

surface at the expense of content and meaning.³ Experience thus imagined would seem to oppose the imperative to reason, think, know or understand. If meaning is to be clung to as an objective, then it will be important to consider how the exercise of such experience might modify understanding and how this might be received as meaning.

If the outcome of experience is meaning being experience opposed to reason, how does one approach the received meaning if reason is somewhere else? The moments of realizing where our ideas might begin, causing madness that may be resolved in the context of a concept, made tangible through a process of articulating. This writing becomes part of an object that bears the marks of my thinking, as much as the “earthen vessel bears the marks of the potter’s hand”.⁴ It is an object of research that represents a ‘reading’ that isn’t mine when it is. “Language takes precedence. Not only before meaning. Also before the self.”⁵ Writing is intentionality and knowledge is founded on subjectivity, thus the presupposition to articulate the reader. “Nothing should present itself, that there be nothing there that is, nothing that is present, nothing is in the present.”⁶

The stakes are always so high: choosing within the infinite total code of language a way of articulating in words a thought that would allow for a work of art to be present, in its absence. Which absence, which presence, one may ask. It might be that when one writes about art, about a work of art, one always lacks words. One is powerless when it comes to translating art into words, art that is the event of the exhaustion of discourse. Perhaps the position I wish to occupy to act upon my own powerlessness (*impuissance*) is to think of an empty space that I don’t have

to fill with new things, or new words, or new sentences, but where I can make existing words, and things, dance or stutter. I could make use of existing discourses too, which I would behead first, so they no longer make sense. *Sans queue, ni tête (aphalle et acéphale)*.⁷

The zombie only *makes sense* once its brain has been destroyed. Without that denouement it remains an abject material presence that defies categorisation – an anomalous object that refuses to be a stable, fixed thing. Undeadliness stages a glitchy and grotesque animation of that which is ossified and inert. It is a semiotic contagion that spreads playful and performative non-sense, infecting *the existing word* with a lurching *dance* and a guttural *stutter*. We in turn lose our heads in the presence of undeadly strangeness, and research is perhaps an attempt to practice and partake of this immersive headlessness without ever exhausting it. The fatal blow to the zombie’s head heralds a moment of understanding; it *makes sense* of the undead corpse. We therefore find our own heads again, but are immunised against the infectious weirdness of *not-knowing* as a result. So the researcher endorses the zombie’s violation of the grave; we let undeadliness feed on our heads without trying to *make sense* of it.

The animal of research, being nourished from its root, springs up from the dirt of discourse, the direction of growth pandering to a *supposed* head. “Humans see the world through language, but do not see language.”⁸ What exactly do the bees mean when they pollinate the blossom?

For art, meaning tends to be expressed through images: copies long since removed in mimesis. “[W]ith man, life has led to a living being that is never completely in the right place ...”⁹ The capacity to expose or profane