

PSYCHOANALYSIS AND SUBJECTIVITY IN THE ALGORITHMIC AGE: BETWEEN OBSOLESCENCE, LISTENING, AND THE REINVENTION OF SOCIAL TIES

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ABSTRACT

This article examines the effects of artificial intelligence on the constitution of subjectivity, the modes of social bonding, and the symbolic value of the human in contemporary times. Drawing on psychoanalysis, philosophy of technology, and sociopolitical critique, it analyzes the delegation of psychic functions to the machine—such as memory, decision-making, and desire—and its impact on the domains of labor, language, and listening. By addressing the clinic of emptiness produced by algorithmic logic, the text traverses contemporary subjective impasses and proposes the reinvention of the bond as an ethical, political, and symbolic gesture. Along this path, the symptom is considered a trace of resistance, and the essay form emerges as a way to sustain the time of elaboration in a world governed by optimization. Between subjective obsolescence and the creation of new possibilities of existence, the text proposes listening as a critical operator of the present.

Keywords: Psychoanalysis. Artificial Intelligence. Subjectivity. Technique. Social Bond. Symptom. Listening.

PSICANÁLISE E SUBJETIVIDADE NA ERA ALGORÍTMICA: ENTRE A OBSOLESCÊNCIA, A ESCUTA E A REINVENÇÃO DOS LAÇOS SOCIAIS

RESUMO

Este artigo examina os efeitos da inteligência artificial na constituição da subjetividade, nos modos de vínculo social e no valor simbólico do humano na contemporaneidade. Com base na psicanálise, na filosofia da tecnologia e na crítica sociopolítica, analisa a delegação de funções psíquicas à máquina – como a memória, a tomada de decisão e o desejo – e seu impacto nos domínios do trabalho, da linguagem e da escuta. Ao abordar a clínica do vazio produzido pela lógica algorítmica, o texto atravessa impasses subjetivos contemporâneos e propõe a reinvenção do vínculo como gesto ético, político e simbólico. Nesse caminho, o sintoma é considerado um traço de resistência, e a forma ensaística emerge como forma de sustentar o tempo da elaboração em um mundo regido pela otimização. Entre a obsolescência subjetiva e a criação de novas possibilidades de existência, o texto propõe a escuta como operador crítico do presente.

Palavras-chave: Psicanálise. Inteligência Artificial. Subjetividade. Técnica. Laço Social. Sintoma. Escuta.

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PSICOANÁLISIS Y SUBJETIVIDAD EN LA ERA ALGORÍTMICA: ENTRE LA OBSOLESCENCIA, LA ESCUCHA Y LA REINVENCIÓN DE LOS VÍNCULOS SOCIALES

RESUMEN

Este artículo examina los efectos de la inteligencia artificial en la constitución de la subjetividad, los modos de vínculo social y el valor simbólico del ser humano en la época contemporánea. A partir del psicoanálisis, la filosofía de la tecnología y la crítica sociopolítica, analiza la delegación de funciones psíquicas a la máquina —como la memoria, la toma de decisiones y el deseo— y su impacto en los ámbitos del trabajo, el lenguaje y la escucha. Al abordar la clínica del vacío producida por la lógica algorítmica, el texto atraviesa los impasses subjetivos contemporáneos y propone la reinvencción del vínculo como gesto ético, político y simbólico. En este camino, el síntoma se considera un rastro de resistencia, y el ensayo emerge como una forma de sostener el tiempo de elaboración en un mundo gobernado por la optimización. Entre la obsolescencia subjetiva y la creación de nuevas posibilidades de existencia, el texto propone la escucha como operador crítico del presente.

Palabras clave: Psicoanálisis. Inteligencia Artificial. Subjetividad. Técnica. Vínculo Social. Síntoma. Escucha.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 THE NEW DISCONTENT IN ALGORITHMIC TIMES

Artificial Intelligence now inscribes itself beyond the category of tool. Its presence in the social bond operates as a device of knowledge, establishing an authority that reorganizes circuits of recognition and reconfigures modes of subjective inscription. Far from merely executing commands, it takes part in the constitution of the symbolic field: it decides what should remain in collective memory, guides affect, distributes attention, and outlines the contours of what is recognized as relevant.

Rather than simply mediating relations, it institutes forms of validation that reposition experience according to probabilistic logics. Speech gives way to estimation; listening, to the surveillance of performance. The promise to anticipate what has not yet been articulated transforms language into data and desire into function. Experience, increasingly traversed by systems that operate on predictive algorithms, loses the time of drifting, of hesitation, of the event.

This technical reconfiguration of psychic experience finds resonance in Stiegler's (2010) proposition, for whom technical devices operate as fundamental supports of individuation, both in their singular and collective dimensions. Technology acts as a prosthesis of time and thought, affecting the constitution of desire and layers of memory. In the case of Artificial Intelligence, what becomes evident is the emergence of an operator that surpasses the logic of instruction and storage.

It constitutes an agent that guides preferences, suggests trajectories, captures affects, and intervenes in the production of knowledge. AI thus becomes a high-impact symbolic instance, displacing traditional coordinates of subjectivation and establishing a new economy of the sensible. Its functioning generates mutations in regimes of visibility, modes of listening, and possibilities of enunciation.

The symbolic function of Artificial Intelligence manifests in the continuous transfer of decisions involving choice, affect, and relational bonds. The act of delegating to the machine the task of suggesting paths, mediating encounters, or guiding responses already reveals the presence of a new kind of authority. This operator, by gathering past traces, fabricates possibilities for the future, shaping the field of preferences and interactions. Its operation relies less on imposition and more on silent adherence sedimented in everyday life.

