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THE ROLE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IN THE CONJUNCTURE OF LAW

Abstract: This paper analyzes the emergence of artificial intelligence by drawing on the key concepts of Louis Althusser. Starting from Althusser's thesis that ideology is not a set of ideas but a material practice of subject production, the text examines how the encounter between AI and law becomes a dominant ideological apparatus of contemporary capitalism. Following the epochal role of Roman law and the nineteenth-century civil code, the stabilized encounter between law and artificial intelligence constitutes a new conjuncture. The paper demonstrates the following: artificial intelligence cannot be understood as a neutral technological innovation, but rather as the result of an encounter between scientific-technological, class-based, and legal processes that shape a new historical conjuncture. In this light, Althusser's outline of law as an ideological state apparatus is particularly significant – not only regulating social relations, but directly participating in the reproduction of the relations of production. Algorithmic decision-making, digital surveillance, and platform capitalism represent a new phase in the formalization and universalization of the legal apparatus. AI produces subjects who accept algorithmic evaluation as objective and technically neutral truth, and this function is already transforming, and will increasingly transform, the character of contemporary law.

Keywords: *Louis Althusser, artificial intelligence, legal apparatus, conjuncture.*

Drawing on Louis Althusser's ideas, I develop the thesis that artificial intelligence represents an indispensable element of the new historical conjuncture, which has emerged from the encounter between class struggle, scientific and technological development, and ideology. I start from Althusser's understanding of the apparatus, which, according to him, is not only an institution but also a material system of practices that reproduces the social structure and produces appropriate forms of subjectivity. Apparatuses can even be private (e.g. security, sport, media, schools) while still functioning as ideological state apparatuses. Furthermore, apparatuses can be ideological (e.g. the church, the school) or repressive (e.g. the army, the police). State apparatuses do not primarily function through force but through the production of loyal subjectivity that spontaneously accepts interpellation. Law is an important state apparatus which is partly ideological, since people voluntarily accept it, and at the same time repressive, since behind law stands the state power (Althusser, 2014). Building on Althusser's theses, I argue that artificial intelligence represents a new ideological apparatus of late capitalism, which produces subjects through allegedly neutral technical interpellations.

The analysis shows that AI does not represent a neutral technology, but a materialized form of social relations, class interests, and political governing strategies. Simultaneously, the paper analyses the precariat as a new form of unstable subjectivation within platform capitalism (Zuboff, 2020). In that sense, the platformization and digitalization of law, accompanied by the use of artificial intelligence, do not represent the result of purely technological development, but rather a transformation in the function and form of law within a new conjuncture and broader structural changes. While Zuboff argues that economic imperatives are the puppeteers controlling machines behind the curtain (27) and that the goals of surveillance capitalism can be revealed if we remove the word "technology," from an Althusserian perspective the process is different: a theoretical approach must account for the articulation of technology, ideology, and class.

Althusser died decades before artificial intelligence entered virtually every sphere of social life. Nevertheless, his conceptual tools appear particularly well suited to illuminating the phenomenon of AI. Within the framework of Althusserian theoretical intervention, a conjuncture does not represent a mere sum of circumstances, but rather a specific configuration of heterogeneous elements – scientific and technological developments, class struggles, ideological formations, and theoretical discourses – which, at a given historical moment, determine the conditions of possibility of thought.

For example, Althusser argues that philosophy itself emerges from a favourable conjunction of circumstances and the interaction of diverse elements (Althusser, 2014, p. 15).

In this text I analyze the conjuncture in which artificial intelligence emerges, understood as the articulation of class relations and scientific-technical development within the ideological field of law. A related concept, clinamen, which Althusser borrows from Tit Lucretius in the final phase of his thought, refers to the aleatory encounter of elements with different histories that produces a potentially stable historical event (Lucretius, 1989). Although these two concepts are similar, there is a tension between them. Nevertheless, both of them provide important tools for understanding phenomena such as AI, which has become an important element of every historical event or a constitutive factor of every new conjuncture. The central concept of Althusser's "middle period", the apparatus, deconstructs the ideological dimension of AI.

