse en el directorio del Comité de Apoyo al Pueblo de Tepoztlán a través de:

Maira Conde Ortiz

Paraíso 7, Barrio San Miguel Arcangel

Tepoztlan, Morelos C.P. 62520

Teléfono: (739) 5 1573

César Rosales Rojas

Prolongación Aniceto Villamar s/c, Colonia Tierra Blanca

Tepoztlán, Morelos C.P. 62520

Teléfono: (739) 5 1496

Adelita San Vicente Tello

cbfl6211(cueyatl.uam.mx)



CONCLUSIONES DEL CONSEJO DE ECOLOGÍA

Subcomité de México

El consejo de Ecología, en su subcomité de México, propone que el Primer Consejo Bioregional de "Las Américas" se pronuncie por la solución a las demandas actuales del pueblo de México.

Apoyo total y solidario con la lucha del pueblo de Tepoztlán.

Respaldo del comité nacional para la defensa de los Chimalapas así como su transformación en "reserva ecológica campesina" y respeto a las comunidades locales (Oaxaca y Chiapas)

Defensa de la diversidad biológica y culturas de las Américas (Bioregionalismos)

Promover el modelo cultural Bioregional como alternativa al modelo económico neoliberal.

Fortalecer y crear los vínculos y compromisos entre grupos ecológicos, indígenas, espirituales, sociales y bioregionalistas.

Por un ambiente sano, justo y democrático

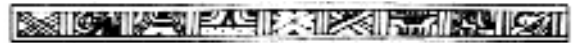
Rechazo a los megaproyectos en los estados, Oaxaca, Quintana Roo, Guerrero, etc.

Revisar y modificar la legislación ambiental bajo el enfoque bioregional.

Respetar letra y espíritu de las leyes de protección y restauración ambiental.

Impulsar ecocentrismo.

Respeto a los acuerdos ambientales internacionales en defensa de los seres humanos y la naturaleza. Congruencia en el pensamiento y la acción local y global.



Reports from Ecology Council

Proposals

- Pan American gathering in the year 2000
- TIBG in the Yucatán in 1998
- Ceremonial village
- Traveling eco-village

We agreed to have a local gathering every year, a regional and continental gathering every two years.

We recommend for the next gathering to limit the size to 350; to do more ecological work on site; to be more organized; to work on deep ecology; to do large training on consensus decision-making; to find the tools for more coherence between personal, local and large scale action.

Suggestions

1. Letter campaign
2. Pressure Mexican consulates
3. Legal costs and debts
4. Sustainable projects
5. Offer technical and educational support with the support committee.

Demandas

1. Golf club cancelled in writing
2. Political prisoner freed.
3. Arrest warrants revoked and records cleared.
4. Responsible punished for April repression.
5. Communal and ejido lands returned
6. Ecological destruction of Lake Acolapa stopped.



CONSEJO DE COCINA

Gloria Cardona y Alina

Consideramos los siguientes puntos:

Planeación: Ocho meses antes del Encuentro se comenzó a trabajar en la elaboración de los menús, las listas de requerimientos, el presupuesto, la integración del equipo básico, el reconocimiento del lugar.

En algunos aspectos ésta planeación previa, se vió alterada por factores sorpresa como:

Falta de información sobre el número real de personas inscritas en el evento, con acceso a comidas, ya que la planeación fué hecha para 300 personas los primeros días del evento y rebasó con cerca de 500 personas el número inicial calculado. A partir del tercer día calculamos que cocinamos para 800 personas pero no supimos con certeza.

Falta de comunicación e información del Consejo organizador hacia el de cocina.

Falta de asistencia de los clanes, al trabajo planeado para ellos. Sobre todo en horas clave: muy temprano en la mañana y por la noche.

Ejecución y Coordinación

En este sentido distribuimos las tareas en el grupo de base (once personas) que coordinaron el trabajo de los clanes que colaboraron.

Para la coordinación general de la cocina fue muy pesado asumir la responsabilidad de

alimentar a 800 personas cuando la planeación fue hecha para 300 los primeros días y para 500 los últimos días.

La Integración del Grupo

Fue la mejor experiencia dentro de todo el trabajo. La integración del grupo se hizo con alegría, entusiasmo, colaboración y fraternidad. Llegaron personas que no pertenecían a ningún clan pero que ofrecieron su apoyo incondicional. Los cantos y las danzas nos acompañaron todos los días.

Nuestras recomendaciones para el próximo Encuentro son las siguientes:

- Comer en círculo
- Alimentos sin lácteos para el 10% de la población
- No empalmar actividades con el horario de la comida: temazcales, junta de organizadores, consejos nocturnos, talleres, etc.
- Cubrir los horarios alimenticios de las diferentes costumbres.
- Dar alimentos vegetarianos a una población en la que solo el 50 % era vegetariana.

Con deseos de éxito para los próximos eventos.

SPIRITUALITY COUNCIL

Recognizing that spirituality is a highly individual matter, the Spirituality Consejo did not define a single bioregional spirituality. This is a collective prose poem compiled from individual statements by the members of the Consejo on what spirituality was for them. The reading of this poem was accompanied by dramatic interpretations by the Consejo.

Spirituality

The art of energy
Seeking unity with the whole
And the wound in my soul
Seeking continental illumination
Grand cosmos connection
Contemplate everything with love and wisdom
Hear the mind
Being mindful of our connection with all things
"Take the spirit out of the rock"
Spiritual beings having a human experience
Food of the soul
What makes us grow
Living daily in a way that honors the earth
Flowing energy that is everything
The key to eternal health and survival
United in a continuum of light and death
Road of the heart
Entering all other dimensions
Consciousness of connection
Evolutionary essence of all beings
Sacred daily life
Connection with the original particles
Multidimensional levels of self-realization
Bring ourselves back to the great spirit
A way of living in another reality
Transcend sacred journey
Healing
Kindness to all living things
Living with an open heart
Joy
Sparks of great spirit
Sharing and receiving
Being in touch with the magic of the universe
Living in state of celebration
Essence of all living things

CONSEJO DE ESPIRITUALIDAD

A sabiendas de que lo espiritual es un asunto altamente personal, el Consejo de Espiritualidad no definió ninguna espiritualidad bioregional. A continuación un poema colectivo en prosa, que es la suma de las declaraciones individuales de los participantes en este Consejo, sobre lo que significa lo espiritual para ellos. La lectura de este poema fue acompañada por una dramatización a cargo de los integrantes del Consejo.

Espiritualidad

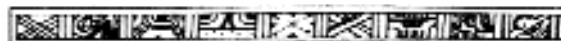
El arte de la energía
Buscando unidad con el todo
Y la herida en mi alma
Buscando iluminación continental
Gran conexión cósmica
Contemplando todo con amor y sabiduría
Corazón y mente
Siendo conscientes de nuestra conexión con todas las cosas
"Sacando el espíritu de la roca"
Seres espirituales experimentando lo humano
Alimento del alma
Que nos hace crecer
Viviendo diariamente de forma que honre la tierra
Fluyendo energía que es todo
La clave de la salud eterna y la sobrevivencia
Unidos en un continuum de luz y muerte
Camino del corazón
Entrando en todas las otras dimensiones
Conciencia de conexión
Esencia evolutiva de todos los seres
Sagrada vida diaria
Conexión con las partículas originales
Niveles multidimensionales de autorealización
Regresándonos al gran espíritu
Una forma de vivir en otra realidad
Transcendiendo la jornada sagrada
Curando
Amabilidad con todas las formas vivas
Viviendo con un corazón abierto

Alegría
Chispas del gran espíritu
Dando y recibiendo
Estando en contacto con el toque mágico del universo
Viviendo en estado de celebración
Esencia de todas las cosas vivas
Los iguales aman.



ART AND CULTURE/ ARTE Y CULTURA

The Arts and Culture council provided a fundamental part of the gathering. They worked hard to present every night extraordinary performances, showcasing the many talents of gathering participants. In collaboration with the Gypsy Theater Workshop, The Art and Culture council ended the week with a parade and performance. Estucha Greenberg coordinated this task. Time is art.



CANADIAN INDIGENOUS STATEMENT

We, the participants of the First Bioregional Gathering of the Americas recognize the commonality of experience of the indigenous peoples of North and South America in their struggle to remain intact as a people in the face of the oppressive forces of colonial government.

We strongly urge the Government of Canada to set an example for the other countries of the Americas, by respecting the rights of the Indigenous Peoples of Canada to self-determination and autonomy on their own lands.

All our relations

Ometeotl.

DECLARACIÓN DE LOS PUEBLOS INDIOS DE CANADÁ

Nosotros los participantes en el Primer Encuentro Bioregional de las Américas reconocemos la experiencia común de los pueblos indios del Norte y del Sur de América en su lucha por mantenerse intactos como pueblo frente a las fuerzas opresivas del gobierno colonial.

Le pedimos al gobierno de Canadá que sirva un ejemplo para los demás países de las Américas, al respetar los derechos de los pueblos indígenas de Canadá a la autodeterminación y autonomía de sus tierras.

Por todas nuestras relaciones

Ometeotl

RESOLUTIONS

The following proposals were adopted by consensus by the attendees of the Gathering:

1. All future bioregional gatherings will not go more than one day without starting councils.
2. That the money left over from this event be equally divided between the two sponsors (Turtle Island Bioregional Congress (TIBG) and the Consejo de Visiones Guardianes de la Tierra(CVGT))
3. A continental event will occur in 1998- a meeting between TIBG and CVGT, South of the Rio Grande/Rio Bravo.
4. That the Art and Culture Committee will produce a cassette of music for the next gathering as a fund raiser.
5. That a guide for organizing a bioregional gathering will be produced for the next event.
6. That an orientation theater piece will be produced for the next gathering.

RESOLUCIONES

Las propuestas fueron acordadas por los participantes del Encuentro, en consenso:

1. Todos los encuentros bioregionales en el futuro deberán incluir desde el primer día el trabajo de los consejos.
2. Que el dinero que quede de este evento sea igualmente dividido entre las dos partes (Congreso Bioregional de la Isla de la Tortuga y el Consejo de Visiones).
3. Un evento continental deberá a ocurrir en 1988, encuentro entre TIBG y CYGT, al sur del rio Bravo.
4. El Consejo de Arte y Cultura va a producir un cassette de música para el próximo Encuentro
5. Se producirá un manual para organizar el siguiente Encuentro.
6. Se producirá una obra de teatro que cuente nuestra historia para el siguiente Encuentro.

COUNCIL OF TRADITIONS

Andres King

During the Bioregional Gathering several ceremonies and rituals helped unify, protect and develop the event. Ceremonies to the sun, the moon, Venus, the sacred fire, men's circles and women's circles, spiritual seedings in the mountain, as well as talks that promote proposals, needs and Amreindian traditions.

We held sweat lodges, a wedding, a Nahuatl baptism, Nahuatl dances, Nahuatl vigil and simple explanations of the grandparents. We held important healings through spiritual energy and through the sun. The integration of the elders was done through harmony, respect and through being aware and grateful to our Mother Earth and her infinite species, including human beings.

Along with the caring for the sacred fire, Doña Margarita gathered people from many nationalities to sing beautiful songs in their languages that spoke of cultures from different regions.

It was wonderful to incorporate the energy of sacred pipes to the spiral dance led by Starhawk. There were innumerable sweat lodges, led by Doña Margarita, Chapo, Don Faustino or Carlos Rios, with great liberating and purifying energy.

The Mayan brothers (keepers of sacred cenotes and ceremonial places) led a ceremony of unification and proposed themselves as the next site hosts for the next bioregional gathering, in order to support their bioregion.

The proposal of the Traditions Council is that we should continue with the policy to include ceremonies because it integrates the bioregional movement. We must acknowledge that before there was bioregionalism, the indigenous wisdom promoted respect of nature and of place.

The other proposal is that the coming event would also take place at a sacred place like Tepoztlán because the presentation of the Council of Traditions, its elders, shamans and healers created an avenue of communication with local campesinos and social activists.

We suggest more previous communication

prior to the event between organizers and indigenous people, in order to include their knowledge.

CONSEJO DE TRADICIONES

Andres King

Durante el Encuentro Bioregional se realizaron ceremonias y rituales que ayudaron a unificar, proteger y desarrollar dicho evento. Ceremonias al sol, la luna, venus, el fuego sagrado, círculos de hombres y mujeres, caminatas de poder y de siembra espiritual en la montaña, así como pláticas para promover sus propuestas, necesidades y tradiciones amerindias.

Se desarrollaron temazcales, una boda, un bautizo mexicana, danzas concheras, velación conchera y explicaciones sencillas y sabias de las y los abuelos.

Se desarrollaron curaciones importantes mediante energía espiritual y del sol. Una característica de armonía y de integración de nuestros abuelos fue el respeto, el estar atento y el agradecimiento a nuestra Madre Tierra y sus infinitas especies, incluyendo a los seres humanos.

Durante el cuidado del fuego sagrado Doña Margarita reunió a gente de muchas nacionalidades que cantaba hermosas canciones en sus diferentes lenguas, hablando de culturas de distintas regiones.

Fue muy bonito incorporar la energía de las pipas sagradas a las danzas espirales de Starhawk. Se hicieron innumerables temazcales dirigidos a veces por Doña Margarita, Chapo, Don Faustino o Carlos Rios con gran energía liberadora y purificadora.

Los hermanos mayas (también guardianes de cenotes y de centros ceremoniales) nos donaron una ceremonia colectiva de unificación natural y se propusieron como sede para el próximo evento bioregional con el fin de apoyar su bioregion.

La propuesta del Consejo de Tradiciones y de Pueblos Indios es que continuemos con la política de incluir ceremonias ya que esto integra al movimiento bioregional. Hay que reconocer que antes de que surgiera el Bioregionalismo, la

sabiduría indígena promovía respeto a la naturaleza y al lugar.

La otra propuesta es que el proximo evento se lleve a cabo en un lugar sagrado como Tepoztlán ya que la presentación del Consejo de Tradiciones, sus ancianos, chamanes y

curanderos creó una avenida de comunicación con los campesinos y luchadores sociales del lugar.

Indigenous Participants in the First Bioregional Gathering of the Americas

(tribe, tradition or home place in parentheses)

State of Mexico

Don Faustino (sun dancer)
Eduardo Kuauhtcuteli (sun dancer)
Mazatl and 25 Aztec dancers (Kalpulli Tepetlixpan)
Kuiz Lopez (Yaqui pipe carrier, Malinalco)

Jalisco

Abuela Margarita Nunez Garcia (MAIS)

Sinaloa

Chapo (Seri nation, Isla de Tiburon)

Morelos

Don Felipe Alvarado (Amatlan)
Dona Vicenta Villalba (Amatlan)
Don Trini (Tepoztlan)
Don Filiberto (Tepoztlan)

Oaxaca

Alvaro Vazquez (Mixteco)
Jesus (Mixteco, Huatla)

Yucatan

Don Jacinto (Maya)
Antonio (Maya)
Gabriel (Maya)

Veracruz

Rolando Solis
Antonio

México City

Xolotl and 20 Aztec dancers
(Kalpulli Kualiamia & Kalpulli Atlachinolli, Xochimilco)
Puebla
Carlos Gomez (Grupo de Vegetalis)
Dona Rosita (Grupo de Vegetalis)

Canada

Brian Grandboise (Dineh Nation)
Gilbert (Dineh Nation)

Cuba

Rene Lescay

Guatemala

Barbara Saquec Xinico (Maya Kachiquel)

United States

Morgan (Apache, grandson of Geronimo)

YOUTH PROPUESTAS DEL CONSEJO DE JOVENES

- Traer al Consejo una agenda ya hecha desde antes de todas las actividades y ponerlo donde todos lo vean.
- Además poner un pizarrón para los talleres que se quieran impartir por iniciativa propia.
- Nos gustaría que se retome el gran círculo, tanto para la comida como para otras cosas, que se sienta la unión.
- Pensamos que el círculo mayor debe

ser mas preciso y rápido, ya que nosotros los jovenes tenemos demasiada energía para estar sentados mucho tiempo y nos desesperamos y despues ya no sabemos que pasa en los círculos. Y por otro lado pensamos que las cosas personales o lo que pueda resolverse sin que esten todos , se hagan afuera

- Por consecuencia de todo lo demás esperamos poder lograr que la gente que viene aquí sepa a los que viene; tenga un propósito por medio de la motivación que crea la integración.

- También nosotros estamos aprendiendo de nuestras propias visiones, gracias por el apoyo y la gran realización de esta increíble semana.

CHAVOS BANDAS

Antonio López
eltiki@swcp.com

Many of the Youth Council were part of what Mexicans call 'chavos bandas.'
The following is a brief description of who they were.

With twenty youth pressed tightly against a teepee's canvas, a pipe passes around with a mix of herbs and sacred tobacco prepared by a First Nation pipe carrier. As the pipe travels clockwise around the circle, each chavo makes a prayer, confession, or passes with silence. The pipe finally reaches Beatrice, a gang youth from Iztapalapa about to make a journey as a representative to an international youth conference in Vienna. She asks for everyone to surround her with white light and to help her carry the intent of the circle overseas.

With all the bad press that gangs get, this incident reveals how urban youth can take their warrior energy and channel it for Mother Earth. Not only did these chavos bandas participate in many initiation ceremonies and sweat lodges through out the week of the gathering, they also provided the camp's security.

Organized by Helen Samuels, a youth activist based in México City, close to two dozen chavos traveled from Monterrey, México City, Iztapalapa, Oaxaca and Las Angeles. As members of the Popular Youth Council (CPJ), a Mexican youth organization, Helen called these chavos "my hope for the world."

Initially some campers thought these security brigades, who patrolled the camp at night, were in fact criminals. It took a public introduction in one of the morning circles for people to realize that these tough looking urban warriors were actually part of the camp's organization.

Because of the general prejudice in the US towards gangs, it was enlightening for many camper's to work and meet these youth.

So, what does "chavo banda" mean? According to Helen, when kids in México hang out together, dress a certain way- i.e. heavy metal t-shirts, wool caps, boots, etc.- , and they give their group a name, they are called chavos bandas— literally "youth bands." But chavo is slang for youth, and "banda" has the implication of a tribal band, like if you are at a pow wow and someone asks you what band you are from. There is no word for gang, like what we have in the US, so these youth will make a distinction between a chavo banda and criminales, which are literally



CHAVOS BANDAS

Antonio López
eltiki@swcp.com

Muchos de los participantes en el Consejo de jóvenes son parte de lo que en México se llama "Chavos Banda" esta es una breve descripción de quienes son.

Somos veinte jóvenes apretados contra la tela del tipi, se pasa la pipa en el círculo con una mezcla de hierbas y tabaco sagrado preparada por el portador de pipa de la nación india. Mientras la pipa viaja en el sentido de las manecillas del reloj, cada chavo hace una oración, se confiesa o guarda silencio. Finalmente la pipa llega a Beatriz, una chava de Ixtapalapa que como representante esta apunto de viajar a Viena, a una conferencia internacional sobre jóvenes. Ella pide que la cubramos de luz blanca y la ayudemos a llevar con ella la intención de este círculo a Viena.

Con toda la mala reputación que tienen las bandas, este incidente revela como la juventud urbana puede canalizar su energía guerrera hacia la Madre Tierra. Estos chavos no solo participaron en muchas ceremonias de iniciación y muchos temazcales a lo largo de la semana del Encuentro, sino que asumieron la responsabilidad de la seguridad del campamento.

Organizados por Helen Samuels una activista en asuntos de jóvenes que vive en México, cerca de dos docenas de chavos viajaron desde Monterrey, Oaxaca, Los Angeles, el DF, Ixtapalapa. Como miembros de del Consejo Popular de Jóvenes CPJ, una de las organizaciones de la Banda en México. Helen piensa que estos chavos son "mi esperanza para el mundo".

Algunos de los participantes cuando se encontraron con las brigadas de vigilancia pensaron que de hecho eran asaltantes. Fue necesaria una presentación pública en el circulo de la mañana para que la gente se diera cuenta que estos guerreros urbana de apariencia ruda formaban parte de la organización del campamento. Dados los prejuicios en EU hacia las bandas, resultó iluminador para muchos el poder conocer y trabajar con estos jóvenes.

WORKSHOPS/TALLERES

YOGA, PRANAYAMA, AND HOPI PRAYER WORKSHOP

Iris Clearwater

We began with an hour of yoga designed to activate and energize all of the body, to open all the energy meridians and chakras, and to bring full circulation into the body. This is done through slow, easy stretches and movements coordinated with deep breathing. Beginning with the toes, we moved up through the various joints, muscles and chakras of the body. This was followed by a guided deep relaxation and healing meditation. We then moved into pranayama to raise, purify and equalize our energy with breath of fire and alternate nostril breathing.

