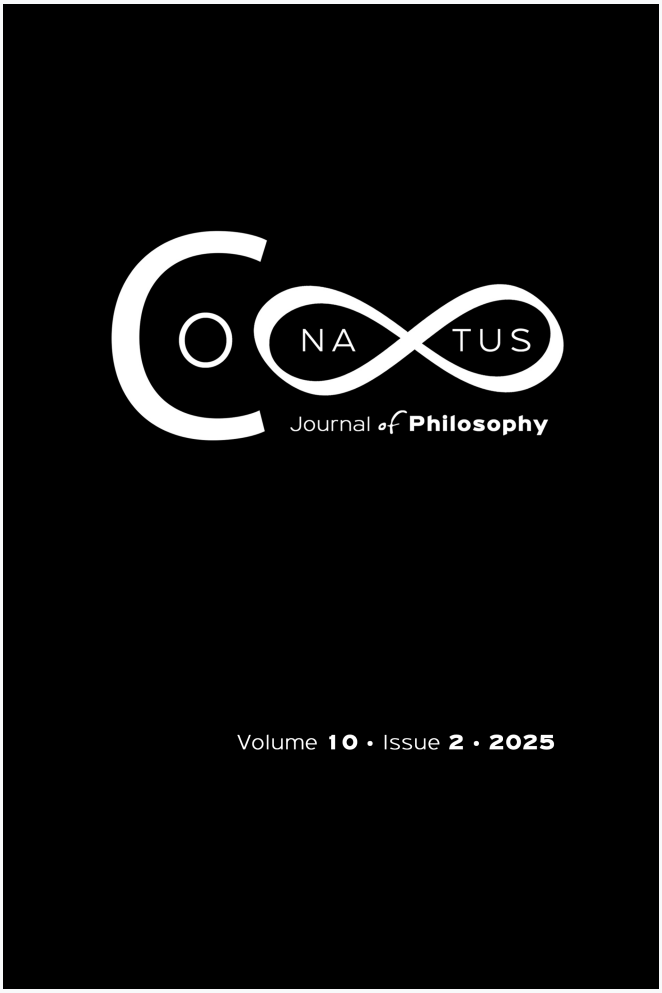
Conatus - Journal of Philosophy

Vol 10, No 2 (2025)

Conatus - Journal of Philosophy



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doi: 10.12681/cjp.37852

To cite this article:

Voloch, N. (2025). On the Divine and the Humane in Modern Context. *Conatus - Journal of Philosophy*, *10*(2), 343–357. https://doi.org/10.12681/cjp.37852

N. Voloch · *Conatus* 10, no. 2 (2025): 343-357
doi: https://doi.org/10.12681/cjp.37852

On the Divine and the Humane in Modern Context

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Abstract

Ever since the dawn of humanity and civilization, the question of divinity has been a major power of thought, conflict and inspiration for cultures, individuals, religions, and countries. In modern times, the term of God has been structured in terms of either religion, or conservative viewpoints that in many ways, are no longer relevant to the world of science and knowledge discovered throughout the years of modern history. Along with scientific and technological developments that improve and reconstruct humanity, a question arises: where are we all heading? To be more precise, we wish to reveal what is the ultimate goal of mankind. Solutions that were once given by religions of all sorts, are now a matter of technicality. As longevity, physical and mental wellness, communication, human knowledge of the universe all become more and more advanced, omnipotence of the human race as a whole is no longer a belief, but a goal, that gets closer as time advances. This paper aims to investigate these purposes and goals of humanity in light of our current state and knowledge, and what challenges we have left to complete our journey in time.

Keywords: *humanism; divinity; concept of God; analytical philosophy; futurism*

I. Introduction

Throughout history, humanity has been captivated by the question of divinity and the pursuit of understanding our place in the world. This inquiry has been a driving force behind cultural development, individual belief systems, religious institutions, and even political ideologies. However, in the modern era, the concept of divinity and the traditional understanding of God have become increasingly challenged by scientific and technological advancements.