Althusser's concept of the apparatus (2014) does not refer only to a specific institution, but also to a mechanism of the production of subjects that enables the reproduction of the conditions of production by generating a particular type of subjectivity (p.188). Ideological apparatuses, in contrast to repressive ones, function through ideology rather than violence, although the distinction between the two is not always clear. Just as the educational apparatus has replaced the church, and the informational apparatus has replaced the educational one (Althusser, 2014), the dominant apparatus today has become artificial intelligence. It has already been perceived that artificial intelligence systems, far from being neutral tools, function as new ideological apparatuses that produce new forms of subjectivation and reproduction of social relations through algorithmic infrastructure and statistical normalization. While schools maintained order by accustoming subjects to imperatives through classes, rituals and disciplinary routines, AI systems today perform a similar function by producing outcomes that embody normative expectations through a form of "silent automation", characterized by a specific rhythm and authority (Erfani, 2026, p. 872).

Artificial intelligence obscures domination not only through its content, but also through the organization of visibility, communicative rhythm and technical necessity. The advantage of AI in comparison to the state-ideological apparatuses such as the media, school, church, sport and similar institutions of modernity is that it shapes the subject without initiating the contact, unlike TV announcers, teachers, priests or coaches in paradigmatic situations (Althusser, 204, p. 190). Instead, the initiative comes from the subject who seeks "neutral" information or a solution to a specific problem.

Thus, the key process is "silent automation" (Erfani, 2026, p. 872) which is precisely why the AI apparatus is becoming more efficient than traditional school today. It does not impose ideology directly, but through everyday practicality and algorithmic anticipation of users' needs. Different AI forms confirm Althusser's conception of education as an ideological apparatus which reproduces the relations of production (Lamboloto, 2025), but with notable differences. While traditional apparatuses of modernity are tied to the nation-state, artificial intelligence, with its algorithms, search engines and network infrastructures, is a supranational creation that belongs to global capitalism. Since ideology is not only a set of ideas for Althusser (2014), but rather a material practice that produces subjects (p.206), an apparatus is most efficient in ideological sense if it is represented as a neutral technological factor. Therefore, AI becomes an ideal instrument for the legal apparatus, which is supposed to appear neutral and above society.

Conjuncture as a Clash of Elements

At one point, Althusser sketched the history of philosophy as a series of conjunctures. He argued that philosophical formations are not the products of an internal development of "ideas", but arise from a clash of concrete historical elements, political and ideological facts, class struggles and scientific revolutions. Each major philosophical conjuncture begins from such an unpredictable combination. I include Althusser himself as an instance within this series of conjunctures, and then attempt to situate the phenomenon of AI within a "conjuncture".

Althusser (2014) discusses the important encounters and intersections among the constitutive elements of scientific discoveries, ideology and class struggle. The role of Civil Law was particularly emphasized in the 19th century, just as the role of Roman Law had been emphasized earlier, while today we can speak of the digitalization of law and the use of AI. Althusser explains how the encounter between a political fact – the creation of the Macedonian empire, which marked the end of the city-state – and the emergence of biological science created Aristotle's conjuncture. Slave-holding Roman society and Roman Law, together with the idea of new physics, produced the Stoic conjuncture. Feudalism and the early revival of Roman Law with the reception of the Arab science shaped the conjuncture of Thomas Aquinas. The development of mercantilism and law under absolute monarchy, combined with Galileo's mathematical physics, gave birth to Descartes. The rise of the bourgeoisie and the French revolution, together with Newton's physics, formed Kant's conjuncture. The

contradictions of the French revolution, the elimination of the threat posed by the Fourth Estate through Thermidor and Napoleon, Civil Law and the first theories of history, led to Hegel's conjuncture. The emergence, rise, victories and defeats of the labor movement, together with Marx's theory, constituted Lenin's conjuncture. Husserl belongs to the encounter of imperialism and the rise of the *petit bourgeoisie* – the class of neither workers nor capitalists – and axiomatization of mathematics and mathematical logic. The crisis of imperialism and the development of technology formed Heidegger's conjuncture.

