Shifting Intelligence Needs

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> "Dans un sens,
> toute "vérité" n'est qu'une erreur
> qui corrige une autre erreur "
> Victor E. Frank[1]

At the very last end of an unforgetable summer, I was self-deceiving myself on Bentham's writings on secrecy and visibility, while sitting in front of the impressive two hundreds years old *Panopticon* in the so beloved large hall of the Bibliothèque Nationale... I did not know yet that only two months later I would meet Stevan Dedijer, around a delicious fish at Lipp, *pour croiser le fer* on some of our non-shared ideas about intelligence. In our world, as Katalin Igo-Kemenes noticed, "each piece has a clear meaning by itself, but one misses the key-piece, the one that would help to put the whole puzzle together. Maybe that is the aim of the game, to figure out is not the point, but to create an image that fits each and everyone's imagination" [2]. The creative *Social Intelligence* – the forthcoming intelligence of society – has been this piece that I was waiting for without even being aware of it. And as this world doesn't tell, but only suggests, I had to cope alone with such a metamorphosis of the social environment, remembering that in these cases rationality is less required than imagination and even poetry, which is the most faithful medium of expression for *self-deception*. The following self-deceiptive story leads me to conclude that there is at last a place today for a general theory of intelligence that would replace all its anecdotical studies with systematic analysis.

ESCAPING FROM THE SEMANTICS OF INTELLIGENCE

Intelligence can mean many things and among them: (a) *ability* – to bring knowledge to understand and to solve problems –; or (b) *activity* – Spying is the poorest kind of intelligence –; or (c) *knowledge* – What intelligence do we have about Sony ? –; or (4) *organization* – Where is the intelligence of this corporation ? – but by no means intelligence is synonymous of espionage. The comparison stops at the *human faculty of understanding* that all spies must naturally have if not willing to be fools. In english, intelligence is as well a branch of knowledge, an interchange of informations or a relationship between persons. The most global definition is perhaps the one given by Simon for whom "intelligence is searching the environment for conditions calling for decision" [3]. Thus, intelligence can be simultaneously seen as a *product*, a *monitoring process*, an *activity* or a type of *knowledge*. Yet, it is obvious that intelligence is not a synonym of information. In France, the common sense of intelligence is a human faculty. It is rarely understood as a product or the process of gathering, interpretating and disseminating information.

The word *"veille"* is used in order to express the intelligence process. The word *"renseignement"* expresses the product: the intelligence that has been gathered in the environment. But the term *"veille"* has a very passive connotation, which does not imply involvment of the intelligence gatherer; and the term *"renseignement"* tacitly refers to the secret services. *Intelligence* as a compilation, analysis and dissemination of informations about the intentions, capabilities, weaknesses and strenghts of internal and external actors of a given environement is widely ignored by french public opinion. Corporations, administrations and universities yet use and understand intelligence under this specific meaning. In fact, intelligence is first the ability of man to discover his own self-deception, that is to say the elementary mean of progress of human kind. I therefore see three fundamental steps in the intelligence process which are:

SCANNING   INTERPRETATION   SELF-DECEPTION
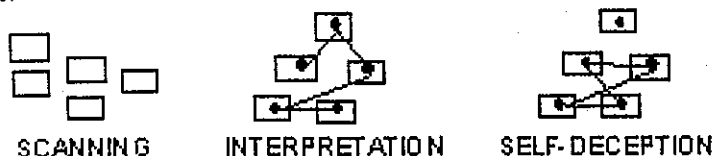
There are not arrows on this scheme because intelligence process sometimes starts by a self-deception – *discovered through intuitive means* -that conducts the social system to proceed a *"backward chaining"* in order to find out the assumptions that support its misperception. Given the particular hypothesis that one may be wrong, one checks to see if his hypothesis matches a fact in his memory. If not, then one checks the rules that have conducted him from these facts to his wrong perception. The definitions that see intelligence as a unilateral adaptative process thus ignore that social systems are sometimes *selected* by their environments before they had time to adapt themselves to it. Such definitions do not match the reality of *population ecology*. Therefore intelligence might be also understood as the ability of a social system *not to be selected* by its environment, be it social, technological, psychological or economic. In this perspective, architecture for example is the intelligence of space. It develops means in order to cope with man necessity not to be dependent on environmental aleas.

