

# Genetic Control of Cell-Cell Interactions

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## Introduction

SOMATIC cell differentiation has been a subject of extensive interest for many years, because a clearer understanding of the mechanisms governing such processes should unlock many of the unsolved problems concerning embryogenesis, ontogeny, and neoplastic transformation. Much information has accumulated about the correlations of cell surface membrane changes with various stages of differentiation. In terms of the consequences of translation of information from the genome as it pertains to control of phenotypic programming, this approach has been very informative and has opened an avenue for possible understanding of the manner by which alterations in the program may occur and thereby result in neoplastic changes.

Nonetheless, there is still a vast gap in our understanding of the various inductive and selective forces that govern the translational and/or transcriptional events at the genetic level that control the program(s) for differentiation. We will examine to what extent cell differentiation is influenced by cell surface molecules on the differentiating cells as well as those on neighboring cells and structures with which they may be interacting. The basis for this viewpoint stems from studies performed in our laboratory, and related observations from other laboratories, that have demonstrated the role of histocompatibility gene products in the control of cellular interactions between T lymphocytes and B lymphocytes and macrophages in the development of humoral immune responses. Since many reviews have already been written on this subject, the main emphasis of this discussion will be on recent studies from our own laboratory that bear directly on the relationships between receptors involved in intercellular communication and the phenotype of cell-cell interactions ultimately displayed by a given lymphoid cell population.

## Genetic Restrictions on Immunocompetent Cell Interactions

The discovery that genetic restrictions on cell-cell interactions were linked with major histocompatibility complex (MHC) represented a significant advance in our understanding of the fine specificity of such intercellular communication events and has broadened our view of the biological significance of MHC genes and their products. The initial demonstrations of MHC restrictions on T cell-B cell interactions in the mouse (19, 20, 32) and on

macrophage-T lymphocyte interactions in the guinea pig (39, 43) were followed by demonstrations of the involvement of MHC gene products in controlling the ability of cytotoxic T lymphocytes (CTL) to effectively lyse target cells (4, 7, 8, 33, 40, 42, 53). In fact, MHC-linked genetic restrictions have by now been identified in virtually every conceivable type of cell-cell interaction involving, directly or indirectly, cells of lymphohematopoietic origin. Although the principal MHC genetic loci involved may vary from one type of interaction to another (i.e., *I* region genes control lymphocyte-lymphocyte and macrophage-lymphocyte interactions, whereas *K/D* genes govern CTL-target cell interaction), the basic phenomenology is the same, namely that the most efficient cell-cell interactions are transacted when the two interacting partner cells share identical *I* or *K/D* region genes as the case may be. Essentially two bodies of thought have arisen as possible explanations for such genetic restrictions. One considers that genetic restrictions are manifestations of the preferable, or even necessary, perception by lymphocytes of antigen in some type of molecular association with MHC determinants on the surface membranes of partner cells with which they interact (i.e., altered-self, complex antigenic determinants) (1, 38, 53). The second considers genetic restriction as a reflection of a distinct cell-cell recognition system involving cell interactions (CI) molecules, at least some of which are encoded by MHC genes, that determine the specificity with which interacting partner cells can effectively communicate (16, 17, 19, 20). To date, both of these possibilities are still viable and will require much additional experimentation.

The interesting paradox regarding the original discovery of MHC restrictions is that the first concepts that linked immunocompetent cell communication events to self-recognition of MHC gene products evolved from a phenomenon that depended on recognition of "not-self"—namely, the allogeneic effect (12). The allogeneic effect described that phenomenon in which introduction of histoincompatible T cells to previously immunized recipients circumvented the normal requirement for antigen-specific helper T cells in secondary antibody responses; this resulted from the development of an active graft-vs.-host reaction in recipient lymphoid organs. The very fact that the allogeneic effect stimulated target T or B cells as a result of interaction at their cell surface MHC molecules prompted the consideration that perhaps precisely the same pathway was involved in syngeneic interactions, perhaps occurring by similar molecular mechanisms. Indeed, experiments designed to address this question demonstrated that physiological *in vivo* T-B cell

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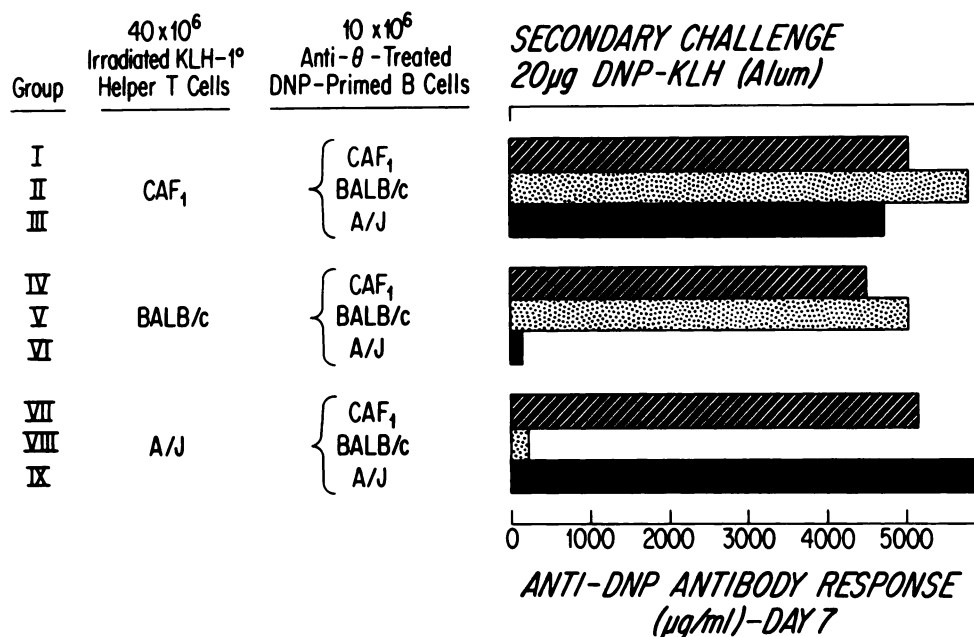


FIG. 1. Conventional parental, but not F<sub>1</sub>, helper T cells are restricted in providing helper activity to partner B cells of isologous parental or F<sub>1</sub> type. Unirradiated CAF<sub>1</sub> recipient mice were treated by injection with 40 × 10<sup>6</sup> KLH primed spleen cells from CAF<sub>1</sub>, BALB/c, or A/J donors. Twenty-four hours later, all recipients were irradiated with 650 rads and then given injections of T cell-depleted, DNP-primed B cells from either CAF<sub>1</sub>, BALB/c, or A/J donors, as indicated. All cell transfers were performed by the i.v. route. Shortly after the transfer of B cells, all recipients were challenged with 20 µg of DNP-KLH adsorbed on alum. The data are presented as geometric mean levels of serum anti-DNP antibodies in individual mice (5 mice/group) bled on day 7 after secondary challenge (DNP, 2,4-dinitrophenyl; KLH, Keyhole limpet hemocyanin).

interactions in the mouse were genetically restricted by MHC-linked genes. As summarized in figure 1, the basic observation was that antigen-specific T cells, primed to keyhole limpet hemocyanin (KLH), were capable of providing specific helper function for B cells, primed to the 2,4-dinitrophenyl (DNP) hapten of semihistocompatible or histocompatible, but *not* histoincompatible, donor origin in secondary antibody responses of the IgG class (19, 20). At about the same time, others demonstrated a requirement of *H-2* identity for successful thymus reconstitution of nude mice (32) and the existence of MHC-linked genetic restrictions in macrophage-T cell interactions in *in vitro* proliferation assays (39, 43).

