

1 **Title:** Whole-genome fingerprint of the DNA methylome during chemically induced

2 differentiation of the human AML cell line HL-60/S4

3

4 **Running title:** DNAm of HL-60/S4 differentiation

5

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28 **Keywords:** DNA Methylation, Promyelocyte, Granulocyte, Macrophage, Differentiation,

29 Epigenetics, Enhancer, Promoter, Multi-omics correlation

30 **Summary statement**

31 Epigenomics plays a major role in cell identity and differentiation. We present the DNA
32 methylation landscape of leukemic cells during in-vitro differentiation, to add another 'omics
33 layer to better understand the mechanisms behind differentiation.

34 **Abstract**

35 Background: Myeloid differentiation gives rise to a plethora of immune cells in the human body.
36 This differentiation leaves strong signatures in the epigenome through each differentiated state
37 of genetically identical cells. The leukemic HL-60/S4 promyelocytic cell can be easily
38 differentiated from its undifferentiated promyelocyte state into neutrophil- and macrophage-like
39 cell states, making it an excellent system for studying myeloid differentiation. In this study, we
40 present the underlying genome and epigenome architecture of HL-60/S4 through its
41 undifferentiated and differentiated cell states.

42

43 Results: We performed whole genome bisulphite sequencing of HL-60/S4 cells and their
44 differentiated counterparts. With the support of karyotyping, we show that HL-60/S4 maintains a
45 stable genome throughout differentiation. Analysis of differential CpG methylation reveals that
46 most methylation changes occur in the macrophage-like state. Differential methylation of
47 promoters was associated with immune related terms. Key immune genes, CEBPA, GF11,
48 MAFB and GATA1 showed differential expression and methylation. However, we observed
49 strongest enrichment of methylation changes in enhancers and CTCF binding sites, implying
50 that methylation plays a major role in large scale transcriptional reprogramming and chromatin
51 reorganisation during differentiation. Correlation of differential expression and distal methylation
52 with support from chromatin capture experiments allowed us to identify putative proximal and
53 long-range enhancers for a number of immune cell differentiation genes, including CEBPA and
54 CCNF. Integrating expression data, we present a model of HL-60/S4 differentiation in relation to
55 the wider scope of myeloid differentiation.

56

57 Conclusions: For the first time, we elucidate the genome and CpG methylation landscape of
58 HL-60/S4 during differentiation. We identify all differentially methylated regions and positions.
59 We link these to immune function and to important factors in myeloid differentiation. We
60 demonstrate that methylation plays a more significant role in modulating transcription via
61 enhancer reprogramming, rather than by promoter regulation. We identify novel regulatory
62 regions of key components in myeloid differentiation that are regulated by differential

- 63 methylation. This study contributes another layer of “omics” characterisation of the HL-60/S4
- 64 cell line, making it an excellent model system for studying rapid *in vitro* cell differentiation.

65 Introduction

66 Gene expression profiles differ among different cell types and change as stem cells differentiate
67 (Cheng *et al.*, 1996; Le Naour *et al.*, 2001; Natarajan *et al.*, 2012). Genome wide CpG
68 methylation, an epigenetic regulation and modification process, has been shown to exhibit
69 similar dynamic behaviour during differentiation (Brunner *et al.*, 2009; Bock *et al.*, 2012).
70 Usually, these two changes (i.e., gene expression and CpG methylation) have been shown to
71 correlate negatively with each other, depending upon the location of the methylated CpG
72 relative to the gene body (Payer *et al.*, 2008; Chuang, Chen and Chen, 2012; Jones, 2012;
73 Yang *et al.*, 2014). Overall, changes in methylation patterns between cell types and tissues
74 throughout life, work to either activate or shut down specific cellular processes (Smith &
75 Meissner, 2013), making cells exhibit different phenotypic characteristics. Acting as a
76 shutdown mechanism, DNA methylation reinforces gene silencing, when expression is not
77 required in a particular cell type (Lock, et al., 1987).

78

79 Normal myeloid cell differentiation occurs within the bone marrow, where stroma cells secrete
80 cytokines to help activate myeloid-specific gene transcription (De Kleer, et al., 2014). Further
81 differentiation can occur in the peripheral tissues or blood, dependent upon exposure of the
82 myeloid precursors to cytokines and other factors, such as antigens (Geissmann *et al.*, 2010;
83 Álvarez-Errico *et al.*, 2015). The first direct committed step toward myeloid cell development is
84 the differentiation of multipotent progenitors (MPP) cells into common myeloid progenitor cells
85 (CMP) (Kondo, et al., 1997), (Alvarez-Errico, et al., 2015). CMP cells can then differentiate
86 further into the granulocyte-macrophage lineage progenitor (GMP) and megakaryocyte-
87 erythroid progenitor (MEP) (Iwasaki & Akashi, 2007). While CMP cells can differentiate into all
88 myeloid cell types, GMP cells give rise mainly to monocytes/macrophages and neutrophils,
89 together with a minor population of eosinophils, basophils and mast cells (Laiosa, et al., 2006),
90 (Iwasaki & Akashi, 2007), (Alvarez-Errico, et al., 2015).

91

92 The human myeloid leukemic cell line HL-60/S4 is an excellent system to study epigenetic
93 changes during chemically induced in vitro cell differentiation. HL-60/S4 cells are supposedly
94 blocked at the GMP cell state and unable to differentiate any further. The HL-60/S4 cell line is a

95 subline of HL-60 and demonstrates “faster” cell differentiation than the parent HL-60 cells.

96 Undifferentiated HL-60/S4 cells exhibit a myeloblastic or promyelocytic morphology with a

97 rounded nucleus containing 2 to 4 nucleoli, basophilic cytoplasm and azurophilic granules

98 (Birnie, 1988). Retinoic acid (RA) can induce HL-60/S4 differentiation to a granulocyte-like

99 state. 12-O-tetradecanoylphorbol-13-acetate (TPA) can induce differentiation to

100 monocyte/macrophage-like states (Fontana, Colbert and Deisseroth, 1981; Birnie, 1988).

101

102 The extent to which DNA methylation regulates these chemically induced differentiation

103 processes is not known. Likewise, the global genome wide methylation changes associated

104 with these differentiation processes have not been described. This study details the methylation

105 changes (and lack of changes), when HL-60/S4 is differentiated to granulocytes, employing RA,

106 and to macrophage, employing TPA. The information contained within this study is intended as

107 a sequel to previous studies that describe the transcriptomes (Mark Welch *et al.*, 2017),

108 nucleosome positioning (Teif *et al.*, 2017) and epichromatin properties (Olins *et al.*, 2014) of

109 HL-60/S4 cells differentiated under identical conditions. The goal is to integrate these different

110 lines of information into a comprehensive description and mechanistic analysis of the cell

111 differentiation pathways in the human myeloid leukemic HL-60/S4 cell lineage.

112 Results

113

114 Little or no DNA methylation changes are observed upon HL-60/S4 cell differentiation at the
115 megabase scale

116 We performed whole genome bisulphite sequencing (WGBS) of HL-60/S4 in 3 different cell
117 differentiation states: the undifferentiated state (UN), the retinoic acid treated granulocyte state
118 (RA), and the tetradecanoyl phorbol acetate (TPA) treated macrophage state. Comparison of
119 the whole genome coverage profiles for each of the three differentiation states of HL-60/S4
120 revealed that the cell line is hypo-diploid (Mark Welch, Jauch, Langowski, Olins, & Olins, 2017)
121 and is chromosomally stable throughout differentiation (Supplementary Figure S1 A-C). A
122 comparison of HL-60/S4 cells (from 2008 and 2012) by fluorescent in situ hybridization (FISH)
123 karyotyping showed that this cell line is also stable over long time periods (Supplementary
124 Figure S1 D&E). From all the CpGs identified by WGBS on all three cell states, a total of
125 21,974,649 (82.38%) CpGs had $\geq 10x$ coverage (Table 1 and Table S1), which spanned the
126 full range of methylation rates, from 0 (completely unmethylated) to 1 (fully methylated). Most of
127 these CpGs are highly and fully methylated (> 0.75 methylation rate), with only small sets of
128 lowly and unmethylated CpGs (< 0.25 methylation rate) and partially methylated CpGs
129 (methylation rate from 0.25 to 0.75) (Figure 1 A and B). Principal component analysis of all
130 CpGs with coverage greater than 10 revealed that the RA treated samples differed only slightly
131 from the untreated sample, while the TPA samples had a much higher methylation variance,
132 compared to the other two samples (Figure 1C). However, little or no methylation differences
133 were observed among the 3 samples, when methylation rates were averaged over 10
134 megabase (Mb) windows (Figure 1D).

