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Comparative Cytogenetics Allows the Reconstruction of Human Chromosome History: The Case of Human Chromosome 13

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Abstract

Comparative cytogenetics permits the identification of human chromosomal homologies and rearrangements between species, allowing the reconstruction of the history of each human chromosome. The aim of this work is to review evolutionary aspects regarding human chromosome 13. Classic and molecular cytogenetics using comparative banding, chromosome painting, and bacterial artificial chromosome (BAC) mapping can help us formulate hypotheses about chromosome ancestral forms; more recently, sequence data have been integrated as well. Although it has been previously shown to be conserved when compared to the ancestral primate chromosome, it shows a degree of rearrangements in some primate taxa; furthermore, it has been hypothesised to have a complex origin in eutherian mammals which has still not been completely clarified.

Keywords: FISH, evolution, mammals, human synteny

1. Introduction

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Comparative cytogenetics has been widely applied to many mammalian species [1–3] through banding methods and, later, with fluorescence *in situ* hybridization (FISH) of whole chromosomes and bacterial artificial chromosome (BAC) probes; these approaches permit the definition of regions of chromosomal homology, rearrangements, and breakpoints, as well as elucidate phylogenetic relationships between taxa [4]. In addition, the comparative cytogenetic approach is particularly useful in the reconstruction of human chromosome (HSA) history.

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Indeed, parsimony analysis of homologies and rearrangements permits us to define ancestral chromosomal syntenies (synteny is the colocalization of two or more genetic loci) and derived ones [2]. Banding allows us to first evaluate rearrangements between species; the mapping of whole chromosomes through the chromosomal painting approach allows researchers to better define rearrangements at the molecular level, such as Robertsonian ones and breakpoints. At a finer level, the use of DNA cloned inside vectors such as yeast artificial chromosomes (YACs) or BAC, used as mapping probes, permits the evaluation of chromosomal dynamics [5, 6], defining marker orders and intrachromosome rearrangements. Moreover, the use of specific loci or repetitive probes permits the localization of specific sequences, such as repetitive ones, which are often supposed to be responsible for the plasticity of chromosomes [7–10] and human genes involved in cancers [11].

More recently, the integration of cytogenetic data with sequence data has been proposed [12–16]. These kinds of data are available from genomic browsers and are helpful for testing previously proposed phylogenomic hypotheses and chromosomal organisation reconstructions.

In this review, we report the principal approach which has proven useful for studying human chromosome history by analysing previous cytogenetic and sequence data regarding human chromosome 13.

2. The reconstruction of human chromosome history

At least three or four principal approaches can be used to reconstruct human synteny history. In a comparative perspective, the analysis of banding data permits the identification of chromosomal homologies. In particular, the analysis of the banding patterns obtained by the enzymatic digestion of chromosomes in metaphases using proteolysis and Giemsa solution staining permits the identification of chromosomal homologies and principal rearrangements occurring between species. Consequently, by focusing attention on a single chromosome, it is possible to track the principal evolutionary steps involving each individual human chromosome [1].

Another approach is the analysis of comparative painting data; the painting approach consists of a whole chromosome undergoing FISH on cytogenetic preparations, allowing the identification of molecular level homologies, interchromosomal rearrangements and genomic breakpoints. First, human chromosome probes are mapped onto metaphases of target species (chromosome painting [CP]) [17], then, for a better comparison, animal chromosomal probes are mapped onto human metaphases in a reciprocal hybridization (RP) [18]. Subsequently, whole animal chromosomes are mapped onto other animal metaphases in an approach known as ZOO-FISH, Z-F [19]. The analysis of these data regarding a single chromosome, consequentially, permits the tracking of each change involving the human chromosome under study.

In addition, human chromosome evolution can be studied using another kind of probe, the BAC probe, containing an insert of 50–300 Kb of the human genome. It can be mapped by FISH onto the metaphases of many species. BACs are available for each human chromosome and can be purchased from the BAC/PAC Resource Center (Chori), and some of them are commercially available for medical diagnosis. These probes are very useful in detecting

small interchromosomal rearrangements which are not detectable by painting and in defining marker order along chromosomes, thus revealing inversions, new centromere evolutions (new centromeres arise without the occurrence of inversions, maintaining the marker order), and duplications [3].

