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Lymphocytes: 1979†

Sudhir Gupta, MD* and Robert A. Good, PhD, MD**

Rapid progress has been made in understanding the complexity of the immune system. The current status of lymphocyte subpopulations with regard to ontogenic development, their surface and intracellular markers, and functions in various immunologic phenomena has been reviewed. Het-

Lymphocytes play a critical role in immune responses. During the last twenty years rapid progress has been made in immunobiology to clarify the role of lymphocytes in immunological phenomena in animals and man. Studies in experimental animals and in experiments of nature in humans led to the discovery of two major lymphoid components of specific immunity (Fig. 1). Both lines of lymphoid cells derive from a common, primitive precursor stem cell. Committed lymphoid stem cells follow different routes of differentiation and maturation into T and B lymphocytes. By one route, they enter the thymus and under its inductive influences begin a sequence of differentiation stages to mature into immunoregulatory and effector T cells that perform functions of cell-mediated immunity. By an alternate route, stem cells are processed in fetal liver and later in bone marrow. These differentiate and mature into B cells, which on terminal differentiation become plasma cells highly specialized to synthesize and secrete specific antibody. These cells thus subserve the function of humoral or antibody-mediated immunity. During differentiation and maturation, lymphocytes develop surface receptors and differentiation antigens and many distinct functions. The

erogeneity of T lymphocytes as defined by receptors for immunoglobulin isotypes is discussed in detail. Various cell types and their products involved in immunoregulation are also presented.

studies of cell surface receptors and the development of methods for identifying and separating the several subpopulations have contributed greatly to understanding the lymphoid system and its functions as effector cells and as regulators and monitors of the immunologic adaptations.

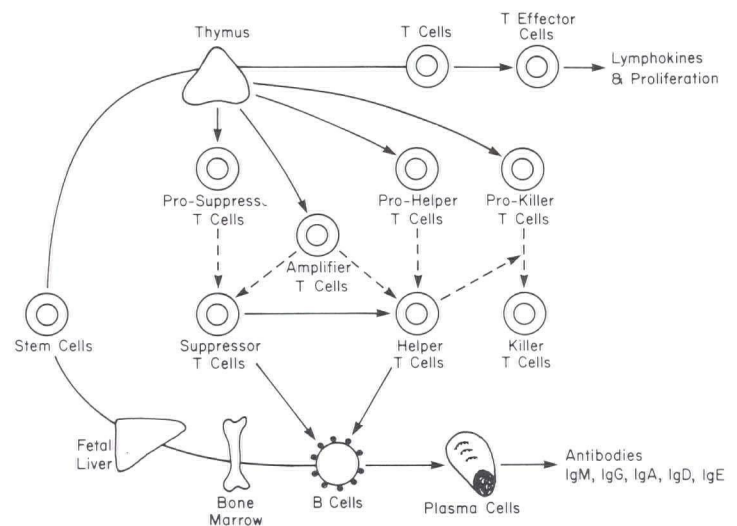


Fig. 1

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Ontogeny of T cell lineage

The thymus originates at about six weeks of gestation from the junction of the ectodermal and endodermal epithelium of the third and fourth pharyngeal pouches as a single layer of epithelial cells. In man, lymphocytes are demonstrable within this organ by the eighth and ninth week of gestation. The epithelial anlagen of the thymus appears at about the

10th embryonal day and has been invaded by mesenchymal cells by the 11th or 12th day. Animal studies indicate that precursors of lymphoid cells appear in the fetal liver and migrate to the thymic epithelium (1). In man at the 11-19th week of gestational age, thymus contains up to 65% cells that form rosettes with sheep RBC (SRBC) (2).^{*} Stites and associates (3) reported that almost all fetal thymocytes between 12-20 weeks of gestation react specifically with antifetal thymocyte serum, as demonstrated by indirect immunofluorescence technique. Antigen-binding cells are maximal in fetal thymus and represent a smaller population in the thymuses of children and young adults (4).

The proliferative response of fetal thymocytes to PHA (5) begins as early as the 14th week of gestation and increases until the 18th week, after which responses decline to adult levels (6). The appearance of proliferative responses of thymocytes to PHA correlates with the demarcation of thymus into cortex and medulla (7). Further morphological study suggests that thymic medulla contains these PHA-responsive thymocytes (6). PHA-responsive lymphocytes appear in the spleen two weeks after such cells appear in the thymus (8), but bone marrow and fetal liver cells fail to respond to PHA at this time (9).

The ontogeny of responding cells in one-way, mixed leukocyte culture reaction (MLR) has been studied by a number of investigators. Stites, et al (9) have reported the presence of MLR-responsive cells in fetal liver as early as 7.5 weeks of gestational age. Carr and associates (10) demonstrated no clear correlation between a strong response of lymphoid cells from fetal liver to allogeneic cells and failure to respond to PHA. MLR-responsive cells were also present in fetal spleen and thymus. These observations suggest that capacity for MLR may be distinct and more primitive than reactivity to PHA. PHA-induced, cell-mediated cytotoxicity is lacking from fetal thymuses (14-18 weeks gestational age) at a time when fetal bone marrow cells respond to PHA by developing cytotoxic potential against target chicken RBC. By contrast, at the same developmental stage these cells failed to proliferate in response to PHA (11). Peripheral blood and splenic lymphocytes from the same fetuses proliferated and became cytotoxic in response to PHA, while liver lymphoid cells failed to respond in either test.

