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QTL clusters reflect character associations in wild and cultivated rice

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Abstract The genetic basis of character association related to differentiation found in the primary gene pool of rice was investigated based on the genomic distribution of quantitative trait loci (QTLs). Major evolutionary trends in cultivated rice of Asiatic origin (*Oryza sativa*) and its wild progenitor (*O. rufipogon*) are: (1) differentiation from wild to domesticated types (domestication), (2) ecotype differentiation between the perennial and annual types in wild races, and (3) the Indica versus Japonica type differentiation in cultivated races. Using 125 recombinant inbred lines (RILs) derived from a cross between an Indica cultivar of *O. sativa* and a strain of *O. rufipogon* carrying some Japonica-like characteristics, we mapped 147 markers, mostly RFLPs, on 12 chromosomes. Thirty-seven morphological and physiological quantitative traits were evaluated, and QTLs for 24 traits were detected. The mapped loci showed a tendency to form clusters that are composed of QTLs of the domestication-related traits as well as Indica/Japonica diagnostic traits. QTLs for perennial/annual type differences did not cluster. This cluster phenomenon could be considered “multifactorial linkages” followed by natural selection favoring co-adapted traits. Further, it is possible that the clustering phenomenon is partly due to pleiotropy of some unknown key factor(s) controlling various traits through diverse metabolic pathways. Chromosomal regions where QTL clusters were found coincided with the regions harboring genes or gene blocks where the frequency of cultivar-derived alleles in RILs is higher than expected. This distortion may be partly due to uncon-

scious selection favoring cultivated plant type during the establishment of RILs.

Keywords Rice · QTL analysis · Gene cluster · Domestication · Indica-Japonica differences

Introduction

Crops are genetically similar to their wild progenitors and compatible with them when hybridized. Both wild and domesticated races belong to one biological species sharing a common primary gene pool, though they usually have different species names (Harlan 1975). This holds true in rice. Cultivated rice of Asiatic origin, *Oryza sativa* L., and its wild progenitor, *O. rufipogon* Griff., belong to a single biological species (Oka 1988). Studies on inter- and intra-specific variation based on isozyme and molecular markers have clearly demonstrated that *O. sativa* and *O. rufipogon* are genetically very similar and that the genetic diversity of the former represents a part of diverse gene pool of the latter (Second 1985; Dally and Second 1990; Sano and Sano 1990; Sun et al. 2001).

Classification of *O. sativa* into Indica and Japonica types has been supported based on hybrid sterility (Kato et al. 1930), morpho-physiological traits (Oka 1958), isozymes (Second 1982; Glaszmann 1987) and various molecular markers (Wang and Tanksley 1989; Dally and Second 1990; Second and Wang 1992; Zhang et al. 1992; Ishii et al. 1995, 1996). *O. rufipogon* is widely distributed in the marshy areas in tropical Asia and Oceania. It contains a large amount of within-species genetic variability and tends to differentiate into the perennial and annual ecotypes (Sano and Morishima 1982; Morishima et al. 1984). Thus, within this *sativa/rufipogon* species complex, besides differentiation towards domestication, two other directions of differentiation have occurred, namely, differentiation into Indica and Japonica types in cultivated races, and differentiation from the perennial to annual ecotypes in wild races.

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Although these different differentiation processes must have been initiated independently in time and space, and each may have occurred more than once, different driving forces might have been superimposed on each other during the evolutionary history, resulting in the complex pattern of diversity in rice. For example, the tendency of Indica/Japonica differentiation described first in cultivated rice was also found to occur in wild rice, though not as conspicuously as in cultivars (Second 1985; Morishima and Gadrinab 1987; Sano et al. 1989; Chen et al. 1993; Cai et al. 1995; Doi et al. 2000). Wild rice populations growing in the northern fringe of its distribution tend to carry Japonica-specific genes or characteristics. Differentiation from perennial to annual type occurred not only within wild races but also can be found during the domestication process. To obtain a clearer understanding of rice evolution, we conducted research into the genetic bases underlying the three types of differentiation mentioned above.

The differences between species or ecotypes can be understood in the context of a multi-locus or multi-character system in evolution. In other words, non-random association of characters (or genes) differing among related taxa characterizes the essential nature of differentiation. Evolution from wild to cultivated rice led to "the adaptive syndrome of domestication" (Harlan 1975) common to many cereals. This adaptive syndrome includes loss of seed shedding, rapid and uniform germination, increased seed production and more determinate growth. In cultivated races, Japonica type is distinguished from Indica type by a higher resistance to potassium chlorate (KClO₃) solution, higher tolerance to low temperature and longer apiculus hair (Oka 1958). The perennial and annual ecotypes in wild races are characterized by a set of life-history traits: the perennial habit is associated with vigorous vegetative growth, low seed production, late flowering and allogamy, whereas the annual habit is associated with high seed production, high seed dispersal ability, early flowering and autogamy. Thus, the variation in reproductive system and mating system is associated in wild rice.

Most of the phenotypic characteristics associated with the differentiation mentioned above are quantitative traits. The objective of the study reported here was to map the quantitative trait loci (QTLs) responsible for differentiation in rice to elucidate the genetic bases of character association. A mapping population used for this study consisted of recombinant inbred lines (RILs) derived from a cross between an Indica cultivar and a Chinese wild rice strain. This wild rice strain, which is perennial and carries some Japonica-specific genes and characteristics, was selected as a parent to provide a sufficient level of polymorphism with Indica type of *O. sativa*. Almost all of the traits of interest were expected to segregate in this mapping population.

