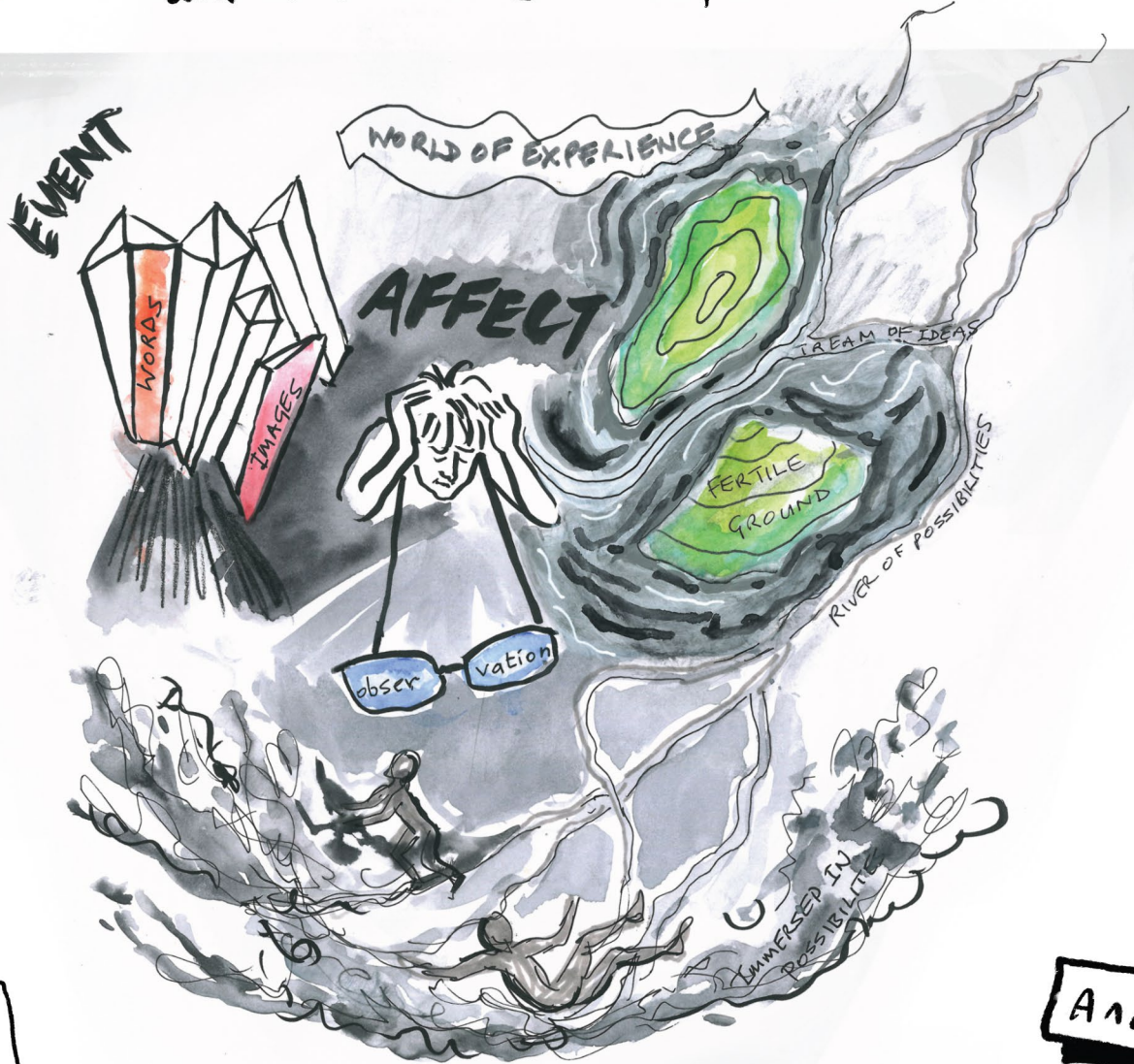


TRIANGULATION



BEING the RECORD of a DISCUSSION
of COMICS THEORY conducted on
2nd MAY 2018, transcribed into WORDS
and then COMICS in the period since.



With...

DR. JOHN MIERS



DR. THIERRY
CHESJUM



And...

DR. PAUL F DAVIES



~ In HONOUR and FOND MEMORY of THIERRY. ~

With the support of, and cover art by, Sharon Finmark.