***Abbreviations used in this paper:**

ADCC — antibody-dependent cellular cytotoxicity
 Con A — Concanavalin A
 EBV — Epstein-Barr virus
 ERFC — sheep RBC rosette forming cells
 GVHR — graft-versus-host reaction
 HTLA — human T lymphocyte antigen
 MIF — migration inhibition factor
 MLR — mixed leukocyte culture reaction
 MHC — major histocompatibility complex

DIFFERENTIATION RECEPTORS ON HUMAN T LYMPHOCYTES

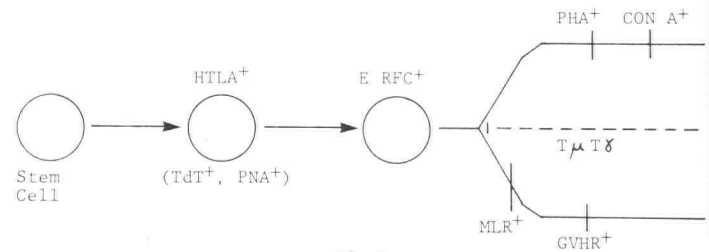


Fig. 2

The fetal lymphoid cells capable of producing graft versus host reaction (GVHR) are present in splenocytes from 13-23 week-old fetuses. No definitive information is available as to the earliest appearance of cells capable of influencing GVHR (12).

Touraine, et al (13,14) studied *in vitro* and *in vivo* expression of differentiation markers on cells of T cell lineage by incubating the bone marrow cells with thymic factors *in vitro* and by sequential study of patients with DiGeorge syndrome who had received thymic transplants. The scheme derived from these studies indicates a sequential and bifurcated development of T cells (Fig. 2). Hirano, et al (14a) have brought forward evidence to support this interpretation which uses definition of T lymphocyte subpopulations by antisera against T cell lines.

Receptors for peanut agglutinin and high terminal deoxynucleotidyl transferase (TdT) activity appear to be very early markers for identifying cells in the T cell lineage. However, these two receptors do not appear to be confined exclusively to cells of T cell lineage. The binding sites of peanut agglutinin, for example, are present on cells from Burkitt lymphoma (B cell lineage) and from acute myeloid leukemia (15). Similarly, high TdT activity has been reported in the malignant cells of patients with pre-B⁺ cell leukemia (16). Therefore, it is evident that these two markers are features of relatively immature cells of both lymphoid and nonlymphoid lineage. Among cells of the T cell lineage, they are present on pre-T or relatively immature T cells but are lacking from mature T cells. Our studies of T cell subsets obtained from various lymphoid organs, as identified by receptors for Ig, demonstrated that SRBC rosette-forming

MRBC — mouse red blood cells
 nk — natural killer
 PNA — peanut agglutinin
 PHA — phytohemagglutinin
 PWM — pokeweed mitogen
 SRBC — sheep red blood cells
 TdT — terminal deoxynucleotidyl transferase
 Tμ — T cells with receptors for IgM
 Tγ — T cells with receptors for IgG
 Tα — T cells with receptors for IgA

thymocytes lack receptors for IgM ($T\mu$), IgG ($T\gamma$), or IgA ($T\alpha$) receptors. These findings suggest that Ig receptors on T cells develop after receptors for SRBC have appeared (17-19).

Ontogeny of B cell lineage

The ontogeny of mammalian B cells has been most extensively studied in mice. The earliest identifiable cell is a large cell with intracytoplasmic IgM but without surface IgM that appears in the liver of 12-13 day-old mouse fetus (20-22). B cells with surface IgM first appear in the fetal liver around 16-17 days of gestation; they have now also been found in rabbits and human fetal liver and in the bursa of Fabricius of the chick embryo (23,24). In man, pre-B cells were present in the fetal liver of a 5-7 week fetus which lacked any surface IgM + B lymphocytes (24).