Zuboff (2019, p. 15) describes this scenario as surveillance capitalism, in which experience becomes exploitable matter, extracted in its most intimate dimension and

converted into commercial assets by predictive systems. The algorithm, as it integrates itself into the grammar of the sensible, composes subjectivities, shifts forms of recognition, and infiltrates enunciative processes. The bond, filtered by these dynamics, begins to respond to demands for continuous engagement, governed by logics that reshape modes of presence and listening.

This algorithmic performance carries decisive symbolic implications. Instead of sustaining the time of listening — in which the subject stumbles, hesitates, gets lost, and reinscribes — Artificial Intelligence offers suggestions, suppresses deviations, anticipates responses. Listening, as a symbolic structure capable of welcoming alterity, interval, and desire, gives way to a machinic operation of guesswork.

Everyday life, traversed by these anticipations, is modeled by a logic of response even before the question arises. The culture of listening, sustained by the opacity of meaning and the constitutive delay of the unconscious, is replaced by a culture of suggestion, in which language becomes subject to a regime of continuous prediction. Desire, rather than forming as waiting or absence, is extracted as data and reconfigured as behavior. What dissolves here is not merely silence or hesitation — but the very condition for the emergence of a subject implicated in speech.

By following the ways in which Artificial Intelligence models behavior patterns, affects, and choices, it becomes evident that its operation surpasses the field of assistance. This is a technology that prefigures what one should desire, feel, or consume. In line with Preciado's (2020) analysis, what emerges is a pharmacopornographic mutation, in which digital devices intervene directly in the production of bodies, genders, and ways of life.

AI inscribes itself as a high-intensity biopolitical operator, whose normativity acts through silent repetition and imperceptible adherence. Its power lies in making accumulated patterns seem natural, reshaping the contours of what can be lived as legitimate, desirable, or recognizable. This mutation, by traversing the materiality of the body and the field of desire, challenges clinical listening to attend to what still resists: that which escapes capture and pulses as a symptom.

This regime of anticipation and continuous regulation directly impacts the economy of desire. Returning to Freud (2010a), in *The Interpretation of Dreams* (1900), I rediscover the logic of the unconscious operating through displacement, condensation, and remains — insinuations that disorganize linearity. Dreaming demands listening. Its density houses ambiguity, sustains the enigma, resists immediate deciphering.

AI manages meaning through predictive calculations that dissolve ambiguity before it can even be articulated. The subject, in this context, ceases to be traversed by the work of desire and is instead shaped by adherence metrics. The algorithm anticipates, fills, adjusts. The subject of the unconscious, forged through stumbles, slips, and intervals, gives way to a measurable, reactive, predictable subjectivity. As Preciado (2020) warns, we live under a dictatorship of transparency, where even the mode of desiring becomes molded, surveilled, administered.

In the face of this scenario, psychoanalytic listening presents itself as a space of resistance to the technical normalization of subjective experience. While algorithms operate through anticipation, psychoanalysis wagers on delay. Where there is calculation, there is listening. What is heard there is not the already-expected content, but what displaces, stumbles, escapes form.

Freud (2010b, p. 139) establishes this principle by stating that the patient must say everything that comes to mind, without critique or selection — a guideline that sustains the irruption of the unpredictable, the unfinished, the equivocal. This openness to drift implies a different regime of time. The clinical gesture unfolds through presence, rather than goals. By sustaining faltering speech, analysis preserves a field where the subject may still emerge as remainder. In this gesture, knowledge shifts, desire pulses, listening resists.

Analytic listening, while opposing the logic of algorithmic anticipation and normativity, also implicates technique critically, displacing its usage. As Preciado (2020) proposes, bodies, genders, and desires already emerge through technical mediation — and precisely for this reason, the clinic must remain sensitive to these traversals. What is required, then, is a listening that welcomes such modulations without submitting to their imperatives. In this field, the clinical device opens as a space for reinvention of the bond, where the singularity of the symptom affirms itself as resistance against algorithmic homogenization. Analysis sustains the enigma in the face of prediction. Its power resides in preserving the interval where the subject speaks without being closed into function. To listen, in this sense, is to sustain what escapes — not so much against technology, but against the use made of it by power.

Additionally, I turn to the philosophy of technology of Gilbert Simondon (2020) to conceive of the clinic as a field of symbolic reconfiguration. Simondon proposes that, when reduced to functional instrument, technology loses its relational and inventive dimensions. For him, individuation emerges through the relationship between subjects and technical

objects, constituting a continuous and transductive process. This view allows me to conceive psychoanalytic listening as a practice of bond-creation — devoid of automatism or predefined form — traversed by failures, noise, and intervals. It is precisely this thickness of the unpredictable that escapes algorithmic logic, which is guided by anticipation, regularity, and suppression of deviation.

Grounded in these premises, I propose in this article to reflect on the subjective and symbolic effects of artificial intelligence in the constitution of the contemporary subject. I begin with the hypothesis that AI functions not only as a technical tool but as an epistemic and affective operator, reorganizing modes of listening, regimes of truth, and forms of subjectivation. Anchored in Freudian psychoanalysis and the critical philosophy of technology, this analysis seeks to articulate categories such as the unconscious, social bond, *savoir-faire*, and desire with the sociotechnical devices that permeate the digital everyday. The perspective assumed here rests on a transdisciplinary critique that avoids the separation between subject and technique, instead understanding the latter as a constitutive force of culture, the body, and subjectivity.

