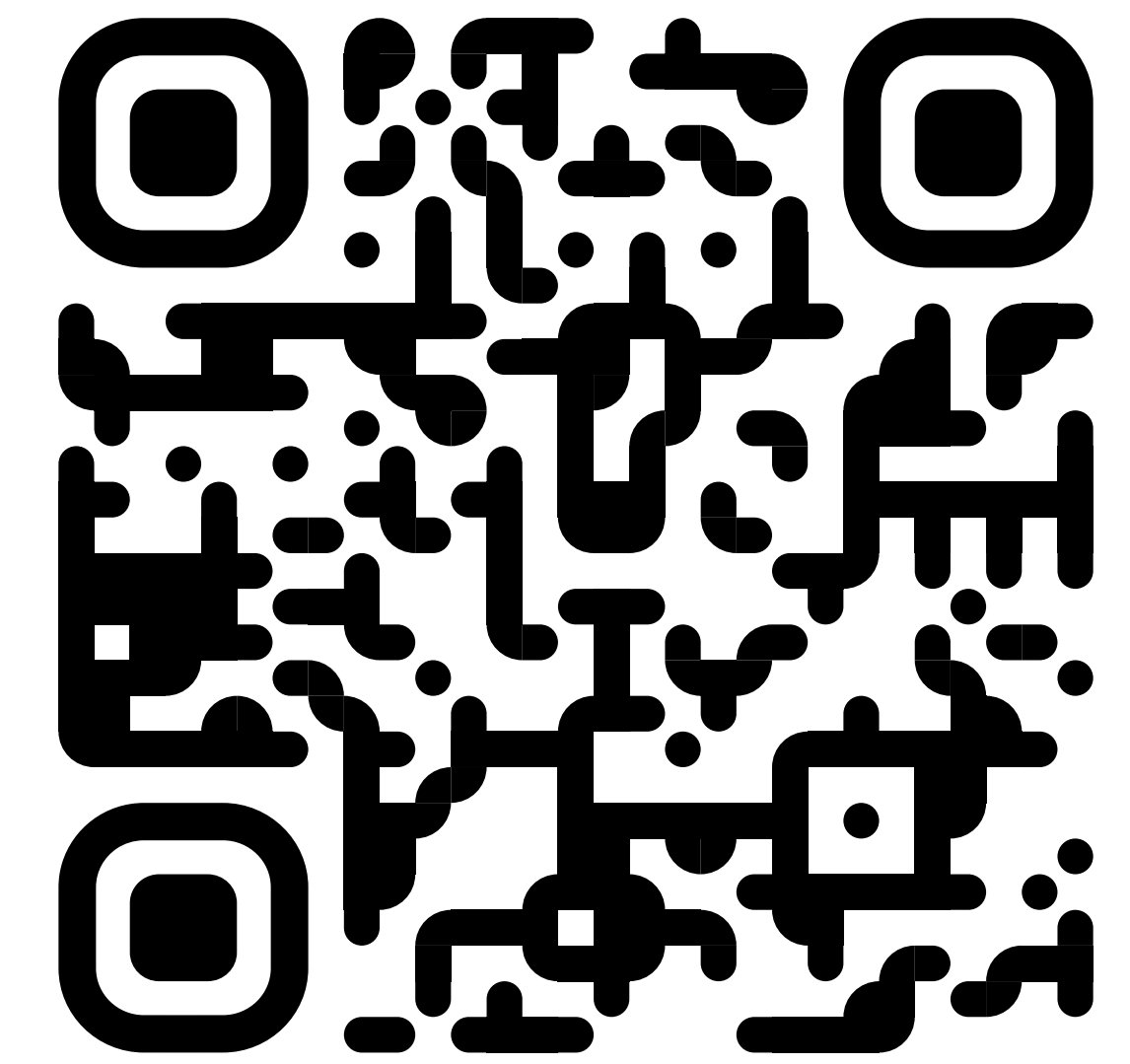
