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## Embodiment theories and alternative perspectives on the body

### Abstract

*Embodiment theories have overcome the doctrine of intellectus archetypus without ever discussing the notion of body on which that particular kind of intellect was based. Indeed, the model of the body underlying embodiment theories remains an a priori: anthropomorphic, independent and “self-contained”. This paper sheds light on the problematic points of this vision and explores the anthropology of the “ontological turn”, looking for alternative modes of body knowledge – seeing it as the result of “affects”, “affections” and habitus – more effective in justifying the corporeal dimension of cognition.*

### Keywords

*Body, Ontological turn, Perspectivism*

The theory of Embodiment or of the “Embodied Mind”, which locates cognition in the body and its sensorimotor processes (see Varela, Thompson and Rosch 1991, Lakoff and Johnson 1999), and its derived theory of the “Extended Mind”, which suggests that the environment and environmental interaction play a constitutive role in the formation of cognitive processes (see Clark and Chalmers 1998, Clark 2008, Wilson 2004), seriously challenged what Isabelle Stengers has called the greatest “division” in Western thought: the Cartesian dualism between mind and body (see Stengers 1997). Both “Embodiment” and “Extended Mind” theories criticize the ideal of an archetypal intellect (*intellectus archetypus*) that produces everything and in which everything is produced, and argue that cognitive and mental processes are expressed in the body (Embodiment) and in the environment (Extended Mind).

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Despite the optimistic reductionism of neuroscientists, over the past thirty years this conception has achieved a certain consensus. And yet, although ecological models of the mind – especially the studies of Andy Clark and David Chalmers, but also Gregory Bateson and, more recently, Alva Noë – offer a variety of tools, devices and frameworks, such as the notion of “sensorimotor contingencies” or the claim that “we are already at home in the environment. We are out of our heads” (Noë 2009: 8) – the “body”, which is at the core of the model of the embodied mind, seems in no need of definition whatsoever.

New theories have modified the notions of both mind and environment without ever discussing the body or changing its scheme, as if the latter were a universal principle, something given *a priori* with a hypostatized form.

Thus, we have successfully overcome the doctrine of *intellectus archetypus*, but not the premise of a *corpus archetypum*, the body on which that particular kind of intellect is based.

What is the sense or purpose of postulating an embodied mind if the notion of the body itself does not evolve and keeps asserting the separation between body and world, and the superiority of the former over the latter? The present article has three objectives: 1) to shed light on the notion of the body in Embodiment theory; 2) to find *Weltanschauungen* that are more effective in validating and justifying the corporeal dimension of cognition; 3) to develop a reflection on the role of perspectivism in the sensorimotor processes.

## 1. A corpus archetypum

At least since Polykleitos' *Canon*, Western culture has been dominated by a classical perspective on the body – anthropomorphic, univocal and serving as the “Nullpunkt of all the dimensions of the world” (Merleau-Ponty 1968: 249).

This linear perspective has been demonstrated by more than half a century of art history, with its rules of representing the space through vertical and singular vanishing points. In philosophy, this particular way of thinking about the body indicates the status of subjectivity. Admittedly, 20<sup>th</sup> century aesthetics and semiotics did deconstruct the idea of the body as an enclosed and impervious referentiality, prior to sense, and insisted on aesthesia, including its non-codi-

fied and non-codifiable expressions, as the medium whereby the flesh and skin of corporeality, viewing and visible, partake in the world (see Fontanille 2004). However, the *scenario* remains that of a subject with a purpose and grasp on objects, with Retention and Pro-tention: the subject of Husserl's intentional act.

Deleuze and Guattari's bold *Qu'est-ce que la philosophie?* (1994) challenged the predominance of the body over the world: "The being of sensation is not the flesh but the compound of nonhuman forces of the cosmos, of man's nonhuman becomings, and of the ambiguous house that exchanges and adjusts them" (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 184). The way was paved by one of Deleuze's main references, Henri Maldiney, who considered perception as an "articulation within the phenomenon" and as "a foundation constituted by a series of totalities articulated into meaning – the closing of a level crossing, evening coming down on the fields, a light twinkling in the dark, the inadequacy of a key in a keyhole or of a dress in a given season" (Maldiney 1973: 43-5, tr. mine). Nonetheless, throughout modernity, the body has remained the touchstone for any kind of representation, "the mold [...] of any housing model" (Vitta 2008: 15, tr. mine), although it was rejected by contemporary architecture and art in favor of a return to the megalithic (see Migliore 2016).

