First Report of *Grapevine Pinot gris virus* Infecting Grapevine in Algeria

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Grapevine Pinot gris virus is a member of the genus *Trichovirus* in the family *Betaflexiviridae*. Grapevine Pinot gris virus (GPGV) was first reported in Italy in 2012 in grapevines exhibiting leaf mottling and deformation disease (GLMD) (Giampetruzzi et al. 2012). Since then, the virus has been detected in most grapevine-growing regions in the European, Asian, American, and Australian continents (Hily et al. 2020). In 2019, a total of 37 grapevine samples, collected during the prospection of neglected cultivars grown in Babar region in Northeast Algeria (Rahali et al. 2019), were analyzed for the presence of GPGV. After RNA extraction and reverse transcription, GPGV detection was carried out by SYBR Green real-time PCR with primer pair CPF3/R3 as described by Bertazzon et al. (2017). One sample of *Vitis vinifera* L. cultivar Clairette, without any clear symptom of GLMD, tested positive for GPGV. Clairette, a French cultivar, was the most important white variety grown in Algeria during the French colonization. To confirm the presence of GPGV, Sanger sequencing was performed in both directions on the amplicon obtained by RT-PCR performed with primer pair DetF/DetR, spanning the end of the movement protein and the beginning of the coat protein genes (Morelli et al. 2014). The obtained sequence of 556 bp was deposited in GenBank under accession number MT272732. Searches using the BLASTn tool against the NCBI nucleotide collection database

showed that the Algerian GPGV isolate shared the highest sequence identity at the nucleotide level (98.6%) with Slovakian isolates SK30 and SK704 (accessions nos. KF134123 and KU949328). A maximum-likelihood phylogenetic cladogram was constructed with MEGA-X (Tamura et al. 2007) using the Algerian sample and 10 reference sequences from different geographic origins: three from the Americas (U.S.A., Canada, and Uruguay), two from Asia (China and Pakistan), and five from Europe (Slovakia, Germany, France, United Kingdom, and Italy). The Algerian GPGV isolate grouped with isolates coming from Europe and the Americas in a distinct cluster separated from the Asian ones. To our knowledge, this is the first report of GPGV in Algeria and the first one in the African continent. The origin of such GPGV infection is quite mysterious, because it is known that this virus can be distributed with trading of infected grapevine propagation material (Fajardo et al. 2017) and locally by the eriophyid mite *Colomerus vitis* (Malagnini et al. 2016). The presence of GPGV in the neglected cultivar Clairette grown in the mountains of Babar, where wine-growing is minimal, is unlikely to be the result of vine-to-vine transmission mediated by mites, which have never been observed in that area (M. Rahali, *personal communication*), and even less probably caused by the use of infected rootstocks, because these vines are not grafted. On the contrary, it is possible that the GPGV infection represents a heritage of the French colonization of Algeria that took place until 1960, a period when the virus may have already been present in France, as hypothesized by Hily et al. (2020). More extensive surveys, mainly on grapevine cultivars imported from France to Algeria, are necessary to support this hypothesis.

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