STUDIES ON THE MECHANISM FOR ENTRY OF VESICULAR STOMATITIS VIRUS GLYCOPROTEIN G mRNA INTO MEMBRANE-BOUND POLYRIBOSOME COMPLEXES

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ABSTRACT

Glycoprotein mRNA (G mRNA) of vesicular stomatitis virus is synthesized in the cytosol fraction of infected HeLa cells. Shortly after synthesis, this mRNA associates with 40S ribosomal subunits and subsequently forms 80S monosomes in the cytosol fraction. The bulk of labeled G mRNA is then found in polysomes associated with the membrane, without first appearing in the subunit or monomer pool of the membrane-bound fraction. Inhibition of the initiation of protein synthesis by pactamycin or muconomycin A blocks entry of newly synthesized G mRNA into membrane-bound polysomes. Under these circumstances, labeled G mRNA accumulates in the cytosol. Inhibition of the elongation of protein synthesis by cycloheximide, however, allows entry of 60% of newly synthesized G mRNA into membrane-bound polysomes. Furthermore, prelabeled G mRNA associated with membrane-bound polysomes is released from the membrane fraction in vivo by pactamycin or muconomycin A and in vitro by 1 mM puromycin - 0.5 M KCl. This release is not due to nonspecific effects of the drugs. These results demonstrate that association of G mRNA with membrane-bound polysomes is dependent upon polysome formation and initiation of protein synthesis. Therefore, direct association of the 3' end of G mRNA with the membrane does not appear to be the initial event in the formation of membrane-bound polysomes.

In eukaryotic cells, polyribosomes are found either free in the cytoplasm or in association with membranes comprising the rough endoplasmic reticulum (RER) (35). The percentage of polyribosomes in each class is dependent upon the cell type, and cells synthesizing large amounts of secretory proteins contain a high proportion of membrane-bound polysomes (35). Furthermore, it has been demonstrated that proteins secreted from the cell are synthesized primarily on membrane-bound polysomes (35). Daifler et al. (10, 11) and Lodish and Small (25) have postulated that membrane-bound polysomes also synthesize proteins which became structural units of various membrane fractions.

From many studies, it appears that mRNAs for specific cellular functions are segregated in eukaryotic cells; however, the mechanism for this segregation process has not been fully elucidated (12, 17, 37). Certain investigators have reported a direct association of mRNA with membranes via the 3' poly (A) and/or adjacent regions of the messenger and have suggested that specificity for mRNA-membrane interaction may reside in the
primary sequence of mRNA (8, 24, 26, 29, 30). Blobel and co-workers (3, 5, 6) have obtained evidence for an alternative mechanism in which the specificity for segregation of mRNA in membrane-bound polysomes is conferred by a common N-terminal hydrophobic nascent polypeptide chain for all secretory proteins. This region, termed the "signal sequence", is cleaved before completion of protein synthesis and does not appear in the final secreted product.

In the present study, we have examined interaction of a specific eukaryotic mRNA with membranes, utilizing vesicular stomatitis virus (VSV)-infected HeLa cells. VSV-infected cells contain two size classes of viral specific mRNAs of sedimentation values 26S and 12-18S (19, 33). The 12-18S size class can be subdivided further into 17S, 14.5S and 12S species (15, 40, 41). The 17S viral specific mRNA codes for glycoprotein G (7, 15, 22, 32) and is found on membrane-bound polysomes. The 14.5S and 12S VSV mRNAs code for nucleocapsid (N), membrane matrix (M) and NS proteins and are found predominantly on free polysomes (7, 15, 22, 32). We have attempted to follow the fate of G mRNA from the time of its synthesis to its association with polysomes in the membrane. We have found that glycoprotein mRNA (G mRNA) is synthesized in the cytosol and then rapidly associates with membrane-bound polysomes. Pactamycin and muconomycin A, inhibitors of initiation of protein synthesis, almost totally block association of G mRNA with the membrane fraction. In contrast, cycloheximide, an inhibitor of elongation, allows association of G mRNA with membrane-bound polysomes. Puromycin -0.5 M KCl specifically releases labeled VSV mRNA from membranes of infected cells, indicating that the nascent chain serves as an anchor for attachment of polysomes containing VSV mRNA. These results are consistent with an interpretation that events early in protein synthesis, related to formation of the N-terminal peptide, are required before glycoprotein G mRNA enters into a stable complex with membrane structures.

MATERIALS AND METHODS
Suspension cultures of HeLa cells were grown at 37°C to a concentration of 4 × 10⁶ cells/ml in Eagle's medium (MEM) supplemented with 2 mM glutamine and 7% fetal calf serum. Vesicular stomatitis virus (Indiana serotype) was grown as previously described (16). Actinomycin D was a gift of Merck Chemical Div., Merck & Co., Rahway, N.J., and muconomycin A was kindly provided by Dr. Susan Horwitz of the Department of Pharmacology, Albert Einstein College of Medicine, New York. Isotopes were obtained from New England Nuclear Corp., Boston, Mass. All glassware, buffers and sucrose solutions were autoclaved.