It is not difficult to continue the series: the rise and fall of socialism, the disappearance of the labor class as the subject of history, together with the emergence of psychoanalysis and quantum physics, constitute Athusser's conjuncture. In an outline of the history of philosophy as a succession of conjunctures formed by political and scientific events – each representing important modifications of the previous conjuncture – we can continue Althusser's sequence and situate Althusser himself within a previously vacant space. The subsequent conjuncture, which Althusser could not have recognized, is that of digitalization, a process that has been particularly radicalized through the development of artificial intelligence.

What is characteristic of Althusser's epoch in terms of class relations? The common image of a revolutionary subject fell apart under Althusser's gaze: the labor class, once regarded as the privileged bearer of a historical mission, began to disappear from modern production plants as well as from the global historical stage. A new industrial revolution contributed to the fragmentation of the proletariat into technical experts, tertiary-sector workers, and specialists in information and data processing, while the traditional factory ceased to be the epicenter of social struggle. At the same time, the traditional strongholds of the labor movement, embodied in once-powerful industrial nations, either collapsed or underwent profound and often regressive reforms (Mallet, 1970). The sequence can be extended even further. Poverty and necessity, once viewed as natural drivers of revolutionary action, proved to be insufficient to bring about a historical breakthrough. The contradictions of capitalism did not, in themselves, lead to revolution. Instead, deprivation became concentrated on the peripheries of the system, and among marginalized strata of society (Gorz, 1970, p. 10).

When viewed within a conjunctural framework, it becomes clear that Althusser's philosophy emerges from a complex intertwining of three processes: the decay of the traditional revolutionary subject, the transformation of materialist science itself, and profound changes in the ideological forms of late capitalism. Psychoanalysis and quantum physics,

each in its own way, undermine the idea of a stable subject and a predictable world, while the collapse of socialism suggests that history is not governed by necessity but by contingency. This configuration – political, scientific, and ideological –provides the ground for Althusser's philosohephy. Heisenberg, whom Althusser does not discuss in particular, in fact encourages the abandonment of linear causality and the rethinking of deterministic laws, while emphasizing the role of the observational situation (Heisenberg, 1972, p. 193).

Althusser also reads psychoanalysis as confirming what is already implicit in Marxism, albeit often obscured in traditional interpretations: an anti-humanist logic of structure, the unconscious, and a process without a subject. He introduces the concept of the epistemological rupture as a key category for understanding modern sciences. In this regard, Marx and Freud represent two intellectual revolutions that shattered the humanist notion of a unified and transparent subject.

In Marx's discovery of the mode of production**,** social relations of production determine individuals rather than the other way around. The subjects of production – workers and capitalists – are not the cause of the system but its effects. Furthermore, ideology is not a form of "false consciousness" but a material necessity for the reproduction of class relations, one that is embodied primarily in social practices.

Freud was revolutionary in claiming that the subject is neither a unified entity nor the master of its own will. The unconscious functions without intention and without an author. Desire emerges as a structure rather than as an expression of personal will. This model of the unconscious enables Althusser to demonstrate that ideology likewise operates according to a logic that is structural, unconscious, and material (Althusser, 1988; 1996).

For Althusser, ideology is not a belief, an opinion, or an idea residing in the mind of a subject. Rather, it is a set of ritual practices, institutions, routines, gestures, and forms of behavior – everything that individuals do without conscious reflection and that becomes their "second nature." Ideology therefore functions according to a principle similar to that of the unconscious: automatically, repetitively, and without authorship, through a symbolic network in which the subject is "always already" caught. In this sense, AI can serve as an illuminating example of the unconscious functioning of ideology.