EMERGENCE OF A PARADIGM

Klaus Knorr was among the first to call for education and research on a global theory of intelligence, which he saw as a strong interaction between conceptual and empirical items that would be easily found in the daily failures and successes of intelligence communities [4]. Stevan Dedijer prooved him right and did more again. He made us doubt that intelligence is the exclusive and non-shared *light of the State*, as Bacon liked to write, pointing out the urgence for a supra-regulation, focusing on world priorities, without using once the term *ethics* but making us strongly think about it: "We are witnessing everywhere the rise of a great variety and number of new organisations, associations and new more complex social systems. As the complexity of social organisation within every system one can think of increases, its component parts even in the most totalitarian ones tend to develop what I call a *social slack*, which expresses a certain degree of freedom to act on their own." [5]. He thus prooved that "quite contrary to Bacon's times and thoughts, democracy is becoming a productive force, with the result that all government of all social systems have to be relatively more open toward the governed, than the governed toward governments" [6]. But if democracy can effectively be a productive force, may one add, it must not be a *blind* force ignoring that human beings are sometimes ready to do anything for more power or more money. Intelligence has a heavy past, several centuries of practice, experiencing a few models and failures. Therefore, intelligence *know-how* does exist, but intelligence *awareness* is still widely lacking today as the first step of creation of a "community of all national actors, from education, science, military, government whose shared task and knowledge is intelligence gathering, social intelligence and security" [7]. Organisations are becoming more and more open, and secrecy, more and more difficult to hide but still necessary as the last essence of social cohesion. In 1938, the reporter George Seldes interviewed Baruch, the friend and adviser of many CEOs. As he was asking him how he managed to be so successful in his life, Baruch answered: "When I was a young man and had a few thousand dollars to invest, I decided to do my own investigation first. I would get a job, any job, with a corporation; I was on the loading platform hauling the product if no other job was open. I waited. I would get a job as a clerck – shipping clerck. I knew exactly what the business was doing. I would get a job as bookkeeper. I assure you that in three or four months I knew more about this company than the chairman of the board or the president or any member of the board of directors, or anyone. I then weighed facts: this company would soon have a boom, it would split its stock many times, raise dividends, make records. So I put my money in it. And went and got a job, any job, at another likely company. After a month or two as bookkeeper I would quit, and do the same thing elsewhere. This is true investigation, this is true investment" [8]. Baruch has invested in intelligence. The intelligence process is thus the most *adhocratic* one among all. One must create in order to gather: the intelligence one gets, is the intelligence one has put in investigations. Intelligence is therefore everywhere human beings think, build, modify, interact with their environment: a paradigm of paradigms.

LAST RESISTANCES TO INTELLIGENCE

Do we are so *bourgeois* that we cannot accept intelligence as a quite natural social process ? Not so long ago, when one was risking himself in speaking about the implications of intelligence in business, one used to receive the same advice that the one that Alice received from the Flower: "You keep your head under the leaves, and snore away there, till you know no more what's going on in the world, than if you were a bud !" [9]. People who do not trust in intelligence must be "unaware of their own mental states and be reluctant to recognize them, even fight such recognition, thus deceiving themselves about their own desires, motives and emotion" [10]. Yet intelligence is in everyone's desires: either to be intelligent, or make the direct environment more intelligent. One must not accept today that a difference could be made between intelligence as the *art of gathering, interpretating and disseminating* information, and intelligence as the art of *understanding* it : it directly leads to Demos' *lying to oneself* [11]. On one hand, if one gathers information without understanding, it becomes a quite good watchdog, who has sometimes its utility, but has nothing to do with the human resources needed by firms today. On the other hand, how can one understand well enough the things and human beings around him if missing of *adequately interpretated information* ? We face today, simultaneously, two *dramas*, two deceptions. Even if not dying, spying is facing an identity crisis. Open and ethical intelligence, while not being prooved wrong, is facing everyday a reality that prooves that spying is sometimes still necessary to protect international human rights. I see here a comparison with Lermontov's *Masquerade* [12] which *Nocturne* is expressing to me the essence of

self-deception. The music first expresses the coming of the night, quietly, in an unavoidable way, and then the music surprises ourselves by a pure and melancholic *crescendo*. Eagerness for newness and resistances to it seem to continually interact in Lermontov's drama. Strategists are eager to call their raw material – *intelligence* –instead of "information" since the latter does not suggest all the work of interpration they made. But none of them dares to do so because of proprieties and social pressure. When "self-deception is mutual, and the methods communal (...) No one acting in concert has an interest in speaking, or producing evidence, against the false belief or questionable desire that each person wants to maintain" [13].

