

1 **Resolving large-scale genome evolution in the high-throughput sequencing era: structural**
2 **variants, genome rearrangement, and karyotype dynamics in animals**

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5
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7 **Keywords:** Evolution, supergenes, recombination, karyotypic variants, genomic rearrangements

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17 **Abstract**

18 Genomic structural variation, genomic rearrangements and karyotype variants are important
19 components on which evolution acts in addition to single nucleotide variants, which are the most
20 common type of variant being studied since the rise of next generation sequencing. These variants
21 have unique mutational mechanisms and evolutionary consequences compared to single nucleotide
22 variants. Here we review the history and methods used to study genomic structural variants in animals,
23 including technical challenges of current methods and promising new approaches. We then review
24 case studies to illustrate how large genomic variants can drive interesting evolutionary phenomena.
25 Meanwhile, most studies are limited to specific taxa and there remain many unanswered questions.
26 We conclude that the time is ripe to expand study on genomic structural variants to various non-model
27 species and across taxa by utilizing cutting edge technologies to open a new door in evolutionary
28 genomics.

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33 Preface: The value of studying genomic structural variants in evolution and ecology
34 One of the fundamental goals of ecology and evolution is to clarify the contribution of genetic mutations
35 to phenotypic change within populations^{1–3}. Recent technological breakthroughs in massively parallel
36 sequencing have enabled researchers to investigate genetic variants in a genome-wide manner on a
37 population scale, sometimes based on high-quality reference genomes^{4–6}. At the same time, however,
38 most of these genome-wide studies have focused only on single nucleotide variants, which are relatively
39 easy to identify and analyze with established pipelines, however, this has led to other types of genetic
40 variants with potentially high impacts being largely neglected^{7–9}.

41 Genomic structural variants and chromosomal rearrangements, including inversions
42 encompassing multiple genes, differences in gene copy number, and polymorphic chromosome fission
43 and fusion, are thought to have an important impact on phenotypes and genome evolution¹⁰. Recent
44 findings that highlight the enormous potential importance of genomic structural variants in ecology and
45 evolution^{11–13}. However, in current standard pipelines for population and evolutionary genomics, such
46 structural variants are often categorized as “complex exceptions” and as such tend to be excluded from
47 the analysis¹⁴. In addition, the laborious and time-consuming investigation of polymorphic chromosome
48 rearrangement that had been conducted intensively earlier has gradually shrunk in the high-throughput
49 DNA sequencing era.

50 Bringing structural variants and genomic rearrangement back to the spotlight of the latest
51 genome-wide methods will be greatly beneficial in the field of evolution and ecology, not only to find out
52 the undiscovered genetic basis of phenotypic diversity but also to unveil the mechanism of large-scale
53 genome evolution, hybridization, reproductive isolation, and speciation¹⁴. Here, we outline how the
54 latest genomics and analytical algorithms can detect various types of genomic structural variants, and
55 how these can unveil the genetic basis of organism ecology and evolution. These variants are present
56 in all organisms, even though they differ in their frequency in different taxa, but we will here restrict
57 ourselves to the animal kingdom.

58 1. Insights into genomic structural variants from early and recent technologies

59 1.1 The overview of genomic structural variants

60 Genomic mutation is the substrate of evolutionary dynamics and biological diversity. The majority of

61 genetics studies, both theoretical and empirical, have been focused on only one type of mutation, Single
62 Nucleotide Polymorphisms (SNPs), which consist of a single base change (**Figure 1**). Because of their
63 simple and short nature, detecting SNPs has become easy and cost-effective^{15,16}. Numerous custom
64 SNP arrays are available for extensively studied species, and sometimes for particular breeds and
65 populations, to investigate their population genomics based on thousands or millions of SNPs¹⁶.
66 However, other types of genomic variants, which we call Structural Variants (SV), have been shown to
67 possess major influences on both evolution and phenotype^{17,18}. While SNPs are known to account for
68 0.1% of differences between two humans, this number grows to 1.5% when taking SVs into account¹⁹.
69

70 There are various types of structural variants, such as deletions, duplications, and insertions, which are
71 generally defined as a change in the sequence of more than 50 bp (**Figure 1**)^{19–21}. This size definition
72 is simply for convenience and conventional, and there is no intrinsic significance in the 50-base cutoff,
73 and certainly, there is no substantial problem with calling a 48-base deletion a structural variant. The
74 size is defined to focus on those variants that would have been overlooked in short-read sequencing,
75 however, a common practice is to filter out indels and focus on SNPs for analysis. Some SVs, such as
76 duplications and deletions, can cause copy number variation of genes, meaning the number of copies
77 of a gene can also vary among individuals or populations^{21–23}. Translocations and inversions are more
78 complex SVs. A translocation is a sequence that is moved from one location to another, often mediated
79 by transposable elements or non-allelic non homologous recombination (NAHR)²¹. An inversion is a
80 genetic segment that breaks off and is reinserted in the same location but in the reverse orientation²⁴.
81 By suppressing recombination, inversions can keep multiple genes within tight genetic linkage and can
82 be inherited as a single locus, creating supergenes that have been associated with multiple ecologically
83 important traits in various species^{17,21,25}.