Materials and methods

Plant materials

A strain of Asian common wild rice (*Oryza rufipogon* Griff.), W1944, which is a perennial and partially outbreeding strain originally collected in China, was crossed with the Indica cultivar (*O. sativa* L.) Pei-kuh from Taiwan. F₁ plants showed partial seed sterility. The F₂ seeds used in the present study were obtained by selfing an F₁ plant.

One hundred eighty-nine F₂ plants were grown in an experimental paddy field at the National Institute of Genetics, Mishima, Japan, in 1990. The progeny of 158 F₂ plants that flowered and set seeds were used for further experiments. Using the single-seed-descent method, we raised the F₃–F₇ generations. Two to three panicles per plant were bagged after panicle emergence, but before flowering, to avoid outcrossing and seed shedding, and seeds from bagged panicles were collected for raising the next generation. The 125 RILs thus obtained were grown in 1995 (F₆), 1996 (F₇) and 1997 (again F₇) following standard cultivation procedures in the experimental paddy field in Mishima, Japan. In 1996, the same set of RILs was planted in an automatic short-day chamber (11.5-h daylength) to assess photoperiod sensitivity. Late-flowering plants in the paddy field (natural daylength) were transferred to the greenhouse to obtain seeds.

Parental polymorphism survey and genotyping of RILs

DNA was extracted from fresh leaves of F₆ plants in 1995. DNA extraction, digestion, electrophoresis and Southern blotting were performed according to the methods described in McCouch et al. (1988). DNA hybridization was carried out using the non-radioactive ECL system (Amersham). A total of 147 markers [121 restriction fragment length polymorphisms (RFLP) markers, 17 isozymes, two protein markers, one random amplified polymorphic DNA (RAPD) marker and six qualitatively recognizable traits] that proved to be polymorphic between the parental strains were examined in all 125 RILs.

The six qualitative traits observed were panicle shape, new tiller emergence after heading, awning, gold furrows on hull, hull color and pericarp color (Table 1). The cultivar parent has a compact panicle, weak tiller emergence after heading, no awn, straw-colored hull and white pericarp. In contrast, the wild parent has an open panicle, vigorous tiller emergence after heading, long awn, black hull and red pericarp. Isozyme assays were performed using the starch and polyacrylamide gel systems described in Ishikawa et al. (1989) and Cai et al. (1995). The method for analysis for the protein marker (salt-soluble storage protein; APAGE1 and APAGE2) is given in Cai and Morishima (1997).

Trait measurements

A total of 34 morphological and physiological traits listed in Table 1 (37 including four different tests of dormancy) were evaluated in the F₇ generation. Five traits (seed shedding, seed dormancy, seed fertility, heading date and KClO₃ resistance) were evaluated twice, in 1996 and 1997 (both F₇). The traits were grouped into four categories: (1) life-history traits, (2) heading behavior, (3) Indica-Japonica diagnostic traits and (4) plant morphology (Table 1). Measurements were taken on an individual basis, and line means were used for the statistical analysis. The evaluation methods for the respective traits are briefly described in Table 1.

Domestication-related traits differing between wild and cultivated rice are essentially life-history traits affecting the propagation and mating systems. Wild rice has a natural propagation ability, either by seeds or by ratoons, conferred by a high degree of seed shedding, strong seed dormancy, long awn, pronounced panicle exertion and regenerating ability (in the perennial type), while cultivated rice has acquired a high and efficient seed pro-

Table 1 Description of qualitative and quantitative traits examined

Trait	Evaluation method ^a
(A) Qualitative traits	
Panicle shape (OP)	Open or compact panicle
New tiller after heading (NT)	Presence or absence of new tiller emergence after heading
Awn (AW)	Presence or absence of awn
Gold furrow on spikelet (<i>gf</i>)	Presence or absence of gold furrows of hull
Hull color (<i>Bh</i>)	Black or yellow hull
Pericarp color (<i>Rc</i>)	Red or white pericarp
(B) Quantitative traits	
Life-history traits	
Seed shedding ^b	Scored as 0-1-2 according to the degree of shedding (1)
Seed dormancy	Germination % evaluated under the four different test conditions (1)
Awn length	Measured for five spikelets
Anther length	Average of ten anthers taken from three flowers
Panicle exertion	Distance from the uppermost leaf neck to the panicle base
Pollen fertility	Percentage of good pollens
Seed fertility ^b	Percentage of filled grains
Ratooning ability	Degree of ratooning after harvest in the field
Root regeneration	Degree of root regeneration from the stem-cut in the wet sand (2)
Shoot regeneration	Degree of shoot regeneration from the stem-cut in the wet sand
Panicle number	Number of panicles per plant
Tiller number	Number of tillers per plant
Panicle/Tiller ratio	Ratio of panicle number to tiller number
Leaf and stem weight	Dry matter weight of leaf and stem per plant
Heading behavior	
Heading date ^b	Number of days from seeding to heading
Basic vegetative phase	Number of days from seeding to heading under short-day length
Photoperiod sensitive phase	Difference between heading date '97 (DTH) and basic vegetative phase (BVP)
Temperature sensitive phase	Difference in DTH between 2 years
Indica/Japonica-related traits	
KClO ₃ resistance ^b	Degree of resistance of the seedlings to KClO ₃ solution (3)
Apiculus hair length	Hair length on the apiculus of spikelet (3)
Germination speed	Germination % at 2 days after soaking (3)
Low temperature resistance	Degree of injury of seedlings treated by low temperature (3)
Panicle base to lowest branch	Distance from panicle neck to the lowest branch base
Plant morphology	
Mesocotyl length	Mesocotyle length germinated in the dark for 10 days
Culm length	Highest culm
Panicle length	Average of three normal panicles
Primary branch number	Number of primary branches per panicle
Secondary branch number	Number of secondary branches per panicle
Spikelet length	Average of ten spikelets
Spikelet width	Width of the widest part of the spikelet
L/W ratio of spikelet	Ratio of length to width of the spikelet
Leaf length	Mean of the first and second top leaves
Leaf width	Width of the widest part of three normal leaves
L/W ratio of leaf	Ratio of length to width of the three leaves

