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Multiple factors have shaped the phylogeography of Chinese spiny loach *Cobitis sinensis* in Taiwan as inferred from mitochondrial DNA variation

T.-Y. CHIANG*, H.-D. LIN*, K.-T. SHAO† AND K.-C. HSU†‡

*Department of Life Sciences, Cheng Kung University, Tainan 70101, Taiwan and †Biodiversity Research Center, Academia Sinica, Nankang, Taipei 11529, Taiwan

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Mitochondrial DNA cytochrome b sequences (1140 bp) in 61 specimens of Chinese spiny loach Cobitis sinensis from 12 drainages in Taiwan were identified as two major clades, exhibiting a southern and a northern distribution, north of TzengWen and south of TzengWen (including TzengWen), respectively. The divergence time between these two phylogroups was estimated at 7.34-9.06 million years before present (B.P.), but these two phylogroups were formed c. 3.41-4.23and 2.22-2.75 M B.P., respectively. Moreover, geological events have been recalculated that Taiwan Island emerged above sea level at an estimate of c. 4–5 M B.P., and quickly became its present shape at c. 2 M B.P. through mountain building. These results suggest that these two major clades of C. sinensis in Taiwan might originate from two different continental populations, since the island's initial isolation in the Pliocene. Within southern Taiwan, the initial colonization was hypothesized to be in KaoPing River, followed by its northward dispersal. The high divergence between KaoPing and TzengWen was influenced by glaciations and landforms. Within north Taiwan, the colonization was from the Miaoli Plateau through western Taiwan to north-eastern and northern Taiwan. This dispersal pattern is concordant with the previously proposed hypothesis. Apparently, both geological and phylogeographic evidence suggested that river capture of the upper Takia River by the LanYang River promoted range expansion in freshwater fishes and also indicated that the Central Range within Taiwan did not act as a barrier to the dispersal of C. sinensis. © 2010 The Authors Journal compilation © 2010 The Fisheries Society of the British Isles

Key words: Cobitis sinensis; glacial event; phylogeography; river capture; Taiwan.

INTRODUCTION

Phylogeography is the phylogenetic analysis of intraspecific genealogies in relation to geography and ecology (Avise *et al.*, 1987). Phylogeographic analysis has become a standard method for deciphering the genetic structures of contemporary populations by providing insights into biogeographic patterns of genetic variation (Avise, 2000). Freshwater fishes dwelling in island-like habitats provide ideal models for phylogeographic analysis because these habitats form a natural link between the geographical and biotic evolution of a distributional range. The geological history of basin interconnections reflects the underlying biogeography of a freshwater species,

[‡]Author to whom correspondence should be addressed. Tel.: +886 227 899545; fax: +886 227883463; email: joekchsu@gate.sinica.edu.tw; joekchsu@yahoo.com.tw

because dispersals depend on direct connections between river basins (Bermingham & Martin, 1998; Bernatchez & Wilson, 1998; Aurelle *et al.*, 2002). The phylogeographic analysis of mitochondrial (mt) DNA variability can provide insights into a freshwater species' natural history, including contemporary and historical dispersal patterns (Culling *et al.*, 2006; Chen *et al.*, 2007).

Taiwan is a subtropical island that provides an excellent opportunity to compare contemporary phylogeographic patterns with biogeographic hypotheses. Taiwan is located off the south-eastern coast of mainland China and is separated from China by the shallow Taiwan Strait. Taiwan was first isolated from the mainland by rising sea levels four to five million years before present (M B.P.) and reached its present shape at *c*. 2 M B.P. through mountain building (Ho, 1986; Hsu, 1990; Teng, 1990; Liu *et al.*, 2000). Geological evidence indicates that landbridges connected the island to the Asian continent three to four times, initially in the Pliocene and possibly two to three times in the Pleistocene (Gascoyne *et al.*, 1979; Fairbanks, 1989; Yu, 1995; Huang *et al.*, 1995). At present, the island has numerous topographically, climatically and ecologically diverse habitats (Lin, 1990; Su, 1992).