A challenging enterprise such as the application of Embodiment theory to the Humanities and to the Social Sciences cannot be limited to a univocal vision of the body. The model of the body underlying Embodiment theory is inadequate and outdated with respect to the theory that it is supposed to support. As a consequence, the main theorists of the "Embodied Mind" struggle to explain how the mind is actually embodied and why neurons are not a sufficient explanation:

Every living being categorizes. Even the amoeba categorizes the things it encounters into food or nonfood, what it moves toward or moves away from. The amoeba cannot choose whether to categorize; it just does. The same is true at every level of the animal world. Animals categorize food, predators, possible mates, members of their own species, and so on. How animals categorize depends upon their sensing apparatus and their ability to move themselves and to manipulate objects. Categorization is therefore a consequence of how we are embodied. We have evolved to categorize; if we hadn't, we would not have survived. Categorization is, for the most part, not a product of conscious reasoning. We categorize as we do because we have the brains and bodies we have and because we interact in the world the way we do. (Lakoff and Johnson 1999: 17-8)

Lakoff and Johnson do not clarify the kind of body and mind to which they are referring. The hypothesis of a mind incarnated in a body has, in their view, no repercussion on the concepts of “body” and “mind”, which remain *a priori*: indeed, irrespective of Embodiment theory, “we have the brains and bodies we have” (Lakoff and Johnson 1999: 17-8). The authors then return to the role of neurons and synaptic connections, since, in their view, “a small percentage of our categories have been formed by conscious acts of categorization, but most are formed automatically and unconsciously as a result of functioning in the world”, so that “we do not, and cannot, have full conscious control over how we categorize” (Lakoff and Johnson 1999: 18). And below:

Think of the properties of the human body that contribute to the peculiarities of our conceptual system. We have eyes and ears, arms and legs that work in certain very definite ways and not in others. We have a visual system, with topographic maps and orientation-sensitive cells that provides structure for our ability to conceptualize spatial relations. Our abilities to move *in the ways we do* and to track the motion of other things give motion a major role in our conceptual system. The fact that we have muscles and use them to apply force *in certain ways* leads to the structure of our system of causal concepts. What is important is not just that we have bodies and that thought is *somehow* embodied. What is important is that the *peculiar nature* of our bodies shapes our very possibilities for conceptualization and categorization (Lakoff and Johnson 1999: 18-9, italics mine).

This entire paragraph from *Philosophy in the flesh* (1999) considers the body as a given which Lakoff and Johnson avoid addressing. The authors are never specific when thematizing the presence of the body, and their whole argument therefore remains quite vague. A truly effective Embodiment theory would require a version of corporeality that is less centered on the Self and more complex than the one that has so far dominated Western philosophy: a version which could retroactively influence the Western philosophy of the body and which could and should help us rethink our Western conceptions of body and mind.

## 2. *Bodies and souls in new anthropology*

When elaborating the notion of Embodiment, philosophy and cognitive sciences should have interfaced more with anthropology. Over the past thirty years, i.e. parallel to the development of Embodiment theories, anthropology has gone through the so-called “ontological turn”. The pivotal studies, most of which were conducted in Latin America, called for the abandonment of ontological monism (based on the idea of a single being endowed with a single truth); for the abandonment of the idea that all entities share an identical nature; and for the existence of different cosmovisions with different values and modes of knowledge. As accurately noted by Bruno Latour, this does not mean equalizing mononaturalism with monoculturalism and claiming that “the one world is ours, the many worlds are yours; and if your disputes are too noisy, may the world of harsh reality come in to pacify your disputes” (Latour 2002: 16). The idea is rather to acknowledge the existence of different ways to identify and engage with the continuities and discontinuities we experience. The protagonists of this “ontological turn” include Eduardo Viveiros de Castro, Marilyn Strathern, Bruno Latour, and Philippe Descola.

In particular, Descola’s (2013) classification of cosmologies into animistic/totemic/naturalist/analogical, derived from Viveiros de Castro, frees us from our exclusive bond with Western naturalism, i.e. from the thesis of *the* original Subject from whom everything is derived, and postulates the coexistence of multiple natures. According to Descola, animism implies inner resemblance and physical difference; totemism, inner and physical resemblance; naturalism, inner difference and physical resemblance; analogism, inner and physical difference.

