## **Studies on the Modular Evolution of Genes**

#### A thesis submitted to the National University of Ireland for the degree of **Doctor of Philosophy**



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This thesis is dedicated to the memory of

Michelle (Shelly) Behan

and

Rafeek Khan

Two beloved friends who passed during the course of my studies.

#### **Declaration**

This thesis has not been submitted in whole, or in part, to this or any other University for any other degree and is, except where otherwise stated, the original work of the author.

Signed:\_

Robert J. Leigh

## **Abbreviations**









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#### **Publications**

Leigh R.J., Moran R.J., Pathmanathan J.S., Bapteste E., O'Connell M.J., Fitzpatrick D.A. & McInerney J.O. (in prep.) "Gene remodelling is rampant in fungi and plants".

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#### **Abstract**

Gene evolution is primarily studied through the observations of comparative cumulative point mutations between homologs. Genes also evolve through "remodelling", the process of repurposing and reorganising genes and gene fragments into novel sequences. Gene remodelling is a relatively underappreciated evolutionary concept. Remodelling events circumscribe the development of novel sequences *via* fusion or fission events and through the shuffling of exons or domains. To date, all studies into remodelling have focussed on specific remodelling events, for example gene fusions in cancer samples, or have used small datasets (<15 species). As such, a comparative remodelling analyses between two taxonomic Kingdoms has yet to be completed. In 2018, CompositeSearch was developed to overcome the computational bottlenecks associated with mining all possible combinations that may attribute to remodelling events. We used CompositeSearch to investigate the comparative extent of remodelling within large fungal (107 species) and plant (50 species) datasets. We observed approximately 50% of fungal genes and 61% of plant genes to have a history of remodelling despite robust controls against Type I errors. We observed the rate of remodelled family birth and decay to be clocklike in both datasets, and that remodelled genes were considerably more homoplastic than non-remodelled genes. Functional overrepresentation analysis concluded that remodelled genes were associated with rapidly evolving systems, such as secondary metabolism, and with phenotypic novelty, such as flowering in angiosperms.

Remodelling events have been associated with the development of antimicrobial resistance (AMR). As CompositeSearch does not discern between a fusion event and any other remodelling event, we developed CompositeBLAST to detect novel AMR fusion events. CompositeBLAST was considerably faster and more sensitive than previously published fusion detection tools. Using this software, we detected previously unreported mupirocin and vancomycin resistance genes as being derived from remodelling events.

# **Chapter I:**

# **Introduction**

#### **1.1 Gene evolution**

#### 1.1.1. Introduction to modular evolution

Molecular evolution refers to the accruement of changes in biological sequences (such as DNA, RNA, or translated amino acid sequences) over successive generations. Molecular evolution is a relatively young field in biology, which utilises principles and practices from genetics, biochemistry, computational biology, and bioinformatics. Gene evolution, a subdiscipline of molecular evolution, focusses on changes in protein-coding genes over generations and is achieved through comparative genetics and comparative genomics. Themes in gene evolution explore, for example, the evolutionary origins of new genes within genomes (Haggerty *et al*., 2012), the evolution of novel functions (Hughes, 2005), and phenotype evolution (Zhang, 2018).

The emergence of novel genes in a genome, whether through duplication, horizontal gene transfer (HGT) or successive point mutations can promote significant functional innovation or phenotypic changes (Chandrasekaran and Betrán, 2008; Haggerty *et al*., 2012). A common example of this can be observed in the development of antimicrobial resistance in bacterial populations *via* plasmid mediated HGT (Lerminiaux & Cameron, 2019). Gene deletion may also confer considerable phenotypic changes (Bailey *et al*., 2019), and is often observed during the transition to parasitic life cycles (Sun *et al*., 2018). For example, successive losses of secondary metabolite production, cellulose degrading, and hemicellulose degrading genes have been implicated in the transition towards obligate biotrophy in the fungal phytopathogen *Blumera graminis* (Spanu *et al.*, 2010).

With the exception of HGT, genetic novelty in genomes typically arises due to "**genetic redundancy**", where a particular biological function is carried out by two or more genes (Force

*et al.*, 1999), usually resulting from a duplication event (discussed further in Section 1.1.3.). In such instances, due to a lack in selection pressures, one duplicate is free to acquire mutations and evolve down its own pathway without affecting organismal fitness (Kleinjan *et al.*, 2008; Xia *et al*., 2016). Of course, there are exceptions to this, such as duplications resulting in gene toxicity or deleterious mutations in paralogs (Birchler and Veitia, 2012). As deleterious mutants are unlikely to persist in the genome, this thesis is exclusively concerned with "successful" mutants (divergent sequences that persist in the genome record). The potential fates of duplicated genes are discussed in *subsection 1.1.2.1.*

The cynosure of this thesis is the study of "modular evolution" in protein-coding genes, and, as such, the terms "gene" and "protein" are used interchangeably. Specifically, we investigate the genesis of novel gene families through "**gene remodelling**", a broad term describing the process of novel gene generation from existing gene sequences through processes such as domain shuffling (Kawashima *et al*., 2009) within a gene, or gene fusion and gene fission between independent genes (Leonard and Richards, 2012).

Typically, gene evolution is considered to be "tree-like", examined through the lens of vertical inheritance, and involves the study of the rates, distribution, and effect of nucleotide substitutions over time or between phenotypes (Haggerty *et al.*, 2012). Comparatively, gene remodelling examines the "network-like" aspects of gene evolution (Jachiet *et al*., 2014; Pathmanathan *et al*., 2018), where instead of having a single point of origin, a gene family can be formed from multiple, non-homologous progenitors (Haggerty *et al*., 2012) (Figure 1.1.1.). Remodelled gene families are the central focus of this thesis.

#### *1.1.1.1. Selfish gene theory*

The selfish gene theory (Dawkins, 1989) argues that genes compete for survival within genomes, tending to promote phenotypic selection that aids their own propagation. Briefly,



**Figure 1.1.1. "Tree-like"** *vs* **"network-like" gene evolution**

The top phylogeny depicts tree-like evolution as the number of roots  $(n_{\text{roots}})$  does not exceed 1 and does not possess merged nodes. The bottom phylogeny depicts network-like evolution as  $n_{\text{roots}}$  > 1 and due to the possession of merged nodes. The bars beside each gene name represent a BLAST alignment (Altschul *et al*., 1997) between each gene, and colour annotations represent membership within a gene family. Circles beside the bars represent network vertices, where each vertex is a gene and each connection (edge) represents homology. All genes in the top phylogeny are connected to each other. Gene families *x* and *y* in the bottom phylogeny do not share homology with each other, however both share homology with family *xy*.

adaptations that are beneficial for the propagation for a specific allele will be selected against genes in direct competition, resulting in a biased allele distribution. As traits are inherited almost exclusively *via* genetic propagation, evolutionary processes, such as selection, are better understood through the observation of genes as opposed to exclusively relying on phenotypic data such as fossils.

#### *1.1.1.2. Gene duplication*

The duplication of genes is a major driving force underlying expansions in the genetic repertoire, and subsequently lays the foundation for the generation of genetic novelty (Wagner, 1998; Garsmeur *et al.*, 2014). Duplicates arising within an organism are known as **paralogs**, whereas genes arising from a common ancestor prior to a speciation event are known as **orthologs**. Duplication mediated evolution has been under consistent, intense scrutiny since Ohno first described the phenomenon in detail (Ohno, 1970). Paralogs are usually indistinguishable from each other immediately after a duplication event, and are thus functionally redundant (Force *et al.*, 1999). Redundancy reduces selective pressure on at least one paralog, which may then accumulate point mutations resulting in innovation or decay (Rice and Palmer, 2006; Wang and Paterson, 2011).

#### *1.1.1.2.1. Potential fates of duplicated genes*

The potential fates of duplicated genes are commonly debated (*eg.* Wagner, 1998; Rastogi and Liberles, 2005; Nardmann and Werr, 2013). In multicellular organisms, unless a duplication event occurs in germ cells, paralogs are present in just one cell, which must compete with neighbouring cells to ensure paralogous survival. Comparatively, duplicates

arising in single celled organisms or within the germ cells of a multicellular organism must compete with other individuals within a population that do not possess this paralogous pair. If a paralog is deleterious to normal function, thus reducing host fitness, it is likely to be removed from the gene pool prior to reproduction or within a few generations of the initial duplication event (Veitia, 2005). As mentioned above, silent mutations may not be selected against and may persist within a population. Comparatively, if a paralog is advantageous, it is likely to be selected for and passed on to successive generations (Force *et al.*, 1999).

Gene dosage refers to the sum of translated sequences by a specific gene in a given cell over time (Qian *et al.*, 2008). If gene concentration is suboptimal, a duplication event could hypothetically increase fitness. Therefore, unless inhibited, increases in gene copy number enables increased protein production. If amplified protein production is advantageous, little variation, if any, accumulates within the paralogous sequence while maintenance remains advantageous (Lynch and Conery, 2000). The slow accumulation of point mutations in a positively selected paralog, or point mutations accrued once paralogous maintenance is no longer advantageous results in altered functionality (Hughes *et al.*, 2014). Comparatively, a paralog may be deleterious to an organism due to interference with tightly coordinated pathways. Prominent fitness declination arising from paralogs is exemplified in human neuropathies where paralogs of α-synuclein have been associated with early onset Parkinson's disease (Rice and McLysaght, 2017). Parkinson's disease progresses through the accumulation of Lewy bodies in nerve tissues (Jellinger and Korczyn, 2018). Lewy bodies are composed of granular tissue and α-synuclein variants. As α-synuclein is involved in embryonic nerve development, germline mutations would likely render a host non-viable. A duplication event allows for α-synuclein variants to arise thus contributing to Lewy body formation (Rice and McLysaght, 2017).



**Figure 1.1.2. Paralog fates**

Each box represents a conserved gene domain and each domain triplet represents a 3-domain gene (*eg*. ABC and EBF). Each descending level represents a duplication event. A solid line between genes represents vertical inheritance between a parent and paralog, a broken line (dashed) represents loss of selection (ns), and a broken line (dotted) represents a change in function. Loss of selection in domains A and C following the second duplication event (resulting in  $A_{ns}BC$  and  $ABC_{ns}$ ) represents a **subfunctionalisation event** (functional partitioning), and the change in function (ABC→ABD) represents a **neofunctionalization event** (evolution of functional novelty). The loss of selection (and subsequent loss of function) exhibited during the third and fourth duplication events  $(A_{ns}BC \rightarrow A_{ns}B_{ns}C_{ns})$  represents a **pseudogenisation event** (complete loss of function). The development of functional novelty in a subfunctionalised gene ( $EBC \rightarrow EBC_{ns} \rightarrow EBF$ ) as exhibited during the third and fourth duplication events represents a **neosubfunctionalisation event** (the evolution of functional novelty in functionally partitioned paralogs).

In cases where paralogs are retained, but not functionally conserved, one of three scenarios arise (Figure 1.1.2.):

- (*i*.): **Pseudogenisation** (Levasseur and Pontarotti, 2011) where a paralog accumulates successive point mutations rendering it functionally deficient resulting in its transition to a non-coding gene;
- (*ii.*): **Neofunctionalisation** (Xia *et al.*, 2016), where one paralog retains its original function and the other, being under less selective pressure evolves a new function through the accumulation of beneficial mutations or through the convergent evolution of a conserved domain, resulting in a "false fusion" event (a gene that appears to be a fusion of two ORFs but did not arise from such) such as an epaktologous event (Nagy and Patthy, 2011). Fusion events are a prominent subset of remodelling events (Leonard and Richards, 2012) and are discussed in detail in *subsection 1.1.1.2.1.*; or
- (*iii.*): **Subfunctionalisation** (Kleinjan *et al.*, 2008), where paralogs of multifunctional genes undergo functional partitioning resulting in differential expression. Ancestral, pre-subfunctionalised genes often contain more than one catalytic domain (Bashton and Chothia, 2007), resulting in selective pressure being applied to only one portion of each paralog.

As such, successive deletion events are free to take place within non-selected regions, resulting in a "one-sided fission" event if this further results in a partial gene deletion (Des Marais and Rausher, 2008). Fission events, like fusion events, are discussed in their own

section later in this chapter (*subsection 1.1.2.1.*). It is also possible for neofunctionalisation to occur in subfunctionalised genes, ultimately cumulating to **neosubfunctionalisation** (Rastogi and Liberles, 2005). Neofunctionalisation or pseudoegenisation are hypothesised to be the most likely fates of non-conserved paralogs (Wagner, 1998; Lynch and Conery, 2000). Neosubfunctionalised genes lend credence to the theory that subfunctionalised genes are intermediates in protein evolution and are rarely retained. Due to the considerable variation in neosubfunctionalised genes from their original paralog, it may be possible that these genes may only share "hidden homology", and, as such, may be undetectable using sequence similarity searches (Janeček, 2008).

#### *1.1.1.2.1.1. Paralog neofunctionalisation*

Neofunctionalisation refers to the evolution of functional novelty in one paralogous gene while the other paralog retains its individual function as a consequence of selective pressures. Neofunctionalisation is hypothesised to follow one of two evolutionary models (Figure 1.1.3.):

#### (*i.*): The "**mutation during redundancy**" (MDR) model

The MDR model (He and Zhang, 2005) strictly states that differential selective pressures are exerted on each paralog following a duplication event. Specifically, one paralog is under selective pressure to retain its original function and the other is under much less pressure and is free to accumulate mutations. MDR mediated neofunctionalisation is hypothesised to be rare due to the fact that deleterious or silent mutations are much more



**Figure 1.1.3. Comparison of MDR and IAD neofunctionalization models over time**

Each box represents a domain and each domain pair represents a paralog undergoing neofunctionalisation (Gene AB→AC). Each level represents a timepoint (annotated by Roman numerals I-IV). A solid line between domains represents functional conservation and a broken (dashed) line represents functional divergence. A colour transition to green represents beneficial mutations leading to functional novelty and a transition to grey represents loss of selection (and subsequent loss of function). For illustrative purposes, Domain A is functionally retained at each time point in each model further emphasising the divergence of Domain B→C. For the MDR model, Domain B undergoes loss of selection and begins to acquire beneficial mutations resulting in functional novelty (which is selected for), eventually becoming the dominant function (Gene AC). For the IAD model, enzyme promiscuity is observed (indicated by the green colour transition without first undergoing a loss of selection), where the secondary function is selected for, eventually becoming the dominant function (Gene AC).

frequent than beneficial mutations and that these accumulations would have to be large scale and localised (Rastogi and Liberles, 2005), which is statistically unlikely to occur compared to the accumulation of deleterious mutations thus leading to pseudogenization (Loewe and Hill, 2010); and

#### (*ii.*): The "**innovation, amplification, and divergence**" (IAD) model

Conversely, the IAD model (Andersson *et al.*, 2015) postulates that novel functions arise alongside original function through enzyme promiscuity, the phenomenon where enzymes catalyse a secondary reaction in addition to their main catalytic reaction. As the rate of beneficial promiscuity increases, the secondary function is further amplified through successive duplication events (Weng, 2014). IAD mediated evolution is most commonly associated with plasmids where it has been observed experimentally by Andersson and company (2015). Promiscuity tends to polarise after a number of duplication events, thus leading to distinct functions between paralogs (Weng, 2014). Briefly, the key difference between the MDR and IAD models is that MDR mediated neofunctionalisation emerges through non-selection of a paralog which allows for the progressive accumulation of beneficial mutations over time, whereas IAD mediated neofunctionalisation emerges through catalytic domain promiscuity, where futher duplicates are selected for one promiscuous function resulting in selective divergence over time.

#### *1.1.1.2.1.2. Paralog subfunctionalisation*

Subfunctionalisation is the evolution of functional partition within multifunctional paralogs (Rastogi and Liberles, 2005). As with neofunctionalisation, subfunctionalisation is also hypothesised to arise from one of two models:

#### (*i*): The "**duplication, degeneration, and complementation**" (DDC) model

The DDC model states non-selected paralogs may accumulate mutations reducing their capacity to perform a particular function (Figure 1.1.4.). This lack of functionality is complemented by the other paralog, resulting in a specialist partitioned function for the degenerated paralog. As the multifunctional paralog is no longer required to carry out the function of the degenerated paralog, it also evolves towards subfunctionalisation due to a lack of selection for the secondary function (Force *et al.*, 1999; Hellsten *et al.*, 2007). In this model subfunctionalised paralogs functionally complement the pre-duplication multifunctional gene but may now freely evolve their own expression patterns and undergo further duplications and modifications without disrupting its complement (assuming these events would not be deleterious due to gene dosage toxicity).

#### (*ii.*): The "**escape from adaptive conflict**" (EAC) model

In contrast to the DDC model, the EAC model initiates with evolution towards simultaneous functional promiscuity prior to a duplication event (Des Marais and Rausher, 2008). In scenarios where functional optimisation is unlikely to be achieved for both functions in a single gene (due to, for example,


**Figure 1.1.4. A comparison of DDC and EAC subfunctionalisaton models over time** 

Each box represents a domain and each domain pair represents a paralog undergoing subfunctionalisation (Gene AB→A and C). Each level represents a timepoint (annotated by Roman numerals I-V). A solid line between domains represents functional conservation and a broken (dashed) line represents functional divergence. A colour transition to grey represents loss of selection and function. Transitions from dullness to vibrancy (in hue) represents a selective pressure increase. In the DDC model, Domain A is conserved in one paralog and Domain B in the other. In this scenario, one paralog underwent loss of selection relatively early post-duplication, and was thus only expressed to perform one function (as indicated by the transition to grey in Domain B). Consequently, the second paralog was selected for its alternative function (Domain B) and displayed lack of selection for Domain A (as indicated by the transition to grey) resulting in two distinct, subfunctionalised paralogs. In the EAC model, one domain in each paralog evolves towards an optimized function (as represented by increases in vibrancy), a loss of selection is observed in the other domain (as indicated by the transition to grey) resulting in two distinct paralogs with complementary domains, and subsequent optimised complementary functions.

substrate competition or structural hindrances), a duplication event followed by a subfunctionalisation event may be advantageous, ultimately resulting in the same outcome as the DDC model. An example of subfunctionalisation can be observed in RNAse1 (*RNS1*) of the primate genus *Pygathrix* (Zhang, 2003). *Pygathrix* spp. have adapted to predominant folivory which is atypical of the capabilities of Old-World primate metabolism. In most primates, *RNS1* is a bifunctional enzyme, assisting in viral defence and in nutritionally derived nucleic acid degradation, and optimally functions at neutral pH (Lomax *et al.*, 2017). As *Pygathrix* have evolved folivory in their recent evolutionary history, they lack a specialised genetic arsenal for leaf degradation, relying on a low stomach pH to degrade cellulose (Zhang, 2003; Liu and Wang, 2016). As *RNS1* displays severely hampered functionality at low pH levels, a duplicated *RNS1* gene was positively selected for increased functionality in acidic environments. Both paralogs evolved to optimise a function for viral defence at neutral pH or for the metabolism of nucleic acids at a lower pH cumulating to an EAC mediated subfunctionalisation event (Liu and Wang, 2016).

#### *1.1.1.2.2. Duplication mechanisms*

As gene duplication leads to functional redundancy, which may subsequently lead to functional, genotypic, and phenotypic novelty, understanding the underlying genetic factors leading to duplication is of importance, especially those leading to large-scale genetic redundancy.

Gene duplication events are commonly ascribed to transposable elements (Marburger *et al.*, 2018), slipped strand mispairing (Levinson and Gutman, 1987), ectopic recombination (Petrov *et al.*, 2003), polyploidy (Clark and Donoghue, 2018), and aneuploidy (Leitch and Leitch, 2008). Variances in ploidy are common in fungi (Albertin and Marullo, 2012) and plants (Tank *et al.*, 2015), as such these were deemed to be excellent candidates to investigate for modular genetic evolutionary patterns due to their propensity to introduce vast amounts of redundant genetic material over short time frames. These studies are the topics of Chapters III and IV.

Whole genome duplication (WGD) or polyploidization is a massive evolutionary driving force. Evidence of WGD has been observed throughout eukaryotes (Macqueen and Johnston, 2014; Ren *et al.*, 2018), and especially in Viridiplantae (Garsmeur *et al.*, 2014), where their influence is particularly prevalent in grass genomes (Thiel *et al.*, 2009). Due to the considerable genetic redundancy, subsequent subfunctionalisation, and neofunctionalisation arising post-WGD, it is implicit in many niche adaption and speciation events (Fawcett *et al.*, 2009).

Polyploidy refers to one of two genomic states, **autopolyploid** (where extra chromosomes are intergenomic in origin) or **allopolyploid** (where extra chromosomes are intragenomic in origin; Figure 1.1.5.). Allopolyploids arise from hybridization events between closely related species, where copies of both parental genomes are maintained. A prominent example of this is observed within the allohexaploid genome of *Triticum aestivum* (common wheat) where three distinct ancestral genomes are maintained (Blanc and Wolfe, 2004). The evolution toward wheat allohexaploidy is believed to have arisen through two distinct hybridization events, where the origin of each ancestral genome has been identified (Petersen *et al.*, 2006). In the first instance, a hybridization event occurred between two diploid species, *Triticum uratu* (einkhorn wheat) and *Aegilops speltoides*, resulting in the emergence of *Triticum turgidum* (durum wheat), an extant crop species harvested for pasta production



**Figure 1.1.5. Comparison of auto- and allopolyploidy**

Each orange or yellow circle represents a cell and each purple circle represents its nucleus. Within each nucleus are a series of bars, representing chromosomes. Chromosomes shared by species A and B are red and chromosomes unique to species B are green. Duplicated chromosomes are annotated with a prime (*eg.* II'). Scenario (*a*.) depicts autoploidy, where an extra copy of a chromosome is inherited during duplication, in this case, chromosome II is duplicated  $(II \rightarrow \{II, II'\})$ . Such scenarios may arise from replication errors such as chromosomal segregation errors (Potapova and Gorbsky, 2017). Scenario (*b.*) represents alloploidy, the inheritance of new chromosomal permutations *via* sexual reproduction between closely related (yet distinct) species. Comparatively, chromosomal copy number increases arising from sexual reproduction between two organisms from the same species is known as polysomy (not shown).

(Kerby and Kuspira, 1987). A second hybridization event between the allotetraploid *T. turgidum* and diploid *Aegilops tauschii* (Tausch's goatgrass) resulted in the emergence of *T. aestivum* (Gill *et al.*, 1991; Petersen *et al.*, 2006).

Comparatively, autopolyploidy is often associated with **polysomy**, the addition of at least one extra chromosomal duplicate from a parent of the same species (Soltis *et al.,* 2014). Incorrect gamete chromosome reduction results in a preserved diploid state. Specifically, autopolyploidy arises through diploid gamete fertilization, resulting in autotriploidy, arising from one diploid gamete and one haploid gamete, or autotetraploids, arising from two diploid gametes (Parisod *et al.*, 2010).

1.1.2. Mechanisms of gene evolution

# *1.1.2.1. Point mutations*

Point mutations (single base pair substitutions, insertions, or deletions) are the most common mechanism of gene evolution, usually arising from erroneous DNA replication (Frömmel and Holzhütter, 1985). Such errors may be spontaneous or may be the result of an environmental interference such as ultraviolet waves or the presence of reactive oxygen species (Fitch, 1967; Livnat, 2013). A point mutation results in one of five outcomes depending on their location within a codon (Thuriaux *et al*, 1982; Friedlander *et al.*, 1983; Hervás-Aguilar *et al.*, 2007; Barrick *et al.*, 2009):

(*i.*): **Silent mutations** do not phenotypically alter an organism as they do not change the codon encoded amino acid, however, subsequent mutations could be deleterious;

- (*ii*.): **Nonsense mutations** result in the generation of a stop codon within a gene resulting in a truncated gene product, an X-linked **nonsense mutation** in the human dystrophin gene (*DMD*) results in the onset of Duchenne muscular dystrophy (Gardner *et al.*, 1995);
- (*iii.*): **Conservative missense mutations** result in an amino acid substitution to an amino acid with similar chemical properties. In such instances, function may be conserved unless the mutation occurs within a highly conserved gene;
- (*iv.*): **Non-conservative missense mutations** result in an amino acid substitution that drastically alters the chemical properties of their site. These mutations are often deleterious, for example, a non-conservative missense mutation at position 20  $(A \rightarrow T)$  of the β-globin gene (*HBB*) results in the onset of sickle cell anemia (Li *et al.*, 2011); and finally,
- (*v.*): **Frameshift mutations** which arise through a nucleobase insertion or deletion event, resulting in codon triplet disruption and the translation of a divergent protein sequence, as such frameshift mutations can be highly deleterious (Zhang *et al.*, 2018). An example of such a mutation is observed in a subset of cystic fibrosis patients where a deletion of a thymine residue at position 1213 of the transmembrane conductance regulator gene (*MRP7*), presents as a misfolded protein product (Lannuzzi *et al.*, 1991).

While point mutations can be highly deleterious, they can also result in advantageous structural or functional novelty (Zakharova *et al.*, 1999). The accumulation of point mutations drives selection towards a neofunctionalised or subfunctionalised state. A single missense mutation can also be highly beneficial. An example of this can be observed in the evolution of antimicrobial resistance. A missense mutation (Asp $\rightarrow$ Asn) at position 87 of a gyrase gene *gyrA* in clinically relevant gammaproteobacteria leads to fluoroquinolone resistance (Willmott and Maxwell, 1993).

#### *1.1.2.2. Gene remodelling*

Considering the sheer extent of genetic variation observed throughout life, it is highly improbable that all variances can be attributed to successive accumulations of point mutations within gene lineages (Haggerty *et al*., 2012; Jachiet *et al.*, 2014 Pathmanathan *et al.,* 2018). It is likely that the process of **gene remodelling** played a significant role during the evolution of complexity. Gene remodelling refers to the rearrangement and modification of existing genes forming new genes from processes such as gene fusion and fission (Leonard and Richards, 2012), domain, and exon shuffling (van Rijk and Bloemendal, 2003; Morgante *et al.*, 2005), and *de novo* generation (McLysaght and Guerzoni, 2015). As gene remodelling is the central theme of this thesis, it is imperative to define specific terms used in remodelling description (Figures 1.1.6.-7.):

(*i*.): A gene that shares significant similarity across a portion of its sequence length with two (or more) unrelated gene sequences is known as a "**composite"** (as it is composed of other, distinct sequences).



**Figure 1.1.6. Remodelling categories (network format)**

Each vertex represents a gene and each cluster of genes (annotated with one of six colours) represents a gene family. Edges represent a "remodelled relationship" (homology *via*  remodelling) between genes in different families. Bars at the bottom of the figure represent BLAST alignments between each gene with respect to every other gene. Alignments from genes of the red and blue **strict component** families constitute significant distinct portions of genes of the purple **nested composite** family (and *vice versa*). Similarly, genes of the purple and green families display considerable homology with distinct portions of the mahogany **strict composite genes**. Grey genes are **non-remodelled**.



**Figure 1.1.7. Remodelling categories (phylogeny format)** 

This diagram contains two phylogenies, the upper phylogeny represents one of many different topologies that could be inferred from the remodelled gene network in Figure 1.2.6. In this phylogeny, each circle represents the birth of a strict component family and all genes emerging after this event are included within the family. Boxes represent gene fusion events (fusion families) and all genes emerging afterwards are members of that family. Colour annotations are consistent with Figure 1.2.6. (blue, red, and green represent struct components; purple represents a nested composite; and mahogany represents a strict composite). The lower phylogeny represents a non-remodelled gene phylogeny and is included for completeness.

- (*ii*.): The terms **"fusion"** and "**fission"** describe a composite gene with a clear, directional evolutionary history (either two genes merged together to form one gene or one gene split to form two genes). The term composite is bidirectional and is used to avoid incorrectly referring to a pre-fission gene as a fusion or *vice versa* (Figure 1.1.8.).
- (*iii*.): A "**component"** gene is a sequence detected as constituting a significant portion of a composite gene.
- (*iv*.): A "**remodelling event**" is the scenario leading to the formation of composite or component genes.
- (*v*.): A gene that is identified as a composite in one remodelling event and as a component in another is known as a **"nested composite"** (**NC**).
- (*vi*.): A composite gene that is not further remodelled (is not detected as a component gene within another remodelling event) is a "**strict composite**" (**SC**).
- (*vii*.): A component gene that is not further remodelled is a "**strict component**" (**SN**).
- (*viii*.): A gene that is not detected as having a history of remodelling is "**nonremodelled**" (**NR**); and
- (*ix*.): NC, SC, SN, and NR categories are "**remodelling categories**" (**RC**).



**Figure 1.1.8. Comparison of remodelling event types**

The networks on the left of the diagram represent three types of remodelling event, where yellow and blue circles represent component genes and the green circle represents a composite. The bars below the network represent sequence alignments between the three genes. Annotation of remodelling events as "fusion" or "fission" requires information on component emergence (directed graphs (discussed in section 1.2.)) whereas annotation as "remodelled" does not (undirected graph). The upper left phylogeny depicts a fusion event as both components emerged prior to the formation of the composite. The upper right phylogeny depicts a fission event as both components emerged after the composite gene. The lower trees do not provide enough evidence to support annotation as "fusion" or "fission". As annotation as "remodelling" does not require graph directionality, all four events can be accurately annotated as remodelled.

Gene remodelling refers to the process of gene evolution beyond just cumulative mutations. In addition to point mutations, remodelling mediated evolution *via* fusion, fission, and shuffling of domains, exons, and fragments gives rise to vast complexity in emerging composite and component genes (Leonard and Richards, 2012; Pathmanathan *et al.*, 2018). Composite and component genes therefore may be homologous to a wide array of unrelated gene families (Haggerty *et al.*, 2012). Remodelling analyses have been completed on small datasets due to the restrictive computing power and time restraints disentangling such extensive similarity until the advent of CompositeSearch (Pathmanathan *et al.,* 2018).

## *1.1.2.2.1. Gene fusion and fission*

Gene fusions possess a defined evolutionary direction where two previously separate open reading frames (ORFs) merge to form a new composite ORF (Leonard and Richards, 2012). Fusion events arise through local (gene mediated) or global (chromosome mediated) mechanisms. The most simple fusion mechanism is the degeneration of a stop codon, resulting in a readthrough of two ORFs as one. Interestingly, gene fusion events often arise through the same "local" mechanisms as duplication, including *via* transposable elements (TE; Bennetzen, 2005). TEs often erroneously insert captured gene sequences into new genomic positions during their own replication processes. If a sequence is inserted into the promoter region or if the resultant protein is non-functional, both the duplicate and target region would be functionally negated (Kapitonov and Jurka, 2001). If a TE inserts a gene into a non-disruptive region, an effective duplication event would have taken place (Lisch, 2013). However, if a captured sequence is inserted into the coding region of a sequence without disrupting transcription machinery or the promotor region, and assuming the stop codon of the donor sequence or target region does not prematurely terminate the readthrough, a fused gene would

be generated (Bennetzen, 2005; Figure 1.1.9.). While TEs are implicit in the evolution of complexity, a misplaced insertion may result in considerable loss of fitness, especially if a signalling pathway is disrupted (Koivunen *et al.*, 2008; Tamura *et al.*, 2016). With the general exception of plants which suffer less consequence (Feschotte, 2002; Nystedt *et al.*, 2013), eukaryotes implement a number of TE mediated misplacement safeguards such as siRNA silencing of TE transcripts (Poetsch *et al.*, 2018). TEs have been identified as the aetiology for haemophilia by insertion mediated truncation of the Factor VIII blood clotting gene, *hemA* (Kazazian *et al.*, 1988). Due to the positional restraints and safeguards against TEs, it is likely that these are relatively rare facilitators of fused gene formation.

Comparatively, chromosomal events are more likely contribute more fused genes to a species' repertoire, especially in lineages that are prone to polyploidisation such as fungi and plants (Nakamura *et al.*, 2007; Leonard and Richards, 2012). After a polyploidization event, massive chromosomal rearrangements and redundant gene compaction take place (Clark and Donoghue, 2018). This environment promotes the three chromosomal events that promote fusion events (Leonard and Richards, 2012) (Figure 1.1.10.):

## (*i*.): **Translocation** of a chromosomal segment on to another chromosome

- (*ii.*): **Inversion** of a segment within a chromosome; and
- (*iii.*): **interstitial deletion**, the deletion of a chromosomal segment resulting in the merger of two previously non-adjacent chromosomal regions.



**Figure 1.1.9. Transposable element mediated gene fusion**

In this scenario, a transposable element (yellow circle) such as a transposon, binds and translocates a copy of Gene A and inserts the duplicated sequence before the N-terminus of Gene C. A resultant missense mutation leading to the degradation of a stop codon allows the readthrough of Genes A and C as a single fused ORF. Black dashed arrows represent TE movement with respect to a captured gene sequence. Grey dotted arrows represent TE movement throughout a genome.



**Figure 1.1.10. Chromosomal rearrangements that promote gene remodelling**

Chromosomal segments are represented by different coloured circles, movement of segments are represented by grey arrows, and the transition of one chromosomal state to another is represented by a black arrow. Wild type chromosomes (I and II) are drawn to the left of the black arrow, and the resultant aberration (I' and II') are drawn to the right. During **translocation**, the q-arm of Chromosome I is translocated to the end of a q-arm in Chromosome II, resulting in severe truncation and elongation of Chromosomes I' and II' respectively. During **inversion**, a p-arm is inverted in Chromosome I, so what was once the telomere (dark red circle) is now adjacent to the centromere (grey circle), displacing all genes at the extremities of the p-arm. Finally, during interstitial deletion, two interstitial segments are deleted from the p-arm in Chromosome I, resulting in the fusion of telomeric segments to the centromeric segments. All of these events promote gene remodelling by physically disrupting genomic architecture and the splintering of DNA sequences.

Gene fusion events have been identified as the aetiology of many cancers due to the disruption of signalling pathways (Nam *et al.*, 2007). An example of this can be observed in the the oncogenic *BCR-ABL1* fusion which arises through a translocation event (Hochhaus *et*   $al.$ , 2011) between chromosomes 9 and 22 (t(9:22)( $q34;q11$ )). Chromosomes displaying this event are known as "Philadelphia chromosomes" and are prevalent in many disease phenotypes, especially leukaemia (Kang *et al.*, 2016). Unfused *ABL1* is a tyrosine kinase involved in mitotic progression and in stress response (Quentmeier *et al.*, 2005). The function of wild-type *BCR* is yet to be fully elucidated. While gene fusions have been attributed to the emergence of disease phenotypes, evolutionary history is replete with hallmarks of advantageous fusion events (Enright and Ouzounis, 2001; Richards *et al.*, 2006). Fusion events have also been implicit in the rapid development of antimicrobial resistance in clinical settings (Williams *et al.*, 2005; Coleman *et al.*, 2015). The functional prowess of fusion (composite) genes are discussed in detail in Chapters II and III, and the extent of fused AMR genes are discussed in Chapter IV. A prominent example of a gene fusion event leading to a highly advantageous adaption can be observed in rhodopsin-guanyl cyclase (RhGC) gene within the Blastocladiomycota (Avelar *et al.*, 2014). In their unfused states, rhodopsin functions as a photoreceptor and guanyl-cyclase as a G-protein coupled receptor. In *Blastocladia emersonii*, RhGC is localised in the zoospore flagellar eyespot. In RhGC, light-activated rhodopsin initiates cGMP synthesis. Plasma membrane hyperpolarisation arises from the opening of  $K^+$ selective channels by cGMP resulting in the opening of voltage activated  $Ca^{2+}$  channels (Avelar *et al.,* 2014). Increased  $Ca^{2+}$  results in increased flagellar beating, resulting in phototactic response. RhGC is essential for phototaxis is *B. emersonii* zoospores.

Comparative to fusions, fissions refer to the splitting of an ancestral ORF into two or more ORFs (Leonard and Richards, 2012). As mentioned in *subsection 1.1.1.2.1.2.*, a onesided fission may arise through a nonsense mutation along a sequence, resulting in a highly

truncated yet still viable sequence (Leonard and Richards, 2012). Gene fission events are believed to occur much less frequently than fusions due to additional formation requirements (Durrens *et al.,* 2008). In addition to the generation of a stop codon, a second start codon preceded by a promoter region must be appropriated within a gene for a fission to occur (Leonard and Richards, 2012).