SO POOR AND USEFUL MODELS AND METAPHORES

Those who believe in the need and the development of intelligence in modern society, are all engaged in a large-scale *propaganda* effort that makes them use models and metaphores. I belong to these people and must confess that models poorly explain reality, but are strongly convincing. On one hand, let's try to explain to someone exactly what intelligence is using words, sentences and facts. On the other hand, let's compare intelligence to a *radar*, a *mirror of reality*, or to *ears and eyes connected to a brain*, and evaluate the difference of perceptions: they might be deformed, strongly influenced by the *mythology* of objects that the audience has but, at least they will be convincing. Among all the metaphores, one is particulary powerful. It is the one that Jones developed in *The Theory of Practical Joking* : "With Bacon, I see the scientist in much the same position as an Intelligence officer, trying to assemble and interpret the evidence of Nature. Because of his limited means of observation, he will often build up a false world-picture from biaised clues; but just as the Intelligence officer can check his mental picture of the situation by making further observations, so can the scientist correct his model by further experiment." [14]. Here we guess an incessant movement from construction to reality – and vice-versa – that intelligence managers like to illustrate as a *cycle*. From a psychological point of view, the cycle symbolizes the mastery of intelligence: its rationalization. It is obviously a defense mechanism against uncertainty or perhaps "an attempt to enclose a number of complex and interrelated functions within a single representative image" [15]... But one can doubt of it.
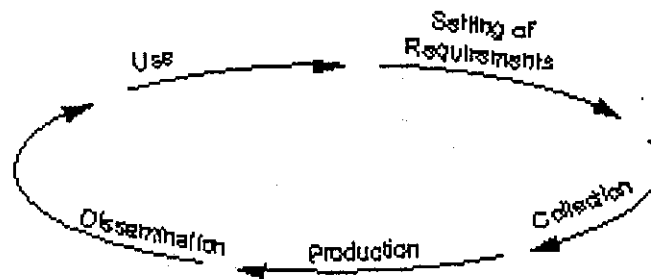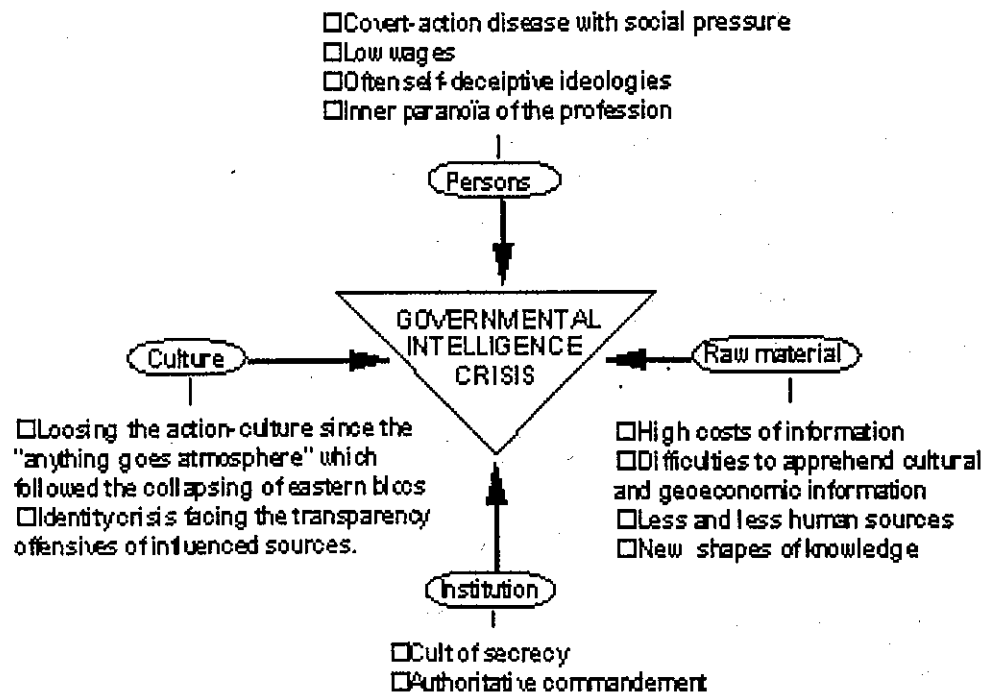

Adapted from H.H. Ransom, "Strategic Intelligence",
Morristown, N.J. : G.P., 1973, p. 12.

