The Genetic Basis of Transcriptional and Spatial Heterogeneity of Squamous Features in

Pancreatic Ductal Adenocarcinoma

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Summary (132 words)

Recent studies indicate that pancreatic cancer expression profiles are variable and largely

reflect a classical or basal-type phenotype. We performed genetic sequencing, RNA-seq, and

histologic review of multiregion sampled pancreatic cancers and found that squamous and

squamoid features, indicators of poor prognosis, correlate with a "basal -like" expressional type.

Cancers with squamous features were more likely to have truncal mutations in chromatin modifier

genes and intercellular heterogeneity for *MYC* amplification that was associated with entosis. In

most patients the basal phenotype coexisted with a glandular component, and phylogenetic studies

indicated that it arose from a subclonal population in the tumor. These data provide a unifying

paradigm for understanding the interrelationship of basal-type features, squamous histology, and

somatic mutations in chromatin modifier genes in the context of the clonal evolution of pancreatic

cancer.

Text:

Despite advances in diagnostic tools, surgery, chemotherapy and radiation therapy, pancreatic ductal adenocarcinoma (PDAC) remains one of the most lethal tumor types [1]. The five-year survival is less than 10% with 56,770 new cases diagnosed and 45,750 deaths estimated for 2019 in the United States alone [2,3]. Large scale sequencing studies have revealed the recurrent genomic features of this disease that target a defined number of core pathways [4-8]. In some patients a genome instability signature is also seen based on either microsatellite instability or on a high number of structural rearrangements [5,9]. Transcriptional studies have revealed that PDAC can be segregated into two major subtypes termed "classical" and "basal-like" [6,7,10,11]. Moreover, these pivotal studies have revealed that PDAs with squamous differentiation specifically correspond to the "basal-like" subtype [11], alternatively designated the "squamous" subtype by some [6]. This overlap and strong relationship of the adenosquamous phenotype with the "basal-like/squamous" signature was confirmed in TCGA re-analysis [7].

We have previously reported that, compared to resected PDACs, advanced stage neoplasms have a higher incidence of variant histomorphologic features that include adenosquamous morphology [12]. Adenosquamous carcinoma (ASC) is a morphologic subtype of PDAC defined by its having >30% squamous morphology. ASCs account for 0.9% of all PDACs and are associated with a poorer prognosis than carcinomas with conventional glandular morphologies [13-15]. In light of this observation, and transcriptional studies indicating PDAC is represented by two transcriptional subtypes, we posited that an integrated analysis of the histologic, genomic and transcriptional features of PDAC would provide insight into the dynamics of transcriptional alterations and adenosquamous features during clonal evolution and development of metastatic disease.

We reviewed hematoxylin and eosin stained sections prepared from more than 7,000 unique

formalin-fixed paraffin-embedded tissues from 156 research autopsy participants spanning two

institutions, all of whom had been clinically or pathologically diagnosed with PDAC premortem.

After histologic review 33 cases were excluded (see Extended Data Figure 1 and Supplementary

Data Table 1) leaving 2944 individual sections from 123 cases (median 17 tumor sections per case)

that fulfilled our criteria for further study. Histologic review in combination with

immunohistochemical labeling of representative blocks for the common squamous differentiation

markers CK5/6 and p63 [16,17] was performed so that each individual formalin-fixed section was

categorized as having a conventional glandular pattern of growth (GL), squamoid features (SF),

or squamous differentiation (SD) (Figure 1a,1b). Squamoid features were defined as the presence

of an alveolar or solid morphologic component with CK5/6 or p63 positivity, but not conventional

squamous morphology, as recently described [18]. By contrast, squamous differentiation was

defined as the presence of a solid growth pattern of neoplastic cells with abundant pink cytoplasm,

prominent cell borders, and intercellular junctions in addition to having both CK5/6 and p63

positivity. Of 2944 blocks, 490 (16.6%) showed squamoid features (SF) or squamous

differentiation (SD) (Figure 1c). When these sections were stratified by patient we determined that

seven PDACs (5.7%) met criteria for adenosquamous carcinoma (ASC), six PDACs (4.9%) had

focal (<30%) squamous differentiation and two PDACs (1.6%) had focal squamoid features

(Figure 1d; Extended Data Figure 2). Three (PAM16, PAM54 and PAM73) of the seven ASCs

were notable for having admixing of squamous and glandular morphologies throughout the

neoplasm, with an estimated >70% of these neoplasms having squamous differentiation overall.

In the remaining four ASCs (PAM32, PAM46, PAM54 and PAM55) the squamous morphology

formed a large discrete focus in a neoplasm with regions of otherwise conventional glandular

morphology. By univariate analysis patients with ASCs or PDACs with SF/SD had a poorer

survival than did patients with PDACs without SF/SD (Figure 1e), compatible with previous

findings [14]. The prevalence of ASC in this cohort of 129 patients with end stage disease is higher

than that reported for surgically resected tumors (5.7% of our cohort vs 0.9% in Boyd et al. P <

0.0001, Chi-square test) [14].

Based on histologic review of all 2944 sections we also noted that ASCs and PDACs with

SF/SD exhibited entosis, a distinct form of cell death in which one cancer cell engulfs another

(Figure 1f) [19]. Entosis was recognized as distinct from epithelial pearls that may also be seen in

squamous carcinomas [20] as they were not associated with concentric layers of squamous cells, with

aberrant keratinization and were not located centrally within nests of squamous carcinoma.

Entosis was also identified in regions of conventional glandular morphology whereas squamous

pearls would not be. To more rigorously determine the relationship of SF/SD to entosis we

therefore adopted strict criteria to count entotic cell-in-cell structures (CIC) (Methods) [21]. The

number of entotic CIC was higher in PDACs with SF/SD or ASCs compared to PDACs without

SF/SD in our cohort (mean ± standard deviation per 10HPF is 1.095±1.240 versus 0.365±0.437

respectively, P < 0.0001, Mann–Whitney U test). To determine if entosis is more reflective of stage

of disease versus morphology, we reviewed an independent cohort of 30 resected PDACs that

included eight ASCs. Similar to the findings in the autopsy cohort, resected ASCs had more entotic

CIC than conventional PDACs (0.441±0.213 versus 0.226±0.219, respectively, P = 0.007, Mann–

Whitney U test) (Figure 1g). Autopsy PDACs with SF/SD or ASCs had more entotic CIC than

surgically resected ASCs, although the difference was not statistically significant. Collectively, we

conclude that squamous morphologic features, characterized in part by entosis, becomes more

prominent with PDAC progression.