84

85 There are even larger genomic variants, karyotypic variants. The most drastic case of karyotypic variants
86 is whole genome duplication (WGD), leading to a doubling of the number of chromosomes and all the
87 genetic content²⁶. More frequently observed, smaller-scale karyotypic variants are chromosomal fusion
88 and fission. A fusion between two chromosomes can happen, thereby reducing the number of
89 chromosomes in the species and linking previously independent sequences (**Figure 2**). Chromosomal

90 fusion can be classified into different types, depending on the centromere position before and after the
91 fusion (**Figure 2**)^{27–29}. Chromosomal fission is the opposite phenomenon, where a single chromosome
92 splits into two chromosomes^{30,31}.

93

94 1.2 A brief overview of historical discoveries of karyotype dynamics and structural variants
95 SVs were described more than a century ago, in the classic genetic mapping era in the 1920s³², by
96 Alfred H. Sturtevant, who established the foundations of modern biology by constructing the first genetic
97 map in *Drosophila*. Sturtevant noticed that genes were not located in the same order among closely
98 related flies using genetic mapping and he proposed that chromosomal inversion would explain the
99 observed gene order differences³². Another example of SV presumption before the rise of observation
100 methods is the case of supergenes, which were predicted by the observation of color pattern in
101 recombinant and crosses of mimetic butterflies³³. In early studies, SVs were detected by observing
102 karyotypes in cell culture arrested at the metaphase of cell division, especially by using chromosome
103 banding^{34–37} (**Table 1**). This method has a low-resolution power and allows detection of only large SVs,
104 but is less efficient than some methods developed later, such as fluorescent in situ hybridization or array
105 CGH (**Table 1**)^{10,35,36,38,39}. All of these techniques detect sufficiently large variants, however, have a low
106 resolution for smaller variants.

107

108 Karyotype research flourished in the field of human medical genomics, but early findings were mainly
109 uninheritable karyotypic variants, such as trisomy 21. Trisomy 21, commonly known as Down syndrome,
110 is a genetic disorder caused by the presence of an extra chromosome 21 in humans that was first
111 associated with the karyotype polymorphism in 1959^{40,41}. In the context of evolution, in 1970, Susumu
112 Ohno proposed that gene duplication is the major driver of evolution⁴². Based on comparisons of
113 genome size, he speculated that there were two rounds of complete genome duplication events in the
114 early vertebrate lineage that would have allowed for vertebrate diversification⁴³. However, at that time
115 there was a little data to support or reject this hypothesis. This remained the case until the 1990s when
116 multiple genetic analyses, including the discovery of paralogous regions among mammals, and the
117 presence of 4 hox gene clusters in mammals (where only one is present in *drosophila*), brought support
118 for Ohno's hypothesis^{44,45}. The rise of sequencing data in the 2000s brought even more support to this

119 hypothesis, with discovery of multiple duplicated genes, reviewed in section 3⁴³.

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122 1.3 Exploiting short and long-read high-throughput sequencing for ecological and evolutionary
123 genomics of structural variants

124 High-throughput sequencing technology has revolutionized genomics by enabling genome-wide scale
125 analysis. Sequencing technologies are categorized as short- and long-read sequencing. Short-read
126 sequencing, which is affordable and widely used for population-scale genomics, has limitations in
127 detecting large or complex structural variants such as inversions, tandem repeats, insertions, and
128 translocations^{19,20}. Nevertheless, several methods have been developed to detect these SVs, principally
129 by mapping reads to the reference sequence and detecting SV breakpoints²¹ (**Table 1**).

130 After the emergence of short-read sequencing technologies, human geneticists immediately started to
131 investigate the impact of genetic variants, including SVs, on human diseases, such as Alzheimer's and
132 Parkinson's diseases^{39,46–49}. The 1000 genome project was launched as one of the first population-
133 scale genomics projects and provided great advancement in cataloging SVs⁵⁰. Building on such early-
134 stage, short-read-based methods for SV detection and analysis, the field is now expanding to more
135 evolutionary-related research questions on various species, such as linking recombination hotspots and
136 SVs⁵¹, the divergence between ecotypes⁵², and the importance of SVs in domestication and selected
137 phenotypes⁵³.