135

136 The single CpG methylation landscape of TPA cells differ most, when compared to UN and RA
137 Cells

138 Due to the small changes observed on the megabase scale, we focused on significantly
139 differentially methylated single CpGs positions (DMPs) for further analysis. A total of 41,306
140 unique CpGs were identified to be significantly differentially methylated (Fisher analysis, see
141 Materials and Methods). These DMPs comprise of 12,713, 17,392 and 17,100 CpGs from the

142 comparisons of RA to UN cells, TPA to UN cells and RA to TPA cells, respectively (Figure 2A).
143 A higher proportion of the DMPs identified in the comparison of TPA to UN cells were hyper-
144 methylated; but a similar number of hyper- and hypo-methylated DMPs were observed in the
145 RA to TPA cells comparison. Most of the hyper-methylated DMPs had a methylation rate shift
146 from around 0 to 0.2; hypo-methylated DMPs showed a reverse shift of methylation rate (0.2 to
147 0) (Figure 2C and D).

148

149 [Enhancers are most enriched within DMPs](#)

150 The most enriched genomic features in the hyper-methylated DMPs were enhancers,
151 transcription start sites (TSSs) of protein coding genes and CpG islands (CpGs) for both RA
152 and TPA cells, compared to UN cells (Figure 2B). CTCF was enriched in TPA hyper-methylated
153 DMPs, but not in RA. On the other hand, CpGs were also the most enriched feature in the
154 hypo-methylated DMPs, when RA was compared to UN cells. Enhancers alone showed a high
155 enrichment in both hyper-methylated and hypo-methylated DMPs, identified when TPA is
156 compared to UN cells (Figure 2B). In contrast to enhancers, simple repeats, epichromatin, and
157 LINE (long interspersed nuclear element) repeats were depleted within hyper- and hypo-
158 methylated regions in both RA and TPA.

159

160 We identified clusters of DMP methylation pattern changes between the 3 cell states of HL-
161 60/S4. We called these cluster “modules”. Module analysis reveals that enhancers are
162 significantly enriched in DMPs that are hypo-methylated in the TPA state, relative to UN and RA
163 (modules M6 and M12). The observed hypo-methylation for TPA treated cells corresponded
164 with lower nucleosome occupancy around the DMPs of M6 and M12 (Supplementary Figure
165 S2). M7 DMPs were similarly hypo-methylated in the TPA, compared to RA and UN cells, but
166 with lower methylation differences (Figure 2E and F). Enrichment of exons, epichromatin and
167 chromatin-interacting domains (Li Teng *et al.*, 2015) were also observed in module M6.

168

169 [CpGs have a very dynamic differential methylation](#)

170 CpGs are differentially methylated, but mainly in relation to RA treated cells. CpGs were most
171 enriched in module M1, which has DMPs that are hemi-methylated (approximated 0.5

172 methylation rate) in RA; but these DMPs showed lower methylation in TPA and UN cells.

173 Similar results were seen in module M9, where DMPs were hypo-methylated in RA, compared
174 to TPA and UN cells. Likewise, CpG enrichment was observed for module M11, where DMPs
175 are hyper-methylated in TPA, compared to RA and UN cells.

176

177 [Methylation of transcription start site DMPs correlate weakly with gene expression](#)

178 A total of 110 and 132 genes were found to have their TSS overlapping with DMPs from RA
179 and TPA cells compared to UN cells, respectively. These overlapping DMPs had a methylation
180 rate difference of at least 0.2. RA genes showed a weak and insignificant correlation between
181 the average methylation difference of the DMPs overlapping with the TSS and the $-\log_2$ (RNA
182 expression fold change) of genes (Figure 3A). This is confirmed by the comparable number of
183 genes that have positive and negative correlation between TSS DMP methylation and gene
184 expression (Figure 3B).

185

186 However, the scatter plot of TSS overlapping DMP methylation change and $-\log_2$ (RNA
187 expression fold change) does show a weak, but significant, negative correlation (Figure 3C) and
188 a higher number of negatively correlating genes, compared to positively correlating ones
189 (Figure 3D).

190

191 [Methylation of long distance regulatory regions shows negative correlation with target gene](#) 192 [expression](#)

193 Methylation and expression of CEBPE (a major transcription factor involved in myeloid cell
194 differentiation) shows a negative correlation at the 3' end of the gene; a region identified to be
195 an enhancer in the ROADMAP epigenome project (Figure 4A) (Roadmap Epigenomics
196 Consortium *et al.*, 2015). The downstream region of the CEBPE gene, containing the DMPs
197 whose methylation has strong negative correlation with expression, has been shown through
198 IMPET (integrated methods for predicting enhancer targets) and CHIA-PET (Chromatin
199 Interaction Analysis by Paired-End Tag Sequencing) to interact with the upstream regions that
200 spans part of the gene body and the TSS region (L. Teng *et al.*, 2015). No DMPs were
201 observed overlapping the TSS of the CEBPE gene; hence, no correlation between TSS

202 methylation and expression is available. The RNA expression of CEBPE (as well as CCNF and
203 PGP) in UN, RA, and TPA is shown in Figure 4B.

204

205 Furthermore, the RNA expression of the gene encoding for cyclin F, CCNF, (Figure 4D)
206 correlates weakly with the methylation of DMPs (Figure 4F) that overlap with its gene and TSS.
207 However, CCNF RNA expression has a strong negative correlation with DMPs overlapping the
208 upstream region of the PGP gene, which encodes phosphoglycolate phosphatase (Figure 4E
209 correlation*). PGP RNA expression (Figure 4C) does not show a similar correlation. This region
210 has also been identified by ROADMAP as an enhancer.

211

212 [Functional annotation of DMPs are mostly immune response related](#)

213 Using DMPs with a methylation fold change greater than or equal to 2, we observed that
214 immune response related cellular functions were the most enriched biological function for all the
215 genes whose TSS overlapped with DMPs, when RA cells were compared to UN cells (Table 2).
216 Similarly, genes with their TSS overlapping DMPs in TPA compared to UN cells, were also
217 mostly related to (or involved with) phosphoproteins, signalling and defence responses,
218 including chemotaxis (Table 3). Similar observations were made when DMPs were merged into
219 DMRs and their functional associations tested in TPA, compared to UN cells (Table 5). For RA
220 compared to UN cells, the functional annotation was general cell function related (Table 4).

221

222 [Key myeloid differentiation transcription factors are differentially expressed](#)

223 From analysis of the expression and methylation profiles of important myeloid differentiation
224 regulatory transcriptions factors, it was observed that CEBPA (Supplementary Figure S3 A&B)
225 and GF11 (Supplementary Figure S3 C&D) may be required to maintain HL-60/S4 in the
226 undifferentiated state (Figure 5). As such, downregulation of CEBPA is necessary for the further
227 differentiation of HL-60/S4 to either the neutrophil-like or macrophage-like state. Meanwhile,
228 SPI1 and CEBPB are upregulated in both differentiated states (Supplementary Figure S3 E&F
229 and K&L).

230

231 Upregulation of CEBPE (Figure 4B) is seen in RA; whereas, it is downregulated in TPA,
232 together with GF11. In TPA treated cells, MAFB is upregulated, although still at low levels
233 (Supplementary Figure S3 G&H). GATA1 is also down-regulated in RA and upregulated in TPA
234 treated cells (Supplementary Figure S3 I&J).

235 Discussion

236

237 Differential methylation during HL-60/S4 differentiation occurs over small regions

238 Only small differences in DNA methylation were observed during HL-60/S4 cell differentiation
239 at the 10 Mb window scale (Figure 1 E). Despite the lack of large scale methylation changes
240 during the induced differentiation of HL-60/S4 cells, we observed both hyper- and hypo-
241 methylation of a large number of differentially methylated single CpGs (DMPs) with a mean
242 difference in methylation rate of 0.2 (Figure 2 A, C and D). Interestingly, the methylation rates
243 of most of the differentially methylated CpGs ranged from around 0 to 0.4, corresponding to the
244 partially methylated or unmethylated CpGs (Figure 2 C and D). This explains why only very few
245 differentially methylated CpGs could be identified, since CpGs with this methylation rate value
246 range were globally very sparse.