From this energized state of well-being, we moved into the Hopi prayer dance— a sacred dance which is a prayer we send, through our movements, to the four directions for the peace and healing of the Earth and all peoples. Everyone who participated fully enjoyed the class and many who could not attend wished it could be held more than once.



YOUR MONEY OR YOUR LIFE

Jimi Markel

The focus of this workshop was to transform our relationship with money and achieve financial independence— to get off the treadmill and live according to one's highest purpose. Henry David Thoreau provided inspiration 150 years ago.— I am convinced by faith and experience

that to maintain one's self on this planet is a pastime, not a hardship if we are willing to live simply and wisely.

In this workshop the participants were interested in diverse approaches to living their dreams. Some had the faith and simplicity of peace pilgrims or Mother Teresa and were soaring and fulfilled. Others were living hand to mouth— some happy, some frustrated, while others were transiting out of careers and seeking ways of serving mother earth.

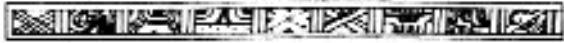
The fundamental principles outlined in the National best selling book, *Your Money or Your Life* can apply to all situations in simplest terms. These are: want what you have, don't want what you don't have, and spend less than you earn. By being conscious of how we spend (take from the earth), we can free ourselves to do the important work needed in 1996. There is really no time to work in jobs that are meaningless and not directly restoring the earth.

There was a good discussion as to applying these strategies in Mexico. The wealthy countries in our region— USA, Canada— consume unsustainable amounts of the earth and can have a general and easier time living simply and having financial freedom. There is much of the wealthy North Americans can learn from Mexico about artfully living— still we all have so much to learn from pre-dominant cultures of our continent.

The Global Living Project research was discussed that is attempting to demonstrate and promote artful living in a context of interspecies equity and equity among the 6 billion humans. Realizing that 85% of the world's people live on \$1000USD/year, while 15% richest live on \$21,000/year with global average of \$4000/year we need to understand that a quantum leap is needed to come into a globally responsible consumption level. In this context where we know the current global average of \$4000USD is completely unsustainable and between 10 & 20 times too consumptive— considering humans now use 40% of the net primary production

(solar hitting a greenleaf) and we are one of an estimated 25,000,000 species— we need to become extremely creative in generating solutions where humans consume a drastically smaller amount of the earth sacred beings.

Once we internalize our place in this web of life— procuring resources within our fair share, cognized of all life— becomes an easy endeavor for those in the wealthy countries.



GREEN CITY

Jeff Westergaard

With the proximity of the gathering to Mexico City many Mexican urban eco-activists were able to attend the whole week, or at least a day or two. As well, the Green City seminar the week before the gathering highlighted environmental issues in Mexico City for a group of 15 participants, and has stimulated the founding of a new Green City network among a core of some 50 environmental groups in the City.

Sponsored by Casa de los Amigos, a Quaker Guesthouse and Service Center (located at Ignacio Mariscal 132 near Metro Revolution in the center of the city), the week long immersion in the environmental struggles of the city opened participants eyes to the challenges as well as the joys of life in one of the largest and most polluted cities on earth. From a quixotic garden project in one of the working poor neighborhoods of Ixtapalapa on the edge of the city, to the underground drainage system running underneath the city center that must pump 24 hours a day to keep the valley from becoming a lake again, and eco-regional activists bravely trying to promote an alternative vision for this paved over valley; we experienced the range of problems, and diversity of solutions proposed to alter the course of urban industrial history in the developing world.

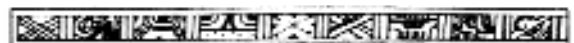
In the neighborhood of Miravalle in Ixtapalapa, we worked with a group known as “Social Ecology Miravalle” for three days on their com-

munity garden project. We were touched the most deeply by the power of a group of families that had the faith to work together to make their small part of the city a little greener, within the context of a radical social ecology vision for the entire city. And the amazing thing is that Mexico City is full of little groups like this, all struggling to make a difference.

It was these kinds of groups who filled up the conference room on November 15 to hear Peter Berg and Allison Lewis speak on ‘Green City San Francisco’. And they have continued to come to monthly meetings since then where we have been discussing the shape that the “Green City Model” might take here in Mexico City.

For the moment, we have agreed to work on a small events calendar that would be distributed by a FAX telephone tree, as well as working on ways to improve communication, interaction, and skills exchange between groups. In our following meetings we will attempt to give ourselves a greater “eco-regional” vision of the Valley of Mexico, and attempt to place the individual and local work of each group within the context of a larger bioregional understanding.

Anyone interested in helping support or learning more about “Green City Mexico” should contact Casa de los Amigos at their email address amigos@laneta.apc.org. There is of course a tremendous need for funding for materials and staff, all help is much appreciated.



REEVALUATION COUNCILING & THE ENVIRONMENT WORKSHOP

Barbara Harmony

This 12 point program, developed by Stephanie Phillips, was reviewed in the workshop.

A 12 Point Program for Counseling on the Environment

1. Deciding to notice everything that is going well regarding the environment, i.e., environmental news and goods.
2. Giving up the expectation that someone else is going to take care of it, and feeling the disappointment that no one has taken care of it..
3. Discharge early memories around scarcity (not enough attention, food, safety, air).
4. Noticing where in your life you're motivated by greed.
5. Notice the pull to client constantly about all the scary things you've heard. Tell your counselor how bad the future could be.
6. Make a decision to contradict hopelessness and despair by noticing where you're hopeful. Tell your counselor your best dreams about how great the future could be.
7. Decide to support any place that anyone is thinking well around the environment. (Do not tell them it is useless, been tried and failed, etc. Be thrilled with all attempts, including your own.)
8. All environmental issues relate to human survival. It is easy for us to get terrified as we learn about all that is going on in our world. Go ahead and learn, but counsel lightly... (eek!)
9. Counsel on our relationship to the land, and our family's histories with the land.
10. Always act on the assumption that we will live.
11. Discharging on our vision of the future from the point of view that the future hasn't happened.
12. Use the Reality Agreement with "I'm com-

pletely connected to everything.

Here are some suggested directions:

1. If I had one wish, it would be to live on a planet like this one.
2. Show your counselor how deeply you care about our world. Ask the question: "How much do you love (the trees, water, wolves, etc.)"?
3. Discharging on how your life would be different if you acted on the reality that you're connected to everything. (Instead of making life decisions on the basis of pseudo-reality.) "How would you relate to the world if you truly acted on the basis of the fact that you were part of the world and it was part of you? (i.e., our bodies and the planet are 70% water.)"
4. Counsel lightly with the direction, "We just might live"!
5. Make a commitment to have an exquisite life. Remember that you are precious (a precious part of the universe.)

Contact:

Route 7, Box 720
Eureka Springs, AR 72631
(501) 253-9431



PERMACULTURE EDUCATION WORKSHOP NATURE'S PRINCIPLES IN DESIGN

Patricia Du Bose Michael
Vice Chancellor of the International
Permaculture Academy
New South Wales Australia

Permaculture Design is a whole system

approach to ecological design decisions based on the close observation of how healthy natural, economic, social, and legal systems work. By selecting appropriate technologies and using natural resources in a sustainable fashion, Permaculture applies fundamental natural laws to conserve resources, generate greater yields, and repair damage.

Permaculture Design itself is a “linking “tool. It links culture with nature by defining how we integrate our human activity into the landscape. What to build, where - and how to build it - as well as how and where to farm, how to cooperate, and what local economic systems work, are powerful design decisions.

Natural systems like sunlight, water, soil, and climate, as well as people, plant and animal life, are all energy events. The task of Permaculture Design is to gather, collect, and conserve as much of that available energy as possible in ways that are effective, and efficient as well as ethical. By applying Permaculture Design Principals we help nature flourish. The result is rich soil, pure water, lavish edible landscapes, and homes that are thoughtful, comfortable, and built to endure. Permaculture also shows us how to use these same principals of Nature to design our neighborhoods, villages, cities, social systems, legal structures, local economics - and even our nutrition - to be healthy, fun, safe,nurturing..... and respectful.

Permaculture Design Education is for people whom the existing institutions of education do not serve. It is a very simple, open, creative education. The entry level is the Basic Design Course that is usually taught in two weeks. It won the Right Livelihood Award (Alternative Nobel Prize) in 1981 because it works on the ground in all different bioregions all over the world. It is a set curriculum that teaches the key design information. The curriculum gives refreshing and positive ways to solve problems; being able to think about the biggest and smallest relationships and understand how and why they affect each other. It gives a basic process for making decisions and creating a plan. It adds much needed information to anyone's' existing education and it is all one really needs to do the

work. Graduation from this course gives a certificate and allows entry into the Academy to do advanced work.

If you want advanced degrees you can develop your own program with a faculty member and work on them. This educational system is designed to do where people live and work, and for people who don't read and write to those with multiple degrees. It can consist of everything from working, to research, to original publishing. The motto of the Academy is “ The Field is Open to the Imagination “. This is true, a person can do adult education in their own place in any area that needs solutions.

If we are going to have the greater culture we want that provides for peace, clean water and food, health, safe comfortable homes, mobility, beauty, fun, great educations, abundant and diverse plant and animal life; than we are all needed as designers and implementors of that culture. If you are interested in pursuing this education, getting training to establish your own academy, or being on the faculty of the academy than contact:

Patricia Michael
8801 Scarlet Circle
Austin Texas, USA 78737
(512) 288-0638 phone and fax
Thank You for the Earth, Patricia

Patricia Du Bose Michael is an experienced social and environmental activists, designer, lecturer and educator who has produced multiple educational events. She has lived, practiced, and taught ecological design that strives to maximize both human and nature's potential. She graduated Magna Cum Laude from Wichita State University, received her Master of Fine Arts from the University of Oklahoma, is a graduate of the New Alchemy Institute (Ecology and Sustainable Design, and Agriculture), and the International Permaculture Academy in New South Wales Australia. She has a wide background in teaching including universities.



WATER WORKSHOP

Barbara Harmon/George Anna Clark

People talked about their water-related interests and concerns. A water committee has met at bioregional gatherings since 1984. In the meetings, all unnatural things done to water are identified. At the 1990 Bioregional Gathering in Maine, the water committee decided to give thanks to the water. During the water committee's meeting in 1992 on the Guadalupe River in Texas Hill Country, after each member provided a four minute water update, it rained for four minutes. Examples of weather controlling from the Himalayas were given. The rain stopped to allow time for lunch while climbing. These seeming miracles remind us of our deep interconnection with water. We are 70% water as is the planet.

Examples were given such as vinegar baking soda, boric acid of safe and natural household products that would not be harmful to the water. A list of those will be available.

How to recognize clean water was described as was stream monitoring and water testing. Water tests to measure fecal coliform are available for \$1.50. Water drop testing that measures the life force of water was described.

The following is a list of the ways water cleans itself: splash; dance with plants and soil;

flow with sun and moon; crawl through rocks, gravel and sand; hide in the earth; warm and expand; chill and contract; dance fast and slow; live with tiniest creature.

Compost toilets as a way to keep waste out of water were discussed. If people are not toilet-trained to water, it prevents the mentality that water can be used as a waste vehicle.

Flow forms that can clean water were described. They would be an excellent bioregional business in Mexico.

Contact persons:

Eureka Springs, Arizona 72632
USA
(501)253-9431

Natural Principles Design
8801 Scarlet Circle
Austin TX 78737
(512) 288-0638

Apartado Postal 1576
Cuernavaca, Morelos 62001
México
Tel/Fax: (73) 180720
esac@laneta.apc.org

Bioregión: Un area geografica de sistemas naturales interconectados: sus cuencas, sus formaciones terrestres, sus especies y sus culturas sustentables ubicadas en el lugar.

Planet Drum

Bioregion: A geographical area of interconnected natural systems and their characteristic watersheds, landforms, species and inhabitory (place-specific and sustainable) cultures.

Planet Drum

TALLER DE AGUA

Barbara Harmon/George Anna Clark

Los asistentes hablaron de sus intereses y preocupaciones respecto al agua.

El comité de agua se ha reunido en los encuentros bioregionales desde 1984. Durante las reuniones se identificaron todas las cosas artificiales que se le están haciendo al agua. Durante el Encuentro Bioregional de 1990 en Main, el comité de agua decidió darle las gracias al agua. Cuando se reunió en 1992 cerca al Rio Guadalupe en Texas Hill Country después de que cada integrante practicó 4 minutos, llovió durante 4 minutos. Se dieron ejemplos del control del clima en los Himalayas. La lluvia paró para dar tiempo para preparar la comida durante el ascenso. Estos milagros nos recuerdan de nuestra interrelación profunda con el agua. Somos 70% agua igual como el planeta.

Se dieron ejemplos (como el vinagre, bicarbonato, ácido bórico) de productos domésticos que son naturales y seguros y no dañan al agua. Una lista de estos estará disponible.

Se habló de cómo reconocer agua limpia y el monitoreo de ríos y pruebas de agua. Las pruebas de agua para medir coliformes fecales están a su disposición por \$1.50 USD. Se describió la prueba de gota de agua para medir la fuerza vital del agua.

Se apuntarán las siguientes maneras por medio de las cuales el agua se limpia a sí misma: por calda, bailando con las plantas y el

suelo; fluyendo entre el sol y la luna; arrastrándose entre las piedras; la grava y el suelo; escondiéndose dentro de la tierra, calentándose y expandiéndose; enfriándose y encogiéndose; bailando rápido y lento; y viviendo con las criaturas más chiquititas.

Se habló de los sanitarios composteros y secos como una manera de evitar que los residuos sólidos se mezclen con el agua. Cuando la gente no usa sanitario húmedo, la letrina seca puede prevenir el uso de los cuerpos de agua como drenaje.

Se describieron formas de limpiar el agua en la que se usa un flujo descendente. Esto podría ser un muy buen negocio biorregional en México.

Contactos:

Barbara Harmony
The Water Center
Rte 7, Box 720
Eureka Springs, AR 72632
(501)253-9431

Natural Principles Design
8801 Scarlet Circle
Austin, TX 78737
(512) 288-0638

George Anna Clark
Apartado Postal 1576
Cuernavaca, Morelos
tel/fax: (73)18-07-20
esac@laneta.apc.org

WATERSHED ORGANIZING WORKSHOP

Organized by Matthew Miller
Recorded by Doug Mason

The group of eight bioregionalists met in the dining hall to share ideas from personal experiences in working with community groups who organize around their own watershed boundaries. We identified WATERSHED (defined) as a unit of land, defined by topographic features such as ridges and divides, that 'sheds' water into a common outlet (lake, river or sea). Watershed is much more in terms of the bio-geo-chemical components and cycles that sustain life and evolutionary processes within our Mother Earth. Watershed also encompasses a human component that includes a rich history of traditional and non-traditional resource uses and cultural practices. Science is just beginning to sort out flowing water systems over the past 20 years or so and out of that inquiry has evolved the river continuum concept. This hypothesis posits "all things are connected" and many scientific disciplines are being integrated to understand the magic of watershed, and therefore, Gaia life processes. Indigenous knowledge has taught this same way of seeing and relating to the various components of where and how we live within our earth biosphere. Peter Berg and Thomas Berry have taught us, non-indigenous consumers and stewards that it is the earth/human relationship that must be brought into harmony through reeducation, experimentation, and re-habitation. Bioregionalism is one central aspect of this reorientation, and watershed organizing is an active step, rather A HUGE LEAP, that each of us can engage in with all species where we live and travel.

To see ourselves in our watershed context, we must "jump scale" in the way we see our surrounding environment, and within that context, how we see ourselves. It is useful to see that watersheds have distinct component parts that connect to form the watershed continuum. These include 1) headwaters, 2) middle reach, and 3) lower reach (estuary and river mouth).

Each of these components has distinct characteristics that carry over to most watersheds. For example, in the higher elevation headwaters, forests feed the streams with leaves, flowers, wood, etc, that enter the hydrologic system and decompose to provide food and nutrition for the myriad of organisms that live in flowing water systems. Eighty-five percent of the total stream miles of a watershed are found in the small rills, creeks and streams that collect water from the forests of the headwater reaches. Here the forest canopies over these narrow drainages and shade the waters from direct sun. Photosynthesis is not a direct source of energy input into the headwater component of the system. As we move downslope into the mid-reach, river channels widen and open up to the sun where aquatic plants grow and die, adding to the diversity of food inputs. Here the waters are warmer than in the headwater reaches, are more turbid (sediment laden), and host a greater diversity of aquatic organisms. In the mid-reach, the gradient or slope of the river is less steep and floodplain terraces develop adjacent to river banks. Here is where agricultural soils attract us humans to plant the seed, tend the plants and produce the food that we, and other animals like to eat. In the middle reach of the watershed continuum, the earth/human relationship becomes more intimate, delicate, and challenging in terms of stewardship and sustainable use.

This same phenomenon carries over into the lower reach component where all that flows through the watershed continuum coalesces. The river channel is widest and deepest here, and deep soil floodplain terraces may extend for miles on either side of the river (unless some engineer has constructed false levees in an attempt to contain temporarily the fury of sediment-rich flood waters). Here also is where biological diversity is greatest within the overall watershed continuum. Where rivers meet the sea, the estuary is the zone of mixing between fresh water that flows from the land above with salt water pushing in from the ocean tides. We all know the intense celebration of life that occurs in the coastal zone (vamos a la playa!)

especially at the river mouth where nutrient-rich waters from the land meet the sea. The watershed continuum often enters into coastal lagoons and then out to open ocean, where water is lifted into clouds by the energy of the sun. The hydrologic cycle brings rain to the land and drives the continuum into eternity.

In summary, the forests feed the streams, the streams feed the rivers and rivers feed the sea. This path of water is the circulatory system of earth life processes, the same as blood flows through our own capillaries and veins. The job of the river is to bring the land to the sea. Rivers, streams and creeks also serve as the fingers of the sea, reaching in and over the land to hug and embrace the terrestrial components of the watersheds of Gaia. Through water, these are the patterns that connect our biosphere.

Within the context of the physical earth/human relationship, traditional and non-traditional uses of land and other natural resources is where we can focus on watershed organizing. Often it is when our use of these resources exceeds some carrying capacity that we take notice of something being out of balance. Cut too many trees in the headwaters and the soil rapidly erodes and travels en masse to the sea. Divert too much water for irrigation, and those downstream are deprived of this life source. Mine and extract too much sand and gravel from the river, and she adjusts her course to erode and consume more of the land down-

stream in an attempt to maintain the balance of gradient and sediment load. Human impacts create imbalances in the watershed that result in environmental problems that prove to anger watershed residents. These problems can affect negatively our quality of life. Organizing can serve to identify these issues that affect a group of humans (and other species) and channel that anger into a positive direction. Once people are talking about common issues, the opportunity for organizing becomes ripe. THE KEY HERE IS RECOGNIZING THAT EVERYONE WITHIN A WATERSHED SYSTEM HAS ONE THING IN COMMON; THAT IS THE HEALTH OF THE STREAMS, RIVERS AND RIPARIAN FORESTS. All other issues fall into place when this is realized. It is an easy task to convince people of different interests, orientations and vocations that clean water and healthy rivers are of mutual interest to everyone. Rivers unite us in all aspects of life, and can bring different people together to work toward the common goal of organizing around our local watershed bioregion. This is not to say that we must wait until the balance is tipped before we organize, but we humans tend to react to issues rather than plan to prevent or mitigate them.

Ideally, a watershed organization ought to evolve out of a sense of stewardship before the shit hits the fan, but this is too often not the case. As watershed issues emerge, it is important to initiate environmental assessments



and biological inventories that serve as baseline data. Baseline information allows us to monitor changes that occur in the future and to pinpoint the cause and effect of various land and natural resource uses. Here is where scientific disciplines and academia can serve a useful role. As an organizer, attract your high school or better yet, university science department to design and implement a rapid environmental assessment of your watershed. There are guides as to the environmental parameters and methodologies available to measure and record baseline data on water quality, habitat composition, biological surveys, etc. Students are often the most enthusiastic about environmental field work. It gets them out of the traditional classroom and exposes them to the real teacher - nature - and involves them in a personal way in their watershed.

Out of the initial environmental assessment, it is possible to design and implement regular monitoring systems that measure change over time. Training of youth is an excellent means in establishing a watershed monitoring network. Win/win situation.

Another step in watershed organizing is to get to know the environmental protection laws and regulations that govern the use of land and other natural resources. Translating those laws into lay terms is important in the reeducation process necessary to activate watershed residents and empower them to become the eyes and ears of the environmental protection laws. Through the structure of an organization, individuals can report violations and help bring justice to unlawful, unsuitable and unsustainable practices.

