The regulatory genome of the malaria vector *Anopheles gambiae*: integrating

chromatin accessibility and gene expression

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ABSTRACT

Background: *Anopheles gambiae* mosquitoes are the primary vectors for the transmission of human malaria in Africa. Despite their importance from a global health perspective, we know very little about the regulatory elements controlling functional gene expression.

Results: We performed genome-wide profiling of chromatin accessibility by ATAC-seq in midguts and salivary glands of laboratory-reared *An. gambiae* mosquitoes experimentally infected with *Plasmodium falciparum*. Our results show that accessibility localized preferentially in promoters and in introns. The integration of ATAC-seq data with the transcriptome revealed by RNA-seq, and with ChIP-seq data, showed accessibility correlated positively both with gene expression, and with histone marks associated with active chromatin (H3K9ac/H3K27ac). The differential analysis of chromatin accessibility and the expression profiles of target genes between tissues allowed us to infer cis-regulatory elements controlling tissue specific gene expression, including functions linked to mosquito genes related to immune responses, like *def1* or *gam1*. Additionally, the analysis of enriched motifs allowed us to predict the *in vivo* binding sites of tissue-specific transcription factors. The ATAC-seq assay also allowed the precise mapping of active regulatory regions, including TSS- and enhancer-like elements that annotate to genes with roles in malaria infection such as *lrim1*.

Conclusion: This study identifies genome-wide regulatory regions likely to play an essential function in the regulation of gene expression in *An. gambiae*. This study is important not only for advancing our understanding of the regulatory genome of the mosquito vector of human malaria, but also for possible application to the genetic manipulation of mosquitoes.

Keywords: chromatin, gene regulation, ATAC-seq, RNA-seq, ChIP-seq, transcription factor, regulatory sequence, human malaria, mosquitoes

BACKGROUND

Chromatin structure is the basal element determining dynamic regulatory landscapes, i.e. the set of regulatory sequences, and the proteins binding to them, that control the definition of phenotypes during development, and in response to the external environment, in metazoa [1]. Cis-regulatory elements are regions of non-coding DNAs capable of regulating transcription. For example, accessibility at promoters allows for the interaction of transcription factors (TFs) with their cognate motifs, recruiting other co-factors involved in chromatin remodeling and transcriptional activation, that enables the spatiotemporal control of gene expression [2-4]. Additionally, transcriptional enhancers work in concert with the core promoter in regulating gene expression, acting as a scaffold for the recruitment of transcription factors and chromatin-modifying enzymes [5-8]. Other relevant regulatory regions are insulators, that typically work in long-range distances and contain binding sites for specific TFs, such as CTCF [9]. Chromatin structure and accessibility at these regulatory regions can also influence alternative splicing [10]. The regulation of this process often involves intronic or exonic cis-regulatory elements that are bound by DNA-binding proteins, that interfere with RNA polymerase II transcriptional elongation or associate with enhancers or silencers in a time- and tissue-specific manner [11-14]. Many splicing regulatory elements have been identified in mammals [15-17], only a few have been described in *Drosophila* [18, 19], and, in general, studies examining the relationship

between the dynamics of chromatin accessibility at cis-regulatory sequences mediating

alternative splicing events are scarce in invertebrates [20-22].

Based on these fundamental principles, variable levels of chromatin accessibility at

regulatory regions are expected to reflect the level of transcriptional activity at a given

tissue or condition and time-point. It is also expected that these regulatory sites display a

typical pattern of histone post-translational modifications (hPTMs) characteristic of active

chromatin [23]. As a consequence, chromatin accessibility can be used as a proxy to

globally identify active promoters and enhancers, and to predict gene activity [24, 25]. By

profiling genome-wide chromatin accessibility in several model organisms, such as the fruit

fly *Drosophila melanogaster*, recent studies have mapped thousands of cis- and trans-

regulatory elements, defining their functional roles in the regulation of genes involved in

processes such as development, physiology and disease [26-28]. For example, there are

more than 40,000 *Drosophila* enhancers and target genes described in the EnhancerAtlas

database [27, 28]. These enhancers, in general, have been shown to modulate the

transcription levels of several target genes, regardless of orientation or distance to the target

promoters [7, 29, 30], and they can be located between and within genes, i.e. within introns

or exons [8, 26, 31].

Compared to the knowledge accumulated on transcriptional regulation in the fruit

fly, little is known about the regulatory genome of other insects, such as mosquitoes. This

is despite the major role of these arthropod vectors in the transmission of important human

infectious diseases. Amongst mosquito-borne diseases, malaria is the deadliest and the one

with the highest global health and economic burden [32]. Human malaria is transmitted by

Anopheles mosquitoes, with members of the species complex *An. gambiae* recognised as

the main vectors in Africa [33]. Controlling and targeting vector populations is key in the

ongoing efforts to fight malaria, but further progress towards alternative molecular-based

approaches has been hampered by the lack of epigenetic and functional genomic studies in

mosquitoes [34]. Indeed, the regulatory genome of *Anopheles* remains practically

unexplored and the regulatory networks of most genes in the *An. gambiae* genome are

unknown, including those genes involved in important functions such as mosquito

insecticide resistance and immunity. The vast majority of cis-regulatory sequences reported

to date in mosquitoes are computational predictions without experimental verification [35-

41]. For example, in relation to promoters and TSSs in *Anopheles*, most 5' UTR regions

have been mapped already. However, in *An. gambiae* a large proportion of genes (2,890 out

of 13,057, or 22.1%, considering updated genome annotations) still do not have 5' UTR

regions annotated, a proportion that is in the same range to thatreported in *D. melanogaster*

[42]. More strikingly, less than a dozen enhancer sequences have been experimentally

validated in *An. gambiae* [37, 43], a negligible number compared with the functionally

annotated enhancers that are publicly available in several *Drosophila* data bases [26-28, 44,

45]. Other aspects of the genomics of mosquitoes that remains little studied from a

mechanistic perspective, and that might be related to the function of unknown cis-

regulatory elements, are isoform switching and chromatin-associated mechanisms of

regulation.

To fill this important gap, here we used the Assay of Transposase-Accessible

Chromatin by sequencing (ATAC-seq) [46, 47] to characterize the *An. gambiae* regulatory

landscape. A comprehensive and integrative examination of genome-wide chromatin

accessibility patterns was necessary to further characterize mosquito gene regulatory

networks *in vivo*. This analysis of chromatin accessibility allows for the genome-wide

identification of promoter regions and enhancers, as well as the prediction TF binding

events [3]. In the research presented here, we performed ATAC-seq and RNA-seq analyses

of both *An. gambiae* midguts and salivary glands infected with *P. falciparum*, and

integrated such datasets with ChIP-seq data for various histone modifications (H3K9ac,

H3K4me3, H3K27ac and H3K9m3) [36]. Our aim was to provide a more complete

annotation of the regulatory genome of a major mosquito vector of human malaria, and to

add new insights into mechanisms controlling functional gene expression. We report a

genome-wide association between chromatin accessibility, epigenetic states and tissue-

specific regulation of transcription. Analyses of DNA-binding motif enrichment of active

regulatory regions allowed us to predict binding sites similar to several *Drosophila* TFs,

many of which have been functionally validated. Furthermore, we provide a comprehensive

map of enhancer-, TSS- and CTCF-like novel regulatory sequences, which are conserved

with those previously characterized in the fruit fly, and appear to be active in the mosquito.

RESULTS

Chromatin accessibility correlates with active transcription and epigenetic states

ATAC-seq libraries were produced from adult female *An. gambiae* s.s. mosquitoes infected

with the *P. falciparum* parasite clone 3D7. Midguts (MGs) were dissected at 7 days post-

infection and salivary glands (SGs) dissected at 14 days post-infection in two independent

experimental infections (Table S1, see Methods). After sequencing, the quality of the

ATAC-seq data obtained was high and comparable between tissues and experimental

infections (Figure 1A). Reproducibility analyses revealed a higher correlation of ATAC-seq

between infections of the same tissue than between tissues, clustering by tissue in a

Principal Components Analysis (PCA) (Figure S1A, S1B). Other quality control

measurements, such as the fraction of reads mapping to the mitochondria, or the library

complexity coefficients, also indicated the high quality of the ATAC-seq data according to

ENCODE standards (Table S2) [48]. The fragment length distributions for both tissues

conformed to previous observations [46, 47]; most insert sizes corresponded to

nucleosome-free regions of less than 130 bp, and a second peak of fragment sizes

represented mononucleosomes (Figure 1A). The distribution of the ATAC-seq nucleosome-

free signal also matched the typical profiles of higher eukaryotes [49-51], with a higher

density of insertions at the TSSs and two smaller peaks marking the spacing between

adjacent nucleosomes (Figures 1B, S1C). By contrast, the highest density of ATAC-seq

mononucleosome signal localized to positions flanking the TSSs at the +/- 1 nucleosome

positions (Figure 1B).

Once we had validated the ATAC-seq approach, we used the MACS2 peak-calling

software [52] to identify regions significantly enriched in ATAC-seq nucleosome-free

signal, which we denote Tn5 hypersensitive sites (THSs). The computed THSs for all

samples are listed in Table S3 and include a total of 111,586 unique accessible regulatory

regions (43,010 in MGs and 68,576 in SGs) that were present in both experimental

infections. The total number of THSs differed slightly between tissues (see Methods), but

we observed that average ATAC-seq enrichment levels at THSs were similar across

samples (Figures S1D, S1E). These THSs annotated to > 10,000 genes (of a total of 13,057

genes in *An. gambiae*). Approximately 20% of the total *An. gambiae* genes do not have 5'

UTRs/TSS annotated, and the promoter for those genes is assumed to lie in the 1Kb region

upstream of the ATG start codon (see Methods). The annotation of the THSs to genomic

features showed a preferential location within introns (30.5%), followed by promoters

(18.3%), exons (14.2%), and 5' UTRs (7.1%) (Figure 1C) (Table S3). The concentration of

accessible sites within introns has been previously reported, for example in *D.*

melanogaster tissues, with around 50% of ATAC-seq THSs found within introns [53]. The

density of THSs at promoters diminishes with distance from the TSS. For genes without

annotated 5' UTRs, THSs density also decreases with distance from the ATG start codon of

the gene (Figure 1D).

