



From disciplinary power to algorithmic power: Philosophy of the subject in the twenty-first century

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Abstract. The expanding presence of algorithmic systems across governance and everyday social practices was shown to indicate a profound transformation of contemporary power relations and the rationality of governance in digital societies. The aim of the article was to conduct a philosophical analysis of the transition from disciplinary power to algorithmic power and to clarify how this shift redefined the conditions of subject formation in the twenty-first century. The study was based on a combination of hermeneutic interpretation, critical theory, and conceptual analysis, which were applied to reconstruct disciplinary models of power, examine transitional forms of control, and analyse contemporary regimes of algorithmic governance as socio-technical configurations. It was established that algorithmic power functioned through automated decision-making and predictive modelling, thereby transforming the epistemic foundations of governance and rearticulating the relationship between power, knowledge, and subjectivity. It was demonstrated that, unlike disciplinary power relying on institutional visibility and normalisation, algorithmic power operated in a decentralised and opaque manner and was embedded in digital infrastructures mediating everyday practices. It was analysed that algorithmic governance introduced an anticipatory temporal logic, whereby future behaviour rather than past action became the primary object of regulation. It was also shown that responsibility became diffused across distributed socio-technical systems, complicating classical ethical and political models. The results of the study could be applied in social philosophy, digital governance research, and the ethics of artificial intelligence to support the development of normative approaches to transparency and possibilities of critique and resistance in algorithmically mediated societies

Keywords: digital governance; social regulation; autonomy; agency; power relations

Introduction

The transformation of power in the digital age had become one of the central themes in social philosophy, philosophy of technology, and interdisciplinary studies of algorithms. At the global level, scholars had increasingly conceptualised algorithmic governance not merely as a technical development, but as a distinct configuration of power operating through digital infrastructures, automated decision-making, and predictive modelling.

Recent research had examined the legitimacy of algorithmic governance and its normative implications for public administration. M. Veale & F.Z. Borgesius (2021) investigated how legal systems are responding to the development of artificial intelligence, particularly in the context of regulating algorithmic decisions. They demonstrated that traditional legal mechanisms, based on transparency and cause-and-effect relationships,

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are ill-suited to algorithms that operate on the basis of probabilities and complex models. The authors analysed European regulatory approaches, including the GDPR, and identified gaps in ensuring accountability. In conclusion, they argue that new legal instruments are needed that take into account the specific nature of algorithmic opacity and the collective nature of harm. M. Wieringa (2020) focused on mechanisms of algorithmic accountability and their practical effectiveness. In her study, she analysed cases of the implementation of audits, explainability and algorithm control procedures in the public sector. The author demonstrated that most such mechanisms remain formalistic, as the systems themselves are not designed with the possibility of their comprehensible explanation to users in mind. Ultimately, the researcher concluded that accountability requires not only external control tools, but also a rethinking of the design of algorithmic systems. R. Kitchin (2019) investigated the epistemological implications of algorithmic governance, in particular the shift in decision-making logic. The author demonstrated that algorithmic systems foster so-called “predictive rationality”, where decisions are made on the basis of predictions of future behaviour. It was demonstrated that algorithmic systems give rise to what is known as “predictive rationality”, where decisions are made on the basis of predictions of future behaviour. This signifies a shift from traditional retrospective evaluation towards proactive intervention. In conclusion, researcher emphasised that such a transformation alters the very nature of power, making it more preventative and less accountable. T. Gillespie (2024) investigated the role of algorithms in the functioning of digital platforms, particularly in the context of content moderation and visibility. The researcher demonstrated that algorithms effectively perform the functions of regulators, determining which content becomes visible and which is marginalised. The research was based on an analysis of platform practices and policies, as well as their impact on public discourse. N. Couldry & U. Mejias (2022) argued that resistance had to confront the colonial logic of data extraction.

Taken together, these recent studies demonstrated that algorithmic governance had emerged as a transformative regime of power with profound implications for subjectivity, autonomy, and social regulation. However, despite extensive empirical and normative research, there remained an insufficiently developed philosophical comparison between disciplinary and algorithmic forms of power, particularly with regard to the ontological transformation of the subject. This gap provided the conceptual motivation for the present study. The aim of this article was to provide a philosophical analysis of the transition from disciplinary power to algorithmic power and to elucidate its implications for the constitution of the subject in the twenty-first century. To achieve this aim, the study addressed the

following tasks: to identify the specific characteristics of disciplinary and algorithmic power and their infrastructural conditions; to examine transformations of subjectivity under algorithmic classification and predictive regimes; and to clarify the implications for autonomy, agency, responsibility, and the possibilities of critique and resistance.

