

Digital media is a field of research developing in regions where digital technologies were developed (United States, Western Europe). Recent years have seen calls towards **decentering digital media**. The proposed project presents a **critical approach to hegemonic narratives in the field of digital media**. There is more than one history of digital media to be told.

The aim of ATARI DEMOSCENE is to understand how local contexts (economic, geopolitical) affect the creative, grassroots, autonomous use of digital media. The project involves a comprehensive study of **the demoscene of the 8-bit Atari computer**, which developed most dynamically in Poland, Germany, Czechia and Slovakia. The demoscene is a European field of cultural production, important aspects of which include **the central role of the platform**, overcoming its constraints and demonstrating the possibilities of the computer. The Atari platform is studied both from a historical perspective and as a so-called zombie computer (dead commercially, but animated by fans) used today for creative purposes.

ATARI DEMOSCENE includes research on the **process of domestication** of the computer as well as **study of creative artifacts** (demos, intros, interactive fiction, disc magazines etc), but also **peripherals, devices, extensions** built throughout decades by users to expand the computer's capabilities. A key task is also an **ethnographic study of the community** affiliated with the platform.

ATARI DEMOSCENE involves **media archeology work**, which will make use of **the laboratory** led by the PI at the Jagiellonian University equipped with **unique local equipment**, without which the proposed project could not be implemented. The laboratory nature of the research leads the PI to be focused more on **production and practice**, rather than on description and theory and develop an **integrative research practice model**.

ATARI DEMOSCENE is high risk: **innovative practice of the humanities** (laboratory model), **no previous similar research to refer to**.



8 bit Atari 130 XE from the collection at the lab headed by the PI. One of the most important platforms for the demoscene and, at the same time, one with most hardware limitations, which the demosceners strive to overcome.



Silly Venture United Atari Scene Art Festival: the world's largest party gathering Atari sceners organized in Gdansk since 2000. It usually gathers more than 400 users of the platform and the competition features more than 100 new creative works written for Atari.



Laboratory at the Jagiellonian University that hosts a collection of platforms and digital works characteristic of Central and Eastern Europe. The laboratory has been operating since 2016, it is used for research and teaching purposes. Head and founder: Piotr Marecki