According to morphologic and kinetic studies, pre-B cells appear divisible into two classes. Large pre-B cells (17 μ) have a deeply indented or convoluted nucleus and represent a rapidly dividing cell population. Small pre-B cells (8 μ) are morphologically similar to surface IgM + B cells but lack surface IgM and divide slowly. In the human, mouse, and rabbit, pre-B cells are found predominantly in the fetal liver and bone marrow but may be present in lower frequencies in fetal spleen and lymph nodes. The study of pre-B cell leukemias (16) demonstrated that Ia antigen was present on pre-B cells. Up to the 13th week of gestation, they outnumber surface IgM + B cells in fetal liver. B lymphocytes bearing only surface IgM develop earlier than do cells bearing other Ig classes (25,26), e.g., those that express surface IgD, IgG or IgA. Initially, IgD appears exclusively on immature B cells which also bear surface IgM. The ratio of lymphocytes with surface IgM alone to those bearing both IgM and IgD probably serves as a good index of maturity of a B cell population. The position in the sequence of appearance of lymphocytes with surface IgE in human fetuses has not yet been elucidated (Fig. 3). However, a study of hooded Lister strain rats (27) demonstrates that surface, IgE-bearing B lymphocytes are derived from B cells with surface IgM. Observations in rat, mouse, and now in human, concur with the view that precursors for each immunoglobulin class of B cells are derived directly from separate surface IgM-bearing cell lines (Fig. 3). While Fc receptor-positive lymphoid cells are found in human fetal liver as frequently as surface IgM + B cells (26), large pre-B cells do not bear Fc receptors. Complement receptor (C_3) bearing lymphoid cells are present in fetal liver in proportions much smaller than those for cells with surface IgM and/or Fc receptors and are lacking in the early gestational period when the other two receptors are present. The receptor for mouse RBC (MRBC) is present as early as surface IgM and perhaps is present on pre-B cells. A scheme of sequential development of receptors on cells of B cell lineage is shown in Fig. 4.

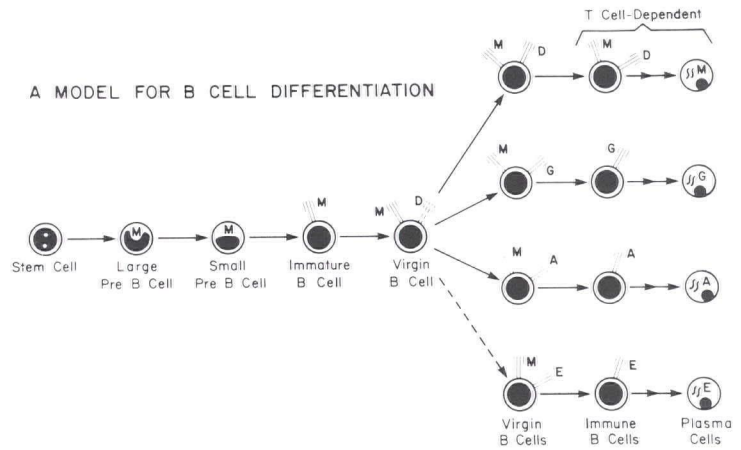


Fig. 3

SEQUENTIAL DEVELOPMENT OF RECEPTORS ON B CELLS

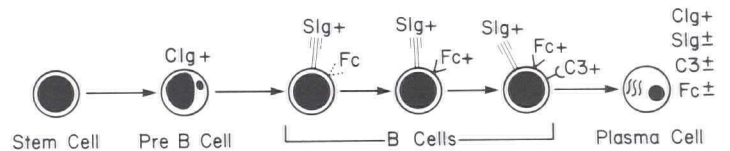


Fig. 4

Markers of human lymphoid cells

During differentiation and maturation, lymphoid cells display a variety of cell surface markers. Based on surface marker analysis, they have been classified into three major subpopulations: T, B, and so-called third population or null cells (Table I).

Lineage of B lymphocytes

Pre-B lymphocytes of mouse and man are characterized by the presence of intracytoplasmic IgM without surface IgM. They are present in very small numbers (~1%) in the bone marrow of young adults but are absent from the peripheral blood. Malignant proliferations of the pre-B cell population have now been reported (16). Although indirect evidence suggests that receptors for MRBC are present on pre-B cells, direct evidence is lacking. Receptors for MRBC are also present on a subset of mature B cells (28-30). Studies of ontogeny as well as of blood from patients with lymphoproliferative disorders suggest that MRBC receptors appear on B cells at an early stage of maturation but not on B cells and plasma cells that actively secrete Ig.

B lymphocytes are identified by the presence of surface Ig that is the product of the cell carrying Ig on its surface. Approximately 10^5 receptor Ig molecules are present on a single B cell and approximately 10-14% of peripheral blood lymphocytes express such surface Ig. Surface IgM-bearing lymphocytes comprise most of the circulating B lymphocytes, whereas only a minor population of B lymphocytes in the circulating blood have surface IgG, IgA, or IgE. Among IgG subclasses, IgG₂ appears to be dominant on the surface

