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HUMAN DIGNITY IN THE POSTHUMAN AGE: ABRAHAMIC ETHICS AND EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES

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ABSTRACT

The accelerating development of artificial intelligence, biotechnology, and algorithmic systems has renewed a central philosophical and theological question in a new and urgent form: what remains of the human when cognition, agency, and embodiment are increasingly mediated by technology? While posthumanist thought has offered influential critiques of classical humanism and anthropocentrism, contemporary debates continue to lack a sufficiently robust normative framework for evaluating the moral status of the human person under conditions of technological transformation. This article argues that Abrahamic religious ethics—especially the interrelated values of dignity, mercy, justice, and responsibility—can make a meaningful contribution to current discussions on the ethical limits and governance of emerging technologies. Using a critical-analytical and comparative approach, the study brings selected ethical resources from Islamic and Christian traditions into dialogue with major posthumanist and contemporary philosophical reflections on subjectivity, embodiment, and technological mediation. Rather than treating religion and technology as mutually opposed domains, the article explores how religious moral vocabularies may serve as normative resources for evaluating developments in artificial intelligence, biotechnology, and algorithmic governance. The analysis proceeds at three interconnected levels: the reconfiguration of the human in posthuman discourse, the ethical implications of emerging technologies, and the possibility of articulating a shared moral framework grounded in cross-traditional ethical convergence. The article concludes that Abrahamic ethical traditions retain significant conceptual and moral relevance in the posthuman age. Their emphasis on human dignity, relational responsibility, and moral accountability offers an important counterweight to reductionist and technocentric visions of the future. Without rejecting scientific progress, the study proposes that religious ethics can help shape a more humane and morally intelligible framework for technological responsibility.

KEYWORDS: Posthumanism; Human Dignity; Abrahamic Ethics; Emerging Technologies; Artificial Intelligence; Biotechnology; Moral Responsibility.

1. INTRODUCTION

In recent decades, the question of what it means to be human has moved beyond the traditional domains of philosophy and theology to become a central concern of contemporary technological culture. Rapid developments in artificial intelligence, biotechnology, neurotechnology, and algorithmic governance have not only transformed material life but also unsettled inherited assumptions about agency, embodiment, identity, and moral responsibility. As the boundaries between the biological and the digital, the embodied and the computational, grow increasingly unstable, ethical reflection can no longer rely on older humanist certainties without reexamining their philosophical and normative foundations.

Within this context, posthumanism has emerged as one of the most influential currents for rethinking the human condition. By challenging anthropocentrism and questioning the self-sufficiency of the autonomous human subject, posthumanist thought has opened important debates on hybridity, relationality, embodiment, and the place of nonhuman actors in ethical life. Yet the strength of posthumanism as critique does not always translate into an equally clear normative framework. Although it powerfully interrogates the limits of classical humanism, it often leaves unresolved the question of how human dignity, moral accountability, and ethical limits are to be rearticulated under conditions of technological transformation (Hayles 1999; Braidotti 2013).

It is at this point that religious ethics deserves renewed scholarly attention. Far from constituting a merely premodern or confessional residue, religious traditions preserve enduring moral vocabularies through which questions of human worth, vulnerability, justice, and responsibility have long been articulated. In particular, the Abrahamic traditions offer a rich archive of ethical reflection for addressing present technological dilemmas, especially where the status of the person, the meaning of agency, and the limits of intervention into life itself are concerned. Concepts such as dignity, mercy, justice, and stewardship are not only theological notions; they also function as normative categories capable of contributing to broader ethical debate.

Although a growing body of scholarship has explored posthumanism, technological ethics, and religious responses to scientific modernity, these discussions often remain fragmented across separate disciplinary fields. Posthumanist studies tend to critique classical conceptions of the human without sufficiently developing a coherent moral account of dignity and responsibility, while many religious interventions on technology remain confined to doctrinal or bioethical rulings without sustained engagement with the wider philosophical implications of the posthuman condition. What remains underdeveloped, therefore, is a comparative ethical framework through which Abrahamic traditions may contribute not merely reactive judgments on specific technologies, but a more coherent moral vocabulary for evaluating the reconfiguration of the human in the age of artificial intelligence and biotechnology.

This article addresses that gap by examining how Abrahamic religious ethics may contribute to a normative framework for evaluating emerging technologies in the posthuman age. Its central argument is that the interconnected values of dignity, mercy, justice, and responsibility constitute a morally significant cluster through which technological developments can be critically assessed. These values are especially important because they resist reducing the human being to data, utility, enhancement potential, or algorithmic optimization alone. They preserve, instead, an understanding of the person as embodied, relational, morally accountable, and irreducible to purely instrumental logics.

The central question guiding this study is the following: How can Abrahamic religious ethics contribute to a normative framework for evaluating emerging technologies in the posthuman age? Three subsidiary questions follow from this inquiry. First, how does posthumanist thought reconfigure the concept of the human self? Second, what ethical challenges do artificial intelligence and biotechnology pose to inherited understandings of dignity and moral responsibility? Third, to what extent can Islamic and Christian ethical traditions provide convergent resources for a shared framework of technological responsibility?

Methodologically, the article adopts a critical-analytical and comparative approach. It examines selected ethical concepts from Islamic and Christian traditions and places them in dialogue with major posthumanist and contemporary philosophical discussions on subjectivity, embodiment, and technological mediation. The study is not intended as a comprehensive theology of technology, nor as an exhaustive survey of all religious responses to posthumanism. Rather, it is a focused normative inquiry into how selected Abrahamic ethical resources may illuminate current debates on artificial intelligence, biotechnology, and algorithmic governance.

