

margit pavelka, jürgen roth functional ultrastructure atlas of tissue biology and pathology









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Functional Ultrastructure

An Atlas of Tissue Biology and Pathology

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This book is dedicated to

Michaela and Ernst

Verena, Raphael, Julia and David

FOREWORD

The period between 1950 and 1980 were the golden years of transmission electron microscopy and produced a plethora of new information on the structure of cells that was coupled to and followed by biochemical and functional studies. TEM was king and each micrograph of a new object produced new information that led to new insights on cell and tissue organization and their functions. The quality of data represented by the images of cells and tissues had been perfected to a very high level by the great microscopists of the era including Palade, Porter, Fawcett, Sjostrand, Rhodin and many others. At present, the images that we see in leading journals for the most part do not reach the same technical level and are not prepared with the same attention to detail as in the golden era of TEM nor do not have the same information content and sheer beauty.

This Atlas by Jürgen Roth and Margit Pavelka is a major exception, as it presents electron micrographs whose image quality and information content is uncompromised and unsurpassed. It has been prepared with great care and attention to detail. It depicts the beautiful diversity of specialized cell types such as those of the exocrine pancreas, intestinal epithelium, sperm and neuron, for example. It reminds the reader that although each cell has the usual complement of organelles their organization is quite different and distinctive and is recognizable to the trained eye. It reminds the cell biologist, biochemist, molecular biologist and pathologist alike, who all too frequently work on cultured cells that lack differentiated features, of the diversity of cells in mammals and how their structure and organization reflect their functions. Thus this atlas provides unique insights on how the architecture of cells, tissues and cell organelles mirror their functions.

It also provides unique insights into how pathological processes affect cell organization.

This information is vital to current work in which the emphasis is on integrating approaches from proteomics, molecular biology, molecular imaging and physiology, and pathology to understand cell functions and derangements in disease. In this current era, there is a growing tendency to substitute modern light microscopic techniques for electron microscopy because it is less technically demanding and is more readily available to researchers. This atlas reminds us that the information obtained by electron microscopy is invaluable and has no substitute. The increased insights obtained are comparable to the superior resolution (1000 x greater) obtained by the two methods. In fact this atlas reminds us that these two approaches are complementary, and neither one can substitute for the other.

Careful perusal of the images in this atlas makes one realize how many details are visible that go beyond those already known as far as even normal cell architecture is concerned. There is still a gold mine to be discovered for those wishing to put forth the effort. When it comes to cellular pathology in particular the surface has barely been scratched.

It can be anticipated that this atlas may stimulate readers to undertake further ultrastructural studies coupled with functional studies on both normal and diseased cells to harvest the detailed insights this will provide. In the age of harvesting the "cell genome and proteome", we should also not forget to pay attention to harvesting the cell "structurome". This atlas provides the reader with the opportunity to get started.

La Jolla, August 2004

Marilyn G. Farquhar

PREFACE

The present-day exciting era of genomics and proteomics, which provided new and revolutionary insights into the life of cells, has also led to a renewed interest and special appreciation of ultrastructure research. For the understanding of the functions of cells and tissues, it is mandatory to precisely know the structure of their macromolecular and supramolecular assemblies and essential to identify their sites of action with high resolution as well as to explore their dynamics in the life of cells and their organisation in higher systems. It is the today's top challenge and priority of all ultramicroscopic methods to visua-localise functional processes in cells and tissues in their correlation with subcellular organelles and their ultrastructurally recognizable domains. Major progress has become possible through the refinement of existing preparation techniques and the development of new ones as well as the development of new types of microscopes. Among others, high pressure cryofixation and cryoelectron microscopy applied for high resolution 3D structural analysis of isolated macromolecular complexes, electron tomography and 3D reconstruction of the inner architectures of cells, low temperature embedding resins and cryoultramicrotomy in combination with immunogold labelling and hybridisation techniques and atomic force microscopes have become fully integrated into the range of methods used in modern molecular cell biology.

Our principal aim in compiling this atlas was to provide the reader with first-hand information about the major role ultrastructure research continues to play in the various fields of cell and tissue biology and pathology. We hope it will be useful for investigators, both beginners and experienced researchers, not only of biology and medicine but also of molecular biology and biochemistry as an aid and guide for the evaluation and interpretation of electron micrographs. The plates of electron micrographs of this atlas illustrate the use of both classical and present-day electron microscopy in the study of normal and diseased cells and tissues. They are accompanied by brief explanatory texts, schemes and diagrams and selected classical as well as recent publications and key reviews for further reading. For those readers who want to up-date the references, a most useful on-line service is provided by Pubmed (http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/entrez/query.fcgi?db).

The first part of the atlas deals with the cell and its various constituents, cell-cell contacts and cell-matrix interactions. Here we aimed to be as complete as possible in the documentation of the various structures and their function in the context of molecular cell biology. In addition we included representative examples of characteristic organelle changes under various experimental conditions and under conditions of disease. The second part exemplifies principles of tissue organisation and is supplemented with selected examples of ultrastructural tissue pathologies. Here, we aimed not on completeness but particular emphasis was placed on morphofunctional aspects in order to demonstrate that the ultrastructure of cells and tissues mirrors their main tasks and reflects specific functions.

We hope that this atlas is not looked upon as a mere collection of striking electron microscopic pictures. Each of the electron micrographs is intended to convey a specific message related to the properties, functions, or pathologies of the tissues and cells shown. Last but not least we would like to hear from our readers and use these suggestions (mail to: juergen.roth@usz.ch and margit.pavelka@meduniwien.ac.at) to improve future editions.

Vienna Zurich, July 2004

Margit Pavelka Jürgen Roth

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