138 Long-read sequencing provides an improvement in detecting SVs, particularly in complex or repeated
139 regions where many SVs are present^{54–56} (**Table 1**). Algorithms have been developed to detect SVs
140 using short-read and/or long-read sequencing data sets^{57–59}. Nevertheless, there is no consensus
141 method, silver bullet, for all types of research questions, partly because most of the software was
142 developed based on human data, and some are specifically developed for somatic variants detection in
143 cancer cells. To apply the methods for ecological and evolutionary genomics, we need to carefully
144 consider species-specific genomic architecture, repeat structure, study questions, and available

145 resources such as reference genome quality. Recently, machine-learning methods have been
146 developed for SVs detection and confidence-based filtering⁶⁰. Hi-C, which investigates the 3D
147 organization of the genome, is also increasingly used to detect SVs. In particular, Hi-C has been used
148 in repetitive regions, translocations, and large variants^{10,61}, where abnormal interactions between
149 regions may signal the presence of SVs^{61–63} (**Table 1**). The methods to analyze SVs evolution have also
150 recently improved, with the possibility to simulate evolution of SVs^{64,65} or investigate population
151 genomics of SVs⁶⁶.

152

153 2. The mutational mechanism of structural variants and genome rearrangements

154 Mutation is the source of variation for evolution, providing the variation for selection to act upon to create
155 adaptation and phenotypic diversity. One of the main characteristics of SVs compared with SNPs is that
156 SVs can be more often generated recurrently than SNPs since SV formation depends on genome
157 architecture such as recombination, segmental duplications and tandem repeats⁶⁷. In cases when
158 variation can be beneficial, for example, resistance to pathogens, multiple recurrent variants are
159 reported and such variants can function as a source of genetic variation under balancing selection^{68–71}.

160

161 The various types of SVs can be generated by multiple mutational mechanisms. The principal SV
162 formation mechanism is recombination, especially NAHR, but other formation mechanisms may occur
163 during DNA repair including non-homologous end joining (NHEJ), microhomology-mediated break-
164 induction replication (MMBIR) and Fork stalling and template switching (FoSTeS)^{21,36,67}. Some SVs are
165 more likely to be formed by specific mechanisms, such as tandem duplication, which is often caused by
166 slipped-strand mispairing during replication⁷². Transposable elements (TEs) are also involved in SVs
167 formation. Indeed, they have been shown to be associated with hotspots of recombination events,
168 particularly NAHR events⁷³. Alu, LINE and HERV elements are particularly known to be associated with
169 SVs formation^{36,67,73}. Genomic architecture also has an impact on SVs formation, with a greater
170 probability to be formed in highly repetitive regions⁶⁷. Low copy repeats (LCRs), by increasing the
171 probabilities of NAHR events because of frequent recombination, are also associated with more SV-rich

172 regions⁶⁷. Sex chromosomes may also be more prone to SVs formation because they generally have
173 no homolog to pair with during meiosis^{74,75}.

174 Chromosomal fusions occur when telomere ends of chromosomes get lost or shortened, even in the
175 case of Robertsonian fusion involving the fusion of two acrocentric chromosomes (**Figure 2C**)²⁹. NHEJ
176 is the main mechanism responsible for this telomere deprotection and chromosome fusion in mammals,
177 as it is the main pathway to repair unprotected DNA ends^{76,77}. Telomeres can also lose their sheltering
178 proteins which can lead to chromosome fusion⁷⁶. Other mechanisms, such as the presence of inverted
179 repeats or single-strand annealing (SSA), which is another DNA repairing mechanism, are known to be
180 responsible of chromosome fusion in non-animal species, while we still are unsure if they play a similar
181 role in animals⁷⁶. For their stability fused chromosomes cannot maintain two centromeres. This issue
182 can be solved in different ways, depending on the type of fusion. In end-to-end fusion, two telomeric
183 chromosomes are fused together (**Figure 2**). This leads to a chromosome with two centromeres (called
184 a dicentric chromosome), and a centromere has to be inactivated or eliminated for the fusion to stay
185 stable⁷⁸. In some cases, a small part of a telomeric chromosome containing the centromere is not fused,
186 often lost through subsequent meiosis, avoiding the formation of a dicentric fused chromosome (**Figure**
187 **2**)⁷⁹. Chromosome fission mechanisms rely on centromere modifications. The major mechanism is
188 simple centric fission; while centric duplication-fission, where the centromere is pre-duplicated, or centric
189 activation-fission, where a new centromere is activated, can cause similar consequences³¹.

