

Measuring Network Distance between Games

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One of the main goals of the Digital Ludeme Project (DLP) is to investigate how different games are related to each other throughout history. Following on from our paper last year on the evidence that is being compiled in the DLP Games Database, this paper will demonstrate how we can use this gathered evidence to define a quantitative estimate of the network distance between two games (and what this actually means).

The DLP Games Database currently contains evidence for over 1000 distinct historical games. Each of these pieces of evidence has an associated date range and location, indicating its temporal and geographical position. By combining this information with a database of connected cultural entities provided by the organisation Geacron (geacron.com), we are using a social network approach to measure stepwise distance between the political and/or cultural entities in which any two pieces of evidence from the DLP Games Database appear, as well as their associated games.

We hope that this measure of distance can be used to help reconstruct the rules of incomplete games, and to model the probable transmission routes of games between cultures throughout time.