The concept of overdetermination**,** which Althusser borrows directly from psychoanalysis, is particularly useful for understanding AI. Overdetermination refers to the fact that every historical situation is shaped not only by the economic instance but also by a multiplicity of relatively

autonomous histories and contradictions. AI is not merely the result of technological development; it is also the product of numerous other processes, including the emergence of new forms of production, transformations in the world of labour, the neoliberal model of governance, the development of platform capitalism, the crisis of educational apparatuses, and the concentration of capital within digital corporations.

Likewise, the concept of overdetermination grants a privileged place to theory, which is capable of identifying "the weakest link" – the rupture that can split an apparently solid conjuncture (Althusser, 2005, 94). Nevertheless, I leave the question of such ruptures within the contemporary conjuncture open.

AI is a symptom of a conjuncture that is not constituted through a mechanical sum of causes. In this respect, AI today occupies a position similar to that occupied by the apparatus at the beginning of the twentieth century. In Victor Tausk's most famous work, a psychotic subject imagines a machine that controls his thoughts, body, and feelings from the outside – that is, a machine that produces him. Tausk demonstrates that the apparatus is not merely a fantastic object but also a projection of split-off parts of the ego and a symbol of the modern technical and social world. More specifically, he interprets the influence machine as a projection of the patient's body and genitals into the external world (Tausk, 1992, p. 190).

After the enormous historical significance of Roman law and nineteenth-century civil law, the stabilized encounter between law and artificial intelligence constitutes a new conjuncture. Digitized legal apparatuses regulate human activities, while their apparent neutrality, operational efficiency, and functionality conceal the class and ideological dimensions of everyday social relations. For this reason, the encounter between the legal apparatus and artificial intelligence represents one of the central contradictions of the contemporary conjuncture.

Legal Apparatus and the Effects of Artificial Intelligence

For Althusser (2014), law is not a neutral set of norms but a specific apparatus that enables the capitalist relations of production to reproduce their own conditions of existence (p. 57). Law is a formalized, systematized, and repressive apparatus that functions through a double structure: on the one hand, it relies on a repressive state apparatus – courts, police, and systems of punishment (Althusser, 2014, p. 65), and on the other, on legal and ethical ideology which produces subjects who “voluntarily” comply with contracts, norms and procedures.

Its key feature is formalism (Althusser, 2014, p. 59). Law does not regulate concrete social content; rather, it regulates the form of relations between legally equal subjects, thereby concealing the real class and production relations that make it possible: “Law has the form of the law, that is, formal systematicity, only on condition that the relations of production as a function of which it exists are completely absent from the law itself.” (Althusser, 2014, p. 59) It is precisely for this reason that law can universalize the principles of freedom, equality and responsibility, while simultaneously reproducing the material inequalities of capitalist society (p. 166). According to Althusser, law “expresses” the relations of production precisely by rendering them invisible: capitalist exploitation appears as a freely entered contractual relationship between formally equal individuals. Legal ideology thus produces an effect of naturalization – individuals are not represented as historically constituted subjects of a specific social system, but rather as “naturally” free and equal persons. In that way, law operates not primarily through overt repression, but through the interpellation of subjects who accept the norms of the existing system as self-evident.

This is why Althusser insists that law functions in two ways: through the repressive state apparatus (courts, police, and prisons) and through the legal-ethical ideology. Nevertheless, repression is generally the exception rather than the rule; in most cases law functions because subjects internalize its norms as natural and self-evident. Legal ideology produces the impression that individuals are “naturally” free, equal and responsible, while moral ideology (“conscience”, “duty”, and “professional ethics”) complements the process (Althusser, 2014, p. 169). In this way, law operates not only through external coercion, but also through the production of subjects who themselves reproduce the system through their everyday practices and behavior. Consequently, law cannot be understood merely as a set of norms or legal acts, but must be conceived as a complex whole comprising legal norms, repressive institutions and legal-ethical ideology. In this sense, the legal ideological state apparatus constitutes a site at which the superstructure is directly articulated within the economic base itself. Capitalism functions not merely through the market and the economy, but also through the continuous ideological production of legal subjects capable of participating voluntarily in contractual relations, labor processes, exchange and the disciplinary mechanisms of the system.