In addition to THSs, ATAC-seq data is also informative about patterns of

nucleosome positioning. The pattern for metazoans is such that the 5' promoter appears

nucleosome-free and the transcribed regions are occupied by a more periodic array of

positioned nucleosomes [54, 55]. Similarly, in our study we observed a larger proportion of

mononucleosome signal at exons and introns compared to promoters and 5' UTRs (Figure

S1F). To validate this more systematically, we used the NucleoATAC nucleosome calling

software [56] to predict nucleosome dyads positions (symmetry axis of the nucleosomal

DNA), and we found dyads within 100 bp windows of around 90% of the THSs (Table S4).

Histone post-translational modifications (hPTMs) are known to play crucial roles in

the remodeling of chromatin structure and transcriptional regulation, with *a priori* well-

established activating (H3K9ac, H3K27ac, H3K4me3) or repressor (H3K9me3) functions

[57, 58]. Activating hPTMs are expected to be enriched at mononucleosomes flanking

active and accessible regulatory regions, like TSSs, whereas repressor histone marks are

associated with non-accessible and nucleosome-occupied heterochromatin. To test such a

relationship between chromatin accessibility and epigenetic states, we examined ATAC-seq

signal relative to ChIP-seq peaks for various hPTMs that we obtained from our previous

study on *P. falciparum*-infected and non-infected *An. gambiae* midguts [36]. ATAC-seq

nucleosome-free signals appeared more enriched (compared to a random distribution) at

peaks of H3K9ac, H3K27ac, and to a lesser extent H3K4me3, and depleted at H3K9me3

peaks (Figure S1G). Next, we applied the segmentation algorithm ChromHMM [59], that

integrates the ATAC-seq and ChIP-seq data, to partition the genome. The purpose was to

detect recurring epigenetic/accessibility patterns genome-wide and then assign a state to

each region in the genome. This analysis resulted in eight chromatin states (Figure S2A,

Table S5). Most (~65%) of the genome appeared to be in a depleted state without ATAC-

seq or ChIP-seq signal. Intergenic regions were largely depleted of ATAC-seq nucleosome-

free signal and enriched in H3K4me3 and H3K9me3. By contrast, 5' UTRs and promoters

displayed states of open-chromatin, and activating hPTMs (H3K9ac, H3K27ac and/or

H3K4me3). This was also the case for introns and exons, which also appeared in an open

state (Figure 2A). Nearly half of the intronic THSs coincided with H3K27ac-enriched

chromatin states (states 5/7, Figure S2A) and only 7.5% with the chromatin state

H3K9ac/H3K27ac/H3K4me3 (state 6, Figure S2A; Table S3). The observation of

chromatin accessibility spanning into exons is also in agreement with the pattern previously

reported in *Drosophila* [25, 60].

The integration of ATAC-seq and RNA-seq data can be used to infer clusters of co-

regulated genes and common regulatory mechanisms. Looking at the association between

nucleosome occupancy and gene expression, mononucleosomes were positioned more

frequently at the promoters of more highly-expressed genes (Figure S2B, Table S6). Our

results also showed that nucleosome-free ATAC-seq enrichment at promoters was

positively associated with gene expression levels of the corresponding genes (Spearman

test: rho 0.39, P < 0.001 (MGs); rho 0.47, P < 0.001 (SGs); Figure 2B). To further

investigate this pattern in a more quantitative manner, we filtered non-overlapping genes

with THSs located at promoters or 5' UTRs, and categorized them by their expression and

chromatin accessibility levels at promoters (see Methods). In approximately 90% of cases,

the high/medium expressed genes appeared in the high/medium promoter accessibility

groups and conversely, medium/low expressed genes appeared in the medium/low

promoter accessibility categories (Figures 2C, S2C, Table S6). This suggests that the

function of these regulatory regions is gene activation. Notably, around 10% of the THSs-

annotated genes displayed opposite profiles for chromatin accessibility and gene expression

levels (high promoter accessibility/low expression or low promoter accessibility/high

expression; Spearman test: rho -0.71, P < 0.001 (MGs); rho -0.65, P < 0.001 (SGs); Figure

S2D, Table S6), suggesting that these accessible THSs correspond to binding sites for

repressor TFs. Finally, by integrating ATAC-seq and RNA-seq data with ChIP-seq data, we

observed that higher accessibility and expression correlated positively with

H3K9ac/H3K27ac enrichment in the promoter, and negatively with H3K9me3 in MGs

(Spearman test: rho 0.14, P < 0.001 (H3K9ac); rho 0.45, P < 0.001 (H3K27ac); rho -0.23, P

< 0.001 (H3K9me3); Figure 2C).

A large proportion of THSs (30.5%) were located within introns, suggesting that

accessibility in these regions may have a role in the regulation of gene expression.

Consistent with this hypothesis, genes that are more intronic relative to the gene length

(intron-rich genes, see Methods) were found to have a higher number of THSs that

accumulate within introns. Conversely, for intron-poor genes, the THSs tended to be

located at promoters (Figure 2D). This pattern is independent on whether the genes have 5'

UTR annotated or not (genes with annotated 5' UTR: intron-rich 49.3% intronic/12.5%

promoter THSs, intron-poor 2.3% intronic/31.8% promoter THSs; genes without annotated

5' UTR: intron-rich 31.2% intronic/8.9% promoter THSs, intron-poor 1.3% intronic/16.3%

promoter THSs). Indeed, genes without annotated 5' UTRs did not seem to accumulate

more THSs within introns when compared to genes with annotated 5' UTRs (Mann-

Whitney U test: $P > 0.05$; Figure 1C). The mean intronic accessibility was positively

correlated with chromatin accessibility at promoters (Spearman test: rho 0.33, $P < 0.001$

(MGs); rho 0.41, $P < 0.001$ (SGs)). There was also a positive and significant correlation

between mean intronic accessibility and gene expression (Spearman test: rho 0.20, $P <$

0.001 (MGs); rho 0.27, $P < 0.001$ (SGs)), which was higher for intron-rich genes (rho 0.25,

$P < 0.001$ (MGs); rho 0.33, $P < 0.001$ (SGs)), and when considering the first intron only

(rho 0.32, $P < 0.001$ (MGs); rho 0.45, $P < 0.001$ (SGs)). Quantitatively, we also observed

that intron-rich genes tend to be more expressed (Spearman test: rho 0.16, $P < 0.001$

(MGs); rho 0.30, $P < 0.001$ (SGs); Figure S2E)). Overall, these observations suggest that

chromatin accessibility within introns could be functionally involved in gene expression

regulation and is dependent on the gene architecture.

Among the target genes with a THS annotated, we found 241 important immune-

related genes such as *stat2*, *rel2* and members of the *TEP* family [61] (Table S3), as well as

671 genes that we reported in an earlier study as *Plasmodium*-responsive by comparing *P.*

falciparum-infected and non-infected *An. gambiae* midguts [36]. These include, for

example, genes encoding CLIP serine proteases, argonaute 1 and the defensin DEF1 (Table

S3). Regulatory sites at these genes are located predominantly within introns (39.4%), but

also at 5' UTRs (7.2%) and promoters (11.5%). Lastly, for this set of genes we also report

here a significant and positive correlation between chromatin accessibility and gene

expression levels (MG, Spearman test: rho 0.31 $P < 0.001$ (promoters); rho 0.10, $P < 0.05$

(introns); Figure S2F).

Overall, our results show a genome-wide correlation between chromatin

accessibility at regulatory regions (i.e. promoters and introns) and the gene expression

levels for each tissue assayed. We also confirm that these regulatory sites display the

typical pattern of histone post-translational modifications (hPTMs) characteristic of active

chromatin.

Tissue-specific chromatin accessibility correlates with differential gene expression

We found evidence for tissue-specific chromatin accessibility profiles through differential

chromatin accessibility analyses at THSs between *An. gambiae* MGs and SGs. A higher

proportion of differentially accessible regions (DiffBind regions) were more accessible in

SGs (85.1%, n=21,243) compared to MGs (Figure S3A, Table S7), and the majority were

located at promoters (26.9%) or within introns (30.2%) (Figure S3B, Table S7). The

majority of the DiffBind regions corresponded to changes in the level of accessibility

between tissues, rather than a presence/absence of a THS in one of the tissues (Figure S3C).

In total, 21,400 DiffBind regions coincided with a THS present in both biological

replicates, and we used this high-confidence set for downstream analysis (Table S7).

278   The integration of the ATAC-seq and RNA-seq data for genes that appeared

differentially expressed and accessible between the two tissues (1,920 out of a total of

3,584 DEGs; Figure S3D, Table S7), revealed a significant correlation between the level of

accessibility at the regulatory sites and the levels of gene expression in the same tissue

(5,382 Diffbind regions at 5' UTRs, promoters or introns of 1,920 DEGs; Spearman test,

rho 0.25, $P < 0.001$ (MGs); rho 0.12, $P < 0.001$ (SGs); Figure 3A). Additionally, there was

also a positive correlation between the magnitude of the change in accessibility at the

DiffBind regions within regulatory sites of DEGs and the change in gene expression

between tissues (Spearman test, promoters: rho 0.37, $P < 0.001$; introns: rho 0.19, $P <$

0.001; Figure 3B). Full details of these analyses are given in Supplementary Info.