### 2.1. *The animistic mentality*

In order to rethink the relationship between corporeality and cognition in Embodiment, we must consider the animistic mentality, which is founded on inner continuity – a whole soul, hence the animistic belief in transmigration – and physical discontinuity – our bodies distinguish us. Descola maintains a naturalist perspective to explain the four cosmologies – as can be seen in the exhibition he curated at Quai Branly, *La fabrique des images* (see Descola 2010). The French

anthropologist limits animism to the Amazonian and Amerindian populations he studies, as if, all things considered, the West were alien to these mentalities and could only identify with them on an abstract level.

In this light the merit of Brazilian anthropologist Viveiros de Castro was to demonstrate that the mechanisms and identification modes of animism are not limited to the practices of native populations. Animistic logic, whereby body and soul are effects of perspective and never *a priori* categories, is extremely widespread in wartime and in the animal world, and especially in the fight for survival (see Migliore 2008, Fabbri 2008, 2011). It is also rampant in Western society, and not for religious reasons or because Buddhism is currently in fashion. Let us think of the controversy about eating meat. The main charge brought forward by vegans is that, by ingesting the flesh of animals, meat eaters also ingest the soul that these animals have in common with us. The argument of the defense is that, deep down, we are all cannibals, as humans always eat an alterity which they reduce to themselves through a variety of beliefs and rituals (see Lévi-Strauss 2013). The first argument originates from the belief that animals incorporate a soul that we share, i.e. that their body, being “an assemblage of affects or ways of being that constitute a *habitus*” (Viveiros de Castro 1998: 478), incorporates a reflexive form that is equivalent to ours; the second argument, which is analogic, is ruled by a basic “exterior/interior” difference between humans and animals, animals that humans reduce to their own life form. Only a “theory of the sign and communication” (Viveiros de Castro 2012: 35), i.e. semiotics, can describe and explain these ever-topical social controversies.

## 2.2. *Embodied knowledge: sensoriality, “dividuality”, perspectival objectification*

What is animism? A recent two-volume anthology addresses this topic (Consigliere 2014a, 2014b). Animism is a way of thinking that truly locates knowledge inside the body, in the sense that affections, affects, and *habitus* are rooted in corporeality to the point of determining the somatic shape and transforming it in time:

A wise man, *huni unaya*, has knowledge throughout his whole body. “*Hawen yuda dasibi unaia*, his whole body knows”, they say. When I asked him where

specifically a wise man had knowledge, they listed his skin, his hands, his ears, his genitals, his liver, and his eyes. “Does his brain have knowledge?”, I asked. “*Hamaki* (it doesn’t)”, they responded. (Kensinger 1995: 239)

For the Cashinahua people of Peru, knowledge does not reside in the brain because there is no physical experience that specifically involves the brain, as opposed to the skin, hands, ears, genitals, liver and eyes. Each of these organs is associated with a process of knowledge acquisition and application through physical actions.

Knowledge and body are so closely interconnected that disorders of the former can have catastrophic consequences on the latter. Once again, this is also the case in the West. Take for instance the perception system of a hunter, tuning in and gathering relevant information to guide his or her behavior: the knowledge of the skin, the sensorial experience attached to the skin, tells him or her the position and behavior of the animals in the forest. Here is a true “embodiment”, a “body that knows” (see McCallum 1996) through its specific properties, which are sensitive. Rather than presenting a generic body that incarnates a generic mind, any Embodiment theory should aim to investigate and to discover these *knowledge-inducing sensory dynamics*.

The kind of Embodiment addressed in the above-mentioned anthropological studies therefore differs from the Embodiment of cognitive sciences, insofar as the former originates from a played and enacted empirical corporeality: it does not show *that* the mind is embodied, but *how* it is embodied.

The second difference is that, according to anthropological Embodiment, the body is anything but unique. Descola’s (2013) theory on the different modes of identification – animism, totemism, naturalism, and analogism – is constitutively interactantial, i.e. it relies on the similarity and/or difference *among* souls and *among* bodies. Moreover, the field of animism ignores individuality and is based on “dividuality”, that is on a person’s *composite* nature, the result of the “absorption of heterogeneous influences” (Marriott 1976: 111), the embodiment of manifold relations – human and non-human entities, material and non-material substances – which partake in various ways in the constitution of that person (see Strathern and Lambek 1998). The body therefore becomes the object of intense semiotic scrutiny in the definition of *personal identities* and in the circulation of *social values* (see Turner 1995).

Finally, the third difference with the Embodiment of cognitive sciences is that, in Anthropological Embodiment, the body can be perceived only from the outside, through the eye of the other. To use a metaphor borrowed from cognitive linguistics, the body emerges when it is the *target* and not the source of observation.