The argument advanced here is not that religious traditions provide a ready-made policy blueprint for technological regulation, nor that theology should displace legal, philosophical, or scientific expertise. Instead, the article contends that religious ethics can serve as a critical and constructive interlocutor in debates increasingly shaped by instrumental rationality and technocratic assumptions. In this respect, the study makes three principal contributions. First, it brings Abrahamic ethics into sustained dialogue with posthumanist thought, a conversation that remains insufficiently developed in current scholarship. Second, it proposes a normative cluster—dignity, mercy, justice, and responsibility—as a coherent framework for evaluating emerging technologies beyond purely utilitarian or technocratic models. Third, it argues that religious discourse, when articulated in dialogical and non-exclusionary terms, can function not as a rejection of scientific modernity but as a constructive moral resource for addressing the ethical uncertainties of the posthuman age.

The article proceeds in four stages. The first section examines the ethical foundations of dignity, mercy, justice, and responsibility within religious and philosophical discourse. The second analyzes posthumanist accounts of the self and the tensions they generate concerning embodiment and moral agency. The third turns to artificial intelligence and biotechnology as fields in which these tensions become especially visible and normatively urgent. The final section considers whether a shared ethical framework may be articulated through convergences across religious and philosophical traditions. Rather than opposing religion to technology, the article investigates whether religious ethics can help clarify moral limits and human ends within a rapidly transforming technological world.

2. Value Foundations: Dignity, Mercy, Justice, and Responsibility

This section develops the normative vocabulary on which the article rests. Rather than treating religious ethics as a set of isolated doctrinal claims, it identifies four interrelated values—dignity, mercy, justice, and responsibility—as a coherent moral cluster for evaluating the posthuman condition. The argument advanced here is that these values do not merely belong to the internal language of religious traditions; they also provide analytically useful categories for assessing emerging technologies, especially where personhood, vulnerability, and moral accountability are at stake.

2.1 Human Dignity

Human dignity occupies a foundational place in Abrahamic ethics because it identifies the human person as a bearer of worth prior to utility, status, productivity, or technological enhancement. In Qur'anic discourse, this status is expressed in the declaration, "We have certainly honored the children of Adam" (Qur'an 17:70). The verse does more than confer symbolic distinction; it establishes an ontological and moral claim about the human being as a subject of honor, agency, and accountability. In this sense, dignity is not reducible to social recognition, nor is it dependent on performance. It names a prior moral standing that grounds both rights and obligations.

This understanding is developed further in Elouazzani's study of dignity and knowledge in Islamic thought, where dignity is presented not as a merely spiritual designation but as a normative principle linking human honor to epistemic and ethical vocation (Elouazzani 2024). The human being is not only honored but tasked: dignity implies the capacity to know, to discern, and to act responsibly. That conceptual move is especially important for the present article because debates on artificial intelligence and biotechnology often risk recasting the human in terms of information processing, enhancement potential, or functional efficiency. Against such reduction, dignity restores the idea that the human person possesses value that exceeds computational or instrumental description.

A similar concern appears in Emmanuel Levinas's ethical philosophy. Although working outside confessional theology, Levinas frames human dignity through the irreducibility of the other, whose "face" interrupts objectification and demands responsibility (Levinas 1985). His account is particularly relevant to technologically mediated societies, where persons may be translated into data profiles, predictive categories, or administrative abstractions. Read together, Qur'anic anthropology and Levinasian ethics support a shared claim: the human person cannot be exhausted by representation, classification, or utility. Within the context of posthuman debates, dignity therefore functions as a normative limit against forms of technological reasoning that obscure vulnerability, singularity, and moral standing.

2.2 Mercy as a Relational Ethical Principle

If dignity identifies the worth of the person, mercy defines the mode through which that worth is ethically encountered. Mercy is central to both Islamic and Christian moral vocabularies. In the

Qur'an, divine mercy is described as all-encompassing, while in the Gospel tradition believers are called to imitate divine mercy in their relation to others (Qur'an 7:156; Luke 6:36). In both cases, mercy is not reducible to sentiment or private piety. It is a relational ethic that acknowledges vulnerability and responds to it without domination. This point becomes especially significant in technologically mediated environments marked by abstraction, speed, and depersonalization. Systems governed by algorithmic optimization tend to privilege efficiency, prediction, and scale; mercy introduces a different moral logic, one attentive to the unquantifiable dimensions of suffering, fragility, and human need. For Taha Abderrahmane, mercy is not an optional virtue added to justice from the outside; it is a transformative moral disposition that reorients the self away from possession and toward ethical relation (Abderrahmane 2006). That formulation helps clarify why mercy matters in contemporary technological ethics: it resists the flattening of persons into cases, users, or data points.

In this article, mercy is treated as a critical category for evaluating technologies that mediate care, judgment, and access. Its relevance lies not in offering a substitute for institutional ethics, but in reminding ethical theory that human beings are encountered not only as rights-bearing agents, but also as vulnerable beings who may be harmed by impersonal systems even when procedural rationality appears intact. Mercy therefore complements dignity by moving from ontological worth to relational response.