Genetic mapping studies established linkage of such genetic restrictions on T-B cell interactions to the *I* region of *H-2* (17, 23). Since such experiments had been designed to specifically circumvent potential defects in macrophage-lymphocyte interactions and specific or non-specific suppressive effects (19-22), the original interpretation was that genetic identity between the T cell and the B cell was necessary for the relevant T cell surface molecules, distinct from antigen-specific receptors, to bind to the corresponding B cell molecule (termed "acceptor" sites) for effective interactions to occur (19, 20). The respective molecules were defined as CI molecules with the *I* region genes encoding them as *CI* genes (17).

Subsequently, the involvement of MHC gene products in controlling the ability of CTL to effectively lyse the virus-infected, chemically modified or minor H antigen-bearing target cells was found (4, 7, 8, 33, 40, 42, 53).

These observations demonstrated that CTL are most efficient in lysing target cells derived from a similar MHC genotype, with the critical genetic loci involved mapping to the *K* and *D* regions of the MHC, thus differing from the *I* region location of the MHC genes involved in T cell-B cell-macrophage interaction.

In view of the substantial experimental and theoretical attention that has been accorded to this subject, one could validly question whether there is any evidence that such genetic restrictions that are, by necessity, identified and demonstrated under experimentally contrived circumstances, are physiologically relevant. There are at least four pieces of information that support the belief that MHC restrictions portray the actual physiology of cell-cell communication in the lymphohematopoietic system. First, the allogeneic effect demonstrates unequivocally that specific interaction at cell surface MHC molecules induces a discrete and measureable biological response by the target cell in such interactions (12), thus proving that MHC molecules can play a role in cell triggering. Second, the existence of MHC-linked *immune response* (*Ir*) genes, which map in precisely the same genetic locations as *CI* genes, determine the immune response phenotype of an individual to various specific antigens thus linking the MHC indisputably to functional responsiveness (2, 3, 36). Third, the fact that *CI* genes determine the effectiveness of cell-cell interactions necessary for nonlymphoid hematopoietic stem cell differentiation (34, 41) provides evidence for a biological significance for such restrictions that extends beyond the immune system. (Parenthetically, such genetic restric-

tions on cell-cell interactions that do not involve, in any obvious way, specific immunological responses provide evidence for a recognition system independent of that employed for recognition of the antigenic universe.) Finally, it is now established that the self-recognition repertoire by which interacting cells perceive themselves most efficiently is influenced significantly by elements in the environmental milieu to which developing cells are exposed during their early differentiation, i.e., the process of adaptive differentiation (13, 14, 18, 24).

Adaptive differentiation describes the process by which differentiating stem cells adapt their functionally expressed self-recognition repertoire, and hence their ultimate interacting phenotype, as a result of exposure to the MHC phenotype of the environment in which they differentiate (13, 14, 18, 24). This has been substantiated by experimentation with irradiation bone marrow chimeras, particularly the results obtained with chimeric lymphocytes of  $F_1 \rightarrow$  parent type (lethally irradiated parental hosts, of A or B type, repopulated with  $[A \times B]F_1$  bone marrow stem cells) that no longer display the indiscriminate interacting phenotype for either parent typical of conventional  $F_1$  lymphocytes, but rather interact preferentially with partner cells of host parental type, or  $F_1$  type (5, 10, 11, 25, 44-46, 51, 52). Still to be determined are the ground rules of adaptive differentiation and the underlying mechanisms by which the self-recognition repertoire is sculptured by elements in the environment.

Studies on Adaptive Differentiation of Lymphocytes in Bone Marrow Chimeras

As an example of such studies (25), we tested the capacities of helper T lymphocytes and hapten-specific B lymphocytes primed in the environments of various combinations of bone marrow chimeras prepared between two parental strains (i.e., A/J and BALB/c) and their corresponding  $F_1$  hybrid ( $CAF_1$ ) to interact with primed B and T lymphocytes derived from conventional parent and  $F_1$  donors in adoptive secondary transfer responses. While  $F_1 \rightarrow F_1$  chimeric lymphocytes displayed no restrictions in terms of cooperative activity with all of the various partner cell combinations, as shown in figure 2,  $F_1 \rightarrow$  parent chimeric lymphocytes displayed restricted haplotype preference in cooperating best with partner lymphocytes sharing the H-2 haplotype, either entirely or codominantly, of the parental chimeric host. Suitable control studies ruled out the existence of either nonspecific or specific suppression mechanisms as possible explanations for the restricted partner cell preference of  $F_1 \rightarrow$  parent chimeric lymphocytes as displayed in the adoptive transfer situation.

Since similar observations with bone marrow chimeras in the CTL systems were interpreted as evidence for a central role of the thymus in dictating the self-recognition repertoire to precursor T lymphocytes, we analyzed the cooperating preference of helper T cells originating from  $F_1$  bone marrow, but differentiating in adult thymecto-

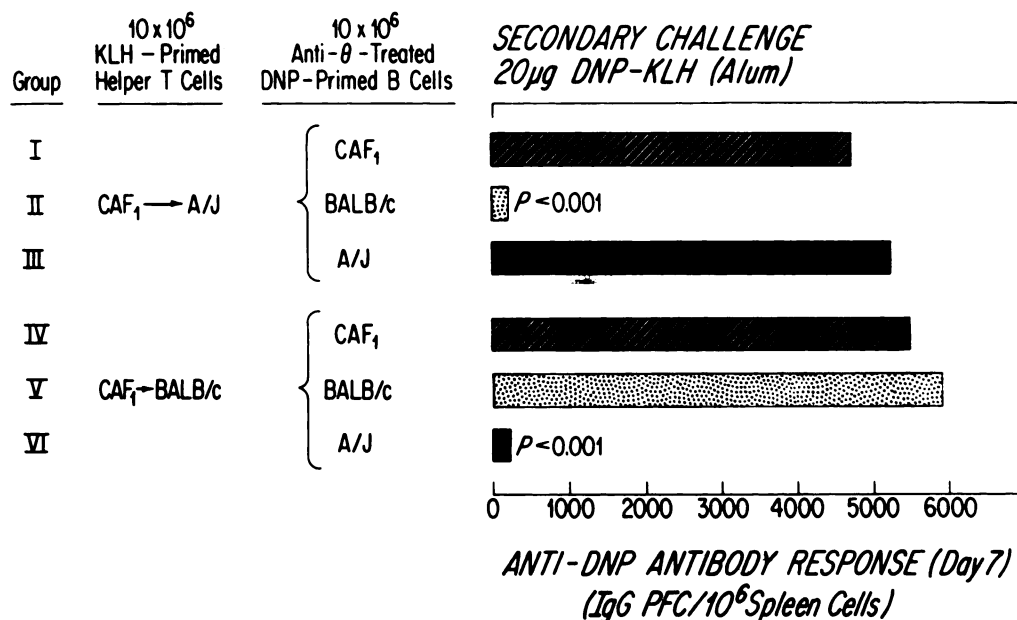


FIG. 2. Spleen cells from KLH-primed  $CAF_1 \rightarrow A/J$  (groups I to III) and  $CAF_1 \rightarrow BALB/c$  (groups IV to VI) were co-transferred with T cell-depleted B cells from DNP-*Ascaris*-primed conventional  $CAF_1$ , BALB/c, or A/J donors into 650 rad-irradiated  $CAF_1$  recipients. All recipients were challenged with 20  $\mu$ g of DNP-KLH in alum shortly after cell transfer. The data are presented as geometric mean levels of IgG plaque-forming cells/ $10^6$  spleen cells of groups of four recipients each assayed on day 7 after cell transfer and challenge. Statistically significant differences, as measured by Student's *t* test are indicated adjacent to the pertinent horizontal bar (DNP, 2,4-dinitrophenyl; KLH, Keyhole limpet hemocyanin). [Adapted from Katz et al. (25).]

