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To

**Subject: Invitation for National Seminar on " Virtual Reality & Augmented Reality: Convergence of Philosophy and Cyber" on Saturday, 25<sup>th</sup> January 2020 in Senate Hall, University of Rajasthan, Jaipur**

Respected Madam/Sir,

We are delighted to inform you that **Department of Philosophy, University of Rajasthan, Jaipur** in collaboration with **Dr CBS Cyber Security Services, Jaipur** is organizing a one day National Seminar on "**Virtual Reality & Augmented Reality: Convergence of Philosophy and Cyber**" on Saturday, 25<sup>th</sup> January 2020, at 10.30 AM in Senate Hall, University of Rajasthan Jaipur.

**Brief Concept Note about the Seminar:**

Interface between conjecture and reality has been a perennial issue of deliberation in both Indian and Western Philosophy. In several great traditions of thought, reality is perceived as a layered notion. Thus, in **Vedāntic, Buddhist** and in other systems of philosophy, distinction is made between transcendental reality (Paramārtha- परमार्थ), empirical reality (Vyavahāra- व्यवहार) and conjectural reality (Pratibhāsa- प्रतिभासा). The Vedāntic notion of reality is that of trikālābādhittvaṁ-त्रिकालाबाधित्वम्, which entails that anything which is sublatale must not be categorized under reality.

From **Buddhist** perspective, reality is co-terminus with Arthkriyākāritvaṁ-अर्थक्रियाकारित्वम् (anything which has ability to produce effects). Bhāṣyakār Ādi Śaṅkara tells us that empirical life is copulation of real and unreal, i.e., all empirical reality is an appearance (maya-माया) or ābhās (आभासा). As such in Vedānta, the world is 'neither real nor unreal' or Sadasadvilakṣaṇa-सदसद्विलक्षण or Mithyā- मिथ्या. In **Kashmir Śaivism** also, the world is seen as the dance of mahāciti- महाचित्ति, which again entails that the empirical world is in between reality and falsity.

In **Western** tradition, **Socratic** concepts, which essentially belong to realm of 'mental', overarch upon non-mental reality. **Plato's** two-world theory introduces the dichotomy of ideas (ultimate reality) and objects (copies of ideas). Hegelian notion of world as the dialectical interaction between Idea-in-itself and Idea-outside-itself, is in a way a German version of Lilāvāda-लीलावाद. Thus in both Indian and Western Philosophy, for many thinkers, empirical reality is seen as a fusion of 'Real' and 'Virtual'.

The present cyber era is often aptly termed as Era of **Virtual Reality/Augmented Reality /Artificial Reality/Virtual Environment/Cyber Space**. The word Cyber is defined as the 'characteristic of the culture of computers, information technology and virtual reality'. **Virtual** is that which doesn't exist physically but appears to be so and **reality** is the state of things as they actually exist. In the context of cyber, **virtual reality** is an artificial environment that is created with software and presented in such a way that the user accepts it as reality. The appearance is so vivid and potent that it appears to be real. Some instances of such fusion or 'virtual reality' could be seen in several illustrations of our daily life, where virtual sensors create a virtual environment which seem real: data storage in cloud, virtual database, virtual shopping, virtual environment for medical consultation, education, training, cloud computing and virtual games etc.

In a world that is getting more and more enveloped with cyber, the artificial environment created through virtual reality, stimulates senses of the user in such a way that the change in the environment synchronizes with the user's act. The latency (lag time between change in the **point of view** and user's sensory stimulation) is reduced to zero, and the user experiencing immersion (the feeling of being inside and part of that world) is able to interact in a meaningful way with his environment, i.e. telepresence (fusion of immersion and interaction); user forgets his real surroundings.

The seminar is an endeavour to identify the points of convergence and divergence between Philosophy and Cyber on 'Virtual Reality' or fusion of reality and appearance. It is hoped to address the question as to how the notion of virtual reality is similar in the two realms and also how is it dissimilar. A dialogue between these two seemingly different disciplines may enrich both of them. While Cyber may develop a more axiological (value centric) ethos by drawing ethical precepts from the 'Metaphysics of fused Reality'; Philosophy might refresh its questions on 'what is real' and 'what is valuable'. Thus it is hoped to initiate an interaction between philosophy and cyber through the seminar.

#### **Themes and Sub-themes of the seminar:**

- Virtual reality in Upaniṣads, Vedānta, Buddhism, Kashmir Śaivism and Cyber.
- Virtual Reality and Augmented Reality: Utility in day to day life and its future.
- Practical feeling of **sensory stimulation** and synchronization with '**point of view**'.
- Metaphysical and Ethical questions implied by Virtual Reality in Cyber.

**To make this event successful, we need your conceptual guidance for the seminar and humbly request you to grace the occasion.**

With Best Regards,



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