In addition to geological evidence, biological studies indicate a close evolutionary relationship between Taiwanese and Chinese continental species. Based on ichthyofaunal similarities among rivers of Taiwan and adjacent areas, Oshima (1923) hypothesized that many freshwater fishes migrated to northern or southern Taiwan during one of the glacial periods. Some fishes dispersed from the Indian Region via southern Taiwan, and others dispersed from Eurasia via northern Taiwan. Ota (1991, 1997) also postulated from faunistic analysis that landbridges had connected Taiwan to the Asian continent possibly several times. Both geological and faunal analyses suggested that conspecific populations in Taiwan might consist of multiple evolutionary lineages originating from the Asian continent. Phylogeographic studies also suggest that conspecific populations in Taiwan were founded by different colonization events (Wang et al., 1999; Creer et al., 2001). The KaoPing River in southern Taiwan is possibly the first river to be colonized by ancestral populations, before individuals dispersed northwards to the TzengWen River (Tzeng, 1986; Wang et al., 1999; Liao et al., 2008) and beyond via the Miaoli Plateau to western, north-eastern and northern Taiwan (Wang et al., 1999; Wang et al., 2004).

Taiwanese orogeny (mountain building) uplifted the longitudinal Central Range to almost 4000 m, an event that may have played an important role in isolating populations on either side of the mountains in western and eastern Taiwan. Distribution patterns of freshwater fishes (Tzeng, 1986) and plants (Chou *et al.*, 1999) are highly correlated with the topographical isolation by the Central Range, and studies of the freshwater crab populations show that even the lower elevation of the south-western extension of the Central Range prevents gene flow between populations of lowland species (Shih *et al.*, 2004, 2006). In contrast, other phylogeographic studies indicate that the Central Range was not a major barrier to dispersal between populations of freshwater fishes (Wang *et al.*, 2004). Geological evidence (Lin, 1957) provides a mechanism for the dispersal of the aquatic species from western and eastern Taiwan *via* upland stream capture of the upper Takia River by the LanYang River.

Several biogeographic studies emphasize the importances of vicariances, due to the uplift of the Central Range, and of dispersals from continental populations (Yu, 1995; Hikida & Ota, 1997; Chou & Lin, 1997; Ota, 1997; Toda *et al.*, 1997, 1998; Wang *et al.*, 1999, 2000, 2004; Creer *et al.*, 2001). The present study examines

hypotheses of evolutionary processes that have influenced genetic differentiation among populations of a well-suited model fish, Chinese (or Siberian) spiny loach *Cobitis sinensis* Sauvage & Dabry de Thiersant. This species is restricted to rivers and occurs widely throughout Taiwan. The bottom-dwelling habits of this fish, with its tendency to burrow and its poor swimming ability, probably limit dispersal. The lack of economic importance and the minor use of this species as bait by anglers make it unlikely that population structure has been altered by human-mediated translocations. Thus, it is likely that the genetic structuring of populations reflects river evolution and geological processes, as for other taxa (Wang *et al.*, 1999, 2000, 2004).

This study aimed to examine the phylogeographical pattern, using mitochondrial cytochrome *b* (cyt *b*) gene sequences, of *C. sinensis* populations in Taiwan to address several questions. First was the periodic breach of Taiwan Strait by low sea level an important factor shaping patterns of genetic structure in *C. sinensis*? If landbridges connect the island to the Asian continent four to six times (Gascoyne *et al.*, 1979; Fairbanks, 1989; Yu, 1995; Huang *et al.*, 1995), do distinct lineages exist within Taiwan? If present, did distinct lineages in Taiwan originate from different ancestral populations? Did *C. cinensis* colonize northern Taiwan *via* the Maioli Plateau and the KaoPing River in southern Taiwan, as previously postulated (Wang *et al.*, 1999, 2004) (Fig. 1)? Is the uplifted Central Range a barrier to migration between populations of *C. sinensis* from west to east or *vice versa*? Did the capture of the



FIG. 1. Sampling localities of *Cobitis sinensis* in Taiwan: CK, ChongKang; CS, ChouShi; HL, HouLong; HW, HsuWao; KP, KaoPing; LY, LanYang; SD, SinDian; TA, TaAn; TC, TouCian; TD, TaDu; TK, TaKia; TW, TzengWen. Zoogeographical districts were those defined by Oshima (1923), Tzeng (1986), Wang *et al.* (1999), Wang *et al.* (2000) and Wang *et al.* (2004). ____, the border of each district. Possible freshwater fishes migration routes in Taiwan (___), as proposed by Tzeng (1986), Wang *et al.* (1999) and Wang *et al.* (2004).

upper Takia River by the LangYang River promote population expansion from west to east, as supported by geological evidence (Lin, 1957)?

