

A Dissimilarity Measure for Comparing Origami Crease Patterns

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Keywords: Computational Origami, Graph Similarity, Geometric Graphs, Crease Patterns, Phylogenetic Trees

Abstract: A measure of dissimilarity (distance) is proposed for comparing origami crease patterns represented as geometric graphs. The distance measure is determined by minimum-weight matchings calculated between the edges as well as the vertices of the graphs being compared. The distances between pairs of edges and pairs of vertices of the graph are weighted linear combinations of six parameters that constitute geometric features of the edges and vertices. The results of a preliminary study performed with a collection of 45 crease patterns obtained from Mitani’s ORIPA web page, revealed which of these features appear to be more salient for obtaining a clustering of the crease patterns that appears to agree with human intuition.

1 Introduction

The origin of the art of paper folding, known as *zhezhi* in China and *origami* in Japan is not certain, but the modern Japanese art known as Origami traces its roots to somewhere around the 9th century (Demaine and O’Rourke, 2007), (McArthur and Lang, 2013). Origami differs from other current paper art in that the final object is typically made purely by folding the paper without cutting, stretching, or otherwise damaging it. From its origins as a purely aesthetic game, origami evolved to gain practical and theoretical significance in the 20th century, as its rules were discovered and the mathematical principles that govern it began to be understood (Lang, 1996), (Bern and Hayes, 1996), (Demaine and Demaine, 2001), (O’Rourke, 2011). Computational origami finds application today in a wide variety of endeavors including architecture (Tachi, 2010), (Liapi, 2002), pop-up books and cards (O’Rourke, 2011), folding rigid materials (Balkom et al., 2004), (Wu and You, 2011), and map folding (Arkin et al., 2004). Origami is ideally suited for solving the problem of packaging large objects into a small volume, such as designing airbags for cars, creating foldable heart stents (that need to inflate once they arrive at their destination to keep arteries open in heart-attack patients), and in folding 100-meter diameter telescopes into three meter boxes for a spacecraft to deliver to outer space (Lang, 1996).

One way to describe an origami model is by its *crease pattern* (CP)—the collection of lines (viewed on the unfolded square) where the paper gets creased (plastically deformed into a nonsmooth kink) in the final model. Folding along all of these crease lines is often the first step in practically folding a model, and the CP is the basis for algorithms that analyze or design origami (Akitaya et al., 2013), (Bern and Hayes, 1996), (Demaine and O’Rourke, 2007), (Lang, 1996). Creases come in two varieties: “mountains” which protrude upwards and “valleys” which protruding downwards (see Fig. 1). For flat origami designs, the CP must satisfy several local properties at each vertex, such as having a zero alternating sum of angles (Demaine and O’Rourke, 2007). For our purposes, a CP is a geometric graph drawn within a square.

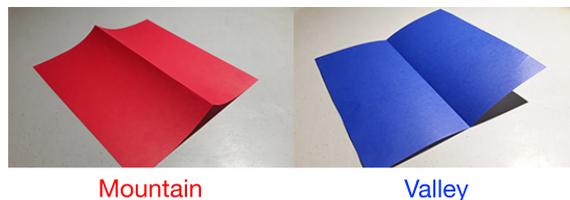


Figure 1: Examples of folds. A fold can be either a mountain (upward protruding) or a valley (downward protruding) depending on the orientation of the paper.

There are many possible ways of measuring the similarity between two graphs, depending on the intended application and the generality of the

class of graphs considered. Origami crease patterns belong to the class of *geometric graphs* in which the locations of the vertices are fixed and specified by their x and y coordinates, and the edges connecting pairs of vertices are straight lines (Pach, 2004). Similarity (distance) measures in geometric graphs generally can be divided into two approaches: syntactic, where the graph is divided up into geometric “features” whose relative positions are then compared, or earth-movers distance methods (transformation or *edit* methods) which measure how much one graph needs to be changed in order to be transformed into the other graph (Gao et al., 2010).