2.3 Justice as Normative Balance

Justice gives institutional and distributive form to the moral claims implicit in dignity and mercy. Within Abrahamic ethics, justice is not merely a legal mechanism but a normative order that structures relations among persons and communities. Qur'anic discourse repeatedly links justice to moral rectitude and social equilibrium, most explicitly in the command: "Indeed, God commands justice and excellence" (Qur'an 16:90). Justice here is both principle and practice: it concerns right measure, fair dealing, and the prevention of domination.

This framework remains highly relevant to the ethics of emerging technologies. Artificial intelligence, digital infrastructures, and biotechnological interventions are not distributed evenly across societies; they are shaped by asymmetries of access, capital, expertise, and governance. Consequently, technological ethics cannot be limited to abstract questions of innovation. It must also ask who benefits, who is exposed to risk, whose data are extracted, and whose agency is diminished. Justice, in this sense, becomes a criterion for evaluating not only outcomes but also structures of participation and exclusion.

The philosophical significance of this point is reinforced by Jürgen Habermas, who locates justice within forms of rational communication among free and equal participants (Habermas 2003). Although Habermas operates in a secular register, his concern with reciprocity and non-domination is compatible with religious accounts that treat justice as a moral demand grounded in the dignity of persons. In the context of posthuman debates, justice must therefore be extended beyond formal legality to include digital justice, epistemic justice, and equitable access to technological goods. Without such expansion, technological progress risks reinforcing existing inequalities while presenting itself as neutral advancement.

2.4 Responsibility: From Stewardship to Technological Accountability

The fourth value, responsibility, links moral agency to power. In Islamic thought, one of its major conceptual anchors is khilāfah, often translated as stewardship, vicegerency, or entrusted responsibility. The Qur'anic declaration, "I am placing upon the earth a vicegerent" (Qur'an 2:30), has frequently been read as assigning the human being a role defined not by domination but by accountable agency before God, creation, and other human beings. Responsibility, in this sense, is inseparable from answerability.

That framework acquires renewed urgency in the posthuman age. Contemporary humans possess unprecedented capacities to edit genomes, automate decision-making, and design systems that affect life chances on a massive scale. The ethical question is no longer whether power exists, but by what moral grammar it will be governed. Responsibility names the refusal to treat technological capacity as its own justification. It introduces a prior question: what ought humans to do with what they can do?

This concern is echoed, in a different register, by Zbigniew Brzezinski's early warning that technological civilization may generate forms of power whose moral consequences exceed the capacities of existing political cultures to govern them (Brzezinski 1970). Although his account is not theological, it underscores a point central to the present argument: technological expansion without moral responsibility risks producing not emancipation, but new forms of human

diminishment. Within Abrahamic ethics, responsibility thus functions as the operative bridge between moral principle and technological action. It prevents dignity, mercy, and justice from remaining abstract values by translating them into a framework of accountable practice.

2.5 Analytical Synthesis

Taken together, dignity, mercy, justice, and responsibility form a coherent normative cluster rather than four independent virtues. Dignity establishes the irreducible worth of the person; mercy governs ethical response to vulnerability; justice structures fair relations within institutions and systems; and responsibility binds agency to accountability in contexts of power. This fourfold framework is especially useful in the analysis of emerging technologies because it resists reduction in multiple directions at once: reduction of persons to data, ethics to efficiency, justice to formal procedure, and agency to technical capability.

For the purposes of this article, these values are not presented as exhaustive, nor as uniquely available within Abrahamic traditions. Rather, they are treated as durable and portable moral categories that allow religious ethics to enter contemporary technological debate in analytically rigorous form. Their significance lies precisely in their ability to preserve moral depth within settings increasingly shaped by abstraction, automation, and enhancement discourse.

Table 1. Core Ethical Values and Their Relevance to Emerging Technologies

Ethical value	Abrahamic ethical grounding	Analytical function	Relevance to emerging technologies
Dignity	The human person possesses inherent worth independent of utility or status (Qur'an 17:70; cf. Elouazzani 2024).	Establishes the moral status of the person.	Counters reduction of humans to data, performance, or enhancement capacity.
Mercy	Ethical response to vulnerability rooted in divine compassion and human imitation of it (Qur'an 7:156; Luke 6:36).	Introduces relational and care-centered judgment.	Critiques impersonal, efficiency-driven systems in healthcare, welfare, and automated decision-making.
Justice	Norm of fairness, right measure, and non-domination in social relations (Qur'an 16:90; Habermas 2003).	Evaluates institutional distribution and inclusion.	Applies to algorithmic bias, unequal access, data extraction, and digital inequality.
Responsibility	Stewardship and accountable agency before God and creation (Qur'an 2:30).	Links power to moral answerability.	Frames governance of AI, genetic intervention, and high-impact technological design.

Source: Author's synthesis based on Qur'anic ethics, selected Christian ethical references, and modern philosophical interlocutors.

Interpretive Note: The table does not imply doctrinal identity among traditions, nor does it claim that these four values exhaust the ethical resources of Abrahamic thought. Its purpose is analytical: to identify a shared normative vocabulary capable of informing debates on emerging technologies without collapsing theological differences into a single system.

3. Posthumanism and the Reconfiguration of the Self

This section examines posthumanism not as a single doctrine but as a field of critique directed at inherited conceptions of the human subject. Its importance for the present article lies in the fact that emerging technologies do not merely add new tools to human life; they alter the conceptual frameworks through which subjectivity, embodiment, agency, and moral responsibility are understood. The question is therefore not simply whether technology changes what human beings can do, but whether it changes what counts as the human in the first place.