MATERIALS AND METHODS

POPULATION SAMPLING AND MOLECULAR METHODS

A total of 61 specimens of *C. sinensis* from 12 drainages were sampled over most of the species' range in Taiwan (Fig. 1). Locality data and sample sizes appear in Table I. In the ichthyofauna classification of Taiwan (Oshima, 1923; Tzeng, 1986; Wang *et al.*, 1999, 2000, 2004), these 12 drainages belonged to five ichthyofauna subregions: north-eastern subregion (LanYang and HsuWao), northern subregion (SinDian and TouCian), Miaoli Plateau subregion (ChongKang, HouLong and TaAn), western subregion (Takia, TaDu and ChouShi) and southern subregion (TzengWen ande KaoPing). Fish were collected with seines and lethally anaesthetized with MS-222 (Sigma; www.sigmaaldrich.com). *Paramisgurnus dabryanus* Dabry de Thiersant is closely related to *Cobitis* (Tang *et al.*, 2006) and, hence, was used as an out-group in this study. The related species of *Cobitis, Cobitis lutheri* Rendahl and *Cobitis macrostigma* Dabry de Thiersant, were also used as out-groups.

Samples were stored in 100% ethanol. Genomic DNA was extracted from muscle tissue by the standard protocol of Blin & Stafford (1976). The entire cyt b gene was amplified using polymerase chain reactions (PCR) and sequenced using primers L14724 (5'-GA CTTGAAAAACCACCGTTG-3') and H15915 (5'-CTCCGATCTCCGGATTACAAGAC-3') (Xiao et al., 2001). Each 100 µl PCR reaction mixture contained 10 ng template DNA, 10 µl 10× reaction buffer, 10 µl dNTP mix (10 mM), 10 pmol of each primer and 4 U of Taq polymerase (Promega; www.promega.com). PCR was programmed on an MJ Thermal Cycler as one cycle of denaturation at 95° C for 4 min, 30 cycles of denaturation at 94° C for 45 s, annealing at 48° C for 1 min 15 s and extension at 72° C for 1 min 30 s, followed by 72° C extension for 10 min and 4° C for storage. PCR products were purified by electrophoresis in a 1.0% agarose gel using $1 \times$ tris-acetate-EDTA (TAE) buffer. The gel was stained with ethidium bromide, and the desired DNA band was cut and eluted using the agarose gel purification kit (Qiagen; www.quiagen.com). Products of the cycle-sequencing reactions were run on an ABI 377 automated sequencer (Applied Biosystems; www.appliedbiosystems.com). Chromatograms were checked with CHROMS (Technelysium; www.technelysium.com.au), and sequences were manually edited using BIOEDIT 6.0.7 (Hall, 1999). Sequences were deposited in GenBank under accession numbers AM711121-AM711124, AM910624-AM910633, AM922265-AM922282, AM922487-AM922505 and AM924168-AM924181.

SEQUENCE ALIGNMENT AND PHYLOGENETIC INFERENCES

Nucleotide sequences were aligned using Clustal X 1.81 (Thompson *et al.*, 1997) and corrected by eye. The substitution model used for the phylogenetic reconstructions was estimated with MODELTEST (version 3.06; Posada & Crandall, 1998) using AIC and Bayesian information criteria (BIC) (Posada & Buckley, 2004). The best model selected was GTR. Haplotype genealogy was generated by a neighbour-joining (NJ) analysis with maximum composite likelihood distance model in MEGA4 (Tamura *et al.*, 2007). Maximum-likelihood (ML) trees were made with Data Analysis in Molecular Biology and Evolution (DAMBE 5.0.37; Xia & Xie, 2001). Branch confidence values were estimated using 1000 bootstrap replications. Bayesian inference (BI) phylogenetic inference was performed using MrBayes 3.0b4 (Huelsenbeck & Ronquist, 2001). One million generations were run under the GTR+G+I model of evolution (sample frequency every 100, chain temperature 0.2). The posterior probability values were used as support for the Bayesian topology. Log-likelihood stability was reached after *c.* 35 000 generations, and the first 350 trees were excluded as burn-in. The remaining trees were used to compute a 50% majority rule consensus tree. The number of mutations between DNA haplotypes in pair-wise comparisons was calculated using MEGA4

