Hide and seek: hidden genetic variance contributing to the adaptive potential of selfing populations

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Abstract: Standing genetic variation is considered a major contributor to the adaptive potential of species. The low heritable genetic variation observed in self-fertilising populations has led to the hypothesis that species with this particular mating system would be less likely to adapt. However, a non-negligible amount of cryptic genetic variation for polygenic traits, accumulated through negative linkage disequilibrium, could prove to be an important source of standing variation in self-fertilising species. Using a classical quantitative genetics model, we demonstrate that selfing populations are better able to store cryptic genetic variance than outcrossing populations, notably due to their lower recombination rate. Following a shift in the environment, this hidden diversity can be partially released, increasing the additive variance and adaptive potential of selfing populations. In such conditions, even though the process of adaptation itself is mating system dependant, selfers reach levels of fitness that are equal to or higher than outcrossing populations within a few generations. Outcrossing populations respond better to selection for the new optimum, but they maintain more genetic diversity resulting in a higher genetic load. In selfing populations, genetic diversity is remobilised, and new close-to-optimum genotypes are generated and quickly increase in frequency, leading to more homogenous populations. Our results bring new insights into the role of standing genetic variation for adaptation in selfing populations.

INTRODUCTION

Natural populations harbour a significant amount of genetic variation, especially at loci governing polygenic traits (Mittell *et al.* 2015; Wood *et al.* 2016; Clo *et al.* 2019). This variation, known as standing genetic variation, has been considered to be an important predictor for the adaptive potential of populations (Orr and Betancourt 2001; Hermisson and

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64 Pennings 2005; Barrett and Schluter 2008; Pritchard *et al.* 2010; Glémin and Ronfort 2013;

65 Matuszewski *et al.* 2015). Indeed, standing variation represents an easily accessible, hence

66 non-negligible, source of genetic variation, available for adaptation to changing conditions

67 (Hermisson and Pennings 2005; Barrett and Schluter 2008). Contrary to adaptation from *de*

68 *novo* mutations, the probability to adapt from standing variation is higher simply because

69 beneficial mutations already segregating in a population are expected to be present at higher

70 frequencies (Innan and Kim 2004; Barrett and Schluter 2008). It has also been suggested that

71 populations adapting from standing genetic variation can cope with more severe and more

72 rapid environmental change, as they are able to cross larger distances in phenotype space

73 (Matuszewski *et al.* 2015). The amount of heritable variance is thus expected to play a key

74 role in adaptation, and any forces affecting it may greatly influence whether or not

75 populations are able to survive environmental changes.

76   An important characteristic of populations, known to greatly affect the amount of

77 genetic variance, is the mating system. From both theoretical (Charlesworth and Charlesworth

78 1995; Lande and Porcher 2015; Abu Awad and Roze 2018) and empirical works

79 (Charlesworth and Charlesworth 1995; Geber and Griffen 2003; Clo *et al.* 2019), it is known

80 that, compared to outcrossing populations, self-fertilization reduces, on average, the amount

81 of additive genetic variance for polygenic or quantitative traits under stabilizing selection.

82 This diminution is due to more efficient purifying selection under selfing and linkage

83 disequilibria maintained between alleles at different loci: the so-called Bulmer effect (Lande

84 and Porcher 2015; Abu Awad and Roze 2018). Because of the low genetic variance

85 maintained in self-fertilizing populations, this mating system has been qualified as an

86 evolutionary dead-end (Stebbins 1957; Takebayashi and Morrell 2001; Igic and Busch 2013).

87 However, theoretical and some empirical works are now pointing towards the existence of

88 cryptic genetic variability (see Paaby and Rockman 2014 for a review), which should, in

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89   addition to the "visible" genetic variation, contribute to the adaptive potential of natural

90   populations. Cryptic genetic variation has been defined as a part of a population's standing

91   genetic variation that does not affect phenotypic variation in a stable environment, but can

92   increase heritable variation in environmental conditions rarely experienced (Gibson and

93   Dworkin 2004; Paaby and Rockman 2014). In other words, it defines a source of variability

94   that is not expressed in stable conditions (due to conditional neutrality, the genetic structure of

95   the population, etc), but which can contribute to adaptation in new conditions. Such "hidden"

96   variability has been detected in both outcrossing (in sticklebacks (McGuigan *et al.* 2011),

97   cavefish (Rohner *et al.* 2013), dung flies (Berger *et al.* 2011), gulls (Kim *et al.* 2013) or

98   spadefoot toads (Ledon-Rettig *et al.* 2010)) and selfing species (*Caenorhabditis elegans*,

99   Milloz *et al.* 2008; *Arabidopsis thaliana,* Queitsch *et al.* 2002). Two main mechanisms could

100   explain the accumulation and the release of such variance: interactions between loci (Badano

101   and Katsanis 2002; Carter *et al.* 2005; Shao *et al.* 2008), and phenotypic plasticity (Anderson

102   *et al.* 2013). In this paper, we focus on interactions between loci.

