ORIGINAL RESEARCH

Characterization of an Alien Chromosome of *Oryza* officinalis Transferred the Genomic and Cytological Environment of *Oryza sativa*

Gang Li • Ming Tang • Wei Hu • Guangcun He • Hong Liu • Xuequn Liu • Rui Qin

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Abstract Distant hybridization between rice species and their genome interactions have become the hot points of genetic research. The new formed hybrid was unstable and many of the alien chromosomes would be excluded out in the meiosis procedure. In this study, we investigated the phenomenon that the monosomic alien addition lines (MAALs) of Oryza officinalis (CC)-Oryza sativa (AA) inherited in the genomic and cytoplasmic environments of cultivated rice. In a series of backcross programs, every time the MAALs were backcrossed with the recurrent parent Hejiang19, we get a portion of the backcross progenies that were similar to the female parent MAALs in morphological characters (with rolled leaves) and chromosome constitutions (2n+1). The monosomic alien chromosome exhibited stable inheritance in the genomic and cytoplasmic environments of cultivated rice. Molecular biology and fluorescence in situ hybridization (FISH) analyses on mitotic cells showed that the alien chromosomes in MAALs were inclined to be transferred integrated into the backcross progenies with rolled leaves and no big fragments of alien chromosomes introgressing into the chromosomes of cultivated rice. By FISH analysis on the meiotic cells, we proved that the single alien chromosome performing nonstandard meiosis and behaving like a

G. Li · H. Liu · X. Liu · R. Qin (⊠) Key Laboratory of State Ethnic Affairs Commission for Biological Technology, College of Life Sciences, South-Central University for Nationalities, Wuhan 430074, China e-mail: qin_rui@hotmail.com

G. Li \cdot M. Tang \cdot W. Hu \cdot G. He

Key Laboratory of Ministry of Education for Plant Development Biology, College of Life Sciences, Wuhan University, Wuhan 430072, China dispensable genetic factor, which would be the cytological reasons for the stable inheritance of alien chromosomes.

Keywords Rice · *Oryza officinalis* · Monosomic alien addition line · Genomic interaction · Meiosis

Introduction

Wild species of Oryza genus are valuable gene pools for resistance to biotic and abiotic stresses in cultivated rice breeding (Multani et al. 2003; Liu et al. 2004). Distant hybridization was used to transfer valuable genes from wild rice into cultivated rice (Brar and Khush 1997). In the interspecific hybrid of plant, however, two different genomes combining together into one nucleus may result in intergenomic conflicts (Riddle and Birchler 2003). The changes include alterations of gene expressions, epigenetic modifications, activations of transposons (Matzke et al. 1999; Comai et al. 2000; Hanson et al. 2000; Shaked et al. 2001; Jin et al. 2008), and structure rearrangements at the chromosomes and DNA sequences levels (Song et al. 1995; Wendel et al. 1995; Leitch and Bennett 1997). The alien genome, which is embedded in the native cytoplasmic and genomic environment, is often unsteady. Elimination of specific DNA sequences and partial or complete uniparental chromosome occurred commonly in many interspecific hybrids (Feldman et al. 1997; Linde-Laursen and Bothmer 1999; Gernand et al. 2005; Du et al. 2008).

Oryza officinalis is a diploid wild rice species with CC genome, which maintained abundant diversity and is close to the AA genome of *Oryza sativa* (Aggarwal et al. 1997; Vaughan et al. 2003; Ying et al. 2006). Agronomists have produced the hybrids between *O. officinalis* and *O. sativa* in the projects of improving cultivated rice. At the

International Rice Research Institute, Jena, Brar, and Khush studied the C genome of O. officinalis and produced introgression lines containing genes for resistance to BPH and WBPH from the cross between O. sativa and O. officinalis (Jena and Khush 1990; Brar and Khush 1997). Their studies also indicated that the recombination between chromosomes of cultivated rice and wild species was limited, and no substitution of large chromosome fragment was found. Jin et al. (2006) reported a mosaic chromosome constructed with short arm of chromosome 4 from cultivated rice and long arm from O. officinalis. Though the homologous chromosomes of A-genome would recombine freely and exchange genes easily in the hybrids, it was the different thing in the wide hybrids between the A and C genomes. The relationship between A and C genomes was never illustrated thoroughly, and the reasons for recombination barrier between chromosomes of cultivated rice and wild species were poorly known.