The GO overrepresentation functional analyses, performed on the DiffBind regions

at 5' UTRs, promoters or introns of DEGs, showed different processes to be enriched in

each tissue, correlating with different functional activities such as digestion and peptide

catabolism in the MGs, or amino acid metabolism and glycolysis in the SGs (Figures 3C,

S3E, Table S7). These results conform with the processes expected for each tissue. For

example, genes related to digestion, such as trypsins, are known to be specifically

upregulated in a tissue-specific manner in MGs after a blood meal [62]. Previous studies

have also shown the upregulation of glycolytic processes in mosquito SGs [63, 64] and of

amino acid metabolism in *Anopheles* SGs in response to *Plasmodium* infection [65]. In

addition, we found more expression linked with more accessible promoters in the same

tissue for immune-related genes, such as proteases in MGs and serpins in SGs (Figure

S3E). These included, for example, serpins involved in the Toll pathway (SRPN2 and

SRPN6), and which have been linked to the *An. gambiae* immune response to *P. berghei*

sporozoites in the SGs [66]. Other examples of mosquito genes in which a functional link

was established are TF-encoding genes, such as *rel2*, which modulates anti-*Plasmodium*

factors, and other immune-related genes including the C-type lectin *ctl4* and the defensin

def1 (Table S7). The gene encoding the gambicin antimicrobial peptide *gam1*

(AGAP008645) is a good case example. This gene was more expressed in SGs, and this

upregulation coincides with several regions of higher chromatin accessibility located at the

TSS/promoter and spanning into exons and introns (Figure 3D).

A high proportion of the THSs and DiffBind regions were found within introns

(44.7%) or exons (36.6%), so they could be also implicated in regulation of expression at

the isoform rather than the gene level. Our analysis revealed evidence of isoform switching

at 176 *An. gambiae* genes, with 346 isoforms changing between the two infected tissues

(Table S8, Figure S3F). The majority (90%) of these genes contained DiffBind regions,

mostly within introns (61.7%) or at promoters (24.6%) (Figure S3G). These results suggest

a functional link between chromatin accessibility dynamics at regulatory regions (mainly

introns) and gene isoform switching.

We performed motif enrichment analysis on the regions with differential chromatin

accessibility to predict the sets of TFs that may be involved in tissue-specific functional

gene expression. By comparing the tissue in which the regulatory sites were more

accessible and the annotated genes more expressed, we could infer the functions of the TFs

in transcriptional activation or repression (i.e. higher accessibility in a tissue corresponded

to higher or lower expression in the same tissue; Table S7). We first focused on the set of

DiffBind regions annotated to 5' UTRs or promoters for DEGs specific to midguts (MGs)

and salivary glands (SGs) (Table 1). For the subset of accessible regions that annotate to

active genes, we found *de novo* motifs that match consensus sequences (binding sites) for

TFs that are known *Drosophila* activators with midgut and salivary gland-specific functions

such as serpent or odd paired(MGs) and homothorax or broad (SGs). The subset of regions

in which the accessibility change was linked to silencing were enriched in motifs similar to

binding sites of known *Drosophila* repressors, such as even, skipped or pleiohomeotic for

midguts, and forkhead or hunchback specific to salivary glands. Next, provided that the

majority of DiffBind regions were located within introns (see above) we performed

analogous analyses to predict TFs at these regions (Table 2). In the majority of cases, we

found enriched motifs similar to the ones in promoters and 5' UTRs (see above). We also

predicted TFs that appeared to be particular to introns, such as bric a brac 1 or schnurri.

Figure 4 shows some of the most relevant tissue-specific enriched motifs in this study.

Altogether, chromatin accessibility and gene expression differential analyses

between tissues allowed us to identify mosquito genes in which the switch between the

open/closed chromatin is associated with transcriptional activation in a tissue-specific

manner. We also provide some evidence that differential accessibility at intronic regulatory

regions could be related with changes in isoform rather than gene expression. Lastly, the

motif enrichment analyses allowed us to predict binding sites for potential activator or

repressor TFs with tissue-specific functions.

Chromatin accessibility allows for the identification of novel *An. gambiae* cis-

regulatory elements

ATAC-seq has been shown to capture regulatory sequences with high precision, and

therefore is an ideal assay to characterize novel cis-regulatory elements such as enhancers

and TSSs. Of the 1,685 *An. gambiae* enhancers suggested from previous studies [37, 43,

67], mostly based on computational predictions, 42% (708) were identified as THSs (Table

S9), and therefore may correspond to active enhancers in the tissues assayed here.

Furthermore, using a homology approach and *D. melanogaster* enhancer maps such as the

EnhancerAtlas [27, 28] (see Methods and Supplementary Info), we predicted 1,122 novel

enhancer-like regions. Of these regions, around 10% (103) were found to overlap with

THSs by ATAC-seq (Table S9). As a consequence, the final database comprises a total of

811 accessible enhancer-like regions in *An. gambiae*, overlapping with 2,272 THSs

annotated to 563 genes. The majority located within introns (43.3%) or promoters (21%)

(Table S9, Figure 5A). Of these 811 accessible enhancer-like regions, 293 displayed

signatures typical of active enhancers: chromatin accessibility and H3K27ac enrichment

(Figure 5B, Table S9). For around 80% (633) of the accessible enhancer-like regions

defined by ATAC-seq that we annotated here to the closest gene, that gene coincides with

the target of the enhancer reported previously by others [26, 37, 43] and therefore these are

most likely to be proximal enhancer elements. The remainder (178) may be distal enhancers

(see Methods and Supplementary Info; Table S9). There was a significant association

between chromatin accessibility at the regulatory sites and the expression of the annotated

target genes for proximal enhancers (Spearman test: rho 0.35, P < 0.001 (MGs); rho 0.15, P

< 0.05 (SGs); Figure 5C), but not for distal (P=0.66 for MGs and P=0.32 for SGs).

The integration of the differential gene expression data between the tissues and

differential chromatin accessibility at enhancer-like regions was used as a proxy to validate

functions. 51 regions were identified both as proximal enhancer-like regions and DiffBind

regions, and annotated to differentially expressed genes between the two tissues. Of these,

the most frequent role was activating: in 37 cases the enhancer region was more accessible

in the tissue where the gene was more highly expressed. However in 14 cases the

relationship was the opposite, pointing to a repressor function. There was also a significant

positive correlation between the changes in accessibility and the differential expression of

the annotated genes (Spearman test: rho 0.60, P < 0.001) (Figure 5D). The *lrim1* gene

(AGAP006348), that encodes for a leucine-rich immune protein, is a good example of a

Plasmodium-responsive gene [36], that has an experimentally validated enhancer, and that

was differentially accessible between tissues. Here, we observed the gene to be more highly

expressed in SGs, and this was associated with a DiffBind region upstream of the promoter,

which was more accessible in SGs, and that coincided with the enhancer experimentally

validated by others [68] (Figure 5E). Apart from differences in gene expression, these

regulatory elements may be also involved in differences in gene isoform expression.

Indeed, there are 38 enhancer-like regions annotated to 19 genes with isoforms that switch

expression. In addition, 20 out of these 38 enhancer-like regions contained instances of

motifs that have been shown to be characteristic of *Drosophila* intronic-splicing enhancers,

such as CTCTCT and TTATAA [69].

Finally, on the set of 2,272 THSs that overlap *An. gambiae* enhancer-like regions,

we performed motif enrichment analyses to predict enriched *de novo* motifs similar to

known binding sites of *Drosophila* TFs that could be acting through binding of enhancers.

Among the top hits, we predicted TFs involved in processes such as nucleosome

organization, reproduction and regulation of immune response (Table 3). These included

regulators such as trithorax-like, pleiohomeotic, zeste and the deformed epidermal

autoregulatory factor-1, which had motifs that annotate to 306 genes.

ATAC-seq peaks can also be used to support TSS prediction and discovery. The

majority of *An. gambiae* genes displayed THSs located at the promoter or the 5' UTRs. In

46.5% of those, the THSs coincided with the annotated TSSs (i.e. the 5' coordinate of the

annotated UTR). Around 20% of genes in the current *An. gambiae* genome annotation

(2,890) do not have annotated 5' UTRs. We observed that 35% of these (1,009) displayed

THSs located at promoters, which could be novel TSSs (Table S3), and in agreement, 51%

of them displayed chromatin states characteristic of TSSs (i.e. open-chromatin, H3K9ac,

H3K27ac, and/or H3K4me3 enrichment) (Table S9).To validate novel TSSs, and based on

the assumption that TSSs tend to be conserved [70, 71], we used a *Drosophila* dataset [72]

and identified 917 homolog TSS-like sites in *An. gambiae* annotated to 819 genes (Table

S9). Integrating this set of homolog TSS sites with the mosquito ATAC-seq data, we found

that the 28.5% of the transferred TSSs (217 out of 917) overlapped with our THSs at

promoters or 5' UTRs (Figure S4A), and displayed enrichment in active hPTMs

characteristic of promoter regions (Figure S4B). As a proof of principle, 79.7% (173) of

homolog TSSs validated mosquito annotated TSSs, and for the rest, the THSs did not

coincide with the annotated TSSs and thus could be considered as alternative TSSs. Finally,

we report 14 potentially novel TSSs that annotated to genes without 5' UTRs (Table S9).

A third type of cis regulatory sequences are insulators, specific DNA sequences that

are bound by insulator binding proteins (IBPs) and play an important role in regulating

gene expression [73, 74]. The CCCTC binding factor (CTCF) is a transcription factor

known to bind insulators and domain boundaries in vertebrates and *Drosophila*. It

contributes to long-range chromatin interactions, including enhancer-promoters, and

organization of chromatin architecture. In *An. gambiae* the CTCF-like gene (AGAP005555)

is the ortholog to CTCF in *Drosophila* and appears to be expressed in the tissues assayed

here. Based on the assumption that the binding sites for CTCF as determined by ChIP-seq

in *Drosophila* [75] should be highly conserved in *Anopheles* [76], we could identify 2,516

homolog *An. gambiae* CTCF sites, which we propose could function as mosquito insulator

elements. 30.4% of the transferred CTCF sites (764 out of 2,516) overlapped with our

ATAC-seq THSs (Table S9). For 51.3% of these (392 out of 764), the annotated gene was

ortholog to the nearest neighboring gene to the CTCF binding sites in *Drosophila*. We also

report a fraction of potential CTCF binding sites that coincide with differentially accessible

regions between midguts and salivary glands (177 out of 2,519). Of these, 29 were

annotated to differentially expressed genes such as the ortholog gene in *An. gambiae* of the

abdominal A (abd-A) gene in *Drosophila* (Figure S4C), which is part of the Bithorax

Complex [73, 74].

