

PHILOSOPHY

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Virtual reality: structural and functional features and specificity of their influence on consciousness

There is a clear distinction between the concepts of “virtual reality”, “virtual consciousness”, and “virtualization”. Their meaning is projected or extrapolated on a social action, subject-object and subject-subject relationships, taking place in a space-time continuum. Virtual reality is represented as a type of symbolic and a kind of psychical reality and is connected to uncertainty. Borderline states of human consciousness explain the transitional nature of computer, cultural, and mystical kinds of virtuality. Mundane consciousness is limited in biological, psychological, sociocultural, existential, and other dimensions. Homo virtualis, a virtuality-based person is a new type of a social individual, currently being formed. In consciousness the borderline between reality and virtuality is disappearing. Language, now based on new virtual linguistics, becomes a new means of expressing virtual consciousness. As a particular case of virtual reality, the Internet represents consciousness, taking its shape, not shaping it. A new civilization is currently being formed where “metacultures” and new global social formations take place of traditional cultures and nationalities. Technical and informational systems synthesize with biological ones on a whole new level shaped by the process in virtual space.

Key words: consciousness, virtualization, information, virtuality, reality, technology, space, time.

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