

**Zeitschrift:** Archives des sciences et compte rendu des séances de la Société  
**Herausgeber:** Société de Physique et d'Histoire Naturelle de Genève  
**Band:** 55 (2002)  
**Heft:** 1

**Artikel:** The Anâtaxis phylogenetic method. 2. An exemple : reconstituting a whole dendrogram  
**Autor:** Bittar, Gabriel  
**DOI:** <https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-740288>

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# THE ANÂTAXIS PHYLOGENETIC METHOD.

## 2. AN EXAMPLE - RECONSTITUTING A WHOLE DENDROGRAM

BY

**Gabriel BITTAR**

(Ms. reçu le 3.1.2002, accepté le 23.5.2002)

### ABSTRACT

**The Anâtaxis phylogenetic method. 2. An example - reconstituting a whole dendrogram.** - The WPGMA numerical taxonomy phenetics method is applied to the semi-matrix of dissimilarities (between terminal taxa) derived from a matrix of characters states to which a cladistic maximum parsimony method had also been applied. Because this semi-theoretical case displays homoplasy and lineage-dependent heterogeneity of transformation rates, the phenogram and the cladogram thus produced are phyletically quite different. The new phylogenetic method Anâtaxis is then applied to the same semi-matrix of dissimilarities, and it rapidly reconstitutes a dendrogram which is congruent with the cladogram.

**Key-words:** Cladistic Maximum Parsimony, Dissimilarity matrix, Evolutionary tree, Heterogeneity of transformation rates, Homoplasy, Numerical Taxonomy Phenetics, Outgroup-based method, Phylogenetic method, Splitting method.

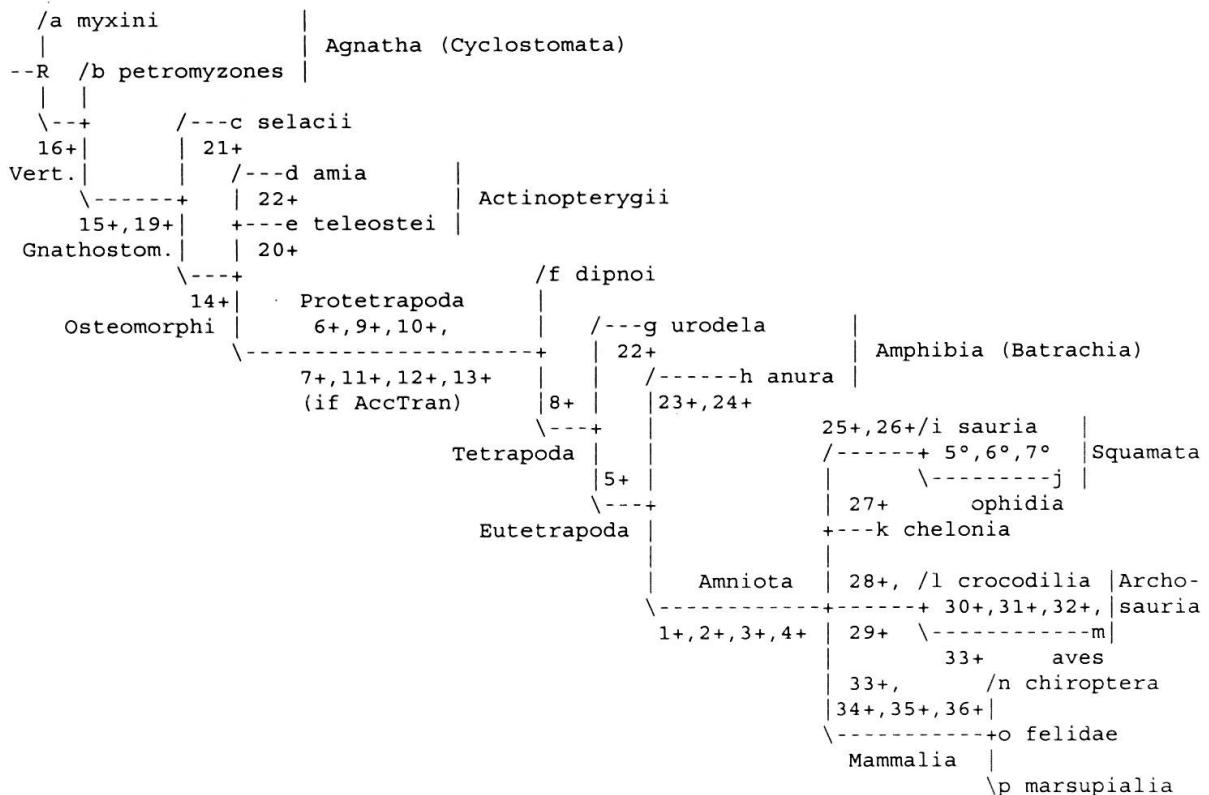
We wish to phyletically study a number of taxa selected from within the **Craniata** phylum, more precisely we want to resolve the phyletic relationships within the **Vertebrata** sub-phylum. Accordingly, we use the **myxini taxon**, which is craniate but non-vertebrate, **as starting outgroup**.