103   To maintain the population as close as possible to the phenotypic optimum, stabilizing

104   selection disfavors apparent genetic and phenotypic diversity (Lande and Porcher 2015; Abu

105   Awad and Roze 2018). However, the structuration of the additive variance also strongly

106   depends on the trait mutation rate and the prevalence of pleiotropy (Lande and Porcher 2015;

107   Abu Awad and Roze 2018). When the per-trait mutation rate is weak, associations between

108   loci are negligible, but when the rate increases, the creation and maintenance of co-adapted

109   gene complexes structure the additive variance into positive within-loci components and

110   negative among-loci components, reducing the observed additive variance (Abu Awad and

111   Roze 2018). The remobilization of alleles contributing to this last component of variance

112   could boost the evolvability of populations forced to undergo directional selection after a

113   change in the phenotypic optimum (Le Rouzic and Carlborg 2008). Indeed, if associations

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114   between loci are broken, segregating alleles could express some or all of their additive effects

115   in new-genetic backgrounds. Classical models analyzing the effect of selfing on adaptation

116   from standing genetic variation have considered a single locus (Glémin and Ronfort 2013),

117   thus neglecting interactions among loci that could result in other forms of standing genetic

118   variation. As self-fertilization reduces the effective recombination rate (Nordborg 2000),

119   allowing the maintenance of co-adapted gene complexes, the storage of hidden genetic

120   diversity should be stronger in selfing populations (as suggested in Lande and Porcher 2015;

121   Abu Awad and Roze 2018), potentially increasing their probability to adapt to an

122   environmental change beyond that expected from single-locus models.

123   In this paper, we explore this hypothesis, using a quantitative genetics framework. We

124   describe and quantify how, to what degree, and under which conditions populations

125   accumulate hidden genetic variation in this theoretical framework of polygenic traits. Though

126   these polygenic trait models are based on simple hypotheses, they have so far proven to be

127   surprisingly accurate in predicting the distribution of epistatic coefficients (Martin *et al.* 2007)

128   andI inferring the mean dominance coefficient of mutations (Manna *et al.* 2011). We show

129   that, in models allowing for hidden genetic diversity and when adaptation is only possible

130   from pre-existing standing genetic variation, selfing populations are able to perform just as

131   well as their mixed-mating and outcrossing counterparts.

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133   *MATERIAL AND METHODS*

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135   **General assumptions**

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137   We consider the evolution of a quantitative trait Z in a population of size N, made of

138   diploid individuals reproducing through partial self-fertilization, with a constant selfing rate σ.

139   The phenotypic value z of an individual is determined by the additive action of L loci each

140   with an infinite possible number of alleles and is given by

141    $$z = g + e, \text{ (1)}$$

142   where g is the genetic component of the individual's phenotype, and is given by $g = \sum_j^L g_j^M +$

143   g_j^P, with g^M_j (respectively g^P_j) the additive allelic effect at locus j inherited from the maternal

144   (respectively paternal) gamete. The random environmental effect, e, is drawn from a Gaussian

145   distribution of mean 0 and variance V_E, and is considered to be independent from the genetic

146   components of fitness. The trait initially undergoes stabilizing selection around an optimal

147   phenotypic value (set arbitrarily at 0). The fitness value W_Z of an individual with phenotype z

148   is thus described by the Gaussian function:

149    $$W_Z = e^{-d^2/2\omega^2}, \text{ (2)}$$

150   where d is the distance between the individual's phenotype z and the optimum trait value and

151   ω^2 is the width of the fitness function, and represents the strength of selection.

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153   **Simulation model**

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155   We implement the model described above into an individual based simulation model

156   written in C++, a modified version of the "continuum of alleles" program provided in Abu

157   Awad and Roze (2018). The simulation program is available in File S1 and online

158   (https://github.com/dialaAbAw/SelfingAdaptation). The life cycle can be summarized by five

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159   successive events: (1) phenotype-dependent choice of the maternal parent (selection), (2)

160   mating-type choice (selfing versus outcrossing), (3) phenotype-dependent choice of the

161   paternal parent in the case of outcrossing, (4) production of gametes (recombination) and (5)

162   mutation. We simulate two phases. In the first one, the population evolves in a stable

163   environment (for a fixed trait optimum value $Z_{OPT} = 0$) until mutation-selection-drift

164   equilibrium (M-S-D) and we explore the effect of the mating system on the genetic

165   components and structure of a quantitative trait under stabilizing selection. In the second

166   phase, we consider the rate of adaptation following a brutal shift in the optimum (Z_{OPT} shift

167   from 0 to 2.5, the shift being of order $L . a^2$).

168   Each generation before equilibrium, the number of new mutations per chromosome

169   per generation is sampled from a Poisson distribution with parameter U, the per-trait haploid

170   genomic mutation rate (ranging from 0.005 to 0.1, in accordance with the literature (Keightley

171   and Bataillon 2000; Shaw *et al.* 2002; Haag-Liautard *et al.* 2007)). The additive value of a

172   new mutant allele is drawn from a Normal distribution of mean 0 and variance a^2. We use

173   parameter set values similar to those in Bürger *et al.* (1989) and Ronce *et al.* (2009), with the

174   number of freely recombining loci under selection $L = 50$, $a^2 = 0.05$, $V_E = 1$, $\omega^2 = 1$ (and hence

175    $V_S = \omega^2 + V_E$ is equal to 2). The mean deleterious effect of mutations $\bar{s}$ ($\bar{s} = a^2 / 2V_S$, Martin

176   and Lenormand 2006) is equal to 0.0125. Although simulations were run over a large range of

177   selfing values, throughout the manuscript we show results run principally for three rates of

178   self-fertilisation, $\sigma = 0$, 0.5 and 0.95, representing outcrossing, mixed-mating and

179   predominantly selfing respectively. They are representative of the three main patterns

180   observed over the whole range (σ from 0 to 1). We also considered two population sizes $N =$

181   250 and 1000.