DRS JOHN, PAUL & THIERRY planned to RECORD a conversation about the COMICS THEORIES they had explored in the course of pursuing their respective PhDs, to see whether these were CONSISTENT - with the PLAN to co-create a "VERBATIM COMIC" based on the recordings.

To keep things manageable, each composed ⑤ QUESTIONS, from which ② were chosen to answer, for a strict ① minute each - with a little chance for comments, questions and RESPONSES after.

This was still a LOT of text to fit into a COMIC!

Each TRANSCRIBED the questions asked, and the COMIC that follows is a result of the subsequent EDITING and DRAWING.

THIERRY passed away in the months following the recording, but his SELF-DRAWINGS are re-used here, and his partner SHARON provided a SPLASH IMAGE.

WHY DO WE NEED THEORY AT ALL? OF WHAT USE IS IT?

Can I go with 3: WHY do we need THEORY at all?



It's perfectly EASY to understand ANALYSES without getting into DETAIL of EMBODIMENT in METAPHOR THEORY...

HOWEVER, I myself would not have ARRIVED at those insights without my EXPLORATION of conceptual metaphor THEORY.

THEORY can be a METHOD - a set of FOCUSES that REVEAL PATTERNS, new things to THINK.

There's INTERPRETING - i.e., you SEE what something MEANS...



...and then, a level above that, there's ANALYSING it:

Saying not just WHAT does it mean, but HOW does it mean?



Then the NEXT step up would be to say that theory then has to be JUSTIFIED...



...by METAPHYSICAL, at least PHILOSOPHICAL reasoning and concepts which LICENSE the VALIDITY of the theory!



They all somewhere INTERPLAY and RELATE...



And it's not always easy to see the WOODS for the TREES.

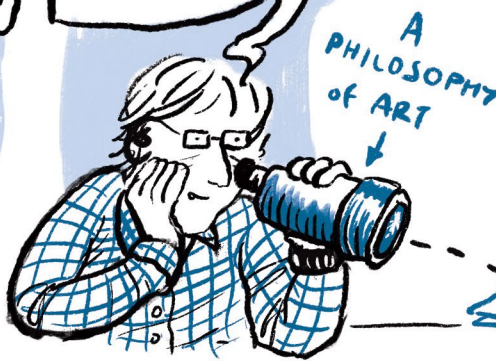


DOES DELEUZE OFFER A 'METHOD' FOR ANALYSIS OF COMICS?

NO. OF COURSE. DELEUZE
Puts forward a complete
system of METAPHYSICS in
which ART plays a central
ROLE as the CRITIC and
CLINICIAN of society...



That's the FUNCTION
of ART as he sees it
and if it's to be of any
WORTH, that's what
it DOES.



What WE can do is to
look at COMICS
through that LENS,
and EVALUATE what
they DO when looked
at in this way.



Questions then
won't be about "HOW
COMICS WORK"
but "what does
THAT particular comic
DO?"



And that's why the
example of

TANTRUM

I think is a GREAT
work of ART...

JULES FEIFFER 1979



It's really a theory
of ART embedded in the
METAPHYSICS through which to view COMICS.

This is what I LOVE
about DELEUZE and
find FASCINATING
about your work....

So theory is a METHOD,
a way of guiding
ENGAGEMENT,
instead of a set of
DICTATS.

The THEORY, then, poses the
EMPIRICAL questions to
be looked at, and they
PRE-STRUCTURE the
different levels of
LOOKING at things.



What do
COMICS DO?
What are we
DOING with
it?



Your THEORY is
RESTING on something!

TIMELESS PHILOSOPHICAL
PROBLEM... SELF,
REALITY...

So you've got to
ARGUE that!



AFFECT is BEYOND LANGUAGE: PRE-PERSONAL, NON-CONSCIOUS - HOW CAN WE ACCOMMODATE IT TO THEORIES OF LANGUAGE?

FOR DELEUZE there is no process of meaning-making that can be ANALYSED OBJECTIVELY.



Meaning either falls back on the MAJORITARIAN, habit, power

or through the CONTORTIONS of MEMORISATION... and that is where the POLITICAL comes in...

"HACCEITIES"
↑CRYSTALLISATION and PROCESSES of INDIVIDUATION



We can't really go into all this because it's INCREDIBLY complex.

Sometimes I think I have it and sometimes I DON'T.



And UNDERLYING this is the difference between "ARE WE DOING SCIENCE or are we doing METAPHYSICS?"

How can we STITCH those two TOGETHER?



MY answer to this is: What are you DOING with theory of LANGUAGE?