190

191 A whole genomic duplication is a rare event, sometimes, large-scale duplications lead to imperfect
192 duplication and sterile offspring. For example, when diploid gametes may be produced, two gametes
193 need to be diploid to form the whole genome duplicated offspring, which is unlikely to happen⁸⁰. One
194 realistic scenario is normal fertilization followed by reduplication during the first division of the zygote
195 with all genetic material duplicated, as it can be observed in some mammals^{80,81}. Hybridization of two
196 closely related species can also lead to genome content duplication, without a subsequent proper
197 meiosis with ploidy reduction, producing diploid gametes at a high rate that can then cross and form
198 polyploid individuals, which is known to happen in fish, amphibians and reptiles⁸⁰. Genomes can also
199 undergo a reduction in size, by loss of genes and non-coding sequence, which sometimes can be a

200 consequence of accumulation of deleterious mutations⁸². This phenomenon is commonly known in
201 bacteria species, but also in some worms and birds^{83–86}. The genome size reduction is particularly
202 investigated in multiple parasite taxa, because genome compaction is associated with the unique
203 evolutionary pressures due to their ecology^{82,83,87}.

204

205

206 3. The evolutionary fate of genomic structural variants and chromosomal dynamics

207 3.1- The evolutionary trajectory and phenotypic effects of SVs

208 Similar to SNPs, the majority of newly arising SVs are expected to disappear without being passed on
209 from generation to generation. However, SVs can make unique evolutionary contributions because they
210 can cover larger genomic segments with different functional effects than SNPs, including gene fusion,
211 inversion/deletion/duplication of one or multiple genes, and mechanistically expanding tandem repeat
212 sequencing^{88,89}. For the same reasons, and also because they differ from SNPs which can have no
213 effect on genes because of the redundancy of genetic code, they are also more likely to be highly
214 deleterious, especially in coding sequences. SVs can also affect gene dosage, by affecting gene copy
215 numbers and regulatory regions^{35,62} and gene expression by altering genomic architecture through
216 “position effects”^{35,62}. The new frontier of this field is the effect of SVs on the 3D organization of the
217 genome, including the disruption of boundaries between interacting regions⁶².

218 Supergenes can be formed by SVs that keep beneficial alleles together by suppressing recombination.
219 They are typically maintained as polymorphism by balancing selection, which can occur in multiple forms
220 ¹⁷. This is exemplified in *Heliconius numata* butterflies, where multiple successive inversions have led
221 to the emergence of a supergene controlling mimicry wing pattern, where alleles of different genes have
222 to be maintained together to ensure the mimetic pattern is produced⁹⁰. This supergene is maintained
223 by disassortative mating, a type of frequency dependant selection,, where females prefer males with
224 different wing patterns that facilitates the generation of heterozygous offspring⁹¹. Supergenes and
225 inversions can also be maintained by overdominance or associative overdominance, the latter appearing
226 in the scenario where different recessive deleterious alleles or when dominant advantageous alleles are
227 fixed on each supergene haplotype⁹². Another important consideration for supergene and inversion
228 evolution is that any deleterious mutations generated will not have many opportunities of being
229 eliminated by recombination. Therefore, in the long term, inversions can be also deleterious because of
230 the accumulation of deleterious mutations^{64,92–95}. Additional advantageous inversions may happen in
231 close proximity of an existing advantageous supergene or inversion, which may extend the
232 supergene/inversion non-recombining region, leading to “evolutionary strata”^{93,96,97}.

233 Duplicated genes increase the production of gene transcripts ⁹⁸, which can often be deleterious ^{42,99} and
234 require the restoration of well-balanced gene expression. This dosage modification can be achieved by
235 the degeneration of one copy (pseudogenization) ¹⁰⁰, or the duplicated copy can also acquire a new
236 function (neofunctionalization) ^{42,100}. Sometimes both gene copies only assume a part of the original
237 function (subfunctionalization) ^{100,101}. There has been a long debate over which process is most
238 important in the evolution of duplicated genes, with recent observations accumulating in favor of
239 neofunctionalization. ^{99,102}. Gene gain and loss can evolve across species and characterize lineage-
240 specific traits. A famous example is the Amylase gene, which is responsible for starch digestion. In
241 addition to marked copy number polymorphisms between human populations with high-starch diets and
242 those with low-starch diets, Amylase underwent copy number gain in multiple domestic mammalian
243 lineages, which consume more starch than their wild counterparts ^{103,104}.

244 Genes losses can also facilitate adaptation ¹⁰⁵. Genes can be lost because some are dispensable,
245 especially in the case of genes that are specific to some environment ¹⁰⁶. A common situation where
246 this occurs is for animals living in perpetual dark environments such as caves, where skin pigmentation
247 and eyes are no longer needed to survive, and loss of genes related to these functions are often
248 observed in such animals ^{107–110}. It is interesting to notice that all genes are not equally likely to be lost,
249 and factors such their function or position influence their probability of being lost ^{105,106,111}.