Gu and Guibas defined a distance function between two flat-folded 1D folds as a “distance root mean squared error” (dRMS) metric, which calculates the distances between each internal point with every other internal point (Gu and Guibas, 2011). Experiments with 40 random folding patterns confirmed a clustering of similar patterns. Unfortunately this method does not generalize to 2D folds that contain non-horizontal or non-vertical edges. For actual origami pieces, which can be realized in 3D or 2D with internal structure, direct comparison of the folded objects is difficult. Ronald Graham describes an idea for which he credits Stan Ulam, suggesting that the similarity of two graphs could be measured by decomposing the graphs into a number of pairwise identical subgraphs, so that the smaller the number of subgraphs needed, the more similar are the graphs (Graham, 1987). This is an interesting approach that applies to very general graphs, and which has not been explored in practical situations, but is difficult to compute. In a dimensionality reduction approach Robles-Kelly and Hancock convert a two dimensional graph into a one-dimensional string, and then apply the well known *edit* (or Levenshtein) distance (Post and Toussaint, 2011), (Levenshtein, 1966) between strings to measure the distance between the original graphs (Robles-Kelly and Hancock, 2005).

In a variant of the approach taken by Graham (Graham, 1987), Fei and Huan introduce a method based on subgraph selection (Fei and Huan, 2008). The subgraphs that appear most frequently are chosen as features, and their frequency and spatial relationship are used to rank each subgraph. This “structure based feature selection method” was tested on several datasets of graphs that describe chemical structures, and was found to outperform several other feature selection methods.

Cheong et al. proposed a geometric graph dis-

tance that is a slight variation of the edit distance to make it work optimally for geometric graphs rather than arbitrary graphs (Cheong et al., 2009). This is achieved by taking into account the order of the sequence needed for performing the edits. Their paper assumes translations, rotations, and scaled graphs to be dissimilar, making it unsuitable for comparing CPs.

When the graphs being compared have the same number of elements, a natural approach to measure their similarity is via a minimum cost perfect matching between their elements. However, in many applications in the real world the graphs being compared have unequal numbers of features, as is the case with origami crease patterns. One approach to handling such general situations has been to merge (or split) vertices and edges so as to make the two graphs have the same number of elements, and subsequently apply one-to-one matching (Berretti et al., 2004), (Ambauen et al., 2003). Such an approach makes sense in certain computer vision applications, but not for matching CPs in origami.

Here we propose a conceptually simple geometric distance measure constructed from two complete bipartite graphs defined between the edges (edge to edge) and nodes (vertex to vertex), respectively, of the two graphs being compared. In each bipartite graph the minimum-weight perfect matching is calculated, and their costs added. The weights between pairs of edges and pairs of vertices of the graph are weighted linear combinations of simple geometric features of the edges and vertices of the crease patterns. We present and discuss the results of a preliminary study performed with the Hungarian algorithm on a collection of 45 crease patterns obtained from Mitani’s ORIPA web page. Using phylogenetic techniques we uncover which of these geometric features appear to be more salient for obtaining a clustering of the crease patterns that appears to agree with human intuition. We also suggest avenues for further research.

2 Methodology

2.1 ORIPA Dataset

An origami crease pattern database was downloaded from Mitani’s ORIPA homepage (Mitani, 2011). The dataset consists of a total of 47 patterns in Oripa format, an XML-like format that stores information about the edge type (mountain or valley) and the x and y coordinates of the two endpoints of every edge.

Two of the patterns were examples of bad crease patterns, so were excluded from testing. Four pairs of patterns that were deemed similar were selected for a preliminary pilot study in order to test the efficacy of the procedure before using larger datasets. By convention, the coordinates range from -200 to 200. Since the four boundary lines of the square piece of paper are common to all the crease patterns they do not constitute either a mountain or a valley, and were omitted from the graph descriptions. Similarly, “guideline” edges (shown as green dotted lines) that are used to help the folding process were omitted as they are not required for the actual construction of the final folded objects.