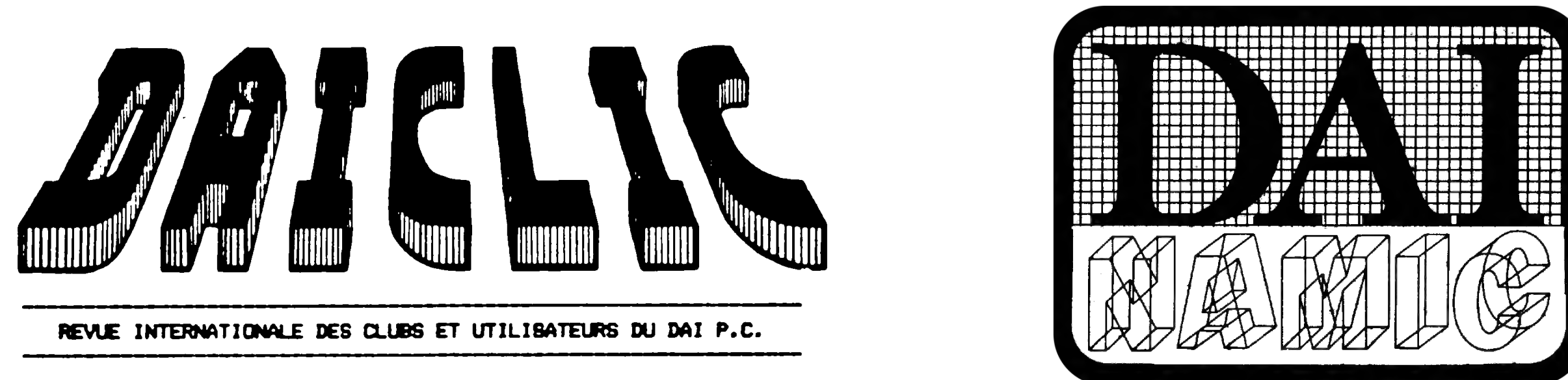