TABLE I
Markers of Human Lymphoid Cell Subpopulations

B Cell Lineage	
Stem Cell	?Alloantigen
Pre-B Cells	Intracytoplasmic IgM ?MRBC receptors "Ia like" antigen
B Cells	Surface immunoglobulin MRBC receptors Epstein-Barr Virus receptor IgG Fc receptors IgM Fc receptors IgA Fc receptors Complement component receptors B cell alloantigens ("Ia like")
T Cell Lineage	
Stem Cell	?Alloantigen
Pre-T Cells	Terminal deoxynucleotidyl transferase (TdT) HTLA Peanut agglutinin
T Cells	HTLA SRBC receptors Acid α -naphthyl acetic esterase IgG Fc receptors (T_γ) IgM Fc receptors (T_μ) IgA Fc receptors (T_α) T_H2 antigen Histamine receptors
Third Population "Unclassified" Lymphoid Cells	IgG Fc receptors Complement component receptors Receptors for EBV "Ia like" antigen

of B lymphocytes (33). A restriction to Ig class or IgG subclass and to Gm antigens has been demonstrated on lymphocyte membrane (33). However, both IgM and IgD can be regularly demonstrated on the same cell (34,35). Using idiotypic antisera, it has been shown that IgD and IgM on the same cell have identical hypervariable regions and therefore appear to employ the same gene to code for their variable regions of the Ig (35). IgD is the most susceptible to proteolysis, but its precise role still remains to be defined. Bourgois and associates (36) have suggested that it may play a regulatory role by eliciting an anti-idiotypic response. Immature B cells possess surface IgM only; mature B cells possess both IgM and IgD. Following activation by antigen or mitogen, IgD is lost. Because immature B cells are very susceptible to tolerance induction, we suggest that IgD prevents tolerance induction and facilitates the positive immunological adaptation.

Receptors for IgG Fc are present on cells from all hematopoietic cell lineages. They are also present on B cells, on lymphoid cells of the "third" population, and on a subpopulation of T cells. Fc receptors on B cells and on third population cells can be distinguished from each other (37) because the former have a lower affinity for complexed IgG than the latter. The concentration of soluble immune complexes required to detect binding to the Fc receptors of third

population cells is 100 times fewer than that required to detect B cell Fc receptors. Third population cells are active in antibody-dependent (ADCC) and natural cytotoxicity (nk), whereas B cells do not mediate such cytotoxicities (38). Fc receptors on B lymphocytes have a close spatial association with "Ia like" antigens; however, no such association has been reported on the surface of cells of the third population. B cell Fc receptors via this association may play a significant role in the regulation of immune response.

In recent years, an interrelationship between components of the complement system and cells of the immune system has been recognized. B lymphocytes express membrane receptors for C_3b , C_3d , C_4b , C_1q , C_8 , and C_2 inhibitor (39-42). Factor B activity is associated with peripheral B cells, cells from chronic lymphocytic leukemia (CLL), and Raji cells of Burkitt's lymphoma. Factor B is present intracellularly and not on the surface of B cells. Thymocytes and erythrocytes lack factor B activity. Since lymphocyte factor B is distinct from C_3b receptor, serum factor B cannot be regarded as fluid phase receptor for C_3b . Receptors for C_3 are trypsin sensitive and are present on most but not all B lymphocytes. Approximately 6000 C_3 molecules are required for maximal binding to a lymphocyte. C_3b and C_3d receptors, which appear to be serologically distinct from each other, cap independently on the lymphocyte surface. The C_4b receptor is present on all of the same cell types which have C_3d receptors, except for a few lymphoblastoid lines with receptors for C_3b only (41,42). The biological function of the C_4b and C_3 receptors appears similar. Receptors for C_1q are present on both T and B lymphocytes. This receptor is sensitive to treatment with trypsin but resists treatment with neuraminidase or DNase. Although the biological significance of C_1q receptors is not known at present, it has been proposed that they bind to immune complexes, and this binding activates a complement sequence that in turn can result in change of cellular activity. C_3 receptors appear to play a part in induction of thymus-dependent antibody production. Complement receptors may participate in the initial events taking place on the lymphocyte surface during antigenic stimulation that leads to antibody production. They may also contribute to the follicular localization of antigen (45) and the antibody-dependent mechanism that brings antigenic substances to certain areas in lymphoid organs, presumably for the induction of immune response (46,47).

Epstein-Barr Virus (EBV) is a lymphotropic virus for man and for New World monkeys. Jondal and Klein (48) demonstrated the presence of EBV receptor on some B cells of long-term, culture-maintained lymphoid cell lines, although it is lacking from T cells. Greaves, et al (49) also reported that EBC receptors are present on virtually all B cells but not on T cells and thymocytes.

In addition to the classical, serologically defined antigens of the major histocompatibility system (HLA-A, B, C), the HLA-gene complex also includes determinants which regulate the ability of cells to stimulate in MLC. In man, during studies of certain alloantisera that selectively inhibited MLC, antibodies were present which exhibited a striking specificity for alloantigens present on B cells but not on T lymphocytes (50). These antigens are distinct from HLA determinants and are designated as HL-B or "Ia like" antigens. At least two genetic loci in MHC appear to be responsible for the synthesis of these polymorphic allotypic antigens. It has now become clear that "Ia like" antigens are not restricted to B lymphocytes but are also present on monocytes, precursors of granulocytes, and even on erythrocytes (51,52), sperm cells, Langerhan cells of skin, and a subpopulation of T cells (53), as well as the third population of lymphoid cells.

