

Becoming Tribal, Thinking Beyond Myth: Ecuadorian Indigenism as Performative Givenness and the Postmodern Event

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Abstract

This inquiry will explore native-inspired practices through the lens and hosting of performance driven by contemporary events. Particularly, it will be argued how Andean rituals and practices might have some a link and extension to 21st century art of performance. The purpose is to grasp Andean practices out of heterogeneity, replacing an old outlook based on myths with a philosophical one in line with postmodern culture. In this “transition” lie the research questions and the enquiry of the problem: whether and by what means it will be possible to embrace Indigenism from heterogeneity and “performative art”, and how this journey from myth to philosophical thought will be executed. This issue and the questions that follow point to a knowledge vacuum, a gap that needs filling. Such scenes of existing on the age-old fringes might welcome “givennesses”—in the present case—as a matter within reach of the lifeworld; and therefore these *expressions* and *experiences* are now to be grasped in terms of performativity within a postmodern event sphere. The event works as an intertwining of nothingness, being and the outburst of difference, which is indeed concrete, specific, experiential; yet it cannot be reduced to, encapsulate into or abridged to practices, specifics or manifestations. The concepts or thoughts in this text—as in Deleuze’s—are not alleged to be abstract, speculative; rather, they take place where the forces—the difference—become without the ideas or theories drawn out of such expressions being detached from their infinite potential movements. By means of a line of flight, a novel sense beyond magic and myth is found in such recomposition: a new meaning of a philosophical-artistic seal regarding the same practices already mentioned. The consequence of such Greek-inspired abandonment would result in the performance becoming tribalised.

Keywords: Ecuador, Indigenism, Latin American/Ecuadorian performance, performance, the event, performative Indigenous culture

In the context of various secular and spiritual galas that take place in Andean Communities (AC hereafter), this text seeks to shed light on what, at this point, might be called *Latin American Indigenous performance factors*, particularly those found in Ecuador. This first statement and façade are decisive.

If such “performing factors” were to elucidate Andean culture—to unveil the hidden—it would mean using a “critical” and “philosophical-artistic” approach “to reality” and no longer a legendary or mythical one. The displacing process that turns one’s *home culture* into another from the *alienworld* (Steinbock, 1995)—so that Indigenism may become a key factor of contemporary thought—is what this paper seeks to do. This will be the first purpose of this work.

Consequently, the *topic of this essay* will be related to the inquiry of *how* and *if* the singular and ritual expressions of Ecuadorian Andean world—or those that fall under its own inspiration—could be seen from the multiple perspectives of the fleeting, the ephemeral or the vagrant, “the itinerant life”, that is, from that which cannot be systematised because it belongs to the domain of *repetitive difference*.

It is not the aim of this essay to carry out a search for an original Andean culture and the practices that configure it, the traditions themselves can be expanded; they are dynamic, they give rise to elements that had not previously been considered as being such.

In the religious-spiritual area, the festivities of *St. Peter’s Day* in Peguche (Ecuador) and the celebration of *Chimborazo* will be analyzed as illustrative examples, so to speak, of these *performance-based* occasions.

At the San Pedro *event* in Peguche, in the Ecuadorian province of Otavalo, the people worship the saints in a ritual that goes back to colonial times. The central feature of this cult event is dance, which is performed in a group by different members of the community dressed in costumes and outfits with a variety of symbols. The performers convey all their corporal strength and impulses through their actions in time with the rhythms of the instrumental band, as if they were connected to something or someone beyond or below the visible. They all take part in these events to pay tribute to the old villagers of the “haciendas”, the homesteads to which the Indigenous families belonged. Among the onlookers, different characters from Andean myths come to the fore. Rituals, folklore and the veneration of saints are part of a heritage that endures and strengthens the “identity” of the inhabitants from Peguche (Maldonado, 2018).

“Chimborazo”—a central province of Ecuador—, on the other hand, holds its harvest festival, the “jaguay”—in the Kichwa language, an expression of motivational impulse—, as a sacred ritual that takes place in free agricultural cooperation (*minga*), during which various chants are sung and the participants continue the celebration by drinking “chicha de jora”, a fermented concoction typical of Latin America, particularly Ecuador and consisting of jora corn, chancaca tapa (dried sugar cane juice, also known as panela), honey and water. In the “jaguay”, the

participants honour the earth, the wind, the water, the sun and the animals, as well as the owners of the harvest, to whom they express their gratitude and censure. After the song in *Quichua* (the indigenous language) sung by the oldest person in the group, the accompanying harvesters join in the chorus of “jahuay, jahuay, jahuay”, which means “go up, go ahead, go on”, which are nothing more than hymns and shouts to motivate the farmers.

Similarly, in the secular sphere, but in honour of Our Lady of Mercy, the celebration of Mama Negra—in Latacunga city—and the archaic myth-ritual dances and baths (Armay Chisi) of the Inti Raymi (Sun Festival), as well as the spiritual and thus human practices of the Andean Days of the Dead, may be seen as foreshadowing and embodying the images of Ecuador’s indigenous culture “on stage”, without neglecting other festivities and cultural memorials that are inspired by them and that somehow share their “civilising” context (Travel Pills, 2012).