In the context of artificial intelligence, Althusser's ideas remain highly relevant. AI systems represent not merely a technological advancement of law but potentially a new phase in the development of the legal-ideological

state apparatus. Algorithms, risk assessment systems, automated decision-making procedures, and digital surveillance mechanisms do not operate primarily through coercion but through the production of an appearance of neutrality, objectivity, and procedural rationality.

Just as bourgeois law concealed class relations behind the formal equality of legal subjects, AI can obscure relations of social power behind the language of data, statistics, and optimization. In this way, the ideological function of law is further intensified: the subject is no longer interpellated solely through legal norms and institutions but is also continuously classified, evaluated, and predicted through algorithmic processes.

From Althusser's perspective, the key problem posed by AI is not merely the question of algorithmic bias or partiality. Rather, it lies in the capacity of algorithmic governance to radicalize the formalism of law and transform historically produced relations of domination into a semblance of automatic technical necessity. In this sense, artificial intelligence becomes a form of digital legal ideology: an apparatus that not only regulates social relations but also produces subjects who accept their own algorithmic evaluation as objective truth.

Algorithmic systems increasingly assume functions of classification, risk assessment, surveillance, and predictive decision-making, while presenting their outputs as neutral, objective, and technically necessary. In this way, AI radicalizes legal formalism. Legal decisions appear as the result of procedural operations and statistical data processing, while the social relations of power that shape the data, criteria, and models remain invisible.

The subject is no longer interpellated solely through legal norms and institutions but also through continuous algorithmic profiling, which produces what may be called a "predictive citizen" – a subject that fits into the patterns of predictable behaviour. From an Althusserian perspective, the problem of AI in law therefore extends beyond algorithmic bias. Digital systems can strengthen the ideological function of law by transforming historically and politically constituted relations of domination into an appearance of technical objectivity and automatic necessity. This is precisely the ideological operation that AI makes possible at an unprecedented scale.

In the realm of law and the judiciary, digital intelligence is gradually changing the very structure of the legal apparatus, where the legal apparatus intersects with capital and the world of labour. In Althusserian terms, the legal apparatus does not merely reproduce social relations through norms and sanctions, but also through the algorithmic organization of visibility, priorities, and the evaluation of “risky” subjects.

The following research can be interpreted in Althusserian terms: *The Code of Capital* presents the idea that capital is not a natural and strictly economic phenomenon, but a legal construction (Pistor, 2019). Lawyers and financial engineers use the basic modules of private law – such as property, contract, collateral, and corporate law – in order to "encode" assets such as land, companies, debts, or intellectual property. Such encoding ensures legal durability, convertibility, and priority of property, so that within a legal system it functions as capital (Pistor, 2019).

This thesis can be further articulated in Althusserian terms: technological development encounters ideology in a "fortunate" conjuncture, where ideology functions through material practices.

Class Characteristics of the Modern Conjuncture

Althusser rejects the idea that history is teleologically determined and tries to conceptualize it as a scientific category. The concepts of overdetermination and structure replace the theory of an active subject that follows a "red thread", as Kant (1974) formerly put it. Instead, what comes to the forefront is the role of the apparatus which reproduces the system, ultimately producing subjects as loyal individuals rather than autonomous bearers of history. Furthermore, Althusser insists on rejecting traditions that privilege rational relations and teleology while neglecting contingency and chance. Aleatory materialism provides him with the tools for a further radicalization of this position (Althusser, 2006). The concepts of structure and overdetermination are no longer sufficient; this position is further radicalized by the idea that history is the result of an encounter among a number of independent factors, rather than the effect of Cause, Meaning and Reason (Althusser, 2006, p. 169). Every mode of production includes elements that develop in their own ways, without an organic or teleological link between different histories. Modernity, therefore, consists of crystallized encounters – contingent combinations that succeeded in stabilizing themselves and forming durable structures. History begins anew whenever a conjuncture shifts, whether through transformations in class struggle, ideology, or the scientific and technological sphere.

