

---

# DIGITAL UTOPIA AND THE VIRTUAL GLOBAL STATE: A REALISTIC AND APPLICABLE MODEL

**Anwar Mousa**

*University of Palestine, Gaza*

*This article proposes the Virtual Global State (VGS) as an applicable model for a realistic utopia. Representing a virtual entity parallel to the real world, the VGS is an ambitious and long-term global initiative, and it is hoped that it will be the first step on the right and long road to a better future for human life on Earth. It is the appropriate and impartial body for thinking, discussing and preparing for the future of the world. It uses virtual space as a tool for solving real-world problems and improving its conditions using systematic methods with implementation phases and timelines. Liberating its virtual citizens from their national, ethnic, ideological and political differences, the VGS gives them an equal opportunity to obtain its global citizenship. Everyone in the real world, including people without real citizenship, has the right to belong to it and to have their own global ID card with an ID number. The article compares the VGS with the most prominent images of the 'Virtuous City' (utopia) and highlights the exclusive features of the VGS and its strategic objectives.*

**Keywords:** *digital utopia, virtual global state, new digital age, virtual global entity, future model of the world.*

## **1. Introduction**

A Utopia, or the Virtuous City, is a fictional, non-existent ideal society with qualities close to perfection, better imagined by the writer than the society in which he lives (Destrée, Opsomer and Roskam 2021). The desire for utopia is a social dream driven by the narrowness of reality and the desire for a better way of life. A utopia can be an ideal or an imaginary answer to questions such as: Can the way we live be improved? Can the flaws of society or the world we live in be remedied? What is the best way to live a better life than the one we live? But the most prominent objection to utopia is the equality between what is utopian and what is ideal. Since human life is imperfect this equality makes utopia seem unrealistic (Viera 2010).

This article proposes an applicable model for a realistic utopia! It is a Virtual Global State (VGS) that represents a virtual entity parallel to the real world, consisting of more than 200 countries and entities on Earth (<http://virtualglobalstate.com>). The VGS embodies the prevailing trend in the world to benefit from the tremendous and rapid development in ICT and AI to move into virtual space. The VGS is an ambitious and long-term global initiative,<sup>1</sup>

Recommended citation: Mousa, A. Digital Utopia and the Virtual Global State: A Realistic and Applicable Model. *Journal of Globalization Studies*, Vol. 15 No. 2, November 2024, pp. 42–52. DOI: 10.30884/jogs/2024.02.02.

and it is hoped that it will be the first step on the right and long road to a better future for human life on Earth. It has a virtual constitution and a global flag, Figure 1, and everyone in the real world has the right to belong to it and to have its 'virtual' nationality Figure 2.



**Fig. 1. The Virtual Global State's (VGS) global flag**



**Fig. 2. The VGS's Virtual National Identity Card (VNC)**

In one sense, the VGS represents a global intellectual forum that, as a virtual simulation of reality, allows its virtual citizens to discuss and influence vital real-world issues and to attract creative and constructive solutions to problems in specific areas. It does not seek to deal in any way with material matters such as cryptocurrencies, virtual countries or others, and is not directed at any geographical area. The primary mission of the VGS is to re-process the negative thoughts that hinder progress towards a more peaceful world. This is based on two 'intuitive' concepts that have been developed: the *Post-Maturity Insight* (PMI) and the *Missing Link* (ML) (<https://virtualglobalstate.com/#/bml>).

The body responsible for the VGS is the Council of the Wise, which will be democratically elected by the virtual citizens of the VGS and then the Council will supervise the elec-

tion of the virtual parliament of the VGS, which in turn will form its Virtual Government (VG). The VG, in turn, forms a steering committee to oversee the design of a Global Project to implement the World Transitional Mission (GP-WTM), Figure 3, which is divided into four components as follows: (1) A Multicultural Persuasion Program (MPP), which represents the concept of the 'Missing Link' that can shorten the path to a greater and peaceful culture and human cooperation by addressing the root 'psychological' causes of conflict. (2) The Forecasting and Processing Program (FP3M), based on the concept of the 'Post-Mature Insight', which represents an innovative treatment of the 'material' causes of conflicts. (3) An Actual World's States Simulator (ASS), which reflects the results of the GP-WTM's outputs in the real world. (4) A Results Collection and Dissemination Unit (RCDU), where the results of both MPP and FP3M performance evaluations are collected through the ASS at the RCDU and disseminated to both the citizens of the VGS and the real world.