To determine the extent that the classical and basal-type transcriptional signatures correspond

to our morphologic findings, we extracted total RNA from 480 frozen samples in triplicate; in all

cases the frozen tissue was matched to the formalin-fixed sections used for morphologic and

immunohistochemical analyses. A total of 214 frozen samples from 27 patients (median 6 samples,

range 1 to 26 samples per patient) meeting quality criteria (Methods) were used for RNA

sequencing (Supplementary Data Table 2). These 27 cases included five ASCs (three with focal

glandular dominant areas) and five PDAC with focal SF/SD. When possible both the conventional

glandular (GL) and squamoid/squamous morphologies (SF/SD) from the same carcinoma were

separately analyzed. Normalized mRNA expression levels of *TP63*, *KRT5* and *KRT6A* confirmed

that GL-PDAC samples had the lowest expression of all three markers whereas SD-PDAC samples

had the highest expression levels of all three markers. SF-PDACs had an intermediate expression

pattern between GL-PDACs and SD-PDACs (Extended Data Figure 3). Consistent with this

finding, network analysis highlights KRT5 and KRT6A as "hub" genes in samples with SF/SD

morphology, and SF/SD morphology shows more complex co-expression patterns in keratin

filament & keratinization pathway than in samples with GL morphology. We next classified our

samples into "classical" and "basal-like" PDAC subtypes using the 50 pancreas cancer gene set

reported by Moffitt et al. [11]. This revealed an almost perfect concordance of morphologic features

with transcriptional subtype, as most SF-PDAC and all SD-PDAC samples corresponded to the

"basal-like" expression pattern, whereas most GL-PDACs corresponded to the "classical" type

pattern (Figure 2a). Principal component analysis using this same gene set revealed a similar

distribution based on morphologic features or expression subtype, whereas no relationship was

found for site of harvesting of each sample (primary or metastasis) (Figure 2b). Finally, we

compared the morphologic features to the transcriptional subtypes of each sample analyzed for 23

of these 27 patients for which two or more samples were analyzed. In 15 patients all samples

studied were homogeneous with respect to both their transcriptional subtype and morphologic

pattern (Figure 2c). The majority of these cases had a glandular morphology (PDAC-GL) and a

classical-type expression signature, although in two patients (PAM16, PAM54) prominent

squamous differentiation was identified in entire neoplasm and had a basal-type expression

signature. In a separate set of three patients (PAM28, PAM39, PAM53) all samples analyzed were

homogenous for their transcriptional subtype despite a degree of morphologic heterogeneity

(Figure 2d). These included a basal-type transcriptional signature but glandular morphology in the

metastases of PAM28 and PAM53, and a classical expression signature in a metastasis with

squamoid features in PAM39. Finally, in five patients (PAM02, PAM22, PAM46, PAM55,

MPAM6) we observed that both the classical and basal-like subtypes co-existed within a single

patient. With two exceptions (one primary tumor sample each in PAM02 and PAM55) the

transcriptional signatures correlated with the histologic features of the sample.

We mined our RNAseq dataset to determine the transcriptional differences between samples

with GL morphology and SF/SD morphology in an unbiased manner. Gene set enrichment analysis

(GSEA) using Hallmark genesets and transcription factor target genesets (Methods,

Supplementary Data Table 4) revealed MYC target gene expression as significantly enriched in

samples with SF/SD compared to GL morphology (Figure 3a, Supplementary Data Table 5, 6), a

finding similar to that reported by Bailey et al. [6]. To further determine the significance of this

observation we reviewed our RNAseq data specifically for MYC gene expression. This revealed

a significantly higher MYC transcript abundance in samples with SF/SD morphology compared

to those with GL morphology (Figure 3b). As *MYC,* located in chromosome 8q 24.21, is a known

target of amplification in PDAC [22,23] we performed fluorescent *in situ* hybridization (FISH)

analysis to see if increased MYC expression was due to increased *MYC* copy number.   We found

eight cases wherein both GL and SF/SD morphologies were present within the same tumor/section

and in all, *MYC* copy number was significantly higher in regions with SF/SD morphology

compared to regions with GL morphology (Figure 3c-d). To further assess the relationship of *MYC*

amplification to PDAC progression, we correlated *MYC* copy number with morphologic features

in 44 patients in our cohort (32 GL-PDAC, six SF/SD-PDAC, six ASC) (Figure 4, Extended Data

Figure 1, Supplementary Data Table 4). *MYC* amplification ($\geq$6-fold by FACETS or FISH) was

significantly associated with higher tumor grade and with squamous subtype (amplification

observed in two of 13 Grade 2 PDACs, nine of 19 Grade 3 PDACs, 10 of 12 PDACs with SF/SD

or ASCs, P = 0.003, two-sided Fisher Exact Test). *MYC* amplification also correlated significantly

with poor outcome (Figure 3e) and high number of entotic CICs (P = 0.0027, Chi-square test with

Yates continuity correction) (Figure 4). *MYC* amplification ($\geq$6-fold) was more prevalent in this

cohort compared to the reported prevalence in resectable disease (21/44 in our cohort vs 5/149 in

TCGA, P < 0.0001, Chi-square) [5,7]. In addition, knockdown of MYC in the adenosquamous cell

line L3.3 led to a decrease in ΔN-p63 transcript abundance (Extended Data Figure 4) in keeping

with the findings of Andricovich et al.[18]. Overall these findings indicate that gains of *MYC* copy

number are common during PDAC progression.