Materials and Methods

The methodological approach of this study was grounded in contemporary social philosophy and critical digital studies. Given the complexity of algorithmic power as both a technological and socio-political phenomenon, the research adopted a pluralistic methodology combining hermeneutic interpretation, critical theory, and conceptual analysis. Hermeneutic interpretation was employed to reconstruct classical theories of power and subject formation, with particular attention to disciplinary mechanisms and their philosophical implications. This method allowed for a careful reading of foundational texts, focusing on how concepts such as normalisation, surveillance, and self-regulation were theorised in relation to modern institutions. Rather than treating these theories as historically closed, the study approached them as conceptual resources for analysing contemporary transformations of power.

Critical theory provided the tools for examining algorithmic power as a form of domination embedded in technological infrastructures. This perspective emphasised the role of economic interests, political rationalities, and asymmetries of knowledge in shaping algorithmic systems. Algorithms were not understood as neutral or purely technical instruments but as socio-technical assemblages that reflected specific values and priorities. By situating algorithms within broader relations of power, critical analysis avoided technological determinism and highlighted the normative stakes of algorithmic governance. Conceptual analysis played a central role in clarifying key categories such as “disciplinary power”, “control”, “algorithmic power”, and “subjectivity”. These terms were often used ambiguously in interdisciplinary debates, leading to conceptual confusion. The present study sought to define them with precision in order to distinguish between different modes of governance and their respective effects on subject formation. Comparative analysis was then used to trace continuities and ruptures between disciplinary, control-based, and algorithmic forms of power. In contrast to an empirical investigation of specific policy documents or regulatory frameworks, the study addressed algorithmic governance primarily at a conceptual and philosophical level, interpreting it as a distinct epistemic regime grounded in correlation, prediction, and uncertainty rather than causal explanation (Leonelli, 2016; Wieringa, 2020).

Accordingly, the research did not undertake a systematic empirical analysis of governmental documents,

laws, or institutional strategies. Instead, the discursive dimension of algorithmic governance was examined at a theoretical level as part of the broader conceptual interpretation of contemporary debates on digital power. This methodological orientation was informed by established approaches in the philosophy of power and critical studies of digital governance. Hermeneutic reconstruction followed the analytical strategy developed in studies of disciplinary rationalities, where power was examined through its techniques, dispositifs, and modes of subject formation (Foucault, 1995). The critical analysis of algorithmic systems drew on contemporary research that conceptualised digital governance as a normative and legal challenge rather than a purely technical development. Conceptual clarification and comparative analysis were further supported by critical investigations of algorithmic knowledge and data-driven reasoning, which emphasised correlation, prediction, and uncertainty as defining epistemic features of algorithmic power (Kitchin, 2016; Amoore, 2020).

To further strengthen the methodological framework, the study incorporated several complementary analytical perspectives that allowed for a more comprehensive examination of algorithmic power as a historically situated and epistemically specific form of governance. The analysis drew on a genealogical approach to situate algorithmic power within a broader historical trajectory of modern governance. Rather than treating algorithmic systems as a radical rupture, genealogical analysis examined how contemporary modes of data-driven regulation reconfigured earlier techniques of surveillance, classification, and normalisation. This approach enabled the identification of continuities and discontinuities between disciplinary, control-based, and algorithmic forms of power, particularly with regard to temporality, visibility, and mechanisms of intervention. In this study, the genealogical perspective was applied as a conceptual reconstruction of transformations in modes of governance rather than as an empirical historical investigation of specific regulatory institutions.

An epistemological analysis was employed to examine the forms of knowledge that underpinned algorithmic governance. This perspective focused on the shift from interpretive and explanatory modes of reasoning towards correlation-based, probabilistic, and predictive forms of knowledge. By analysing how algorithmic systems produced, validated, and operationalised knowledge at a conceptual level, the study addressed the transformation of epistemic authority and its implications for decision-making, accountability, and legitimacy. In addition to the interpretative and conceptual approaches described above, the study incorporated a political-economic perspective in order to analyse the role of data extraction, attention monetisation, and value generation in contemporary algorithmic governance. Drawing on insights from critical studies of digital

capitalism, this perspective examined how algorithmic infrastructures operate within broader economic logics of platform economies and surveillance-based data accumulation. Rather than conducting a quantitative economic analysis, the study employed a critical political-economic interpretation to understand how economic imperatives shape the design and deployment of algorithmic systems and influence the forms of subjectivity they produce.