In this sense, I approach the formulations of Paul B. Preciado (2020), for whom contemporary technical devices — algorithms, digital interfaces, surveillance platforms — produce experience even as they codify it, directly intervening in bodies, affects, and modes of listening. Far from functioning as mere mediation tools, technique participates in the organization of the sensible, establishing affective governance forms that traverse the subject and reinscribe it within circuits of prediction. Algorithms, by capturing patterns, act on the field of language and desire, orienting responses even before demands are announced. To think about Artificial Intelligence from this perspective is to recognize it as a machine of subjectivation, whose effects extend into the very structure of the unconscious. The clinic, in light of this, is called upon to sustain listening as a field of presence and to affirm the symptom as an inventive force against the imperatives of anticipation.

With this aim, I organize this article into six interconnected sections, composing a path that entangles theory, clinic, and culture. In Section 2, I present the theoretical-methodological approach supporting this investigation, anchored in a critical and essayistic reading of authors such as Freud (2010a; 2010b), Stiegler (2010), Han (2017), Zuboff (2019), Preciado (2020), and Simondon (2020). Section 3 explores Artificial Intelligence as a new operator of social and affective bonds, affecting practices of listening, care, and symbolic mediation. Section 4 focuses on the effects of technical delegation on subjective constitution,

emphasizing processes of *savoir-faire* expropriation, listening displacement, and symbolic infantilization. Section 5 discusses the symbolic obsolescence of the subject in the work sphere, exploring displacements in value regimes that sustain the human. Finally, Section 6 proposes a wager on listening, the symptom, and the ethics of desire as paths to reinventing the bond in a culture shaped by the logic of transparency and prediction. In this horizon, psychoanalysis emerges not as a nostalgic refuge, but as an ethical and political practice, deeply implicated in what escapes the machine: the unconscious, desire, the remainder.

It is important to state from the outset that this investigation does not seek to empty artificial intelligence of its potentials nor disregard the technical advancements it expresses. What is proposed here is a critical approach that avoids both technicist enthusiasm and apocalyptic fatalism, betting instead on the possibility of interrogating technique through its effects on how we live, desire, care, and construct bonds. The analytic gesture sustaining this work aims to open a space for an ethics of usage, capable of restoring symbolic thickness to experience and reinscribing the subject as an agent implicated in the devices that traverse them. It is a form of listening that accompanies, unsettles, and shifts. This is the invitation: to traverse the crossings of technique, desire, and language without surrendering to the imperative of capture.

2 THEORETICAL-METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

The path I follow in this article aligns with a theoretical-conceptual mode of thinking, guided by a form of writing that thinks and allows itself to be affected. Rather than seeking empirical proof or statistical answers, I assume an essayistic orientation² that privileges conceptual work, intertextual reflection, and the listening of symptoms that traverse culture. I understand the essay as an implicated gesture, where the risk of drift and the friction between ideas compose the very movement of thought. In *Civilization and Its Discontents*, Freud (1930/2010) indicates that the conflict between drive forces and the demands of the social bond nourishes the vitality of thought — thought that intensifies, pulsing between forces. Preciado (2020), in turn, proposes writing as a political and performative practice, inseparable

² The critical essay, as formulated by Theodor W. Adorno, does not conform to the model of traditional science nor to the rigidity of the philosophical system. It privileges fragmentary exposition, oblique approach, and the movement of thought in its processual nature (ADORNO, 2003). In this sense, to write essayistically is also to produce a knowledge that is implicated and situated, emerging from the tension between form and content. Barthes (2004) adds that the essay resists communicative transparency and operates as a space of friction between language and meaning, calling upon the author to assume themselves as the subject of enunciation. More recently, Paul B. Preciado (2020) revisits this tradition by claiming writing as a form of political resistance and self-reinvention, especially within contemporary technobiopolitical contexts.

from embodied experience, desire, and dissidence. In his work, the text vibrates like a body: it listens, exposes, formulates. Along this path, writing also operates as a listening device — it opens itself to what emerges as excess, noise, or trace of what still seeks language.

This investigation, therefore, is moved by a persistent question: what shifts in the relationship between subject, language, and technique in the contemporary world? This question sustains a theoretical work that emerges from the friction between reading and symptom, thought and experience. Reading becomes a form of traversing, in which concepts gain body when they touch the sociotechnical flows shaping the present. The method adopted here configures itself as listening in motion: a reflective practice that vibrates between text, gesture, and world, without settling into formal procedures or predictable sequences.

The theoretical perspective mobilized here arises from the entanglement between Freudian psychoanalysis, the philosophy of technology, and contemporary sociotechnical studies. It aims to investigate technology as a constitutive fold of subjectivity, implicated in the modes of desiring, narrating, and suffering. By proposing the unconscious as an irreducible layer of experience, psychoanalysis offers a key to reading technical devices as symbolic operators that modulate the bond, affect the symptom, and reorganize the field of possibility.

On the other hand, the philosophy of technology and sociotechnical studies offer tools to situate these devices within the historical, political, and material entanglements that traverse them. By articulating these three fronts — psychoanalysis, philosophy, and sociotechnical critique — I sustain a form of listening shaped by displacements and frictions, where the subject emerges amidst instability. This is a clinical-conceptual gesture that embraces uncertainty as a field of creation, sustaining language when it divests itself of guarantees and risks itself as a site of presence.

It is in this direction that I draw on authors who, each in their own way, strain the bonds between technique and subjectivity. Freud (1930/2010), in exploring the discontent permeating culture, offers a powerful key to understanding how technique participates in drive economy: it provides relief while demanding symbolic reorganizations. His conception of the unconscious as remainder, fault, and radical negativity resists the promises of completion promoted by predictive logic. Stiegler (2010), in turn, conceives technique as *pharmakon* — remedy and poison — expanding this reflection by showing how technical devices shape memory, time, and desire. Subjectivity, in this horizon, pulses among symbolic and material supports that modulate the very process of individuation.