^a For details see. (1), Cai and Morishima (2000); (2), Oka and Morishima (1967); (3), Oka (1958)

^b Evaluated in 2 years

ductivity with many large panicles, high seed fertility and heavy seeds. Wild rice, particularly the perennial type, is partially outbreeding, while cultivated rice is predominantly inbreeding. Since it is difficult to estimate the accurate outcrossing rate for a large number of lines, and given that anther length is positively correlated with outcrossing rate (Oka and Morishima 1967), this latter trait was measured as an indication of outcrossing rate. Because in some characters, such as seed shedding, seed dormancy and regenerating ability, the results of evaluation are greatly affected by the number of days from heading to the test date, each line was harvested 30 days after heading based on the respective line means for heading date. Seed dormancy was evaluated using four different tests in 1997 and are presented in this paper (details in Cai and Morishima 2000).

Heading behavior is an important character in wild and cultivated rice. In rice, growth duration or days to heading from seed-

ing (DTH) is often divided into a basic vegetative phase (BVP) and a photoperiod-sensitive phase (PSP) (Chang et al. 1969). In the present study, BVP was estimated by DTH under the short daylength condition, and PSP was estimated by the difference between DTH under short and long (natural) daylength conditions. The temperature-sensitive phase was estimated by the difference in DTH between 1996 and 1997.

To evaluate Indica versus Japonica variation, we observed the following four diagnostic characters (Oka 1958): KClO₃ resistance, low temperature tolerance, apiculus hair length and germination speed. Further, the parameter distance from the panicle neck to the base of the lowest rachis used by Cheng (1993) was added.

Statistical analysis

A linkage map was constructed using MAPMANAGER (Manly 1993) based on the segregation data of 147 markers in F_6 RILs. To determine primary linkage groups, we took known map information (Causse et al. 1994; Harushima et al. 1998) into account. For the segregation data of each marker, deviation from the Mendelian ratios (1:1) was examined by chi-square tests.

The chromosomal locations of putative QTLs were determined by the interval mapping method using QGENE (Nelson 1997). LOD score > 3.0 was adopted as a probability threshold for significant QTL. Composite interval mapping using MQTL (Tinker and Mather 1995) was also performed for several traits to test the effect of genetic background. Since the two methods yielded essentially the same results, only the results of QGENE are shown. The proportion of observed phenotypic variance explained by each QTL was estimated by the coefficient of determination (R^2). Additive gene effects were estimated, but dominance effects could not be evaluated in RILs. Genotype-by-year interactions were tested using MQTL software for the traits evaluated in 2 years. Prior to the QTL analysis, frequency distributions of phenotypes among RILs were examined in each character, and for seed shedding (index), seed dormancy (germination %), $KClO_3$ resistance (index) and mesocotyle length, which showed high skewness, original data were transformed to log or arcsine.

Results

Segregation of markers in RILs and map construction

One hundred forty-seven markers were mapped on 12 chromosomes. Our linkage map has a total length of 1,192.7 cM (Fig. 1). The number of the markers mapped on their respective chromosomes ranged from 7 (Chr. 10) to 20 (Chr. 1). The order of the RFLP markers largely coincided with results reported by other workers (Causse et al. 1994; Harushima et al. 1998).

The Mendelian factors controlling the following six qualitative characters were mapped. Panicle shape (OP) was found to be linked to *Est10* on chromosome 1. Since previously identified loci for panicle shape (spreading panicle) are located on chromosome 4 (*spr1*, Kinoshita and Takamura 1986; *Spr3*, Eiguchi and Sano 1990), this might be a different locus. New tiller emergence after heading (NT) was mapped on the end of long arm of chromosome 6. The AW locus controlling the presence or absence of awn in this cross was mapped in the middle of long arm of chromosome 9. A gene for black hull segregating in this cross was mapped on chromosome 5; this is most probably *Bhb* (one of the three complementary genes controlling black hull) because the genotype of the wild parent should be *Bha Bhb Bhc* and that of cultivar parent may be *Bha bhb Bhc* (=Ph) (Maekawa et al. 1981). The locus for gold furrows on the hull (*gf*) was mapped on chromosome 1, and it is probably *gf2* which has been assigned to chromosome 1 but not yet mapped (Sanchez and Khush 1994). The second locus of salt-soluble protein (APAGE2) was mapped on chromosome 11. One RAPD marker (RB1) linked to a sterility gene (our unpublished data) was located in the middle of long arm of chromosome 1. Two isozyme loci, *Mal3* and *Amp7*, were newly mapped on chromosomes 1 and 6, respectively.

Segregation ratios of two parental alleles deviated significantly from the 1:1 ratio that is theoretically expected in RILs at many loci. Among 147 markers, 76 (52%) showed an excess of cultivar-derived alleles and 17 (12%) showed an excess of wild rice-derived alleles at the significance level of $P < 0.001$. The frequencies of cultivar-derived alleles at respective markers are shown in parenthesis (Fig. 1). Distorted allele frequencies were observed over all 12 chromosomes with 30% (Chr. 12) to 75% (Chr. 5) of the mapped marker loci.