Developing communication channels is another vital organizing activity. Important channels include neighbor to neighbor, community to community, watershed organization to members and to other community groups. It may not be necessary to involve government agencies in the early stages, but the sooner you are able to involve them and gain their support, the stronger and more credible the watershed organization may become. Another option is to avoid contact with government all together, but in our existing

structures they ought to be included until traditional structures are composted and new strategies evolve to replace them. For now, do what you can to win the support of your politicians, as they are our bioregional neighbors just like the other slime molds and viral disease organisms that reside in our watersheds.

Education and outreach may be the primary focus of your budding watershed organization. Education groups are perceived as benign and non-threatening to existing old boyz networks and power interests. Use the opportunity to spread the word of environmental issues, watershed processes and "services" that natural systems offer to us "consumers." Target the schools, churches (Christian environmental associations are on the move!), community groups, garden clubs and business involved with Rotary and Chamber of Commerce, for example, to get the ball rolling. Soon you will be receiving calls to offer lectures and presentations to other interested groups. Use the radio, newspaper and other media to sensitize the community toward watershed consciousness and activism. Organize special events around Earth Day, World Environment Day, Independence Day, etc. to crank up the vibration one notch at a time. Throw a watershed party and invite elected officials to be judges for childrens contests that link people with nature. The media is sure to come, especially if there is plenty of chips and salsa and lemonade. Make watershed learning FUN for everyone!

A few other ideas emerged in the workshop that are worth mentioning for your consideration. Watershed maps and aerial photographs, including remote sensing imagery from NASA are good ways to bring the watershed perspective home. These maps and images ought to become a part of your watershed office of community center and posted for viewing 24/7. The power of flight to view and experience the watershed from the air is an awesome tool to help local residents fly out of their county or township and land back in their watershed. Air flight can be expensive, but often is the best and quickest way to convert the non-believers to bioregionalism. A couple of options for assistance with

educational overflights include: 1) LightHawk, the wings of conservation (also known as the Environmental Air Force). They are located in San Francisco and work within all the nations of Turtle Island to fly folks over protected areas, clear cut forests, and watersheds. They are currently ripe for assisting community watershed groups by providing planes and pilots - you buy the fuel. Call directory assistance (area code 415) for their phone number, or e-mail to the workshop organizer for contact information. 2) In some states and countries, there are emergency medical air evacuation services. Wings of Hope is the name of an active service in Belize, and they have been willing to assist the Sibun Watershed Association with educational overflights. 3) There is always the defence boyz who love to fly those planes and helicopters above our backyards and favorite get away spots. Maybe they could be convinced to do a bit of community service on behalf of your watershed. Remind them that they benefit too from healthy streams and rivers.

The old folks hold the knowledge and history of the functionings and happenings in the watershed. Make an effort to meet them, interview them, involve them in the watershed organizing process and let them stand as testimony that times are changing, and not for the better concerning watershed health and protection. In the Sibun Watershed example, old timers open our member meetings with statements that remind us what it used to be like to drink from the river safely, and to know the pulses of the river from season to season. Integrate this traditional wisdom into "streaming wisdom" toward an increased watershed consciousness and activism.

In the case of the Sibun Watershed in Belize, we are fortunate enough to have attracted a committed environmental scientist working on his Ph.D. at Jackson State University in Mississippi, USA. Ed Boles is a watershed guru who is designing and publishing an "Atlas of the Sibun River Watershed." This will serve as a watershed users information guide and we intend to distribute one copy to each household in our watershed. Ed is an artist as well as biologist, and is including maps of the geogra-

phy and natural features, land uses and rivers and streams that connect the Sibun Watershed. Also included are illustrations of various habitats that occur in each watershed component, with line drawings of flora and fauna found living there. Copies of the Atlas will be available for purchase in Summer, 1997 through Monkey Bay Wildlife Sanctuary.

In summary, there is much one can do to organize within your watershed boundaries. Workshop participant Patricia Michael offered very creative examples of successful watershed organizing in the Blanco Watershed in the hill country of Texas. We agree that it is a contagious undertaking and you are sure to infect those around you and build a support team that gives a voice to the river and other species living in your watershed. Use the information presented as an ideas guide or menu to action, and then get out and do it! It is very meaningful and rewarding work.

It has been a true pleasure and uplifting experience to be with all of you in Tepoztlan for the Congress. It has taught me that hope exists, inspite of the hurdles to jump and fires to quelch. On behalf of the Sibun Watershed Association (proposed) I hope to invite you all to Belize for a future Bioregional Congress of the Northern Americas. Emmeth and I are going to check in with our Belizean colleagues and see if they think Belize is ready to host a Bioregional Congress.

For further information concerning the Watershed Organizing Workshop, the Sibun Watershed Association in Belize, or how to contact other participants in this workshop, do not hesitate to contact:

Matthew Miller, c/o Monkey Bay Wildlife Sanctuary,

P.O. Box 187, Belmopan, BELIZE,

FAX: country code (501)·823·361

E-mail: mbay pobox.com

SPANISH CLASSES IN THE SHADOW OF IZTACCIHUATL

by David A. Lillie
davey@greens.org

A new identity, volcanoes, a dome, singing, a small town market and 20 bioregionalists all led to a wonderful learning experience at Iztac Ranch, near Amecameca, México. Thanks to the hard work of Tad Montgomery, organizer extraordinaire, many of us learned a lot of Spanish in a short time, using a technique called Sugestopedia. Two weeks of classes preceded the First Bioregional Gathering of “The Americas,” so that we would get a head start on using Spanish during the Gathering.

For me, this worked out perfectly — although a MONTH of classes would have gotten me closer to being able to speak the language without so many smiles and giggles from the local people. Getting to the site of the class was a big adventure for several people. One woman encountered a hostile taxi driver/thief who charged her 400 pesos (about \$50) for the ride from the airport to the bus station, and wouldn't let her out until she paid him. People like me, who were lucky enough to get a taxi voucher inside the airport, only paid 32 pesos for the same ride. Two of the men, telling a taxi driver in Amecameca that they wanted to go to “Iztac” ended up at 12,000 ft on the volcano Iztaccihuatl (The Sleeping Maiden, summit at 5,230 m - 17,160 ft.) in the freezing dark. They quickly figured out this was NOT the right place, and caught the taxi before it turned around and went back to town (at a cost of 200 pesos!). One other woman didn't realize she had arrived at the right town, but fortunately Tad was walking near her bus (on one of our class “assignments” in town) and dragged her off before the bus left.

One by one or in small groups, we all arrived at the beautiful Iztac Ranch at the foot of the sleeping maiden, still being watched over by her lover Popocatepetl (5,465 m - 17,800 ft) in hopes

that someday she will wake up. The ranch is dominated by a large steel, concrete and glass dome, which was the center of our activities during the classes. As we ate our meals, interacted in class, or just relaxed, we could look out the windows and see the snowcapped maiden far above us. Most of us camped out, but a few of us slept on beds in new rooms about 100 yards from the dome. Some had bathrooms and showers, but in order to have a hot shower — a rare commodity — we had to use the large communal bathrooms in the basement of the dome.

The weather was almost uniformly sunny and warm in the daytime, with several days that were so hazy we could barely see the mountains. Due to our high altitude, around 8,500 ft., the nights were always cool, sometimes in the 40's, sometimes well below freezing. Once we woke up to frost on the tents and grass instead of the normal heavy dew. Since the buildings had no heat in them, we would generally start out the days in our long underwear and coats and blankets, taking all of those off by 1 PM or so, and then putting them all back on again after the sun went down.

For those of us who were vegetarians, the meals were great — including a large variety of local fruits and vegetables and typical Mexican food of the area. We had to adjust our North American meal clocks to the Mexican meal plan — Desayuno (breakfast) at 8 AM, Comida (the biggest meal of the day) at 1:30 PM or so, and Cena (a light supper) at 8 PM or so (usually a yummy soup and tortillas).

Our day began with exercises or stretching at 7:30 AM (sometimes), then breakfast, class at 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM, lunch, siesta (or activities in town) until 4:30 PM or so, class again until 7 PM or so, supper at 7:30 PM, then singing, videos, games, etc. until bedtime.

What were the classes like? It's difficult to describe, other than to say it had the most variety and was the most enjoyable language class I have ever taken. From the beginning, the teachers tried to speak only Spanish, making things obvious with pantomiming and pointing and writing on large sheets of paper. The heart of the course is an 8 act play “Somos



Hermanos” (We are brothers/sisters) which was written by one of the teachers. We would get one act of the play at a time — complete with translation and other interesting information about Spanish — which the teacher would read very slowly to us while we just relaxed and classical music played in the background. Then we could ask questions about it and other details might be covered. Then we would get a tape of the act and listen to it again, while reading the text, before we went to sleep and early in the morning.

The next day — or next class time, depending on when we started, we would take turns acting out the different roles in the play, complete with different hats and simple costumes to identify us. This, of course, given our limited Spanish and extroverted natures, was completely hysterical and we often laughed until it hurt. This cycle was repeated throughout the two weeks (for those of us taking the beginning and intermediate classes) until we finished all 8 acts. In between the work on the play, we learned about various aspects of Mexican culture, Spanish grammar, Spanish songs, how names are formed and the names of the various relatives you could have, etc.

Each of us had our own Spanish identity, a name and an occupation, which we chose from lists at the beginning of the class. I was Lorenzo Garcia Mendoza, a famous Singer (cantante). Others were Joaquin - cocinero, Esperanza - campesino, Sergio - mago, Jesus - soldado, Francisco - vagabundo, and so on. We kept the roles for a whole week (or 2), and used them in our conversations (in Spanish, much of the time) even outside the classes. On a few of the days, we would all go to town during the siesta time with a “tarea” (homework). We would have a list of questions to ask of some stranger in town, items with Spanish names to find, try tasting fruits or vegetables we had never seen before, etc. We usually went in groups so it wasn’t so intimidating.

What we found, of course, was that people were invariably happy to help us and intrigued to get to know people from the North better. We usually rode the “peseros” into town, which are wonderful examples of what public transportation should be. They are mostly VW vans, or “combis,” with 2 rear seats, so they can carry at least 8 people — many more when children are included. They each run fixed routes, which cover all the rural areas around Amecameca.

You wait by the side of the road until one comes by, usually within 15 minutes, and hope it isn't already full. You don't pay until just before you get off, or at the end of the route. It used to cost one peso, and thus the name *pesero*. Now it's up to 1.5 pesos, or about 29 cents, much cheaper than the taxis, which run between 15 - 20 pesos to get to or from town. When you want to get a *pesero* from town back to Iztac, you get in and wait until the van is nearly full, and then it leaves.

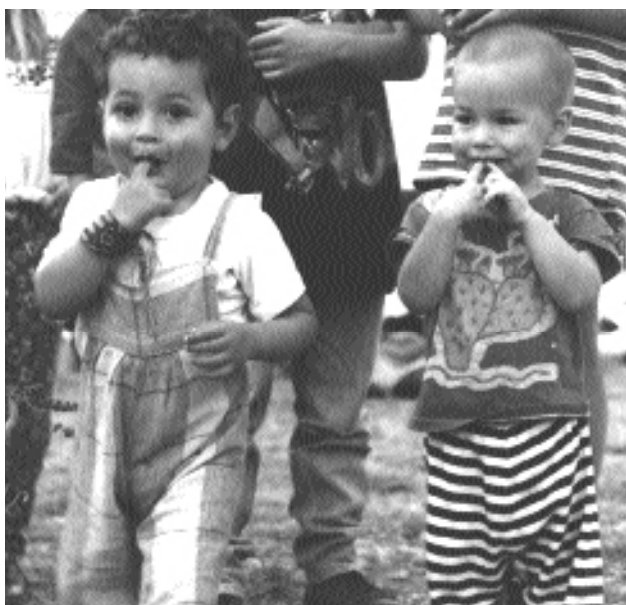
The experienced traveler always carries a book to read or a meditation to practice or a friend to converse with. One of our questions to ask the people in town was "What sights would you recommend I see around Amecameca?" The first response was to visit the Sacromonte church, which sits on the shoulder of a 600 or 700 ft. hill on the edge of town. So we spent another siesta time climbing up to this church,



where we got a beautiful view of the town as well as the two huge volcanoes overlooking it. Asking more questions, we found out that the church had been built on top of an ancient pyramid, as have so many Catholic churches in Mexico, and that there was a tunnel under the church that went to a room with an obsidian ceiling. Tad Montgomery and I went back later and found the tunnel behind the church, largely filled with decaying flowers. I crawled back as far as I could go, but the tunnel had collapsed until the hole was only big enough for a large cat to get through. There definitely was a larger space beyond, as air was blowing out the hole. We also heard that the body that had been entombed in the pyramid had been reburied in the basement of the large church in town.

The other recommendation we had was to visit the volcanoes. Our teachers helped us arrange a large van and driver which drove us up to the Pass of Cortez between the two mountains, and then on a rough dirt road a bit further up Iztaccihuatl. We didn't have a long time to explore, but we managed to hike up to a ridge at 13,000 ft., where we had a great view of both sides of the mountain. Popocatepetl has been erupting and spouting dangerous smoke for over a year now, so we were not able to get closer to him. More unfortunately, the peaks were all clouded over so we didn't get good pictures (good for postcard sales at the tourist shop). Our other entertainment consisted of playing games in Spanish, an evening of song sharing and listening to some members of the (becoming famous) Cielo y Tierra group sing, watching videos with Spanish subtitles and the video "Like Water for Chocolate" in Spanish with no subtitles.

Finally we reached the end of the play and the classes, and with the help of the large van and a friend's small pickup truck, 18 of us and some of our baggage all squeezed in and made the 1.5 hour trip to the Mextitla, Boy Scout camp near Tepoztlán for the Gathering. A symbolic demonstration of how close we had become in two weeks.



REFLECTIONS

Edges

Starhawk

This article develops ideas I spoke about at the final meeting of the Congress.

In ecology, “edge” is the word that describes the place where two ecosystems meet: where the forest meets the meadow or the ocean meets the shore. Edge is the most fertile part of a system. A climax forest will have a limited number of species in its heart. A meadow may support grasses and wildflowers, but little else. But at the edge where they meet, where sun infiltrates the forest, where tree roots infuse the

She
changes
everything
she touches
And everything
she
touches
changes

soil with micorrhizal fungi, a wealth of shrubs, vines, berries and flowers will flourish.

Our recent Bioregional Congress in Mexico was a great example of “edge.”

The North American Bioregionalists encountered the Consejo de Visiones encountered the Rainbow tribes. Each group has its own way of doing things, its own understanding of what is essential, its own style and language and assumptions. What a rich mix! Indigenous healers from remote mountains of Mexico lunched with activists from Manhattan. Dedicated environmentalists from Tepoztlan encountered drum playing Colorado hippies. Tense attempts at consensus were interrupted by conch shells and ceremony. Meals conflicted with meetings.

We humans are often uncomfortable at the edge. We like to know what to expect, and we like things to be run in the ways we think are proper. But if we can move through our discomfort, the edge can be a place of growth and illumination.

When we encounter a system different from our own, our assumptions are called into question. We are forced to identify what they are, and to view them through other eyes. Our ideas are tested. Do they make sense to people whose lives are very different from ours?

For me, the great gift of the Congress was the affirmation that yes, the bioregional vision makes sense, not just to college-educated people from the US or Canada, but to the very people whose lives are most impacted by the globalization of the economy and the decimation of the earth’s habitats.

Ecology is not a luxury, it is the basic ground of survival for people who still live close to the land, and they are well aware of it. Spirituality is not a frill, but a core survival issue for cultures and individuals.

Personally, I wouldn’t trade the diversity we experienced for all the immaculate toilets and on-time meals in the world. I hope we do have another Congress in Mexico. If we can learn to embrace the edge, our movement will flourish.

REFLECCIONES

Orillas

Starhawk

Este ensayo desarrolla ideas que mencioné en la reunión final del Encuentro.

En ecología “la orilla” es la palabra que describe el lugar en donde dos ecosistemas se encuentran: donde el bosque se encuentra con la pradera ó donde el océano se encuentra con la playa. Orilla es la parte mas fértil de un sistema. Un bosque clímax tendrá un número limitado de especies en la parte central. Una puede apoyar los pastos y las flores silvestres, pero nada mas. Sin embargo en la orilla donde se encuentran, ahí donde el sol infiltra el bosque, donde las raíces de los arboles infunden hongos micorrhizos, crecen un tesoro de arbustos, viñas, zarzas, y flores.

Nuestro Encuentro bioregional en Mexico fue un gran ejemplo de “orilla”.

Los bioregionalistas del norte se encontraron con el Consejo de Visiones que a su vez se encontró con las tribus Arcoiris. Cada grupo tiene su propia manera de hacer las cosas, su propia comprensión de lo que es esencial, su propio estilo, lenguaje así como sus propias suposiciones. Que rica mezcla! Curanderos indígenas de las montañas remotas de México

llegaron con activistas de Manhattan. Dedicados ambientalistas de Tepoztlán se encontraron con hippis tamboreros de Colorado. Algunos momentos tensos en torno a la toma de una decisión en consenso fueron interrumpidos por el llamado de la caracola y la llegada de un grupo ceremonial. Las horas de comida a menudo se conflictuaban con las de las reuniones.

Nosotros los seres humanos nos sentimos incómodos en las orillas. Nos gusta saber que esperar y nos gusta saber que las cosas se manejan de la manera que nos parece apropiada.

Pero si somos capaces de atravesar nuestra incomodidad, la orilla puede ser un lugar de cre-

cimiento e iluminación.

Cuando encontramos un sistema diferente del nuestro, nuestras suposiciones son cuestionadas. Nos vemos obligados a identificarlas y a verlas a través de los ojos de los demás. Nuestras ideas están a prueba. Tienen sentido para personas cuya vida es diferente de la nuestra?

Para mi, el gran regalo del Encuentro fue la afirmación de que si la visión bioregional tiene sentido, no solamente para la gente que ha recibido educación universitaria en EU o en Canadá, sino que las personas cuyas vidas están siendo mas afectadas por la globalización de la economía y la destrucción de los ecosistemas de la tierra.

La ecología no es un lujo, es un piso básico para la sobrevivencia de la gente que todavía vive cerca de la tierra y que son conscientes de ello. La espiritualidad no es un accesorio, sino un asunto central para la sobrevivencia de diversas culturas e individuos. Personalmente, yo no cambiaría la diversidad encontrada por escusados inmaculados o precisión en los horarios del Encuentro. Espero que tengamos otro Encuentro en México.

Si podemos aprender a abrazar la orilla, nuestro movimiento florecerá.

Ella
cambia toda
lo que toca
Y todo
lo que toca
cambia

Challenges for Healing the North/South Wound

Virginia Sánchez Navarro
110123.742@compuserve.com

"We never crossed the border,
the bordecrossed us."

Chicano Saying

The stereotype of Northerners as more rational and Southerners as more emotional has justified past abuses by the North. It is time to acknowledge the prejudice that lies behind the historical wound and commit to heal it.

Yes, the South is more connected to the heart and the North to the mind, but we both need to promote the activity of the two sides of the brain in order to hold higher energies. Therefore, the self-righteous mind and the colonized mind need to do their respective work to meet in a terrain that creates mutual growth. Let us learn from each other. In cultural diversity we complement ourselves.

As bioregionalists we honor Earth's natural

borders and want to transcend political borders. With this in mind I would like to address some very important issues for our better understanding.

Since words name our reality and the way we think shapes our lives, the way Northerners and Southerners of the Rio Bravo/Rio Grande use these two words, "American continent," creates conflict.

In strictly geographic terms "continent" refers to a continuous piece of land. In Mexico we are taught in school that mother earth has five continuous pieces of land, that is, five continents: America, Asia, Africa, Europe and Oceania. America is the name of the continuous piece of land that starts in Alaska and ends in Tierra del Fuego.

For the US to call itself "America," reducing the other 30 countries to its backyard, is as much a historical arrogance as for the patriarchal culture to call humanity "Man" or "mankind," subsuming women as their rib. There has been growing awareness over this fact in the past years and the use of humankind and human beings is slowly taking the place of mankind and man.

México's official name is the United States of



Mexico, so US alone for a name would not do. The need to find a name that is not imperialistic and to use it as a political statement remains (for lack of a better term I still use “US,” but I hope we find a better term in the future).