## **1.2. Graph theory**

As mentioned previously, evolution *via* gene remodelling is "network-like" as opposed to "tree-like". A "tree" structure refers a subset of graph structures that displays a single root (if any) and is completely devoid of merged nodes. Comparatively, "network-like" refers to a subset of graph structures that has merged nodes and more than one root (Haggerty *et al.*, 2012). In discrete mathematics, graph theory focusses on modelling pairwise relationships between two or more objects. A graph  $(G = V,E)$  is composed of **nodes (vertices)** and the relationships between them **(edges)** and may be **directed**, with asymmetric, orientated edges between vertices, or **undirected**, with symmetric, unorientated edges between vertices. This thesis relies exclusively on undirected graphs (as previous gene remodelling studies have done (Jachiet *et al.*, 2014; Pathmanathan *et al*., 2018)), where each vertex is a gene and edges between vertices are formed through sequence similarity (homology), resulting in a **sequence similarity network** (SSN). A small set of graph theory terminologies are used throughout this this thesis (Figure 1.2.1.):

(*i.*): A **connected component** (not to be confused with "component" genes as discussed in *subsection 1.1.2.8.*) refers to a group of vertices that are connected (*via* edges) to each other but not to any group;



**Figure 1.2.1. Graph theory nomenclature**

Graph (*a*.) depicts two **connected components**, distinct vertex groups (purple and orange) that are unconnected to each other. Graph (*b.*) illustrates a **subgraph** (annotated by green) within a connected component (non-included vertices are annotated with orange). The upper connected component in Graph (*c*.) depicts a **clique** (where all vertices are connected to all other vertices) and the lower connected component depicts a **quasi-clique** (where all vertices are not connected to all other vertices). For clarity, connected components in Graphs (*a*.) and (*b*.) are also quasi cliques. A **cluster** (or **family**) refers to any clique or quasi-clique in a graph. **Articulation points** (annotated as "A") in Graphs (*a*.) and (*b*.) are vertices that connect two otherwise disconnected clusters.

- (*ii*.): A **subgraph** refers to specific nodes and their associated edges within a connected component;
- (*iii.*): A **clique** refers to a connected component where all vertices share an edge with all other vertices;
- (*iv.*): A **quasi-clique** refers to a connected component where not all vertices share an edge with all other vertices.
- (*v.*): A **cluster** (or **family**) refers to both cliques and quasi-cliques
- (*vi.*): An **articulation point** is a vertex (or cluster or vertices) that connect two otherwise unconnected clusters.

In their studies, Jachiet *et al*. (2012) and Pathmanathan *et al*., (2018) primarily focussed on viral datasets, however, other network based remodelling studies have investigated the role of remodelling in pathway evolution (Richards *et al*., 2006; Ocaña-Pallarès *et al*., 2019) and as evidence for eukaryogenesis *via* bacterial-archaeal chimerism (Alvarez-Ponce *et al*., 2013).

Homologous relationships (edges) between genes (vertices) in an SSN are easily established using tools such as BLASTP (Altschul *et al*., 1997) or DIAMOND (Buchfink *et al*., 2015), or through the possession of conserved protein domains such as PFAM domains (Finn *et al*., 2008) and InterPro domains (Apweiler *et al*., 2001) as assigned by tools such as InterProScan (Jones *et al*., 2014). All SSNs in this thesis are constructed using BLASTP and the specific criteria for cutting edges are discussed in Section 1.3.2.

### **1.3. Tools used for remodelled gene detection in large datasets**

1.3.1. *fdf*BLAST (Leonard and Richards, 2012)

Prior to the release of CompositeSearch, remodelled gene detection required considerable computational resources required for large scale combinatorial comparisons (Pathmanathan *et al*., 2018). Due to this bottleneck, *in silico* studies on gene remodelling tended to focus on fusion or fission events pertaining to single genes (*eg.* Alvelar *et al*., 2014), on specific biochemical pathways (*eg.* Richards *et al*., 2006), or between two organisms (*eg.*  Nakamura *et al*., 2007). In 2012, Leonard and Richards released *fdf*BLAST, the first tool for for high-throughput gene remodelling events. In particular, *fdf*BLAST detects **differential**  gene fusions (instances where a fused gene is observed in one genome and both components are observed in another genome). For the purposes of this section, the terms "fusions" and "composites" are used interchangeably. Leonard and Richards applied this technology to nine fungal genomes, where a total of 63 gene fusions were identified.

*fdf*BLAST has five main steps (Figure 1.3.1.):

#### (*i.*) Comparative reciprocal BLAST

Each genome in a multi-genome dataset is queried against each other genome using BLASTall (Altschul *et al*., 1997) to search for the presence of single copy full length homologs (1:1 relationship), the presence of genes with multiple homologs in another genome (1:2 relationship), and the presence of multiple homologs in a genome that hit a single gene in another genome (2:1 relationship). This step ensures that a bidirectional hit is observed between the

#### Step  $1$ **Automated Serial BLASTp Analysis**

Genomes of interest are collated and then subjected to NCBI's local BLAST tools, "formatdb" and "blastall".



An all against all analysis is carried out, producing the standard BLAST output. For example, three genomes A, B and C are analysed in this way: A to A, A to B, A to C and B to B, B to A, B to C and C to C, C to A, C to B.



Reciprocal Hit Matching

For each gene that has displayed evidence of differential hit patterns the reciprocal (e.g. A to B and B to A) analysis is queried to see if the differential pattern is preserved.



Genes with differential hits that display hits in both directions are selected.

If the second gene is not present at the selected e-value cut-off it is not considered a complete reciprocal hit.



in order to help manual confirmation, further narrowing the list of predicted putative gene fusion events.

**Figure 1.3.1.** *fdf***BLAST pipeline**



#### Comparative Hit Counts.

Genes with differential hit patterns are identified and passed on for further analyses by parsing the previous BLAST output using BioPerl.



Program includes user adjustable e-value threshold so that multiple comparisons, with different cut-offs, can be performed.



Ranking and Sorting

Sorting: The subject ORFs are sorted by their 'location' compared to the query sequence's length; placing them left, right or spanning the middle. This helps remove 'complete full length' homologues (gene M) and identify potential split domains  $f$ nenes Land K



Ranking: Each ORF is given a score based on the number of bases matched to the query sequence divided by the total length. These are coloured; green (80-100), blue (70-80), purple (60-70), red (40-60) and black (<40) based on %-identity in fdfBLAST's output.

The resulting images only include two candidate unfused ORFs, unlike the above image which represents the internal program data structure. Genes I, L and M are discarded.

An illustration of the *fdf*BLAST pipeline used by Leonard and Richards (2012).

fusion and each component. If a potential fusion is not found to have bidirectional hits, it is discarded from further analyses.

### (*ii*.) Comparative hit counts

All instances of 1:2 and 2:1 relationships are extracted while all 1:1 relationships are excluded from further analyses. 2:1 and 1:2 relationships are selected to detect instances where one gene aligns to two different homologs at different coordinates along its sequence (fused gene sequence). Such instances may then be parsed for differential fusion detection. 1:1 relationships cannot satisfy this requirement, as such they are discarded.

# (*iii*.) Reciprocal hit matching

Alignments between each gene in each potential fusion (1:2 and 2:1) relationship are assessed to ensure that hits are bidirectional between both genomes. This is a quality control procedure to ensure confidence in homology.

# (*iv*.) Ranking and sorting

A "terminal alignment category" (C-terminal or N-terminal) is assigned to each component based on its positional alignment along the fusion sequence. If the component sequence terminates within the first 50% of the fusion it is annotated (sorted) as "C-terminal terminating" and if it terminates within the final 50% of the gene, it is annotated as "N-terminal terminating". This process is replicated for the initiation (start) of each component alignment against the fused gene, and each component is annotated as "C-terminal initiating" or "Nterminal initiating". Instances where genes initiate and terminate within the same terminal are assigned to that terminal (C-terminal or N-terminal aligning) and genes that initiate within the C-terminus but terminate within the Nterminus are annotated as "middle aligning". If a middle aligning component has a user defined (default =  $90\%$ ) length similar to the fusion, it is considered to be a full length homolog and is discarded.

Retained components are then ranked based on two separate methodologies:

# (*a*.): Percentage identity sequence similarity

The percentage of total identical amino acids ("pident") mapped to the fusion sequence (where higher percentages are ranked higher); and

# (*b*.): Geographical distance ratios between components

The geographical distance ratio (DR) between each N-terminal and each C-terminal component alignment (query sequences) along the fused gene is calculated using the formula:

$$
DR = \frac{qend_N}{qstart_C}
$$

where:



For each potential fusion, the DR between all potential C- and N-termini are binned between 0.1 and 1 at increments of 0.1. Distance ratios are inversely correlated with the distances between alignments. For example, a distance ratio of 1 would be observed when two component alignments are adjacent, whereas a distance ratio of 0.1 would be observed when alignments are relatively far apart in relation to the fusion sequence (Figure 1.3.2.).

## (*v*.) Conserved domain detection

HMMscan (Johnson *et al.*, 2010) is used to assign PFAM domains (Bateman, 2002) to each component and fusion. A fusion must share domains with each of its components to be considered valid and fusions not possessing conserved PFAM domains are discarded. Graphical outputs are constructed for each fusion/fission event, which may then be manually curated.



**Figure 1.3.2.** *fdf***BLAST distance ratios**

Each scenario (*a*.-*c*.) represents the distance ratio (DR) calculated for two components (A and B) against a composite gene (solid black line) where  $DR = [0.1, 0.2, ..., 1.0]$ . The DR is inversely correlated to the distance between domains (Leonard and Richards, 2012)

#### 1.3.2. CompositeSearch (Pathmanathan *et al*., 2018)

To our knowledge, CompositeSearch is the only program for high throughput remodelled gene detection since *fdf*BLAST (Leonard and Richards, 2012) and its predecessor, fusedTriplets (Jachiet *et al*., 2014). CompositeSearch is a high throughput C++ program for detecting gene remodelling events in SSNs constructed using BLASTP (Altschul, 1997). CompositeSearch detects families acting as articulation points (composite families) between at least two otherwise unrelated families (component families) and differs from *fdf*BLAST by searching for all instances of gene remodelling, not just differentially distributed gene fusion events, thus CompositeSearch is a **sensitive** detection tool, whereas *fdf*BLAST is a **selective**  detection tool. A CompositeSearch analysis identifies gene remodelling in five steps:

# (*i*.): SSN construction

CompositeSearch requires an SSN constructed using BLASTP (tabular format (-outfmt 6)) as input. Low complexity sequences and repetitive sequences can be detected by BLAST as being highly similar; as these potentially non-homologous and relatively common gene architectures could cause a potentially high degree of false positive results, they are excluded from further analyses using BLAST incorporated "SEG" (-seg yes) and soft masking (-soft\_masking true) filters. This step is taken as a precaution as the implementation of compositional statistics in the BLAST+ algorithm already aims to reduce influence from such alignments (Pathmanathan *et al.*, 2018). As CompositeSearch requires alignment information in a defined order, the executable BLAST command was applied:

blastp -query <input file> -db <database file> -out <output file> -seg yes -soft\_masking true -outfmt "6 qseqid sseqid evalue pident bitscore qstart qend qlen sstart send slen"

where:



BLAST flags between quotation marks (6, qseqid - slen) refer to the sequence columns that appear in in the -outfmt6 (tabular) output file.

# (*ii*.) "cleanBlastp" executable

The C++ program "cleanBlastp" is provided with CompositeSearch which converts each gene ID (qseqids and sseqids) to a unique integer which removes self-hits, removes redundant hits, and in cases where multiple high scoring pairs (HSPs) are observed, selects the best hit (based on the lowest *e*value). Three output files are produced by cleanBlastp:

- (*a.*): A "**cleanBlast**" file with retained BLASTP statistics (in tabular format) for CompositeSearch network analyses (explained in step (*iii*.).)
- (*b*.): A "**cleanBlast.genes**" file containing a list of all converted gene IDs which is used during CompositeSearch analysis.
- (*c*.): A "**cleanBlast.dico**" file containing gene IDs and their mapped integer IDs. This file is not used by CompositeSearch but is provided to allow the user to identify genes during downstream analyses.

The "cleanBlast" and "cleanBlast.genes" files contain data from the BLASTP analysis (described in step (*i*.)) which has been optimised for processing by CompositeSearch. This "cleaning" method has been implemented to avoid simultaneous memory access issues and to allow CompositeSearch to be parallelized for rapid analyses (Pathmanathan *et al.*, 2018)

# (*iii*.) CompositeSearch executable

CompositeSearch, is used to identify instances of gene remodelling between homologous gene families. The executable is invoked using the command:

./compositesearch -i cleanBlast file -n cleanBlast.genes -m composites -c 80 -p 30 -e 1e-05 -l 20 -x 2 -y 2

## where:





As each flag is used during different steps of a CompositeSearch analysis, they are discussed as they arise. The "cleanBlast" and "cleanBlast.genes" files (generated in step (*ii*.)) are processed by CompositeSearch to assign genes to clusters (families) and then to determine the presence of gene remodelling events *via* the identification of clusters acting as articulation points between at least two other clusters. Genes are clustered into families using a three step method:

# (*a.*): Edge detection

An edge is established between two gene (vertex) alignments if the pident  $\geq$  the user defined minimum pident (-p) and if the *e*-value  $\leq$ the user defined maximum *e*-value.

#### (b.): Vertex clustering:

A Depth First Search (DFS) algorithm is used to cluster vertices (with intervertex edges as defined in step (*i*.)) into connected components (CC) if the mutual coverage score  $\geq$  the user defined minimum (-c).

## (*c.*): Family assignment:

As overextended BLAST alignments may incorrectly introduce genes to a family (Mills and Pearson, 2013), a mutual coverage score  $(S<sub>mc</sub>)$  is computed for each potential family (as defined by Pathmanethan *et al.*, 2018), and instances where  $S_{\text{mc}} < 1$  were subjected to Louvian community detection (Blondel *et al*., 2008). The application of Louvian community detection is to prevent potential composites and their components being assigned to the same families. Genes remaining in clusters after DFS and Louvian community detection are considered to be gene families. A connectivity score for each family (*Cf*) is calculated using the formula:

$$
C_f = \frac{(2 \times n_E)}{(n_V \times (n_V - 1))}
$$

where:

*n<sub>E</sub>*: The sum of edges in a given family; and *nv*: The sum of vertices in a given family

The family detection step produces three output files, "family.edges" (an edge list between vertices in each family), "family.nodes" (a list of vertices (integer gene IDs) assigned to each family), and "family.info" (a tab delimited file containing family attributes).

Remodelling events between gene families are determined using a two-step method:

### (*a*.): Non-familial homology extraction

Instances of non-familial homology (edges between vertices that are not assigned to the same family) are extracted from the "cleanBlast" file. Instances with genes assigned to families with sizes  $\leq$  -x (minimum composite family size) or -y (minimum component family size) are discarded resulting in an non-familial SSN (nfSSN).

# (*b*.): Composite detection

Each gene in each family with a size  $\geq$  -x are considered to be potential composites. Each gene in each family with a size  $\geq$  -y are considered to be potential components. For each potential composite, all hits are extracted from the nfSSN and compared. A composite is considered to be a *bona fide* composite if genes from two distinct component gene families map to two distinct

regions of the composite with an overlap  $\geq$  -1 (the maximum permitted overlap). If a family contains a single *bona fide* composite it is considered to be a "composite family" and all potential component genes associated with a *bona fide* composite are considered to be component genes, and their families annotated as such (Figure 1.3.3.). Gene families can be both composites and components, such instances are discussed in *subsection 1.1.2.2*.

This step results in the production of two files:

- (*i*.): A "**compositesinfo**" file containing mean alignment information for each composite against its associated component gene families; and
- (*ii*.): A "**compositefamiliesinfo**" file containing composite family attributes that may be used for downstream processing.



**Figure 1.3.3. A** *bona fide* **composite**

The graph illustrates relationships between three gene families (A, B, and C). Families A and B (annotated as red and blue) are component families and family C (annotated as purple) is a composite family. Intrafamilial relationships are annotated as light grey, interfamilial relationships used to infer a remodelling event are annotated as gold, and interfamilial relationships not used to infer a remodelling relationship are annotated as dark grey. Bars below the graph represent BLAST sequence similarity alignments between each sequence. An instance of remodelling was ascertained in this graph due to gene C2 acting as an articulation point (*bona fide* composite) between families A and B. Gene C1 is a truncated homolog of C2 and is assigned to the same family (and therefore a composite), however, as a significant sequence similarity relationship was only detected between C1 and members of family B (but not between family A) it could not serve as an articulation point and is not a *bona fide*  composite.

## **1.4. Statistical tests**

This thesis relies heavily on a set of distinct probabilistic statistical methods for the inference of significance which are discussed here prior to their usage in Chapters III-V.

1.4.1. Data comparison

#### *1.4.1.1. Population pairwise comparisons*

Differences between two populations are often ascertained by comparing means using a *t*-test (Student, 1908; Welch, 1947) assuming the data follows a Gaussian distribution. However, as data populations in this thesis was anticipated (and later observed) to be highly skewed (*eg.* as observed in gene family sizes (Demuth and Hahn, 2009)), a non-parametric Mann-Whitney *U* test (Mann and Whitney, 1947) was used to compare if two populations were stochastically different. Both population medians are stated to be equal under the null hypothesis  $(H_0:\eta_a=\eta_b;H_A:\eta_a\neq\eta_b)$  in a Mann-Whitney *U* test, and the *U* statistic is calculated using the formula:

$$
U_a = \sum R_{a,b} - \frac{n_a(n_a+1)}{2}; \ U_b = \sum R_{a,b} - \frac{n_b(n_b+1)}{2}; \ U = \min(U_a, U_b)
$$

where:



The *P*-value associated with the *U* statistic is ascertained from the normal distribution the corrected Z-statistic  $(Z_c(\mu, \sigma^2))$  using the formulae:

$$
P = f(Z_c(\mu, \sigma^2)) = \frac{1}{\sqrt{2\pi}} e^{\frac{-(Z_c)^2}{2}}; Z_c = \frac{U - \left(\frac{n_a n_b}{2}\right)}{\sqrt{\frac{n_a n_b}{12} \left((n_a + n_b + 1)\sum_{i=1}^k \frac{t_i^3 - t_i}{(n_a + n_b)(n_a + n_b - 1)}\right)}}
$$

where:



# *1.4.1.2. Comparison of proportions*

A Fisher's exact test (Fisher, 1922) is a statistical test used to determine if there are nonrandom associations, such as similar proportions, between two categorical variables. In general, a Fisher's exact test is a probabilistic test where both proportions  $(\pi)$  are stated to be equal under the null hypothesis (H<sub>O</sub>: $\pi_1 = \pi_2$ ;H<sub>A</sub>: $\pi_1 \neq \pi_2$ ) and is calculated using the formula:

$$
P = \frac{((X_a + X_b)! \times (Y_a + Y_b)! \times (X_a + Y_b)! \times (X_a + Y_b)!)}{((X_a + X_b + Y_a + Y_b)! \times X_a! \times X_b! \times Y_a! \times Y_b!)}
$$
where:



#### *1.4.1.3. Comparison of data points to data series*

In this thesis, a **data series** is defined as "a set of discrete, real numbers (data points; *n*   $\geq$  30) from a given experimental dataset". Each data point may be compared to its series using a cumulative distribution function  $(\Phi)$  or one dimensional Gaussian Q-function  $(Q)$  (Nikolić, Perić and Marković, 2017). Both functions are tail distribution probability functions of the **standard normal distribution**, and, as Q is derived from  $\Phi$  ( $Q = 1-\Phi$ ), both are inversely correlated with each other. Under the null hypothesis (for  $\Phi$ ), a given data point (*x*) is stated to be greater than or equal to a random point on a Gaussian distribution  $\Phi(X)$  when sampled from the data series  $(H_0: \Phi(x) \geq \Phi(X); H_A: \Phi(x) > \Phi(X))$  and for *Q*, *x* is stated to be less than or equal to  $\Phi(X)$  (H<sub>O</sub>: $O(x) \leq 1-\Phi(X)$ ; H<sub>A</sub>: $O(x)$  > 1- $\Phi(X)$ ). In this thesis, we were concerned with "bursts" (data points that were statistically likely to be distributed on the right tail of a Gaussian distribution ( $\Phi(x) \geq 0.95$ ; $Q(x) \leq 0.05$ )), so *Q* was calculated for each data point during such comparisons. *Q* was calculated using 3 steps (Figure 1.4.1.):

## (*i*.): Determination of normality

As *Q* requires a sereisto follow a standard gaussian distribution, the data series was subjected to a Kolmogorov-Smirnoff (KS) test ( $\alpha$  = 0.05)



**Figure 1.4.1. Q-function pipeline**

Each yellow box represents one of three steps in the Q-function pipeline described in *subsection 1.4.2.3.* Each step is connected to its associated process *via* a grey broken line (dashed). Each process is connected to its associated graph *via* a grey broken line (dotted). Graphs were drawn for illustrative purposes and are rough approximations of statistical distribution. The graph associated with step 1 depicts a histogram of raw data (*x*) connected by a spline. The left graph associated with step 2 (normality test) depicts  $g(x)$  (red) and  $\hat{F}(x)$  (blue). The right graph associated with step 2 (Box-Cox transformation) depicts *x* subsequent to transformation ( $\lambda(x)$ ). Finally, the graph associated with step 3 depicts  $g(x)$  with  $\Phi(x)$  and  $O(x)$ significance limit boundaries (0.05, 0.95) depicted as green broken lines (dotted).

(Kolmogorov, 1933; Smirnoff, 1948), where a series was considered to follow a Gaussian distribution if  $P > \alpha$  was observed. Instances where  $P \leq \alpha$  were transformed to a Gaussian distribution using a Box-Cox transformation (Box and Cox, 1985) and normality was redetermined using a KS test ( $\alpha$  = 0.05).

A KS statistic (T) is calculated using the formula:

$$
T = \sup_x | g(x) - \widehat{F}(x); g(x) = \frac{1}{\sigma \sqrt{2\pi}} e^{-\left(\frac{Z^2}{2}\right)}; Z = \frac{x - \mu}{\sigma}; \widehat{F}(x) = \frac{1}{n} \sum_{i=1}^n I_{\{x_i \le x\}}
$$

where:



A Lilliefors correction (Lilliefors, 1967) is employed to determine that T is sampled from a Gaussian distribution using the formulae:

$$
T_{n,\alpha} = \frac{\alpha_{KS}(n)}{f(n)}; f(n) = \frac{\alpha_{KS}(n) + n}{\sqrt{n}} \cdot 0.1
$$

where:



As  $n \le 50$  is observed for every invocation of the KS test,  $\alpha_{KS}(n)$  was estimated to be 0.895 for each test. Instances where  $T > T_{n,\alpha}$  ( $P > 0.05$ ) were considered to be sampled from a Gaussian distribution.

A Box-Cox transformation is performed using the formula:

$$
(x+1)λ=\frac{(x+1)λ-1}{λ}
$$
; λ=(-5, -4.99, -4.98, ..., 5)

where:



The mean and standard deviation is computed for each transformed series and the  $\lambda$  yielding the lowest standard deviation is selected as the most appropriate transformation.

#### (*ii.*): Data standardisation

Each transformed series was standardized by transforming each data point to its *Z*-score (standard score) using the formula described in step (*i*).

(*iii*.): Calculation of  $\Phi$  and  $Q$ 

The error function  $(E)$  was used to calculate  $\Phi$  for each Z-score in the series using the formulae:

$$
\Phi(Z) = \frac{1}{2} \left[ 1 + \mathcal{E} \left( \frac{Z}{\sqrt{2}} \right) \right]; \ \ \mathcal{E}(x) = \int_{-\infty}^{x} \frac{1}{\sqrt{2\pi}} e^{-y} dy
$$

where:



 $Q$  was then calculated by subtracting  $\Phi$  from 1.

Every primary invocation of the KS test in this thesis reported each series as non-Gaussian ( $P < 0.05$ ) and every Box-Cox transformation invoked to rectify this was successful  $(P > 0.05)$ .

## *1.4.2.4. Correlations between two data series*

A multitude of data series can be extrapolated from object characteristics in a given set, for example, series of (*i*.) genome sizes, (*ii*.) the sum of genes in a given genomes, and (*iii*.) the sum of chromosomes can be constructed from a set of given genomes. In this thesis, diverse characteristics are compared across genomic sets ( $n \geq 50$ ). As such characteristics may compare a Gaussian series to a non-Gaussian series, correlations were derived using non-parametric Spearman's  $\rho$  correlation matrices (Spearman, 1904). A correlation matrix is a collection ( $n >$ 2) of pairwise correlation tests (*eg.* Spearman's ρ test) where each matrix cell represents one test. For a Spearman's  $\rho$  test each variable is ranked in each series (rank variables), where nondistinct variables are each assigned to the same rank, and  $\rho$  is calculated using the formula:

$$
\rho = \frac{\sigma_{x,y}}{\sigma_x \times \sigma_y}; \sigma_{x,y} = \frac{\sum ((x_n - \mu_x) \times (y_n - \mu_y))}{|c|_R}
$$

where:



#### 1.4.3. Control for Type I errors

A Bonferroni-Dunn correction (Bonferroni adjustment) is applied to every statistical test in this thesis to control for Type I errors (Bonferroni, 1936; Dunn, 1959; 1961). A Bonferroni correction is an adjustment of the critical  $\alpha$ , the maximum permitted *P*-value allowed for the inference of statistical significance. The critical  $\alpha$  is adjusted using the formula:

$$
\alpha_{\rm B} = \frac{\alpha}{|c|}
$$

where:



A Bonferroni correction may also be applied to the *P*-value, where a *P*-value can be adjusted to a maximum of 1, using the formula:

$$
P_{\rm B} = P \times |c|
$$

where:

*PB*: Bonferroni adjusted *P*-value

Significance is determined in probabilistic statistical tests when  $P \le \alpha$  (or  $P \le \alpha$ ) when Type I errors are not controlled. By using a Bonferroni correction, a result is not determined to be significant unless  $P \le \alpha_B$  or  $P_B \le \alpha$ , resulting in more robust statistical results. The critical  $\alpha$  is adjusted in every invocation of the Bonferroni correction throughout this thesis, with the exception of results produced by "find\_enrichment.py" from GOATOOLS (Klopfenstein *et al.*, 2018), which adjusts the *P*-value (*subsections 2.2.3.4; 3.2.5.1.*).

## **1.5. Aims of this thesis**

Efforts to understand the effect, scope, and breadth of modular gene evolution and gene remodelling have been carried out on small datasets due to the computational limitations

imposed by parsing such extensive combinatoric calculations. We aim to uncover the extent of remodelling throughout the evolutionary history of the genome. From there, we aim to investigate and functional or phylogenomic distribution biases using robust bioinformatic and biostatistical methodologies. We believe gene remodelling is an underrepresented and underappreciated evolutionary process and aim to highlight its extent and effects.

## **Chapter II:**

## **Bioinformatic and Biostatistical Analyses of**

# **Gene Remodelling in Fungi**

## **2.1. Introduction**

#### 2.1.1. Introduction to mycology

Fungi, with more than five million estimated species, constitute one of the most diverse and speciose eukaryote kingdoms (Blackwell, 2011). Fungi are excellent candidates for assessing trends in eukaryote evolution as they have relatively small genomes, display simple, yet specialised cellular morphologies, exhibit short life cycles, and are amenable to genetic manipulation (Taylor *et al.*, 1993; Botstein *et al*., 1997; Pazouki and Panda, 2000; Calvo *et al.*, 2002; Berger *et al.*, 2005; Alby and Bennett, 2010; Karathia *et al.*, 2011; Leducq, 2014; Mohanta and Bae, 2015). The value of fungi to experimental biology is exemplified by *Saccharomyces cerevisiae* (baker's yeast) being the first eukaryote organism to have its entire genome sequenced (Goffeau *et al.*, 1996); by the wealth of highly curated genomic and proteomic resource databases available for model fungi (Skrzypek and Hirschman, 2011; Stajich *et al.*, 2012; McDowall *et al.*, 2015); and databases dedicated to fungal chromosomal architecture and synteny (Byrne and Wolfe, 2005; Fitzpatrick *et al.*, 2010). Fungi occupy a vast range of ecological niches from mutualistic internal and external mycobiomes (Brundrett, 2002; Seed, 2014; Hager and Ghannoum, 2017) to deadly plant and animal pathogens (Sanglard, 2002; Rosenblum *et al.*, 2008; Brefort *et al.*, 2009; Ma *et al.*, 2010) and have been found occupying niches in hostile environments such as deep sea hydrothermal vents (Le Calvez *et al.*, 2009; Burgaud *et al.*, 2014).

The fungal kingdom is highly diverse, and are known to virtually all known habitable ecosystems (Barron, 2003; Le Calvez *et al.*, 2009; Seed, 2014; Mohanta and Bae, 2015). Fungi are reported to be the earliest eukaryote lineage to have engaged in terrestrialisation (Liu *et al.*, 2006), subsequently altering edaphic geochemistry and enabling terrestrialisation in early plant

lineages (Bidartondo *et al.*, 2011; Quirk *et al.*, 2015). Due to their incredibly vast morphological and biochemical characteristics (Pazouki and Panda, 2000; Calvo *et al.*, 2002) and the low probability of fungal macrostructure fossilisation (Redecker *et al.*, 2000), phylogenetic relationships between fungal lineages are most accurately reconstructed using genomic data (McCarthy and Fitzpatrick, 2017). Fungi are hypothesised to have diverged from the metazoa approximately 833-1891 Ma (Betts *et al.*, 2018). At present, there are eight major fungal phyla (Spatafora *et al.*, 2017) (Figure 2.1.1.). The Cryptomycota and Microsporidia form a clade of deep branching zoosporic true fungi (Bass *et al.*, 2018). The placement of these lineages amongst the fungi has been debated due to the lack of chitinous cell walls and a nontrophic life-cycle, existing as obligate parasites with resultantly reduced gene sets (Capella-Gutiérrez *et al.*, 2012; James *et al.*, 2013). The Blastocladiomycota and Chytridiomycota both constitute aquatic phyla and maintain motile flagella in their spores (James *et al.*, 2006). Both Chytridiomycota and Blastocladiomycota are observed to maintain cholesterol as the fatty acid constituent of cell walls as opposed to ergosterol (Liu *et al.*, 2006). The loss of the flagellum and transition from cell wall cholesterol to ergosterol has been attributed to mycoterrestrial evolution, eventually leading to the emergence of the Mucuromycota and later the Glomeromycota (Spatafora *et al.*, 2017). The Dikarya are the sister clade to Glomeromycota and circumscribes the Ascomycota and Basidiomycota phyla. Dikarya are distinguished from other phyla by the maintenance of two distinct nuclei during their life cycles (Spatafora *et al.*, 2017). Basidiomycota maintain two nuclei during their entire life cycles while Ascomycota maintain a second nucleus during reproduction (Gladfelter and Berman, 2009).

## 2.1.2. Secondary metabolism



**Figure 2.1.1. Representative phylogeny of the major fungal phyla**

This phylogeny was adapted from Spatafora *et al.* (2017). Each leaf node represents a phylum or subphylum. Red and blue circles represent the Ascomycota and Basidiomycota phyla respectively. The purple box represents the emergence of the Dikarya. The orange box represents the transition from cholesterol to ergosterol during mycoterrestrialisation and subsequent loss of flagella (Liu *et al.,* 2006).

Secondary metabolites are small, bioactive compounds whose production, while not essential for cell viability, may confer considerable fitness in niche environments (Keller *et al.,*  2005). Like plants and bacteria, fungi have the capacity to produce a wide arsenal of secondary metabolites, primarily polyketide synthases (PKS) and non-ribosomal peptide synthases (NRPS) (Calvo *et al.*, 2002; Keller *et al.*, 2005; Perrin *et al.*, 2007; Liu *et al.*, 2015). The evolution of many secondary metabolic pathways, and the regulatory machinery for these pathways, has co-evolved with fungal sexual development, likely as a mechanism to protect spores (Calvo *et al.*, 2002). Secondary metabolism is particularly prominent in Pezizomycotina (Arvas *et al.*, 2007; Lah *et al.*, 2011). Fungal secondary metabolites also present as potent virulence factors for infection of plant and animals hosts, enabling the evolution of many devastating pathogens (Idnurm and Howlett, 2001; Perrin *et al.*, 2007; Ma *et al.*, 2010; Calvo and Cary, 2015). Such metabolites are of considerable economic value, for example, the revolutionary antibiotic, Penicillin, an NRPS, was first isolated from *Penicillium notatum*  (Pezizomycotina) in 1929 (Fleming, 1929). This discovery profoundly altered the scope of modern medicine by introducing widespread antibiotic use (Gaynes, 2017).

## 2.1.3. Fungal chromosome dynamics

The relationship between chromosomal aberration and gene remodelling events has previously been established (Mitelman *et al.*, 2004; Leonard and Richards, 2012; Kloosterman and Hochstenbach, 2014). Large scale chromosomal rearrangements occur frequently throughout the course of evolution (Chang *et al.*, 2013). Such rearrangements have been observed in cells that have adapted to selective conditions during experimental evolution analyses (Gordon *et al.*, 2009; Naseeb *et al.*, 2017). Chromosomal rearrangements in *S. cerevisiae* have been implicated in expanding its nitrogen assimilation repertoire in nitrogen poor environments (Hellborg *et al*., 2008). This adaption arose *via* rearrangement of the DAL gene cluster to a tightly packed genomic unit, much like a bacterial operon. These structural rearrangements allow for rapid co-expression of genes during nitrogen starvation (Wong and Wolfe, 2005). Experimental reversions of these rearrangements (to mimic those in *Naumovia castelii*) severely reduced the ability of *S. cerevisiae* to survive under nitrogen starvation (Naseeb and Delneri, 2012).

Wild type *S. cerevisiae* sampled from Evolution Canyon, Israel were observed to be significantly more copper resistant due to inversions and segmental duplications in chromosomes XII and XIII (Chang *et al.*, 2013). When samples of this strain were subjected to fluctuating copper concentrations a high frequency of chromosomal reversion to the model configuration was observed, which remained fixed in populations not exposed to high copper concentrations (Chang *et al.*, 2013). These results suggest that yeast chromosomes are malleable and chromosomal rearrangements may serve as a mechanism for rapid adaption. Such chromosomal rearrangements also promote gene remodelling events (Leonard and Richards, 2012).

Fungi do not maintain specialised tissues for most, if any, of their life cycles (Mulder *et al.*, 2007). A lack of pressure to maintain such structures may allow these species to undergo such chromosomal anomalies that may be otherwise deleterious in organisms maintaining multicellular anatomies (Mitelman *et al.*, 2004; Raudsepp and Chowdhary, 2016; Potapova and Gorbsky, 2017).

Despite many species possessing intron rich genomes, Fungi have relatively low rates of alternative splicing when compared to other eukaryotes (McGuire *et al.*, 2008; Grutzmann *et al.*, 2014), with many cases of duplication and subfunctionalisation being associated with intron containing genes (Rastogi and Liberles, 2005; Hickman and Rusche, 2010; Marshall *et al.*, 2013). Due to the propensity for fungal paralogs to undergo subfunctionalization it is reasonable to assume that these generally follow a "subneofunctionalization" model, whereby subfunctionalized paralogs slowly transition toward novel functionality (He and Zhang, 2005).

One prominent methodology of researching remodelling event evolution, especially *via* gene fusion and fission, is the use of network models over traditional tree models (Haggerty *et al.*, 2014). As a fusion gene typically shares ancestry with two unrelated genes, a typical tree model is inappropriate (as discussed in *subsection 1.1.2.2.1.*) instead an *N*-rooted fusion graph or network is used (Haggerty *et al.*, 2014; Coleman *et al.*, 2015). These networks are typically either protein-protein interaction networks (PPI) or, as is the case throughout this thesis, sequence similarity networks (SSN). In these networks, a gene or protein is displayed as a vertex, and its interaction or detected homology to another gene is displayed as an edge connecting the two vertices (as discussed in section 1.3.). This method is used as it provides greater capacity to visualise composite nodes, HGT, and other combinatorial events on a gene and genome level (Haggerty *et al.*, 2014). The use of these methods has allowed for in-depth exploration into alternative evolutionary mechanisms such as gene remodelling (Jachiet *et al.*, 2013; Pathmanathan *et al.*, 2018).

## **2.2: Methodology**

## 2.2.1: Benchmarking of CompositeSearch

While CompositeSearch was found to be more sensitive than its predecessors, MosaicFinder and fusedTriplets (Jachiet *et al.,* 2013; Pathmanathan *et al.,* 2018) when detecting remodelled genes in viruses, there are no reports on its use for eukaryotic remodelling event detection. A total of 63 composite genes were reportedly identified in 9 fungal genomes (Table 2.2.1.) using *fdf*BLAST (Leonard and Richards, 2012). We benchmarked

CompositeSearch against *fdf*BLAST on the 9 genomes used by Leonard and Richards (2012). We performed a reciprocal BLAST sequence similarity search on the concatenated genome dataset using an *e*-value stringency (cut-off) score  $(E)$  of  $E \leq 1e^{-10}$  to mirror the *E* used for *fdf*BLAST, we then processed the BLAST output file through cleanBLASTp and CompositeSearch using default parameters. Composite genes identified by both *fdf*BLAST and CompositeSearch are reported in Table 2.3.1.