Because of intergenomic conflicts, the distant hybrids between O. officinalis and O. sativa would exclude a portion or all of the alien chromosomes of O. officinalis. At some special case, one of the alien chromosomes retained in the nuclear and joined into the formation of the aneuploid plants. The monosomic alien addition lines (MAALs) of O. officinalis-O. sativa are aneuploid plants holding 12 chromosome pairs of cultivated rice and only one chromosome of O. officinalis, and these new materials are convenient for studying relationships between the A and C genomes (Tan et al. 2005; Li et al. 2008). In this study, we investigated the phenomenon that the MAALs of O. officinalis (CC)-O. sativa (AA) inherited stably in the genomic and cytoplasmic environments of cultivated rice. The single alien chromosome was found performing nonstandard meiosis and behaving like a dispensable genetic factor, so that it can be retained in the new genomic environment rather than be excluded thoroughly out of the native nuclear in the lifecycle of MAALs.

Materials and Methods

Plant Materials

Wild rice *O. officinalis* (Acc. HY018), cultivated rice Hejiang19 and MAAL8 (with an alien chromosome 8 of *O. officinalis*) were used in this study. The aneuploid MAAL8 plant (BC2 generation) was backcrossed to Hejiang19, and the backcross progenies of BC3 generation were obtained. From the BC3 population, we selected the plants with an alien chromosome 8 of *O. officinalis* to be backcrossed again. In such a way, the backcross progenies from BC3 to BC9 generations were obtained. The plants materials were planted in field at the Institute of Genetics of Wuhan University under a standard regime for rice plants.

RFLP Analysis

Genomic DNA of each plant was extracted from young leaves using the CTAB method (Murray and Thompson 1980). The DNA restriction digestion and Southern hybridization followed previously described procedures (Huang et al. 2001). The DNA samples were digested with five restriction enzymes: *Dra* I, *EcoR* I, *EcoR* V, *Hind* III, and *BamH* I. Twenty-five restriction fragment length polymorphism (RFLP) probes distributing evenly along the chromosome 8 of cultivated rice were used to identify *O. officinalis*-specific bands from the DNA samples.

Chromosome Preparation

For mitotic chromosome preparation, root tip tissues were collected in the morning from vigorously growing rice plants and fixed immediately in a 3:1 (ν/ν) mixture of ethanol and glacial acetic acid at 4°C overnight, then stored in a refrigerator until use. After washing thoroughly with distilled water, the fixed root tips were treated with a mixture of 2% pectinase (SERVA, Germany) and 2% cellulase (SERVA, Germany) at 28°C for 3–4 h. Finally, the treated root tips were squashed on slides and dried over a flame (Song and Gustafson 1995). For meiotic chromosome preparation, young panicles of rice plant were treated as described previously by Xiong et al. (2006). Preparation of microsporocytes cell at the early stage of meiosis were kept in a freezer at -20° C before fluorescence in situ hybridization (FISH) analysis.

C_0t -1 DNA Preparation

Total genomic DNA of *O. officinalis* was used to prepare C_0t -1 DNA based on the method of Zwick et al. (1997). Genomic DNA was sterilized under 0.14 Mpa for 12–15 min and broken into fragments at about 800–1,500 bp, and then was reannealed at 65°C for the required time calculated according to the formula C_0t -1=C (mol/L)×T(s). S1 nuclease (Promega, USA) was used to digest the single stretched DNA in a water bath at 37°C for 1 h. The target DNA was purified and stored in TE buffer at –20°C before use.

