Wisam Gibran

The Position of the Human Being

From Cultural Awareness to Ontological Awareness

Nazareth, 2025

G

Gibran Publishing

Publishing Literature and Music Online

Introduction

Now when artificial intelligence became a partner in the cognitive act rather than a mere tool of it, the classical definition of the human being as *homo sapiens* ("the knowing being") or *res cogitans* ("the thinking being") collapsed. From Descartes to Heidegger, philosophy revolved around the idea that the human possesses self-awareness enabling the production of meaning. Yet this very awareness has today become part of a hybrid system in which algorithms participate in generating knowledge and even in shaping the very conditions of perception. Thus, a deeper question arises: **Who is the human being after artificial intelligence?**

In the age of AI, human beings have become a *negotiating entity*, dwelling in a liminal space between action and delegation, between awareness and computation, between creativity and simulation. As algorithms think, analyse, and create, they no longer merely threaten the human being— they compel him to redefine himself, not as the sole agent, but as the being who perceives the limits of his thoughts before the machine and within those limits discovers a new possibility of awareness. As N. Katherine Hayles observes in *How We Became Posthuman* (1999), the human being has not simply lost his privileged position but has been transformed into *information*—codified and exchangeable (Hayles 1999, 2). Consciousness itself is no longer a fortress but an open system of computational representation.

1

This transformation recalls Homi Bhabha's question in *The Location of Culture* (1994): if culture is a shifting site where meanings are produced through negotiation, then the human being himself has become such a "site" — a field of interaction between the organic and the digital, between the self and the algorithm. Hence, we may shift Bhabha's question from "the location of culture" to "the location of the human being": *What is the human being's position when artificial intelligence thinks, draws, writes, and creates?*

In this context, we cannot ignore the deep epistemic rift between two generations:

- The **pre-AI generation**, whose awareness was formed when knowledge was the fruit of human effort and lived experience, now faces existential estrangement when asked to trust systems that think on their behalf.

- The **AI-native generation**, born within the algorithmic environment, no longer perceives the machine as a tool but as the natural milieu of consciousness. For this generation, information is not the result of effort but a constant flow. It inhabits hybridity as a condition of being, not as an exceptional post-human generation, in Bhabha's sense, redefining the boundary between the human and the artificial (Bhabha 1994, 56).

Professionally, François Chollet—creator of *Keras* and deep-learning engineer at Google—emphasises that "real intelligence is not measured by computational volume but by the ability to abstract and understand relationships" (2019, 3). He thereby restores the value of intuition as an

irreducibly human quality, arguing that the essence of intelligence lies not in faster calculation but in the capacity to generalise beyond prior experience (2019, 5).

Philosophically, Luciano Floridi in *The Fourth Revolution* (2014) contends that humanity is living its **fourth revolution** after Copernicus, Darwin, and Freud: we are no longer the centre of the cosmos, nor the apex of life, nor the masters of our own minds, but informational beings inhabiting an immaterial environment (Floridi 2014, xi). Yuval Noah Harari in *Homo Deus* (2016) similarly warns that it is not labour or skill alone that erodes, but "the ontological dignity of the human being" when algorithms come to know us better than we know ourselves (Harari 2016, 366).

From this perspective, the question of the *human position* cannot be examined apart from a **fourth dimension** of *gender*. Smart technologies are not gender-neutral; they reshape representations of masculinity and femininity within data systems and digital discourse. As Donna Haraway argues in *A Cyborg Manifesto* (1985), the cyborg is neither male nor female but a hybrid entity that transcends the gender binaries of modern thought (Haraway 1991, 150). Similarly, Rosi Braidotti in *The Posthuman* (2013) affirms that the post-human is also the post-gendered, as technology redistributes concepts of body, desire, and identity (Braidotti 2013, 24). Kate Crawford in *Atlas of AI* (2021) demonstrates that artificial intelligence, despite its apparent neutrality, embeds biases that reproduce gendered and racial hierarchies (Crawford 2021, 57).

Accordingly, this study unfolds through **four interrelated axes**—education, art, politics, and gender—as fields in which the human being is re-positioned in the age of artificial intelligence: between those who

produce meaning, those who generate it algorithmically, and those who interrogate it within the boundaries of awareness, power, and identity.