2.2 Dissimilarity Metric

Let CP_1 and CP_2 be two crease patterns (represented as geometric graphs) that are to be compared according to their dissimilarity or distance from each other. The proposed distance measure between the two crease patterns is defined as the cost of a minimum-weight perfect matching in a complete bipartite graph $K(CP_1, CP_2)$ that connects with an *arc* every element of CP_1 with every element of CP_2 . The links connecting two vertices in a graph are usually called either *arcs* or *edges*. Here we reserve the term *arc* for the links in the bipartite graphs linking the two CPs, and the term *edges* for the links of the vertices in the CPs, to avoid confusion. Since the CPs are made up of two types of elements, namely vertices (points) and edges (creases), and these geometric objects are quite different from each other, it is convenient to first compute the two matchings separately, and subsequently to add their costs together. Thus two complete bipartite graphs are first computed, one for matching the edges of the CPs denoted by $K_E(CP_1, CP_2)$, and the second for matching the vertices of the CPs denoted by $K_V(CP_1, CP_2)$. The weights of the arcs of both bipartite graphs are linear functions of the geometric features calculated from the edges and the vertices of the CPs. More specifically, the weight of an arc in $K_E(CP_1, CP_2)$ that connects some edge ϵ_1 in CP_1 with some edge ϵ_2 in CP_2 is defined as a linear combination of the following four features: e_1 denotes the difference between the lengths of ϵ_1 and ϵ_2 , e_2 is the smaller of the two angles between the lines containing ϵ_1 and ϵ_2 , e_3 is the minimum Euclidean distance between a point in ϵ_1 and a point in ϵ_2 , and e_4 indicates the edge type (mountain or valley). Each of these features is

normalized to 1 as follows:

$$E_1 = (e_1)/\sqrt{2} \quad (1)$$

$$E_2 = (e_2)/2\pi \quad (2)$$

$$E_3 = (e_3)/\sqrt{2} \quad (3)$$

$$E_4 = (e_4) \quad (4)$$

The weight of an arc in $K_V(CP_1, CP_2)$ that connects a vertex ω_1 in CP_1 with a vertex ω_2 in CP_2 is defined as a linear combination of the following two features: v_1 denotes the difference in the degrees of ω_1 and ω_2 , and v_2 stands for the Euclidean distance between ω_1 and ω_2 . Similar to the edge distance, v_2 was normalized by dividing by $\sqrt{2}$. The vertex degrees were more problematic to normalize than the distances because their values ranged from 0 to more than 30, with no noteworthy distribution. However, since preliminary testing with the pilot dataset showed that v_1 was a poor indicator of geometric graph dissimilarity, it was given a negligible weight. The two normalized features are given by:

$$V_1 = (v_1) \quad (5)$$

$$V_2 = (v_2)/\sqrt{2} \quad (6)$$

The above features for comparing the edges and vertices of a pair of CPs, determine the weights of the arcs in the complete bipartite graph $K_E(CP_1, CP_2)$. For an edge ϵ_1 in CP_1 , and an edge ϵ_2 in CP_2 , denote the weight of the arc in $K_E(CP_1, CP_2)$ which connects ϵ_1 and ϵ_2 by $d_E(\epsilon_1, \epsilon_2)$. Then this weight is given by the equation:

$$d_E(\epsilon_1, \epsilon_2) = \sum_{i=1}^4 w_{e_i} E_i \quad (7)$$

These weights are used to compute the minimum-weight matching in $K_E(CP_1, CP_2)$. Let the resulting cost be $C_E(CP_1, CP_2)$.

Similarly, for a vertex ω_1 in CP_1 , and a vertex ω_2 in CP_2 , denote the weight of the arc in $K_V(CP_1, CP_2)$ which connects ω_1 and ω_2 by $d_V(\omega_1, \omega_2)$. Then this weight is given by the equation:

$$d_V(\omega_1, \omega_2) = \sum_{j=1}^2 w_{v_j} V_j \quad (8)$$

These weights are used to compute the minimum-weight matching in $K_V(CP_1, CP_2)$, with resulting cost $C_V(CP_1, CP_2)$.

Finally, the overall distance (cost) between CP_1 and CP_2 is defined as:

$$D(CP_1, CP_2) = C_E(CP_1, CP_2) + C_V(CP_1, CP_2). \quad (9)$$

Note that the w_{e_i} and w_{v_j} in the above equations are additional weights that can be tuned so as to yield more meaningful clusterings of the CPs.