I AB	ile 1. Sample	s of <i>Cobitis sinensis</i> used to	r mtDNA analyses,	location, abbreviat	ion (Abbr.) and sum	imary statistics	
			Samules eize	Number of	Hanlotvne	Nucleotide div	rersity (%)
Population	Abbr.	Localities	(N)	haplotype	diversity (h)	$ heta_\pi$	$\theta_{\rm w}$
Northern Taiwan			54	46	0.993	1.998	2.331
ChongKang	CK	120° 42′ E; 24° 35′ N	9	9	1.000	1.269	1.537
HouLong	HL	120° 40′ E; 24° 25′ N	9	5	0.933	0.205	0.269
TaAn	TA	120° 41′ E; 24° 15′ N	L	9	0.952	0.615	0.753
TaKia	TK	120° 42′ E; 24° 10′ N	9	5	0.933	0.310	0.384
TaDu	TD	120° 40′ E; 24° 00′ N	9	9	1.000	0.292	0.384
ChouShi	CS	120° 37' E; 23° 45' N	4	2	0.500	0.351	0.383
SinDian	SD	121° 18′ E; 24° 55′ N	4	ŝ	0.833	0.322	0.335
TouCian	TC	120° 50' E; 24° 42' N	4	4	1.000	1.243	1.292
LanYang	LY	121° 15' E; 24° 40' N	5	ŝ	0.700	0.395	0.421
HsuWao	ММ	121° 20′ E; 24° 39′ N	9	9	1.000	0.246	0.269
Southern Taiwan			L	9	0.952	2.059	2.614
TzengWen	ΤW	120° 36′ E; 23° 20′ N	1	1			
KaoPing	KP	120° 38′ E; 23° 10′ N	9	5	0.933	0.784	0.730
Total			61	52	0.994	4.383	5.290

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and was used to construct a minimum spanning network with MINSPNET (Excoffier & Smouse, 1994).

POPULATION STRUCTURE AND PHYLOGEOGRAPHICAL HISTORY

Estimates of haplotype diversity (*h*) (Nei & Tajima, 1983) and nucleotide diversity (θ_{π} , θ_{w}) followed Nei (1987). Interpopulation nucleotide divergence between samples was estimated with D_{a} using DnaSP 4.10.8 (Rozas *et al.*, 2003). The current (θ_{π}) and historical (θ_{w}) genetic diversity were determined in DnaSP. Comparing estimates generated by these two indices provides insight into population dynamics over recent evolutionary history (Templeton, 1993). Differences between these statistics indicate population decline (if $\theta_{\pi} < \theta_{w}$) or growth (if $\theta_{\pi} > \theta_{w}$) (Pearse & Crandall, 2004; Buhay & Crandall, 2005). The hierarchical structure of cyt *b* variation was examined with an analysis of molecular variance (AMOVA, Excoffier *et al.*, 1992) using Arlequin 2.000 (Schneider *et al.*, 2000). This analysis was performed with a K2P distance with the gamma correction ($\alpha = 1.242$) and 20 000 permutations. AMOVA partitions the observed variation among samples into within-population (F_{ST}), within-group (F_{SC}) and among-group (F_{CT}) components.

MDIV (Nielsen & Wakeley, 2001), a Bayesian Markov-chain Monte-Carlo (MCMC) method, was used to estimate the posterior distribution of theta ($\theta = 2N_e u$), the number of migrants per generation ($M = N_e m$, where *m* is migration rate) and divergence time between populations (equations adjusted for mtDNA). MDIV was used to estimate the time to the most recent common ancestor (T_{MRCA}) for all sequences. Five MCMC runs were performed with five million steps each, with a 10% burn-in Bayesian analysis, and were also performed with BEAST 1.3 (Drummond & Rambaut, 2005) to investigate the history of *C. sinensis* in Taiwan. Posterior distributions of parameters were estimated using two independent MCMC analyses of 10 million steps each with a burn-in of 10%. Samples from the two chains, which yield similar results, were combined. Convergence of the chains was checked using TRACER 1.4 (Rambaut & Drummond, 2004), and the effective sample size (ESS) for each parameter exceeded 200. Values of T_{MRCA} using this method were compared with estimates of T_{MRCA} from MDIV.