DISCUSSION

The aims of this study were to investigate mechanisms underlying tissue-specific

regulation of gene expression, and to map genome-wide enhancer- and TSS-like activity in

An. gambiae in vivo. In a previous study, we characterized different post-translational

modifications of histone tails (hPTMs), and the transcriptional profiles of *P. falciparum*-

infected and non-infected *An. gambiae* midguts, which allowed us to identify changes in

the epigenomic landscape of the mosquito linked to malaria infection [36]. However, this

information was insufficient to capture with high precision the location and function of

tissue-specific mosquito cis-regulatory elements (CREs). To this end, in this study we

performed the first genome-wide chromatin accessibility profiling by ATAC-seq, together

with gene expression analysis by RNA-seq, in *An. gambiae* tissues infected with *P.*

falciparum.

We report thousands of accessible regulatory sequences (THSs) involved in tissue-

specific transcriptional regulation, which were distributed genome-wide, particularly at

introns and promoters (regions 1 Kb upstream of genes). This pattern is in agreement with

the distribution of accessible regulatory sites reported in *Drosophila* by ATAC-seq [25,

53], and in *Ae. aegypti* and *An. gambiae* mosquitoes by FAIRE-seq [38, 41]. Chromatin

accessibility at regulatory sites is generally considered a good predictor of gene activity

[48, 77], which our results support, showing a positive correlation between open-chromatin

at regulatory regions and gene expression. By integrating our ATAC-seq and ChIP-seq data

for various hPTMs [36], we also describe a relationship between accessibility and

epigenetic states at these regulatory sites: the enrichment of hPTMs with a priori activating

(H3K9ac, H3K27ac) or repressor (H3K9me3) roles that relate to gene function.

In *D. melanogaster*, introns are known to harbour regulatory sequences and to have

an important role in the spatio-temporal control of gene expression [78, 79]. In *An.*

gambiae, we demonstrate a relationship between accessibility at introns, gene expression,

and H3K27ac enrichment at the active site, suggesting that intronic THSs are involved in

functional regulation of gene expression. Another important observation is that gene

architecture influences the proportion of open CREs at introns respective to promoters, and

vice versa: genes with higher intronic content contain more intronic THSs, and moreover,

chromatin accessibility at these regions also correlates with higher accessibility of the

cognate promoters and higher gene expression. Our results agree with previous hypotheses

that longer introns would be more efficient in transcriptional enhancement [80], and is also

in agreement with observations that introns can influence transcription by looping or

coupling with promoters, transcribing sRNAs, or accumulating regulatory sequences [6,

79]. This is a poorly understood phenomenon that has been termed intron-mediated

enhancement. It seems to be conserved among eukaryotes, including *Drosophila* [81, 82].

Our comparative analyses of mosquito midguts and salivary glands allowed us to

unveil tissue-specific regulatory elements that may underlie functional differences between

tissues. We identified thousands of THSs displaying differential chromatin accessibility

between tissues, annotated to differentially expressed genes. A major proportion of

differentially-accessible regions were more accessible in salivary glands, and were located

at promoters or introns. A higher fraction of ATAC-seq nucleosome-free reads were seen at

salivary glands when compared to midguts, which could reflect both that the ATAC-seq

assay worked better in this tissue, or that salivary glands display a more accessible

regulatory landscape. Notably, the integration of our differential datasets revealed a

correlation between accessibility and the transcriptional state, i.e. genes tended to be more

expressed in the tissue where the regulatory sites were more accessible. Moreover, these

genes appeared to have tissue-specific functions, such as digestion in midguts and amino

acid metabolism in salivary glands, which has also been shown to be a pathway affected by

Plasmodium infection (Pinheiro-Silva et al 2015). The next step was to predict the

regulatory proteins involved in these functional responses. Here we report that the CREs

with tissue-specific accessibility appear enriched in motifs resembling the consensus

binding sites of *Drosophila* TFs involved in tissue-specific processes, including TFs with

immune functions in midguts and salivary glands such as srp and rel. The functions of most

of these predicted *Drosophila* TFs are likely conserved in mosquitoes [83, 84]. Indeed,

many of the TFs predicted in this study, such as srp, Deaf1 or Trl, agree with those

predicted by previous studies that employed FAIRE-seq in different *Ae. aegypti* and *An.*

gambiae tissues [38, 41]. Among the differentially-expressed genes that seem to be

regulated by differentially accessible CREs and that contain the above motifs, we found

examples of immune-related genes [61], such as *srpn6* or *gam1*, and genes that we

identified in our previous study as *Plasmodium*-responsive [36], such as the defensin *def1*.

The regulation of these genes is likely to be crucial in determining mosquito infection

phenotypes that impact traits such as vector competence, immune response, longevity or

reproduction. Until now, the regulatory elements of most immune-related and *Plasmodium*-

responsive *An. gambiae* genes have been uncharacterized.

Another motivation of this study is the genome-wide mapping, discovery and

validation of functional enhancers and TSSs in *An. gambiae;* several enhancer elements

have previously been predicted bioinformatically, but their *in vivo* characterization and

functions remain poorly explored. Relatively few mosquito candidate enhancer sequences

have been defined, compared to the four thousand enhancers described in *Drosophila*

(EnhancerAtlas database, [27, 28]), and only a very small number have been

experimentally validated in *Anopheles* [37, 43]. Using our ATAC-seq data, we map *in vivo*

42% (708) of those 1,685 *An. gambiae* enhancers predicted bioinformatically [37, 43, 67].

In addition, we found 1,122 potentially novel *An. gambiae* regulatory regions that are

homolog to known *D. melanogaster* enhancers [26], and which do not coincide with

previously predicted mosquito regulatory sequences. Of these 1,122 enhancer-like regions,

around 10% (103) were found to be accessible, by ATAC-seq analysis. The remaining

1,019 regions homolog to *Drosophila* enhancers were not accessible according to ATAC-

seq analysis. This could be due to the fact that these enhancers were originally identified in

D. melanogaster under different experimental conditions and tissues. In total we report 811

enhancer-like regions accessible according to ATAC-seq analysis, that are located

throughout the genome, mainly in introns and exons. Our results also show that the

majority of enhancer sites (around 80%) would regulate the neighboring gene. This

distribution and pattern is in agreement with previous observations in other model

organisms, which suggest enhancers are mainly proximal to or intragenic of target genes

[26, 85].

In support of the functional role of active enhancer sites in *An. gambiae*, a positive

correlation was seen for the majority of enhancer sites between chromatin accessibility at

proximal regulatory sites, and the gene expression of the target genes. A small number of

potentially distal regulatory networks, which are known to play important roles during

development and differentiation processes in *Drosophila*, were also identified in *Anopheles*,

based on the location of ortholog genes in *Drosophila*.

Finally, a powerful tool to validate the enhancer function is the combined analysis

of differential chromatin accessibility at enhancers and gene expression changes between

tissues. We report 51 enhancer-like regions with differential chromatin accessibility in

midguts and salivary glands, that annotated to differentially expressed genes. For 37 out of

the 51, the enhancer was more accessible in the same tissue in which the gene was more

expressed, and this association was also quantitative. Importantly, we observed that 141 of

the accessible enhancers were annotated to genes that we previously reported to be

Plasmodium-responsive [36]. One example is the leucine-rich repeat protein 1 (LRIM1)

encoding gene, that harbours an enhancer that switches chromatin states between tissues,

and thus is implicated in tissue-specific gene expression regulation. Future studies in *An.*

gambiae, applying approaches such as STARR-seq, transgenesis or Hi-C are now needed to

validate the enhancers function.

CONCLUSIONS

In summary, we applied for the first time high-throughput genome-wide chromatin

accessibility profiling by ATAC-seq in *Plasmodium*-infected *An. gambiae*, providing new

evidence on the mechanisms of transcriptional regulation in mosquitoes. The integrative

analyses of ATAC-seq, RNA-seq and ChIP-seq allowed us to link chromatin accessibility

and structure with function, as well as to characterize tissue-specific CREs potentially

involved in mosquito immune responses to *Plasmodium*. We also show ATAC-seq is a

powerful tool for the *in vivo* discovery and characterisation of functionally active enhancers

as well as insulator sequences, which are still poorly understood in mosquitoes. Such a

detailed map of the regulatory genome of the main human malaria vector *An. gambiae* fills

an important gap in the field, and it is essential for designing new strategies of disease

control based on the genetic manipulation of mosquitoes.

METHODS

Mosquito rearing and experimental infections

Five-day old female *An. gambiae* s.s. Kisumu mosquitoes from a genetically outbred

laboratory colony in the University of Glasgow were used for experimental infections.

Mosquitoes were maintained under standard insectary conditions (27□±□2 °C, 80□±□5%

relative humidity, 12:12 LD). Females were fed through membrane feeders on blood

containing gametocytes of *P. falciparum* clone 3D7, prepared according to standard

protocols [86]. Thereafter the mosquitoes were given access to a solution of 5% glucose/

0.05% 4-aminobenzoic acid *ad libitum*. Three independent experimental infections

(Infections 1, 2 and 3) were carried out. Prevalence (percentage of infected mosquitoes) and

intensity of infection (median number of oocysts) are described in Table S1. We performed

dissection of midguts (MGs) on adults at 7 days post-infection and of salivary glands (SGs)

at 14 days post-blood meal.