This fiesta of Mama Negra (Black Mamma) in Cotopaxi is held in honour of the Virgen de la Merced (Virgin of Mercy), and although it is a very popular and sacred celebration, it has many profane elements, such as dances, music and characters, which enrich the celebration. Just as the November fiesta has a markedly secular character, the September one is deeply rooted in the sentiments of the Catholic Christian faith professed by the traders at the main popular markets of the city and by the people at large (Travel Pills, 2012).

Furthermore, the liturgical dances and ritual baths typical of the Inti Raymi (Sun Festival), as well as the indigenous rites of the Day of the Dead, are materialised and entirely practised at a very human and secular plane, all within a performing scene with a very strong ethnic and national stamp (Latvecuador, 2014; Terry, 2019).

In light of the above, and given the aim of this paper, this essay attempts to approach Andean practices from a range of views rather than a single focus; in terms of *difference* instead of a purposive standpoint: after all, guided by non-conceptual “realities” (*singularities*) as opposed to determinations—however abstract or eidetic—these replace a legendary, myth-based view with a philosophical one at the heart of contemporary culture.

It is precisely here that the *problem of research* and its agonising inquiry rapidly arises: *whether*, and in *which way*, it should be possible to capture Andean rites from the heterogeneous and performance; and *how*, if so, this scientific *transferring* from myth to philosophical thought could be both made feasible and brought to fruition. Once the *conflict* is cleared up, and only then—meaning the philosophical strategy of this journey—, would one achieve that “void knowledge content”, that gap in science-cognition to be reached.

The *evental register*—“the sphere of *the event*”—in which indigenous expressions unfold—once the *performative givenness* has taken place¹—, is shaped by *connections of forces* that dispense with *unity* and also with *meaning*—both terms understood from a metaphysical point of view. It is also made up of constellations of junctions, called “assemblages”, as well as linkages that extend from the vivid genesis to the necessary disappearance. (Heidegger, 1975). There is a reference here to the outburst of *difference* that reflects the *unique* as much as the *singular*; as it were, a life without *concepts*.

Such an event *works*, operates in an experiential, specific, concrete way (the bottom line is “works”, not “what is it?”); yet by no means does this entail that it is reducible to practices, nor to certain “manifestations” involving affects, singularities or perceptions; on the contrary, it goes beyond the mere concreteness or *occurrence* of a performing nature. Furthermore, the concepts or thoughts included in this text—as in so many of Deleuze’s—do not claim to be *abstract*, speculative, but they exist where *forces*—the repetition of difference—are ceaseless at work, without the *ideas* or *theories* arising from such *indigenous expressions* being detached from their infinite potential movements.

There is no allusion in this essay to the quest for *identity*—an issue that deserves, in any case, all respect and attention; not least since, in Deleuze’s texts, such *identities* either do not exist or have been displaced outside the *event* itself. In the field of post-structuralism, the object of interest turns out to be “what happens” or “what occurs” *plus* the *heterogeneous* forces that in one way or another underlie and traverse it.

In consequence, *relevance*—in this particular case—does not lie in “the search for truth, for *identity*” or on its political or social genesis, yet in the fact that “indigenous culture”—namely in Ecuador—can move from *myth* to *philosophical thinking* or undergo a major shift through the suitable strategy. *Should* and *when* this transformation be duly justified, it would lead to the conversion of a marginal culture into a philosophical problem of the first international order.

To make clear again the boundaries of this study, the inquiry at hand does not enter on *descriptions* bounded by the necessary *epoché* and *phenomenological reductions*. Moreover, the essay does not claim to discover any truth, as said, nor to practice any kind of demonstration. As already mentioned, this essay is not set in a transcendental area.

What springs up beneath surface is a single “intuition,” an unbreakable bond of thought and life, an abiding connection between mind and being (Ezcurdia, 2016). Indigenous expressions

¹ The world of traditions learnt since childhood—and coined by the ancestors—now gets a cultural gift or “givenness” from outside and hosts it in its “neighbourhood” and thereby transforms its surroundings. Consequently, this traditional old world is now controlled and reshaped by practices or codes coming from other cultures. In this particular case, this donation or *givenness* ends up happening on the part of *performativity*, which cohabits with the *event*. It is therefore given as a gift for the benefit of Andean culture, which in turn is duly and conveniently transformed by the new philosophy of *performance* (Steinbock, 1995).

do not speak of unity, of an Olympian culture, but rather of uniqueness, the repetition of difference, the juxtaposition of multiple and heterogeneous elements.

It is a matter of revealing something that had been hidden: indigenism in Latin America as a pre-Western culture inspired by *difference* and therefore located in postmodernity; this is what it is all about, unveiling the concealed to one's own world and its naive visitors. This is not only a rebellion, but a political revelation (Deleuze & Guattari, 1983, 2005). The purpose is to get to see the invisible where everything seemed still and comfortable (Henry, 2009).