As societies have progressed, our knowledge and understanding of the world have expanded exponentially. The principles once used

Received: 10 June 2024 | **Revised**: 17 June 2025 | **Accepted**: 19 June 2025

to explain the mysteries of existence, such as religious doctrines and conservative viewpoints, are now being questioned in light of new scientific discoveries. These discoveries have undoubtedly shaped and reshaped our perception of the world and our place within it. In light of these advancements, it begs the question: where is humanity ultimately headed? What is the ultimate goal of the human race? With the continuous improvement of longevity, physical and mental well-being, communication, and our expanding knowledge of the universe, the concept of human omnipotence – the idea that we, as a species, can become all-powerful – has become less of a belief and more of a tangible goal that appears closer within our reach as time progresses.

The philosophical implications of humanity's trajectory toward divinity cannot be fully explored without addressing foundational critiques of technological advancement, ethical foresight, and the evolving conception of the human. By drawing on the works of Martin Heidegger, Hans Jonas, and contemporary post humanist/transhumanist thinkers, we deepen our analysis beyond aspirational narratives and root it in critical traditions of thought.

Heidegger[1] posits that modern technology is not a neutral tool, but a mode of revealing – a way in which reality discloses itself to us. He describes this as Gestell (enframing), wherein all entities, including humans, are reduced to Bestand (standing reserve), mere resources to be stored, optimized, or manipulated. In this view, the quest for immortality or omnipotent intelligence may not represent liberation, but rather the consummation of enframing: a world where divinity is redefined as total utility. As we develop artificial intelligence and life-extending technologies, Heidegger compels us to ask whether we are truly transcending humanity or simply deepening our instrumental view of existence.

Hans Jonas[2] argues that the unprecedented scope of technological power, genetic engineering, artificial life, climate manipulation, requires a new kind of moral philosophy: one that emphasizes responsibility across generations. His imperative of responsibility demands that we act not for immediate outcomes alone but for the sustainability of genuine human life. This extends directly to our vision of "divinity": if future technologies make us God-like, Jonas would insist that we ask first whether such power is morally survivable, and whether it preserves human dignity, identity, and continuity.

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[1] Martin Heidegger, *The Question Concerning Technology and Other Essays*, trans. William Lovitt (Harper & Row, 1977).

[2] Hans Jonas, *The Imperative of Responsibility: In Search of an Ethics for the Technological Age* (University of Chicago Press, 1984).

The project of overcoming human limitations, often associated with transhumanism (e.g., Bostrom[3]) envisions a future where biological boundaries are transcended via technology. Yet post humanist theorists, such as Rosi Braidotti,[4] N. Katherine Hayles,[5] and Francesca Ferrando[6] emphasize the need to decenter the liberal-humanist subject, warning against the illusion that divinity can be achieved solely through rational mastery or enhancement. Instead, they stress relationality, vulnerability, and embodiment. A truly humane future, in this view, is not one of domination over nature or self, but of symbiosis, humility, and ethical interdependence.

This critical posture challenges utopian narratives by suggesting that "becoming like gods" without rethinking what it means to be human risks replicating older hegemonies, only now in digital or genetic form. While the possibility of controlling time represents the ultimate symbolic transcendence of human limits, Heidegger's critique of technology and Jonas's ethics of responsibility remind us that such aspirations must be tempered by ontological humility and ethical foresight. If time itself is to be reframed, as our perception of space once was, then this act must be situated not only in imaginative speculation, but also in philosophical responsibility and moral restraint.

The purpose of this paper is to delve into the goals and aspirations of humanity in relation to our present state of affairs and knowledge. It aims to navigate the challenges that lie ahead for us as we strive to fulfil our potential and complete our journey through time. By analysing the current scientific and philosophical landscape, we hope to gain insight into our highest aspirations as a species and the potential obstacles we must overcome to realize them.

In doing so, we will explore the evolving nature of divinity, the impact of scientific and technological progress on our understanding of the human potential and contemplate the implications of our collective goals on the future of humanity. By examining these factors, we hope to deepen our understanding of the purpose and trajectory of our species, as well as the importance of continually reassessing our understanding of divinity in light of new knowledge.

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[3] Nick Bostrom, "Transhumanist Values," *Journal of Philosophical Research* 30 (Supplement) (2005): 3-14; Nick Bostrom, *Superintelligence: Paths, Dangers, Strategies* (Oxford University Press, 2014).

[4] Rosi Braidotti, *The Posthuman* (Polity Press, 2013).

[5] N. Katherine Hayles, *How We Became Posthuman: Virtual Bodies in Cybernetics, Literature, and Informatics* (University of Chicago Press, 1999).

