Intelligence for Obedience and Creativity for Subversion: Reading António Ladeira’s *Os Monociclistas* (2018) and *Seis Drones* (2018)

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Abstract

Social networking makes us communicate with the right persons; x-ray luggage scanners ensure secure travelling; computer applications save loads of books and are digital space savers. We could go on to conclude the obvious: intelligence has ensured critical technological breakthroughs to make present-day digital society fully operational and crystalline. However, we can also wonder the extent to which intelligence measures human development, that is the extent to which technology makes us better humans. Han (2015) argues that the digital world is a panoptic system that has made us alike so that we are better controlled. Before him, Foucault (1977) contended that vigilance systems, implemented since the 18th century, developed towards disciplinary forms of social control. A panoptic vigilance-based society has turned us into voluntary obedient humans. António Ladeira’s *Os Monociclistas* (2018) and *Seis Drones* (2018) offer a glimpse of the dystopian existence of our urban society in the near future, fully dependent on panoptic systems of vigilance that ensure maximum efficiency and transparency. Han contends that human life is incompatible with absolute transparency regardless of what intelligence produces. Ladeira’s anthologies confirm that intelligence has made us obedient, but we cannot be absolutely obedient all the time. Creativity is the disrupting factor that subverts the AI systems, and this factor alone restores our hope of becoming better humans in the future.

Keywords: Intelligence, Creativity, Obedience, Transparency, António Ladeira