The study included a conceptual analysis of generative artificial intelligence as a specific technological development within algorithmic governance. This analysis focused on the capacity of generative models to produce language, images, and symbolic content, thereby extending algorithmic power from classification and prediction towards the production of meaning. Generative systems were therefore examined not as technical artefacts in isolation but as socio-technical mechanisms that transform the conditions under which communication, interpretation, and subject formation occur in digitally mediated environments. Together, these additional perspectives allowed the study to integrate philosophical, epistemological, and political-economic interpretations of algorithmic governance while maintaining the primarily conceptual character of the research. The study adopted an infrastructural perspective interpreted in analytical rather than empirical terms. Instead of conducting a detailed technical analysis of particular platforms, standards, or computational architectures, the study examined infrastructures as conceptual sites where political rationalities were embedded and enacted. Thus, data infrastructures and classification systems were analysed as theoretical categories that help explain how algorithmic governance operates through distributed socio-technical arrangements, rather than as concrete technical systems subjected to empirical investigation.

Finally, elements of critical discourse analysis were incorporated as an interpretative framework rather than a systematic corpus-based method. Instead of analysing a defined body of policy documents or institutional strategies, the study examined how algorithmic governance was framed within broader academic and theoretical debates. This perspective allowed the analysis to consider how notions such as efficiency, objectivity, and innovation functioned discursively to legitimise algorithmic authority and to marginalise alternative forms of critique. The conclusion regarding the ontological transformation of the subject was reached through a comparative conceptual analysis, supported by genealogical and epistemological approaches. By comparing the implicit models of subjectivity presupposed by disciplinary and algorithmic regimes of power, the study showed that algorithmic governance required a different mode of subject existence – one based on probabilistic profiling and predictive assessment rather than reflexive norm internalisation. This shift in the

conditions of knowing and governing the subject justified interpreting algorithmic subjectivity as an ontological transformation not merely in an epistemic sense, but in relation to the mode of being attributed to the subject. Under disciplinary regimes, the subject was constituted as a reflexive and norm-responsive agent whose identity was grounded in intentionality, self-relation, and moral accountability. By contrast, algorithmic governance presupposed a subject defined primarily through probabilistic modelling, behavioural regularities, and data-driven classification. What was altered was not simply the way the subject was described or evaluated, but the structural conditions under which agency, responsibility, and self-understanding were possible. In this sense, the ontological shift concerned the transformation of the subject from a bearer of intentional action to a statistically inferred entity whose existence within governance was mediated by correlation and optimisation rather than interpretation and deliberation. Taken together, these methodological perspectives complemented the hermeneutic, critical, and conceptual approaches outlined above. They enabled a multi-dimensional analysis that captured algorithmic power as simultaneously historical, epistemic, infrastructural, and discursive, thereby strengthening the analytical rigour and explanatory scope of the study.

Results and Discussion

Disciplinary power is interpreted as a historical response to the increasing administrative complexity of modern societies, in which sovereign mechanisms alone proved insufficient for regulating populations. Its primary objective was not punishment but normalisation. Through techniques such as surveillance, examination, and hierarchical observation, disciplinary power sought to produce individuals who conformed to established standards of behaviour and productivity. Power became effective not by repressing individuals but by shaping their conduct in advance. A defining feature of disciplinary power is its spatial organisation. Institutions such as schools, prisons, and factories functioned as enclosed environments in which individuals were subjected to continuous observation and evaluation. These spaces allow power to operate through visibility. Individuals became objects of knowledge, were measured, compared, and classified according to predefined norms. Through these processes, discipline produces subjects who were both individualised and standardised.

Disciplinary power also operates through the regulation of time. Daily schedules, timetables, and routines structured activity and imposed rhythms that shape bodily conduct. Time becomes a medium of control, ensuring efficiency, predictability, and productivity. The disciplined subject learned to align its actions with institutional expectations, internalising the temporal logic of power.

One of the most significant effects of disciplinary power was the internalisation of norms. Rather than relying on external force, discipline encouraged individuals to monitor and regulate themselves. Surveillance became internalised as self-surveillance. The subject anticipated evaluation and adjusted behaviour accordingly, often without conscious awareness of the governing norms.