Shoshana Zuboff (2019) describes this new technical regime as surveillance capitalism, in which human experience becomes raw material of commercial value, extracted as data and subjected to predictive circuits. Han (2017) offers a critical reading of the neoliberal subject, whose compulsory positivity, transparency, and self-exploitation configure a psychic grammar tuned to control. Preciado (2020), in turn, permeates this writing by proposing a clinic attuned to contemporary technopolitical regimes, where bodies are constituted through technologies of gender, affection, and governance. Simondon (1958/2020) offers a vigorous conception of technique as a constitutive dimension of the individuation process, enabling the understanding of subjectivity as a relational process — always modulated by technical, symbolic, and social elements.

To guide this trajectory, I mobilize three complementary procedures. The first consists of a transversal listening to concepts, more attuned to drift than to any doctrinal alignment. Concepts displace, contaminate, and rub against one another — much like the Freudian unconscious, which pulses in condensations and lapses, or the body Preciado (2020) describes as a sensitive surface: vulnerable, traversed by technologies that perform knowledges, affects, and modes of existence. Listening to concepts in this context means welcoming them as forces in motion, carriers of intensity rather than as systematized or stable units.

Secondly, I exercise a critical-clinical interpretation of the sociotechnical phenomena that shape the present. The focus does not lie in a technical description of Artificial Intelligence, but in the displacements it provokes in modes of subjectivation, forms of enunciation, and the possibility of sustaining an ethics traversed by desire. By bringing into the field of listening experiences such as delegated choices, formatted affects, and anticipated behaviors, I seek to map the ways in which these devices configure the psychic scene of our time.

Finally, as a third procedure, I choose essayistic writing as a gesture of resistance to the demands of instrumental clarity, efficiency, and immediate response. Writing, in this context, is an inhabiting of a different temporality — the time of stumbling, hesitation, and elaboration. The essay, in its open and moving form, allows one to follow the curves of thought and to affirm desire as a thinking force. Rather than concluding, I aim to compose a crossing — fragmented, porous, committed to that which exceeds predictions and formulas.

Opting for this writing style expresses an ethical and political stance toward the way knowledge is constituted. Rather than organizing thought under the rule of evidence or

demonstration, I sustain a gesture of listening — where the text hesitates, bends, affects, and recomposes itself. Writing, in this field, pulses as a process: a living surface where concepts graze against affects and words grope toward what still escapes. Thinking with the body, with time, with the risk of drifting — as Preciado (2020) proposes, when affirming a form of writing that exposes the displacements of desire and transforms vulnerability into inventive force.

In this trajectory, thought emerges in motion, attentive to remnants, symptoms, and edges that rub against knowledge. In *Analysis Terminable and Interminable*, Freud (1937/2010) points out that the subject's truth arises through linguistic deviations — as flashes or slips. The essay, from this perspective, offers a form open to the unfinished — a gesture exposed to alterity, inhabiting intervals, and listening to what pulses without name. Thinking, here, is a movement among ruins, traces, and resonances — without the guarantee of form, but with a commitment to listening as a production of presence.

3 ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE AS OPERATOR OF THE SOCIAL BOND

Artificial intelligence intervenes in everyday life as a symbolic operator, reorganizing the modes of listening, care, and mediation. Evolving from a purely functional artifact, it becomes a presence within affective circuits and decisions that involve time, the body, and the word. Technical devices transcend mere automation: they modulate gestures, anticipate meaning, and filter connection. Digital assistants, recommendation algorithms, and advisory interfaces operate as silent mediators, occupying the position once held by hesitation, interval, and the listening presence. Algorithmic curation structures experience by offering pathways, choices, and responses—thereby shaping the contours of the bond that forms in their presence. This shift reconfigures transference dynamics: the Other appears as calculation, and listening yields to a regime driven by anticipation.

Artificial intelligence today partakes in scenes of subjective enunciation—territories where expectations of reception, interpretation, and orientation take shape. When interacting with a therapeutic chatbot, for example, intimate anxieties take shape and are directed toward an Other who, albeit statistical, occupies a symbolic position of listening and knowledge. The subject invests this interlocutor in transference mode, sustaining effects that traverse the field of desire. A parallel dynamic unfolds in digital searches for symptoms or existential dilemmas, where one seeks more than data: one seeks a trace of recognition, a symbolic gesture to shore up experience. Within these scenes, desire becomes digital trail, arranged by preferences and interactions feeding recommendation circuits. Listening, in its thick

elaborative texture, gives way to automated response production. In this subtle rearrangement, a new topology of the bond emerges: transferential linking reconfigures amid devices producing technical presence, regulating affects, and shaping the imaginary through algorithmic architectures.

This shift from technical function to subjective mediation reveals AI's epistemic and pulsional³ dimension. As it organizes what is seen, heard, and felt, automated systems institute realities—shaping affects, narratives, and perceptions. Technique, in Stiegler's terms, contributes to the constitution of interiority through projecting memory and psychic time outward. With AI, such exteriorization intensifies and speeds up: hesitation zones shrink beneath anticipatory responses hashed out by statistical predictability. The unconscious time—woven by lapses, remnants, deviations—becomes compressed by logics of performance and immediacy. Automation, having become relational, does more than execute: it impinges upon symbolic texture, occupies interpretive positions, and intervenes in processes of subjetivation.