A realistic utopia can reflect the dream of a better real world, where it means not only a world of peace and cooperation between countries, but also a world whose future is drawn as people hope. Therefore, after the world reaches an acceptable level of peaceful and constructive coexistence among its states, commensurate with human maturity and wisdom, the VGS's initiative will turn to the development of a Future Model for the World (FMW). The FMW will be a model of what the real world will look like in the future, as people hope. The model will represent a new horizon in the journey of the VGS, where a Flexible Global Vision (FGV) will be set up and updated to suit the emerging conditions for each specific period of humanity's future.

In his effort to achieve permanent peace in the real world, Immanuel Kant's cosmopolitan right derives from an understanding of all human beings as equal members of a universal community (Kant 1939 [1795]). According to him, the right of refuge is considered as fundamentally bound to the conditions of universal hospitality, defined as the right to be welcomed on arrival in a foreign territory. However, it is conditional on the guest's peaceful arrival. Although Kant understood the surface of the Earth as basically a community (Taylor 2010), and all human beings have the fundamental right to asylum everywhere, many restrictions are placed on immigrants and asylum seekers nowadays. In contrast to Kant's right, the virtual citizens of the VGS enjoy complete equality in the virtual world and they are freed from the barriers of their ethnic, national, ideological, and geopolitical complexities – with full respect for them. The citizens of the VGS are already a part of the real world in addition to being part of the VGS, and thus they will form a bridge between them and will create a public opinion for a real world that is peaceful, cooperative and constructive, far from national, racial, ideological, and other determinants

Glenn D. Paige, in his turn (Paige 2009 [2002]), introduces the concept of non-killing in the human community, which refers to the absence of killing, threats to kill, weapons designed to kill humans, and justifications for their use. Yet, in the developed countries, killing takes place every day, with governments legitimizing the possession of weapons. The VGS, on the other hand, has the specific aim to address the psychological causes of conflicts and violence and to invest in human potential, through constructive cooperation between people.

The rest of the paper is organized as follows. Section 2 introduces the crucial role of the VGS as a realistic digital utopia in our new digital age. Section 3 presents a comparison between the VGS and the most prominent images of the 'Virtuous City' (Utopia) and, finally, Section 4 concludes the paper.