FISH Analysis

The C_0t-1 DNA of *O. officinalis* was labeled with biotin-11-dUTP using a nick translation kit (Roche, Germany). Blocking DNA was obtained from the *O. sativa* genomic DNA and autoclaved to fragment sizes of 100 bp to 1 kb. The mixing ratio of probe DNA and blocking DNA was 1:12. In situ hybridization was performed with the procedures described by Yan et al. (1999). Biotin-labeled probes were detected in a three-step detection/amplification procedure: streptavindin-Cv3, biotinylated anti-streptavindin and streptavindin-Cy3 (Vector Laboratories, USA). For each step of the immune reaction, slides were incubated at 37°C for 30 min and washed with PBS at intervals. Finally, the slides were counterstained with 1 ug/mL 4', 6-diamidino-2phenylindole in Vectashield, an antifade solution (Vector Laboratories, USA). For bicolor FISH analysis, the centromeric DNA (specific sequence from AA genome) was labeled with digoxigenin-11-dUTP (Boehringer Mannheim), and the dig-labeled probes were detected using sheep antidigoxigenin-fluorescein isothiocyanate and rabbit anti-sheep FITC. Chromosomes were viewed under an Olympus BX51 fluorescence microscope (Tokyo, Japan) equipped with a CoolSNAP fx CCD camera (Roper Scientific, USA). Gray scale images were captured for each fluorescence channel and then merged with V++ Precision Digital Imaging software (Digital Optics, New Zealand). Final images were fine-tuned with Adobe Photoshop 8.0 software.

Results

Production and Morphological Characterization of the Backcrossing Progenies

The monosomic alien addition line 8 (MAAL8; BC2) was a plant with a chromosome 8 of *O. officinalis* added to the entire chromosomes complement of cultivated rice species (Tan et al. 2005). Being an aneuploid plant, the MAAL8 was male sterile and had rolled leaves, which was different from both of the parents. We backcrossed the MAAL8 with the cultivated rice Hejiang19 (Fig. 1) and obtained a backcross population with 99 plants at BC3 generation. Phenotype analysis showed that the BC3 plants were almost the same in plant heights, but they could be obviously discriminated by leaf shapes: 58 plants had rolled leaves (R-leave, Fig. 2a) which were similar to the







Fig. 2 Morphological characters of two types of plants at BC₃ generation. **a** Plant with rolled leaves (*R-leaf*); **b** plant with flatted leaves (*F-leaf*)

female parent MAAL8; the other 41 had flatted leaves (F-leave, Fig. 2b) which were similar to the recurrent male parent Hejiang19. Beside the leaf shapes, other morphological characters among the two types of backcross progenies and their parents were showed in Table 1. Because the plants with R-leaves were similar to MAAL8 (BC2) in morphological features and were proved in the following experiments holding a whole alien chromosome 8 of C genome, we named them as MAAL8 (BC3) plants as well. The rolled leaves were used as the visible morphological traits of the aneuploid MAAL plants among the backcross progenies.

In the further experiments, the MAAL8 (BC3) plants were backcrossed with Hejiang19 again, and a population with 53 plants at BC4 generation was obtained. Of these 53 plants, 33 had F-leaves and 20 had R-leaves, and the latter were also identified as MAAL8 (BC4) plants. The phenotypes of the two typical plants, such as leaf color, heading date and number of panicles, were similar to those of plants at BC3 generation respectively. In this way, the progenies from BC5 to BC9 generations were obtained, and the MAAL8 (BC5), MAAL8 (BC6), MAAL8 (BC7), MAAL8 (BC8), and MAAL8 (BC9) plants were identified at different generations (Fig. 1). The phenotypes of the backcross progenies were stable, i.e., the plants with R-leaves of different generations had similar phenotypes and so did the plants with F-leaves. The numbers of two

| - | | - | | | | | |
|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|-------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|--------|
| Plant materials | Leaf shape | | Leaf color | Heading date | Number of | Plant height | Male |
| | Lengthways section | Transverse section | | (uay) | paneles | (cm) | sterne |
| Hejiang19 | Curve | Flatted | Light green | 63.7±2.3 | 11.6±3.2 | 65.9±5.2 | No |
| F-leave plant | Curve | Flatted | Light green | 72.9 ± 7.1 | 17.0 ± 1.6 | 71.3 ± 1.3 | Yes |
| R-leave plant | Erect | Rolled | Dark green | 81.3 ± 4.8 | 13.1 ± 2.3 | 73.3 ± 3.9 | Yes |
| MAAL8 | Erect | Rolled | Dark green | _ | _ | 61.5 | Yes |

Table 1 Phenotypes of parents and BC3 plants

types of plants at different generations were shown in Table 2. The ratios of plants with R-leaves among total plants were variable and segregation ratio of these two types of plants showed no regular tendency. A notable fact was that the MAAL8 plants had been produced at all generations; the single alien chromosome 8 of *O. officinalis* had persisted transmitting through female gametes in the AA genomic background. It seemed that the MAAL8 was "immortal" in these backcross programs.

