

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. SUMMARY	2
ENGLISH SUMMARY	3
DEUTSCHE ZUSAMMENFASSUNG	5
2. AIMS OF THE THESIS	10
3. INTRODUCTION - DESCENT OF T CELL DIVERSITY	14
CD8 ⁺ T CELL RESPONSES UPON ACUTE AND PERSISTENT VIRAL INFECTIONS	16
CD8 ⁺ T CELL ACTIVATION AND DIFFERENTIATION	19
ASYMMETRIC CELL DIVISION AS A MECHANISM TO GENERATE DIVERSITY	23
METABOLIC INSTRUCTION OF CD8 ⁺ T CELL DIFFERENTIATION	27
AGING AFFECTS CD8 ⁺ T CELL RESPONSES	30
4. RESULTS: CHAPTER 1	
INCREASING MEMORY CD8 T CELL POTENTIAL BY ENFORCING ASYMMETRIC CELL DIVISION	34
INTRODUCTION	36
RESULTS	37
Asymmetric cell division is a feature of CD8 ⁺ T cell subtypes that retain stemness	37
Transient mTOR inhibition enhances and restores asymmetric cell division capability	40
Higher asymmetric cell division rates lead to better memory potential	43
Increased asymmetric cell division and memory potential can be induced in exhausted CD8 ⁺ T cells expressing intermediate levels of the co-inhibitory receptor PD-1	47
Increased memory potential by inferring higher asymmetric cell division rates leads to better control of LCMV infection	49
Human naive and central memory CD8 ⁺ T cells show higher asymmetric cell division rates upon transient mTOR inhibition	50
DISCUSSION	52
MATERIALS AND METHODS	56
SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION	61

5. RESULTS: CHAPTER 2

DOES THE AGING IMMUNE SYSTEM GENERATE VIRTUAL MEMORY CELLS TO COMPENSATE FOR DETERIORATION OF NAIVE T CELL IMMUNITY?

INTRODUCTION	70
RESULTS	72
CD8 ⁺ T cells from aged mice show low asymmetric cell division rates that can be restored upon transient mTOR inhibition	72
Reestablishment of asymmetric cell division in CD8 ⁺ T cells from aged mice leads to better memory potential	74
CD44 ^{hi} CD8 ⁺ T cells are present in higher frequencies in aged mice, but do not carry an exhaustion phenotype	76
CD44 ^{hi} CD8 ⁺ T cells from aged mice exhibit increased asymmetric cell division rates	78
Reestablishment of asymmetric cell division in CD44 ^{hi} CD8 ⁺ T cells from aged mice leads to better memory potential	79
CD44 ^{hi} CD8 ⁺ T cells from aged mice have a virtual memory phenotype	82
Altered expression of immune synapse components in T _{VM} from old P14 mice	84
Activated T _{VM} cells survive better in absence of antigen	87
DISCUSSION	91
MATERIALS AND METHODS	95
SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION	99

6. DISCUSSION - ASYMMETRIC FATES: A MECHANISM TO GENERATE DIVERSITY

EMERGENCE OF MHC-RESTRICTED TCRs	106
IMMUNE SYNAPSE: A POLARIZED ENCOUNTER	107
ASYMMETRIC CELL DIVISION AS GENERATOR OF DIVERSITY - ACD AS GOD	110
HOW FAR WE CAN SEE DIVERSITY	114
TUNING DIVERGENCES	117
MEMORY LOSS	120
MODULATING ACD AS MEANS TO REINVIGORATE IMMUNE RESPONSES	126

7. THE UNKNOWN

8. REFERENCES

9. ABBREVIATIONS

10. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

11. CURRICULUM VITAE