3.1 From Humanist Subject to Relational Subject

Classical humanism generally construed the self as a rational, relatively autonomous subject whose moral agency rests on stable interior capacities such as reason, will, and self-possession. Posthumanist thought challenges this model by questioning the centrality, self-sufficiency, and exclusivity of the human subject. In its place, it proposes more decentered accounts of subjectivity in which the self is relational, embodied, technologically mediated, and entangled with nonhuman systems and environments.

A foundational statement of this shift appears in N. Katherine Hayles's How We Became Posthuman, where the posthuman is analyzed not as the disappearance of the body but as a problematic reconfiguration of the relation between embodiment, information, and subjectivity (Hayles 1999). Hayles's intervention is particularly important because it distinguishes critical posthumanism from fantasies of pure disembodiment. Her argument is not that embodiment becomes irrelevant, but that modern technoculture has often privileged informational patterns over lived corporeality in ways that threaten to detach personhood from finitude and vulnerability. For the present study, this critique is

decisive: once the human is redescribed primarily as information or system, the ethical language of dignity becomes harder to sustain unless it is reformulated with care.

3.2 Critique of Anthropocentrism and the Expansion of Ethical Consideration

Posthumanism also advances through a critique of anthropocentrism. It contests the assumption that the human stands at the unquestioned center of moral and ontological order and opens inquiry toward animals, machines, networks, ecological systems, and hybrid life forms. This move has important ethical consequences because it broadens the field of concern beyond the sovereign human individual. At the same time, however, it raises a difficult question: can the critique of human exceptionalism proceed without dissolving the normative distinctiveness of the human person?

Rosi Braidotti addresses this issue by proposing a non-unitary and relational account of subjectivity in The Posthuman (Braidotti 2013). Her work rejects fixed humanist binaries and emphasizes multiplicity, interdependence, and transformation. The value of Braidotti's intervention lies in its refusal of closed identity and its attempt to rethink ethics beyond possessive individualism. Yet for a religiously informed ethics, this move must be received critically as well as appreciatively. If the self is reconceived entirely in terms of flow, assemblage, and becoming, then moral accountability may risk becoming diffuse unless some account of personhood, answerability, and ethical limit is retained.

3.3 Embodiment against Disembodiment

One of the major internal tensions within posthuman discourse concerns embodiment. Certain transhumanist imaginaries have envisioned forms of existence in which consciousness could be detached from the body, uploaded, extended indefinitely, or technologically redesigned beyond ordinary human limits. Hayles criticizes precisely this trajectory by arguing that the posthuman should not be equated with fantasies of disembodied information but must remain attentive to the constitutive significance of embodiment (Hayles 1999). This point matters for the present article because Abrahamic ethics does not regard the body as incidental to personhood. Vulnerability, finitude, suffering, responsibility, and care are all mediated through embodied life.

Jean-Luc Nancy's reflections on the body reinforce this concern from a different philosophical angle. In Corpus, Nancy resists abstract conceptions of the self detached from corporeal exposure and finitude, insisting instead on the body as the site of relation, limit, and existence in common (Nancy 2008). Read in conjunction with Hayles, Nancy helps clarify what is ethically at stake in posthuman debates: once embodiment is displaced by purely technical or informational models, the conditions of moral encounter are altered as well. What is endangered is not only a metaphysical image of the human but a practical grammar of responsibility grounded in finitude and exposure.

3.4 Cyborg Figurations and Hybrid Identity

Donna Haraway's "A Cyborg Manifesto" remains one of the most influential texts in this field because it treats the cyborg not simply as a technological object but as a figure that destabilizes inherited oppositions such as human/machine, nature/culture, and male/female (Haraway 1991). The cyborg, in Haraway's formulation, is a political and epistemological provocation: it exposes the constructed character of rigid identities and invites new forms of coalition and critique.

For the purposes of this article, Haraway's contribution is significant in two respects. First, it demonstrates that posthuman figures are not reducible to engineering scenarios; they also function as conceptual tools for rethinking social and political identities. Second, it shows that technological hybridity does not automatically imply ethical impoverishment. Yet the article also maintains that symbolic hybridity must be distinguished from normative indeterminacy. A critical religious ethics may accept that the human condition is technologically mediated and historically mutable without conceding that personhood is infinitely plastic or morally unbounded.

3.5 The Problem of Moral Agency in Technologically Mediated Subjectivity

The more the self is interpreted through systems, codes, networks, and algorithmic mediation, the more pressing the question of moral agency becomes. If action is increasingly distributed across human and nonhuman actors, then responsibility can appear fragmented or displaced. This is one of the central concerns that motivates critique of certain posthuman trajectories. Hubert Dreyfus, though writing in a broader critique of digital mediation, warns against accounts of intelligence and agency that abstract too quickly from embodied, situated, and practical human existence (Dreyfus 2009). His intervention is relevant here because it reminds us that not all forms of cognition are equivalent to calculative processing, and not all modes of

judgment can be reduced to formalizable systems.

From the standpoint of Abrahamic ethics, this issue is decisive. Religious anthropology does not deny relationality or technological mediation, but it insists that the human person remains a morally accountable agent rather than a transient node in impersonal processes. This claim does not require a return to rigid humanist individualism. It does, however, require preserving a concept of the self that can bear obligation, exercise discernment, and answer for action. In this respect, the posthuman critique of autonomous subjectivity is illuminating, but it cannot by itself supply the normative account of responsibility required for evaluating emerging technologies.