2.3 Computational Aspects

The minimum-weight perfect matchings of the two complete bipartite graphs that make up the distance measure between two CPs were computed with the Hungarian algorithm, also known as the Kuhn-Munkres algorithm (Kuhn, 1955), (Munkres, 1957). The cost matrix is constructed such that the matrix entry in the i th row and j th column represents the cost of assigning element i to element j . The algorithm may be described briefly as follows. The smallest entry in each row is subtracted from all entries of its row, and the smallest entry in each column is subtracted from all entries of its column. Then lines are drawn through the matrix such that all zero entries are covered with the minimum number of lines. If for an $n \times n$ matrix n lines were drawn, the algorithm terminates; if the number of lines is less than n , the smallest entry not covered by any line is subtracted from each uncovered row, and added to each covered column. This procedure is repeated until the optimal solution is found. If the number of elements in the two graphs being compared are not equal, then dummy rows or columns are inserted of very high cost, to make the matrices square. In the experiments reported here the Munkres python library was used (Clapper, 2008).

3 Results

3.1 Phylogenetic Trees

Phylogenetic trees were constructed to better visualize the results. A phylogenetic tree is a branching (also clustering or taxonomy) diagram often used in biology to infer evolutionary relationships between taxa (Hodge et al., 2000). It is also useful in our case for visualizing the clustering of the CPs in terms of dissimilarity. The BioNJ and UPGMA phylogenetic trees available in the *SplitsTree* software were compared (Huson and Bryant, 2006). BioNJ is an edited version of the Neighborhood-Joining (NJ) algorithm. NJ is an algorithm created by Naruya Saitou and Masatoshi Nei (Gascuel, 1997) that, given a distance matrix, iteratively finds a taxonomy. It starts with a star shaped network with all distances between each pair of points equal, and iteratively adds nodes to join the closest two points until the entire tree corresponds to the given distances as closely as possible. BioNJ differs from NJ in the selection of the two points, and usually gives better results for highly varying trees.

In contrast to the NJ methods, the UPGMA (Unweighted Pair Group Method with Arithmetic Mean)

algorithm creates a rooted tree. The UPGMA tree “assumes a constant rate of evolution” without which it is not a well-regarded method for obtaining satisfactory classification taxonomies in bioinformatics. However, for the purpose of application to CP dissimilarity the assumption may be ignored at present. The UPGMA tree was primarily used because the BioNJ and NJ algorithms in the most recent version of *SplitsTree* had some difficulty plotting the phylogenetic trees in the presence of negative distances.

3.2 Pilot Study

Four pairs of CPs that were roughly similar as judged by the eyes of the authors were selected for the initial pilot study. The patterns (4, 5), (7, 8), (19,20), and (26, 27) shown in Figure 2 were used. Individual weights and some combinations were tested, and the results used to generate phylogenetic trees. The fitness values obtained from the BioNJ and UPGMA filters are given in Table 1.

Table 1: Fitness values for each edge and vertex feature.

Features	BioNJ	UPGMA
V_1	16.2	0
V_2	65.253	18.333
E_1	80.906	51.285
E_2	45.36	19.503
E_3	13.744	0
E_4	0	0
$V_1 + V_2$	56.173	21.429
$E_1 + E_2$	54.354	36.173
$V_1 + V_2 + E_1 + E_2 + E_3 + E_4$	57	15.844

The fitness values obtained from the phylogenetic analysis carried out with each feature in isolation were used as weights of the form $(w_{v_1}, w_{v_2}, w_{e_1}, w_{e_2}, w_{e_3}, w_{e_4})$ for the phylogenetic analysis with all six features. The “Bio” weight was specified as (16.2, 65.253, 80.906, 45.36, 13.744, 0) and the “UP” weight was specified to be (0, 18.333, 51.285, 19.503, 0, 0). The resulting phylogenetic trees with the pilot dataset are shown in Figure 2 and Figures 5 to 8. *BuTinah*, NYUAD’s High Performance Computing cluster, was used to test the larger datasets. *BuTinah* is capable of approximately one trillion floating point operations per second and consists of 512 super-dense compute nodes, each with at least 48 GB memory. The weights could not be tested on the entire set due to lack of sufficient time, but the result on half of the set (the second half) were completed and are shown in Figures 3 and 4.