Comparative cytogenetics has been applied to reconstructing most human chromosome history; these published works have mainly been done by reviewing previous painting data or by mapping BAC probes on primates (see review in [2]) and other eutherian mammals; some works have analysed only specific chromosome regions (see **Table 1** for representative works).

Furthermore, alignments of sequences (SA) of many mammal species, obtainable from the NCBI, UCSC, and Ensemble genome browsers, can be integrated with molecular cytogenetic information in order to shed light on the history and peculiar features characterising each human chromosome.

2.1. The evolutionary history of HSA 13

Human chromosome 13 has been sequenced, and it has been shown to be the largest acrocentric chromosome in the human karyotype. Currently, the NCBI reports 1381 total genes, 41 novel genes, and 477 pseudogenes for a size of 114.36 MB [47]. It is among the human chromosomes with the lowest percentage of duplicated sequences [48].

The analyses of classical and molecular cytogenetics, using comparative banding and chromosome painting, have allowed researchers to formulate hypotheses about its ancestral forms. In this report, we delineate the principal steps regarding the history of human chromosome 13, tracked through the analysis of previous cytogenetics literature and sequence data. We have reported a list of species analysed by painting or sequence information, chromosome homologues to human chromosome 13, human associations with HSA 13, chromosome type if available, references and methods from which we obtained the data, such as CP, RP, Z-F, and SA (see Table 2). The principal steps in the evolution of human chromosome 13 are illustrated in a graphical reconstruction of the mammal phylogenetic tree, Figure 1; the mammal phylogenetic tree has been drawn in agreement with previous ones [16, 49], with some modifications, and was created using Mesquite v.2.75 [50]. Among mammals, three major groups are distinguishable: monotremes (Prototheria, platypus), marsupials (Metatheria, opossum), and placental mammals (eutherian), with these last two known as Theria; among placental mammals, Afrotheria, Xenarthra, and Boroautherian are recognized, with the latter comprising Laurasiatheria and Euarchontoglires (or Supraprimates) [49]. In the mammalian phylogenetic tree are shown the orthologue blocks that correspond to human chromosome 13-in yellowin representative eutherian species for which reciprocal chromosome painting is available; for some of them also DNA sequence alignments have been previously showed, see Table 2 for reference. For each species are reported chromosome ideograms on which human synteny 13 is found, and on the left of the ideograms are reported the species' chromosome number and on the right HSA syntenies; the black circle is the centromere. Syntenies homologues of human chromosome 13 in platypus (Monotremata) are on chromosomes 2, 10, and 20, in opossum (Metatheria) are on chromosomes 4 and 7, and in chicken (Aves) are on chromosome 1. These chromosomes are reported in box because they are representative eutherian mammal

HSA chr.	Methods	References
1	Region study by BAC mapping	[20]
	History by multidisciplinary approach	[21]
	History by BAC mapping	[2]
2	Region study by BAC mapping	[22]
	History by BAC mapping	[2]
3	Region study by BAC mapping Review	[23–25]
4	Region study by BAC mapping	[27]
	History by BAC mapping	[2]
	Region study by BAC mapping	[28, 29]
5	Region study by BAC mapping	[30, 31]
	review	[2]
6	History by BAC mapping	[32, 33]
7	Painting	[34]
	Review	[35]
	Region study by BAC mapping	[36]
8	Brief history by BAC mapping	[2]
9	Region study by BAC mapping	[37]
10	History by BAC mapping	[37, 38]
11	History by BAC mapping	[39]
12	Brief history by BAC mapping	[2]
13	History by BAC mapping	[40]
14	Region study by BAC mapping	[41]
15	Region study by BAC mapping	[41, 42]
16	History by BAC mapping,	[43]
	Painting	[34]
17	History by BAC mapping	[2]
18	Region study by BAC mapping,	[44]
	History by BAC mapping	[2]
19	Painting,	[34]
	Brief history by BAC mapping	[2]
20	History by BAC mapping	[45]
21	Region study by BAC mapping	[23]
	Brief history by BAC mapping	[2]
22	Brief history by BAC mapping	[2]
Х	Brief history by BAC mapping	[2]
у	Region study by BAC mapping	[46]

Table 1. List of representative works, (references and methods) analyzing each human chromosome evolution and/or marker order in particular chromosomal region.