mized, lethally irradiated  $F_1$  recipients reconstituted with either  $F_1$  or homozygous parental thymus grafts (26). The results of these analyses revealed only a marginal tendency for helper T cells derived from parental thymic chimeras to provide better help for B cells of the same parental type corresponding to the origin of the thymus graft than for the opposite parent. Most importantly, in no instance was there any evidence of "restriction" in the classical sense of *presence* vs. *absence* of help as routinely observed in studies concerning genetic restrictions of T-B cell cooperative interactions by conventional lymphoid cell populations.

Thus, such studies demonstrated that the thymic microenvironment exerts relatively little influence on the cooperative phenotype of helper T cells generated in thymic chimeras. The next chimera study was conducted to analyze further the sites of dominant influence on lymphocyte maturation with regard to the self-recognition capabilities normally displayed by regulatory helper T cells (29). This was accomplished by utilizing lymphocytes obtained from: 1)  $F_1 \rightarrow$  parent chimeras, and 2) intact parental mice rendered tolerant as neonates to the MHC determinants of a second parental strain. Lymphocytes were removed from these environments and *adoptively primed* to KLH in irradiated, thymectomized  $F_1$  recipients. The resulting helper T cells were then ana-

lyzed for their partner cell preferences when mixed with conventional DNP-primed B lymphocytes of either parental or  $F_1$  origin in adoptive secondary responses in irradiated  $F_1$  recipients. As shown in figure 3, irrespective of their initial environmental origins, T cells of such types could be adoptively primed to develop totally unrestricted helper cell activity for B lymphocytes of both parental types as well as B cells of  $F_1$  type. These results indicate that the dominant influence on cooperative capabilities of helper T cells is exerted by the extrathymic microenvironment in which such cells undergo their early differentiation. Moreover, they demonstrate that the haplotype restriction displayed by helper T cells primed in, and taken directly from,  $F_1 \rightarrow$  single parent chimeras is actually a *pseudorestriction* since helper T cells with unrestricted cooperating phenotypes can be induced in such  $F_1 \rightarrow$  single parent chimeric populations when adoptively primed in irradiated  $F_1$  recipients. This pseudorestriction in cooperative capabilities was explained by a new concept termed *environmental restraint*.

Environmental restraint describes the process by which the environmental milieu can exert nonpermissive influences on the development of functional interacting partner cells corresponding to one of the possible (and actually existing) CI phenotypes inherent in a given lymphoid cell population. In other words, despite the fact

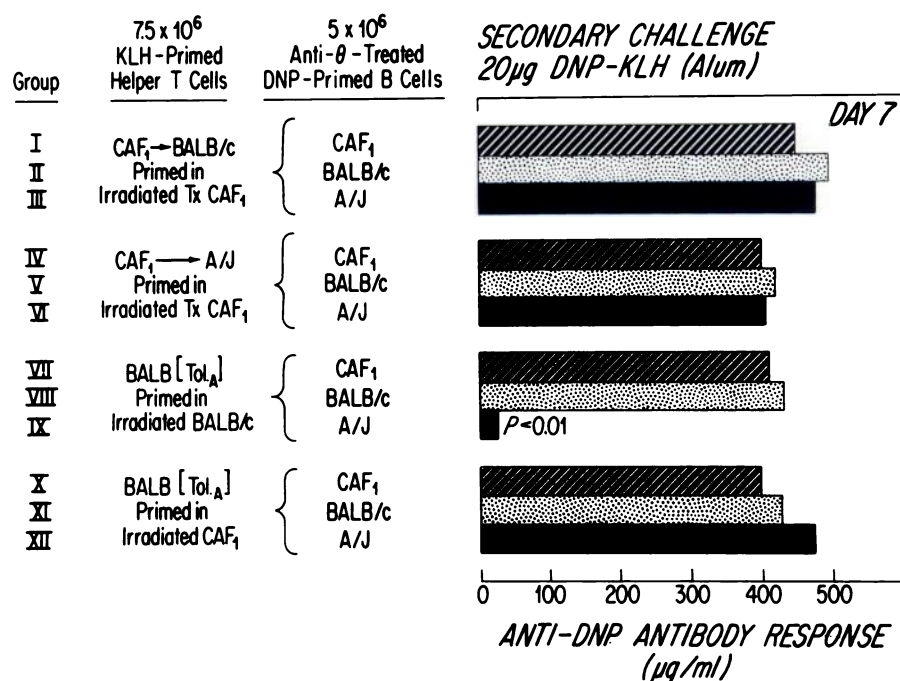


FIG. 3. Spleen cells from unprimed  $F_1 \rightarrow$  parent chimeras (groups I to VI) were adoptively primed to KLH in irradiated thymectomized conventional CAF<sub>1</sub> recipients. Spleen cells from BALB/c mice, rendered tolerant to A/J MHC determinants as neonates (by injection of  $50 \times 10^6$  irradiated CAF<sub>1</sub> spleen cells within the first 24 hours after birth) were adoptively primed to KLH in either irradiated BALB/c recipients (groups VII to IX) or irradiated CAF<sub>1</sub> recipients (groups X to XII). All adoptive priming consisted of injecting  $50 \times 10^6$  donor spleen cells into irradiated recipients that were then immunized with 20  $\mu$ g of KLH in CFA immediately after transfer. The adoptively primed KLH-specific helper cells were recovered seven days later and co-transferred with T cell-depleted B cells from DNP-*Ascaris*-primed conventional CAF<sub>1</sub>, BALB/c, or A/J donors into 650 rad-irradiated CAF<sub>1</sub> recipients. All recipients were secondarily challenged with 20  $\mu$ g of DNP-KLH in alum shortly after cell transfer. The data are presented as geometric mean levels of serum anti-DNP antibodies in groups of four recipients each. Statistically significant differences are indicated adjacent to the pertinent horizontal bar (KLH, Keyhole limpet hemocyanin; MHC, major histocompatibility complex; DNP, 2,4-dinitrophenyl; CFA, complete Freund's adjuvant). [Adapted from Katz et al. (29).]

that the  $F_1$  lymphoid cells residing in an  $F_1 \rightarrow$  parent chimera consist of self-recognizing subpopulations corresponding to each of the two inherited parental CI types, the parental host environment is only permissive for expression (in that environment) of that subpopulation corresponding to the CI phenotype of the parental host; that same environment is nonpermissive for emergence of the second parental type subpopulation for reasons that have yet to be delineated.