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Simulation program:

At the start of a simulation, all *N* individuals are homozygous for allele 0 at all *L* loci and are thus at the fitness optimum. To form the next generation, *N* new zygotes are produced through selfing with probability σ, and through random mating with probability 1-σ. Selection occurs during the sampling of parental individuals, occurring with probabilities proportional to their fitness. During meiosis, the number of cross-overs is sampled from a Poisson distribution with parameter *R* (which represents the genome map length), and the position of each cross-over along the chromosome is sampled from an uniform distribution. According to Haldane's mapping function, the recombination rate between two adjacent loci is $r = \frac{1}{2}\left[1 - exp\left(\frac{-2R}{L-1}\right)\right]$, with $R = 50$ in our simulations. Mutation occurs after recombination: the number of new mutations per chromosome per generation is sampled from a Poisson distribution with parameter *U*, the haploid genomic mutation rate ($U = L\mu$, with μ being the per locus mutation rate). The additive value of a new mutant allele is drawn from a Normal distribution of mean 0 and variance a^2.

After reaching the M-S-D equilibrium, we introduce an environmental change by shifting the phenotypic optimum. The only source of genetic variability to reach the new optimum is the standing variation accumulated at M-S-D equilibrium (after the shift, *U* is set to 0). We then let the population evolve for 200 generations.

Effect of selfing on genetic variance structuration at Mutation-Selection-Drift equilibrium

205   Following Turelli & Barton (Turelli and Barton 1990), we decompose the genetic variance of

206   a polygenic trait using the following equation:

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$$V_{\mathrm{A}} = 2 \sum_j^L \left(C_{jj} + C_{j,j} \right) + 2 \sum_{j \neq k}^L \left(C_{jk} + C_{j,k} \right), \quad (3)$$

208   with

209
$$C_{jj} = \frac{1}{2} E[\ (g^{\mathrm{M}}_j - \bar{g}_j)^2 + (g^{\mathrm{P}}_j - \bar{g}_j)^2] \quad (4)$$

210   and

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$$C_{j,j} = E[\ (g^{\mathrm{M}}_j - \bar{g}_j) \cdot (g^{\mathrm{P}}_j - \bar{g}_j)], \quad (5)$$

212   where $\bar{g}_j$ is the mean allelic effect on the phenotype at locus j and g^{M}_j (respectively g^{P}_j) is the

213   allelic effect at locus j inherited from the maternal (respectively paternal) gamete. The sum of

214   all values of C_{jj} represents the variance of allelic effects (the genic variance V_{genic}, the genetic

215   variance of a trait in a population harboring the same allelic frequencies as the population

216   under study, but without any genetic association between loci) and is computed from

217   simulation outputs following equation (4). The sum of all values of $C_{j,j}$ represents the

218   covariance in allelic effects on the maternally and paternally inherited chromosomes at locus

219   j, and represents the fraction of the genetic variance due to excess of homozygosity (named

220   V_{inbred}); we compute it following equation (5). This quantity represents $F.V_{\mathrm{genic}}$, where F is the

221   inbreeding coefficient of the population. These first term of equation (3) ($2 \sum_j^L \left(C_{jj} + C_{j,j} \right)$)

222   represents the genetic variance due to within locus variation. The second term ($2 \sum_{j \neq k}^L (C_{jk} +$

223    $C_{j,k})$) represents the component of the variance due to associations between loci (noted V_{LD}),

224   and is obtained by subtracting V_{genic} and V_{inbred} from the total additive genetic variance. This

225   component is proportional to linkage disequilibrium (LD), and tends to be negative under

226   stabilizing selection due to associations between alleles from different loci with compensatory

227   effects (*i.e.* the allele on one locus is positive, the other negative, their effects on the

228   phenotype thus cancel out when both are present).

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230   *Analyses after the environmental change*

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232   Due to an increased probability of extinction during long periods of maladaptation, it

233   seems more relevant to focus only on the dynamics of adaptation during the first generations

234   after an environmental change. We follow the temporal dynamics of the additive variance and

235   its components, the dynamic of the mean population phenotype, and the dynamic of the mean

236   population fitness, as a function of the mating system and the mutation rate, over 20

237   generations.

238   In addition, and in order to test if remobilization of V_{LD} plays a role in the adaptation

239   of selfing populations, we computed the slope of the trait mean dynamics just after the

240   environmental change (during the first five generations) as a function of the amount of

241   additive variance available at M-S-D equilibrium. If remobilization of V_{LD} is involved in the

242   adaptive process of selfing populations, the initial slope, for a similar amount of additive

243   variance, should be higher in selfing populations compared to mixed mating and outcrossing

244   ones.

245

246   **RESULTS**

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248   Below we present results only for $N = 250$ and $L = 50$, as larger population sizes and

249   more loci did not qualitatively change the results. Results for $N = 1000$, as well as $L = 500$ are

250   given in the supplementary materials section (Figures S1-S6).

251

252   **DECOMPOSITION OF THE GENETIC VARIANCE AT EQUILIBRIUM**

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254   As predicted, the additive genetic variance present at M-S-D equilibrium in our

255   simulations is negatively correlated with the selfing rate (figure 1A, see Abu Awad and Roze

256   2018 for the analytical model). By examining each component of the additive variance, we

257   can see that the variance due to within loci variation ($V_{genic} + V_F$) is higher in selfing

258   populations due to the higher rate of homozygosity (figure 1 B & C). These two components,

259   as well as the total additive variance, increase linearly with increasing mutation rates (figure 1

260   A, B & C). The among-loci component (V_{LD}) is negative (figure 1D), due to the build-up of

261   linkage disequilibrium between alleles with different signs, allowing phenotypes to be close to

262   the phenotypic optimum (0). Because recombination is less effective under selfing, this

263   negative component is responsible for the smaller additive variance observed under

264   predominant selfing. It also contributes significantly to the variance observed in mixed mating

265   and outcrossing populations with moderate to high mutation rates (figure 1D). Larger

266   population sizes or more loci do not change the results for outcrossing and mixed mating

267   populations (Figures S1-S2). For selfing populations, larger population sizes and higher per

268   locus mutation rates contribute to increasing negative linkage disequilibrium (V_{LD}) due to

269   negative linkage disequilibrium (Figure S3).

