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Co-shared genomic alterations within tumors from patients with both myeloproliferative neoplasms and lymphoma

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Running heads: Shared mutations in patients with MPN and lymphoma

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Contributions: JMH, MBP, WCC, GI, and FdA conceptualized the study. TLP, JMH, GI, and SJHD validated tissue specimens. JMH, TLP, HF, MBM, SJHD, PN, and BKM collected the samples. JMH, MCH, and NJB performed the biostatistical analyses. JMH, MBP, MBE, MCH, PRN, TLP, HF, MBM, SJHD, PN, BKM, HBO, JS, WT, NJB, ML, WCC, GI, and FdA made substantial contributions to the acquisition and interpretation of data. JMH, MBP, PRN, MBE, NJB, and FdA drafted the original manuscript. All authors critically revised and contributed to the completion of the final manuscript.

Data-sharing statement

Due to patient confidentiality and Danish data protection regulations, original clinico-pathological and genomic data (including raw sequencing data) cannot be made publicly available. However, data can be shared upon reasonable request and in accordance with GDPR and current national legislation.

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Myeloproliferative neoplasms (MPNs) and lymphomas are generally considered to be distinct malignant diseases. MPNs are clonal hematopoietic stem cell disorders characterized by proliferation of one or more of the myeloid-derived cell lineages. Lymphomas comprise a wide range of B- or T/NK-cell-derived malignancies^{1,2}. However, in patients diagnosed with both malignancies, some lymphoid entities are overrepresented.^{3,4} In a nationwide cohort of patients presenting with both MPNs and lymphoma, we observed that the occurrence of T-follicular helper cell lymphoma, angioimmunoblastic type (AITL), was 5-7 times higher than in the general population⁵. This, together with observations of similarities at genomic and proteomic level in patients with concurrent MPNs and lymphoma^{6,7}, has contributed to the hypothesis that MPNs and some lymphoma subtypes may share common pathogenetic steps. To further explore this hypothesis, we investigated the mutational landscape in archival tumor samples from patients with both diagnoses.

We performed whole exome sequencing (WES) of paired bone marrow (BM) and lymphoma tissue samples from patients diagnosed, either simultaneously or metachronously with both MPN and lymphoma, of either AITL or diffuse large B-cell lymphoma (DLBCL) type. To our knowledge, the present study is the first to report the occurrence of shared genomic alterations within the disease-specific tumor samples from patients diagnosed with MPNs and either AITL or DLBCL.

A Danish cohort of patients diagnosed with both MPN and lymphoma between 1990-2015 was previously described⁵. Diagnostic tumor samples from 14 patients with MPN, diagnosed prior or synchronous to either AITL (n=5) or DLBCL (n=9), were identified through the Danish National Pathology Registry (DNPR)⁸. We excluded patients with MPN diagnosed >6 months after lymphoma to reduce the probability of therapy-induced MPN. Clinicopathological characteristics are summarized in Table 1.

The study was approved by the Danish National Committee on Health Research Ethics (record no. 1609521) and the Danish Data Protection Agency (record no. 1-16-02-420-15) and was performed in compliance with the principles of the Helsinki Declaration. Before inclusion, written informed consent was obtained. Exception was made in cases where the patient had died at the time of the study, to which separate permission was granted in the ethics approval.

All patients were diagnosed with MPN based on BM samples, while the lymphoma diagnoses were based on either lymph node or extra-nodal tissue biopsies. Non-neoplastic tissue from archived specimens in the DNPR or saliva (in cases where no archived non-neoplastic tissue was available) were used as germline control. All specimens were reviewed by an experienced hematopathologist at a tertiary-care center. Immunohistochemical characterizations were performed to verify the adequacy of study specimens regarding the presence of MPN and lymphoma in relation to tumor

