

think I am right in saying that “all the birds” in this context refers to one paper on the turkey beta2-m, cited in Table 4.32, that describes a mere 7-residue oligopeptide of which at least three residues were wrong (or rather, the peptide cannot have been derived from beta2-m). Nevertheless, now the full sequences of both the turkey and chicken beta2-m are near completion, and their overall homologies with known mammalian sequences are approximately 50% (unpublished). So he was lucky there!

Turning now to more important matters, I shall briefly mention Klein’s treatment of some important questions in the biology of MHC relating to origin and function. First, were MHC-like molecules already in function before the development of lymphocytes (with the early forms of fish, one presumes)? If so, what were the functions of prelymphocytic MHC molecules? Clearly our only hope of illuminating this question rests with present-day invertebrates and primitive taxa of fish. Klein’s chapter on evolution takes us through some of the better documented examples of incompatibility reactions in tunicates, annelids, and coelenterates to cell sorting in sponges and

even to self-sterility in flowering plants. Although I have previously been a lay preacher on the importance of the *Botryllus* fusibility locus as a primordial MHC, today I acknowledge his points of scepticism and can agree that we appear for the moment “to have lost the track that was supposed to have led to a primordial gene.” But then, so miserably few workers are actually looking hard for it with adequate techniques. A major, but not unrelated, question is whether the MHC in present-day vertebrates including mammals also mediates physiological functions outside the realm of self-nonsel discrimination. His review of nonimmune functions of the MHC is both scholarly and very sceptical, but on this issue, I believe, his scepticism is likely to be proven wrong in the near future.

This book is the happy outcome of an intellectual *tour de force*. It is really about biology as seen from the viewpoint of immunology as seen from the angle of MHC as seen through the discerning eye and ardently constructive mind of the authour. As said Zola about the novel: “Un coin de la nature vue à travers un tempérament.”

Morten Simonsen

Erratum

H-2-specific antibodies induced by injection of syngeneic leukemia cells

Wilhelm Schmidt

Immunogenetics 25: 215–221, 1987

Correctly, Figure 2 and Figure 3 of this article should be interchanged so that the autographs in Figure 2 appear with the legend to Figure 3 and those in Figure 3 with the legend to Figure 2.