[6] Francesca Ferrando, *Philosophical Posthumanism* (Bloomsbury Academic, 2019).

Ultimately, this investigation aims to stimulate thoughtful discourse and inspire further research into the philosophical implications of our ever-evolving understanding of the goals and purposes of humanity. As we stand poised on the precipice of a new era, defined by unprecedented advancements, we must critically examine and question the foundations upon which our beliefs and aspirations are built. Through this exploration, we endeavour to shed light on the true essence and direction of the human journey.

II. Background and related work

Throughout history, the question of divinity has played a significant role in shaping cultures, inspiring individuals, and influencing religious beliefs and practices.[7] The concept of God has traditionally been associated with religious ideologies, providing answers to existential questions and guiding moral and ethical frameworks.[8] However, with the advancements in science and the widening scope of human knowledge, the definition and relevance of God have come under scrutiny.

In the modern era, science and technology have profoundly transformed our understanding of the world and our place within it. The knowledge gained through empirical investigations and critical thinking has challenged traditional religious notions, leading to a growing divergence between conservative viewpoints and scientific progress. This shift has prompted a re-evaluation of the ultimate goal or purpose of humanity.[9] Cerutti[10] examines the ethical and moral implications of considering the interests of future generations when determining the ultimate goal of humanity. It discusses the concept of "long-termism" and the responsibility of current generations to secure a positive future for subsequent generations. Habermas[11] explores the challenges and possibilities of biotechnology and genetic engineering in shaping the future trajectory of humanity. The book discusses the ethical dilemmas associated with these advancements and raises questions about the ul-

[7] Georgia Petridou, *Divine Epiphany in Greek Literature and Culture* (Oxford University Press, 2016); Valeschka Martins Guerra, "Community, Autonomy and Divinity: Studying Morality across Cultures," (PhD diss., University of Kent, 2008).

[8] Pamela Ebstyne King, "Religion and Identity: The Role of Ideological, Social, and Spiritual Contexts," in *Beyond the Self*, ed. Felicity Callard et al., 197-204 (Routledge, 2019).

[9] Hubert Joly, "A Time to Lead with Purpose and Humanity," *Harvard Business Review*, March 24, 2020, https://hbr.org/2020/03/a-time-to-lead-with-purpose-and-humanity.

[10] Furio Cerutti, "Why Should We Care for Future Generations?" *IOP Conference Series: Earth and Environmental Science* 6 (2009): 132002.

[11] Jürgen Habermas, *The Future of Human Nature* (Polity Press, 2003).

timate goals humans should pursue in light of these developments. Bostrom delves into the potential impact of artificial intelligence (AI) and its role in determining the future goals of humanity. The book raises concerns about the potential risks associated with developing superintelligent AI and highlights the need for careful consideration and ethical guidelines in shaping the future of AI. Appiah[12] explores the concept of identity and its influence on goal setting for humanity. He argues for a broader, inclusive understanding of identity that transcends narrow boundaries and fosters a global perspective on the ultimate goals of mankind. Hill Jr[13] explores the idea of humanity as an intrinsic value, or an end in itself. Hill argues against views that diminish the moral significance of humans in favour of other entities or ideas, such as maximizing pleasure or promoting the natural world. He contends that recognizing humanity as an intrinsic value is crucial for moral decision-making. Hill starts by addressing utilitarian theories that prioritize maximizing overall happiness or pleasure. While acknowledging the importance of promoting happiness and reducing suffering, Hill criticizes the utilitarian view for potentially disregarding the inherent worth of individuals and for failing to protect their rights and autonomy. He argues that treating humanity as merely a means to an end undermines the moral significance of human beings. Next, Hill examines environmental ethics that prioritize preserving the natural world over individualistic concerns. While acknowledging the importance of environmental preservation, Hill argues against the view that human beings are just equal parts of nature. He asserts that humans possess a unique capacity for self-awareness and autonomy, which should not be diminished but rather respected and protected. Hill then introduces the concept of humanity as an end in itself, drawing from Immanuel Kant's philosophy. This perspective holds that human beings have intrinsic worth, and they cannot be used merely as a means to achieve other ends. Hill argues that this perspective aligns with our moral intuitions, which reflect our recognition of individuals' inherent dignity and worth.