The encounter of technology and capitalism has created AI. What will the encounter between artificial intelligence and the working class create? The answer is simple: the precariat. The precarization of work and the fragmentation of collective identity represent the central characteristics of the new class configuration in Great Britain (Eagleton, 2014). The urban poor constitute at least a half of the world's population today. This group

includes street vendors, criminals, sex workers, rickshaw drivers and – in our version – cashiers, taxi drivers, teachers. The original proletarian was not primarily an industrial worker, but a woman who, in conditions of extreme poverty, could offer only one thing – her biological capacity. She could give birth to children, and this was expected of her. In this sense, the early proletariat was closely tied to reproduction. The term itself comes from the Latin *proletarius*, which referred to a citizen of the lowest rank in ancient Rome. These citizens had no property, so their only value for the state lay in their capacity to produce offspring (*proles*), who could become soldiers or colonizers. In Roman society, *proletarii* were free but poor citizens whose contribution to the state was not in property or taxes, but in offspring. The precariat, however, is not capable of stable reproduction – unstable employment conditions cancel that possibility in the long term – and that is why proletariat is imported. In the eyes of "native" workers, immigrants are often perceived not as a part of the laboring class but as intruders. Consequently, an unstable position of the working class in the labor market, as well as its radical transformation, can be expected.

Furthermore, the higher and wealthier segments of the precariat do not perceive themselves as part of the working class. Although industrial capitalism continuously draws technical and scientific labor into its orbit, and the sectors of services, information, and communication have undergone a substantial growth, capitalist property and class relations have not fundamentally changed (Eagleton, 2024). Workers in different sectors refuse to identify as proletarians, adopting instead new conceptual frameworks to describe their position. The precariat, in particular, does not accept the idea of being equated with the traditional working class: a segment of the precariat, especially the educated and IT precariat, perceives itself as an upper, seemingly privileged class stratum. The disappearance of the working class as a privileged historical agent, the fragmentation of the proletariat, and the rise of the precariat, reveal the fact that poverty and social contradictions do not inevitably lead to progress or revolutionary rupture. Instead of a necessary turning point, non-reformist reforms and aleatory encounters remain the only viable forms of the class struggle, opening new possibilities for historical agency.

The precariat did not emerge exclusively as a result of the development of AI and platform capitalism. A study published in 2011 argues that the precariat is an emerging class formed under conditions of neoliberal globalization and characterized by widespread labor insecurity. "In this spirit, the precariat could be described as a neologism that combines an adjective 'precarious' and a related word 'proletariat'" (Sanding, 2011, p.

22). Its defining features include unstable labor market, insecure employment, lack of safe working environment, limited opportunities for skill production, income instability and weak social representation (Standing, 2011, p. 17). The precariat is neither a homogenous class nor a fully self-aware collective agent.

The social context of the emergence of the precariat in the age of digitalization and artificial intelligence sheds light on the concept of surveillance capitalism. The relationship between the precariat and artificial intelligence can be understood as a new phase of the transformation of labor under contemporary capitalism. Surveillance capitalism pushes society towards a form of anti-democratic institutionalism. To paraphrase Zuboff: algorithms are not held accountable for their actions (Zuboff, 2020, p. 539). Surveillance capitalism exercises power through its materialization as the Big Other, a system that operates beyond the sphere of human labor. The Big Other acts on behalf of a set of commercial operations designed to modify human behavior in order to ensure commercial success, replacing the rule of law with a new form of sovereignty and a regime governed by private entities. Surveillance capitalists claim the right to control human, social and political realities in ways that extend far beyond the conventional realm of private firms or markets (Zuboff, 2020, p. 539).