Finally, at the gathering, the idea of different continents within the American continent, i.e. North and South America, became an issue. The American continent was wounded at the Panama Isthmus when the Panama Canal Zone was built. Significantly, this is where US military base trains the armies of Latin America in torture skills at what is called the School of the Americas. The fact that the continuity of America has been severed in Panama by the US for its commercial and security issues is a political matter that US bioregionalists should not ignore.

This inflicted wound has affected migrations of all species, has created a new colonized culture and is responsible for the split in the energetic flow between the north and south poles of the Earth, which does not take place in any of the other continents of Mother Earth. And since species tend to migrate toward the equator, a great degree of biological and cultural diversity is found in the center of the American continent.

Since the North/South wound is epitomized by US/Mexico foreign relations, the healing of this wound will impact the world. Therefore, special attention needs to be paid to achieve progress in the near future.

To address ways in which we can effectively organize, I propose the following questions, to collectively brainstorm on a common strategy.

- How can we stop the Isthmus of Oaxaca from becoming the next Panama Canal?
- How do we stop the growth of México City and help the people — who for the first time in Mexican history were able in 1997 to elect a mayor (1997-2000) and chose to defeat the 69 years old ruling party— make DF a green city?
- How do we stop the US from making México a toxic dumping ground as it is already along the border?
- How do we facilitate the creation of several watershed projects on the two sides of the Rio

Bravo/Rio Grande?

- How do we help bridge the public health concerns of workers on the both sides of the border?
- How do we address financial inequity and public debt in an ecological way?
- How do we stop the export of toxic agricultural products banned for consumption in the US, but produced to be sold in “underdeveloped” countries?
- How do we promote self sufficiency and self-reliance, where local economies have been dismembered by globalization policies?
- How do we promote a drug policy that addresses the issue of consumption and not only of production?
- How do we stop reactionary immigration laws and promote awareness of how California’s agroecology is sustained by over-exploited Mexican labor?
- How do we stop and reverse the militarization of the border? How do we demilitarize our respective governments? How do we dismantle the School of the Americas?
- How do we promote meaningful cultural exchange that encourages mutual respect?
- How do we embrace the native wisdom of this continent? How do we walk towards a global ethical framework, where all First Nations people along with all earth’s keepers can share our ethical codes and begin to build one that includes all?
- How do we support each other and acknowledge our complementary needs?

I have the vision of a critical mass of people from the two sides of El Rio Grande/Bravo, committing to restore that watershed, which has become the ultimate contemporary expression of a political border. This would require coordinated action between people from Colorado, New Mexico, Texas, Baja California, Sonora, Chihuahua, Coahuila, Nuevo León, Tamaulipas.

To heal the North/South wound not only creates a world example, but it also synthesizes the internal quest to balance our left/right brain, yin and yang, male and female. By coming together we become whole again, ecologically and spiri-

DESAFÍOS PARA SANAR LA HERIDA NORTE/SUR

Virginia Sánchez Navarro
110123.742@compuserve.com

"Nunca cruzamos la frontera,
la frontera nos cruzó."

Slogan Chicano

El estereotipo de que los del norte son mas racionales y los del sur somos mas emocionales justifica los abusos del Norte. Ya es tiempo de reconocer el prejuicio detrás de la herida histórica y de comprometernos con sanarla.

Si, el Sur esta mas conectado al corazón y el Norte a la mente, sin embargo ambos necesitamos promover la actividad de los dos lados del cerebro para ser capaces de contener energías mas elevadas. Por lo tanto, la mente autocomplaciente y la mente colonizada necesita hacer su respectiva tarea para ser capaces de encontrarse en un terreno de crecimiento mutuo. Aprendamos unos (as) de los otros (as). En la diversidad cultural nos complementamos.

Como bioregionalistas, honramos las fronteras naturales de la Tierra y pretendemos trascender las fronteras políticas. Con esto en mente, quisiera tratar algunos asuntos importantes para nuestro mejor entendimiento.

Dado que las palabras nombran nuestra realidad y que la manera de pensar conforma nuestras vidas, la manera como los del Norte y los del Sur del Río Bravo usamos estas dos palabras: "Continente Americano", crea conflicto.

En términos geográficos "continente" se refiere a un pedazo de tierra continua, rodeada por mar. En México aprendemos en la escuela que la tierra tiene cinco continentes: América, Asia, África, Europa y Oceanía. América es el nombre de pedazo continuo de tierra que comienza en Alaska y termina en Tierra del

Fuego.

El hecho de los EU. se adjudiquen el nombre de "América", reduciendo a los otros 30 países a su traspatio, es un gesto de arrogancia histórica como cuando la cultura patriarcal nombra a la Humanidad, el "Hombre" reduciendo a las mujeres a su respectiva costilla. En los últimos años ha habido una comprensión creciente de esta arbitrariedad y lentamente "ser humano" va tomando el lugar del "Hombre".

El nombre oficial de México es Los Estados Unidos de México, por lo que EU en si mismo no es basta para satisfacer la necesidad de encontrar un nombre para EU que no sea imperialismo y que podamos usar como postura política. Dada la ausencia de un mejor término, seguiré usando EU. mientras encontramos el termino adecuado.

Finalmente, en el Encuentro de Meztitla, la idea de diversos "continentes" dentro del continente Americano surgió como una suposición cultural entre los hermanos (as) del norte. El continente americano fue herido a lo largo del Istmo de Panamá cuando se construyó la "Zona del Canal de Panamá"

Significativamente, ahí es donde la base militar de EU. entrena a la élite de los ejércitos latinoamericanos en el oficio de la tortura, en lo que se conoce como la Escuela de las Américas. El hecho de que la continuidad continental ha sido rota en Panamá por los intereses comerciales y de "seguridad" es un asunto político que los bioregionalistas de EU no deberían obviar.

Esta herida infligida ha afectado la migración de todas las especies; ha creado una cultura colonizada y es responsable de la ruptura energética entre los polos norte y sur de la Tierra, hecho que no sucede en ningún otro continente del planeta. Es debido a esta particularidad geográfica de América y del hecho de que las especies tienden a migrar hacia el ecuador, que el centro del continente alberga un altísimo grado de diversidad biológica y cultural, así como de flora y fauna endémica.

Dado que la herida Norte/Sur tiene su

máxima expresión en las relaciones exteriores de EU/México,

Sanar esta herida tendría un impacto mundial. Es necesario atender de manera especial esta tarea si pretendemos lograr resultados en un futuro cercano.

Con respecto al tema de cómo organizarnos de manera efectiva, propongo las siguientes preguntas para una primera lluvia de ideas entorno a una estrategia común.

Cómo podemos impedir que el Istmo de Oaxaca se convierta en el próximo Canal de Panamá?

Cómo nos comprometemos juntos a detener el crecimiento del D.F. y apoyamos a la gente, -que por primera vez en la Historia mexicana fuimos capaces de elegir al regente capitalino (1997-2000) y de derrotar a 69 años de tiranía partidaria-, y hacemos del D.F. un ciudad verde?

Cómo impedimos que EU siga haciendo de México su basurero tóxico?

Cómo facilitamos la creación de diversos proyectos de rescate de cuencas en ambos lados del Río Bravo?

Cómo enlazar las demandas de salud pública de los trabajadores de ambos lados de la frontera?

Cómo enfrentamos la disparidad financiera y las deudas pública?

Cómo detenemos la exportación de agroquímicos prohibidos para el consumo en EU, pero producidos para ser vendidos en los países "subdesarrollados"?

Cómo promovemos autosuficiencia y autoconfianza en las economías que han sido desarticuladas por la globalización?

Cómo promovemos una política sobre drogas que atienda el asunto del consumo y no solo el de la producción?

Cómo impedimos las leyes migratorias inhumanas y promovemos la conciencia de como la agroeconomía de California esta basada en la sobre-explotación a la mano de obra mexicana?

Cómo detenemos y revertimos la militarización de nuestra frontera común? como desmilitarizar nuestros gobiernos? Cómo des-

mantelar la Escuela de las Américas?

Cómo promover intercambio cultural significativo que estimule el respeto mutuo?

Cómo abrazar la sabiduría nativa a este continente? Cómo avanzar hacia una ética global, en la que los pueblos de las Naciones originales así como los guardianes de la Tierra, podamos compartir nuestros códigos de ética para construir uno que los incluya a todos?

Cómo nos apoyamos unos a otros y reconocemos nuestras necesidades complementarias?

Tengo la visión de una masa crítica de personas de ambos lados del Río Bravo (expresión contemporánea por excelencia de frontera política) comprometida con la restauración de la cuenca. Lo que implicaría la acción coordinada de la gente de Colorado, Nuevo México, Texas, Baja California, Sonora, Chihuahua, Coahuila, Nuevo León y Tamaulipas.

Sanar la herida Norte/Sur en las relaciones EU/México no solo crea un ejemplo mundial, sino resume la búsqueda interior del equilibrio entre nuestro hemisferio derecho e izquierdo; nuestro aspecto yin y yang; nuestra parte femenina y masculina. Lograr este balance integra nuestras partes y eleva nuestra conciencia en lo ecológico y en lo espiritual.



REMEMBERING MEZTITLA

by Beatrice Briggs

Once, long ago, at a time when all the creatures of the earth were in great danger, the people of the eagle came together with the people of the condor in the land of the people of the queztal. Compared to the huge human population of the planet in those days, the pilgrims were few in number - only a thousand or so. Somehow, those inspired, confused, intrepid few - our ancestors- found their way to the ceremonial village at Meztitla. And there for seven days and nights, they prayed for all their relations and for the sacred places from which they came.

The pilgrims arrived in the middle of November, when the casahuates were in bloom. Some of them came from across the oceans - from Europe, Israel, Australia, Japan. Others came from the north, following the seasonal migration routes of the butterflies and songbirds. Still others came from the rainforests, mountains, grasslands and coastal regions of the south. And, of course, many came from the four directions of Mexico.

From Tepoztlán, follow the signs of the turtle

To reach Meztitla, all the travelers had to pass through Tepoztlán, a municipality which was in the second year of popular revolt against the powerful economic and political forces of that dark era. Past the barrier of rocks and barbed wire erected at the entrance to the town. Past the shops with the slogan "No al club de golf" painted on the exterior walls (for it was the threat of a luxury golf course development that had caused the Tepoztecos to rise up in defense of their land and traditional lifeways.) Past the zócalo (main square) and mercado (market), where local residents and tourists exchanged goods and gossip. Past the fuschia, red, and orange bougainvillea blossoms, cascading with equal brilliance over the weekend estates of the rich, and the simple homes of the poor.

Down the narrow roads they came, bumping

along the cobblestones, following hand-painted wooden signs bearing the image of a turtle and an arrow pointing the way. The turtle was, then as now, a symbol of Turtle Island, the continent on which we live. Back then, most people had forgotten this ancient name, and failed to perceive the curvature of the land under their feet as the fragile carapace of a living creature. But somehow, the image of the turtle retained sufficient power to call her people together.

From scout camp to ceremonial village

In those days, Meztitla was a scout camp, 80 acres of trees and open fields, spread out under the volcanic cliffs of the Tepozteco mountains. The "amenities" consisted of a small cluster of administration buildings, three toilet/shower areas, a swimming pool, kitchen and dining pavilion, several small picnic shelters, a large stone amphitheater with a firepit and a semi-circle of 14 empty flagpoles. The Mexican scouts, dressed in their navy blue shorts, knee socks, grey shirts and tidy neckerchiefs, had been cleared out to make way for this new band of campers, whose widely varying dress codes signaled their disparate allegiances.

Some who came to Meztitla wore the feathers and fabrics of their indigenous heritage: mexica, aztec, maya, dineh. Some dressed entirely in white all the time, while others wore white, often accented with red sashes or headbands, only for ceremonies. Many wore the trans-national "uniform" of t-shirts and jeans. And many were fashion anarchists, wearing the colorful garb of the hippie/rainbow tribe. The campesinos of Tepoztlán were recognizable by their white shirts, dark pants and straw sombreros.

Out of battered vans and campers, buses, cars and taxis poured the arrivals at Meztitla. (A few prophets of the ecozoic era came on foot or bicycle, and to them we pay special homage.) Their backpacks, duffle bags and instrument cases littered the ground around the registration tables, where they paid their fees (or made an argument for not paying) and received their wooden turtle medallions, just like the ones we wear at our gatherings today.

Within a few days the pilgrims transformed

the conventional functionality of the scout camp into a crude prototype of the permanent ceremonial village that Meztitla has since become. Flags in seven colors of the rainbow were hung on the 14 flagpoles. Water purification tanks and waste recycling centers were strategically located. Signs were hung marking the areas for health care, eating, children, sweatlodges, parking and other activities. Unfortunately, most of the signs were too small, or in the wrong places, and some things that needed signs had no identification at all, so people stumbled around in confusion and frustration. Of course, this problem was easily remedied at subsequent gatherings, and ever since that time, the site mapping and signage teams have been given special importance.

Trouble with time

Time was another source of confusion and frustration. The only things that happened “on time” were the rising and setting of the sun, moon and stars. The ceremonies synchronized to those celestial events occurred as scheduled, but almost everything else simply happened when it happened, or not at all. You must remember that back in those days, many people relied on clocks, watches, and appointment books to know when and where they were supposed to be. This system, based on the now obsolete Gregorian calendar, was quite functional in those parts of the world where the imperatives of the corporate/industrial system still dominated. People who arrived at Meztitla wanting to accomplish certain objectives naturally kept their eyes on the clock, fearing that time would slip away, or be in such short supply that they would not be able to do what they had planned.

Another group at Meztitla back in “1996” were experimenting with what they called 13:20 time. This approach, based on the ancient Mayan calendar, is much closer to the way we calculate time today. More respectful of the cosmic rhythms, it sees time as an evolutionary spiral which humans ride like a wave, occasionally taking transformational leaps.

Anyway, you can imagine how difficult it was back then to reconcile these conflicting expectations and experiences of time. Now we require

those arriving at our ceremonial villages with watches and alarm clocks to leave them at the registration desk. We ask them to listen for the sound of the conch and drums to know when to come to ceremonial circles and to rely on the growling of their stomachs, the itch in their loins, the curiosity in their brains, or the fatigue in their bones to know what to do, and when.

What shall we call it?

To tell the truth, there were many sources of confusion at Meztitla, some as deeply hidden as the springs on the rocky hillsides above the camp. Some say the confusion started with the very words used to call people together. You see, that first coming together was organized by two groups, one from the north and one from the south. The northerners, most of whom were English speaking, had the habit of calling their events “gatherings,” although that too was problematic, as we shall soon see. Anyway, “gathering” translates as “encuentro” in Spanish. The people from the south where used to calling their events “consejos,” which is “council” in English. So when the invitation to Meztitla was written, the English title read “First Bioregional GATHERING of the Americas,” while the Spanish one said “Premier CONSEJO bioregional de las Americas.” (emphasis added) Some people who spoke both languages were disconcerted by this difference, and wondered if finding a common word might make coming together easier. Of course, they were right. By the next time these groups made camp together, they called the event “council” in English and “consejo” in Spanish, because those words best capture the spirit and intent of the gatherings/encuentros.

Allies or enemies?

If we continue sweeping the linguistic minefield, however, we discover an even more explosive source of conflict embedded in the word “gathering.” In those days, “gathering” was the term was used to name the get-togethers of two separate tribes, the “rainbows” and the “bioregionalists.” From the point of view of the dominant culture of the late twentieth century, these two groups were almost indistinguish-

able from one another. Compared to the “mainstream,” both were “alternative,” meaning, they were seeking new ways - or trying to recover old ways- of living sustainably on the planet. But, like marginalized people in every epoch, the rainbows and the bioregionalists tended to attack one another instead of affirming their common cause and pooling their respective strengths in defense of the earth.

And what were the differences in doctrine and practice that almost prevented the rainbows and the bioregionalists from working together ? Well, the rainbows had a tradition of not charging anyone to attend their gatherings, covering expenses by passing a “magic hat,” into which people put what they could afford. They staged their annual events in national forests or other public land, which helped to minimize costs and make room for all. As a consequence, their gatherings were very large, (20-30,000 people) and very diverse. During the approximately 25 years BM (before Meztitla) that these rainbow gatherings had been occurring, crews of volunteers had become skilled at setting up camps in places with no pre-existing infrastructure, cooking for the multitudes, and maintaining order and security - without violating the anarchistic principles on which “the rainbow” was based.

In contrast, bioregional gatherings of those days tended to be much smaller, seldom more than a few hundred people. The camps were held in locations like Meztitla, where basic facilities for camping were already in place. To defray the costs (which included rental of the camp, as well as food and other expenses), each person was charged a fee. Of course, in order to increase economic and cultural diversity, some financial subsidies were provided, but, in general, the participants in bioregional gatherings shared equally in the cost of mounting them. These events always included workshops about a wide range of topics related to re-inhabiting the bioregions of the earth and plenaries, large group meetings where manifestos and policy statements relating to the significant environmental, political, economic and cultural issues of the day were debated and, when possible, endorsed by consensus. Through their workshops and plenaries, the bioregionalists developed the practices of peer education and self-

governance that we still use today.

Although it is easy for us to see how much the rainbows and the bioregionalists had in common and how powerful they became once they learned to work together, we must try to understand some of the negative stereotypes by which each group was characterized back then.

The bioregionalists were accused of being elitist (because they charged a registration fee and denied entrance to those who could not pay or who had not arranged in advance for financial aid), anal (because they set times for activities such as workshops and expected them to be honored), heady (because they took ideas seriously, often writing or giving lectures about them), and provincial (because they focused on local action).

The rainbows were vilified as being anti-ecological (because of the negative effects their large gatherings were thought to have on the ecosystems in which they were held), drug-dependent (because marijuana and other then-illegal substances were freely used at their events), parasitical (because so many of them contributed so little financially), and hedonistic (because “hanging out” - rather than “work” - was a dominant feature of rainbow life.) The gypsies among the rainbow tribe were subject to special condemnation because, being nomadic, they violated a central tenet of bioregionalism, namely, allegiance to a particular place.

A surfeit of drumming

A further polarizing element in this chaotic event was the drumming. Night and day, the drummers played. Some people loved it, dancing ecstatically to the pulsating rhythms. Some ignored the drums, or managed to incorporate them easily into their experience of Meztitla and then missed the sounds when the week was over.. Others suffered from deprivation of sleep, bird song, and silence. Representatives of children, elders, neighbors, and the non-human species asked the drummers to respect their need for some quiet - to no avail. Because of the location of the site, right next to a mountain, and the large number of people camping in every direction, there was no place in which the drummers could play without disturbing someone.

What were the drums telling people back then? Why could they not be silenced? Some said it was because the drummers were “rainbows,” meaning anarchists who refused to respect outside authority, who came to do their own thing, entered without paying, never attended the morning circles and otherwise disregarded the needs and interests of the larger community. Others opined that the ceaseless drumming resulted from a long-standing lack of consensus among the organizers themselves about this issue. As it happened, the most persistent drummers were not “outsiders,” but rather members of their own circle. The historically-minded pointed out that a mere ten or twenty years before, this situation would never have arisen because then there were many fewer drummers. But by the time of the Meztitla gathering, drumming was experiencing a renaissance. Not only were there more drummers, but there were more beginners. Playing softly was not yet in their repertoire. Finally, the more metaphysically inclined characterized the insistent presence of the drummers as a wake up call from mother earth, demanding a new kind of attention.

Whatever the cause, the solution to the problem evolved over time. Now, upon arrival, all drummers are informed of the existence of the Drummers Council and are encouraged to join in it. This group sets camp policy about drumming - when, where, how long, how loud, how many drummers, etc. The council sponsors drumming workshops in which more experienced musicians share skills and knowledge with other players. A representative of the Drummers Council attends the daily organizing meetings to help solve any problems that arise. I guess one could say that those noisy drummers showed us the importance of creating clear lines of communication among the various groups in the camp and the need for mutual respect and consideration. Now people are once again beginning to share the belief of the native people of this continent that the drum is the creator’s favorite instrument.

Circles within Circles

Speaking of councils, one of the great organizational failures of Meztitla was that the seven,

originally planned councils (health, ecology, traditions, spirituality, art and culture, youth and children) were not convened in an orderly manner early in the week. This made it hard for people to meet those whose interests most closely matched their own and contributed to the general lack of coherence. Now we know how crucial it is for those groups - and the others that have emerged since then - to have space and time to meet at the very beginning of the event. Each council sponsors its own series of workshops, most of which are planned in advance, and takes responsibility for posting schedules, preparing locations and fostering a sense of community among those who are drawn to that circle.