In light of the correlation of both *MYC* amplification and entosis with tumor progression in

PDAC, we more closely determined the relationship if any between these two observations. In

nine cases with *MYC* amplification and entotic CICs, FISH revealed remarkable intercellular

heterogeneity for *MYC* copy number. We therefore determined *MYC* copy number in a minimum

of five entotic CICs in four different neoplasms, i.e. in matched winner cells (eating) and loser

cells (the cell being eaten) (Figure 3f). The winner cells had 8.3 $\pm$ 10.5 copies of *MYC* compared

to only 2.4 ± 3.2 copies per loser cell (P < 0.0001, Mann-Whitney U-test). After normalization

for chromosome 8, the winner cells had still higher copy number (2.1 ± 1.4 copies per winner cell

compared to 1.7 ± 0.9 copies per loser cell), but was not statistically significant (P = 0.103, Mann-

Whitney U-test). Collectively this suggests that gain of *MYC* copy number is selected for in the

context of gains in ploidy[24], and illustrates that intercellular heterogeneity for *MYC* amplification

specifically is correlated with entosis.

We next determined the relationship of the coding genomic landscape to the development of

squamous morphology by performing multiregion whole exome or whole genome sequencing on

DNA extracted from frozen samples matched to the formalin-fixed sections in all 44 patients. High

quality single nucleotide variants and small insertions/deletions were identified for each sample

and used to recreate the phylogenetic relationships among the spatially distinct samples within

each patient (Methods). Overall the genetic features of this cohort were consistent with the PDAC

genomic landscape (Figure 4, Supplementary Data Table 4)[4-8]. We did not identify mutations of

UPF1 that have previously been reported in ASC [25]. However, cancers from two of 44 patients

had a *KDM6A* mutation [6,18], both of whom were female and one with an ASC, leading us to more

closely evaluate the chromatin modifier gene mutations in all 44 patients. The most common

chromatin modifier gene with a deleterious mutation was *KMT2C* (seven of 44 cases, 16%),

followed by *ARID1A* (four cases, 9%), *KMT2D* (three cases, 7%), *ARID2* and *KDM6A* (two cases

each, 5%). With two exceptions the mutations in chromatin modifier genes were mutually

exclusive (Figure 3e). Seven of 12 patients (58%) with a PDAC with SF/SD morphology or ASC

had a mutation in a chromatin modifier gene compared to 10 of 32 patients (31%) with a PDAC

with GL morphology, a difference that did not reach statistical significance (P = 0.195, Chi-square

with Yates' continuity correction).

While there was no difference in the prevalence of mutations in chromatin modifier genes in

cancers with or without SF/SD, phylogenetic trees indicated an influential relationship among the

evolutionary timing that a mutation in a chromatin modifier gene arose and the extent of squamous

morphology. For example, seven of seven chromatin modifier gene mutations identified in PDACs

with SF/SD morphology or ASCs were truncal in origin (Figures 4 and 5, Extended Data Figures

5 and 6), compared to only five of the eleven mutations in PDACs with GL morphology (P =

0.038, two-sided Fisher Exact Test). In the remaining PDACs with GL morphology, mutations in

chromatin modifier genes were assigned to a branch or were private to a single sample in that

patient. Curiously, we noted that two PDACs with SF/SD and wild type chromatin modifier genes

(PAM28, MPAM6) had deleterious truncal mutations of *RB1* (Figure 5b, Extended Data Figure

7).

We also evaluated the approximate evolutionary timing of *MYC* copy number gain during

clonal evolution based on FACETS copy number and ploidy estimations generated for each

sequenced sample (Methods). *MYC* amplification was identified in five cases in a subclonal

manner; in four of these cases *MYC* amplification followed whole genome duplication (Figure 5c,

Extended Data Figures 6 and 8). Three of five cases with *MYC* amplification had a truncal

mutation in *ARID1A* (Extended Data Figure 6). The timing of or subclonality of *MYC* amplification

did not correlate with SF/SD morphology. Taken together, we conclude that *MYC* amplification

follows truncal mutations in chromatin modifier genes and is in part selected for during whole

genome duplication. However, the imperfect correlation of *MYC* amplification with development

of squamous morphology suggests that it is a marker of aggressive tumor features in general but

not progression to SF/SD or ASC per se.

We further evaluated heterogeneous morphologic or transcriptional features seen in the cancers

of 10 patients (six PDACs with SF/SD and four ASCs) in the context of both phylogenetic

relationships and their anatomic distribution. In eight of 10 patients the squamous component was

a clonal population, i.e. all samples with squamous morphology were phylogenetically more

closely related to each other than to the sample(s) with GL morphology in the same patient (Figure

5b,5c and Extended Data Figures 5a, 6a, 6c, 7, 8a). These phylogenetic relationships did not imply

a shared anatomic location, as genetic, morphologically and transcriptionally similar samples

could be found in both the primary tumor and in metastatic sites (Figure 6, Extended Data Figures

5-19). In the remaining two patients the SF/SD was exclusive to a single sample analyzed (PAM39,

Extended Data Figure 6b and PAM22, Extended Data Figure 8b). Integration of phylogenetic

trees with morphologic features also suggested that SF/SD can develop independently in the same

neoplasm, for example PAM55 (Figure 5a) in which samples PT8, PT9 and samples PT2-PT6

were contained within three different clades respectively. Thus, beyond genetic alterations such as

those in chromatin modifier genes, subclonal populations with SF/SD may further be defined by a

combination of epigenetic and/or microenvironmental cues [26,27].

These patterns reveal several novel features of PDAC. While mutations in *KMT2C, ARID1A*

and related genes have consistently been identified in large scale screens of the PDAC genome [6,7],

their significance for the natural history of PDAC has remained unclear. We now show that the

evolutionary context in which these mutations occur is related to the likelihood the PDAC will

develop squamous morphology. This likelihood is not absolute, as evidenced by the deceased

patients in our cohort with poorly differentiated PDACs with truncal mutations in chromatin

modifier genes. While our findings are consistent with reports that ASCs are associated with a

worse outcome [14], they contradict those that report an improved outcome in PDACs with mutations

in *KMT2C, ARID1A* and related chromatin modifier genes [28,29]. Future efforts that consider

somatic mutations in these genes specifically in the context of whole genome duplication, *MYC*

copy number and morphologic features may resolve this discrepancy.

