

Tepoztlán is not for sale! Tepoztlán will not surrender!

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Tepoztlán Is Not For Sale! Tepoztlán Will Not Surrender! Thus the mantra of a dangerous war of resistance to being absorbed by Big Capital waged and won by citizens of an ancient community now less than one superhighway hour south of Mexico City. To block a megadevelopment on communal land, a tourism and remittances dependent Tepoztlán went into a siege mode (1994-8). Recounting the “No to the Golf Club” struggle, I also put the case that there are still two superpowers: the US dominated political/corporate alliance and a community strategically organized to gain the benefits of transacting in a Free Market without losing control over the allocation, use, and transformation of its tradable common property resources.

Not coincidentally, project dimensions become known only as the NAFTA comes into effect. A hugely empowered consortium intends to transform 200 ha of rural communal land into a “golfer’s paradise”.

Also on the drawing board are hundreds of millions of dollars of commercial facilities. Though in a deep recession, members of a corporately organized Tepoztlán coalesce around a risky refusal to grant the permit legally necessary to change the use of the land. At many levels, the project responds to the angst and hopes of citizens.

But reasons for refusal are structurally sound. The quality of the jobs are not what people want for their children. An inflow of a reserve army will burden the already endangered environment. Undermined will be pluralistic infra- and superstructures created to make it feasible for all members to work toward a modern lifestyle. The millenarian campaign I now frame can serve as a model for other David/Goliath defenses of the resource of community in the time of globalization.

We are all Tepoztlán and Tepoztlán is Us! During a debate phase, leaders from all factions meet nightly. Recognizing the requirement for steadfast unity, voice is ceded to a Committee of a United Tepoztlán. With a deep history of State aggression, the campaign plotted stresses interventions that maximize media coverage but minimize danger to citizens and basic cooperative institutions. And though leaving negotiation space, leaders make it clear that there can be no compromise on the human and

constitutional rights of citizens meeting in free assembly to control the allocation of the commons.

D-Day, 24 August 1995. Citizens learn a politically suspect mayor has secretly granted the permit to change the use of the land.

They seize the municipal government. All portals are barricaded and 24-hour guards posted. In a calculated effort to gain the world's attention and support, numerous sound bite astute events are staged, such as marches to Cuernavaca and Mexico City. Defiant slogans cover almost every surface of the beautiful mountain municipality. Meanwhile, the Morelos Governor issues more than 100 arrest warrants and cuts off local funding. Movement leaders communicate via nightly meetings in the Plaza.

And always on the frontline are late modern women explicitly and individually and collectively going out as rural homemakers.

Press releases invoke the Constitution as both protection and justification. A key assertion is the obligation to impeach traitors. A first ever grassroots and squeaky clean municipal election ensues. The Governor refuses to recognize this new Provisional Council.

Denouement. 13 April 1996, Tepoztecan by the thousands assemble to somberly receive the pine coffin of Marcus Olmedo, a 70 year old campesino and now martyr. This is the way things happened.

To commemorate Zapata's assassination, an excursion, composed mainly of mothers, children, and seniors, sets out. It will culminate with the presentation of a "polite" petition to President Zedillo, on hand in Morelos to make a commemorative address. On a deserted road, a police phalanx blocks the group. Guns drawn, nightsticks flaying, they storm conveyances.

Tepoztecans run into the fields. But many citizens are captured and forced to stand some eight hours in the punishing sun. Water, lunches, and hats are taken by taunting police (men and women) who do allow even children to break ranks. The torture continues through the night. The Red Cross is not allowed to treat even the most severely wounded. As the attack begins Don Marcos tries to shield a person being beaten. Savagely, a policeman drags him from the bus. Shots ring out. Lifeless, he is put

into a police van where he is allowed to bleed to death. Next day, his corpse is found trussed up inside a duffle bag, discarded in a ditch many miles from the murder scene.

The Governor goes on TV. Tepoztecan were the aggressors. Police only defended themselves. A 3-minute video follows. A citizen has taped the assault on Don Marcos. Next day the consortium announces the “definite cancellation” of the Golf Club. But citizens view the price paid as too great and interpret the cancellation as only one stage in a long ongoing and increasingly predatory attempt to control development agendas.

Conclusions. Transnational Tepoztlán returned to Prehispanic forms to enlist already tested dependent society coping strengths. Power is first germinated in the barrios, then gravitates upward. Yet this was no atavistic movement but a fully late modern struggle that turned on its head techniques dominant orders use to restructure in ways that diminish the ability of a civil society to control development. Further, as has historically been the case, the most vulnerable activists were sent to the front where they constitute an expendable volunteer army. So, resistance invokes two enduring myths of pluralistic community. One is that all members have decision making powers. Yet especially in turbulent times, citizens opt to increase the pre-existing power of local gatekeepers. This pragmatic not fetishized decision is more dangerous now that gatekeepers regularly enlist compelling Free Market production technologies and reproductive ideologies.

Paradoxically, also exploded is the “tragedy of the commons” paradigm. For, the Golf Club demonstrates there is no inherent structural reason why a corporate community cannot organize to enact its own global economy future.

Follow up questions crucial to late anthropology emerge from this movement.

Can a sociality act rationally in ways that go so against the neoliberal grain? Is it possible to equip children to achieve when firms are shut out of the economy? Can a profound reliance on such a modern sending-and-receiving economy as post-peasant Tepoztlán’s ever be integrated into a communitarian fabric? Indeed, is resistance even desirable given the vast resources of the establishment? However, most vital is to evaluate the impact on foot soldiers of late modern weapons of the weak. Significant to this actor oriented agenda is that while vested in historically familiar mechanisms

affording disguises to entrenched age, class, and gender divisions, in fact, coping strategies change fundamentally to accord with locally specific structural adjustment texts and also to actor situated contexts of adaptation to new power systems. To be noted as well is that besides the physical perils, some social and economic disruptions were unsustainable at family/household levels. Then the conceptual task is twofold. First is to blue print forces converging from the outside in and the inside out. Second is to testify ethnographically and politically to the kind of community citizens really want to create and, furthermore, can agree to sustain when the entry price into the brave New Economy is the expendability of its most vulnerable citizen members.