250 Transposable elements (TEs) contribute to SV formation. TEs have their own evolutionary phases,
251 where they are initially invasive in the host genome, but after some time, they reach an equilibrium of
252 invasion and purging ^{112,113}. This can impact the SV formation dynamics in the host genome, where more
253 SVs are generated in the initial invasion period, with regression in generation rate as the equilibrium is
254 reached. TEs can also bring new functions in the host genome ^{114,115}, starting from the emergence of
255 the TE-mediated phenotype, followed by selection of this TE and the immobilization of the TE in the
256 genome ¹¹⁶. Some notable examples include the RAG genes in mammals, which play a role in
257 recombination of immune genes, and *Drosophila* telomeres, which are composed of inactivated TEs ^{117–}
258 ¹¹⁹. TEs also can have various impacts on genome structure, such as modification of recombination rate
259 or genome size ^{120,121}. By increasing genome size, TEs can increase energy consumption during
260 genome replication ^{121,122}. TEs are, thus, a major component target for genome size reduction ¹²³.

261

262 It has recently become increasingly clear that repetitive sequences, previously thought to have no
263 function and eliminated from analysis due to their complexity, contribute to phenotypic and adaptive
264 evolution in a variety of species. In shrimps, simple repetitive sequence expansions play a role in
265 genomic plasticity and osmoregulatory capacity through modulating gene expression ¹²⁴. Another case
266 suggests that a large repeat-rich block with multiple TEs which is not yet assigned to a chromosome, is
267 associated with songbird subspecies with different migrator behaviour ¹²⁵. These cases suggest that a
268 considerable amount of evolutionarily important genetic factors are located in repeat-rich regions, which
269 have been overlooked by conventional studies due to technological limitations. Application of the latest
270 methods, such as targeted long-read sequencing, promise to unveil the evolutionary significance of such
271 repeat sequences.

272

273

274 3.2 The evolution of larger genomic rearrangements: Karyotype evolution, whole genome duplication,
275 sex chromosomes and B chromosomes

276 After a chromosome fusion or fission appears, the karyotype first has to be stabilized to be maintained
277 in the population over generations. It is important to ensure that there is only one centromere on the
278 chromosome, since chromosome fusions may lead to chromosome segregation errors during meiosis
279 including aneuploidy⁷⁵. Another consequence of fusions is that they create longer chromosomes, which
280 may have an impact on the cell biomechanisms, for example, the centromere may need to become
281 stronger to ensure proper mobility of the chromosome. As a consequence, the number of kinetochores
282 microtubules and the size of the kinetochore is likely to increase⁷⁸. Chromosome fusions are also known
283 to reduce recombination rate^{126,127}, which can lead to various evolutionary consequences. For instance,
284 chromosome fusion can bring a significant selective advantage when linkage disequilibrium is favored,
285 such as by linking locally adapted loci¹²⁸.

286

287 *De novo* karyotype mutations are often observed in human embryos, but such individuals do not survive
288 until birth, and many chromosome number mutations are considered lethal. Chimpanzees with
289 equivalent trisomy have been found and they share some symptoms with those of Down syndrome in
290 humans¹²⁹. This report is insightful in whether specific *de novo* chromosomal trisomy with low lethality
291 is common across closely related species, and how the chromosome dosage affects phenotype in
292 closely related species. However, *de novo* karyotype variation at the population level has rarely been
293 examined in non-human animal species, leaving many open evolutionary questions, such as their effects
294 on phenotype or reproductive success.

295 WGD doubles the entire set of chromosomes and thus has important biological and evolutionary
296 consequences, including facilitating speciation¹³⁰. It has the immediate consequence of doubling
297 genome size, which as mentioned earlier, increases the cost of cell multiplication^{131,132}. Moreover, cell
298 size and cell volume often increase after a genome duplication with various metabolic consequences
299¹³². This cell size increase also can lead to the “gigantism” effect, with polyploid individuals having larger

300 body or organ size ¹³¹. WGD is also a duplication of all genes at a single time, and similar to the
301 previously mentioned case for gene duplication, but more intensified dosage compensation happens
302 after WGD ¹³³. Species that undergo a whole genome duplication are thus subject to a rediploidization,
303 where most duplicate gene copies are lost after some time ^{133–135}. Sex chromosomes and B
304 chromosomes are other karyotypic variations that should be noted. Sex chromosomes are more extreme
305 cases of supergenes, and some supergenes even display some sex chromosome-like behaviour ¹³⁶.
306 Differentiated sex chromosomes often have a phase of degeneration (loss of functional genes) over
307 time ^{137–139} and are characterized by a non-recombining region with its homolog, as in supergenes or
308 inversions ^{93,138}. B chromosomes are supernumerary chromosomes, which are mainly composed of
309 repeated sequences, although they can contain some genes ^{140,141}. B chromosomes are usually
310 considered to reduce the fitness of the host, due to the resources needed to be replicated, however,
311 they are sometimes preserved, when they contain important genetic elements ^{140–142}. Some sex and B
312 chromosomes also undergo non-mendelian inheritance, which is known to have important evolutionary
313 impacts in similar circumstances as with cytoplasmically inherited elements or segregation distorters ^{143–}
314 ¹⁴⁵.