Our data also illustrate that glandular and SF/SD morphologies, and by extension the classical-

type and basal-type expression signatures, coexist in the same PDAC. While prior studies of ASC

have also reported this phenomenon [17,20,30], we now show that the SF/SD component arises from

a subclonal population. This raises two possibilities for understanding SF/SD. First, SF/SD may

develop from classical-type gland forming pancreatic cancer. The paucity of data reporting small,

early stage ASCs and that SF/SD are commonly found in association with conventional glandular

features are consistent with this possibility [30]. Moreover, whereas we found that SF/SD may arise

during the clonal evolution of a PDAC we did not observe the converse scenario by phylogenetic

analysis, i.e. a subclonal glandular component arising in a predominant SF/SD neoplasm. While

we believe the former is the most parsimonious explanation, we acknowledge a second possibility

where a common phenotypic intermediate cell type gives rise to both classical-type and basal-type

phenotypes. Our study relied on bulk and macrodissected tissues thus we did not reach the level

of resolution required to answer this question definitively.

These data also contextualize the significance of *MYC* copy number gains in PDAC by

illustrating that it is selected for during tumor progression and following whole genome

duplication. Furthermore, we identify a novel feature of *MYC* in PDAC, intercellular heterogeneity

for copy number that is associated with entosis. Entosis, a process in which a cancer cell engulfs

its neighbor, represents a form of cell competition that stimulated by low glucose

environments[19,31]. Intriguingly, MYC expression has also been shown to promote competition

between normal cells in both fly and mammalian tissues during development [32,33] suggesting a new

potential mechanistic parallel between intercellular heterogeneity for *MYC* copy number and

stimulation of cell competition. In PDAC specifically, these observations provide clues to the

microenvironmental changes that contribute to disease progression [34].

In summary, we describe a multimodal approach to multiregion sampled PDACs that provide

a unifying paradigm for transcriptional subtypes, squamous morphology and somatic mutations in

chromatin modifier genes that is rooted in phylogenetic analyses. These insights provide optimism

for clinical management, as they now provide the context in which to understand the significance

of these molecular events for more rigorous stratification of patients for personalized medicine

approaches. We expect that our findings will have implications for understanding other solid

tumor types as well in which these mutations occur and/or that develop squamous features over

time. Ultimately, our hope is that comprehensive studies such as this pave the way for identifying

novel therapeutic vulnerabilities or re-evaluation of the utility of currently available therapies

based on the genotypes and phenotypes assessed.

Methods

Ethics Statement

This study was approved by the Review Boards of Johns Hopkins School of Medicine and

Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center.

Patient selection

A cohort of 156 cases from the Gastrointestinal Cancer Rapid Medical Donation Program at Johns

Hopkins Hospital and six cases from the Medical Donation Program at Memorial Sloan Kettering

Cancer Center were used. All patients had a premortem diagnosis of PDAC based on pathologic

review of resected or biopsy material and/or radiographic and biomarker studies. In addition,

hematoxylin and eosin (H&E) stained sections of 30 resected PDACs were used for histologic

review.

Histology and Immunohistochemistry

H&E slides cut from all formalin-fixed and paraffin-embedded (FFPE) blocks of each autopsy

were reviewed by two gastrointestinal pathologists (A.H. and C.I.D). Based on review and joint

discussion a consensus diagnosis was rendered. Immunolabeling was performed on unstained

serial sections cut from a subset of FFPE blocks per patient with antibodies against p63 (Ventana,

clone 4A4) and CK5/6 (Ventana, clone D5/16B4) according to optimized protocol on a Ventana

Benchmark XT autostainer (Ventana Medical Systems Inc.). Appropriate positive and negative

controls were included in each run.

Histologic Review for Entosis

All H&E sections of each case were reviewed for entotic cell-in-cell structures (CIC) using the

criteria proposed by MacKay [21]: cytoplasm of the host cell (winner or engulfing cell), nucleus of

the host cell (typically crescent-shaped, binucleate, or multilobular and pushed against the

cytoplasmic wall), an intervening vacuolar space completely surrounding the internalized cell

(loser), cytoplasm of internalized cell, and nucleus of internalized cell (often round in shape and

located centrally or acentrically). If internalized and/or engulfing cells were undergoing mitosis

they were excluded from analysis. Any cases in which we were unable to count 50 high power

fields and/or had less than five slides for review were excluded from this analysis. Representative

entotic CICs were validated by immunofluorescence labeling for e-cadherin in combination with

DAPI to highlight cell nuclei in the Molecular Cytogenetics Core at MSKCC (see MYC Immuno-

FISH analysis section below for details).

RNA Sequencing

Frozen sections were cut from samples for histologic review and regions of interest were

macrodissected for extracting total RNA using TRIzol (Life Technologies) followed by Rneasy

Plus Mini Kit (Qiagen). Each RNA sample was initially quantified by Qubit 2.0 Fluorometer

(Thermo Fisher Scientific). Samples were additionally quantified by RiboGreen and assessed for

quality control using an Agilent BioAnalyzer in the Integrated Genomics Core at MSKCC, and

513ng-1µg of total RNA with an RNA integrity number ranging from 1.3 to 8.3 underwent

ribosomal depletion and library preparation using the TruSeq Stranded Total RNA LT Kit

(Illumina catalog # RS-122-1202) according to instructions provided by the manufacturer with 8

cycles of PCR. Samples were barcoded and run on a HiSeq 4000 in a 100bp/100bp or 125/125bp

paired end run, using the HiSeq 3000/4000 SBS Kit (Illumina). On average, 94 million paired

reads were generated per sample and 26% of the data mapped to the transcriptome.

RNA sequencing data alignment and analysis

Output data (FASTQ files) were mapped to the target genome using the rnaStar aligner [35] that

maps reads genomically and resolves reads across splice junctions. We used the 2 pass mapping

method outlined by Engstrom [36] in which the reads were mapped twice, the first mapping using a

list of known annotated junctions from Ensembl and the second mapping based on known and

novel junctions. Postprocessing of the output SAM files was performed using PICARD tools to

add read groups and covert it to a compressed BAM format. The expression count matrix from

the mapped reads was determined using HTSeq (www-huber.embl.de/users/anders/HTSeq) and

the raw count matrix generated by HTSeq was processed using the R/Bioconductor package

DESeq (www-huber.embl.de/users/anders/DESeq) to normalize the entire dataset between sample

groups. Normalized log2 expression were used for downstream analyses (Supplementary Data

Table 3, *released after publication*).