247

248 The DNA methylation landscape of RA cells is closer to undifferentiated HL-60/S4 cells, than to 249 TPA treated cells

250 Despite the generally similar megabase-scale methylation landscape observed in all 3
251 samples, they could be clearly distinguished using principal component analysis (Figure 1 C).
252 Whereas TPA cells were seen to be very different from UN cells based on their whole genome
253 methylation profiles, RA and UN cells were closely positioned on the axes of both principal
254 component 1 and 2. Neutrophil methylation has already been shown to be only slightly, but
255 significantly, different from the promyelocyte precursor cell methylation (Alvarez-Errico, et al.,
256 2015). Thus, the small differences seen between RA (granulocyte-like) cells and the UN
257 (promyelocytic) cell forms are consistent with that previous study.

258

259 Differential methylation is limited to a few CpGs with very low levels of methylation

260 A total of 41,306 CpGs were identified to be differentially methylated; a very small number
261 compared to the genome wide CpG numbers. The numbers of differentially methylated CpGs
262 identified by a comparison of TPA to RA and UN cells were very similar. The lowest numbers of
263 differences of differentially methylated CpGs were seen in a RA comparison to UN cells (Figure
264 2A). Hyper-methylated DMPs were only enriched in protein coding TSS and in CpGI and

265 Enhancers for both RA and TPA, compared to UN. However, CTCF sites were only enriched in
266 hyper-methylated DMPs in the TPA-UN comparison (Figure 2B). Hypo-methylated DMPs were
267 seldom enriched for any particular genomic feature, except for CpGI, which was enriched in the
268 RA-UN comparison, while enhancers showed enrichment within the TPA-UN comparison.

269

270 Changes in gene expression profiles, regulated by enhancers, may play a major role in the
271 differentiation of macrophage-like cells. Enhancers stand out from other genomic features for
272 TPA differentiated cells, which are quite different from UN cells (Figure 1C). The DMP module
273 (M6), which has full methylation of CpGs in UN and RA, but hypo-methylation in TPA, is the
274 same module that shows the highest enhancer enrichment (Figure 2D&E). These observations
275 emphasize the significance of hypo-methylation of enhancers in macrophage-like differentiation,
276 as observed in TPA-treated cells. On the other hand, modules M1 and M4 which showed either
277 hyper- and hypo-methylation, for RA compared to UN, showed little enrichment of any genomic
278 features, except CpGI. This may suggest a fine tuning of expression for already active genes,
279 while hypo-methylation of DMPs in module M6 hints at the activation of expression of genes
280 that might not be expressed in UN or RA cells.

281

282 On a broader view, hypo-methylation of enhancers, epichromatin and chromatin interaction
283 domains in TPA cells suggests a remodeling of the transcriptional regulatory circuits in this
284 state, compared to the RA and UN cell states.

285

286 [Interplay of DNA CpG methylation and nucleosome occupancy is genomic context dependant](#)

287 In TPA cells we observed lower nucleosome occupancy and hypo-methylation around the
288 DMPs of module M6 (Figure 2E and Supplementary Figure S2). This module was also enriched
289 for enhancers (Figure 2F). Similar observations were made for modules M7 and M12, albeit
290 with lower levels of methylation change, enhancer enrichment and differential nucleosome
291 occupancy changes. In modules M8 and M11, we observe hyper-methylation in TPA cells but
292 no increase in nucleosome occupancy. These modules had little or no enrichment of
293 enhancers. Similarly, other modules with hypo-methylation for either UN (modules M5 and M10)
294 or RA cells (M8 and M9) did not exhibit reduced nucleosome occupancy, nor were they

295 enriched in enhancers. This suggests that differential nucleosome occupancy that is associated
296 with differential DNA methylation in our differentiation system occurs in the genomic context of
297 enhancers. This is consistent with previous findings of changes of nucleosome occupancy and
298 DNA methylation in regulatory genomics contexts of CTCF binding and promoters (Kelly *et al.*,
299 2012) during cellular differentiation.

300

301 [RA and TPA cells share only a few DMPs](#)

302 We identified 12 clusters of DMP patterns, which we grouped into modules. These modules
303 revealed that most of the identified CpGs were differentially methylated only in TPA cells,
304 compared to the other differentiated states (Figure 2 E). The first 6 modules describe CpGs that
305 were differentially methylated in one cell state, by comparison to one other cell state; while the
306 latter 6 modules are for CpGs that were differentially methylated in one cell state, compared to
307 the other two cell states.

308

309 Since the differentiation of HL-60/S4 into the granulocyte-like or macrophage-like state is a
310 branched process and not linear, the effects of most of the CpGs that are differentially
311 methylated in one direction may not be important to the other differentiation direction; unless, of
312 course, the effect on CpGs is required for the differentiation process. It is conceivable that the
313 effects of differentially methylated CpGs in modules M7-12 may be related to cell differentiation
314 in general, while those in modules M1-6 may be related to specific developments of the
315 different cell states.

316

317 [Both positive and negative correlations are observed comparing DNA methylation of TSS 318 regions and levels of gene expression](#)

319 Earlier reports suggested that methylation in the promoter and the first exon inversely
320 correlated with gene expression (Brenet *et al.*, 2011; Jones, 2012). As such, it would be
321 expected that in the HL-60/S4 cell differentiation system, DNA methylation in the TSS region of
322 genes should correlate negatively with gene expression. However, we observed equal
323 numbers of genes that showed either positive or negative correlation between TSS methylation
324 and gene expression was about equal (Figure 3). This observation suggests that there are

325 additional epigenetic modifications required at gene promoters to regulating transcriptional
326 activity (Ford *et al.*, 2017) or that gene expression is determined by the epigenetic state of
327 multiple regulatory elements and not just the promoter (Ong and Corces, 2011).

328

329 [Long-range chromatin interactions play an important role in HL-60/S4 differentiation](#)

330 RNA expression of CEBPE exhibits a strong inverse correlation with differential methylation in
331 a downstream region of the CEBPE gene. These regions have been shown to be interacting,
332 employing CHIA-PET in the K562 leukemia cell line (Figure 4A) (Dunham *et al.*, 2012).

333

334 Similarly, a region within the promoter of PGP was identified to contain DMPs which correlated
335 negatively with the RNA expression of CCNF (upstream of PGP) (Figure 4E and F). As these
336 two genes transcribe in opposite directions, they may share the same promoter. However, this
337 region, despite being in PGP, showed negative correlation with only CCNF. Being a Cyclin, it is
338 involved in regulating the progress through the cell cycle, but the exact function in this process
339 of differentiation is not clear. We have also presented evidence that methylation of chromatin
340 interaction partners also plays a crucial role for expression of genes in HL-60/S4 cells (Figure
341 4).

342

343 [CEBPA downregulation and differential regulation of CEBPE expression are required of HL-
344 60/S4 differentiation](#)

345 TSS methylation and RNA expression of key myeloid differentiation transcription factors SPI1,
346 CEBPB, CEBPE, CREBBP, CEBPA, DNMTs and HDACs were examined. CEBPA was
347 observed to be hyper-methylated in RA and TPA compared to UN cells (Figure S3). This
348 resulted in significant downregulation of expression of CEBPA in the differentiated states
349 compared to UN cells.

350

351 SPI1 and CEBPA, together with CEBPB are known to be required for the maintenance of CMP
352 and GMP developmental stages of myeloid cells (Alvarez-Errico, et al., 2015). However, it is
353 the counter-interaction between SPI1 and CEBPA transcription factors that decides whether a
354 GMP differentiates or not (Iwasaki & Akashi, 2007), since CEBPA is known to repress

355 macrophage differentiation induced by SPI1. However, down-regulation of CEBPA expression
356 in both RA and TPA suggests that it is significant in maintaining HL-60/S4 in the promyelocytic
357 state. Thus, down-regulating CEBPA is key to macrophage differentiation; whereas, SPI1 is
358 also expressed over 1.5-fold in both RA and TPA compared to UN cells.

359

360 Most of the other transcription factors necessary for the differentiation of macrophage and
361 granulocytes are equally regulated by RA and TPA. An exception is CEBPE, which is
362 upregulated in RA, but downregulated in TPA (Figure 4 A and B). This suggests that it is the
363 downregulation of CEBPE which permits the differentiation of HL-60/S4 into the macrophage-
364 like state.

365

366 Employing these observations, together with the data of Supplementary Figure S3, we have
367 developed a model of the HL-60/S4 differentiation program based upon the transcription
368 factors that may be required (Figure 5). In this model, we propose that down-regulation of
369 CEBPA is necessary for differentiation of HL-60/S4 cells. Whereas, CEBPE is upregulated in
370 the neutrophil-like state, its downregulation and the simultaneous upregulation of MAFB and
371 GATA1 are necessary of macrophage-like differentiation. This supports the idea that CEBPE is
372 necessary for the commitment of HL-60/S4 cells to a neutrophil-like state.