content and to assess for any reciprocal infiltration of MPN into lymphoma or vice versa. A DNA library triad encompassing the 3-way paired MPN, lymphoma, and non-neoplastic tissue specimens was constructed for WES following standard protocols. Captured targets were paired-end sequenced according to standard protocols. Raw sequencing data was quality checked. We observed a high level of indels and C:G-T:A substitutions, probably induced by formalin-fixation of the specimens. To reduce the false-positive rate, the data was processed on two independent mutation-calling pipelines. Variants with allele frequencies (VAFs) <10% were excluded from the analyses, and only somatic variants reported in COSMIC⁹ were retained for downstream evaluation. Variants within genes with a well-established relevance for the diseases addressed in the present study, were manually curated regardless of VAF. This involved variants in *DNMT3A*, *TET2*, *IDH2*, *RHOA* and *JAK2*^{1,2}. Alleles with depth coverage of ≥ 20 reads were evaluated. Variants present in the gnomAD database (version 2.1.1)¹⁰, European non-Finnish population, at a frequency above 0.01 were removed. Quality and read depth assessment were complemented with the inspection of focus variants in Integrative Genomics Viewer¹¹.

In patients diagnosed with MPN and AITL, the fraction of myelopoietic tissue in the MPN BM samples varied between 40-95% (Table 1). Tumor cell content in the AITL samples was estimated ranging between 60-90%. In patients diagnosed with MPN and DLBCL (patients #6-14), the fraction of myelopoietic tissue in the MPN BM samples varied between 80-95%. Tumor cell content in the DLBCL samples was estimated in the range 70-90%, except for patient #7 in which there was a low content of 15% due to adjacent salivary gland tissue.

Figure 1 shows an overview of the identified mutations with VAFs $\geq 10\%$ for both MPN/AITL and MPN/DLBCL patients.

Specific mutations, well characterized in the literature as being associated with MPN and AITL are presented in Table 2 in more detail. Shared mutations were defined by an identical position and nucleotide change within the given gene sequence. In four out of five AITL patients, mutations in either of the epigenetic modifier genes *DNMT3A*, *TET2*, or *IDH2* were identified. Notably, a mutation in *IDH2* leading to amino acid change at position R172 was found in two out of five patients. A *RHOA* mutation resulting in the G17V change was found in the AITL sample of patient #1. In patient #5, MPN and AITL were simultaneously diagnosed. This patient had discrete lymphoma infiltration in the BM, where a *RHOA* mutation was identified. The same mutation could not be detected in the lymph node biopsy.

Both AITL patients with *IDH2* mutations had a concurrent *RHOA* mutation. Mutations in the *JAK2* gene were found in three of the MPN samples. Two cases harbored the *JAK2* V617F amino acid change, while the third was *JAK2* exon 12-mutation positive.

In the nine DLBCL patients, mutations in genes commonly associated with lymphoid neoplasms (*B2M*, *BCL2*, *CCND3*, *EZH2*, *TP53*, *NKFBIE*, *PAX5* and *MYD88*), were identified with high allelic burdens (Figure 1). *JAK2* mutations resulting in V617F amino acid change were found in five of these patients' MPN samples. One patient harbored a *MPL* mutation in the MPN sample.

Shared mutations were found in 3/5 (60%) MPN/AITL patients and involved *DNMT3A*, *JAK2* and *TET2*. *IDH2* was found in both tissue samples of patient #5, but due to simultaneous diagnosis of MPN and AITL and BM infiltration of lymphoma, this mutation could not confidently be classified as shared. Shared mutations were found in 2/9 (22%) MPN/DLBCL patients involving only *JAK2* (Table 2).

DNMT3A and *TET2* play essential roles in hematopoietic stem cell differentiation and abnormal function of these genes may lead to impaired hematopoietic differentiation capacity and to the accumulation of clonal hematopoiesis (CH)¹²⁻¹⁴. Shared mutations of *DNMT3A* (patient #2) and *TET2* (patients #1 and #3) were present with high allelic burdens (range 19-49%), supporting the hypothesis that these mutations may be involved in the early common pathogenetic steps of both MPN and AITL. The allelic burden of *DNMT3A* and *TET2* mutations were higher than those of *IDH2* and *RHOA* in the AITL samples, suggesting that the latter mutations could represent more downstream events¹⁴.

