

Lecture

Early Materialization: the possibility of a Personal Computer

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This lecture dives into the early days of the PC era. While economic views on innovation usually focus on the outcome (products, services, other goods) and the corresponding market segments, the history of the emergence of the PC concept and technology show a different process. The PC came to be through an exploration journey of the 1970's, when early materializations of a “microcomputer” resulted from the efforts of a dispersed community of user-developers and user-developer-entrepreneurs. These endeavors built on previous knowledge and uses of mainframe computers, integrating new capabilities of the chip technology as well as entrepreneurial aspirations and collective dreams. Starting from cases such as the MICRAL microcomputer and reviewing the legacy of what we today would probably call “innovation hubs” such as Xerox Parc or the Homebrew Computer Club, this lecture unravels the challenges of early technological emergence through the lens of developer innovation. In this dynamic trajectory, technologies, actors and emerging markets co-evolve, in a transformative journey before industrial rationalization standardizes the identities of products, producers and market segments.

In person: New Building, Department of History and Philosophy of Science, NKUA

Online: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86003468724?pwd=RzJxb2RYUmRrc2JlY2VlRkpjekJGZz09>

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