The gathering at Meztitla also suffered from the absence of clans. The organizing committee clearly intended to follow the precedent established at previous bioregional events of assigning each participant to a clan. These small groups were to have had the same function clans have at our gatherings today, that is, they were supposed to meet daily to provide a base of emotional support for its members and also to function as work teams, assigned to tasks around the camp. Unfortunately, instead of following the time-tested methods of assigning people to clans by a random selection, the local committee tried to group people according to the Dreamspell, a complex revisioning of time, based on the Mayan calendar. It was a bold and interesting concept, but the process of figuring out each person’s Dreamspell clan was so cumbersome and time-consuming that many never received their assignment and the whole system collapsed. Those who had had their doubts about the wisdom of using the Dreamspell to form clans regretted not having spoken out more forcefully during the planning process. At least the experience proved once and for all that interest in the Dreamspell and other esoteric material should be channeled into workshops, and that clans should be assigned some simpler way. Today most people find their clan by drawing an animal name out of a hat at the registration desk. The other alternative is to join a “guild.” The guilds have specialized work assignments, such as facilitation, translation, recycling, water, and other essential services.

The guilds meet daily at the same time as the clans and provide the same emotional support for their members. But instead of rotating jobs each day, they work only in their chosen specialty. This assures that the key jobs get done by people functioning as a team.

Welcome home?

Registration was another area where the failures of Meztitla proved to be instructive to future generations. Back then, our ancestors did not realize that to cope with the endless flux of arrivals, departures, complaints, questions and problems that accompany large, international gatherings, the welcome area needs to function twelve to fourteen hours a day, every day. Nor did they know that in addition to having people at the desk who speak English and Spanish, that they also needed people who speak Rainbow. Now that we make a practice of having Rainbow-speakers at the registration table, we get better cooperation from who arrive expecting a Rainbow gathering. Meztitla also forced our ancestors to grapple with the difficult issues of what to do with those who arrive without money (which was more crucial then than it is now) or who do not understand the norms of the ceremonial village.

Of course, thanks to the lessons learned at Meztitla, we now have a much better system of orientation for everyone who comes to our encampments. We now know better how to balance the need to give people time to settle into a strange situation against the pressure to “get started” with the program. We keep improving our delivery of the bioregional message, so people remember why they came. For example, nowadays our opening ceremony always ends in the formation of a human map of “las Américas.” The large group then forms smaller circles, based on geography, so participants can meet others from their region. Elders from each region participate in the discussion, which includes planning for the cultural presentations which take place later in the week.

Another thing we have learned since Meztitla is that when it comes to conveying the basics about bioregionalism, music, humor, costumes and drama are far more effective than talking heads. People who would never sit still for hours

of lectures, flock to see the “keynote” theater piece performed by a talented troupe of young people. The piece is presented several times during the event, including a special variation for the youngest children. The songs are repeated during morning circles, in the food lines and at other spontaneous moments, so the imprint is deep and lasting. Anyone who wants to delve deeper into discussions about the bioregional movement can attend workshops designed for that purpose.

Nowadays, on the morning of second day, without fail, the councils meet. Each one has a team of translators and facilitators assigned to help the group members get to know one another and decide what workshops the council will sponsor and in what other ways the group wishes to relate to life in the ceremonial village. That afternoon a plenary is held during which each council announces its intentions for the week. Bulletin boards around the camp keep people informed of the councils’ offerings, schedule changes and other announcements. People still get lost, confused and frustrated trying to keep up with everything that is going on, but between the regional circles, the councils and the clans, they have a firmer base to stand on than people did back in Meztitla in 1996.

An omnicentric universe

That first gathering in Mexico also demonstrated what physicists had been saying for years: we live in an omnicentric universe. A swirling, constantly evolving miracle in which the center is now where and everywhere. Even for bioregionalists, for whom decentralization is an article of faith, living this reality can be disorienting. We have gotten better at strengthening the nodes, meaning the councils, clans, guilds and other sub-groups, and snack bars, campfires, counseling stations, silent zones and coffee wagons where people can go to regain their equilibrium, but it is still a dance. The dance of the individual and the group. The dance of the control freaks and the anarchists. The dance of the first-timers and the old-timers. The dance of the young and the gray-hairs. The potential divisions are many. The dance is one.

MIRACLE IN THE MOUNTAINS

Can a camp-out in central México remake North-South relations?

by Alice Klein

TEPOZTLÁN, México - Winter's bite has become a mere concept here, where poinsettias bloom outdoors and the sweet forest shade cools the sun's enfolding warmth. Surrounding this dappled haven just outside the Mexican village of Tepoztlán, ragged flat-topped mountains flash their silent messages, lava-red against the cloudless blue sky.

Which is lucky, because I'm living outdoors for the week.

There are around 700 of us - nobody knows exactly how many because registration is already challenged beyond recovery - for an event that is so much on the crossroads that it has multiple identities. It's the seventh North American bioregional congress, the sixth Mexican consejo de visiones and the first-ever bioregional gathering of the Americas.

Too simplistic

"We are creating a new human presence in the Americas," says the brochure. "Grounded in the natural world, this new culture envisions a future that is both ecologically sustainable and socially just."

I've come to see how these watershed-lovers from two continents will ply their own free trade in this tent village of gringos, latinos and indigenous people of all ages and all cultural hues. And by a gift of fate, they are meeting on a certifiable power spot. Tepoztlán, in Zapata's home state of Morelos, is now the site of one of the most dramatic community-based ecological success stories on the continent.

But this meeting of many ancestries and age groups is placing a lot of distracting new questions on the table.

It doesn't take long to notice the ceremonial

fires and drumming circles. And it doesn't take long to get the sense that the experiential and the intellectual are going to find themselves in a tug-of-war.

By day two, I've sat through an endless agenda-setting process and it's painfully obvious that we, as a group, are organizationally impaired. Ritual and self-expression outrank organizational and intellectual content by about 10 to one.

It's too simplistic to call it a North-South thing. The laid-back of both cultures are all happy because the vibe is great, the do-it-yourself religion and make-it-yourself music are all working. Healing opportunities abound - yoga, local tinctures, massage, traditional energy work, sweat lodge, at your service.

But many of the movement professionals and students who came from the U.S. and Canada are counting on the kind of structured, bioregional teaching that this infrastructure can't possibly deliver. And we're running on tropical time.

Mexican feminist and site committee member Virginia Sanchez puts it this way. "We Mexicans gather in a more celebratory mood. The North Americans have more experience in structure. We come from the healers and have good contacts with those rescuing traditions. Together we need to be striking the balance between schedules and people's rhythms. But this is the work that brings us together."

Or does it? Even now, weeks later, the faxes and e-mail are still flying, poetically taking sides on the significance and usefulness of this or any future intercontinental gathering.

One thing about camping - it's a great equalizer, especially in nice weather. It's about as far from the money economy as a week can take you. I think that's why camping and intercultural politics make good bedfellows. But it does raise other fundamental issues - like where do you stand on all-night drumming, practically and metaphysically speaking?

But I haven't tuned in to all this yet. I've just

arrived at this rolling camp owned by the Boy Scouts, and what I'm most keenly aware of is how much there is to carry when you bring your son and your camping gear to a social experiment far from home.

This wooded, grassy encampment looks huge, as we struggle past tables and teepees toward some distant tents. Suddenly these youths - they look like kids you'd see on the streets of México City, there's not a whiff of counterculture about them - just grab our bags and start walking. "Gracias," I say, confused.

Street Gang

The next day I learn they're former street gang members from eight Mexican states who are here to learn about place-based ecology. In return for the education, they're working security.

Bioregionalism is one of the very few isms I'm not allergic to - at least not yet. Its saving syllable, I think, is bio - life - which is so huge and undefinable that it defies containment even from its sister syllables. Combined with region, the word demands recognition of the intimate and infinite connection between land forms and the living.

Using this idea-rich perspective, bioregionalists concern themselves not only with the preservation of the wild, endless diversity of nature but also with creating culture that can take the practice of place into everyday life. It's this wide focus, which includes trying to understand how to be human and nonmurderous, that makes for a refreshing sense of politics.

And we're here to learn by doing. The intent of this congregation, like the ones that have been held biannually in North America since 1984 - this one is the largest ever - is to create, for the space of a week, a ceremonial village.

That means honing the skills needed to actually facilitate participatory and nonhierarchical activity.

But this conference seems to suggest that more practice is needed. There are 96 workshops scheduled for everything from gypsy the-

atre, watershed mapping and ecological waste management to the creation of an all-species curriculum.

But I'm cranky sitting here on the ground, though it's soft and very dry, still warm but out of the sun, under the open big top. Trained facilitators and translators are working hard to keep this main-circle meeting flowing. Women who have founded a local recycling organization explain their work.

Guatemalan union leaders talk about what peace might mean after three decades of war. A healer and specialist in local herbal medicine stands at the front, tiny and very old. Hands clasped behind her back, she invites anyone interested to join her for a walk.

Karmic Thing

But finding out when and where anything happens is just too hard. It's more a karmic than an intentional experience. Of course, that leaves room for lots of magic.

But right now I feel trapped. This is what keeps happening to me during these long plenary sessions that seem to fill so much time here. If I leave, I won't know what's going on. If I stay, instead of engaging in learning, I will have to listen to more announcements.

Facilitators take heed. Too much oral information - in two languages - is actually kidnapping the conference energy. Who would think disempowerment could result from such good intentions?

The written word and a communication structure could do a lot for this ceremonial village. Is this ancient history repeating itself?

The Boy Scout camp where all this is unfolding is just a donkey stroll from the free, constitutional and popular municipality of Tepoztlán - a cosmopolitan village where traditional values have been at home for thousands of years.

Only an hour from México City, this town at the foot of a steep mountain temple to Tepozteco, the god of the wind, has carried on

one of the most exceptional ecological actions on the continent.

The town's unfinished odyssey started with the struggle to prevent an international developer with state government backing from building a luxury golf course and resort on water-poor communal land long held sacred by native Tepoztecos.

Just over a year ago, the mayor left town when the townspeople flocked to the central square after hearing that he was planning to sign the documents to OK the deal. Since then, using nonviolent resistance, the golf club opposition has held off the security forces sent against them.

The town has been cut off from federal assistance for more than a year. In response, the free municipality conducted its own local elections based on ancestral tradition. Merchants and tradespeople are paying taxes to this new council, but most public services are staffed by volunteers from the community.

Defended Earth

"This is the result of organized, democratic opposition to neo-liberalism," says one town rep. "We learned that the town can govern itself with our own representatives, without repressive institutions. We believe that defending the earth is everyone's responsibility."

(Recent negotiations have guaranteed that the golf course will never be built.)

Being in Tepoztlán is the miracle of this big sleepover.

It started as the vision of a wiry, rainbow-capped Mexican ambassador of the avant garde, Alberto Ruz, who first attended the biannual bioregional congress in 1988 and started bringing his interesting friends. In 1990 they started a Mexican bioregional sibling called the Guardians of the Earth Vision Council, which has been holding its own yearly gatherings ever since.

Ruz and a number of other key local organizers live in an alternative community called Huehuecoyotle, tucked into the mountains just up the road. In the 70s, he and his community-

to-be toured the globe as a guerrilla theatre group.

He is still very close to his inner gypsy.

Ruz dreamed of hosting this campground communion long before Tepoztlán got national attention for its golf club rebellion. If synchronicity is the fates' way of affirming a good direction, then bioregionalists bumped into a big yes from on high.

But there are aspects of Ruz's vision that are ringing alarm bells for the movement's old guard. It's his fascination with putting their cerebral strength in touch with the high-vibing Rainbow spirit. (The North American Rainbow gatherings have been taking place for 25 years and attract upwards of 20,000 full- and part-time hippies.)

"I learned many of the things I brought here," he says. "The bioregional movement holds the most advanced forms of conceptualization of what an ecological society should be, but the Rainbows have 25 years of direct experience of how to do it.

"This gathering is blending the best of the bioregional and the best of the indigenous, creating a mix of the best of emerging cultures - not in Europe, not in the States, but here, in a mestizo culture."

Ruz's most far-out achievement is on the last night - a pipe ceremony uniting the diversity of groups, cultures, ages and bioregions gathered here and honouring the land and all the living in Tepoztlán. This ecumenical melange was conducted by sacred pipe holders from 14 different traditions - some very old, some very new.

For the ritual finale, author and witchcraft revivalist Starhawk leads a wiccan spiral dance. Attendance is way up from those long meetings during the day. And yes, the moon is full.

But other movement leaders greet the Rainbow presence and influence with as much enthusiasm as canoeists greeting a head wind. To some, the tribal celebration and ritual of this gathering have spent the political force of the project.

The most high-profile critic is a 16-year veteran and one of the founding organizers, David Haenke, an intense Ozark mountain man with a

split comedic personality.

It's the last morning and Haenke's brow is knitted. He's absorbed with getting ready for the upcoming plenary. But this is a movement that makes kindness part of its process, and when it comes time for him to speak, Haenke ends up telling a long and ambiguous story about White Buffalo Woman. In private, he is more to the point. He thinks this type of event is eroding the movement's essential nature.

"Bioregionalism needs town councils, not self-appointed luminaries," he says. "We didn't elect the people who filled so much of our time. There was too much deference to traditions that don't come out of this movement. I truly believe this was a wonderful event. The problem was calling it a bioregional congress. It was a Rainbow thing, a gypsy thing, only in a small part bioregional."

It's not just Haenke. There is a subtext here of resistance to the gravitational pull of the metaphysical on a movement that's trying to found new sciences.

Gatherings Boycotted

San Francisco bioregional theorist Peter Berg amplifies, "These gatherings are being boycotted by a certain number of first- and second-wave bioregionalists because they think there's some woo-woo, some trance-dance, some wacked-out quality to this that doesn't go anywhere."

But Berg thinks there is a historic process going on here. The first wave of bioregionalists were cultural rebels, but over time what he calls a professional honing took place through the creation of new disciplines like renewable energy design, ecological city design and the architecture of natural systems.

"And now there's a third group," he says. "And that is students, the 20- and 30-year-olds who are not only learning this from their parents, from alternative cultural sources, but in school. I believe they will mainstream this movement - this all-night drumming, Mayan calendar, organic food, cultural diversity, decentralist government movement."

Crosscurrents abound. Now that the gather-

ing is almost over, all these crosscultural thinkers, doers, questers and dancers are trying to figure it out. But nobody thinks a resolution simply to hold another congress in two years' time - a movement tradition since 1984 - is going to be the most contentious point of the entire week. When Toronto's bioregional congress host and former Journal Of Wild Culture founder Whitney Smith presents this simple resolution, it is blocked by one vote, enough in this consensus-ruled meeting to court defeat.

The final session tailspins into a facilitation nightmare. At the same time, it's absurdly touching. In the background, buses are leaving, and people are packing up their stuff and saying goodbye to new and old friends. And under the main tent, nobody knows what's happening.

Suddenly, a parade of about 20 men, women and children, rekindling ancient Aztec tradition, arrives plumed and robed in amazing feathers and snakeskins to sing a song of thanks.

Magic Cue

The spirit of dissent melts into a hand-holding circle. Those who favour a gathering are asked to step into the centre of the circle. They are the committee charged with working on future plans.

But as is the case with any movement, the real drama is in where the people stand whose energy actually makes it all happen. The gathering gets a vote of confidence from the large group who step into the centre to commit to a next time. But there are some key people who are conspicuous by their absence.

For weeks, there is nothing in the e-mail that makes me feel that this experiment, whose failings are as educational as its strengths, will revive. So when I got word last week that two key movement matriarchs - one from the North and one from the South - made it a New Year's resolution to work together on the next gathering - yes, in two years - I couldn't suppress a smile.

Perhaps they'll take a cue from the magic of Tepoztlán and hold the next gathering at another bioregional hot spot. Chiapas in 98, anyone?

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ENCUENTRO: BIOREGIONALISTS DISCOVER AMERIKUA

by Antonio Lopez
eltiki@swcp.com

Last Fall, under a cool Mexican sky illuminated by a full moon, Venus and other radiating, moving objects, a chavo with raven, Sid Vicious hair plugged his guitar into an old tube amp. A full band behind him— bass, tamburas, drum kit and rhythm guitar— followed closely behind, jacking into the electronic grid.

An eclectic group of bioregional activists— urban gang youth from Mexico City, Aztec dancers, rainbow gypsies, Canadian map makers, radical ferries, cultural anthropologists and other visitors from beyond— danced ecstatically around a large bonfire, well past midnight.

As the celebration moved up several energetic notches, dissonant jazz beats, punky guitar and funky bass rifts echoed through the valley of Quetzalcoatl's birthplace. From the far end of the lava stone amphitheater, an Earthen colored grandmother in a traditional white huipil entered the circle. Her gray hair tied back in a robust braid, the camp's indigenous grandmother-dynamo, known as Abuelita, waved her arms, calling for silence.

The band stopped, along with the hundred plus revelers. Addressing the crowd, who had just completed a grueling week of councils, endless meetings and infinite networking, Abuelita commanded total respect, and total silence. With a stern, lecturing voice, she stated: "The full moon demands the quiet reverence and celebration of women. The music is too loud, and out of place. The women must gather."

Murmurs and cries of desperation leaked from the crowd. No one wanted the party to end. Leslie, a towering, skeletal translator with a Guatemalan box hat, repeated the statement for the English speakers in the group— in Spanish. A roar of laughter erupted from the crowd. It was his first mental error after over a hundred straight hours of translating. Abuelita stomped

off, convinced she was being mocked by the chavos. Leslie chased her down to explain the screw-up.

Meanwhile, spontaneously emerging from the group was a soft Latin polyrhythm built with clapping and hand drums, layered by a folk song in Spanish: "...Y era la luna llena que asomaba su carita en la cordillera..." ("...and the full moon was peeking from behind the mountains"). Then it turned into "...Adalita la luna llena que asomaba su carita en la cordillera.", a homage to Adalita, the famous revolutionary in the torn dress who adorns Mexican restaurant calendars. Abuelita— Adalita—, now orbiting the fire, rejoined the large circle, dancing, clapping, and singing with a huge smile.

The bass quietly re-integrated with the chorus, with live drumming jumping into the mix, and suddenly the raucous, electrified celebration was going full tilt again.

Before retiring to her own, mellow fire, Abuelita acknowledged the generation gap, and exclaimed, "This is a new culture. We are different now. We have changed."

* * *

It is easy to see why Abuelita, AKA Margarita Nunez Garcia, could make such a statement. At that moment, during a celebration ending an unprecedented gathering of bioregionalists from Canada, US, Mexico, Central and South America, she witnessed a new American culture: one of the Americas, one without political, social, or economic borders; a new nation of half-breeds, indigenous warriors, gang youth, spiritualists, and community activists all made of post-colonial, post-modern DNA. What she witnessed, and participants experienced, was a new culture defined by the continent of Amerrikua, the ancient name for the Americas.

It was at an historical event, billed as "The First Bioregional Gathering of the Americas," where the locus for such a cultural gathering took place. Located in the Cuauhnahuach bioregion in the central valley of Mexico, just an hour's bus ride South of Mexico City, an international group of close to 800 people gathered to affirm the existence of a parallel movement, one

that intends to counter neo-liberalism (NAFTA-style economic colonialism).

Nestled below towering cocoa colored cliffs, a few miles from the rebellious municipality of Tepoztlan, and down the road from Quetzalcoatl's birthplace, participants created a "ceremonial village" to hash out the future of a pan-American bioregional network. Unlike cigar-choked political conventions held in generic hotels, this gathering of bioregionalists took place in an experimental setting where participants camped and performed all the work and maintenance of the camp, including preparing food and scrubbing pots.

Two years in the works, the event represented the symbolic unification of the North Americas (a name suggested by Mexican organizers who were tired of being excluded by the terminology of "North America"). Turtle Island Bioregional Gathering, a loose network of bioregional activists working mainly in Canada and the US, and the Consejo de Visiones Guardianes de la Tierra (Earth Guardian Vision Councils), a Mexican-based group, met jointly for the first time.

Since 1984, Northern bioregionalists have been holding biennial congresses and gatherings through-out the US and Canada. In 1988, representatives from the alternative Mexican movement began attending these activist gatherings. Six years later they convinced the group, by consensus decision at the 1994 gathering in Kentucky, to hold the next event in Mexico.

Bioregionalists are an atypical group that defies a sweeping generalization. At its core, bioregionalism is a cultural idea, one that relies on a mix of hard science and spirituality to map sustainable futures. Bioregionalists range from indigenous elders to permaculture activists, from writers to acupuncturists, from artists to scientists.

Bioregionalism can come across more as cosmological than political. However, it can also be seen as the modern counter-part to neo-liberalism and globalization: bioregionalism looks at nature beyond political borders, as an integrated part of culture, economic justice, local empowerment and sustainability.

