MAJOR SURFACE IMMUNOGENS OF *TRYPANOSOMA CRUZI*
TRYPOMASTIGOTES

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