Thus, our current hypothesis is that adaptive differentiation is a dynamic rather than a static process and that the self-recognition repertoire within a given species enjoys a certain degree of plasticity. Moreover, we feel that the plasticity of the self-recognition repertoire is determined by the occurrence of responses against self-specific receptors for CI molecules (i.e.  $\alpha$ CI) and these, in turn, determine the immune response phenotype for a given individual.

### Orchestration of Cooperating Phenotypes of Conventional $F_1$ Lymphocytes

One very important lesson from the  $F_1 \rightarrow$  parent chimera experiments has been the realization that the answers to all of the mysteries pertaining to self-recognition and adaptive differentiation are present in conventional heterozygous  $F_1$  individuals. Consequently, experimental analysis of lymphoid cells from  $F_1$  hybrids under various circumstances should allow us to unravel such mysteries. As shown in figure 4, it can be viewed that an ( $A \times B$ )  $F_1$  individual contains a minimum of three subsets of self-specific interacting partner cells, one each corresponding to the two respective parental types ( $A$  and  $B$ ) and the third corresponding to an  $F_1$ -specific subset ( $A/B$ ). Each respective subset carries specific CI molecules ( $CI_A$ ;  $CI_B$ , and  $CI_{A/B}$ ), for which there are corresponding  $\alpha$ CI receptors ( $\alpha CI_A$ ,  $\alpha CI_B$ ,  $\alpha CI_{A/B}$ ). One need only envisage the possibility that responses can be generated against such  $\alpha$ CI receptors (i.e., anti- $\alpha$ CI) under certain circumstances to realize that the cooperating phenotypes can display considerable plasticity.

The occurrence of such anti- $\alpha$ CI responses was first suggested by experiments demonstrating that the cooperating phenotypes of conventional  $F_1$  lymphocytes could be orchestrated by certain experimental manipulations, including: 1) parental cell-induced allogeneic effects during priming of either T or B lymphocytes (27, 28); and 2) incorporation of lymphoid cells of parent  $B$ -type into cooperative interactions between  $F_1$  hybrid T cells and B cells of parent  $A$ -type, and vice versa (30; see below). In both types of experiments, appropriate controls ruled out allosuppression phenomena, or blocks in effective macrophage-lymphocyte interactions. Most importantly, the effects observed were exquisitely haplotype-specific. The development of anti- $\alpha$ CI responses could explain the permissiveness of expression of one subpopulation of self-recognizing cells in the face of nonpermissiveness of expression of the second subpopulation of self-recogniz-

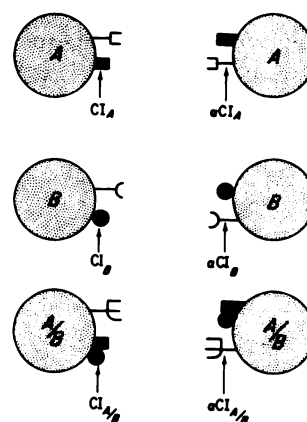


FIG. 4. Depicted are the three minimal subsets of potential self-specific interacting partner cells in heterozygous ( $A \times B$ )  $F_1$  individuals. Subsets  $A$  and  $B$  correspond to the inherited cell interactions (CI) specificities of the respective parental  $A$  and  $B$  donor mice, while subset  $A/B$  represents a unique  $F_1$  specific subset of interacting cells. The corresponding  $CI_A$ ,  $CI_B$ , and  $CI_{A/B}$  target molecules and the corresponding receptors for such molecules ( $\alpha CI_A$ ,  $\alpha CI_B$ , and  $\alpha CI_{A/B}$ ) are depicted.

ing cells. Likewise, such anti- $\alpha$ CI responses provide a suitable explanation for manifestations of environmental restraint within an  $F_1 \rightarrow$  parent chimera, as discussed above.

A series of experiments were conducted to demonstrate means by which to maneuver the cooperating phenotypes of conventional  $F_1$  hybrid lymphocytes. The first of such studies demonstrated circumstances in which restrictions in  $F_1$ -parent partner cell interactions determined by  $Ir$  genes could be willfully directed by induction of parental cell-mediated allogeneic effects during priming of the  $F_1$  helper T cell population to the antigen governed by the relevant  $Ir$  genes (27). Responses to the synthetic terpolymer L-glutamic acid, L-lysine, L-tyrosine (GLT) in the mouse are controlled by  $H-2$ -linked  $Ir$ -GLT genes. (Responder  $\times$  nonresponder)  $F_1$  hybrid mice, themselves phenotypic responders, can be primed with GLT to develop specific helper cells capable of interacting with DNP-primed  $F_1$  B cells in response to DNP-GLT. Unlike the indiscriminate ability of  $F_1$  helper T cells for conventional antigens (i.e., not  $Ir$  gene-controlled) that can help B cells of either parental type (as well as  $F_1$ ) equally well, GLT-primed  $F_1$  T cells can provide help only under normal circumstances for B lymphocytes of responder parent origin (21); they are unable to communicate effectively with nonresponder parental B cells (figure 5). However, the induction of a parental cell-induced allogeneic effect during priming of  $F_1$  mice to GLT actually dictates the direction of cooperating preference that will be displayed by such  $F_1$  helper cells for B cells of one parental type or the other. Thus, as shown in figure 5,  $F_1$  T cells primed to GLT under the influence of an allogeneic effect induced by parental BALB/c cells developed into effective helpers for nonresponder A/J B cells, but failed to develop effective helpers for responder BALB/c B cells, and vice versa. In contrast,  $F_1$  T cells primed to GLT under the influence of an allogeneic effect induced