Perhaps being on Mexican turf influenced

the flavor of this particular gathering, but for those attached to time (hardly anyone wore a watch), and squares (everything was done in circles), the event was difficult to grasp. Many old-guard activists (mainly from the North), had a hard time adjusting to the non-linear nature of the happening, and the constant ceremonial activity of the camp.

Unlike typical political conferences, there was an emphasis on experiencing the ceremonial village rather than organizing workshops, or setting up council meetings. However, if you wanted to learn about medicinal herbs, you could take one of the frequent nature walks led by a curandera; or if you wanted to experience autonomous political action, you could go to the neighboring town of Tepoztlan and work with community activists.

Regardless of the disorganized appearance of the gathering, close to a hundred workshops were held. But, as one Mayan advised a lost traveler in search of a workshop, "No matter where you are, that's exactly where you should be." And indeed, it seemed like no matter where you were, some fascinating encounter took place.

In spite of the abundant chaos (twice as many people showed up than expected), the net result was a sense that a new culture was forming, a culture that combines elements of ancient, indigenous traditions with a modern society shaped by the diversity of post-colonial life. While urban gang youth from Mexico City, Oaxaca, Monterey and LA provided the camp's security, Aztecs trained in the Lakota Sun Dance performed daily temezcals (sweat lodge/"house of vapors" in Nahuatl); organic farmers from Guatemala exchanged tips with permaculturalists from the US; bioregionalists from Mexico City and the Sierra Madre's studied map making with a Canadian urban planner. It was a remarkable combination of the sacred with the technical, the ceremonial with the practical, the mind with the heart.

On the night of the closing party, an unprecedented ceremony culminated the event. Eleven indigenous pipe carriers from South America to Canada shared sacred pipes, holding perhaps

the first post-modern exchange of spiritual, indigenous traditions of the Americas. Writer and spiritual activist Starhawk then led the group in a spiral dance, an ancient European tradition, to officially end the week long series of ceremonies and networking.

For Fiz Harwood, New Mexico resident and coordinator of the Rio Grande Bioregional Project, the event represented a powerful unification movement. "This was the fulfillment of a 15 year dream to see the energy of the Americas reawaken. From a sea of 500 years of colonization receding, communities and islands are reemerging," she said. In her view, the European descendants of the colonial past are finally discovering America, close to 500 years after landing.

Old-guard activist David Henke, who was one of the first bioregionalist organizers in the US, took a different stand, feeling that the counter-cultural elements of the growing bioregional movement would hurt its credibility. "This gathering had so much rainbow, gypsy, and new age content in both the people attending and in what was presented, that it diluted the ecological focus profoundly, more than the definition of bioregional eco-centrism can stand."

Dissatisfaction among the traditional activists of the movement has caused a raging e-mail debate about the future of the movement. The conflict to emerge from the gathering seems to be a controversy that reflects the constant struggle of the left/right brain dichotomy: many Northerners desired a more concrete schedule and plan, while the Southerners were more focused on letting information flow naturally.

Alberto Ruz Buenfil, a key organizer from Mexico, felt ultimately that the gathering was about expanding the vision of the bioregional movement. "Bioregionalism can be many different things, but cannot become a new fundamentalism, and the attempt of the Consejo de Visiones to bring in other colors (indigenous, South Americans, street gangs, healers, Rainbows, New Agers), is precisely to honor the biodiversity that exists in the planet, to enrich and broaden the spectrum of possibilities, experiences and alliances, among different

age, class, ethnic and cultural movements and groups. Which is precisely one of the things that most Northern Bioregionalists felt was missing in their Congresses and gatherings."

Viewed from the border region of New Mexico, this struggle represents growing pains marked by divergent cultural perspectives coming together for the first time. If indigenous elders, Rainbow tribalists, community activists, technicians, New Agers, alternative health practitioners, artists and musicians, foresters, urban gang members and an unprecedented diversity of cultures are going to carry the banner of bioregionalism, the conflict of process will play itself out. If anything, it is a microcosm of paradigms challenging each other in the greater debate of how we map the future of the environmental and self-sufficiency movement.

What took place in Mexico, even if it was an imperfect union of spirit and political action, planted seeds for future continental events. In the next four years there will be at least one more gathering in Mexico and then a unifying event that will bring North and South America together in the year 2000, at a yet to be determined location in either Central or South America (Panama was offered as one possibility since that will be at the end of their lease with the US for the Panama Canal). Meanwhile, smaller groups have returned home to form their local bioregional organizations and to take the spirit of a unified America with them as they charge forward into the future.

Ultimately, it appears, the net result of the gathering was a multifaceted, experiential event that reflected the Spanish word for meeting: *encuentro*. This signifies an encounter, but also derives from the verb "encontrar"— to find. As Abuelita noted, we have found something new, yet very old. Its called America. And it's not about borders, but about a culture that's defining itself in the spirit of the continent.

**FIRST BIOREGIONAL GATHERING OF THE
AMERICAS
CUAUHNAHUAC BIOREGION -
TEPOZTLAN, MEXICO
NOV 17-24, 1996**

SUMMARY REPORT

History

This event was co-sponsored by the Turtle Island Bioregional Gathering (TIBG) from the North and the Earth Guardian Vision Council (EGVC) of Mexico. Although TIBGs had been held every other year since 1984 and EGVCs annually since 1991, this was the first time the two groups had collaborated on a joint project. It was also the first continental bioregional gathering to be held south of the Rio Grande.

Attendance

By far the largest bioregional gathering to date, the event was attended by 800-1,000 people from 20 countries. 250 from United States, Canada, Europe, Australia, the rest from Latin America, including many indigenous elders.

Purpose

The intention was to create a "ceremonial village" in which participants in the event could live, learn, and celebrate together for a week in order to encourage bioregional and ecological practices through out the continent.

Connection with Tepoztlan

Given the intrinsically local nature of bioregionalism, getting acquainted with the people and land of Tepoztlan was a high priority. Elders and other representatives of the community were present throughout the event, presenting workshops, conducting indigenous plant walks, and leading ceremonies. On the day devoted to community service, about 60 participants helped build check dams to prevent erosion on a local trail, while others started a garden at

an elementary school. A third group welcomed 150 school children and their teachers to our camp for a day of fresh air, ecological learning and fun. In addition, about \$600 US was raised for the legal defense fund of the municipality of Tepoztlan, which has been waging a three-year battle to protect its culture and ecosystem from destruction by multi-national interests.

Program

The program included over 90 workshops, presented by participants, on subjects ranging such as watershed organizing, herbal medicine, ecovillages, permaculture, consensus facilitation, bioregional education, the political situation in Chiapas, to name but a few. There were also daily plenary sessions for general announcements and discussion. Sunrise and sunset ceremonies and daily sweat lodges were conducted by indigenous elders. Evening programs included cultural presentations by participants featuring music, dancing, videos and slides.

Pre-event Activities

A two-week Spanish language intensive, attended by 20 people, took place before the gathering. In addition, a week-long "Green Cities" program was held in Mexico City, which involved representatives of community groups throughout the Federal District.

Site

The event was held at a boy scout camp. Participants brought their own camping equipment or stayed in a nearby hotel. Food was prepared by a team of local women, assisted by volunteers from the group. Much of the produce was organically grown by local farmers. Recyclables were collected at twelve stations around the camp and hauled away by a local women's recycling cooperative. Paper was recycled at a paper-making workshop conducted on site. Night-time security was provided by a former street gang members from Mexico City. A team of alternative health care practitioners and

emergency medical technicians provided first aid and other services. An open-air market and art gallery provided outlets for work produced by participants. A snack bar provided an additional venues for socializing.

Finances

The event generated approximately \$60,000 US in revenues and \$58,000 US in expenses. More than \$45,000 of the income came from registrations and donations from the North.

Evaluations

Responding to an evaluation questionnaire several months after the gathering, some of the northern participants described the event in these terms: Fantastic!.. Overwhelming!.. Sensational!...A magnificent experience of celebration and spiritual learning... An historic, multi-cultural event full of color, chaos and confusion...A whirlwind of inspiration, communication, creation and exploration.. A dream come true.

Even the most enthusiastic commentators, however, acknowledged that the event was beset by some serious organizational problems. Difficulty in locating the 90 scheduled workshops, failure of the clans and councils to meet, overly-long morning circles, incessant drumming, bathroom conditions and the failure of anything other than the sunrise and sunset ceremonies to happen "on time" frustrated many. Fortunately, most of these glaring defects can be easily corrected in the future. The committee heads of each of the primary areas of the event have filed reports and their recommendations will be transmitted to the next team of organizers.

The large scale of the event and the presence of many people either unfamiliar with or uncommitted to the basic principles of bioregionalism caused many "old-time" bioregionalists to feel alienated and upset. The stress of being in a foreign country and not understanding Spanish compounded the problem for some. Consideration is being given to the possibility of

limiting the size of future events and to publicizing them in ways that clarify the serious intent of the gathering, without sacrificing the celebratory dimensions.

Outcomes

In addition to promoting multi-cultural understanding and building networks among activists, the event produced north/south participant directories, a permaculture institute in the Cuauhnahuac Bioregion, on-going liaison with the people of Tepoztlan and several articles written by participants and published in periodicals in the United States and Canada. The Green Cities group continues to meet in Mexico City, Projects currently in the works include a bi-lingual proceedings, a WEB page, a how-to guide to organizing events of this kind, music and video collaborations, and a bioregional anthology in Spanish. In conjunction with the newly formed Bioregional Association of the Northern Americas (BANA), event participants are helping create a north-south skills exchange database. A Rainbow Peace Caravan, which did outreach in Central America prior to the gathering, is continuing on its journey, carrying the bioregional message to South America.

Next steps

A consensus decision was made on the last day of the gathering to hold another Bioregional Gathering of the Americas in 1998, somewhere in Mexico. Since then, Mazunte, on the coast of Oaxaca, has been identified as the probable site and planning meetings are being scheduled to take place in Mexico in November 1997 and January and April, 1998. Meanwhile, local and regional bioregional gatherings are taking place in various locations in Mexico, the United States and Canada.

Prepared by Beatrice Briggs
Coordinator
Turtle Island Office
May 1997

**PRIMER ENCUENTRO BIOREGIONAL DE
LAS AMÉRICAS
BIOREGIÓN DE CUAUHLHUAC -
TEPOZTLÁN, MÉXICO
17-24 DE NOVIEMBRE, 1996**

REPORTE FINAL

La Historia

Este evento fue patrocinado conjuntamente por El Encuentro bioregional del norte de la Isla de la Tortuga (TIBG) y por El Consejo de Visiones de los Guardianes de la Tierra (EGVC) de México. Los encuentros de TIBG se llevan a cabo cada dos años desde 1984 y los de EGVC cada año desde 1991, esta fue la primera vez que los dos grupos colaboraron en un proyecto conjunto. También fue el primer encuentro bioregional continental al sur del Río Bravo.

La asistencia

Fue por mucho la mas concurrida de entre todos los eventos bioregionales a la fecha, asistieron al Encuentro entre 800 y 100 personas de 20 países. Doscientas cincuenta llegaron de los Estados Unidos, de Canadá, de Europa, de Australia y el resto de diferentes países de América Latina incluyendo a varios ancianos de tradición indígena.

El Propósito

La intención fue crear un “pueblo ceremonial” en el que los participantes del evento pudieran vivir, aprender y celebrar juntos a lo largo de una semana para promover prácticas ecológicas y bioregionales a lo largo del continente.

La conexión con Tepoztlán

Dada la naturaleza intrínseca del Bioregionalismo, conocer a la gente y la tierra de Tepoztlán fue una prioridad. Los ancianos y otros representantes de comunidades pre-

sentaron talleres, condujeron caminatas para conocer las plantas de la región y oficiaron ceremonias.

El día dedicado al servicio a la comunidad, cerca de 60 participantes ayudaron a construir presas para prevenir la erosión, mientras que otros comenzaron un jardín en la escuela primaria. Un tercer grupo le dio la bienvenida a 150 niñas/niños y sus maestros que visitaron el campamento buscando aire fresco, aprendizaje ecológico y diversión

Además, se juntaron \$600 dólares para contribuir al fondo para la defensa legal del municipio de Tepoztlán que ha estado librando una batalla de tres años para proteger su cultura y su ecosistema de la destrucción en manos de los intereses multinacionales.

Programa

El programa incluyó mas de 90 talleres, presentados por participantes sobre temas que abarcaban desde: organización por cuencas hasta medicina herbolaria, ecopueblos, permacultura, facilitación de toma de decisiones por consenso, educación bioregional, la situación política en Chiapas, para mencionar algunos. También hubo sesiones plenarias diarias para discusión y anuncios generales. Ceremonias al amanecer y anochecer al tiempo que temazcales diarios conducidos por ancianos de tradición. Programas vespertinos incluían las presentaciones artísticas de los participantes: música, danza, videos y diapositivas.

Las actividades previas al evento

Un taller intensivo de español que duró dos semanas y al que asistieron 20 personas. Además se llevó a cabo en el D.F. un programa de una semana sobre “Ciudades Verdes” en el que participaron representantes de grupos comunitarios de la ciudad.

La Sede

EL evento se llevó a cabo en un campamento de boys scouts. Los participantes tra-

jeron sus propio equipo para acampar o se quedaron en el hotel mas cercano. Un equipo formado por mujeres del lugar y por voluntarios preparó diariamente los alimentos. Muchos de lo que comimos creció orgánicamente a manos de los agricultores locales. Los desperdicios se recogían en 12 estaciones ubicadas en todo el campamento para ser reciclados por la cooperativa femenina de reciclaje. El papel se recicló en talleres que se llevaron a cabo en el lugar. La seguridad nocturna la proveyeron algunos grupos de chavos banda de México. Un equipo de salud alternativa ofreció sus servicios a lo largo del evento. Un mercado al aire libre y una galería de arte sirvieron para que los productos de los participantes fueran adquiridos por los interesados.

Finanzas

El evento generó aproximadamente \$60,000 dólares en entradas y \$58,000 dólares en gastos. Mas de \$45,000 de las entradas vino de los registros y de donaciones del Norte.

Evaluaciones

Respondiendo a un cuestionario a manera de evaluación que enviamos varios meses después del Encuentro, algunos de los participantes del Norte describieron el evento de la siguiente forma:

Fantástico!... Maravilloso!.. .Sensacional!... Una experiencia magnífica de celebración y aprendizaje espiritual... Un evento histórico y multi-cultural lleno de color, caos y confusión... Un torbellino de inspiración, comunicación, creación y exploración.. .Un sueño hecho realidad.

Hasta los mas entusiastas comentarios reconocieron que al evento le faltó organización. Problemas para localizar los 90 talleres programados, las dificultades para que los clanes y los talleres se reunieran; reuniones demasiado largas en los círculos de la mañana, las tocaditas de tambores sin parar, las condiciones de los baños; el hecho de que solo las ceremonias del amanecer y anochecer sucedían a tiempo, frustraba a muchos. Afortunadamente, la mayoría

de estos defectos son fácilmente corregibles en el futuro. Los jefes de comités de cada una de las principales áreas, realizaron un reporte y sus recomendaciones serían transmitidas al nuevo equipo coordinador.

La gran escala del evento y la presencia de mucha gente nueva o con poco compromiso a los principios del bioregionalismo provocaron que muchos de los antiguos bioregionalistas se sintieran incómodos. La tensión de estar en un país extranjero, no hablar el idioma contribuyeron al malestar. Se esta considerando limitar el tamaño de los futuros eventos, al tiempo que difundir la información sobre el evento de tal manera a clarificar la intención del encuentro, sin sacrificar la dimensión celebratoria

Desenlace

Además de promover comprensión multicultural y de construir redes entre activistas, el evento produjo un directorio norte/sur, un instituto de Permacultura de la región de Cuauhnahuac; una relación constante con la gente de Tepoztlán y muchos artículos publicados en periódicos en Estados Unidos y Canadá.

El grupo de "Ciudades Verdes" continúa reuniéndose en el DF; entre los proyectos en curso están el de las memorias del evento en versión bilingüe; una página en Internet; un manual para organizar eventos de este tipo, colaboraciones musicales y de video; una antología bioregional en español. En conjunto con la recientemente formada Asociación Bioregional de América del Norte (BANA), los participantes están ayudando a crear una base de datos para intercambio de información norte-sur; una Caravana Arcoíris por la Paz, que viajó por Centro América antes del evento invitando al mismo y que continua llevando el mensaje bioregional por Sur América.

Preparado por Beatrice Briggs
Coordinadora
Turtle Island Office
Mayo 1997

RESULTADOS

¡EL ESPÍRITU DE MEZTITLA VIVE!

Seguimiento de información y acciones:

Directorio

Están a tu disposición en un impreso los nombres, direcciones, números telefónicos y direcciones de correo electrónico de 750 participantes de Canadá, México, Estados Unidos, Centroamérica, Europa, Sud América, Israel y Australia, además de los de 27 organizadores biorregionales clave en México. Para pedidos favor de usar la forma que se incluye.

Memorias del Encuentro

Las tienes en las manos

Antología biorregional en español

Antología Biorregional: Orígenes del Consejo de Visiones de los "Guardianes de la Tierra" es la primer recopilación integral de artículos, ensayos y poesía sobre biorregionalismo, ecología profunda, ecofeminismo y cómo poner estas ideas en práctica en el Sur. También incluye un directorio invaluable de los grupos biorregionales en México. Ve la forma de pedidos.

Boletín Voice of the Turtle (Voz de la Tortuga)

Este boletín en inglés se publica entre dos y tres veces al año y contiene información oportuna sobre eventos biorregionales y demás noticias del movimiento. El siguiente número se enviará en el mes de abril. Para suscripciones, usa la forma de pedidos.

Guía para organizar un Consejo

Biorregional

Se ha creado un comité para producir una guía bilingüe que ayude a los futuros comités de organización y participantes a beneficiarse de nuestra experiencia. Si te gustaría trabajar en la elaboración de este documento, ponte en contacto con The Turtle Island Office o bien con Don Diego, P.O. Box 357, Crestone, CO 81131.

Cassettes/CDs de música biorregional

Además del CD de Cielo y Tierra que se consigue en tiendas de música y lo produjo Warner Music, búscalo en la sección de música internacional), se pueden hacer pedidos de otros dos cassettes de grupos de música de gran talento que pertenecen al movimiento biorregional. Uno se llama "Cantos a la Tierra" grabado por Tamu Tariaticha, el grupo de Michoacán que tuvo gran éxito en Meztitla. El otro es "Tukipa: La Casa de Todos" realizado por la familia Arcoiris de Tepoztlán. Ambos contienen cantos entonados en el consejo biorregional y mucho más. Ve la forma de pedidos. Otro grupo está trabajando para crear un cassette/CD de música de las biorregiones de las Américas para ayudar a difundir nuestro mensaje cultural y juntar fondos para futuros eventos. Si tienes sugerencias con respecto a la música que debiera incluirse o te gustaría ayudar con el proyecto, ponte en contacto con Pedro Vadhar, Privada de los Cedros 220-C, México D.F.,

01720, México (tel. 5 815 2861) o con la Oficina de la Isla de la Tortuga.

Videos

Los videoastas voluntarios que grabaron el consejo están compartiendo sus imágenes para producir varios videos. Se necesitan contribuciones financieras para sufragar los gastos de edición. Los que puedan contribuir al fondo

para videos ahora tendrán derecho a recibir una copia gratuita del video de su elección por cada U\$ 50.00 dólares que contribuyan. Para contribuir o recibir información sobre los videos, ve la forma de pedidos.

Antología de poesía biorregional

Un grupo de poetas biorregionalistas está interesado en crear una antología de materiales de todo el continente americano. Si te gustaría participar en este proyecto, envía tus poemas, ideas o demás aportes a Andrés King Cobos, Huehucóyotl, Tepoztlán, 62520, Morelos, México o bien a Van Andruss, P.O. Box 1599, Lilloet, BC V0K 1V0, Canadá.

Apoyo financiero para el municipio de Tepoztlán

El pueblo de Tepoztlán usó el donativo de los U\$ 600.00 dólares recogidos en Meztitla para sufragar sus gastos legales. Se necesitan alrededor de U\$ 300.00 dólares por mes para continuar con la lucha legal de los tepoztecos por recuperar los títulos de propiedad de sus tierras comunales, liberar al prisionero político restante y mantener la soberanía frente a la gran presión del gobierno. Las contribuciones provenientes del exterior se pueden enviar a: Bioregional Project/ORC, P.O. Box 1198, Ava. MO 65608, USA. Los cheques o giros bancarios se deberán enviar en dólares norteamericanos a nombre de "Bioregional Project/ORC" (favor de escribir "for Tepoztlán" en el cheque). El Centro de Recursos Ozark (ORC) retendrá el 10% de las contribuciones para cubrir gastos administrativos. Los fondos restantes se enviarán a Tepoztlán por giro telegráfico. Las contribuciones provenientes del interior de México se podrán enviar directamente a la cuenta bancaria número 5010151-2 de Bancomer a nombre de MIGUEL ALBERTO HIDALGO LINARES y FRANCISCO ALMAZAN VERAZALUCE, plaza 192, sector 32, sucursal Tepoztlán, Morelos.