ATAC-seq library preparation and sequencing

We performed the ATAC-seq protocol using fresh MGs and SGs from ~20 individual

mosquitoes from two independent infections (Table S1). Mosquito tissues were

resuspended in lysis buffer [47] to permeabilize membranes. The nuclei pellet was

resuspended in the transposition reaction mix (25 μl of 2×TD Buffer, 1.25 μl of Tn5

Transposase and 23.75 μl of nuclease free water), and incubated for 30 min at 37°C. All

samples were purified using the Qiagen MiniElute Kit. Library amplification was carried

out with 2X KAPA HiFi mix and 1.25 μM of Nextera primers [47]. The optimal cycle

number was determined by qPCR with conditions as originally described in [47]. ATAC-

seq libraries were sequenced at BGI (China) with an Illumina HiSeq4000 sequencer to

obtain 25-37 M of 2×50 bp paired-end reads (Table S2).

RNA isolation, RNA-seq library preparation and sequencing

We prepared RNA-seq libraries from *P. falciparum*-infected midguts and salivary glands

obtained in two independent experimental infections (2 and 3, Table S1). Immediately after

dissection, tissues were stored in TRIzol (Invitrogen) and frozen at -80ºC until subsequent

processing. Total RNA was extracted from a pool of ~□30 midguts and a pool of ~60

salivary glands from 30 mosquitoes using the TRIzol manufacturer protocol. RNA

concentration was quantified using a Qubit® 2.0 Fluorometer, and RNA integrity was

determined with an Agilent 2100 Bioanalyzer. We used the Ovation® Universal RNA-seq

System (Nugen Technologies) for strand specific RNA-seq library construction following

the manufacturer's instructions. Custom primers specific to mosquito ribosomal sequences

were designed to reduce the percentage of ribosomal reads in the sample and the ribo-

depletion step was incorporated into the standard workflow (Table S10). Libraries were

sequenced at Cabimer (Spain) using an Illumina NextSeq500 for both 2x150 bp paired-end

and 1x75 bp single-end reads.

ATAC-seq data processing and analyses

We conducted ATAC-seq data analyses according to the recommendations of the

ENCODE Pipeline (https://www.encodeproject.org/atac-seq/, [48]). First, raw reads were

trimmed 20 bases from the 3′ end of each read (-3 20), and aligned to the *An. gambiae*

PEST genome (AgamP4) with Bowtie2 [87] (v2.4.1) using default parameters, except for –

no-unal –no-mixed -X 2000. We then applied a MAPQ score threshold (10) and sorted and

deduplicated the reads using SAMtools [88] (v1.10). To adjust the known bias and ensure

the mapping of Tn5 cutting sites, we shifted aligned reads +4 bp for + strands and −5 bp for

− strands with ATACSeqQC [50] (v1.10). We removed not properly-paired reads and

extracted nucleosome-free fragments with a size threshold of 130 bp (SAMtools). We

performed peak-calling on nucleosome-free reads with MACS2 [52] (v.2.1.2) *callpeak*

module and the following parameters: -f BAMPE -g 273109044 -q 0.01 -B --keep-dup all --

nomodel --nolambda. We refer to ATAC-seq peaks as Tn5 hypersensitive sites (THSs). To

identify THSs unique or common across samples, we used BEDTools *intersect* [89]

requiring a minimum overlap of 51% (-f/-F 0.51). We annotated THSs to genomic features

combining HOMER [90] (v4.11) and ChIPseeker [91] (v1.22) (see Supplementary

Methods). We used the AgamP4.12 gene set [92] and considered the first coordinate of the

5' UTRs as the TSSs. For genes without an annotated 5' UTR we took the translation start

site (ATG codon) as the reference point. In either case, the 1 Kb upstream window was

considered as the putative promoter region. The mean length of the annotated 5' UTRs was

253 bp, and the higher density in the distribution of values is ~100 bp, so even if some

genes do not have annotated 5' UTRs, we expect a 1 Kb window to capture the whole

promoter (Figure S5A). Metadata for the annotated genes was obtained from the Gene

Ontology (GO), Kyoto Encyclopedia of Genes and Genomes (KEGG) and Pfam databases

using DAVID [93] and PANTHER [94], and the WikiPathways [95] and ImmunoDB [61]

databases (Table S3). To quantify the ATAC-seq nucleosome-free signal enrichment at

genomic regions of interest, we used BEDTools *intersect* -c. The read counts were

normalized (RPKM) and we added a pseudocount (0.1) when required to get finite values.

We categorized genes into high, medium or low groups based on promoter chromatin

accessibility with threshold values determined by dividing the signal in three quantile

groups according to their means (*Hmisc::cut2* R function).

We extracted mononucleosomal reads applying a 171-256 bp size threshold

(SAMtools) and predicted nucleosome dyads using NucleoATAC [56] (v0.3.4) (see

Supplementary Methods).

RNA-seq data processing and analyses

We trimmed adapters from the raw reads using BBDuk (v38.79) with -tbo -tpe -

minlength=35 parameters and removed rRNA contamination using SortMeRNA [96] (v4.2)

with default parameters. Apart from the default rRNA databases, we used additional large

and small subunit *An. gambiae* and *P. falciparum* rRNA sequences from the SILVA

database [97, 98] (LSU r132/SSU r138). Cleaned directional RNA-seq reads were mapped

against the AgamP4 v2.00 reference genome using STAR [99] (v2.7.3a). Two different sets

of reads were available, 2x150 bp and 1x75bp, which were processed in parallel until we

combined the raw counts. Raw counts at the gene level were obtained using CoCo [100]

(v.0.2.2) and then provided to DESeq2 [101] (v1.26) for normalization (see Supplementary

Methods). Correlation and PCA plots by deepTools2 [102] (v3.4.1) showed higher

similarity between infections than between tissues and no clustering based on the

sequencing approach (Figure S5B, Figure S5C), which is consistent with results using

summed counts. Normalized counts were comparable between infections and higher in SGs

(Figure S5D). We also observed high correlation (~75%) between the RNA-seq data in this

study and data from our previous study [36] (Figure S5E). We categorized normalized

counts in high, medium or low groups as described above (*Hmisc::cut2* R function).

Normalized RNA-seq counts (DESeq2) for each gene are included in Table S6.

Integration of ATAC-seq, RNA-seq and ChIP-seq data

We used ChromHMM [59] (v1.2) to compute genome-wide chromatin state predictions on

the *An. gambiae* genome based on ATAC-seq nucleosome-free signal enrichment levels

and hPTMs data from our previous study [36] (see Supplementary Methods). This analysis

was performed only on midguts for which hPTMs data was available.

For the correlation and integrative analyses of ATAC-seq, ChiP-seq and RNA-seq

data, we restricted the analysis to a subset of 8,245 genes that harbour high confidence

regulatory regions. We first discarded genes with very close adjacent genes encoded on

opposing strands (with upstream promoters likely overlapping) and genes with the gene

bodies or putative promoters overlapping or embedded into many other gene bodies or

promoters (> 2). Following their categorization into high, medium, low accessibility groups

(see above) we identified genes displaying different patterns of regulation: activating when

the change in accessibility is in the same direction, and potential repressor events when the

promoter is accessible but the gene is weakly expressed or silent.

Differential ATAC-seq and RNA-seq analyses

We used the DiffBind R package [103] (v2.14) to assess differential chromatin accessibility

at given locations between mosquito MGs and SGs. As input for DiffBind, we used the

ATAC-seq nucleosome-free reads and the THSs. Infection 1 and Infection 2 were used as

biological replicates. Differential gene expression analyses between mosquito MGs and

SGs were conducted using the DESeq2, edgeR [104] (v3.28.1) and DREAMSeq [105]

(v1.0.4) R packages to identify Differentially Expressed Genes (DEGs) (Table S7). We

used the IsoformSwitchAnalyzeR R package [106] (v1.8) to analyze differential gene

isoforms expression between MGs and SGs. See Supplementary Methods for more

information and details on these analyses.

Characterization of novel regulatory elements

To map active regulatory sites, we used *An. gambiae* enhancers predicted computationally

by others from *Drosophila* enhancers (N=1,628), or from *Drosophila*-enhancer motifs

(N=51) [37, 67], as well a few *Anopheles* enhancers identified previously by STARR-seq

(N=6) [43] (see Supplementary Methods). Next, to generate a set of novel candidates, we

downloaded *D. melanogaster* collections of enhancers [27, 28], including some activity-

based enhancer-target gene assignments [26]. We then used the UCSC LiftOver tool

webserver (https://genome.ucsc.edu/cgi-bin/hgLiftOver, [107]), which uses homology data

between species, to transfer coordinates to *An. gambiae* (see Supplementary Methods). In

both sets of enhancers, we checked the overlap of the novel enhancer-like elements with

our THSs using BEDTools *intersect* and incorporated the annotation of the THSs (see

above and Supplementary Methods). The target genes for the previous enhancers were

obtained from the previous studies (see above) and we obtained *An. gambiae* orthologs

when needed using FlyBase [42], VectorBase [92] and OrthoMCL [108]. We considered

proximal enhancer-like regions those annotated by our approach to the same genes than the

original targets in *Anopheles*, or any corresponding ortholog in *Drosophila*. To correct our

annotation based on the nearest neighboring gene, we included the target genes identified

by others when we could obtain an unambiguous single target gene from the published data

sets. We considered a regulatory region to be potentially distal if located > 2 Kb away from

the promoter of the target gene. To explore the relationship between the chromatin

accessibility at these regions and expression of the annotated genes, we quantified the

ATAC-seq signal at the THSs-overlapping enhancer-like regions as described above.

To discover novel TSS-like sites, *Drosophila* TSSs were downloaded from the

Eukaryotic Promoter Database (Release 128-005, [72]), and as we did for enhancers, we

used a homology-based approach to transfer coordinates to the *An. gambiae* genome. We

then checked annotation to genomic features (HOMER), overlap with THSs (BEDTools

intersect) and whether the annotated genes already have 5' UTRs/TSS annotated, in order

to classify these elements as novel.