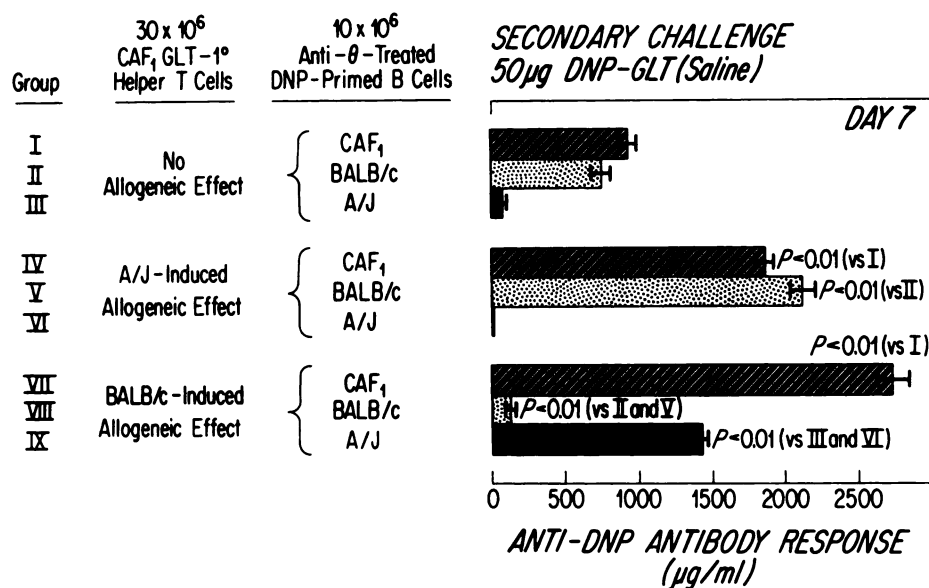


FIG. 5. Conventional CAF<sub>1</sub> mice were primed to GLT: 1) in the absence of an allogeneic effect, with 50 µg of GLT in CFA followed 10 days later by a second injection of 50 µg in saline (groups I to III); or 2) under the influence of an allogeneic effect induced by i.v. injection (on day 10 after initial immunization with 50 µg of GLT in CFA) of 25 × 10<sup>6</sup> spleen cells from either parental A/J (groups IV to VI) or BALB/c (groups VII to IX) donors just before the second injection of 50 µg of GLT in saline. All GLT-primed spleen cells were recovered seven days after the second injection to be used as helper cells. These cells were co-transferred with T cell-depleted DNP-*Ascaris*-primed B cells from conventional CAF<sub>1</sub>, BALB/c, or A/J donors into 650 rad-irradiated CAF<sub>1</sub> recipients. All adoptive recipients were secondarily challenged with 50 µg of DNP-GLT in saline shortly after cell transfer. The data are presented as geometric mean levels of serum anti-DNP antibodies of individual mice in groups of five mice each bled on day 7 after cell transfer and secondary challenge. Horizontal lines represent the range of standard errors, and relevant statistically significant differences vs. corresponding control groups are indicated adjacent to the horizontal bars (GLT, L-glutamic acid, L-lysine, L-tyrosine; DNP, 2,4-dinitrophenol. [Adapted from Katz et al. (27).]

by either parental type displayed significantly enhanced levels of helper activity for B cells derived from F<sub>1</sub> donors (27).

These results were interpreted to reflect the existence of two interdependent events provoked by the allogeneic effect: One event augments the differentiation of GLT-specific helper T cells belonging to the subset corresponding to the opposite parental type; this would explain the development of increased helper activity provided to partner B cells of opposite parental type (as well as of F<sub>1</sub> origin). The second event, we postulated, involves the production of responses against the receptors that normally self-recognize native CI determinants; this form of anti-αCI response is restricted against self-recognizing receptors of the same parental type used for induction of the allogeneic effect, hence explaining diminished helper activity of such F<sub>1</sub> cells for partner B lymphocytes of corresponding parental type. The existence of haplotype-specific anti-αCI receptor responses was postulated to explain the permissiveness of the development of one subpopulation of self-recognizing cells (corresponding to one of the parental haplotypes) in the face of nonpermissiveness of the development of the subpopulation of self-recognizing cells corresponding to the second haplotype involved. Moreover, it is not difficult to envisage that the existence of such a mechanism might explain environmental restraint as described above.

The ability to orchestrate the cooperating phenotype of (responder × nonresponder) F<sub>1</sub> GLT-specific helper T cells, prompted us to investigate whether the success of

such manipulations was unique to responses controlled by *H-2*-linked *Ir* genes, or whether priming F<sub>1</sub> lymphocytes to any antigen under the influence of a transient allogeneic effect would result in a similar deviation in cooperating preferences for partner cells of one or the other parent type. Additionally, it became important to ascertain whether F<sub>1</sub> B lymphocytes could be similarly directed in their cooperating partner cell preferences when primed under the influence of a parental cell-induced allogeneic effect. This ability to orchestrate the cooperating preferences of F<sub>1</sub> lymphocytes is not unique to antigen systems under *H-2*-linked *Ir* gene control, and is a property demonstrable in B lymphocytes as well as T lymphocytes (28).

Additional support for the idea pertaining to anti-αCI receptor responses came from experiments demonstrating that F<sub>1</sub>-parent T-B cell cooperation in vivo is significantly diminished by the presence of lymphoid cells of opposite parental type (30). This inhibition phenomenon is not a straightforward allosuppression mechanism as it can be induced by parental lymphoid cells depleted of T cells, it does not operate on cooperative interactions between homologous T and B cells of opposite parental type, and absolutely requires the presence of F<sub>1</sub> cells as participants in the reactions generated. Since the presence of parental lymphoid cells only affected cooperative interactions between F<sub>1</sub> T cells and B lymphocytes of opposite parental type, but had no inhibitory effect on cooperative interactions between homologous F<sub>1</sub> T and B cells, this strongly argues for the existence of one or

more subsets of  $F_1$  interacting partner cells that are uniquely specific for  $F_1$ , as distinct to either parental type, CI determinants. Moreover, it again appears that the most likely mechanism underlying such parental cell-induced inhibitory effects on  $F_1$ -parent partner cell interactions is the development of anti-self CI receptor responses by  $F_1$  cells against the relevant self receptors of the parental partner cells involved.

### Parallelisms between the Cell Interaction and Immune Response Phenotypes

Since the discovery of immune response (*Ir*) genes by Benacerraf and McDevitt and their colleagues (3), much effort has been directed toward delineating the nature of these genes and the mechanism by which they determine the ability of an individual to develop an immune response to a specific antigen. The discovery of MHC-linked genetic control of interactions between T cells and B cells (19, 20, 32) and between T cells and macrophages (39, 43) added additional complexities to these questions, particularly when the *CI* genes were mapped to the *I* region of the murine *H-2* complex (17, 23).

Even before the final mapping of *CI* genes to the *I* region had been accomplished, experimental evidence was obtained that strongly indicated a crucial functional linkage between *CI* and *Ir* genes. The first such evidence

was the observation, described above, that T cells from (responder  $\times$  nonresponder)  $F_1$  hybrids primed to the synthetic terpolymer GLT, to which responses are governed by *Ir-GLT* genes, were restricted to providing GLT-specific help for DNP-primed B cells only from phenotypic responder parental and  $F_1$  donors in response to DNP-GLT; the same  $F_1$  T cell population was incapable of helping B cells obtained from nonresponder parental donors (21) (see fig. 5, groups I to III). Since  $F_1$  T cells can indiscriminately interact effectively with partner B cells from either parent when the carrier antigen employed is not one to which responses are governed by a known *Ir* gene (19, 20), this restricted cooperating phenotype in the DNP-GLT experiment clearly signalled a role of *Ir* genes in determining the partner cell preferences in such cooperative interactions. For this and other reasons, we have concluded that *Ir* and *CI* genes are one and the same. If this is true, then one would predict that the immune response phenotype should exhibit comparable plasticity to that already demonstrated for *CI* gene-determined cooperative phenotypes based on the environment in which stem cells differentiate. Indeed, several reports have appeared that indicate that this is so in bone marrow chimeras (6, 9, 11, 35, 50).

The hypothesis that we are testing can thus be stated as follows: Returning to the model schematically illustrated in figure 4, which illustrates at least three minimal subsets of self-specific interacting partner cell subsets in a conventional heterozygous ( $A \times B$ )  $F_1$  individual, it seems clear that when such an individual is immunized with an antigen to which there are no restrictions imposed on responses by *Ir* genes, all three subsets of interacting cells will be functionally expressed. Hence, the cooperating phenotype of the lymphocyte population from this  $F_1$  individual will appear totally unrestricted in terms of cooperating with partner cells of both parents as well as of  $F_1$  origin.