Methodology

A further intention of this paper is to fuel a set of narratives based on questions and despair, rather than spur on some kind of premises assuming that everything is soundly right and that therefore success is guaranteed. The *event*, and consequently the *performance*, is not *described* “speaking as to the order and manner of things”: it is not *explained*. It might only happen to “resonate”:

Discussing discourse hints not only at the death of the master-narrative and the closure of processes branded by cattle irons and sealed by their limits—beginning and end—, but also refers, as Deleuze and Guattari (1983) suggests, to the parting of a means of representation: a “desire” based on shortage (endless pursuit) and hopeful lust instead of fertile thought. Desire, not wish: just desire. The latter builds, erects, forges homes and cities. Worlds! It connects and produces realities..., rather than filling a long void.

This should be borne in mind when reading the following: The event could happen, but it almost never does.

It does not mean that such methodological “triangulation” is intended to provide a more holistic and profound vision of Andean culture. The reason for approaching this essay with a cultural studies methodology and a variety of pathways, means and strategies lies in the fact that the use of disparate methodologies allows for the collection of knowledge that would otherwise be unattainable.

When reference is made to *origins*, it is in terms of their *spiral motion* and also their *genealogy*, not as some sort of *limit* or *determination* that would be more suitable to any kind of metaphysical approach. Estermann (1999, 2021) suggests that Quechua “is not a pure, truly indigenous and native culture, but a hybrid space and a syncretic universe that reflects the diverse cultural heritage of the vast majority of Quechua people” (p. 50).

At the outset of this text, it was said how anxious one was to understand indigenism in Ecuador, not as a *mythical* but as an “evental occurrence” (the *evental register*: a sphere of the postmodern event), and also “how it”—this *event*—and “if so” it could be approached from the multiplicity, *objective* and then *problem* of the quest; this opens the floodgate of a contemporary dam of knowledge to fill the previous *cognitive void* of this inquiry.

Surely the most relevant reason not to overlook this issue—the one posed by the *research problem*—deals with the passionate endeavour of this essay to provide an interpretation of *indigenous* customary *practices* in Ecuador from a decidedly post-structuralist perspective. It is hoped that such an approach will contribute not only to a central, first-order relocation of indigenous culture in Latin America, but also to a compilation of previously inaccessible knowledge on the subject.

Such an intellectual stance, if followed, will lead to the reception of new “elements” that were previously hidden, which would become the projection of a dynamic vision—through a *line of flight* (Deleuze, 1990; Deleuze & Guattari, 1983)—with respect to the *homeworld*, and beyond it, towards a place distant from one’s own culture or tradition.

This paper is not about reaching, arriving at, let alone proving any kind of truth; no attempt to demonstrate anything in the context of a “rigorous science” (Husserl, 2002). Rather, it has to do with a walk through *indigenous experiences*—in the same way that one can be moved by a scent, a gesture, a gaze—and feeling—as “éprouver”, in French: to be touched, to be moved, to yield to the temptation “to prove” the idea crossing the mind and body of what is glimpsed; but it is not an *affection* of the subject, who is merely part of what is happening, nor a degree of *force* around the *object*, pushed to the margins by what has taken place; it is simply a matter of being affected by what is being done.

The “Andean expression” arises, it is coming up, it is not related to the unitary organisation of the parts; it is not unity or identity, but rather something *prior* “genealogically” speaking: a concept that is not assembled into unity. In this “*expression* of experiences” there is no interiority that comes out at all—like a corpse surfacing to the surface; it is only an arising of the world, an awakening, an epiphany, a *vibration* or a *force* that manifests itself beyond *modern representation*—in Greece, however much some may insist, there was “no re-presentation”, only born as a result of the *modern age*, of *modernity* –. Consequently, this experience alluded to is one..., that is to say, that goes on before anyone possesses it—it is not something that belongs to me, it does not happen “to-me”.

What comes about is an unfolding on a *plane of immanence* (a non-transcendent surface where everything is linked without any hierarchy), on which there are a myriad connection of countless number (*forces*, *intensities*, *vibrations*, *becomings*). It is not a “thing” that happens, but an *ontological structure* (that is, a world-related framework) in which there is no *hierarchy* or *unity* and which *does not belong to anyone*, to a subject, ever! It is the world’s happening. That is why *transcendental empiricism* (a theory of how something new comes about) can be spoken of *prior* to the subject, and even “prior to” any judgement or perception. But there will be *captures of beings*, absolutely: one body will seize another out of *vibration*, out of *affection*, not out of mutual recognition. There will be a grasping of *becoming*.

I would not speak of this *transcendental empiricism* in terms of *universals*, but rather about *singular* conditions of experience that will make “the new” possible. Nor is the method intended to propose a *theory of knowledge*, but of *difference* (becoming), of how something

“new” *becomes* (all this, of course, in the sphere of *performance*—of art—and by projecting this “dramatic” process into the domain of a postmodern event). The *subject*, or rather *subjectivities*, do not know the here called “experience”, which is thought to be “without *self*”; as a “transcendental subject” it turns out to be *immanent* to experience, it does not point to any kind of truth resulting from an *intentional correlation* between subject and world.

