Abstract
Trypanosomatid protozoan parasites express an aggressive strategy of parasitism by infecting host macrophages and inducing extensive T-lymphocyte activation. One goal of such strategy is to drive the immune response of genetically susceptible hosts to a state of unresponsiveness regarding parasite killing. Unresponsiveness is achieved through different mechanisms, depending on the parasite species. In this brief review, recent findings on the molecular and cellular bases of the parasites’ exploitation of host immune responses are discussed.

Keywords
Trypanosoma cruzi, Leishmania chagasi, T lymphocytes, CTLA-4, apoptosis, transforming growth factor.