In contrast, when an  $F_1$  individual is exposed to an antigen to which responses in one of the parental haplotypes is restricted by a specific *Ir* gene, the development of functionally interacting subsets follows a different course. Thus, as depicted schematically in figure 6, exposure of an ( $A \times B$ )  $F_1$  hybrid to GLT, to which parent *A* is a nonresponder, results in development of functional expression of only the *B* and *A/B* responder subsets of interacting cells; the parental *A* subset is functionally silent, as evidenced by the restricted phenotype of  $F_1$  cells described in the original DNP-GLT studies (21). The question that we have specifically addressed is whether the functional silence of the parent *A* subset under these circumstances might be a manifestation of the development of an anti- $\alpha CI_A$  response provoked by exposure of the lymphoid system to GLT.

Thus, thymic chimeras were constructed by reconstituting lethally irradiated, thymectomized recipients who were: 1)  $CAF_1$ ,  $BALB/c$ , or  $A/J$  with  $CAF_1$  bone marrow cells and  $CAF_1$  thymus grafts; or 2)  $CAF_1$  with both bone

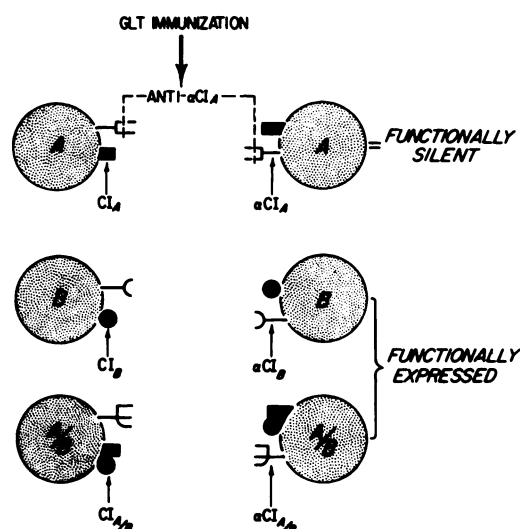


FIG. 6. As in figure 4, depicted are the minimal subsets of potential self-specific interacting partner cells in heterozygous ( $A \times B$ )  $F_1$  individuals, with the corresponding CI and  $\alpha CI$  molecules displayed on the surfaces of such cells. In response to a conventional antigen, such as KLH, all three subsets of interacting cells would presumably be activated thus explaining the indiscriminate cooperative phenotype of  $F_1$  T cells with partner cells of either parental type or of  $F_1$  type. In contrast, in response to GLT (to which the parent *A* strain is a nonresponder) the model proposes that there develops a rather immediate anti- $\alpha CI_A$  response that renders that particular subset functionally silent; the remaining *B* and *A/B* subsets are functionally expressed hence leading to the phenotype of effective cooperation by GLT-specific  $F_1$  cells for partner cells of parent *B* and ( $A \times B$ )  $F_1$  type, but no cooperative activity for partner cells of parent *A* type (KLH, Keyhole limpet hemocyanin; GLT, L-glutamic acid, L-lysine, L-tyrosine; CI, cell interactions).

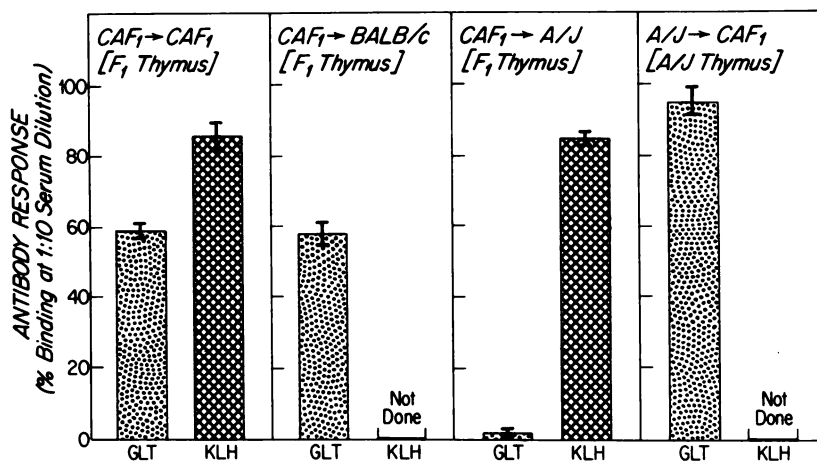


FIG. 7. Radiation bone marrow chimeras were constructed by transferring either CAF<sub>1</sub> bone marrow cells into thymectomized, lethally irradiated (950 rads) CAF<sub>1</sub>, BALB/c, or A/J recipients (panels 1 to 3) or A/J bone marrow into thymectomized, lethally irradiated CAF<sub>1</sub> recipients (panel 4). Recipients were transplanted two weeks later with thymuses of the donor type indicated, under the kidney capsules. All mice were typed for *H-2* three to four months after reconstitution and were rested until nine months after reconstitution before immunization with GLT and/or KLH. All mice were immunized i.p. with 50  $\mu$ g of GLT in CFA on day 0 and boosted with 50  $\mu$ g of GLT in saline on day 14. The data presented are mean percent binding of [<sup>125</sup>I]labeled GLT of 1:10 dilution of individual serum samples from bleedings of groups of four mice each on day 24 (10 days after boosting). Standard errors are indicated by the vertical line on each bar. Mice immunized with KLH (panels 1 and 3) were immunized i.p. on day 30 (after initiation of GLT immunizations) with 20  $\mu$ g of KLH in CFA and boosted on day 40 with 10  $\mu$ g of KLH in saline. The data presented are mean percent binding of [<sup>125</sup>I]labeled KLH of 1:10 dilutions of individual serum samples from bleedings on day 47 (GLT, L-glutamic acid, L-lysine, L-tyrosine; KLH, Keyhole limpet hemocyanin; CFA, complete Freund's adjuvant). [Adapted from Katz et al. (31).]

marrow cells and thymus grafts obtained from nonresponder parental A/J donors. These chimeras were then immunized with unconjugated GLT and analyzed for their capacities to develop GLT-specific antibody responses (31).

As summarized in figure 7, CAF<sub>1</sub> → CAF<sub>1</sub> and CAF<sub>1</sub> → BALB/c chimeras, both possessing CAF<sub>1</sub> thymus grafts, developed comparable GLT-specific antibody responses. In striking contrast, chimeras of CAF<sub>1</sub> → A/J type failed to produce detectable levels of anti-GLT antibody responses despite the fact that such chimeras possessed thymus grafts of CAF<sub>1</sub> origin. This did not reflect ineffective thymic reconstitution since such mice were able to develop KLH-specific antibody responses comparable to those displayed by corresponding CAF<sub>1</sub> → CAF<sub>1</sub> controls. On the other hand, chimeras constructed with lymphoid stem cells and thymus grafts of nonresponder A/J parental origin, which had differentiated in the environment of CAF<sub>1</sub> hosts, developed excellent GLT-specific antibody responses.

This experiment may offer significant insight on the mechanism(s) by which *Ir* genes determine the immune response phenotype. The most pertinent findings, displayed by the CAF<sub>1</sub> → A/J and A/J → CAF<sub>1</sub>, indicate quite clearly that elements in the corporeal environment may determine the *Ir* phenotype of a given individual. This conclusion follows from the finding that stem cells from phenotypic responder F<sub>1</sub> donors that mature in an environment containing homologous F<sub>1</sub> thymus display the nonresponder phenotype characteristic of the remainder of the corporeal environment provided by the nonresponder parental host. Reciprocally, stem cells

from phenotypic nonresponder parental donors differentiate in a corporeal environment provided largely by phenotypic responder F<sub>1</sub> elements, with the exception of the nonresponder parental thymus graft, to display phenotypic responsiveness to GLT. In other words, the *Ir* phenotypes in these circumstances reflect the permissiveness of the phenotypic responder F<sub>1</sub> environment, on the one hand, and the nonpermissiveness of the phenotypic nonresponder parental environment, on the other.