Detection of putative QTLs

The quantitative traits observed generally showed nearly normal distributions among RILs. However, seed shedding, seed dormancy, shoot regeneration index, germination speed and mesocotyle length distorted towards the cultivar-parent type. Log-transformed data were used for seed shedding and mesocotyle length, and arcsine-transformed data were used for seed dormancy. For shoot regeneration and germination speed, the original data were used because scale transformation did not improve the frequency distribution pattern. Transgressive segregation was observed for heading date.

The association between phenotype and marker genotype was investigated using the interval mapping method. Among 37 traits examined, 24 traits revealed significant QTLs at the level of LOD > 3.0. Chromosomal regions of 143 QTLs identified are shown with 1.0-LOD supporting confidence intervals (vertical bar, Fig. 1). QTLs for different traits closely located on the chromosome map were represented in a group corresponding to a confidence interval drawn so as to include all their 1.0-LOD supporting confidence intervals.

The distributions of the percentage of observed phenotypic variance explained by each QTL (PVE) in respective traits are shown (Table 2). PVE were mostly less than 25%. Two loci with large effects, one for awn length (73%) and the other for ratooning ability (36%), were mapped at the locations of AW (Chr. 9) and NT (Chr. 6) which we used as qualitative markers, respectively.

The number of QTLs per trait varied markedly. One to six QTLs were detected for 16 traits and more than ten QTLs for 8 traits. Among the various domestica-

Fig. 1 Linkage map of rice based on RILs of the cross Pei-kuh × W1944 and locations of putative QTLs (LOD > 3.0) affecting 24 traits. *Figures in parenthesis following respective markers to the left of chromosomes show the frequencies of the cultivar-derived allele in which red and blue figures stand for significant excess and deficiency from the theoretical ratio of 0.5, respectively.* Approximate positions of centromeres are indicated by the *spindle symbol* according to Singh et al. (1996). *Trait code to the right of chromosomes can be found in Table 2 (red, domestication-related traits; blue, Indica/Japonica traits; black, heading behavior; green, morphology).* *Underlined QTLs signify those for which gene effect showed the opposite direction expected from the parental phenotypes.* *Vertical bars to the right of chromosomes indicate QTLs defined by the 1.0 LOD supporting confidence intervals*