#### 2.2.2: Development of a composite family quality control procedure

False positive matches (Type I errors) may occur in sequence similarity searches due to "poor gene calls" from poorly assembled genomes (Richards, 2018) As CompositeSearch identifies gene remodelling events based on partially aligning genes, such reports would potentially result in false reports of gene remodelling events. We constructed a pipeline to test the effect of poor genome annotation in datasets used for composite detection (Figure 2.2.1.). This approach consisted of controlling composite family size (-*x*) and component family size (*-y*). The pipeline consisted of 7 steps:

- (*i*.): A subset of genes (5%;  $n = 4,451$ ) were randomly selected and extracted from the dataset. "Pseudo-fissions" were induced in each subset sequence by artificially splitting at its midpoint to form two separate sequences.
- (*ii*.): A sequence similarity network (SSN) was constructed using BLAST ( $E \le 1e^{-0.5}$ ) using the parameters required by CompositeSearch as described in subsection 1.3.2.

## **Table 2.2.1. Fungal genomes used for composite detection by Leonard and Richards, 2012**

These 9 reference genomes are sampled from across the fungal Tree of Life and constitute a small yet highly diverse dataset. Originally, this dataset also included two Microsporidia, however, as no composites were detected in these taxa by Leonard and Richards (2012), they were excluded from their published analysis.





**Figure 2.2.1. Effect of low quality genomes in composite detection analyses**

This graphic illustrates the pipeline described in subsection 2.2.2. Each level depicts a step in the pipeline for each iteration. Solid black lines indicate the directional succession of each step. The broken line depicts the generation of the control dataset which does not introduce "pseudofissions" into the dataset.

- (*iii.*): A concise SSN was constructed by parsing the SSN through "cleanBlastp" (Pathmanathan *et al*., 2018). This removed self-hits, redundant hits, and selected the longest HSP in cases where multiple HSPs were observed between hits.
- (*iv*.): A series of four CompositeSearch analyses were performed on the concise SSN:
	- (*a*.):  $-x \ge 1$ ;  $-y \ge 1$  (default settings)
	- (*b*.): -*x* ≥ 2; -*y* ≥ 1
	- (*c*.): -*x* ≥ 1; -*y* ≥ 2
	- (*d*.):  $-x \ge 2$ ; −*y* ≥ 2

A fifth analysis ("strict filter") was included by extracting composite families where the sum of *bona fide* composites  $(-x_{bf}) \ge 2$  from the "compositefamiliesinfo" output file produced during analysis (*d*.;  $-x \ge 2$ ;  $-y \ge$ 2). As described in subsection 1.3.2., a *bona fide* composite is identified as having non-overlapping homology to members of two distinct component families.

- (*v*.): Data for each of the five analyses was recorded for downstream comparisons.
- (*vi*.): A series of pseudoreplicates was constructed by performing steps 1-5 100 times, and a control dataset (a dataset without pseudofissions) was constructed by performing steps 2-5 on the original dataset.
- (*vii*.): Control and experimental datasets were compared:
- (*a*.): We assumed 5% of identified composite families from the control dataset were false positives  $(FP_C)$ .
- $(b.)$ : Experimental false positives  $(FP_E)$  were computed using the formula:

$$
FP_E = (CF_E - CF_C) + FP_C
$$

where:



(*c*.) A one-tailed Fisher's exact test  $(H_0: \pi(x) \leq \pi(X); H_0: \pi(x) > \pi(X))$ was performed between control and experimental false positives for each iteration (Table 2.3.2., Figure 2.3.1.).

As the purpose of this was to identify a filter where control and experimental false positives were statistically similar, a result with an insignificant *P*-value  $(P \ge 0.05)$  was considered to be successful.

2.2.3. Development of a composite gene analysis pipeline

We developed a modular pipeline for remodelled gene detection and analysis (Figure 2.2.2.). This pipeline consisted of five modules which are described below (*subsections 2.2.3.1- 2.2.3.5.*). This pipeline was an attempt to identify:

- (*a*.) Gene remodelling trends across the dataset
- (*b*.) Functional trends in remodelled gene categories
- (*c*.) Gene remodelling trends across phylogenies

#### *2.2.3.1. Database construction and quality control*

A dataset of 107 fungal genomes (Table 2.2.2.) was obtained from Leonard and Richards (2012) and taxonomic lineages were obtained from the sources provided by the authors. The quality of these genomes were assessed using BUSCO *v*3.0.2 (Simão *et al*., 2015; Waterhouse *et al.*, 2017) with the fungal single copy orthologous dataset (fungi odb9) from OrthoDB (Zdobnov *et al*., 2017; Kriventsev*a et al*., 2018). Genome size (Mbp) and GC% were obtained from source for each taxon and genome density (*n*genes/Mbp) was obtained by dividing the number of genes in a given genome by its respective genome size (Table 2.3.3.). Descriptive statistics (mean, median, standard deviation, quartiles, and co-efficient of variation (CV)) were calculated for collated genomic statistics and BUSCO completion (Table 2.3.4.). The dataset consisted of 1,150,995 canonical protein sequences sampled from across five major fungal phyla (Ascomycota (71 genomes), Basidiomycota (30 genomes), Blastocladiomycota (1 genome), Chytridiomycota (2 genomes), and Mucoromycota (3 genomes)). This heavily biased towards the Dikarya, and specifically to the Ascomycota, due to the availability of the data at the time of Leonard and Richards' initial publication.

#### *2.2.3.2. CompositeSearch analysis, quality control, and annotation*

A sequence similarity network (SSN) was constructed using BLAST ( $E \leq 1e^{-0.5}$ ) using the parameters required by CompositeSearch as discussed in subsection 1.3.2., resulting in

## **Table 2.2.2. Dataset of fungal genomes**

Each of the 107 fungal species used in this chapter is provided with its GenBank ID (if applicable), the number of genes observed in its genome (*n*<sub>genes</sub>), and its taxonomic lineage. Taxonomic clades are ranked left to right in increasing order of specificity (phylum, subphylum, class, order, and family). A total of 101 species (Ascomycota and Basidiomycota) belong within a subkingdom "Dikarya", and all belong within a subphylum. The 6 genomes that do not belong to a subphylum are annotated as "N/A".













**Figure 2.2.2. Remodelled gene analysis pipeline**

The orange box represents the initial genome database construction and quality control using BUSCO (QC<sup>[a]</sup>) with an appropriate BUSCO set from OrthoDB (*subsection 2.2.3.1.*). The red box represents a phylogeny construction by aligning groups of highly distributed orthologs (using MUSCLE) and merging them to construct a superalignment which is used to build a phylogeny using PhyML with a model as decided by ProtTest (*subsection 2.2.3.4*.). The purple box represents assigning PFAM and GO terms to each gene using InterProScan, and assignin putative "Domains-of-origin" using the method described by Cotton and McInerney, 2010. The green box represents the identification of remodelled genes using BLASTP and ComposteSearch. The second round of quality control  $(QC^{[b]})$  refers to the family-size control strategy discussed in *subsection 2.2.3.2.*). Solid arrows represent the "flow" of data and dashed arrows refer to data mergers, where analyses rely on the output of two datasers. Finally, the blue box refers to the collation and analysis of data (section 2.2.3.).

1.325*e*12 pairwise sequence comparisons. The SSN was parsed through "cleanBlastp" to produce a concise SSN. The functionality of "cleanBlastp" is discussed in subsection 1.3.2. CompositeSearch was performed on the concise SSN using default parameters with composite family size control  $(-x > 2)$  and component family size control  $(-y > 2)$  parameters. The strict filter protocol (as described in section 2.2.2.) was applied to reduce potential Type I errors. Genes were annotated with a remodelling category (RC) as per *subsection 1.1.2.2*.

#### *2.2.3.3. Trends in gene family sizes*

Descriptive statistics were computed for family sizes in each RC (Table 2.3.5., Figure 2.3.2.). As considerable variation was observed (CV  $\leq$  294.6%), datasets were compared using a two-tailed Mann-Whitney *U* test  $(H_0:\eta_1=\eta_2;H_A:\eta_1\neq \eta_2)$ . A Bonferroni correction was applied  $(\alpha = 0.05; |c| = C_2^{|RC|} = 6; \alpha_B = 8.33e^{-03})$  and a  $P \le \alpha_B$  was considered statistically significant (Table 2.3.6).

#### *2.2.3.4. Phylogenetic and character state reconstruction*

#### *2.2.3.4.1. Phylogenetic reconstruction*

A phylogeny of the organisms in this analysis was constructed by obtaining all yeast "euKaryote Orthologous Groups" (KOGs) (Tatusov *et al.*, 2003) from JGI (https://www.genome.jgi.doe.gov) and searching them against our dataset using BLASTP  $(E \leq 1e^{-20})$ . KOG sequences were retained for phylogenetic construction if they were present in 95% (~102 species), resulting in 277 KOG sequences that were sampled for reconstruction. The reciprocal best BLAST hits was identified for each of the 277 KOGs in each species (if present) and was extracted as the representative sequence for that species resulting in the creation of 277 KOG families. Each KOG family was aligned using MUSCLE *v*6 with default parameters (Edgar, 2004). Poorly aligned positions and other non-informative positions (such as positions with no substitutions or only one substitution) were removed from each alignment (resulting in removal of the entire gene alignment in 28 cases) by using Gblocks *v*0.91*b* with default parameters (Castresana, 2000). A total of 249 KOG families were retained for phylogenetic reconstruction. A superalignment was constructed from the 249 alignments using FASconCAT *v*1.0 with default parameters (Kuck and Meusemann, 2010). Bootstrap support for internal branches were assessed in PhyML *v*3.0 (Guindon *et al.*, 2010) using 100 bootstrap samples and the LG+I+G (Le and Gascuel, 2008) model, as selected by ProtTest *v*3.0 (Darriba *et al.*, 2011). A majority-rule consensus tree was then constructed using PAUP\* (Swafford, 2002) and visualised using iTOL *v*3 (Letunic and Bork, 2016) (Figure 2.3.3.).

#### *2.2.3.4.2. Character state reconstruction*

A presence-absence matrix was constructed for each CompositeSearch defined sequence family for each species. Each branch was assigned a node ID using the "naked -; tplot;" functions with "Tree analysis with New Technology" (TNT) *v*1.5 (Goloboff *et al*., 2008). The TNT "-apo" function was used to plot character states from a presence-absence matrix of gene families to their inferred branches on an independently constructed phylogeny (Figure 2.3.4.), this function also determines whether a character state (trait; *T*) was gained (birthed;  $T_b$ ) and lost (decayed;  $T_d$ ) for each branch on the phylogeny by comparing families with its preceding branch. As TNT does not assign any character states to the root node or any node immediately succeeding it, we appended two "pseudo-outgroups" to the phylogenetic Newick file and to the presence-absence matrix (Figure 2.3.4.) For the presence-absence matrix, each pseudo-outgroup was assigned a "0" (absence) for each character state.

## *2.2.3.4.3. Comparison of homoplastic proportions*

Any character state that was observed to have been gained more than once by TNT  $(T_{b(f>1)})$  across the phylogeny was considered homoplastic. We calculated the "homoplastic proportion" (HP) for each RC (HP<sub>RC</sub>) using the formula:

$$
HP_{RC} = \frac{\Sigma(T_{b(FS > 1)})}{\Sigma(T_b)}
$$

A two-tailed Fisher's exact test  $(H_0: \pi(x)=\pi(X);H_A: \pi(x)\neq \pi(X))$  was used to compare HP rates between each RC. A Bonferroni correction was applied ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ;  $|c| = C_2^{\text{[RC]}} = 6$ ;  $\alpha_B =$ 8.33 $e^{-03}$ ) and a  $P \le \alpha_B$  was considered statistically significant (Table 2.3.7).

## *2.2.3.4.4. Construction of rate series*

The sum of RC trait births  $(T_b)$  and decays  $(T_d)$  were calculated for each branch. We calculated the  $T_b$ Meganuum (Ma;  $f_b$ ) and  $T_d/Ma$  ( $f_d$ ) using the formula:

$$
f_x = \frac{T_x}{\kappa \times \tau}; \tau = \frac{DT}{LP}
$$

where:

ƒ: Frequency (rate)

*T<sub>x</sub>*: The sum of birthed traits  $(T_b)$  or decayed traits  $(T_d)$  at a given branch

- k: Branch length
- τ: "Time constant"
- DT: Divergence time of eukaryotes
- LP: Longest root-to-leaf path in our phylogeny

Fungal molecular clock studies are fraught with difficulties due to the lack of reliable fossil records for accurate node calibration (Berbee and Taylor, 2009; Prieto and Wedin, 2013). A highly calibrated molecular clock analysis of species across the Tree of Life estimated Dikarya to have reportedly between 392.1-1823 Ma (Betts *et al.,* 2018). The farthest child (longest path; LP) from the root of Dikarya (Node 118 in our phylogeny (Figure 2.3.4)) was reported to be *Pichia membranifaciens* ( $κ = 0.61630503$ ). We calculated τ using 392.1 and 1823 Ma as DT. This indicated that  $\kappa = 1$  represents 636.21 to 2957.95 Ma. As 2957.97 Ma is considerably greater than the divergence time for Eukaryotes (Betts *et al*., 2018), we determined  $\tau = 636.21$  to be most appropriate. When adjusted for the LP from the root (*P*. *membranifaciens*; LP = 0.88999) the divergence time for the MCRA was determined to be 566.22 Ma. This timepoint was also deemed suitable as established Chytridiomycota and Blastocladiomycota fossils (our earliest diverging lineages) have dated to approximately the Devonian-Carboniferous Periods (400-300 Ma; Krings *et al*., 2009*a*; Krings *et al.,* 2009*b*) and the suspected Glomeromycota or Mucuromycota *Prototaxites loganii* has been dated to the Middle Devonian (386 Ma; Retallack and Landing, 2014). We calculated *fx* for each branch using the formula described in *subsection 2.2.3.3.2.2.* (Table 2.3.5.). The root node was excluded from further analyses as it did not possess a k.

#### *2.2.3.4.4.1. Comparison of rates between and within nodes and tips*

For each RC, three sets of  $f_b$  and  $f_d$  descriptive statistics were calculated (Table 2.3.8.) for each of:

- (*a*.) The entire phylogeny
- (*b*.) The subset of internal nodes within the phylogeny (branches)
- (*c.*) The subset of tip nodes within the phylogeny (leaves)

For each RC, to determine whether considerable differences exist between tips  $(\mu f_{x(t)})$ and nodes ( $\mu f_{x(n)}$ ) Mann-Whitney U tests (H<sub>O</sub>: $\eta_1 = \eta_2$ ;H<sub>A</sub>: $\eta_1 \neq \eta_2$ ) were used to compare:

- (*a*.)  $\mu f_{b(n)}$  and  $\mu f_{b(t)}$
- (*b*.)  $\mu f_{d(n)}$  and  $\mu f_{d(t)}$

A Bonferroni correction was applied ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ;  $|c| = 2$ ;  $\alpha_B = 0.025$ ) was applied to each set and instances where  $P \leq \alpha_B$  were considered statistically significant.

To determine whether considerable rate differences exist between RCs within each set, Mann-Whitney U tests  $(H_0:\eta_1=\eta_2;H_A:\eta_1\neq \eta_2)$  were used to compare:

- (*a*.) Each  $\mu f_{b(n)}$  to each other  $\mu f_{b(n)}$
- (*b*.) Each  $\mu f_{b(t)}$  to each other  $\mu f_{b(t)}$
- (*c*.) Each  $\mu f_{d(n)}$  to each other  $\mu f_{d(n)}$
- (*d*.) Each  $\mu f_{d(t)}$  to each other  $\mu f_{d(t)}$

Again, a Bonferroni correction was applied ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ;  $|c| = C_2^{|RC|} = 6$ ;  $\alpha_B = 8.33e^{-03}$ ) was applied to each set and a  $P \le \alpha_B$ ) was considered statistically significant (Table 2.3.9.)

#### *2.2.3.4.4.2.. Investigation for evolutionary bursts*

An evolutionary burst is a significant increase in  $f_b$  or  $f_d$  compared to the background rate. To determine the presence of any evolutionary bursts, rate series were transformed to a Gaussian distribution using a Box-Cox transformation and bursts were determined by using a  $Q$ -function  $(H_0:Q(x) > 1-\Phi(x);H_A:Q(x) \leq 1-\Phi(x))$  as described in *subsection 1.4.1.3*. This procedure was implemented for:

- (a.)  $f_b$  and  $f_d$  for all tips and internal nodes ( $\{f_{x(y)}\}; y$ )
- (b.)  $f_{b(n)}$  and  $f_{d(n)}$  only  $(\{f_{x(n)}\}; x)$

A Bonferroni correction was applied to each set  $(\alpha = 0.05; |c_{(v)}| = 212; |c_{(x)}| = 105; \alpha_{B(v)}$ = 2.6*e*<sup>-04</sup>;  $\alpha_{B(x)}$  = 4.8*e*<sup>-04</sup>) and instances where  $P(y) \leq \alpha_{B(y)}$  or  $P(x) \leq \alpha_{B(x)}$  were considered statistically significant (Tables 2.3.9.-10..)

## *2.2.3.5. Gene annotation (function and origin)*

#### *2.2.3.5.1 Functional annotation of each RC*

Each sequence in the dataset was assigned a PFAM domain (Bateman *et al.,* 2004) and gene ontology (GO) functional terms (Ashburner *et al*., 2000) using InterProScan *v*5 (Jones *et al.*, 2014) using the "PfamA" model  $(E \leq 1e^{-0.3})$  and "--goterms" flag. GO terms for each

sequences were grouped into a "GO-slim" subset (broad category) terms using the "map to slim.py" script from GOATOOLS (Klopfenstein *et al.*, 2018) using the curated generic ontology map (produced by https://www.geneontology.org). Each sequence was mapped back to its CompositeSearch defined family and RC annotation. For each RC, overrepresentated GO terms were identified by comparing to the background of all other genes in the dataset using the "find\_enrichment.py" script from GOATOOLS. The "find enrichment.py" script uses a applies a Bonferroni correction to *P*-values to report statistical significance ( $P_B = P \times |c|$ ;  $P_{B(\text{max})}$  < 1) and instances where  $P_B \le 0.05$  were considered significantly overrepresented (Tables 2.3.12.-19.).

#### *2.2.3.5.2. Functional enrichments during the divergence of Pezizomycotina*

Considerable phenotypic innovations are hypothesised to have emerged during the divergence of Pezizomycotina from Saccharomycotina, such as a wide expansion in secondary metabolism (Wisecaver *et al*., 2014) and a transition from a predominantly asexual life cycle to being predominantly sexual (Ojeda-Lopéz *et al.,* 2018). The transition from asexuality to sexuality has led to a bias towards the maintenance of a multicellular teleomorph during at least some of the life cycle (in most species (Wynns, 2015)) as opposed to only maintaining a yeastlike unicellular anamorph (Nagy *et al*., 2018). Pezizomycotina reportedly underwent considerable genomic expansions and genomic rearrangements during this divergence, leading to larger, more complex genomes and more rapid evolutionary rates when compared to other Ascomycota subphyla (Kelkar and Ochman, 2012). Due to the correlations between genome rearrangement and gene remodelling (Leonard and Richards, 2012), and between gene remodelling and phenotype evolution (Richards *et al.,* 2006*;* Alvelar *et al*., 2014) it was hypothesised that gene remodelling may be correlated with some of the innovations observed during this transition. Genes for each RC were extracted from families assigned to Node 115 (the root of Pezizomycotina), resulting in four sets. Again, overrepresentation was established for each RC set using "find\_enrichment.py" using all genes from all sampled Pezizomycotina as a background and the curated Aspergillus GO-slim ontology map (Table 2.3.20.). In all cases, a Bonferroni correction was applied to the *P*-value and instances where  $P_B \le 0.05$  were considered significantly overrepresented.

#### *2.2.3.5.3. Gene origin annotation*

A method for assigning genes to a potential "Domain-of-origin" (Bacteria, Archaea, or Eukaryote; DO) has previously been described (Cotton & McInerney, 2010). Each gene in the dataset was searched (*E*≤*1e*-06) against a large bacterial and archaeal dataset obtained from McCarthy & Fitzpatrick (2016). If a gene unambiguously returns hits in only one DO (bacteria or archaea), it was considered to originate in that DO. If a gene was reported to have hits in both DOs, it was annotated as "Undefined Prokaryote". This annotation is necessary to prevent DO mis-annotation due to the possibility of HGT between bacteria and archaea. If a hit was not reported for a gene it was considered to be of eukaryote origin. DOs were assigned to each family by majority rule of their associated genes (Table 2.3.21.**)**. For each RC, DOs were compared to all other DOs using a two-tailed Fisher's exact test  $(H_0: \pi(x) = \pi(X); H_A: \pi(x) \neq \pi(X)$ . A Bonferroni correction was applied ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ;  $|c| = C_2^{|RC|} = 6$ ;  $\alpha_B = 8.33e^{-0.3}$ ) and instances where  $P \leq \alpha_B$  were considered statistically significant.

#### *2.2.3.6. Trends between gene remodelling and genome characteristics*

As discussed in *subsection 2.1.4.*, fungal genomes have been observed to undergo frequent rounds of WGD and chromosomal rearrangements, thus providing an environment that promotes gene remodelling events. "Retained remodelling events" (or "internal remodelling events") were established for each genome using the protocol discussed in *subsection 2.2.3.2* (Figure 2.2.3.)*.* Genome remodelling category proportions (RCPs) were calculated for genes obtained from the "globally remodelled" dataset (GRCP) and the "retained remodelling" subset (RRCP) by dividing the number of genes in each RC assigned to a given genome by the number of genes in the genome (Tables 2.3.23.-24; Figure 2.3.5.).

*2.2.3.6.2. Correlations between genomic characteristics and genomic remodelled proportions*

We collected data for four genomic characteristics for each of our sampled taxa for comparative analyses:

- (*a*.) Genome size (Mbp)
- (*b*.) Genome density  $(n_{\text{genes}}/Mbp)$
- (*c*.) Genome guanine-cytosine content (GC %); and
- (*d*.) BUSCO genome completeness (C%)

Genome size and GC% for each fungal genome assembly was obtained from their respective repositories (Table 2.3.3.). Genome density was calculated by dividing the sum of genes in a given genome by its genome size. BUSCO completeness (%) was obtained from section *2.2.2.* and RCPs were obtained from *subsection 2.2.3.5.1.* (Table 2.3.21.). Correlations were established using a Spearman's ρ correlation test (H<sub>O</sub>:*X*<sub>1</sub>∝*X*<sub>2</sub>;H<sub>A</sub>:*X*<sub>1</sub>∝ $\mathcal{X}_2$ ) between each


**Figure 2.2.3. Global remodelling** *vs* **internal (retained remodelling)**

The top image displays "global remodelling" where remodelling events are detected within multigenome datasets. The bottom image displays "internal remodelling", a subset of global remodelling where both component families and the composite family are required to be observed within the same genome. Higher rates of internal remodelling are expected for genomes that have underwent WGD events due to subsequent chromosomal restructuring post-WGD. Only Gene C in Genome Y is observed to be "internally remodelled".

RCP and each of the four genomic characteristics (Figure 2.3.6.) A Bonferroni correction was applied ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ;  $|c| = 5$ ;  $\alpha_B = 0.01$ ) to each set and a  $P \le \alpha_B$  was considered statistically significant. This procedure was performed on both the globally remodelled and internally remodelled datasets.

### **2.3. Results**

2.3.1: Detection of composite genes identified by both *fdf*BLAST and CompositeSearch

All composite genes were searched against the 54 fusions (of a reported 63) provided by Leonard and Richards (2012) using BLASTp (*E*≤1*e*-50) and a mutual coverage of 90%. The reciprocal best hits were selected based on lowest *e*-value score. This analysis returned hits for 52 of the 58 queried fusion sequences provided by Leonard and Richard (SI; 2012) (Table 2.3.1.) thus illustrating the effectiveness of CompositeSearch. Fusions unidentified by CompositeSearch did not possess two non-overlapping component families.

#### 2.3.2: Effect of controlling remodelled family sizes for type I error reduction

Investigations into whether controlling composite and component family sizes would minimize Type I errors in composite detection were performed. It was found that controlling either composites or components lead to a considerable reduction in errors. Restricting component families to contain a minimum of 2 constituent genes and restricting composite families to contain a minimum of 2 *bona fide* composite genes  $(-x_{(b<sub>f</sub>)} \geq 2; -y \geq 2)$  lead to a statistically insignificant difference between the control and experimental datasets (Table 2.3.2.; Figure 2.3.1.). These results indicate that these measures are successful in curtailing

# **Table 2.3.1. Composite genes identified by both** *fdf***BLAST and CompositeSearch**

Each composite gene identified by both packages was assigned its "Fusion ID" (Leonard and Richards, 2012), its composite family ID, and its remodelling category. A total of 52 genes were identified, of which 42 (80.77%) were observed to be nested composites.





# **Table 2.3.2. Effect of poor genome quality on composite detection analyses**

Each of the five detection stringency criteria (composites  $\geq x$ ; components  $\geq y$ ) are displayed for each of the 100 experimental iterations. Within each criteria, for each iteration, five values are presented, (*i*.) the sum of composites detected in the control (C), and (*ii*.) experimental (E) datasets with (*iii*., *iv*.) the sums of type I errors associated with C and E, and (*v*.) the *P*-value derived from each iteration. Insignificant results ( $P > 0.05$ ; *n* = 100 (100%)) were only observed when *bona fide* composite and component family sizes were controlled, illustrating the effectiveness of this implementation in controlling type I errors.











**Figure 2.3.1: Effect of poor genome quality on composite detection analyses**

Each error rate (C and E) for the five stringency criteria are plotted (as annotated in the legend) as per Table 2.3.2. This figure serves as a visual aid to further demonstrate the effectiveness of controlling the sum of *bona fide* composite genes in a composite family alongside controlling component family sizes in comparison to other stringency criteria.

Type I errors resulting from potential cases poor genome annotation and was therefore used in every CompositeSearch analysis throughout this thesis.

2.3.3. Fungal genome dataset quality control and genomic statistics

Genome completeness and genomic statistics were collated (Table 2.3.3). A mean completeness score (C) of 95.6±4.0% (C  $\in$  {77.2, ..., 100}) was observed across the 107 species (Table 2.2.4). A large standard deviation was observed for duplicated BUSCO genes (2.47±8.01) due to a massive amount of duplicates in *Allomyces macrogynus* (72.1%). As *A*. *macrogynus* is autotetraploid (Emerson and Wilson, 1954; Albertin and Marullo, 2012), such high levels of duplication in expected single copy orthologs is not surprising.

### 2.3.4. Gene remodelling is rampant in fungi

In total, of the 1,150,918 protein coding sequences in our dataset, 111,768 (9.71%) were excluded due to low complexity as detected by BLAST or due to being a singleton, resulting in a sample of 1,039,150 genes within 81,476 non-singleton families (Table 2.3.5; Figure 2.3.2). Remodelled genes accounted for approximately 73.89% of all sampled genes and 50.39% of all families, with the remaining 26.11% of genes and 49.69% of families being nonremodelled. Nested composites had the highest representation of all remodelled genes, accounting for 33.97% of all sampled genes (and 21.25% of all families) and strict components were best represented amongst remodelled families, accounting for 26.51% of all families (and 18.72% of all genes). These results illustrate that approximately 60.13% of all fungal genes, 68.04% of all sampled genes, and 49.69% of families have a history in remodelling.

# **Table 2.3.3. Completeness and characteristics for 107 fungal genomes**

Each taxon is annotated with its genome size (GS), GC content, number of genes, genome density, and genome completeness. Genome completeness is given as a percentage of expected orthologs where C is "completeness". Completeness is the cumulation of singleton (S) and duplicated (D) orthologs. Fragmented (F) and missing (M) orthologs detract from C. Taxa are arranged based on their taxonomic clades.













# **Table 2.3.4. Descriptive statistics for 107 fungal genomes**

Descriptive statistics calculated for each category in Table 2.3.3. Column IDs are annotated as per Table 2.3.3.



## **Table 2.3.5. Extent of remodelled genes and families in fungi**

The number  $(n)$  of genes in the entire dataset (Genes<sub> $(a)$ </sub>), the sum of genes in the sampled dataset (Genes<sub>(s)</sub>; Genes<sub>(a)</sub> – Excluded), and the number of gene families attributed to each RC are presented with their associated proportion (%) within their respective populations. The "Excluded" category is only observed in  $Genes_{(a)}$  as genes in this category were not used for sampling by CompositeSearch, and thus were excluded from Genes(*s*) and Families respectively





**Figure 2.3.2. Extent of remodelled genes and families in fungi**

Each pie chart represents one of three datasets (Genes<sub>(*a*)</sub>, Genes<sub>(*s*)</sub>, and Families) from Table 2.3.2. Again, the "Excluded" category is only observed in Genes<sub>(*a*)</sub> as genes in this category were not used for sampling by CompositeSearch, and thus were excluded from Genes(*s*) and Families respectively

#### 2.3.5. Variance in gene family sizes

Gene families were observed to display incredible variation for each RC  $(C.V. =$ 145.8% - 294.6%) with considerable bias observed towards smaller families ( $\eta_{0.25} \leq 3$ ;  $\eta_{0.50} \leq$ 5;  $\eta_{0.75} \le 18$  (Table 2.3.6.). Nested composites were observed to be most variant (C.V. = 294.6%) and to have the largest range ( $2 \ge n \le 1933$ ) compared to other categories ( $2 \ge n \le 294.6$ %) 320). On average, nested composites were reported to form larger families (*n* = 20.39±60.07) than other RC categories ( $n_{SC} = 14.57 \pm 21.25$ ;  $n_{SN} = 9.0 \pm 16.81$ ;  $n_{NR} = 6.7 \pm 12.15$ ) (Figure 2.3.4.). Family sizes for each RC were observed to be significantly different ( $P \le \alpha_B \le 8.33e$ <sup>03</sup>) from each other ( $P \le 2.79e^{-0.5}$ ) with the exception of NC *vs.* NR ( $P = 0.11$ ) using a twotailed Mann-Whitney *U* test (Table 2.3.7.).

#### 2.3.6. Comparison of evolutionary rates

### *2.3.6.1. Phylogenetic annotation*

A phylogeny was constructed using 277 highly distributed (present in  $n \ge 102$  (~95%) species) KOG gene family alignments (Figure 2.3.3.). Internal nodes were annotated as per the "-apo" function in TNT (Figure 2.3.4.). All major clades are in their correct placements as Chyrididomycota was basal to Blastocladiomycota (thus constituting the "zoosporic true fungi" (ZTF)), the ZTF were basal to the Mucoromycota (thus forming the "monokaryotes"), and the monokaryotes were basal to the Dikarya (Spatafora *et al*., 2016).

# **Table 2.3.6. Descriptive statistics for fungal gene family sizes**

Statistics describing family size distribution characteristics were tabulated for each RC. Each RC is assigned a mean  $(\mu)$ , median  $(\eta)$ , quartiles  $(\eta_{0.25, 0.50, 0.75})$ , minima, maxima, and CV.



### **Table 2.3.7. Comparison of fungal family size distributions**

Samples (*a*.) and (*b*.) refer to the RCs being tested. The Mann-Whitney U statistic (U) is provided alongside a *P*-value for each comparison. All comparisons were considered statistically significant ( $P \le \alpha_B \le 8.33e^{-03}$ ) except for NC *vs.* NR ( $P = 0.11$ ).

Sample $(a.)$	Sample $(b.)$	$\blacksquare$	P
NC	<b>SC</b>	$7.19e^{08}$	$6.48e^{-38}$
NC	<b>SN</b>	$5.41e^{08}$	$6.19e^{-89}$
<b>NC</b>	<b>NR</b>	$4.41e^{08}$	0.11
<b>SC</b>	<b>SN</b>	$4.28e^{08}$	$5.00e^{-15}$
<b>SC</b>	<b>NR</b>	$3.56e^{08}$	$2.79e^{-0.5}$
<b>SN</b>	NR.	$2.48e^{08}$	$7.02e^{-31}$



**Figure 2.3.3: Representative fungal phylogeny**

This fungal phylogeny constructed from a maximum likelihood superalignment 249 highly distributed KOG genes ( $n_{species} \ge 102$ ). We were content with the placement of all higher taxonomic clades in this tree with the exception of one contentious species, *Ustiago maydis.* In this tree *U. maydis* represents the Ustillagomycotina subphylum (smut fungi), which should be sister to the Agaricomycotina and not the Pucciniomycotina as displayed here (Spatafora *et al.*, 2017). This could just be due to the complement of genes in this particular species, and perhaps a larger Ustilagomycotina sample size would better resolve their phylogenetic placement.



**Figure 2.3.4: Representative fungal phylogeny annotated with internal node annotations**

An illustration of the representative fungal phylogeny (Figure 2.3.3) with the two pseudooutgroups prepended to the original root node and annotated using TNT (as per *subsection 2.2.3.4.2.*)

#### *2.3.4.2. Remodelled genes are more homoplastic than non-remodelled genes*

When sampled from across the entire phylogeny (all data), significant differences ( $P \leq$  $\alpha \leq 8.33e^{-03}$ ) were observed between all comparisons ( $P \leq 7.10e^{-03}$ ) except for between NC and RC  $(P = 0.497)$  (Table 2.3.7.). Remodelled genes were considerably more homoplastic than non-remodelled genes ( $HP_{NR} = 0.305$ ), where composite genes were observed to be most homoplastic (HP<sub>NC</sub> = 0.487; HP<sub>SC</sub> = 0.464; HP<sub>SN</sub> = 0.433).

When sampled from exclusively from internal nodes, again, all comparisons were observed to be significantly different ( $P \le 3.40e^{-14}$ ) except for between NC and RC ( $P = 0.671$ ). Again, remodelled genes were observed to be more homoplastic ( $HP_{NC} = 0.120$ ;  $HP_{SC} = 0.123$ ;  $HP_{SN} = 0.073$ ) in comparison to non-remodelled families ( $HP_{NR} = 0.058$ ).

These results suggest that remodelled genes, especially strict and nested composites, are much more likely to disobey Dollo's Law of Irreversibility (Dollo, 1893; Gould, 1970) and evolve through multiple, independent events, which would be expected of fused genes (Leonard and Richards, 2012). These results also highlight the extent of homoplasy in tips (leaf nodes) in comparison to internal nodes from the increases observed due to their inclusion.

# *2.3.6.3. Dynamic evolutionary rates observed within and between remodelling categories*

When sampled from across the phylogeny, birth rates displayed considerable variation  $(0.00846 \le f_b \le 416.4; 221.1 \le CV \le 276.1)$  within each RC (Table 2.3.8.). Significant differences ( $P \le \alpha \le 8.33e^{-03}$ ) were observed between each RC ( $P \le 1.72e^{-0.5}$ ) except for between NC and SN (*P* = 0.952) (Table 2.3.9). Even greater variance rates were observed for decay rates within each RC (0.00846  $\leq f_b \leq 322$ ; 315.8  $\leq$  CV  $\leq$  377.8), however significant

## **Table 2.3.8. Homoplastic proportion comparisons between fungal remodelling categories**

Pairwise comparisons between each  $HP_{RC}$  ( $RC_{(a)}$  and  $RC_{(b)}$ ) sampled from across (*i*.) the entire phylogeny and (*ii*.) exclusively from internal nodes are displayed. The sum of homoplastic families  $(n_H)$  and all families  $(n_{all})$  used to calculate the HPs are shown. Significant *P*-values  $(P \le \alpha_B \le 8.33e^{-03})$  are emboldened.

		$RC_{(a)}$			$RC_{(b)}$				
<b>Dataset</b>	RC(a)	$RC_{(b)}$	$n_{\rm H}$	$n_{all}$	<b>HP</b>	$n_{\rm H}$	$n_{\rm all}$	<b>HP</b>	$\boldsymbol{P}$
	NC	<b>SC</b>	8431	17317	0.487	978	2107	0.464	$4.97e^{-02}$
	NC	SN	8431	17317	0.487	9418	21727	0.433	$7.50e^{-26}$
	NC	<b>NR</b>	8431	17317	0.487	12350	40489	0.305	$\boldsymbol{0}$
All data	<b>SC</b>	SN	978	2107	0.464	9418	21727	0.433	$7.10e^{-03}$
	<b>SC</b>	<b>NR</b>	978	2107	0.464	12350	40489	0.305	$4.31e^{-50}$
	SN	<b>NR</b>	9418	21727	0.433	12350	40489	0.305	$2.73e^{-222}$
Exclusively internal nodes	NC	<b>SC</b>	2080	17317	0.120	260	2107	0.123	0.671
	<b>NC</b>	SN	2080	17317	0.120	1593	21727	0.073	$2.42e^{-55}$
	NC	<b>NR</b>	2080	17317	0.120	2334	40489	0.058	$1.21e^{-137}$
	<b>SC</b>	SN	260	2107	0.123	1593	21727	0.073	$1.61e^{-14}$
	<b>SC</b>	<b>NR</b>	260	2107	0.123	2334	40489	0.058	$4.24e^{-28}$
	SN	<b>NR</b>	1593	21727	0.073	2334	40489	0.058	$3.40e^{-14}$

# **Table 2.3.9: Descriptive statistics for observed evolutionary rates in fung**

Descriptive statistics for evolutionary birth  $(f_b)$  and decay  $(f_d)$  rates were calculated. The considerable variance observed in across the entire phylogeny ( $CV \leq 378.8\%$ ) is due to the considerable differences between leaf and branch node subsets (Table 2.3.9). In particular, considerable variance is observed in the subset of leaf nodes (CV  $\leq$  309.4%), which is due to using a small  $\kappa$  during transformation.