For me, LINGUISTICS is an ONGOING endeavour of trying to DESCRIBE what we are DOING SOCIALLY.

It's always SUBJECT to CHANGE.



Creating a linguistics IS a power act... there are some good reasons to create a GRAMMAR...

It's quite another power thing to TEACH those rules!

What RULES can we PROPOSE for this language?



We'll always be CHASING it, always RE-THEORISING.



So for you linguistics is neither a THEORETICAL nor EMPIRICAL discipline, it's a process of ANALYSIS...?

DATA
PRACTICE
THEORY



For me, those are not EXCLUSIVE.

What it ISN'T is a claim to THE TRUTH, a fixed and ABSOLUTE 'science' - which I would also reject - it doesn't mean you throw away LINGUISTICS!



We're finding COMMON GROUND.



THERE IS ALWAYS A DEFICIT in LANGUAGE (LECERCLE). Do we, should we, tackle the dimension BEYOND LANGUAGE?

Yes we DO and we SHOULD. Having identified things beyond language we can bring them INTO language

by naming them
in order to be able to talk about them

There is a DEFICIT, yes. But THAT'S OKAY. And it's ALWAYS going to be true.

If you fill the DEFICIT, there will still be a deficit.

Language is PHYSICAL, VISUAL, AUDITORY in the sense of MUSK - perhaps there's a FALSE BINARY?

So you're saying we can always "CATCH UP"?

You've BOTH said that in a way. That we're CHASING the deficit, and we can...

INTERPRET it

UNDERSTAND it

MAKE SENSE of it.

You're NEVER going to FILL IT...

And WHAT is DEFICIENT is ALWAYS MOVING.

WE FILL IN our DEFICITS and CREATE OTHERS as language DEVELOPS.

But we can OVERLOOK things with LANGUAGE, so that things remain in...

Only if you believe that language is A thing, A SYSTEM as opposed to developing PRACTICES.

Yep, I'm totally with that.

This is about how we UNDERSTAND LANGUAGE. As a LINGUISTIC THING, or with MULTIMODALITY, SOCIAL CONTEXT and so on.

From the DELEZIAN philosophy I'm interested in...

...is precisely HOW you can make an ACCOUNT for what goes on BEFORE anything is MANIFESTED and can be brought into LANGUAGE.

This seems too SHARP to me a DISTINCTION...

DELEUZE is going to have the notion of "THE EVENT"...

which I love!

so THESE are the things that interest me - in that sense, PRE LANGUAGE.

So much of this depends on what we MEAN by language.

And the answer is way too simplistic if we say 'language is this lexical structure, this system'

Yes. We have to go beyond that.

A **STRUCTURALIST** sort of linguistics is NOT the **ONLY** linguistics.

When **HALLIDAY** talks of **CHILD LANGUAGE**, how an infant **LEARNS** to **MEAN** - From the **START**, meaning is **BODILY**: "**INTENSITIES**", emotions we can't **HELP** but **MEAN**.



BUT IF THESE THINGS ARE **MANIFEST** IN ANY WAY AT ALL, THEN THEY CAN - "**CAPTURED**" IS THE **WRONG** WORD I THINK, BUT THEY CAN BE...



CRYSTALLISED.

YEAH, CRYSTALLISED: THEY CAN BE **MANIFESTED** IN A **FORM** THAT CAN BE **REFLECTED ON.**

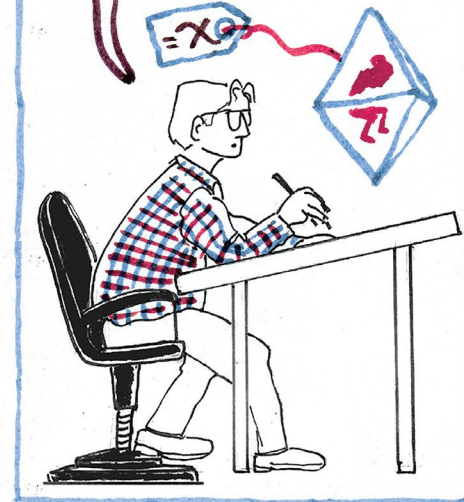


IF I'M **EXPERIENCING** SOME **INTENSE** **PHYSICAL** **SENSATION**, MAYBE THE **IDEA** OF **SEMIOTIC** **SYSTEMS** IS WAY OUT OF MY **CONCERN**

