Yet another problem addressed by embodiments of the present invention is that of reducing the space required, the loss of fluid, and/or the duration of the conversion or of the entire assay as compared to the methods described in the prior art. At the same time, the reproduciblity may be maintained or increased.

Yet another problem is that of providing a method which may minimize the risk of mistakes and an associated waste of reagents and damage to the sample.

This and further problems are solved by the subject matter according to embodiments of the present application and, in particular, by the subject matter of the attached independent claims, wherein embodiments result from the dependent claims.

According to a first aspect of the present invention, there is provided an incubation tray having a depression formed by the walls of the incubation tray, and comprising a base, wherein the incubation tray comprises a means for drawing off liquid at at least one longitudinal end of the depression, preferably an opening which opens into an outlet channel on the longitudinal end of the depression, particularly preferably in a wall of the incubation tray, wherein the opening and the outlet channel are designed in such a way that negative pressure can be applied, wherein the means for drawing off liquid enables the fluid on the base to be drawn off and is preferably an opening which opens into an outlet channel and is located on the base of the incubation tray, wherein the incubation tray is pivotable about the transverse axis of the incubation tray, wherein the incubation tray can be equipped with a carrier for including a biological sample at an underside of the carrier that faces the base of the incubation tray, preferably lying on the

base, and wherein the incubation tray has a means for fixing a separation between the underside of the carrier and the base of the depression, thus effectuating a formation of a separate compartment which is closed on the bottom by the base, on the top by the underside of the carrier and on the side by the walls.

In yet another preferred embodiment, the incubation tray has an opening which opens into an outlet channel, which opening opens into an outlet channel extending on the plane of the base or therebelow, which outlet channel adjoins an outlet compartment which is separated from the depression and has an outlet compartment opening.

In yet another preferred embodiment, the incubation tray contains a fluid, wherein the incubation tray preferably has an opening which opens into an outlet channel and the surface of the fluid preferably lies above the opening.

In yet another preferred embodiment, the carrier and the incubation tray are matched to each other in such a way that the carrier can be moved in the depression, back and forth along the longitudinal axis of the incubation tray, when the incubation tray is equipped with the carrier.

In yet another preferred embodiment, the incubation tray furthermore has an opening which opens into the inlet channel, preferably in a wall of the incubation tray that adjoins an inlet compartment which is separated from the depression, which inlet compartment has an inlet compartment opening, wherein the inlet channel preferably extends along the longitudinal axis

CLAIMS

1. An incubation tray having a depression formed by the walls of the incubation tray, and comprising a base,

wherein the incubation tray comprises a means for drawing off liquid at at least one longitudinal end of the depression,

preferably an opening which opens into an outlet channel on the longitudinal end of the depression, particularly preferably in a wall of the incubation tray, wherein the opening and the outlet channel are designed in such a way that negative pressure can be applied,

wherein the means for drawing off liquid enables the fluid on the base to be drawn off and is preferably an opening which opens into an outlet channel and is located on the base of the incubation tray,

wherein the incubation tray is pivotable about the transverse axis of the incubation tray,

wherein the incubation tray can be equipped with a carrier for including a biological sample at an underside of the carrier that faces the base of the incubation tray, preferably lying on the base, and

wherein the incubation tray has a means for fixing a separation between the underside of the carrier and the base of the depression, thus effectuating a formation of a separate compartment which is closed on the bottom by the base, on the top by the underside of the carrier and on the side by the walls.

2. The incubation tray as claimed in claim 1,

wherein negative pressure is applied via the outlet channel.

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3. The incubation tray as claimed in one of claims 1 to 2,

wherein the incubation tray has an opening which opens into an outlet channel, which opening opens into an outlet channel extending on a plane of the base or therebelow, which outlet channel adjoins an outlet compartment which is separated from the depression and has an outlet compartment opening.

4. The incubation tray as claimed in one of claims 1 to 3,

containing a fluid, wherein the incubation tray preferably has an opening which opens into an outlet channel and the surface of the fluid preferably lies above the opening.

5. The incubation tray as claimed in one of claims 1 to 4,

wherein the carrier and the incubation tray are matched to each other in such a way that the carrier can be moved in the depression, back and forth along the longitudinal axis of the incubation tray, when the incubation tray is equipped with the carrier.

6. The incubation tray as claimed in one of claims 1 to 5,

further including an opening which opens into an inlet channel, preferably in a wall of the incubation tray

that adjoins an inlet compartment which is separated from the depression, which inlet compartment has an inlet compartment opening,

wherein the inlet channel preferably extends along the longitudinal axis of the incubation tray, on the plane of the base or therebelow.

7. The incubation tray as claimed in claim 6,

comprising an opening which opens into an outlet channel, along the longitudinal axis of the incubation tray at one longitudinal end, and having an opening which opens into an inlet channel, at the other longitudinal end of the depression.

8. The incubation tray as claimed in one of claims 3 to 7,

further including an extraction hood which is detachably fitted on the outlet compartment opening and comprises an outgoing line, via which negative pressure can be applied.

9. The incubation tray as claimed in one of claims 5 to 8,

wherein the carrier can be moved, during the movement, up to one longitudinal end of the depression and thereby gaplessly abuts the longitudinal end of the depression.

10. A device comprising a lower part including incubation trays as claimed in one of claims 8 to 9, each incubation tray having at least one outlet compartment opening, and a frame-shaped upper part including extraction hoods,

wherein the lower part and the upper part are matched to each other in such a way that the upper part can be placed onto the lower part in such a way that an extraction hood is fitted on each outlet compartment opening.

11. A method for incubating a carrier, including the steps:

a) incubating a carrier, in the presence of a fluid, in the depression of an incubation tray having a depression formed by the walls of the incubation tray, and comprising a base, and

b) drawing off the fluid at one longitudinal end of the depression, preferably via an opening which opens into an outlet channel which is under negative pressure,

wherein the opening is located at the longitudinal end of the depression, preferably on the base of the incubation tray,

and wherein the incubation tray is an incubation tray as claimed in one of claims 1 to 9 or an incubation tray in the device as claimed in claim 10.

12. The method as claimed in claim 11,

wherein the incubation tray is pivotable about the transverse axis of the incubation tray and at least one of the steps a) and b), preferably step b), is carried out during pivoting.

13. The method as claimed in claim 12,

wherein step b) is carried out in the instant at which an incubation tray is pivoted in such a way that a