		RC	$\mu$	$\sigma$	<b>SE</b>	$CV(\% )$	Min.	Max.	$\eta_{0.25}$	$\eta_{0.50}$	$\eta_{0.75}$
<b>Entire</b> phylogeny $(n = 212)$		NC	14.59	40.27	2.766	276.1	0.00846	416.4	2.722	6.464	12.13
		${\rm SC}$	1.859	4.83	0.3317	259.8	0.00846	42.56	0.391	0.8433	1.617
	$f_b$	SN	14.7	38.28	2.629	260.5	0.00846	328.1	3.001	6.259	11.72
		$\rm NR$	21.59	48.6	3.338	225.1	0.00846	405.2	4.93	10.18	19.44
		NC	6.992	25.48	1.75	364.4	0.004832	322	0.6173	0.6173	5.216
	$f_d$	${\rm SC}$	0.955	3.016	0.2071	315.8	0.004832	37.79	0.08478	0.3211	0.833
		SN	5.11	18.22	1.251	356.5	0.004832	226.8	0.4969	1.6	3.667
		<b>NR</b>	6.602	25.01	1.717	378.8	0.004832	314.5	0.5778	2.244	4.643
<b>Exclusively</b> internal nodes $(n = 105)$	$f_b$	NC	6.852	6.071	0.5925	88.61	0.02664	30.11	2.288	4.787	10.93
		SC	0.9429	0.8233	0.08035	87.32	0.02443	3.285	0.3006	0.6578	1.315
		<b>SN</b>	6.784	7.742	0.7556	114.1	0.02664	60.62	2.369	4.789	8.424
		<b>NR</b>	13.36	15.9	1.552	119.1	0.02664	95.57	3.855	7.982	15.52
		NC	2.242	3.245	0.3167	144.8	0.01015	23.5	0.518	0.518	2.891
	$f_d$	SC	0.394	0.6931	0.06764	175.9	0.01015	5.306	0.06323	0.1765	0.3956
		SN	1.62	2.092	0.2041	129.1	0.01015	13.14	0.3583	0.9843	2.064
		$\rm NR$	1.938	2.47	0.2411	127.5	0.01015	14.91	0.44	0.9515	2.697
<b>Exclusively</b> leaf nodes $(n = 107)$	$f_b$	$\rm NC$	22.18	55.45	5.36	250.0	0.00846	416.4	4.325	7.49	15.17
		${\rm SC}$	2.758	6.642	0.6421	240.8	0.00846	42.56	0.5263	0.9193	1.971
		<b>SN</b>	22.46	52.31	5.057	232.9	0.00846	328.1	4.371	8.919	15.49
		$\rm NR$	29.66	65.73	6.354	221.6	0.00846	405.2	5.873	11.83	21.18
		NC	11.65	35.18	3.401	301.9	0.004832	322	1.159	1.159	7.901
		${\rm SC}$	1.506	4.125	0.3988	274.0	0.004832	37.79	0.168	0.5102	1.107
	$f_d$	SN	8.535	25.15	2.431	294.7	0.004832	226.8	0.941	2.749	6.096
		$\rm NR$	11.18	34.58	3.343	309.4	0.004832	314.5	1.095	3.66	8.107

# **Table 2.3.10. Comparison of family birth and decay rates in fungi**

Pairwise comparisons between each  $HP_{RC}$  ( $RC_{(a)}$  and  $RC_{(b)}$ ) sampled from across (*i*.) the entire phylogeny and (*ii*.) exclusively from internal nodes are displayed. The U statistic and *P*-values are provided for each comparison. Statistically significant comparisons ( $P \le \alpha \le 8.33e^{-03}$ ) are emboldened.



rate differences were only observed between SC and each other RC ( $P \le 9.06e^{-22}$ ) and not between any other comparison  $(P > 0.048)$ .

Comparatively, when sampled from the subset of exclusively internal nodes, considerably less variance was observed for both birth rates (0.00846  $\leq f_b \leq 322$ ; 87.37  $\leq$  CV  $\leq$  119.1) and decay rates (0.02443  $\leq f_b \leq$  95.57; 127.5  $\leq$  CV  $\leq$  175.9) respectively for each RC. Again, only significant differences were observed between SC and each other RC (*P* ≤ 1.55*e*-<sup>12</sup>) and not between any other comparison ( $P > 0.108$ ).

Finally, when sampled from the subset of exclusively leaf nodes, considerable variation in birth rates  $(0.00846 \le f_b \le 416.4; 221.6 \le CV \le 250)$  and decay rates  $(0.004832 \le f_b \le 322;$  $274 \leq CV \leq 309.4$  respectively for each RC. Significant differences in birth rates were observed between each SC comparison ( $P \le 1.93e^{-21}$ ) and between NC and SN ( $P = 4.73e^{-03}$ ). Significant decay rate differences ( $P \leq 4.64e^{-13}$ ) were only observed between SC comparisons.

Significant differences ( $P \le \alpha \le 0.0125$ ) were observed between internal exclusive nodes and leaf exclusive nodes for each specific RC (*eg.* NC *vs* NC) for both birth rates ( $P \leq$ 9.27 $e^{-03}$ ) and decay rates ( $P \le 1.51e^{-0.6}$ ) (Table 2.3.10).

These results suggest that despite the considerable variance observed within RCs, with the exception of SCs, RCs evolve at a relatively similar rate. The significant evolutionary rate increases observed between internal nodes and leaf nodes in each RC is likely due to genomic innovation during speciation (Gogarten and Townsend, 2005). Synapomorphic families observed at internal nodes were evolutionarily "successful", meaning they were retained post speciation events. Such differences were expected as genome sequencing provides a "snapshot in time" (Klimke *et al*., 2011) of a given genome, with no guarantee that an innovation will persist. The evolutionary rate increase is likely influenced by homoplasy and epaktologous events which would be consistant with the HP differences observed in Table 2.3.7.

# **Table 2.3.11. Comparison of evolutionary rates between internal and leaf nodes**

Each test samples gene families of the same RC and compares those sampled from leaves to those sampled from internal nodes. U is the Mann-Whitney U statistic. Every result was considered statistically significant ( $P \le \alpha_B \le 0.0125$ ).

	<b>RC</b>	$\bm{U}$	$\boldsymbol{P}$
$\mathbf{f}_b$	NC	4170	$1.19e^{-03}$
	<b>SC</b>	4455	$9.27e^{-03}$
	<b>SN</b>	3703	$1.82e^{-0.5}$
	<b>NR</b>	4438	$8.29e^{-03}$
$f_d$	NC	3268	$1.44e^{-07}$
	<b>SC</b>	3469	$1.51e^{-06}$
	<b>SN</b>	3158	$3.66e^{-08}$
	<b>NR</b>	2959	$2.65e^{-09}$

#### *2.3.6.3. Evolution* via *gene remodelling is clocklike in Fungi*

When sampling from across the phylogeny, significant evolutionary bursts ( $P \le \alpha_B \le$ 2.35*e*-04) were only observed during two speciation events (Table 2.3.11). Significant bursts of nested composite births ( $f_b = 416.44$ /Ma;  $P = 5.7e^{-0.5}$ ), strict component births ( $f_b = 307.012$ /Ma;  $P = 2.2e^{-0.4}$ ), and non-remodelled family births  $(f_b = 404.28$ /Ma;  $P = 2.2e^{-0.4}$ ) were observed during the divergence of *Coccidioides immitis* from its MRCA with *Coccidoides posadasii*. Significant bursts of strict component births  $(f_b = 328.06/Ma; P = 1.7e^{-04})$ , non-remodelled family births  $(f_b = 405.16$ /Ma;  $P = 2.0e^{-0.4}$ ), nested composite decay  $(f_d = 322.01$ /Ma;  $P = 9.5e^{-0.4}$ <sup>05</sup>), strict component decay ( $f_d$  = 226.77/Ma;  $P = 1.0e^{-0.4}$ ), and non-remodelled family decay ( $f_d$ = 314.45/Ma; *P* = 8.44*e*-05) were observed during the divergence of *Fusarium verticillioides* from its MRCA with *Fusarium oxysporum*. These results are influenced by short branch lengths associated with *C. immitis* ( $\kappa$  = 0.0005; Table 2.3.11) and *F. verticillioides* ( $\kappa$  = 0.001).

When sampling from the subset of internal branches, a significant burst ( $P \le 4.76e^{-04}$ ) was only observed for strict component births  $(f_b = 60.62/\text{Ma}; P = 3.0e^{-04})$  in "Node 196", branch within genus *Fusarium*, representing the divergence of the MRCA of *F. verticillioides*  and *F. oxysporum* (*Fov*-MCRA) from *F. graminearum* (Table 2.3.12). In contrast to the branches representing *C. immitis* and *F. verticilliodes*, the branch length for "Node  $196$ " ( $\kappa$  = 0.01169) was within the average branch lengths for internal branches  $(0.04169\pm0.03859)$ , however, the sum of strict component families assigned to this branch  $(n = 450)$  was considerably greater  $(n > \mu + (3 \times \sigma))$  than the mean assignment of strict component families per internal branch (109.4±89.987).

The burst observed at "Node\_196" corresponds to genomic expansions during the divergence of *Fov*-MCRA from *F. graminearum* (Ma *et al.*, 2010). These expansions are

### **Table 2.3.12. Evolutionary bursts across the fungal phylogeny**

Each site (branch or leaf node) is annotated with its associated branch length  $(\kappa)$ , character state changes  $(T_b$  and  $T_d$ ), birth and decay rates  $(f_b$  and  $f_d$ ) and their associated *P*-values derived from a *Q*-function ( $P(f_b)$  and  $P(f_d)$ ).  $\lambda$  values used for Box-Cox transformation are given beneath Qfunction RC identifiers. Significant evolutionary bursts ( $P \le \alpha_B \le 2.36e^{-0.4}$ ) are emboldened and underlined in the *P*(*f<sub>b</sub>*) and *P*(*f<sub>d</sub>*) columns. Significant bursts were observed at two sites, the leaf nodes representing speciation events for *Coccoides immitis* and *Fusarium verticilliodes*, respectively. Significant *P*-values are emboldened.




























#### **Table 2.3.13. Investigation for evolutionary bursts across internal nodes of the fungal phylogeny**

Each site (branch or leaf node) is annotated with its associated branch length  $(\kappa)$ , character state changes ( $T_b$  and  $T_d$ ), birth and decay rates ( $f_b$  and  $f_d$ ) and their associated *P*-values derived from a *Q*-function ( $P(f_b)$  and  $P(f_d)$ ).  $\lambda$  values used for Box-Cox transformations are given beneath the RC identifiers in the *Q*-function columns. Significant evolutionary bursts ( $P \le \alpha_B \le 2.36e^{-0.4}$ ) are emboldened and underlined in the *P*(*f<sub>b</sub>*) and *P*(*f<sub>d</sub>*) columns. A significant burst was observed at one site, "Node 196", which represents the divergence of *Fusarium verticillioides* and *F. oxysorum* from *F. graminearum*.











evidenced by the contrasting genome sizes and gene counts  $(n_{\text{genes}})$  between these three species (Table 2.3.3.), where a genome size minimal difference  $(\Delta_{min})$  = 14.476% (5.38 Mbp) and  $n_{\text{genes}}$  $\Delta_{min}$  = 6.561% ( $n = 874$ ) was observed between *F. graminearum* and *F. verticilloides* (which had a smaller genome and  $n_{\text{genes}}$  than *F. oxysporum*. These expansions are evidenced by considerably different chromosome numbers  $(n_{\text{chr}})$  amongst these species, where *F*. *graminearum* possesses an *nchr* of 4, *F. verticilloides* an *nchr* of 11-12, and *F. oxysporum* an *nchr*  of 15 (Gale *et al*., 2005; Ma *et al*., 2010). The bursts observed during the speciation of *F. oxysporum* directly correspond to the HGT event between an unidentified *Fusarium* and *F. oxysporum* allowing for a broader host range (Ma *et al*., 2010).

#### 2.3.7. Functional overrepresentations in remodelled fungal genes

*2.3.7.1: Nested composite genes are likely to be involved in pathogenicty but unlikely to be involved in secondary metabolism*

Nested composites were observed to be overrepresented for transmembrane transport process (BP) ontologs (GO:0055085;  $P_B \leq 4.38e^{-0.5}$ ) (Table 2.3.11), signal transduction (GO:0007615;  $P_B = 3.85e^{-03}$ ), and macromolecular modification (GO:0043412;  $P_B = 7.60e^{-03}$ ). Overrepresentation was also observed for cellular component (CC) ontologs associated with the extracellular region (GO:0005576, GO:0044421;  $P_B \leq 8.24e^{-0.6}$ ). These ontologies are commonly associated secreted as effectors (Vivek-Ananth *et al*., 2018). *A. fumigatus* genes from families with these overrepresented ontologs (*eg.* acetylxylan esterase (*axe1*; XP\_748362.1; enzyme commission number (EC):3.1.1.72), cellobiohydrolase (AFUA\_3G01910; XP\_748511.1; E.C:3.2.1.91), and endo-1,4-b-xylanase (AFUA\_6G13610;

XP\_751237.1; E.C:3.2.1.8)) were previously reported to not only be secreted, but to play a role in phytopathogenicity through the degradation of plant cell walls (Rodriguez-Moreno *et al*., 2017; Uhse and Djamei, 2018). Conversely, while secondary metabolites are associated with pathogenic processes (Pusztahelyi *et al*., 2015), nested composite genes were observed to be significantly underrepresented for primary metabolism (GO:0044238;  $P_B$  = 0.0139) and secondary metabolism  $(P_B = 1.36e^{-0.3})$  (Table 2.3.12). Interestingly, phytopathogenic secretome-associated genes (such as those mentioned above) were commonly associated with primary metabolism (GO:0044238).

Interactions between pathogenic fungi and their hosts are complex, and are engaged in a constant evolutionary arms race (Möller and Stuckenbrock, 2017), where advanced invasion strategies emerged in response to advanced plant defences. Due to these factors, perhaps it is not surprising to observe secretome-related genes to be further remodelled. Genes involved in secondary metabolism are usually large, multidomain, and multifunctional (Pasek *et al*., 2006), and commonly share evolutionary histories with primary metabolic pathways (Smith and Tsai, 2007). Due to these factors, an overrepresentation of secondary metabolic genes was reasonably expected, but this was not the case.

# *2.3.7.2. Strict composite genes are likely to be involved in pathogenicity and metabolism but not secretion*

In direct contrast to what was observed for nested composites, strict composites were statistically likely to be involved in primary metabolism  $(P_B = 4.59e^{-0.3})$  (Table 2.3.13) and secondary metabolism  $(P_B = 4.41e^{-0.4})$  and statistically unlikely to be involved in signal transduction ( $P_B = 1.35e^{-0.3}$ ) (Table 2.3.14) or transmembrane transport ( $P_B = 3.48e^{-0.3}$ ). *A. fumigatus* genes from families with overrepresented ontologs for primary metabolism (*eg.* 

## **Table 2.3.14: Overrepresented GO-slims in nested composite genes**

Each GO-slim entry is annotated with its ontology type (biological process (BP), or cellular component (CC), or molecular function (MF)), its proportion within the sample  $(\hat{p}(n))$ , its proportion within the background  $(\hat{p}(N))$ , its annotation depth, and its uncorrected and corrected *P*-values. Instances where  $P_B \le 0.05$  were considered to be significantly overrepresented.









### **Table 2.3.15: Underrepresented GO-slims in nested composite genes**

Each GO-slim entry is annotated with its ontology type (biological process (BP), or cellular component (CC), or molecular function (MF)), its proportion within the sample  $(\hat{p}(n))$ , its proportion within the background  $(\hat{p}(N))$ , its annotation depth, and its uncorrected and corrected *P*-values. Instances where  $P_B \le 0.05$  were considered to be significantly underrepresented.



















malate synthase (acuE; XP\_747723.1; E.C:2.3.3.9), α,α-trehalose phosphatase subunit Tps2 (*tps2*; XP\_755036.1; E.C: 3.1.3.12), and chorismate mutase/prephenate dehydratase  $(AFUA 5G05690; XP 754063.1; E.C:5.4.99.5)$  were, again, involved in pathogenicity (Olivas *et al*., 2008; Al-Bader *et al.*, 2010; Pérez *et al*., 2015; Xiaowei *et al*., 2019). Chorismate synthase is a constituent of the highly remodelled shikimate pathway (Richards *et al.*, 2006). These observations further highlight the evolutionary arms-race between pathogenic fungi and their hosts as mentioned above, and their prevalence amongst remodelled genes is not surprising.

#### *2.3.7.3. Strict component genes are likely involved in mitosis and DNA repair*

Strict component genes were observed to be significantly likely to be involved in stress responses (GO:0006950;  $P_B = 3.35e^{-0.3}$ ) (Table 2.3.15) and in the mitotic cell cycle (GO:0000278, GO:0007059, GO:0051301;  $P_B \le 6.0e^{-03}$ ) and unlikely to be associated with regulatory processes (GO:0050789, GO:0050794, GO:0065007, GO:0140110; *PB* ≤ 4.29*e*-03) (Table 2.3.16). Strict component *A. fumigatus* genes from families with overrepresented ontologs for stress response (*eg.* endonuclease III homolog (*ntg1*; XP\_749248.1; E.C:4.2.99.15), mitochondrial genome maintenance protein mgm101 (AFUA\_2G09560; XP\_755290.1; (no assigned EC number)), and UV-endonuclease (*uve1*; XP\_750978.1; E.C:3.- .-.-)) commonly facilitate the maintenance of nuclear and organelle genome integrity after exposure to physical stressors (Heijink *et al*., 2013; Verna and Idnrum, 2013; Bakhoum *et al*., 2017). Comparatively, the strict component *A. fumigatus* gene associated with mitosis (*eg.*  CHL4 family chromosome segregation protein (AFUA\_4G06540; XP\_752172.1; (no assigned EC number))) aids in *de novo* kinetochore assembly and sister chromatid adhesion during replication (Mythreye and Bloom, 2003).

## **Table 2.3.16. Overrepresented GO-slims in strict composite genes**

Each GO-slim entry is annotated with its ontology type (biological process (BP), or cellular component (CC), or molecular function (MF)), its proportion within the sample  $(\hat{p}(n))$ , its proportion within the background  $(\hat{p}(N))$ , its annotation depth, and its uncorrected and corrected *P*-values. Instances where  $P_B \le 0.05$  were considered to be significantly overrepresented.











## **Table 2.3.17. Underrepresented GO-slims in strict composite genes**

Each GO-slim entry is annotated with its ontology type (biological process (BP), or cellular component (CC), or molecular function (MF)), its proportion within the sample  $(\hat{p}(n))$ , its proportion within the background  $(\hat{p}(N))$ , its annotation depth, and its uncorrected and corrected *P*-values. Instances where  $P_B \le 0.05$  were considered to be significantly underrepresented.














# **Table 2.3.18. Overrepresented GO-slims in strict component genes**

Each GO-slim entry is annotated with its ontology type (biological process (BP), or cellular component (CC), or molecular function (MF)), its proportion within the sample  $(\hat{p}(n))$ , its proportion within the background  $(\hat{p}(N))$ , its annotation depth, and its uncorrected and corrected *P*-values. Instances where  $P_B \le 0.05$  were considered to be significantly overrepresented.















# **Table 2.3.19. Underrepresented GO-slims in strict component genes**

Each GO-slim entry is annotated with its ontology type (biological process (BP), or cellular component (CC), or molecular function (MF)), its proportion within the sample  $(\hat{p}(n))$ , its proportion within the background  $(\hat{p}(N))$ , its annotation depth, and its uncorrected and corrected *P*-values. Instances where  $P_B \le 0.05$  were considered to be significantly underrepresented.













DNA repair and mitosis are both highly conserved and tightly coordinated processes which can be significantly impaired by mutation (Hakem, 2008). Due to these factors, it is surprising to observe these ontologies in any remodelling category.

#### *2.3.7.4. Non-remodelled genes are likely to possess conserved housekeeping functions*

As observed in overrepresented strict component ontologs, non-remodelled ontologs were enriched for mitotic processes ( $P_B \leq 8.33e^{-03}$ ) and for ribosomal biogenesis (GO:0042254;  $P_B = 1.33e^{-03}$  (Tables 2.3.17-18.). As observed in strict components, non-remodelled ontologs were also underrepresented for signalling. Due to the highly conserved and coordinated role of the ribosome in protein synthesis, it is not surprising that these genes are not remodelled.

*2.3.7.5. Functions of remodelled genes emerging at the root of Pezizomycotina correlate to phenotype*

With 53 of 107 species, Pezizomycotina constitute the most speciose clade in our dataset (49.53%; Tables 2.2.2.-2.2.3). The economic value of Pezizomycotina is reflected by their relative volume of sequencing projects compared to other fungal lineages (Geiser *et al.*, 2006). The divergence of Pezizomycotina from Saccharomycotina is marked by considerable changes in phenotype, such as the transition from a predominantly anamorphic lifecycle to a predominantly teleomorphic life cycle, a transition towards predominant multicellularity, and the expansion of secondary metabolism pathways (Spatafora and Bushley, 2015). When remodelled gene families annotated to the root of Pezizomycotina ("Node\_115") were tested for functional overrepresentation, considerable coincidences between function and phenotype were observed (Table 2.3.19.). Strict composites displayed significant overrepresentation for

# **Table 2.3.20: Overrepresented GO-slims in non-remodelled genes**

Each GO-slim entry is annotated with its ontology type (biological process (BP), or cellular component (CC), or molecular function (MF)), its proportion within the sample  $(\hat{p}(n))$ , its proportion within the background  $(\hat{p}(N))$ , its annotation depth, and its uncorrected and corrected *P*-values. Instances where  $P_B \le 0.05$  were considered to be significantly overrepresented.





















# **Table 2.3.21: Underrepresented GO-slims in non-remodelled genes**

Each GO-slim entry is annotated with its ontology type (biological process (BP), or cellular component (CC), or molecular function (MF)), its proportion within the sample  $(\hat{p}(n))$ , its proportion within the background  $(\hat{p}(N))$ , its annotation depth, and its uncorrected and corrected *P*-values. Instances where  $P_B \le 0.05$  were considered to be significantly overrepresented.









# **Table 2.3.22: Functional overrepresentations at the root of Pezizomycotina**

Each GO-slim entry is annotated with its ontology type (biological process (BP), or cellular component (CC), or molecular function (MF)), its proportion within the sample  $(\hat{p}(n))$ , its proportion within the background  $(\hat{p}(N))$ , its annotation depth, its RC, and its uncorrected and corrected *P*values. Instances where  $P_B \le 0.05$  were considered to be significantly overrepresented. RCs are separated by a solid line and ontology types (within RCs) are separated by a dashed line.


















secondary metabolism and toxin production processes (GO:0019748, GO:0009404;  $P_B \leq 1.49e$ <sup>04</sup>). A representative *A. fumigatus* gene from this this subset (AFUA 6G00680A; XP 731488.2) was reported to be a mycotoxin synthase with two oxidase ustYa domains (IPR021765). Oxidase ustYa domains catalyse the cyclisation of peptide secondary metabolites such as ustiloxins and cyclochlorotines (Umemura *et al*., 2014).

Secondary metabolite production is often expressed during the sexual cycle in Pezizomycotina, and are believed to protect spores from predation (Calvo *et al*., 2002). Interestingly, two nested composite *A. fumigatus* genes overrepresented for signal transduction and assigned to "Node\_115", serine-threonine kinase (*rim1*, XP\_755834.1, E.C:2.7.11.1.) and adenylate cyclase (*AcyA*, XP\_750741.2, E.C: 4.6.1.1.), are involved in meiosis (Li and Mitchell, 1997; Kang *et al*., 2016). These results highlight the correlation between gene remodelling and the major phenotypic transition observed during the divergence of Pezizomycotina from Saccharomycotina.

2.3.8: Genes of bacterial origin are statistically more likely to be remodelled than eukaryoticoriginating genes

Families of archaeal origin were not significantly enriched ( $P \le \alpha_B \le 4.16e^{-03}$ ) for any RC (Table 2.3.22.). Bacterial originating ( $P \le 2.0e^{-03}$ ) and undefined prokaryote originating (*P*  $\leq$  0.999) families were reported to be as significantly enriched as all RCs except NR. Families of eukaryote origin were observed to be enriched for NR (*P* < 1.0*e*-04). Due to the considerable rarity of horizontal gene transfer between bacteria and eukaryotes (McCarthy and Fitzpatrick, 2016), it is likely that the vast majority of gene families with a bacterial or undefined prokaryote DO were vertically inherited. Therefore, these results suggest that "more ancient" gene families are more much statistically likely to be subjected to remodelling due to their persistence in the

### **Table 2.3.23: "Domains-of-Origin" for each remodelling category**

Gene families (as defined by CompositeSearch) were assigned to a "Domain-of-Origin" (DO). The sum of genes (*n*) from each RC and their associated significance (*P*) for each DO are presented. Significant observations ( $P \le \alpha_B \le 4.16e^{-0.3}$ ) are emboldened.



genome over time. It is important to state, however, that 65,175 of 81,446 families (80.02%) of genes were of eukaryote origin, and considerably more families of eukaryote origin were detected in each RC than in any other DO. These results suggest that while "older" gene families are more likely to remodel, considerable remodelling is observed in "younger" families also.

#### 2.3.9. Trends between genomic characteristics and remodelling extent in genomes

RCPs were calculated (Tables 2.3.23.-24.) for each genome and compared to genomic characteristics (Table 2.3.3; Figure 2.3.5.). For GRCP, significant positive correlations ( $P \le \alpha_B$ ≤ 0.01) were observed between genome completeness (as defined by BUSCO) and (*a*) SN genomic proportions ( $\rho = 0.4105$ ;  $P < 1.0e^{-0.4}$ ) and (*b*) NR proportions ( $\rho = 0.5298$ ;  $P < 1.0e^{-0.4}$ )  $^{04}$ ) respectively (Figure 2.3.6). A significant negative correlation was also observed between genome completeness and excluded proportions ( $\rho = 0.5298$ ;  $P < 1.0e^{-0.4}$ ) and between genome size and SN proportions ( $\rho = -0.3713$ ;  $P < 1.0e^{-0.4}$ ). These results suggest that using higher quality assemblies for gene remodelling analyses results in a greater number genes being assigned to strict component or non-remodelling families as opposed to being excluded (due to being defined as a singleton by CompositeSearch). This suggests that incomplete genome assemblies may result in Type II errors (false negative) in remodelled gene detection.

For IRCP, significant positive correlations ( $P \le \alpha_B \le 0.01$ ) were observed between genome size and each RCP ( $\rho = 0.3298 - 0.6662$ ;  $P \le 1.0e^{-0.4}$ ) except the "excluded" proportion where a significant negative correlation was observed ( $\rho = -0.4591$ ;  $P < 1.0e^{-04}$ ). This is likely due to genetic redundancy from events such as WGD and genomic expansions, which would promote the clustering of more non-singleton families into non-excluded families. Conversely,

## **Table 2.3.24. GRCPs for each fungal genome**

GRCPs (%) were calculated for each genome by dividing the number of remodelled genes per RC (*n*) by the total number of genes in its respective genome.







## **Table 2.3.25. IRCPs for each fungal genome**

IRCPs (%) were calculated for each genome by dividing the number of remodelled genes per RC (*n*) by the total number of genes in its respective genome.











**Figure 2.3.5. Representative fungal phylogeny annotated with genomic characteristics**

The representative phylogeny (Figure 2.3.3.) was annotated with three datasets, each represented as a pie charts. The internal pie chart illustrates genomic completeness (Table 2.3.3.) for each species where completeness is annotated as green, fragmentation as orange, and missing BUSCO genes as grey. Middle pie charts represent IRCP for each species (Table 2.3.24) and external pie charts represent GRCPs for each species (Table 2.3.23). The 5 RCPs were annotated purple for NC, red for SC, blue for SN, grey for NR, and black for excluded.



**Figure 2.3.6.** *Correlation matrix between genomic characteristics and genomic remodelling extent*

Illustration of effect sizes (Spearman's  $\rho$ ) and their significance (*P*) between genomic characteristics for (*a*) the globally remodelled dataset and *(b*) the internally remodelled dataset. Each data category is annotated as per the legend. Data calculated from GRCP (Table 2.3.23.) is presented on the left, and from IRCP (Table 2.3.24.) on the right.

a negative correlation was observed between genome density and SN proportions ( $\rho = -0.3061$ ;  $P= 1.3e^{-0.4}$ ) when sampled from IRCP. This was not expected due to the positive correlations usually observed between genome size and genome expansion events (Fischer *et al*., 2014). However, as a significant negative correlation ( $\rho = 0.3713$ ;  $P < 1.0e^{-0.4}$ ) was observed between genome size and SN proportions from GRCP, it could be a case of larger fungal genomes are being likely to have undergone polyploidisation (Kellis *et al.*, 2004) which may promote the transition of strict components to nested composites. This would likely result in a negative correlation for these categories.

#### 2.3.10: A case of gene remodelling in *Batrachochytrium dendrobatidis*

A cluster of family cliques (40 genes from 7 families) were detected during the speciation of *Batrachochytrium dendrobatidis* (Chytridiomycota; Figures 2.3.7-2.3.8). Of these, 4 were strict composites, and 3 were strict components. In each instance, where two families shared homology, a complete bipartite graph was observed (whether homology was detected as a consequence of remodelling or not). The completeness of this graph suggests that these genes were associated with rapid or recent remodelling. As only a single gene (from any family) was identified in another genome in our dataset (*Spizellomyces punctatus,*  Chytridiomycota) and how all other genes were only identified in *B. dendrobatidis* it could be suggested that these genes were duplicated and expanded to fulfil a specific niche in its lifecycle. Each gene in the four composite families shared a peptidase family s41 domain (PF03572), which are reported to be potent virulence factors against amphibian hosts (Thekkiniath *et al.,* 2013). An identifiable PFAM domain was not detected in any strict component gene.



**Figure 2.3.7:** Inter-familial relationships between a subset of genes in *B. dendrobatidids*

Families that have full connectivity between each vertex (cliques) in *Batrachochytrium dendrobatidis*. The green composite family contains one gene from *Spizellomyces punctatus*, all other families are specific to *B. dendrobatidis*. Purple families are also composite families. Blue component families share homology between each other and to the C-terminus of each composite family. Red component families share homology with the N-terminus of each composite family.



**Figure 2.3.8.** Relationship between remodelled *B. dendrobatidis* cliques.

Each composite family forms a clique with each other composite family and each component family. Both blue component families form a clique with each other. Red component families form a clique with each composite family. Composite families serve as articulation points between red and blue component families.

2.3.11: A potential case of fission mediated subneofunctionalsation in *Saccharomyces cerevisiae*

*Trp1* (SPBC1539.09c) is an essential multifunctional enzyme in *Schizosaccharomyces pombe* where it is involved in tryptophan biosynthesis (Thuriaux et al., 1982). *Trp1* was reported as a composite by CompositeSearch where two non-homologous components were found in *S. cerevisiae* (*trp3* (YKL211C) and *trp1* (YDR007W)). This remodelling event was found to be a whole gene fusion/fission event by *fdf*BLAST. *S. pombe Trp1* was found to be a composite of YKL211C at along N-terminus and YDR007W at its C-terminus (Figure 2.3.9.). While this composite was also detected by Leonard & Richards in 2010 it is not amongst the list of fusion proteins on Pombase (McDowall et al., 2015). YKL211C and YDR007W are both non-essential, null mutants are tryptophan auxotrophic and perform distinct functions during tryptophan biosynthesis, all of which are performed by *Trp1* in *S. pombe* (Miozzari *et al*., 1978; Thuriaux *et al.*, 1982).

#### **2.4. Discussion**

#### 2.4.1 Gene remodelling is extensive in fungi

Our results illustrate the extent of sequence remodelling throughout the evolution of fungi, with 49.94% of all sequences in our dataset having a history of some form of remodelling in that timeframe. In addition, we found that composite sequences constitute 32.76% of all sampled genes. The primary mechanisms of sequence evolution are duplication, recombination, and divergence (Dittmar and Liberles 2011; van Rijk and Bloemendal 2003; Leonard and Richards 2012; Przytycka *et al*. 2006; Patthy 1999) all of which are correlated



**Figure 2.3.9:** *Composite tryptophan biosynthesis gene*

Differential fusion gene (*Trp1*; SPB1539.09c) observed in *Schizosaccharomyces pombe*, each component gene (*trp3* (YKL211C) and *trp1* (YDR007W)) is observed in *Saccharomyces cerevisiae*. A copy of the fusion gene was not observed in *S. cerevisiae* and a copy of neither component gene was found in *S. pombe*. This image was produced using *fdf*BLAST (Leonard and Richards, 2012)

with each other to varying degrees (Vogel *et al.* 2005). To our knowledge, the only other published research to look at global scale remodelling was during the benchmarking of CompositeSearch and of FusedTriplets, where 21,623 genes out of 204,894 (10.6%) in a viral dataset were reported as composite genes (Pathmanathan *et al.* 2018; Jachiet *et al.* 2014). The sum of composites in fungi has previously been estimated to be approximately 4% and the sum of fusion components to be approximately 9% (Durrens *et al.* 2008; Enright & Ouzounis 2001). A study of nine Drosophila species reported approximately 9,000 sequences (approximately of fusion components to be approximately 9% (Durrens *et al.* 2008; Enright & Ouzounis 2001). A study of nine Drosophila species reported approximately 9,000 sequences (approximately 6.62%) that are the product of domain recombination (Wu *et al.* 2012). Here, using network analysis, we report levels of remodelling that are considerably greater than previously reported.

#### 2.4.2. Composite genes are highly homoplastic

It was observed that remodelled families were likely to be homoplastic ( $P \leq 0.002$ ), larger in comparison to other remodelling categories ( $P \le 7.10e^{-03}$ ), statistically enriched to be of prokaryote origin ( $P \le 2.0e^{-03}$ ) and unlikely to be of eukaryote origin ( $P > 0.999$ ). There are a few possible explanations for these two findings. First of all, the larger family size among composites could be due to the CompositeSearch software clustering epaktologs into families. Epaktologs are sequences that have independently acquired the same domain architecture, meaning that, strictly speaking they are neither orthologs nor paralogs (Haggerty et al. 2014; Nagy & Patthy 2011). Larger composite family size is an indication that particular kinds of protein more "successful" or "useful", in other words, more likely to arise in the first place and then more likely to persist throughout evolution, once they arise. This would cause composite families to be larger than non-composite families on average and also more likely to arise more

than once. Composite families are also more likely to be multifunctional (Pasek et al. 2006), and therefore, there is less of a requirement to independently transcribe and translate two different genes, when instead they can be combined into a single gene. This might influence the retention of composite proteins over non-composites. The observation of prokaryote DO enrichments across all remodelled categories (except NR) is in agreement with other studies highlighting higher duplication rates and expendability of more ancient Prokaryote orthologs in Eukaryotes (Jordan *et al.*, 2002; Cotton and McInerney, 2010; Alvarez-Ponce *et al.*, 2013; Luo *et al.*, 2015). Synapomorphy gain and loss patterns were compared between leaves and branches using multiple Mann-Whitney *U* tests, where significant differences were observed for all categories ( $P \le 1.19e^{-03}$ ) suggesting that remodelling (and evolution) occurs at a more rapid rate during speciation. Only three branches were observed to have an evolutionary burst, the *C. immitis* speciation branch ( $P \le 2.23e^{-0.4}$ ), the *F. verticillioides* speciation branch ( $P \le$ 1.71 $e^{-0.4}$ ), and "Node 196" ( $P = 3.26e^{-0.4}$ ). The burst at *C. immitis* is likely due to its exceptionally short branch length ( $\kappa$  = 0.000517) and the bursts in "Node 196" and *F*. *verticillioides* are likely due to large genomic expansions during the divergence from *F. graminearum*.