Chromosome Constitutions and Normal Mitosis in the Backcrossing Progenies

Because of much differences on DNA sequences between the A and C genomes, FISH analyses with Cot-1 DNA from O. officinalis as probes could easily discriminated chromosomes of O. officinalis (CC) from those of cultivated rice (AA) in the hybrid nucleus, where the two kinds of chromosomes coexisted (Lan et al. 2006). FISH analyses with C₀t-1 DNA from O. officinalis were applied on cell preparations of root tip tissues harvested from the two types of backcross progenies. In the images of cell at metaphase, there were 24 chromosomes detected from the cells of plants with F-leaves (Fig. 3a). Except a little visible hybridized signals showed on the terminals of one pair of chromosomes, all the 24 chromosomes had almost invisible hybridized signals indicating they originated from the cultivated rice. The same experiments have been done on cell preparations from cultivated rice Hejiang19 and we also detected one chromosome pairs having a little visible hybridized signal on the terminals. So, the probed terminals would belong to the chromosomes of cultivated rice (unpublished data). From the images of mitotic cells of plants with R-leaves, however, 25 chromosomes were detected (Fig. 3b). In order to distinguish the chromosomes of A- or C-gnome, we also performed bicolor FISH analysis: using biotin-labeled C_0t-1 DNA from *O. officinalis* as probes (Texas red) to detected chromosomes from C genome and digoxigenin-labeled centromeric DNA from cultivated rice as probes (green) to detected chromosomes from A-genome. Of these 25 chromosomes, 24 had little hybridized signals of labeled C_0t-1 DNA (Texas red) but many hybridized signals of labeled centromeric DNA (green), indicating they originated from cultivated rice; the other one was entirely covered with strong red hybridized signals and had invisible green hybridized signals, indicating it originated from *O. officinalis*.

In the images of cells at a later metaphase (Fig. 3c, d), the sister chromatids of several chromosomes of cultivated rice were found disjoining initially from the centromere and the alien chromosome (marked with white arrow) was found to have performed the same procedure. This phenomenon implied that the alien chromosome 8 performed normally at the mitosis like the native chromosomes in the hybrid cells.

When we performed FISH analyses on backcross progenies in different generations, we get similar results. Obviously, all the plants with R-leaves had an entire alien chromosome of *O. Officinalis*. There were no arms or large fragments of alien chromosome 8 introgressing into the chromosomes of cultivated rice.

RFLP Analysis on the Backcrossing Progenies

By comparing RFLP analysis, Jena et al. (1994) and Tan et al. (2005) had revealed homologous chromosomes between

| Table 2 | Numbers | of two |
|-----------|------------|--------|
| types of | plants at | |
| different | generation | ıs |

| generations | BC3 | BC4 | BC5 | BC6 | BC7 | BC8 | BC9 |
|----------------------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Plant with R-leaves | 58 | 65 | 93 | 20 | 28 | 74 | 22 |
| Plant with F-leaves | 41 | 117 | 277 | 46 | 25 | 326 | 65 |
| Total plants | 99 | 182 | 370 | 66 | 53 | 400 | 87 |
| Ratio of R-leave plant (%) | 58.6 | 35.7 | 25.1 | 30.3 | 52.8 | 18.5 | 25.3 |
| | | | | | | | |

Fig. 3 Chromosome constitutions of the two types of plants revealed by FISH analysis. a Mitotic cell from F-leaves plant; b-d mitotic cells from R-leaves plant. b the strong red signals were showed on the alien chromosome 8 and the green signals were showed on the centromere region of 24 chromosomes of cultivated rice: c-d showed the alien chromosomes 8 (pointed out with white arrow) disjointing normally at later metaphase as other chromosomes from cultivated rice. The enlarged alien chromosomes were showed in the top left corners