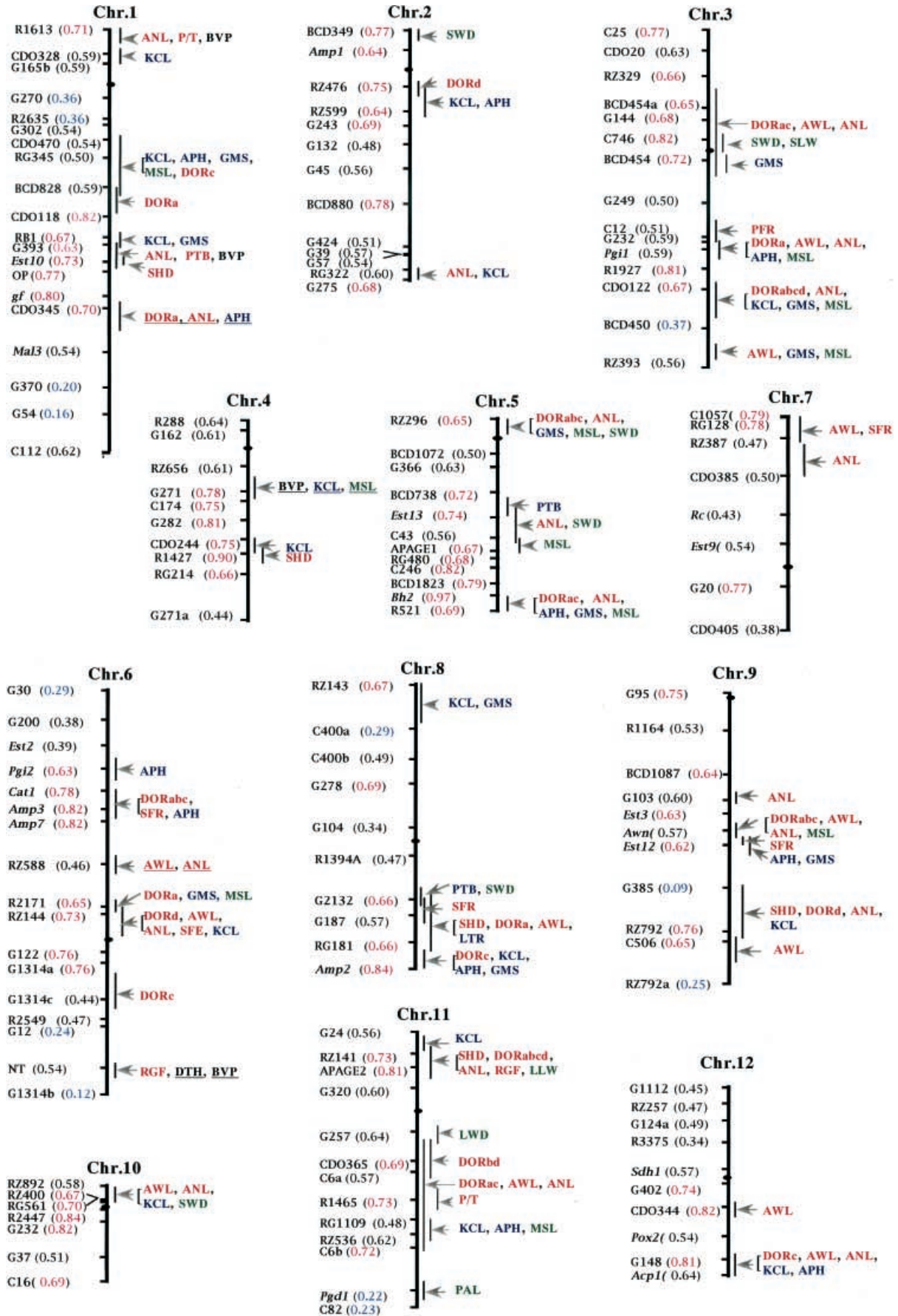


Table 2 Percentages of observed phenotypic variance explained by each QTL for 24 traits

Trait (Code)	Percentage													Total no. of QTLs
	12	14	16	18	20	22	24	26	28	30	32	>35		
Life-history traits														
Seed shattering '96 (SHD)	1	3	1											5
Seed dormancy (DOR) ^a : a		2	4	3	1	2		1						13
b		3	2		1									6
c		2	2	1	2	3		1		1				12
d		1	1	2	1					1				6
Awn length (AWL)		7	1		2	1		1				1		13
Anther length (ANL)		4	3		5	4	3	1			1			20
Pollen fertility (PFR)		1												1
Seed fertility '97 (SFR)			1	2	1		1							5
Ratooning ability (RGF)	1											1		2
Panicle/tiller ratio (P/T)		1	1											2
Heading behavior														
Heading date '97 (DTH)		1	1											1
Basic vegetative phase (BVP)	2	1	1											4
Indica/Japonica diagnostic traits														
KClO ₃ resistance '96 (KCL)	1	4	5	3	1		2							16
Apiculus hair length (APH)	2	3	3		1		1	1						11
Germination speed (GMS)	1	4	4		1	1								11
Low temperature resistance (LTR)	1													1
Panicle base to lowest branch (PTB)	3													3
Plant morphology														
Mesocotyl length (MSL)	6		3		2									11
Panicle length (PAL)				1										1
Spikelet width (SWD)	2	1	1	2										6
L/W ratio of spikelet (SLW)		1												1
Leaf width (LWD)	1													1
L/W ratio of leaf (LLW)	1													1

^a Germination percentage evaluated at 30 days after heading for hulled seeds (a), 30 days after heading for de-hulled seeds (b), 60 days after heading for hulled seeds (c) and 60 days after heading for de-hulled seeds (d).

tion-related traits, seed dormancy, awn length and anther length had a large number of QTLs. Another, and probably the most important character for domestication, seed shedding, proved to be controlled by a relatively small number of loci (five). Regarding perennial/annual variation, two QTLs were detected for ratooning ability in the field and zero for regenerating ability of excised stem cut. Two QTLs were found for panicle number / tiller number (degree of sexual/vegetative reproduction). Regarding heading behavior, one and four QTLs were detected for days to heading and basic vegetative phase, respectively. No QTL for photoperiod and temperature sensitivity were detected. This may be because the wild parent is photoperiod sensitive and the late flowering plants were selected against during establishing RILs.

Among five Indica/Japonica diagnostic traits, KClO₃ resistance, apiculus hair length and germination speed had between 11 and 16 QTLs, in contrast to the other two traits, low-temperature tolerance and distance from panicle base to the lowest branch, which were controlled by one and three QTLs, respectively.

Size differences between the parents seemed to be controlled by a relatively small number of genes except for seed width (6 QTLs) and mesocotyl length (11

QTLs). Five morphological traits failed to reveal QTLs at the significance level of LOD>3.0.

Distribution of QTLs on the 12 chromosomes is summarized with LOD values in Table 3. The number of QTLs detected on each chromosome varied from 3 (Chr. 7) to 21 (Chr. 11). This distribution significantly deviated from the values expected on the basis of the length of the respective chromosomes (chi-square = 71.9, $P < 0.0001$). In particular, chromosome 8 carried a much larger number of QTLs than expected.

For most QTLs, parental alleles had the expected effect on traits. For example, alleles from the wild parent increased wild traits such as awn length and seed dormancy, while alleles from the cultivar parent had the opposite effect. However, a few QTLs exhibited effects in the opposite direction from that expected. For example, alleles from the wild parent decreased awn length and seed dormancy, and alleles from the cultivar parent had the opposite effect. These QTLs (10) were found to concentrate in the long arm of chromosome 1 and 4, and in both arms of chromosome 6 (underlined in Fig. 1).

Genotype-by-year interactions were analyzed for seed shedding, seed fertility and KClO₃ resistance in 1996 and 1997. No significant interactions were detected.