Infection of HeLa Cells
Log-phase HeLa cells were concentrated to a density of 4 × 10⁶ cells/ml and infected with VSV at a multiplicity of infection (MOI) of 10 PFU/cell. 1 h postinfection, actinomycin D was added to 5 μg/ml and fetal calf serum was added 1.5 h postinfection. [3H]Juridine (30-40 Ci/mmol, 30 μCi/ml) was added 2.5 h postinfection or as stated in the appropriate figure legend. Inhibitors of protein synthesis were added as indicated. Labeling of infected cells was stopped by pouring the cells over frozen, crushed Earle's solution.

Preparation of Cytoplasmic Extracts
Cells were harvested by centrifugation, washed with Earle's solution and resuspended in RSB (0.01 M NaCl, 0.01 M Tris-HCl, pH 7.4, and 0.0015 M MgCl₂) containing 100 μg/ml heparin. The cells were left at 0°C for 10-15 min and then lysed with a glass Dounce homogenizer. Cell lysis was monitored by light microscopy. Nuclei were removed by centrifugation at 1,600 rpm for 3 min and the crude cytoplasmic extract was separated into a cytoplasmic pellet and a postmembrane supernatant fraction by centrifugation at 13,000 rpm for 30 min. The cytoplasmic pellet was resuspended in isotonic buffer (0.15 M NaCl, 0.01 M Tris-HCl, pH 7.4, 0.0015 M MgCl₂) containing 100 μg/ml heparin and layered over replete 35-ml 15-30% (wt/wt) linear sucrose gradients in isotonic buffer and 100 μg/ml heparin. Centrifugation was carried out at 4°C in a Beckman #SW27 rotor (Beckman Instruments Inc., Spinco Div., Palo Alto, Calif.) at 25,000 rpm for 30 min. The pellet, containing membrane-bound polysomes, was resuspended in isonic buffer containing the nonionic detergent NP-40 and used directly for separation of polysomes and ribosomal subunits or adjusted to a final sodium dodecyl sulfate (SDS) concentration of 1% for analysis of RNA. The postmembrane supernatant fraction was also separated into polysomes and ribosomal subunits after addition of the NP-40 or was analyzed directly for VSV mRNA components.

Sucrose Gradient Centrifugation of the Membrane Pellet or Postmembrane Supernatant Fraction
Membrane pellets or postmembrane supernatant fractions were layered over replete 35-ml 7-52% (wt/wt) linear sucrose gradients in isotonic buffer, containing 100 μg/ml heparin, and were centrifuged in the Beckman #SW27 rotor at 4°C for 16 h at 16,000 rpm. Gradients were collected through an Altex automatic recording...
spectrophotometer, model #152 (Altex Scientific Inc., Berkeley, Calif.). Small portions of each fraction were analyzed for radioactive RNA by TCA precipitation and liquid scintillation spectrometry as described previously (16). In order to determine whether [3H]uridine-labeled RNA in the 40S region was associated with 40S ribosomal subunits or was present as mRNPs, this region of the gradient was rerun on a second 35-ml 15-30% (wt/wt) linear sucrose gradient in isotonic buffer containing 100 μg/ml heparin. Centrifugation in the Beckman #SW27 rotor was carried out at 4°C for 15 h at 25,000 rpm. Gradients were collected as described above, and small portions of each fraction were analyzed for radioactive RNA. Appropriate fractions from each gradient were pooled and precipitated with 2.5 vol of absolute ethanol for subsequent analysis of VSV mRNA components.

**Sucrose Gradient Analysis of VSV mRNA**

Fractions in ethanol were precipitated by centrifugation at 12,000 rpm for 30 min, resuspended in NETS buffer (0.1 M NaCl, 0.01 M Tris, pH 7.4, 0.002 M EDTA and 0.1% SDS), layered on 11.6-ml 15-30% (wt/wt) sucrose gradients in NETS buffer, and centrifuged in a Beckman #SW41 rotor at 23°C for 17 h at 33,000 rpm. Gradients were monitored as indicated above.