Lineage of T lymphocytes

It is likely that stem cells that have been committed to differentiate along the T cell lineage bear a definitive alloantigen, although this antigen remains to be defined. As discussed in the section of ontogeny of T cells, pre-T cells, relatively immature T cells and thymocytes have receptors for peanut agglutinin and possess high activity of TdT. Another antigen, the human T lymphocyte antigen (HTLA), is present on human thymocytes and also on both relatively immature and fully mature T cells (13,54). Receptors for SRBC are present on thymocytes and peripheral blood T cells and absent from other cells of hematopoietic lineage. The formation of rosettes between T lymphocytes and SRBC is very susceptible to technical variations which influence both the proportions of rosette-forming cells and the strength of SRBC binding to lymphocyte. While the biochemical nature of the receptor on T lymphocytes for SRBC is poorly understood, it is probably a glycoprotein synthesized within hours after enzymatic removal from the T lymphocytes by a process requiring protein synthesis but not cell replication.

Human peripheral blood T cells have receptors for Helix Promatia A hemagglutinin (HP), but it is also present on a subpopulation of B lymphocytes (55,56). There is evidence to suggest that the HP receptor on the B cells is also present on relatively immature cells (57).

Alpha-naphthyl acetate esterase (ANAE) activity has been used as an enzymatic marker to identify monocytes, but it can also be demonstrated in most T cells (58,59). However, the staining pattern is quite distinct from that seen on monocytes. Whereas ANAE-stained T cells reveal a discrete spotted pattern, monocytes reveal a homogeneous rim pattern. Knowles, et al (60) reported comparable proportions of ANAE positive and SRBC binding cells in the

peripheral blood. However, discrepancies between these two markers were observed in thymus and spleen, where less ANAE activity was recorded in thymocytes than in SRBC rosette forming cells. Further, in the spleen ANAE activity was demonstrated in non-T cell fractions.

Human T lymphocytes demonstrate an extraordinary degree of heterogeneity, as evidenced by the presence of differentiating antigens (TH1 and TH2) as well as by receptors for immunoglobulins that exist on relatively distinct subsets of human T lymphocytes (61-69). TH1 and TH2 phenotypes have been defined either by heterologous anti-T cell antisera which have been absorbed on autologous B cell lines (for TH1) or by absorption with leukemic cells from a patient with T cell type CLL (for TH2). TH1+ cells respond by proliferation to mitogens, PHA, Con A, and allogeneic cells and produce migration inhibition factor (MIF). TH1+ cells do not respond by proliferation to soluble antigen but have allogeneic killer activity. TH2+ cells also respond poorly by proliferation to soluble antigens. This population appears to mediate a powerful killer activity in cell-mediated lymphocytes. Hirano, et al (14a) have identified surface antigen on human suppressor T cells by using an antiserum against human T leukemic cell line HSB absorbed with homologous B cell line. While this antiserum also identifies a population of T cells that respond in MLC, it has no effect on helper T cells or mitogenic response to PHA and Con A.

Recently, Strelkauskas, et al (70,71) have demonstrated that sera from patients with juvenile rheumatoid arthritis (JRA) contain antibodies that are directed against a subset of T lymphocytes. JRA + T cells proliferate in response to Con A but not to PHA and when isolated from normal individuals inhibit immunoglobulin biosynthesis of B cells in plaque forming cell (PFC) assay. In contrast, JRA negative T cells enhanced immunoglobulin production by B cells. These studies clearly demonstrate the presence of antissuppressor T cell antibodies in the sera of patients with JRA. It is evident that the serum from patients with autoimmune disease may provide readily available reagents for further dissection of functionally distinct subpopulations of human T cells.

Human T lymphocytes have also been shown to possess receptors for IgM ($T\mu$), IgG ($T\gamma$), or IgA ($T\alpha$) (63-69) which can be identified and enumerated by rosette-technique using OxRBC-IgM, IgG, or OxRBC-TNP-IgA complexes. The receptor for IgM on $T\mu$ cells has specificity for the Fc portion of the IgM molecule and appears to bind to the T cell receptors by its CH_4 domain (72). Both pentameric and monomeric IgM could bind to IgM receptors on $T\mu$ cells (73). It is likely that IgG receptor on $T\gamma$ cells binds to molecules of each class of IgG. Similarly, $T\alpha$ cells appear to bind to both IgA1 and IgA2 subclasses of the IgA molecules (unpublished observation). $T\mu$ and $T\gamma$ cells have been

extensively studied for the morphological and functional characteristics that will be detailed below.

The 'third' population of lymphoid cells ('null' cells)

Non-T and non-B cells with lymphoid morphology represent a somewhat heterogeneous population of cells. Almost all have high affinity receptors for IgG Fc and approximately two thirds appear to have receptors for EBV and "Ia like" antigens. A very small population also have receptors for C₃. Recently, it has become clear that under appropriate experimental conditions these cells can differentiate into mature erythrocytes, granulocytes, T lymphocytes, or B lymphocytes (74-76). They appear to be heterogeneous and are comprised of progenitor cells committed for various hematopoietic cell lineage; we prefer to call them "unclassified cells."