373

374 The upregulation in the expression of GATA1 and MAFB genes supports their role in
375 committing HL-60/S4 cells to a macrophage-like state. We, therefore, postulate that HL-60/S4
376 cells may only differentiate into a macrophage-like state upon down-regulation of CEBPA, in the
377 absence of CEBPE.

378 **Conclusions**

379

380 The HL-60/S4 cell line is an excellent model system for myeloid leukemia and for cell
381 differentiation studies, due to the capability of differentiating the (undifferentiated)
382 promyelocytic cell line into macrophage-like and granulocyte-like states, following TPA and
383 RA treatments, respectively. The 3 different states of this cell line show very high
384 methylation levels for most CpGs, leaving only a few partially methylated or unmethylated
385 CpGs. Genome wide DNA methylation analysis indicates that the methylation level of the
386 granulocyte-like state differs only slightly from the undifferentiated form; whereas, the
387 macrophage-like state is very different from the other two cell states.

388

389 We found 41,306 CpGs (of the $\sim 26.7 \times 10^6$ measured CpGs) showed significant differential
390 methylation upon differentiation of the HL-60/S4 cells, concentrated within a group
391 characterized by very low to partially methylated CpGs. This is substantially fewer than the
392 4.93 million dynamic CpGs involved in B-cell maturation, most of which were found in later
393 stages of differentiation (Kulis *et al.*, 2015). Furthermore, since differentiation into the
394 macrophage-like and granulocyte-like states is a branched set of events, only a few
395 differentially methylated CpGs are shared between the diverged cell states. Hence, most of
396 differentially methylated CpGs are specific to either macrophage-like or granulocyte-like
397 differentiation.

398

399 Similarly, differential methylation was limited to the genomic features that overlapped with
400 CpGs that are not fully methylated. This explains why regulatory genomic features such
401 enhancers, CpG islands and protein-coding gene TSS were enriched, while epichromatin
402 was highly depleted in the differentially methylated regions. This could also imply that once a
403 CpG becomes methylated, it is more likely to remain methylated, which is consistent with
404 observations in previous studies (Senner *et al.*, 2012).

405

406 A gene encoding a key transcription factor in the differentiation of myeloid cells (CEBPA)
407 was hyper-methylated in both RA and TPA treated cells. Hyper-methylation of the promoter
408 of this gene, however, negatively correlated with gene expression, implying repression of
409 transcription of CEBPA in both the macrophage-like and granulocyte-like states. CEBPE, on
410 the other hand, was hyper-methylated and expression was down-regulated only in the
411 macrophage-like cell forms. This implies that down-regulation of CEBPE is required for
412 macrophage development. Experiments involving CEBPE “knockout/knock-down” are
413 required to examine whether down-regulation of CEBPA in HL-60/S4 cells will promote
414 differentiation into a granulocyte-like state.

415 **Materials and Methods**

416

417 **Samples**

418 We used the human AML (acute myeloid leukemia) cell line HL-60/S4, available from ATCC
419 (CRL-3306). Differentiation of this cell line was induced with retinoic acid (RA) and 12-O-
420 tetradecanoylphorbol-13-acetate (TPA) to attain the granulocyte-like and macrophage-like
421 states, as previously described (Mark Welch et al 2017). In previous publications (Mark
422 Welch et al 2017, Teif et al 2017), the undifferentiated (UN) HL-60/S4 cells were denoted
423 “0”. In the current study the same undifferentiated cells are denoted “UN”.

424

425 **Sequencing and library preparation**

426 Whole genome bisulphite sequencing (WGBS) libraries were prepared for untreated (UN),
427 RA, and TPA treated HL-60/S4 cells. Libraries were prepared using the Illumina TruSeq
428 DNA Sample Preparation Kit v2-set A (Illumina Inc., San Diego, CA, USA) according to
429 manufacture guidelines. After the adapters were ligated to the library, they were treated with
430 bisulphite followed by PCR amplification. Sequencing was performed on the Illumina HiSeq
431 2000 using paired end mode with 101 cycles using standard Illumina protocols and the 200
432 cycle TruSeq SBS Kit v3 (Illumina Inc., San Diego, CA, USA).

433

434 **Read alignment and methylation calling with BSMAP**

435 WGBS sequencing data were analysed using BsMAP (Xi and Li, 2009) and BisSNP
436 packages. In brief, sequencing reads were adaptor-trimmed using CUTADAPT package
437 (Martin, 2011), while read alignments were performed against the human reference genome
438 (hg19 GRCh37 version hs37d5-lambda, 1000 Genomes) using the BsMAP-2.89 package
439 with non-default parameter $-v\ 8$ (Xi & Li, 2009). Putative PCR duplicates were filtered using
440 Picard (version 1.61(1094) MarkDuplicates (<http://picard.sourceforge.net>). Only properly
441 paired or singleton reads with minimum mapping quality score of ≥ 30 and bases with a
442 Phred-scaled quality score of ≥ 10 were considered in methylation calling using the

443 BisulfiteGenotyper command. BisulfiteTableRecalibration was called with `–maxQ 40`.
444 Methylation calling was done with BisSNP package (Liu, et al., 2012) and single-base-pair
445 methylation rates (b-values) were determined by quantifying evidence for methylated
446 (unconverted) and unmethylated (converted) cytosines at all CpG positions. Non-conversion
447 rates were estimated using data from mitochondrion DNA (chrM). Only CpGs with coverage
448 greater than or equal to 10x in all sample replicates were considered in downstream
449 analysis.

450

451 [Differentially methylated CpGs calling](#)

452 Fisher exact test with $\alpha = 0.05$ was applied to all 17,233,911 CpGs individually to extract
453 differentially methylated positions (DMPs).

454

455 [Principal component analysis \(PCA\)](#)

456 Principal component analysis was done on all 17,233,911 CpGs using the `princomp`
457 command in R.

458

459 [Genomic features analysis](#)

460 We extracted genic features (intron, exons, intergenic regions, genes transcription start site
461 (TSS)) together with 4D genomic interaction data from gencode v17 (Harrow *et al.*, 2012),
462 CpG Island, Laminal Associated Domains (LADS) and RepeatMasker definitions from UCSC
463 (Rosenbloom *et al.*, 2013). Using the start and end coordinates of the genes from
464 Genecode17, TSS was defined as the region extending 2kb upstream and 1kb downstream
465 the start of the gene. RepeatMaskers considered in the enrichment analysis are: DNA repeat
466 elements (DNA), Long interspersed nuclear elements (LINE), Low complexity repeats, Long
467 terminal repeats (LTR), Rolling Circle repeats (RC), RNA repeats (RNA, rRNA, scRNA,
468 snRNA, srpRNA and tRNA), Satellite repeats, Simple repeats (micro-satellites) and Short
469 interspersed nuclear elements (SINE). Enhancer were extracted from ENCODE (Dunham *et*

470 *al.*, 2012), FANTOM5 (Andersson *et al.*, 2017) and Vista (Visel *et al.*, 2007). Coordinates of
471 HL-60/S4 Epichromatin are described (Olins *et al.*, 2014).

472

473 [Enrichment analysis](#)

474 Genomic feature and chromosome enrichment in the DMPs were estimated using the
475 formula:

476

$$477 \text{DMP_enrichment}_{\text{feature}} = (\text{overlap_size} / \text{data_size}) / (\text{feature_size} / \text{genome_size})$$

478

479 Where “*data_size*” is the size of the data (for either RA or TPA DMPs) been used to
480 calculate the enrichment. Note that the enrichment of the hyper and hypo-methylated DMPs
481 were calculated relative to the “*data_size*” or the total DMPs or DMRs called for each
482 comparison but not relative to the total of only hyper or hypo-methylated DMPs or DMRs.

483

484 [Functional annotation](#)

485 DMR functional annotations was performed with DAVID 6.8 (Huang, Sherman and Lempicki,
486 2009) using the full set of human genes as the background.

487

488 [Differential methylation patterns of DMPs analysis](#)

489 DMPs were clustered using the hclust (Murtagh, 1985) with the complete linkage method
490 after the Euclidean distances were calculated using the dist function in R. The hierarchically
491 clustered DMPs were divided into 12 clusters using cutree. The resulting clusters were
492 named as modules, from module M1 to module M12.