These observations support the possible parallel evolution of two distinct neoplastic proliferations, a myeloid and a lymphoid, from a common hematopoietic progenitor cell population that carry CH features such as *TET2* and *DNMT3A* mutations. These findings extend previous reports of the development of metachronous AITL and myeloid neoplasms from a common *TET2/DNMT3A*-mutated stem cell population in patients with CH¹⁵.

Eight of the 14 patients harbored *JAK2* mutations: 3/5 (60%) of the MPN/AITL patients and 5/9 (56%) of the MPN/DLBCL patients. In patient #2 (AITL) and patients #6 and #8 (DLBCL), the *JAK2* mutation was shared. The non-neoplastic tissue of these patients also carried the same *JAK2* variant with a low allele frequency (Table 2). While this may represent in vivo tumor cell contamination of the samples, another possible interpretation is that the presence of a *JAK2* germline mutation predisposed to the subsequent development of MPN and lymphoma.

The risk of cross-contamination between MPN and lymphoma cannot be excluded with certainty, as demonstrated by the findings in patient #5. However, this risk is mitigated by factors such as: (i) expert specimen review by a tertiary-center hematopathologist; (ii) the diagnosis of MPN dating several years before the lymphoma diagnosis in most patients (10/14), reducing the probability of lymphoma cells being present in the MPN samples. Of the five patients with shared mutations (three MPN/AITL and two MPN/DLBCL), four had an interval between the diagnosis of MPN and lymphoma of ≥ 2.6 years. In the last of these five patients (patient #1), AITL was diagnosed simultaneously with

MPN, but without evidence of lymphoma in the BM; (iii) a high tumor cell content in most specimens, increasing the probability that the DNA extracted and sequenced from MPN and lymphoma tissue is representative of the respective neoplasm.

For future investigations, the application of single-cell and spatial multi-OMICS will likely improve the level of precision of clonal recognition and development.

In conclusion, we identified shared and private mutations in patients with co-occurrent MPN and lymphoma. Some of these mutations, particularly in the setting of MPN/AITL, may reflect ancestral pathogenetic alterations related to CH (e.g., *TET2*, *DNMT3A*), while others (e.g., *IDH2*, *RHOA*) may facilitate downstream clonal divergence and expansion. These events seem to be less frequent in DLBCL than AITL. However, additional data from larger, independent studies are required to provide support for these hypotheses.

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Tables and figures

Table 1: Demographic and clinicopathological characteristics

Patient #	Sex	MPN diagnosis	Age at MPN diagnosis (yrs)	MPN treatment	Δ Dx	MPN tissue	Lymphoma tissue	Non-neoplastic germline tissue	Tumor content		First line lymphoma treatment	Survival from lymphoma diagnosis (yrs)
									MPN sample (%)	Lymphoma sample (%)		
AITL patients												
1	M	PMF	64	None	0	BM	LN	Lung	40	70	CHOP	5.3
2	F	ET	73	ASA	2.6	BM	LN	Skin	90	80	CHOP	8.2
3	M	ET	60	ASA	4.8	BM	LN	Skin	95	85	CHOEP+ASCT	6.0
4	F	PV	72	ASA, P, HC	3.5	BM	LN	Skin	95	60	Palliation	<0.1
5	F	MPN-U	62	None	0	BM	LN	Skin	85	90	CHOEP+ASCT	Alive*
DLBCL patients												
6	M	PV	71	ASA, P, HC	8.3	BM	Skin, bone	Skin	95	90	Palliation	<0.1
7	M	MPN-U	71	ASA, P, HC	3.8	BM	SG	GIT	95	15	R-CHOP	8.4
8	F	PV	68	ASA, P, HC	2.6	BM	LN	Ovary	90	70	R-CHOP	4.5
9	F	ET	68	NR	16.6	BM	SG	Skin	90	90	NR	NR
10	F	PV	65	None	0	BM	LN	GIT	90	75	R-CHOP	0.3
11	F	ET	76	HC	9.5	BM	GIT	Saliva	80	90	R-CHOP	1.5
12	F	MPN-U	66	ASA, P	0	BM	LN	Saliva	90	90	R-CHOP	Alive*
13	M	ET	65	ASA, HC	12.3	BM	GIT	Saliva	80	90	R-CHOP	0.6
14	M	PV	71	I, P	3.1	BM	Pleura	Saliva	80	75	R-CHOP+MTX	Alive*