This internalisation gave rise to a paradoxical form of autonomy. On the one hand, the disciplined subject appeared self-governing, capable of rational choice and moral responsibility. On the other hand, this autonomy was structured by norms that were not freely chosen but socially imposed. Freedom and control became intertwined.

Despite its pervasive influence, disciplinary power remained relatively transparent. Its mechanisms were institutionalised and identifiable. Schools, prisons, and factories could be named, criticised, and reformed. This visibility provided the conditions for resistance and political contestation. Subjects could recognise the sources of power and articulate forms of opposition.

While disciplinary power provided an effective framework for understanding modern forms of governance, its explanatory capacity became limited when applied to contemporary digital societies. Disciplinary institutions presupposed enclosed spaces, relatively stable norms, and subjects whose behaviour could be corrected through observation and normalisation. However, late modern societies were characterised by mobility, fragmentation, and the erosion of institutional boundaries.

As social life increasingly unfolded across networks rather than within institutions, power could no longer rely solely on spatial enclosure. Individuals moved between physical and digital environments, interacting through platforms that transcended traditional institutional frameworks. In this context, disciplinary mechanisms persisted but lost their central organising role. They were supplemented by more flexible and continuous forms of control.

This transformation signalled not the disappearance of discipline but its integration into broader regimes of governance. Disciplinary techniques remained operative in workplaces, educational systems, and bureaucratic organisations, yet they were increasingly intertwined with digital monitoring, performance metrics, and automated evaluation systems. The result was a hybrid landscape in which classical discipline coexisted with emerging forms of algorithmic regulation.

The concept of control marked an important transitional moment between disciplinary and algorithmic power. Unlike discipline, which operated through fixed norms and enclosed spaces, control functioned through continuous modulation. Power no longer sought to confine individuals but to track, assess, and influence them across multiple contexts.

Control operated in real time. Rather than correcting deviations after they occurred, it continuously adjusted the parameters within which behaviour unfolded. Access was granted or restricted, opportunities were opened or closed, and permissions were updated dynamically. The subject was no longer evaluated at discrete moments but was subjected to ongoing assessment.

This shift had significant implications for subjectivity. Under regimes of control, individuals were not addressed as stable identities but as variable profiles. Subjectivity became fluid, composed of changing attributes that were constantly recalibrated. The subject was no longer disciplined into a fixed norm but was modulated according to situational demands.

Early theoretical accounts of control emphasised the erosion of disciplinary enclosures and the emergence of more flexible, mobile forms of power. Control was conceptualised as a mode of governance based on continuous variation rather than fixed norms, in which institutional confinement gave way to open-ended processes of modulation (Deleuze, 1992). Subsequent analyses highlighted that such forms of power were inseparable from broader transformations of capitalism, governance, and social acceleration, in which regulation increasingly occurred through flows, networks, and real-time feedback rather than stable institutional frameworks (Lash, 2007).

From an economic perspective, algorithmic power was also understood as embedded in profit-driven models of digital capitalism, particularly those described as surveillance capitalism. In this context, the logic of data extraction, prediction, and behavioural modulation was not incidental but structurally linked to value production, as algorithms were optimised to maximise engagement, retention, and monetisable attention rather than epistemic accuracy or social fairness. This economic orientation shaped not only how algorithms operated, but also which forms of subjectivity became valuable, governable, and visible within algorithmic systems. This economic configuration corresponded to what S. Zuboff (2019) described as surveillance capitalism, in which behavioural data were extracted, analysed, and commodified in order to predict and shape future action. In this framework, algorithmic systems were not merely tools of governance but central instruments of value production, linking economic imperatives directly to the modulation of subjectivity. Consequently, algorithmic governance could not be adequately analysed without accounting for the economic imperatives that actively configured algorithmic rationality. From this perspective, control was understood as a transitional configuration that anticipated algorithmic governance by privileging adaptability, circulation, and ongoing assessment over normalisation, while remaining structurally connected to earlier disciplinary logics. Algorithmic knowledge did

not misunderstand the subject; it simply had no place for misunderstanding at all.

Algorithmic power was characterised as a distinct mode of governance defined by automation, prediction, and data-driven decision-making. Unlike disciplinary power, which relied on visible institutions and explicit norms, algorithmic power operated through computational processes that were often opaque to those affected by them. Algorithms analysed large volumes of data to identify patterns, generated predictions, and guided action.