Expression type classification and PCA analysis

A 50 pancreatic cancer related gene set identified by Moffitt et al. was used to classify all samples

into "classical" and "basal" types [11]. Clustering analysis and heatmaps were displayed using the R

package 'pheatmap' using spearman's rank correlation. These 50 gene signatures were also used

for generating the Primary Component Analysis (PCA) plot using DESeq2 package

(https://www.bioconductor.org/packages/release/bioc/html/DESeq2.html).

Gene set enrichment analysis

Gene set enrichment analysis was performed based on methods described [37]. Both gene sets and transcription factor target gene sets (Supplementary Data Table 5) based on ChIP-seq data downloaded from ChIP-Atlas (http://chip-atlas.org/) [38] were used for analysis. Only TOP 500 ChIP peaks located within 1000bp from the TSS with scores over 50 were used.

Network analysis and Cytoscape visualization

Co-expression networks were constructed by first identifying the best predicted soft threshold for transforming the data. Pearson correlation between any two genes across samples was next used as the weight between nodes. Subset of Keratins (KRT) family genes were used to construct the weighted gene-gene network, and the network structure was visualized using Cytoscape [39]. We adjusted the width of edges connecting nodes based on the weights, and weights that are less than 0.05 were removed from the network.

DNA sequencing

Genomic DNA was extracted from each tissue using QIAamp DNA Mini Kits (Qiagen). Whole genome sequencing (WGS) and whole exome sequencing (WES) and alignment performed as previously described [40,41]. Briefly, an Illumina HiSeq 2000 platform was used to target a coverage of 60X for WGS samples and 150X for WES samples. The resulting sequencing reads were analyzed *in silico* to assess quality, coverage, as well as alignment to the human reference genome (hg19) using BWA[42]. After read de-duplication, base quality recalibration, and multiple sequence realignment were completed with the Picard Suite and GATK version 3.1[43,44], somatic SNVs/INDELs were detected using Mutect version 1.1.6 and HaplotypeCaller version 2.4[43,45]. We

excluded low-quality or poorly aligned reads from phylogenetic analysis. Filtering of called

somatic mutations required each mutant to be observed in at least one neoplastic sample per patient

with at least 5% variant allele frequency and with at least 20x coverage; correspondingly, each

mutant must have been observed in less than 2% of the reads (or less than 2 reads total) of the

matched normal sample with at least 10x coverage. Copy number analyses were performed using

FACETS as previously described [46]. Regarding PAM02, we used the data previously reported [40].

Driver gene annotations

All somatic variants causing a frameshift deletion, frameshift insertion, in-frame deletion, in-frame

insertion, non-synonymous missense, nonsense, nonstop, splice site/region, or a translation start

site change were considered. Variants were called driver mutations if they passed at least three of

the following methods: 20/20+ [47], 20/20+ PDAC[47], TUSON[48] and MutSigCV[49]. For frameshift

deletions, frameshift insertions and nonsense mutations specifically, passing only two of these four

methods were required. Additionally, we required a CHASM p-value of ≤ 0.05 and an FDR of $\leq$

0.25 for the 20/20+ and 20/20+ PDAC methods. Additionally, we also considered genes

significantly mutated in large PDAC sequencing studies[4,5,7].

Whole Genome Duplication

Whole genome duplication (WGD) was performed in combination of computational analysis and

manually reviewed following Bielski et al.[24], called if $MCN \geq 2$ and ploidy ≥ 2.5, and >50% of the

autosomal genome was affected. Three low tumor purity samples (PAM22PT5, PAM25PT2 and

PAM32PT4) which didn't match these criteria were judged in consideration of expecting WGD

occurrent point in phylogenetic trees.

Evolutionary analysis

We derived phylogenies for each set of samples by using Treeomics 1.7.9 [50]. Each phylogeny was

rooted at the matched patient's normal sample and the leaves represented tumor samples.

Treeomics employs a Bayesian inference model to account for error-prone sequencing and varying

neoplastic cell content to calculate the probability that a specific variant is present or absent. The

global optimal tree is based on Mixed Integer Linear programming. All evolutionary analyses were

performed based on WES data with exception of PAM02 (WGS and additional target

sequencing)[40] and MPAM06 (WGS). Somatic alterations present in all analyzed samples of a

PDAC were considered truncal, in a subset of samples considered branched, and in a single sample

considered private.

MYC Immuno-FISH analysis

Immuno-FISH was performed on paraffin sections according to procedures optimized at the

Molecular Cytogenetics Core Facility. The primary (E-Cadherin [24E10] Rabbit mAB) and

secondary (Goat anti-Rabbit Alexa 488) antibody was purchased form Cell Signaling Technology

and Invitrogen (Thermo Fisher Scientific) respectively. The 2-color *MYC*/Cen8 probe was

prepared in-house and consisted of BAC clones containing the full length *MYC* gene (clones RPI-

80K22, RP11-1136L8, and CTD-2267H22; labeled with Red dUTP) and a centromeric repeat

plasmid for chromosome 8 served as the control (pJM128; labeled with Green dUTP). Briefly, de-

waxed paraffin sections were microwaved in 10mM sodium citrate, pretreated with 10% pepsin

for 10 minutes at 37°C, rinsed in 2XSSC, dehydrated in ethanol series (70%, 90% and 100%), co-

denatured at 80°C for 4 minutes with 5-20uL of *MYC*/Cen8 DNA-FISH probe, and hybridized for

72 hours at 37°C. Following hybridization, sections were washed with wash buffer (0.01% Tween

20 in 2XSSC), fixed in 4% formaldehyde for 15-20 minutes at RT, rinsed in 1XPBS, blocked at

RT for 1 hour (blocking buffer: 5% FBS and 0.01% Tween 20 in 1XPBS), and incubated overnight

at 4°C with primary antibody (1:100)(dilution buffer: 1% FBS and 0.01% Tween 20 in 1XPBS).