These results further corroborate with hypothesis that composites are born at a relatively clocklike rate, hence why an insignificant difference in birth rate is observed, and why greater proportions of composite families are observed at leaf nodes on average. These results are further compounded by the fact that remodelled genes are more likely to have arisen in ancient bacterial lineages ( $P \le 0.0001$ ) allowing for more time for homoplasy to occur.

2.4.3. Composite genes emerging at the root of Pezizomycotina are involved in typical Pezizomycotina phenotypes

Pezizomycotina were the largest clade in our dataset. GO slim terms from composite genes that were reported to have emerged at the root of Pezizomycotina were enriched against a subset of all genes from Pezizomycotina resulting in the detection of several significant (*PB ≤* 0.05) biological process enrichments (GO:0005975 (carbohydrate metabolic process), GO:0007049 (cell cycle), GO:006259 (DNA metabolic process), GO:0019748 (secondary metabolic process), and GO:0009404 (toxin metabolic process)). During the emergence of Pezizomycotina, the shift to a predominantly multicellular clade, with a predominantly sexual lifecycle and a wide effector arsenal was observed (Liu and Hall, 2004; Arvas *et al.*, 2007). Cytokinesis ontologs were also enriched. Cytokinesis is the physical process of cell division and is essential for the proliferation of a cell line. Despite its importance, ubiquity and partial uniformity of steps involved, cytokinesis displays lineage specific differences in its coordination, highly dependent on organism complexity, specifically the development of the division plane (Canman *et al.*, 2003). During the evolution of Ascomycota, Taphrinomycotina and Sacchromycotina developed synapomorphic mechanisms to optimise nuclear segregation (Khmelinskii *et al.*, 2010). A paradigm shift in cytokinetic machinery seems to have coincided with the shift to a predominantly multicellular lifecycle during the evolution of Pezizomycotina. Enrichments of secondary metabolite processes (GO:0019748) and toxin metabolic processes (GO:0009404) coincide the expansions of effector arsenals during the evolution of early Pezizomycotina to potent pathogens (Cavalier-Smith, 1992; Demain and Fang, 2000; Arvas *et al.*, 2007).

2.4.4. Remodelled genes are likely to be involved in transport, whereas non-remodelled genes tend to be involved in housekeeping processes

When all genes in each remodelling category were searched for enrichment, eleven significantly enriched nested composite ontologies could be directly associated with small molecule transport.These results are unsurprising as these ontologies are all directly associated with the Major Facilitator Superfamily (MFS) (CL0015) of transporters or proteins that aid in their function (Madej, 2014; Yan, 2015). MFS is one of the two most abundant membrane bound transporter families in biology (Nelissen *et al.*, 2006) where it is ubiquitously distributed across cellular life and has been observed in a multitude of domain architecture combinations, where different combinations permit the transport of diverse small molecule repertoire (Madej, 2014). Significantly enriched non-remodelled ontologies were associated with housekeeping functions, specifically transcription, ribosomal structure, and base metabolic precursor generation. RNA transcription is a finely tuned, ubiquitous process. Transcription factor mutation is usually highly deleterious and altered dosage interferes with epigenetic controls (Poveda *et al.*, 2010). It is unsurprising that genes related to such a selectively pressurised process would be unaffected by remodelling.

#### 2.4.5. Virulence factors are remodelled in *Batrachochytrium dendrobatidis*

Each gene in the four composite families in the cluster of complete bipartite graphs from *B. dendrobatidis* shared a peptidase family serine 41 domain (PF03572). The relevance of S41 peptidases in *Batrachochytrium dendrobatidis* have been previously described (Thekkiniath *et al.*, 2013), where it was concluded after an exhaustive search of approximately 6,000 proteomes that a considerable expansion of S41 peptidases was observed in *B. dendrobatidis.* The consequence of *B. dendrobatidis* infection on tadpoles is usually non-lethal keratinization of mouthparts. Metamorphosis in frogs is governed by 3, 5, 3′-triiodothyronine (T3), after exposure to T3 *Batrachochytrium dendrobatidis* zoospores display considerable

chemotaxic attraction to  $T_3$  and exposure to  $T_3$  exhibits increased production of serine proteases that function to degrade host defence peptides allowing for advanced pathogen invasion of the hosts dermal tissues (Thekkiniath *et al.*, 2013).

#### **2.5. Conclusion**

In conclusion, this analysis highlights the extent to which protein remodelling has been central to the diversification of fungi. While most studies of protein evolution, tend to focus on the treelike parts of evolutionary history, we show that the non-treelike parts can be equally interesting. More than seventy percent of the extant sequences we have examined in fungal genomes show evidence of remodelling and we have shown some of the factors that have influenced this remodelling. With increased sampling of genomes, we expect the proportion of proteins where we can detect remodelling in their history will increase – greater sampling of genes increases the likelihood of detecting remodelling events. Remodelling of proteins provides a rich supply of possibilities for all organisms, in terms of new functions, combinations of functions, co-expression of functions and separating functions from one another. It is perhaps not surprising that remodelling is so rampant.

# **Chapter III:**

# **Bioinformatic and Biostatistical Analyses of**

# **Gene Remodelling in Viridiplantae**

#### **3.1: Introduction to botany**

The cultivation of plants has possibly impacted human civilisation more than any other factor. Plants, alongside cyanobacteria, guided ancient ecosystem evolution by reducing atmospheric  $CO<sub>2</sub>$  levels and temperature, and by increasing  $O<sub>2</sub>$  and atmospheric pressure through photoautotrophic endeavours (Wallace *et al.*, 2017). Archaeplastida (Viridiplantae ('green' plants and algae), Rhodophyta ('red' algae), Glaucophyta (glaucophyte algae)), cyanobacteria ('blue-green' algae), and photosynthetic stramenopiles ('brown' algae) perform the majority of primary metabolic production in any exposed ecosystem and, as such, form the beginning of most food webs. The United Nations predict that world populations will approach 10 billion by 2050, with significant accelerated growth observed in underdeveloped regions of Africa and Asia, which is projected to continue indefinitely (https://population.un.org/wpp/Publications/). In light of such rapid acceleration in human population growth, one of the greatest challenges posed is how to adequately and sustainably feed an expanding population (Li and Zhang, 2007; Turner, 2009) despite continued devastating losses due to plant pathogens, pests and environmental disasters (Bebber, Ramotowski and Gurr, 2013; Bebber *et al.*, 2014; Bebber and Gurr, 2015; Lesk *et al*., 2016).

Comparative genomics between economically viable species, may unlock the potential for sustainable, higher yielding, more disease resistant, nutritious crop production without impacting local ecology or public health. Fossil fuels (such as oil, coal, and methane) are the anaerobically decomposed remnants of ancient plant and animal matter (Berner, 2003), and have been used for heat and energy production by humans since the Bronze Age (Dodson *et*   $al.$ , 2014). Fossil fuel consumption has exponentially increased during the course of the  $20<sup>th</sup>$ century, and they have become a highly contentious, highly valuable economic asset with devastating environmental effects due to increased atmospheric  $CO<sub>2</sub>$  and other greenhouse

gasses (Cheng and Xiong, 2014; Olson and Lenzmann, 2016). The most striking effect observed is the steady increase of global temperatures (Rosenzweig *et al.*, 2008; Trenberth *et al.*, 2014) resulting in adverse environmental effects such as the increased instances of wildfires, cryosphere decay, rising sea levels, disruption of ecosystems, and ocean acidification (Botkin *et al.*, 2007; Hoegh-Guldberg *et al.*, 2007; Jolly *et al.*, 2015; Zhang and Wang, 2015). As mentioned above, plant metabolism catalysed the reduction of atmospheric  $CO<sub>2</sub>$  through photosynthetic metabolism. Deforestation has considerably impaired  $CO<sub>2</sub>$  bioremediation (Houghton, 1991; Song *et al.*, 2015). The devastating effects of global warming has prompted research into CO<sub>2</sub> bioremediation by plants and chlorophyte microalgae through comparative genomic mining and biotechnological augmentation (Maeda *et al.*, 1995; Zeiler *et al.*, 1995; Raeesossadati *et al.*, 2014; Gonçalves *et al.*, 2016). However, as fossil fuel resources are limited, the economic value of fossil fuel has sparked massive genetic engineering projects in chlorophytes and diatoms (Hill *et al.*, 2006; Cockerill and Martin, 2008; Gouveia and Oliveira, 2009; Olson and Lenzmann, 2016). These biofuels are long aliphatic hydrocarbons produced *via* the algal fatty acid synthesis pathway and are the subject of intense research (Miao and Wu, 2006; Chisti, 2007; Gouveia and Oliveira, 2009; Sani *et al*., 2013; Nayak *et al.*, 2016).

Plants, like fungi and bacteria, engage in secondary metabolism (Cavalier-Smith, 1992) and produce a wide array of therapeutic compounds and valuable industrial synthons (Aharoni and Galili, 2011). With the advent of advanced synthetic biology and systems biology tools, understanding the mechanisms underlying the structure and evolution of plant genomes is a highly important task if we wish to uncover hidden treasures in future biotechnological efforts.

Comparative analyses between plants have revealed that their evolutionary histories are replete with polyploidisation events (resulting in increased chromosome copy numbers) followed by massive chromosomal restructuring events (Jiao *et al.*, 2011; Li *et al.*, 2015). These events allow for the process of gene remodelling, specifically fusions, fissions, and exon shuffling events (França *et al*., 2012; Leonard and Richards, 2012), gene subfunctionalisation, and neofunctionalisation (Rastogi and Liberles, 2005; Conant *et al.,* 2014), and the co-option of genes into alternative pathways (True and Carroll, 2002; Cock *et al.*, 2014) which can have drastic effects on the metabolic prowess, genotype, and phenotype of a given lineage.

Genomic analyses have identified a wealth of such remodelling events throughout the Tree of Life (Enright and Ouzounis, 2001; Froy and Gurevitz, 2003; Pasek *et al.*, 2006; Nakamura *et al.*, 2007; Nagy and Patthy, 2011; Leonard and Richards, 2012), however these analyses generally look at specific events, or specific types of events during plant evolution. The expression of fused plant genes in plant hosts has yielded some valuable phenotypes, specifically increased salt tolerance in *Lolium perenne,* an agriculturally important food source for grazing animals (Cen *et al.*, 2016), increased trehalose accumulation and decreased abiotic stress in *Oryza sativa* (Garg *et al.*, 2002), increased wax ester biosynthesis in *Nicotania tabacum* (Aslan *et al.*, 2014), and enriched formaldehyde bioremediation by *Pelargonium* sp. 'Frensham' (geranium) (Song *et al.*, 2010). Comparative analyses of plants and mining for remodelling events may provide invaluable knowledge by aiding in the elucidation of their complex biochemistries and evolutionary histories.

#### 3.1.1: An overview of plant evolution

Photosynthesis was first achieved by ancient cyanobacteria over 3 billion years ago (gigayears ago; Ga; Blankenship, 2010; Betts *et al.,* 2018). Approximately 1033-1891 Ga an endosymbiotic event between a cyanobacteria and a non-photosynthetic eukaryote led to the evolution of the first photosynthetic eukaryotes, and the subsequent rise of the Archaeplastida (Keeling, 2010; Betts *et al.*, 2018). The combined cyanobacterial and archaeplastidian photoautotrophies led to a slow accumulation of atmospheric oxygen and ozone, a reduction in CO2 levels, and the subsequent cooling of Earth (Kenrick *et al.*, 2012; Martin and Allen, 2018). This ozone layer and thickened atmosphere reduced the levels of irradiating ultraviolet (UV) rays in the troposphere (Lowe and Tice, 2007), which is a key factor attributed to the eventual myco- and subsequent phytoterrestrialisation events (Bidartondo *et al.*, 2011; Kenrick *et al.*, 2012). Basal embryophytes (land plants) further expanded oxygen production (Wallace *et al.*, 2017).

Chlorophyta are the earliest known diverging Viridiplantae division (phylum) and, with the Charophyta, constitute the green algae (Martin *et al.*, 2002; Lewis and McCourt, 2004; Nishiyama *et al.*, 2018). The currently accepted hypothesis is that early marine chlorophytes adapted to limnic environments and transitioned into complex charophytes (Lewis and McCourt, 2004; McCourt *et al.,* 2004; Leliaert *et al.*, 2012; Delwiche and Cooper, 2015; Domozych *et al.*, 2016). The transition from aquatic to terrestrial environments led to the eventual transition toward the evolution of the multicellular embryophytes (Delwiche and Cooper, 2015). Streptophyta is a monophyletic clade and circumscribes charophytes and embryophytes (Becker and Marin, 2009).

Recent phylogenetic studies have grouped embryophytes as the sister taxa to three late diverging charophyte lineages, Charophyceae, Coleochaetophyceae, and Zygnematophyceae (CCZ clade), with Zygnematophyceae being the most likely closest relative to embryophytes (Karol *et al.*, 2001; Guiry, 2013; Lemieux *et al.*, 2016) (Figure 3.1.2.).

Phragmoplasophyta is a monophyletic clade that encompasses the CCZ clade and embryophytes (Wilhelmsson *et al.*, 2017). Phragmoplasophyta are defined by their synapomorphic phragmoplast, a structural component which aids in cell wall establishment after division cycles (Euteneuer and McIntosh, 1980; Smertenko *et al.*, 2018). The earliest branching embryophytes were non-vascular, and were likely very similar to extant bryophytes,



**Figure 3.1.1. Phylogeny of the Archaeplastida**

Rhodophyta and Glaucophyta are basal to Viridiplantae and are not "true plants". Coloured circles indicate a major phenotype transition. The orange circle represents terrestrialisation, pink represents vascularisation, green represents the evolution of the modern leaf structure, purple represents the development of seeds, and blue represents the evolution of pollen (Baldwin and Husband, 2011; Bidartondo *et al.*, 2011).

represented by three phyla: Bryophyta (mosses), Anthocerotophyta (hornworts) and Marchantiophyta (liverworts) (Mishler and Churchill, 1984; Kenrick and Crane, 1997; Nickrent *et al.*, 2000). The exact evolutionary radiation of these divisions within the bryophytes is unresolved, with one hypothesis suggesting that bryophytes are, themselves, monophyletic and sister to the monophyletic tracheophyte (vascular plants) clade, and the other, more widely accepted hypothesis suggesting that Bryophyta and Marchantiophyta constitute a monophyletic clade basal to Anthocerotophyta, which, itself, is sister to the vascular tracheophytes (Nishiyama and Kato, 1999; Duff *et al.*, 2009; Stotler and Crandall-Stotler, 2009; Ligrone *et al.*, 2012; Delwiche and Cooper, 2015; Morris *et al.*, 2018).

Tracheophytes are divided into two clades, the phylum Lycopodiophyta (club mosses), and the superphylum Euphyllophyta (Tomescu, 2009; Vasco *et al*., 2013). Lycopodiophyta and Euphyllophyta are differentiated by leaf vasculature complexity, Lycopodiophyta possess a single vascular trace whereas Euphyllophyta possess a complex vascular network. Euphyllophyta consist of the divisions Pteridophyta (sporogenic ferns) and Spermatophyta (seed plants) (Bennici, 2008; Clarke *et al*., 2011).

Ancestral polyploidisation events coincided with significant reproductive strategy innovations: the evolution of pollen mediated reproduction, and the development of the coated seed. This innovation allowed for the development of seed dormancy, protection against desiccation, alternative dispersal mechanisms, and removed the dependence on aquatic fertilisation (Baldwin and Husband, 2011; Jiao *et al.*, 2011; Li *et al.*, 2015). A second round of polyploidisation led to the divergence of angiosperms (flowering plants) from gymnosperms (softwoods) (Van de Peer *et al.*, 2009; Conant *et al.*, 2014). This whole genome duplication event coincided with a third significant reproductive innovation: the evolution of flowers (Chanderbali *et al.*, 2016). This led to complex symbiotic relationships with arthropods and an explosion in plant diversity (Labandeira, 2013).
### 3.1.2 Genome architecture evolution in Viridiplantae

Plant evolutionary history is abound with polyploidisation events (PE) (Blanc et al., 2003; Adams and Wendel, 2005; Doyle and Egan, 2010; Jiao *et al.*, 2011; Weiss-Schneeweiss *et al.*, 2013). Polyploidy can result *via* intragenomic events, autopolyploidic hybridization, or allopolyploidic hybridisation (Arrigo and Barker, 2012). Plant comparative genomics have concluded that all angiosperms, and likely all tracheophytes, are ancestrally polyploid, and that angiosperms freely undergo polyploidisation (Jiao *et al.*, 2011), whereas PE are less common in gymnosperms (Bennett, 2004). Recent PE in angiosperm lineages can be observed alongside genomic remnants of the PE ancestral to all angiosperms, and of the PE hypothesised to be ancestral to tracheophytes (Soltis *et al.*, 2009).

Plant genome evolution appears to follow a cyclic PE model (CycPE), where rounds of polyploidy occur and are followed by subsequent loss of redundant paralogs, chromosomal rearrangements, and the eventual decay of the redundant chromosomes before entering another cycle (Wendel *et al.*, 2016). CycPE was first hypothesised after multispecies expressed sequence tags (ESTs) comparative analyses, revealed bursts of sequence similarity, duplication patterns, and micro- and macrosynteny between distantly related organisms, suggesting an ancestral origin (Leitch and Bennett, 2004; Fawcett *et al.*, 2009; Jiao *et al.*, 2011; Wendel *et al.*, 2016). A wide range of genomic responses to PE are observed. Early genomic responses pertain to the molecular responses to individual genes and to their expression (Jackson and Chen, 2010; Arrigo and Barker, 2012). Molecular genetic responses may result in pseudogenisation, homologous exchange, or the expansion of incorporated, activated transposable elements. Expression level responses likely result in expression bias eventually progressing to subfunctionalisation, neofunctionalization, subneofunctionalisation, or pseudogenisation, accompanied by chromosomal rearrangements (Lynch and Conery, 2000;

Rastogi and Liberles, 2005*b*; Marques *et al.*, 2008; Albertin and Marullo, 2012). Abiding responses, usually result in genomic subfunctionalisation and neofunctionalization, and significant chromosomal rearrangement and decay, further resulting in chromosomal number reduction (Leitch and Leitch, 2008; Wendel *et al.*, 2016). New species emerging from multiple CycPE ultimately display considerable chromosomal architecture changes compared to their pre-polyploid progenitor (Jiao *et al.*, 2011; Arrigo and Barker, 2012). Emergent species are diploidised by these chromosomal events, while maintaining ohnologs and vestigial PE genomic architecture (Conant *et al.*, 2014; Estep *et al.*, 2014; Clark and Donoghue, 2018).

The fate of duplicate genes, especially ohnologs (homologs arising from a WGD event), has intrigued biologists since their discovery. Observations of genomic reduction following CycPE may suggest a non-random, selective fate for ohnologs (Conant and Wolfe, 2008; De Smet *et al.*, 2013; Panchy *et al.*, 2016). Restored singleton genes (genes that once had an ohnolog which has been subsequently deleted) have higher expression patterns and wider expression domains than those in duplicated pairs, and are statistically enriched for DNA replication and repair, chloroplast function, and other essential housekeeping functions (Conant and Wolfe, 2008; Panchy *et al.*, 2016). The selection for these genes to return to a singleton state may be due to gene dosage toxicity, or the stoichiometries of protein-protein interaction or protein complex assembly (Freeling, 2009; Birchler and Veitia, 2012). For example, genes producing monomeric products with few interaction partners or those that are non-essential in biological pathways would be under less selection pressure than multimeric product genes (those involved in a number of different pathways) or more essential products (Bashton and Chothia, 2007).

Gene biased fractionation (the non-random selection of lost and retained ohnologs from each respective donor in a hybridization event) has been observed throughout the angiosperms (Wang *et al.*, 2011; Cheng *et al.*, 2012; Freeling *et al.*, 2012; Conant *et al.*, 2014). An ancient

example of differential genomic fractionation can be observed from an early Paleozoic (~65 Ma) intergeneric alloploidization event in ancestral *Gossypium* sp. (cotton), evidence of which is observed in modern lineages (Renny-Byfield *et al.*, 2015). The selection processes governing biased fractionation aren't completely understood but may involve repressibility due to adjacency of transposable elements (TEs), leading to fewer constraints and varying levels of expendability (Renny-Byfield *et al.*, 2015; Wendel *et al.*, 2016).

Despite rounds of genome reduction following PE, considerable genome size variation and variations in complexity exist between even relatively closely related Viridiplantae genomes (Lang *et al.*, 2010; Marroni, Pinosio and Morgante, 2014; Ruhfel *et al.*, 2014), for example, the *Hordeum vulgare* (barley) genome is over 11 times larger than another Poeceae grass genome, *Oryza sativa* (rice; 5.1 Gbp *vs.* 0.43 Gbp respectively) despite having less chromosomes (7 *vs.* 12 respectively; Goff, 2002; Mayer *et al.*, 2011). Alongside PE, genomes may undergo expansion *via* rapid TE propagation if removal efforts are overwhelmed by unequal or illegitimate recombination events (Devos, 2002). Occurrences of lineage specific TE amplifications have been observed in plant lineages. Comparative genomics between *Oryza*  reveal an approximate 400 Mbp increase, almost doubling in genome size, between *O. australiensis* and *O. sativa*, mostly due to three retro-TE families (Turcotte *et al.*, 2001; Ma and Bennetzen, 2004; Piegu *et al.*, 2006). Interestingly, the TEs responsible for the genomic expansion in *O. australiensis* are present in all other *Oryza* species, but, with the exception of an approximate 200 Mbp genomic expansion in *O. granulata* estimated to have occurred approximately 2 Ma, have remained comparatively inactive (Ma and Bennetzen, 2004; Ammiraju *et al.*, 2007), which may suggest an environmental cause for such evolutionary bursts. TE amplification is also reported to have been responsible for the tripling in genome size between *Gossypium* species (Hawkins *et al.*, 2006). The genome size variations between members of *Oryza* and *Gossypium* represent the dynamics imposed by TE proliferation and decay in conjunction with CycPEs.

Comparative genomic analyses between the TE poor *Genlisea aurea* and the TE rich octopolyploid *Paris japonica* revealed little variation in gene content despite massive variation in genome size (~60 Mbp and >150Gbp respectively) (Pellicer *et al.,* 2010). This observation illustrates the enormous effect of TE propagation in genomic expansion, which comparatively depreciate the effects of tandem gene duplication in genome expansion and can virtually negate the effect of gene loss *via* genomic fractionation following a PE (Wendel *et al.*, 2016). TEs play an important gene regulatory role despite observed gene content consistency and a relatively constant TE accumulation and decay rate (Leitch and Leitch, 2008; Schrader *et al.*, 2014).

Despite the vast information attained from reference genomes, organisms are constantly evolving and adapting such that a single genome does not represent the dynamic genetic variation within a species, however these sequences have proved invaluable in resequencing efforts, leading to considerably greater insight into genomic variation within resampled species (Huang *et al.*, 2009; Huang *et al.*, 2013). Although considerably valuable, resequencing efforts are limited by poor quality mapping of short read sequences in species with high TE activity or other genomic variations resulting in small indels and intergenic sequences not being detected (Kircher and Kelso, 2010; Alkan *et al.*, 2011).

High throughput systems biology approaches, such as pangenomic and pantranscriptomic analyses are used in an attempt to capture as much variation information as is possible, and have been used to map variances in a multitude of model plant systems (Hirsch *et al.*, 2014; Golicz *et al.* , 2016; Contreras-Moreira *et al.*, 2017; Sun *et al.*, 2017).

## *3.1.2.1. Evolutionary development via transcription factor co-option*

Gene co-option (exaptation) is an evolutionary process where a gene is incorporated into a new functional pathway without initially altering its functional biochemistry (True and Carrol, 2002). Co-opted genes are often paralogs (or ohnologs) and may be subjected to subfunctionalisation or neofunctionalisation after co-option has taken place (McLennan, 2008; Hilgers *et al*., 2018). These genes may also be subjected to gene remodelling which may further increase their fitness effects. Gene co-option has been extensively studies in plants, especially through transcription factor (TF) co-option during the transition from haplontic predominant to diplontic predominant life cycles (Szovenyi *et al.*, 2011; Pires and Dolan, 2012).

Embryophytes display "alternation of generations" (AG) (the alternation between a multicellular haploid gametophyte generation and a diploid sporophyte generation during their life cycles; Kenrick, 1994; Graham and Wilcox, 2000). A haplontic lifecycle is exhibited by all known green algae where a haploid stage is observed for the majority of the algal life cycle, with an ephemeral diploid zygote stage. Conversely, embryophytes display a haplodiplontic life cycle, where two mitotic stages with differential ploidy is observed (Niklas and Kutschera, 2010). In charophytes, only zygotes display diploidy (Haig, 2010; Nishiyama *et al.*, 2018). Two competing hypotheses compete to decipher the origin of AG in embryophytes, the "homologous theory" (modification theory) and the more widely accepted "antithetic theory" (intercalation theory; Bower, 1890; Bennici, 2008). The homologous theory suggests that land plants first displayed isomorphic AG, however there is no known genetic support for this and only sparse early Devonian fossils which appear to be isomorphic (Thornber, 2006). Comparatively, the antithetic theory suggests that that the sporophyte arose through successive mitotic division phase insertions during zygotic generation prior to meiotic division resulting in a diploidic (sporophytic) embryo on a gametophytic thallus (Bennici, 2008). This protosporophyte is hypothesised to have transitioned from a gametophyte nutritional parasite to a metabolically independent sporophyte, followed by subsequent transitionary steps towards life cycle dominance (Qiu *et al.*, 2006; Kenrick, 2017). The antithetic theory is supported by the triad of (*a*.) sporophyte absence in charophytes, (*b*.) gametophyte dominance over sporophytes in bryophytes, and (*c*.) sporophyte dominance over gametophytes in tracheophytes (Niklas and Kutschera, 2010).

A hypothetical model of sporophyte evolution *via* the co-option of ancient gametophyte genes and their regulatory gene networks has been proposed (Szovenyi *et al.*, 2011; Pires and Dolan, 2012). This model is based on greater differential expression patterns between gametophytes and sporophytes of angiosperms when compared with bryophytes, and that a plethora of gametophyte-biased transcription factors are preferentially expressed in angiosperm sporophytes. One such example of gametophyte- specific regulatory TF co-option to sporophyte regulation can be observed in type II MADS box (MADS-II) TF (Henschel *et al.*, 2002; Singer *et al.*, 2007). MADS-II has a distinct, functional evolutionary origin in charophytes, where it regulates haploid germ cell differentiation (Tanabe *et al.*, 2005). During embryophyte divergence, MADS-II underwent a duplication and subsequent neofunctionalization, forming the MIKC<sup>c</sup> and MIKC<sup>\*</sup> TF families (Henschel *et al.*, 2002; Singer *et al.*, 2007). MIKC<sup>\*</sup> retained MADS-II conserved function, regulating gametophyte development in embryophytes, whereas MIKC<sup>C</sup> primarily regulates sporophyte development. MIKC\* displays differential expression and regulatory functions between bryophytes and angiosperms, it is expressed in both bryophyte gametophyte and sporophyte generations, but is restricted to sporophyte expression in *Arabidopsis thaliana* (Quodt *et al.*, 2007). An almost complete set of the MIKC<sup>C</sup> gene family is present in sampled gymnosperms, further expanded before the divergence of the basal angiosperm genus, *Amborella*, and further expanded again in crown angiosperms (Münster *et al.*, 1997; Gramzow and Theissen, 2010; Melzer *et al.*,

2010). These expansions and diversifications aided in the development of the sporophyte, and later, the flower (Tanahashi *et al.*, 2005; Singer, Krogan and Ashton, 2007). This evolutionary pattern likely follows an evolution by subneofunctionalisation model (He and Zhang, 2005). Comparative studies between *Physcomitrella patens*, a model Bryophyta, and spermatophytes have shed light on the evolution of both embryogenesis and AG (Kimura *et al.*, 2008; Lee *et al.*, 2008; Hay and Tsiantis, 2010). Homeodomain transcription factor (TF) control was found to be of particular importance in both of these pathways, KNOX family TF repression results in the repression of gametophyte body plan development, and BELL family TF repression results in either the repression of zygote development or zygote division. An RWP-RK family TF in the model liverwort (Marchantiophyta) *Marchantia polymorpha* was found to control dormancy in unfertilized ova and germ cell formation (Chardin *et al.*, 2014). Gametophyte reduction is observed in angiosperms when compared to other embryophyte clades (Brandes, 1973; Kerp, *et al.*, 2003; Borg *et al.*, 2009). MpRWP-RK TF orthologs in *A. thaliana* (*DUO1*  and *DUO3*) were found to control development of pollen generation cells (Durbarry, 2005; Rövekamp *et al.*, 2016). As MpRWP-RK TF was found to complement *DUO1* and *DUO3*  function in *A. thaliana* (Durbarry, 2005) it has been hypothesised that sexual reproductive control has been conserved since the emergence of early embryophytes. It is possible that gametophyte genes (and their regulatory networks) were co-opted or neofunctionalised to promote sporophyte evolution during the rise of the spermatophytes (True and Carroll, 2002; Teshima and Innan, 2008).

Some genes with ancient origins are transcriptionally restricted to one lifecycle generation, two examples of which are the TALE homeobox TF superclass (Hamant and Pautot, 2010; Hudry *et al.*, 2014) and *LFY* (Tanahashi, 2005). Initiation of the diploid phase in the model alga *Chlamydomonas reinhardtii* (Chlorophyta) lifecycle is achieved by heterodimerisation of two TALE proteins, Gsm1p and Gsp1p, whereas embryophytic sporophyte development processes are also under control of TALE homeobox TF, specifically KNOX and BELL (Lee *et al.*, 2008). These results suggest that TALE genes may be restricted to diploid stages throughout Viridiplantae.

*LFY* is a floral meristem regulator in angiosperms, however it is expressed during the sporophytic generation throughout streptophyte lineages, where it regulates zygotic cell division in non-flowering embryophytes and charophytes (Tanahashi, 2005; Silva *et al.*, 2015). These examples illustrate generation phase exclusivity, and highlight the questions of "Where did generation phase genes first originate?" and "What were their original pathways (if any) before evolving to function as sporophyte regulators?"

Polycomb-group proteins (PGP) remodel chromatin by methylating lysine 27 on histone 3 (H3K27) resulting in epigenetic transcriptional repression (Okano *et al.*, 2009). Two interacting PGPs, CLFp and FIEp, have been identified as AG regulators in *P. patens*  (Mosquna *et al.*, 2009). Deletion of either CLFp or FIEp in *P. patens* results in the initiation of apogamy (the fertilisation independent generation of sporophytes) (Mosquna *et al.*, 2009; Chen *et al.*, 2014). CLFp is homologous to gene products from the  $E_{(Z)}$  gene cluster in animals (Schatlowski *et al.*, 2010) which are responsible for appropriate epigenetic control of embryonic development, suggesting an ancient role for these genes in sexual reproduction. CLFp in angiosperms, however, is not implicated in embryogenesis, instead, it regulates the floral homeotic gene *FLC*1 (Jiang *et al.*, 2008). ΔCLF mutants display altered flowering and curled leaf morphologies (Jiang *et al.*, 2008; Chen *et al.*, 2014). The recruitment of CLF as a floral repressor likely occurred during the angiosperm divergence from gymnosperms, where it may have originally prevented floral gene expression in leaf tissues (Cairney and Pullman, 2007).

Due to the dynamic genome architectures observed during the course of divergent Viridiplantae evolution, it is reasonable to hypothesise that these genes may have been subneofunctionalised following a PE, subsequently leading to greater gene diversity, anatomical evolution, and the emergence of the sporophyte.

## *3.1.2.2. Metabolic evolution*

Due to the "polyploidisation-rearrangement-reduction" model observed during CycPE throughout plant evolutionary history, it is likely that new genes may arise at these points through gene remodelling events. This is largely due to the favourable conditions for remodelling that are observed during the course of the CycPE, namely the influx of new genetic material and rampant chromosomal restructuring (Leonard and Richards, 2012). As mentioned previously, remodelled genes may be co-opted, subfunctionalised, neofunctionalised, or subneofunctionalised (Hellsten *et al.*, 2007; Xia *et al.*, 2016) leading to novel or augmented metabolic pathways (Richards *et al.*, 2006). Previous studies have investigated plant gene remodelling events, but most work investigates specific fusion genes (Wang, 2006; Aslan *et al.*, 2015; Méheust *et al.*, 2016), or comparative analyses that identify differential remodelling events between a small set of genomes (*eg.* Nakamura *et al,*, 2007). Plant gene fusion events have garnered considerable interest due to their influences on secondary metabolism, where both component genes (if present) are often co-localised and co-expressed (Hagel and Facchini, 2017). Gene fusion and fission events are the most well studied remodelling events, where they have been attributed to the expansions of protein domain complexities in bacteria (Pasek *et al.*, 2006). Differential gene fusions are likely to be involved in the same pathway as their components, and have been annotated as "extreme clustering", and may confer niche physiological advantages compared to species with unfused components in different environments, by ensuring extremely tight control of co- expression and co-localisation of two components of their respective pathways (Enright and Ouzounis, 2001; Richards *et al.*, 2006; Fani *et al.*, 2007; Leonard and Richards, 2012; Avelar *et al.*, 2014). As plant evolution is abound with CycPEs, and major metabolic and phenotypic innovations are associated with ancestral polyploidisation events, it is probable that gene remodelling played a role in their establishment.

### **3.2. Methodology**

The methodology for this chapter largely follows the methodology used in Chapter II, any changes made to any protocol described in Chapter II are discussed in detail.

3.2.1. Database construction and quality control

A database of 50 non-canonical Viridiplantae proteomes were constructed from PLAZA *v*4.0 (Van Bel *et al*., 2018), Gymno-PLAZA *v*1.0 (Proost *et al*., 2015), and pico-PLAZA *v*2.0 (Vandepoele *et al*., 2013). The dataset consisted of six Chlorophyta, one Bryophyta, one Marchantophyta, one Lycopodiophyta, three Pinophyta (Gymnospermae), and 38 Angiospermae (Table 3.2.1.). This dataset contained a combined total of 1,672,377 sequences and is biased towards angiosperms as they are the most widely sampled species due to their economic importance. There are only a limited number of sequenced basal embryophytes, and only three gymnosperms from Gymno-PLAZA could be used as other assemblies were constructed from transcriptomic data, which is not suitable for gene remodelling analyses due to elevated levels of truncated sequences in such assemblies (Hara *et al*., 2015). As per *subsection 2.2.3.1.*, genome density, genome size and GC% were obtained from source. Genome quality was assessed using BUSCO *v*3 with default settings with the Viridiplantae ortholog dataset from OrthoDB *v*10 (Kriventseva et al., 2018). Genome size,

## **Table 3.2.1: Dataset of 50 Viridiplantae genomes**

Each subset represents a major clade to which its species belongs. The subset 'Dicot' represents dicotyledons, and 'Monocot' represents monocotyledons. The majority of sequenced plant genomes are crops, leading to a bias towards angiosperm lineages. Common names are provided for each species (if applicable) and if a common name could not be ascertained, the reasoning behind the species inclusion is provided instead (*eg.*  multicellular alga).







density and GC% were obtained from source (Table 3.3.1.). Descriptive statistics were computed for each data series presented in Table 3.3.1. (Table 3.3.2.).

3.2.2. CompositeSearch analysis, quality control, and annotation

A SSN was constructed using BLASTP (as per *subsection 2.2.3.2.*) resulting in 2.797*e*<sup>12</sup> pairwise comparisons. CompositeSearch analysis, remodelled gene quality control, and remodelling category annotation was replicated as per *subsection 2.2.3.2.* The extent of remodelled genes and families was computed for the dataset (Table 3.3.3; Figure 3.3.1.) and compared to the fungal dataset (Table 2.3.5.) using a Fisher's exact test  $(H_0: \pi(x)=\pi(X); H_A: \pi(x) \neq \pi(X)$ ). A Bonferroni correction was applied ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ;  $|c| = |RC| = 4$ ;  $\alpha_B$  = 0.0125) and instances where  $P \leq \alpha_B$  were considered statistically significant (Table 3.3.4.).