the A and C genomes sharing syntenic RFLP markers. In order to investigate the molecular integrity of the alien chromosome 8, we performed RFLP analysis on backcross progenies at different generations using 25 polymorphic RFLP markers that distributing evenly on chromosome 8 of cultivated rice (Fig. 4b) and could be used to identify the DNA fragments originated from chromosome 8 of O. officinalis. We analyzed all the 99 plants at BC3 generation, and found that each of the 25 markers had displayed O. officinalis-specific bands on the plants with R-leaves; but none of them displayed any O. officinalis-specific bands on the plants with F-leaves (Fig. 4a). These results showed that the molecules of alien chromosome 8 in MAAL8 (BC3) were intact, and the alien chromosome 8 was transferred integrally from the female parental MAAL8 (BC2) into the backcrossing progenies MAAL8 (BC3).

RFLP analyses were also applied on the progenies from BC4 to BC9 generations, and we get the same results like the BC3 generation. Each of the plants with R-leaves was detected with an intact alien chromosome 8, but the plants with F-leaves were detected with not any fragment of alien chromosome 8 by using all the 25 RFLP markers. These results were accorded to above FISH analysis, indicating the alien chromosome 8 was transmitted from the female parent integrally and stably, so that an entire alien chromosome 8 was detected in the MAAL8 plants. There were no large DNA fragments of alien chromosome



Fig. 4 Southern blotting analysis on parents and two types plants at BC₃ generation. BC2M8, MAAL8 at BC2generation. **a** Genomic DNA were digested with *EcoRV* and probed with marker C502 from chromosome 8 of AA genome; **b** the 25 used markers distributing on chromosome 8 of cultivated rice (data originate from http://rgp.dna. affrc.go.jp)

8 covering these 25 markers inserting into the chromosomes of cultivated rice.

Nonstandard Meiosis of Alien Chromosome 8 in the Aneuploid Plants

For the male sterile rice, the pollen abortions were usually found after the uninucleate stage and their meiosis process was normal (Pan 1976; Wu et al. 1994). In this study, we harvested the anther tissues of MAAL8 and studied their meiotic characters by FISH analysis. The meiosis I is crucial in the whole meiosis process because it involve in the chromosomes segregation, number reduction and the creation of genetic diversity (Nonomura et al. 2004). We used the young anther cutting down from the just heading rice for FISH analysis. When the biotin-labeled C0t-1 DNA of O. officinalis as probes were hybridized to chromosomes at meiotic metaphase I, 12 bivalents were showing in blue with very weak hybridized signals, suggesting their origination from cultivated rice; and one univalent was sprayed with strong Texas red, suggesting its origination from O. officinalis (Fig. 5a, b). The twelve bivalents were arrayed on the metaphase I plate, but the univalent of alien chromosome 8 was apart from them. When the cells processed into meiotic anaphase I, the 12 bivalents disjoined into 24 chromosomes and arrayed in two groups, which would separated and segregated into the opposite poles. The univalent of alien chromosome 8 moved randomly to one pole (Fig. 5c, d). These results indicated that the meiocytes in aneuploid MAALs underwent a special meiotic process. The 24 chromosomes from cultivated rice performed normally as they paired at metaphase I and then separated at anaphase I, the chromosome number were halved in each secondary spermatocyte; but behaviors of alien chromosome at meiosis I were specific. As there was only one alien chromosome 8, no bivalent of alien chromosome was formed. The alien chromosome 8 was not found pairing with chromosome from cultivated rice, nor was it excluded out from chromosomes constitution of MAALs plants. This phenomenon was different from the newly formed hybrid cells who would exclude many of the alien chromosomes in their meiosis procedures. In these meiosis procedures, it seemed that the alien chromosome 8 just acted like an independent genetic factor and entered randomly into one of the secondary spermatocyte at meiotic anaphase I.

Fig. 5 FISH analysis behaves of the chromosomes at Meiosis Iin R-leaves plants. **a** and **b** The 12 bivalents form cultivated rice were distributing on equatorial plate at metaphase I and the univalent of alien chromosome 8 was apart from them; **c** and **d** the homologous chromosomes from cultivated rice disjointed into opposite poles at anaphase I and the alien chromosome 8 move into one pole



Discussions

Distant hybrids between cultivated and wild rice species have been exploited extensively for the improvement of cultivated rice. Because of intergenomic conflicts, the alien genome in the hybrids was always instable, elimination of partial or complete uniparental chromosome or specific DNA sequences occurred commonly. The formation of MAALs were the results that the wide hybrid cells of triploid BC1(2n+n) plant eliminated the most alien chromosomes but kept only one during their meiosis process, and these new materials are convenient for studying relationships between the A and C genomes. In this study, we used the MAAL materials to investigate actions of the monatomic alien C chromosomes inheriting the new A-genomic environments.