This research therefore aims to say something that has not yet been thought of, either in its integrity or in its approach; in this regard, it lacks objective references, solid evidence, databases or rich and stable background information to contribute to the study. Undoubtedly, it is worth stating that, even if there are “captures of beings”, as has already been said, this study is not a *descriptive* one, of a phenomenological nature, in a *transcendental-aesthetic* scale of a pre-reflexive/reflexive nature, in no way is this the issue at stake. By “transcendental” here is meant, in popular terms and within a phenomenological context, a relationship between subject and world that points to a kind of truth that will never be abstract or separate from life.

Therefore, no attempt is made in this essay to *describe* “indigenous expressions” that, from a pre-reflective realm—the *Lifeworld* or *Lebenswelt*—and through the historical development of a science, should arrive “at a full-life of a reflexive nature” that would guarantee the impartiality of observations through *epoché* and phenomenological *reduction*.

By not attempting to *describe*, *poetics* becomes an irreplaceable element of the *event*—and, therefore, of *performance*—ensuring its rejection of representational language and its collusion with creation itself.

The event is something concrete that cannot be reduced to the concrete itself, but this does not mean that reflections on the event should be something abstract. The significant Deleuzian “*intuition*”, whose inspiration, structure and method are followed, is not a mere *cognitive function*—as Ezcurdia (2016) points out—but an *ontology* irreparably conjoined with life. That is, *indigenous expressions* and the *reflections* that result from them are two inextricably linked sides of the same coin. The transit or passage from *living matter* to *consciousness*, that is, the shift from the *unconscious* to the *conscious*—which is the *content of intuition*—would be precisely where *matter* would come to “satisfy its form” as *becoming*, as *difference*, according to Ezcurdia (2016) (exactly where *the return*—of *becoming*—transpires as an *event*). For Deleuze, *matter* is a constant process of variation, not a passivity: and knowledge is certified by “*reality*”, while reality is corroborated by knowledge.

In the particular case being discussed, *indigenous expressions* are first and foremost hermeneutically stripped of their mythical import in order to keep exclusively with those *practices* that are object of public manifestation and study. Then, through a *line of flight*, a *desiring process* is produced (meaning a *productive force* that always remains within immanence; it does not aim at an ideal objectuality), like a *transformation* leading to the abandonment of age-old Greece, of a metaphysical meaning (Hegel, 2018). Hence the path of *multiplicity* is found, which, from *performance* (*alienworld*) makes a donation (*givenness*) of itself to the ancient and mythical *homeland* of indigenism (Steinbock, 1995). In so doing, an

unprogrammable, non-categorical transformation is introduced, to the detriment of *abstractions* or in favour of singular multiplicities and any kind of assemblages that spill over into familiar indigenism.

The need to approach this study with concepts that match the nature of its ontological structures will allow, in terms of *contextual relevance*, to make visible institutions that, due to their complexity and everyday nature, have been hidden or displaced to the margins, as is the case of indigenous manifestations.

It should be stressed that these methods are subject to some inherent limitations and possible biases related to the diversity of perspectives involved in this analysis and to a philosophy of *the event* intrinsic to postmodernism—even in the 21st century. This already could imply a certain ideological implication or influence on the ongoing investigation.

Literature Review, Analysis, and Possible Gaps

To get an insight into the panorama and ideas of contemporary European post-dramatic expressions, the central text here would be Lehmann's *Postdramatic theatre* (2006) and definitely *The Logic of Sense* (Deleuze, 1990), the latter with a wider range of interests and trying to reconstruct new logics of meaning with implications in many areas of contemporary life, specifically in the art world. Some further classics in the field are Fischer-Lichte's (2008) book on performance aesthetics and Schechner's (2003) on performance theory, with additional philosophical contributions by Ramsés Leonardo Sánchez Soberano (2016). Also of particular merit is the academic literature by López-Antuñano (2023), who specializes in contemporary theatre, mainly in Europe, and has written a number of important publications on this subject.

Indeed, there exist countless scientific essays on post-drama, contemporary theatre and performance, but not so many that bring together, or at least succeed in doing so, theories, ideas—be they performative, literary or philosophical—on the one hand, and the concrete experience of evental performance art on the other.

One of Latin America's most renowned thinkers, Quijano (2007), has been trying to ascertain the meaning of "decoloniality," which is nothing less than an epistemic and political disengagement from European and colonial power. Additionally, Walter D. Mignolo (2010) is one of the main figures and exponents of decolonial thought in this region. As for Enrique Dussel (1995), who was one of the great continental thinkers and philosophers of 20th century: while educated in Europe, his work is highly regarded for its philosophical and political commitment to his native land.