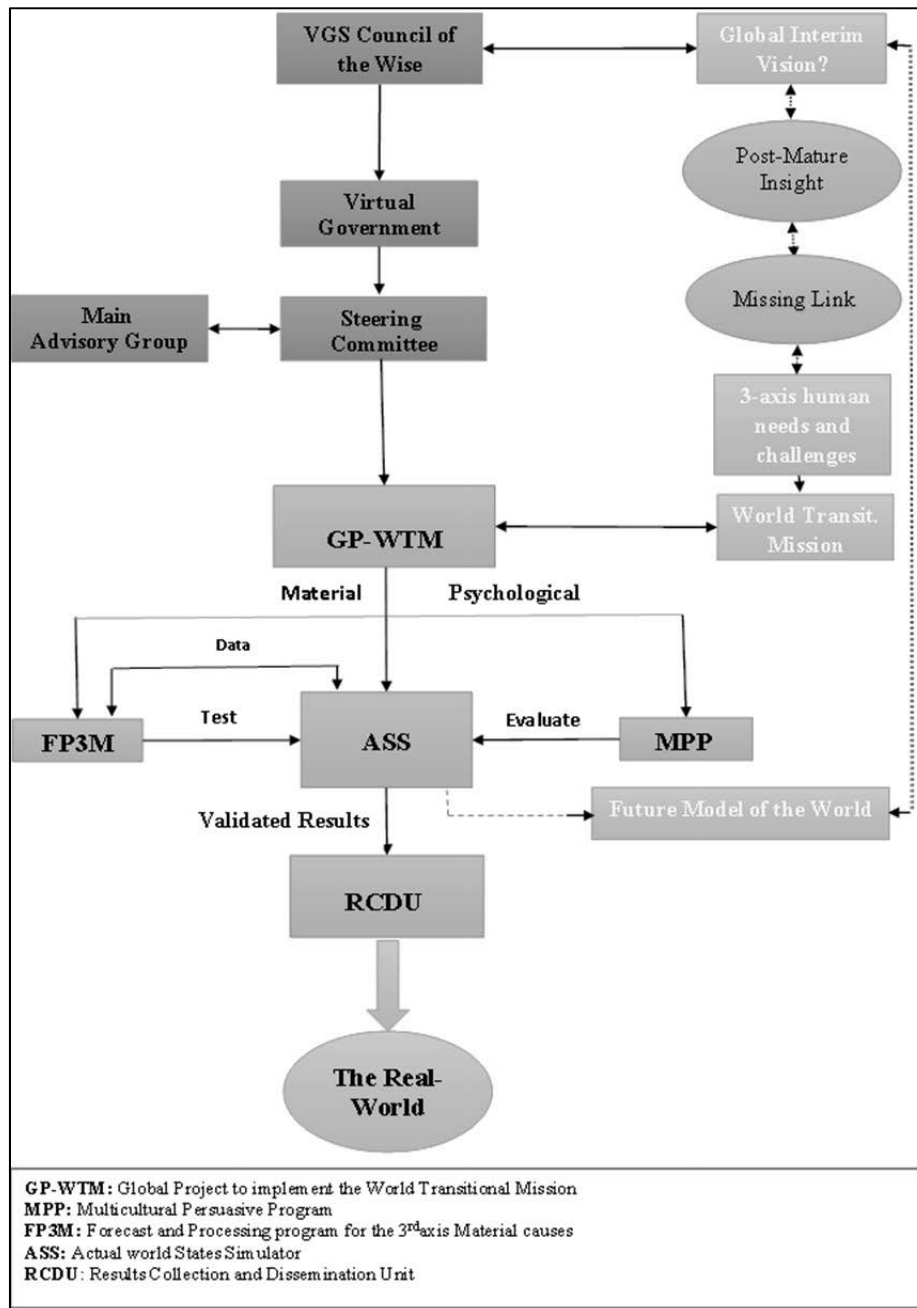


Fig. 3. The VGS Preliminary Architecture

## 2. The New Digital Age and the VGS

Very soon, most of the world's population will be connected to the Internet, and modern generations of communication will be available for the benefit of all, not just people of the North and the West of the globe. This information revolution and the digital communities, emerging from it – which can be called ‘virtual kingdoms or states’ – will lead to a partial retreat of the so-called national sovereignty of real states over their lands. Thus, the coming sovereignty will be divided between political geography and virtual geography, heralding the end of full national sovereignty towards virtual or digital global states. Hence, in the coming years, real countries will subject their national sovereignty to attacks from multiple virtual kingdoms (Schmidt and Cohen 2013).

The ‘real world civilization’, which has evolved over thousands of years, will compete with the emerging ‘virtual world civilization’, which is in the process of being formed. These two civilizations are forced – and this is inevitable – to coexist, compete, and perhaps conspire against each other. They will influence each other, and we can expect the virtual world to have a greater impact on the real world. The shape of our ‘whole world’<sup>2</sup> will therefore be determined by the balance formula that will be reached between integration in many areas and collision in certain areas. This will, of course, affect the behavior of all individuals, groups, companies, organizations and governments in this new reality of living and competing in two worlds. And each individual or entity will have to find and create their own formula for achieving their interests in the entire world.

Historical changes will happen at a faster rate and will affect everyone in the world whether they are the most influential or the least. Everyone will be able to access inexhaustible sources of information that will quench their thirst for knowledge and scholarship in ways that were not available in the past. Moreover, the generation of the new digital age will enjoy an authority that was not available to any previous generation of people. We will no longer describe the launch of long-term projects as ‘the first step on the road of a thousand miles.’ The road will be much shorter because of the enormous potential of virtual space in the speed of germination, growth, and communication of ideas. What human thought has produced from the dawn of civilization to the present day will be produced much more in terms of new ideas and creations, in relatively short period of time. This is because the expansion of the Internet and the ease of communication with it in the South and East of the globe are expected to bring billions more people into the virtual space.

