

Repeated evolution of trophic specializations in an endemic cichlid fish lineage from Lake Tanganyika

(Eretmodini/phylogeny/adaptive radiation)

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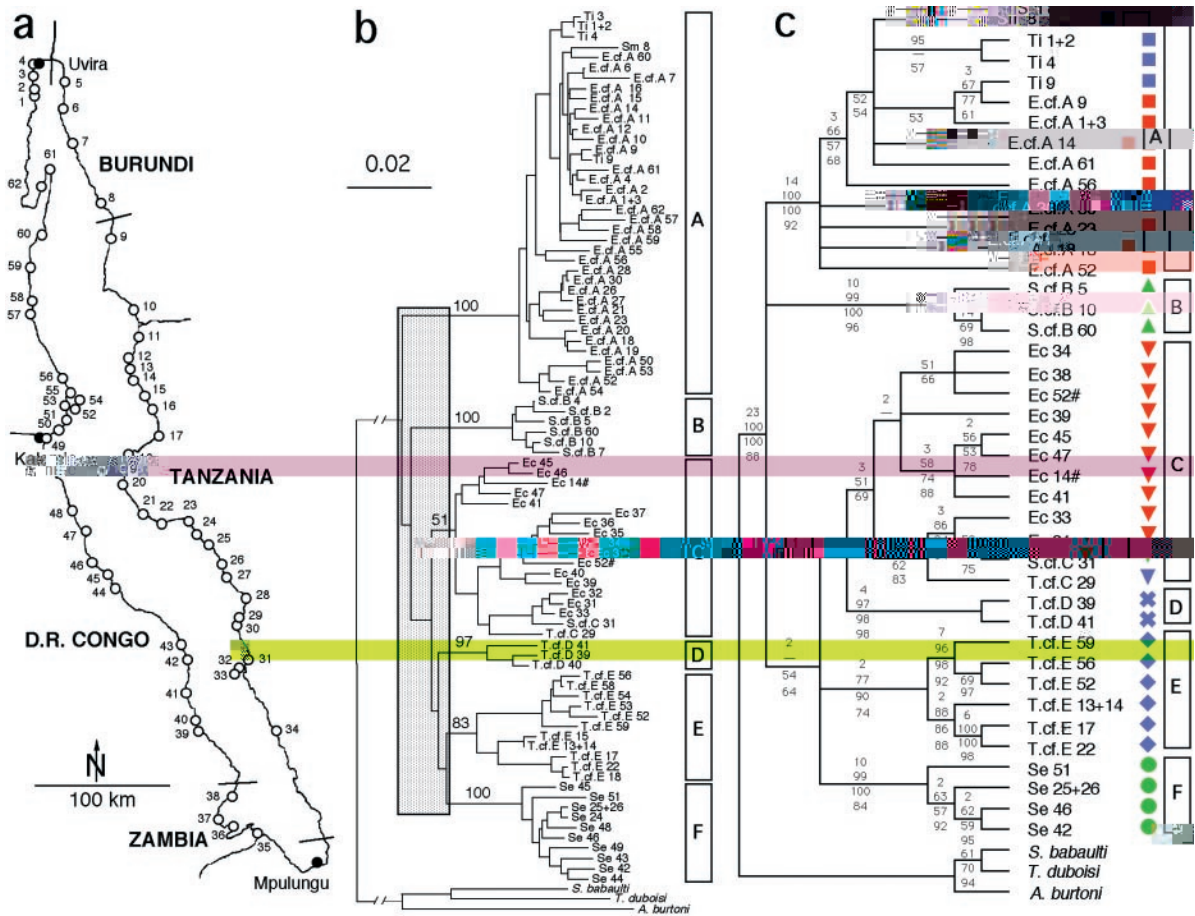