taxons	caractères																																											
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36								
a_myxini	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	+	0	0	0	0	0	?	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0				
b_petromyzones	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	+	+	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	?	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0			
c_selacii	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	+	+	+	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	?	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0			
d_amia	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
e_teleostei	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
f_dipnoi	0	0	0	0	0	+	?	0	+	+	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	0	?	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
g_urodela	0	0	0	0	0	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
h_anura	0	0	0	0	0	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
i_sauria	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
j_ophidias	+	+	+	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0				
k_chelonia	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
l_crocodilia	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
m_aves	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
n_chiroptera	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
o_felidae	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
p_marsupalia	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	0	q	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

This is an *ad hoc* matrix, with characters and taxa chosen for demonstration purposes, and with no pretense at producing a taxonomically or systematically valid phyletic tree. Rather, this matrix was designed to include the main pitfalls associated in a phyletic reconstruction, and to demonstrate the validity and effectiveness of the Anâtaxis method. The characters are binary (presence/absence) morphological ones, and their definition might be obtained through the author.

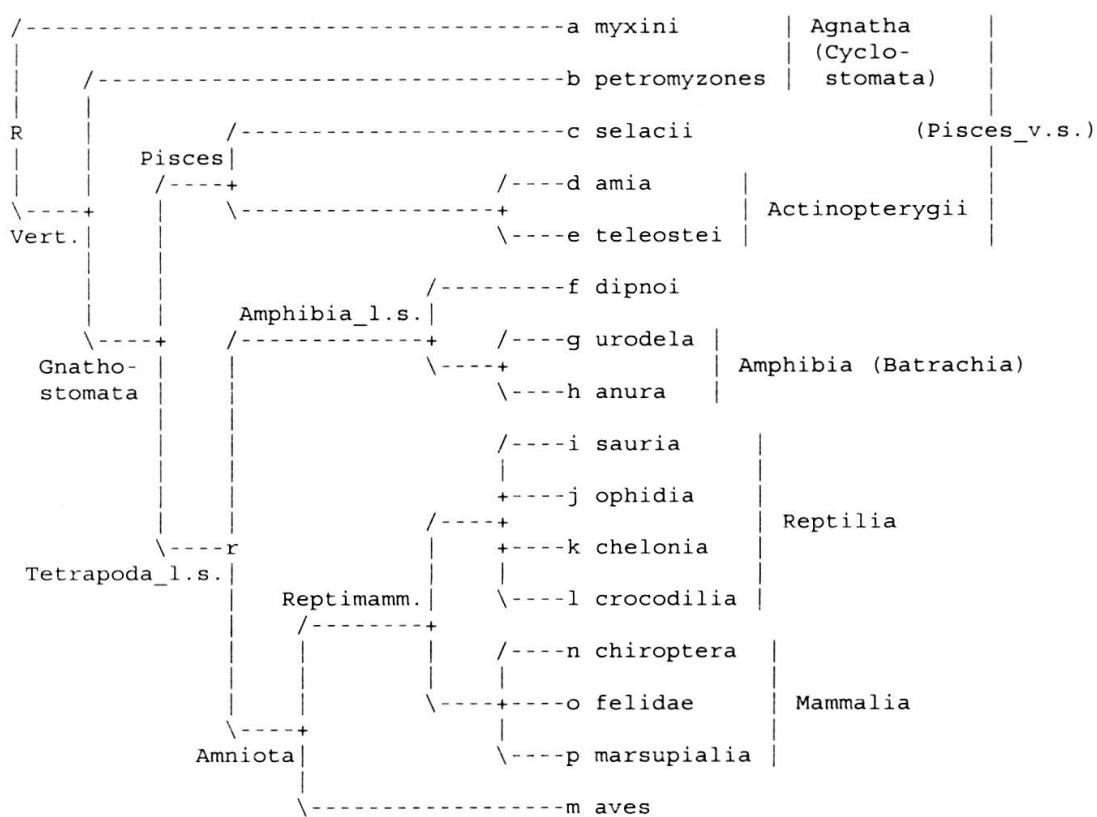
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With a Cladistic Maximum Parsimony (CMP) method (SWOFFORD, 1993), i.e. by looking for the tree that minimises the sum of dissimilarities between all pairs of adjacent nodes, and with a post hoc rooting (R) done within the branch leading to the a\_myxini node, we obtain the following phylogram, i.e. a cladogram in which the length of each branch is proportional to the dissimilarity between the two nodes which this branch connects (for the DelTran option, the transformations of characters 7 and 11-13 are done one branch later, in the Tetrapoda branch). The total length of this cladistically most parsimonious tree is 39 steps (all the steps are indicated above or below each branch), with a total of 5 homoplasies.