BUT IF EITHER OF YOU ARE **SEEING** THAT I'M **SHAKING** AND **QUIVERING**, YOU'RE GOING TO BE **OBSERVING** THOSE **MARKERS** AND **USING** THEM AS **SIGNS.**



BUT YOU'VE **ALREADY** **BROUGHT** IT **BACK**, YOU **SEE**, TO **OBSERVATION** AND **LANGUAGE.**



WHY NOT **LEAVE** IT AT THAT **DELEUZIAN** **NOTION** THAT YOU ARE **EXPERIENCING** AN **INTENSITY** WHICH **AFFECTS**, AND THE **RESPONSE** IS **AFFECT.**



BUT THESE THINGS **AREN'T** **MUTUALLY** **EXCLUSIVE.**

NO, THEY'RE NOT. THE **QUESTION** IS, DO THE **FOUNDATIONS** OF YOUR **LINGUISTIC** **THEORIES** **ACCORD** WITH A **DELEUZIAN** **NOTION** OF **SELF**

I think you can't **CHARACTERISE** a **WHOLE** **SCHOOL** OF **THEORY** in that way. There are **DIFFERENT** **APPROACHES** to **LINGUISTICS**, that can **TACKLE** things in **DIFFERENT** **WAYS.**

IF you're going to **DEFINE** **affect** as the **PRE-LINGUISTIC**, and as "**INEFFABLE**", then yes, you can't talk about it, or theorise about it - or it stops being **"IT"** if you do.



I **TOTALLY** **AGREE, YES.**

OR ARE WE **STITCHING** **THEORIES** WHICH AT **BOTTOM** HAVE **DIFFERENT** **PREMISES?**



AFFECT
BODY
SOCIETY
LANGUAGE

...and I'M **HAPPY** with that **TENSION.**

(HOW) CAN WORDS AND IMAGES BE CONSIDERED TO HAVE A CONGRUITY OF PURPOSE?



"CASCADE OF COMMITMENTS",
THAT'S A REALLY NICE PHRASE..

IN MY
TERMINOLOGY
I WOULD TALK
ABOUT "ACTIVATING
THE SOURCE
DOMAIN"

MAKING
A GREATER
CONSCIOUSLY
ACTIVE
RANGE
OF PROPERTIES
OF THE
CONCEPTUAL
DOMAIN BEING
CONSIDERED!

AM I RIGHT IN
UNDERSTANDING THAT IF WE
NAME THIS TAPE RECORDER
AS A 'TAPE RECORDER',
OR IF WE DRAW
THAT TAPE RECORDER
...

... SO
EACH
MODALITY
ACTUALLY

BRINGS
DIFFERENT
ASPECTS

COMMITMENTS,
YES.

... WE'RE
IMBUING IT
WITH DIFFERENT
QUALITIES

DIFFERENT
...

I like
"commitments"

THE DIECTIC
THERE, CALLING
IT "THIS" ...

... INCLUDES THE FACT
THAT IT'S RECORDING
WHAT WE'RE SAYING,
THAT IT'S ON
THIS TABLE

That's been over
a minute on
that.

SORRY, I...

WHAT
A LOVELY
MINUTE.

Let's
move
on?

IN
THIS ROOM

FOR THIS
PURPOSE

➡ To what extent

?? < ?????????????????? > ??

RELY ON

A PARTICULAR CONCEPTION OF

THE NATURE OF

DOES YOUR

T	H	E	O	R	E	T	I	C	A
L	F	R	A	M	E	W	O	R	K

THE "SELF"?