**RESULTS**

**Synthesis and Subcellular Localization of VSV G mRNA**

To analyze subcellular sites for synthesis and accumulation of VSV mRNAs, HeLa cells were infected with VSV and at appropriate time points postinfection aliquots of cells were labeled with [3H]uridine for 5, 20, or 120 min. In each case, the time at which the cells were harvested was 4.5 h postinfection. After the various labeling periods, membrane-bound and non-membrane-bound fractions were prepared and the distribution of [3H]uridine-labeled 12-18S viral mRNA species determined (Fig. 1). After a 5-min pulse, labeled 17S mRNA is present in both the nonmembrane and membrane-bound fractions, although the proportion of labeled 17S mRNA in total 12-18S mRNA is higher in the membrane-bound fraction (Fig. 1 A and D). After a 20-min pulse, the relative proportions of labeled 14.5S and 12S VSV mRNAs increase in the nonmembrane fraction (Fig. 1 B), whereas the proportion of labeled 17S mRNA increases in the membrane-bound fraction (Fig. 1 E). The profile for 12-18S VSV mRNAs in the membrane-bound and nonmembrane fractions changes only slightly between 20 min and 120 min. After a 120-min pulse, 17S mRNA comprises >75% of labeled 12-18S VSV mRNA in the membrane-bound fraction, whereas it represents only a small shoulder in the 17S region in the non-membrane fraction (Fig. 1 C and F). These results demonstrate that all the VSV 12-18S
mRNA species, including 17S G mRNA, are synthesized in the nonmembrane fraction and that G mRNA rapidly associates with the membrane-bound fraction.

Experiments were performed to follow the movement of labeled 17S VSV mRNA from the nonmembrane to the membrane-bound fraction of infected cells after short pulses with [3H]uridine (Fig. 2). In infected cells labeled for 5 min, most of the radioactivity associated with the non-membrane-bound fraction is found in 40S subunits and monosomes, with higher activity in the 40S region (Fig. 2 A). After a 15-min pulse, labeled RNA in 40S subunits and monomers of the nonmembrane fraction is increased and some radioactivity has entered the polysome region (Fig. 2 B). Labeling of polysomes, however, is partially obscured by 120S nucleocapsids, and some larger polysomes in the nonmembrane fraction may be lost during preparation of subcellular components. In the membrane-bound fraction of cells pulsed for 5 min (Fig. 2 C), little radioactivity is found in 40S subunits or monosomes, but some radioactivity is already present in polysomes. Essentially, the same results were obtained after a 2.5-min pulse, although the level of radioactive labeling was lower. After a 15-min pulse, 40S subunits and monomers still show only a low level of labeling; however, membrane-bound polysomes are highly labeled (Fig. 2 D). Various regions of the gradient shown in Fig. 2 A (i.e., polysomes, monosomes, 40S subunits and supernatant mRNPs) were separated and analyzed for 12-18S VSV mRNA species by SDS-sucrose gradient centrifugation. As shown in Fig. 3, labeled 17S mRNA can be identified in material isolated from the 40S subunit and monomer regions but not in material isolated from the mRNA or polysome region. Since the experiments in Figs. 2 and 3 were performed under conditions of continuous labeling, the results indicate that 17S G mRNA associates initially with nonmembrane ribosomes and is then transferred to membrane-bound polysomes without first cycling through membrane-bound subunits or monosomes.

To be certain that labeled 12-18S RNA in this system represents VSV mRNA, a number of experiments were performed. Polysomes were isolated from VSV-infected cells, treated with 5 µg/ml actinomycin D, and labeled with [3H]uridine for 1 h. RNA was isolated from these polysomes by phenol extraction, and the 12-18S fraction was separated by sucrose gradient centrifugation. 85% of labeled RNA in the 12-18S region adsorbed to oligo (dT)-cellulose at 0.5 M NaCl - 10 mM Tris HCl, pH 7.4 and was eluted with 10 mM Tris HCl, pH 7.4 (16). This fraction was hybridized to 42S RNA isolated from intact virus and, as shown in Fig. 4, there was complete protection from T1 and pancreatic RNAse degradation as the level of 42S virion RNA input was increased. These results show that all of the labeled RNA in the 12-18S region represents sequences complementary to 42S virion RNA, and that the bulk of this material is polyadenylated, i.e., represents VSV mRNA.

Effect of Inhibitors of Protein Synthesis on Subcellular Localization of G mRNA

In order to determine whether protein synthesis is necessary for attachment of G mRNA to the membrane-bound fraction, the effect of certain...
Ribosomal localization of [3H]uridine-labeled VSV G mRNA in the non-membrane fraction after a 5-min pulse. 3.3 x 10⁶ HeLa cells were infected with VSV, and at 4 h 45 min postinfection the cells were labeled for 5 min with 3 mCi [3H]uridine (37.6 Ci/mmol). Cells were poured over frozen, crushed Earle’s solution, and a nonmembrane fraction was prepared. The nonmembrane fraction was layered over a 35-ml linear 7-52% (wt/wt) sucrose gradient in isotonic buffer containing 100 μg/ml heparin, and centrifuged in the Beckman SW 27 rotor at 16,000 rpm for 16 h at 4°C. Fractions were collected and aliquots assayed for trichloroacetic acid-precipitable radioactivity. The polysome, monosome and 40S regions of the gradient were pooled separately, and polysomes and monosomes were precipitated by addition of 2 vol of absolute ethanol.