493

494 Feature enrichment within modules were estimated using the following formula:

495

$$496 \text{Module_enrichment}_{\text{feature}} = (\text{mod_feature} / \text{feature_size}) / (\text{module_size} /$$

497 *total_modules*)

498

499 Where “*mod_feature*” is the size of a module overlapping with a specific genomic feature
500 and “*feature_size*” is total size of a genomic feature in all modules. Whereas “*module_size*”
501 is the total size of a module and “*total_modules*” is the size of the all modules together.

502

503 [Extraction of differentially methylated regions \(DMRs\)](#)

504 DMR calling was done by first averaging coverage and number of methylation calls in a 3
505 CpGs sliding windows with maximum size of 2kb. Fisher exact testing was done using an
506 alpha value of 0.05 to extract differentially methylated windows. Continuous differentially
507 methylated windows were merged into one and Fisher test with same conditions were
508 applied the second time ensure the regions were significantly differentially methylated.
509 Differentially methylated regions that had 3 CpGs /1kb ratio were extracted before applying
510 the final filter which states that a DMR should consist of at least 3 sliding windows. This step
511 was to eliminate regions that probably had only one truly differentially methylated CpGs. As
512 such, DMRs that were made of less than 3 windows (5 CpGs) were dropped also dropped.

513

514 [Differential gene expression](#)

515 Differentially expressed genes data estimated using the RSEM software package (Li &
516 Dewey, 2011) were obtained from our collaborators in The Josephine Bay Paul Center for
517 Comparative Molecular Biology and Evolution (USA) (Mark Welch *et al.*, 2017).

518

519 [Correlation between gene expression and TSS methylation of HL-60/S4 genes](#)

520 Methylation and transcriptome data were integrated by first extracting genes with $-\log_2$
521 (RNA expression fold change) ≥ 1.5 and TSS overlapping with at least one DMP as
522 extracted using the Fisher exact test. Using this criterion we identified 114 and 221 genes for
523 RA and TPA respectively, summing up to a total of 280 unique differentially expressed
524 genes.

525 Secondly, genes with TSS overlapping with DMPs with methylation rate difference ≥ 0.2
526 were extracted for functional annotation analysis. In this extraction criterion 86 and 112
527 genes were identified for RA and TPA respectively. The correlation between the average
528 methylation change of DMPs overlapping with the TSS of a gene and the $-\log_2$ (RNA
529 expression fold change) were estimated for RA and TPA genes in a scatter plot. Similarly,
530 correlation between the average methylation of DMPs overlapping with a gene TSS and the
531 gene's expression were estimated using values from all samples and the distributions plotted
532 separately for genes whose TSS overlap with RA and TPA DMPs.

533

534 Furthermore, the correlation between the methylation of individual CpGs in the gene body
535 and TSS region and gene expression was estimated for all genes from both extraction
536 criteria together with the gene expression of transcription factors known to be involved in
537 myeloid cell differentiation (Figure 5).

538

539 **List of abbreviations**

540 HL-60/S4 – human myeloid leukemic cell line HL-60/S4 (ATCC CRL-3306).

541 UN – undifferentiated HL-60/S4

542 TPA – tetradecanoyl phorbol acetate treated HL-60/S4

543 CpG – Cytosine-phosphate-Guanine dinucleotide

544 CpGI – CpG island

545 DMP – differential methylated CpG position

546 DMR – differentially methylated CpG region

547 MPP – multipotent progenitor cells

548 CMP – common myeloid progenitor cells

549 GMP – granulocyte monocyte progenitor cells

550 MEP – megakaryocyte erythrocyte progenitor cell

551 WGBS – whole genome bisulphite sequencing

552 FISH – fluorescent in-situ hybridisation

553 M-FISH – multiplex FISH

554 LINE – long interspersed nuclear element

555 TSS – transcription start site

556 CHIA-PET – Chromatin interaction analysis by paired end tag sequencing

557 IM-PET – integrated method for predicted enhancer targets

558

559 **Author Contributions**

560 DEO, RE conceived the research. RE, DEO, NI supervised the study. ALO, DEO acquired
561 the samples and data. EBA, NI, VT processed the data. EBA, VT, MB, TB, ZG, NI analysed
562 data. All authors interpreted and discussed data. EBA, NI wrote the paper. All authors
563 commented on and critically revised the manuscript.

564

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569 facilities to DEO and ALO, enabling the growth and characterization of HL-60/S4 cells.

570

571 **Competing interests**

572 No competing interests declared

573

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576 support from the University of New England, College of Pharmacy.

577

578 **Data availability**

579 Raw sequencing data was deposited at the ENA under accession PRJEB27665.

580 Associated processing scripts and differential methylation analysis scripts are available via

581 [GitHub](#);

582 https://github.com/jokergoo/ngspipeline/blob/master/WGBS_pipeline.pl

583 https://github.com/eantwibo/HL60S4_methylation_scripts/

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682 **Figure Legends**

683 Figure 1: Analysis of DNA methylome upon chemical induction of differentiation of HL-60/S4
684 cells. A. Whole genome CpG methylation rate density plot. B. Box plots summarising the
685 distribution of CpG methylation rates per sample replicates for the ~22 million CpGs with
686 coverage greater than or equal to 10x in all samples. The upper and lower limits of the boxes
687 represent the first and third quartiles respectively, and the black horizontal line is the median.
688 The whiskers indicate the variability outside the upper and lower quartiles. C. Principal
689 component analysis of the WGBS data for the three treated samples. D. Circular
690 representation of DNA methylation rates for the different treatments. CpG methylation rates
691 were averaged over 10-Mb windows and are presented as heat map tracks. The heat maps
692 show the DNA methylation change with respect to the sample in the next inner track.

693

694 Figure 2: Differentially methylated CpGs (DMPs) analysis. A. Number of DMPs identified
695 with Fisher exact test for each comparison. RA and TPA are the DMPs identified when RA or
696 TPA was compared to the control (UN), while RA vs TPA is the comparison in which RA was
697 compared to TPA. B. Enrichment of genomic features in the hyper-methylated (left) and
698 hypo-methylated (right) DMPs in RA and TPA, compared UN cells. C. The density plot of the
699 methylation rates of DMPs. Hyper and hypo-methylated DMPs are denoted by (hyper) and
700 (hypo) respectively. On the left and right panels show the distribution of DMPs identified in
701 the RA and TPA compared to UN cells respectively. D. Modules identified from the
702 unsupervised clustering of the DMPs. E. Genomic feature enrichment in the 12 modules
703 identified. F. Enrichment of genomic features in the 12 identified modules.

704

705 Figure 3: Correlation between TSS methylation and gene expression A. The scatter plot of
706 TSS DMPs methylation change and fold change of RNA expression values ($-\log_2$
707 transformed) for genes which had their TSS overlapping with DMPs with 0.2 methylation
708 difference between RA and UN cells. B. The distribution of Pearson correlation coefficient
709 values between the average methylation of DMPs overlapping with TSS and expression

710 intensity for the genes with differentially methylated TSS in RA relative to UN cells. C. The
711 scatter plot of TSS DMPs methylation change and fold change of expression values (-log₂
712 transformed) for genes which had their TSS overlapping with DMPs with 0.2 methylation
713 difference between TPA and UN cells. D. The distribution of Pearson correlation coefficient
714 values between the average methylation of DMPs overlapping with TSS and expression
715 intensity for the genes with differentially methylated TSS in TPA relative to UN cells.

716

717 Figure 4: Gene expression integration with CpG differential methylation shows that CEBPE
718 expression is regulated by methylation of downstream region. A. The promoter region of
719 CEBPE gene shows a strong inverse correlation between expression and methylation of
720 DMPs in its downstream region. Top panel: the interacting regions are regions identified
721 with IM-PET in K562 cells and confirmed by CHIA-PET. Second panel shows genomic
722 coordinates of CEBPE gene on chromosome 14 whereas E029 chromHMM panel shows the
723 genomic features along the CEBPE gene in E029 (primary monocyte cells from peripheral
724 blood). Correlation panel shows the correlation of between DMPs along the genomic
725 coordinates and the gene expression of CEBPE for all three states. Methylation panel shows
726 the methylation rate of CpGs along the gene coordinates +/- 2kb. B-D. The expression of
727 CEBPE (B), PGP (C) and (CCNF) for the three different states. E, F. The cyclin-F-box
728 protein coding gene CCNF interacts with a distant upstream region which regulated its
729 expression through methylation. Panel description is similar to figure 4A except the
730 "correlation" panel in 4E which depicts the correlation between the methylation of CpGs
731 along the PGP gene coordinates and the expression of CCNF. The sequence panel shows
732 the nucleotide sequence of in the differentially methylated region upstream PGP (enhancer
733 region): DMPs are marked in the sequence panel by ** while the blue arrows points to TPA-
734 specific SNP sites within the differentially methylated region. 4F shows similar information
735 depicted in 4A for CCNF gene. The interaction between the CCNF promoter and the region
736 upstream PGP was also identified by ChIA-PET in the K562 cell line.

