The presence of immunoglobulin receptors on thymus-derived (T) cells has been extremely difficult to document and is still a matter of considerable controversy. Most of the demonstrations have involved inhibition of known T cell functions with anti-Ig antisera (1–3). With one notable exception, experiments concerned with the direct demonstration of immunoglobulin on T cells all indicate that if there is any immunoglobulin associated with T cells, it is extremely small, i.e., two to three orders of magnitude lower than that present on bone marrow-derived (B) cells (in the range of a few hundred molecules per cell) (4, 5). In contrast to this, Marchalonis et al. have claimed that there are similar amounts of Ig associated with T and B cells (6).

The purpose of the present paper was twofold: (a) to investigate the possibility that T cells had relatively large amounts of Ig that went previously undetected due to being “buried” in the membrane, and (b) to describe the capacity of certain theta-positive tumors to passively adsorb significant quantities of IgG onto their surfaces.

Materials and Methods

Source of Cells.—Thymic and splenic lymphocytes were obtained from normal C57B1, BDF1, and AKR mice. Spontaneous thymomas that arose in AKR mice were maintained by serial passage. The DBA/2 lymphoma L-5178-Y (7) was maintained by serial passage either in vivo in ascitic form or in vitro in Dulbecco’s modified Eagle’s medium supplemented with asparagine, folic acid, 5% trypticase soy broth, and 10% fetal calf serum.

Anti-Immunoglobulin-Coated Plastic Bead Columns.—In order to deplete populations of surface Ig-positive cells as measured by the immunofluorescence assay, lymphoid cells were passed through Degasan bead columns which were previously coated with the IgG fraction of rabbit anti-mouse Ig antisera. The detailed procedure employed to coat the columns and elute the lymphoid cells is described elsewhere (8).

Quantitation of Immunoglobulins Associated with Mouse Lymphocytes.—Quantitation of immunoglobulins was performed on viable and disrupted cells. Disruption was accomplished by (a) repeated freeze-thawing of lymphocytes, (b) treatment with the nonionic detergent Nonidet P-40 (NP40; Shell Oil Co., New York) at a final concentration of 0.5% for 10 min at room temperature, and (c) treatment with 9 M urea-1.5 M acetic acid for 2 hr at 37°C and 16 hr at room temperature or at 37°C for 30 min (6). The supernatants of the treated cells were

* This work was supported by U.S. Public Health Service Grant AI-09758 and by American Heart Association Grant 70-749.
exhaustively dialyzed against phosphate-buffered saline. The quantitation of immunoglobulins on the intact cells and the disrupted cells was performed as previously described (4).

Lactoperoxidase-Catalyzed Labeling of Lymphocytes and Immunoprecipitation.—The iodination of lymphocytes was performed as described by Vitteta et al. (5). Cell lysates were prepared by treatment of the washed cells with 0.5% NP40 or with 9 M urea-1.5 M acetic acid as detailed above. Specific precipitation of radiiodinated Ig from the cell lysates was done by addition of 30 μg of carrier mouse Ig to 0.5 ml of lysate followed by the appropriate quantity of rabbit anti-mouse Ig. Control precipitations were made with chicken IgG or keyhole limpet hemocyanin and their respective antisera. The immune precipitates were dissolved in 0.5 M tris(hydroxymethyl)aminomethane buffer, pH 8.4, containing 1% sodium dodecyl sulfate (SDS) and 8 M urea, reduced and alkylated, and electrophoresed on 5% polyacrylamide gels which contained 0.1% SDS, 0.5 M urea.

| TABLE I |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Intact | Method of disruption | NP40 | Freeze-thaw | Urea-acetic acid |
| | | μ | μ | μ | μ |
| Spleen | 7.5 | 5.6 | 32.5 | 13.1 | 15.6 | 8.4 | 1.9 |
| Thymus | 0.6 | 0.3 | 1.6 | 1.2 | 1.2 | 0.9 | 1.0 | 0.3 |
| Spleen after anti-Ig column | 0.7 | 2.3 |
| Thymus after anti-Ig column | 0.2 | 0.8 |