3.6 Analytical Assessment

Posthumanism makes at least three important contributions to contemporary ethical debate. First, it exposes the limits of anthropocentric and exclusionary models of the human. Second, it foregrounds the constitutive role of embodiment, mediation, and relationality in subject formation. Third, it forces moral philosophy and theology to confront the anthropological consequences of technological transformation rather than treating technology as ethically external to the human. These are major gains.

At the same time, the article argues that posthumanism does not fully resolve the question of normativity. Its strongest formulations critique old boundaries, but they do not always provide sufficient criteria for determining what ought to remain ethically non-negotiable in technologically mediated life. This is the point at which Abrahamic ethics reenters the discussion. Dignity, mercy, justice, and responsibility do not negate the posthuman insight that the self is relational and historically mediated. Rather, they provide normative parameters for judging how far such reconfiguration can proceed without eroding the moral standing of the person. In that sense, the religious response proposed here is not anti-posthumanist in a simple sense; it is a critical appropriation that receives posthumanism's diagnostic power while resisting its more reductionist or normatively indeterminate tendencies.

Table 2. Humanist and Posthuman Conceptions of the Self: A Functional Comparison

Analytical dimension	Classical humanism	Posthumanism	Ethical question raised
Conception of the self	Rational, centered, relatively autonomous subject	Relational, decentered, technologically mediated subject	How can moral accountability be preserved under distributed models of agency?
Status of embodiment	Important but often secondary to rationality	Constitutive, though contested between critical posthumanism and transhumanist disembodiment	Can dignity be sustained if embodiment is treated as optional or replaceable?
Human/nonhuman relation	Human exceptionalism often presupposed	Human entangled with machines, animals, and systems	How far can anthropocentrism be criticized without dissolving personhood?
Ethical orientation	Duties, reason, and moral self-governance	Relationality, hybridity, networks, and distributed agency	What normative criteria govern technological reconfiguration of the human?
Risk	Exclusionary and overly centered account of the human	Diffusion of agency and weakening of moral limits	How can critique of humanism avoid ethical indeterminacy?

Source: Author's synthesis based on Hayles 1999, Haraway 1991, Braidotti 2013, Nancy 2008, and Dreyfus 2009.

Interpretive Note: The table is not intended to collapse complex traditions into rigid binaries. Its purpose is analytical: to identify the conceptual shift that makes posthumanism ethically significant for this article. The comparison shows that posthumanism productively unsettles inherited assumptions about the self, but it also reveals the need for a stronger normative account of dignity and responsibility.

4. Religious Ethics and Emerging Technologies

This section moves from conceptual analysis to applied ethical evaluation. Its concern is not technology in the abstract, but specific domains in which emerging technologies exert pressure on inherited understandings of personhood, agency, and accountability. Artificial intelligence, gene editing, and cloning are especially significant because they do not merely extend human capacities; they also reshape the conditions under which decisions are made, bodies are interpreted, and the limits of permissible intervention are drawn. Recent global data underline the urgency of these debates: the 2025 AI Index reports that 78 percent of organizations worldwide reported using AI in 2024, up from 55 percent the year before, while global private investment in generative AI reached $33.9 billion in 2024 (Stanford Institute for Human-Centered Artificial Intelligence 2025). These figures

do not settle the ethical debate, but they show the scale and speed with which AI is moving from experimentation to systemic integration.

4.1 Christian Ethical Responses to AI and Genetic Intervention

Within Catholic moral teaching, the foundational principle governing biotechnological intervention is the dignity of the person from conception to natural death. The instruction Dignitas Personae frames bioethical evaluation around this principle and explicitly addresses cloning, embryo research, and gene therapy. It rejects forms of reproductive cloning and treats many interventions that instrumentalize embryonic life as incompatible with human dignity, while allowing certain therapeutic interventions directed toward healing rather than redesigning the human being (Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith 2008). This distinction remains important for the present article because it shows that the Christian response to emerging technologies is not uniformly prohibitive; rather, it differentiates between therapy and forms of intervention that risk altering the moral meaning of procreation, embodiment, and human identity.

The same concern is visible in Catholic and broader Christian engagement with artificial intelligence. The 2020 Rome Call for AI Ethics, promoted by the Pontifical Academy for Life, articulated a set of guiding principles for AI development, including transparency, inclusion, responsibility, impartiality, reliability, and security/privacy (Pontifical Academy for Life 2020). Its language is especially relevant to this article because it treats human dignity not as an abstract value but as a criterion for the design and governance of AI systems. In January 2023, Pope Francis addressed participants in the interfaith "Abrahamic commitment to the Rome Call," explicitly situating AI ethics within a shared moral conversation across religious traditions (Pope Francis 2023). In his G7 address of June 14, 2024, he again emphasized that ethical decisions cannot be reduced to technical efficiency and that algorithms require moral orientation (Pope Francis 2024). The 2025 Vatican note Antiqua et Nova further develops this position by insisting that AI must support rather than supplant properly human intelligence and by warning against delegating life-and-death decisions to autonomous systems (Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith and Dicastery for Culture and Education 2025).

What emerges from these documents is a consistent theological pattern: technological development is acknowledged as potentially beneficial, but its legitimacy depends on whether it preserves the integral dignity of the person and maintains meaningful human judgment. This is why recent Christian interventions on AI focus not only on innovation, but also on oversight, responsibility, and the moral limits of delegation. In that sense, Christian ethics contributes to contemporary AI debates by refusing both technophobia and technological determinism.