Following overnight incubation, sections were washed with wash buffer, rinsed in 1XPBS,

incubated with secondary antibody (1:500) for 1 hour at 37°C, rinsed in 1XPBS, stained with DAPI

and mounted in antifade (Vectashield, Vector Laboratories). Slides were scanned using a Zeiss

Axioplan 2i epifluorescence microscope equipped with Isis 5.5.9 imaging software (MetaSystems

Group Inc, Waltham, MA). Metafer and VSlide modules within the software were used to generate

virtual image of H&E and DAPI-stained sections. In all, corresponding H&E sections assisted in

localizing tumor region and histology (GL, SF or SD). The entire section was systematically

scanned under $63 \times$ objectives to assess MYC/Cen8 copy number across different histologies and

to identify entotic cell-in-cell structures (CIC). All observed entotic cells and representative

regions within a case were imaged through the depth of the tissue (merged stack of 16 z-section

images taken at 0.5 micron intervals) and signal counts performed on captured images. For

correlation of *MYC/*Cen8 copy number with histology, for each case, a minimum of 50 discrete

nuclei were scored (range 50-150). Within a given histology (GL, SF or SD), when *MYC*/Cen8

copy number was heterogenous and topographically distinct, a minimum of 50 discrete nuclei were

scored for each distinct region whenever possible. For correlation of *MYC/*Cen8 copy number

with entosis, only CICs meeting the selection criteria previously described were scored. For each

CIC, *MYC*/Cen8 copy number was recorded separately for the "winner" and "loser". Presence of

E-Cadherin staining (which highlights the cell perimeter) and nuclear morphology helped

distinguish the "loser" (internalized cell with uniformly round nucleus) from "winner" (host cell

with crescent-shaped, binucleate, or multilobulated nucleus and often pushed against the

cytoplasmic wall). To minimize truncation artifacts, only nuclei with at least 1 signal for *MYC*

and Cen8 were selected. *MYC* amplification was defined as: ≥2 MYC/Cen8 ratio, ≥6 copies of

MYC (discrete signal) or presence of at least one *MYC* cluster (≥4 copies; tandem duplications).

3~5 copies of MYC/Cen8 were regarded as copy number gain (polysomy).

Cell Culture and MYC RNAi

L3.3 cells (gift from laboratory of Dr. Scott Lowe) were cultured in DMEM supplemented with

10% heat-inactivated fetal bovine serum (FBS) and 1% penicillin-streptomycin. L3.3 scramble

and MYC knockdown cells were prepared by retroviral transduction with pRFP-C-RS scramble

(TF30015, Origene) and pRFP-C-RS *c-myc* shRNA constructs (TF311323, Origene),

respectively. Cells were selected with puromycin (2 μg/mL) after 48 hr of transduction.

Western Blotting

Cells were scraped with lysis buffer (50mM Tris-HCl at pH 6.8, 2% SDS, 10% glycerol),

vortexed, then boiled at 100 °C for 5 min. Protein concentration was measured by BCA assay

(Pierce), followed by western blotting as described previously (Florey et al., 2011). The

antibodies used include: anti-c-myc (sc-40, Santa Cruz), anti-GAPDH (sc-47724, Santa Cruz),

and anti-p63 (619002, BioLegend).

Statistics

All statistics was performed using XLSTAT (version 2018.2).

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A.H., J.F. and C.I.-D. designed the study; A.H., J.F., A.P.M.-M, H.S., M.A.A., A.B., R.K., P.B.,

L.D.W., R.H.H., C.I.-D. collected autopsy samples; A.H. and C.I.-D. reviewed histology of

autopsy samples and selected cases; O.B., D.K., A.H. and C.I.-D. reviewed pathology of surgical

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J.F. prepared RNA samples; A.P.M.-M., J.H., H.S., Z.K. and A.H., prepared the DNA samples;

A.H., Y.Z. and C.I.-D. performed RNA sequencing; Y.H., A.H., L.Z. and J.H. analyzed RNA

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Figure 1

Figure 1. Morphologic Heterogeneity for Squamous Features in Pancreatic Ductal

Adenocarcinoma. a. Schematic for classification of sections. Squamous differentiation or

squamoid feature was determined for each block in all cases based on the combination of

histomorphologic features and p63 and CK5/6 immunohistochemistry (IHC). **b.** Representative

histomorphologic and immunocytochemical images of glandular pattern (GL), squamoid feature

(SF) and squamous differentiation (SD) in patients PAM02 and PAM110. SD areas showed solid

growth pattern with both CK5/6 and p63 positivity, while SF areas showed CK5/6 positive labeling

but are negative for p63. **c. Summary of block diagnoses. d. Postmortem case diagnoses**. Seven

cases corresponded to adenosquamous carcinoma (ASC), four cases showed focal (<30%)

squamous differentiation (SD), and two cases showed focal squamoid features (SF). **e. Kaplan-**

Meier analysis of PDAC with or without squamous/squamoid features. PDAC with SF/SD

showed poorer prognosis than PDACs without SF/SD. **f. Representative histomorphologic and**

immunofluorescent images of entotic CIC in patient PAM20. A clearly defined 'moonshape'

host nucleus, intervening vacuolar space and internalized cell is identified. Immunofluorescent

images clear e-cadherin membranous labeling of the winners (eating cells) and losers (eaten cells).

g. Average number of entotic cell in cell structures (entotic CIC) in PDAC with or without

SF/SD. Both autopsy cases (with or without SF/SD) and surgical cases (ADSQ or PDAC) have a

higher level of entotic CICs.

Figure 2

Figure 2. Transcriptional Heterogeneity for Squamous Features in Pancreatic Ductal

Adenocarcinoma. RNA sequencing (RNA-seq) of was performed on snap-frozen tissues of 214

unique samples from 27 patients including five with ASC and five with focal SF/SD. RNA-seq

data were used to classify each of the 214 samples into "Basal-like" and "Classical" tumors

(Moffitt et al. Nature Genetics, 2015). Both the heatmap (**a**) and PCA plots (**b**) indicate a strong

correlation of SF/SD morphology with a "Basal-like" transcriptional signature, and GL

morphology with a "Classical" transcriptional signature. **c-e.** Integrated analysis of

transcriptional subtype with unique block diagnosis indicates intratumoral heterogeneity for both

transcriptional signatures and histomorphologic features.

