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**Man | Microchip. India, the Cold War and the Computer. A Global History of the Digital Age, 1947-2000.**

Since the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, the rise of the Indian “knowledge society” was shaped by the idea of “technological development”. However, it was not before 1947, that, with the ascent of modernization theories and international technical assistance missions, computer and nuclear sciences, satellite and space technologies became means of “nation building” and “transmission belts” for power politics. Under the premises of a global Cold War, the growing “digital divide” between North and South fundamentally transformed the international political and economic landscape.

Science and technology programs openly mirrored the ideological oppositions of the “digital era”. Inspired by a global planning euphoria and highly modernizing technocratic visions the industrialized countries, especially the US and the USSR, the UK and Western Germany, promoted extensive educational programs and boosted the evolution of computer industries since the late 50s. Here, computers – as key instruments of economic and political planning – served as a pledge of growth, prosperity and stability.

In the developing countries, the discourse on computerization was particularly fashioned by the rolling battles on decolonization. Consequentially, in India, the dependency on imported hardware products and IT-services was perceived as “electronic colonialism”, while since the late 70s – with the rise of an indigenous software industry – the dawn of a new “digital independency” seemed to be on the horizon. However, when Indian service industries took a sizeable share of the global IT markets in the 80s and continued to do so after the liberalization, the rise of their new regime of “outsourcing” and “body shopping” evoked even stronger concerns about a veiled revival of the old colonial dependencies. In this ambivalence, the exchange of man and microchip, personnel and know-how between North and South became a symbol of the advanced globalization of modern working spheres on the edge of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Hence, my research combines political, social and science history approaches to trace the roots of the “digital revolution” in India. It looks into why and how actors both on a local and a global level engaged in this process and thus aims to shed new light on the history of the “digital era” from a North-South-divide perspective – based on extensive oral history interviews and a broad variety of archival and printed sources from all over Europe, the USA and India.

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