

In Situ Hybridization

Laboratory Companion

Edited by
Melody Clark



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Forward

In situ hybridization as a technique has evolved greatly since the first published results of Pardue and Gall in 1969. Then the ability to localise crude satellite DNA preparations to nuclei was regarded as revolutionary, but now, just over 25 years later, the multiple localisation of single copy sequences onto extended nuclear fibres is routine. During this period, what was initially seen as a minor extension to traditional cytogenetics has evolved into a multidisciplinary technique providing a link between many different areas of biological research.

As an example, interphase cytogenetics using genomic *in situ* hybridization and chromosomal *in situ* suppression (see chapters 4 and 1) has impacted heavily on the field of cancer genetics. Diagnosis of the progression of a disease is no longer reliant upon obtaining metaphase chromosome spreads, chromosome paints can highlight individual chromosomes within the nucleus, defining any genome changes which have taken place. Combining this with immunocytochemistry (chapter 4) enables such genome changes to be precisely correlated with cell type, allowing a further refining of diagnosis and ultimately leading to more accurate and successful treatments.

The use of genomic *in situ* hybridization is not solely restricted to this one field, it can also reveal important clues as to evolutionary relationships between species and the spatial organisation and behaviour of chromosomes within the nucleus. All of which are ably demonstrated in chapter 1 with its agricultural bias. At the opposite end of the molecular scale, multiple single copy clones can now be routinely mapped onto extended nuclear fibres at resolutions of up to 5Kb (chapter 2). Thus providing a valuable link between all the sequencing, cloning and genetic linkage data generated by the Human Genome Project.

PCR, that universal tool of molecular biology has also been adopted by *in situ* hybridization. As with molecular biology, it can be used as an alternative to traditional cloning and labelling strategies. Chapter 3 extols the virtues of such an adaptable technique.

It is important to realise that *in situ* hybridization is not only limited to chromatin. Another expanding field is that of developmental genetics which is now heavily reliant upon this technique as a means for localising expression of genes, both at the organism and organ level (chapter 5). It is providing answers to not only gene product localisation

tion, but also in tandem with studies of transgenics, answers as to the control elements necessary for that expression in the first place. Finally we cover the least publicized level of the technique: the EM level. It must be remembered that not all answers are gained with bright multicoloured painted chromosomes or embryos, the ultimate definition of DNA and RNA localisation with respect to the ultrastructure of the cell is only obtained at the EM level, a field which has been comparatively neglected, but which shows great potential. So the aim of this manual was not necessarily to catalogue the latest *in situ* hybridization techniques, but to put together a whole range of techniques which reflect major areas of current research and interdisciplinary approaches. All have proven reproducibility with immediate and practical applications. Detailed methods are supplemented with helpful hints on technique and rounded off by comprehensive troubleshooting sections (although it is hoped that this final section is not needed!) to ensure that the novice researcher gets the best introduction to this field. One should be aware that *in situ* hybridization is a rapidly evolving field (with an equally rapidly expanding number of acronyms!) and that this manual can only hope to provide a sound basis for interesting developments to come.

Good Luck!

February 1996

Melody Clark

A remark on the layout of this book:

In order to facilitate the use of this book as a methodological source for your bench work, a wide page format has been chosen.

Due to its proper, durable binding the book has the advantage of lying flat on your bench top for convenient use. In addition, a wide margin leaves room for your own notes and provides some key notes and pictograms that shall assist you in finding the relevant information:

a pipette symbol marks the start of a step by step protocol section, a grey bar follows the whole protocol section



this symbol draws your attention to potential hazards and safety suggestions



comments on the key steps in methodology are highlighted by a key symbol



a "good idea" symbol marks useful hints for optimization of methodology



this pictogram indicates discussions of alternative approaches



the tool indicates troubleshooting guides that shall help you in finding out what could or did go wrong and in solving and avoiding problems



suggestions for monitoring quality and reliability of the experimental procedure are highlighted by the magnifying glass



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Contents

CHAPTER 1. Genomic *In Situ* Hybridization for Whole Chromosome and Genome Analysis