RESULTS

Quantitation of T Cell Immunoglobulins before and after Cell Disruption.—Previous studies indicated that extremely small amounts of Ig determinants could be detected on the surface of viable T cells: 0.04-0.09 ng/10^6 thymocytes and 0.4-0.6 ng/10^6 splenic or lymph node T cells compared with 30-90 ng/10^6 B lymphocytes (4). One possible explanation for this two to three order of magnitude difference is that although comparable amounts of Ig are present on B and T cells, most of the constant region antigenic determinants are buried in the membrane of T cells and are therefore not available to react with anti-Ig antisera (6). To study this possibility, Ig quantitation was performed on lymphoid cells before and after disruption of cell membranes by either freeze-thawing, treatment with NP40, or treatment with 9 M urea-1.5 M acetic acid. Lymphoid cells studied were (a) thymic lymphocytes, (b) splenic lymphocytes, and (c) splenic and thymic lymphocytes eluted from a plastic bead column coated with rabbit anti-mouse Ig antisera. The thymic lymphocytes and cells eluted from anti-Ig columns were used as T cell populations. They contained less than 1% of cells with easily detectable Ig and over 90% of cells had detectable theta antigen by immunofluorescence. Normal spleen cells were used as a source of B cells. Approximately 40% of these cells had readily detectable Ig. As seen in Table I, regardless of the source, there was a two- to fourfold increase in measurable Ig when disrupted lymphocytes were
compared with intact cells. Different methods of disruption yielded different results in that the greatest amount of Ig was detected after NP40 lysis and the least after urea-acetic acid treatment. Whether the observed increase was due to release of cytoplasmic Ig or uncovering of membrane-bound Ig is not known, but whatever the mechanism, it is clear that populations containing predominantly T cells and those containing a large number of B cells behave

---

**Fig. 1.** SDS gel electrophoresis of anti-Ig and control precipitates obtained from NP40 lysates of radioiodinated splenic lymphocytes (A) and thymic lymphocytes (B). Precipitates were reduced and alkylated before electrophoresis. The positions of migration of μ, γ, and L chains are indicated. ● — ●, anti-Ig; ■ — ■, control.
similarly, and that there is no disproportionate increase in the measurable T cell Ig after disruption of cell membranes.

Surface Immunoglobulins Detected by Lactoperoxidase-Catalyzed Iodination of Thymus and Spleen Cells.—Since by use of the quantitative radioimmunoassay we were unable to demonstrate large amounts of T cell Ig as was previously reported (6), it was decided that it was important to try and demonstrate this by the lactoperoxidase method. The amount of trichloroacetic acid (TCA)-precipitable radioactivity from cell lysates was generally in the range of 15–30%. From spleen cell lysates approximately 2–4% of the TCA-precipitable radioactivity was precipitated with antisera to mouse Ig, whereas 0.4–1% was precipitated with control antisera. In contrast, with thymus cell lysates only 0.3–0.8% of the protein-bound counts were precipitated by anti-mouse Ig, whereas in control precipitates, 0.2–0.7% was precipitated. Furthermore, as shown in Fig. 1, SDS polyacrylamide gel electrophoresis of the reduced and alkylated immune precipitates of spleen cell lysates revealed H and

L chains, whereas thymus cell immune precipitates were distributed in a similar pattern to the control precipitates without any discernible H and L chain peaks.

Ig Associated with Theta-Positive Lymphomas.—Three theta-positive lymphomas were studied for membrane-bound Ig. Quantitation of κ-light chains and γ2 and μ-heavy chains are shown in Table II. Tumors were studied as solid or ascites tumors, and in the case of L-5178-Y, also as a cultured cell line. Considerable Ig was associated with all tumors grown in mice. In particular large amounts of γ2 were observed 5–10 times that seen in normal thymus, whereas usually less μ-chain determinants were found compared with normal thymus. These results contrasted sharply to the lack of any detectable Ig on the L-5178-Y cells grown in vitro. The presence of large amounts of IgG and the lack of any detectable Ig on in vitro grown cells suggested that Ig may be passively adsorbed to the surface of these cells. Proof of this came from studying the in vitro cultured L-5178-Y cells before and after incubation with normal mouse serum or heat aggregated IgG2 and then washed six times with Hanks'
balanced salt solution and the surface Ig quantitated. Whereas before incubation with mouse Ig no detectable surface Ig was present, after such incubation these cells contained 1.38 ng/10⁶ cells when incubated with heat aggregates of IgG2. An even greater amount of passively adsorbed IgG was observed when cells were incubated in normal mouse serum. This amount of passively adsorbed immunoglobulin was sufficient to account for all the Ig detected on the in vivo grown cells. When these cells were examined by indirect immunofluorescence using a rabbit anti-mouse immunoglobulin conjugate, it was shown that mouse Ig could be detected on these cells by this procedure as well, although a considerable heterogeneity in the degree of fluorescence was observed in these preparations.