Recent philosophical literature underscores the need to critically examine the aspirations of transhumanism and techno-divinization within broader metaphysical and ethical frameworks. As Juozelis[14] argues, many transhumanist goals, such as immortality, omniscience, and engineered perfection, subtly mirror religious teleologies and eschato-

[12] Kwame Anthony Appiah, *The Lies That Bind: Rethinking Identity* (Liveright Publishing, 2018).

[13] Thomas E. Hill, Jr., "Humanity as an End in Itself," *Ethics* 91, no. 1 (1980): 84-99.

[14] Evaldas Juozelis, "Religious Dimensions in Transhumanist and Posthumanist Philosophies of Science," *Conatus – Journal of Philosophy* 6, no. 1 (2021): 125-133.

logical myths. These secular projections of transcendence may not represent radical breaks from the past but rather reconfigure longstanding theological narratives in a technological guise. At the same time, discussions of artificial intelligence and posthuman cognition benefit from more rigorous philosophical foundations.

Anderson[15] et al. emphasize the importance of distinguishing between autonomy and agency in AI systems, warning against overly simplistic analogies between human and machine intentionality. This serves as a critical counterweight to utopian visions of AI as an all-knowing divine mind.

In the realm of biotechnology, Boutlas[16] highlights the moral complexities that accompany the manipulation of genetic material, especially when enhancement is prioritized over therapeutic intervention. Likewise, Psarros[17] stresses the significance of embodiment in discussions of technological transcendence, arguing that efforts to overcome the body risk undermining its ontological and ethical value. These insights deepen the ongoing dialogue around human enhancement, calling for a more grounded view of what it means to "perfect" the human form. Kaldudjerovic[18] extends this conversation by offering a normative framework for evaluating the permissibility of genetic interventions, cautioning that any such project must consider both distributive justice and the preservation of human dignity.

Finally, while the present paper explores divinity through the lens of future potentialities, it is crucial to acknowledge that the question of God remains philosophically alive. As Swinburne and Meichanetsidis[19] note, theism is not merely a relic of metaphysics but continues to evolve in dialogue with scientific progress and existential inquiry. Incorporating this perspective affirms that discussions of divine aspiration, even those framed around human potential, must remain open to theological as well as philosophical interpretation.

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[15] Michael Anderson et al., "Towards Moral Machines: A Discussion with Michael Anderson and Susan Leigh Anderson," *Conatus – Journal of Philosophy* 6, no. 1 (2021): 177-202.

[16] George Boutlas, "Bioethics as the 'Third Culture': Integrating Science and Humanities, Preventing 'Normative Violence,'" *Conatus – Journal of Philosophy* 3, no. 1 (2018): 9-29.

[17] Nikolaos Psarros, "Practice and Human Form." *Conatus – Journal of Philosophy* 3, no. 1 (2018): 45-62.

[18] Zeljko Kaldudjerovic, "Bioethics and Hereditary Genetic Modifications," *Conatus – Journal of Philosophy* 3, no. 1 (2018): 31-44.

[19] Richard Swinburne and Vasilis Meichanetsidis, "Proofs for the Existence of God: A Discussion with Richard Swinburne," *Conatus – Journal of Philosophy* 9, no. 2 (2024): 305-314.

These papers and research provide insights into the evolving philosophical and ethical debates surrounding the ultimate goal of humanity in the context of modern knowledge. By considering perspectives on future generations, biotechnology, artificial intelligence, and rethinking identity, scholars have attempted to understand the challenges and possibilities that lie ahead in defining the goals of human progress.

III. Definitions

To ground the inquiry presented in this paper, it is necessary to clarify several core terms.

Divinity, as used here, does not denote a strictly theistic being, but rather the ensemble of traditionally divine attributes: timelessness, omniscience, creative power, and the transcendence of natural limits. In this sense, divinity functions symbolically, echoing both theological complexity and technological aspiration.[20] *Humane*, by contrast, refers not merely to compassion, but to the essential characteristics of human moral and existential experience: rationality, dignity, embodiment, and ethical agency.[21] In discussions of posthuman transformation, it marks the qualities we seek to preserve or transcend. *Omnipotence* is understood here not as metaphysical absolutism, but as the theoretical human capacity to overcome all limitations: biological, spatial, or temporal via scientific mastery. This concept merges classical philosophical notions of divine power with contemporary models of computational and informational agency.[22] Lastly, *immortality* is used to denote the indefinite extension of life through biological enhancement or digital continuation, rather than literal eternal life. It is both a technical pursuit and a moral challenge that touches on the nature of personhood and finitude.[23] Each of these terms functions not only descriptively but normatively, guiding the kinds of futures that appear possible or desirable.