Education: From Transmitting Knowledge to Losing Meaning

Education in the era of artificial intelligence is no longer a process of transmitting knowledge but a dynamic space of interaction between human and machine—between the learner and the programming of learning itself. Historically, education has been a human experience shaped by time, memory, and gradual understanding; yet the entry of AI into pedagogy has transformed knowledge into an instantaneous flow of information, making the concept of *learning* itself subject to radical redefinition.

Floridi views the information revolution as "the fourth transformation" in humanity's relation to knowledge, whereby the human ceases to be its centre and becomes a component of a larger epistemic structure continuously producing information through human-machine interaction (Floridi 2014, xi). This shift undermines the classical notion of education as a movement from ignorance to understanding and converts it into an endless exchange of data, stripping learning of its existential—or rather **ontological**—depth. When learning is reduced to the retrieval of *generative answers*, the human being loses the creative friction that once shaped awareness through error, reflection, and experiment.

Hayles notes that the contemporary individual faces a "crisis of cognitive awareness" amid proliferating technologies mediating every relation with the world (Hayles 1999, 4). The learner no longer builds meaning through

contemplation and intellectual effort but operates within an ecology of algorithmic dependence. This alters not only the role of the learner but that of the teacher, who ceases to be the sole source of knowledge and becomes instead a mediator between human awareness and algorithmic cognition.

Practically, Mutlu Cukurova (2024) argues that integrating AI into education could yield a form of *hybrid intelligence* combining machine computation with human intuition—but such integration requires redefining the aims of education: no longer the transfer of information but learning how to *use* knowledge in a world of infinite sources. Likewise, Bodong Chen (2025) observes that generative systems such as *ChatGPT* and *Copilot* shift education from "acquisition" to *co-inquiry*, where teacher and learner alike employ AI as an *epistemic infrastructure* rather than a mere aid.

Yet despite its technical advantages, this shift carries a profound philosophical peril—the **loss of meaning**. When the teacher becomes merely a "supervisor of data flows," education loses its ethical and ontological dimension, because value is not generated by the algorithm but through human encounter itself (Floridi & Taddeo 2018, 328). Thus, AI threatens not education itself but *the meaning within education*. Schools risk becoming laboratories for immediate answers rather than spaces of wonder and discovery. Once the question disappears, the human being forfeits his deepest existential tool: the *desire to understand*.

Art: From Imagination to Simulation

Art reveals most vividly the transformation of the human–AI relation. Once a purely human act rooted in imagination and feeling, art has become an experimental field for machines capable of creative generation. What changes when the machine can paint, compose, write, and interpret aesthetically?

Chollet observes that "intelligence is not the ability to produce complex patterns but the ability to grasp the relations underlying them" (Chollet 2019, 6). Despite its virtuosity in generating images or melodies, AI remains bound to statistical imitation rather than aesthetic intuition. Art, in essence, is not the product of perfection but of the *beautiful error*— that deviates which engenders wonder and meaning.

Hayles suggests that *post-human art* arises in the gap between human imagination and computational capability, where "creativity becomes a shared event between human and technical system" (Hayles 1999, 288). The artist becomes not a solitary creator but an *algorithmic curator* of collective creativity. Generative-art experiments such as Refik Anadol's algorithmic works demonstrate that AI can evoke aesthetics beyond conventional human perception, yet Crawford cautions that such systems mirror the biases encoded in their data (Crawford 2021, 65): machine aesthetics are never innocent—they materialise pre-existing human visions.

Braidotti holds that art in the post-human age is no longer a mirror of human beauty but a laboratory of hybridity among bodies, languages, and machines (Braidotti 2013, 89). Creativity becomes a relational

phenomenon within technological infrastructure. Hence originality itself loses its old authority: the value of an artwork is measured not by *who made it* but by *how* it emerged through human–machine collaboration.

Still, this aesthetic fusion provokes an ethical question: is the machine truly art, or a simulation of it? Bhabha's notion that culture is produced through negotiation in the "third space" (Bhabha 1994, 53) applies here: art in the AI era is precisely such negotiation, with the machine as partner redefining the borders of human imagination. Yet, as Haraway warns, the "loss of the symbolic body" in cyber-culture risks erasing the emotional and corporeal dimensions of art (Haraway 1991, 164). Human imagination has always been existential, tied to wonder, desire, error, and dream—dimensions absent from algorithmic creativity.