K. ANAMTHAWAT-JÓNSSON, J. S. HESLOP-HARRISON,
and T. SCHWARZACHER 1

1.1	Introduction	1
1.2	Uses of Genomic <i>In Situ</i> Hybridization	2
1.2.1	Genome Organization of Different Sequence Classes	2
1.2.2	Species Identity, Differentiation and Relatedness	3
1.2.3	Genomic Stability	5
1.2.4	Spatial Organization of Chromosomes	6
1.2.5	Chromosome Introgression and Rearrangements	7
1.2.6	Chromosome Behaviour and Meiosis	8
1.3	The Principle of Genomic <i>In Situ</i> Hybridization	9
1.3.1	Genomic Probing	9
1.3.2	Blocking and Competitive Hybridization	10
1.4	Materials and Chemicals	12
1.4.1	Buffers and Reagents	12
1.4.2	Chemicals	13
1.4.3	Equipment	13
1.5	Genomic <i>In Situ</i> Hybridization: Protocol	14
1.5.1	Chromosome Preparations	14
1.5.2	Probe DNA	14
1.5.3	Blocking DNA	15
1.5.4	<i>In Situ</i> Hybridization Procedure	15
1.6	Troubleshooting	18

CHAPTER 2. Fluorescence *In Situ* Hybridization: Applications in Gene Mapping and Clinical Diagnostics

G. A. EVANS and L. SELLERI 25

2.1	Introduction	25
2.2	Materials and Chemicals	28
2.2.1	Buffers and Reagents	28
2.2.2	Chemicals	30
2.2.3	Equipment	30
2.3	FISH Using Single Copy Cosmid Probes	31

2.3.1	Preparation of Metaphase Chromosomes	31
2.3.2	Preparation of Metaphase Chromosome Slides for Hybridization	31
2.3.3	Preparation and Labelling of Probes	32
2.3.4	Hybridization of Cosmid Probes	32
2.4	Multicolor FISH Using Cosmid Probes	33
2.4.1	Labelling of Probes and Hybridization Reactions	33
2.5	Interphase FISH Analysis	34
2.5.1	Preparation of Interphase Nuclear Slides from Short Term Cultures	35
2.5.2	Direct Preparation of Interphase Spreads	35
2.5.3	FISH	35
2.6	FISH Analysis Using YAC Clones	36
2.6.1	Preparation of Metaphase Chromosomes	36
2.6.2	Isolation of YAC DNA	36
2.6.3	Biotin Labelling of YACs	37
2.6.4	FISH	37
2.6.5	Microscopy	38
2.7	Direct Visual <i>In Situ</i> Hybridization (DIRVISH)	38
2.7.1	Preparation of Stretched DNA	39
2.7.2	FISH Hybridization	39
2.7.3	Detection and Analysis	39
2.7.4	Microscopy	40
2.8	Troubleshooting	40

**CHAPTER 3. Detection of Nucleic Acids (DNA and RNA)
In Situ by Single and Cyclic Primed *In Situ* Labelling (PRINS):
Two Alternatives to Traditional *In Situ* Hybridization Methods**

J. HINDKJÆR, C. TERKELSEN, S. KØLVRAA, J. KOCH, and L. BOLUND	45	
3.1	Introduction	45
3.2	Materials and Chemicals	47
3.2.1	Buffers and Reagents	47
3.2.2	Chemicals	47
3.2.3	Equipment	48
3.3	DNA-PRINS with Oligonucleotide Probes	48
3.4	PRINS with <i>DdeI</i> Digested Cloned Probes	50
3.4.1	Generation of Primers from Cloned Alpha Satellite DNA	52
3.4.2	PRINS Reaction	52
3.5	Multicolour-PRINS	53
3.6	PRINS-painting	54
3.7	PRINS-PCR and Repeated-PRINS of DNA	55
3.7.1	Chromosome Spreads	56
3.7.2	Pretreatment of Chromosome Spreads	57
3.7.3	Labelling Reaction	57
3.8	PRINS-PCR of mRNA	58
3.9	Visualization of Hapten-Labelled Nucleotides	61