315

316 4. Concluding remarks - Unanswered questions and future directions

317 As we have reviewed, SVs and karyotypic variants are an important part of genomic variation, which
318 can have various phenotypic and evolutionary consequences. They are still overlooked compared to
319 SNPs, partially because of the difficulty to sequence them in a cost effective way. Recent advances in
320 sequencing technology with long reads and detection algorithms will certainly make SVs studies more
321 reliable and affordable, and are paving the way for the new era for evolutionary genomics research ¹⁴⁶.
322 One of the main challenges is to improve integration of SVs and SNPs data, which is currently often
323 avoided because of the different informatic coding used for these variants ¹⁴. More methods to analyze
324 SVs evolution are also needed, in order to take into account the full ranges of genomic variation and
325 have multiple indicators for evolutionary analysis as well as more reliable results ¹⁴. SVs are also often
326 considered on their own, but in reality they are often interacting between each other. Sex chromosomes
327 are for instance often encountered with inversions, duplication or deletion ^{137,147,148}. Evolution of this type

328 of structure might lead to specific dynamics which need to be investigated and considered. SVs have
329 not been studied in a broad taxonomic range, therefore, deeper and wider investigations on different
330 organisms will significantly improve our knowledge on SVs content in the genome and their
331 maintenance. We also still lack information on how different types of SVs play a role in various
332 evolutionary processes such as speciation or divergence between populations or closely related
333 species. The impact of these variants on gene expression is still an active field, and the evolution of
334 gene expression after gene/genome duplication is not fully understood yet. The recent advancement
335 in 3D genome conformation is particularly relevant to investigate how SVs can alter genome
336 conformation creating different expression patterns¹⁴⁹. Overall, the study of SVs and karyotypic variants
337 is a fascinating area of research that holds great potential for advancing our understanding of genome
338 evolution. With continued advancements in theory, technology and new analytical tools, we can look
339 forward to many unseen discoveries.

340

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346

347 **Glossary**

348 Genomic variant: Variation in the DNA sequence compared to a reference sequence.

349 Structural variant (SV): Genomic variant that covers multiple base pairs.

350 Non-allelic homologous recombination (NAHR): Recombination events between similar sequences
351 (Homologous recombination) but at different genomic positions.

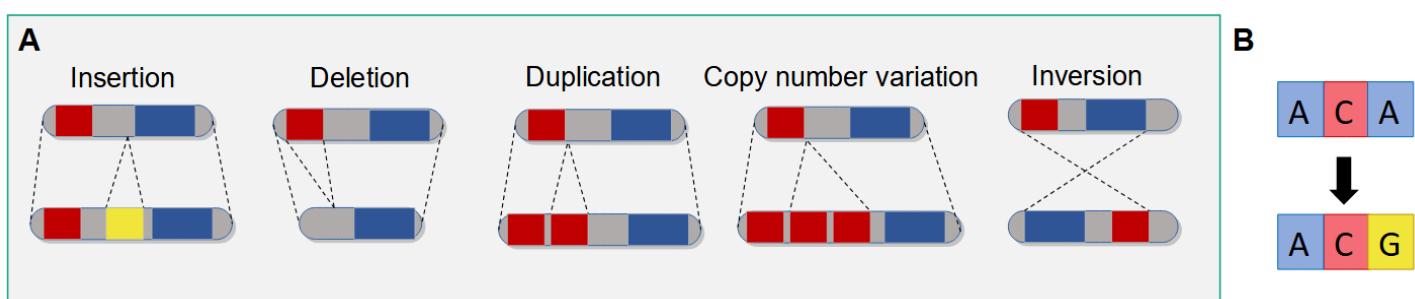
352 Karyotypic variant: Variant that impacts the number or conformation of the karyotype.

353 Polymorphic variant: variant that is present (in a population, or in a group of species considered) in
354 several forms (for instance, some individuals have a deletion, others have not).