## 3.2.3. Trends in gene family size

As per subsection 2.2.3*.,* descriptive statistics were computed for RC family sizes (Table 3.3.5.). Differences in family sizes between RCs were assessed using Mann-Whitney *U*-tests (H<sub>O</sub>: $\eta_1$ = $\eta_2$ ;H<sub>A</sub>: $\eta_1 \neq \eta_2$ ). Again, a Bonferroni correction was applied ( $\alpha$  = 0.05;  $|c|$  =  $C_2^{|RC|}$  $= 6$ ;  $\alpha_B = 8.33e^{-03}$ ) and a  $P \le \alpha_B$  was considered statistically significant (Table 3.3.6.). Family sizes were compared for each specific RC (*eg.* NC *vs* NC) between fungal (Table 2.3.6) and plant datasets using Mann-Whitney *U*-tests  $(H_0:\eta_1=\eta_2;H_A:\eta_1\neq\eta_2)$ . A Bonferroni correction was applied ( $\alpha$  = 0.05;  $|c|$  = 4;  $\alpha$ <sub>*B*</sub> = 0.0125) and a *P*  $\leq \alpha$ *B* was considered statistically significant (Table 3.3.7.).

## 3.2.4. Phylogenetic and character state reconstruction

### *3.2.4.1. Phylogenetic reconstruction*

Considerable difficulties are associated with resolving Viridiplantae phylogenies using molecular data due to the prevalence of ohnologs following frequent polyploidisation events (Ruhfel *et al.*, 2014; Van Bel *et al.*, 2018). We attempted phylogeny reconstruction using a ubiquitous ortholog gene tree superalignment. Ubiquitous genes from the Viridiplantae odb *v*10 dataset (as used in section 3.1.) were identified by searching against each proteome using reciprocal BLASTP (*E*≤1*e*-20). A total of 99 genes were observed to be ubiquitous, however, as none were observed to be single copy, we selected the reciprocal BLAST best hit for each gene from each genome for further analysis. Genes were aligned in each of the 99 gene sets using MUSCLE *v*3.8 (Edgar, 2004) under default parameters. Uninformative alignments were removed using gBlocks (Castresana, 2000) with a minimum block size of 5, and concatenated into a superalignment using FASconCAT *v*1.11 (Kück and Meusemann, 2010). The best model for protein evolution was ascertained to be the LG+I+G model (Le and Gascuel, 2008) using ProtTest *v*3 (Abascal *et al.*, 2005). A total of 100 constrained bootstrap replicates were produced using PhyML v3.0 (Guindon *et al.*, 2010). A consensus tree was constructed from the PhyML produced replicates using 'majority rule' in PAUP\* v3 (Swafford, 2002) and visualised using iTOL v3 (Letunic and Bork, 2016) (Figure 3.3.2.).

Due to the considerable disagreement between our phylogeny and the expected phylogeny, we reattempted reconstruction using the 31 ubiquitous orthologs identified by Ciccarelli and company (2006) using the same methodology as above. Again, no single copy orthologs were detected and the best model of protein evolution was determined to be LG+I+G (Figure 3.3.3.). This phylogeny was, again, highly disagreeable with the expected phylogeny.

To overcome the difficulties in resolving a defensible phylogeny, a "scaffold phylogeny" was inferred from PLAZA *v*4, Gymno-PLAZA *v*1.0, and Pico-PLAZA *v*2.0, and used to constrain the construction of a phylogeny using the 99 ubiquitous genes from the Viridiplantae odb dataset as above (Figure 3.3.4.).

#### *3.2.4.2. Character state reconstruction*

Character state reconstruction was completed as per *subsection 2.2.3.4.2* using the phylogeny constructed in *subsection 3.2.4.1.* with two "pseudo-outgroups" appended to the root (Figure 3.3.5.).

## *3.2.4.3. Comparison of homoplastic proportions*

Homoplastic proportions were derived using the formula described in *subsection 2.2.3.3.2.1.* and compared using a two-tailed Fisher's exact test  $(H_0: \pi(x) = \pi(X); H_A: \pi(x) \neq \pi(X)$ . Again, a Bonferroni correction was applied ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ;  $|c| = C_2^{|RC|} = 6$ ;  $\alpha_B = 8.33e^{-03}$ ). Instances where  $P \le \alpha_B$  was considered statistically significant (Table 3.3.8.). HPs were compared for each specific RC (*eg.* NC *vs* NC) between fungal (Table 2.3.7) and plant datasets using Fisher's exact tests  $(H_0: \pi(x)=\pi(X); H_A: \pi(x) \neq \pi(X)$ ). A Bonferroni correction was applied ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ;  $|c| =$ 4;  $\alpha_B$  = 0.0125) and a *P* <  $\alpha_B$  was considered statistically significant (Table 3.3.9.).

#### *3.2.4.4. Evolutionary rate series construction*

Evolutionary rate series  $(f_x)$  for each RC was constructed using the formulae described in *subsection 2.2.3.4.4.* Unlike fungi, a comprehensive collection of fossilised Viridiplantae structures have been curated (Harris and Davies, 2016), and two separate node calibration points have been presented that could be used for t calculation (Betts *et al*., 2018):

Betts and company estimated Embryophyta to have emerged between 448.5 - 509 Ma. The farthest leaf from Node 58 was observed to be *Zoysia japonica* (FL = 0.63226874), from which in  $\tau$  was calculated to be 709.35 -805.04 Ma. The farthest leaf from the root was, again, observed to be *Z. japonica* (FL<sub>R</sub> = 0.97834456). Adjusting  $\tau$  for FL<sub>R</sub> suggests that the common ancestor for all taxa in our dataset emerged between 725.05 - 822.86 Ma.

### (*ii.*): The root of Angiospermae (Node 55)

Betts and company estimated Angiospermae to have emerged between 125.9 – 247.3 Ma, much more recent than their embryophyte ancestors. Again, farthest leaf from Node 58 was observed to be *Z. japonica* (LP = 0.44831458), from which  $\tau$  was calculated to be 280.8296 - 551.6216 Ma. Adjusting  $\tau$  by LP<sub>R</sub>, the common ancestor of all taxa in our dataset emerged 287.05 - 563.83 Ma.

Fossil evidence was used to select the most appropriate  $\tau$  ( $\tau$  = 805.04 Ma) for rate series computation. Chlorophytes are hypothesised to have emerged during the Neoproterozoic Era, approximately 541 Ma – 1 Ga (Fang *et al*., 2017). The Neochlorophyta ("UTC") clade encompasses three chlorophyte classes, Ulvophyceae, Trebouxiophyceae, and Chlorophyceae (Derrien *et al*., 2009). The Ulvophyceae were absent in our dataset, however two trebouxiophycean taxa (*Chlorella* sp. NC64A and *Coccomyxa* sp. C169) and two chlorophycean taxa (*Chlamydomonas reinhardtii* and *Volvox carteri*) were represented. Evidence from the fossil record suggest that neochlorophytes had already diverged to three distinct chlorophyte lineages by the Neoproterozoic Era specifically the Tonian Era, 720 Ma – 1 Ga (Butterfield *et al*., 1994; Arouri *et al*., 1999; Fang *et al*., 2017; Del Cortona *et al*., 2019). When FL<sub>R</sub> is transformed to time using  $\tau$  (derived from Embrophyta), the most recent common ancestor to all of our taxa is estimated to have existed between 725.05 - 822.86 Ma. The more ancient  $\tau$  was selected to definitively place the MRCA within the Tonian era.

## *3.2.4.5. Comparison of rates between and within nodes and tips*

Descriptive statistics were computed for RC evolutionary rates (Table 3.3.10). Evolutionary rates were compared for each RC between and within phylogenetic nodes and tips using Mann-Whitney *U* tests  $(H_0:\eta_1=\eta_2;H_A:\eta_1\neq\eta_2)$  as per *subsection 2.2.3.4.4* (Tables 3.3.11.-12.). HPs were compared for each specific RC (*eg.* NC *vs* NC) between fungal (Table 2.3.9) and plant datasets using Fisher's exact tests  $(H_0:\pi(x)=\pi(X);H_A:\pi(x)\neq \pi(X)$ . A Bonferroni correction was applied ( $\alpha$  = 0.05;  $|c|$  = 4;  $\alpha_B$  = 0.0125) and a *P* <  $\alpha_B$  was considered statistically significant (Table 3.3.13.).

## *3.2.4.6. Investigation for evolutionary bursts*

Evolutionary bursts were detected using a *Q*-function  $(H_0:O(x) > 1-\Phi(x);H_A:O(x) \leq 1-\Phi(x)$  $\Phi(x)$ ) as described in *subsection 2.2.3.3.2.2.* (Tables 3.3.13.-14; Figure 3.3.6.). Bonferroni corrections were applied to( $\alpha = 0.05$ ;  $|c_{(x)}| = 99$ ;  $|c_{(y)}| = 50$ ;  $\alpha_{B(x)} = 2.6e^{-04}$ ;  $\alpha_{B(y)} = 4.8e^{-04}$ ) and instances where  $P(x) \le \alpha_{B(x)}$  or  $P(y) \le \alpha_{B(y)}$  were considered statistically significant.

## 3.2.5. Gene annotation (function and origin)

## *3.2.5.1. Functional gene annotation*

Genes and gene families were assigned PFAM domains and gene ontologies as per *subsection 2.2.3.4.1.* Again, GO-slim subset groupings were completed using the curated generic ontology map so results could be easily compared to Chapter II later in this chapter. Bonferroni corrected over- and underrepresented GO-slim subsets per RC were detected using "find enrichment.py" as per *subsection 2.2.3.4.1*. (Table 3.3.15.).

## *3.2.5.2. Gene origin annotation*

Potential DOs were assigned to each gene and gene family using the methodology described in *subsection 2.2.3.4.3*. DOs were compared to all other DOs using a two-tailed Fisher's exact test  $(H_0: \pi(x) = \pi(X); H_A: \pi(x) \neq \pi(X))$  for each RC. A Bonferroni correction was applied ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ;  $|c| = C_2^{|RC|} = 6$ ;  $\alpha_B = 8.33e^{-03}$ ) and instances where  $P \le \alpha_B$ were considered statistically significant (Table 3.3.13.). HPs were compared for each specific RC (*eg.* NC *vs* NC) between fungal (Table 2.3.22) and plant datasets using Fisher's exact tests  $(H_0: \pi(x) = \pi(X); H_A: \pi(x) \neq \pi(X)$ ). A Bonferroni correction was applied ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ;  $|c| = 4$ ;  $\alpha_B =$ 0.0125) and a  $P \le \alpha_B$  was considered statistically significant (Table 3.3.16.).

#### 3.2.6: Trends between gene remodelling and genomic characteristics

GRCPs and IRCPs were calculated for each genome as per *subsection 2.2.3.5.1* (Tables 3.3.17.-18.). Data for four genomic characteristics (genome size, genome density, GC%, and BUSCO completeness) were collated for each sampled taxa as per *subsection 2.2.3.5.1.1.*  Again, correlations were established using a Spearman's  $\rho$  correlation test (HO:*X*1∝*X*2;HA:*X*1∝̸*X*2) between each RCP and each of the four genomic characteristics (Figure 3.3.7.). A Bonferroni correction was applied ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ;  $|c| = 5$ ;  $\alpha_B = 0.01$ ) to each set and a *P*  $\leq \alpha_B$  was considered statistically significant.

## **3.3. Results**

## 3.3.1. Genome quality and characteristics

Genomic characteristics and quality (BUSCO completeness) were computed for each species (Table 3.3.1.). On average, a high level of genome completion (88.95 $\pm$ 14.86%) was observed (Table 3.3.2.), however, a small subset of genomes (*n* = 6) exhibited completeness (C) below one standard deviation from the mean  $(C < 74.09\%$ , ("below average")). All three Gymnospermae (*Picea abies, Picea glauca,* and *Pinus taeda*), *Hordeum vulgare*, *Malus domestica*, and *Zoysia japonica* were observed to possess below average completion. The three gymnosperm species have been used extensively in plant genome evolutionary analyses (Proost *et al.*, 2014; Van Bel *et al*., 2018) without any reported quality issues, so it was hypothesised that their reported deficit in completeness ( $C \le 63.7$ ) was due to one of two prominent reasons:

## (*i*.): Gene set bias in the orthologous database

Gymnospermae are known to possess highly divergent gene sets when compared to other Viridiplantae lineages (De La Tore *et al*., 2019), yet no

## **Table 3.3.1. Completeness and characteristics for 50 Viridiplantae genomes**

Each taxon is annotated with its genome size (GS), GC content, number of genes, genome density, and genome completeness. Genome completeness is given as a percentage of expected orthologs where C is "completeness". Completeness is the cumulation of singleton (S) and duplicated (D) orthologs. Fragmented (F) and missing (M) orthologs detract from C.





# **Table 3.3.2. Descriptive statistics for Viridiplantae genomic characteristics**

The minimum (Min), maximum (Max), median ( $\eta$ ), quartiles ( $\eta_x$ ), mean ( $\mu$ ), standard error (SE), and coefficient of variation (CV) are presented for each genomic characteristic.



Gymnospermae were used for the construction of Viridiplantae odb  $v.10$ (Kriventseva *et al*., 2018).

## (*ii*.): Gene evolution patterns in Gymnospermae

Gene evolution in Gymnospermae is markedly different to other Viridiplantae lineages (De La Tore *et al*., 2017). In gymnosperms, genes slowly acquire insertions in their nucleotide and resultant amino acid sequences. These accumulations may result in the misidentification of a singleton BUSCO gene (S) as a fragment (F) if an ortholog exceeds two standard deviations from the average length used to construct the model BUSCO gene (Waterhouse *et al.*, 2018). This argument is strengthened when the mean fragmentation rate is gymnosperms  $(27.2\pm11.88\%)$  is compared to non-gymnosperms  $(4.87\pm6.45\%).$ 

The reported lack of genome completeness observed in *H. vulgare*  $(C = 63.3\%)$  could be due to the use of an older, perhaps incomplete or inferior quality assembly genome on PLAZA *v*4.0. The reported genome source was Ensembl Genomes ASM32608v1 (ftp://ftp.ensemblgenomes.org/pub/plants/release-35/). however, an updated *H. vulgare*  (IBSC\_v2) genome assembly has been uploaded to Ensembl Genomes (Mascher *et al.*, 2017). The sum of protein coding genes in ASM32608v1 was reported by PLAZA *v*4 to be 24,282 whereas a total of 39,841 were reported in IBSC\_v2 (a difference of 15,559 genes (an inflation of 164.08%). A BUSCO analysis using the conserved eukaryote ortholog database reported 98% completion during reassembly (Mascher *et al.,* 2017).

The completion deficit  $(C = 49.3\%)$  in *Z. japonica* is derived from high levels of fragmented and missing BUSCO sets (F = 30.2%; M = 20.5%). The *Z. japonica* sequencing

project reported genomic completeness of 94.7% (Tanaka *et al.*, 2016) using the CEGMA core eukaryote gene dataset (Parra *et al.*, 2007). Previous studies have placed *Z. japonica* as an early diverging member of the Poaceae PACMAD clade (*eg.* Van Bel *et al.,* 2018), and it displays a relatively long branch ( $\kappa = 0.274$ ) in our phylogenetic analyses which provides support for divergence based fragmentation and losses. It may be the case, as with the gymnosperms, that the missing and fragmented BUSCO sets may reflect the evolutionary history of *Z. japonica*.

Finally, the completion deficit observed in *M. domestica*  $(C = 64.6\%)$  is attributable to a considerable amount of fragmentation in BUSCO set hits  $(F = 22.8\%)$ . Again, as in the gymnosperms and *Z. japonica*, this may merely reflect the evolutionary history of *M. domestica*. Extensive WGD and genomic reorganisations have been reported during the recent evolutionary history of *M. domestica* and closely related species (*eg. Pyrae* spp.) compared to other, more distantly related, plant lineages (Xiang *et al.*, 2016). These evolutionary dynamics have resulted in significant differences in gene content, architecture and sizes between the genomes of *M. domestica* and other Angiospermae (Velasco *et al.*, 2010). Such events may have caused considerable difference in gene length resulting in higher rates of fractionation as expected in the Gymnospermae.

Genome incompleteness can be observed even in high quality assemblies of type species such as *Caenorhabditis elegans* (C = 85%) and *Homo sapiens* (C = 89%) (Simão *et al*., 2015). The six genomes with "below average" completion were retained for further analyses as they were determined to be of high quality (Proost *et al.,* 2015; Van Bel *et al.*, 2018) are of high economic importance, and (with the exception of *H. vulgare*) plausible evolutionary reasons could be determined to explain their reported incompleteness.

## 3.3.2. Extent of gene remodelling in Viridiplantae

In total, of the 1,672,377 sequences in this dataset, a total of 488,979 genes (29.28%) were excluded due to the removal of low complexity sequences or due to being a singleton, resulting in a sample of 1,183,398 genes within 81,112 families (Table 3.3.3; Figure 3.3.1.). These results are in stark contrast to what was observed in the fungi (Table 2.3.5.), where significant differences ( $P \le \alpha_B \le 0.0125$  (Genes<sub>(*a*)</sub>:  $P \le \alpha_B \le 0.01$ )) were observed between every comparison (Table 3.3.3.).

## 3.3.3. Variance in gene family sizes

As observed in the fungal dataset (section 2.3.3.), gene family sizes displayed considerable variation for each RC (129%  $\leq$  CV  $\leq$  427%) with considerable bias observed towards smaller families ( $\eta_{0.25} \leq 3$ ,  $\eta_{0.50} \leq 11$ , and  $\eta_{0.75} \leq 31$  (Table 3.3.4.). Again, nested composites were observed to display the greatest variance (CV = 427%), the widest range (*n*   $\in \{2, 3, ..., 9093\}$  and largest mean  $(37.99 \pm 162.1)$  when compared to other RCs  $(129\% \leq CV$  $\leq$  229%); *n*<sub>SC</sub> ∈ {2, 3 …, 335}, *n*<sub>SN</sub> ∈ {2, 3 …, 442}, *n*<sub>NR</sub> ∈ {2, 3 …, 152}; and  $\mu$ <sub>(SC, SN, NR)</sub> =  $19.11\pm24.71$ ,  $5.819\pm13.33$ ,  $6.698\pm10.62$  respectively). Family sizes were reported to be significantly different ( $P \le \alpha_B \le 8.33e^{-03}$ ) to each other when using a Mann-Whitney U-test (*P*  $\leq$  4.79*e*<sup>-121</sup>) (Table 3.3.5.). Again, stark contrasts (*P*  $\leq$  2.37*e*<sup>-208</sup>) were observed when families belonging to each specific RC were compared to their counterparts in the fungal dataset (Tables 2.3.7., 3.3.6). These contrasts are due to the observations of consistently larger means and medians observed in Viridiplantae family sizes when compared to the fungi (Tables 2.3.6., 3.3.4).

#### 3.3.4. Comparison of evolutionary rates

## **Table 3.3.3. Extent of remodelled genes and families in Viridiplantae**

The number  $(n)$  of genes in the entire dataset (Genes $(a)$ ), the sum of genes in the sampled dataset (Genes<sub>(s)</sub>; Genes<sub>(a)</sub> – Excluded), and the number of gene families attributed to each RC are presented with their associated proportion (%) within their respective populations. The "Excluded" category is only observed in Genes(*a*) as genes in this category were not used for sampling by CompositeSearch, and thus were excluded from Genes(*s*) and Families respectively.





**Figure 3.3.1. Extent of remodelled gene and family extent in Viridiplantae**

Each pie chart represents one of three datasets (Genes(*a*), Genes(*s*), and Families) from Table 3.3.2. Again, the "Excluded" category is only observed in Genes(*a*) as genes in this category were not used for sampling by CompositeSearch, and thus were excluded from Genes(*s*) and Families respectively.

## **Table 3.3.4. Comparison of remodelling extent in fungi and plants**

The remodelling extent is presented for plants (%v) and fungi (%F) for the 4 RCs in the "sampled" datasets (Genes(*s*) and Families) and for the 4 RCs and "excluded" genes in the entire dataset (Genes<sub> $(a)$ </sub>). All comparisons were observed to be significantly different (Genes<sub> $(s)$ </sub>, Families:  $P \le \alpha_B \le 0.0125$ ; Genes<sub>(a)</sub>:  $P \le \alpha_B \le 0.01$ )



## **Table 3.3.5. Descriptive statistics for gene family sizes in Viridiplantae**

Statistics describing family size distribution characteristics were tabulated for each RC. Each RC is assigned a mean  $(\mu)$ , median  $(\eta)$ , quartiles  $(\eta_{0.25, 0.50, 0.75})$ , minima, maxima, and CV.



## **Table 3.3.6. Comparison of family sizes between RCs in Viridiplantae**

RC(*a*) and RC(*b*) refer to the RCs being tested. The Mann-Whitney U statistic (U) is provided alongside a *P*-value for each comparison. All comparisons were considered statistically significant ( $P \le a_B \le 8.33e^{-03}$ ).



# **Table 3.3.7. Comparison of RC family sizes between fungi and plants**

Family sizes from each RC were compared between the fungal and plant datasets. A U statistic is provided alongside a *P*-value for each comparison. All comparisons were reported to be significantly different ( $P \le \alpha \le 0.0125$ ).



#### *3.3.4.1. Phylogenetic annotation*

After two failed attempts to reconstruct a phylogeny (Figures 3.3.2.-3.3.3.), a phylogeny was constructed using 99 ubiquitous gene family alignments from the OrthoDB Viridiplantae\_odb 10 dataset (as used for BUSCO analyses) with a scaffold obtained from Van Bel *et al.*, 2018 (Figures 3.3.4.). Internal nodes were annotated as per the "-apo" function in TNT (Figure 3.3.5.).

*3.3.4.2. Remodelled genes are more homoplastic than non-remodelled genes in Viridiplantae*

As observed in the fungal dataset (*subsection* 2.3.4.2.), significant differences ( $P \le \alpha_B$  $\leq$  8.33*e*<sup>-03</sup>) were observed between all comparisons (*P*  $\leq$  4.60*e*<sup>-19</sup>) when sampled from across the entire phylogeny (Table 3.3.8.). As observed in fungal families, remodelled gene families were observed to be significantly more homoplastic ( $0.458 \leq HP \leq 0.609$ ) than non-remodelled families (HP<sub>NR</sub> = 0.35;  $P \le 1.69e^{-140}$ ). SC were observed to be the most homoplastic families (HP<sub>SC</sub> = 0.609) amongst remodelled families (HP<sub>NC</sub> = 0.497, HP<sub>SN</sub> = 0.458;  $P \le 1.14e^{-26}$ ). In fungi, a supremum difference ( $sup_{HP}$ ) of 0.54 is observed between RC, however, in Viridiplantae a sup<sub>HP</sub> of 0.151 is observed. With the prominent exception of NC ( $P = 0.044$ ), significant differences ( $P \le \alpha_B \le 0.0125$ ) were observed for each specific RC comparison (*P*  $\leq$  2.16 $e^{-0.8}$ ) between the fungal and plant datasets when sampled from across entire phylogenies (Table 3.3.9.).

As observed when sampled from all nodes in the Viridiplantae phylogeny, all comparisons were significantly different ( $P \leq 4.78e^{-14}$ ) when sampled from the subset of internal nodes. However, unlike what was observed when sampled from the entire phylogeny



**Figure 3.3.2. Unconstrained "BUSCO" phylogeny**

A maximum likelihood superalignment of the 99 ubiquitous genes derived from the BUSCO viridiplantae odb *v*10 database. All lineages are correctly placed, except for those within the dicots where all clades are incorrectly placed. This is likely due to dicots evolving through continuous rounds of WGD followed by degradation. As this tree resolved all other lineages so well, it was chosen as the basis for the constrained tree.



**Figure 3.3.3. Unconstrained "Cicarelli" phylogeny**

Maximum likelihood tree made from a superalignment of the universal orthologs described by Cicarelli *et al*., (2006) without constraints. In this phylogeny *Selaginella* is incorrectly placed as basal to all other embryophytes and the Chlorophyceae are incorrectly placed as the outgroup in place of the Chlorophyta, despite being reported as late diverging algae (Guiry and Guiry, 2018). Dicotyledon clades are highly misplaced, for example, *Vitis vinifera*, is an early diverging dicot, however, it is placed deep within the clade, and the mustard plants (Brassicaceae) are placed as ancestral to the nightshades (Solanaceae).



**Figure 3.3.4. Constrained "BUSCO" phylogeny**

Consensus phylogeny constructed from a concatenated superalignment of 99 ubiquitous orthologous genes with a manually constructed scaffold inferred from Van Bel *et al.* (2018). No bootstrap supports are present as a scaffold was used to restrict phylogenetic topologies. The root appears to bifurcate the Chlorophyta, however rerooting at the LCA of *Physcomitrella patens* and *Chlamydomonas reinhardtii* resolves the topology. We chose to leave the root where it is in support of new evidence that Mamiellophyceae is an outgroup to the rest of Chlorophyta (Guiry and Guiry, 2018).


**Figure 3.3.5. Annotated Viridiplantae phylogeny**

Internal node IDs (as computed by TNT) were assigned to each node from the constrained "BUSCO" phylogeny (Figure 3.3.4.)

## **Table 3.3.8. Comparisons of homoplasy in Viridiplantae remodelling categories**

HPs were computed for families in each RC when sampled from across the entire phylogeny and for the subset of exclusively internal nodes. The number of homoplastic families per RC per set  $(n_H)$  is presented alongside the total number of families per RC  $(n_{all})$ . All comparisons were observed to be statistically significant ( $P \le \alpha_B \le 8.33e^{-03}$ ).



## **Table 3.3.9. Comparison of homoplastic proportions between fungi and plants**

HPs for each RC (per phylogenetic set) were computed between the Fungi ( $HP_F$ ) and Viridiplantae (HP<sub>V</sub>) respectively. Every comparison was observed to be significantly different  $(P \le \alpha_B \le 0.0125)$  with the exceptions of NC when sampled from across the entire phylogeny  $(P = 0.044)$  and for SC when sampled from across the subset of internal nodes  $(P = 0.824)$ 



and in fungi, SN were significantly less homoplastic (HP<sub>SN</sub> =  $0.023$ ;  $P \le 1.05e^{-72}$ ) than all other RCs ( $0.05 \leq HP \leq 0.126$ ). Again, SC were observed to be more homoplastic than all other RCs (HP<sub>SC</sub> = 0.126). The Viridiplantae HP<sub>SC</sub> and HP<sub>NR</sub> (HP<sub>NR</sub> = 0.05) for this subset is comparable to their fungal counterparts ( $HP_{SC} = 0.123$ ;  $HP_{NR} = 0.053$ ), however  $HP_{NC}$  ( $HP_{NC}$ )  $= 0.079$ ) and HP<sub>SN</sub> are considerably lower than their respective fungal counterparts (HP<sub>NC</sub> = 0.12;  $HP_{SN} = 0.073$ ). With the prominent exception of NC ( $P = 0.824$ ), significant differences ( $P \le \alpha_B \le 0.0125$ ) were observed for each specific RC comparison ( $P \le 9.24e^{-0.5}$ ) between the fungal and plant datasets when sampled from across phylogenetic internal node subsets.

These results are in agreement with those observed for fungi and, as such, suggest that remodelled genes, particularly composite genes, are either highly likely to disobey Dollo's Law of Irreversibility or more likely to be epaktologous as first postulated in *subsection 2.3.4.2.* 

### *3.3.4.3. Evolutionary rate dynamics between remodelling categories*

When sampled from across the phylogeny, birth rates displayed considerable variation within each RC (*eg.*  $0.215 \le f_b \le 227$ ;  $139 \le CV \le 173$ ) (Table 3.3.10.). Significant differences  $(P \le \alpha \le 8.33e^{-03})$  were observed between each SC and each other RC,  $(P \le 7.57e^{-18})$ , where SC were observed to have a much lower  $f_b$ , but not between any other comparison ( $P \ge 0.56$ ) (Table 3.3.11.). High variance rates were observed for decay rates within each RC (*eg.* 0.002  $\leq f_d \leq 50.2$ ; 112  $\leq$  CV  $\leq$  140), with significant rate differences observed between each comparison ( $P \le 5.27e^{-04}$ ) with the exception of SN *vs* NR ( $P = 0.28$ ). While these rates are high, they are considerably low when compared to the fungi  $(f_b: 225.1 \le CV \le 276.1; f_d: 315.8$ ≤ 378.8) where a greater range in rates (*eg.* 0.00846 ≤ *fb* ≤ 416.4; 0.00846 ≤ *fd* ≤ 322) was also observed (*subsection 2.3.4.8*; Table 2.3.7.). In contrast to the fungi, lower *fd* were observed in Viridiplantae when compared to *fb*.

# **Table 3.3.10. Descriptive statistics for RC evolutionary rates in Viridiplantae**

Descriptive statistics for evolutionary birth  $(f_b)$  and decay  $(f_d)$  rates were calculated for the entire phylogeny and for each phylogenetic subset (exclusively leaf nodes and exclusively internal nodes).



## **Table 3.3.11. Comparison of RC evolutionary rates in Viridiplantae**

RC(*a*) and RC(*b*) refers to the RCs being compared for each rate in each phylogenetic subset. At least 3 significant differences ( $P \le \alpha_B \le 8.33e^{-03}$ ) were observed in each analysis run. Interestingly, comparisons with SC were observed to be significantly different in every instance ( $P \le 1.00e^{-03}$ ) with the exception of SC *vs* SN when sampled from across internal nodes (*P* = 0.02).

		$RC_{(a)}$	$RC_{(b)}$	U	$\overline{P}$
Entire phylogeny	$f_b$	NC	<b>SC</b>	8927	$1.75e^{-23}$
		$_{\mathrm{NC}}$	${\rm SN}$	5137	0.56
		N <sub>C</sub>	$\rm NR$	5123.5	0.58
		SC	${\rm SN}$	1430.5	$7.57e^{-18}$
		<b>SC</b>	$\rm NR$	1131	$8.87e^{-21}$
		SN	$\rm NR$	4834.5	0.87
	$f_d$	NC	${\rm SC}$	7894	$1.14e^{-13}$
		NC	SN	6990.5	$2.18e^{-07}$
		NC	NR	6639.5	$1.62e^{-0.5}$
		SC	SN	3502.5	$5.27e^{-04}$
		<b>SC</b>	NR	3111	$9.10e^{-06}$
		${\rm SN}$	$\rm NR$	4468	0.28
Exclusive internal nodes	$f_b$	NC	${\rm SC}$	2323	$1.43e^{-13}$
		NC	SN	1625	$9.83e^{-03}$
		NC	$\rm NR$	1346.5	0.51
		SC	SN	384	$2.42e^{-09}$
		<b>SC</b>	NR	295	$4.70e^{-11}$
		${\rm SN}$	$\rm NR$	999.5	$0.08\,$
	$f_d$	NC	<b>SC</b>	1970	$7.02e^{-07}$
		NC	${\rm SN}$	1759.5	$4.49e^{-04}$
		NC	$\rm NR$	1663.5	$4.41e^{-03}$
		SC	${\rm SN}$	918.5	0.02
		<b>SC</b>	$\rm NR$	763.5	$8.06e^{-04}$
		SN	$\rm NR$	1095.5	0.29
<b>Exclusive leaf nodes</b>	$f_b$	NC	SC	2204	$1.03e^{-12}$
		NC	${\rm SN}$	981	0.12
		NC	$\rm NR$	1244	0.76
		SC	${\rm SN}$	194	$8.82e^{-13}$
		${\rm SC}$	$\rm NR$	199	$1.14e^{-12}$
		<b>SN</b>	$\rm NR$	1437	0.09
	$f_d$	NC	SC	2011	$8.65e^{-09}$
		NC	SN	1793	$2.60e^{-0.5}$
		N <sub>C</sub> ${\rm SC}$	$\rm NR$ SN	1715 791.5	$2.60e^{-0.4}$ $3.70e^{-03}$
		<b>SC</b>	$\rm NR$	737	$1.00e^{-03}$
		SN	$\rm NR$	1083.5	0.41

When sampled from the subset of exclusively internal nodes, considerably less variance was observed within both  $f_b$  (*eg.* 0.298  $\le f_b \le 33.4$ ; 67.2  $\le$  CV  $\le$  104) and  $f_d$  (*eg.* 0.002  $\le f_d \le$  9.58; 90.8 ≤ CV ≤ 100). Again, significant differences ( $P \le \alpha \le 8.33e^{-0.3}$ ) between RC  $f_b$  were only observed when compared to SC ( $P \le 2.42e^{-0.9}$ ) but not between other RCs ( $P \ge 9.83e^{-0.3}$ ). Comparatively, significant differences between RC *fd* were observed when compared to NC (*P*   $\leq$  4.41*e*<sup>-03</sup>) and between SC and NR (*P* = 8.06*e*<sup>-04</sup>) but not for SC *vs* SN or SN *vs* NR (*P*  $\geq$  0.02). These trends are markedly different to what was observed in fungi, where significant differences between all comparisons (except SN *vs* NR) were observed for *fb* and only when compared to SC for *fd*.

Finally, when sampled from the subset of exclusively leaf nodes (speciation event nodes), a relatively high degree of variance was observed for both  $f_b (eg. 1.11 \le f_b \le 227; 132$ ≤ CV ≤ 140) and  $f_d$  (eg. 0.004 ≤  $f_d$  ≤ 50.7; 105 ≤ CV ≤ 131) respectively. Significant RC  $f_b$ differences were only observed in comparisons with SC ( $P \leq 1.03e^{-12}$ ), however, significant  $f_d$ differences were observed between all comparisons ( $P \leq 3.70e^{-03}$ ) except SN *vs* NR ( $P = 0.41$ ). Birth rate differences are comparable to the fungi where significant differences were also observed between all comparisons to SC ( $P \le 1.93e^{-21}$ ) but also for NC *vs* NR (4.73*e*<sup>-03</sup>). Decay rates were quite different to fungi. As mentioned above, in Viridiplantae significant differences in RC *fd* during speciation were observed between all comparisons except SN *vs* NR, however in fungi significant differences were only observed when compared to SC.

Significant differences ( $P \le \alpha_B \le 0.0125$ ) were observed for every comparison when rates for each specific RC (*eg.* NC *vs* NC) were compared between internal and leaf nodes (*P* ≤ 8.95*e*-03) (Table 3.3.12.) where higher medians were observed for leaf nodes in each comparison (Table 3.3.7.).

As observed in fungi, these results suggest that despite the considerable variance observed within RCs, with the notable exception of SC, their birth rates are relatively constant.

# **Table 3.3.12. Comparison of evolutionary rates between leaf and internal nodes in Viridipantae**

Evolutionary rates were compared between leaf and internal node subsets from the Viridiplantae phylogeny. Every comparison was observed to be significantly different ( $P \le \alpha_B$ )  $\leq$  0.0125).



The significant evolutionary rate increases observed between internal nodes and leaf nodes in each RC is likely due to genomic innovation during speciation (Gogarten and Townsend, 2005). These results also support the hypotheses discussed in *subsection 3.3.4.2*. which posits that remodelling events are likely to flout Dollo's Law and that they are more likely to be epaktologous during speciation. Alongside instances of convergent evolution, the simultaneous increase in both birth rate and homoplasy suggest that homoplasy is a major driving force behind these phenomena.

Synapomorphic families observed at internal nodes were evolutionarily "successful", meaning they were retained post speciation events. Such differences were expected as genome sequencing provides a "snapshot in time" (Klimke *et al*., 2011) of a given genome, with no guarantee that an innovation will persist. The evolutionary rate increase is likely influenced by homoplasy and epaktologous events which would be consistent with the HP differences observed in Table 3.3.7.

Evolutionary rates for each RC (from each phylogenetic set) were compared to each of their respective counterparts from the fungal dataset (Table 3.3.13.). Rates were found to be remarkably similar when sampled from the entire phylogenies and from the subsets of internal nodes. When sampled from across the phylogeny, significant differences ( $P \le \alpha_B \le 0.0125$ ) were only observed in SC birth and decay rates ( $P \le 9.54e^{-04}$ ), and when sampled from the internal node subsets, significant differences were only observed in SC decay rates  $(P = 1.89e^-)$  $^{03}$ ). When sampled from the subset of leaf nodes however, significant differences were observed, again, for SC birth rates ( $P = 2.06e^{-0.5}$ ), for NC decay rates ( $P = 5.33e^{-0.3}$ ), and for both SN birth and decay rates ( $P \le 0.01$ ). These results suggest that, with the exception of SC, remodelled gene families are retained at a consistent rate within both plants and fungi. The significant differences observed between the leaf node subsets (speciation events) are likely due to the increased number of polyploidisation events during Viridiplantae speciation

## **Table 3.3.13. Comparison of RC evolutionary rates between fungi and plants**

Each RC evolutionary rate (from each phylogenetic set) was compared to its counterpart from the fungal dataset. SC are the only RC to display significant rate differences ( $P \le \alpha_B \le 0.0125$ ) between fungi and plants when sampled from either (*a.*) the entire phylogeny or (*b*.) the subset of internal nodes. Significant differences are also observed in SN and NR rate evolution when sampled from just leaf nodes.



resulting in greater family genesis when compared to the fungi (Albertin and Marullo, 2012; Clark and Donohue, 2018)

#### *3.3.4.4. Gene remodelling is 'clocklike' in Viridiplantae*

Only one site of evolutionary bursts ( $P \le \alpha_B \le 5.05e^{-0.4}$ ), the speciation of *Triticum aestivum*, was reported across the Viridiplantae phylogeny where bursts in NC ( $f_b$  = 170.35/Ma;  $P = 4.87e^{-0.4}$ ) and NR ( $f_b = 158.98$ /Ma;  $P = 4.65e^{-0.4}$ ) were observed (Table 3.3.13.), no bursts in *fd* were observed at any site along the phylogeny. Similarly to these conservative results, no bursts  $(P \le 1.02e^{-0.3})$  were observed when sampled from the subset of internal branches (Table 3.3.14.). These sparse results are consistent with those observed in fungi (*subsection 2.3.4.3.*) suggesting that evolution *via* gene remodelling is relatively clocklike. The bursts observed during the speciation of *T. aestivum* are consistent with the two rounds of allopolyploidisation attributed to its genome evolution (Matsuoka, 2011), where these massive redundant genetic influxes promote rampant remodelling events (Leonard and Richards, 2012).