However, it should be noted that the virtual world has its dark sides as well, and the comparison of its advantages and disadvantages for humans, and which is greater, will remain a question. And no one – whether an individual, an entity or a country – in the new digital age has the luxury of choosing whether to join the virtual world or not! It is a world in which virtual armies will fight and play a role no less important than that of their traditional counterparts in the real world. Small countries will launch virtual attacks on countries they have never even dreamed of targeting them militarily or even raising their heads in front of. Various cyber-attacks such as digital espionage, sabotage, infiltration, and others can paralyze or control the basic and vital joints of real states. They can shut down power grids, pollute water supplies, and derail trains carrying passengers or even hazardous materials. They can also disrupt stock markets or penetrate, steal or destroy the sensitive databases of real states or companies. Moreover, in our new digital age, the culture of digital security, privacy and how to control its settings needs to be taught in the early stages of schooling. Students should also fully informed about the warnings and dangers of the virtual world, with real-life examples of what happens when they fail to protect their privacy and security.

But will man be able to control the virtual world and prevent things from escaping in a direction contrary to human interests? Here, the serious question arises, as it has been strongly raised, about the possibility of robots, programmed with modern technologies of artificial intelligence escaping from human control in the future! Here we must work to keep the human hand open to separate the uses of good and evil! Hence the crucial role of VGS as a realistic digital utopia, where it will try to integrate the real world with the virtual one in all possible areas and resolve clashes in others. This can be reflected from the exclusive features of the VGS and its strategic objectives, as follows.

### **2.1. The Exclusive Features of the VGS**

- As a virtual entity parallel to the real world, the VGS is the appropriate and impartial body to think, discuss and prepare for the future of the world. It differs from the UN in that the latter reflects the reality on the ground and the dominant centers of power in it after World War II (represented by the UN Security Council), which resist any change that is not in their favor. On the contrary, the VGS enjoys a space free from the influence of these powers and from the geopolitical problems and historical sedimentation between existing states and entities.

- The VGS has a Global Interim Vision, which looks ‘towards a more peaceful and cooperative world, where its future is built in the interests of all humanity.’ It has also a World Transitional Mission whose task is to work towards achieving this vision (using the virtual world as a ‘parallel entity’ to make the real world better).

- The VGS liberates its citizens from their national, ethnic, ideological and political differences and gives them an equal opportunity to obtain their global citizenship. Everyone in the real world, including people without real citizenship, has the right to belong to it and to have their global identity card with an ID number.

- The world's leading companies specializing in virtual reality (VR) and augmented reality (AR) technologies more and more often allow users to escape from the real world and its problems, in whole or in part, into the virtual world for entertainment. The VGS, on the contrary, uses virtual space as a tool for solving real-world problems and improving its conditions, using systematic methods with implementation phases and timelines.<sup>3</sup> These companies may make the real world worse, while the goal of the VGS is to make it better.

- The current VGS platform is just a prototype and can be expanded, developed, and promoted to include a global social media platform among its various segments. It will differ from the dominant social media platforms in the world in that it will be neutral and not controlled by a single owner, but will be subject to the policies of the VGS Council of the Wise. Hence, it will be able to create a global opinion and a positive pressure force for a real world that is peaceful, cooperative and constructive.

### **2.2. The Strategic Objectives of the VGS**

The strategic objectives of the VGS are divided into short-term and long-term objectives, as follows.

#### **2.2.1. Short-term goals of the VGS:**

- The systematic and comprehensive dissemination of a culture of peace and non-violence at the level of peoples and individuals in the world in order to gradually achieve a more peaceful and cooperative world, in which military weapons will no longer be the basic guarantee of human security in the world.

- Re-processing of negative thoughts that impede progress towards a better world by providing logical and tangible proof that reducing man-made conflicts and investing in hu-

man potential through constructive cooperation between countries is the supreme interest of humankind. And then to create positive pressure on the world's decision-makers to implement effective measures for the benefit of humanity.