Table 1. Demographic and clinicopathological characteristics of all 14 patients included in the study. **Abbreviations:** AITL = angioimmunoblastic T-cell lymphoma; ASA= acetylsalicylic acid; ASCT = autologous stem cell transplantation; BM = bone marrow; CHOEP = cyclophosphamide, hydroxydaunorubicin, oncovin, etoposide, prednisolone; CHOP = cyclophosphamide, hydroxydaunorubicin, oncovin, prednisolone; Δ Dx = time between MPN and lymphoma diagnosis (yrs); DLBCL = diffuse large B-cell lymphoma; ET = essential thrombocythemia; F = female; GCB = germinal-center B-cell like; GIT = gastrointestinal tract; HC = hydroxycarbamide; I = interferon; LN = lymph node; M = male; MPN = myeloproliferative neoplasm; MPN-U = MPN unclassifiable; MTX = methotrexate; NR = not reported; P = phlebotomy; PMF = primary myelofibrosis; PV = polycythemia vera; R = rituximab; SG = salivary gland; * = alive at time of data analysis but exact survival time not reported.

Table 2: Detailed representation of selected mutations identified in the study cohort

Patient #	Somatic mutations					MPN	Lymphoma	Present in germline control
	Gene	Position	Nucleotide change	Mutation type	Amino acid change	VAF	VAF	
AITL patients								
1	<i>DNMT3A</i>	chr2:25470979	G>A	Missense	p.T261M	12%		No
	<i>DNMT3A</i>	chr2:25470521	C>T	Missense	p.R318Q		7%	No
	<i>TET2</i>	chr4:106157053	C>T	Stop gain	p.Q673	21%	38%	No
	<i>IDH2</i>	chr15:90631839	T>C	Missense	p.R172G		15%	No
	<i>RHOA</i>	chr3:49412973	C>A	Missense	p.G17V		29%	No
2	<i>DNMT3A</i>	chr2:25462017	T>G	Missense	p.N797T	29%	31%	No
	<i>JAK2</i>	chr9:5073770	G>T	Missense	p.V617F	9%	31%	Yes (VAF: 15%)
3	<i>TET2</i>	chr4:106164778	C>T	Stop gain	p.R1237	48%	33%	No
	<i>JAK2</i>	chr9:5073770	G>T	Missense	p.V617F	36%		Yes (VAF: 34%)
4	<i>JAK2</i>	chr9:5072541	G>A	Missense	p.R64Q	72%		No
5 ^s	<i>IDH2</i>	chr15:90631838	C>A	Missense	p.R172M	2%	2%	No
	<i>RHOA</i>	chr3:49412973	C>A	Missense	p.G17V	9%		No
DLBCL patients								
6	<i>JAK2</i>	chr9:5073770	G>T	Missense	p.V617F	92%	15%	Yes (VAF: 22%)
8	<i>JAK2</i>	chr9:5073770	G>T	Missense	p.V617F	72%	14%	Yes (VAF: 8%)

Table 2. Detailed representation of selected genetic alterations identified in the study cohort. Identical mutations shared between the myeloproliferative neoplasm (MPN) and lymphoma, within the same patient, are highlighted in grey. Several shared mutations were identified in the MPN/angioimmunoblastic T-cell lymphoma group while shared mutations were identified in only two MPN/diffuse large B-cell lymphoma patients involving exclusively p.V617F *JAK2* mutation canonical for MPN. ^sIn patient #5, MPN and lymphoma were diagnosed simultaneously. The bone marrow was infiltrated by both neoplasms. The mutational findings in this patient should therefore be interpreted with caution. **Abbreviations:** AITL = angioimmunoblastic T-cell lymphoma; DLBCL = diffuse large B-cell lymphoma; MPN = myeloproliferative neoplasm; VAF = variant allele frequency.