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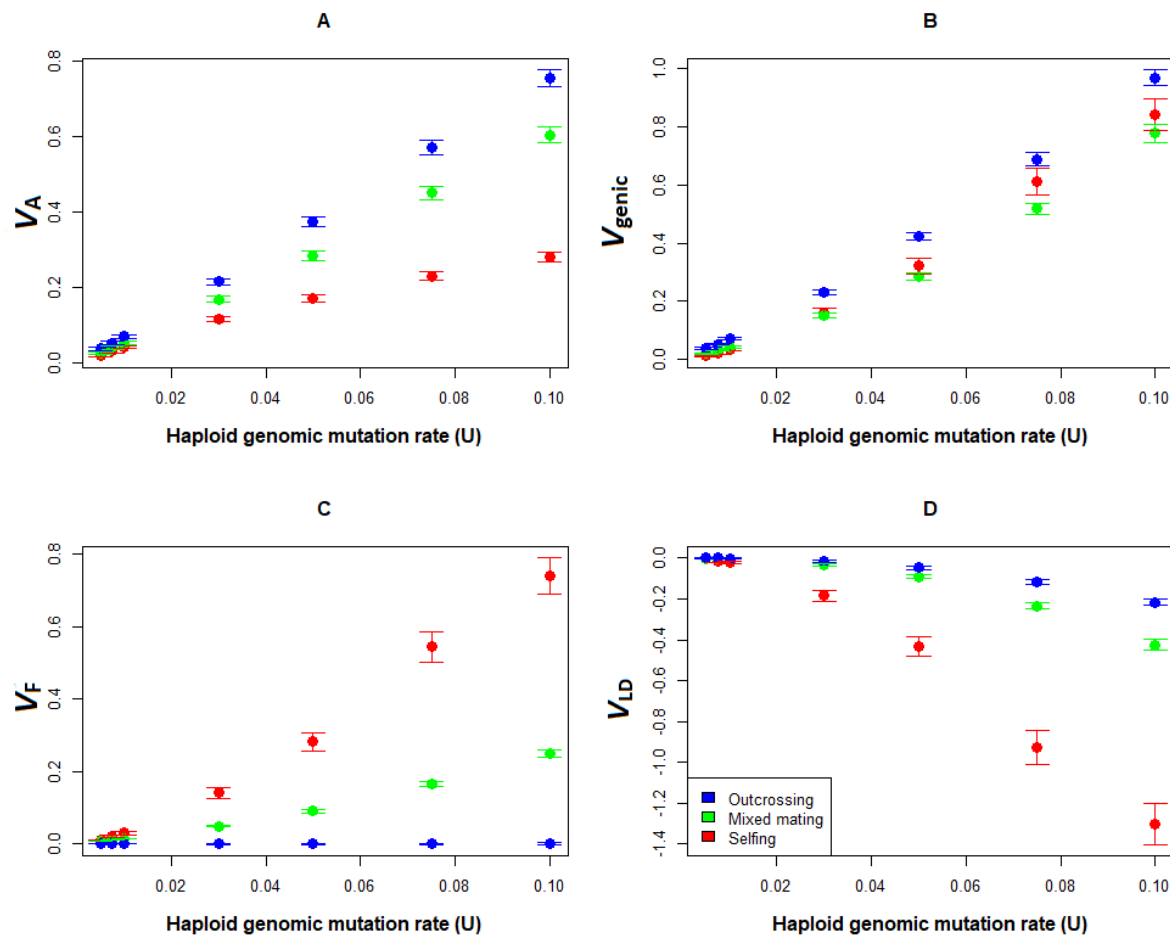
Figure 1. Additive genetic variance and its components as a function of the genomic mutation rate and the mating system. **A.** Observed additive variance for the phenotypic trait. **B.** Genic variance for the phenotypic trait (V_{genic}). **C.** Genetic variance due to inbreeding (V_F). **D.** Genetic variance due to linkage disequilibrium (V_{LD}). Error bars stand for 95% confidence interval (n = 100).

ADAPTATION THROUGH STANDING GENETIC VARIATION:

For simplicity, we focus on four mutation rates (U = 0.005; 0.03; 0.05; 0.1), representing the different patterns of genetic variance observed at M-S-D equilibrium for the

282 outcrossing, mixed mating and selfing populations mentioned above. We first describe the

283 dynamics observed for outcrossing populations, which will serve as a reference for

284 comparison with the dynamics of selfing populations. We generally find that the dynamics for

285 mixed mating populations are similar to those of outcrossing populations (Figure S4).

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287   **DYNAMICS OF THE ADDITIVE VARIANCE AND OF ITS COMPONENTS:**

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289   In outcrossing populations, the additive variance exhibits very tiny changes during the

290 adaptation process, so do its components (Figure 2). In all cases, the observed additive genetic

291 variance slightly increases during the first generations of adaptation (Figure 2A), then, it

292 either reaches an equilibrium (Figure 2A, $U < 0.1$) or slowly begins to decrease (Figure 2A, U

293 $= 0.1$). When V_{LD} is small at M-S-D equilibrium ($U < 0.1$), the observed increase of the

294 additive variance is mainly due to an increase of the genic variance (Figure 2B), probably due

295 to successive sweeps of rare alleles during the adaptation process. In these situations, V_{LD}

296 slightly decreases with time (Figure 2C), indicating that some associations between loci are

297 building up. When V_{LD} is significant at M-S-D equilibrium ($U = 0.1$), the genic variance