Reference to European humanists is part of the processes of cultural hybridisation that are so present and widespread in contemporary thought. Through the *line of flight* (Deleuze & Guattari, 1983; Guattari, 2015), the aforementioned indigenous expressions would be tactically displaced from their homeworld (Steinbock, 1995) towards the *aionic* time inhabited by the

event in contemporary thought: *Logic of Sense* (Deleuze, 1990), *Event and World* (Romano, 2009), *Event and Time* (Romano, 2013), *There is: The Event and the Finitude of Appearance* (Romano, 2015) amongst others.

Indeed, different philosophical tendencies are currently moving in the same direction, while others—from different standpoints—are trying to overcome this transdisciplinary perspectivism, which is not committed to the world itself beyond what is implied by the fact of being just another perception in the middle kingdom of non-being.

Theoretical Framework

A Brief Note on Identity in Indigenous Latin America

The *Nepantla* symbolises an intermediate “space”, a transit zone—a liminal place and non-place between existence and non-existence, and between what is and what is not. This means the indefinable, that which cannot be determined or identified in the nucleus of individual essence, which would define what something is. (Anzaldúa, 1987; Bhabha, 1990; Gallegos, 2024; Sánchez de Tagle, 2022). The Nahuatl (an indigenous Mexican language) word “nepantla” is central to indigenous worldviews in Latin America.”

The following is not about thinking the *nature*, the *identity* of Indigenism, (never!), but of “what it is” that Indigenous embodiment *does or is doing*; “what is seen here” of what is being performed, what one “*encounters*,” what *there is*....; what *happens*, what *becomes* of it, “how it all runs” from inside—not from outside—of what is taking place. Once again, it is emphasised that the essay attempts to explore the confluence of times, spaces and events that constitutes the *encounter* and the *performance* (Bhabha, 1990; Steinbock, 1995).

For the people known today as the Aztecs and their descendants, time and space were not abstract concepts, intellectual ideas that existed outside of “reality”, but rather points at which they converged as *places* and *events* (the event is studied and analysed below in this same essay). In other words, time and space were elements that participated in the formation or constitution of the *nepantla*. Therefore, there is no radicality, extremism or compromise in the *nepantla*, but rather a nature of threshold, frontier or liminality: an intermediate zone.

Indigenism happens precisely through this interstitial space.

Deleuze’s Lines of Flight

To “describe” the process being followed, according to Habermas (1984, 1987) and his theory of communicative action, this essay aims to get a sense of language within the very dynamics of the *homeworld* (Steinbock, 1995), through *practices* that would give a tangible meaning to the so-called *expressions*; the latter, meaning such practices, more genuine than the linguistic expressions themselves. These pragmatic statements are not only language, but they also become culture. In other words, the approach that crystallises here is related to the “voiding or

inward stripping” of any hermeneutic vestige that remains stuck to the homeworld or its rules. The path opened up here is tied to the cutting off of those muddy flows that lead to the so-called *molar plane*—as it were: the denial of the smiling approval of... this “system”, for instance, and others of the same kind—and, in turn, their revolutionary severance from it; this in order to focus on what Indigenous Peoples “do”, for this “doing” that is being talked about is their own form of expression. The *molar plane* or activity refers to predefined and established structures such as concepts or institutions that can be identified, recognised and understood. These structures can be categorised or named and are abstract. By contrast, the molecular level focuses on movement and difference.

To get a sense on the *forces* involved in these *practices* could be considered as one of the scientific goals now under full serious discussion. Such “practices”—the Andean ones—when deprived or stripped of a mythical touch or content, will offer—through “givenness”—a tangible “new meaning” to such expressions of an indigenous stamp, now based on *singularity*, that of a *guest culture* inherited from an *alienworld*.

These elements, *evental elements*, or, if one wishes, those *events* whose *expressions* carry an artistic trait or sign, come to constitute “a doing”, they are an effective “being done”, and such “being doing” naturally invites, one might say, interpretation itself; that what is “to be seen” is there...—there is (Romano, 2009, 2013, 2015)—to be interpreted. In other words, and for the sake of emphasis, in the context of generative *pre-givenness* (Steinbock, 1995), the issues involved are habits, practices and pre-theoretical structures: those *alienworld* manifestations (*difference, becoming*) that now spill over into the ancestral and familiar myth-world are also part of the same *world of life*.

It is the same “self” that *lives life*, that lives the world, and whose experiences will be constitutive of the *intentional world* (of a *transcendental, reflective world*). Already in *The Crisis of the European Sciences* in 1936 (Husserl, 1970) it is observed how in these two spheres—the *pre-reflective* and the *intentional*, the transcendental one—there is an inextricable interplay and unity. It is not feasible to speak of practical expressions on the one hand and reflexive utterances on the other. This spilling over or “givenness” is the only phenomenological instant in the whole process which, in what remains, follows a pure *ontology of the event*.