To characterise CTCF binding sites, we downloaded binding sites for *Drosophila*

CTCF from the ChIP-Atlas [75]. As described above, we transferred the coordinates from

D. melanogaster to the *An. gambiae* genome based in homology.

Motif enrichment analysis

We performed d*e novo* motif analysis using HOMER. We applied this pipeline to different

sets of THSs: activating or repressor, depending on the pattern of promoter accessibility

and gene expression of the annotated gene. This analysis was conducted separately on the

set of DiffBind regulatory regions at different locations and on the set of enhancer-like

elements (see Results). We used the *findMotifsGenome.pl* module considering the THSs

summit and searched for motifs in 100 bp in each direction (-size -100,100). See

Supplementary Methods for additional details on this analysis.

DECLARATIONS

Ethics approval and consent to participate

Not applicable.

Consent for publication

Not applicable.

Availability of data and materials

ATAC-seq and RNA-seq data supporting the conclusions of this article are deposited in the

GEO repository under accession number GSE152924,

https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/geo/query/acc.cgi?acc=GSE152924. The datasets supporting

the conclusions of this article are included within the article and its additional files.

Competing interests

The authors declare that they have no competing interests.

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Authors' contributions

EG-D conceived and supervised the project. EG-D and LR-C designed the experiments.

JLR and EG-D wrote the manuscript. LR-C edited the manuscript and provided

infrastructure for mosquito rearing, parasite culture and mosquito infection. EG-D and LR-

C performed laboratory experiments. JLR analyzed the sequencing data with supervision

from EG-D. All authors read and approved the final manuscript.

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FIGURE LEGENDS

FIGURE 1: ATAC-seq allows for the genome-wide profiling of chromatin accessibility

and nucleosome occupancy in *An. gambiae*

(a) ATAC-seq fragment size distribution corresponding to *P. falciparum*-infected *An.*

gambiae midguts (MGs) and salivary glands (SGs). I1 and I2 are biological replicates

(independent infections). A large proportion of reads are less than 100 bp, which represents

the nucleosome-free region. The plot also shows a clear periodicity, which is indicative of

nucleosome occupancy. To filter THSs (nucleosome-free regions) and mononucleosomes,

we selected reads in the ranges of 50-130 bp and 171-256 bp, respectively.

(b) Average profile plots of normalized (RPKM) ATAC-seq nucleosome-free and

mononucleosomal reads surrounding *An. gambiae* annotated TSSs (±1 Kb). Higher

mononucleosomal signals flank the nucleosome-free region at TSSs. Profiles in grey

represent reads density at random genomic coordinates.

(c) Annotation of THSs to features genome-wide: intergenic regions, promoters, 5' UTRs,

exons, introns, 3' UTRs and downstream regions. Most THSs annotate to introns.

(d) Density plot showing the position of THSs with respect to the TSSs (or ATG start

codons for genes without annotated 5' UTRs). Higher densities of THSs occur within 1 Kb

upstream the TSSs or ATG sites. The dashed lines indicate the putative promoter region

located 1 Kb upstream.

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FIGURE 2: Chromatin accessibility by ATAC-seq is predictive of active hPTMs and

tissue-specific gene expression

(a) Heatmap showing the overlap of various genomic features with chromatin states

inferred using ChromHMM. Darker red in the first column indicates higher percentage of

the genome overlapping with a particular state. In all other columns the red indicates the

likelihood of finding a chromatin state compared to the random expectation. Most of the

genome is in a depleted state. Introns and promoters display a typical state of open-

chromatin and activating hPTMs.

(b) Correlation between ATAC-seq nucleosome-free signal at TSSs and promoters and

gene expression. Profile plots (left) show changes in ATAC-seq nucleosome-free signal

enrichment at each tissue with respect to the TSSs ($\pm$ 1 Kb). Genes are divided into groups

and ranked by their mRNA levels (high, medium or low). Violin plots (right) show mRNA

levels for genes grouped by their level of ATAC-seq nucleosome-free signal at promoters:

high, medium and low chromatin accessibility. Plot width accounts for the density of

repeated values in the range. Median values are marked with a black dot.

(c) Heatmap showing ATAC-seq nucleosome-free enrichment, gene expression levels of

the annotated gene, and hPTMs enrichment at promoters. Data correspond to a subset of

non-overlapping genes with a THSs annotated in which there is a positive relationship

between accessibility and gene expression, i.e. transcriptional activation (see Methods). The

plot is for midguts. Genes are ordered by mRNA levels. ATAC-seq and ChIP-seq

enrichments at promoters are normalized (RPKM) and the ChIP-seq input-corrected. Data

are mean-centered.

(d) Frequency of THSs annotated to various regions for genes grouped by their intronic

composition: intron-rich, intron-medium and intron-poor. THSs tend to localise at introns,

rather than at the promoter, in high intronic genes, and the opposite is true for low intronic

genes. Diagrams show the archetypal structure for the three categories of genes based on

their intronic composition.

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FIGURE 3: Differential chromatin accessibility between tissues correlates with changes in

gene expression

(a) Heatmap showing ATAC-seq nucleosome-free enrichment at DiffBind regions located

at 5' UTRs, promoters or introns of differentially expressed genes and their expression

levels. There is a positive and significant correlation between chromatin accessibility at

these regions and gene expression. Genes are ordered by normalized ATAC-seq enrichment

(RPKM). Data are mean-centered and for infection 2.

(b) Heatmap showing chromatin accessibility and gene expression fold changes between

tissues for differentially expressed genes that display a DiffBind region at the promoters

and/or 5' UTRs and at the introns. Changes occur in most cases in the same direction and

there is a positive and significant correlation between the magnitude of changes in

accessibility and expression.

(c) Top GO Biological Processes terms overrepresented in the set of DEGs with DiffBind

regions located at promoters, 5' UTRs and/or introns for each tissue.

(d) Chromatin accessibility and gene expression profiles in the region containing the

antimicrobial peptide GAM1-encoding gene (AGAP008645) which is differentially

expressed and differentially accessible between tissues. The tracks displayed are for

midguts and salivary glands from infection 2. The location of 5' UTRs, THSs, and the

regions of differential accessibility (DiffBind) are indicated by colored bars. All tracks are

shown at equal scale.

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1123   **FIGURE 4**: Relevant enriched motifs in differentially accessible regions

1124   The figure shows relevant de novo enriched motifs found among the top results in

1125   differentially accessible regions at the promoters, 5' UTRs and/or introns of differentially

1126   expressed genes. Full results can be consulted in Tables 1-2. Motifs are similar to known

1127   *Drosophila* TFs with known tissue-specific and activator and repressor functions.

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FIGURE 5: Genome-wide *in vivo* mapping and functional characterisation of *An. gambiae*

enhancers

(a) Annotation of accessible enhancers to various genomic features: intergenic regions,

promoters, 5' UTRs, exons, introns, 3' UTRs and downstream regions. The majority of

enhancers locate at introns or promoters.

(b) Chromatin states at the accessible enhancers. As expected, these regulatory regions

appear to be H3K27ac-enriched.

(c) Scatter plots showing a positive correlation between chromatin accessibility for a subset

of proximal enhancers (see Results), and gene expression of the nearest target gene. Data is

for midguts (left) and salivary glands (right).

(d) Heatmap displaying chromatin accessibility and gene expression fold changes between

tissues for differentially expressed genes that show a DiffBind region coinciding with a

proximal enhancer element. Changes occur in most cases in the same direction and there is

a positive correlation in the magnitude of the change.

(e) Chromatin accessibility and gene expression profiles in the region containing the

LRIM1-encoding gene (AGAP006348), a *Plasmodium*-responsive gene based on our

previous study [36]. Here, this gene is differentially expressed and displays a differentially

accessible enhancer between tissues. The tracks shown are for midguts and salivary glands

from infection 2. All tracks are shown at equal scale. The location of various genomic

features: 5' UTRs, THSs, DiffBind regions and chromatin states, are indicated by colored

bars. The enhancer element as predicted by others [43] that is coinciding with the

differential accessibility region is highlighted as the pink box.

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1153   **TABLES**

1154   **TABLE 1**: List of enriched consensus motifs corresponding to know *Drosophila* TFs in the

1155   set of THSs at DiffBind regions that annotate to the promoters or 5' UTRs of differentially

1156   expressed genes. Results are separated by tissues and activator and repressor candidates.

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1161 **TABLE 2**: List of enriched consensus motifs corresponding to know *Drosophila* TFs in the

1162 set of THSs at DiffBind regions that annotate to introns of differentially expressed genes.

1163 Results are separated by tissues and activator and repressor candidates.

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1168 **TABLE 3**: List of enriched consensus motifs corresponding to known *Drosophila* TFs in

1169 the set of THSs at *An. gambiae* enhancer-like regions.

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ADDITIONAL MATERIAL

File name: **Figure S1**

File format: .pdf

Title of data: Figure S1

Description of data:

(a) Spearman correlation plot showing similarity between replicates (I1/I2) and tissues:

midguts (MGs) and salivary glands (SGs). Samples are ordered by an unsupervised

hierarchical clustering approach and cluster by tissue rather than biological replicate

(experimental infection). (b) Principal Component Analysis on the replicates (I1/I2) and

tissues, MGs and SGs. The plot shows the percentage of variance explained by PC1 and

PC2 axes and the distribution of the samples along the first two Principal Components.