FIG. 1. (a) Map of Lake Tanganyika showing the localities studied. Circles in bold indicate type localities: Uvira (*T. irsacae*) and Mpulungu (*S. erythrodon*). Fishes from lineages where the distribution does not include the type locality are referred to as: *a*: genus name cf. species name. (b and c) Phylogenetic analyses using combined dataset of partial *cyt b* and control region sequences. Locality numbers are given behind species names that are based on the current taxonomy (9). Ec, *E. cyanostictus*; E.cf.A., *E. cf. cyanostictus* (lineage A); Se, *S. erythrodon*, S.cf.B or C, *S. cf. erythrodon* (lineages B and C respectively); Sm, *S. marlieri*; Ti, *T. irsacae*; T.cf.C, D, or E, *T. cf. irsacae* (lineages C, D, or E, respectively). Ec (14)# and Ec (52)# indicate distinct taxa with an *Eretmodus*-like dentition than E.cf.A (14) and E.cf.A (52). They differ in coloration (33) and in the number of tooth groups and teeth per group (15). Published sequences (*cyt b*/control region) from *Tropheus duboisi* (Z12039/Z12080), *Simochromis babaulti* (Z12045/U40529), and *Astatotilapia burtoni* (Z21773/Z21751) were used as outgroups (34–36). The assignments to the six major lineages (A–F) are given in boxes. (b) NJ phylogram of the 90-taxon dataset. Bootstrap values are shown only for the six major lineages (A–F). Shaded box highlights the time window in which the six eretmodine lineages originated. Bar scale indicates the inferred number of nucleotide substitutions. (c) Strict consensus tree of the MP and the NJ analyses using the 44-taxon dataset. Bootstrap values $\geq 50\%$ for the MP analysis and decay indices > 1 are shown above branches. Bootstrap values $\geq 50\%$ for the NJ analysis and quartet-puzzling support values are shown below branches. Different symbols follow the assignments to lineages A–F (red, *Eretmodus*-; green, *Spathodus*-; and blue, *Tanganicodus*-like dentition type).

PCR and direct sequencing of two mtDNA gene fragments by using standard methods (13). The two primer pairs used to amplify a portion of the cytochrome *b* (*cyt b*) gene and of the proline tRNA with a segment of the control region are given in refs. 17 and 18.

Phylogenetic Reconstruction and Hypotheses Testing. A total of 338 bp of the control region and 363 bp of the *cyt b* were aligned and combined for further analyses. Gaps in the control region were treated as missing data. We conducted the analyses in two steps. First, we constructed a neighbor-joining (NJ; ref. 19) tree with all 90 specimens by using TREECON Version 1.3b (20). Second, we used a smaller dataset with a representative subset of 44 specimens from 34 localities. This dataset was analyzed with the maximum parsimony (MP; ref. 21) and NJ methods by using PAUP* Version 4.0d64 (21). Heuristic searches (TBR branch swapping, MULPARS option effective, and random stepwise addition of taxa with 10 replications) were used to find the most parsimonious trees. NJ was performed based on Kimura two-parameter corrected distances (22) as the first step of the analysis. In addition, a heuristic maximum likelihood (23) tree search procedure was

performed by using the quartet-puzzling algorithm in PUZZLE Version 3.1 (24) by using the default options with 1,000 puzzling steps.

Phylogenetic relationships were also examined by introducing different character-state weighting schemes for transitions and transversions in the MP analyses as well as by successive character reweighting based on the rescaled consistency index (25) by using the unweighted MP consensus tree as the starting tree. Robustness of the inferred MP and NJ trees was tested by using the bootstrap method (26) with 500 resamplings for the MP analysis and 500 and 1,000 resamplings for the NJ analyses of the 90-taxon and the 44-taxon dataset, respectively. Decay indices (27) were calculated for the MP trees as an index of support (28) by using AUTODECAY Version 3.0.3 (29). Competing phylogenetic hypotheses were compared by using the Templeton (30) and Kishino-Hasegawa (31) tests as implemented in PAUP*. To examine the evolution of trophic specialization in eretmodine cichlids, we mapped tooth shapes (treated as unordered characters with three states) onto phylogenetic hypotheses by using MACCLADE Version 3.06 (32).

RESULTS

Sequence Variation. Of 158 variable sites (63 and 95 for the *cyt b* and the control region, respectively) identified among the 40 different haplotypes from the combined *cyt b* and control

Lineages A and C are the only two lineages that contain individuals with different trophic morphologies. In lineage C, which is dominated by cichlids with an *Eretmodus*-like dentition, we found a *Tanganicodus*-like dentition at locality 29 (Fig. 1a) as well as a few kilometers north of the location (13, 14) and a *Spathodus*-like dentition at locality 31 (Fig. 1a). The *Eretmodus*-like-dominated lineage A contains the scarce species *S. marlieri*, which occurs in different, intermediate sand rock habitats and at greater depth than other eretmodine species (38), and *T. irsacae*, both of which show a aberrant tooth morphology for lineage A and are found only in the northernmost part of the lake (Fig. 3). From these specimens, new tissue samples were taken and resequenced to confirm their haplotypes.

The presence of multiple oral tooth shapes within a single mtDNA lineage as found in lineage A and C is not likely to result from phenotypic plasticity as a response to different habitat use. Although phenotypic plasticity in the lower pharyngeal jaws has been documented in cichlids (39–41), we are not aware of reported cases that involve the shape of oral jaw teeth. Moreover, fishes with different tooth shapes also differ

concomitantly in body shape (L.R. and D. C. Adams, unpublished data), and tank-bred individuals kept on an identical diet retain their oral tooth shapes (L.R., unpublished data), indicating that oral tooth shape in eretmodine cichlids has a strong genetic component.