### 3. *Perspectivism*

According to animism, bodies are the result of perspectival effects: the soul, which remains identical across the species, adopts a viewpoint; the body, which varies from one individual to the next, being a system of *habitus*, affections and affects, becomes manifest when it becomes the object of someone else's viewpoint. This kind of "perspectivism", observed and theorized for the first time by anthropologist Tânia Stolze Lima, who studied the Juruna of Brazil, is different from relativism, which admits various points of view on a single reality (see Lima 1996). There are no object-creating Subjects, but rather anything that *occupies* a given point of view will become a subject (see Viveiros de Castro 1998). There is no body in the sense of an *a priori* physiological essence and no undefined cognition embodied in it, but a constellation of attitudes and habits that emerge in the form of points of view – that is to say, differences – and which determine the unique character of the body of a given species: what it eats, how it communicates, where it lives, whether it is gregarious or solitary, etc.

Like Viveiros de Castro and later Descola, Lima also draws on Deleuze's reading of perspectivism as the "truth of relativity" and not the "relativity of what is true": in a non-essentialist and phenomenical worldview, the subject is an event: a vector of curvature, the effect of what occupies the point of view and makes it what it is, "pure powers whose act consists in habitus or arrangements (folds) in the soul" (Deleuze 2006: 24)<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>2</sup> The authors mentioned by Deleuze, in particular Leibniz and Nietzsche, never imagine a situation in which the visions change but reality remains the same. In Leibniz, however, the multiplicity of perspectives – as things and beings are points of view – converges into God, the monadic and geometric point of convergence of all points of view (Serres 1968: 252). In Nietzsche, to the contrary, the point of view opens on a divergence, which claims that "each point of view is another town, the towns are linked only by their distance and resonate only

Even the idea of the animistic soul and cognition as a concatenation of affects, affections and *habitus* comes from Deleuze, as proof that the generalizing power of this kind of Embodiment goes well beyond animistic cultures and concerns both the individual and other living species: the “affect” is the acting power that increases or decreases according to the chance encounters in which the sentient body takes part; the “affection” is a composition of bodies, a relationship of mutual capture that triggers the alterations imposed by a body to another (see Deleuze 2013). Here Deleuze is referring to Spinoza, who defined the *affectus* as “the modifications of the body, whereby the active power of the said body is increased or diminished, aided or constrained, and also the ideas of such modifications” (Spinoza 1951: 4). Ethology itself, according to Deleuze, is based on the affects of which we are capable and which define the bodies:

The approach is no less valid for us, for human beings, than for animals, because no one knows ahead of time the affects one is capable of; it is a long affair of experimentation, requiring a lasting prudence, a Spinozan wisdom that implies the construction of a plane of immanence or consistency. Spinoza’s ethics has nothing to do with orality; he conceives it as an ethology, that is, a composition of fast and slow speeds, of capacities for affecting and being affected on this plane of immanence. (Deleuze 1988: 125)

The animistic model of the soul is human, while that of the body is animal. This condition shared by humans and animals is not animality, but humanity.

Thus, jaguars and humans are both predators from the point of view of a lamb; jaguars are predators and lambs are prey from the point of view of a human; and humans and lambs are both prey from the point of view of a jaguar (Viveiros de Castro 1998: 470). *Culture* is the point of view of the Self on the Self – a “deictic us” whereby subjects experience and agree on their own nature; *nature* is the point of view of the Self on the bodies-affections of others, the shape of the Other as body – a “scopic function”. Crazed by hunger, Alex, the lion of the animation movie *Madagascar 1* (2005), sees his zebra friend as a steak.

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through the divergence of their series, their houses, and their streets [...]. Disjunction is no longer a means of separation. Impossibility is now a means of communication” (Deleuze 1990: 173-4). For a comparison between the notion of perspective in semiotics and philosophy, see Migliore 2015.

### 3.1. *The morphology of vision*

We can clearly understand that this kind of embodiment, which is inseparable from perspectivism, radically changes our idea of “vision”, of how we see others and perceive ourselves. Perspectivism is different from relativism, which postulates various points of view on a single reality. And it is not a matter of ideological representation or projection, unlike Western perspective. Here, the nature of the observed object changes depending on the vision. Let us now get to the heart of the matter.