298 remains constant during the first generations (Figure 2B), but V_{LD} increases slightly (Figure

299 2C), contributing to the increase of the additive variance. The second phase during which the

300 observed additive variance decreases can be explained by the decrease of genic variance with

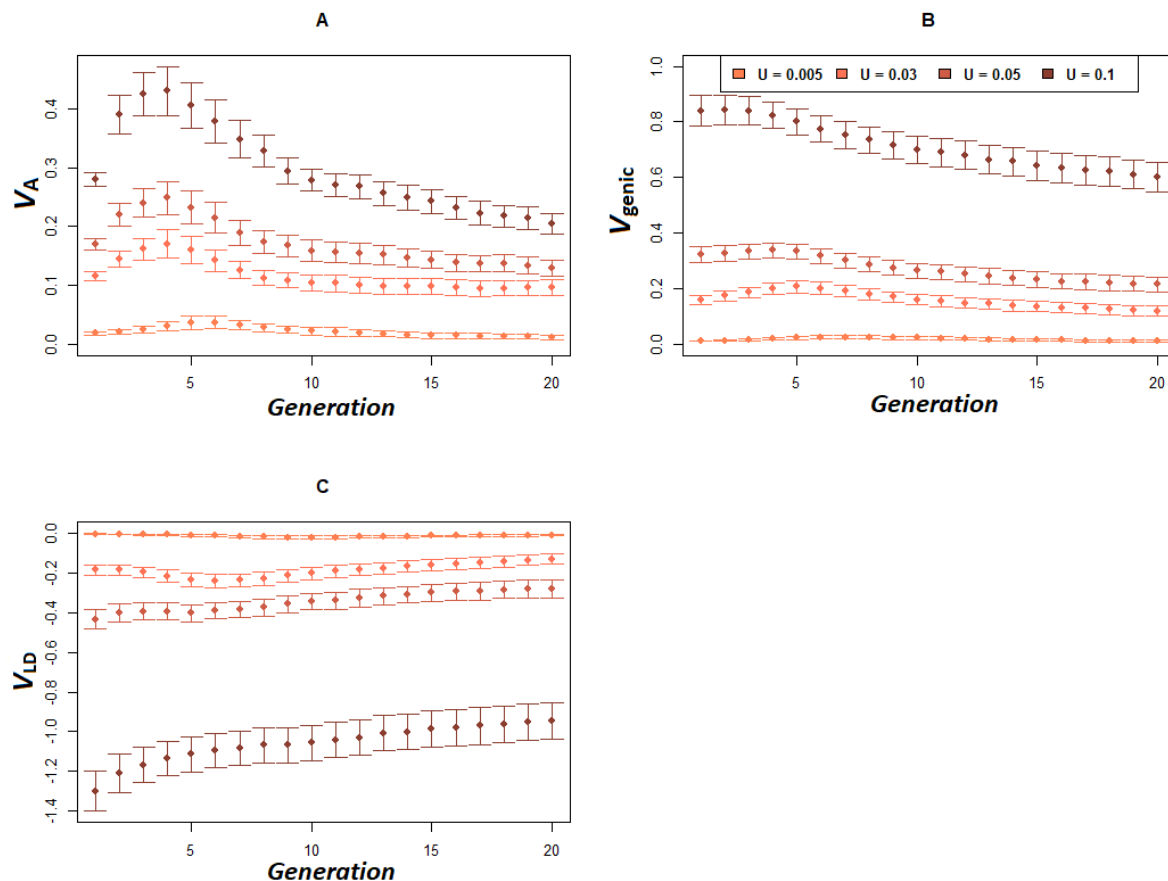301 time, due to the purging of deleterious mutations (Figure 2B).

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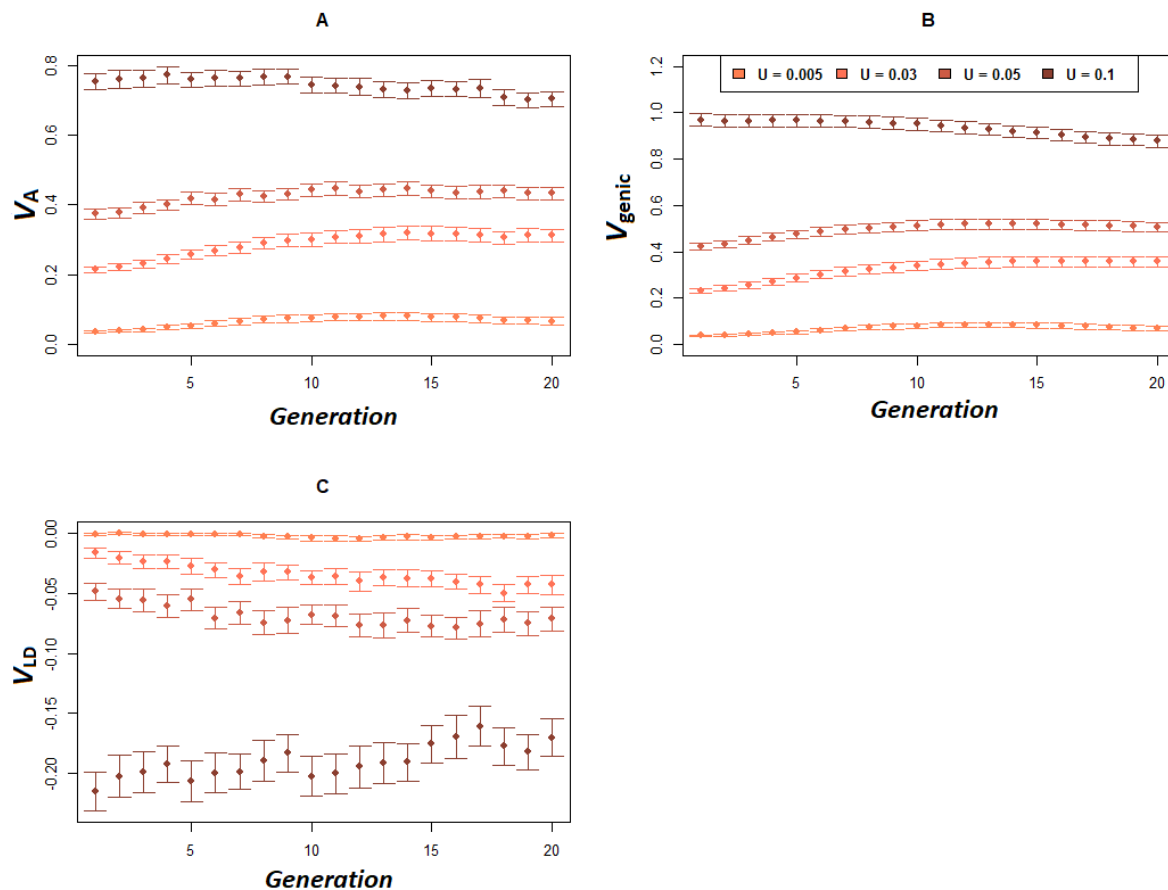
Figure 2. Dynamics of additive genetic variance and its components in function of the haplotypic trait mutation rate, for outcrossing populations. **A.** Observed additive variance for the phenotypic trait. **B.** Genic variance for the phenotypic trait (V_{genic}). **C.** Genetic variance of the phenotype due to linkage disequilibrium (V_{LD}). Error bars stand for 95% confidence interval (n=100).