Figure 1: Overview of shared and private mutations in the study cohort

Figure 1. Shared and private mutations with variant allele frequencies (VAFs) $\geq 10\%$ identified by whole exome sequencing. Canonical myeloproliferative neoplasm (MPN) and lymphoma-associated mutations are also reported at lower VAF levels. The numbers in the individual boxes indicate VAFs (%). **A.** Mutations identified in patients with angioimmunoblastic T-cell lymphoma (AITL) and MPN. §In patient #5, MPN and AITL were diagnosed simultaneously. The bone marrow was morphologically and immunohistochemically found to be infiltrated by both neoplasms. The mutational findings in this patient should therefore be interpreted with caution (see Discussion). **B.** Mutations identified in patients with diffuse large B-cell lymphoma (DLBCL) and MPN. #identical variant found in non-neoplastic tissue (germline mutation). *According to International Cancer Genome Consortium terminology, www.dcc.icgc.org.
Abbreviations: AITL = angioimmunoblastic T-cell lymphoma; DLBCL = diffuse large B-cell lymphoma; M = myeloid sample; L = lymphoid sample.

A

Genes	MPN/AITL (patients #1-5)										Function impact*
	1		2		3		4		5 ^s		
	M	L	M	L	M	L	M	L	M	L	
<i>SF1</i>	11										Medium
<i>DNMT3A</i>			29	31							Medium
<i>TET2</i>	21	38			48	33					High
<i>IDH2</i>		15							2	2	Medium
<i>RHOA</i>		29							9		Medium
<i>JAK2</i>			9 [#]	41 [#]	36 [#]		72				Medium
<i>NOTCH2</i>						25					Medium
<i>NCOR1</i>					33		18	10			Medium
<i>ABL1</i>		13									Medium
<i>NSD1</i>		10									Medium
<i>IRF4</i>		17									Medium
<i>INVS</i>		11									Medium
<i>DICER1</i>		12									Medium
<i>TAF1</i>							63				Medium
<i>BCOR</i>		11									Medium
<i>MTOR</i>		22									Medium
<i>SMC1A</i>		20									Medium
<i>BCL2</i>		21									High
<i>NRAS</i>					12			80			Medium
<i>STAT3</i>									16		Medium
<i>PTEN</i>							35				High
<i>CDC73</i>							29				Medium
<i>TET1</i>							21				Medium
<i>BCOR</i>							16				Medium

Frameshift mutation
 Missense mutation
 Stop-gain mutation

B

Genes	MPN/DLBCL (patients #6-14)														Function impact*				
	6		7		8		9		10		11		12			13		14	
	M	L	M	L	M	L	M	L	M	L	M	L	M	L		M	L	M	L
<i>NRAS</i>		16																	Medium
<i>MYD88</i>			63									58							High
<i>JAK2</i>	92 [#]	15 [#]	12		72 [#]	14 [#]	13										20		Medium
<i>MPL</i>			10												10				High
<i>TP53</i>												26							High
<i>POU2F2</i>				13															Medium
<i>TET2</i>							15												High
<i>PIM1</i>									30			26							Medium
<i>DUSP2</i>									24			32						22	Medium
<i>CD58</i>									20										High
<i>B2M</i>										19									High
<i>EZH2</i>										12									Medium
<i>TBL1XR1</i>												29							Medium
<i>ETV6</i>												34							Medium
<i>SOCS1</i>													15						Medium
<i>HIST1H1E</i>														14					Medium
<i>NFKBIA</i>													11						Medium
<i>BCL2</i>																44			High
<i>CCND3</i>																49			Medium
<i>SPEN</i>																48			High
<i>TNFAIP3</i>																		27	High
<i>NFKBIE</i>																		29	High
<i>PIK3R1</i>																		19	High
<i>IKBKB</i>																		31	Medium
<i>PAX5</i>																		28	Medium

Frameshift mutation
 Missense mutation
 Stop-gain mutation