The nature of what is observed is at the core of “primary dialectics [...] between seeing and eating” (Mentore 1993: 29) or, in any case, of a complex interaction between seeing and being seen. Jaguars see blood as we do beer (Viveiros de Castro 1998: 470); what we see as a mud puddle is, to a tapir, a large ceremonial house. “What varies is the *objective correlative* of the point of view: what passes through the optic nerve (or digestive tube) of each species, so to speak” (Viveiros de Castro 2012: 34, italics mine). There are no self-identical substances that are being categorized in different ways, but relational multiplicities such as blood-beer or zebra-steak. This approach has three main consequences:

1) scopic functions are non-simultaneous. A human and a jaguar cannot be both “subjects”, or rather “people”, at the same time. A jaguar pouncing on a man sees the latter’s blood as beer before the man has become aware of the peril. “Each species has to be capable of not losing sight, so to speak, of the fact that the others see themselves as people and, simultaneously, capable of forgetting this fact – that is, of – no longer seeing it” (Viveiros de Castro 2012: 34). This is particularly important when humans become predators, that is to say when they kill to eat. They must be the first to see so as not to be seen.

2) Although we must be capable of “not seeing” the animals we eat as they see themselves, sometimes it may be useful or even necessary to see how certain animals see and to see them as they are seen by other animals (see Viveiros de Castro 2012). The Self incorporates the point of view of the enemy. In order to avoid being eaten by the jaguar, we must adopt its point of view on itself, become the Other by occupying the enemy’s position toward us, but without letting us be overwhelmed by alterity. This is how René Thom explains the evolution of the species and how morphological mutations unfold through time. He goes so far as suggesting that the shape of the prey

may be based on that of the predator's claws or beak. Skin and shell are tactical interruptions of the prey's organic extension and counter the obstructive action of the predator's beak, fangs or claws (Thom 1988: 139). According to Viveiros de Castro, it is the fact of living on the edge between fear and desire of the Other that induces the incorporation *of, by* and *through* the Other (Viveiros de Castro 2012: 29). The dynamics of animistic Embodiment are based on a different paradigm than ours. In the Western philosophical tradition, the prototypical manifestation of the Other is that of the friend – a friend who ultimately is Other as a different “moment” of the Self; in Amerindian culture, it is the foe who functions as the experienced transcendental condition. “Humans have to be capable of deconditioning their humanity in certain conditions, since the influx of the non-human and becoming-other-than-human are obligatory moments of a fully human condition. The world of immanent humanity is also (and for the same reasons) a world of the immanence of the enemy” (Viveiros de Castro 2012: 32). Here “enmity is not a mere privative complement of ‘amity’, a simple negative facticity, but a *de jure* structure of thought, a positivity in its own right” (Viveiros de Castro 2012: 40).

3) Thus, the visible form of the body, which is a powerful sign of the differences between affections, is not a fixed entity but a variable and metamorphic appearance, an ever-changing and removable clothing. It can be deceptive: a human form may conceal a jaguar-affection. Appearances are misleading, not because they differ in their supposed essence, but precisely because they are appearances, i.e. something that appears. An appearance implies and is determined by a recipient, a subject in front of whom the act of appearing takes place. “It is not so much the body that is a clothing but rather that clothing is a body” (Viveiros de Castro 1998: 482). Thus, it is not among the natives, but in the works of the Middle-European artist Alberto Savinio, a reader of Weininger, that we find human stages with heaps of animal-like toys or object-like moving toys (see for instance his paintings *Le fantôme de l'Opéra*, 1929, and *Les collégiens*, 1929). Savinio is thinking in terms of the appearance of objects.

The considerations on Embodiment developed in anthropology and animal studies appear far richer and better articulated than the ones provided so far by psycholinguistics and cognitive linguistics, which help us describe and better understand languages but not the actual implication of the body in the process.

#### 4. *Embodiment and enunciation*

According to Viveiros de Castro, the apparatus of enunciation, that is the system of actorial, spatial and temporal deictics (see Benveniste 1973a, 1973b) used for the analysis of objective and subjective markers in discourse, is the best possible model to study these processes. The Amerindian terms that are usually translated as “human being” do not actually refer to the natural category of the human species or to a member thereof, but to a *person*, an animated being in the pronominal sense – be it a human, a jaguar or a lamb – as a relational position (Viveiros de Castro 1998: 483), the marker of a presence.