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[20] Sarah Coakley, *God, Sexuality, and the Self: An Essay 'On the Trinity'* (Cambridge University Press, 2013); Rafael Capurro, "Digital Ontology and Religious Imagination," *AI & Society* 24, no. 1 (2009): 35-42.

[21] Martha C. Nussbaum, "Human Capabilities, Female Human Beings," in *Women, Culture, and Development*, eds. Martha C. Nussbaum and Jonathan Glover, 61-104 (Oxford University Press, 1995); Donna J. Haraway, "A Cyborg Manifesto: Science, Technology, and Socialist-Feminism in the Late Twentieth Century," in *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women: The Reinvention of Nature*, 149-181 (Routledge, 1991).

[22] Edward Wierenga, *The Nature of God: An Inquiry into Divine Attributes* (Cornell University Press, 1989); Luciano Floridi, *The Fourth Revolution: How the Infosphere Is Reshaping Human Reality* (Oxford University Press, 2014).

[23] Leon R Kass, "L'Chaim and Its Limits: Why Not Immortality?" *First Things* 113 (2001): 17-24; Hayles, *How We Became Posthuman*.

IV. Current state of humane towards divine

In our journey as humanity towards divinity, the current state of human development highlights numerous advancements and challenges. Scientific and technological progress has propelled humanity towards unparalleled heights, enabling us to better understand and manipulate the world around us. The exponential growth of knowledge in fields such as genetics,[24] artificial intelligence,[25] nanotechnology[26] and space exploration[27] has opened up unprecedented possibilities for humanity's future.

One notable development is the increasing focus on longevity and physical well-being.[28] With advancements in medicine and healthcare, we have witnessed a significant increase in life expectancy and the alleviation of numerous diseases. Furthermore, the emergence of regenerative medicine and the potential to enhance human capabilities through genetic engineering and bio-enhancement have raised the prospect of extending human lifespan and overcoming biological limitations. The pursuit of physical immortality and the quest for optimal health have become central to the vision of a god-like human existence. In parallel, there has been a remarkable growth in our understanding of the human mind. Advancements in neuroscience and cognitive sciences have shed light on the complexities of consciousness, memory, and decision-making processes.[29] The development of artificial intelligence and neural interfaces has further blurred the boundaries between human and machine intelligence. These advances pave the way for the possibility of enhancing cognitive abilities, achieving superior intellect, and potentially transcending human limitations altogether.

Communication and interconnectedness have also undergone immense transformations with the advent of global networks and the

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[24] Kaitlin Myers et al., "Epilepsy Genetics: Current Knowledge, Applications, and Future Directions," *Clinical Genetics* 95, no. 1 (2019): 95-111.

[25] Vítor Pereira et al., "A Systematic Literature Review on the Impact of Artificial Intelligence on Workplace Outcomes: A Multi-Process Perspective," *Human Resource Management Review* 33, no. 1 (2023): 100857.

[26] Saima Malik et al., "Nanotechnology: A Revolution in Modern Industry," *Molecules* 28, no. 2 (2023): 661.

[27] Rocco Santomartino et al., "Toward Sustainable Space Exploration: A Roadmap for Harnessing the Power of Microorganisms," *Nature Communications* 14, no. 1 (2023): 1391.

[28] Howard S. Friedman et al., "Personality and Health, Subjective Well-Being, and Longevity," *Journal of Personality* 78, no. 1 (2010): 179-216.