IM (Hey & Nielsen, 2004) was used to determine whether the observed pattern of genetic variation was a result of historical divergence or limited contemporary migration. IM was used in this instance instead of MDIV because it allowed for asymmetric rates of gene flow and different effective population sizes of the source populations. IM produced similar estimates for each run; parameter estimates fell within the 95% highest posterior densities (HPD) for the parameter estimates from the other runs. The mode and 95% HPD for estimates were used from the run producing the largest ESS (Hey & Nielsen, 2004) for the estimates.

RESULTS

SEQUENCE DIVERSITY

A total of 61 cyt *b* sequences [1140 base pairs (bp)] were obtained from 12 populations of *C. sinensis*. A total of 259 sites were variable, of which 198 were parsimoniously informative. Sequences were A+T (59.0%) rich. Base frequencies were A = 0.274, C = 0.262, G = 0.148 and T = 0.316 overall and A = 0.363, C = 0.279, G = 0.068 and T = 0.289 in third-codon positions. These frequencies were strongly biased against guanine. Nucleotide substitutions were biased towards transitions and with a mean ti:tv ratio of 3:4. Estimates of the current (θ_{π}) and historical (θ_{w}) genetic diversity per sites for each sample indicated that only the KP sample from southern Taiwan showed a pattern of growth ($\theta_{\pi} < \theta_{w}$; Table I).

EVOLUTIONARY RELATIONSHIPS

In the phylogenetic analyses, the use of *P. dabryanus*, *C. lutheri* or *C. macrostigma* produced the same result. The topologies of the ML, NJ and BI trees were identical, with only small differences in bootstrap values (Fig. 2). Fifty-two cyt *b* haplotypes fell into two major lineages; in the consensus NJ tree, the first group contained two samples from the south Taiwan (southern lineage) and the second group contained ten samples from North Taiwan (northern lineage), both with significant bootstrap support. Two sublineages appeared within the north lineage, also with high bootstrap support. The first sublineage included three samples from the Miaoli Plateau, and the second sublineage (non-plateau sublineage) included samples from western, northern and north-eastern Taiwan. The Maioli Plateau sublineage appeared in a basal position. The genealogies of these two sublineages consisted of short branches and little structure. Three minor lineages appeared within the non-plateau sublineage with high bootstrap support, except for eastern sublineage (Fig. 2). Samples from north-eastern and north-eastern Taiwan clustered within a single lineage.

The haplotype network consisted of three levels (Fig. 3) and was largely consistent with the topology of the phylogenetic tree (Fig. 2). Two disjoined clades, 2-1 and 2-2, corresponded to northern and southern lineages, respectively. Within clade 2-1, the north-eastern populations [clade 1-3; LY and HW (see Fig. 1 or Table 1 for abbreviations)] were linked to the northern (clade 1-4; SD & TC) and western (clade 1-2; TK, TD and CS) clades. The northern and Miaoli Plateau clades were located at tip positions, and the north-eastern and western clades were located at internal positions.

POPULATION STRUCTURE

Hierarchical analysis of molecular variance (AMOVA) indicated significant genetic structure at several levels. The hierarchical analysis of F_{ST} revealed that samples of *C. sinensis* were divided into northern, north-eastern, Maioli Plateau, western and southern subregions. The largest amount of genetic variation (84·29%) was distributed among, rather than within groups. The AMOVA indicated that most of the genetic variability could be explained by a single north-south partition (Table II). F_{ST} values were >0·959 between two geographic groups. Large fixation indices were also observed in other models, including three to five groups (Table II; Fig. 2). Most of the genetic variation could be explained at the regional level. Because a deep phylogeographic partition was identified between the southern and northern groups, all subsequent analyses of population history were conducted separately for each group, as well as for the total sample.

To assess genetic isolation, the IM programme was used to calculate the amount and direction of gene flow among populations. Within the north lineage, these results suggested asymmetric gene flow from source populations. Gene flow from western to north-eastern populations (M = 0.010-0.15) was higher than that from north-eastern to western populations (M = 0.05-0.10). The results also indicated low levels of reciprocal gene flow between northern areas and the Miaoli Plateau. Gene flow between populations on the Miaoli Plateau and western areas as well as between northern and north-eastern areas was higher than other comparisons. Conversely, the magnitude of gene flow between western and north-eastern populations was moderate. The results of the nested clade analysis and IM analysis indicate migratory routes from Miaoli Plateau through the Takia River to western Taiwan, then to





FIG. 3. Minimum spanning network of mitochondrial DNA cytochrome b haplotypes in Taiwan Cobitis sinensis populations. The two major mtDNA clades (northern and southern) were treated as separate networks. Numbers at nodes indicate number of nucleotide changes between haplotypes. (See Fig. 1 for sampling site abbreviations.)