Table 3 Distribution of QTLs on 12 chromosomes (LOD scores are shown)

Trait code ^a	Chromosome												Total no.
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
SHD	3.36			3.37				3.70	3.97		3.85		5
DORa	3.68		4.92		5.52	4.17		3.64	5.40		3.76		13
	3.22		3.46		4.45	4.45					4.17		
DORb			3.35		3.78	3.27				3.92	4.67		6
											3.48		
DORc	3.09		5.68		5.71	7.97		5.24	3.66		4.60	3.10	12
			6.92		4.75	3.97					5.12		
DORd		4.37	3.14				4.60			5.02	8.18		6
											3.78		
AWL			3.59			3.36	3.88	7.04	29.40	3.24	5.92	3.27	13
			4.99			3.40			3.34			5.11	
			3.29										
ANL	5.72	5.19	3.98		5.94	3.63	3.56		3.46	6.28	6.53	5.18	20
	8.49		5.10		3.29	4.11			3.45		6.28		
	4.85		6.87		4.80				5.72				
PFR			3.06										1
SFR						3.82	3.17	3.18	4.58				5
						3.54							
RGF						10.28					3.09		2
P/T	3.60										3.39		2
DTH						3.58							1
BVP	3.91			3.05		4.36							4
	3.39												
KCL	3.78	4.13	3.83	3.68		3.89		3.38	3.42	3.64	4.53	4.82	16
	4.91	4.18		4.58				6.40			3.04		
	6.52												
APH	3.11	3.76	6.88		3.63	4.04		4.54	6.14		3.08	3.99	11
	3.23					3.53							
GMS	3.80		3.81		3.44	3.77		3.45	3.80				11
	3.37		5.99		5.13			3.43					
			3.22										
LTR								3.03					1
PTB	3.26				3.09			3.21					3
MSL	3.02		3.11	3.34	4.06	4.31			4.21		5.40		11
			5.51		3.03								
			3.04		3.10								
PAL											4.72		1
SWD		4.46	4.77		3.14			4.60		3.51			6
					3.20								
SLW			3.75										1
LWD											3.19		1
LLW											3.00		1
Total no.	19	6	24	5	17	20	3	13	15	4	21	6	153

^a See Table 2 for abbreviations and code for DOR

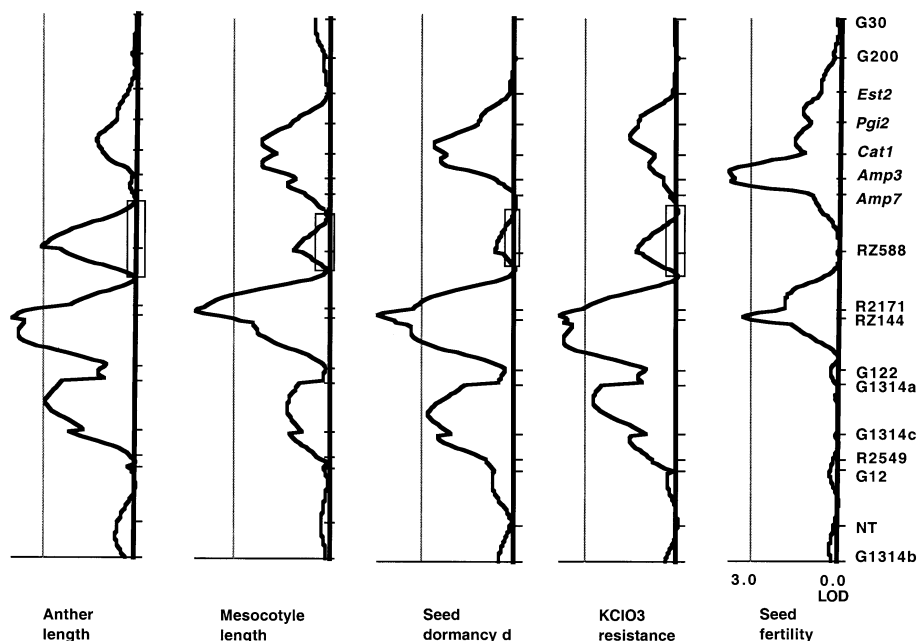
Gene clusters

Genomic regions of the QTLs of various traits were compared. QTLs for different traits were often mapped on the same or adjacent intervals, forming several clusters over the 12 chromosomes (Fig. 1). To test whether or not QTLs were randomly distributed along a chromosome, we carried out the null hypothesis in a Poisson

goodness of fit. The chi-square test indicated that the distribution of QTLs on each chromosome was nonrandom except for chromosome 5.

QTLs for domestication-related traits (shown in red in Fig. 1) tended to be concentrated on particular regions of chromosomes 3, 6, 8, 9, 11 and 12. Smaller but similar clusters were found in other regions. Further, QTLs for Indica/Japonica diagnostic characters (blue in Fig. 1)

Fig. 2 LOD profiles for QTLs of five traits along chromosome 6. *Abscissa* indicates LOD value. The regions on the chromosomes indicated by *rectangles* signify those in which the direction of gene effect is opposite to that expected from the parental phenotypes



tended to be mapped near the above-mentioned clusters. For instance, the distal end of the long arm of chromosome 8 harbors QTLs for domestication-related traits (SHD, DOR, AWL, SFR) as well as Indica/Japonica QTLs (KCL, APH, GMS, LTR, PTB). QTLs for mesocotyl length (MSL) also tended to be part of the clusters. Near the centromere of chromosome 3 and in the middle of the long arm of chromosome 11, the LOD profile of seed dormancy, awn length and anther length showed contiguously distributed multi-peaks. Whether there are several linked QTLs or a broad region (shown by a confidence interval in Fig. 1) affecting the trait is not known from the present study.

Several traits, each controlled by more than 11 QTLs (DOR, AWL, ANL, KCL, APH, GMS, MSL), were found to exhibit a similar LOD profile along a chromosome. As an example, LOD profiles for anther length, dormancy, KClO_3 resistance and mesocotyle length along chromosome 6 are shown (Fig. 2). Awn length, apiculus hair length and seed width also showed a similar pattern. In these traits, QTLs detected near marker RZ588 on chromosome 6 consistently showed a different direction of genic effect from QTLs in other regions. Seed fertility given in Fig. 2 for comparison, however, showed a quite different pattern. These results suggest that an unknown key factor with pleiotropic effect is involved in the expression of several traits.