3.9.1	Standard Slides	61
3.9.1.1	Biotin	61
3.9.1.2	Digoxigenin	62
3.9.2	Micro-slides	63
3.9.2.1	Detection of Labelled DNA	63
3.9.2.2	Detection of Labelled RNA	63
3.9.2.3	Alkaline Phosphatase Visualization	63
3.9.2.4	Fluorescent Visualization	64
3.10	Troubleshooting	64

CHAPTER 4. Fluorescence Immunophenotyping and Interphase Cytogenetics as a Tool for Investigation of Neoplasms (FICTION): Combined *In Situ* Hybridization and Fluorescence Immunophenotyping

K. WEBER-MATTHIESEN		67
4.1	Introduction	67
4.2	Application of the FICTION Method	69
4.2.1	Defining the Cell Type of Chromosomally Aberrant Clones	69
4.2.2	Defining the Differentiation State of Chromosomally Aberrant Cells	70
4.2.3	Interpretation of Ambiguous Cytogenetic Findings	70
4.2.4	An Aid to Diagnosis	71
4.2.5	Overcoming the Detection Limit of FISH	72
4.3	Materials and Chemicals	73
4.3.1	Buffers and Reagents	73
4.3.2	Chemicals	74
4.3.3	Equipment	74
4.4	Preparation of Slides for FICTION	75
4.5	FICTION-Protocol 1: Immunophenotyping Using One Antigen Plus <i>In Situ</i> Hybridization of Two Centromeric Probes	76
4.5.1	Control Studies: Specificity of Immunophenotyping	78
4.6	FICTION-Protocol 2: Immunophenotyping (Two Different Antigens) Plus <i>In Situ</i> Hybridization (One Centromeric Probe)	80
4.6.1	Control Studies: Specificity of the Immunophenotyping	83
4.7	FICTION-Protocol 3: Detection of Structural Chromosome Aberrations Within Immunophenotyped Cells	84
4.8	Evaluation of Results	85
4.9	Documentation of FICTION-Results	88
4.10	Troubleshooting	88

CHAPTER 5. *In Situ* Hybridization to Embryo Whole Mounts and Tissue Sections: mRNA Detection and Application to Developmental Studies

T. JOWETT, M. MANCERA, A. AMORES, and Y. YAN 91

5.1	Introduction	91
5.2	Materials and Chemicals	92
5.2.1	Buffers and Reagents	92
5.2.2	Chemicals	95
5.2.3	Equipment	95
5.3	General Procedures	96
5.3.1	RNase-free Treatments	96
5.3.2	RNA Probe Synthesis	96
5.4	Whole Mount <i>In Situ</i> Hybridization	97
5.4.1	Fixation and Pretreatments	97
5.4.2	Hybridization	100
5.4.3	Post-Hybridization Washes	101
5.4.4	Incubation with Antibody	101
5.4.5	Preabsorption of Antibodies	102
5.4.6	Post-Antibody Washes and Histochemistry	103
5.4.7	Performing Experiments with Many Different Batches of Embryos or a Large Number of Probes	104
5.4.8	Embedding and Sectioning Whole Mount Embryos	105
5.5	Double-Labeling Whole Mount <i>In Situ</i> Hybridization	105
5.5.1	Hybridization	106
5.5.2	Preabsorption of the Antibodies	106
5.5.3	Alkaline Phosphatase/horseradish Peroxidase Staining (Blue/Brown)	106
5.5.4	Sequential Alkaline Phosphatase Staining (Blue/Red)	110
5.5.5	Special Considerations	112
5.6	<i>In Situ</i> Hybridization to Tissue Sections	113
5.6.1	Preparing TESPA-Treated Slides	113
5.6.2	Fixation and Embedding Embryos or Tissue	114
5.6.3	Cutting Paraffin Sections	115
5.6.4	Pretreatment and Hybridization of Sections	116
5.6.5	Washing of Sections and Immunodetection of Probe	118
5.7	Troubleshooting	120