Clade	Hierarchical groups	% Variance	Statistics	Р	
Five ichthyological subregions (northern, north-eastern, Miaoli, western and southern)					
	Among regions	84.29	$F_{\rm SC} = 0.516$	<0.001	
	Among populations in regions	8.11	$F_{\rm ST} = 0.924$	<0.001	
	Within populations	7.60	$F_{\rm CT} = 0.843$	<0.001	
Total	Among regions (northern clade v. southern clade)	82.77	$F_{\rm SC} = 0.761$	<0.001	
	Among populations in regions	13.11	$F_{\rm ST} = 0.959$	<0.001	
	Within populations	4.12	$F_{\rm CT} = 0.828$	<0.001	
North	Among regions (Miaoli Plateau v. non-plateau)	64.74	$F_{\rm SC} = 0.536$	<0.001	
	Among populations in regions	18.89	$F_{\rm ST} = 0.836$	<0.001	
	Within populations	16.38	$F_{\rm CT} = 0.647$	<0.010	
Four ic Miaoli)	hthyological subregions in northern Ta	aiwan (north, nor	th-eastern, weste	ern and	
	Among regions	74.47	$F_{\rm SC} = 0.376$	<0.001	
	Among populations in regions	9.60	$F_{\rm ST} = 0.841$	<0.001	
	Within populations	15.92	$F_{\rm CT} = 0.745$	<0.001	
Three ic	chthyological subregions in non-plateau	subclade (north; n	orth-eastern and	western)	
	Among regions	48.83	$F_{\rm SC} = 0.406$	<0.001	
	Among populations in regions	20.78	$F_{\rm ST} = 0.696$	<0.001	
	Within populations	30.39	$F_{\rm CT} = 0.488$	<0.001	

TABLE II. Analysis of molecular variance (AMOVA)

Analyses were performed separately for populations in each clade.

the Takia River in north-eastern Taiwan and to north-eastern and northern Taiwan. Within southern Taiwan, the IM analysis indicated no gene flow between KaoPing and TzenWen rivers (Fig. 1).

COALESCENT ANALYSES AND DIVERGENCE TIMES

The mtDNA cyt b evolutionary rate could not be estimated for C. sinensis because of a lack of a calibration point. Therefore, estimates of T were converted to real time by assuming a range of neutral mutation rates in proxy species. A divergence rate of 0.68 - 0.84% per million years was previously estimated for *Cobitis* (Perdices & Doadrio, 2001; Doadrio & Perdices, 2005; Culling et al., 2006). Divergence between the northern and southern clades was T = 2.38 (MDIV; 95% HPD T = 0.8 - 3.6). Hence, the northern and southern lineages diverged from one another at c. 7.330-9.060 M B.P. The estimate of divergence time between the two subclades within the northern clade was T = 0.17 (95% HPD T = 0.1-0.8) and represented 0.253-0.314 M B.P. The divergence time estimate between the two populations in the southern clade was T = 2.78 (95% HPD T = 1.89 - 4.36) and represented 2.050–2.540 M B.P. The Bayesian approach implemented in BEAST yielded an estimate T_{MRCA} for the whole complex at 9.22–11.43 M B.P. (CI: 6.11–13.03 M B.P.), whereas the likelihood approach implemented in MDIV estimated T_{MRCA} at 9.25-11.47 M B.P. The T_{MRCA} of northern and southern clades was estimated at 2.22–2.75 M B.P. and 3.41-4.23 M B.P., respectively.