Exploring the DAI micro-computer through a map of the readers of two of its hobbyist magazines

We explored the history of a 1980s Belgian micro-computer named the DAI through the lens of an interactive map. We use geocoded addresses of readers from two hobbyist magazines, DAINamic and DAIClic, to visualize the life of this device through a map. This interactive map allows us to grasp complex information while avoiding reducing its qualitative nature and to gain new insight into this corpus for further research.



kipple.be
dai.hypotheses.org



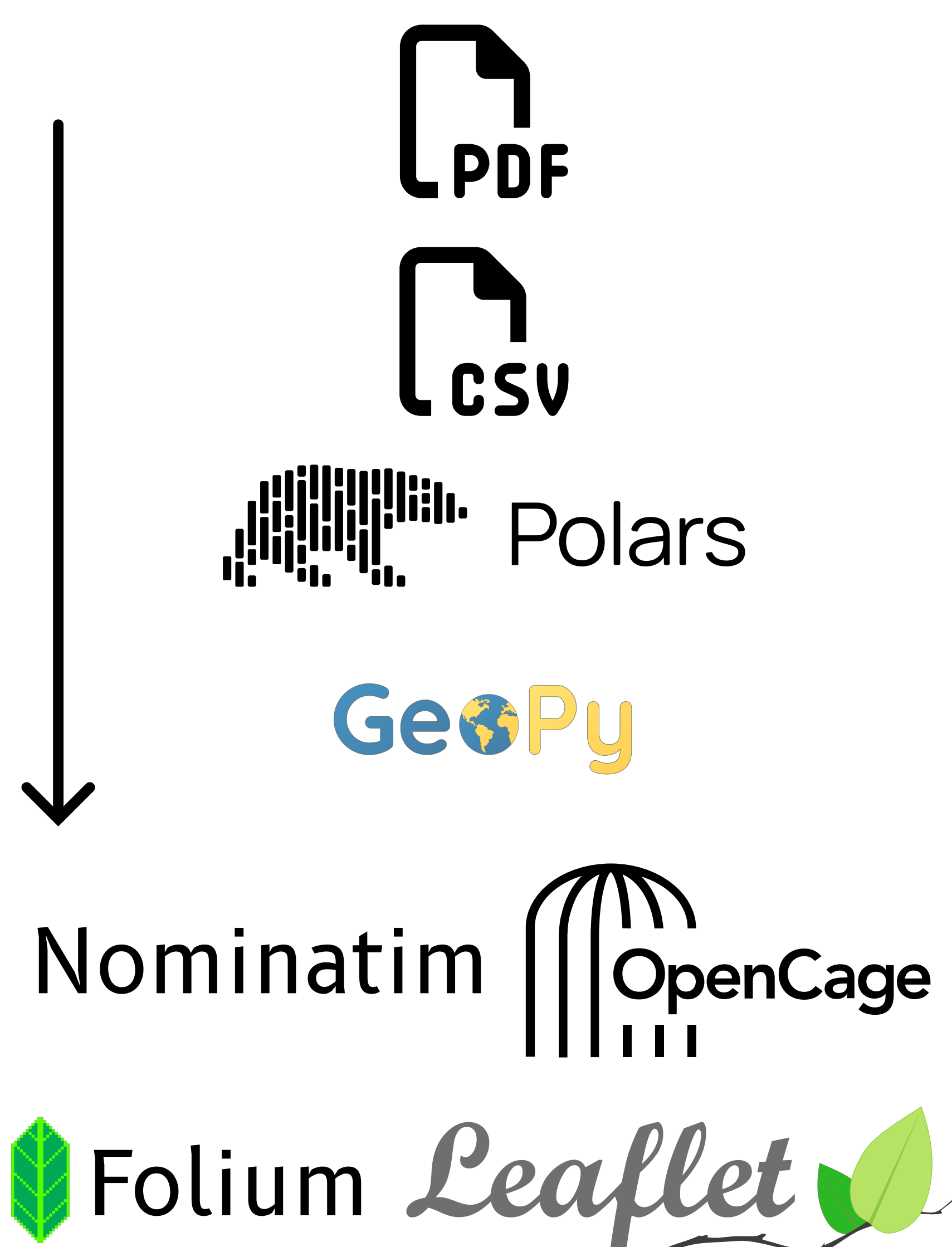
Geocoding

We gathered a dataset of 735 entries (434 DAINamic readers et 236 DAIClic readers in December 1986, 18 readers left for DAIClic in 1988, and 47 identified resellers of the DAI), spread over 14 pages of DAIClic and DAINamic magazines.

We then geocoded each address to obtain a set of geographical coordinates to pin on our map.

This was done by encoding each address in a spreadsheet and then ingested as a Polars DataFrame. For private personal addresses, we reduced the precision by omitting the house number from the addresses.

Each entry was then sent through GeoPy to several geocoding APIs to find the one best able to translate these aging addresses. Even though these addresses are close to 40 years old, we found success with OpenCage's geocoding API. We noted that each geocoding API seems to display its idiosyncrasies and using an aggregator such as OpenCage gave us the best results.



Mapping

The map was made using the Leaflet library first in Python through Folium, then directly with Leaflet in React. Using an interactive map enables us to keep each entry discrete and thus augment this dataset with outside information instead of reducing it to quantitative insight. Such insight would be limited by the small size of our dataset and its non-exhaustive nature.

Through a qualitative lens, this inexhaustive map shows us that the social life of the DAI computer and its hobbyists reached across Europe. Furthermore, such visualization can inspire new questions through viewer's surprises.

We noticed the geographical distances between the addresses of members of the same club, challenging us to ask new questions about how these members lived their membership. For example, how frequently members participated in meetings. The map also allows us to combine our budding dataset with different kinds of information. Here combining store addresses gathered from advertisements with our hobbyists' addresses brings our attention to new places where we could find traces of hobbyists' clubs.