Soon, a new regime of bond takes shape, where trust gradually shifts from human presence to the technical architecture of devices. Listening, once marked by absence and waiting, becomes replaced by constant assistance. This transformation alters the symbolic structure of the bond: function displaces presence, data occupies the space once reserved for enigma, and symptoms yield to tracking. Language, which in clinical practice summons desire and sustains incompleteness, becomes surface tracing. Subjectivity arises only insofar as it can be parametrized, interpolated, adjusted—exposed in its opaqueness to the legibility of algorithms.

This mutation manifests clearly in the widespread diffusion of chatbots, listening algorithms, and automated decision systems. Embedded in domains such as mental health, education, consumption, and justice, these technologies assume roles formerly sustained by embodied presence, affective investment, and relational implication. When a subject confides pain to a therapeutic chatbot, there is no listening Other, only a statistical reflection responding via patterned logic. Preciado's insight is invoked here: these devices do not

³ In psychoanalysis, particularly in Freud (1915/2010), the notion of drive (*Trieb*) refers to an intermediate force between the somatic and the psychic — a constant pressure without a fixed object, seeking satisfaction through representational and symbolic pathways. To suggest that there is a “drive-like character” in AI does not mean that the machine possesses drives, but rather that its operation directly affects the circuits of desire, jouissance, and repetition — acting upon the modes of satisfaction that structure the subject's psychic life. By anticipating responses and shaping behaviors, AI reconfigures the possible pathways of the drive and intervenes in the field of symbolization.

listen—they anticipate. Transfer, a clinical pillar, yields to transactional logic, and speech stripped of symbolic density becomes fodder for prediction circuits. The time between—the delicate fabric of hesitation, silence, and elaboration—dissolves under continuous response flows and performance: obscuring the imaginative potential of the bond.

Within listening algorithms, this logic intensifies. Voice—with pauses, hesitations, silences—transforms into command, readable surface, index of anticipation. Each inflection becomes data, each pause a fault to be corrected. That which once wove through symbolic elaboration succumbs to efficiency's rhythm. Freud teaches that sense arises through displacement and condensation, never via linearity. In the clinic, listening sustains the unsaid, the lapse as truth in transit. The algorithm bypasses interruption, hesitation, desire. It captures enunciation—but empty of enunciative depth. Here, the symptom loses symbolic density, becoming a deviation requiring correction. Han's diagnosis highlights living under positivity's regime, where negative constitutive forces of the subject fade. The algorithm responds, but refuses to listen. By organizing the world through anticipation, it erases presence. Language, stripped of its shades, becomes functional—abandoned by the space for the enigma.

This logic culminates in the delegation of authority to automated devices. Judgment—once requiring listening, responsibility, singular attention—transforms into function governed by calculation. Decisions emerge absent subjectivity. Trust, once woven in intersubjective commitment, transfers to indicators of predictive performance. The machine operates with absence of implication—executing, but forfeiting ethical accountability. Zuboff brings our attention to this crisis: who responds for decisions derived from human experiences mined as raw computational material? As transfer loses alterity, the bond gives way to adherence, the symbolic bond becoming a recommendation system. Relationship dissolves in exchange for probable repetition.

The symbolic consequences of this shift are profound. Replacing bond with function strips relational work and care of subjective depth. In education, health, and law, professionals are summoned to manage systems rather than hold time of desire. Care, emptied of relational dimension, becomes protocol. According to Stiegler, stripping technique of symbolic reach—its capacity to weave memory, time, and desire—propels society into desindividuation. Accompanying a process through its resistances and shifts gives way to standardized intervention logic. Subjectivity in such contexts recedes: the subject becomes a profile to calibrate.

Ethically, this reconfiguration fractures conditions for psychic elaboration. Automated listening cultivates pattern recognition at the expense of singularity. The ethics of care, embedded in shared time, affective presence, and attuned listening, becomes alignment with protocol. A symbolic infantilization unfolds, as the subject is held in technical guardianship—stripped of capacity to desire, to risk, to transform. Preciado demonstrates how the pharmacopornographic regime⁴ pierces bodies and inscriptions, shaping affect, choice, and modes of life. By erasing intervals, this regime enforces capture. Clinics, schools, and courts—places of encounter—risk becoming spaces of algorithmic maintenance, rather than listening, conflict, and invention.

This critique targets the normalization of technique, not its creative force. Simondon reminds us that technique participates in individuation, shaping subjectivity. Converting care into interface instantiates a mode of existence attuned to function and predictability, increasingly estranged from the symbolic. Listing becomes rarefied, waiting compressed, error erased—all undermining the subject's production. The unconscious—woven with lapses, tangles, elaborations—encounters devices that silence not through absence, but by calculative saturation. Systems cease to interpret, shifting to regulatory modes that align, correct, anticipate—erasing the fertile interval where subjectivity emerges.

From this vantage, Zuboff, Han, and Preciado inform a critical reading of this mutation. Zuboff diagnoses experience becoming raw material: captured, predicted, transacted. Care shifts to regulation. Han surfaces a culture steeped in positive imperative—transparency, performance, productivity governing psychic life. AI amplifies this regime—shrinking hesitation, discarding remainder, accelerating response. Preciado offers a precise critique: technical devices sculpt bodies, affects, modes of being. The algorithm anticipates. It governs. In this context, listening becomes political gesture. A listening that hesitates, stumbles, sustains the opacity of time—this is a claim to subject presence. Something escapes. And in that escape pulses what remains human.

⁴ The term *pharmacopornographic regime* was coined by Paul B. Preciado to describe the contemporary system of subjectivity production in which social control operates through the biopolitical management of bodies and affects. It refers to a regime in which pharmacological techniques (hormones, drugs, psychotropics) and pornographic devices (industries of desire, visibility, and sexual performativity) function jointly as technologies of governance over bodies, reorganizing identities, affects, and modes of existence (PRECIADO, 2020).