The issue and the *course of action* under *investigation* is that *something is happening*, takes place: an “indigenous expression”, so to speak. Consequently, an “idea” comes up: a *thought conjoined to said expression* makes it known that such an Andean celebration “is not”—formally speaking—part of *unity*: the oneness, the identity. On the contrary, it seems “to be” a pre-Olympic liturgy, or rather, *it functions* like a *multiplicity*. At this point a *vector of deterritorialisation* is being drawn, in other words, a *line of flight*. This “fleeing” could refer to the evasion of *borders*, of a *teleology*, of a *determination*, in short, to a disruption and a destruction of the so-called “closed concepts”. Let the methodological tract be continued: a *line of escape*, a *disorganisation* does not imply *only a shift*, in this case a *transformation of indigenism*; it also entails what one might call—in the framework of Deleuze’s philosophy—a

redistribution of the possible. The latter opens the path to a *reconfiguration of forces* and foreshadows *the state of novelty* within the structure of *difference* (Deleuze, 1990; Deleuze & Guattari, 1983; Parr, 2010; Zourabichvili, 2012).

Guattari's (2015) *line of flight* may well be the most appropriate strategy for the case at hand, since it is not so much a matter of *reterritorialising* a concept or destroying the meaning of metaphysics itself, but of daring to break all the possible paths leading to an *end*, and stumble—without predetermination or groundwork—upon the unexpected or revolutionary discovery.

Vectors of deterritorialization are processes of *becoming*, if this expression is allowed; *devises* of breaking those particular and codified lines that intertwine the world in order to move away from those means of elaborating knowledge that have a hierarchical, arboreal identity and opt for the *rhizomatic* (like the ginger plant, which has a robust rhizome below); in other words, choose *difference*. It is about breaking or shifting these foreseen or possible processes in a direction not presumed in the route and making them independent of an old/future sequence of actions; a way of finding—through *encounters* beyond the feasible—a discovery or a new, unpredictable and unexpected element (Deleuze & Guattari, 1983). The line of flight would be that dazzling moment or flow in which something or someone deviates from established processes and habits to embark on a new path, direction or set of ideas. This would not only imply novelty or transformation, but also a state of becoming.

The surrounding worlds, traditions, homeworlds can be expanded, they are dynamic, and come to *produce* elements that were not previously defined as such. Through the use of *cartographies*—those deserted charts that are not imprinted but chanted, as in the oral tradition (Anzaldúa, 1987)—one tries to locate new spaces, but *without naming them*, perhaps by using *nomadic* and *dynamic* concepts, *percepts* and *affects* as well (Deleuze, 1990).

This is precisely the pivot, the fulcrum; the *lines of escape* are thrust out of that liminality between what exists and what does not exist (the boundary between being and not-being); it is not something that “is” but “is not complete” (that would be a *simulacrum*), but something that *is born into being and simultaneously is not*, and the cycle begins over again. It is the ongoing and inexorable cycle of being born and of concurrently perishing (Heidegger, 2015).

This *finding*, should it be deemed pertinent to be thought of, might also be taken as relevant, since, if so—and given that Andean culture is on the edge of Western abstract forms—it would lead to the perception of *indigenous practices*, in this case Ecuadorian ones, as being appropriate to be located and interpreted in the sphere of *contemporary event* (Badiou, 2007).

The mythical concepts that were used to approach indigenous expressions are now replaced by *nomadic concepts*, by *cartographies*—the treatment of which will be the subject of a later study. It is precisely in the Lifeworld, so intimately bound up with that steady flowering of the natural, world-living self, that *givenness* takes place, right in the happening of that performative existence of a pre-reflective and, moreover, practical character. And it is exactly in this space that the *matter* of the event, which asserts itself as the will to power, hosts this return as a

differential fact, as multiplicity, as something heterogeneous in the heat of the *intuitive form* of the event, the central axis of Deleuze's ontology.

Something quite similar happens with *poetics* in the “evental site” (Badiou, 1988), where *thought*, willing to remain active, marginal, singular multiple, rebels against the very fact of being a *concept* (an abstraction) and seeks only the light of *intensity* (a vibration), which is always prior to the idea. Certainly, in other schools of thought, knowledge may be transmitted as content, but not in the approach taken here, where doctrine is only a gesture to be performed, a mode of becoming. Indeed, in other spheres of existence—it is insisted—the world is academically “described”. But in the one that is the subject of this study, the happening “resonates”, and this *resonance*, before any concept or idea, must open itself to *poetics* (Ezcurdia, 2016; Farges & Perreau, 2012; Husserl, 1970). This is just a way of thinking, far from being verified; the challenge will be whether it is possible to be thought, to be construed in this way.

The Event

With regard to the *event* covered in this section, it should be said that the term usually called *homeworld*—the pre-givenness itself (Steinbock, 1995)—would in this case be typified by its unwavering commitment to the traditional community and the distinctive elements that make it up: clothing, dances, the sounds uttered, music, all the gestures, attitudes or other actions that are performed. Non-linguistic expressions or practices are culture, as Habermas (1987) points out. In other words, whatever interpretation one makes of pre-givenness—this latter concept meaning the culture or tradition of a group—will of course be assuming the so-called homeland, the *homeworld*, via a *line of flight*. The door is opened to a discovery that is not possible, foreseeable, not announced in the traditional circle or its prospects; the latter—in French: *ligne de fuite*—leads the *cultural practices* of one's own world—by cutting them off from the expected processes—towards an adventure that would reach this alleged *absence* on its way to a definitive rebellion.