355 Non-homologous end joining (NHEJ): Broken DNA is repaired with ligation without homologous
356 template.

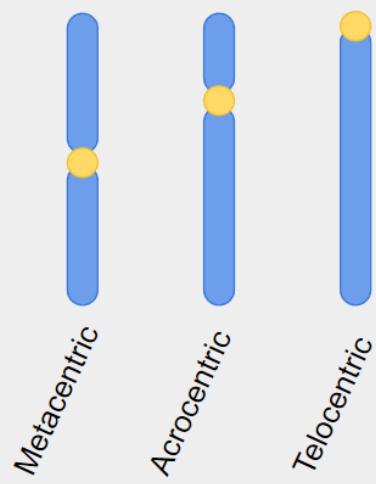
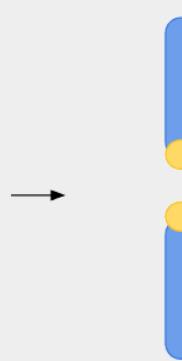
357 Microhomology-mediated break-induction replication (MMBIR): During replication, if DNA is broken and
358 has to be repaired, a region of microhomology can invade a nearby replication fork.
359 Fork stalling and template switching (FoSTeS): During replication, if a fork is stalling, the lagging strand
360 might disengage and invade a nearby replicating fork.
361 Alu: Most abundant family of TE in human genome, of around 300bp long, classified as short
362 interspersed nuclear element.
363 Long interspersed nuclear element (LINE): A family of retrotransposons.
364 Human endogenous retroviral element (HERV): Sequences derived from ancient retroviruses.
365 Single-strand annealing (SSA): DNA repair mechanism in which a long 5' single strand is paired with
366 another single stranded DNA on the another chromosome.
367 Polypliody: When the chromosomes are in more than 2 copies (diploidy) in the genome.
368 Position effect: Change in expression of a gene without any direct change in the coding or regulatory
369 sequences, but often because of a change in the gene environment.
370 Overdominance: When the heterozygous genotype is advantageous compared to both homozygous
371 genotypes (in the case a a bi-allelic locus).
372 Aneuploidy: When the chromosomes are present in an abnormal number, which is often the case when
373 all chromosome pairs do not have the same number of copies.

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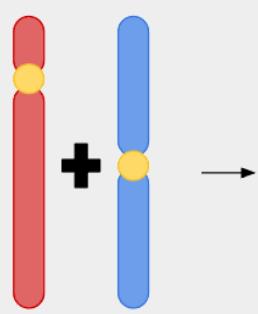


378
379 Figure 1: Different types of genomic variants

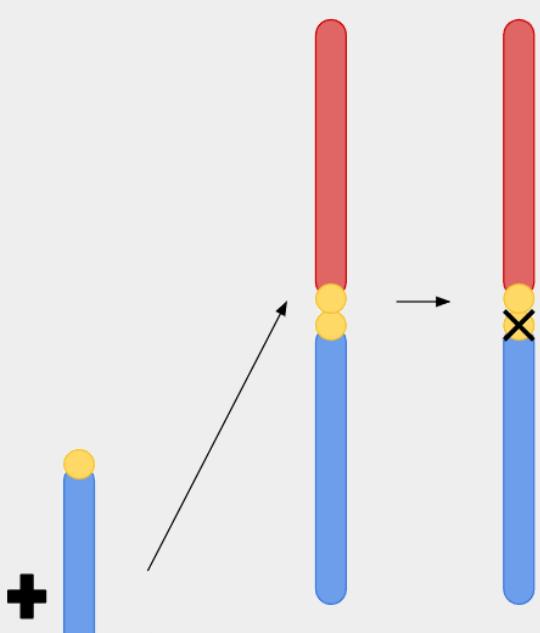
380 **A:** Structural variants. **B:** Single nucleotide Polymorphism

A**B****C**

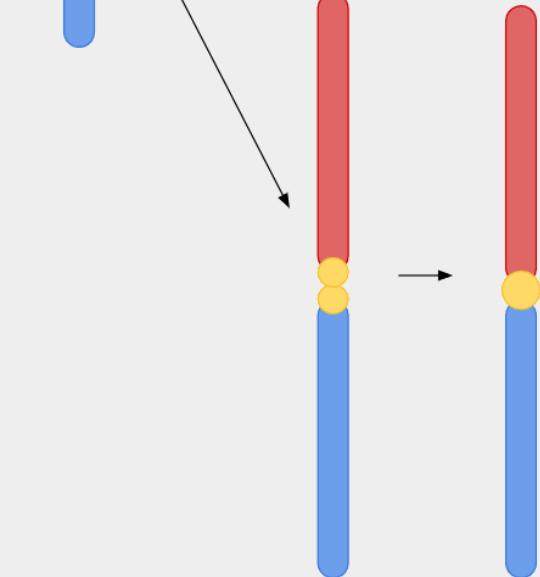
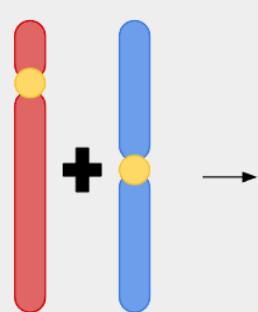
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2