Contrary to the traditional proletariat of the industrial era, the precariat lacks a stable collective identity. Precariat workers come from different social strata and classes, ranging from precariously employed academics to seasonal workers. Artificial intelligence further fragmentizes the collectivity of labor through personalized algorithms and the expansion of the "gig economy". Workers are no longer aware of who their actual employers are, as labor relations mediated by algorithms appear neutral and technically objective. In that way, exploitation is depoliticized: dismissal is no longer perceived as the decision of a capitalist employer but as the "outcome of a system", a poor performance rating or an automated optimization process. Individuals are employed and discharged by what appears to be a neutral program. Although physical coercion and poverty are less prevalent than in the nineteenth century, psychological pressure has intensified as the workers are subjected to continuous monitoring, evaluation, rating, and demands for self-optimization.

From the perspective of aleatory materialism, AI does not represent merely a technological instance, but a conjuncture of capital, information and automation. It simultaneously generates both the excess work and a growing population of redundant workers: the former become hyperproductive operators within digital capitalism, while the latter remain

continuously replaceable. The system thus produces a paradoxical situation: although AI promises the liberation of labor, it at the same time intensifies the feelings of insecurity, self-surveillance and atomization. The precariat consequently emerges as one of the central social subjects of digital capitalism – not as a stable class, but as a heterogeneous mass of individuals living between employment and unemployment, platform-based engagement and permanent availability.

Concluding Notes

The conjuncture in Serbia during the second and third decades of the 21st century can be easily determined in line with Athusser's theory. The scientific and technological dimension of this conjuncture is reflected in the widespread use of artificial intelligence, while its ideological element lies in a stabilized interregnum (an apparently endless transition), accompanied by increasing totalitarian consolidation, recurring protests of the middle class, and the fragmentation of the declining working class.

Artificial intelligence is neither the result of the agency of an "individual" or a "subject", as Althusser would have interpreted it, nor an invention of a genius, but an ideological apparatus that surpasses the previous ones: the church, the school, and the media. Ideology is "instilled" through seemingly neutral forms of knowledge, protocols and algorithms that emerge from the encounter and articulation of multiple parallel historical processes: technological, class-based, and ideological. Interpellation is quiet and technical, but also quick and ruthless. While some occupations disappear, others emerge, and the constellation of states in relation to the dominant axis of the capitalist metropolises is being reconfigured at an accelerating pace.

Artificial intelligence can also be understood as an effect of structural causality: not as the product of a single cause, but rather as the result of the relationship among economic, political, ideological, and scientific instances. These elements do not operate independently – they are overdetermined, each carrying traces of and reflecting others, so that the entire conjuncture becomes condensed in one instance. Artificial intelligence is therefore not merely the sum of platform capitalism, political surveillance, governing strategies, ideological narratives about technological neutrality, or advances in statistics or computational sciences, but rather a structured totality composed of mutually interconnected elements.

Furthermore, in line with Althusser's later works, this structure should be understood as the result of an aleatory encounter: artificial intelligence is

not an inevitable product of historical processes, but rather a stabilized outcome of the encounter between elements that could otherwise have generated different formations or remained unconnected. Contemporaneity thus represents a contingent outcome of multiple encounters – a structure that emerged from an encounter, and subsequently acquired the appearance of necessity. Finally, artificial intelligence ultimately unveils the humanist illusion. What humanism has concealed – the structural production of the subject – is rendered operationally visible through different forms of artificial intelligence.

In line with Althusser's later works, artificial intelligence can be understood as a technological manifestation of aleatory materialism. Algorithms operate not on inevitabilities but on probabilities, statistical correlations and contingent patterns. Artificial intelligence appears to calculate encounters. Althusser is therefore closer in his ideas to Lucretius's notion of *clinamen* than to Hegelian dialectics. The crucial difference, however, is that the aleatory encounter has been captured, disciplined, and exploited by capital. The most dangerous ideological claim surrounding artificial intelligence is that it "merely processes data". From an Althusserian perspective, this is a classic ideological effect: the erasure of the conditions of its own production.