Note that PC1 explains 96.3% of the variance and PC2 6.2%. Samples cluster by tissue

rather than by biological replicate. (c) ATAC-seq density of insertions surrounding *An.*

gambiae annotated TSSs (± 1 Kb). The average profiles are shown in solid colored-lines to

account for dispersion. Different colors correspond to each biological replicate. Most

insertions occur at the TSSs consistently in the two infections. (d) Normalized (RPKM)

ATAC-seq nucleosome-free signal at THSs per infection and tissue. Median values are

marked with black dots. Chromatin accessibility at THSs is comparable across samples. (e)

Venn diagram showing the overlap between THSs identified in each infection for each

tissue independently. The areas are proportional to the numbers of regions. The replicability

is high as the majority of THSs are present in both experimental infections. (f) Enrichment

plots depicting the fraction of ATAC-seq monucleosomal reads (top) and nucleosome-free

reads (bottom) in each tissue that map to different genomic features: 5' UTRs, promoters,

exons and introns. A larger proportion of ATAC-seq signal occurs at introns and exons. (g)

Average profile plot of normalized (RPKM) ATAC-seq nucleosome-free reads at ChIPseq

peaks for various histone post-translational modifications (hPTMs). ChIP-seq peaks are

from our previous study and correspond to *P. falciparum*-infected *An. gambiae* midguts

[36]. The region plotted comprises $\pm$ 1 Kb around the hPTMs peak summits. Profiles in

grey represent enrichment at random genomic coordinates. ChIP-seq peaks of H3K9ac,

H3K27ac, and to a less extent H3K4me3 are more enriched in nucleosome-free reads (i.e.

accessible), whereas H3K9me3 peaks appear depleted.

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File name: **Figure S2**

File format: .pdf

Title of data: Figure S2

Description of data:

(a) Heatmap of ChromHMM emission parameters using an eight chromatin states model

based on ATAC-seq and hPTMs enrichment patterns in midguts. The integration of

ATACseq and ChIP-seq data allows for the partition of the genome into eight epigenetic

states. ChIP-seq data was obtained from our previous study [36]. Darker red indicates

higher enrichment of a particular signal. (b) Average nucleosome fuzziness score at

promoters of genes grouped by gene expression levels (high, medium, low). Nucleosome

fuzziness by DANPOS2 measures the deviation of nucleosome positions, and in our study,

it is higher for less expressed and silent genes. Plot width accounts for the density of

repeated values in the range. Median values are marked with black dots. The P value is

indicated for the Wilcoxon signed-rank tests between scores of genes expressed at different

levels. (c) Heatmap showing ATAC-seq nucleosome-free enrichment at promoters and

gene expression levels of the annotated gene. Data correspond to a subset of non-

overlapping genes with a THSs annotated and in which there is a positive relationship

between accessibility and gene expression, i.e. transcriptional activation (see Methods). The

plot is for salivary glands. Genes are ordered by mRNA levels. Data are mean-centered.

ATACseq enrichment at promoters is normalized (RPKM). (d) Heatmap showing ATAC-

seq nucleosome-free enrichment at promoters and gene expression levels of the annotated

gene. Data correspond to a subset of non-overlapping genes with a THSs annotated and in

which there is an opposite relationship between accessibility and gene expression, possibly

pointing to repressor regulatory events (see Methods). Genes are ordered by mRNA levels.

Data are mean-centered. ATAC-seq enrichment at promoters is normalized (RPKM). (e)

The plot shows mRNA levels for genes grouped by their intronic composition (see Figure

2d). Intron-rich genes tend to be more expressed. Plot width accounts for the density of

repeated values in the range. Median values are marked with a black dot. The P value is

indicated for the Wilcoxon signed-rank tests between genes expressed at different levels. (f)

Heatmap showing ATAC-seq nucleosome-free enrichment at promoters and introns and

gene expression levels of *Plasmodium*-responsive genes [36]. The plot is for midguts.

Genes are ordered by ATAC-seq enrichment at promoters. ATAC-seq enrichment is

normalized (RPKM). Data are mean-centered.

1239

File name: **Figure S3**

File format: .pdf

Title of data: Figure S3

Description of data:

(a) Volcano plot displaying DiffBind regions between midguts and salivary glands. The x

axis is the fold change difference between tissues, and the y axis indicates the level of

significance. Significant DiffBind regions are marked in pink. A negative fold change (x

axis) indicates higher accessibility in salivary glands whereas a positive value indicates the

opposite, that accessibility is higher in midguts. (b) Annotation of DiffBind regions to

features genome-wide: intergenic regions, promoters, 5' UTRs, exons, introns, 3' UTRs

and downstream regions. Most DiffBind regions annotate to introns. (c) Venn diagram

showing the overlap between THSs identified in midguts and salivary glands. The majority

of THSs are common, but there is a fraction (30.7% for midguts and 26% for salivary

glands) that is tissue-specific. The areas of the circles are proportional to the numbers of

THSs. (d) Volcano plot displaying differentially expressed genes (DEGs) between midguts

and salivary glands. The x axis is the fold change difference between tissues, and the y axis

indicates the level of significance by DESeq2. Significant DEGs are marked in yellow

(DESeq2) and in pink if part of the final set (DESeq2/edgeR/DREAMSeq, see Methods). A

negative fold change (x axis) indicates higher accessibility in salivary glands whereas a

positive value indicates the opposite, accessibility is higher in midguts. (e) Top PANTHER

protein classes overrepresented in the set of DEGs with DiffBind regions located at

promoters, 5' UTRs and/or introns per tissue. Overrepresented pathways are also shown for

salivary glands (results are not significant in the case of midguts). (f) Volcano plot

displaying genes with significant isoform switches between midguts and salivary glands.

The y axis is the significance while the x axis represents the Isoform Fractions difference

(dIF). Dashed vertical lines mark a threshold in significance of 0.05 (y axis) and in dIF of

0.1 in each sense that we use to filter high confidence switching events. A negative dIF

indicates higher expression of the isoform in salivary glands, whereas a positive value

indicates the opposite, higher isoform mRNA levels in midguts. (g) Venn diagram showing

the overlap between genes displaying isoforms switching and genes with a DiffBind region

annotated. The areas of the circles are proportional to the numbers of genes.

1271

File name: **Figure S4**

File format: .pdf

Title of data: Figure S4

Description of data:

(a) Annotation of accessible TSS-like regions to various genomic features: intergenic

regions, promoters, 5' UTRs, exons, introns, 3' UTRs and downstream regions. The

majority of regulatory sites are located at 5' UTRs and promoters. (b) Chromatin states at

the accessible TSS-like regions. As expected, these regulatory regions are accessible and

H3K9ac/H3K27ac/H3K4me3-enriched. (c) Chromatin accessibility and gene expression

profiles in the region containing the gene encoding the homeobox protein abdominal-A

homolog (AGAP004662). Here, this gene is differentially expressed and displays a

differentially accessible region between tissues, which is coinciding with a region that is

homolog to a CTCF binding site in *Drosophila* at the promoter of the ortholog gene. The

tracks shown are for midguts and salivary glands from infection 2. All tracks are shown at

equal scale. The location of various genomic features: 5' UTRs, THSs, DiffBind regions,

and the regions.

1288

File name: **Figure S5**

File format: .pdf

Title of data: Figure S5

Description of data:

(a) Density plot showing the lengths of the annotated 5' UTRs. The mean length is 253 bp

and the higher density occurs around 100 bp, so we expect a 1 Kb window to capture well

the promoter regions. (b) Spearman correlation plots (top) and Principal Component

Analyses (bottom) for two experimental infections and for paired-end (left) and single-end

(right) sequencing approaches. Samples are ordered by an unsupervised hierarchical

clustering in the correlation heatmaps. Samples cluster by tissue rather than experimental

infections. (c) Plots are as shown in (b) but with the samples by both sequencing

approaches. Samples cluster by tissues and experimental infections rather than sequencing

approaches. (d) Gene expression levels at each sample. Median values are marked with a

black dot. Gene expression is comparable between experimental infections and higher in

salivary glands. The P value is indicated for the Wilcoxon signed-rank tests. (e) Spearman

correlation plot as shown in (b,c) but integrating the RNA-seq data sets of *P. falciparum-*

infected *An. gambiae* midguts in our previous study [36]. The RNA-seq assays are

comparable, with around 70% positive correlation.

1307

File name: **Figure S6**

File format: .pdf

Title of data: Figure S6

Description of data:

(a) Example of Gene Regulatory Network showing groups of co-regulated genes, genes that

display active binding sites for a particular TF, and the TF-encoding gene. The line plot

shows in dark red the gene expression profile of the homothorax TF-encoding gene

(AGAP002178) and the predicted target genes following the same pattern of expression in

dark grey. Relevant target genes involved in mosquito immunity are depicted in dark blue.

(b) Chromatin accessibility and gene expression profiles in the region containing the DEF1-

encoding gene (AGAO011294), which is a *Plasmodium*-responsive gene based on our

previous study [36] and a case example here of a gene involved in mosquito immunity that

is differentially accessible and expressed between tissues. The tracks displayed are for

midguts and salivary glands from infection 2. The location of 5' UTRs, THSs, and the

chromatin states are indicated by colored bars. We also show the predicted binding site and

motif for the homothorax TF based on the motif enrichment analysis (see Figure S6A). All

tracks are shown at equal scale. (c) Heatmap showing gene expression levels and ATAC-

seq nucleosome-free enrichment at promoters of differentially expressed genes (only for

infection 2). There is a positive and significant correlation between chromatin accessibility

and gene expression for high/medium expressed genes. Genes are ordered by mRNA levels.

ATAC-seq enrichment is normalized (RPKM). Data are mean-centered. (d) Venn diagram

showing the overlap between the set of differentially expressed genes and genes with

differentially accessible regulatory (DiffBind) regions located at 5' UTRs or promoters.

The areas of the circles are proportional to the numbers of genes. (e) Chromatin

accessibility and gene expression profiles in the region containing the cation transporter-

encoding gene AGAP003039, which is an example of a gene targeted by a distal enhancer

[37]. The enhancer region is differentially accessible and more accessible in salivary glands

and the target gene is differentially expressed in the same tissue. The tracks shown are for

midguts and salivary glands from infection 2. All tracks are shown at equal scale. The

location of 5' UTRs, THSs and DiffBind regions are indicated by colored bars. The

accessibility at the enhancer regions and the expression profile of the target gene are

highlighted in red.