Contrary to the dynamics observed in outcrossing populations, additive variance substantially varies during the adaptation process in selfing populations. For small mutation rates ($U \leq 0.03$), the dynamics are very similar to those observed in outcrossing populations (figure 3). The observed additive variance slightly increases during the first generations (Figure 3A). This increase is due to a rise of the genic variance (Figure 3B), associated with a

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315   decrease of V_{LD} (Figure 3C), probably due to an interaction between sweeps of beneficial

316   mutations that were rare before the environmental change and the creation of new beneficial

317   associations between loci. For higher mutation rates ($U \geq 0.05$), the dynamics are different.

318   The genic variance remains constant during the first generations and then decreases (figure

319   3B), whereas V_{LD} increases faster than the decrease of V_{genic} (figure 3C), explaining the

320   overall increase of additive variance. This behaviour can be explained as follows: there is a

321   complex interaction between the purging of deleterious mutations due to selfing, which tends

322   to quickly fix the best multi-locus genotypes, eroding genetic diversity and residual allogamy,

323   which allows the mobilization of a small fraction of the hidden genetic diversity. The outcome

324   of this interaction is an increase of the genetic diversity and of the populations' adaptive

325   potential. The fact that the rate of adaptation (*i.e* the slope of the change in the trait values

326   during the first generations) as a function of the initial level of additive variance is higher for

327   selfing populations when V_{LD} is large, confirms that the remobilisation of the hidden diversity

328   plays a role in the adaptation process (figure S5).

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Figure 3. Dynamics of additive genetic variance and its components in function of the haplotypic trait mutation rate, for selfing populations. **A.** Observed additive variance for the phenotypic trait. **B.** Genic variance for the phenotypic trait (V_{genic}). **C.** Genetic variance of the phenotype due to linkage disequilibrium (V_{LD}). Error bars stand for 95% confidence interval (n=100).

TRAIT AND FITNESS DYNAMICS DURING ADAPTATION PROCESS:

Here, we consider that there is adaptation if populations reach a similar level of fitness as that observed before the environmental change. In all cases, compared to selfing

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341   populations, outcrossing and mixed mating population respond better to selection, by being

342   closer to the new phenotypic optimum (figure 4). When the mutation rate is weak ($U =$

343   0.005), none of the populations are able to adapt, and thus the fitness remains low (figure 4).

344   For higher mutation rates ($U > 0.005$), outcrossing and mixed mating populations are always

345   close to the new optimum, and are able to return to fitness levels similar to those observed at

346   M-S-D equilibrium. Selfing populations require that the mutation rate is high enough ($U \geq$

347   0.05, figure 4) in order to reach similar fitness levels as those observed in outcrossing

348   populations. Interestingly, in some cases, adaptation occurs more rapidly in selfing

349   populations, despite the higher genetic diversity of outcrossing populations. The larger the

350   population size and the higher the per-locus mutation rate, the higher the level of potentially

351   usable hidden genetic diversity, and the smaller the genomic mutation rate necessary to reach

352   similar levels of fitness in selfing populations (figures S6-S7).

353   Nevertheless, different mating systems exhibit different dynamics of adaptation.

354   Outcrossing populations adapt by reaching a new phenotypic optimum, but they also maintain

355   a high level of genetic diversity (figure 3), resulting in populations having both mal-adapted

356   and well-adapted individuals. Selfing populations are always further away from the new

357   phenotypic optimum (figure 4), but both the remobilization of the V_{LD}, and the fast fixation of

358   the "best" phenotypes allow for the production of close-to-optimum individuals. These

359   phenotypes will then quickly increase in frequency, leading to more homogenous populations

360   than observed for an outcrossing mating system (figure 4).