Artificial imagination, as the product of deep learning, is imagination *without awareness*: it simulates creativity without *being conscious* of meaning. The forthcoming aesthetic challenge, therefore, lies in **re-humanising imagination**, ensuring that technology extends wonder rather than replaces it.

Politics: From Authority to Algorithm

Since the dawn of political thought, the core question has been *who holds power?* In the AI era, *what is the nature of power when exercised algorithmically?* Power no longer resides solely in institutions or governments but in invisible domains where control operates through code, model, and classification.

Harari remarks that "data has become the most valuable resource in human history; whoever controls it controls the future" (Harari 2016, 382). Whereas political authority once rested on land or capital, it now depends on control of information and behavioural patterns derived from it. Artificial intelligence thus appears not merely as an instrument of power but as a power in itself—a faceless, conscienceless authority that learns and decides.

Crawford states that "AI is not a neutral infrastructure but a political and economic system producing power through surveillance and control" (Crawford 2021, 12). Surveillance today is distributed: every click, every digital act contributes to a vast decision-making apparatus that reproduces and guides collective behaviour. Floridi terms this new form of politics **cyber-democracy**, in which massive data analyses replace the deliberations of citizens (Floridi 2014, 142). The human being thus shifts from *political agent* to *datafied subject*—raw material within algorithmic economies of decision.

Algorithmic bias, then, is a political issue par excellence: it determines who is visible and who is erased in the digital sphere. Haraway's *cyborg theory* shows how technology reshapes the relation between body, power, and knowledge (Haraway 1991, 165). Echoing Foucault's notion of *biopower*—power over life that organises rather than kills (Foucault 1978, 139)—AI today extends *biopolitics* into the digital realm: monitoring, classifying, predicting, and optimising human behaviour. In *Society Must Be Defended*, Foucault observed that the modern state began to treat populations as statistical entities rather than individuals (Foucault 2003, 243). AI now performs the same operation at unprecedented scale.

Yet some scholars, such as Bushmit Kohli (2023), envision an *ethical algorithmic governance* ensuring transparency and accountability in decision-making. The future task of politics, therefore, is the **re-humanisation of power**—the reintegration of ethical and affective dimensions into algorithmic systems so that efficiency coexists with justice. The threat is not that machines will rule us, but that we will willingly relinquish our humanity for the sake of efficiency.

Gender: From Binary to Hybridity

Among all fields reshaped by artificial intelligence, gender is perhaps the most intricate, for it concerns how human beings conceive of themselves, their bodies, and the limits of identity. Modern thought defined gender within the male/female binary; AI reopens this debate by producing digital representations, images, voices, and identities that resist such categorisation.

Haraway's *A Cyborg Manifesto* dissolves the boundaries between nature and culture, body and technology, male and female (Haraway 1991, 150). Similarly, AI's generative systems create a new *virtual gender*, transcending biological constraints. Yet Crawford warns that despite such fluidity, AI often replicates gendered stereotypes embedded in training data (Crawford 2021, 57). When algorithms are trained on male-dominant discourses, they extend that symbolic authority, becoming tools for reproducing inequality.

Braidotti views the post-human era as an opportunity to reconceive gender as a **process of hybridity**, not a closed binary (Braidotti 2013,

104). Technology does not abolish gender but transforms it, enabling new bodily and emotional experiences in which "masculinity" and "femininity" are redefined through relations among human, machine, and environment. Thus, gender in the AI age becomes not a *category* but a *negotiation*—an ongoing interplay between body and algorithm.

On a symbolic level, AI also reshapes *voice, language, and face*—central to gender identity. When anyone can generate an image or voice differing from their biological sex, the boundary between self and projection collapses, giving rise to **digital gender hybridity**. This is not the end of gender but the beginning of a continuously diverse existence. The critical task is to dismantle the relation between gender and algorithm and to build systems that learn from diversity rather than dominant pursuit of **gender-algorithmic justice** that values multiplicity as a human constant.

Towards an Anthropology of Post-Artificial Intelligence

Artificial intelligence has not merely changed human tools; it has reformulated the human being himself. Everything that once defined humanity—knowledge, creativity, power, the body—has become redistributed within digital structures that learn, think, and simulate.

We thus require a new anthropology—not one that defines the human *against* the machine but one that understands what emerges *between* them. From Socrates to Sartre, the human being was seen as a contemplative being who knows because he thinks. In the AI era, contemplation yields to interaction. The human no longer stands outside

the world analysing it but lives within it as a continuous input in a network of data.