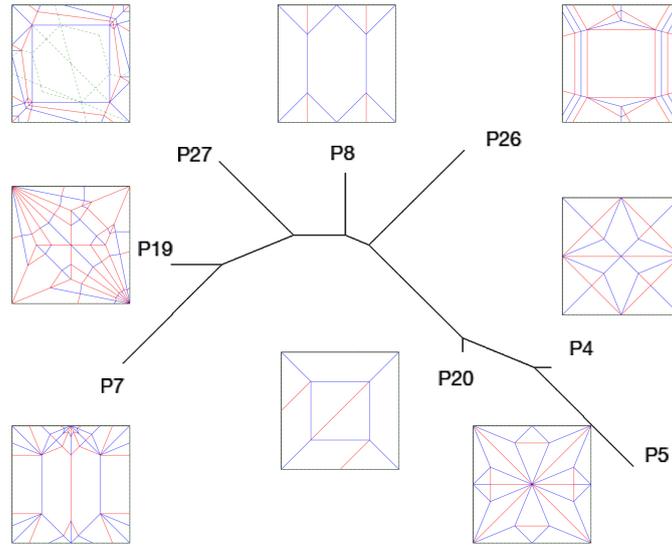


Figure 2: The pilot set with just E_1 , with BioNJ filter.

4 Discussion

The feature E_1 , the difference in edge lengths, was generally the best indicator of dissimilarity. In Figure 2, the pairs that should be similar are not necessarily close together, but the dissimilar ones are far apart. With the UP weight some clustering of similar pairs can be seen with UPGMA, as shown in Figure 4. In the pilot set it appears that the UP weight is a better indicator of similarity than the Bio weight, suggesting that V_1 and E_3 are rather deficient as features for measuring the perceptual similarity of geometric graphs.

Figures 3 and 4 show that both the UP and the BIO weights display similar clustering with some of the patterns, such as (33, 35), (36, 37), and (25, 31). However, while the two are not always in agreement with respect to which pairs are most similar, they generally agree on two that are very distant from each other.

5 Conclusion and Future Directions

The present preliminary study provides sufficient motivation to perform an experiment with a group of human subjects to determine more objectively how well our measure of geometric graph similarity correlates with human judgments of the similarity of origami crease patterns. Furthermore, it would be then be interesting to determine if generalizing the distance

measure tested here to computing minimum-weight many-to-many matchings would offer any improvement over using perfect matchings. It is also planned to compare the measure tested here with other measures of geometric graph similarity. In particular, computing the many-to-many optimal matching for certain one-dimensional strings is computationally more efficient than the Hungarian algorithm for two-dimensional geometric graphs (Eiter and Mannila, 1997), (Colannino et al., 2007), (Mohamad et al., 2014). Hence it is worth determining the viability of converting CPs to one-dimensional strings that can be tackled with one-dimensional many-to-many techniques. In addition we would like to determine whether there is any correlation between the similarity of the crease patterns and the similarity of their respective folded objects. Crease patterns have also found application to the documentation of origami (Lang, 2012), (Akitaya et al., 2013). Therefore, it will be explored how the phylogenetic trees computed from collections of crease patterns can contribute to this documentation, as well as inform the historical evolution of origami designs.

6 Acknowledgements

The authors are grateful to the reviewers for useful suggestions, and to the High Performance Computing resource center of New York University Abu Dhabi for making their super-computer *BuTinah* available for the experiments.