Comparative Cytogenetics Allows the Reconstruction of Human Chromosome History: The Case... 123 http://dx.doi.org/10.5772/intechopen.79380

	Chromosome type	Chr.	Human association	References	Methods
Dermoptera					
Galeopterus variegatus	Acrocentric	13		[58]	RP
Proboscidea					
Loxodonta africana	Acrocentric	16,26	13, 6/13/3	[59]	СР
	Submetacentric			[12, 16]	SA
Elephas maximus	Acrocentric	16, 26	13, 6/13/3	[59]	СР
	Submetacentric				
Tubulidentata					
Orycteropus afer	Submetacentric	1	19/16/13/2/8/4	[59, 60]	СР
					SA
Afrosoricida					
Chrysochloris asiatica	Metacentric	8	13/18	[61, 60]	RP
					SA
Macroscelidea					
Elephantulus rupestris	Submetacentric	2	13/3/21/5	[61]	СР
Elephantulus edwardii				[60]	SA
Macroscidelis proboscidens	Submetacentric	2	13/3/21/5	[53]	СР
Sirenia					
Trichechus manatus	Metacentric	19	13/3	[62]	СР
Eulipotyphla					
Sorex araneus	Metacentric	bc	9/5/2/13/8/7	[16, 63]	CP, SA
Blarinella griselda	Submetacentric	3	13/10/13/4/5	[63]	СР
Neotetracus sinensis	Submetacentric	3,10	13/4/20/10,	[63]	СР
	Acrocentric		1/13/10/12/22		
Hemiechinus auritus				[64]	СР
Talpa europaea	Metacentric	6	2/13	[65]	СР
Cingulata					
Dasypus novemcinctus	Submetacentric	19		[66]	СР
Pilosa					
Choloepus didactylus	Acrocentric	17		[64]	СР
Coniochaeta hoffmannii	Acrocentric	12		[66]	СР
Tamandua tetradactyla	Metacentric	4, (2*)	13/1	[64, *66]	СР
Bradupus torauatus	Acrocentric	12		[67]	СР
Bradynus varieoatus	Acrocentric			[67]	CP
Carnivora	nerocentite	17		[0,]	<u> </u>
Mustala nutovina				[68]	CP
1v1n31011 pn1011113				[00]	CI

	Chromosome type	Chr.	Human association	References	Methods
Vulpes vulpes	Submetacentrics	6,9	13/14, 2/8/13/3/19	[69]	RP
Canis lupus familiaris	Acrocentrics	(25*) 22, 28		[*70]	RP
				[69]	СР
				[71, 72]	Z-F
				[16]	SA
Felis silvestris catus	Acrocentric	A1		[69]	СР
				[12, 13, 51]	SA
Mephitis mephitis	Submetacentric	19		[73]	СР
Procyon lotor	Metacentric	3	13/2	[73]	СР
Perissodactyla					
Equus caballus	Acrocentric	17		[74]	RP
				[13, 16]	SA
				[19]	Z-F
				[40]	BAC
Equus asinus		11		[19]	Z-F
Equus burchelli	Submetacentric	6q	13/9	[19]	RP
					Z-F
Equus grevyi		6q	13/9	[19]	Z-F
Equus zebra hartmannae		15		[19]	Z-F
Equus hemionus onager		5q	12/13/22	[19]	Z-F
Equus przewalskii		16		[19]	Z-F
Diceros bicornis	Acrocentric	10		[19]	Z-F
Ceratotherium simum		10		[19]	Z-F
Tapirus bairdii		1		[19]	Z-F
Tapirus indicus	Acrocentric	18		[19]	Z-F
Tapirus pinchaque		13		[19]	Z-F
Tapirus terrestris		8		[19]	Z-F
Hemiechinus auritus	Submetacentrics	5q,6	5/13, 2/22/12/13/12	[64]	СР
Pholidota					
Manis javanica	Submetacentric	1,9q	13/5/2p, 18/13	[64]	СР
	Metacentric			[75]	СР
Manis pentadactyla	Submetacentric	1q, 17	13/5/2, 13	[75]	СР
-	Acrocentric				
Cetartiodactyla					
Bos taurus	Acrocentric	12		[12, 16]	SA
				[76]	RP