#### *3.3.4.5. Functional overrepresentations in remodelling categories*

#### (*i*.): Overrepresentations exclusive to nested composites

NC exclusive BP ontologs were observed to be significantly overrepresented ( $P_B \le 0.05$ ) for growth (GO:0040007;  $P_B = 1.04e^{-03}$ ), macromolecule modification (GO:0005975, GO:0019538, GO:0043412, GO:0044260, GO:0044267, GO:1901564;  $P_B \le 0.0127$ ), biological quality regulation (GO:0007165, GO:0042592, GO:0050794, GO:0065008; *PB* ≤ 4.76*e*-

# **Table 3.3.14. Evolutionary rates in Viridiplantae**

For each RC at each node, the sum of gained  $(T_b)$  and lost  $(T_d)$  synapomorphies are presented alongside their rates  $(f_x)$  and the probability that a

burst was observed  $(P(f_x))$ .  $\lambda$  values used for Box-Cox transformations and branch lengths  $(\kappa)$  used to calculate rates are also provided.











## **Table 3.3.15. Evolutionary rates across internal nodes of the Viridiplantae phylogeny**

For each RC at each node, the sum of gained  $(T_b)$  and lost  $(T_d)$  synapomorphies are presented alongside their rates  $(f_x)$  and the probability that a

burst was observed  $(P(f_x))$ .  $\lambda$  values used for Box-Cox transformations and branch lengths  $(\kappa)$  used to calculate rates are also provided.







# **Table 3.3.16. Functional over- and underrepresentation in Viridiplantae remodelling categories**

For each RC, representations (Rep; overrepresentation (enrichment; e) and underrepresentation (purification; p)) are presented for each GO. The GO depth and ratios used to calculate P (and  $P_B$ ) are provided. Only significant ( $P_B \le 0.05$ ) representations are displayed.










































































<sup>03</sup>), and extracellular matrix organisation (GO:0030198, GO:0043062;  $P_B \leq$ 1.04*e*-03; Table 3.3.15.). These ontologs coupled with NC exclusive CC overrepresentations for microbodies (GO:0005777, GO:0042579;  $P_B \le 9.01e^{-04}$ ) and extracellular encapsulating structures (GO:0005777, GO:0042579;  $P_B \leq$ 2.82*e*-03) are strongly attributed to plant defences against insect attack and fungal infection (Gols, 2014; Duan *et al*., 2016).

### (*ii.*): Overrepresentations exclusive to strict composites

SC exclusive BP ontologs were observed to be significantly overrepresented for response to external stimuli (stress and stimulus response (GO:0006950, GO:0050896; *PB* ≤ 0.0133), secondary metabolism (GO:0009056, GO:0019748; *P* ≤ 2.54*e*-03), transport (GO:0006810, GO:0051179, GO:0051234;  $P_B \le 4.11e^{-03}$ ). The appearance of secondary metabolism, stress response, and transport ontologs is highly complementary to the results observed for NC. Secondary metabolites are often produced in response to environmental stressors (*eg.* infection or animal attack) in plants (Wink, 2003, 2018; Hartmann, 2004) As secondary metabolites are often produced by large, multidomain and multifunctional genes (Pasek *et al*., 2006), an overrepresentation of secondary metabolism ontologs in SC is not surprising. These results are highly complementary to what was observed for NC, suggesting that the plant defence system evolved through rounds of gene remodelling.

(*iii.*): Overrepresentations exclusive to strict components

SN exclusive overrepresented BP ontologs were found to be significantly overrepresented ( $P_B \le 0.05$ ) for growth (GO:0040007;  $P_B = 1.04e^-$ <sup>03</sup>), transcription, specifically DNA and transcription factor binding (GO:0003677, GO:0008134;  $P_B \le 0.0133$ ), and for protein modification (GO:0036211, GO:0006464; *P* ≤ 0.011) (Table 3.3.15). Protein modification is often mediated by small, non-specific, and often monomeric biocatalysts (Beltrao *et al.*, 2013). As discussed in Section 3.1., gene co-option is relatively common in plants, and these findings will be further discussed in Section 3.4. Due to their broad functionality and their co-option into biochemical pathways (Prabakaran *et al.*, 2012), it is not surprising to observe their overrepresentation as strict components.

### (*iv*.): Overrepresentation exclusive to non-remodelled genes

NR exclusive BP ontologs were observed to be significantly overrepresented for embryonic developmental processes (GO:0007275, GO:0009790, GO:0032501, GO:0032502, GO:0048856; *PB* ≤ 8.47*e*-04), ribosomal biogenesis (GO:0042254;  $P_B = 5.73e^{-0.4}$ ), and cell division (GO:0051301;  $P = 1.2e^{-0.4}$ ; Table 3.3.15.). These are all essential housekeeping functions in multicellular eukaryotes, and mutation in such processes often proves to be highly deleterious (Kasarskis *et al.*, 1998; Sparkes *et al.*, 2003) so the fact that they are overrepresented in non-remodelled families is not surprising

3.3.5. Ancient genes are more likely to be remodelled in Viridiplantae

Families of archaeal, bacterial, and undefined prokaryote origin were observed to be significantly overrepresented ( $P \le \alpha_B \le 3.125e^{-03}$ ) for NC ( $P \le 8.97e^{-15}$ ) and SC (2.98*e*<sup>-08</sup>) categories (Table 3.3.16.). Eukaryote specific families were overrepresented for NR (1.20*e*-24). These results are similar to those observed in fungi where significant overrepresentations were observed for SN comparisons. Insignificant differences ( $P \ge 0.32$ ) were observed for SN families of bacterial, eukaryotic and UP origin and for NR families of archaeal origin.

For NC, families of bacterial, archaeal, and UP origin were observed significantly more in Viridiplantae than fungi ( $P \le 1.69e^{-19}$ ; Table 3.3.17.), whereas a greater proportion of eukaryote originating families were observed in fungi (*P* = 7.65*e*-48). Again, Viridiplantae were observed to have greater proportions of SC families in every DO comparison ( $P \leq 3.33e^{-0.5}$ ) except for eukaryote originating families which were greater in fungi ( $P = 3.33e^{-20}$ ). SN families of archaeal origin were observed in significantly greater proportions in Viridiplantae  $(P = 6.02e^{-04})$ . Finally, NR families of bacterial and UP origin were observed in significantly greater proportions in Viridiplantae ( $P \leq 1.26e^{-19}$ ), and again, eukaryote specific NR family proportions were observed to be significantly greater in fungi ( $P = 3.87e^{-62}$ ).

These results suggest that Viridiplantae possess greater proportions of more ancient gene families for RC than their fungal counterparts. While both datasets were observed to be highly plastic, Viridiplantae were observed to display more relative plasticity in their ancient families when compared to fungi which are more likely to subject "newer" families to molecular innovation.

3.3.6. Gene remodelling is more prominent in genomes that undergo frequent WGD

### **Table 3.3.17. Domains-of-Origin for each remodelling category in Viridiplantae**

The count (*n*) of each RC per DO is presented on the left and *P-*values on the right. Significant observations ( $P \le \alpha_B \le 4.16e^{-0.3}$ ) are annotated in bold. No significant comparisons were observed in SN



### **Table 3.3.18. Domain-of-Origin comparisons between fungi and Viridiplantae**

For each RC, each DO is annotated with its count  $(n<sub>RC</sub>)$ , the count of the background (all families not annotated to the same RC;  $n_B$ ) and the percentage (of total families;  $\%$ ) for each taxonomic kingdom. Comparisons between kingdoms are denoted by *P.* Significant comparisons ( $P \le \alpha_B \le 0.0125$ ) are emboldened. The greater % value denotes which kingdom was significantly more likely to have gene families of a specific RC originating in a specific DO.

		Fungi			Viridiplantae			
<b>RC</b>	<b>DO</b>	$n_{\rm RC}$	$n_{\rm B}$	$\frac{0}{0}$	$n_{\rm RC}$	$n_{\rm B}$	$\frac{0}{0}$	$\boldsymbol{P}$
NC	Archaea	141	16661	0.84	401	19998	1.97	$2.38e^{-20}$
	<b>Bacteria</b>	1319	15483	7.85	2015	18384	9.88	$8.67e^{-12}$
	Eukaryote	11425	5377	68.00	12391	8008	60.74	$7.65e^{-48}$
	Prokaryote	3917	12885	23.31	5592	14807	27.41	$1.69e^{-19}$
<b>SC</b>	Archaea	27	2080	1.28	85	2450	3.35	$3.02e^{-06}$
	<b>Bacteria</b>	162	1945	7.69	287	2248	11.32	$3.33e^{-0.5}$
	Eukaryote	1592	515	75.56	1598	937	63.04	$3.33e^{-20}$
	Prokaryote	326	1781	15.47	565	1970	22.29	$3.92e^{-09}$
<b>SN</b>	Archaea	208	21519	0.96	429	33266	1.27	$6.02e^{-04}$
	<b>Bacteria</b>	1660	20067	7.64	2500	31195	7.42	0.34
	Eukaryote	16158	5569	74.37	25135	8560	74.60	0.55
	Prokaryote	3701	18026	17.03	5631	28064	16.71	0.32
<b>NR</b>	Archaea	326	40484	0.80	213	24270	0.87	0.35
	<b>Bacteria</b>	1879	38931	4.60	1678	22805	6.85	$1.11e^{-33}$
	Eukaryote	36000	4810	88.21	20564	3919	83.99	$3.87e^{-52}$
	Prokaryote	2605	38205	6.38	2028	22455	8.28	$1.26e^{-19}$

Relative "global remodelling" and "internal (retained) remodelling" proportions were calculated (Tables 3.3.18.-19; Figure 3.3.6.) and compared to genomic characteristics for each taxon. When relative "globally remodelled" RC genomic proportions were compared to genomic characteristics, significant positive correlations ( $P \le \alpha_B \le 0.01$ ;  $0.3 < \rho \le 0.7$ ) were observed between genome size and the SN proportion ( $\rho = 0.5086$ ;  $P = 0.002$ ), between genome density and the NR proportion ( $\rho = 0.3878$ ;  $P = 0.0054$ ), and between genomic completeness and both NC ( $\rho = 0.5774$ ;  $P < 0.0001$ ) and SC ( $\rho = 0.5591$ ;  $P < 0.0001$ ) proportions respectively (Figure 3.3.7.). Significant negative correlations (-0.7  $\leq \rho \leq$  -0.3) were observed between genome size and the non-remodelled genomic proportion ( $\rho = -0.4650$ ;  $P =$ 0.0007, between genome density and the strict component genomic proportion ( $\rho = -0.5357$ ; *P*  $\leq$  0.0001), and between completeness and the excluded genomic proportion ( $\rho$  = 0.5591; *P*  $\leq$ 0.0001). Positive correlations between completeness and genomic proportions are unsurprising as it can be reasonably expected that higher quality genomes would make better candidates for remodelled gene studies, negative correlations between completeness and excluded proportions are unsurprising for the same reason. Negative correlations between genome size and NR proportions are also unsurprising. As discussed in Section 3.1., Viridiplantae genomes evolve through cyclic polyploidisation which has the dual effect of increasing genome sizes and promoting remodelling events (Leonard and Richards, 2012; Madlung, 2013). The negative correlation between genome density and SN proportions was also unsurprising. Positive correlations have previously been established between angiosperm genome size and polyploidisation frequency (Adams and Wendel, 2005). While the reverse is observed for Gymnosperms, which have extremely sparse genomes but do not readily undergo polyploidisation (Wan *et al.*, 2018), they only contribute 3 genomes (6%) to these analyses, whereas angiosperms contribute 38 genomes (76%). As angiosperms constitute the vast majority of our dataset, this correlation was not surprising.

## **Table 3.3.19. Relative GRCPs in Viridiplantae**

Each genome is annotated with the sum of genes (*n*) (and their proportion (%)) ascribed to each RC and those excluded from further analyses (E) for the "globally remodelled" dataset.





## **Table 3.3.20. Relative IRCPs in Viridiplantae**

Each genome is annotated with the sum of genes (*n*) (and their proportion (%)) ascribed to each RC and those excluded from further analyses (E) for the "internally remodelled" dataset.







**Figure 3.3.6. Representative Viridiplantae phylogeny annotated with genomic characteristics**

The Viridiplantae phylogeny (Figure 2.2.3.) was annotated with three genomic datasets, each represented as pie charts. The internal pie chart represents BUSCO completeness, the middle chart represents IRCPs (Table 3.3.19.), and the outer charts represent GRCPs (Table 3.3.18.).



# **Figure 3.3.7. Correlation matrix between genomic characteristics and gene remodelling extent in Viridiplantae**

Illustration of effect sizes (Spearman's  $\rho$ ) and their significance (*P*) between genomic characteristics for (*a*) GRCPs (Table 3.3.19) on the left and (*b*) IRCPs (Table 3.3.20) on the right.

When relative "internally remodelled" (retained remodelled) RC genomic proportions were compared to genomic characteristics, significant positive correlations were observed between genome size and each remodelled (NC, SC, and SN) proportion ( $\rho \ge 0.5104$ ;  $P \le$ 0.0002) and between completeness and the NR proportion ( $\rho = 0.6924$ ;  $P < 0.0001$ ). These results are unsurprising as larger Viridiplantae genomes have typically undergone rounds of polyploidisation which, as discussed previously, promotes remodelling events. It can reasonably be expected that greater genome completeness would positively correlate with the NR proportion due to a higher rate of paralog inclusion when CompositeSearch is constructing families. As a family was required to have a minimum of two members, inadvertent paralog exclusion due to genome incompleteness would result in a non-remodelled gene being classified as excluded. Significant negative correlations were observed between genome density and each remodelled category ( $\rho \le 0.4383$ ;  $P \le 0.0015$ ), between GC% and the SN proportions ( $\rho = -0.391$ ;  $P = 0.005$ ), and between each of genome size, and completeness and excluded proportions ( $\rho \leq -0.3929$ ;  $P \leq 0.0048$ ). Again these results are all unsurprising. As a retained remodelling event requires both component families and composite family to be observed within the same genome, genomes replete with polyploidisation events would reasonably be expected to have larger and less dense genomes and greater instances of duplicate genes and a greater frequency of remodelling events overall. In this dataset, much higher GC% were observed in Chlorophyta, which had more dense genomes and lesser remodelled proportions compared to Embryophyta (Table 3.3.1.). Due to these factors, a negative correlation was to be expected between GC% and strict components. Finally, negative correlations were expected between genome size and excluded proportions, and between completeness and excluded proportions. Larger genomes in this dataset were more likely to possess higher frequencies of paralogs (and ohnologs) due to frequent gene and genome duplication (Adams and Wendel, 2005), and as CompositeSearch required a minimum of two members for each gene family, these results were to be expected; the negative correlation between completeness and excluded proportions were also expected for the same reason.

### **3.4. Discussion**

### 3.4.1. Gene remodelling is rampant in Viridiplantae

Overall, approximately 60.95% of genes (1,019,409 of 1,672,377 genes) were observed to display a history of remodelling when sampled from the globally remodelled dataset (Tables 3.3.3; 3.3.18). In total, NC, SC, and SN each accounted for an approximately 46.33% (774,886 genes), 0.029% (48,440 genes), and 11.72% (196,083 genes) respectively.

It must be noted that only 70.76% (1,183,398 genes) were sampled from the globally remodelled dataset meaning that approximately 85.69% were observed to have a history of remodelling (Table 3.3.3.). Of sampled genes, NC, SC, and SN accounted for 65.48%, 0.04%, and 16.57% respectively.

Clear distinctions were observed for gene remodelling extent between fungi and plants. With regards to genes (when examined from across the dataset and from just the data sampled by CompositeSearch), plants were observed to have greater proportions of NC and SC than fungi ( $P \le 3.02e^{-45}$ ; Table 3.3.4.). Comparatively, fungi always presented greater proportions of SN and NR  $(P = 0)$  than plants. Plants were observed to have greater proportions of all remodelled category (NC, SC, and SN) families ( $P \leq 8.44e^{-13}$ ) and fungi were observed to have a greater proportion of NR families ( $P = 0$ ). This is likely due to the fact that the plant dataset contained considerably more genes than the fungal dataset and that plants were observed to form significantly larger gene families ( $P \le 2.37e^{-208}$ ; Table 3.3.7). These results suggest that while both clades are highly plastic, plant genomes are considerably more dynamic and subject to remodelling than their fungal counterparts.

### 3.4.2 Remodelling mediated evolution is clocklike in Viridiplantae

We could not detect any internal branches with significant ( $P \le 0.0005$  (all data);  $P \le$ 0.001 (internal branch subset exclusive)) bursts of birth or decay using a Q-function after the application of a Bonferroni correction. One speciation events were observed to contain bursts (Table 3.3.13). Significant bursts of nested composite and non-remodelled gene birth ( $P \leq$ 0.0005) was observed during the speciation of *Triticum aestivum*. These sparse results are consistent to what was observed in fungi, suggesting that evolution *via* gene remodelling is relatively clocklike.

With the exception of SC ( $P \le 9.54e^{-04}$ ), significant differences ( $P \le \alpha_B \le 0.0125$ ) were not observed between evolutionary rates (births or decays) when sampled from across plant and fungal phylogenies, and a significant difference was only observed in SC  $f_d$  ( $P = 1.89e^{-03}$ ) when sampled from exclusively internal nodes (Table 3.3.13.). Significant differences were observed, however, when leaf node exclusive rates were compared. Significant differences were observed in SC and SN  $f_b$  and in SN and NR  $f_d$ . These comparisons strengthen the argument that evolution *via* remodelling occurs at a relatively clocklike rate between both clades.

### 3.4.3 Remodelled genes are highly homoplastic in Viridiplantae

A total of 20,399 NC families, 2,535 SC families, 36,695 SN families, and 24,483 NR families were constructed by CompositeSearch. Any family observed to have appeared more

than once (annotated to have originated at separate branches) was considered to be homoplastic (Table 3.3.8.). A total of 10,444 nested composites (H.P. =  $0.497$ ), 1,545 strict composite families (H.P. = 0.609), 15,423 strict component families (H.P. = 0.458), and 8,559 nonremodelled families (H.P. = 0.35) were observed to be homoplastic. A combined total of 84,112 families were plotted, of which, a combined total of 35,971 families were homoplastic (H.P. = 0.428). A Fisher's exact test confirmed that remodelled categories were significantly different to each other ( $P \leq 4.78e^{-14}$ ). These results highlight the dynamic homoplasticity of remodelled gene families compared to non-remodelled families, and between each other, and compared to the dataset background. The observation of homoplasticity in remodelled genes is not so surprising as it is possible that remodelled genes may have arose through epaktology or independent gene fusion events (Nagy and Patthy, 2011; Leonard and Richards, 2012; Avelar *et al.*, 2014; Haggerty *et al.*, 2014). Homoplasticity could also be attributed to a quirk of clustering by CompositeSearch, where large gene families may fall just outside cluster assignment criteria in some groups resulting in a false positive identification due to patchy annotation by the "-apo" function in TNT .

Viridiplantae gene families were also observed to be more homoplastic than fungi in every instance ( $P \le 9.24e^{-0.5}$ ) except for NC ( $P = 0.044$ ) when sampled from across the phylogeny and SC ( $P = 0.824$ ) when sampled from the subset of internal nodes.

### 3.4.4. The role of gene remodelling in the evolution of multicellularity in plants

We observed an enrichment of transcription factor regulatory activity (GO:0140110; GO:0003700;  $P_B \le 4.86e^{-03}$ ) within both SC and SN (Table 3.3.15.). In our dataset the evolution of multicellularity occurred at two separate occasions, (*i*) the speciation of the alga *Volvox carteri* and (*ii*) during the divergence of embryophytes from chlorophytes. We identified a
single family associated with with transcription factor regulation and multicellular development reported to have been gained at the branch representing embryophyte divergence (F54088), where the ortholog in *Arabidopsis thaliana* was reported to be At2g41980 (SINAT1) an E3 ubiquitin-protein ligase (E.C:2.3.2.27) (Qi *et al.*, 2017).

Regulatory protein ubiquitination is required for a wide variety of plant development and environmental response pathways (Wilkinson, 1999; Furlan *et al*., 2012; Duplan and Rivas, 2014; Miricescu *et al*., 2018). Protein polyubiquitination is dependent on the activity of three enzymes for the activation (E1), conjugation (E2), and ligation (E3) of ubiquitin (Serrano *et al*., 2018). Polyubiquitinated proteins are degraded to constituent amino acids *via* the 26S proteasome for the synthesis of new peptides. E1 and E2 initiate and promote polyubiquitin chain progression, whereas E3 is responsible for target protein selectivity (Sadowski and Sarcevic, 2010). Several E3 families have previously been identified such as U-box proteins (Hatakeyama *et al.*, 2001), Skp-Cullin-F box proteins (Cheng *et al.*, 2011), and anaphasepromoting complexes (Castro *et al.*, 2005) throughout life and all share a RING finger motif or an E6-associated protein carboxyl terminus (HECT) domain which catalyses ubiquitin ligation to lysine residues (Huibregtse *et al.*, 1995; Metzger *et al*., 2012).

Seven in absentia (SINA) proteins, such as SINAT1, are E3 ligases that possess a RING finger motif at their N-termini, neighboured by a conserved SINA domain which functions to bind and dimerise their specific substrate (Hu and Fearon, 1999; Miao *et al.*, 2016). SINA proteins have been observed and well characterised in metazoan (Pepper *et al*., 2017) and plant lineages (M. Wang *et al.*, 2008). In *A. thaliana*, SINAT1 acts with SINAT2 and SINAT6 to regulate AG6 mediated autophagy (Qi *et al.*, 2017). A large variety of hormone mediated plant developmental pathways, including those under the control of cytokinin, auxin, gibberellic acid, jasmontic acid, and DELLA, are at least partially dependant on proteasome degradation, resulting in hormonal defects in E3 knockout studies (Foltz *et al.*, 2006; Ning *et al.*, 2011; Qi *et al.*, 2017). In light of observations by previous studies, it is not surprising to observe proteasomal mediated regulators during the divergence of embryophytes, mirrored by previous reports of increases in hormonal complexity and transcription factor copy number and class types during this transition to reflect more complex body plans (Bennici, 2008; de Vries *et al.*, 2016; de Vries and Archibald, 2018; Morris *et al.*, 2018).

Of the 26 component families associated with the composition of F54088, two were observed to have occurred either during the emergence or prior to the emergence of Viridiplantae, F401 and F106717. F106717 had a single member in *A. thaliana*, At3g23580 (*RNR2A*), a ribonucleoside-diphosphate reductase (E.C: 1.17.4.1). Ribonucleoside diphosphate reductases catalyses the 2' reduction of ribonucleotides to deoxyribonucleotides, the precursors required for DNA synthesis (Cory, 1983; Guarino *et al.*, 2014). There are two known *RNR2A* paralogs in *A. thaliana* (*RNR2B* and *TSO2*), however they did not meet the clustering requirements to be assigned to the same family by CompositeSearch. Previous studies have demonstrated functional redundancy between *RNR2A, RNR2B*, and *TSO2* with no phenotypic differences observed in either *RNR2A* or *RNR2B* single mutants or *RNR2A*/*RNR2B* double mutants compared to wild type *A. thaliana.* In comparison, *TSO2* mutants displayed reduced deoxyribonucleotide triphosphate (dNTP) accumulation and developmental defects, such as fasciated shoot meristems and callus floral organs (Wang and Liu, 2006). Both TSO2 single mutants and *TSO2*/*RNR2A* double mutants displayed increased DNA damage accumulation, massive apoptosis rates, and decay of transcriptional silencing. *TSO2*/*RNR2A*/*RNR2B* triple mutants were observed to be seedling lethal. Wang and Liu (2006) hypothesised that the functional redundancy between *RNR2A* and *RNR2B* to be a safeguard against mutagenic lethality should one paralog undergo mutation, and illustrates the essentiality of proper RNR function in plant development, and that the observations in *TSO2*/*RNR2A* double mutants illustrated a correlation between increased DNA damage and apoptosis. The finding of a

developmental regulator undergoing a remodelling event to form a new developmental regulator during a major phenotypic transition is interesting, yet unsurprising as previous remodelling studies (specifically gene fusion studies) allude to the likelihood of a fused gene retaining at least one of its components functions.

The other component family predating the divergence of Viridiplantae, F401, is a large family, with 75 members reported in *A. thaliana*. Each member of F401 was found to possess leucine rich repeats (PF00560). The majority of F401 members were observed to be 'receptor like proteins' (eg. AT1G58190, AT2G32660, AT5G27060, and AT1G47890) which are often involved in immune responses and developmental processes (Godiard *et al.*, 2003; Kruijt *et al*., 2005; Wang *et al.*, 2008). Indeed, some F401 member genes (AT5G06860 (*PGIP1*), AT5G06870 (*PGIP2*), and AT3G05360 (*RLP30*)) have been characterised to inhibit phytopathogenic fungal infection (Ferrari *et al.*, 2003, 2006; Zhang *et al.*, 2013). Conversely, four proteins (AT1G65380 (*CLV2*), AT1G17240 (*RLP2*), AT1G71400 (*RLP12*), and AT3G12145 (*FLR1*)) are known to be involved in organ developmental processes in addition to immunity (Wang *et al.*, 2008; Torti *et al.*, 2012). Three of these proteins (*CLV2*, *RLP12,* and *RPL2*)) are *CLAVATA2* and *CLAVATA2*-like RLPs which act as receptors for *CLV3* and *CLV3* like proteins (Rojo *et al.*, 2002; Wang *et al.*, 2008; Fletcher, 2018). *CLV3* and *CLV3*-like proteins are extracellular hormone precursor signalling molecules that regulate meristem maintenance (Doerner, 2006). *CLV2* and *CLV2*-like RLPs control the sizes of totipotent cell populations in meristematic tissues (Kayes and Clark, 1998; Pan *et al.*, 2016). F401 describes a large cluster of signal receptors involved in diverse pathways. Again, it is interesting yet unsurprising to see developmental regulators being remodelled during emergence of phenotypic complexity. *CLV* genes and *FLR* both interact with another repurposed developmental regulator class, the MADS box genes, to fully orchestrate organogenesis in angiosperms (Kanno *et al.*, 2007).

#### **3.5. Conclusion**

In conclusion, Viridiplantae are known to evolve *via* cyclical polyploidization events, where the size of their genetic arsenal doubles, resulting in considerable redundancy, followed by chromosomal rearrangements and decay of redundant, non-selected genes. This model of evolution not only allow for gene remodelling but promote it, as such, it is not surprising to observe such rampant levels of gene remodelling in this clade. Gene remodelling is also clocklike in this clade, with no significant bursts of evolution (composites or otherwise) observed along any internal branch. Considering the rampancy of remodelling, it could be due to the fact that, when successful, composite families comprise a significant proportion of all retained synapomorphic families. The co-option and subfunctionalization of transcription factors could be due to repeated rounds of homoplastic remodelling, thus promoting rapid evolution in the Viridiplantae lineage.

In summation, the models of evolution, propensity for hybridization, and chromosomal architectures provide a nurturing environment for remodelling to occur, so perhaps it is not so surprising to observe such high remodelling rates.

**Chapter IV**

# **Development of a**

# **Robust Composite Gene Detection Tool**

#### **4.1. Introduction**

Gene remodelling is an important and rampant evolutionary process (Pathmanathan *et al.,* 2018). As previously discussed in Chapters I-III, remodelled genes arise from a plethora of different mechanisms including the rapid accumulation of point mutations localised within in a structural or functional domain, shuffling of exons or domains within a gene, or through the fusion and fission of genes and domains (Snel *et al.*, 2000; Braun and Grotewold, 2001; Vogel *et al.,* 2005; Vibranovski *et al.*, 2006; Nagy and Patthy, 2011; Leonard and Richards, 2012). Gene duplication is likely the driving force behind beneficial remodelling events through subfunctionalization and neofunctionalization of non-selected genes, allowing them to accrue mutations or to acquire or lose domains (Causier *et al.*, 2005; He and Zhang, 2005; Des Marais and Rausher, 2008; Freeling, 2009). Due to these events, combined with convergent sequence evolution and epaktologous gene birth (emergence of a gene with the same architecture as another gene but lacking an orthologous or paralogous evolutionary history), it is common to observe partial homology between genes (Haggerty *et al.*, 2014).

Hybridised coding gene composites (and their components), specifically fusion and fission genes, are of considerable interest as they allow for the study and interpretation of evolutionary protein-protein interactions (Enright *et al.*, 1999; Enright and Ouzounis, 2001) or for the rapid development of functional and phenotypic novelty (Avelar *et al.*, 2014; Chen *et al.*, 2014). A successful fusion event (a fusion event that becomes positively selected) is likely to become fixed in a population and have been used to polarise evolutionary relationships (Nakamura *et al.,* 2007; Durrens *et al.*, 2008).

Previous authors have identified subsets of composite genes in *Drosophila* spp, fungi, plants, and bacteria (Wang *et al.*, 2000; Jones, 2005; Pasek *et al.*, 2006; Nakamura *et al.*, 2007; Leonard and Richards, 2012), and the role of composites in metabolic pathway evolution (Richards *et al.*, 2006; Hagel and Facchini, 2017). Despite these works, it was not possible to perform exhaustive composite gene detection analyses until the publication of CompositeSearch (Pathmanathan *et al.,* 2018).

As discussed in Chapter I, CompositeSearch is a highly sensitive tool, able to detect even slightly shared homologous between a composite and component genes, and is therefore a useful tool for reconstructing the mosaic evolutionary history of a gene family. CompositeSearch, however, is quite unintuitive, and requires considerable postprocessing by the user to analyse any detected composite family in detail. CompositeSearch also makes use of multiple HSPs to detect composites (Pathmanathan *et al.,* 2018). This allows for the detection of composites with a likely shared ancestor between both components (Figure 4.1.1). While these events are still remodelled they are not fusion or fission events. Comparatively, *fdf*BLAST (Leonard and Richards, 2012) is highly selective, requiring not just a high degree of polarised homology between a composite and a component, but shared conserved regions are also required. However, *fdf*BLAST it can be argued that such analyses are too conservative, requiring that a component is differential, where a fused gene is detected in one genome, and two components (but not the fusion) in another genome. In addition to these strict parameters, *fdf*BLAST does not cluster fusion genes into families (fusion events), is dependent on "BLASTall", an outdated version of BLAST and does not use tabular BLAST output, resulting in excessive storage requirements for multi-genomic analyses. We also found *fdf*BLAST to be slow and cumbersome to use.

A need exists for a program which can sensitively and selectively detect fused genes that is also intuitive, has implemented quality control measures, requiring the optional conservation of domain architectures. To fill this need, we have developed compositeBLAST, a Python *v*.3.6 program high confidence composite gene detection and visualisation package.



**Figure 4.1.1. Multiple HSP processing by CompositeSearch**

Representation of how CompositeSearch would report homologies between a composite and components with multiple HSPs. CompositeSearch selects the most significant HSP as the representative alignment and the lesser HSP is ignored. While this is indeed a case of gene remodelling, it is highly unlikely to be a fusion or a fission event. It is possible that this scenario illustrates a subfunctionalization event, however it would not meet the criteria to be classed as a fission in this state.

The following chapter describes its implementation and use on a number of preliminary test datasets.

#### **4.2. Methodology**

#### 4.2.1. Gene fusion software development

To our knowledge, no high throughput software exists to parse large genomic datasets for the specific identification of definitive gene fused gene events using BLAST+ (Camacho *et al.*, 2009) and which allows inference from conserved domain architecture. To counter this conundrum we developed "compositeBLAST", a Python *v*3.6 script used to detect distinct fused genes based on sequence similarity, geographic coordinates between alignments, and PFAM domain architectures. The steps of compositeBLAST are described in the next sections.

#### *4.2.1.1. Homolog detection*

Homologs were detected using tabular (-outfmt 6) BLASTP (Camacho *et al.,* 2009) with an *e*-value stringency cut-off of *E*≤1*e*-05. Tabular BLAST data was structured in the order required by CompositeSearch (qseqid, sseqid, evalue, pident, bitscore, qstart, qend, qlen, sstart, send, slen). While compositeBLAST can process a reciprocal BLAST file, we were interested in detecting composites where both components could be detected in at least one other species. For analyses such as this, two BLASTP analyses were required, one search between query genome A and subject genome B, and another between query genome B and subject genome A. We did not use SEG filters or limit the amount of target sequences. BLASTP output were loaded into compositeBLAST for further processing.

#### *4.2.1.2. Processing of high scoring pairs*

The BLASTP output file is loaded into compositeBLAST. Multiple high scoring pairs (HSPs) arise in cases where a query sequence aligns to more than one segment of a subject sequence. This may arise due to the presence of conserved sequence segments within both sequences. As these sequences could provide a basis for the erroneous report of a fused gene. This can be exemplified in cases where one HSP aligns to the N-terminus of a suspected fusion and another sequence to the C-terminus (Figure 4.1.1.). This would be problematic if no other distinct sequences aligned to the N-terminus thus allowing for a false positive report. To control these type I errors, we removed all alignments where multiple HSPs were detected. This was achieved by counting the amount of times a gene returned a hit for each other gene. Cases where the number of hits between a pair of genes exceeded one were removed. The specifics of this code snippet are explained in Figure 4.2.1.

#### *4.2.1.3. Processing of single HSPs*

To further control type I errors in composite reporting we required that a hit between genes was reciprocally reported, sharing a reciprocal HSP. For example, a case where sequence A (*seqA*) returned a hit for *seqB* and *seqB* returned a hit for *seqA* were considered to share an appropriate level of homology for further processing. Conversely, a case where a hit was returned between *seqA* and *seqC* but not between *seqC* and *seqA* was not further processed. The specifics of this code segment are explained in Figure 4.2.2.

```
1.1\,1Remove multiple HSPs
1.1.1def remove multiple hsps(filepath):
    X = filepath
    single_hsps\_ids = []single hsps = []hsp count = defaultdict(int)
    for line in filepath:
        term = line.strip().split('\t')
        seq1, seq2, evalue, pident, bitscore, qstart, qend,
        \qlen, sstart, send, slen, length = term[0], term[1],
        \term[2], term[3], term[4], term[5], term[6], term[7],
        \term[8], term[9], term[10], term[11]
        hsp_{count}[\text{seq1}, \text{seq2}] += 1filepath = filepath.seek(\theta)
    already checked = set()for (seq1, seq2), val in hsp count.items():
        if val == 1:
            already_checked.add((seq1, seq2))
    already_{checked} = set(already_{checked})for line in X:
        term = line.strip().split('\t')
        if \text{term[0]}, \text{term[1]} in already checked:
             single_{\text{sp}}, append(term[0:])
    return single_hsps
Initial_hits = remove_multiple_hsps(input_blast_file)
Reciprocal_hits = remove_multiple_hsps(reciprocal_blast_file)
Single_hsps = Initial\_hits + Reciprocal\_hits
```
**Figure 4.2.1.** composite BLAST multiple HSP removal algorithm

The first step involves opening lists and dictionaries for data storage. BLAST data is then processed through and HSPs between two genes are counted. If a gene pair has just one detected HSP, their associated alignment is extracted from the BLAST file for futher processing. Multiple HSPs are removed from both BLAST files. Full code provided at www.github.io/robleigh/compositeBLAST

```
\sim 100Identify reciprocal hits
\mathbf{1} , \mathbf{1} , \mathbf{1}dict = \{\}for item in Single_hsps:
    sequences = tuple(item[0:2])if sequences[::-1] in dict:
         dict[sequences[::-1]].append((item))else:
         dict[sequences] = [item]for item in Single_hsps:
    rec sequences = tuple(item[0:2])
    if rec\_sequences[0] == rec\_sequences[1]:
         x = rec sequences [0], rec_sequences [1]
         dict[x].append((item))pairs = {k: v for k, v in dict.items() if len(v) > 1}
```
**Figure 4.2.2.** compositeBLAST reciprocal HSP retention algorithm

The "sequences = tuple(item[0:2])" function extracts the qseqid and sseqids from Single hsps (as a single item ("A,B")). The first step of this snippet is responsible for extracting all "A-B" HSPs from identified single HSPs ("Single hsps"). The second step retrieves "B-A" HSPs. The final step iterates through both lists and returns hits where "A-B" and "B-A" are observed. Full code provided at www.github.io/robleigh/compositeBLAST

#### *4.2.1.4. Processing of potential components*

Potential composites were identified using a "non-transitive triplet" method (Jachiet *et al*., 2012) where one component gene aligns to one region on the composite, and another gene aligns to a separate region. We aimed to detect composites only where both the N- and Ctermini were detected amongst potential components. Cases where only the N- or the Cterminus could be detected amongst components may indicate that a fusion or fission event may have occurred, however it is also likely that an erroneous truncation event may also have occurred *via* a stop codon insertion or an error in sequencing or assembly (Des Marais and Rausher, 2008; Pathmanathan *et al.*, 2018). A legitimate model where only an N- or C- terminal component exists in addition to the 'fused' gene could arise through a subfunctionalization event. In such an event (as discussed in Chapter I), a multifunctional gene is duplicated to increase the rate of one function in a particular pathway (Rastogi and Liberles, 2005; Semon and Wolfe, 2008). Regions of the duplicate not involved in its specialised function would no longer be under selective pressure and may be truncated or experience a high level of mutation, thus appearing as a component. The detection of such cases was not our focus as they may produce considerable type I errors due to high levels of sequence similarity.