Caravana Arcoiris de la Paz

Después de una primera etapa exitosa que llevara a la Caravana por México y cinco países centroamericanos, la Caravana sigue su viaje hacia el sur, si quieres recibir informes sobre cómo unirse a la Caravana sin dejar casa y recibir información directamente de ellos a través de su boletín electrónico "ArcoRuedas" escribe a: lacaravana@aol.com o visita la página Web de la caravana:

<http://www.tortuga.com/caravan.html>.

BANA

¡La Asociación Biorregional de las Américas del Norte (BANA) te necesita!
contacto con:

BANA
c/o Planet Drum Foundation
P.O. Box 31251
San Francisco, CA 94131
de la biorregión de Shasta.
Tel: 415 285 6556
Fax: 415 285 6563
Correo electrónico: planetdrum@igc.apc.org.

RESULTS

THE SPIRIT OF MEZTITLA LIVES!

Follow-up Information and Actions

Directory

The names, addresses, telephone numbers and e-mail addresses of 250 participants from the USA, Canada, Europe, Australia and Isrea, plus 27 key bioregional organizers in Mexico are available either as mailing labels (for one-time use by participants only) or as a printed directory. The list of participants from the south is experiencing technical difficulties, which we hope will be resolved soon. To order, see enclosed form.

Proceedings

This document will contain a bilingual summary of the week's program, reports from all the councils and as many workshops as possible, resolutions adopted in the plenaries, graphics, poetry, commentary by movement elders and more. It should be available by June 1997, both in printed form and on the internet (see WEB site info below). To order, see enclosed form. If you have contributions for the proceedings, please contact Virginia Sanchez Navarro, Celaya 23-6, Mexico, DF 06100, Mexico; e-mail: sanchez@laneta.apc.org. or Antonio Lopez, 223 N. Guadalupe, #423 Santa Fe, NM 87501, Northern Rio Grande Bioregion; email: eltiki@spaceplace.com.

WEB Page

A TIBG home page is under construction! For more information, contact Antonio Lopez, 223 N. Guadalupe, #423 Santa Fe, NM 87501, Northern Rio Grande Bioregion; e-mail: eltiki@spaceplace.com. or Emilio Osorio Garcia,

Zenzontle #104, La Ceiba, Villahermosa, Tab, Mexico.; email: oemilio@nexus.net.mx.

Voice of the Turtle

This English-language newsletter is published 2-3 times a year and contains timely information about future bioregional events and other news of the movement. The next issue will be mailed in April. To subscribe, see order form.

The Guide: How to Organize a Bioregional Gathering

A committee has been formed to create a bilingual guide to help future organizing committees and participants benefit from our experience. If you would like to work on this document, contact the Turtle Island Office or Don Diego, PO Box 357, Crestone, CO 81131.

Cassettes/CDs of Bioregional Music

In addition to Cielo y Tierra's CD which is commercially available in music stores (called "Cielo y Tierra/Heaven and Earth", released by Warner Music. Look in world music section), two other cassettes by talented bioregional groups can be ordered. One is "Cantos a la Tierra," recorded by Tamu Tariaticha, the group from Michoacan which brought down the house in Meztitla. The other is "Tukipa: La Casa de Todos," by the Rainbow family of Tepoztlán. Both of these contain songs heard at the bioregional gathering, plus more. To order see enclosed form.

Another group is working on creating a cassette/CD of music from the bioregions of the Americas to help spread our cultural message and to raise money for future events. If you have suggestions of music to be included or would like to help with this project, contact Pedro Vadhar, Priv. de los Cedros 220-C, Mexico DF, 01720, Mexico (tel. 5.815.2861) or the Turtle

Island Office.

Videos

The gathering was documented by several volunteer videographers who will be sharing their imagery to produce various videos. Financial contributions are needed to defray editing costs. Those who contribute to the video fund now will be entitled to receive one free copy of the video of their choice for each \$50 US contributed. To contribute or receive information about the finished videos, see the order form.

Bioregional Anthology in Spanish

Antología Biorregional: Orígenes de Consejo de Visiones de los "Guardianes de la Tierra" is the first comprehensive, Spanish language collection of articles, essays and poetry about bioregionalism, deep ecology, ecofeminism and how these ideas can be put into practice in the South. Also includes an invaluable directory of bioregional groups in Mexico. To order, see enclosed form.

Anthology of Bioregional Poetry

A group of bioregional poets is interested in creating an anthology of material from all over the continent. If you would like to participate in this project, send your poetry, ideas or other contributions to Andres King Cobos, HueHuecóyotl, Tepoztlán, 62520, Morelos, México or to Van Andruss, Pox 1599, Lilloet, BC V0K 1V0, Canada.

Financial Support for the Municipality of Tepoztlán

The people of Tepoztlán used the donation of \$600 US collected at Meztitla to defray their legal expenses. Approximately \$300 US per month is needed to continue the Tepoztecos' legal fight to regain title to their communal lands, free the remaining political prisoner and maintain their sovereignty in the face of intense government pressure. Contributions from outside Mexico can be sent to Bioregional Project/ORC,

P.O.B ox 1198, Ava, MO 65608.USA. Checks or money orders, in US dollars only, payable to "Bioregional Project/ORC". (Put "for Tepoztlán" on the check). Ten percent of each contribution will be retained by the Ozark Resource Center for administrative purposes. Funds will then be forwarded to Tepoztlán by wire transfer. Contributions from within Mexico can be sent directly to following bank account:
Name: MIGUEL ALBERTO HIDALGO LINARES
Y FRANCISCO ALMAZAN VERAZALUCE;
account number: 5010151-2; Bank:
BANCOMER: plaza: 192: sector: 32: Branch:
Tepoztlán, Morelos.

Rainbow Peace Caravan

After a successful first stage, which took the Rainbow Peace Caravan through Mexico and five other Central American countries, the journey continues south. The enclosed brochure includes photos of the Magic Bus and information on How to Join the Caravan Without Leaving Home. Tax deductible contributions should be made payable to Wisconsin Assembly of Local Arts Agencies and sent to Rainbow Peace Caravan c/o Ari Adler, 55 Brackett St. Apt # 3, Brighton, MA 02135, USA. To receive the electronic newsletter, ArcoRuedes, write lacaravana@aol.com or visit the caravan's web site: <http://www.tortuga.com/caravan.html>.

BANA

The Bioregional Association of the Northern Americas (BANA) needs you! This new, continental organization is preparing for its first annual meeting this summer, pursuing non-profit status, developing a Skills Exchange Database, fundraising and recruiting members. For information, contact:

BANA
c/o Planet Drum Foundation
PO Box 31251
San Francisco, CA 94131
Shasta Bioregion.
Tel: (415).285.6556.
Fax:: (415).285.6563.

BIORREGIÓN MAYA CONVOCA AL: VII CONSEJO DE VISIONES GUARDIANES DE LA TIERRA Y PRIMER ENCUENTRO BIORREGIONAL MAYA

En el primer eco-cenote "DOS PALMAS"

Ejido de Jacinto Pat, Municipio de Solidaridad, Tulum, Quintana Roo, México Del sábado 15 al 22 de noviembre de 1997

SERVICIOS

VIDA EN LA ALDEA CEREMONIAL

LUGAR

Cenote "DOS PALMAS" es una zona de un kilómetro cuadrado en el que se pretende conservar el territorio lo más natural y limpio posible. En "DOS PALMAS" del ejido Jacinto Pat actualmente se llevan a cabo grandes luchas para defender al ecosistema y la cultura de la destrucción por parte de los intereses desarrollistas y multinacionales.

ALOJAMIENTO

Campamento en "DOS PALMAS", habrá tiendas de campaña y hamacas para rentar a precios módicos, cada persona deberá llevar su propia manta o bolsa de dormir. Para aquéllos que no puedan acampar se reservará un número limitado de habitaciones en un hotel en las cercanías del lugar.

COMIDAS

Un grupo de mujeres experimentadas de la región prepararán alimentos vegetarianos y recibirán la ayuda de los participantes de la reunión. Se encontrará también disponible frutas, jugos y alimentos diversos para su venta. También habrá agua purificada disponible en el campamento.

Servicio de primeros auxilios, masaje y medicina natural. Guardería para niños de hasta 4 años. Actividades para niños entre 4 y 11.

CONSEJOS DE VISIONES

Habrán consejos y talleres varios (ecología, salud, espiritualidad, tradiciones indígenas, arte y cultura etc...). Ceremonias al amanecer y a lo largo del día, traer objetos de poder y prendas ceremoniales. Tareas comunitarias y apoyo emocional en "Clanes". Facilitación grupal y toma de decisiones por consenso. Un día habrá participación en la comunidad local. Tianguis donde se lleve a cabo algún tipo de intercambio. Celebración: compartiremos canciones, danzas, historias, marionetas, videos, diapositivas, y diversión.

NECESIDADES

Intérpretes inglés-español, apoyo para preparación del lugar antes del evento y pronto pago de inscripciones.

COSTOS

Habrán tarifas diferenciadas entre el norte y el sur y se agradecerán donaciones para becas de indígenas y financiamiento al comité organizador local.

México y Sur [\$ pesos]:

1. Inscripción: \$130.00 antes 1 septiembre.

\$160 después 1 septiembre
niños entre 4 y 12: media tarifa

2. Alimentos: \$60.00 al día (desayuno, almuerzo y cena) US\$20.00 al día (desayuno, almuerzo y cena)
niños entre 4 y 12: media tarifa

3. Alquiler hamaca y mosquitero: \$100.00 (por semana) US\$30.00 (por semana)

4. Alquiler tiendas de campaña para 6 personas: \$80.00 (por persona toda la semana) US\$10.00 (por persona toda la semana)

EU y Norte [US\$ dls]:

1. Inscripción: US\$20.00 antes 1 septiembre
\$30.00 después 1 septiembre
niños entre 4 y 12: media tarifa

2. Alimentos: US\$20.00 al día (desayuno, almuerzo y cena)
niños entre 4 y 12: media tarifa

3. Alquiler hamaca y mosquitero: US\$30.00 (por semana)

4. Alquiler tiendas de campaña para 6 personas: US\$10.00 (por persona toda la semana)

CUPO

Cupo limitado a 400 personas, urge pre-inscribirse al menos con la mitad del costo para reservar lugar. Enviar giro bancario por correo a nombre de: Antonio Rivero Aguilar, Ap. Post. #2, Tulum, Quintana Roo, México.

OBJETIVO

La temática que queremos manejar es la del nacimiento de la biorregión maya y la puesta en marcha de la primera escuela taller de eco-turismo y permacultura.

Lo importante para nosotros es, que nos encontramos en el ombligo de América donde

se gesta una nueva cultura que es conciente de que la luz de cada persona cabe en algunos de los colores del arcoiris; y vamos a formar un inmenso puente de amor, comprensión y fraternidad entre las Américas llamadas del norte y del sur desde el centro de gestación en las TIERRAS SAGRADAS DEL MAYAB.

Don Mariano Mazón Can
Coordinador

Antonio Rivero
Propaganda y Difusión

Gabriel Mazón
Propaganda y Difusión

Para mayor información:

Centro Cultural Dos Palmas

Av. Principal de Tulum s/n

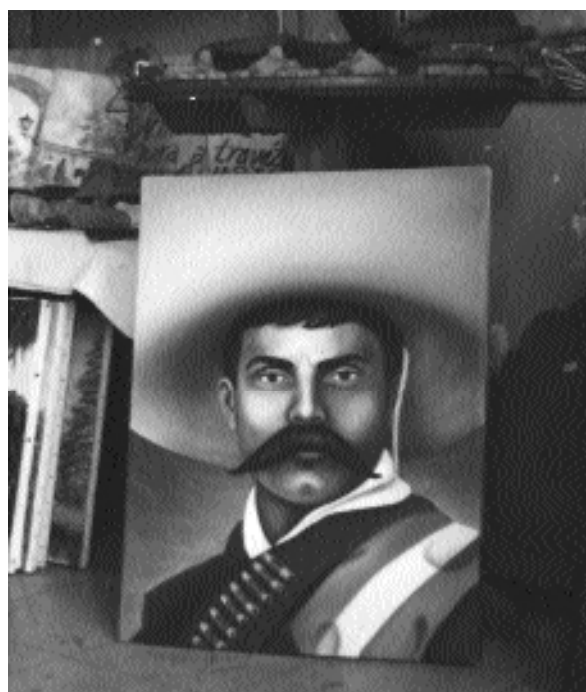
Ap. Post #2 Tulum, Quintana Roo, México

Tel /Fax (987) 12132

Centro de Comunicaciones SABANA

Tel/Fax (987) 12092

E-mail: savana@cancun.rce.com.mx



AN INVITATION TO ATTEND: THE 7TH ANNUAL EARTH GUARDIAN VISION COUNCIL AND THE FIRST MAYAN BIOREGIONAL ENCOUNTER

at the eco-cenote "Dos Palmas" Ejido de Jacinto Pat, Municipio de Solidaridad
Tulum, Quintana Roo, Mexico

Saturday, November 15 - Saturday, November 22, 1997

PLACE

"Dos Palmas" is one-square kilometer preserve centered around a cenote (deep pool) in the ejido (communal lands) of Jacinto Pat. The site is located 13 km. north of Tulum, near the archeological ruins of Xel-Ha. The local community is fighting to defend this ecosystem and its culture from destruction by development and multinational interests.

ACCOMMODATIONS

Rustic campgrounds in "Dos Palmas." Tents and hammocks for rent at a modest price. Bring your own blanket or sleeping bag. A limited number of reservations can be made at a nearby hotel.

FOOD

A group of women from the region will prepare vegetarian food with the help of participants. Fruit, juice and other foods will also be available for sale. Purified water available at the campgrounds.

OTHER SERVICES

First aid, massage, natural medicine, nursery for children up to 4 years of age and activities for children 4 to 11 years old.

PROGRAM

There will be councils and various workshops in subjects such as ecology, health, spirituality, indigenous traditions, art and culture. Ceremonies will begin at sunrise and continue throughout the day. Bring your power objects and ceremonial clothing. All participants will be assigned to a clan (small group) for community work and emotional support. There will be group facilitation and consensus decision-making. One day will be devoted to local community service. A market place will provide an opportunity for sale or barter of crafts and other items. Celebrations will include the sharing of songs, dance, history, puppets, videos, slides, and other entertainment.

NEEDED

English-Spanish translators; help preparing the site before the event (beginning Nov 1); registration payments promptly sent.

COSTS

There will be different prices between the north and south. We appreciate donations for scholarships for indigenous people and to help finance the local organizing committee.

Mexico and South US and North Registration
before September 1st N\$130 \$40

after September 1st N\$160 \$50
(4-12 yrs, half price)

Food

(breakfast, lunch and dinner) N\$60/ per day
\$20/ per day children 4-12 yrs, half price

Rentals

Hammocks w/ mosquito net N\$100/ per
week \$30/ per week

Tent for 6 people N\$80/ per person/ week
\$10/pp/week

Space will be limited to 400 people. We
urge you to reserve your space payment of at
least half the fees in advance. Participants from
outside Mexico should send international money
orders: Antonio Aguilar, A.P. #2, Tulum, Quintana
Roo, Mexico. In Mexico direct deposits can be
made into the checking account: Bancomer
#.25410037366 in the name of Mariano Mazon
Can (sucursal Playa del Carmen).

OBJECTIVES

The theme we want to work with is the birth
of the Mayan bioregion and the inauguration
of an educational center offering workshops in
eco-tourism and permaculture. Most important
for us is that we encounter in the matrix of
America where the new culture is being created,
a culture conscious that the light of each person
forms the colors of the rainbow. We are going
to form an intense bridge of love, understanding
and fraternity between the Americas from the
north and south from this magnetic center of the
sacred lands of the Mayab.

Don Mariano Mazon Can
Coordinator

Antonio Rivero Gabriel Mazon
Information and Distribution Information and
Distribution

For more information:

Centro Cultural Dos Palmas

Av. Principal de Tulum s/n
A. P. #2
Tulum, Quintana Roo, Mexico
Tel/Fax (987) 12132

or

Centro de Comunicaciones SABANA

Tel/Fax (987) 12092
Outside Mexico add prefix 011-52
E-mail:savana@cancun.rce.com.mx

AN ORGANIZING MANUAL FOR THE VILLAGE LIFE OF A SEVEN-DAY MEETING OF THE BIOREGIONAL MOVEMENT

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I. BASIC DEFINITIONS

1. The Bioregional Movement

Membership in the Bioregional Movement begins on that awesome day when being a part of Planet Earth and all its living systems and geographical subparts becomes primary in defining what we call “Home.” On that day, nations, states, cities, races, cultures fade to a secondary role in home definition. We become one human family, one species in collaboration with all the other species of life that make this planet a viable home for living beings.

The bioregional movement also emphasizes finding our sense of place, becoming regional beings who ground ourselves on some continent, in some broad biome of living forms, in

some local bioregion of human and other-than-human life. We take geography seriously and learn to map our way into meaningful definitions of our specific home places.

The bioregional movement is a loose association of people, an open invitation to all people, to become active in ecological restoration, sustainable society building, and the pioneering of an Earth-based culture with fresh expressions of thoughtful wisdom, bodily awareness, and courageous motivations.

The movement espouses a universal mode of cultural experimentation. No sectarian beliefs or dogmas or ritual practices are superimposed on anyone. No final economic or political dogma is taught, though the movement is fully critical of the established Earth-destructive systems of economic and political collusion, and espouses alternative formations of economic and political living.

No brief statement can exhaust the idea of bioregionalism, for bioregionalism is a response to the vast turning point of our times and to the necessity to commune with the full mystery of the natural cosmos.

2. The Image of Ceremonial Village

When we gather for a week in an encampment of many hundred people, we propose to form ourselves in an exemplary life together, the sort of life we would wish for the whole Earth in the centuries to come. Some Native American peoples have set up what they called “ceremonial villages,” villages not meant to be lived in permanently, but set up temporarily for nurture, educational, and motivational purposes. This is a good image for what we intend to be in our seven-day encampments. We are something more than a conference of educational intent, something more than a congress or a council for political decision-making, something more than a gathering for cultural experimentation. We are all those elements and more. We boldly wish to be a village of the 21st century social life we espouse. It is as if we have been sent back to this decade from some future time. We are attempting to live now, in spite of all our imper-

fections, the social life toward which we wish to move.

Then after the healing power of such seven-day encampments, we return to our ordinary local places and invest ourselves in making elements of this ceremonial village become manifest in those places.

3. The Default Designs for Village Life

“Default Designs,” as that term is used in this manual, means those designs for our village life that we use unless there is some pressing reason to change them. These are well-proven designs which we have developed over many years and have come to expect as elements of our common life together.

a. The Morning Circle

Each day after breakfast the entire group is invited, indeed strongly encouraged, to assemble together for clarification on the living of the ensuing day. This design is perhaps the most important of all the designs for keeping intact the life of the week-long village.

The default agenda for a Morning Circle:

1. A gathering procession, song, dance, or ritual
2. Orienting talks on bioregionalism or the designs of village life
3. Clarifying and achieving consensus on the schedule of the day
4. Making necessary announcements as determined by the administrative coordinators (Only urgent announcements are made; the plethora of announcements can be posted on conveniently located bulletin boards and/or published in a daily new sheet.)
5. A closing ritual

b. The Plenary

On some mornings the Morning Circle can be expanded into a longer meeting of the whole body. This working body of the whole we call “the Plenary.” It may also meet after the noon meal. It uses the consensus decision-making process

and is the main political body of the village. Only decisions made at this meeting determine the ongoing policy for the currently functioning village life and for the time and place and qualities of its future encampments. Decisions made between Plenary sessions need to be brought to the next Plenary for review and confirmation or reversal.

The default agenda for a Plenary Session. Any of the items listed above for the Morning Circle plus:

1. The approval of consensus facilitators
2. The announcement and revision of a decision-making agenda
3. Reaching consensus on this use of time.
4. The facilitation of the approved agenda.

c. The Clan

The Clan is a small group of eight or so who meet every day for personally relevant talk and for planning and doing village work assignments. This design has proved very useful both as a means of caring for ourselves and as a means of doing our common work in a most collaborative and fair manner.