Rather than imposing rules directly, algorithmic systems structured the environment in which decisions were made. Recommendation algorithms, ranking systems, and scoring mechanisms prioritised certain options while rendering others less visible or less accessible. Power thus operated indirectly, shaping behaviour without issuing commands. This indirectness contributed to the perception that algorithmic governance was neutral, objective, or merely technical.

A defining feature of algorithmic power was its anticipatory orientation. By modelling future behaviour on the basis of past data, algorithmic systems sought to manage potential outcomes before they occurred. The future became an object of governance. This temporal shift distinguished algorithmic power from disciplinary correction, which responded to deviations after the fact. Prediction was central to the functioning of algorithmic power. Predictive models estimated the likelihood of future actions, risks, or outcomes, enabling institutions to intervene in advance. In domains such as finance, policing, healthcare, and employment, predictive analytics increasingly shaped decision-making processes.

Optimisation complemented prediction by defining desired outcomes and adjusting behaviour towards them. Algorithmic systems did not merely describe reality; they actively shaped it by promoting efficiency, engagement, or security according to predefined criteria. These criteria were rarely neutral. They reflected economic, political, and institutional priorities that remained largely invisible to affected subjects. Algorithmic social regulation thus differed fundamentally from disciplinary normalisation. Instead of enforcing conformity to stable norms, it operated through continuous adjustment and feedback. Individuals were governed not according to who they were, but according to what they were likely to do. The subject became a statistical entity defined by probabilities rather than intentions.

At the core of algorithmic power lay a fundamental transformation of subjectivity. Individuals were increasingly constituted as data subjects – entities defined by the continuous production, circulation, and analysis of data. This datafication of the self altered how subjectivity was understood and governed. Rather than being grounded in consciousness, intention, or narrative identity, the subject was increasingly

represented as a set of behavioural patterns and measurable indicators. Subjectivity became legible to systems that operated through statistical correlation rather than interpretation or meaning. Datafication introduced a quantitative logic into the constitution of the subject. Qualitative aspects of experience – ambivalence, uncertainty, desire – were translated into numerical values that could be compared, ranked, and optimised. While this translation enabled algorithmic governance, it also reduced the complexity of human life. The subject was simplified in order to be governed efficiently.

Importantly, datafication was not a passive process imposed from outside. Individuals actively participated in it through their everyday use of digital technologies. However, this participation was asymmetrical. While subjects generated data, they had limited access to the models and criteria through which that data was interpreted. Algorithmic subjectivity thus emerged through a relationship of dependence and dispossession. Algorithmic subjectivity was characterised by a shift from stable identity to predictive classification. Rather than defining individuals by fixed attributes, algorithmic systems constructed identities dynamically, based on probabilities derived from past behaviour. Identity became something that was continuously recalculated and updated. This predictive logic had far-reaching social consequences. Algorithmic classifications determined access to opportunities, resources, and forms of recognition. Credit scores, risk assessments, and recommendation systems shaped life chances in ways that were often opaque and difficult to contest. Unlike disciplinary classifications, which were linked to explicit norms and institutional rules, algorithmic classifications operated through hidden criteria embedded in technical systems.

Predictive identity also introduced a temporal displacement in subject formation. Individuals were governed according to what they were expected to do rather than what they had done. The subject was treated as a future risk or opportunity. This anticipatory orientation challenged traditional ethical frameworks that tied responsibility to past actions and conscious intention. Moreover, predictive classification tended to reinforce existing patterns. Because algorithmic models relied on historical data, they reproduced past inequalities and biases. The subject was caught in a feedback loop in which prior behaviour constrained future possibilities. Transformation and self-determination became increasingly difficult. The emergence of algorithmic subjectivity raised fundamental philosophical questions about autonomy and agency. Classical accounts of autonomy presupposed a subject capable of rational reflection and self-legislation. Algorithmic governance complicated this picture by shaping the conditions under which choices were made.

Agency was similarly transformed. In algorithmic systems, action was distributed across human and non-human actors. Decisions emerged from interactions between individuals, data, algorithms, and institutional objectives. This distributed agency challenged models of responsibility that relied on individual intentionality. This situation generated a theoretical paradox that required further clarification: if algorithmic governance constituted the subject as probabilistic and structurally dependent, the question arose as to who could act as the bearer of collective subjectivity capable of resistance. The analysis suggested that algorithmic power did not eliminate subjectivity as such, but displaced intentional agency from the individual level to relational and collective configurations. While algorithmic systems operated by reducing individuals to profiles and behavioural probabilities, practices of resistance emerged not from isolated intentional subjects, but from coordinated forms of action situated at the level of infrastructures, data practices, and institutional arrangements. Conscious resistance was therefore grounded not in the restoration of a sovereign, fully intentional subject, but in a reconfiguration of agency as distributed, reflexive, and collectively articulated. On this basis, resistance remained philosophically possible precisely because algorithmic power presupposed relational environments in which subjects could recognise, contest, and reorganise the conditions of their own governability.