Functions of lymphocyte subpopulations

Over the past decade progress has been made in the resolution of the multiple genes comprising the major histocompatibility complex or super gene of the mouse (MHC), called the H-2T1a gene complex. The most significant advances in defining the MHC relate to its functional role. It has been established that the gene products of the *K* and *D* region are primary targets for the cell-mediated cytotoxicity reactions in allograft rejection. Recent studies have shown that the most effective cytotoxic reactions against virus infected or chemically modified target cells require *H-2K* and *I* or *H-2D* identity between the sensitizing cells and the target cell. These findings indicate that these gene products play a direct role in recognition of the target by the effector cell (77,78). At present, it seems certain that this finding reflects the fundamental role of these products in presenting foreign membrane-bound antigens and in mediating an interaction between killer and target cells in immune reactions.

Pilarski (79) has demonstrated that cytotoxic T cells are present as pro-killer cells among the thymocytes of mice. For thymocytes to generate cytotoxic cells, helper T cells appear to be imperative. These helper T cells have some of the same functional properties as T cells, which help B cells to differentiate into antibody-producing plasma cells. The helper cells are antigen-specific, theta bearing, radio resistant, and appear predominantly in spleen. In unprimed situations they do not display strain specificity. Although the mechanism by which helper cells generate killer cells from pro-killer thymocytes is not known, two possibilities must be entertained: 1) helper cells may act on the precursors of T killer cells probably with the help of an accessory cell; or 2) sequential interactions occur in which the helpers act indirectly on the killer precursors by first inducing a pro-helper cell among the thymocyte-derived population to expand clonally and to provide help for the killer precursors also present in thymus. It is of interest that the helper cells

that have been irradiated function well in this regard. The genes of the *I* region in mice have been shown to be associated with immunoregulatory activities.

Firm evidence in mice (80) and indirect but convincing evidence in humans (81) indicates that help and suppression are mediated by distinct subsets of T cells each genetically committed to its particular function. In mice, suppressor and helper T cells can be identified by Ly alloantigens present on their surface membranes. In man, these subsets of T lymphocytes have been identified by the presence of different receptors for IgM or IgG on their surface (81). Immunoregulatory T cells may exist as inactive precursors, the pro-helper and pro-suppressor cells (82,83). In human leukemic proliferation, malignant deviation of helper, suppressor, and of pro-suppressor T cells has recently been described (84). These precursors must interact with another set of T cells, the amplifier T cells, before maturing into fully functioning helper or suppressor cells. Immunoregulatory suppressor functions may be antigen-specific or non-specific. The specificity can be directed to either hapten or carrier molecules. In certain systems the effect of suppressor cells on target cells is genetically restricted. Suppressor cells may regulate the production of all immunoglobulin classes (85), a single class of immunoglobulin (86), a single immunoglobulin allotype (87), or a single idotype (88). In some systems, suppressor cells affect target cells in a genetically restricted fashion; in other systems, no genetic barrier to suppressor cell activity is seen.

In mice it is now possible to define five subregions of the I segment of the H2 complex: I-A, I-B, I-J, I-E, and I-C. I-A subregion codes structural information for a soluble helper T cell factor (83), and other I-subregions participate in suppressor function. Suppressor T cells capable of suppressing MLC release a factor that inhibits the reactivity of responding cells sharing the same I-C subregion genotype (89). The I-J subregion appears to encode genetic information for surface markers found on suppressor T cells and also for the determinants of soluble suppressor factors derived from such cells (90-92). I-J associated suppressor factors are antigen specific and mediate profound suppression of both specific cellular and antibody-mediated responses. In man the genetic control of immunoregulatory functions is largely unexplored. However, Engleman and McDevitt (93) have reported that HLA-D associated gene products can serve as structures permitting T cell subsets to recognize appropriate target cells for exertion of suppressor activity.

Advances in the technology of separating and purifying distinct subpopulations of human lymphocytes have permitted the analysis of the linkage of various functions to T, B, and 'third' (unclassified) populations of lymphoid cells in man (Table II). Discussion of these functions has recently

TABLE II
Functions of Human Lymphocyte Subpopulations

Properties	T Cells	B Cells	"Unclassified" Lymphoid Cells
Proliferative Responses			
Antigen	+	-	-
Allogeneic cells (R)	+	-	-
Allogeneic cells (S)	+S*	+	+
Epstein-Barr Virus	-	+	+
Cytotoxic Responses			
Cell mediated lympholysis	+	-	?
Antibody-dependent cytotoxicity	+S*	-	+
Natural killer activity	+S*	-	+
Mitogen induced cytotoxicity	+	+	+
Lymphokine Production			
Leukocyte migration inhibition factor	+	+	+
Macrophage migration inhibition factor	+	+	+
Blastogenic factor	+	+	+
Lymphotoxin (α)	+	+	+
Interferon	+	+	?
Antibody Synthesis	-	+	+
Miscellaneous			
Precursors of B Cells	-	-	+
Precursors of T cells	-	-	+
Precursors of Granulocytes	-	-	+
Precursors of Erythrocytes	-	-	+