To determine whether the relative decrease in membrane-bound viral RNA in pactamycin-treated cells resulted from a block in the association of viral mRNA (specifically G mRNA) with membranes, [3H]uridine-labeled viral RNA from drug-treated and control cells was analyzed by sucrose gradient centrifugation (Fig. 7). Addition of pactamycin reduced the level of all three 12-18S VSV mRNA components in the membrane-bound fraction, the most prominent effect being that on the 17S component (Fig. 7A). At the same time, the proportion of 17S mRNA in the nonmembrane fraction increased, so that it now represented a defined peak (Fig. 7B). The levels of [3H]uridine-labeled 17S G mRNA in the membrane-bound fraction of equivalent numbers of cells, in the presence or absence of various protein synthesis inhibitors, are listed in Table I. Pactamycin reduces G mRNA in the membrane-bound fraction to 14% of control and mycomycin A to 7-8% of control. Cycloheximide, at 100 μg/ml, has a lesser influence on the amount of labeled G mRNA entering the membrane-bound fraction, reducing this value to 57% of control (Table I). At this concentration, cycloheximide inhibited protein synthesis in VSV-infected HeLa cells by 97%.

![Figure 3](image-url)
Hybridization of [3H]uridine-labeled 12-18S RNA from VSV-infected HeLa cells to VSV 42S virion RNA. HeLa cells were infected with VSV for 2.5 h and labeled with [3H]uridine (30-40 Ci/mmol, 60 μCi/ml) for 4 h as noted in Materials and Methods. [3H]uridine-labeled 12-18S, poly A+ RNA was prepared from total cytoplasm by phenol extraction, ethanol precipitation, sucrose gradient centrifugation, and oligo (dT)-cellulose chromatography as described previously (16). Unlabeled VSV 42S RNA was prepared from intact virus by SDS-phenol extraction, ethanol precipitation and sucrose gradient centrifugation to isolate the 42S component. Hybridization assays were performed in a 5-μl volume in sealed capillary tubes containing 200 mM NaPO4 buffer, pH 6.8-0.5% SDS, 437 cpm 12-18S VSV mRNA, and increasing amounts of VSV 42S RNA.

The tubes were heated at 100°C for 5 min and then incubated at 65°C for 15 h. The tubes were placed on ice, broken, and the samples diluted into 1 ml of 300 mM NaCl-30 mM Na citrate. 10 μg of pancreatic RNase plus 4 U of T1 RNase in 1 ml of 300 mM NaCl-30 mM Na citrate were added and incubation was performed at 37°C for 30 min. The samples were then placed on ice for 10 min, adjusted to 10% TCA, and left on ice for 10 min. The samples were filtered through nitrocellulose filters, washed 3 times with 4 ml of 5% TCA, and counted by liquid scintillation spectroscopy. Blanks of 38 cpm, representing machine background plus cpm resistant to nuclease digestion with labeled RNA samples incubated in the absence of 42S virion RNA, were subtracted from each point. 56 ng of VSV 42S RNA protected [3H]uridine-labeled poly A+ RNA from uninfected HeLa cells to only 18 cpm above the blank.

Experiments were then performed to show that G mRNA was accumulating in the nonmembrane fraction of pactamycin-treated cells. The [3H]uridine-labeled 17S component from the nonmembrane fraction of VSV-infected and pactamycin-treated cells was isolated and applied to an oligo (dT)-cellulose column. Approximately 85% of this material was adsorbed to oligo (dT)-cellulose, indicating that it contained a poly(A) sequence. Bound material was eluted from oligo (dT)-cellulose at low ionic strength (16) and analyzed further by sucrose gradient centrifugation. Fig. 8 shows that this mRNA sedimented at 17S, the normal position for glycoprotein G mRNA. A 17S component was also identified in the nonmembrane fraction of drug-treated cells by sucrose gradient centrifugation in the presence of 85% formamide.

Unlabeled, poly A+ RNA from the membrane-bound and non-membrane-bound RNA fraction of control and pactamycin-treated VSV-infected cells was isolated and translated in a wheat germ mRNA-dependent cell-free system. Both et al. (7) have demonstrated previously in this system that 17S VSV mRNA codes for a 63,000-dalton polypeptide which is glycoprotein G protein by tryptic peptide analysis (presumably minus the carbohydrate region, since in vivo synthesized G protein has a mol wt of 67,000 daltons). As shown by the autoradiogram of the slab gel electrophoresis of our cell-free reaction product (Fig. 9, upper portion), a polypeptide of 63,000 daltons is produced when RNA from VSV-infected cells is added to the wheat germ system. The relative proportion of the 63,000-dalton polypeptide (G(63K)) is highest and represents a major component with control
membrane-bound RNA (slot F) and is lowest with control non-membrane-bound RNA (slot D). After addition of pactamycin to VSV-infected cells, the proportion of G<sub>63K</sub> synthesized in the wheat germ system is decreased under direction of membrane-bound RNA (slot C) and is increased under direction of non-membrane-bound RNA (slot E). Fig. 9 (lower portion) shows the densitometry scans of the cell-free product in the wheat germ system under the direction of VSV-mRNA from control and pactamycin-treated cells. In these tracings, the profile of the cell-free product is normalized to a constant peak height for N protein, the major VSV-directed cell-free product.

