

"General regulatory scheme for translational regulation. The messenger encoding a ribosomal gene carries a repressor binding site generally located at close proximity to a ribosome loading site. This overlap induces competition between the ribosome and the ribosomal repressor protein for binding at this site. After binding of the repressor, translational coupling blocks the expression of the downstream reading frames." [From *Translational Regulation of Gene Expression 2*]

extension rather than a revision of its eponymous predecessor. Several of the regulatory modes described here seem to be characteristic of a variety of eukaryotic or bacterial systems. Some of them involve trans-acting proteins that bind to special cis-acting regions of an mRNA as a general way to regulate the synthesis of specific proteins. Ribosomal frameshifting and readthrough of stop codons also contribute to modulation of gene expression, especially of the reverse transcriptase gene in retroviruses. New and interesting results showing that some of the proteinsynthesis initiation factors act as protooncogenes suggest that additional mechanisms of control may await discovery.

The contributions to this book vary in quality. Hatfield's opening paper, which deals with a two-ribosome model for attenuation, is particularly clear and informative. Data and examples are cited from the trp operon and ilvGMEDA attenuators. Hatfield argues that functional and structural differences between them cannot be accommodated by a single model and that their mechanisms of action must be different. A careful discussion of the assumptions underlying these conclusions not only provides new insight but suggests new areas of investigation.

The rate-limiting step of protein synthesis is often initiation, and several papers deal with regulation of this process. Merrick and Anthony provide a detailed examination of translation of bicistronic mRNAs. They describe three initiation mechanisms—5' m⁷G cap-dependent initiation, internal initiation, and reinitiation—and convey the limitations of our ability to correlate and predict the type of initiation from structural information, giving the reader a sense of the direction of future research.

Disappointing some contributions that contain excessive jargon, limiting their potential audience. Given book's emphasis on mechanism, it is surprising that little structural information is offered. Insights regarding protein and RNA structure, along with quantitative data, would have provided a molecular basis for possible regulatory pathways. To some extent this omission reflects the current state of the field, although the tat-TAR interaction in HIV mRNA has been characterized both structurally and function-

ally. A useful integration of structural and functional information is provided by Portier and Grunberg-Manago, who discuss the biological mechanisms and possible control by structural elements, such as pseudoknots.

Although this book does not pretend to be a complete catalog of control mechanisms, the examples have been carefully chosen, and enough of them are sufficiently well presented to make this a useful volume for those interested in translational regulation of gene expression. As our knowledge of RNA structure and proteins associated with translational control mechanisms increases, we should begin to be able to describe these mechanisms in detailed molecular terms.

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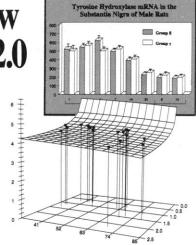
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