737

738 Figure 5: Chemical differentiation model of HL-60/S4 showing the transcription factors that
739 may play an essential role in determining cell fate. Downregulation or upregulation of gene
740 expression are denoted by “-“ or “+” respectively. Genes with no sign attach implies their
741 levels are maintained at similar levels as in UN (promyelocytic) state.

742 **Tables and table legends**

743

	UN	RA	TPA
Treatment	None	Retinoic acid	tetradecanoyl phorbol acetate
State	Undifferentiated	Granulocyte	Macrophage
Measured CpGs	26,681,926	26,681,926	26,647,233
Genome coverage (x)	28.87	29.43	27.56
CpG coverage (x)	21.90	22.60	20.20
ChrM conversion rate	0.999	0.999	0.998

744

745 Table 1: CpG coverage statistics. A summary of the whole genome bisulphite sequencing

746 (WGBS) data for the undifferentiated HL-60/S4 (UN), and retinoic acid (RA) and

747 tetradecanoyl phorbol acetate (TPA) treated cells.

748

749

Term	%	Enrichment	PValue
Glycoprotein binding	3.85	19.86	0.01
Translation	7.69	4.46	0.01
Defence response	10.26	3.2	0.01
Immunoglobulin-like V-type domain	5.13	8.01	0.01
Signal peptide	26.92	1.6	0.03
Steroid binding	3.85	11.48	0.03
Protein biosynthesis	5.13	5.32	0.04
Lipoprotein	8.97	2.72	0.04
Positive regulation of cell migration	3.85	8.29	0.05
Peroxisome	3.85	8.33	0.05
Enzyme binding	7.69	2.81	0.06
Positive regulation of locomotion	3.85	7.53	0.06
Endocytosis signal motif	2.56	27.58	0.07
Defence response to Gram-positive bacterium	2.56	24.6	0.08
Ankyrin	5.13	3.94	0.08
Phospholipid catabolic process	2.56	22.36	0.08
Cell membrane	17.95	1.59	0.09
SH2 domain binding	2.56	20.41	0.09
Locomotory behavior	5.13	3.59	0.1
Structure of Caps and SMACs	2.56	14.92	0.1

750

751 Table 2: Immune response related functions are predominant in cellular functions of genes
752 with the most differentially methylated TSS in RA, compared to UN cells. The functional
753 annotation of genes with their TSS overlapping with DMPs, with a methylation rate difference
754 ≥ 0.2 in RA, compared to UN cells, for which gene expression data was available. The p-

755 value is the calculated hypergeometric binomial calculated in DAVID.

756

Term	%	Enrichment	PValue
Defense response	11.43	3.47	0
Phosphatase activity	5.71	4.29	0.01
Positive regulation of locomotion	3.81	7.27	0.02
Chemotaxis	5.71	3.9	0.02
Peroxisome	3.81	7.09	0.02
Leukocyte transendothelial migration	3.81	5.75	0.03
Opsonization	1.9	59.33	0.03
Immunoglobulin-like fold	7.62	2.59	0.03
Translation	5.71	3.23	0.04
Immune response	8.57	2.32	0.04
RNA binding	8.57	2.23	0.04
Steroid binding	2.86	8.34	0.05
Phosphoprotein	44.76	1.23	0.06
Intracellular protein transport	5.71	2.86	0.06
p53 signalling pathway	2.86	7.48	0.06
MAPK signalling pathway	4.76	3.17	0.06
Positive regulation of phagocytosis	1.9	29.67	0.06
Regulation of leukocyte activation	3.81	4.29	0.06
Zinc finger region:C3H1	1.9	29.11	0.07
Protein biosynthesis	3.81	4.05	0.07
Signal peptide	22.86	1.4	0.08
Regulation of apoptosis	8.57	1.99	0.08
Macrophage activation	1.9	23.73	0.08
Small GTPase mediated signal transduction	4.76	2.92	0.09
Calcium-binding	1.9	21.03	0.09

Antimicrobial	3.81	3.69	0.09
Cell cycle	5.71	2.48	0.09
Cytoskeleton organization	5.71	2.45	0.09
Structure of Caps and SMACs	1.9	14.92	0.1
Palmitate moiety binding	3.81	3.58	0.1

757

758 Table 3: Immune response related functions are predominant in cellular functions of genes
759 with the most differentially methylated TSS in TPA compared to UN cells. The functional
760 annotation of genes with their TSS overlapping with DMPs with a methylation rate difference
761 ≥ 0.2 in TPA, compared to UN for which gene expression data was available. The p-value is
762 the calculated hypergeometric binomial calculated in DAVID.

763

764

765

766

Term	n	Enrichment	BinomP
Peroxisome proliferator activated receptor pathway	2	30.84	4.76E-05
Catabolic process	40	1.59	3.70E-04
Phagocytosis	7	3.88	5.84E-04
Organic substance catabolic process	34	1.51	1.65E-03
Cellular catabolic process	31	1.50	2.02E-03
Organelle organization	40	1.38	2.99E-03
Protein folding	6	2.28	3.97E-03
Organophosphate catabolic process	13	2.08	4.29E-03
Regulation of cholesterol transport	3	7.23	4.47E-03
Cell division	12	2.09	4.61E-03
Leukocyte migration involved in immune response	1	38.55	5.22E-03
Quinolate metabolic process	2	25.70	5.27E-03
Positive regulation of calcium-mediated signalling	3	9.64	5.32E-03
Mitochondrion degradation	2	22.03	5.67E-03
Histone H4-K acetylation	2	11.86	5.88E-03
Nucleotide catabolic process	12	2.10	6.05E-03
Retinoic acid receptor signalling pathway	2	8.57	6.27E-03
Nucleoside phosphate catabolic process	12	2.07	6.37E-03
Purinergic nucleotide receptor signalling pathway	2	8.12	7.28E-03
Neurotransmitter metabolic process	3	8.90	7.58E-03
Heterocycle catabolic process	16	1.60	8.25E-03
Regulation of ER to Golgi vesicle-mediated transport	2	25.70	9.02E-03
Aromatic compound catabolic process	16	1.59	9.55E-03
Organonitrogen compound metabolic process	31	1.55	9.79E-03

768 Table 4: Cellular functions of DMRs which were generated by merging DMPs. The biological
769 process enrichment was performed with DMRs generated from TPA-UN comparison DMPs.
770 The p-value is the calculated binomial calculated by GREAT (McLean *et al.*, 2010).
771

Term	n	Enrichment	P value
Regulation of defense response	53	1.76	1.1E-10
Endocytosis	50	2.14	3.8E-10
Negative regulation of interleukin-8 production	5	12.93	6.5E-08
Regulation of inflammatory response	27	1.98	1.3E-07
Negative regulation of protein modification process	44	1.88	1.1E-06
Negative regulation of transferase activity	27	2.15	1.1E-06
Immune response-activating signal transduction	36	1.95	1.2E-06
Activation of immune response	38	1.75	2.4E-06
Positive regulation of defense response	31	2.05	3.1E-06
Negative regulation of protein kinase activity	25	2.23	3.6E-06
Negative regulation of kinase activity	26	2.19	5.7E-06
Negative regulation of phosphorylation	35	2.23	8.1E-06
Negative regulation of protein phosphorylation	34	2.30	9.0E-06
Platelet activation	29	2.10	1.6E-05
Regulation of peptidase activity	38	1.71	1.9E-05
Toll-like receptor 5 signalling pathway	12	2.86	2.5E-05
Toll-like receptor 10 signalling pathway	12	2.86	2.5E-05
Response to lipoprotein particle stimulus	5	7.76	6.5E-05
Positive regulation of histone H4 acetylation	3	15.51	8.0E-05
Positive regulation of myeloid leukocyte differentiation	9	3.58	1.1E-04
Response to low-density lipoprotein particle stimulus	4	10.34	1.3E-04
Regulation of cysteine-type endopeptidase activity	25	2.03	2.3E-04
Regulation of meiosis	8	4.77	2.5E-04
Positive regulation of behaviour	16	2.73	3.2E-04
Regulation of meiotic cell cycle	8	4.00	5.2E-04

Response to estrogen stimulus	20	2.30	7.7E-04
Positive regulation of histone acetylation	6	5.82	1.1E-03
Negative regulation of glycolysis	4	12.41	1.4E-03

772

773 Table 5: Cellular functions of DMRs which were generated by merging DMPs. The biological

774 process enrichment was performed with DMRs generated from TPA-UN comparison DMPs.