[29] Francesco Calzavarini, "Rethinking Modality-Specificity in the Cognitive Neuroscience of Concrete Word Meaning: A Position Paper," *Language, Cognition and Neuroscience* 39, no. 7 (2023): 815-837.

digital age. The rapid development of information and communication technologies has revolutionized the way we connect, share knowledge, and interact with one another.[30] As our ability to access and process information exponentially increases, the boundaries of human knowledge expand, enabling us to comprehend and navigate the universe with previously unimaginable precision. However, amid these remarkable developments, significant challenges lie ahead. Ethical dilemmas surrounding the pursuit of God-like attributes arise. The implications of modifying human biology or creating sentient machines raise concerns about the potential loss of human identity and the erosion of moral values.[31] The unequal distribution of resources and access to these advancements also raises ethical questions about the potential for exacerbating existing inequalities.[32] Furthermore, the quest for God-like abilities necessitates considering the impact on our environment and the potential consequences of our actions. Balancing our ambitions with the sustainability of our planet and the preservation of biodiversity becomes increasingly crucial as we redefine our relationship with nature. In conclusion, the current state of human development in relation to the aspiration of becoming gods in the future reflects an extraordinary trajectory of scientific and technological progress. While we have made significant strides towards transcending our biological limitations and improving our understanding of the universe, a multitude of challenges loom. As we embark on this transformative journey, grappling with the ethical, social, and environmental implications becomes increasingly imperative to ensure a responsible and inclusive future for humanity.

V. What is next? Goals towards divinity

In light of our current state and knowledge, it is imperative to explore the goals that lay ahead for humanity in its quest for divinity. These goals can be broadly categorized into three main areas: immortality with

[30] Bright A. Gyamfi et al., "Synthesizing the Impacts of Information and Communication Technology Advancement and Educational Developments on Environmental Sustainability: A Comparative Analysis of Three Economic Blocs – BRICS, MINT, and G7 Economies," *Sustainable Development* 31, no. 2 (2023): 744-759.

[31] Rajakishore Nath and Vineet Sahu, "The Problem of Machine Ethics in Artificial Intelligence," *AI & Society* 35, no. 1 (2020): 103-111.

[32] Alessandra Geraci and Luca Surian, "The Developmental Roots of Fairness: Infants' Reactions to Equal and Unequal Distributions of Resources," *Developmental Science* 14, no. 5 (2011): 1012-1020.

well-being, Earth's constant sustainability, and scientific knowledge of the universe. Humanity's journey and goals over time towards divinity are depicted in Figure 1. The first goal towards divinity is the pursuit of immortality with well-being. As advancements in medical science continue to unravel the mysteries of human existence, the possibility of extending our individual lifespan becomes a tangible aspiration. However, mere longevity is not sufficient; it must be accompanied by physical and mental wellness. The goal is to not only prolong human life but also ensure that it is lived with good health and vitality, enabling individuals to thrive and contribute to the collective progress of humanity.

The second goal focuses on Earth's constant sustainability. In an era characterized by pressing ecological concerns, it is essential to recognize the interdependence between humans and the environment. To strive towards divinity, mankind must seek to harmonize its existence with the natural world, respecting and preserving the delicate balance of ecosystems. This necessitates sustainable practices in all aspects of life, from energy consumption and resource utilization to waste management and conservation efforts. By ensuring the continuous well-being of our planet, humanity works towards its own transcendence.

The third goal embodies the pursuit of scientific knowledge of the universe. Throughout history, humans have been driven by a deep fascination with the cosmos and a desire to unravel its mysteries. As our technical capabilities expand, so does our ability to uncover the secrets of the universe. This pursuit of scientific understanding grants us insight into the intricate workings of the cosmos, bridging the gap between the known and the unknown. By seeking to comprehend the universe, humanity strives towards a higher state of consciousness and a closer connection with the divine.

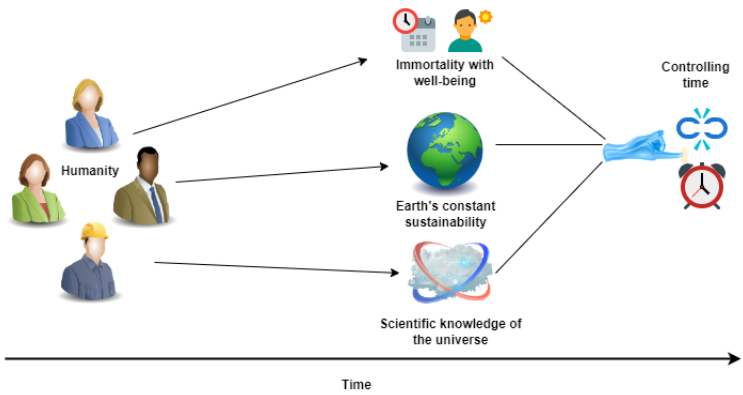

Figure 1. Humanity's journey and goals over time towards divinity

These goals towards divinity present significant challenges that must be overcome. Achieving immortality with well-being requires not only advancements in medical technology but also ethical considerations regarding the implications of prolonged life. Earth's constant sustainability demands a concerted global effort to mitigate climate change, protect biodiversity, and promote sustainable living practices. The quest for scientific knowledge of the universe necessitates continued investment in scientific research and exploration, along with a willingness to challenge traditional beliefs and ideologies.