It all suggests that indigenous culture does not refer to a *distinct, abstract* form or concept, such as a *fundamental* or *logos* of immutable nature that refers to the *substance* of all that exists (Estermann, 2021). Rather, we are dealing with an interwoven system of co-dependent, cross-related, anarchic and heteronomous, non-substantial entities. For Andean thought, there are no absolute entities—in a narrow sense. Such a notion of the “absolute” is one of a Western origin and does not belong to an Andean cosmovision.

Regarding *infinity*, Estermann (2021) states that in the ontological scope of the Andean world, such an infinity is not understood as an endless line, but instead is seen as a cyclic motion or endless spiral... Each loop is then closed by a cosmic cataclysm (*pachakuti*) which in turn gives rise to another “spin”; an age that could be called ... *new*. In contrast to dominant modern Western conception of *time*, Estermann argues, an Andean time conception stresses quality, cyclicity, reversibility, discontinuity, and lack of linear progress.

Somewhat similarly, the same author goes so far as to claim that Andean temporality reflects the Greek notion of *kairos* (the fitting time). It is clear that, in the context in which he expresses himself, this author is addressing a time of *ceaseless present* (aion time), a time without *privileges* (neither of the *subject* nor of the *thematization*), without *hierarchies*; that is, an *event* of *heterogeneity*.

As Claudio Romano points out in the *Introduction to Event and World* (2009, p. 4), with reference to a fragment by Nietzsche (2005) in which this author critically relates “what happens” (*Lightning flashes*) with an *activity* and a *subject*:

...Nietzsche attacks what he calls a ‘fundamental belief, ‘the belief that ‘there are subjects.’ Indeed, by interpreting every appearance in relation to a *subject*, for example, every ‘action’ in relation to an agent, every ‘effect’ in relation to a ‘cause,’ it is implicitly asserted that ‘everything that happens relates as a predicate to some subject. ‘Assigning an event to an ontic substrate entail reducing the event to a pure ‘predicate,’ which is therefore used in connection with a ‘subject’.

Then there would have arisen this confusion, also pointed out by Heidegger, between being and entity. The *poetic word* is worded without agents—the *poetics* that makes the event *resonate*: it just happens! It is not a matter of relating what is happening to an *activity* behind which there would always be a *subject*; it is not a question of assigning *predicates* to a subject, but of letting it happen, of disappearing (the subject) altogether (Romano, 2009). What is expressed in *the event* cannot be determined by the past, nor by the present or the future, because the event (Heidegger, 2013) speaks of what is not yet.

In the same way that Eric Alliez (1998) has written in relation to philosophical thought in Deleuze in its connection with the concept “image of thought” and a pre-philosophical understanding linked to the creation of concepts, the *language of the event* would not be a descriptive one; it would be a pure one without images—which Deleuze calls the faculty of essences –, heterogeneous, unbalanced, to free life where it is imprisoned and to draw *lines of flight* (Bene & Deleuze, 1979).

On the other hand, that said sort of *understanding*—the *momentum* of the *lines of flight*—might also give rise to a possible “new event” that would refer, once again, to *the supreme incarnation*, now and then,

...of that *tiny instant* abaft a dance, *more* than just a solitaire gesture; to the lifting of a *gulp*... to one’s dry lips,—or to *despair* at her sudden loss: at that secret burden of such endless death, under the twinkling Night...

In other words, have a go at writing the event down.

Besides, the *void* of individual identities in Ecuadorian indigenism, plus those borders and frontiers (neither *starting* nor *ending*) from which one *enters and exits*, similar to *birth* and

perishing (Heidegger, 2015) to which one is called by *difference*, invite one to interpret such Ecuadorian indigenous practices as “something that happens” in the sphere of the contemporary *event*.

Findings and Discussion

Ecuadorian Event and Performance

Castilla Cerezo (2014) points out that Deleuze suggested the following in a course at the Université de Vincennes—now Université Paris-VIII-Vincennes-Saint-Denis:

...speak of art, of an art, be it painting, music or any other, means, according to this author—that is to say, Deleuze –, *to form concepts that are in direct relation with that art and only with it*, ... Consequently, *art*, even if it is *mimesis*, fiction and imagination, *is not merely imitation of action* (as the Aristotelian definition of fiction asserted) but, on the contrary, ‘production’ of a *second surface, no longer physical...*²

In the same vein, Deleuze (2000) poses the following key question: beyond the revelation of the essence (of art)—beyond the *object*, beyond the *subject* itself—(the posed question...) belongs only to the sphere of *art*. If revelation is to be achieved, it will only be accomplished in this sphere.