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Appendix

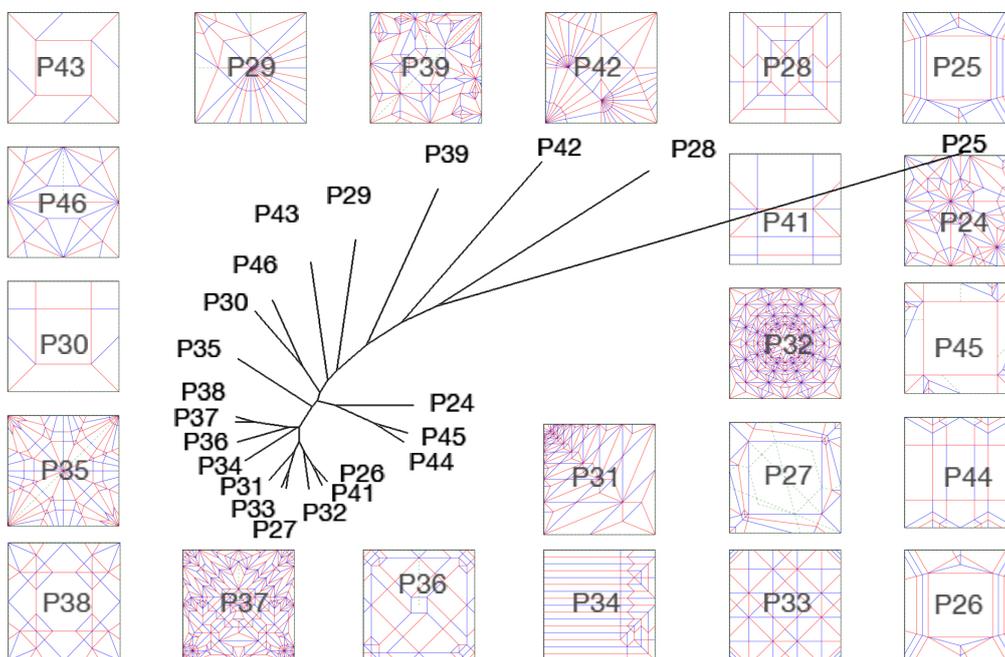


Figure 3: The half set with the Bio weights, using the UPGMA filter.

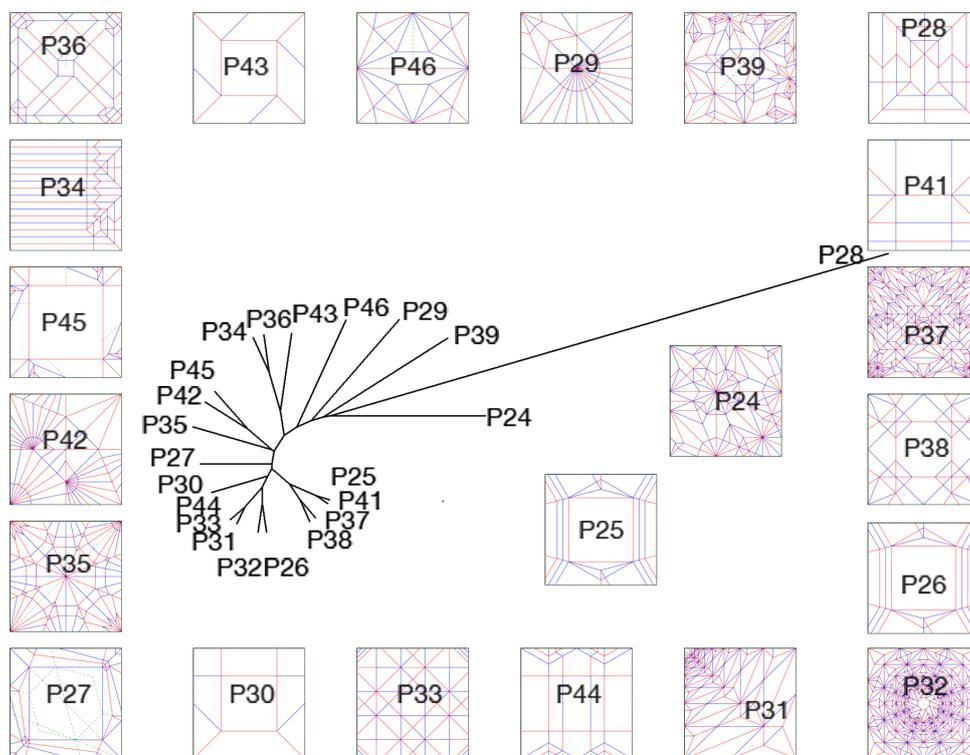


Figure 4: The half set with the UP weight, using the UPGMA filter.