	Chromosome type	Chr.	Human association	References	Methods
Sus scrofa	Metacentric	11		[12, 16]	SA
				[76]	RP
Camelus dromedarius	Metacentric	14		[76]	RP
Globicephala melas	Metacentric	15		[77]	Z-F
Hippopotamus amphibious	Metacentric	15		[77]	Z-F
Giraffa camelopardalis	Metacentric	12	14/15/13	[77]	Z-F
Okapia johnstoni	Acrocentric	11		[77]	Z-F
Moschus moschiferus	Acrocentric	17		[77]	Z-F
Lagomorpha					
Oryctolagus cuniculus	Submetacentric	8	13/12	[78]	RP
				[51]	SA
Rodentia					
Mus musculus		3,5,8,14,14		[13]	SA
				[79]	SA
				[16]	SA
Rattus norvegicus		2,12,15,15,16		[13]	SA
				[16]	SA
Sciurus carolinensis	Submetacentric	6	10/13	[80]	RP
				[81]	RP
Petaurista albiventer	Metacentric	11	10/13	[81]	СР
Tamias sibiricus	Metacentric	10	10/13	[81]	СР
Castor fibre	Submetacentric	4	8/13	[79]	СР
Pedetes capensis	Submetacentric	6	13/12/22	[79]	СР
Sicista betulina	Metacentric,	1,9	13/4/10/11/9/10,	[79]	СР
	Submetacentric		3/6/313/19		
Chiroptera					
Eonycteris spelaea	Submetacentric	E11	13/4/8/13	[82]	СР
Rhinolophus mehelyi	Acrocentric	R6	13/4/8/13	[82]	СР
Hipposideros larvatus	Metacentric	H1	13/3/21	[82, 83]	СР
Mormopterus planiceps	Metacentric	M7	13/18	[82]	СР
Myotis myotis	Metacentric	V5/6	4/8/13/12/22	[82]	СР
Aselliscus stoliczkanus	Metacentric	1	22/12/13/4/8/13	[83]	СР
Megaderma spasma	Metacentric	12	20/13/8b/4c	[84]	СР
Taphozous melanovogon	Submetacentric	1	4c/8b/13/16b/7c/5a	[84]	СР

	Chromosome type	Chr.	Human association	References	Methods
Primates					
Strepsirrhini					
Avahi laniger		12		[85]	СР
Daubentonia madagascariensis		8p	10/13	[85]	CP
Eulemur fulvus		12		[85]	СР
Hapalemur griseus griseus		-15		[85]	СР
Indri indri	Submetacentric	3p	13/17	[85]	СР
Lemur catta	Acrocentric	13		[85, 86]	BAC
					СР
Lepilemur ankaranensis		14		[87]	СР
Lepilemur dorsalis		6p		[85, 87]	СР
Lepilemur edwardsi		6p		[87]	СР
Lepilemur leucopus		1q ter		[87]	СР
Lepilemur microdon		5p		[87]	СР
Lepilemur mittermeieri		7p		[87]	СР
Lepilemur mustelinus		8 ter		[87, 85]	СР
Lepilemur jamesi		5q ter		[87]	СР
Lepilemur ruficaudatus		5q prox		[85, 87]	СР
Lepilemur septentrionalis		14		[85, 87]	СР
Microcebus murinus	Submetacentric	13		[85, 87]	СР
Propithecus verreauxi		6q	5/13	[85]	СР
Otolemur crassicaudatus	Acrocentric	14		[88]	СР
Galago moholi	Metacentric	5	13/16/12	[88]	СР
Otolemur garnettii	Submetacentric	14		[89]	RP
Nycticebus coucang	Submetacentric	18		[89, 90]	RP
		17			СР
Platyrrhini					
Alouatta belzebul	Acrocentric	14		[91]	СР
Alouatta caraya	Acrocentric	15 (20*)		[92, *93]	СР
Alouatta guariba guariba	Acrocentric	14		[93]	СР
Alouatta seniculus arctoidea		16		[91]	СР
Alouatta seniculus macconnelli	Submetacentric	4q	13/19	[92]	СР
Alouatta seniculus sara		12		[91]	СР