775 The p-value is the calculated binomial calculated by GREAT (McLean *et al.*, 2010).

776 **Supplementary figures**

777 Supplementary figure S1: Genome of HL60/S4 is stable over long time and upon
778 differentiation: Coverage plots of the WGBC data for UN (A), RA (B), and TPA (C) depicting
779 stable genome during differentiation. D and E show 2 examples of M-FISH of
780 undifferentiated HL-60/S4 over a period of 4 years depicting stability of the genome.

781

782 Supplementary figure S2: Average nucleosome occupancy around DMP of the different
783 modules as described in figure 2. Each image shows nucleosome occupancy 2000 bases
784 up- and downstream of DMPs per module. Nucleosome occupancy is shown in black, red
785 and blue for untreated, RA and TPA treated respectively. GC content refers to the
786 percentage of GC at each base relative to the DMP position.

787

788 Supplementary figure S3: Key myeloid differentiation transcription factors are differentially
789 methylated and expressed during expression. DNA methylation landscape and gene
790 expression of transcription factors know to play important role in myeloid differentiation.
791 Gene expression levels for the three differentiation states as shown in the blue bar plots
792 correspond with the methylation and correlation profiles on their left.

793

794

795 **Supplementary tables**

	UN	RA	TPA
QC-passed reads	1,075,185,936	1,070,133,636	1,096,718,018
Read pairs	453,160,937	453,160,937	433,631,362
Unpaired reads	37,984,963	37,984,963	36,188,487
Unmapped reads (%)	12	10	18
Duplicates (%)	4	4	4
Genome-wide coverage(x)	28.87	29.43	27.56
CpGs identified	26681926	26699651	26647233
CpG coverage	21.9	22.6	20.2
ChrM conversion	0.998761	0.999071	0.998135

796

797 Supplementary table ST1: Read and alignment statistics of the whole genome bisulphite

798 sequencing data used in this study.

799

800 Supplementary tables ST1-ST13: enrichment of GO molecular function terms in modules

801 M1-M12

802 [Submitted as an EXCEL file]

803

804 Supplementary table ST14: enrichment of GO biological process terms in module M6

805 [Submitted as an EXCEL file]

806

807

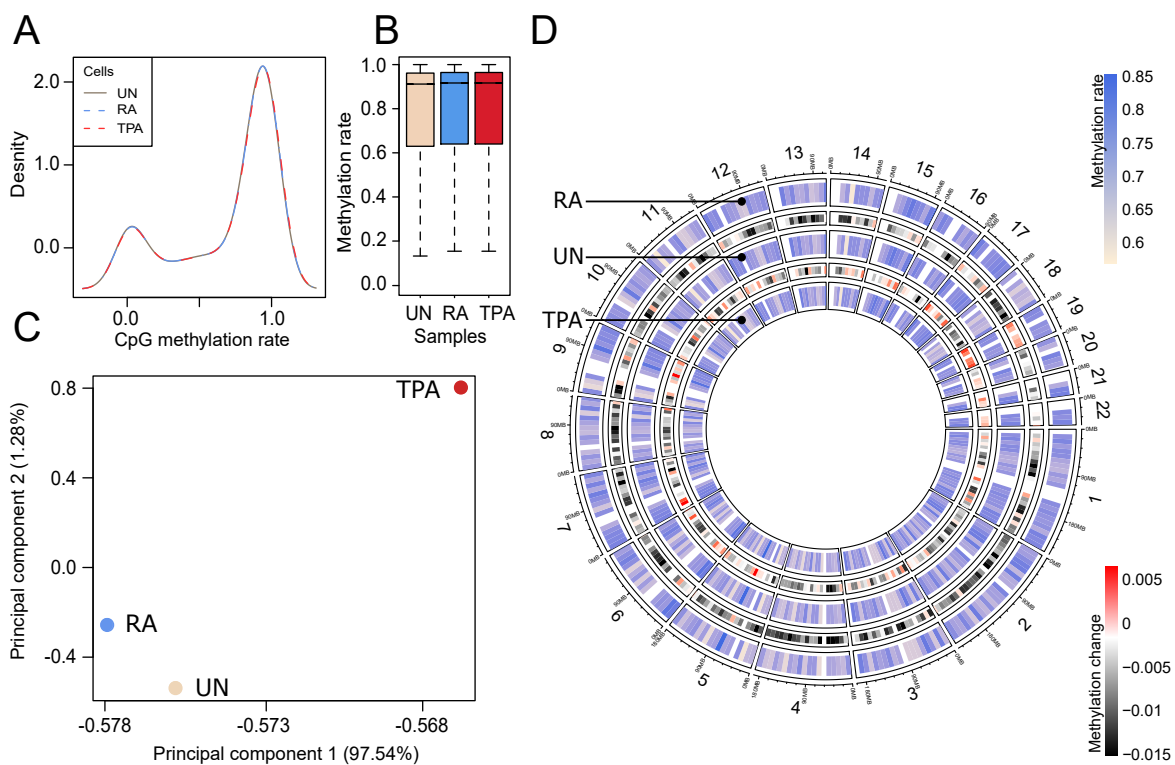
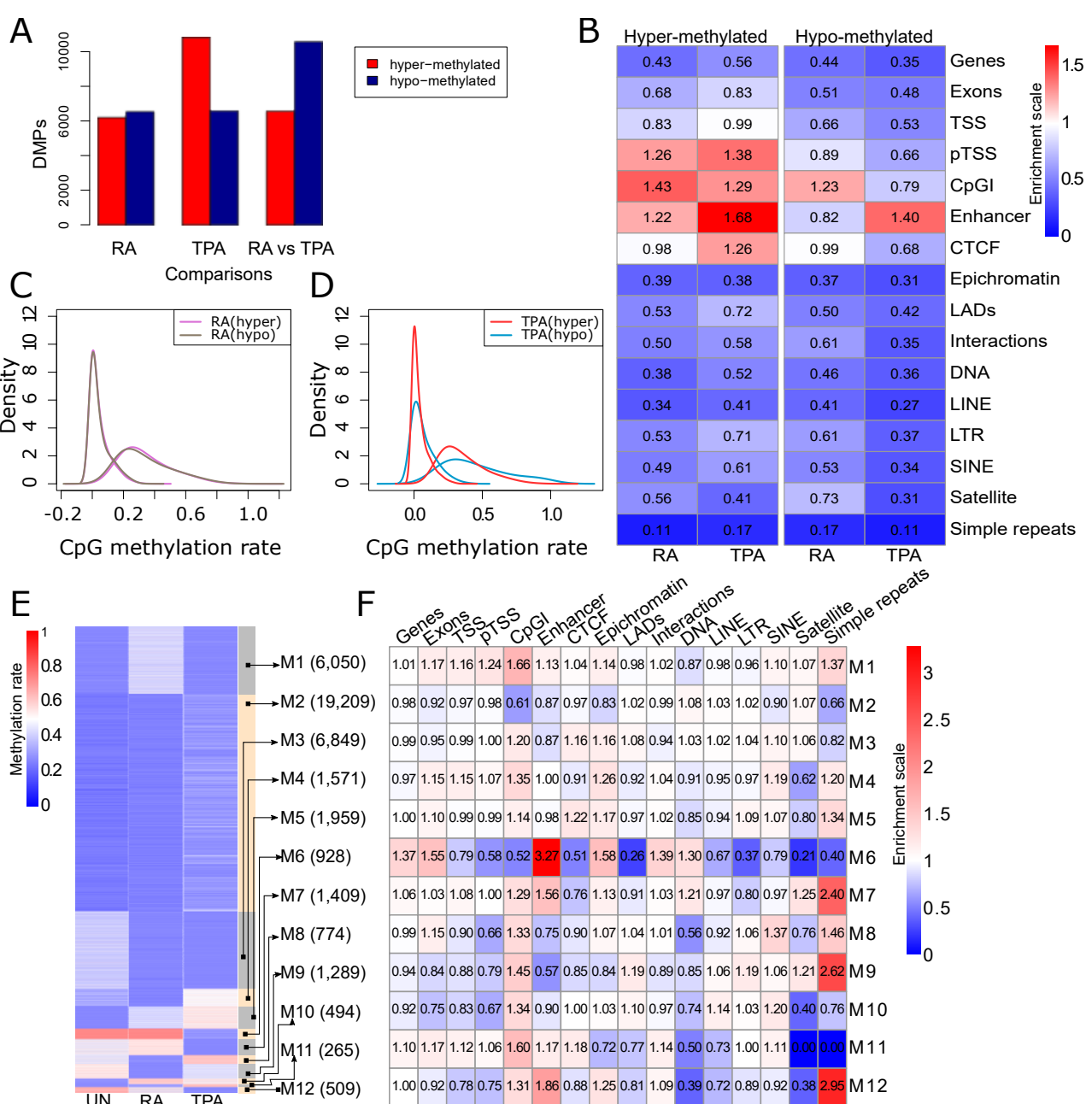