DISCUSSION

ORIGINATION FROM TWO CONTINENTAL POPULATIONS IN THE PLIOCENE

Taiwan Strait is 70-100 m deep, 130-250 km wide and separates the island of Taiwan from continental China. Previous phylogeographic studies of Taiwanese species have estimated the colonization dates during the landbridge phase in the Pleistocene for freshwater fishes (0.055 Ma for Zacco pachycephalus (Günther), see Wang et al., 1999; 0.1–1 M B.P. for Acrossocheilus paradoxus (Günther), see Wang et al., 2000) and frogs (0.15-0.24 M B.P. for Rhacophorus taipeianus and 0.38-0.45 M B.P. for Rhacophorus moltrechti, see Yang et al., 1994). Other phylogeographic studies, however, indicate that Taiwan was colonized by ancestral populations >2 M B.P. (Pliocene; 5.8 M B.P. for the lizard Takydromus sauteri, Lin et al., 2002; 5.7 M B.P. for the crab Candidiopotamon rathbunae, Shih et al., 2006; 2-3 M B.P. for the snake Trimeresurus stejnegeri, Creer et al., 2001). Many species could easily have migrated from the mainland to the island of Taiwan during Pliocene and Pleistocene glaciations as a result of the lowered sea level (Huang et al., 1995). If a Pleistocene colonization by C. sinensis is assumed, the substitution rate for the cyt b gene would be three-fold larger (3.14%) sequence divergence per million years) than values obtained in other studies of *Cobitis* species (0.68–0.84% sequence divergence per million years; Perdices & Doadrio, 2001; Doadrio & Perdices, 2005; Culling et al., 2006). Therefore, the present dataset indicates that C. sinensis most probably colonized the island during Pliocene, not Pleistocene, glaciations. An earlier molecular clock calibration indicates that the northern and southern lineages in Taiwan arose c. 2.22-2.75 and 3.41-4.23 M B.P., respectively. These estimates imply that the island has been populated by C. sinensis for more than four million years, a date that matches the age of the uplift of the island (4-5 M B.P.; Hsu, 1990; Teng, 1990; Liu et al., 2000). The geological history of the area indicates that a landbridge connected the island to the Asian continent initially in the Pliocene (Huang et al., 1995). Phylogeographic and floristic analyses (Shen, 1994; Lin et al., 2002; Shih et al., 2006) also indicate that Taiwan Island has had a biological history of c. 5 M B.P. Tao & Hu (2001) also found that Taiwan had Pliocene fossil teeth of several fish species. Therefore, a Pliocene colonization of the island by C. sinensis represents one of the earliest records of freshwater fishes on the island.

Lin (1957) proposed that the Formosa Bank, a ridge located in the Taiwan Strait in an area north of TzengWen, influenced animal migrations during glaciations. The Bank divided the glacial landbridge into northern and southern drainages, so that northern rivers flowed northwards into the Pacific Ocean and southern rivers flowed southwards into the South China Sea. Because of the topographical isolation by this bank, Lin (1957) suggested that the Taiwanese fauna was separated into two regions north and south of TzengWen (including TzengWen). The present study found that the distributions of the northern and southern clades of *C. sinensis* in Taiwan are consistent with isolation by the Formosa Bank. The present results agree with those of Oshima (1923), who considered that the freshwater fishes in southern Taiwan originated from the Indian Region and those in northern Taiwan from the Euroasiatic Region. This dispersal and colonization hypothesis agrees with the results of previous studies (Oshima, 1923; Tzeng, 1986; Wang *et al.*, 1999) and with the current concepts of the tectonic evolution of the island of Taiwan (Lin, 1957).

PHYLOGEOGRAPHY OF C. SINENSIS

The mtDNA genealogy and network were mostly consistent with the subregions defined based on their ichthyofauna (Fig. 1; Tzeng, 1986; Wang et al., 2004). The shape of the haplotype network is consistent with a relatively recent population expansion in the north clade, in which several localized lineages are connected by short branches to the most common haplotypes (Fig. 3). In the phylogenetic analysis, the Maioli Plateau sublineage appeared in a basal position within the northern lineage and implies that these are the oldest populations in the last region isolated from mainland in northern Taiwan. The phylogeography of the cyprinid fish Varicorhinus barbatulus (Pellegrin), 1908 (Wang et al., 2004) also indicates that the Miaoli Plateau region was the last region isolated from the mainland. According to coalescence theories, the interior position in the minimum spanning network and high frequencies of the western subregion clade, 1-2, indicates that it was probably an ancestral clade and may represent relict ancestral haplotypes (Crandall & Templeton, 1993). The phylogenetic analyses (Figs 2 and 3) suggest that dispersals occurred from the Miaoli Plateau through the Takia area to central western Taiwan and then from the Takia River to north-eastern (LanYang and HsuWao rivers) and northern (SinDian and TouCian rivers) areas (Fig. 1). Estimates of gene flow also support a migratory route in North Taiwan clade from Miaoli Plateau via the Takia River to western, north-eastern and northern Taiwan.