In order to ascertain to what extent lymphoid cells interact with other lymphoid as well as nonlymphoid elements in a chimeric environment, mixed parent chimeras were constructed by reconstituting lethally irradiated CAF<sub>1</sub> recipients with equivalent numbers of responder BALB/c and nonresponder A/J parental bone marrow cells. Six months after reconstitution, these double parent chimeras were primed with GLT in order to generate GLT-specific helper T cells. Spleens were removed from such mice, treated with BALB/c anti-A/J antibodies plus C to remove any cells of parental A/J type or of recipient F<sub>1</sub> type; the remaining "Chim.BALB/c" splenic cells were then tested for cooperative helper activity when co-transferred with DNP-primed B cells of CAF<sub>1</sub>, BALB/c, or A/J origin in response to secondary challenge with DNP-GLT. The cooperative phenotype of "Chim.BALB/c" helper T cells was compared with that of GLT-primed helper T cells taken from conventional CAF<sub>1</sub> donors co-transferred with portions of the same populations of DNP-primed B cells.

As shown in figure 8, GLT-primed conventional CAF<sub>1</sub> helper T cells displayed the normal cooperative phenotype of providing good helper activity for B cells of



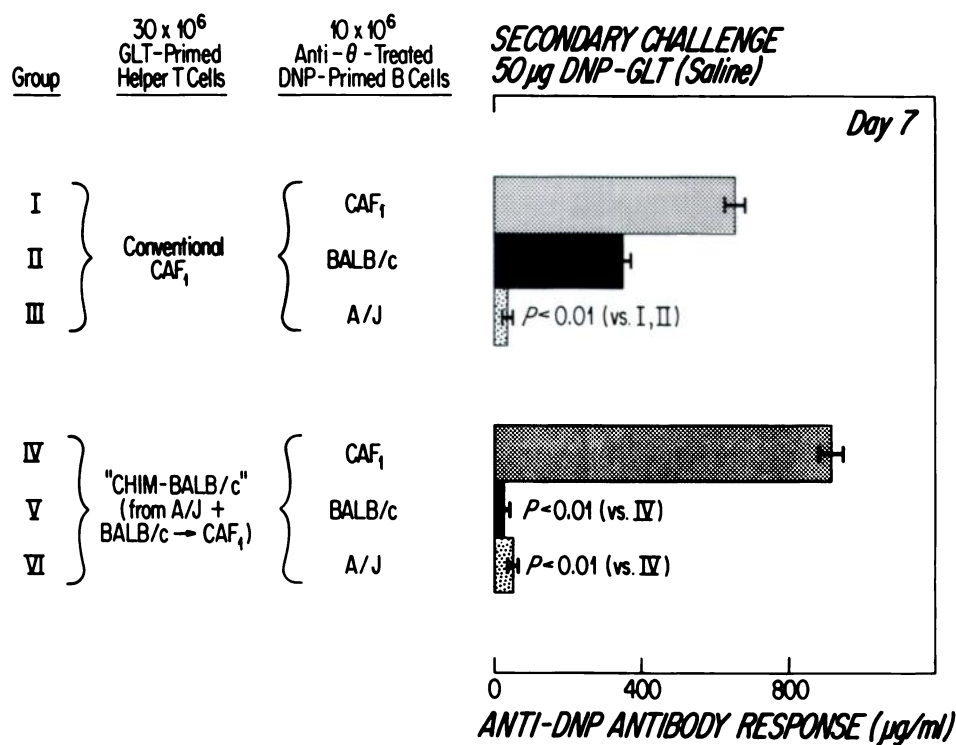


FIG. 8. Conventional CAF<sub>1</sub> mice and mixed parental A/J + BALB/c → CAF<sub>1</sub> chimeras were immunized with 50 µg of GLT in CFA followed by a single boost of GLT in saline three weeks thereafter. Spleen cells were obtained from such GLT-primed donor mice three to four weeks after the last saline boost to be used as helper cells. "Chim.BALB/c" spleen cells were obtained from such mixed parent → F<sub>1</sub> GLT-primed chimeras by treatment of the spleen cells in vitro with BALB/c anti-A/J antibodies + C. Then 30 × 10<sup>6</sup> GLT-primed conventional CAF<sub>1</sub> and "Chim.BALB/c" spleen cells were transferred together with T cell-depleted DNP-*Ascaris*-primed B cells from conventional CAF<sub>1</sub>, BALB/c, or A/J donor mice into 650 rad-irradiated CAF<sub>1</sub> recipient. All recipients were secondarily challenged with 50 µg of DNP-GLT in saline shortly after cell transfer. The data are presented as geometric mean levels of individual serum anti-DNP antibodies of groups of five mice each assayed on day 7 after cell transfer and secondary challenge. Horizontal lines represent standard errors and relevant *P* values depicting statistically significant differences between experimental and control groups are indicated beside the corresponding horizontal bars (GLT, L-glutamic acid, L-lysine, L-tyrosine; DNP, 2,4-dinitrophenyl). [Adapted from Katz et al. (31).]

responder F<sub>1</sub> and parental BALB/c origins, but not for B cells of nonresponder A/J origin (groups I to III). The cooperative phenotype of GLT-primed "Chim.BALB/c" helper T cells (groups IV to VI) provides a striking contrast. Such cells displayed excellent helper activity for DNP-primed partner B cells of CAF<sub>1</sub> type, but failed to engage in effective interactions with either responder BALB/c or nonresponder A/J partner B cells.

The failure of "Chim.BALB/c" T cells to provide GLT-specific helper activity for either BALB/c or A/J partner B cells in response to DNP-GLT is not a reflection of some general abnormality existing in such mixed parental chimeras. Nor do these data reflect some unusual properties of the partner B cells employed in this experiment with respect to their ability to interact with mixed parental chimera T cells. Thus, "Chim.BALB/c" helper T cells obtained from the same group of mixed parental → F<sub>1</sub> chimeras, but primed to KLH rather than to GLT, provided adequate helper T cell activity for aliquots of the same B cells as those used in figure 8 in secondary adoptive responses to DNP-KLH, and such helper activity was comparable with the two parental-type partner B cells as well as with F<sub>1</sub> B cells.

The preceding experiments clearly demonstrate three

critical points about the GLT system. First, the immune response phenotype of a given individual is not dictated by the nature of the thymic microenvironment; second, one or more elements in the extrathymic corporeal environment determine the permissiveness of immune response capability; and third, such elements are not derived primarily from the lymphoid stem cell pool, although lymphoid cells may interact with such corporeal elements in the determination of the immune response phenotype. It should be noted that no conclusion can be reached about the cellular locus at which the mechanism(s) determining *Ir* phenotype operates. For example, unresponsiveness to GLT displayed by CAF<sub>1</sub> → A/J chimeras could reflect a defect at the level of T cells, B cells, or macrophages, or any combination thereof, or at one or more of the requisite interactions between such cells. From the data in figure 8, it seems clear that nonpermissiveness can at least operate at the level of generation of a relevant subset of GLT-specific helper T cells, but again this could reflect a defect solely at the T cell level or at the level of T-macrophage and/or T-T cell interactions.