R = Responder

S = Stimulator

S* = Subpopulation

been reviewed in detail (76,94,95). Cells of all three populations respond by proliferation to mitogens (PHA, Con A and PWM), but the degree of proliferative response differs. While proliferative responses to soluble antigens and allogeneic cells in MLC are almost exclusively attributable to T lymphocytes, all three populations produce migration inhibition factors in response to soluble antigens to which the host has been sensitized. Mitogenic factor, interferon and lymphotoxin are all produced by each of the major subsets of lymphocytes. Only T cells have cytotoxic potential in cell-mediated lympholysis. Antibody-dependent cytotoxicity (ADCC) and spontaneous cytotoxicity (SMCLC) are mediated by both the 'unclassified' population and by a subset of T cells with IgG ($T\gamma$) receptors.

T cell subpopulations identified by the receptors for immunoglobulin

During the sojourn of thymocytes from thymus to the peripheral blood and the peripheral tissues, mature T cells develop the capacity to express receptors for IgM ($T\mu$), IgG ($T\gamma$), or IgA ($T\alpha$). In addition, a small proportion of T cells in

the peripheral blood possess receptors for both IgM and IgG, 'double' receptor, or lack either receptor altogether ($T\phi$).

$T\mu$ and $T\gamma$ cells have been extensively studied for morphological and functional characteristics (96-99) (Table III). They have distinct morphologic characteristics by both light and electron microscopy (100). $T\mu$ cells are smaller than $T\gamma$ cells with higher ratio of nucleus to cytoplasm. They also have smoother surfaces, a less well developed Golgi apparatus, scanty rough endoplasmic reticulum, and paucity of azurophilic granules. By contrast, $T\gamma$ cells are equipped with long microvilli, cytoplasm rich in mitochondria, abundant Golgi, and a well developed, rough endoplasmic reticulum. The cytoplasm contains many azurophilic granules that are PAS negative and Alcian blue negative. The RNA content of $T\mu$ and $T\gamma$ cells, as measured by flow cytometric analyses, is quite different, as $T\mu$ cells contain approximately twice the amount of RNA as $T\gamma$ cells (101).

Table IV shows the tissue distribution of T cell subsets in various lymphoid compartments (17, 18). Peripheral blood, cord blood and tonsils have comparable proportions of $T\mu$

TABLE III
Characteristics of Human T Cell Subpopulations

Characteristics	T μ Cells	T γ Cells
B cell differentiation	↑s	↓s
T cell proliferation	?	↓s
Natural Killer activity	-	+s
Antibody-dependent cytotoxicity	-	+s
Blastogenic responses to:		
Phytohemagglutinin	+	-
Concanavalin A	+	+
Allogeneic cells	+	+
Mediator Production:		
Migration inhibition factor (LMIF)	+	-
Interferon	+	+
Adherence to nylon, wool or plastic	-	+s
Locomotor properties	+	-
Histamine receptors	-	+s
Thymopoietin	-	↑
Corticosteroids	-	+
Irradiation	-	+
Sensitivity to: Pronase	+	±
Trypsin	+	-
Neuraminidase	+	-
RNA content	high	low
Morphology: Nuclear:cytoplasmic ratio	high	low
Golgi body	rich	few
Rough endoplasmic reticulum	abundant	scanty
Cytoplasmic granules	+	-
α -naphthyl acetate esterase	+	-

s = subpopulation

↑ = enhancement

↓ = inhibition

and T γ cells, while lymph nodes contain low proportions of T α cells and no T γ cells. The spleen is rich in T γ cells and contains low proportions of both T μ and T α cells. Thymocytes, in general, lack all T μ , T γ and T α phenotypes.

These figures suggested to us that T cell subsets might have different locomotor properties. Using modified Boyden chamber assay and bovine casein as a chemoattractant, we demonstrated that T μ cells migrate well into the filters, whereas T γ cells either migrated poorly or did not migrate at all (102). Further, when T cell subpopulations are isolated by density gradient electrophoresis according to their surface charge, T μ cells were enriched in the high mobility fractions and T γ cells in low mobility fractions (103).

T cell subsets demonstrate differential sensitivities to corticosteroid, irradiation, and the inductive influence of thymopoietin (104). T γ cells are radiosensitive, while T μ cells are radioresistant. T γ cells are suppressed in vitro by high doses of corticosteroids, but this susceptibility varies among different normal individuals, and the concentrations of

corticosteroids required for the effect cannot be reached during therapy in patients. T μ cells, by contrast, are totally resistant to the effect of any reasonable concentration of corticosteroids. Thymopoietin pentapeptide increases the proportion of T γ cells after incubation with peripheral blood T cells in vitro, which suggests that a population of precursor T γ cells exists in the peripheral blood that can be induced to differentiate to T γ cells.