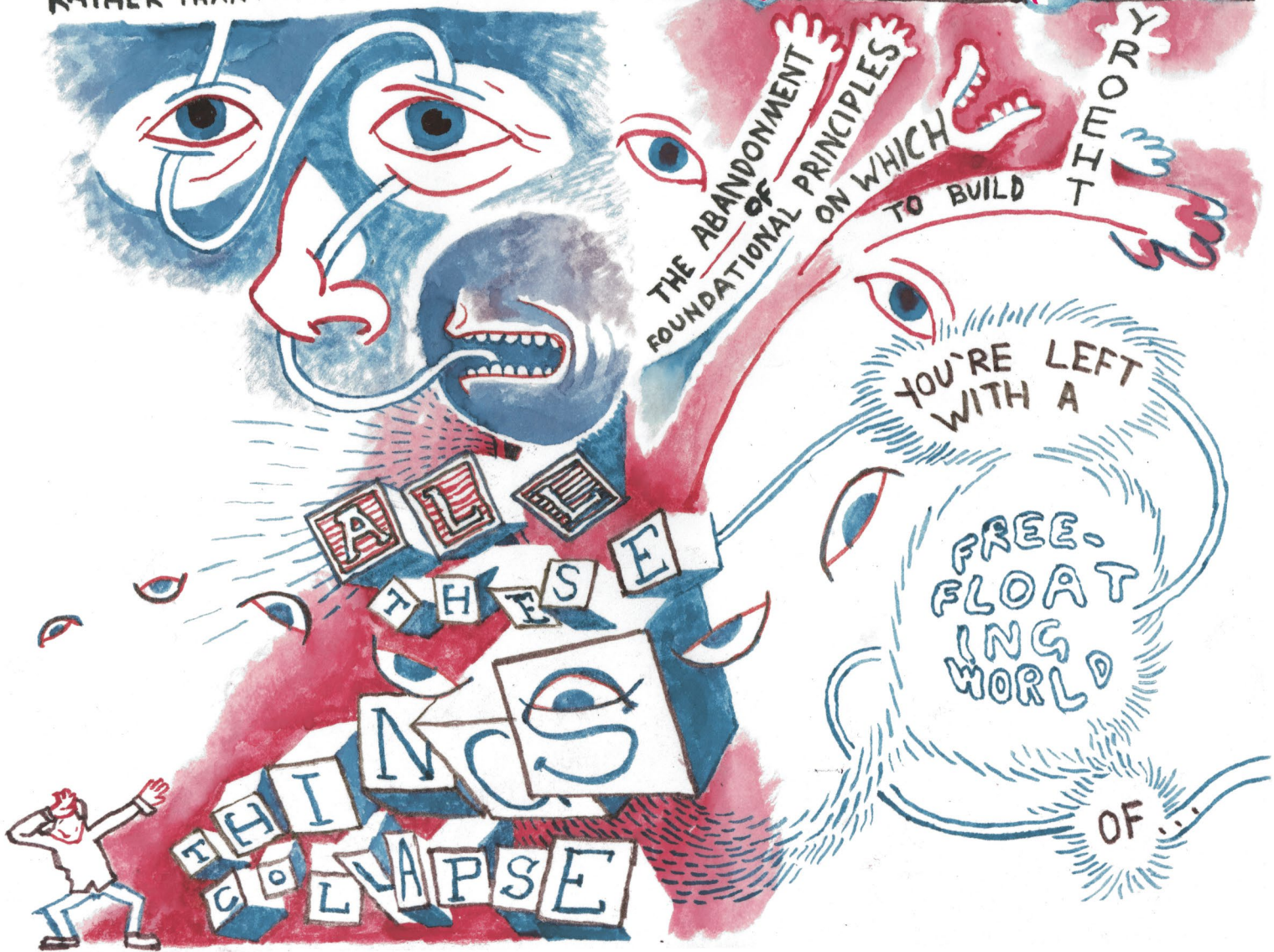
QUESTION 5.

I NOW HAVE MY MINUTE. OK.

THIS IS REALLY THE ARGUMENT ABOUT HOW POSTMODERNISM UNDERMINES THE VERY NOTION OF ANY ATTEMPT AT SOCIAL SCIENCES...



THE SELF IS SEEN AS AN ASSEMBLAGE RATHER THAN ANY NOTION OF ESSENCES,





SO MEANING-MAKING IN COMICS IS GOING TO BE DIFFERENT FOR EVERY COMIC PRODUCTION

AND FOR EVERY COMIC CREATOR, EVEN IN COMMERCIAL PRODUCTIONS.







I wonder whether the idea of inker and penciller and so on,

whether that's just because we're aware of that cultural history of how those jobs were divided -

