maker versus Hitchcock the television-maker. The encounter happens at a time when Hollywood had to redefine itself due to the closure of many cinemas caused by a loss of audiences to television. TV was on the rise, and it had to carve out a niche for itself within society. But alas, it's almost as if the social ritual of the coffee break gave way to the commercial break.

First published as: Bernard, C. & Grimonprez, J., "It's a poor sort of memory that only works backwards: Johan Grimonprez en dialogue avec Catherine Bernard" in *L'image-document, entre réalité et fiction*, ed. J.-P. Criqui (Paris: Le Bal / Marseille: Images en Manoeuvres Éditions, 2010), 212–23.

Philosophy, the "Unknown Knowns", and the Public Use of Reason

Slavoj Žižek

September 2006

In March 2003, Donald Rumsfeld engaged in a little bit of amateur philosophizing about the relationship between the known and the unknowns: "There are known knowns. These are things we know that we know. There are known unknowns. That is to say, there are things that we know we don't know. But there are also unknown unknowns. There are things we don't know we don't know." What he forgot to add was the crucial fourth term: the "unknown knowns", things we don't know that we know—which is precisely the Freudian unconscious, the "knowledge which doesn't know itself." If Rumsfeld thinks that the main dangers in the confrontation with Iraq are the "unknown unknowns," the threats from Saddam about which we do not even suspect what they may be, the Abu Ghraib scandal shows where the main dangers are: in the "unknown knowns," the disavowed beliefs, suppositions, and obscene practices we pretend not to know about, although they form the background of our public values. The task of philosophy as the "public use of reason" is to unearth these "unknown knowns." It is not to solve problems, but to redefine them; not to answer questions, but to raise the proper question. In an old joke from the defunct German Democratic

Republic, a German worker gets a job in Siberia; aware of how all mail will be read by censors, he tells his friends: "Let's establish a code: if a letter you will get from me is written in ordinary blue ink, it is true; if it is written in red ink, it is false." After a month, his friends get the first letter written in blue ink: "Everything is wonderful here: stores are full, food is abundant; apartments are large and properly heated, movie theatres show films from the West, there are many beautiful girls ready for an affair-the only thing unavailable is *red ink*." The structure is here more refined than it may appear: although the worker is unable to signal in the prearranged way that what he reports is a lie, he nonetheless succeeds in getting his message across-how? *By inscribing the very reference to the code into the encoded message, as one of its elements.* Of course, we encounter here the standard problem of self-reference: since the letter is written in blue, is not its entire content true? The solution is that the very fact that the lack of red ink is mentioned signals that is SHOULD have been written in red ink. The nice point here is that this mention of the lack of the red ink produces the effect of truth *independently of its own literal truth*: even if red ink really WAS available; the lie that it is unavailable was the only way to get the true message across in this specific condition of censorship. And is this not the matrix of critical philosophy, not only in "totalitarian" conditions of censorship, but perhaps even more, in the more refined conditions of liberal censorship? One starts with agreeing that one has all the freedoms one wants-and then one merely adds that the only thing missing it the "red ink": we "feel free" because we lack the very language to articulate our unfreedom. What this lack of red ink means is that, today, all the main terms we use to designate the present conflict-"war on terror," "democracy and freedom," "human rights," etc. etc.-are FALSE terms, mystifying our perception of the situation instead of allowing us to think it. In this precise sense, our "freedoms" themselves serve to mask and sustain our deeper unfreedom-that is what philosophy should make us see.

Excerpts from: Žižek, S., "Philosophy, the "unknown knowns", and the public use of reason", in *Topoi*, vol. 25, no. 1–2 (2006): 137–42.

If You See Yourself, Kill Him

An interview with Johan Grimonprez and Tom McCarthy by Alexander Provan

July 2009

Alexander Provan: Johan, for your latest work, *Double Take* (2009), you collaborated with Tom. It must have been a tight collaboration given that Tom wrote the story upon which the film is based. How did this collaboration come about?

Johan Grimonprez: Tom and I first met at a 2005 screening of my film *dial H-I-S-T-O-R-Y* (1997) at the British Film Institute. Tom, who had recently published his novel *Remainder*,[1] was on the post-screening panel and I was in the audience. I was then invited to join the panel on stage.

Tom McCarthy: [On the phone] I remember that an academic complained that the film "didn't render ideology as ideology", to which I responded by comparing its structure to Greek tragedy, with the modern terrorist as Antigone, "who sets herself against the state by invoking a higher, more divine law".

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1   McCarthy, T., *Remainder* (Paris: Metronome Press, 2005).