With RNA from control VSV-infected cells, the relative amount of G synthesized under the direction of membrane-bound RNA (determined as the area under the 63-k dalton region of the tracing in scan f) is approximately 9-fold greater than that obtained with non-membrane-bound RNA (scan d). This is consistent with the distribution profiles for labeled "17S" VSV-mRNA in the membrane-bound versus the non membrane-bound RNA fraction after a 2-h pulse. The amount of G<sub>63K</sub> synthesized under the direction of membrane-bound RNA is reduced approximately 50% after treatment of cells with pactamycin (scan f vs. scan c), whereas synthesis of G<sub>63K</sub> under the direction of non-membrane-bound RNA is increased 400% after treatment of cells with pactamycin (scan d vs. scan e). However, the relative amount of G<sub>63K</sub> synthesized by the sum of membrane-bound plus non-membrane-bound RNA from control versus pactamycin-treated cells remains relatively constant (scans f plus d vs. scans c plus e). This is
TABLE I

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Membrane sample</th>
<th>[3H]Uridine-labeled 17S G mRNA</th>
<th>cpm</th>
<th>% of control</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Control</td>
<td>84,200</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+10^{-6} M pactamycin</td>
<td>11,500</td>
<td>13.6</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+10^{-6} M muconomycin A</td>
<td>6,040</td>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+100 μg/ml cycloheximide</td>
<td>47,600</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

At 4 h postinfection, equal numbers of VSV-infected HeLa cells were preincubated for 10 min in the presence of an antibiotic and subsequently labeled for 60 min with [3H]uridine. A control sample was labeled for 60 min with [3H]uridine. Membrane-bound fractions were prepared, resuspended in NETS buffer, and layered on 15-30% sucrose gradients in NETS buffer. The samples were centrifuged in the Beckman SW41 rotor at 33,000 rpm for 17 h at 23°C. Fractions were assayed for TCA-insoluble radioactivity, and the amount of 17S G mRNA in each sample was determined by estimating the area under the 17S region in each gradient.

consistent with earlier findings demonstrating a shift in labeled G mRNA from the membrane-bound to the non-membrane-bound fraction after addition of pactamycin to VSV-infected HeLa cells.

In order to show that the decrease of 12-18S mRNA in membrane-bound polysomes of cells incubated with pactamycin was not the result of non-specific release of mRNA, VSV-infected HeLa cells were labeled for 60 min with [3H]uridine and the membrane-bound polysome fraction was prepared. This fraction was resuspended in buffer, incubated at 37°C for 30 min with various agents, and membranes were recollected through a sucrose cushion by a modification of the method of Cardelli et al. (8). Exposure of the membrane-bound fraction to pactamycin, cycloheximide, or 0.5 M KCl resulted in release of little [3H]uridine-labeled VSV RNA (Table II). However, agents which are known to release mRNA from polysomes, namely, puromycin - 0.5 M KCl and EDTA, reduced [3H]uridine-labeled RNA in the membrane-bound fraction by 85%.

Fate of Prelabeled mRNA in Membrane-Bound Fraction

The results presented in Tables I and II suggested that pactamycin and muconomycin A blocked entry of G mRNA into the membrane-bound fraction, but that cycloheximide was considerably less effective in this function. We performed experiments to follow the fate of prelabeled G mRNA already present in the membrane-bound fraction. VSV-infected HeLa cells were labeled with [3H]uridine for 30 min; pactamycin, muconomycin A or cycloheximide was added and incubation continued for an additional 30 min. Membrane fractions were prepared, counted for radioactivity, and 12-18S VSV mRNA was analyzed by sucrose gradient centrifugation. Fig. 10 A shows that total labeled VSV RNA in the membrane-bound fraction is reduced after treatment of cells with pactamycin or muconomycin A but that it continues to increase after treatment with cycloheximide. In the non-membrane-bound fraction (Fig. 10 B), the amount of labeled VSV RNA increases, as expected. Table III demonstrates that 70% and 90% of prelabeled G mRNA are removed from the membrane-bound fraction after addition of pactamycin and muconomycin A, respectively. Since G mRNA continues to enter the membrane-bound fraction after addition of