A second hypothesis to explain the occurrence of multiple oral tooth shapes within a single mtDNA lineage is hybridization. Experimentally produced hybrids between two Lake Malawi haplochromines that differ in trophic morphology showed mosaic of parental, intermediate, and unique patterns of morphological expressions (42). All specimens from lineage A and C with either a *Spathodus*- or *Tanganicodus*-like tooth shape (Fig. 2) showed no morphological features of either lineage A or C *Eretmodus*-like specimen. Therefore, it seems unlikely that recent hybridization or past introgression of mtDNA haplotypes into a clade with a different tooth morphology can explain these results. Although unlikely, this possibility needs to be addressed in future studies in which the morphology of hybrids is compared with that of parental species and nuclear markers are used to evaluate whether hybridization has had an impact on the observed pattern.

Our results allow us to statistically reject the traditional hypothesis (12) that specimens with identical trophic specializations, such as the shape of their oral jaw teeth, are derived from a single immediate common ancestor. None of the three tooth-shape types (*Eretmodus*-, *Spathodus*-, and *Tanganicodus*-like) was resolved monophyletically (Table 1), and at least eight evolutionary transitions between tooth-shape types occurred (Fig. 2).

Phylogeographic Patterns, the Geological History of Lake Tanganyika, and Morphological Differentiation. Eretmodine cichlids are restricted along shallow rocky and pebble shores and are unable to disperse across open water. Each of the six eretmodine lineages shows a limited distribution within the lake (Figs. 1 and 3). The high degree of intra-lake endemism and the pronounced phylogeographic structuring of eretmodines can be partly explained by the influence of major lake level fluctuations in the Pleistocene that are generally assumed to have had a strong influence on phylogeographic patterns and speciation of rock-dwelling cichlids (34, 43). During this time, the single lake basin of Lake Tanganyika split up into three isolated sub-basins (shown in gray in Fig. 3; refs. 44 and 45); this event is still reflected in the distribution of mtDNA lineages.

The northern and southern shorelines of each of these sub-lakes might have permitted dispersal and gene flow between cichlid populations from western to eastern coast lines or *vice versa*. The occurrence of some lineages on both opposite shores of the lake (e.g., lineage E and F; Fig. 3) can best be explained by this route of gene flow (43). The formation of the six distinct eretmodine lineages appears to have occurred within a brief period of time (Fig. 1b), probably before the onset of the lake level fluctuations in the Pleistocene.

In addition to the influence of lake level fluctuations on the geographic distribution of eretmodine mtDNA lineages, sev-

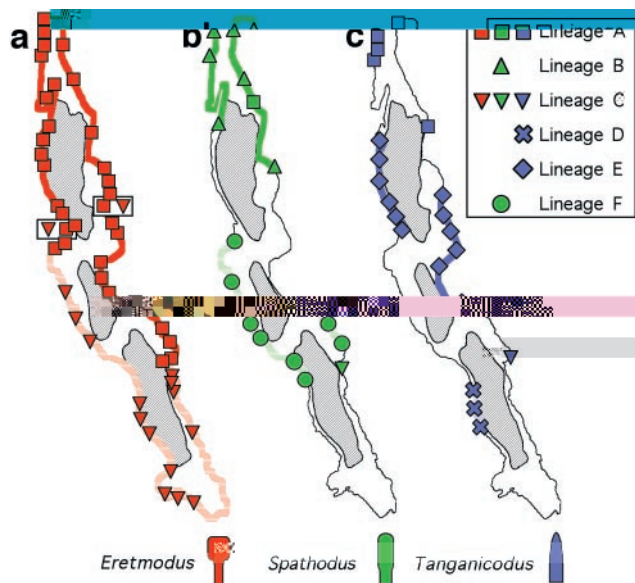


FIG.

er interesting patterns emerge when distributions are viewed in conjunction with the phenotypes that characterize certain lineages (Fig. 3). Eretmodine cichlids with identical trophic morphologies from different mtDNA lineages in general reveal a nonoverlapping distribution. Those with *Eretmodus*-like dentition (shown in red) from lineages A and C have a complementary lake-wide distribution (Fig. 3 a). We found only two localities where these morphologically and genetically distinct *Eretmodus*-like specimens occur sympatrically (Fig. 1). Specimens with a *Spathodus*-like dentition (green) from lineages B and F show a strict complementary distribution. Only *S. marlieri* from lineage A is found within the distribution range of *S. cf. erythrodon* from lineage B (Fig. 3 b). Specimens with a *Tanganicodus*-like dentition (blue) from lineages A and C–E also show complementary distributions (Fig. 3 c).