In fact, intelligence processes are often poor straight lines, directly leading to a blind alley. And when it turns, it is from self-deception to self-deception, in a circular and endless lie that conduct the intelligence gatherer to strengthen the false models he has still in the head. The cycle is therefore the more stupid, but the more useful also, among all allegories that can be used to illustrate the word "intelligence". Where does it start ? It reminds us this old philosophical trick of the hen and the egg. Who has been the first, the egg or the hen ? In a same way, the setting of requirements can not be made without the use of intelligence that leads the reflexion to some specific objectives. None of the five steps of the intelligence cycle above can exist before its precedent. In fact, one must seek the first act of intelligence in the impossibility to do anything else: a hazard. And to increase this hazard of intelligence, the only way is to scan the environment, endlessly, and learn more from it everyday that it is spent behind the unconscious and conscious windows of the mind. Intelligence is therefore a long apprenticeship, not a circle, but perhaps an odd *nodes bag* that prooves once again that we are not perfect. Governmental intelligence has during a long time seen itself as a nice and perfect cycle. It is nowadays facing big troubles and looking for the corners where its diseases could be hidden.
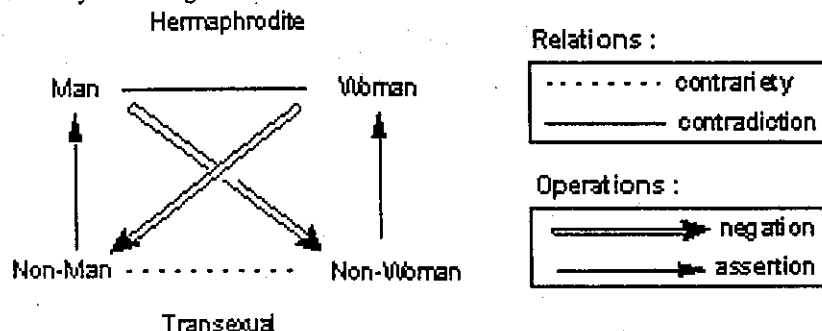
GOVERNMENTAL INTELLIGENCES IN DEEP CRISIS

Daniel Defoe said that "intelligence is the soul of all public business" [16]. But how does this soul look like ? Before the fall of the wall of Berlin, Robert Gates, as he was still at the head of planning of the CIA, declared that "intelligence looks at the world through a uniquely gloomy prism (...) looking behind the facade – behind the headlines – and trying to discern reality" [17]. But aiming intelligence only at its present reality is ignoring its *future-oriented nature*, its powerful virtuality that led Akio Morita to say : "We are focusing on business ten years in advance, while you seem to be concerned only with profits ten minutes from now. At this rate, you may never be able to compete with us." [18]. Because of its intelligence, *Japan can say 'No'* but will not do so, instead it will proove us right on the

emergence of an intelligence-based society. Intimidation through words has become a powerful weapon which does not replace *in fine* nuclear dissuasion, but opens a new *era* of firms and international relationships. What is wrong with past intelligence doctrines today ? First of all, openness: as Jones noticed, "in a modern, open state there are so many channels of observation available to an outside body, and so many aspects of national activity to be observed, that it would be impossible for a security service to cover them all." [19]. Today, governmental intelligence is coping with a deep crisis, whose first signals might have been found in 1973, when Ransom wrote: "intelligence doctrine, which heavily emphasizes security, fosters a compartimented activity, with each compartment or unit normally maintaining a tight secrecy over its own activity." [20]. Opennessphobia, public opinionphobia, incompetent-phobia... Such are diseases and results of compartimentation. The crisis is really deep because of its global nature. The raw material of intelligence – *information and sources* –is living a metamorphosis from political and military to cultural, socioeconomics and social concerns. Since the collapsing of eastern bureaucracies, action is less and less required but threat is bigger and bigger as westerners' awareness diminish. Governemental is thus facing an identity crisis, increased by a social pressure against secrecy and a commandement of intelligence services that still remain self-deceiptive in any country. What are the reasons for such a deep crisis ?

☐Covert-action disease with social pressure
☐Low wages
☐Often self-deceiptive ideologies
☐Inner paranoïa of the profession

⬭ Persons ⬭

GOVERNMENTAL
INTELLIGENCE
CRISIS

⬭ Culture ⬭   ⬭ Raw material ⬭

☐Loosing the action-culture since the "anything goes atmosphere" which followed the collapsing of eastern blocs
☐Identity crisis facing the transparency offensives of influenced sources.

