

*Exercise 8: Read "Technology and society in the information age" by Attila Kincsei and write 1-2 paragraphs on "How ICT can reproduce power inequalities? Alternatively, how can it change them?"*

### **Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and Power Inequalities**

Within technology and society studies a model called Actor-Network-Theory is one of the provided approaches to analyze the interplay of society and technology. This model covers human as well as non-human actors staying in relation with each other using certain technical artifacts forming a network. Relations within this network are mainly seen as created based on political decisions, which by definition are derived from the question, how to gain and keep power. Thus, entities being loosely interrelated exist in parallel within one network, allowing one group to have power over another.

The theory does not see technology as cause for power inequalities in a network, because it is available for each party regardless of their position. As power is a consequence of collective actions the human actors are the main cause. Technology may still be used to maintain inequalities as long as powerless actors do not try to use the available technology for their goals. Thus, using technology may enable new groups to gain power and others to lose theirs. This process is called translation (power shifts between society and technology) and mainly forms as well as changes the network structure and how actors interact with each other.