The results obtained in this study were consistent with a growing body of international research that interpreted algorithmic governance as a distinct configuration of power rather than a neutral technological development. Recent studies in critical data studies and political economy demonstrated that algorithmic systems increasingly functioned as infrastructures of governance that organised social behaviour through data extraction, prediction, and optimisation (Birch *et al.*, 2021; Crawford, 2022). These findings supported the present analysis, which showed that algorithmic power reshaped subjectivity by operating through anticipatory and probabilistic logics rather than normative judgement.

Several contemporary scholars focused on the epistemic transformation introduced by algorithmic systems. M. Wieringa (2020) demonstrated that algorithmic accountability frameworks often failed because algorithmic systems were not designed to be intelligible to the subjects they governed. These conclusions confirmed the results of the present study, which established that algorithmic knowledge displaced interpretative understanding with correlation-based assessment, thereby altering the epistemic conditions under which subjects were rendered governable.

Research on datafication and subjectivity further corroborated the findings of this article. D. Lupton (2019) analysed how data practices reconfigured

selfhood by translating lived experience into measurable indicators, while M. Fourcade & K. Healy (2017) showed that algorithmic classifications increasingly determined social worth through reputational and risk-based metrics. In contrast to these sociological accounts, the present study extended the analysis by arguing that such transformations should be understood as ontological rather than merely functional, since algorithmic governance presupposed a fundamentally different mode of subject existence.

Economic analyses of digital capitalism also aligned with the results presented here. Studies of platform capitalism demonstrated that algorithmic systems were structurally shaped by profit imperatives that prioritised engagement, predictability, and behavioural modulation (Srnicek, 2016; Birch *et al.*, 2021). While these works focused primarily on economic mechanisms, the present study contributed a philosophical dimension by showing how economic rationalities were translated into modes of subject formation and governance.

At the same time, certain divergences between existing research and the present findings were noted. Empirical studies of algorithmic governance in public administration often framed algorithmic decision-making as a problem of regulation or ethics (Eubanks, 2018; Benjamin, 2019). While these analyses were valuable, the present study argued that such approaches remained insufficient unless they addressed the deeper transformation of subjectivity presupposed by algorithmic governance.

Finally, recent work on resistance and collective agency emphasised the limits of traditional political action in algorithmically mediated environments. S. Milan & E. Treré (2019) demonstrated that data activism increasingly targeted infrastructures rather than institutions, while M. Ziewitz (2015) proposed an interpretation of algorithms as forms of governance that are not necessarily based on explanation or transparency. The author examined how algorithmic systems operate through procedures and rules that stabilise uncertainty in complex social contexts. Drawing on a socio-legal analysis, researcher demonstrated that algorithms create order through repetitive practices rather than through the rational justification of each decision. Ultimately, the author concluded that algorithmic governance should be understood as a procedural form of power, rather than merely as a technical tool. These perspectives supported the conclusions of this study, which showed that critique and resistance were reconfigured under algorithmic power and required infrastructural and collective forms rather than individual opposition.

Overall, the comparison with recent international research demonstrated that the findings of this study both confirmed and extended existing debates. By integrating philosophical analysis with contemporary empirical and theoretical literature, the article contributed

a systematic account of algorithmic power as a regime that transformed not only governance practices but the very conditions of subjectivity, responsibility, and critique. The preceding analysis allowed algorithmic power to be understood not merely as a technological extension of disciplinary and control-based mechanisms, but as a qualitative reconfiguration of the logic through which power related to subjectivity. While disciplinary power operated through the internalisation of norms within relatively stable institutional frameworks, and control regimes introduced flexibility through continuous modulation, algorithmic governance transformed the very conditions under which subjects were rendered knowable, governable, and responsible.