☐High costs of information
☐Difficulties to apprehend cultural and geoeconomic information
☐Less and less human sources
☐New shapes of knowledge

⬭ Institution ⬭

☐Cult of secrecy
☐Authoritative commandement

LEARNING FROM THE SEMIOTICS OF INTELLIGENCE

The semiotics bring a new vision of intelligence in general, and of this crisis that intelligence services have to cope with in particular. Greimas and Courtès [21] have elaborated an interpretation system of signs that they have called *the semiotic square*. It is "a visual representation of relations maintained between the distinctive charateristics that constitute a same semantic category. In order to build this square, semiotics are using an essential acquired knowledge of structural linguisitics, which has been to recognize the existence of two types of *opposition relationships* in language: the privative relation and the qualitative relation, in other words contradiction and contrariety [22] ". The following example, given by Floch, illustrates how the *semiotic square* substantiate the relations and operations that link signs and symbols together.

Hermaphrodite

Man ——————— Woman

Non-Man · · · · · · · · · · Non-Woman

Transexual

Relations :

· · · · · · · · contrariety
——————— contradiction

Operations :

══════▶ negation
———————▶ assertion

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Such a semiotic tool fits perfectly intelligence concerns which are undoubtedly so contradictory and paradoxical. Governments, corporations and individuals face today the challenge of gathering intelligence without putting themselves out of the social game. "Intelligence has to adapt itself to its new social habitat. It has to take a softer shape, without using the language that reminds past times of authoritarism. Intelligence is thus a social phenomenon of the firm. It reveals a global comportment that adapts the firm simultaneously to economic imperatives and social imperatives" [23]. Secrecy interrelates with espionage. Openness interrelates with democracy. Intelligence interrelates with security. Here are the three fundamental assertions to begin with. Secrecy contraries openness, that itself contraries intelligence. Espionage contraries democracy, that itself is being contraried by security imperatives. Where are the missing links ? How security, democracy and secrecy are tied ? In fact, two semiotic squares, interdependent, are needed to represent the duality of intelligence, that might be:
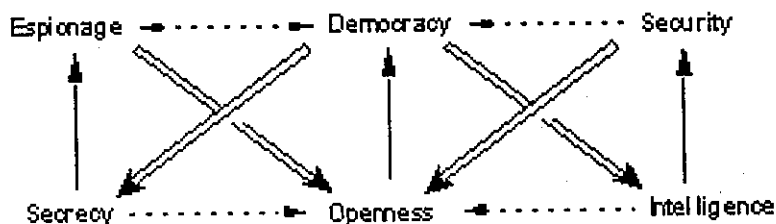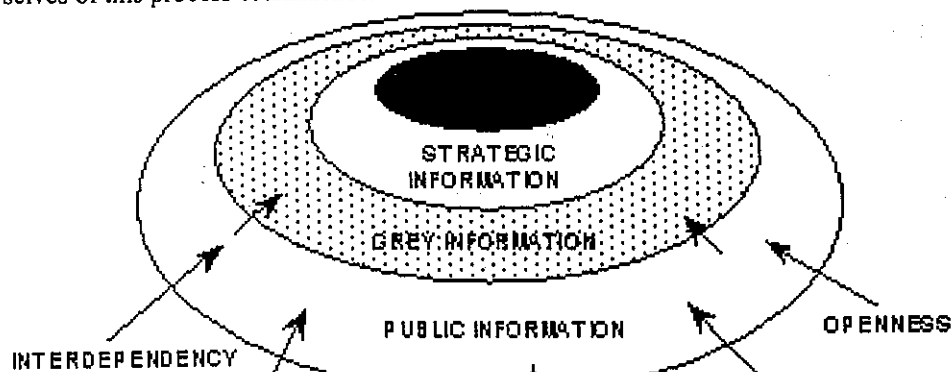

On this scheme, open intelligence doctrines *-ironically* -are placed on the right, whilst conservative secrecy doctrines are on the left. It shows that the two doctrines are *insepararable*, one loosing sense without the existence of the other. On this interpretation system of signs, one can read an explication of the intelligence crisis of today and *-perhaps* -the coming of the intelligence of tomorrow. The crisis can be explained by the impossibility to fix contradictions, and therefore the impossibility to get rid of one of these alternatives. On the contrary, contrarieties are often unilateral. Intelligence contraries openness – while forcing every social system to protect its knowledge – but openness does not contrary intelligence. In a same way, security imperatives contraries democracy – while hiding to people what governments are preparing for their own future – but democracy needs security, for obvious reasons (terrorism, economic dependency, ...). The present crisis can be read in the crossed-arrows on the left of the squares. Espionage must position itself regarding openness, whilst democracy must position itself regarding secrecy. And tomorrow's intelligence can be read in the right square. How intelligence theorists will proove that intelligence is a democratic social process ? How security definition will take under consideration the increasing openness of all organized social systems ?

