

Today more and more people, in order to escape from the everyday reality, play various computer games. Especially MMO (massive multiplayer online) games are popular today, as they allow players to become anyone they want – miner, warrior, craftsman, medic or a poet. What is more, players are able to meet others inside the game world, which makes it possible to create various social relations. Those relations bear high level of resemblance to the real world institutions – many of the players in virtual world make friends, sign contracts referring to the in-game items trade or fight each other. During the game, they encounter various challenges, with which they are not always able to deal with. As an effect, organized structures consisting of the players acting in some mutual goal are created. In order for these entities to work effectively, it is necessary to elaborate the rules that will make such conduct possible. Here we should ask ourselves the question – could those rules develop in such way they will start to resemble some normative order, in which each rule is consistently and hierarchically framed?

In order to answer this question we should consider following questions: First of all, it is necessary to ask if MMO game is still play for the players affiliated in said organizations? It seems that not always. A good example here is the phenomenon of in-game items trading, by which some players earn for their living. If this intuition will be validated, we should distinguish the norms created by players and all the ways in which they are manifesting. When we define which rule sets undergo the research, we shall compare them with existing model of normative order, which is law. Thanks to that we will assess if they posses traits sufficient for calling them a system. If it occurs that not, research about soft law will be brought up. Soft law is a normative order like the regular law, but it lacks the apparatus of coercion. This makes it easier for the player-created rules to fulfill the conditions of becoming a normative order.

If proposed research validates that people are able to create orderly set of rules that resemble institutions known from the reality, it will open a couple of new research possibilities: we will be able to, for example, introduce some new norms to such orders, to check their efficiency in practice. It will allow us to see if such rules will be working adequately in the future in real life. Validation of research hypothesis could also enable us to precise the conditions necessary for emergency of law (or other normative order).

Described direction of research will allow better recognition of human activity inside the virtual reality, which is an environment completely new and unknown before. This, in connection with its growing popularity causes that one day it could become something more than just a game. Because of that it is worth to acknowledge its specific traditions, rules and laws created inside it in order to have more influence on the changes that could happen with this reality's spread.