Erroneous composite reporting may arise due to the query and subject both possessing short homologous regions such as those required in some protein structural motifs. To control for these errors, the aligned region of a potential component  $(A<sub>(c)</sub>) = (qstart - qend) + 1$ ) was required to be greater than or equal to 30% of its sequence length. We used a 30% cut off as this is what was required for CompositeSearch. Potential components that did not meet this requirement were discarded from further processing.

#### *4.2.1.5. Detection of potential composites by sequence similarity*

To detect potential fusions, we treated each alignment as overlapping line segments in a cartesian coordinate system where query sequences were treated as potential fusions and the subject as a potential component. As we aimed to detect composites with distinct component alignments along both their N- and C- termini we bisected a potential composite and each section was considered the N-terminal section or the C-terminal section. To bisect the gene we defined each section based on the length of a potential composite gene, the first 50% of the sequence was the N-terminal section and the final 50% was the C-terminal section. We allowed for some section overlap by extending each section by 10% of the fusion length into the opposing section (Figure 4.3.3.) Therefore, a component was assigned to the N-terminal if its alignment terminated within the first 60% of the composite length ("N-terminal region"), and a component was assigned to a C-terminal if it initiated within the final 60% of the fusion length ("C-terminal region"). The central region was the overlap between the N- and Cterminal regions. As BLAST alignments can slightly overextend, an additional 20 amino acids was added to the N- and C-terminal limits to mirror the methodologies of other remodelling algorithms (Jachiet *et al.,* 2012; Pathmanathan *et al*., 2018). To avoid ambiguous terminal assignment, an N-terminal component was also required to initiate outside of the central region and C-terminal component was required to terminate outside the central region. A potential component with an alignment that either (*a*) crossed the entire central region or (*b*) initiated and terminated within the central region were discarded. Once all N-terminal and C-terminal components have been established, all combinations per potential fusion are generated. The snippet of code pertaining to this section is explained in Figure 4.3.4.



**Figure 4.2.3.** compositeBLAST gene region assignments

The dotted black line bisects the fusion gene through its midpoint. The blue and red arrows indicate the extent of the N-terminal and C-terminal regions, where red and blue arrows highlight the range of each region past the midpoint. The grey arrow indicates the central region. Thick black lines indicate unaligned regions on the component whereas boxes on genes indicate aligned regions. N-terminal alignments are annotated in blue and C-terminal alignments are aligned in red. The grey "homolog" genes are not identified as components because they either span the length of the central region or initiate and terminate within the central region.

```
Arrange data into a uniform order
arrangement = []<br>for key, values in pairs.items():<br>pairs = values[0] + values[1]<br>if int(pairs[7]) > int(pairs[1], pairs[1], pairs[14], pairs[3], pairs[15], pairs[16], pairs[5], pairs[6], pairs[7],<br>x = pairs[8], pairs[1], p
Quality control and assignment of potential components
C_terminus = []<br>N_terminus = []
for item in arrangement:<br>midpoint = float(item[10])/2<br>range = float(item[10])/location_range
       range - roadviceminal property/codesity<br>Upper_N_terminus = (midpoint + range) + 20<br>Lower_C_terminus = (midpoint - range) - 20<br>Comp_align_cov = (int(item[12])-int(item[11])+1)/int(item[13])*100
      Comp_align_cov = (int(item[12])-int(item[11])+1)/int(item[13])*100<br>Ruc_comp_align_cov = (int(item[15])-int(item[14])+1)/int(item[15])*100<br>Min_cov = min(Comp_align_cov, Rev_comp_align_cov)<br>Min_cov = min(Comp_align_cov, Rev_
Combination of potential components
combinations = [(N + C) for C in C_terminus for N in N_terminus if C[0]==N[0] and C[1]!=N[1]]
```
**Figure 4.2.4.** compositeBLAST fusion detection algorithm

The first step arranges data into an appropriate format, grouping the statistics from both BLAST alignments into one line based on the longest gene in the pair. The second section divides the longest (query) sequence into N-terminal, C-terminal, and central regions and ensures that the alignment covers  $\geq 30\%$  of the putative component (subject) sequence. If an alignment initiates and terminates within the C-terminus, it is assigned to the C-terminus. Conversely, if an alignment initiates and terminates within the N-terminus, it is assigned to the N-terminus. If an alignment initiates and terminates within the central region or spans the central region it is excluded. The third step iterates through each potential composite gene and if it possesses a C-terminal component and an N-terminal component, it is considered to be a "putative composite". The combination of all putative *bona fide* C- and N- termini are computed for each putative composite. Full code provided at www.github.io/robleigh/compositeBLAST

#### *4.2.1.6. Confirmation of potential composites by conserved protein architectures*

InterProScan *v*5 (Jones *et al.*, 2014) was used to detect conserved protein architectures (PFAMs) for every composite and potential component. The combination of all possible Nand C-terminal components were arranged for each composite (triplet). The set of PFAM domains was compared for each gene in each triplet. A potential fusion was considered to be *bona fide* if (*a*) it shared at least one PFAM domain with each of its N-terminal component and C-terminal component and (*b*) the N-terminal components and C-terminal components did not share any PFAM domains. This ensured that a *bona fide* fusion inherited a conserved domain (and associated structural motif and function) from two separate lineages (Figure 4.2.5.).

#### *4.2.1.7. Clustering composites into events*

The sequences of all identified composites were searched against each other using BLASTP  $(E \leq 1e^{-0.5})$ . Genes were determined to be in the same family if they possess a mutual alignment overlap  $\geq 80\%$  and a pident  $\geq 30\%$ . Families were clustered and converted to an edge list using the "Graph.add\_edge()" function of NetworkX (nx) python package (Aric *et al.,*  2007). The NetworkX edge list was further converted to a matrix using the "nx.to scipy sparse matrix()" function. Finally, matrices were clustered using the MarkovClustering (mc) python package using the "mc.run mcl()" and "mc.get clusters()" function (Allard *et al.,* 2017). Each cluster was considered to be a remodelling event.



**Fig 4.2.5.** Comparison of alignments used to determine remodelling by compositeBLAST

Yellow and orange boxes highlight conserved (PFAM) domains on each sequence. In this scenario the only combination of components that is possible the top N-terminal gene and the bottom C-terminal gene. The N- and C-terminal components in the middle are excluded because they share a PFAM domain which is not permitted by compositeBLAST in an effort to maximise divergence between component genes.

#### 4.2.2. Visualisation of composite gene alignments

We designed compositeViewer, a Python *v*3.6 program to view alignments between composites and components when detected by compositeBLAST. The length of the composite gene is drawn as a black line  $(0,x)$  and all other coordinates are drawn using  $(0,x)$  as a reference point. Alignments are drawn in colourful blocks on the composite gene, and directly below, the alignment is mapped for the component sequence. Once the alignments have been drawn for all sequences, the rest of the component genes are extended (as a black line) from the alignment using their own coordinates with reference to the alignment to initiate and terminate the extension (Figure 4.2.6.)

#### 4.2.3. Benchmarking compositeBLAST on a fungal dataset

We benchmarked the functionality of composite BLAST using a 9 fungal genome dataset as used by Leonard and Richards (2012). We used a BLASTP search (*E*≤1*e*-10 ) to cross reference detected composite genes with the fusions identified by Leonard and Richards in 2012 (Table 4.2.1.). Leonard and Richards were not able to obtain any informational fused genes from two Microsporidia. We replicated this using the same species (*Encephalitozoon cuniculi* and *Antonospora locustae*), however as we were unable to get the accessions for the assemblies Leonard and Richards used, we substituted *Encephalitozoon cuniculi* GB-M1 *v*1.0 and *Antonospora locustae* HM-2013 *v*1.0 obtained from the Joint Genome Institute (https://genome.jgi.doe.gov). Again, we performed a pairwise search (BLASTP; *E*≤1*e*-10) and performed a compositeBLAST search on the dataset using default settings. We used *E*≤1*e*-10 to replicate the parameters used by *fdf*BLAST so results could be accurately compared. We also compared the speed of compositeBLAST and *fdf*BLAST. We used BLASTP (for



**Figure 4.2.6. compositeViewer depiction of fusion gene** *arnA*

Example of an alignment using the known fusion gene *arnA* (Williams *et al.*, 2005) illustrated using compositeViewer. The position of the alignments are perpendicular and the extensions of the rest of the component are extended based on the coordinates of their own alignments to the composite gene.

### **Table 4.2.1. Genomes initially used by Leonard and Richards (2012).**

We also replicated their original study by including two Microsporidia species, *Encephalitozoon cuniculi* and *Antonospora locustae* (in bold)



compositeBLAST) and BLASTall (for *fdf*BLAST) to detect homologies between a two yeast dataset (*Saccharomyces cerevisiae* and *Schizosaccharomyces pombe*).

#### 4.2.4. Determination of the evolutionary rate of composite gene formation

In order to decipher the rate of composite generation in fungal and plant lineages, it was important to establish how many remodelling events were ancestral. For fungi, we searched all reported composite genes against a dataset of three genomes ancestral to our dataset. This dataset consisted of two Cryptomycota *Paramicrosporidium saccamoebae* str. KSL3 (GCA\_002794465) and *Rozella allomycis* CSF55 (GCA\_000442015), and a Holomycota, *Fonticula alba* (GCA\_000388065), all of which were downloaded from Ensembl (www.ensembl.org).

We determined a remodelling event to be ancestral if any gene from a cluster returned a hit with pident  $\geq$  30% and mutual overlap of 80% using BLASTP ( $E \leq 1e^{-0.5}$ ). Ancestral events cannot be used to determine a rate as it is not known when they first emerged so these clusters were excluded further rate calculations.

Dikarya were reported to have emerged between 392.1-1823 Ma (Betts *et al.,* 2018). We calculated an approximate evolutionary rate  $(\tau)$  for fungi used in this thesis to be 636.21 Ma when  $\kappa = 1$  (*subsection 2.2.3.3.2.2.*). The LP from the root of the fungal phylogeny was determined to be 0.88999 (*Pichia membranifaciens*). The divergence time for fungi was approximated to be 566.22 Ma by multiplying  $\tau$  by LP. The composite birth rate (*f<sub>b</sub>*) was calculated by dividing the sum of non-ancestral remodelling events by 566.22 (as per *subsection 2.2.3.4.*)

4.2.5. Detection of composite antimicrobial resistance genes using compositeBLAST

The complete set of antimicrobial resistance (AMR) genes were downloaded from the Comprehensive Antibiotic Resistance Database (CARD) (Jia *et al.*, 2017) searched against a dataset of 193 reference prokaryote genomes (115 bacteria and 78 archaea) downloaded from UniProtKB (Bateman *et al.*, 2017). A wide breadth of genomes were selected to increase phylogenomic diversity within the dataset (Table 4.2.2.) Model organisms were chosen for each phylum if available. All analyses were conducted using an *e*-value stringency cut off of  $(E \leq 1e^{-0.5})$  and processed through compositeBLAST using default settings  $(E \leq 1e^{-0.5})$ ; coverage = 30%). We implemented a second quality control step for these analyses so component genes could not display significant homology at  $E \leq 1e^{-0.5}$  using BLASTP. We implemented this step to encourage the most robust composite events.

#### 4.2.6. Assessment of antimicrobial resistance composite distribution

The presence and enumeration of each full length *bona fide* composite homolog in a given genome was determined using the same criteria as the clustering step of compositeBLAST and in the family detection algorithm of CompositeSearch (Pathmanathan *et al.*, 2018). A BLASTP (*E*≤1*e*<sup>-05</sup>) search was performed between a fusion query and each gene in each genome. If a query returned a hit with (a)  $\geq$  80% mutual sequence length overlap and (b) a percentage identity (pident) score  $\geq 30\%$  it was considered to be present in the genome. For each composite, a dataset was constructed for all identified N-terminal components, and another for all C-terminal components. The presence and numeration for each component type (N- or C-) was also determined using this method. The presence and absence of each fusion and its components in a given genome was compared to each other genome in

## **Table 4.2.2. Prokaryote genomes used for the detection of composite antimicrobial resistance genes.**

All genomes were downloaded from UniProtKB with all associated genomic and assembly statistics provided.

















the dataset to determine if a phyletic distribution bias could be observed. Detected fusions were discarded if a phylogenetic pattern could not be observed within N- or C-terminal full length homologs.

#### **4.3. Results**

#### 4.3.1. Benchmarking compositeBLAST

The 9 fungal genome dataset used during the debut analysis of *fdf*BLAST (Leonard and Richards, 2012) was used to detect the efficacy of compositeBLAST. We first established if we could determine we could detect the 63 fusions detected by *fdf*BLAST. Our first observation was that only 59 fusions were present in the output files provided by Leonard and Richards. Of these 59 fusion genes, we were not able to detect 12 (Table 4.3.1.). Of these 12 genes, 10 were recoverable by either removing the criteria where components could not span the terminal region or by reducing the minimum amount of coverage required for a component gene. The remaining two components were not recoverable as they had only an N-terminal component in both Leonard and Richards results and in our initial BLAST results. As compositeBLAST requires at least two distinct components, these genes were not recoverable by any means. Differential fusions are observed when a composite is observed in one genome and both components (but not the composite) are observed in a different genome.

#### 4.3.2. Extent of composite genes and fungi

In 9 fungi, a total of 573 composite genes within 300 families were detected using compositeBLAST, of which 219 were singleton genes. A total of 354 genes were dispersed

# **Table 4.3.1. Fusions identified by Leonard and Richards (2012) not observed during the benchmarking of compositeBLAST.**

Of the 12 non-identifiable fusions, 10 could be recovered by removing the requirement that a component does not span the central region of the fusion. The remaining two fusions (highlighted in red) did not have an appropriate C-terminal component in our analyses or in Leonard and Richards (2012) results. As compositeBLAST requires an N- and a C-terminal component these two fusions could not be recovered under any circumstance.



amongst 81 multigene families, where an average of  $12.6\pm 33.5$  genes per composite family was observed. These results are an order of magnitude greater than those reported by Leonard and Richards (2012). We observed compositeBLAST to be much faster than *fdf*BLAST, taking just 118 seconds to process the data in comparison to 8019 seconds.

#### 4.3.3. Rate of composite generation

Using the approximated fungal divergence time of 566.22 Ma, the rate of composite generation in fungi was calculated to be 0.14 events/Ma (excluding singleton families) to 0.53 events/Ma (including singleton families)

There has not been a comparison for fungal genomes, however this figure is far greater than plant composite gene evolutionary rate observed Nakamura *et al.* (2007) who estimated the rate to be  $1.0e^{-11}$ -2.0*e*<sup>-11</sup> events/year  $(1.0e^{-0.5} - 2.0e^{-0.5})$  events/Ma).

#### 4.3.4. Detection of composite AMR genes

We detected 13 fused AMR genes using compositeBLAST. Of the 13 detected genes, 9 had been previously reported by other authors (Table 4.3.2.). We detected 4 fusion genes (*mupA*, *mupB*, *rphA*, and *rphB*) from the 2019 CARD gene dataset that, to our knowledge, have not been reported before. The four genes can be broken into two sets of duplicate genes, where *mupA* and *mupB* (*mupAB*) confer resistance to mupirocin (Troeman *et al.*, 2019), *and rphA* and *rphB* (*rphAB*) confer resistance to rifamycin (Sensi, 1983; Baysarowich *et al.*, 2008). The specifics of these resistance mechanisms and fusion genes are explained in the next sections.

### **Table 4.3.2. 11 AMR composite genes detected by CompositeBLAST**

Each composite AMR is represented by its accession ID and gene ID. Genes previously reported as composites are cited. Four detected genes have not been previously reported (emboldened).



#### *4.3.4.1 Rifamycin resistance*

Two rifamycin resistance genes, *rphA* (ARO:3000444) and *rphB* (ARO:3003992) were reported to be composites by compositeBLAST. Both *rphA* and *rphB* belong to the rifamycin phosphotransferase (E.C: 2.7.9.6) class of AMR resistance cassettes (Boehme *et al.*, 2010).

Rifamycins are a class of ansamycin bacterial polyketides or artificially manufactured antibiotics used primarily to combat mycobacterial infections in clinical settings (Sensi, 1983). Rifamycins bind the  $\beta$  subunit of DNA-dependant RNA polymerase ( $rpoB$ ) and physically block RNA elongation (Feklistov *et al.*, 2008). As rifamycins act through steric occlusion, resistance may arise through point mutation in *rpoB* that reduce rifamycin binding affinity (Campbell *et al.*, 2001). A 531 Ser $\rightarrow$ Leu point mutation (S531L) in *rpoB* is the most common rifamycin resistance conferring point mutation in *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* (Lemus *et al.*, 2004). In *Norcardia farcinica*, an *rpoB* duplicate (*rpoB2*) has undergone sufficient cumulative mutation to confer resistance, where 88% sequence similarity is observed between both sequences (Ishikawa *et al.*, 2006). Ishikawa and company (2006) also observed differential *rpoB* and *rpoB2* expression is observed depending on rifamycin presence.

Resistance may also arise through rifamycin inactivation through position 21 phosphorylation, as has been observed in both *rphA* and *rphB* (Campbell *et al.*, 2001; Goldstein, 2014). Phosphorylation mediated rifamycin resistance is observed throughout a range of environments as a competitive response between bacterial communities in addition to clinical settings (Baysarowich *et al.*, 2008).

*rphA* and *rphB* are full length homologs (FLHs) of each other (*rphAB*), and display an overlapping set of *bona fide* N- and C-terminal components and phylogenetic distributions with the exception of an *rphB* FLH presenting in *Halogeometricum borinquense* (Euryarcheota) where an *rphA* FLO is not observed (Table 4.3.3.). *rphAB* FLOs observed in three
**Table 4.3.3.** Distribution of FLHs of each composite AMR gene.

For each genome, presence and absence of a composite (F), N-terminal component (N), and Cterminal component are highlighted in a coloured box. In each box a "1" represents presence and a "0" represents absence. The presence of a composite, N-terminal component and Cterminal components are indicated by purple, red and blue colouration, respectively.

















Euryarchaeota (*Halalkalicoccus jeotgali*, *Methanocella arvoryzae*, and *Methanosarcina acetivorans*), in *Bacillus subtilis* (Firmicutes), and in *Sebaldella termitidis* (Fusobacteria).

Both N-terminal and C-terminal component FLHs are observed in four distantly related species, *Aeropyrum pernix* (Crenarchaeota), *Ferroglobus placidus* (Euryarchaeota), *Sphaerobacter thermophilus* (Chloroflexi), and *Deinococcus radiodurans* (Deinococcus-Thermus). N-terminal component FLOs were also observed in the Heimdallarchaeota archaeon (Asgard clade), in *Korarchaeum cryptofilum* (Korarcheaota), in three Crenarchaeota (*Metallosphaera sedula*, *Saccharolobus solfataricus*, and *Sulfurisphaera tokodaii*), in two *Methanosarcina acetivorans* (Euryarchaeota) and in *Listeria monocytogenes* (Firmicutes). Cterminal FLOs were only observed in conjunction with N-terminal FLOs.

Representative C- and N-terminal *bona fide* components (D1C8T8\_SPHTD and D1C8T7\_SPHTD for *rphA* and *rphB* were selected from *Sphaerobacter thermophilus* (Figures 4.3.1.-2.). D1C8T8 SPHTD was reported to be a phosphoenolpyruvate (PEP) utilizing protein mobile region in UniProt and as ENOG4106850 (phosphoenolpyruvate synthase) in EggNOG v5. Comparatively, D1C8T7\_SPHTD was identified as a pyruvate phosphate dikinase PEP/pyruvate-binding protein in UniProt and as ENOG4107R95 (pyruvate kinase (by similarity) in EggNOG v5 (Huerta-Cepas *et al.*, 2018). D1C8T8 SPHTD shared a PEP utilizing mobile domain (PF00391) with the N-termini or *rphAB* and a pyruvate phosphate dikinase, PEP/pyruvate binding domain (PF01326) with the *rphAB* C-termini.

#### *4.3.4.2. Mupirocin resistance*

Two mupirocin resistance genes (ARO:3000510 (*mupA*) and ARO:3000521 (*mupB*)) were reported to be composites. Mupirocin is administered for topical Firmicute infections, especially MRSA infections (Troeman *et al.*, 2019). Mupirocin inhibits protein synthesis



**Figure 4.3.1. Representative composite-component alignments for** *rphA*

Both homologous domains are located towards the termini, with no observed homology within the centre. *rphA* shares a pyruvate phosphate dikinase domain (PF01326) with D1C8T8 along their N-termini. *rphA* and D1C8T7 share a PEP utilizing mobile domain (F00391) along their C-termini.



**Figure 4.3.2. Representative alignments for an** *rphB* **composite gene.**

*rphB* is almost idistinguishable from *rphA*. Both homologous domains are located towards the termini, with no observed homology within the centre. *rphB* shares a pyruvate phosphate dikinase domain (PF01326) with D1C8T8 along their N-termini. *rphB* and D1C8T7 share a PEP utilizing mobile domain (F00391) along their C-termini.

through reversible t-RNA synthetase binding (Martin and Simpson, 1989). Both low-level and high-level mupirocin resistance types have been reported. Low-level resistance is hypothesised to arise through cumulative point mutations in wild type *ileS*, whereas level resistance is conferred by two distinct loci, *mupA* and *mupB*, which are reported to display considerable sequence differences to wild type *ileS* (Gilbart *et al.*, 1993; Cookson, 1998)

Both *mupA* and *mupB* share *bona fide* C-terminal FLOs (SYM\_LISMO was selected as a representative), however no mutual *bona fide* N-terminal FLH was observed so SYL\_HELPY was selected as a representative for *mupB* and D3DI52\_HYDTT for *mupA*. An overlapping alignment was observed between both components in both cases (Figures 4.3.3.- 4.).

SYL\_HELPY (*leuS*) was identified as *Helicobacter pylori* leucine--tRNA ligase (E.C: 6.1.1.4) using UniProtKB (Bateman *et al.*, 2017). D3DI52\_HYDTT was also identified as leucine--tRNA ligase (*leuS*) from *Hydrogenobacter thermophilus.* Conversely, SYM\_LISMO (*metG*) was identified as *Listeria monocytogenes* methionine--tRNA ligase (E.C: 6.1.1.10). Both *mupA* and *mupB* (*mupAB*) share a tRNA synthetases class I (I, L, M and V) domain (PF00133) with *leuS* and a tRNA anticodon binding domain (PF08264) with *metG*. *mupAB* were reported to contain just these two PFAM domains. Interestingly, two PFAM domains were observed in *leuS* and in *metG* that are not present in the other component or in *mupAB*. *leuS* was reported to contain an additional tRNA synthetases class I (M) domain (PF09334) and a leucyl-tRNA synthetase, domain 2 (PF13603). Comparatively, *metG* was observed to also contain a tRNA binding domain (PF01588) and a tRNA synthetases class I (M) domain (PF09334).

*mupA* FLHs were distributed across the dataset (Table 4.3.3.). Interestingly, no *mupA*  FLOs were observed in the phyla Acidobacteria, Cyanobacteria, Deferribactres, Fusobacteria, Tenericutes, Proteobacteria, or Verrucomicrobia. *mupA* N-terminal component FLHs were



**Figure 4.3.3. Representative composite-component alignments for** *mupA* 

Both homologous domains are located towards the centre. The N-terminal component (D3D152) and *mupA* share a tRNA synthetases class I (I, L, M and V) domain (PF00133) and the C-terminal component (SYM) share a tRNA anticodon binding domain (PF0268). *mupA*  displays a "fused alignment" where both the alignments of both components partially overlap against the composite, resulting in a long alignment, unlike the "polarised" alignments observed in *rphAB.*



**Figure 4.3.4. Representative composite-component alignments for** *mupB*

Both homologous domains are located towards the centre. The N-terminal component (D3D152) and mupA share a tRNA synthetases class I (I, L, M and V) domain (PF00133) and the C-terminal component (SYM) share a tRNA anticodon binding domain (PF0268). mupB displays a "fused alignment" where both the alignments of both components partially overlap against the composite, resulting in a long alignment, unlike the "polarised" alignments observed in *rphAB*.

observed in a patchy distribution across the archaea but were almost ubiquitous across the bacteria. *mupA* C-terminal component FLHs were also relatively evenly distributed across the bacteria, however no FLHs were observed within the Spirocheates or Betaproteobacteria.

#### **4.4. Discussion**

#### 4.4.1. compositeBLAST is a useful tool for composite detection

In this chapter we have presented compositeBLAST to be a valuable tool for detecting and visualising high quality composite genes. We have demonstrated that compositeBLAST to be more sensitive than *fdf*BLAST (recovering an order of magnitude more genes than those found by Leonard and Richards (2012)).

The parameters for composite detection *via* homology statistics alone, while good for determining relationships between two sequences, may not be adequate for composite detection through the lens of "fusion" and "fission". The restriction of multiple HSPs aids in the reduction of Type I errors that may be encountered when using tools such as CompositeSearch (Pathmanathan *et. al.,* 2018). As compositeBLAST requires a degree of domain conservation between the composite and each component and for there to be no domain conservation between both components we believe this tool to be highly selective, depending on input data quality. Composite genes have the potential for resolving trifurcations in phylogenies and evolutionary histories (Leonard and Richards, 2012). As compositeBLAST provides a "middle ground" between CompositeSearch and *fdf*BLAST (in terms of sensitivity and selectivity), it may be used to detect previously unknown evolutionary traits throughout the tree of life. The sensitivity and selectivity of compositeBLAST is further exemplified by the rate of composite emergence in plants between those detected by compositeBLAST and those detected by Nakamura and company (2007).

#### 4.4.2. Efficacy of detecting clinically relevant composite genes

Composite genes, specifically fusion genes, are aetiologies of many cancers due to the disruption of signalling cascades (Mitelman *et al.* , 2007; Liu *et al.*, 2009; Stransky *et al.*, 2014). Differential gene fusion events between hosts and pathogens are also potential targets for increased success in the treatment of infectious diseases (Trimpalis *et al.*, 2013). By detecting genes from metabolically important pathways that are fused in the host and unfused in the pathogen, or *vice versa*, it is possible to use these as pathway disruptive targets. We identified four AMR genes that confer resistance to mupirocin and ripamycin to be composites.

While composite genes have been implicated in secondary metabolite and AMR evolution (Coleman *et al.* 2014), the extent of such processes on the evolution of pathogenicity is yet to be elucidated. Therefore, compositeBLAST could be used to decipher such relationships and aid in the development of new treatment regimens for emerging and persistent infectious microorganisms.

## **4.5. Conclusion**

We have demonstrated the efficacy of compositeBLAST in detecting *bona fide*  composite genes and by using compositeBLAST we were able to identify two classes of AMR genes as composite genes which have not been previously reported. Considering the wealth of high quality genomes available, compositeBLAST provides a mechanism to detect previously unknown high-confidence gene remodelling events which may highlight previously unknown evolutionary relationships, and may be used to help resolve trifurcations in phylogenies.

# **Chapter V**

**Concluding Remarks and Future Work**

## **5.1 Concluding remarks**

It is evident that the evolution of genes and of genomes is not dependant on a vertical model of inheritance (Haggerty *et al.*, 2014). It has been long established that prokaryote genomes frequently evolve through horizontal gene transfer (Kurland *et al.*, 2003; Groussin *et al.*, 2016), and more recently, evidence of horizontal gene transfer (HGT) between eukaryotes (Fukatsu, 2010) and interdomain HGT (McCarthy and Fitzpatrick, 2016). These genes can lead to incongruent phylogenies and, as such, are quite often cause misrepresentation and incorrect placement of taxa during the construction of prokaryote superalignments (Puigbò *et al.*, 2009, 2010). Comparatively gene evolution while once thought to be mostly under a model of vertical inheritance, displays striking evidence of horizontal evolution through the transfer and rearrangement of domains (Yanai *et al.*, 2002; Leonard and Richards, 2012; Jachiet *et al.*, 2013; Haggerty *et al.*, 2014; McLysaght and Guerzoni, 2015; Pathmanathan *et al.*, 2018). The extent of sequence rearrangement and the sharing and merging of gene domains was not fully appreciated until the development of CompositeSearch due to computational restrictions (Pathmanathan *et al.*, 2018). Reconstructing evolutionary histories of genes through the lens of gene remodelling uncovers previously unseen or underappreciated trends, relying more on a network model as opposed to a simple tree model.

In Chapter 2, the methodology and network based detection mechanism of CompositeSearch were introduced. We benchmarked the functionality of CompositeSearch on a dataset of fungal genomes previously used to detect remodelling events (Leonard and Richards, 2012) where it was deemed to be a highly sensitive detection tool. Alignments between composite and component genes usually display fragmented homologies (Pathmanathan *et al.,* 2018), Type I errors in composite detection could easily arise due to poor gene calls or incorrect genome assemblages. As a precaution, we designed and statistically modelled a quality control procedure to reduce the Type I error rate. It was observed that restricting a composite family to contain 2 or more *bona fide* composite genes and restricting component families to contain 2 or more members sufficed to remove additional Type I errors in 100 repeated controlled experiments. We performed a CompositeSearch analysis on 107 fungal genomes (1,150,918 genes). We found that 9.71% (111,768) genes could not be analysed due to low complexity or being identified as a singleton gene. It was observed that 49.94% of all genes (55.31% of all sampled genes) displayed a history of remodelling, of which 376,968 (32.76% of all genes and 36.28% of sampled genes) were identified as composites. We did not anticipate so many genes to display a history of remodelling based on previous studies (Nakamura *et al.*, 2007; Leonard and Richards, 2012). We plotted the presence and absence of remodelled gene families to an independently derived phylogeny and did not observe any bursts of evolution attributed to any branch for any remodelling category. These results suggest that successful remodelling events, remodelling events that persist postspeciation events, are clocklike in fungi, evolving at a stable pace. The observation of an profound increase in remodelling within nodes representing speciation events when compared to internal nodes further lend evidence this hypothesis. We observed that between 43.9% and 47.7% of families from remodelled categories (nested composites, strict composites, and strict component families) were homoplastic, which was in stark contrast to the 30.5% of homoplastic non-remodelled families. This rate of homoplasy suggests that convergent remodelling occurs at a relatively high rate, possibly as a rapid response to a stressor. Again, this was compounded when we observed composite genes to be functionally overrepresented for the production of secondary metabolites and small molecule transport. We also observed that remodelled gene families were enriched for a bacterial or undefined prokaryotic origin, whereas eukaryote specific genes families were more likely to be non-remodelled.

In chapter 3, we investigated the extent of gene remodelling in 50 Viridiplantae genomes (1,672,377 genes) using CompositeSearch. We observed a much higher rate of remodelling in plants when compared to fungi. In total, we observed nested composite, strict composite, strict component, and non-remodelled genes to account for 46.33%, 2.9%, 11.72% and 29.24% of the entire dataset, and 65.48%, 4.1%, 16.57%, and 13.86% of sampled genes. Like fungi, we observed plants to display a stable rate of remodelled gene acquisition and decay, where evolutionary bursts were only observed during speciation events where organisms have underwent significant chromosomal and genomic restructuring (for example, the speciation of the hexaploid *Triticum aestivum*). Again, with respect to the phylogeny, considerable differences were observed in the evolutionary rate of leaf nodes and internal branches, further compounding the hypothesis that remodelling events occur much more frequently during speciation events. We found the same categories of remodelled genes to be more homoplastic than in fungi. We observed remodelled categories to be 42-60.9% homoplastic (compared to 43.9-47.7%) and non-remodelled categories to be 35% homoplastic. We observed remodelled genes to be enriched for stress responses and metabolism as in fungi, but also for photosynthesis and multicellular development (*via* transcription factor remodelling). A considerable proportion of genes enriched for transcriptional regulation were found to be involved in multicellularity, and were found to emerge during major phenotypic transitions in plant evolutionary history. This highlights the evolutionary importance of gene remodelling in the evolutionary history of the green tree of life. We observed remodelled plant gene families to be enriched for a prokaryote origin, and eukaryote specific gene families to be non-remodelled, mirroring what we observed with fungi.

In Chapter 4, we developed compositeBLAST, a sensitive and selective tool for the detection of gene remodelling events. We found compositeBLAST to be a fast and intuitive tool. From a functional perspective, we found compositeBLAST to be more sensitive than *fdf*BLAST, and were able to recover 10 times more composite genes than those reported by Leonard and Richards (2012) when we replicated our procedure on the dataset they used for composite detection in fungi. We report compositeBLAST to be more selective than CompositeSearch for the detection of polarised remodelling events, such as gene fusions and fissions due to the exclusion of multiple HSP derived homology and due to the requisite for the conservation of domains between composites and components which lend further robustness in our results. We detected two unreported classes of antimicrobial resistance genes as composites conferring resistance to mupirocin and rifamycin using CompositeBLAST. These results illustrate the importance of composite gene detection not just in macroevolutionary biology studies but also for observing trends in microevolution such as in the rapid emergence of AMR.

# **5.2. Future work**

Evolutionary analyses have become more nuanced and informative as the number of high quality genome assemblies continues to expand. In our analyses of 107 fungi and 50 plants we observed some highly interesting results, however we feel that we just scratched the surface of the extent of gene remodelling. With a greater sample size of genomes that cover a broader range of taxa, more interesting and previously unreported phylogenomic trends may come to light. It would be interesting to observe the rate of remodelling in fungal and plant species that were previously unavailable to us either due to the genomes not being available or due to low quality assemblages. In particular, it would be interesting to observe the rate of remodelling in non-Dikarya species. Dikarya accounted for 101 of 107 of our species, so undoubtedly, results were biased due to the lack of available, reliable non-Dikarya genomes during the time of analysis. Similarly, in plants 38 of 50 were angiosperms, due to the lack of reliable, non-

angiosperm genomes. There are a wealth of genomes that we could have used for the plant analyses to help correct these biases, however, these were constructed from transcriptomes (Van Bel *et al.,* 2018) so they would not have been useful for the detection of remodelling genes due to Type I errors arising from alternative transcripts appearing as composites and components of each other. It would be of considerable interest to observe the rate of remodelling in other clades such as the Metazoa or 'protists', and within the Prokaryotes. Ultimately, a large study encompassing all domains of life would likely uncover considerable previously unseen evolutionary trends. Further development of compositeBLAST to encompass DNA alignments (BLASTN), and transcription alignments (BLASTX and tBLASTn) in addition to protein alignments would provide a tool for the detection of polarised composites in transcriptomes, untranslated genomes, and in entities that do not have a protein complement, for example viroids. We aim to implement GFF2/GFF3 parsing to decipher the location of genes within a genome to flag adjacent component genes for manual curation in an attempt to further reduce Type I errors. We aim to perform compositeBLAST on larger, more diverse datasets in future studies to uncover trends in polarised composite evolution throughout the domains of life.

#### **5.3. Final remark**

Gene remodelling is a relatively unexplored evolutionary concept. As the rate of genome sequencing and curation rises, the material to uncover remodelled gene evolutionary trends also grows. We must stop observing gene evolution through the lens of a verticallyexclusive model if we are to begin to understand the vast complexities observed throughout the Network of Life.

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