The locations of the gene clusters mentioned above were not near the centromeres. Rather, they seemed to be in the regions where cultivar-derived alleles significantly exceeded wild alleles in frequencies. The predominance of cultivar-derived alleles in this population may be accounted for by, in addition to segregation distortion usually observed in the F_2 , the selective advantage of the plants with cultivar-like traits during estab-

Table 4 Frequencies of cultivar-derived alleles observed in F_2 (estimated from the genotypes of the mixed seeds on F_2 plants) and F_7 RILs for 12 isozyme and two coloration genes. Figures in the parentheses are the chromosome number

Loci	F_2	F_7	Difference ^a
Loci linked to domestication QTLs			
<i>Acp1</i> (12)	0.50	0.64	*
<i>Amp2</i> (8)	0.79	0.84	NS
<i>Amp3</i> (6)	0.49	0.82	**
<i>Bh</i> (5)	0.68	0.97	**
<i>Cat1</i> (6)	0.71	0.78	NS
<i>Pgi1</i> (3)	0.62	0.59	NS
Loci unlinked to domestication QTLs			
<i>Amp1</i> (2)	0.65	0.64	NS
<i>Est2</i> (6)	0.45	0.39	NS
<i>Est9</i> (7)	0.57	0.54	NS
<i>Pgd1</i> (11)	0.24	0.22	NS
<i>Pgi2</i> (6)	0.65	0.63	NS
<i>Pox2</i> (12)	0.61	0.54	NS
<i>Rc</i> (7)	0.45	0.43	NS
<i>Sdh1</i> (12)	0.52	0.57	NS

^a Difference between F_2 and F_7 . * significant at 5%; ** significant at 1%; NS, non-significant

lishment of RILs. Data on the allele frequencies of some isozyme and pigmentation genes observed for F_2 are available. Table 4 shows a comparison of allele frequencies between F_2 and F_7 RILs. Six marker loci linked to domestication QTLs tended to show an increase in cultivar alleles from the F_2 to F_7 generation. In contrast, eight marker loci unlinked to domestication QTLs did not show such a trend. This suggests that

gene blocks of domestication-related QTLs carrying cultivar-alleles might have been favored through unconscious selection.

Discussion

Related species or ecotypes can be recognized by a set of traits or genes in which the states of different traits or alleles at different loci are non-randomly associated with each other; these association patterns characterize the taxa. Major factors causing such non-random association or gametic disequilibrium are natural selection for co-adapted traits, linkage, pleiotropy and/or the founder effect (Hedrick et al. 1979). Though these factors are barely distinguishable, comparison of association patterns between different generations could be an effective approach to dissect its genetic mechanism. Non-random associations that exist in nature and disappear in the interpopulation F_2 generation are largely the products of natural selection for co-adapted traits. On the other hand, those remaining in the F_2 (so-called character coherence at the phenotypic level) may be due to pleiotropy or close linkage. Recent advances in genome analysis enabled us to open the door to look into the genetic bases of character association at the genic level.

Classical evidence for character coherence was reported by Clausen and Hiesey (1958) in *Potentilla glandulosa*. In the F_2 population of an interracial cross, they found that most pairs of characters showed weak but significant correlations in such a way as observed between the two parents in nature. Grant (1981) inferred that the character coherence is due to "multifactorial linkages". It is a phenomenon inevitably caused by the random distribution of multiple factors over the "limited number" of chromosomes determining the differences of two or more quantitative traits. Some of the genes for different traits occur on the same chromosome. Grant (1981) described that "all multifactorial characters (quantitative traits) differentiating the two races or species are expected to be tied together in an interlocking system of weak linkages". Another example of character coherence was reported by Joly and Sarr (1985); they found a preferential association of characters in the progeny of a cross between pearl millet (*Pennisetum typhoides*) and its wild relatives and discussed a role for natural selection, which supposedly worked on the gametophyte to preserve the domestication syndrome.

The recently observed clustering of functionally related genes has been of great interest in many species. Koinange et al. (1996) found that the distribution of the domestication syndrome genes in common bean appears to be concentrated on specific genomic regions. Khavkin and Coe (1997) examined the map locations of many maize genes reported to date and pointed out that not only QTLs but also classical mutant genes for growth or development and homeotic genes mapped with cDNA are distributed non-randomly in gene clusters along the ten maize chromosomes. This cluster phenomenon was

explained by the adaptive significance of the functional gene network. In rice, Xiong et al. (1999) and Bres-Patry et al. (2001) performed QTL analysis of domestication-related traits using the crosses between *O. sativa* × *O. rufipogon* and between *O. sativa* × weedy type rice, respectively. Both studies demonstrated clusters of QTLs related to domestication, though a comparison between their results and ours is difficult due to insufficient common markers.

Regarding the three types of differentiation targeted in the present study (wild/cultivated types, perennial/annual types, and Indica/Japonica types), a number of QTLs responsible for wild/cultivated differentiation as well as for Indica/Japonica differentiation were identified, and clustering phenomena were demonstrated.