4.2 An Islamic Ethical Framework: Maqāṣid, Stewardship, and Human Oversight

The Islamic ethical response to emerging technologies is best understood through a maqāṣid-based framework centered on the protection of life, intellect, dignity, lineage, and moral order. This framework does not begin with a rejection of innovation as such. Rather, it evaluates technological practices according to whether they preserve or compromise the ends that Islamic law seeks to protect. In this respect, Islamic ethical reasoning is structurally analogous to other normative traditions that distinguish between beneficial therapeutic use and forms of intervention that threaten human integrity or social order. The logic of stewardship developed earlier in the article becomes especially important here: human beings may develop and use technologies, but they do not possess unlimited moral license over life.

On bioethical questions, the resolutions of the International Islamic Fiqh Academy have long treated human cloning with deep caution, and broader regional documentation from the World Health Organization's Eastern Mediterranean office records a clear pattern of religious and juristic opposition across the Muslim world to reproductive cloning while allowing space for therapeutic research under strict ethical constraints (WHO Eastern Mediterranean Regional Office 2006; International Islamic Fiqh Academy 2024). This distinction is useful for the present article because it parallels the therapy/enhancement boundary already observed in Christian discourse. It also shows that Islamic bioethics evaluates biotechnology not only in terms of technical possibility, but in light of lineage, dignity, and the prohibition of turning the human being into a manipulable object.

On artificial intelligence, the most direct and recent institutional statement is Resolution No. 258 (3/26) of the International Islamic Fiqh Academy, published in November 2025, which addresses AI's rulings, guidelines, and ethics. The resolution frames AI as a powerful tool whose permissibility and limits depend on its purposes, impacts, and governance. It emphasizes ethical controls, human responsibility, and the prevention of harms affecting religion, life, intellect, lineage, wealth, and honor (International Islamic Fiqh Academy 2025). Complementing this

juristic development, the 2024 Jeddah Declaration on the guiding principles of AI in the OIC context called for a comprehensive AI ethical and technical strategy and stressed equitable access, prevention of exploitation, and coordination with specialized institutions including the International Islamic Fiqh Academy (Jeddah Declaration 2024). Together, these documents indicate that contemporary Islamic discourse is moving toward a principled rather than merely reactive engagement with AI.

This institutional trajectory is consistent with the writings of Shaykh Abdullah bin Bayyah, especially where he emphasizes maṣlaḥah, taḥqīq al-manāṭ, and cautious moral deliberation in relation to contemporary technologies (Bin Bayyah 2007; 2018). For the purposes of this article, his relevance lies less in isolated quotations than in the methodological point he represents: technological issues cannot be judged by utility alone, but require a broader assessment of consequences, contexts, and higher ethical objectives. That approach fits naturally within a maqāṣid-based account of AI and biotechnology, where human oversight remains indispensable and technical systems are treated as instruments rather than substitutes for moral reasoning.

4.3 Convergences in Religious Technology Ethics

Despite clear doctrinal differences, Christian and Islamic ethical responses to emerging technologies display three major convergences relevant to this article. First, both traditions place human dignity at the center of ethical evaluation. Second, both distinguish between beneficial use and morally disfiguring use: technologies directed toward healing, service, or legitimate assistance may be accepted, while those that instrumentalize life, erase accountability, or deform human relations are subject to moral restriction. Third, both insist on meaningful human oversight. This convergence is not accidental; it reflects a shared concern that technological systems must remain subordinate to moral purposes rather than becoming autonomous sources of normativity.

This point also aligns with broader international ethical discourse. UNESCO's Recommendation on the Ethics of Artificial Intelligence, adopted by member states in 2021, places human rights and human dignity at the center of AI governance and stresses transparency, fairness, and human oversight (UNESCO 2021). While UNESCO is not a religious body, its principles help demonstrate that the moral vocabulary developed in religious traditions can enter contemporary global discussions without losing analytic relevance. In other words, Abrahamic ethics does not stand outside present AI governance debates; it articulates, in thick moral form, concerns that also appear in emerging secular and intergovernmental frameworks.

4.4 Analytical Implications

The significance of these convergences is not that religious traditions offer a complete regulatory blueprint for technological governance. Nor is the claim that theological ethics can replace legal, scientific, or institutional expertise. The stronger claim is more limited and more defensible: religious traditions preserve a morally dense vocabulary through which the ethical stakes of emerging technologies can be interpreted with greater depth than purely instrumental or market-centered language allows. Dignity protects against reducing the human person to data or biological material; mercy corrects impersonal systems that overlook vulnerability; justice addresses asymmetries of benefit, risk, and access; and responsibility ensures that power remains answerable to moral judgment. In this sense, the religious response to AI and biotechnology is not a retreat from modernity, but a contribution to a thicker account of technological accountability.