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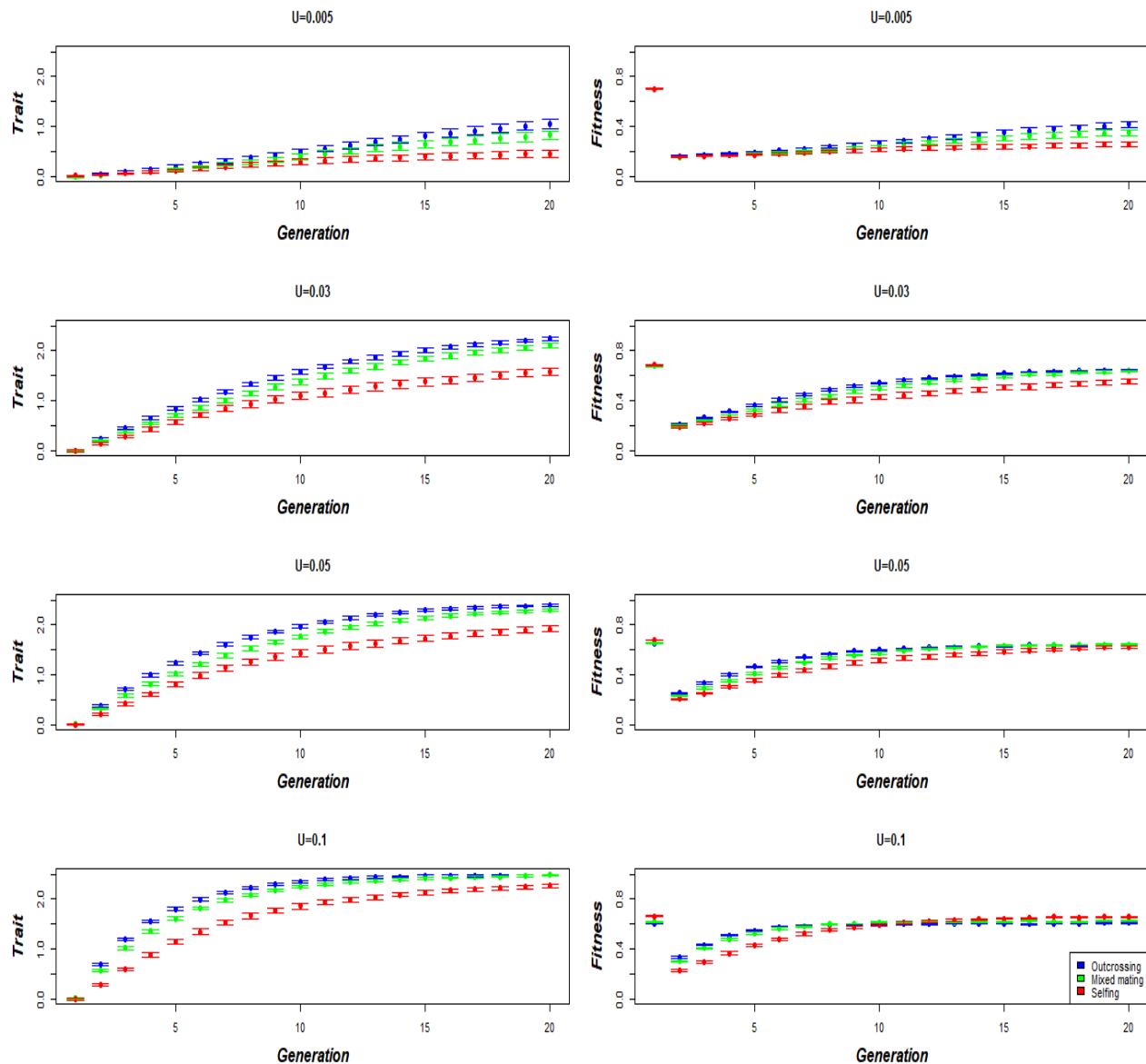
Figure 4. Dynamics of the trait and fitness, in function of the trait haplotypic mutation rate and the mating system. Error bars stand for 95% confidence interval (n=100).

DISCUSSION

In accordance with Stebbins' definition of the dead-end hypothesis (Stebbins 1957), single-locus models predict that adaptation from standing genetic variation is less likely in

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370   selfing populations compared to outcrossing ones, notably due to the reduced genetic

371   variation resulting from purging (Glémin and Ronfort 2013). Considering a polygenic trait,

372   and associated interactions among loci, we find that this is not always the case. Indeed, we

373   find that for low mutation rates, our results support the expectations of single locus models.

374   However, for higher mutation rates, and as predicted by previous work (Abu Awad and Roze

375   2018), associations between loci are no longer negligible. In this case, stabilizing selection

376   shelters an important amount of hidden additive variance, especially in self-fertilising

377   populations. We show that some of this variance can be released during phases of directional

378   selection to new environmental conditions. Our results support that it is possible to observe

379   similar levels of adaptation in selfing and outcrossing populations, despite unconditionally

380   lower levels of observed additive variance under predominant selfing.