	Chromosome type	Chr.	Human association	References	Methods
Aotus lemurinus griseimembra	Acrocentric	17		[93, 94]	СР
Aotus nancymaae	Acrocentric	19		[95]	СР
Ateles geoffroyi				[96]	СР
Ateles belzebuth hybridus	Acrocentric	12		[97]	СР
Ateles belzebuth marginatus	Submetacentric	12		[98]	СР
Ateles paniscus paniscus	Metacentric	4	13a/13b/3c/7b/1a2	[98]	СР
Brachyteles arachnoides	Acrocentric	20		[98]	СР
Callicebus donacophilus pallescens	Acrocentric	15		[99]	СР
Callicebus lugens	Submetacentric	1	1/13–12/13	[100]	СР
Callicebus moloch	Acrocentric	21		[101]	СР
Callicebus cupreus	Submetacentric Acrocentric	7,17	3/21/13, 13/17	[102]	СР
Callimico goeldii	Acrocentrics	19,17	13/9/22, 13/17	[18, 103]	CP RP
Callithrix argentata	Submetacentrics	2,1	13/9/22, 20/17/13	[18, 103]	CP RP
Callithrix jacchus	Submetacentrics	1,5	13/9/22, 20/17/13	[18, 103]	CP RP
Cebuella pygmaea	Submetacentrics	1,4	13/9/22,20/17/13	[18, 103]	СР
Saguinus oedipus	Submetacentrics	1,2	9/13/22,20/17/13	[18, 103]	СР
Cebus apella (Sapajus)	Acrocentric	17		[104, 105]	СР
					Z-F
Sapajus a. paraguayanus	Acrocentric	17		[105]	Z-F
Sapajus A. robustus	Acrocentric	17		[105]	Z-F
Cebus capucinus	Acrocentric	11		[105]	СР
Cebus nigrivitatus	Acrocentric	17		[97]	СР
Chiropotes israelita	Acrocentric	15		[95]	СР
Chiropotes utahicki	Acrocentric	15		[95]	СР
Lagothrix lagotricha	Submetacentric	8		[106]	СР
Leontopithecus chrysomelas	Submetacentrics	1,2	9/13/22,13/17/20	[107]	СР
Pithecia irrorata	Submetacentric	8	22/13	[108]	СР
Cacajao calvus rubicundus	Acrocentric	13		[108]	СР
Saimiri sciureus	Acrocentric	16		[18, 101]	СР

	Chromosome type	Chr.	Human association	References	Methods
Catarrhini					
Chlorocebus aethiops	Metacentric	3		[109]	СР
Cercopithecus erythrogaster	Submetacentric	12		[110]	Z-F
Cercopithecus neglectus	Metacentric	19		[111]	RP
Cercopithecus stampflii	Submetacentric	13		[110]	Z-F
Presbytis cristata	Metacentric	19		[112]	СР
Colobus guereza	Metacentric	19		[113]	СР
Erythrocebus patas	Submetacentric	15		[111]	RP
Hylobates concolor	Metacentrics	5,9	1/13; 1/4/10/13	[114]	СР
Hylobates klossii		4q	3/13	[115]	СР
Hylobates lar	Metacentric	4q	3/13	[17]	СР
Hylobates moloch		4q	3/13	[115]	СР
Macaca fuscata	Submetacentric	16		[116]	СР
Nasalis larvatus	Metacentric	15		[117]	СР
Pygathrix nemaeus	Submetacentric	17		[118]	СР
Semnopithecus francoisi	Metacentric	9		[119]	СР
Semnopithecus phayrei	Metacentric	9		[115]	СР
Symphalangus syndactylus		15		[17]	СР
Pongo pygmaeus	Acrocentric	14		[17]	СР
Gorilla gorilla	Acrocentric	14		[17]	СР
Pan troglodytes	Acrocentric	14		[17]	СР
Scandentia					
Tupaia belangeri	Acrocentric	17		[120]	СР
Tupaia minor	Acrocentric	16		[121]	СР
Galliformes					
Gallus gallus		1		[51, 52]	SA
Monotremata					
Ornithorhynchus anatinus	Submetacentric	2,10,20		[51]	SA
	Metacentrics				
Didelphimorphia					
Monodelphis domestica	Submetacentrics	4,7		[51, 52]	SA