Now here is a phenogram, i.e. a tree produced by a Numerical Taxonomic Phenetics -NTP- method (SNEATH & SOKAL, 1973). It is the product of an application, on the  $\Delta$  matrix of dissimilarities between pairs of taxa, of the clustering algorithm **WPGMA** (Weighted-Pair Group Method with Arithmetic averages) - and again, with a post hoc rooting (R) done within the branch leading to a\_myxini.

The phenogram differs strongly from the cladogram, because, as a product of an NTP method, it is very sensitive to the lineage-dependent heterogeneity of evolutionary rates, and does not take into account homoplasy. Because of the high number of autapomorphies within the m\_aves branch, the birds have been rejected to a basal position within the Amniota phenon; this adds two homoplasies to the tree. Because of the high number of autapomorphies within the Amniota branch, it has been rejected to a basal position relative to the f\_dipnoi taxon and the Amphibia; this adds two homoplasies to the tree. And because of the high number of autapomorphies within the branch leading to the f\_dipnoi and Tetrapoda, the remaining fish are found assembled together within a Pisces phenon; this adds one homoplasy to the tree.



Thus, with five more homoplasies, the phenogram is five steps longer than the cladogram. It would be ideal to have a method based on an analysis of the matrix of dissimilarities between taxa rather than on the matrix of the states of characters, thus being much quicker than CMP methods, but that nevertheless would not be subject to the phyletic artefacts typical of NTP methods.

The Anâtaxis method aims to do precisely that (BITTAR, 2002). Let us apply it to this problem. To simplify the demonstration, we do not present here the way Anâtaxis solves the problem of homoplasy - we leave three dots between parentheses (...) when such a problem occurs.

In a preliminary step, their three dissimilarities being equal to 0, the three mammalian taxa are joined together in a n\_Mammalia taxon.

### Iteration 1.

With indices o for myxini and i for any vertebrate, median-normalise on the a\_myxini taxon (median = 15.5) the Vertebrata  $\Delta$  sub-matrix:

$$\text{(in bold) } \mathbf{diff}_{oi} = \text{med}(\Delta_{oi}) - \Delta_{oi}$$

$\Delta$		b	c	d	e	f	g	h	i	j	k	l	m	n
o=myxini	diff	<b>14</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>5.5</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>-3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>-3</b>	<b>-4</b>	<b>-8</b>	<b>-6</b>
a_myxini	0	1.5	4.5	5.5	5.5	10	13.5	15.5	18.5	15.5	18.5	19.5	23.5	21.5
b_petromyzones	<b>14</b>		3.5	4.5	4.5	9	12.5	14.5	17.5	14.5	17.5	18.5	22.5	20.5
c_selacii	<b>11</b>			3.5	3.5	7	11.5	13.5	16.5	13.5	16.5	17.5	21.5	19.5
d_amia	<b>10</b>				2.5	7	8.5	12.5	15.5	12.5	15.5	16.5	20.5	18.5
e_teleostei	<b>10</b>					7	10.5	12.5	15.5	12.5	15.5	16.5	20.5	18.5
f_dipnoi	<b>5.5</b>						5	7	10	10	10	11	15	13
g_urodela	2							4	8	9	7	8	12	10
h_anura	0								8	11	7	8	12	10
i_sauria	-3									3	3	4	8	6
j_ophidia	0										6	7	11	9
k_chelonia	-3											3	7	5
l_crocodilia	-4												4	6
m_aves	-8													8

Vertebrata  $\Delta^*$  sub-matrix median-normalised on taxon myxini,  
with  $\Delta_{ij}^* = \Delta_{ij} + \mathbf{diff}_{oi} + \mathbf{diff}_{oj}$ :

$\Delta^*$		b	c	d	e	f	g	h	i	j	k	l	m	n
o=myxini	diff	<b>14</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>5.5</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>-3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>-3</b>	<b>-4</b>	<b>-8</b>	<b>-6</b>
a_myxini	0	15.5	15.5	15.5	15.5	15.5	15.5	15.5	15.5	15.5	15.5	15.5	15.5	15.5
b_petromyzones	<b>14</b>		28.5	28.5	28.5	28.5	28.5	28.5	28.5	28.5	28.5	28.5	28.5	28.5
c_selacii	<b>11</b>			24.5	24.5	23.5	24.5	24.5	24.5	24.5	24.5	24.5	24.5	24.5
d_amia	<b>10</b>				22.5	22.5	20.5	22.5	22.5	22.5	22.5	22.5	22.5	22.5
e_teleostei	<b>10</b>					22.5	22.5	22.5	22.5	22.5	22.5	22.5	22.5	22.5
f_dipnoi	<b>5.5</b>						12.5	12.5	12.5	15.5	12.5	12.5	12.5	12.5
g_urodela	2							6	7	11	6	6	6	6
h_anura	0								5	11	4	4	4	4
i_sauria	-3									0	-3	-3	-3	-3
j_ophidia	0										3	3	3	3
k_chelonia	-3											-4	-4	-4
l_crocodilia	-4												-8	-4
m_aves	-8													-6