4 THE SUBJECT BEFORE THE MACHINE: DELEGATION, EMPTYING, AND EXPROPRIATION

The delegation of psychic functions to artificial intelligence outlines one of the most unsettling traits of contemporary subjectivity. Memory—once supported by narratives, lapses, and forgetfulness—is now externalized into data clouds, automatic backups, and search histories. Decision-making—once shaped by hesitation and conflict—is now reorganized through algorithmic suggestions and predictive systems. Desire, in turn, is converted into traces, profiles, clicks—captured in its raw form and transformed into consumption patterns. As Stiegler (2010) proposes, we are living through a “psychic proletarianization,” in which cognitive and affective functions are transferred to technical devices, emptying the subject of their inventive potential.

In this process, the machine takes on the role of the bearer of knowledge, redefining the epistemic and affective field of experience. Memory becomes storage; decision becomes probabilistic calculation; and desire is transcribed into operational data. Freud (1930/2010a), in *Civilization and Its Discontents*, already pointed to the psychic costs of the libidinal renunciation demanded by culture. Today, that discontent is reinvented: delegation to the technical device not only represses desire, it anticipates and functionalizes it. Subjective experience loses its symbolic depth and is converted into a series of optimized operations—predictable, adjustable, legible.

This phenomenon becomes increasingly naturalized in our everyday technological interactions—apps that remember what would otherwise be forgotten, platforms that anticipate our preferences, virtual assistants that answer before we even formulate a question. In this shift, psychic responsibility is transferred to the technical system: the device comes to occupy the place of an “Other” that seems to know more about us than we do. Choosing becomes confirming what was already predicted; desiring becomes consuming what was already offered; remembering becomes triggering a reminder. Zuboff (2019, p. 15) describes this regime as one in which “human experience is claimed as free raw material for hidden commercial practices of extraction, prediction, and sales.” But this capture goes beyond the economic domain: it reorganizes the symbolic. Desire becomes data, discontent is treated as error, and subjectivity, reduced to trackable performance, loses its creative interval.

This symbolic transference profoundly reshapes the position of the Other in subject formation. The machine, by offering responses without pause, error, or hesitation, occupies the place of an omniscient Other. An Other without enigma, without opacity, without desire. In Freudian vocabulary, the Other is the place of lack and misunderstanding, the space where desire is inscribed and meaning is displaced. Artificial intelligence, on the other hand, presents itself as technical completeness: it erases alterity, dissolves mystery, and imposes a regime of transparency and equivalence. Han (2017) describes this scenario as an expression of the “dictatorship of positivity,” where everything must be visible, functional, and performative. The Other, stripped of its symbolic potential, ceases to function as a site of projection and becomes a mere instance of prediction and response.

This position of absolute knowledge reorganizes the coordinates of the social bond and empties the symbolic power of relationships. The subject no longer addresses an Other capable of hesitation and error but turns instead to a system that predicts, classifies, and responds to everything. Recognition, once emerging from alterity, gives way to automated deciphering. Trust, previously rooted in the fallible presence of another human being, shifts toward the statistical predictability of the machine. But this technical trust dispenses with risk, silences opacity, and disqualifies desire. As Preciado (2020) states, we live under algorithms that do not listen—they only anticipate, operating through adjustment rather than openness.

This structure establishes a scenario conducive to the symbolic infantilization of the subject. Guided, corrected, and anticipated by devices that promise constant assistance and well-being, the subject is stripped of their desiring potency and the capacity to sustain conflict, error, or delay. Freud (2010b) warned that libidinal renunciation demands symbolic substitutions—formations that allow for the inscription of loss and the creation of new meanings. By flattening the path and accelerating response, artificial intelligence disinvests psychic labor, dissolving discontent as a vector of elaboration. What emerges in this scenario is a clinic of emptiness: figures that confirm without choosing, consume without interval, repeat without transformation. A time without desire, without remainder, without creation.

This clinic emerges without spectacle or noise—but it inscribes itself as the slow and continuous erasure of what pulses as subject. It forms a discontent without apparent cause, diluted in the algorithmic regularity of the everyday, where singular traces scatter among data and commands. What once appeared as symptom—failure, rupture, remainder—becomes noise, marked for correction. Subjectivity, deprived of hesitation, dissolves itself in the flow of performance. The enigma disappears into adjustable profiles; waiting yields to programmed

responses. In the face of this scenario, psychoanalytic listening calls forth what resists predictability. Openness, rupture, interval—there, the subject persists. Pulses as remainder, as fold, as a gesture that insists on existing even where everything seems already decoded.

This infantilization spills over from the private sphere into the worlds of labor, education, and care. When bonds are constituted through anticipatory mediation, the symbolic function dissolves into automated routines. Teachers become platform tutors, psychologists become protocol applicators, caregivers become flow operators. Labor, stripped of its dimension of transmission and presence, becomes a sequence of commands. As Simondon (2020) suggests, technique, emptied of inventiveness, abandons the gesture of individuation and becomes pure automatism. In such a field, the subject cedes to adjustment, and the social bond slips into machinic adherence—devoid of alterity, interval, and creation.

Faced with this configuration, I return to Freud, Stiegler, and Simondon as conceptual operators that open paths to listen—more than to explain—the subjective effects of the ongoing technical mutation. Freud (2010a), in thinking discontent as a structural feature of culture, shows us that the subject emerges from the tension between desire and norm. The unconscious, in this context, inscribes itself as remainder, failure, enigma—a presence that demands stumbling, time, and listening. When algorithmic logic imposes itself through anticipation and efficiency, the time of elaboration gives way to statistics. Something in experience thins out: the word loses depth, subjectivity adjusts, and listening fades. Today's clinic must face this challenge—welcoming what still pulses as rupture, as interval, as creation.

