

The “Wirikutas” in defense of the sacred land... cosmopolitics, peyote and the role of new ethnicities struggling against transnational mining in northern Mexico

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In recent years resistance strategies against extractive imperative in Mexico have focused on generating local protests with demands addressed to national authorities without any success. In addition, the Mexican State appears increasingly unable to make radical decisions that may stop the extractive wave, due to international pressures as those exerted by NAFTA. Few actors have created specific counter-development initiatives with ample capacity to effect change in local realities and threatened territories.

In the struggle to preserve their ceremonial areas to the possible intrusion of transnational mining industry in the Natural Sacred Site Wirikuta, the wixarika ethnic group has modified several of their traditional patterns of life. An example is the gradual but careful opening of their intimate worldview and spaces to non-indigenous actors. This contact has an historical background related to academia, but also with a growing interest of groups with spiritual, cultural or psychedelic interest in the mystical side of Wirikuta. A sort of reconnection with nature or a re-twinning with the indigenous is set here, creating new communities that have initiated a joint struggle against the intrusion of Canadian mining companies. In this paper I will address this case to the light of the recognition of indigenous rights and their effectiveness, as well as cosmopolitics as a guide to understanding the new actors on the scene, under the umbrella of risk as the motor of social change.

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