

MAŁGORZATA LEŚNIEWSKA  
PIOTR LEŚNIEWSKI

## **Analogy-Making in Biology. An Essay on the Comparative Spirit**

Fate has been kind  
to me thus far  
(...)  
My yen for comparison  
might have been taken away

Wisława Szymborska *Among the multitudes*

What is the visible and what is the invisible?

Paracelsus *Paragranum*

**ABSTRACT.** Analogy-making fulfills many important functions in biology – heuristic, systematizing, explicative, assertive-justifying, illustrative-didactic, although the term ‘analogy’ is rarely used nowadays. In the paper we present examples of analogy-making in biological sciences and in the teaching of biology.

**KEY WORDS:** analogy, anomaly, biology, evolution, development, evo-devo

### **1. Introduction**

As noted by Minelli [2009] *the comparative spirit that for a long time had seemed to be lost in many areas of biology seems to have given new life*. In recent years, comparative studies in biology have contributed to many unexpected discoveries, which have, among other things, affected