Figure 3

Figure 3. Squamous Features in Pancreatic Ductal Adenocarcinoma Correspond to

Enhancement of MYC. a. Gene-set enrichment analysis (GSEA) using hallmark gene sets and

transcription factor target gene sets collected from ChIP-Atlas identify MYC target genes as the

top ranked gene set in SF/SD (see also Supplemental Tables 6 and 7). **b.** Normalized MYC RNA

transcript abundance is significantly higher in SF/SD samples than in GL samples. **c.**

Representative images of MYC-FISH analysis in SF/SD and GL regions. **d.** Analysis of *MYC* copy

number in eight cases indicates that *MYC* is significantly amplified in SF/SD regions compared to

GL regions in the same carcinoma. **e.** Kaplan-Meier analysis indicating patients whose carcinomas

have *MYC* high (>= 6) copy number have a worse outcome than carcinomas with low *MYC* copy

number. **f.** Representative images of entosis (single arrow: loser (eaten cell), double arrows: winner

(eating cell)). **g.** Winner cells have higher *MYC* copy number than loser cells.

Figure 4

Figure 4. Genomic Landscape of End Stage Pancreatic Ductal Adenocarcinomas with and without Squamous Features. Oncoprint illustrating the driver gene somatic alterations of 44 cases with respect to their histologic and immunolabeling profiles. Truncal mutations in chromatin modifier genes are significantly enriched in PDACs with focal SF/SD and ASCs, whereas MYC amplification is seen in both high grade PDACs (G3) and in PDACs with SF/SD.

Figure 5. Integration of Transcriptomic and Morphologic Features with Phylogenetic Patterns in Pancreatic Ductal Adenocarcinoma. Red and purple outlines indicate samples that have SF/SD based on RNAseq (triangles) and/or histology (squares). The predicted timing of somatic alterations in driver genes, whole genome duplication and MYC amplification are also shown. Mutations in chromatin modifier genes are in red font, all others in orange. Principal Components Analysis plots are shown for each patient as well. **a.** Phylogenetic tree of patient PAM55. Truncal driver genes are notable for a *KMT2C* somatic alteration. SF/SD in this carcinoma have arisen as three independent subclones: in primary tumor sample PT8, in primary tumor sample PT9, and in the subclone giving rise to primary tumor samples PT5 and PT6 and metastases PT2-PT4. **b**. Phylogenetic tree of patient PAM28. Truncal driver genes include a deleterious mutation in *RB1*. SF/SD in this carcinoma have occurred due to one subclone that gave rise to the primary tumor samples PT1 and PT2 and the metastasis PT3. **c**. Phylogenetic tree of patient PAM46. No mutations in chromatin modifier genes were identified. *MYC* amplification (>6 copies) was detected in all samples of the local recurrence but not the original resected primary tumor PT1.

Figure 6

Figure 6. Relationship of Anatomical Location to Morphologic and Transcriptional

Heterogeneity. (a) Shown is the spatial location of each sample within the primary tumor or

distant sites and their corresponding transcriptional and histological subtypes. (b) Representative

histologic images of representative tumors in the same patient.

Ex. Data Figure 1

700   **Extended Data Figure 1: Schematic of case selection for current study.**

Ex. Data Figure 2

702 **Extended Data Figure 2: Immunolabelling for glandular and squamous components in 13**

703 **Representative PDACs.** All regions with squamous differentiation (SD) showed positivity for

704 CK5/6 and p63, whereas no labeling was observed in regions with glandular morphology (GL).

705 In two PDACs the neoplastic cells stained positive for CK5/6 but were negative for p63 and thus

706 classified as having squamoid features. n.d., no immunolabeling performed.

a

b

Ex. Data Figure 3

Extended Data Figure 3: mRNA Expression of squamous markers in samples with glandular

growth pattern (GL), squamoid features (SF) and squamous differentiation (SD). a. mRNA

expression of *TP63, KRT5* and *KRT6A*. SD have higher expression *of TP63, KRT5* and *KRT6A*

than GL. SF have intermediate expression pattern between SD and GL. **b. KRT network based**

on mRNA expression. In GL, KRT19 (normally expressed in ductal epithelia) is a hub in pancreas

cancer. In SF, KRT6A and KTR5 (normally expressed in squamous epithelium) have some

interaction. In SD, stratified squamous epithelium keratins (KRT4, KRT5, KRT14, KRT15) and

heavy weight keratins (KRT1 and KRT10) were expressed in the network.

Ex. Data Figure 4

719 **Extended Data Figure 4**: Knockdown of MYC (c-MYC) protein using three independent siRNAs

720 shows downregulation of ΔN-p63 protein (L3.3 cell line).

Ex. Data Figure 5

 Extended Data Figure 5: Integration of Transcriptomic and Morphologic Features with

Phylogenetic Patterns in Pancreatic Ductal Adenocarcinomas with *KMT2C* and *KDM6A*

mutant cases. Red and purple outlines indicate samples that have SF/SD based on RNAseq

(triangles) and/or histology (squares). The predicted timing of somatic alterations in driver genes

on the evolutionary tree, the timing of whole genome duplication, and the number of mutations

per branch are also shown. Mutations in chromatin modifier genes are in red font, all others in

orange. **a.** Phylogenetic tree of patient PAM32. Truncal driver genes are notable for a *KMT2C*

somatic alteration. **b.** Phylogenetic tree of patient PAM54. Truncal driver genes are notable for a

KMT2C somatic alteration. **c.** Phylogenetic tree of patient PAM16. Truncal driver genes are

notable for a *KDM6A* somatic alteration.

Extended Data Figure 6: Integration of Transcriptomic and Morphologic Features with

Phylogenetic Patterns in Pancreatic Ductal Adenocarcinoma with *ARID1A* mutant cases.

Red and purple outlines indicate samples that have SF/SD based on RNAseq (triangles) and/or

histology (squares). The predicted timing of somatic alterations in driver genes on the evolutionary

tree, the timing of whole genome duplication, and the number of mutations per branch are also

shown. Mutations in chromatin modifier genes are in red font, all others in orange. Phylogenetic

tree of patient PAM02 (a), PAM39 (b) and PAM20 (c). Truncal driver genes are notable for a

ARID1A somatic alterations.

