

# THE TATTOO AS ANCESTRAL LEGACY AND DICOTOMIC ELEMENT OF NATIONAL IDENTITY

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## **ABSTRACT**

Nowadays, tattoos are associated mostly with fashion, nevertheless tattooing can constitute a tool of national identity since its ancestral relation with the Latin American native culture. In the state of the art, no work can be found that faces this specific topic. This paper discusses the determinant footprint of ancient tattooing in the national culture and its actual use as national identity element.

The study mainly uses quantitative analysis tools. It presents surveys and interviews to determinate what idea of national identity may be reconstructed from the analysis of the Latin American tattoo culture.

These data should confirm the hypothesis that tattoos were used by Latin American ancestors and thereby turn into a national identity icon, used by a percentage of individuals. Although the percentage is still low, it leads us to conclude that it is indeed used in this sense and that the trend will progressively increase.

**Keywords:** Tattoo, identity, ancestral Ecuadorian tattoos, ancestral Latin American tattoos.