IT SEEMS UNCONTROVERSIAL TO SAY THAT'S INFLUENCED BY OUR KNOWLEDGE OF PRODUCTION LINE TECHNIQUES,

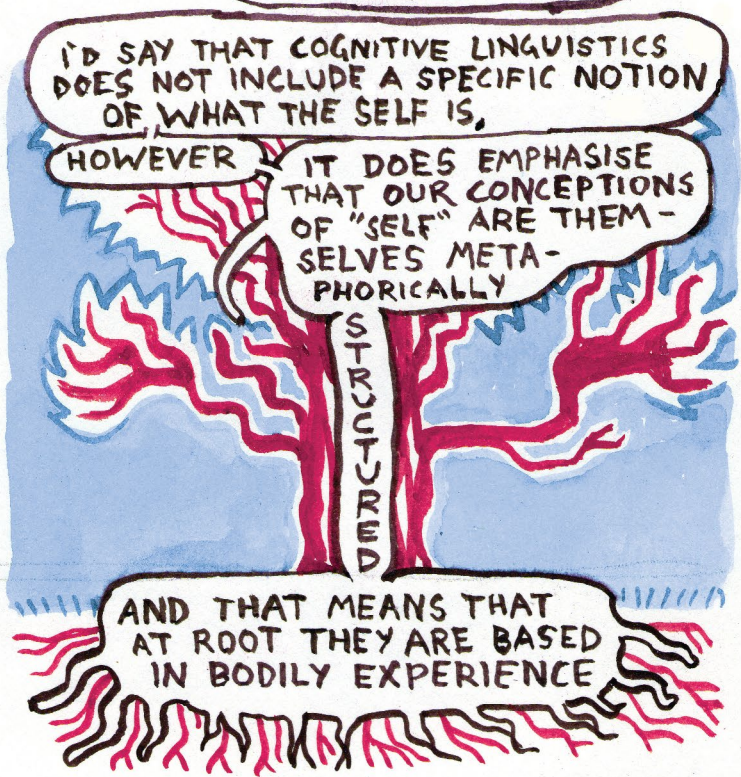


BUT I THINK THERE IS A DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THOSE TASKS



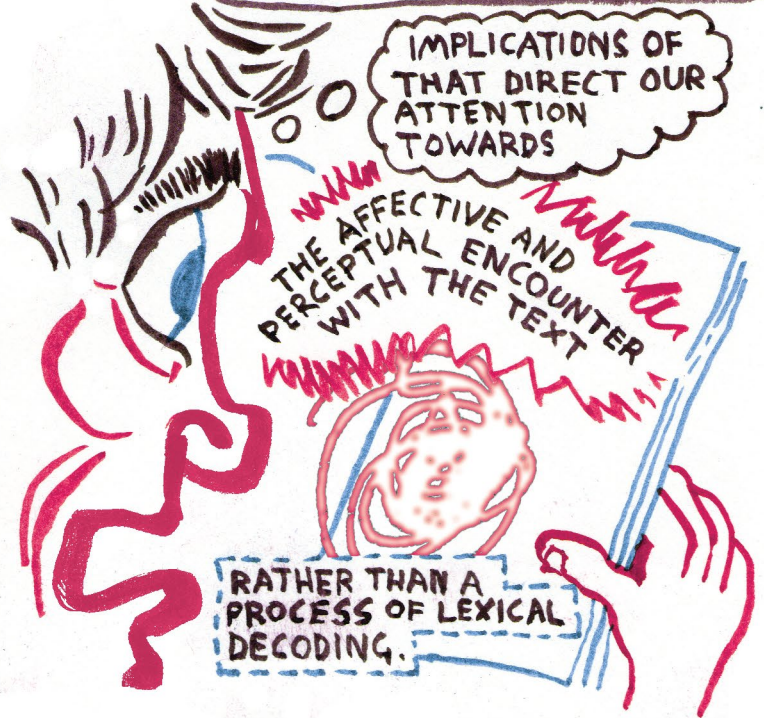
THE MARKS I CAN MAKE WITH A BRUSH ARE DIFFERENT FROM THOSE I CAN MAKE WITH A PENCIL

SO IT'S NOT ARBITRARY TO SEE THEM AS DISTINCT PARTS OF A RELATED SET OF EXPRESSIVE ACTIVITIES



I'D SAY THAT COGNITIVE LINGUISTICS DOES NOT INCLUDE A SPECIFIC NOTION OF WHAT THE SELF IS, HOWEVER IT DOES EMPHASISE THAT OUR CONCEPTIONS OF "SELF" ARE THEMSELVES METAPHORICALLY

AND THAT MEANS THAT AT ROOT THEY ARE BASED IN BODILY EXPERIENCE



IMPLICATIONS OF THAT DIRECT OUR ATTENTION TOWARDS

THE AFFECTIVE AND PERCEPTUAL ENCOUNTER WITH THE TEXT

RATHER THAN A PROCESS OF LEXICAL DECODING.



IT SEEMS TO ME, THEN, THAT THESE THINGS ARE COMPATIBLE.

I THINK SO, YES.

THEY'RE JUST DIFFERENT ... PARTS OF A MACHINE.



After Thierry, with apologies. PFD