382 Figure 2: Chromosome fusion and fission

383 **A:** Type of chromosomes depending on the position of the centromere. **B:** Chromosome

384 fission, here a metacentric chromosome is split into two acrocentric chromosomes. **C:** Chromosome

385 fusion. **1:** telomere to telomere fusion with elimination of a centromere bearing arm: Fusion of a

386 metacentric chromosome and a telocentric (or acrocentric) chromosome results in a fused chromosome

387 and a small free chromosome issued from the telocentric (or acrocentric) initial chromosome. **2:**

388 Telomere to telomere fusion with elimination of one centromere: Fusion of a metacentric (or any other

389 type) with a telocentric (or any other type) chromosomes, which leads the two chromosomes to

390 completely merge, resulting in a chromosome with two centromeres, where one of them will be quickly

391 lost. **3:** Centromere to centromere fusion: Fusion of two telocentric (or acrocentric) chromosomes by

392 their centromere. In this case, the two centromeres will be adjacent, which can lead to one of them being

393 lost (top - as in C2), or they can form a single, possibly stronger centromere (bottom).

394

Table 1: Chronology of the main methods used to identify SVs

Technology name	Year	Description	References
Chromosome banding	1968	Stain the chromosomes allowing their observation with a microscope	¹⁵⁰ Caspersson, T., Farber, S., Foley, G. E., Kudynowski, J., Modest, E. J., Simonsson, E., ... & Zech, L. (1968). Chemical differentiation along metaphase chromosomes. <i>Experimental cell research</i> , 49(1), 219-222.
Fluorescent in situ hybridization (FISH)	1982	Uses fluorescent probes to bind to specific nucleic acids.	¹⁵¹ Langer-Safer, P. R., Levine, M., & Ward, D. C. (1982). Immunological method for mapping genes on Drosophila polytene chromosomes. <i>Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences</i> , 79(14), 4381-4385.
Array Comparative Genomic Hybridization (Array CGH)	1992	Hybridize two different DNAs fragments to the same probes (oligonucleotides), to observe differences in intensities.	¹⁵² Kallioniemi, A., Kallioniemi, O. P., Sudar, D., Rutovitz, D., Gray, J. W., Waldman, F., & Pinkel, D. (1992). Comparative genomic hybridization for molecular cytogenetic analysis of solid tumors. <i>Science</i> , 258(5083), 818-821.
SNP-array	1998	Similar as array CGH but use allele specific oligonucleotides	¹⁵³ Wang, D. G., Fan, J. B., Siao, C. J., Berno, A., Young, P., Sapolsky, R., ... & Lander, E. S. (1998). Large-scale identification, mapping, and genotyping of single-nucleotide polymorphisms in the human genome. <i>Science</i> , 280(5366), 1077-1082.
Solexa (sequencing by synthesis)	2006	Short read sequencing method relying on the synthesis of complementary strand nucleotide by nucleotide	¹⁵⁴ Pickrell, W. O., Rees, M. I., & Chung, S. K. (2012). Next generation sequencing methodologies-an overview. <i>Advances in protein chemistry and structural biology</i> , 89, 1-26.

Solid (sequencing by ligation)	2008	Short read sequencing method making use of a ligase enzyme	¹⁵⁴ Pickrell, W. O., Rees, M. I., & Chung, S. K. (2012). Next generation sequencing methodologies-an overview. <i>Advances in protein chemistry and structural biology</i> , 89, 1-26.
High throughput chromosome conformation capture (Hi-C)	2009	Capture chromatin conformation to investigate 3D organization of the genome	¹⁵⁵ Lieberman-Aiden, E., Van Berkum, N. L., Williams, L., Imakaev, M., Ragoczy, T., Telling, A., ... & Dekker, J. (2009). Comprehensive mapping of long-range interactions reveals folding principles of the human genome. <i>science</i> , 326(5950), 289-293.
Pacbio SMRT sequencing	2011	Long reads method using fluorescent nucleotide to sequence the DNA fragments in real time	¹⁵⁴ Pickrell, W. O., Rees, M. I., & Chung, S. K. (2012). Next generation sequencing methodologies-an overview. <i>Advances in protein chemistry and structural biology</i> , 89, 1-26.
Nanopore sequencing	2012	Long reads method where DNA fragments pass through pores and emits different electric signal depending on the base passing by the pore	¹⁵⁴ Pickrell, W. O., Rees, M. I., & Chung, S. K. (2012). Next generation sequencing methodologies-an overview. <i>Advances in protein chemistry and structural biology</i> , 89, 1-26.

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