Table 2. List of species analyzed by chromosomal painting (CP or reciprocal P) and/or sequence alignments (SA) and the references used. For each species is reported the human chromosome 13 homologous and eventually, if present other human associations.

outgroups and data come just from sequence alignments. When HSA 13 synteny, in yellow, is rearranged with just few human syntenies, these are represented in different colours and are reported on the right of the ideogram (e.g., in Indri chromosome 3, synteny 13 is fused



Figure 1. The mammalian phylogenetic tree showing the orthologue blocks that correspond to human chromosome 13—in yellow—in representative eutherian species for which reciprocal chromosome painting is available. For some species also DNA sequence alignments have been previously showed, see **Table 2** for citation; in the tree, it is reported the ancestral synteny 13 form described by painting data analysis and in the box the eutherian ancestral chromosome 13 alternative reconstruction obtained through sequence data* [17]. The platypus (Monotremata), opossum (Metatheria) and chicken (Aves) chromosomes homologues are reported in the box to the low right; these last species are representative outgroups. Different colours represent HSA human syntenies which are reported on the right of the ideogram; white region represents parts of chromosomes covered by many different human syntenies; on the left of the ideogram are reported the species' chromosome number of the 13 human homologues; the black circle is the centromere.

with synteny 17 in red), whereas when HSA 13, in yellow, is rearranged with many human syntenies, these are represented by white segments for logistic issue (e.g., on chicken chromosome 1). Through painting and sequence analysis in mammals, human chromosome 13 has been previously shown to be conserved, with some exceptions (Table 2, Figure 1). Indeed, the homologues to human chromosome 13 are found as single conserved chromosomes in most representative mammalian orders analysed by chromosome painting, for example in Dermoptera, Pilosa, Carnivori (cat-Felis silvestris catus ch A1), Lagomorpha (rabbit-*Oryctolagus cuniculus* ch 8), Perissodactyla (horse–*Equus caballus* ch 17), and Cetartiodactyla (cattle-Bos tauros ch 12 and pig-Sus scrofa ch 11; in pig, the synteny is metacentric due to a new centromere formation). Human synteny 13 has gone to many rearrangements such as translocation and fission in other different groups; indeed, it is associated with one or more human syntenies due to translocation, as in Tubulidentata, Afrosoricida, Eulipotyphla, Macroscelidea, Sirenia, Pholidota, Chiroptera (Table 2). For example, among Chiroptera in Greater mouse-eared bat, on *Myotis myotis* ch 5/6 is present human synteny 13 associated with many other human syntenies (8 lightgreen/4 bordoux/13 yellow/12 green/22 darkgreen) and among Rodentia in eastern grey squirrel, Sciurus carolinensis ch 6, human synteny 13 in yellow is associated with other human syntenies (reported in white in Figure 1). Furthermore, human synteny 13 is fragmented into two segments or into many segments and associated

with other HSA syntenies, for example in Carnivori (Canis—*Canis lupus familiaris* ch 22, 28), in Proboscidea (elephant—*Loxodonta Africana* ch 16, 26), and in Rodentia species such as birch mouse (*Sicista betulina* ch 1, 9; in these last species, many other human syntenic associations are reported in white segments for logistic concern in **Figure 1**).

Through genome assembly analysis (alignments of sequences, SA), chromosome 13 has also been shown to be conserved in many mammals such as pigs, horses, and cats [13], very rearranged in mice (Mus musculus ch 3, 5, 8, 14) [14] and fragmented in platypus (Ornithorhynchus anatinus ch 2, 10, 20) [51]; moreover, it has also been shown to be present in the outgroups Opossum (Monodelphis domestica ch 4, 7) and chicken (Gallus gallus ch 1) [52] (Table 2, Figure 1). More recently, researchers analysing more than 19 placental mammals have hypothesised that the eutherian homologue 13 ancestor was fused with other human syntenies (HSA 4, and parts of HSA 2 and 8) [16]. This alternative reconstruction obtained through sequence data (in Figure 1 reported in the box*) see synteny 13 on EUT ch 1 associated with other HSA syntenies (2 orange/8 lightgreen/4 bordoux) according with previous sequence alignments work [17]. Part of this human associations (13/2/8/4) involving human synteny 13 is found through painting just in Greater mouse-eared bat ch 5/6, HSA syntenies 4/8/13/12/22, and for this reason, the alternative reconstruction do not find support through painting. Thus, the two reconstructions, by painting and by sequence analysis, regarding the ancestral synteny 13 in eutherian are not in agreement. Better analysis is needed in order to clarify this complex origin. The main issue to be considered to shed light on this issue is the use of appropriate outgroups in the reconstruction of the ancestral eutherian chromosome forms and the incomplete set of taxa analysed. Indeed, the lack of comparative chromosome painting between eutherians and other mammals, such as monotreme and marsupials, and on the other hand the lack of data on many genomes do not permit an exact reconstruction [16, 53].