It is straightforward to define the sub-outgroup. Let us call **Gnathostomata** the non-lamprey vertebrates and gnathostomeX any member of this taxon. When analysing all the triads formed within the myxini-normalised Vertebrata ingroup, we notice that ALWAYS  $\Delta^*(\text{petromyzones};\text{gnathostome1}) = 28.5 = \Delta^*(\text{petromyzones};\text{gnathostome2}) >> \Delta^*(\text{gnathostome2};\text{gnathostome1}) \{-8 \text{ to } 24.5\}$ : all the triads involving petromyzones are ultra-metric-like, and the lampreys taxon appears as the external one in all these triads.

Thus, within the Vertebrata subset, the b\_petromyzones taxon is outgroup to the Gnathostomata ingroup.

## Iteration 2.

Median-normalise on the b\_petromyzones taxon (median = 14.5) the Gnathostomata sub-matrix of original  $\Delta$  :

$\Delta$		c	d	e	f	g	h	i	j	k	l	m	n
o=petromyzones	diff	11	10	10	5.5	2	0	-3	0	-3	-4	-8	-6
b_petromyzones	0	3.5	4.5	4.5	9	12.5	14.5	17.5	14.5	17.5	18.5	22.5	20.5
c_selacii	11		3.5	3.5	7	11.5	13.5	16.5	13.5	16.5	17.5	21.5	19.5
d_amia	10			2.5	7	8.5	12.5	15.5	12.5	15.5	16.5	20.5	18.5
e_teleostei	10				7	10.5	12.5	15.5	12.5	15.5	16.5	20.5	18.5
f_dipnoi	5.5					5	7	10	10	10	11	15	13
g_urodela	2						4	8	9	7	8	12	10
h_anura	0							8	11	7	8	12	10
i_sauria	-3								3	3	4	8	6
j_ophidia	0									6	7	11	9
k_chelonia	-3										3	7	5
l_crocodilia	-4											4	6
m_aves	-8												8

Gnathostomata  $\Delta^*$  median-normalised on taxon b\_petromyzones :

$\Delta^*$		c	d	e	f	g	h	i	j	k	l	m	n
o=petromyzones	diff	11	10	10	5.5	2	0	-3	0	-3	-4	-8	-6
b_petromyzones	0	14.5	14.5	14.5	14.5	14.5	14.5	14.5	14.5	14.5	14.5	14.5	14.5
c_selacii	11		24.5	24.5	23.5	24.5	24.5	24.5	24.5	24.5	24.5	24.5	24.5
d_amia	10			22.5	22.5	20.5	22.5	22.5	22.5	22.5	22.5	22.5	22.5
e_teleostei	10				22.5	22.5	22.5	22.5	22.5	22.5	22.5	22.5	22.5
f_dipnoi	5.5					12.5	12.5	12.5	15.5	12.5	12.5	12.5	12.5
g_urodela	2						6	7	11	6	6	6	6
h_anura	0							5	11	4	4	4	4
i_sauria	-3								0	-3	-3	-3	-3
j_ophidia	0									3	3	3	3
k_chelonia	-3										-4	-4	-4
l_crocodilia	-4											-8	-4
m_aves	-8												-6

Let us call **Osteomorpha** the non-selacii gnathostomes. We notice the clear-cut candidacy of the selacii taxon as the next sub-outgroup: with the exception of when the f\_dipnoi taxon is involved, there is an ultrametric-like triadic relationship,  $\Delta^*(\text{selacii}; \text{non-dipnoi osteomorph1}) = 24.5 = \Delta^*(\text{selacii}; \text{non-dipnoi osteomorph2}) >> \Delta^*(\text{non-dipnoi osteomorph2}; \text{non-dipnoi osteomorph1}) \{-8 \text{ to } 22.5\}$ .

Otherwise, when the f\_dipnoi taxon is involved, we have  $\Delta^*(\text{selacii}; \text{non-dipnoi osteomorph}) = 24.5 > \Delta^*(\text{selacii}; \text{dipnoi}) = 23.5 >> \Delta^*(\text{non-dipnoi osteomorph}; \text{dipnoi}) \{12.5 \text{ to } 22.5\}$ . (...)

The c\_selacii taxon appears as the external one in all triads formed from within the lampreys-normalised Gnathostomata subset. Thus, within this subset, the taxon c\_selacii is outgroup to the Osteomorpha ingroup.

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