The missing screen. A film theoretical view of cinematic virtual reality.

Virtual reality is probably the most exciting entertainment technology on the market at present. Theorizing virtual reality is not a new phenomenon, but it seems as if the technology in practice finally caught up with theory considering the future of the medium.

The paper will focus on cinematic virtual reality. CVR is a category of VR in which there is no interaction between the viewer and the outer world. Thus, it differs from normal VR where you can interact with objects, relating it rather to video games.

This paper will try to revise this media upheaval towards immersive simulation from the perspective of film theory. Is it possible to describe the new medium in classical film theoretical terms or is CVR a different domain and needs new ones? The most noticeable difference to concentrate on, is the new cinematic dispositif. In CVR the screen merges with the eye-field of the recipient. How does this affect concepts of realism or the impression of reality? Additionally, the metaphors used to describe cinema like window, frame and screen are being questioned.

This turning back to names like Bazin, Kracauer, and Deleuze is as essential as looking at concepts like *glass panes* (Mathias Thiele*), transplane images* (Jens Schröter) and the epistemology of the screen in general (Dennis Göttel). Adding to the more film theoretical side of the equation, the theory of virtual reality itself enters the field. The final goal is to bring them both together.

With the results of such an analysis the paper gives a prediction about the classical cinemas political role compared to CVRs. How does subjectivity and ideological influence transform? Is CVR more of the same or must classical film establish itself as an autonomous medium with its own qualities?

Key-words: Cinematic virtual reality, Screen, Subjectivity, Cinematic dispositif, Film theory.