Figure 8 Sucrose gradient analysis of G mRNA synthesized in the presence of pactamycin. [3H]uridine-labeled 17S mRNA was isolated from the nonmembrane fraction of pactamycin-treated cells and applied to an oligo (dT)-cellulose column in 0.5 M NaCl, 0.01 M Tris, pH 7.4, 0.5% SDS buffer. Polyadenylated mRNA was eluted from the column with 0.01 M Tris, pH 7.4 and precipitated with absolute ethanol. Labeled RNA was pelleted, resuspended in NETS buffer and centrifuged on a 15-30% sucrose gradient in the Beckman SW 41 rotor as described in the legend to Fig. 7. Fractions were collected and radioactivity was determined as described.
Figure 9 Autoradiogram and densitometry scans of SDS slab gel electrophoresis of \[^{[35S]}\]methionine-labeled cell-free reaction products synthesized under the direction of membrane-bound and non-membrane-bound RNA fractions isolated from VSV-infected HeLa cells. 2 × 10^9 HeLa cells, infected with VSV for 2.5 h, were divided into two equal aliquots, and 1 × 10^-8 M pactamycin was added to one aliquot. Incubation of cells was continued for 4 h, and RNA was isolated by SDS-phenol extraction and ethanol precipitation of total membrane-bound and non-membrane-bound fractions. Poly A^+ RNA was prepared from these RNA fractions as described in Fig. 8 and translated in a messenger-dependent wheat germ cell-free system prepared according to the method of Marcu and Dudock (27). Incubations in a total volume of 25 μl were performed at 23°C for 2.5 h and contained 20 mM HEPES, pH 7.4, 2.5 mM Mg(Ac)₂, 60 mM KAc plus 40 mM KCl, 2 mM dithiothreitol, 1 mM ATP, 20 μM GTP, 8 mM creatine phosphate, 16 μg/ml creatine phosphokinase, 40 μM phenylmethyl sulfonyl fluoride (a protease inhibitor), 8 μl wheat germ extract, 27 μM 19 unlabeled L-amino acids minus methionine, 6 μCi L-[\(^{[35S]}\)]methionine (sp act 315 Ci/mmol), and various RNA fractions including poly A^+ RNA from uninfected cells and poly A^+ RNA from rabbit reticulocytes as controls. Incorporation of \[^{[35S]}\]methionine into protein was measured as polypeptide insoluble in 5% TCA after heating to 90°C for 20 min. SDS-slab gel electrophoresis was performed with approximately 200,000 cpm of each cell-free reaction product as previously described, using intact virus for authentic VSV protein markers (16). Upper portion: Autoradiogram of SDS-slab gel electrophoresis. A: No RNA added, 72,566 cpm of cell-free product (the maximum we could apply to the gel) was used in this case. B: Poly A^+ rabbit reticulocyte RNA (under the conditions used, α- and β-globin polypeptide chains migrated with dye front). C: Poly A^+ RNA from membrane-bound fraction of pactamycin-treated cells, D: Poly A^+ RNA from control non-membrane-bound fraction. E: Poly A^+ RNA from control non-membrane-bound fraction of pactamycin-treated cells. F: Poly A^+ RNA from control membrane-bound fraction. G: Poly A^+ RNA from uninfected HeLa cells. Lower portion: Densitometry scans of slots C, D, E and F from the autoradiogram of the SDS-slab gel electrophoresis shown above. In these tracings, the sensitivity of the scanner was adjusted so that the peak height of VSV N protein (the major VSV-directed cell-free product) was 60% of full scale. Since the absolute amount of mRNA added to the system in each experiment is unknown, this normalization was required to compare the amount of glycoprotein G synthesized under the direction of the four separate RNA fractions; (f) membrane-bound RNA, control VSV-infected cells; (e) membrane-bound RNA, pactamycin-treated, VSV-infected cells; (d) non-membrane-bound RNA control VSV-infected cells; (c) membrane-bound RNA, pactamycin-treated, VSV-infected cells; (b) non-membrane-bound RNA, pactamycin-treated, VSV-infected cells. The position of authentic VSV protein markers NS, N and M and the 63-k dalton band from the autoradiogram are indicated.
TABLE II

In-vitro Release of [3H]Uridine-Labeled VSV-RNA from the Membrane-Bound Fraction of Infected HeLa Cells

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fractions</th>
<th>cpm</th>
<th>% release</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A Control</td>
<td>5,338</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B +0.5 M KCl</td>
<td>4,959</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C +0.5 M KCl-1 mM puromycin</td>
<td>875</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D +30 mM EDTA</td>
<td>796</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E +10⁻⁶ M pactamycin</td>
<td>4,580</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F +100 μg/ml cycloheximide</td>
<td>4,550</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