As reflected in the introduction to this essay, a factual journey through the most relevant indigenous expressions of Ecuador reveals a dramatic process of *deterritorialisation* that produces a dual fracturing at the heart of these rites, with these indigenous expressions being both the margin and the absence, whereas Greece and West are referred to as the centre and presence of that which is metaphysically significant.

On the one hand, the cleavage between aesthetic and organic processes tends to trigger the *destruction* or *deconstruction* of Western metaphysical and unitary composition. *Minor* art, stemming from “*minor*” themes, languages, “*minor*” perspectives and cultures, leads to the dismantling of Western power structures and hierarchies and the exaltation of *difference*. Conversely, there is a genuine political *amputation*, which alters the balance of power: in this case, the obliteration of Greece’s cultural and aesthetic categories will unleash the political potential of theatre. This was the first observation upon encountering the aforementioned Andean performance-event (Bene & Deleuze, 1979).

A second aspect that draws significant attention when one is introduced to the events of the already mentioned Andean celebrations has to do with the modern concept of *representation*.

² All texts referenced in French and Spanish in this essay have been translated into English by the main author of this manuscript.

The *self*, that transcendental schematism which does not exist in Greece and which synthesises all representations in Kant (1998), or the Cartesian (Descartes, 2009) idea of *internal consciousness*, the *ego cogito*—where representations reside—is translated into absentia; it declines as a non-representational force in indigenous expressions: there is no *theatre of the word* or *character incarnation*. Needless to say, there is no *mimesis* (imitation or logos) in the perfume or constitution of the expressions under study in this essay. The *event* and *performance* of indigenous expression signifies an immediate rupture with metaphysics and, consequently, with any compositional process. This is so obvious when you consider the indigenous expressions in Ecuador that you just let it resonate in the context of the event. No further analysis is needed (Cull, 2009).

Indeed, this is the finding and the insight—the starting and the *denouement*—one is definitely faced with: to have made it possible to intuit Ecuadorian indigenism, not from a museum gallery, not from a crowded bistro, but through a postmodern viewpoint not hinting at Greece or its philosophy of the spirit (Hegel, 2018). The relinquishment of colonial power is apparent and in favour of a new distribution of potentials, an indissmissible claim.

Concluding: The Bleeding Feet, Becoming Tribal

In conclusion, all of the above shows that indigenous culture is not a set of *distinct* or *abstract forms* and concepts, such as *intellectual* terms, *foundations* or *logos* of an unchanging nature that aim at a *substance* of all that exists or at the basic order of the entity as *being* (Estermann, 1999, 2021). Rather, it is an interwoven system of co-dependent, interrelated, anarchic and heteronomous, non-substantial entities... For Andean thought, there are no *absolute* entities—in the strict sense —. Such a notion of the “absolute” is of Western origin and does not belong to the cosmic world referred to, the so-called Andean cosmovision.

The *objective* of the existing research was to explore the potential nexus between these indigenous celebrations and the realms of stage performance along with 21st-century postmodern culture. This would suggest, firstly, that these indigenous performative ceremonies may have possessed a certain “Dionysian” quality from their very beginnings and, secondly, that this kind of interpretation—drawing on contemporary European philosophy—might serve to illustrate the imprint of this inherent *difference* within the context of performative Andean indigenism. It would appear that the arts associated with the former *margin* adhere to paradigms that can reasonably be understood in terms of *liminality* and also *event*. It seems that the concept of “liminalness” was diverted—by the authority of Greek culture—to metaphysics and, eventually, “to re-presentation”.

How a Western culture, the European one, has so often brushed beauty—*allure!* —, with its rosy pads, through arts, science, philosophy, and yet stain its feet with blood in the repeated absence of those who have been moved to the margins on the altar of Foundation, Order, Metaphysics is a huge question that holds an enormous contradiction. The Hegelian approach to history—the Greek, the meaning—was conceived only on the basis of the conqueror’s mindset. If dialectics is the internal motor of history, then Hegel’s thought —European thought—justifies

wars, and even more: the annihilation of peoples, which would be necessary for the full development of history, that is to say, such an effective extermination would be required for the presence of the spirit in History (Hegel, 2018). This would be a tremendous paradox even for a convinced European soul.

Should that be the case, then there can only a single answer: to desert the homeland, to become tribal.

With regard to Artaud's oeuvre, Deleuze makes the following observation: to write for the illiterate—to speak for the aphasic, to think for the acephalous. [...] It is a question of becoming. The thinker is not acephalic, aphasic, or illiterate, but becomes so. He becomes Indian and never stops becoming so—perhaps “so that” the Indian who is himself Indian becomes something else and tears himself away from his own agony. This feeling of shame is one of philosophy's most powerful motifs (Deleuze & Guattari, 1983, p. 232–309; Ezcurdia, 2016).

Statement on the Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence

No generative AI has been applied to this scientific work. None of the data or information used in this essay has been processed using any version or possibility of AI, nor is it necessary to enter into an agreement to this effect relating to the regulations of the University of Oslo. As the author of the paper, I take full responsibility for the originality of its content, statements and references.

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