

Summaries

Krzysztof Pawlak

A Few Remarks on the Subversive in Psychoanalysis

The text concentrates on a few basic but very often misunderstood psychoanalytic notions such as the unconscious and the subject and tries to show their subversive potential pointing to the anti-philosophical and anti-scientific status of psychoanalysis. Taking into consideration that philosophy is the “science” of the conscious mind, Freud’s discovery of the unconscious as something which by definition cannot be brought to consciousness founded psychoanalysis as anti-philosophy. Additionally, psychoanalytic distinction between “disinterested” knowledge and subjective truth grounds psychoanalysis as anti-scientific. Since the subjective truth can only be the truth of the subject of the unconscious, that is, the unconscious desire, and this truth as such can only be expressed in language in which there are no signifiers for the split subject, such truth always interrupts itself on the way and exists only as narrative fiction, never arriving at its consummation, always not-all.

Paweł Dybel

Crumbs of Psychoanalysis

The introductory part of the text is a personal reminiscence of the author about his discovery of psychoanalysis while a young scholar forced on him unwittingly by the ossified academic institution and his unexpected fascination with the discourse he had up until then considered as a naïve 19th century naturalism. Having also analysed the intellectual climate of his academic youth (late communist Poland), which was unfavourable to his interests, the author describes the misunderstandings and bad faith which fed such an approach and, against this background, shows why outside Poland, psychoanalysis has become the inalienable part of the Western intellectual mind frame. He also discusses the way French theory “saved” psychoanalysis from pseudo-Freudian commonplaces (Horney, Fromm) by showing that the founding Freudian gesture was a denaturalization of man by means of displaying the linguistic nature of supposedly naturalistic psychoanalytic notions such as the unconscious, drive or desire, and by proposing a new anthropology of sense in which language itself, as the site in which man and consciousness are constituted, is shown to be inevitably non-coincident with itself.

Sławomir Masłoń

Living Death, Dead Life. Lacan, Badiou and the Lost Treasure of Liberalism

Using as a springboard an essay by Agata Bielik-Robson in which she criticizes the recent revival of the connection between Marxism and Lacanian psychoanalysis as the reincarnation of deadly rhetoric (fanatic and fantasmatic) and opposes it to the origins of liberalist discourse as the modern language of pure vitalist energy, the text tries to show that such an ecstatic interpretation of liberalism is precisely the fantasmatic counterpart of the drab and life-denying “the end of grand narratives” ruling ideology. It also attempts to show that the opposition between the supposed ideological adulation of death (Lacan) and life (liberalism) is not only based on erroneous understanding of crucial Lacanian concepts, but also on a questionable conceptualization of the notion of life itself.

Maciej Nowak

The Whereabouts of Cogito. Narratives of Megalomania and the Melancholy of the Beginning

The title of the article is a cluster of various plays on words which build up an allusion to classic texts and “situations” that should sound familiar to most humanists. The title suggests that *cogito* is not an epistemological post of certitude but it has its “whereabouts” – so its axiological and discursive character cannot be pinned down and endowed with an ultimate sense of some kind. Consequently, the dynamic and perhaps furtive nature of *cogito* is tainted by the author’s (Descartes’s) megalomania or, to put it bluntly, the philosopher’s arrogant claim of his being able to access objective truth and authoritatively define the firm fundament of all knowledge. The article shows that this aspiration cannot be fulfilled (hence the titular *melancholy*, a word alluding to both Derrida and Levi-Strauss) and that it has been the nature of grand philosophical projects to get embroiled in complex semantic, conceptual, stylistic, textual trouble spots.