The aneuploid MAAL8 plants were male sterile, but the female gametes were functional and could be fertilized with pollens from recurrent parent Hejiang19 and produced backcross progenies. In a serial of backcross programs, we produced and identified the MAAL8 plants from BC3 to BC9 generations, the alien chromosome 8 have been transferred continuously. It seemed that the MAAL8 was "immortal" in these sexual reproduction programs. In our lab, the MAAL7 and MAL9 materials were also backcrossed with cultivated rice to produce backcross progenies from BC3 to BC5 generations and they get similar results (private communication). The actions of the monatomic alien chromosome inheriting stably in the MAAL plant was much different from those of the new formed hybrids between wild rice and cultivated rice, in which the chromosomes composition in the nuclear was unstable and elimination of alien chromosomes were often happened. Through comparison between MAALs and newly formed distant hybrid, we think the reduction of dosage effect of exogenous genetic material in the MAAL plant might involve its different inheriting characteristics. When there was only one alien chromosome, the intergenomic conflicts would decrease and were sustainable by the nucleus of cultivated rice. So, the alien chromosome was not excluded but was continuously transferred to the female gametes. Though the theoretical ratio of MAAL plants would be half in the backcross progenies, in fact, the MAAL plants were weak on the seedling stage and die easily; the surviving MAAL plants were reduced. The final ratios of MAAL plants among total plants were low and showed no regular tendency.

Usually, the homologous chromosomes in the ordinary hybrids within the AA genome could recombine freely and produce introgression lines easily. But it was a different thing in the distant hybrids between A and C genomes. In previous studies, Brar and Khush had pointed out that the recombination between chromosomes of cultivated rice and *O. officinalis* was limited in their hybrid and no substitution of large chromosomes fragments was found. The detected introgressions were small in size by an inconvenient method (Brar and Khush 1997). In our lab, Tan et al. had obtained several introgression lines from new formed hybrid between O. officinalis and cultivated rice (Tan et al. 2004a, b). But it became difficult once the alien chromosomes were inheriting stably in the aneuploid plants. In this study, we found the alien chromosome 8 in the MAAL8 was transmitted integrally and stably. Molecular analyzing with 25 polymorphic RFLP markers, we checked an intact alien chromosome in each MAAL8 plant and there was not any officinalis-specific fragments covering the 25 RFLP markers inserting into the chromosomes of cultivated rice. Using FISH analysis, we also detected an intact alien chromosome 8 in the MAAL8 plant and no fragments of alien chromosome inserting into chromosomes of cultivated rice. In further studies, we investigated the actions of the alien chromosome in meiosis process and found its nonstandard meiosis process. The alien chromosome acted like an independent genetic factor: it did not paired with chromosome from cultivated rice, not participated in composition of bivalent, not join the formation of the metaphase I plate and entered randomly into one of the secondary spermatocyte at meiotic anaphase I. The special meiosis of alien chromosome may be the cytological reason for the recombination barrier between the homologous chromosomes of different genomes.

O. officinalis is a distantly related species of cultivated rice and its CC genome is close to the AA genome of O. sativa, so, we could produce their distant hybrid and use this material for improvement of cultivated rice. On the other hand, their intergenomic conflict obstructed our uses of the wild rice materials. The interaction between AA and CC genomes were much complex. Here, we studied the interaction between an alien chromosome of O. officinalis and nucleus of cultivated rice. The differentiation between AA and CC genomes, such as CC genome hold abundant specific repeat sequences and is much bigger relatively, would result in the special meiosis of the alien chromosome in MAAL plants. Owing to this nonstandard meiosis, the alien chromosome could be transferred integrally and stably. Further studies were needed to clearly illustrate the relationship between AA and CC genomes, for it is very important for the utility of wild rice materials.

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