The interpretation we favor for such results is that responses against CI molecules can determine the ob-

served plasticity of the immune response phenotype. We further believe that such anti- $\alpha$ CI responses could readily explain the mechanism by which *Ir* genes function to determine the immune response phenotype; it is only necessary to assume that *Ir* genes encode CI molecules. If one considers that CI molecules are distinct entities from antigen-specific receptors, then the manner in which *Ir* genes exert such exquisite specificity for antigen in responses over which they display control depends on whether *Ir* genes encode molecules serving as: 1)  $\alpha$ CI receptors alone (at least in part); 2) target CI molecules themselves; 3) or both  $\alpha$ CI receptors and target CI molecules.

The above experiments are consistent with this notion. Thus, it is clear from these findings, as well as from our earlier studies in the *Ir-GLT* system (21) and from the work of others (6, 11, 35), that expression of *Ir* phenotype is not a reflection of whether or not a given *I* region gene or genes is absent from the genome of an individual. Nor, for that matter, is there any structural evidence to indicate whether *Ir* phenotype is associated with the expression of the relevant *Ir* gene product(s). Data pertinent to this point arises from the results obtained with GLT-primed responder BALB/c T cells that had differentiated in the same environment with nonresponder A/J parental cells (fig. 8). Such cells displayed a cooperating phenotype restricted for DNP-primed partner cells derived from conventional F<sub>1</sub> donors. The fact that differentiation and priming to GLT occurred in an environment where nonresponder parental lymphoid cells were also present obviously determined this unusual cooperating phenotype. We can think of no mechanism by which the presence of the cohabitating nonresponder A/J cells could have regulated expression of the relevant *I* region gene product by responder BALB/c cells that could account for functional deletion of the BALB/c-specific GLT-helper T cell subset.

On the other hand, one *can* explain this observation by a mechanism involving responses against self-specific CI molecules. As shown schematically in figure 6, if a nonresponder individual displays that phenotype because, for whatever reason, exposure to GLT evokes a very strong (and early) anti- $\alpha$ CI response, this would, in turn, blunt the development of any possible response to GLT. Exposure of an individual of a responder phenotype to GLT, conversely, would not elicit this type of anti- $\alpha$ CI response under normal circumstances, and hence the environment of such an individual would be permissive for responses to GLT.

Why, then, does cohabitation of responder cells with nonresponder cells result in nonpermissiveness for the population of responder self-specific cells? This could be explained by the fact that a state of mutual immunological tolerance exists between the cohabitating parental lymphoid cell populations in such chimeras (49). A consequence of such mutual tolerance is the emergence within each parental lymphoid cell population of inter-

acting subsets specific (in terms of CI molecules expressed and recognized) for the CI phenotype of the other parental population (15). Indeed, this point has been experimentally verified (47). It follows from this, therefore, that, for whatever reason GLT evokes a self-specific anti- $\alpha$ CI response in the nonresponder individual, the state of mutual tolerance in the mixed parental chimeric environment would allow GLT to evoke a comparable response against the CI molecules displayed by the corresponding responder-specific subset reactive to GLT that originates from the responder stem cell pool.

The fact that GLT-specific responder helper T cells capable of interacting with B cells of conventional F<sub>1</sub> donor origin were induced in such chimeras implies the existence of: 1) an F<sub>1</sub>-specific subset of T cells originating from the responder parental lymphoid population; and, likewise, 2) a subset of F<sub>1</sub>-specific partner B cells (distinct from the subsets corresponding in cooperating specificity to each of the two parental CI types) within the conventional CAF<sub>1</sub> partner B cell population. Moreover, the presence of F<sub>1</sub>-specific subsets of T and B cells within the mixed parental chimera explains why such chimeras produced circulating anti-GLT antibodies *in situ* (not shown) despite the absence of detectable GLT-specific helper T cells of BALB/c-specific cooperating potential. The existence of F<sub>1</sub>-specific cooperating helper T cells has been found recently in studies performed by Sproviera et al. (48) and from our own laboratory (30).

Inherent in our thinking about CI molecules and their relationship to the immune response phenotype is the notion that in individual *A* there is heterogeneity among CI<sub>A</sub> that we can denote CI<sub>A1</sub>, CI<sub>A2</sub>, CI<sub>A3</sub>–CI<sub>An</sub>; for each CI<sub>A</sub> specificity, there will be corresponding  $\alpha$ CI<sub>A</sub> receptors, i.e.,  $\alpha$ CI<sub>A1</sub>,  $\alpha$ CI<sub>A2</sub>,  $\alpha$ CI<sub>A3</sub>, and so on (15). Moreover, one can further assume that within each CI<sub>A</sub> subset are represented a given number of antigenic specificities in terms of distinct antigen-specific receptors. For example, let us assume that in a GLT nonresponder individual *A*, GLT-specific receptors may be affiliated on the same cells that belong to subset CI<sub>A1</sub>. Anything that prevents the reaction  $\alpha$ CI<sub>A1</sub> → CI<sub>A1</sub> could be manifested as specific unresponsiveness to GLT; for example, something analogous to an anti- $\alpha$ CI<sub>A1</sub> reaction, as suggested above.

If this is the case, then one might anticipate that after immunization of a nonresponder individual with GLT, which might provoke such an anti- $\alpha$ CI<sub>A1</sub> response, competence of that individual to mount responses against other antigenic determinants for which specific receptors are also affiliated with subset CI<sub>A1</sub> might be, at least transiently, compromised. This speculation is very difficult to test experimentally at the moment since the ability to detect such compromised responsiveness is hampered by the fact that a complex antigen, such as KLH, might display many major distinct antigenic determinants, receptors for each one of which could be affiliated with distinct CI<sub>A</sub> subsets. Thus, temporary functional silence of subset CI<sub>A1</sub> as a result of GLT

immunization could indeed compromise the response to one of the major determinants displayed by KLH, but since responses against the other major determinants would not be similarly compromised, one would hardly detect any defect in the response to KLH under these circumstances. The collective results presented in figures 7 and 8 are compatible with this interpretation, since where responses to GLT were absent, there was no compromise noticeable in the ability of such animals to respond to KLH.

### Conclusions

The firmness of our grasp in understanding genetic control of lymphocyte recognition and differentiation processes has increased substantially over the past five years. Thus, concepts that were hardly imagined a decade ago concerning the role of the MHC in controlling cell-cell communication and certain aspects of recognition in the immune system have enabled us to view normal cell differentiation and its control with a quite different perspective. From these new perspectives have also developed new ideas in terms of the mechanisms by which immunocompetent cells transact their necessary and usually unmistakable communication processes that, we now know, determine the overall response pattern developed by the individual in both health and disease. It is probable that future studies will broaden our understanding of the genetic basis of self-recognition and cell-cell interactions that depend upon such self-recognition processes. Moreover, we should develop a clearer picture of the mechanisms underlying adaptive differentiation and the boundaries of the plasticity of phenotypic self-recognition. Finally, isolation and characterization of the CI molecules involved in such processes should clarify many ambiguities and questions with respect to the general issue of MHC restrictions. In the broad sense, we might also expect that information obtained in studies such as these will be pertinent to furthering our basic knowledge of cell differentiation, receptor expression, self-recognition, and other developmental processes involved in multicellular organisms.

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