381

382   **Hidden genetic variation, its remobilization and genotypic selection**

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384   Stabilizing selection is expected to favour the build-up and maintenance of co-adapted

385   gene complexes, and this will structure the additive variance into positive within-loci

386   components and negative among-loci components, reducing the observed additive variance

387   (Abu Awad and Roze 2018). In a changing environment, alleles involved in the negative

388   among loci component of variance may be unveiled and mobilized to respond to directional

389   selection (Le Rouzic and Carlborg 2008). Our analysis shows that such associations between

390   loci, coupled with hidden genetic variation, are more likely to emerge in selfing than in

391   outcrossing populations, because of less efficient recombination under selfing (Lande and

392   Porcher 2015; Abu Awad and Roze 2018). This prediction is in accordance with empirical

393   observations of more frequent transgressive segregation (progeny of a cross being outside the

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394   phenotypic parental range) in inbred compared to outbred species (Rieseberg *et al.* 1999;

395   Johansen-Morris and Latta 2006). Our analysis also shows that the less effective

396   recombination rate associated with selfing avoids the complete release of the negative linkage

397   disequilibria and thus limits the response to selection. As a result, selection mostly operates at

398   the genotypic level while allelic selection is more prevalent in more recombining populations

399   (Neher and Shraiman 2009). Interestingly, if the rate of self-fertilization is changed during the

400   adaptation process (σ changing from 0.95 to zero after the environmental change), the

401   dynamics of the fitness remains similar (figures S8-S9). Indeed, under complete outcrossing

402   all the hidden genetic variance can be mobilized and this allows initially selfing populations

403   to reach the new phenotypic optimum but recombination also generates less adapted

404   genotypes which reduces the mean population fitness.

405

406   ***De novo* mutations *vs.* standing genetic variation: rethinking adaptation in selfing**

407   **species?**

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409   It has been a long accepted paradigm that the advantage procured by selfing, was the

410   rapid fixation of *de novo* mutations more efficiently than in outcrossing populations,

411   independently of the dominance of new mutations, a process known has "Haldane sieve"

412   (Haldane 1927). Indeed, from one locus theory, adaptation through new mutations is more

413   likely in selfing species, and is more likely than adaptation from standing genetic variation

414   (Glémin and Ronfort 2013). However, recent works have suggested that the reduced effective

415   recombination rate of selfing populations adds a disadvantage even when it comes to the

416   fixation of new mutations. Unlike what is expected in outcrossing populations, the fixation of

417   beneficial mutations in selfing populations can be hindered if they appear during the selective

418   sweep triggered by a beneficial allele at another locus (Hartfield and Glémin 2016). This

419   observation as well as the results presented here show that predictions from the point of view

420   of polygenic models are less dichotomist: the ability of selfing populations to adapt from

421   either *de novo* mutations or standing variation strongly depends on the parameters considered

422   (the mutation rate in particular), with selfers being often as able to adapt as outcrossers, even

423   if the underlying mechanisms strongly differ.

424   We have only considered a simple architecture of quantitative traits in which epistatic

425   interactions emerge naturally. Epistasis, and notably its directionality, is known to play a key

426   role in adaptation (Hansen 2013). Positive epistasis, with genes that reinforce each other's

427   effects in the direction of selection, inflate the additive variance and thus the ability of

428   populations to adapt to an environmental change (Carter *et al.* 2005; Monnahan and Kelly

429   2015), contrary to the non-directional epistatic scenario (Carter *et al.* 2005). Negative

430   epistasis, where genes tend to mute each other's effects, reduces the additive variance of the

431   character, thus limiting adaptive potential (Carter *et al.* 2005). Few empirical estimations of

432   the directionality of epistasis are available in literature (Le Rouzic 2014; Monnahan and Kelly

433   2015; Oakley *et al.* 2015, all detecting positive epistatic interactions), despite numerous

434   methods and the diversity of data used to infer it (Le Rouzic 2014). Developing methods to

435   detect and measure the directionality of epistatic interactions in relation to the mating system

436   may bring us closer to understanding the differences in patterns of adaptation observed in

437   selfing and outcrossing populations.

438

439   **New insights into the role of standing genetic variation in the adaptation dynamics of**

440   **selfing populations**

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442   The overwhelming success of selfing species in the domestication process and as

443   invasive species is not considered as resulting from a higher adaptive ability of selfing species

444   compared to outcrossing ones. For instance, the invasive success of selfing populations is

445   attributed to reproductive assurance, since a single individual is able to colonize a new

446   environment (Rambuda and Johnson 2004; van Kleunen *et al.* 2008), and to reduce gene flow

447   which are expected to limit maladapted gene exchanges between populations (Levin 2010).

448   Regarding domestication, it has been argued that selection in selfing populations is most

449   probably due to new mutations, because the standing genetic variation is lower in such

450   populations due to more efficient purging of deleterious mutations that could be involved in

451   the domestication process (Glémin and Bataillon 2009). This idea is reinforced by the fact that

452   selfing species are expected to quickly fix a rare beneficial mutation, independently from its

453   dominance level (Ross-Ibarra 2005). In their review on mating system variation in

454   domesticated plant species, Glémin and Bataillon (2009) have suggested that the high

455   frequency of self-fertilising crop species could be related to an increase in additive variance

456   during domestication; this idea has however never been tested theoretically or empirically.

457   Here we show that this increase in additive variance could indeed be an advantage when

458   selfing species are faced with new environments. However, our results hold true only if

459   bottlenecks during the domestication and invasion processes are not too strong or if mutation

460   rates are high.

461

CONCLUSION AND PERSPECTIVES

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464   In this work, we argue that selfing populations under stabilizing selection are able to

465   accumulate hidden genetic variation through negative linkage disequilibrium. Thanks to this

466 hidden variation, adaptation under high self-fertilisation rates is not always limited by the

467 expected reduction in additive genetic variance due to purging. We therefore suggest that a

468 simple estimation of additive variance of quantitative traits is not adequate when speculating

469 on the long-term adaptive capacity of a population. Complementary analyses should also be

470 carried out when quantifying the long-term evolvability of a population. Such analyses

471 include looking for transgressive segregation, or carrying out experimental evolutionary

472 experiments in which directional selection is induced. More empirical evidence is required to

473 determine how frequent is cryptic diversity in natural populations of selfing species, and

474 whether or not this property is sufficient to allow for selfing species to adapt to a changing

475 environment.

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