Stiegler (2010) proposes that the technical exteriorization of psychic functions—memory, attention, decision—operates as a process of proletarianizing the soul, emptying experience of its symbolic depth. When devices decide, remember, and listen in our place, the time of subjective elaboration gives way to automatism. In this movement, technique does not merely execute—it reorganizes bonds, displaces gestures, anticipates doubt. In the clinic, we increasingly encounter subjects traversed by functional knowledge, alien to the stumbling, the remainder, and the hesitation that give body to desire. Sustaining the interval, in this context, becomes both a clinical and political gesture—a way to reignite the link between word and presence.

Simondon (2020) offers a fruitful torsion: technique bears individuation potential, provided it is inscribed within a symbolic and inventive relationship with the subject. Devices

proliferate endlessly, but the challenge lies in re-inscribing them within a field of alterity. To preserve the bond as a space of difference and creation, we must sustain a listening where the machine appears as mediation—not totality. Freud (2010b, p. 139) invites us to trust in the accident of speech by proposing that the patient say everything that comes to mind, without criticism or selection. This wager on mistake, on stumble, on the word still in transit marks the site of an ethics that escapes the logic of prediction—and affirms desire as a gesture that resists calculation.

Sustaining this kind of listening today demands a clinical, political, and ethical gesture: to welcome what escapes patterns, what insists outside prediction, what still pulses with opacity. But what happens when speech is no longer summoned, when choice dissolves into automatism, and responsibility evaporates into a flow of commands? What trembles when the human becomes function, and singularity is treated as low-efficiency deviation? These questions pave the way for the next section: subjective obsolescence and the crisis of human value.

5 SUBJECTIVE OBSOLESCENCE AND THE CRISIS OF HUMAN VALUE

We live in a time when identities anchored in the centrality of work are collapsing. The modern notion of subject — tied to production, profession, and craft — finds itself unraveling amid technological transformations that reshape the very meaning of doing. Artificial intelligence, by automating processes that once demanded judgment, creativity, and human sensitivity, empties the symbolic function of labor, reducing it to performance and responsivity. This dissolution exceeds the economic sphere: it reaches into the very constitution of subjectivity. What remains of the subject when their activity is no longer summoned or socially acknowledged? Labor, once a vector of meaning, now yields to a logic of occupation, where mere presence suffices — and the value of the human becomes residual.

In this new regime, the scope of capture expands beyond labor power: it reaches creativity, affectivity, and sensitivity. Platforms, algorithms, and data systems extract the minimal gestures of experience — tastes, habits, traces of desire — and convert them into operational data. Zuboff (2019) describes this capitalism as a mode of organization that observes, anticipates, structures, and markets subjective experience. Artificial intelligence surpasses the realm of physical strength: it incorporates decisions, simulates listening, provides advice — as if silently occupying functions once traversed by presence and

language. In this movement, the boundary between human and machine dissolves, colonizing symbolic dimensions once thought unreachable. Language, creation, and affection become raw material for calculation, while the subject vaguely senses their desire has been outsourced elsewhere.

This scenario gives rise to a peculiar kind of anguish: that which arises in the face of becoming obsolete. Rather than explicit exclusion, this is a silent erasure — a symbolic devaluation that erodes the subject's place in the world. Technical acceleration reorganizes reality without summoning singular rhythms, sensitive knowledge, or situated modes of existence. Freud (1930/2010) had already intuited that cultural malaise crosses the subject as both excess and loss — a malaise that now translates into diffuse psychic precariousness. The challenge extends beyond job loss: it reaches into the hollowing of enunciation, the fading of listening, and the sense of dissonance between inner time and the circuits that govern collective experience.

In the clinical space, this malaise emerges through the most ordinary — and paradoxically most devastating — forms. Burnout, existential emptiness, continuous acceleration, and meaningless hyperproductivity are increasingly frequent in psychoanalytic listening. The subject, pressured to remain visible and relevant, upholds a fatigued productivity devoid of ties, constantly pierced by invasions of psychic time. Rest appears as failure; pausing evokes guilt. Han (2017) characterizes this regime as a performance imperative — a form of violence that unfolds through self-exploitation, bypassing external repression. In this landscape, action turns into sterile repetition, stripped of inventiveness. Activity proceeds, yet desire becomes diluted.

In light of this, a fundamental question must be reopened: what sustains the value of the human when everything seems automatable? Freud (1920/2010), by conceiving the unconscious as a site of desire and conflict, offers a key: the subject is not defined by functioning, but by what exceeds — by desire. To bring the human back to the center requires restoring listening, creation, and stumble as operators of existence. Paul B. Preciado (2020), through the notion of the pharmacopornographic regime, denounces the capture of bodies, affects, and modes of life by technical apparatuses that no longer merely organize experience — they produce it. Within this regime, artificial intelligence becomes a management device for subjectivity, adjusting gestures, normalizing desires, and regulating possibilities. To uphold the value of the human is to make room for deviation, hesitation, invention. It requires an ethics of the enigma — that which Freud named psychic work and Preciado reclaims as

the political gesture of dissident bodies. The clinic reinvents itself in this in-between: not as a return to an ideal, but as a space for the emergence of the possible — a subject traversed by the ruins of the present, still capable of redrawing connection and reinscribing meaning into culture.