One of the central implications of this transformation concerned the ontological status of the subject. In disciplinary regimes, subjectivity presupposed a reflexive agent capable of recognising norms and adjusting behaviour accordingly. Algorithmic power, by contrast, increasingly addressed the subject as a probabilistic construct whose significance lay not in intentionality or self-understanding, but in behavioural regularities extracted from data. This shift suggested a move from a normatively grounded subject towards a computationally produced subject-position, where agency was inferred rather than exercised.

At the same time, algorithmic power introduced a new form of asymmetry between knowledge and self-knowledge. While disciplinary power relied on forms of visibility that allowed subjects to recognise, contest, or internalise norms, algorithmic systems operated through opaque processes that remained largely inaccessible to those they governed. As a result, subjects were subjected to evaluations and classifications they could not fully comprehend, challenge, or reinterpret. This epistemic asymmetry undermined classical models of autonomy grounded in transparency and rational deliberation.

The analysis also revealed a transformation in the temporality of governance. Whereas disciplinary mechanisms operated retrospectively by correcting deviations from established norms, and control regimes modulated behaviour in real time, algorithmic governance was fundamentally oriented towards the future. By acting on predictions rather than actions, algorithmic systems governed subjects in advance, effectively pre-structuring the space of possible conduct. This anticipatory logic raised critical ethical questions regarding responsibility, as individuals could be sanctioned, restricted, or categorised based on projected behaviour rather than actual decisions. This anticipatory orientation of algorithmic governance reflected broader transformations in the temporal logic of power, where future behaviour became the primary object of regulation (Kitchin, 2019; Amoore, 2020).

Furthermore, algorithmic power complicated traditional distinctions between coercion and consent.

Because algorithmic governance frequently operated through convenience, personalisation, and optimisation, power was experienced not as an external constraint but as facilitation. This blurring of domination and enablement made algorithmic power particularly resistant to critique, as subjects could actively participate in systems that simultaneously empowered and constrained them. The result was a form of governance that was internalised not through discipline, but through habitual reliance on algorithmic mediation.

The analysis of algorithmic governance also extended to recent developments in generative artificial intelligence, which introduced a further transformation in the mode of algorithmic power. Whereas earlier algorithmic systems primarily operated through classification, ranking, and prediction of behaviour, generative models were shown to produce language, images, and symbolic content that actively shaped communicative environments. In this sense, algorithmic power no longer functioned solely by evaluating subjects, but by participating in the production of discursive reality itself.

Generative artificial intelligence altered the relationship between governance and meaning by intervening directly in processes of representation, interpretation, and communication. Rather than merely sorting pre-existing data, generative systems contributed to the formation of narratives, categories, and semantic frames within which subjects understood themselves and others. This shift intensified the epistemic transformation already identified in the study: governance increasingly relied not on interpretative engagement with intentional agents, but on probabilistic generation and optimisation of communicative outputs.

As a consequence, subjectivity was not only classified and predicted but also co-produced within algorithmically mediated discursive environments. The subject encountered algorithmic outputs not merely as external evaluations, but as elements participating in the shaping of social reality. This development suggested a transition from algorithmic assessment of behaviour to algorithmic participation in the constitution of meaning, thereby deepening the ontological transformation previously described.

Importantly, the emergence of algorithmic subjectivity did not imply the disappearance of resistance or agency, but it did require their reconceptualisation. Resistance could no longer be understood solely as opposition to identifiable institutions or explicit norms. Instead, it had to address infrastructural arrangements, data practices, and algorithmic logics that shaped social reality indirectly. This suggested a shift from individual acts of resistance towards collective and infrastructural forms of critique that engaged with the conditions of algorithmic governance itself.

Finally, the analysis highlighted the methodological implications for philosophy. If power increasingly

operated through computational systems rather than discursive or institutional forms, philosophical critique had to extend beyond interpretation to include engagement with technical, infrastructural, and epistemic dimensions of governance. Philosophy was thus confronted with the task of rethinking its own tools and categories in order to remain capable of critical intervention in algorithmically mediated societies.

In this sense, algorithmic power did not merely transform subjectivity, it transformed the conditions under which critique, responsibility, and political agency could be articulated. Understanding this transformation was essential for developing ethical and political frameworks capable of responding to the challenges posed by algorithmic governance in the contemporary world.