The default agenda for a Clan:

1. Introduce new members
2. Review village work assignments and responsibilities
3. Use the remaining time in a talk and listen format. The recommended talk and listen format divides the time equally among all members of the group and appoints a timer to tell each person when his or her time is used. In that allotted time, each person may say anything they wish without being interrupted or questioned by the others. The others just listen. This is deep wisdom: being affirmatively listened to by a group is quite refreshing and healing. It is also very instructive to the listeners—providing vivid experiences of the actual lives that people are living.
4. Resolve confusions that can be handled by the attending Clan members

5. Close with a group hug.

d. The Council

The Council is the main programmatic working body of the meeting. Here proposals are developed for Plenary consideration, for the proceedings of the meeting, and for action after the meeting. Here are some of the Councils now being recommended: Ecology, Education, Health, Spirituality, Indigenous Traditions, Art & Celebration, Youth, and Children. Other Councils can be organized upon request. Councils may be any size and if quite large may need to subdivide into smaller working groups. For example, the Ecology Council might sub-divide into working groups on networking, local empowerment, continental support of specific places, organizing the bioregional movement, mapping, planetary strategy, or deep ecology.

The default agenda for a Council:

1. Approve focalizers or facilitators
2. Select recorders and translators
3. Perhaps sing a song
4. Introduce members unless there is a fairly quick sub-division of the Council, in which case introductions can best be made in the sub-groupings.
5. Perhaps approve a question for a disciplined round of responses
6. Set overall context for the work of the day and/or week
7. Start work together and then perhaps divide up into groups
8. Perhaps reassemble for reports and ritual closing

e. The Workshop

The workshop is an hour and 20 minute event initiated by a presenter or presenters who have something to share and their own means of sharing it. It is assumed that at least part of every workshop would be open discussion, questions and answers, or some other participatory process.

The default agenda for a Workshop:

1. Introduction of leaders and translators
2. Selection of recorder, if desired
3. If practical, introduce all attendees
4. The presenter-initiated talk or process
5. The presenter-led question and answer period or some other participatory process
6. Closing announced in time for attendees to move on to the next event

II. THE DEFAULT WEEKLY SCHEDULE

1. The Registration Day

In the registration process, each participant is asked to choose a Council and is assigned a Clan. The turtle pendant indicates the completion of registration and should be worn at all times. The Clan assignment can be fixed to the back of the turtle pendant and a colored string can indicate the Council choice.

Clan assignments can be completely random or persons who have attended previous village encampments may be placed in each Clan to give each Clan some informal leadership. The work assignments should be pointed out during the registration process—especially to the members of those Clans who have work assignments the first day. Perhaps all registrants should be apprised of their work assignments for the week and enabled to see the fairness of the work construct and its flexibilities. If the details of the work structures are prepared ahead of registration and explained to each registrant, this will avoid many problems later on.

Also, the turtle pendant can serve as an entry pass to the grounds and perhaps as a meal ticket. A more elaborate meal ticket may be preferred. It is highly recommended that only registered persons be admitted to the meal lines. It is also highly recommended that camping and cooking on the grounds by non-registered persons be discouraged.

If possible a breakfast meal should be served to

the meeting organizers and volunteers who are setting up the meeting. At this breakfast meal, the first administrative meetings of the week can be held. At 2:00 pm, the first meal, perhaps only a snack, for early arrivals might take place. By 6:30 the kitchen needs to be in full swing and a meal provided to all registered persons. Organizers and early arriving volunteers will need to prepare those first meals, since the work structures cannot begin until Monday morning. And the registration process needs to begin early in the day in order to provide meal tickets for these meals and begin organizing volunteers to prepare them.

Registrants may also be asked if they are planning to conduct a workshop, whether they have already turned in their workshop form, and, if not, given a form and instructed on how to fill it out. (See Day Two discussion below for a full explanation of a recommended workshop scheduling process.)

2. The First Day: Orientation Day

Establishing the Morning Circle, the Clans, and the Councils is the main task of the first day.

The Morning Circle on this first day will need to be extended into an orientation Plenary for all persons, both new and experienced. This Plenary is a ritual of beginning for all attendees. At this Plenary we can begin orienting everyone to the village design and we can review the basic tenants and history of bioregionalism. We can welcome everyone to the place of meeting. We can introduce the key administrative leadership. We can introduce the Council focalizers. And we most certainly need to explain carefully how everyone can be involved in the decision-making processes. This includes an explanation of the Administrative Center and announcement boards. It includes an explanation of the openness of the Administrative Meetings at breakfast time. It includes an explanation of the consensus process to be used in Plenaries and Councils.

Then Council meeting places for the afternoon need to be clarified.

We then conclude the morning in Clans, allowing a full 60 minutes for Clan organization and the first meeting of the Clans. If the Clans get off to a good start this first day and if meaningful bonding and interest in Clan membership develops, both the working together as Clans and the care provided in Clans can be enjoyable and fruitful. If Clans are not smoothly formed and well attended this first day, the work structures may suffer for the entire week. Further, we must not minimize the value of having a “family” of diverse backgrounds with whom to meet and share experiences.

In the afternoon block of the first day, the default schedule calls for the first meeting of the Councils. This is the best way to orient new people: put them in a Council along-side experienced persons and let them go to work. All the details of orientation do not have to take place on this first day. Elements of orientation (and review) can take place during each Morning Circle all week long. Spending the whole day in Plenary this first day is a serious mistake. Get people into smaller more participatory contexts as soon as possible. A two-hour Plenary should be long enough to get people clear enough to function meaningfully in the whole round of village life.

At the beginning of the Councils meetings on this first day, the focalizers can be prepared to give a short but inspiring talk about the task of their Council and its potential work for the week. This talk can satisfy some of the need people feel for orientation. And, in these smaller groups, questions can be fielded from those who are still feeling disorientation.

3. The Second and Third Days

The morning of the second day can have a relatively brief Morning Circle, and then everyone can go into a 30 minute Clan meeting to be followed by a second Council meeting. These designs will now be familiar to those who attended the first day. The Workshop is an additional design to be introduced the second day. Workshops can begin on the afternoon of the second day and take place both morning and

afternoon on the third day.

The main task of this Plenary is to explain the workshop scheduling and clarify how everyone can choose and find the workshops of their choice. Doing oral pitches for these workshops is not required if the following process has been used. Have everyone who wants to conduct a workshop be given a form for doing so when they register. This form may also have been mailed out to registrants before they came to the meeting. This form needs to ask for these four items: (1) the title of the workshop, (2) an illuminating sub-title, (3) the presenter(s) name(s), and (4) a sentence about the presenter(s). The form needs to also provide space for a translation into English or a translation into Spanish. The entire form needs to be no larger than a half sheet of paper. If the translation has not been completed when the presenter registers, translators can be made available to assist with that task in the registration area on registration day. Then the half-page workshop form, with translation into both languages, is placed on the bulletin board at the administrative center or near the Morning Circle gathering place. A workshop coordinator assigns each workshop a place and a meeting time, and all this is posted clearly. Presenters can approach the workshop coordinator with suggestions and changes as needed. If all this has been done, then all that remains to be done at the Morning Circle of the second day is to clarify any confusions that have arisen or to iron out any difficulties with the scheduling.

The default weekly schedule suggested above provides eight workshop periods of 1 hour and 20 minutes each with a 10 minute break between—two periods on the afternoon of the second day, four periods on the third day, and then two more periods on day five. If there are 12 places for workshops to meet, this schedule provides space for 96 workshops. Other events may be scheduled in the evenings before, during, or after the evening meal. These events need also to be scheduled with the assistance of the workshop coordinator. Anyone wanting to attend any of the scheduled events can go to the bulletin board and find all the information they need. If more information is needed,

access to the workshop coordinator can be provided. In the next major section of this manual, the full functioning of the administrative center will be outlined.

4. The Fourth Day: Community Work Day

The community work day will need to be planned by the site committee before the meeting begins. This day can be contexted at the opening Plenary on day one and then again at the Morning Circle on day four. If day four is not a convenient day to do the community work day, day three is a possibility, but day four is by far the best day for a work break from the other forms of work. This day can be a most exciting and rewarding experience for all involved. It needs to be carefully organized and enthusiastically explained to everyone.

5. The Fifth Day

The morning of the fifth day is the last day that Councils meet before they take their resolutions and reports to the Plenary on day six. The main burden of the Morning Circle on day five is to clarify how the Plenary on day six will be conducted and what and how each Council needs to prepare to do its presentations.

6. The Sixth Day: Plenary Day

This is a crucial day in the week-long meeting. A careful agenda for resolutions and reports needs to be constructed and excellent facilitation provided for these six or more hours of Plenary time.

7. The Seventh Day: Wrap-Up Day

The last Sunday morning of the week may need to include a wrap-up Plenary, wrapping up the loose ends left from the sixth day Plenaries and preparing for the dismantlement and clean up of the encampment. The breakfast meetings of the coordination committees can begin the evaluation of the entire meeting. Perhaps part of the Plenary time can also be used for evalua-

tion.

The clean-up processes can surely begin on this day and hopefully be completed on the following day.

8. Scheduling Flexibilities and Priorities

The daily and weekly schedule is open to change throughout the week and these changes are proposed and consensed upon in Morning Circles and Plenaries. Morning Circle must be attended to participate in the scheduling changes. Attending Morning Circle is also the surest way to be fully informed about the schedule for that day. Announcements of schedule changes do, however, need to be posted on the program announcement board and/or printed in the next day's newsletter.

The default agenda includes a Quiet Time scheduled from 1:00 pm until sunrise. The village life suffers sleep deprivation if drumming and other loud noises are permitted to extend throughout the night. A sunrise celebration is encouraged, but its location might be placed somewhat distant from the sleeping tents.

Meal times are a crucial factor to keep in tact. To assure this, the Clans assigned to kitchen help, must make kitchen work one of their most pressing priorities and plan to have fun preparing food together. Food supervisors and hired help must also be apprised of the need to have meals ready on time, and need to be prepared to make full use of the Clans' help. Further, it would help if, at all times, there were a person in the kitchen who can speak both English and Spanish. If the day's schedule is delayed no more than 30 minutes, time for the day's activities can be recovered. But when we begin to run an hour late, serious sacrifices are entailed. In time scheduling, we might say that our aim is to find that flexible and patient, yet disciplined middle ground between harsh efficiency and total chaos.

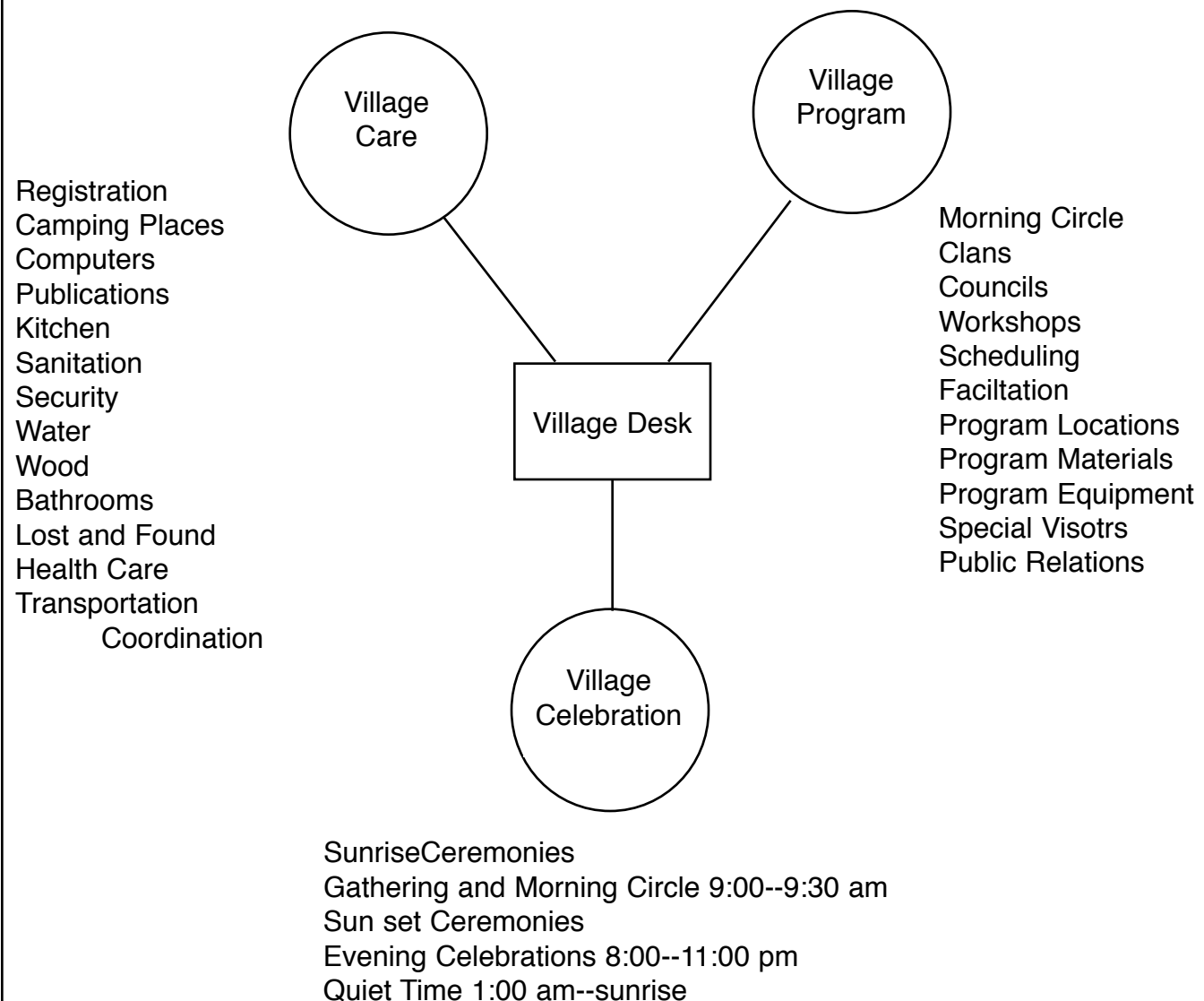
III. THE VILLAGE ADMINISTRATIVE CENTER

The administration of a small meeting can be done by a few people in an informal manner, but as our village life approaches 400 to 1000 people, a more formalized administrative design is necessary if we are going to avoid overloading a few people. We also need an adequate and simple format which practically enables all persons to participate in the decision-making processes. The following is a design that has promise in solving some of the problems we

have been experiencing. This design, like all designs in this manual, is presented as a default design. Changes are always appropriate where needed. The following diagram places all the tasks of administering the village life into three groups of tasks. These three sets of tasks are each given a physical space—a building, a tent, a table, —-at the very least, a bulletin board. Let us call these places, The Village Care Center, The Village Program Center and The Village Celebration Center. Then, three sets of administrative coordinators are assigned to work in loose connection with these three administrative spaces.

1. The Village Desk

THE VILLAGE LIFE ADMINSTRATIVE CENTER



The village desk is a fourth physical place in the administrative center. It is located in easy walking distance from all three administrative centers. It is occupied from 8 am to 8 pm by one human being fluent in both English and Spanish or by two human beings, one fluent in English and one in Spanish. The village desk provides a point of contact with the administrative design for all participants at the meeting. It is also the first place to go as new people join the meeting. The task of occupying the village desk can be accomplished by assigning one or two Clans each day to this task. Each member of the Clan will thus need to spend no more than two hours doing this duty. The persons sitting at the village desk do not register people or solve difficult problems. They link the inquiring person with the appropriate coordinators in the appropriate administrative center.

2. The Village Care Center

The list of tasks to the left of the Village Care circle defines the array of tasks handled at this location. A bulletin board states where the appropriate coordinator can be found. Persons are perhaps working on computers at this location. The storage of various supplies like soap, toilet paper, and water may also be at this location.

3. The Village Program Center

The list of tasks to the right of the Village Program circle defines the array of tasks handled at this location. A bulletin board states where the appropriate coordinator can be found. A large bulletin board with a complete schedule of all program events is also present at this location. This location may also be the check-out place for program equipment and materials.

4. The Village Celebration Center

The list of tasks beneath the Village Celebration circle defines the array of tasks handled at this location. A bulletin board also exists at this location containing notices of celebration

planning meetings, the locations of celebration coordinators, and other relative data having to do with this list of activities.

5. The Administrative Coordinators

Each of the three branches of the Village Administration Center has three overall coordinators—at least one man, at least one women, at least one person who speaks both Spanish and English. Other qualities of human diversity may also be considered. Competence to do the job, however, is the first priority for all nine of these coordinators.

In addition to these three sets of three coordinators, other persons are selected to coordinate specific activities as needed.

6. The Village Coordination Circles

At breakfast each day, three meetings take place—one for each administrative center. Joint meetings may be held whenever this seems best. Let us call this joint meeting The Village Coordination Circle. Let us call the separate meetings: The Village Care Circle, The Village Program Circle and The Village Celebration Circle. The three overall coordinators for each Village center, along with all the specific coordinators for that center, and all other interested persons and volunteers, meet together and face the issues of that day. Anyone is welcome to these meetings, but each attendee must be made aware that a consensus process is being facilitated and an agenda is being followed.

7. The Mood Watchers

In addition to the nine coordinators, there are three persons appointed as mood watchers for the overall meeting. These persons have no specific administrative assignments, but roam the entire village asking questions and listening for issues that need solution and looking for challenges that need responses. The mood watchers attend one or more of the breakfast meetings and report their findings or make their recommendations. The mood watchers may also add their practical assistance to those are-

nas that are most in crises. These three persons may not be the only mood watchers in the village, but they are three persons expected to do this important work and are, ideally, persons who can be trusted to do it well.

These custodians of the overall mood of the village are servant leaders, not dictators. The Plenary is the overall authority. The administrative meetings, the administrative coordinators and the mood watchers derive their authority from the expectations of the whole Plenary that these tasks are to be done.

8. Other Administrative Roles

Other administrative roles may be desired, such as:

Crafts House Managers
Snack Bar Managers
Information Exchange and Book Store Managers
Market Tent Managers

9. Hired Personnel

Hired personnel may also be desired, such as:

Kitchen Supervisors
Meal Planners, and Food Shoppers
Cooks
Kitchen Workers
Sanitation Workers
Security Guards

These persons are hired and supervised by the appropriate administrative coordinators.

10. Burn-out and Democracy

The purpose of this administrative design is not to make matters complex, but to spread out responsibilities to many people and yet maintain a practical unity and connection among every organizer and every participant in the meeting.

Burn-out is caused when a person has been

put in the position of having to handle too many decisions about too many problems with too few linkages with other responsible and willing people. This design, flexibly and sensibly implemented, can spread out the decision-making and action demands in a logical and workable fashion.

Also central in the values being supported by this design is the value of democracy—of maximizing participation in all the decisions that are taking place in the village life. Unless people know where to go for information and how to get things done, they feel left out and revert to blaming they know not who for whatever troubles them. If people see clearly that there is an understandable and workable administrative design in place, they can throw their energy into being part of the solution to issues that arise.

IV. THE GLORY OF VILLAGE CARE

(In this section of the manual, the details of doing village care can be spelled out—meal menus, sanitation practices, security models, the number of computers needed, the Voice of the Turtle heritage, transportation models, health center wisdom, work structuring, etc.)

V. THE PARAMETERS OF CELEBRATIONAL LIFE

(In this section of the manual, the details for doing celebrational life can be spelled out. What has been done in the past can be summarized, and why this heritage was useful can

be explained.)

VI. THE PURPOSES OF PROGRAMATIC WORK

(In this section of the manual, our experience

on what it means to do good programatic work can be shared. This section might be designed to assist Morning Circle facilitators, Council focalizers and Workshop presenters to do a better job.)

VII. THE SELECTION OF A SITE

(The success of the meeting begins with the selection of the site and of the locally residing team of people who will set up that site for the meeting. This section of the manual can hold our wisdom on these matters.)

VIII. RECRUITMENT, BROCHURES, AND PUBLICITY

(In this section of the manual, we can share our accumulated wisdom on the details of successfully getting people mobilized to attend the meeting.)

IX. FINANCIAL MODELS AND METHODS

(In this section of the manual, we can share our accumulated wisdom on all the details having to do money.)

X. PARTICIPANT MAILING LISTS AND PROCEEDINGS

(In this section of the manual, we can record our wisdom on producing a participant mailing list to give to each participant and our wisdom on preparing a manageable but informative proceedings of the meeting.)