Recently, we have analyzed the presence of receptors for histamine on T cell subsets. Using histamine-coated sepharose bead columns, we demonstrated that histamine receptors are present as a subset of T γ cells but almost completely absent from T μ cells (105).

Moretta, et al (106) examined the proliferative responses of T μ and T γ cells to PHA and Con A. T μ and T γ cells responded similarly to different concentrations of Con A, both in their peak proliferative response and in the kinetics of their response. T γ cells, however, did not respond to PHA. In contrast, T μ cells responded with the same peak proliferative response as that of unseparated T cells but required much higher concentrations of PHA to achieve that response. In our own study of proliferative responses in one way MLC, both the T μ and T γ populations responded similarly to allogeneic stimulator cells.

T μ and T ϕ cells produced leukocyte migration inhibition factor (LMIF) in response to PHA or Con A in amounts comparable to that produced by unfractionated T cells (107). In contrast, T γ cells either failed to produce LMIF or produced less LMIF than that of T μ cells.

Moretta, et al (81) have also examined the functional properties of T μ and T γ cells in immunoregulation of B cell differentiation to plasma cells following stimulation with pokeweed mitogen (PWM). When T μ cells were added to B cells and cultured in the presence of PWM, differentiation of B cells to plasma cells occurred. This reaction indicated that T μ cells may act as helper T cells. In contrast, when T γ cells were added to B cells along with PWM, no differentiation to plasma cells was observed, suggesting that T γ cells are not helper T cells. However, when T γ cells were added to cultures of B cells, T μ cells and PWM, no differentiation of B cells to plasma cells was observed. These experiments led these investigators to conclude that T μ cells are helpers and T γ cells are suppressors. Later, it became clear that neither of these populations in their entirety are helpers or suppressors. Hayward, et al (108) demonstrated that T μ cells after activation with Con A could suppress differentiation of B cells to plasma cells. In another study, such an effect was associated with change in surface phenotype (T μ → T γ) of a subpopulation of T μ cells (109). These experiments indicate that the T μ cell population is heterogeneous. Similarly, we have demonstrated that it is only a subpopulation of T γ

TABLE IV
Distribution of T Cell Subsets

Lymphoid Compartment	T μ (%) Mean \pm SD	T γ (%) Mean \pm SD	T α (%)	Mean \pm SD
Peripheral Blood (60)	52.2 \pm 10.8	10.4 \pm 4.0	(15)	8.2 \pm 4.6
Cord Blood (24)	46.0 \pm 9.8	22.2 \pm 6.0	(4)	4.2 \pm 2.2
Tonsils (8)	54.0 \pm 15.0	6.4 \pm 4.0	(6)	9.4 \pm 3.2
Bone Marrow (4)	55.0 \pm 23.8	8.5 \pm 4.4		Not Done
Thymus (8)	2.1 \pm 3.5	3.1 \pm 3.2	(2)	0.0
Spleen (4)	10.4 \pm 2.4	48.0 \pm 10.2	(4)	2.4 \pm 1.2
Lymph Nodes (8)	49.0 \pm 6.0	1.6 \pm 2.0	(4)	2.2 \pm 1.6

() = number of specimens examined

cells (histamine receptor positive) that mediates suppression of either T or B cell responses (105).

Recently, we have reported (110) that both T and non-T cells can mediate ADCC and natural killer (nk) activity. Among the T cells, both ADCC and nk activity are present in T γ cells and absent from T μ cells. Histamine receptor negative T γ cells appear to participate in the killer activity (unpublished observations). Clear but indirect evidence both in animals and humans suggests that the T cell mediating ADCC activity is distinct from that mediating nk.

The analysis of these two subpopulations, both for their numbers and proportions in the peripheral blood and lymphoid organs of patients with primary and secondary immunodeficiency disorders, demonstrates that an imbalance among two subsets and maldistribution among lymphoid compartments are frequently encountered in primary and secondary immunodeficiency disorders (111-116).

Recently, it has been demonstrated that the T cell subsets, particularly T γ cells, undergo changes in their surface phenotypes and show modulation of their functions as well (110,117), although these changes occur only when insoluble immune complexes (OxRBC-IgG) are used to isolate

them from non-T γ cells. It is unclear whether these changes occur in vivo in pathologic states associated with circulating soluble immune complexes. If this were the case, analysis of T cell subsets employing the use of Fc receptors would be less useful. However, when we used sera from patients with connective tissue diseases who have high levels of circulating soluble immune complexes, we could not observe a shift of phenotype or modulation of their functions, e.g., ADCC (unpublished observation). Therefore, the influence of soluble immune complexes in vitro does not correlate with that influence in vivo.

Summary

From the accumulating data, it is evident that T lymphocytes are at least as heterogenous as B lymphocytes. We can now visualize the immune system as having not only two arms but also hands and fingers which work together in a splendid, highly coordinated fashion. Furthermore, it appears likely that several more populations of T and B lymphocytes will be discovered in the future. It will be important to define the function(s) of each new subpopulation to determine how its functions integrate with the other subpopulations before immune systems can be understood as a single functional unit.

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