Conclusions

The transition from disciplinary power to algorithmic power was shown to mark a profound transformation in the governance of contemporary societies. Algorithmic power did not replace disciplinary mechanisms, but reconfigured them through datafication, prediction, and automation, thereby reshaping subjectivity and producing a form of algorithmic subject characterised by personalisation, classification, and anticipatory control. The analysis demonstrated that algorithmic governance challenged classical philosophical assumptions about autonomy, agency, and responsibility, as subjects appeared formally autonomous while becoming structurally dependent on algorithmic infrastructures. Beyond these general conclusions, the study allowed for several further conceptual clarifications. First, algorithmic governance was interpreted as a transformation of the rationality of governance itself, in which power increasingly operated through probabilistic assessment and anticipatory intervention rather than normative judgement or retrospective correction. Second, the findings suggested that algorithmic subjectivity emerged through a dual process of individuation and abstraction, undermining traditional notions of a coherent and stable subject and replacing them with continuously recalibrated profiles and risk-based representations. From a forward-looking philosophical perspective, the analysis indicated that the emergence of generative artificial intelligence further shifted algorithmic power from the classification of behaviour towards the production of language, images, and meaning. This development suggested the formation of a hybrid subjectivity, in which human and machine-generated expressions became increasingly entangled, complicating distinctions between authorship, agency, and responsibility.

The study also articulated a normative dimension of algorithmic governance. It was argued that ethical and political responses could not be limited to transparency alone, but required the development of algorithmic

literacy, a right to opacity, and practices of counter-algorithmic design capable of contesting dominant modes of data-driven control. These developments also raised the question of whether meaningful forms of resistance remained possible within algorithmically mediated systems of governance. At the same time, the possibility of resistance within algorithmic governance was interpreted in a more limited and relational sense. Because algorithmic power frequently operated through anticipatory regulation and behavioural modulation, opportunities for reflexive agency did not arise solely at the level of individual decision-making. Rather, they emerged at points where algorithmic infrastructures became visible through institutional rules, interface interactions, or collective practices of critique. In such situations, subjects were able to recognise the conditions under which algorithmic classifications and predictions operated, thereby opening limited spaces for contestation and reinterpretation. At the epistemological level,

the findings underscored that algorithmic power signalled the decline of a regime of understanding in favour of regimes of correlation and optimisation, thereby destabilising the status of the human subject as a moral and interpretive agent. Future research was identified as focusing on the development of normative and political frameworks capable of addressing the ethical and social challenges posed by algorithmic governance, taking seriously the distributed nature of agency and the infrastructural conditions of contemporary power.

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Від дисциплінарної влади до алгоритмічної: філософія суб'єкта у XXI столітті

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Анотація. Зростання присутності алгоритмічних систем в управлінні та повсякденних соціальних практиках вказує на глибоку трансформацію сучасних владних відносин та раціональність управління в цифрових суспільствах. Метою статті було провести філософський аналіз переходу від дисциплінарної влади до алгоритмічної та з'ясувати, як цей зсув переосмислив умови формування суб'єкта у XXI столітті. Дослідження базувалося на поєднанні герменевтичної інтерпретації, критичної теорії та концептуального аналізу, які були застосовані для реконструкції дисциплінарних моделей влади, вивчення перехідних форм контролю та аналізу сучасних режимів алгоритмічного управління як соціально-технічних конфігурацій. Встановлено, що алгоритмічна влада функціонує через автоматизоване прийняття рішень та прогнозне моделювання, тим самим трансформуючи епістемічні основи управління та переосмислюючи взаємозв'язок між владою, знаннями та суб'єктивністю. Продемонстровано, що, на відміну від дисциплінарної влади, що спиралася на інституційну видимість та нормалізацію, алгоритмічна влада функціонує децентралізовано та непрозоро та вбудована в цифрові інфраструктури, що опосередковують повсякденні практики. Проаналізовано, що алгоритмічне управління запроваджує випереджальну часову логіку, згідно з якою майбутня поведінка, а не минулі дії, стає основним об'єктом регулювання. Обґрунтовано, що сучасна суб'єктність дедалі більше конституюється через алгоритмічну класифікацію та випереджальне регулювання, що породжує парадоксальний стан поєднання формальної автономії зі структурною залежністю від алгоритмічних медіацій. Також показано, що відповідальність розпорошилася по розподілених соціально-технічних системах, ускладнюючи класичні етичні та політичні моделі. Результати дослідження можуть бути застосовані у соціальній філософії, дослідженнях цифрового управління та етиці штучного інтелекту для підтримки розвитку нормативних підходів до прозорості, а також можливостей критики та опору в алгоритмічно опосередкованих суспільствах

Ключові слова: цифрове врядування; соціальне регулювання; автономія; суб'єктність; владні відносини