MAJOR SURFACE IMMUNOGENS OF *TRYPANOSOMA CRUZI* TRYPMONASTIGOTES

ALI OUAISSI, J. CORNETTE, A. TAIBI, P. VELGE and A. CAPRON.

Centre d'Immunologie et de Biologie Parasitaire, INSERM U 167-CNRS 624 Institut Pasteur, 1 Rue du Prof. Calmette, 59019 Lille, France.

The surface antigens of *Trypanosoma cruzi* trypomastigotes were identified using immunoprecipitation with human immune sera and compared with metabolically labeled excretory-secretory products (ES) released by the parasite *in vitro*. A series of major immunogenic components in the ES material were revealed (160; 120 and 80-96 kDa). The trypomastigote surface bears the 130 kDa band and the 80-120 kDa complex. Competition experiments carried out demonstrated the common antigenic structure of ES and surface antigens. The fibronectin receptor of *T. cruzi* trypomastigotes(FnR) was also identified in the ES antigens. The presence of Acetylcholinesterase (AChE) activity in *T. cruzi* soluble antigens has been reported in our laboratory. This observation together with the presence of FnR on *T. cruzi* trypomastigotes, allowed us to investigate the relationship between the AChE and the parasite FnR by using immunological and biochemical probes. Here we present evidence that the parasite FnR exhibits immunological cross-reactivity with human AChE. Antibodies to AChE were detected in *T. cruzi*-infected patients sera and during experimental infection of BALB/c mice. Anti-idiotypic antibodies were also found in these sera. These antibodies may contribute to the appearance of the conducting tissue damage. The presence of anti-idiotypic antibodies may support the notion for a functional idiotypic network that may play a role in the immunopathology of Chagas' disease. This work was supported by INSERM U167-CNRS 624 and the UNDP/World Bank/WHO Special Programme for Research and Training in Tropical Diseases.

1-T. Duriez et al. (1983), Protistologica, XIX: 299.