In conclusion, the goals towards divinity in our current era are centered around immortality with well-being, Earth's constant sustainability, and scientific knowledge of the universe. As humanity continues to move forward, these objectives remain crucial in our journey towards a higher state of existence. By striving towards these goals, we can transcend the limitations of the past and propel ourselves closer to the divine.

VI. The final frontier

As for the final frontier of mankind in its journey towards divinity, the only thing that actually is defining for this power is the control on time. Once this target, that seems imaginary in many ways, is achieved, all other purposes are negligible in this light. This may seem as an unapproachable target, since only theoretical attempts of describing time travel or time manipulation have been done so far, and the realm of time travel has been in areas such as science fiction, literature and cinema. But if we look at higher perspective, we can easily say that the world we live in today could seem nothing but imaginary in the eyes of a person that lived several hundreds of years ago, let alone a person that lived a couple of thousands of years ago. The technology, the abundance, and even the world itself, that was once considered flat, is at our hands, with the ability to fly, that was not so long ago, in historical terms, was considered impossible and imaginary by humanity, is now an ordinary fact of life, along with even flying to space and exploring it. So, it may possibly be that in a couple of hundred years, or several thousands of years from these days, this will also be a trivial fact to some extent, as an option of observing the past, and maybe affecting on it in some ways, and that will complete the journey of mankind towards divinity.

Usually in great changes of perception, there is an element of looking at an object, formula, physical law or any other well-accepted fact of science, from a different perspective. For example, as we can see in Figure 2, when the earth was believed to be flat, and no other way

could be considered, this was due to the fact that humanity lived, and still lives within it, thus not being able to perceive its actual form. It is only when another dimension is being scaled up (from two-dimensional perspective to three dimensional) we can see it's true form being round as a sphere. If we take this reduction to the element of time, we can see, as portrayed in Figure 2, that as we live inside of time and see it as three dimensional, it seems linear and thus, also infinite. If we scale up to the fourth dimensions, which is indeed time itself, we might perceive that it is not in the form we thought it was.

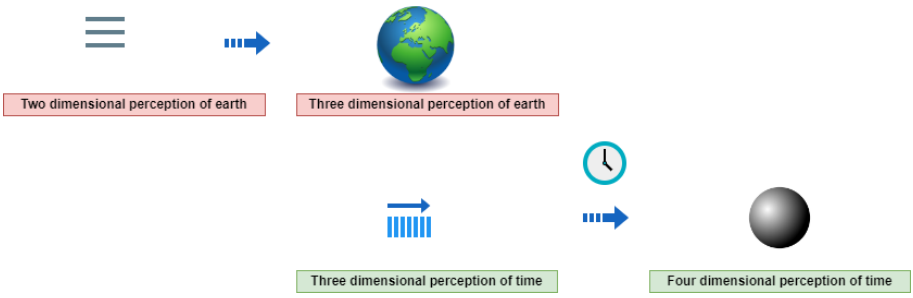

Figure 2. Changes in perception in earth and time as a scaling up a dimension is done

VII. Conclusion

The pursuit of divinity in the modern era is shaped by our evolving understanding of the world and our place within it. Scientific and technological advancements have challenged traditional notions of divinity and opened up new possibilities for humanity's ultimate goals. As we strive towards immortality with well-being, Earth's constant sustainability, and scientific knowledge of the universe, we must navigate the ethical, social, and environmental implications that arise along the way. Our current state and knowledge offer a glimpse into the potential future of humanity, where the control of time may be the defining factor in our journey towards divinity. While the realization of this goal may seem distant or even unimaginable, history has shown us that what was once considered impossible can become a reality. As we continue to push the boundaries of knowledge and progress, we have the opportunity to transcend the limitations of the past and propel ourselves closer to the divine. Through thoughtful discourse and continued exploration, we can deepen our understanding of our purpose and trajectory, ensuring a responsible and inclusive future for humanity.

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