Figure 1



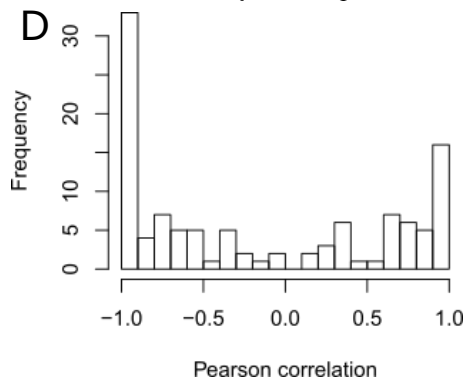
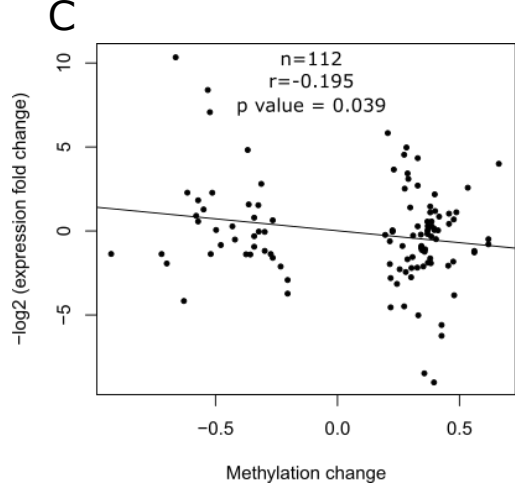
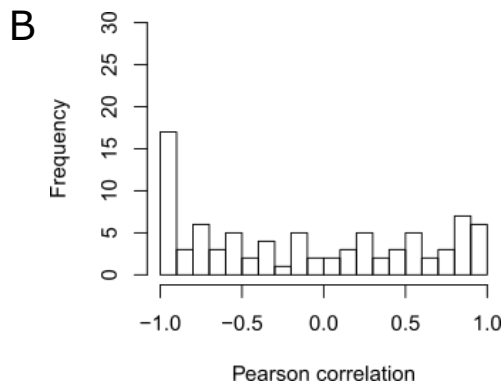
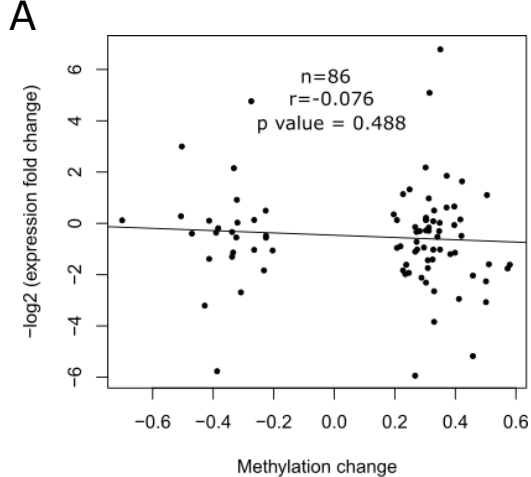


Figure 3

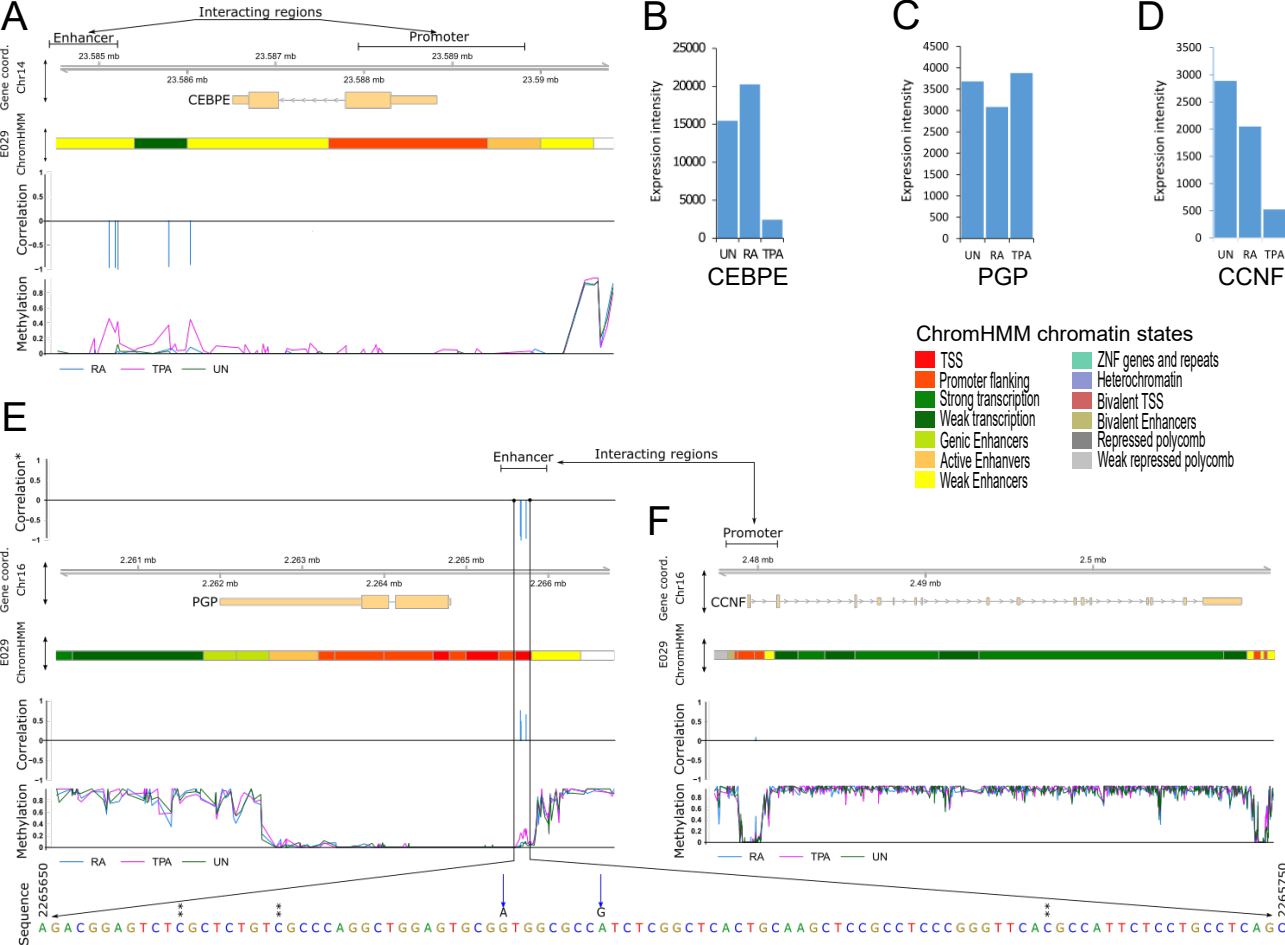


Figure 4

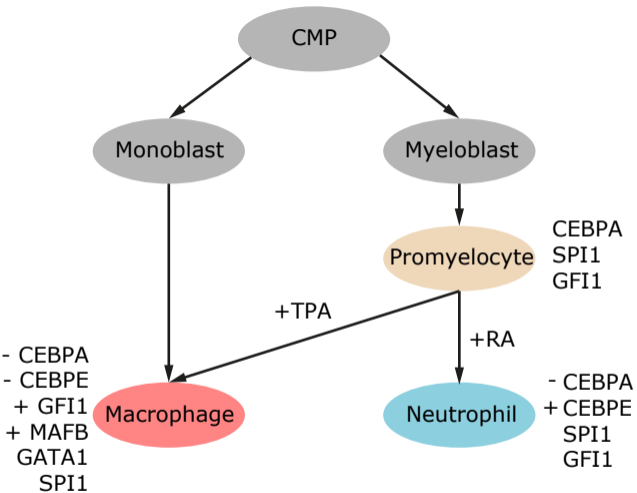


Figure 5