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MONOCLONAL
ANTIBODIES
IN TRANSPLANTATION

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PREFACE

Polyclonal anti-lymphocyte antibodies were introduced in the early sixties and since then have proven to be essential tools to immunosuppress patients undergoing organ and bone marrow transplantation. Their use is, however, often limited by the lack of standardization and the difficulty of an adequate dosage adaptation. The advent of monoclonal antibodies directed at a vast array of functionally relevant T- and B-cell receptors has opened the way for a modern and more clinically appropriate use of anti-lymphocyte antibodies.

Experimental and clinical evidence presented in this book illustrates that antibodies expressing different specificities can be very effective in preventing or reversing established transplant rejection. Moreover, the data strongly suggest that the use of these new therapeutic agents may allow the induction of specific tolerance to transplant alloantigens.

It will perhaps not be long before tolerance becomes more than a sporadic and uncontrolled event after transplantation in man. This important goal, which seems likely to be achievable through the use of monoclonal antibodies, must guide and sustain the efforts and collaborations between basic scientists and clinicians in the field.

With great pleasure I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the contributors for their active collaboration and for sharing their experience in such a clear and up-to-date fashion.

Lucienne Chatenoud