Impacts of Information and Communication Technologies on the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs

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Introduction. There is a growing consensus within the community of scholars that recent advances in Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) and the diffusion of liberal ideas through globalization have empowered civil society across the globe and transformed modern societies into postmodern network society [Castells 1996, 2005, 2008]. Similar analyses have been made regarding the Turkish society in general and Turkish public institutions in particular. Against the backdrop of this social context, this paper will study the role that ICTs play in organizational change at the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs over the last decade. This case study confirms the propositions of the adaptive structuration theory, which stipulates that organizational change depends on a complex interplay between rules and resources provided by technology and institutions as well as the response of organizational actors to technology. Organizational change occurs when the process of *structuration* and *appropriation* is completed. In this paper, it is argued that once successfully appropriated in the organization ICTs lose their primary function as a means of organizational change because they become embedded into the social structures of the organization.

Aim. This paper intends to contribute to a policy inquiry about whether ICTs introduced to the Ministry delivered intended changes within the organization. The author will elaborate on changes that ICTs have triggered in the Ministry at the organizational level, and by doing so, prepare the groundwork for later analyses on relations between those organizational changes and public diplomacy articulated by the Ministry.

Material and method. This case study follows the premises of the adaptive structuration theory (AST) of Gerardine DeSanctis and Marshall Scott Poole (1994). AST provides a model that describes the interplay between advanced information technologies, social structures, and human interaction. In addition, Castells' theory of network society will be referred to in explaining the social context in which the Ministry is embedded.

Conclusion. In this paper, it is argued that once successfully appropriated in the organization, ICTs lose their primary function as a means of organizational change because they become embedded into the social structures of the organization.

VIII