

Biological characterization of *Trypanosoma cruzi* stocks from Chilean insect vectors

Solari, A.

Wallace, A.

Ortiz, S.

Venegas, J.

Sanchez, G.

Fifty-seven *Trypanosoma cruzi* stocks isolated from *Triatoma infestans* and *Triatoma spinolai* of the five different geographic endemic areas of Chile were studied by schizodeme and molecular karyotype analysis. Four different genotypes are found in the sylvatic *T. spinolai* vector and five in the *T. infestans* domiciliary vector. Of these genotypes, two common genotypes overlap on both transmission cycles exclusively in the extreme northern endemic areas of Chile. Metacyclic trypomastigotes obtained in vitro or cell-derived trypomastigotes proved to be infective in γ -irradiated Balb/c mice for the study of the immune response and biological behavior. Of a total of 57 *T. cruzi* stocks obtained, 19 of them, representing all the different genotypes found in Chile, were tested on a murine experimental model and then fully studied. Female compared with male animals demonstrated greater resistance to Chagas disease with all the *T. cruzi* stocks tested. The immune response was assessed by lytic ant