Supposedly “human” characteristic are not the prerogative of humans. *They are produced within the body*. Individuals – as mentioned above – perceive the members of their own species as humanity, as culture. The species possesses a deictic “us” and, within the group, humanity is a reflexive property – the lamb is human to another lamb, and the jaguar is human to another jaguar. Contrariwise, identity, i.e. the difference among bodies that can only be perceived from an external point of view, is the product of a scopic function. The impersonal pronouns “it” and “them” indicate the non-person or the object, i.e. nature (Viveiros de Castro 1998: 483) Then there is the “you”, the second person (singular or plural) seen as the other subject of a non-human perspective, the supernatural, a dead persona or spirit. “Only shamans, multinatural beings by definition and office, are always capable of transiting the various perspectives, calling and being called ‘you’ by [non-human subjects] without losing their condition as human subjects” (Viveiros de Castro 1998: 483).

In rituals, these pronominal functions are inverted. Human bodies, covered in feathers, colors, patterns, masks and other animal prostheses, are transformed into animals and reveal to their own eyes the “natural” peculiarity of their body. Interestingly enough, the moment of the maximum social objectification of bodies coincides with the moment of maximum animalization (Viveiros de Castro 1998: 480).

##### 4.1. *Embodiment as incorporation and ensoulment of the alterity*

The construction of the pronominal person is a fascinating topic (see Santos-Granero 2012). In animistic cosmology, the notion that an individual embodies his or her own cognition makes no sense: generally

speaking, corporeality and thought are already interconnected, and the function of the organs is to give a transitive property to the reflexivity of the soul. But above all, this soul and this body are the result – temporary and ever-changing – of the incorporation of extraneous substances, in order to transfer some of their powers and qualities onto the person being made. In animism, such incorporation is realized through two modalities: *embodiment*, which entails the incorporation through objectivation of external substances and subjectivities, and *ensoulment*, which involves the incorporation through subjectivation of external artifacts and bodily substances. Instances of embodiment include, among the Yanésha, the ingestion of the subjectivity of the liana *eñsesrech*, which can be turned into hard straight bones, while ensoulment include the incorporation of personal ornaments (chest bands and wristbands), clothes (tunics), and tools (spindles and bows), and their gradual transmutation into somatic or extrasomatic body parts (Santos-Granero 2012: 198). This new ethnography no longer ascribes the transfer “contagious magic” caused by similarities and contact (see Frazer 1915), but interprets it by taking into account the instances at stake.

In this approach, every person is unique but never complete, independent or “self-contained”, because it is a being constituted by the subjectival substances of multiple entities, and a being constitutive of other persons (Santos-Granero 2012: 200).

## 5. *Embodiment definition categories*

Viveiros de Castro has been criticized for using “Western” categories to explain non-Western ways of existence. Such a critique is misplaced. His model of the four cosmologies (naturalist-analogist-animistic-totemic) implies the existence and value of natures and mentalities that are present in the West but alternative to naturalism. Hence his methodological use of the body/soul category to make explicit the relationship determining each of these cosmologies, namely the relationship between “inside” and “outside”, however they are defined and correlated across different cultures. For instance, as it turns out, the “interior/exterior” pair is not necessarily discontinuous and binary: the two terms can both be immanent (as opposed to an immanent body and a transcendent soul) and their connotations can be local. Moreover, the body/soul pair generally never refers to a single being

but to the relationship of similarity and/or difference *among* bodies and *among* souls. Let us repeat it once more: naturalism implies inner difference and physical resemblance; analogism, inner and physical difference; animism implies inner resemblance and physical difference; totemism, inner and physical resemblance. To all intents and purposes, Embodiment requires the interdefinition between inside and outside and consists *in the variety of modes of this interdefinition*.

Supposing that these modes have a geographic distribution would be a return to the fallacy of cultural divisions and hierarchies. It is a matter of thought and belief, not of distinction between West and non-West. 1) The animistic thought is and has always been part of our world, just as there may be elements of naturalism in Amazonian cultures; and 2) Deleuze, despite being a Western philosopher, was not necessarily a naturalist philosopher. The critique to Viveiros de Castro is therefore based on a wrong premise, namely on the assumption that these mentalities are and can be separated and physically located in different worlds.

The meaning of “Embodiment” in new Anthropology sheds light on the shortcomings of the cognitivist approach. Considering the recent change of sensitivity toward the non-human and the animal, the notion of Embodiment as an individual mind incarnated in an individual body must be abandoned.

Embodiment should rather be seen as a temporary clothing, as a somatic exteriorization, interconnected with the viewpoints of others, of an interior system of habits, of affections and affects. This is the key to understanding, in everyday life, the contiguity between animistic, naturalist, analogist and totemic behaviors.

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