1340

File name: **Table S1_Infections**

File format: .docx

Title of data: Table S1

Description of data:

Information on the prevalence (percentage of infected mosquitoes), the intensity (mean

number of oocysts), the numbers of mosquitoes and the range of oocysts. Samples from

Infection 1 (I1) and Infection 2 (I2) are used in the ATAC-seq assay and samples from

Infection 2 and Infection 3 (I3) are used in the RNA-seq assay.

1349

1350   File name: **Table S2_Reads alignment statistics**

1351   File format: .xlsx

1352   Title of data: Table S2

1353   Description of data:

1354   Summary of ATAC-seq and RNA-seq alignment and quality control statistics.

1355

File name: **Table S3_ATAC-seq THSs**

File format: .xlsb

Title of data: Table S3

Description of data:

a. Summary of the THSs. b. List of THSs for each tissue and experimental infection

annotated to genes and genomic features. Columns include data on the MACS2 peak-

calling, whether the THSs are present in both infections, and the chromatin state,

overlapping ChIP-seq peaks and whether the annotated genes are *Plasmodium*-responsive

in our previous work [36]. Table is ordered by MACS2 Fold Change.

1365

File name: **Table S4_ATAC-seq nucleosome dyads**

File format: .xlsb

Title of data: Table S4

Description of data:

a. Summary of the nucleosome dyads. b. List of predicted nucleosome dyads for each tissue

and experimental infection. Occupancy levels by NucleoATAC and coincidence with the

ChIP-seq peaks in our previous study [36] are included. Table is ordered by NucleoATAC

occupancy.

1374

File name: **Table S5_Chromatin states segmentation**

File format: .xlsx

Title of data: Table S5

Description of data:

Segmentation of the genome in chromatin states by ChromHMM based on midguts ATAC-

seq and ChIP-seq [36] data.

1381

File name: **Table S6_ATAC-seq promoters RNA-seq genes**

File format: .xlsx

Title of data: Table S6

Description of data:

a. Normalized (RPKM) ATAC-seq enrichment at promoters and gene expression levels of

the corresponding gene for each tissue and experimental infection. Columns include gene

expression levels by RNA-seq, ChIP-seq enrichment [36], mean nucleosome fuzziness by

DANPOS2 and whether the genes are *Plasmodium*-responsive in our previous work [36]. b.

Gene structure data and categorization based on the intronic/exonic composition.

1391

File name: **Table S7_Differential analyses**

File format: .xlsx

Title of data: Table S7

Description of data:

a. Differential chromatin accessibility regions (DiffBind) between tissues. Columns include

data on the DiffBind analysis, the annotation to genomic features, the annotated THSs, gene

expression levels by RNA-seq, and coincidence with ChIP-seq peaks and chromatin states

in our previous study [36]. Table is ordered by DiffBind Fold binding affinity. b.

Differentially Expressed Genes (DEGs) between tissues. Columns include data by DESeq2,

but the genes are the result of combining DESeq2/edgeR/DREAMSeq. c. Integration of

DiffBind regions (a) annotated to DEGs (b). D. Results of the GO terms, protein classes

and pathways PANTHER overrepresentation tests (see Results).

1404

File name: **Table S8_Isoform switches analyses**

File format: .xlsx

Title of data: Table S8

Description of data:

Genes switching isoforms expression between tissues with annotated DiffBind

regions.

1411

File name: **Table S9_Novel regulatory regions**

File format: .xlsx

Title of data: Table S9

Description of data:

a,b. *Anopheles* enhancers previously predicted by others [37, 43, 67] (a) and novel

enhancer-like regions predicted here based on *D. melanogaster* homology [26] (b). The

overlapping THSs and annotated genes and whether the enhancers were experimentally

validated in previous studies are included. c. TSS-like regions predicted here based on *D.*

melanogaster homology. The overlapping THSs, annotated genes and whether the genes

have previously annotated 5' UTRs are included. d) *An. gambiae* regions homolog to

Drosophila CTCF binding sites [75]. The overlapping THSs and annotation are included.

1423

1424   File name: **Table S10_Custom primers**

1425   File format: .xlsx

1426   Title of data: Table S10

1427   Description of data:

1428   Custom primer sequences specific to ribosomal sequences used in the ribodepletion step.

1429

File name: **Table S11_Motifs activating repressor**

File format: .xlsx

Title of data: Table S11

Description of data:

List of enriched consensus motifs corresponding to know *Drosophila* TFs in the set of

THSs that annotate to the promoters of active genes, and low expressed or silent genes.

1436

File name: **Table S12_Motif instances**

File format: .xlsx

Title of data: Table S12

Description of data:

Enriched motif instances at different sets of THSs (see Supplementary Results) for the TFs:

homothorax (a), serpent (b) and trithorax-like (c).

1443

1444   File name: **Supplementary Methods**

1445   File format: .docx

1446   Title of data: Supplementary Methods

1447   Description of data:

1448

1449   File name: **Supplementary Results**

1450   File format: .docx

1451   Title of data: Supplementary Results

1452   Description of data:

1453

a

Chromatin states at genomic features (MGs)

Chromatin states:
1. Depleted
2. H3K9me3
3. H3K4me3
4. H3K4me3/K9me3
5. H3K27ac
6. H3K9ac/K27ac/K4me3
7. Open-chromatin/H3K27ac
8. Open-chromatin

b

ATAC-seq nucleosome-free signal (RPKM)

MGs

SGs

-1 Kb   TSS   1 Kb

RNA-seq mRNA level (Log2)

mRNA level
- High
- Medium
- Low

Correlation:
MGs: 0.39, P < 0.001
SGs: 0.47, P < 0.001

High   Medium   Low

ATAC-seq 1 Kb upstream

c

MGs. N = 7,334

ATAC-seq   RNA-seq   ChIP-seq

Correlation ATAC/RNA-seq:
rho = 0.58, P < 0.001

Correlation ATAC/ChIP-seq:
(rho, all P < 0.001)

H3K9ac   0.14
H3K27ac   0.45
H3K4me3   -0.03, P < 0.05
H3K9me3   -0.23

ATAC-seq signal (Log2)
-5.3   0   3.4

RNA-seq norm. counts (Log2)
-9   0   12

H3K9ac H3K27ac H3K4me3 H3K9me3

ChIP-seq enrichment (Log2)
-3.1   0   4.4

d

Distribution of ATAC THSs at genes per intronic composition

THSs annotation
- Intergenic
- Promoter
- 5' UTR
- Exonic
- Intronic
- 3' UTR
- Downstream

Intronic gene composition
(Range / Number):

Rich:
99-39% / 113,259

Medium:
39-11% / 38,735

Poor:
11-0% / 35,562

Intronic gene composition

Rich: 19.0 / 12.2 / 6.4 / 11.7 / 47.8 / 2.9
Medium: 28.6 / 27.1 / 9.8 / 18.5 / 10.1 / 5.9
Poor: 36.8 / 28.0 / 7.4 / 19.6 / 2.1 / 6.1

Structure examples: (Intron %)

Rich (AGAP006656)

Medium (AGAP004906)

Poor (AGAP001888)

- ATAC THSs
- UTRs
- Intron
- Promoter

a DiffBind regions at promoters/5' UTRs/introns DEGs

Chromatin access. DiffBind regions   Gene expression

Correlation:
MGs:
rho = 0.25
P < 0.001

SGs:
rho = 0.12
P < 0.001

MGs   SGs   MGs   SGs

ATAC-seq signal (Log2)
-3.9   0   3.9

RNA-seq norm. counts (Log2)
-6   0   6

b Genes with differential accessibility/expression

Diffbind promoters/5' UTRs   Diffbind introns

Correlation:
Promoters:
rho = 0.37
P < 0.001

Introns:
rho = 0.19
P < 0.001

DiffBind (ATAC-seq)   DESeq2 (RNA-seq)   DiffBind (ATAC-seq)   DESeq2 (RNA-seq)

Fold Changes (Log2)
Promoters   Introns
-12   0   11   -11   0   9

c DEGs with DiffBind regions at promoters/5' UTRs/introns. GO BP Terms

MGs

digestion (GO:0007586)
dendrite development (GO:0016358)
animal organ morphogenesis (GO:0009887)
peptide catabolic process (GO:0043171)
synapse organization (GO:0050808)
animal organ development (GO:0048513)
cell-cell signaling (GO:0007267)
carbohydrate metabolic process (GO:0005975)
multicellular organism development (GO:0007275)
developmental process (GO:0032502)

0   10   20
Fold Enrichment

SGs

branched-chain amino acid metabolic process (GO:0009081)
branched-chain amino acid catabolic process (GO:0009083)
glycolytic process (GO:0006096)
ATP generation from ADP (GO:0006757)
ADP metabolic process (GO:0046031)
purine nucleoside diphosphate metabolism (GO:0009135)
purine ribonucleoside diphosphate metabolism (GO:0009179)
ribonucleoside diphosphate metabolism (GO:0009185)
pyruvate metabolic process (GO:0006090)
nucleoside diphosphate phosphorylation (GO:0006165)

0   4   6
Fold Enrichment

d

AGAP008644-RA

Gene

GAM1

1Kb

5' UTRs
ATAC-seq MGs   [0 - 50]
ATAC THSs MGs
ATAC-seq SGs
ATAC THSs SGs
DiffBind regions   SGs   SGs
RNA-seq MGs   [0 - 3,000]
RNA-seq SGs

Tissue-specifc enriched motifs

MGs:

srp (TWATCTTATCTT)   tin (CTATAGTG)   byn (GWGTGSCACT)   shn (GGTACKGTACCG)

SGs:

hth (YTGACAGCTGTC)   twi (TTGCACATTTGC)   Med (GGGCAGCVTT)   fkh (TTTGTAAACAAT)