CHAPTER 6. *In Situ* Hybridization at the Electron Microscopic Level

F. WACHTLER, C. SCHÖFER, and K. WEIPOLTSHAMMER 123

6.1	Introduction	123
6.2	Materials and Chemicals	124
6.2.1	Buffers and Reagents	124
6.2.2	Chemicals	125
6.2.3	Equipment	125
6.3	Labelling Nucleic Acids for <i>In Situ</i> Hybridization	126

6.4	Preparing Tissue for Electron Microscopic <i>In Situ</i> Hybridization	126
6.4.1	Fixation	127
6.4.2	Embedding, Cutting and Mounting	128
6.4.3	Troubleshooting	129
6.5	<i>In Situ</i> Hybridization at the EM Level for DNA Sequences	130
6.6	<i>In Situ</i> Hybridization at the EM Level for RNA Sequences	133
6.7	Detection of Hybrids	134
6.7.1	Gold Labelled Antibodies	135
6.7.2	Troubleshooting	136
6.7.3	The Use of the Peroxidase Reaction to Detect Hybrids at the EM Level	138
6.7.4	Troubleshooting	139
6.7.5	Controls	140
6.8	Evaluation and Interpretation of Results	144
Appendix I		
	Labelling DNA Probes for <i>In Situ</i> Hybridization	147
Appendix II		
	Quantification of Efficiency of Incorporation of Labelled Nucleotides	155
	Glossary	159
	Subject Index	163

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Abbreviations

The following is a list of the most common abbreviations used throughout the book.

AMCA	7-amino-4-methylcoumarin-3-acetic acid-N-hydroxy-succinamide ester
AP	alkaline phosphatase
ATP	adenosine triphosphate
BCIP	5-bromo-4-chloro-3-indolyl-phosphate, also known as X-phosphate
bp	base pairs
BSA	bovine serum albumin
cDNA	complementary DNA
CGH	comparative genomic hybridization
CHAPS	3-[(chloramidopropyl)-dimethylammonio]-1-propane-sulphonate)
CISS	chromosomal <i>in situ</i> suppression
CTP	cytidine triphosphate
Cy3	surprisingly this is a chemical name, not an abbreviation
DAB	diaminobenzidine
DABCO	1,4-diazabicyclo [2.2.2] octane
DAPI	4,6-diamidino-2-phenylindole
dATP	deoxyadenosine triphosphate
dCTP	deoxycytidine triphosphate
ddATP	dideoxy adenosine triphosphate
ddCTP	dideoxy cytidine triphosphate
ddGTP	dideoxy guanidine triphosphate
ddTTP	dideoxy thymidine triphosphate
DEPC	diethylpyrocarbonate
dGTP	deoxyguanidine triphosphate
DIG	digoxigenin

DIRVISH	direct visual <i>in situ</i> hybridization
DMF	dimethyl formamide
DMSO	dimethyl sulphoxide
DNA	deoxyribonucleic acid
DTT	dithiothreitol
dTTP	deoxythymidine triphosphate
dUTP	deoxyuridine triphosphate
EDTA	ethylene diaminetetraacetic acid
EGTA	ethylene glycol tetraacetic acid
EM	electron microscope/electron microscopic
FACS	fluorescence activated cell sorting
FISH	fluorescent <i>in situ</i> hybridization
FITC	fluoroscene isothiocyanate
GTP	guanidine triphosphate
Kb	kilobase pairs
mRNA	messenger ribonucleic acid
N-As-Mx	naphthol As-Mx phosphate
NBT	4-nitro blue tetrazolium chloride
PBS	phosphate buffered saline
PCR	polymerase chain reaction
POD	horseradish peroxidase
POX	peroxidase
PVP	polyvinylpyrrolidone
rDNA	ribosomal deoxyribonucleic acid
RNA	ribonucleic acid
rt/RT	room temperature
SDS	sodium dodecyl sulphate
SDW	sterile distilled water
SSC	standard saline citrate
TESPA	3-aminopropyltriethoxysilane
tRNA	transfer ribonucleic acid
UTP	uridine triphosphate
UV	ultraviolet
YAC	yeast artificial chromosome