In most parts of the lake, fish with two distinct tooth types from two different mtDNA lineages can be found sympatrically (Fig. 3). This is the case for the range covered by lineages D–F. Not considering the *Spathodus*- and *Tanganicodus*-like fishes from lineage A, this pattern would extend and include the distribution of lineage B. The allopatric distributions of *S. cf. erythrodon* (lineage B), *T. cf. irsacae* (lineage E), *S. erythrodon* (lineage F), and *T. cf. irsacae* (lineage D) are shown in Fig. 3 b and c. These lineages are found sympatrically with either *E. cf. cyanostictus* from lineage A or *E. cyanostictus* from lineage C. In the southernmost part of the lake (locality 33–39, Fig. 1a) *E. cyanostictus* is the only eretmodine found (33).

Ecological Causes of Recurrent Parallel Evolution and Adaptive Radiations. The phylogenetic analysis and the phylogeographic distribution of mtDNA lineages refutes the assumption that the presence of similar pairs of trophic specialists (*Eretmodus*-like with either *Spathodus*- or *Tanganicodus*-like dentition type) evolved only once and that subsequently they colonized other coatlines. The data support the hypothesis that lineages with identical trophic morphology evolved independently and concurrently in different parts of Lake Tanganyika. The multiple independent evolution of identical tooth shapes, as indicated in Fig. 2, suggests recurrent parallel evolution of ecologically important morphological traits between closely related species within the same lake basin and challenges the current approach of cichlid taxonomy, because it often relies, sometimes exclusively, on characters related to feeding, such as dentition and tooth morphology.

The phylogeographic distributions of the six mtDNA lineages and the phylogenetic mapping of the morphological traits reveal patterns that suggest that not just vicariance events, such as major lake-level fluctuations, have been responsible in shaping the intra-lacustrine distribution of eretmodine cichlids. Our data show a consistent pattern in morphological divergence in dentition of sympatric species pairs. The allopatric distribution of genetically distinct lineages that are characterized by similar trophic morphology strongly suggests that ecological processes, such as competitive exclusion, that can play a central role in structuring communities (46) between two species (different mtDNA lineages) with the same tooth morphology might be responsible for this pattern of species distributions. Moreover, over a wide range of the lake's shores, sympatrically occurring eretmodine species pairs are found. In general, a species pair contains members of two distinct mtDNA lineages, and in addition, the species of such a pair show consistent differences in oral tooth shape, with one species having an *Eretmodus*-like dentition and the other either a *Spathodus*- or *Tanganicodus*-like dentition. In different areas of the lake, however, these morphological species pairs belong to different mtDNA lineages (Fig. 3).

Differences in trophic morphology, such as tooth shape, in closely related fishes or ecomorphs of the same species are often correlated with tradeoffs for resource use (47, 48). The distinct tooth morphologies found in eretmodine cichlids are correlated with differences in diet (10, 11). The repeated

formation of morphologically distinct pairs of species in different parts of Lake Tanganyika suggests that ecological diversification may be a major driving force behind morphological differentiation and evolutionary divergence in these fishes. Similar patterns have been found in postglacial fishes inhabiting lacustrine environments that have led to ecological speciation (2, 6). Further ecological studies might increase our understanding of the adaptive value of oral tooth shape in eretmodine cichlids (by evaluating how species with different tooth shapes differ in habitat use and in efficiencies of trophic resource exploitation) and how differentiation in trophic morphology might have facilitated the coexistence of lineages. These ecological data would also provide information on the

Z97444; 45, Z97528/Z97442; 46, Z97529/Z97443; 48, Z97526/
Z97441; 49, Z97522/Z97440; 51, Z97521/Z97439.

Ti: 1, Z97539/Z97450; 2, Z97540/Z97451; 3, Z97541/Z97452;
4, Z97542/Z97449; 9, Z97538/X90596.

T.cf.C: 29, Z97555/X90603.

T.cf.D: 39, Z97557/Z97459; 40, Z97556/Z97460; 41, Y15133/
Y15134.

T.cf.E: 13, Z97549/X90597; 14, Z97550/X90598; 15, Z97551/
X90628; 17, Z97552/X90599; 18, Z97553/X90600; 22, Z97554/
X90601; 52, Z97546/Z97458; 53, Z97547/Z97456; 54, Z97548/
Z97457; 56, Z97545/Z97455; 58, Z97544/Z97454; 59, Z97543/
Z97453.

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