

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABBREVIATIONS	9
SUMMARY	11
RESUMEN	13
RESUM	15
INTRODUCTION	17
Synthetic Biology	17
The first synthetic genetic devices based on transcription regulation	23
Synthetic biology chassis	26
Design principles and challenges for engineering synthetic biology circuits	30
Post-transcriptional regulation	33
RNA-binding proteins	35
REFERENCES	40
OBJECTIVES	49
CHAPTER 1	51
Gene regulation by a protein translation factor at the single-cell level	51
1. INTRODUCTION	53
2. MATERIALS AND METHODS	55
2.1. Strains, plasmids, and reagents	55
2.2. Growth curves	57
2.3. Flow cytometry	57
2.4. Deterministic mathematical modelling	58
2.5. Stochastic mathematical modelling	59
2.6. Numerical simulations	61
3. RESULTS	62
3.1. Regulation of translation with an RNA-binding protein in single cells	62
3.2. Noise analysis in transcription and translation regulation	66
3.3. Examination of global effects on regulated gene expression	69
3.4. Integrative modeling of the deterministic and stochastic dynamics	73
4. DISCUSSION	76
REFERENCES	79
CHAPTER 2	83
Repurposing the mammalian RNA-binding protein Musashi-1 as an allosteric translation repressor in bacteria	83
1. INTRODUCTION	85

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS	88
2.1. Strains, plasmids, and reagents	88
2.3. Real-time fluorescence quantification in solid medium	91
2.4. Flow cytometry	92
2.5. Purification of a Musashi protein	92
2.6. Binding kinetics assays of protein-RNA interactions	93
2.7. Gel electrophoresis	94
2.8. Microscopy	95
2.9. Mathematical modeling	95
2.10. Molecular visualization <i>in silico</i>	95
3. RESULTS	96
3.1. A Musashi protein can down-regulate translation in bacteria	96
3.2. Mechanistic insight into the engineered regulation based on a protein-RNA interaction	101
3.3. A mathematical model captured the dynamic response of the system	106
3.4. Rational redesign of the targeted transcript to enhance the dynamic range of the response	111
3.5. The regulatory activity of a Musashi protein in bacteria can be externally controlled by a fatty acid	113
4. DISCUSSION	117
REFERENCES	121
GENERAL DISCUSSION	127
REFERENCES	133
CONCLUSIONS	135
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	137