Floridi writes that "the contemporary self is no longer an independent entity but a node in an informational system" (Floridi 2014, 95). Awareness shifts from **self-awareness** to **networked awareness**: the human is no longer the centre of cognition but one of its threads. Hayles describes the digital condition as one of **distributed cognition**, where mental functions are shared between mind and algorithm (Hayles 1999, 289). The post-human, therefore, is not the negation of the human but the dismantling of its old unity and the redistribution of intelligence between person and environment. Intelligence becomes a **shared phenomenon**, a *hybrid intelligence* combining human sensitivity with computational precision.

If the algorithm can think, what still distinguishes the human is **moral judgement**. The machine decides probabilistically; the human decides according to value. Hence Floridi & Taddeo call for a new *data ethics* restoring the human being as a moral agent within digital systems (Floridi & Taddeo 2018, 329). Ethics thus becomes humanity's last bastion against total computation.

Can ethics remain exclusively human? While morality as conscious reflection seems irreducible, current research in *machine ethics* seeks to encode moral reasoning into algorithms for autonomous systems (Wallach & Allen 2008). The question then shifts: *cannot a machine be moral?* But *what kind of morality can a machine prodproduce?* Acedural, probabilistic, intention-less morality that nonetheless imitates ethical behaviour. Kant's distinction between acting *according to duty* and acting *from duty* remains

decisive: a machine may act *according to duty* because it is programmed, but it cannot act *from duty* because it lacks self-awareness and free will. Human morality rests on intention, conscience, and responsibilities not yet reducible to code. Still, the rise of *artificial moral agents* opens a new moral dialogue between human and machine, where ethics itself becomes a shared frontier of awareness.

What, then, remains distinctively human? **Wonder**—which Aristotle named the origin of philosophy—is the one act no algorithm can simulate. A machine may calculate

References

1. **Bhabha, Homi K.** *The Location of Culture.* London: Routledge, 1994.

2. **Braidotti, Rosi.** *The Posthuman.* Cambridge: Polity Press, 2013.

3. **Chen, Bodong.** "Beyond Tools: Generative AI as Epistemic Infrastructure in Education." *arXiv preprint*, 2025.

4. **Chollet, François.** "On the Measure of Intelligence." *arXiv preprint* arXiv:1911.01547 (2019). https://arxiv.org/abs/1911.01547.

5. **Crawford, Kate.** Atlas of AI: Power, Politics, and the Planetary Costs of Artificial Intelligence. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2021.

6. **Cukurova, Mutlu.** "The Interplay of Learning, Analytics, and Artificial Intelligence in Education: A Vision for Hybrid Intelligence." *arXiv preprint*, 2024.

7. **Floridi, Luciano.** The Fourth Revolution: How the Infosphere is Reshaping Human Reality. Oxford University Press, 2014.

8. **Floridi, Luciano, and Mariarosaria Taddeo.** "What Is Data Ethics?" *Philosophy & Technology* 31, no. 4 (2018): 327–332.

9. **Foucault, Michel.** *The History of Sexuality, Volume 1: An Introduction.* Translated by Robert Hurley. New York: Pantheon Books, 1978.

10. **Foucault, Michel.** Society Must Be Defended: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1975–1976. Translated by David Macey. New York: Picador, 2003.

11. **Harari, Yuval Noah.** *Homo Deus: A Brief History of Tomorrow.* London: Harvill Secker, 2016.

12. **Haraway, Donna.** "A Cyborg Manifesto: Science, Technology, and Socialist Feminism in the Late Twentieth Century." In *Simians, Cyborgs and Women: The Reinvention of Nature*, 149–181. New York: Routledge, 1991 (الأصل 1985).

13. **Hayles, N. Katherine.** How We Became Posthuman: Virtual Bodies in Cybernetics, Literature, and Informatics. University of Chicago Press, 1999.

14. **Kant, Immanuel.** *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals.* Translated by Mary Gregor. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998 (الأصل 1785).

15. **Kohli, Pushmeet.** "AI and the Reconfiguration of Human Creativity." Lecture, DeepMind Research Talks, London, 2023.

16. **Wallach, Wendell, and Colin Allen.** *Moral Machines: Teaching Robots Right from Wrong.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008