OPEN INTELLIGENCE DOCTRINE FROM THE GEOECONOMICS

POINT OF VIEW

Who does serve the *open intelligence* doctrine ? When the fox of *Jean de la Fontaine* is telling the raven the beauty of its feather, it is looking with envy to its cheese that it holds in its bill. The fox uses a strategy of influence in order to make the bill open, and the cheese fall into its own mouth. Information is thus only the symptom of intelligence. In this particular case, the raven got the valuable information – *the cheese* -which it protects very carefully but it did not have the *intelligence* of the environment: he didn't make the link between its beauty and its own bill. Those who are "singing" the beauty of openness are like the fox: without information, but quite intelligent. They have everything to win in a cooperative transaction, and nothing to loose. The more they "sing" the cooming of *transparency* – and cooperation – the more they have hope to make bills and mouths open. There is the hidden meaning of openness: its *hidden dimension.* Here is the subterfuge. Open intelligence is at the same time an emerging reality and a powerful mystification that interrupts secrecy awareness. Perhaps we must'nt tell, as Ransom [] used to do so, that 80% of intelligence comes from open sources. It incites voyeurism for the 20% left... And considerably diminish *attention* for intelligence disclosures. There thus exists real semantics of openness that can be found in words such as "interdependency", "globalism", "transparency" and that justify more *cooperative attitudes* from the targeted selves of this process of influence.
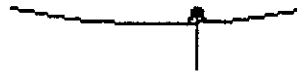
Intellligence theorists have already underlined the important role that played the *"openness"* of the Antique Athens in the fall of Greece. The "open city to the world" of Pericles was thus opened to Sparta's spies, whose conception of intelligence was much more agressive than Athenians' one. In fact, social systems while becoming more intelligent, also become more *conspiratorial*, that is to say more oriented and shaped in order to reach their own objectives.

SECRECY AS THE ESSENCE OF LIFE

Visibility is absence of charm. And hidden in its mystery, charm is the begining of everything in life. Marketing is for example the science of charming consumers. Intelligence is the art of guessing truth masked by the charm of facts. When the individual is not able to keep secrets, personality is widely offered to public space and thus looses all its meaning and its depth. The genesis of personality is an hide-and-seek game between the true-self and the social-self that are looking each other, cross-checking and running after the other. Every social system has an *interior life*, be it firm or human being, that is indiscernable from the outside and thus justify the need for intelligence gathering. All organized lives veil in secrecy from the precise moment of their births. Some recent researches show that the durability of cooperations between firms is based on the mutual confidence these firms have been able to create. Unfortunately, in these researches that I would not quote because of politeness, *confidence* is very badly defined, with pompous words and vagueness. Confidence, or reliance, is in fact the ability to arouse feelings of intimacy in others while ever remaining respectful of their mysteries. When human beings know almost everything there is to know about each other, they begin to transform reality in a nightmare which objective is to create *meaning*, any meaning. Very often, this *constructed meaning* is sarcastic towards others. Absence of secrecy, paradoxically, is followed by distrust and suspicion rather than total confidence. Because reality is loosing – with its secrets – all its charms: "The more two people in a relationship come to know about each other, the more their mutual secrets are disclosed, and the nore the relationship becomes something cold and insipid" [24]. The question is now how one can reasonably tell his CEO that the Joint-Venture they had hardly prepared is failing *by a lack of charm...* (sic). It prooves, if necessary, that there is a need today for *partnership intelligence.* "With this trend now prevailing in the world, we have no choice but to live cooperatively" [25]. It's a *fatal attraction*, said Morita, an inescapable interdependence. How to cope with it without loosing one's own identity and mystery ? In fact, secrecy – *and therefore identity perennial* -remain the essence of relationships between all social systems, be they firms or persons, and particulary the essence of competition. In cooperation, some things must still remain secret, in order to respect the business partner, in order not to resign own commerce liberty. "Which in nature is public, which in its content concerns all, becomes also externally, in its sociological form, more and more public; while that which in its inmost nature refers to the self alone – that is, the centripetal affairs of the individual – must also gain in sociological position a more and more private character, a more decisive possibility of remaining secret" [26]. The more cooperative and competitive the firms are, the more they use specific agreements, for managers, suppliers and clients, in order to protect their secrets that must not be divulged to competitors. In that sense, secrecy individualizes the corporations through these nominative agreements that attach the individual to the secrecy genesis of the social group. Social process is thus a self-deceiving secret pursuit that is based on the confidence each has in its own false construction of reality.