Algorithms are not neutral – they are materialized social relations, class interests, political decision presented as technological necessity. From an Althusserian perspective, artificial intelligence is neither a demon nor a savior. Rather, it is a material manifestation of late capitalism: a faceless apparatus of interpellation, a structural effect of a conjuncture, and a laboratory in which subjects are produced without the illusion of freedom.

However, contrary to "traditional" transition moments, the *interregnum* in Serbia has become institutionalized. It is no longer a crisis, but a permanent regime of governing through crisis. The conjuncture is frozen; economic, political and symbolic contradictions are not resolved but continuously redistributed through the ideological apparatuses such as legal, educational or religious ones. The contemporary Serbian state is reproduced not primarily through law and parliament (political apparatus), but through ideological state apparatuses: the media – continuous production of strong emotions, panic, loyalty (Damnjanović, 2025a); the educational system – depoliticized knowledge, loyal subjectivities (Damnjanović, 2025b); the church – moral legitimation of the order (*agape* as selective love); culture and sport – symbolic compensation for actual insignificance.

If we follow Althusser's conceptual framework, the encounter between artificial intelligence and law must be viewed in relation to both the

repressive state apparatus and the ideological apparatus. The government of the Republic of Serbia adopted the "Ethical Guidelines for the Development, Application and Use of Reliable and Responsible AI" in order to introduce a mechanism that would enable the responsible development of artificial intelligence and ensure that the systems based on "machine learning" (sic) are aligned with ethical and safety principles (The Government of the Republic of Serbia, 2023). This document endeavors to present artificial intelligence as a technical necessity that merely requires ethical regulation. However, ethical guidelines do not operate as external limitation imposed upon technology; rather they constitute a form through which technology itself functions. While repressive apparatuses such as the police, gendarmerie, or informal groups interpellate subjects through the direct exercise of state power, another – far more important – interpellation is performed through morals and ethics, and such phrases as "machine learning". The document reflects a new conjuncture – a stabilized encounter between administration and ethics.

Therefore, artificial intelligence from Althusserian perspective is not a mere technological innovation, but a historical conjuncture in which capital, ideology, science, and the transformation of class relations intersect. Artificial intelligence represents a new form of the ideological apparatus of late capitalism, reproducing the existing order not primarily through repression, but through "quiet automation", algorithmic anticipation and the production of subjects who accept their own digital classification as objective truth. In this way, the ideological function of the apparatus is radicalized, albeit on an old foundation. Domination is exercised not through an explicit command, but through procedural rationality, statistics, and ethical norms that implicitly define what subjects are expected to think and how they are expected to act to arrive at acceptable solutions. In that sense, contemporaneity can be understood as a stabilized result of the aleatory encounter of different histories: technological, political, economic, and ideological. Althusser's concepts of conjuncture, overdetermination, apparatus, and aleatory materialism enable us to comprehend AI not as an autonomous force, but as a symbol of an epoch in which capitalism manages to present its social relations as a neutral technical rationality.

This transformation marks a shift in the very form of law itself. Law is no longer confined to statutes, court decisions and normative acts, but it acquires an algorithmic form. The legal apparatus now functions through digital procedures, automated evaluation, rating, profiling, and the continuous regulation of subjects' visibility. The formal equality of legal subjects, characteristic of classical civil law, is reconfigured into an

appearance of neutrality grounded in data processing and technical objectivity of algorithms. Law thus becomes less a space of interpellation and conflict, and more an infrastructural regime for the modulation of behavior. AI radicalizes legal formalism. Power relations that resulted from historical and class struggle are represented as an outcome of an "automated" data processing, while the subject becomes continuously evaluated and predictively organized legal object.

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