The Central Range, which consists of the Central, Syivia and Yushan mountains, was formed by the collision of the Philippine Sea and continental Asian tectonic plates c. 2 M B.P. (Lin, 1966; Page & Suppe, 1981). This mountain range may have acted as a barrier to the dispersal between western and eastern populations in species, such as C. sinensis, which have limited migratory capabilities. The mtDNA gene genealogy and the molecular dating from the MDIV analysis, however, indicated that the divergence between the Takia and LangYang populations was very recent. The upper stream regions of the LanYang and Takia Rivers are located on the border between the Central and Syivia mountains; the LanYang River flows north-east into Pacific and Takia River flows west into Taiwan Strait. Topological evidence, however, indicates river capture of the upper Takia River by the LanYang River (Lin, 1957), and this capture probably facilitated the interdrainage transfers, produced vicariant isolations and led to the cladogenesis of freshwater taxa (Burridge et al., 2006; Kozak et al., 2006). The results of the present study indicate that north-eastern and northern populations originated from the Takia River by way of the LanYang River (Fig. 3). Generally, freshwater fishes, e.g. C. sinensis, Candidia barbata (Regan), Z. pachycephalus, and A. paradoxus (Tzeng, 1986), that inhabit western Taiwan are also found in north-eastern Taiwan. The mtDNA gene genealogy did not support the hypothesis that the Central and Syivia mountains acted as a barrier to the dispersal of freshwater fishes (Wang et al., 1999, 2000, 2004). Therefore, river capture may have played an important role in the biogeography and evolution of freshwater fishes in northern Taiwan.

In the present study, samples from KP and TW formed two high divergence monophyletic clades, clades 1-5 and 1-6, respectively. This is consistent with a

previous genetic study of Sinogastromyzon puliensis Liang, (Cypriniformes: Balitoridae) in south-western Taiwan, which showed that the TzengWen population also formed a monophyletic clade, distinct from other populations (Liao et al., 2008). Liao et al. (2008) proposed that ancestral populations of S. puliensis first colonized the KaoPing River. This hypothesis implies that colonists either skipped the TzengWen River when S. puliensis migrated northwards or that a colonization was followed by extinction, and then again followed by back colonization. The landbridge between the mainland and the island may have acted as a refuge during glaciations in the late Pleistocene (Boggs et al., 1979). Rivers south of the KaoPing River, however, did not extend onto the landbridge, because a deep sea trench near the KaoPing estuary reached 200 m depth within 3 km of shore. Additionally, low temperatures would have prevented C. sinensis from reaching this area, even though the distance between the upstream reaches of the KaoPing and TzengWen rivers was short. Therefore, the divergent clades in the KaoPing and TzengWen rivers may have arisen under the influences of glaciation and landform. This scenario is also consistent with the results of C. sinensis in the present study, which initially colonized KaoPing River then dispersed northwards because of topographic changes during glaciations.

In summary, the sea-level history of Taiwan Strait was important in shaping the genetic structures of populations of C. sinensis. The deep mtDNA separations between northern and southern lineages indicate that these lineages had independent origins, since the initial isolation of Taiwan in the Pliocene. The initial colonization in southern Taiwan appears to have been in the KaoPing River, and this was followed by northward dispersal. The large amount of divergence between KaoPing and TzengWen populations is likely to be due to glaciations. Within northern Taiwan, dispersals occurred from the Miaoli Plateau through western Taiwan into north-eastern and northern Taiwan. The NCA and IM analyses indicate that river captures promoted dispersal between eastern and western Taiwan. Uplift of the Central Range has not caused barriers to the dispersal of C. sinensis from the west to east and vice versa. Climate changes during the Pliocene and Pleistocene Ice Ages and river capture produced barriers and migration pathways that are reflected in the genetic structure of present-day populations. The deep mtDNA divergence between lineages of C. sinensis indicates that, for conservation, this species can be divided into two geographical units that can be considered evolutionarily significant units (ESU). The θ_{π} and θ_{w} indicate that all populations, excluding the KaoPing population, show decline in population size. The results of this study are important for the development of a management plan for the conservation of freshwater fishes in Taiwan.

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