At 3.5 h postinfection, 1.5 x 10⁸ VSV-infected HeLa cells were labeled for 60 min with 3 mCi [3H]uridine. A membrane-bound fraction was prepared, resuspended in buffer (20 mM Tris HCl, pH 7.4, 25 mM KCl, 5 mM MgCl₂, 1 mM dithiothreitol, 100 μg/ml heparin), and divided into six equal portions. Each of these fractions was incubated at 37°C for 30 min under varying conditions: (A) buffer; (B) buffer containing 0.5 M KCl; (C) buffer containing 0.5 M KCl and 1 mM puromycin; (D) buffer containing 30 mM EDTA; (E) buffer containing 10⁻⁶ M pactamycin; and (F) buffer containing 100 μg/ml cycloheximide. After incubation, the various membrane-bound fractions were layered over a 5-ml 30% (wt/wt) sucrose cushion in buffer (samples A and D-F) or in 0.5 M KCl buffer (samples B and C) and centrifuged in the Beckman SW 41 rotor at 30,000 rpm for 30 min at 4°C. The pellets were resuspended in 250 μl of buffer containing heparin. 2 ml of 10% TCA was added, and the precipitated radioactivity was determined as in previous tables and figures.

DISCUSSION

The results presented in this paper suggest that formation of membrane-bound polysomes in VSV-infected HeLa cells occurs after protein synthesis is initiated and that the nascent polypeptide chain is required to maintain integrity of mRNA-membrane interaction. Our results are based on analysis of a specific viral mRNA, glycoprotein G mRNA. This mRNA is found almost exclusively in the membrane-bound fraction, and its translation product, G protein, is transferred across the plasma membrane to become part of the outer envelope of the mature virus (18). We have followed the fate of newly synthesized G mRNA by labeling VSV-infected cells with [3H]uridine in the presence or absence of inhibitors of protein synthesis. Pulse-labeling experiments indicate that 17S G mRNA is synthesized in the cytosol fraction. This is consistent with the finding that a soluble VSV-transcription complex sediments at 140S in VSV-infected Chinese hamster ovary cells (33). Newly synthesized G mRNA rapidly associates with 40S ribosomal subunits and subsequently with 80S monomers in the nonmembrane fraction. We have not been able to detect G mRNA in polysomes of the non-membrane-bound fraction.

Labeled VSV G mRNA is present in the membrane-bound fraction of infected HeLa cells within 5 min after a pulse with [3H]uridine. However, even after this very short labeling period, radioactive VSV mRNA is found in small polysomes of the membrane-bound fraction, whereas little radioactivity is present in 40S subunits or monomers. Within 20 min after pulse labeling of these cells, G mRNA comprises more than 75% of the 12-18S mRNA in the membrane-bound fraction, and this mRNA is present predominantly in polysomes. The amount of G mRNA in the polysome region of the membrane-bound fraction is also

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greater than that found in the 40S subunit or monomer pool after a 5-min or 15-min pulse. Since we have been unable to detect a progression of labeled 17S G mRNA from subunits to polysomes within the membrane-bound fraction, it appears that G mRNA is present in polysomes, or at least in oligosomes, at the time of its association with membranes.

We reasoned that, if association of G mRNA with the membrane-bound fraction requires prior mRNA-ribosome interaction and synthesis of a nascent polypeptide chain, then inhibition of protein synthesis at the appropriate step would prevent formation of an mRNA-ribosome-membrane complex. To examine this question, we used a number of inhibitors of protein synthesis to determine the requirements for entry of VSV G mRNA into the membrane-bound fraction. Pactamycin and muconomycin A (also known as verrucarin A) are inhibitors of initiation of protein synthesis, the former allowing formation of an mRNA-40S subunit complex (9, 20, 21), and the latter blocking initiation after formation of an mRNA-80S monomer complex (2, 26). The very low level of protein synthesis observed in the presence of these drugs at 1 × 10^{-6} M (less than 5% of control) probably represents individual cells or polysomes.
FiguRe 11 Influence of muconomycin A and cycloheximide on polysome size and VSV mRNA distribution. 1 × 10⁶ HeLa cells were infected with VSV, and at 4 h postinfection the cells were divided into 3 equal portions. 1 × 10⁻⁷ M muconomycin A or 100 µg/ml cycloheximide was added to separate portions, and one portion was left as control. After 10 min in the presence or absence of muconomycin A or cycloheximide, 0.8 mCi [³H]uridine (37 Ci/mmol) was added to control and drug-treated cells and incubation was continued for an additional 60 min. Total polysome fractions were prepared, layered on 7–52% (wt/wt) sucrose gradients, and centrifuged in the SW27 rotor as described. Gradient fractions were monitored for optical density at 254 nm, and TCA-precipitable radioactivity was determined in each fraction. A: Control cells. B: Muconomycin A-treated cells. C: Cycloheximide-treated cells.

