Histochemical study of the definitive erythropoietic foci in the chicken yolk sac

Gen Niimi, Nobuteru Usuda, Masanori Shinzato, Chiyuki Kaneko, Yoichi Nagamura and Jaime Pereda

1 Laboratory of Electron Microscopy, 2 Department of Anatomy II, School of Medicine, 3 Department of Medical Technology Course College, 4 Department of Clinical Cytopathology, School of Health Science, Fujita Health University, Toyoake, Aichi, Japan 5 Chiba Institute of Science, Choushi, Chiba, Japan 6 Human Embryology, Faculty of Medical Sciences, University of Santiago de Chile, Santiago, Chile

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INTRODUCTION

Through the evolution of vertebrates, the developing hematopoietic system is characterized by the successive phases in which hematopoietic stem cell differentiation occur. Among vertebrates, the chicken does not use the fetal liver as a major hematopoietic organ. Instead, the chicken maintains blood formation in the yolk sac until bone marrow hematopoiesis is established (Zon, 1995). It is well recognized that avian yolk sac is involved in both primitive and definitive erythropoiesis during embryonic development. Primitive erythropoiesis occurs at the early somite stages (6-8, 9 somites) in the area vasculosa of the yolk sac, formed by an endoder-