- The outbreak of wars and the resulting killing and destruction are evidence of the failure of the entire world order and a disgrace to all of humanity. But the idealistic ambition to eliminate the possibility of wars once and for all is not possible. So, the practical goal is to reduce their occurrence as much as possible.

- Ensuring human equality and freeing people from the negative effects of the barriers of national, ethnic and ideological differences, with full respect for them. And then, the formation of a global opinion that represents a common denominator between the various intellectual and ideological trends of the peoples of the world, supporting the right to international peace and human well-being on the face of the earth. This can pave the way for the integration of civilizations and prevent their clash.

- Giving all interested people and specialists the opportunity to freely express their opinions on everything related to the hopes and aspirations of the real world, as well as developing creative solutions to problems in critical areas through an intelligent simulation system of the most important geopolitical, economic and explosive crises in the real world as a virtual simulation of reality.

- The involvement of technocrats in the development of solutions to the world's pressing geopolitical problems, rather than limiting these issues – mostly – to specialists in political science, in order to take advantage of the high skills of specialists in applied sciences in solving problems in a purely scientific and logical way, away from the negative influences of the dominant political and economic forces.

- Correcting the imbalance between the tremendous and rapid technological development that we have been witnessing for several decades, which has not been matched by a similar positive development in the human aspect, the management of life on Earth and the solution of global problems in a constructive manner.

#### 2.2.2. Long-term goals of the VGS:

- Developing the future model of the world. Even if this hoped-for model cannot be applied at present or in the foreseeable future due to current conditions, it is logical for humans to hope to achieve it in the future, provided that it is gradually achievable after man is able to change his circumstances for the better.

- Control of impulsive and unpredictable technological development in certain fields and its harm to humans.

- To develop a vision for the shape of international political systems in the future world, given the composition of the current systems that do not care about the interests of humanity as a top priority. Hence, not to allow the fate of the world to be determined according to the agendas and interests of some of those who control global political affairs in contradiction to this priority.

- Developing innovative economic systems that meet human aspirations in the future world, but are fair in relation to the current systems that allow a limited number of people to own more than half of the world's wealth.

- To eliminate the negative effects of the dominance of the global media and its tools, linked to influential political and economic forces. And to create a neutral, fact-based media environment in the future world.

- Addressing the population explosion that is not commensurate with the economic growth in many countries and the resulting problems of unemployment and forced migration.

### 3. A Comparison between the Virtual Global State and the Most Prominent Images of the ‘Virtuous City’ (Utopia)

At first glance the Virtual Global State (VGS) may appear to be a form of ‘unrealistic digital utopia’. This description is inaccurate for the following reasons:

- Unlike the non-existent ideal society of Utopia, the VGS represents a virtual global entity parallel to the real world, reflecting and addressing its basic and urgent problems in a realistic and practical way that can be applied – through an approximate timetable in the first main stage. And in the second main stage, which aims to develop a future model for the real world as people hope, even if this hoped-for model cannot be applied at the present time or in the foreseeable future due to current conditions, it is logical for man to hope to reach it in the future provided that it is gradually achievable after people are able to change their circumstances for the better.

- *Plato* imagined his city – as the first recorded proposal for a utopia, around 375 BC – after the war that broke out between Sparta and Athens and left the effects of destruction on many cities (Charbit 2002). Then he thought of a new system that would guarantee justice to the people (*Plato's Republic*), where he developed a curriculum for education that would reach the goal, which is *the philosopher-ruler*, who passes through stages of education until he comes to see the good in himself. The republic ranks citizens into a rigid class structure of ‘golden’, ‘silver’, ‘bronze’, and ‘iron’ socio-economic classes. Golden citizens are trained in a rigorous 50-year education program to become benevolent oligarchs, ‘the philosopher kings’ (Morrison 2007). While the VGS depends on the Multicultural Persuasive Program (MPP), which is based on realistic and tangible persuasion and represents an invitation to think, because without thinking there is no persuasion. It is not an educational program or indoctrination as in *Plato's Republic*.