As reviewed by Oka (1988), domestication syndromes or character associations differentiating wild and cultivated rice are mostly broken in the F_2 of a cross between wild and cultivated plants. In our RILs, trait associations characterizing the two parents were partly significant but generally weak (data not shown). This may imply that non-random character associations differentiating wild and cultivated rice are mainly due to natural selection for co-adapted traits and not due to linkage or pleiotropy of a few genes. Gene clusters for the domestication syndrome are probably due to multifactorial linkages as argued by Grant (1981), followed by natural selection favoring co-adapted gene blocks. Pernes (1983), predicted that linkages of the components of the domestication syndrome could be adaptive, particularly in outbreeding species in which the recovery of cultivated type following frequent outcrossing between wild and cultivated forms might be facilitated by such linkages. In rice, though the current domesticates are predominantly inbreeding, natural hybridization must have played an important role in the domestication process, preserving chromosome blocks carrying co-adapted genes.

In Indica/Japonica hybrids of rice cultivars, character associations differentiating the two types are broken in the F_2 and tend to recover in later generations (Oka 1988). We detected a number of QTLs affecting Indica/Japonica diagnostic characters such as KCL, APH and GMS and found that those QTLs were distributed over the genome forming the clusters. Unexpectedly, the Indica/Japonica clusters and domestication clusters were mapped on the same or adjacent regions of the chromosomes. QTLs for the traits controlled by multiple factors showed quite similar variation patterns of gene effects along the chromosome (Fig. 2). It should be noted that QTLs for mesocotyl elongation (MSL) in the dark, a trait considered to reflect endogenous hormone level were mapped near QTL clusters. Plant hormones such as abscisic acid and gibberellic acid are known to be responsible for seed dormancy and germination speed (Takahashi 1997). This suggests the possibility that an unknown key factor(s) controlling some metabolic path for differentiation and development of many traits is involved in this clustering phenomenon.

QTLs of a cluster might be loosely linked to each other as argued by Grant (1981), or some of them are functionally co-adapted or some others might be related by unknown factor(s) with pleiotropic effect. Such chromosomal regions are inherited as a block. Since they are distributed throughout the genome, they recombine showing a decrease in character association in the early generations of the hybrid and subsequently tend to recover parental types in the later generations through natural selection and/or some internal mechanism.

Our study failed to elucidate the genetic basis of another targeted differentiation – perennial/annual variation associated with mating system – since few related QTLs were detected. One of the two loci for P/T (proportion of panicle number to tiller number) was mapped together with a locus for BVP near the distal end of short arm of chromosome 1 (flanked with R1613 and CDO328). This might correspond to a QTL reported by Kohn et al. (1997) based on a preliminary study of a cross between an annual and perennial plant of *O. rufipogon*. It was found to be located near G1184Ca and controls several component traits related to perennial/annual differentiation, including heading date. The mapping population used in the present study was probably inappropriate to elucidate the whole scope of perennial versus annual differentiation that primarily occurred in *O. rufipogon*.

Our markers consisted of a number of isozyme and protein genes for which we have conducted a variation survey in many accessions of *O. sativa* and *O. rufipogon*. It enabled us to evaluate the present results by comparison with our previous studies. One of the gene clusters harboring domestication QTLs and Indica/Japonica QTLs was found on the region marked by *Est10* on chromosome 1. *Est10* is a rare isozyme locus known to be diagnostic for distinguishing not only between Indica and Japonica cultivars but also between wild and cultivated races (Wang et al. 1992). This provides evidence that a gene block related to phylogenetic differentiation really exists.

It is known that allelic variations at several isozyme loci such as *Acp1*, *Amp2*, *Cat1*, *Pgi2* and *Pox2* are strongly associated with Indica versus Japonica differentiation (Second 1982; Glaszmann 1987). Our study demonstrated that chromosome regions marked by those diagnostic isozymes harbor Indica/Japonica QTLs. This may explain why independent isozyme loci, that are supposedly neutral, are in a strong gametic disequilibrium state among rice varieties. In contrast, no gene cluster was found near isozyme loci that do not show distinct association with Indica versus Japonica differentiation (*Amp1*, *Mal3*, *Pgd1*, *Sdh1*).

Segregation distortion in rice was recently investigated by molecular markers in different types of populations and crosses, and a number of segregation distortion loci distributed over the genome were postulated (Harushima et al. 1996; Xu et al. 1997; Virk et al. 1998). In RI populations it is difficult to distinguish genetic causes of distorted allele frequencies from environmental ones (Xu et al. 1997). In our RI population, alleles from

the female Indica cultivar parent were generally predominant. Yet, allele distortion in F₂ was not so severe compared with F₇ RI population (Table 4). Segregation distortion in the F₂ might have been blurred in the RI population by various factors. The chromosomal regions showing apparent over-representation of cultivar alleles in RILs were associated with QTL clusters. It can be inferred that a predominance of cultivar-derived alleles might largely reflect its selective advantage under the cultivation environment in which the RI population was developed.

Recent advances in synteny studies suggest the common genes or gene blocks have been conserved in different grass species. QTL studies carried out in several cereal crops have demonstrated that independent domestication of different species involved convergent selection for the domestication syndrome (Paterson et al. 1995). Comparison between our results and the synteny map given by Paterson et al. (1995) suggested that locations of some of our QTLs for seed dormancy, seed shattering and seed width seemed to correspond to the regions harboring QTLs for the same (or related) traits on maize and sorghum chromosomes, although precise examination is difficult due to the insufficient common markers.

QTLs detected in the present study were significant at LOD>3.0 but still putative. To what extent the results obtained from this mapping population can be generalized for understanding the genetic mechanisms in the evolutionary history of rice remains a question. The relative importance of linkage and pleiotropy to explain QTL clusters is also unknown. Further analysis based on a finer map or isogenic lines is necessary to determine the precise location of each QTL.

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