FIGURE 12 Sucrose gradient analysis of VSV 12–18S mRNA species present in 80S monomers and 40S subunits of non-membrane-bound fraction of muconomycin A-treated VSV-infected HeLa cells. The 80S and 40S regions from the non-membrane fraction of muconomycin A-treated VSV-infected cells were isolated and precipitated with ethanol. The samples were resuspended in NETS buffer, layered on a 15–30% sucrose gradient, and centrifuged in the Beckman SW41 rotor as described in the legend to Fig. 7. Fractions were collected and radioactivity was determined.

which escaped inhibition. Utilizing these antibiotics, we find that formation of polysomes is inhibited and that entry of G mRNA into the membrane fraction is suppressed up to 80–90%. Under these circumstances, labeled 17S mRNA accumulates in the non-membrane fraction.

Rosbash (39) has previously studied the influence of cycloheximide on association of mRNA with membranes in uninfected HeLa cells. Cycloheximide inhibits elongation of polypeptide chains, rather than initiation of protein synthesis, and allows formation of small polysomes (9, 13). In Rosbash's studies, there was only a 30–35% reduction of labeled HeLa cell mRNA in the membrane-bound polysome fraction after addition of cycloheximide, although protein synthesis was inhibited by 98%. In addition, labeled HeLa cell mRNA was found predominantly in monosomes and disomes, although some material was present in trisomes (39). Using the VSV-infected HeLa cell system, we have confirmed the observations of Rosbash for a specific mRNA, G mRNA. Thus, we find that cycloheximide reduces the level of [³H]uridine-labeled G mRNA in the membrane-bound fraction to 57% of control (Table I).
Our results demonstrate further that pactamycin and muconomycin A, which inhibit the initiation of protein synthesis but do not prevent mRNA-40S subunit association (pactamycin) or mRNA-80S monomer formation (muconomycin A), have a significantly greater effect on G mRNA association with membranes than cycloheximide. This is consistent with an interpretation that synthesis of the nascent chain is a prerequisite for association of G mRNA with the membrane fraction. Furthermore, from in vitro experiments with membranes prelabeled with VSV mRNA and incubated in the presence of 1 mM puromycin -0.5 M KCl, we find no evidence for direct association of labeled mRNA or mRNA-40S subunits with membranes.

Since pactamycin and muconomycin A inhibited interaction of G mRNA with membranes but did not cause dissociation of preformed mRNA-membrane complexes, we were able to perform "pulse-chase" experiments to follow the fate of G mRNA which had already entered the membrane-bound fraction. If G mRNA were directly associated with membranes, then addition of inhibitors of protein synthesis to preformed complexes should have little effect. However, we found that 70-90% of prelabeled G mRNA is released from the membrane-bound fraction after addition of pactamycin or muconomycin A. This suggested that G mRNA-membrane interaction depends upon a linkage which is sensitive to protein synthesis inhibition. Release of labeled mRNA from the membrane-bound fraction in vitro by puromycin -0.5 M KCl is consistent with this interpretation.

The results reported here support a model for segregation of membrane-bound polysomes recently proposed by Blobel and co-workers (3, 5, 6). According to this model, termed the "signal hypothesis", formation of polyribosomes and translation of mRNA for all proteins begins in the cytosol compartment of the cell. Those mRNAs whose translation products are to be transferred across a membrane first synthesize a hydrophobic N-terminal peptide, which serves as the signal for recognition by the membrane. Polysomes containing this hydrophobic peptide or "signal sequence" attach to the membrane, polypeptide synthesis continues, and vectorial transfer of protein across the membrane occurs (3, 5, 6). Therefore, it is the N-terminal sequence of the growing polypeptide chain, rather than the primary sequence of mRNA, which serves as the signal for recognition by the membrane.

We would like to emphasize that our present results have been obtained with one specific labeled RNA, glycoprotein G mRNA. Studies by other investigators reporting a direct association of poly (A) containing mRNA with membranes are based primarily on in vitro treatment of isolated membranes with various agents known to remove ribosomes from membranes (8, 24, 30). Under such conditions, a varying portion of labeled mRNA may remain with membranes, depending upon the cell type, labeling conditions and treatment utilized (8, 24, 30). Certain studies have suggested that mRNA-protein complexes (mRNPs) may be involved in mRNA-membrane interaction (8, 24, 28-30), and mRNP complexes involving the 3'-poly (A) region of mRNA have been described (4, 23, 42). Recently, Adesnik et al. (2) reported a direct association of mRNA with the membrane fraction in human fibroblasts after in vivo inhibition of initiation of protein synthesis (2). However, these and other studies (8, 24, 30) have examined total or a mixed population of membrane mRNAs rather than an mRNA for a specific protein. Since membranes may contain mRNAs for secreted proteins, membrane constituent proteins and possibly certain intracellular proteins (10-12, 17, 25, 38), specific mRNAs in different systems may have varying affinities or mechanisms for interaction with ribosomes and membranes, and further studies will be needed to examine this question.

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