Table 3. Selected Religious and Global Ethical Milestones in AI and Biotechnology

Year	Institution / document	Domain	Core ethical emphasis	Relevance to this article
2008	Dignitas Personae (Catholic Church)	Bioethics / genetic intervention	Dignity of the person, limits on cloning and embryo instrumentalization, distinction between therapy and morally illicit intervention	Shows that Christian ethics differentiates between healing and redesign of human life.
2020	Rome Call for AI Ethics	AI governance	Transparency, inclusion, responsibility, impartiality, reliability, security/privacy	Establishes a religiously informed but globally legible AI ethics framework.
2021	UNESCO Recommendation on the Ethics of AI	Global governance	Human rights, human dignity, fairness, transparency, human oversight	Demonstrates overlap between religious and international ethical language.
2024	Jeddah Declaration on Guiding Principles of AI	OIC policy / ethics	Equitable access, prevention of exploitation, coordinated ethical strategy	Shows emerging institutional Islamic concern for AI ethics beyond isolated fatwas.
2025	Antiqua et Nova (Vatican)	AI and human intelligence	Human dignity, proper relation between AI and human intelligence, limits of delegation	Strengthens Christian concern about preserving human judgment.

2025	IIFA Resolution No. 258 (3/26)	Islamic legal ethics of AI	Human responsibility, ethical controls, prevention of harm across maqāṣid domains	Provides explicit contemporary Islamic guidance on AI ethics.

Source: Author's synthesis based on Vatican documents, UNESCO AI ethics materials, the OIC-related Jeddah Declaration, and International Islamic Fiqh Academy resolutions.

Table 4. Selected Indicators of the Contemporary Scale of AI Deployment

Indicator	Most recent figure located	Why it matters ethically
Organizations reporting AI use	78% in 2024	Indicates that AI is no longer marginal; ethical questions now concern mainstream deployment.
Organizations reporting AI use, previous year	55% in 2023	Shows the speed of adoption and the narrowing time available for ethical response.
Global private investment in generative AI	$33.9 billion in 2024	Demonstrates the economic momentum driving deployment and the need for governance.
U.S. private AI investment	$109.1 billion in 2024	Indicates concentration of capacity and uneven power in AI development.

Source: Stanford Institute for Human-Centered Artificial Intelligence, AI Index Report 2025.

Interpretive Note: The inclusion of these indicators is not intended to reduce the argument to technological trend analysis. Their purpose is narrower: they show that ethical reflection on AI now concerns large-scale institutional adoption rather than speculative future scenarios alone. The faster deployment becomes, the more urgent the question of normative oversight.

5. Toward a Shared Ethical Framework: Religion as a Moral Resource

This final section draws together the conceptual and applied strands of the article. The aim is not to argue that religious traditions can produce a single universal ethic in any exhaustive or uncontested sense. Rather, the argument is more specific: Abrahamic traditions preserve a set of morally durable concepts that can contribute to a shared ethical framework for evaluating emerging technologies. Such a framework does not eliminate theological difference, nor does it seek to dissolve religious ethics into a thin procedural consensus. Its purpose is instead to identify convergent moral concerns capable of informing public reflection on dignity, responsibility, justice, and the limits of technological intervention.

5.1 Why a Shared Ethical Framework Is Needed

The search for a shared ethical framework is driven by the character of contemporary technological transformation itself. Artificial intelligence, genetic intervention, and data-intensive infrastructures operate across borders, institutions, and legal systems. Their effects are rarely confined to one community, one state, or one disciplinary domain. Under such conditions, ethical reflection cannot remain purely local or purely technical. It must address questions that are transnational and civilizational in scope: What should not be delegated to machines? What forms of intervention into life remain morally permissible? How should human worth be understood in contexts shaped by prediction, optimization, and enhancement?

The urgency of these questions explains why ethical discourse on technology has increasingly moved toward the language of principles, rights, accountability, and human oversight. Yet principles alone often remain too abstract unless they are sustained by thicker moral traditions capable of explaining why dignity matters, why vulnerability deserves response, and why power must answer to limits. This is where religious ethics can make a distinctive contribution. Its value lies not in replacing legal or institutional frameworks, but in preserving a morally serious vocabulary that resists the flattening of human life into technical management.

5.2 Religion as a Moral Resource Rather than a Political Substitute

To describe religion as a moral resource is not to present it as a transcendent substitute for politics, law, or science. The claim is more modest and more defensible: religious traditions carry conceptual, symbolic, and ethical resources that remain relevant when societies confront questions of human meaning under technological pressure. In this respect, religion contributes not because it offers a ready-made regulatory code, but because it sustains moral languages that continue to shape judgments about personhood, obligation, suffering, justice, and care.

This is consistent with Elouazzani's argument that Qur'anic dignity is not merely honorary but normative: the human being is honored in a way that grounds both knowledge and responsibility (Elouazzani 2024). Such an account is especially relevant to the present article because it resists two contemporary reductions at once: the reduction of

knowledge to instrumental control and the reduction of the human to functional capacity. Within this framework, the person is not only a bearer of rights but also a seeker of meaning and an accountable moral subject.

5.3 Ethical Convergence without Doctrinal Erasure

The possibility of ethical convergence across traditions is strengthened by comparative work that has shown how moral concepts form structured semantic fields rather than isolated prescriptions. Toshihiko Izutsu's study of Qur'anic ethics is especially relevant here. In God and Man in the Qur'an and Ethico-Religious Concepts in the Qur'an, Izutsu demonstrates that concepts such as ʿadl, birr, taqwā, and raḥma belong to a coherent moral world in which divine attributes and human conduct are reciprocally related (Izutsu 2002; 2007). The significance of Izutsu for this article lies not merely in lexical analysis, but in showing that religious ethics can be articulated conceptually and dialogically rather than only devotionally.