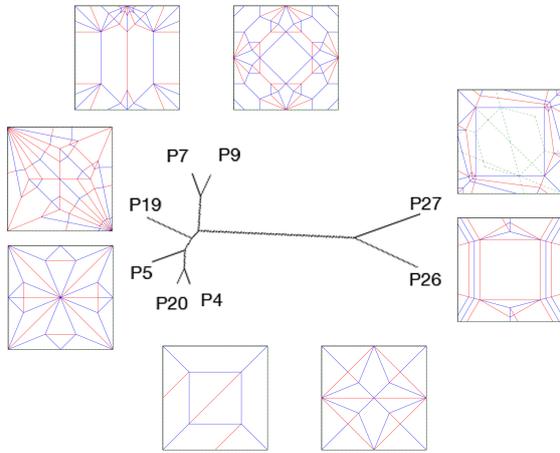


Figure 5: The pilot set with the UP weights, using the UP-GMA filter.

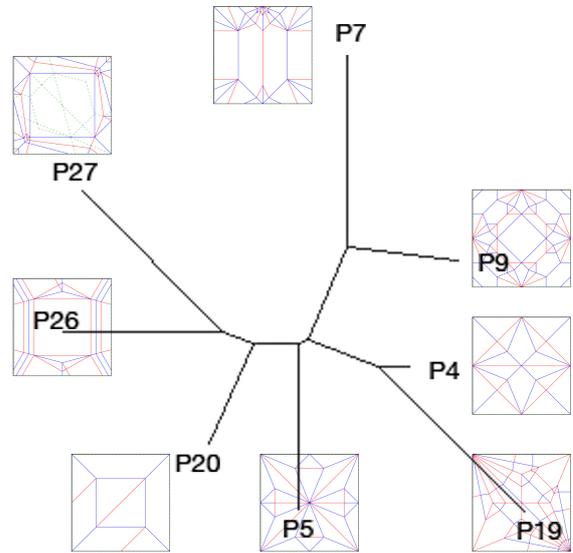


Figure 7: The pilot set with the Bio weights, using the BioNJ filter.

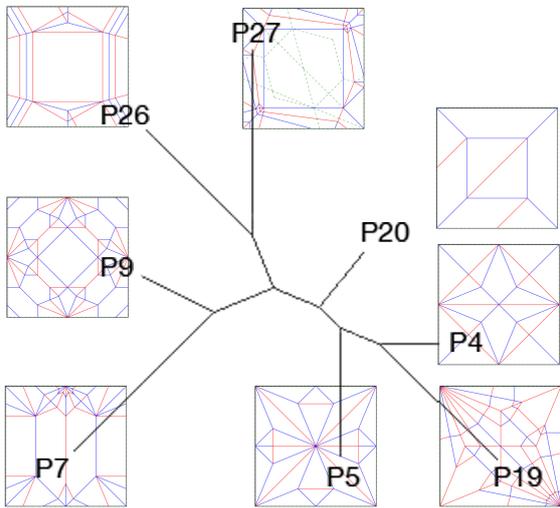


Figure 6: The pilot set with the UP weights, using the BioNJ filter.

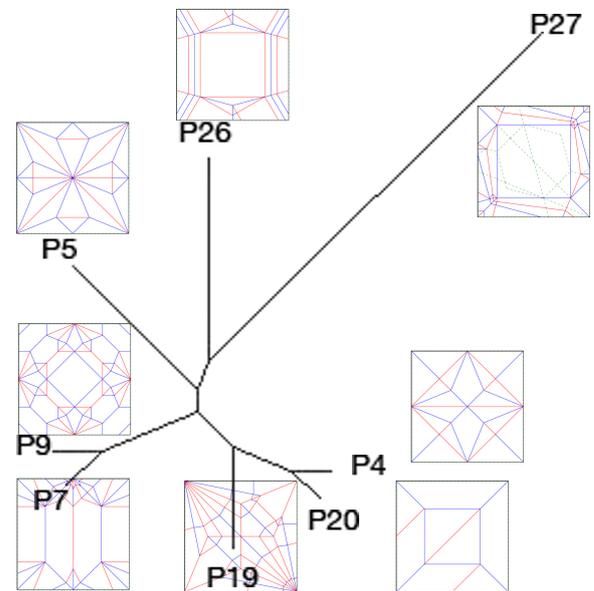


Figure 8: The pilot set with the Bio weights, using the UP-GMA filter.