



# AUTOIMMUNITY

Genetic, Immunologic, Virologic,  
and Clinical Aspects

*Edited by*

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# **AUTOIMMUNITY**

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and Clinical Aspects**

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## Preface

The pathogenesis of autoimmunity appears to involve genetic, immunologic, and viral factors interacting through complicated mechanisms still poorly understood. Recent evidence suggests that self-recognition of histocompatibility antigens may be a normal event in immune surveillance which promotes simultaneous recognition of viral or other new cell surface antigens. The "network theory" of immune regulation through idiotypic recognition represents another physiological expression of autoimmunity which may have potential for immune tolerance and immunotherapy. The rapidly expanding area of autoimmunity directed against receptors for hormones and neurotransmitters opens the possibility that many presumed nonimmunologic diseases may actually have an underlying immune basis. The relationship between autoimmunity and malignant lymphoproliferation leads into the broad area of neoplasia and the normal control of cellular growth and differentiation.

Autoimmunity, then, is an important immunobiologic clue into the physiology and regulation of the immune system. At the same time, autoimmunity is an aspect of clinical medicine that is relevant to many afflictions involving several different organ systems. The task of editing a volume on autoimmunity becomes a challenge potentially as broad as immunology and medicine.

In selecting the contributors to this book, I hoped to create a compendium of fact and opinion that might state the problems and point out future directions in a way described so beautifully by George Santayana:

Our knowledge is a torch of smokey pine which lights the path but one step ahead across a void of mystery and dread.

If successful, each chapter in this volume may serve as a torch illuminating a small area of the problem. Hopefully, the whole will be greater than



the sum of its parts and the biologic mystery of autoimmunity will be found on and between these pages.

I am deeply grateful to the busy scientists and clinicians who found time to prepare these chapters, to Maurice Landy who suggested that I undertake this responsibility, and to the staff of Academic Press whose help has been invaluable. To the reader, I apologize not for what is on these pages, but for the many areas not included.

*Norman Talal, M.D.*

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