A comparable aspiration appears in Hans Küng's work on global ethics. Küng's claim is not that religions must merge, but that they can identify a minimal moral consensus sufficient for coexistence and common action. His well-known formulation—that there can be no peace among nations without peace among religions, and no peace among religions without dialogue among religions—remains relevant because emerging technologies amplify the consequences of moral fragmentation rather than overcoming them (Küng 1991). Read alongside Abrahamic ethics, Küng's proposal supports a key point of this article: shared ethical reflection does not require doctrinal uniformity, but it does require stable moral commitments capable of orienting action in common.

5.4 A Four-Part Framework for Technological Responsibility

The argument of this article can now be stated in more precise form. The four values developed earlier—dignity, mercy, justice, and responsibility—may be treated as a functional framework for technological ethics.

First, dignity establishes the irreducible moral status of the person and sets a limit against reducing human beings to data, biological material, performance metrics, or enhancement potential. Second, mercy introduces an ethic of response to vulnerability and corrects forms of technological rationality that remain formally efficient yet morally indifferent. Third, justice evaluates the distribution of benefits, burdens, risks, and exclusions produced by digital and biotechnological systems. Fourth, responsibility ensures that power remains answerable to moral judgment and that technological capacity is not mistaken for ethical legitimacy.

These values do not amount to a full regulatory scheme, but they do provide a morally coherent architecture for evaluating emerging technologies. Their advantage lies in the fact that they are thick enough to sustain serious ethical judgment, yet sufficiently intelligible to enter broader public and interreligious conversation.

5.5 Practical Implications

If religion is to function as a constructive moral resource in the posthuman age, at least four practical implications follow.

First, interdisciplinary platforms are needed in which theologians, ethicists, technologists, and legal scholars can engage one another without reducing ethical questions to technical feasibility alone. Second, religious traditions must continue to refine their language on AI and biotechnology in ways that are normatively serious yet publicly intelligible. Third, ethical discourse should distinguish more clearly between therapeutic, assistive, and enhancing uses of technology rather than treating all intervention as morally equivalent. Fourth, human oversight must remain central wherever technological systems affect life, judgment, education, healthcare, warfare, or religious interpretation.

These implications do not transform religion into policy machinery. They do, however, indicate concrete ways in which religious ethics can inform wider deliberation on technological futures.

Table 5. A Four-Part Religious-Ethical Framework for Evaluating Emerging Technologies

Ethical value	Core moral question	Technological risk addressed	Normative implication
Dignity	What is the moral status of the human person?	Reduction of persons to data, utility, or enhancement potential	No system should treat human worth as conditional on performance or optimization.
Mercy	How should vulnerability be encountered?	Impersonal or efficiency-driven decision systems	Ethical design must remain responsive to fragility, suffering, and human need.
Justice	How are benefits and burdens distributed?	Algorithmic bias, exclusion, unequal access, extractive infrastructures	Governance must address fairness, participation, and distributive asymmetry.

Responsibility	Who remains accountable for action and consequence?	Diffusion of agency through automation and delegation	Meaningful human oversight and answerability must be preserved.

Source: Author's synthesis based on the conceptual argument of this article and the comparative ethical materials discussed in Sections 2–5.

Interpretive Note: This framework does not claim to exhaust the ethical resources of Abrahamic traditions, nor does it presume full theological agreement across them. Its purpose is analytic and constructive: to identify a set of convergent moral categories that can inform contemporary debates on AI and biotechnology without collapsing religious diversity into a single doctrine.

CONCLUSION

This article has argued that the posthuman condition raises not only technological questions but also fundamental moral questions concerning personhood, embodiment, accountability, and the limits of intervention into life. By bringing Abrahamic ethics into dialogue with posthumanist thought and contemporary debates on AI and biotechnology, the study has sought to show that religious discourse still has significant conceptual relevance in technologically transformed societies.

Four main conclusions follow.

First, posthumanist thought provides an important critique of exclusionary and overly self-sufficient models of the human subject. It illuminates the extent to which embodiment, mediation, and relationality shape human existence. Yet its diagnostic strength does not always yield a sufficiently robust normative framework for evaluating the moral status of the person under conditions of technological transformation.

Second, Abrahamic ethics preserves a morally durable vocabulary—especially dignity, mercy, justice, and responsibility—that remains analytically and normatively relevant to contemporary technological debates. These values are not merely devotional ideals internal to particular traditions; they also function as critical categories for judging whether technologies preserve or erode the conditions of humane life.

Third, contemporary Christian and Islamic engagements with AI and biotechnology reveal meaningful convergences. Both traditions distinguish between legitimate assistance and morally disfiguring intervention, both insist on the dignity of the person, and both maintain that technological systems require human oversight and moral limits. This convergence does not erase doctrinal differences, but it does support the possibility of shared ethical reasoning.

Fourth, the contribution of religion to posthuman ethics should not be understood as a nostalgic return to premodern authority or as an attempt to replace legal and scientific expertise. Its stronger contribution lies in offering a thicker moral language for technological accountability—one capable of explaining why human beings should not be reduced to information, why vulnerability matters ethically, why justice must govern institutions, and why power must remain answerable to moral judgment.

The article therefore concludes that the future of technological civilization cannot be guided by technical capability alone. It also depends on preserving a serious ethical vocabulary adequate to the dignity of the human person under conditions of rapid transformation. In this respect, religious ethics does not stand outside modern technological debate. At its best, it contributes to the moral clarification without which innovation risks becoming normatively directionless.

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