- In 1516, *Thomas More* (1478–1535) presented his book *Utopia* in a narrative form. It described a ship that discovered an unknown island with an ideal society, the *island of Utopia* (Morer 2003 [1516]). The era was characterized by political tyranny and the appropriation of the wealth of nations by a few classes. So, it was a call for equality, and the abolition of private property. ‘Utopia’ was one of the signs of the intellectual movement that prevailed in the era of the European Renaissance, known as *humanism*. This was because it elevated the status of human thought, resisted the stagnation of the Middle Ages, and aspired to an era in which reason, justice and love of humanity would prevail (Sargent 2016). This imaginary society was viewed as a realistic blueprint for a functioning nation. Here the VGS agrees with *Thomas More's* elevation of the status of human thought and aspiration to an era in which reason, justice and love of humanity prevail. But the VGS will not be located on some unknown island where an ideal society exists. On the contrary, it is supposed to enter every home in the real world, inviting every person to join the state and obtain its virtual citizenship in order to be an active element in the realistic confrontation with the problems of the real world in order to make it better.



- The philosopher *Francis Bacon* devoted his knowledge to the discovery of the laws of nature in (*The New Atlantis – 1626*). The circumstances of the time were the emergence of new knowledge, so Bacon's ambition, for example, was to build a scientific institution whose aim was to know the laws of the universe in order to serve and advance human (Bacon 2009). And here he believes that scientific and technological utopias are more likely to be fundamental in the future, enabling utopian living standards; for example, the absence of suffering; changes in human nature and condition. While the VGS believes that the tremendous and rapid technological development that the real world has been experiencing for several decades has not been matched by a similarly positive development in the human aspect, managing life on Earth and solving global problems in a constructive manner, and therefore it works to address this imbalance. This is one of the main reasons for the creation of the VGS, and one of its pillars is the Council of the Wise, whose mission is to prioritize the interests of humanity in important decisions facing the real world, and not to allow a fanatical politician to destroy in an instant what technocrats have built up through years of physical and mental effort. The continuation of wars, the killing and displacement of people, and the destruction of cities – in the light of tremendous and rapid technological development – is surely an evidence of a serious defect in human thinking that needs to be corrected. So, the scientific and technological development alone is not enough to serve and advance humanity which, of course, contradicts what the philosopher Bacon thought.

- The philosopher, *Al-Farabi* treated the virtuous city in several books, most notably 'The Opinions of the People of the Virtuous City', where he put forward a theory of the ideal state as in *Plato's 'Republic'* and, like him, saw it as the philosopher's duty to provide guidance to the state (Black 2001). Al-Farabi's ambition was for the perfection of morals in the ruler and for happiness in this world and the next (Reisman 2005). The VGS agrees with Al-Farabi – as with Plato – that it is the duty of the philosopher to provide guidance to the state, but it replaces the philosopher with a council of the wise and guidance with persuasion. It also encourages technocrats not only to develop technical solutions, but also to actually participate in the management of the state. The VGS differs from, and does not aspire to, the ideal case of *al-Farabi's utopia* – as it differs from the ideal cases of previous images of utopia. It rather seeks to reflect and address the pressing problems of the real world in a realistic, practical and applicable way.

- *Technological Utopia*, which refers to a world in which technological advancement would improve living conditions in an almost utopian or idealistic manner. There is a strong belief that technology allows humanity to make social, economic, political, and cultural progress where laws, government, and social conditions operate solely for the benefit and well-being of all humanity (Segal, Howard 1986). This is the strong belief in the ability of Technological Utopianism to solve any kind of problem that would allow people to live some kind of utopia. On the contrary, the VGS believes that the tremendous and rapid technological development that we have been witnessing for several decades has not been accompanied by a similar development in the human aspect and in the management of human life on earth! So, it is necessary to reduce the gap between the two by focusing on the human side. On the other hand, the VGS agrees with the Technological Utopia by not ignoring the problems that technology can cause, such as the fear of the over-development of the AI and robotic machines.