TOWARDS NEW INTELLIGENCE NEEDS

"The easisest person to deceive is one's own self", said Buwer-Lytton [27] and I have self-deceived myself whilst discovering that the information society was over before it exists. Moreover, this concept seems now to me as one of the most successful misinformations of the century, a huge fallacy that has hidden urgent intelligence needs during decennies: a willfull misconception. Since Wilensky in its *Organizational Intelligence* defintion has shown hierarchy, specialization and centralization as "major sources of distorsion and blockage of intelligence" [28], how much has been road explored ? Intelligence services are still centralized. Holism is still regarded as a perfidious danger. Hierarchy has still the last word among all when higher interests are in play. But something is new: intelligence has spread over business, individual life and all social systems that accompany nations' development. Today, we must "despise no man and consider nothing impossible, for there is no man who does not have his hour and there is no thing that does not have his place" [29] as the Talmud taught. But we must make choice. Two alternatives present themselves to the business intelligencer: *the house of certainty* that Michel Foucault has so brillantly described [30] or *the logical doubt* that avoid one to be self-deceipt by its own false convictions. In one hand, Foucault's house of certainty requires a measure of everything – time, space, business and men – in order to put all the environment inside squares that permit a higher intelligence and control of its evolution. Foucault was thus denonciating imprisonment and totalitaristic attitudes used by social-selves in our society. He although opened a door for a *systematic scanning of the social, technical, economic and cultural environments.* Fingarette, while dealing with self-deception, put light on our egos and counter-egos and on the *systematic doubt about*

ourselves as powerful tools for intelligence. But Fingarette's self-deception, which leads and misleads one's selves, is like the cave of plato: a psychic prison.

MICHEL FOUCAULT'S HOUSE OF CERTAINTY   **VS**   **FINGARETTE'S PSYCHIC PRISON OF UNCERTAINTY**
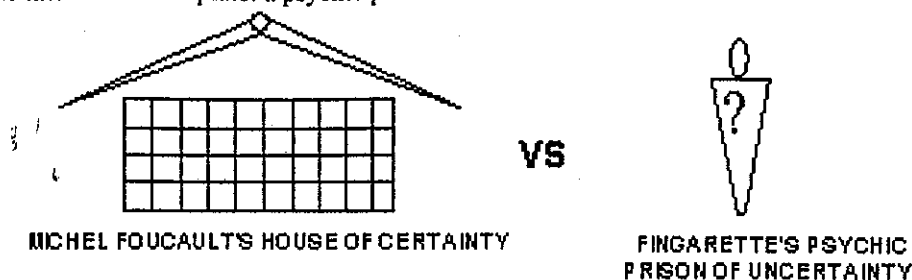
Here is the universal dilemma of intelligence: the totalitaristic house of certainty *versus* the psychic prison of uncertainty. The only way to find out such a dilemma is shifting intelligence needs. That is to say targetting intelligence process toward economic and human welfare. And it is not a question of methods, but of ethics and social consciousness.

CONCLUSION

André Gide said that "the true hypocrite is the one who ceases to perceive his deception, the one who lies with sincerity" [31]. Are we all going to remain true hypocrites toward intelligence ? Or, are we going to become "*ex-self-deceivers* who at last acknowledged their egotic aims – and whose self-reproaches, far from leading to self-reformation, become by a brillant *volte-face* the supreme medium of expression for their now fully conscious egoïsm" ? [32]. Every statement one could make about it will certainly lead oneself to a deep self-deception: because we are not able to say today what will exactly become intelligence tomorrow. And here is the greatest challenge for all of us. And for those who still resist to intelligence, there is at last a hope: "self-deception is the best cure for melancholia" [33].

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