Human chromosome 13 has also been analysed by mapping BAC probes onto representative Mammalian orders [40]; this work has especially focused attention on the history of this chromosome, with particular focus on intrachromosomal rearrangements and the potential relationships between evolutionarily new centromeres (ENCs) and neocentromeres occurring in clinical cases. Indeed, it has been hypothesised that neocentromere formation, a typical event in many tumours, could occur in correspondence to ENC position arising during evolution [54]. BAC mapping has permitted the study of small intrachromosomal rearrangements along the human 13 homologues and the identification of the occurrence of new evolutionary centromeres. Among mammals, evolutionary centromere repositioning on HSA 13 homologues have been shown in pigs and many primates such as for example on *Lagothrix lagotricha* chromosome 8 [40]; furthermore, a small inversion is common in nonprimate mammals [3, 40].

Although human chromosome 13 has been previously shown to be conserved, when compared to ancestral primate chromosomes, it shows some degree of rearrangements in certain primate taxa. Conflicting interpretations of classical banding data on human and great ape chromosome 13 have been published [1, 55, 56]. Among Hominoids, humans, chimpanzees, and orangutans share the same acrocentric form from which the gorillas' differs by only a small paracentric inversion [57]. Among Strepsirrhini, it is a single conserved chromosome as seen for example in grey mouse lemur (*Microcebus murinus* ch 13); however, in this species, synteny 13 is metacentric presumably due to an inversion or alternatively for the occurrence of a new centromere. Synteny 13 has gone to different rearrangements in other species such as, for example, in indri (*Indri indri* ch 3), where it is fused with synteny 17 in red (**Figure 1**). Among Catarrhines (Old World monkeys), the HSA 13 homologues differ in the presence of new centromeres, for example Vervet monkey (*Chlorocebus aethiops*); the *Chlorocebus* chromosome 3 are, indeed, metacentric if compared with the acrocentric human form (**Figure 1**).

Even if human chromosome 13 is presumably conserved in the ancestors of platyrrhines, HSA 13 homologue has gone into many rearrangements in New World monkeys; indeed, synteny 13 has gone to fission and subsequent translocation with other HSA syntenies in Common marmosets (*Callithrix jacchus*), resulting in chromosome 1 and 5 (covered, respectively, by HSA 13 yellow/9 blue/22 darkgreen and 13 yellow/17 red/20 lightgreen), and in Titi monkeys (*Callicebus cupreus*) resulting in ch 7 and 17 (covered, respectively, by HSA 3 fuxia/21 lightblue/13 yellow and 13 yellow/17 red; **Figure 1**). Furthermore, some intrachromosomal rearrangements, such as inversions and new centromeres, have been shown by BAC in other Platyrrhini [40].

3. Conclusion

Classic cytogenetics, using banding, and molecular cytogenetics, using painting or other mapping probes such as BAC, are useful methods for reconstructing human chromosome history in a comparative approach with mammals. Although human chromosome 13 has previously been shown to be conserved in mammals, it is less conserved then previously claimed; indeed, some interchromosomal rearrangements have been demonstrated through painting, and intrachromosomal rearrangements have been shown by BAC mapping in various taxa; for this reason, further analysis is needed. Furthermore, the ancestral eutherian form has yet to be elucidated, as contrasting results continue to be shown through painting and sequence data comparison.

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Conflict of interest

We have no conflicts of interest.

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