Extended Data Figure 7: Integration of Transcriptomic and Morphologic Features with Phylogenetic Patterns in Pancreatic Ductal Adenocarcinoma with *RB1* mutation. Red and purple outlines indicate samples that have SF/SD based on RNAseq (triangles) and/or histology (squares). The predicted timing of somatic alterations in driver genes on the evolutionary tree, the timing of whole genome duplication, and the number of mutations per branch, are also shown. Mutations in chromatin modifier genes are in red font, all others in orange. Truncal driver genes are notable for a *RB1* somatic alteration.

a

b

Expressional Type	Histological Type	Location	Genetic Alternation
▲ Basal-like	■ Squamous (SD)	▢ Primary	▲ MYC copy number ≥ 6 (by FACETS)
▲ Classical	■ Squamoid (SF)	▢ Metastasis	▲▲ Whole genome duplication
	■ Glandular (GL)		

Ex. Data Figure 8

Extended Data Figure 8: Integration of Transcriptomic and Morphologic Features with

Phylogenetic Patterns in Pancreatic Ductal Adenocarcinoma without Detectable Mutations

in Chromatin Modifier Genes. Red and purple outlines indicate samples that have SF/SD based

on RNAseq (triangles) and/or histology (squares). The predicted timing of somatic alterations in

driver genes on the evolutionary tree, whole genome duplication, MYC amplification, and the

number of mutations per branch are also shown. Mutations in chromatin modifier genes are in red

font, all others in orange. Phylogenetic tree of patient PAM53 (a) and PAM22 (b).

PAM28

760 **Extended Data Figure 9: Relationship of Anatomical Location to Morphologic and**

761 **Transcriptional Heterogeneity in PAM28.** (a) Shown is the spatial location of each sample

762 within the primary tumor or distant sites and their corresponding transcriptional and histological

763 subtypes. (b) Representative histologic images and immunohistochemical labeling of

764 representative tumors in the same patient.

PAM46

Ex. Data Figure 10

Extended Data Figure 10: Relationship of Anatomical Location to Morphologic and Transcriptional Heterogeneity in PAM46. (a) Shown is the spatial location of each sample within the primary tumor or distant sites and their corresponding transcriptional and histological subtypes. (b) Representative histologic images of representative tumors in the same patient.

PAM32

Extended Data Figure 11: Relationship of Anatomical Location to Morphologic and Transcriptional Heterogeneity in PAM32. (a) Shown is the spatial location of each sample within the primary tumor or distant sites and their corresponding transcriptional and histological subtypes. (b) Representative histologic images and immunohistochemical labeling of representative tumors in the same patient.

Ex. Data Figure 12

Extended Data Figure 12: Relationship of Anatomical Location to Morphologic and Transcriptional Heterogeneity in PAM54. (a) Principal component analysis using Moffit 50 gene set. (b) Shown is the spatial location of each sample within the primary tumor or distant sites and their corresponding transcriptional and histological subtypes. (c) Representative histologic images of representative tumors in the same patient.

PAM16

Ex Data Figure 13

787 **Extended Data Figure 13: Relationship of Anatomical Location to Morphologic and**

788 **Transcriptional Heterogeneity in PAM16.** (a) Principal component analysis using Moffit 50

789 gene set. (b) Shown is the spatial location of each sample within the primary tumor or distant

790 sites and their corresponding transcriptional and histological subtypes. (c) Representative

791 histologic images of representative tumors in the same patient.

PAM02

Ex Data Figure 14

793 **Extended Data Figure 14: Relationship of Anatomical Location to Morphologic and**

794 **Transcriptional Heterogeneity in PAM02.** (a) Principal component analysis using Moffit 50

795 gene set. (b) Shown is the spatial location of each sample within the primary tumor or distant sites

796 and their corresponding transcriptional and histological subtypes. (c) Representative histologic

797 images of representative tumors in the same patient.

PAM39

Ex. Data Figure 15

800 **Extended Data Figure 15: Relationship of Anatomical Location to Morphologic and**

801 **Transcriptional Heterogeneity in PAM39.** (a) Principal component analysis using Moffit 50

802 gene set. (b) Shown is the spatial location of each sample within the primary tumor or distant sites

803 and their corresponding transcriptional and histological subtypes. (c) Representative histologic

804 images of representative tumors in the same patient.

PAM20

Ex. Data Figure 16

807 **Extended Data Figure 16: Relationship of Anatomical Location to Morphologic and**

808 **Transcriptional Heterogeneity in PAM16.** (a) Shown is the spatial location of each sample

809 within the primary tumor or distant sites and their corresponding transcriptional and histological

810 subtypes. (b) Representative histologic images and immunohistochemical labeling of

811 representative tumors in the same patient.

MPAM6

Ex. Data Figure 17

814   **Extended Data Figure 17: Relationship of Anatomical Location to Morphologic and**

815   **Transcriptional Heterogeneity in MPAM6.** (a) Principal component analysis using Moffit 50

816   gene set. (b) Shown is the spatial location of each sample within the primary tumor or distant sites

817   and their corresponding transcriptional and histological subtypes. (c) Representative histologic

818   images of representative tumors in the same patient.

PAM53

a

c

b

Omental Met **PT3**

Liver Met 1 **PT1**

Liver Met 2 **PT2**

Pancreas Primary

Ex. Data Figure 18

821 **Extended Data Figure 18: Relationship of Anatomical Location to Morphologic and**

822 **Transcriptional Heterogeneity in PAM53.** (a) Principal component analysis using Moffit 50

823 gene set. (b) Shown is the spatial location of each sample within the primary tumor or distant sites

824 and their corresponding transcriptional and histological subtypes. (c) Representative histologic

825 images and immunolabeling of representative tumors in the same patient.

PAM22

a

c

PT1 ▲ 🟧   PT2 ▲ 🟪

PT8 ▲ 🟧

b

Pancreas Primary

828   **Extended Data Figure 19: Relationship of Anatomical Location to Morphologic and**

829   **Transcriptional Heterogeneity in PAM22.** (a) Principal component analysis using Moffit 50

830   gene set. (b) Shown is the spatial location of each sample within the primary tumor and their

831   corresponding transcriptional and histological subtypes. (c) Representative histologic images of

832   the tumor in the same patient.