**DISCUSSION**

By three separate methods, it has been impossible to demonstrate large amounts of T cell Ig after cell disruption. The NP40 treatment of cells yielded the highest values of immunoglobulin, whereas urea-acetic acid treatment yielded somewhat lower values. The latter procedure was that used by Marchalonis et al. (6) in their studies which showed relatively large amounts of T cell immunoglobulin. The discrepancy between our data and theirs is at present unexplainable. However, in our hands no T cell Ig could be detected using the lactoperoxidase iodination procedure as well. These results are in accord with those of Vitteta et al. (5). The finding of some theta-positive lymphomas with passively adsorbed IgG on their surface further complicates the T cell Ig situation. It is not known to what extent this Ig receptor is present on normal T cell populations; however, it raises the possibility that such receptors may exist on some T cells, and therefore, any finding of T cell Ig must be evaluated as to whether it is a product of a T cell rather than a result of passive adsorption.

**SUMMARY**

Quantitation of surface and total cell Ig obtained after lysis by detergent, urea-acid treatment, and freeze-thawing were determined on spleen cells, thymus cells, and spleen cells specifically depleted of B cells. A two- to four-fold increase in measurable Ig was found after cell lysis. All cell populations showed a similar increase in measurable Ig indicating that no discordantly large amounts of buried Ig determinants were associated with the surface of T cells. The lack of appreciable amounts of T cell Ig was confirmed by immunoprecipitation of radioiodinated cells. A theta-positive lymphoma was described which, when grown in culture, lacked detectable surface Ig but contained a receptor site for IgG. This resulted in appreciable amounts of surface IgG being associated with the tumor line when isolated from ascitic fluid of tumor-bearing mice or after preincubation of cultured cells with either heat-aggregated IgG or normal mouse serum.
REFERENCES

1. Greaves, M. F. 1970. Biological effects of anti-immunoglobulins. Evidence for immunoglobulin receptors on T and B lymphocytes. *Transplant. Rev.* 5:45.

2. Lesley, J. F., J. R. Kettman, and R. W. Dutton. 1971. Immunoglobulins on the surface of thymus-derived cells engaged in the initiation of a humoral immune response. *J. Exp. Med.* 134:618.

3. Basten, A., J. F. A. P. Miller, N. L. Warner, and J. Pye. 1971. Specific inactivation of thymus-derived (T) and non thymus-derived (B) lymphocytes by 121 labeled antigen. *Nat. New Biol.* 231:104.

4. Grey, H. M., S. Colon, P. A. Campbell, and E. Rabellino. 1972. Immunoglobulins on the surface of lymphocytes. V. Quantitative studies on the question of whether immunoglobulins are associated with T cells in the mouse. *J. Immunol.* In press.

5. Vitetta, E. S., C. Bianco, V. Nussenzweig, and J. W. Uhr. 1972. Cell surface immunoglobulin. IV. Distribution among thymocytes, bone marrow cells, and their derived populations. *J. Exp. Med.* 136:81.

6. Marchalonis, J. J., R. E. Cone, and J. L. Atwell. 1972. Isolation and partial characterization of lymphocyte surface immunoglobulins. *J. Exp. Med.* 135:956.

7. Fischer, G. A. 1958. Studies of the culture of leukemic cells *in vitro*. *Ann. N.Y. Acad. Sci.* 76:673.

8. Campbell, P. A., and H. M. Grey. 1972. Removal of immunoglobulin-bearing lymphocytes by anti-immunoglobulin coated columns. *Cell. Immunol.* 5:171.