#### 4. Conclusion

The exciting and disturbing developments that the future of the new digital age may bring can leave people with more questions than answers! This is where we need to work to keep the human hand open to separate the uses of good and evil! Hence comes the crucial role of the VGS, as a realistic digital utopia, where it will try to integrate the real world with the virtual one in all possible areas and resolve clashes in others. This can be reflected in the exclusive features of the VGS and its strategic objectives. Being a virtual entity parallel to the real world, the VGS is the appropriate and neutral body for thinking, discussing and preparing for the future of the world. The VGS agrees with what Thomas More went on to raise the status of human thought and to aspire to an era in which reason, justice and love of humanity will prevail. But the VGS will not be located on an unknown island where an ideal society exists. On the contrary, it is supposed to enter every home in the real world, inviting every person to join the state and obtain its virtual citizenship in order to be an active element in the realistic confrontation with the problems of the real world and to make it better.

Moreover, the VGS realizes that the scientific and technological development alone is not sufficient to serve and advance humanity, which of course contradicts what the philosopher Bacon thought. However, the VGS agrees with Al-Farabi – as with Plato – that it is the duty of the philosopher to provide guidance to the state, but it replaces the philosopher with a council of the wise and guidance with persuasion. It also encourages technocrats not only to developing technical solutions, but also to actually participate in the governance of the state. The VGS differs from the ideal case of *al-Farabi's utopia* – as it differed with the ideal cases of previous images of utopias – and does not aspire to be so. It rather seeks to reflect and address urgent real-world problems in a realistic and applicable way.

#### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> The design and implementation of the VGS initiative consists of two main phases. While the first phase (21 years) focuses on the present conditions of human life, the second phases (two years and beyond) deals with the future, its challenges, and what the real world will look like as people hope it will.

<sup>2</sup> The Real World and the Virtual World.

<sup>3</sup> The VGS Initiative is based on studying and addressing the psychological and material reasons why countries and entities around the world resort to violence and war as solutions to geopolitical, ideological, and other problems. Hence, this treatment will take a relatively long time in order to consolidate the concept of non-violence and constructive and peaceful cooperation not only at the level of nations, but also at the level of individuals. Since the expected period for the completion of the initiative of the virtual global state is about 23 years, it is not possible to expect tangible results at the world level before 30 years! And of course, 30 years is not a long time in the history of peoples. The initiative is expected to continue and develop over time!

#### REFERENCES

- Bacon, F. 2009. *The New Atlantis*. New Zealand: The Floating Press.
- Black, D. 2001. Al-Farabi. In Leaman, O., and Nasr, H (eds.), *History of Islamic Philosophy* (pp. 178–197). London: Routledge.
- Charbit, Y. 2002. The Platonic City: History and Utopia. *Population* 57 (2): 231–260. DOI: 10.3917/popu.202.0231. URL: <https://www.cairn.info/revue-population-2002-2-page-231>.
- Destrée, P., Opsomer, J., and Roskam, G. 2021. *Utopias in Ancient Thought*. Berlin, Boston: De Gruyter. <https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110733129>.

- Kant, I. 1939 [1795]. *Perpetual Peace*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- More, Th. 2003 [1516]. *Utopia*. Transl. by Paul Turner. Penguin Classics.
- Morrison, D. R. 2007. The Utopian Character of Plato's Ideal City. In Ferrari, G. R. F. (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Plato Republic* (pp. 232–256). New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Paige, G. D. 2009. *Nonkilling Global Political Science*. 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. Center for Global Nonkilling.
- Reisman, D. 2005. *Al-Farabi and the Philosophical Curriculum*. In Adamson, P., and Taylor, R. (eds.), *The Cambridge Companion to Arabic Philosophy* (pp. 52–71). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Sargent, L. T. 2016. Five Hundred Years of Thomas More's Utopia and Utopianism. *Utopian Studies* 27 (2): 184–192.
- Schmidt, E., and Cohen, J. 2013. *The New Digital Age: Reshaping the Future of People, Nations and Business*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf.
- Segal, H. P. 1986. The Technological Utopians. In Corn, J. J. (ed.), *Imagining Tomorrow: History, Technology and the American Future*. Cambridge: MIT Press.
- Taylor, R. S. 2010. Kant's Political Religion: The Transparency of Perpetual Peace and the Highest Good. *The Review of Politics* 72: 1–24.
- Vieira, F. 2010. The Concept of Utopia. In Claeys, G. (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Utopian Literature* (pp. 3–27). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.