

Marakate – the people of knowledge



Article by Marius Enrico Hannig

In northwestern Mexico in the high desert of the Sierra Madre Occidental lives a primitive tribe, which has preserved its spiritual culture for millennia. The Spanish people called them Los Huicholes, and they call themselves Wixárika – the healers.

The wise ones from the tribe take a lifelong journey where they commit themselves to learn the spiritual processes of the nature and gradually become the people of knowledge – Marakate. The Marakamés are the spiritual leaders of their tribes. They learn the ability to see all things as they really are, develop extraordinary healing powers, and in accordance with the natural forces determine all processes of everyday life of their community.

The Wixárika have preserved their spiritual practises until today. The resulting shamanic knowledge is deeply rooted into their life and it is has been constantly renewed and extended through their ceremonies, pilgrimages and festivals.

By doing so they are able to pass their tradition to the next generations and keep the knowledge alive. They live their life with dedication and passion and without any immoderate material expectations. For them life is a constantly renewable initiation in the mysteries of nature. With their annual pilgrimage to the holy area Wirikuta, the energetic center of the Earth, with ceremonies and offerings they provide a balance between giving and taking, human beings and nature. They initiate themselves into the mysteries of creation.

On this arduous journey into the desert the Wirikuta are visiting thousands of years old sacred places to communicate directly with the powers of Nature and to receive visions. For the Marakamés and the pilgrims the whole journey to Wirikuta presents a continuous sacrifice and make a confession to their own life.

For several days and nights a variety of ceremonies and rituals are held without sleep and food. The most significant activity is the encounter with the blue deer, which is traditionally being haunted in the form of the peyote cactus (Hikuri) in the area of Wirikuta.

By taking the cactus in the nightly ceremonies and through the ritual, through sacrifices as well as dancing and loud singing of the Marakamés very powerful visions and deep insights into life become accessible. The ceremonies are deeply emotional, spiritual and body purifying, by which big powers are being released. In this process the Marakamés feel themselves as incarnations of their gods and ancestral. The archaic rituals in the long cold nights of the desert are mirrors for one's soul, in which the Marakamés plunge into the depths of their own inner cosmos, enter other worlds, encounter mythical creatures and get to know the mystery of death and life .

The ceremonies end with the sunrise. The sun transforms the experiences of the darkness and allows the rebirth of a new life to start with new power to be able to go the path of the heart, and to learn and take part in the healing. The people of Wixárika are one of the few indigenous people on earth who managed to defend its cult with sacred plants against all external influences until today.

Today, the sacred place Wirikuta is threatened by the mining corporations which are contaminating the earth with chemicals by the degradation of noble metals in that area, and by that are threatening the growth-basis for the endangered peyote - cactus. Even the traditional deer hunting, which is taking place at the end of the annual pilgrimage in Wirikuta, cannot be longer performed due to the privatisation of protected areas. They are being chased with guns by the new owners, and are now forced to place their own enclosure on their territories, where they can do the deer hunt.

Therefore, the people of Wixárika immediately need financial and professional support.

If you want to know more about the Wixárika, take part in projects or pilgrimages, contact the registered association Mother Earth Institute in Germany, Berlin.

For more information

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