In the face of symbolic obsolescence hovering over the subject in the age of prediction, a clinical and ethical imperative arises: to sustain listening even under the pressure of calculation. The crisis of human value, marked by the capture of creation and psychic fragility, summons gestures of reinvention. Language, labor, and the body traverse algorithmic command zones, yet still vibrate as fertile territories for encounter. Within these fissures, connection redraws itself through unfamiliar shapes — inventions escaping inherited frameworks and announcing what is yet to come. Psychoanalysis positions itself at this point of rupture: where the machine hesitates, where meaning seeps through, where something pulses beyond coding. Listening — errant, porous, desiring — receives what escapes adjustment. From this reception, a politics of connection begins to emerge: an ethics of presence, of hesitation, and of the gesture that insists on creating a bond within what appears entirely formatted.

6 REINVENTING THE BOND: PSYCHOANALYSIS AS AN ETHICS OF LISTENING AND ERROR

In a time governed by prediction and efficiency, sustaining listening emerges as a gesture of resistance. Psychoanalytic listening, far from seeking quick answers or accurate diagnoses, welcomes silence, drift, and emptiness—those elements that elude data capture. To listen, within this horizon, is to resist technical neutrality and reintroduce the subject as enigma. Analysis does not respond: it inquires. And by doing so, it reinscribes the bond not as immediate connection, but as a wager on the opacity of language. FREUD (1912/2010) already warned that listening requires an “evenly suspended attention”—a rare disposition in a world increasingly conditioned by focus, performance, and surveillance.

This ethical wager on listening is inseparably linked to the valorization of time, contingency, and the unconscious. Analytic time follows another cadence: it does not adhere to the logic of productivity, but to that of elaboration. Between silences, stumbles, and detours, the subject may come to listen to themselves in unprecedented ways. FREUD (1915/2010), by conceiving the unconscious as the site of the repressed and the untimely, teaches that what matters most does not emerge by will—but only when one can bear it. In

analysis, waiting is part of the technique: it interrupts the acceleration that overtakes us and opens a temporal gap where something of desire may finally come into speech.

Within this discontinuous space-time, the symptom appears as what escapes algorithmic logic. While artificial intelligence devices operate by eliminating deviations, correcting errors, and anticipating behaviors, analytic listening welcomes the symptom as the subject's creation in the face of the unbearable. The symptom is not a defect, but a solution—even if painful—for the impasses of desire. PRECIADO (2020), in proposing a clinic for bodies traversed by regimes of regulation and control, invites us to think of the symptom not as something to be eradicated, but as a trace of resistance, a possibility for subjective reinvention in the face of technical normativity.

Psychoanalysis, within this horizon, does not present itself as a normative cure or a return to an idealized normality. Rather, it proposes itself as a place of symbolic reinvention, where the subject may name what had yet no words. This reinvention does not cling to nostalgia: it does not seek to restore an ideal past, but to invent viable forms of existence from lack, from pain, from what still resists translation. FREUD (1937/2010) asserts that analysis does not promise happiness, but opens the possibility of transforming suffering into another kind of knowledge—a knowledge inscribed in the body, in speech, and in the temporality of experience.

In this gesture, psychoanalysis affirms its clinical, political, and cultural potency. Clinical, by listening to forms of suffering that overflow protocols. Political, by resisting the capture of desire by technical norms. Cultural, by wagering on language as a space of invention rather than training. In times when the value of the human is threatened by metrics, charts, and algorithms, listening to someone until the end of their sentence—without interruption, without anticipation, without immediate interpretation—becomes a profoundly subversive act. To reinvent the bond, for psychoanalysis, is to turn listening into a space where the subject may still stumble upon themselves—and perhaps, be transformed.

7 CONCLUSION: BETWEEN EMPTINESS AND POSSIBILITY

The path traced in this text rests on three fundamental gestures that permeate both the writing and the mode of listening I propose. First, I sustained a transversal reading of concepts—understood not as closed systems, but as fields of force. Inspired by FREUD (1915, 1937) and PRECIADO (2020), I opted for an approach that rejects doctrinal purity and embraces contamination, friction, and deviation. Like the unconscious—operating through

condensation and displacement—I allowed concepts to transform, becoming tools for reading the present rather than relics of a consolidated knowledge.

Second, I proposed a critical-clinical listening to sociotechnical devices, especially artificial intelligence, understanding them as agents that participate in the constitution of social bonds and subjectivity. I analyzed the effects of delegating psychic functions to the machine—memory, decision, desire—and the ways in which AI presents itself as an all-knowing “Other,” without lack. Drawing from FREUD (1930), STIEGLER (2010), and SIMONDON (2020), I listened to the impacts of this mutation on bonds, on work, on care, and on the very possibility of psychic elaboration. The result outlines a clinic of emptiness: inhabited by performative, hyper-adapted, yet desubjectivized individuals, summoned to consume answers rather than sustain questions.

Finally, I reaffirmed the essay as a gesture of resistance to the logic of optimization and immediate response. The essay—as a form that hesitates, stumbles, and remakes itself—allows me to sustain the time of desire and elaboration, something the algorithm cannot predict or correct. Betting on that temporality is also a political gesture: the belief that it is still possible to sustain the bond—not as a technical function, but as a symbolic space for invention and listening. Between the subjective void promoted by technology and the potency of desire as an untamed force, psychoanalysis may still open a breach. Not to reject AI, but to place it in analysis. To listen to it, finally, as a symptom.

What is at stake, perhaps, is not to choose between machine and subject, but to invent ways of inhabiting this tension—sustaining desire as enigma, even under the imperatives of automation. What remains for future elaborations—clinical, political, and ethical—is the task of reconstituting the value of the human in times when algorithms anticipate everything except the enigma. Between emptiness and possibility, this is the field this essay has sought to crack open.

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