## CHAPTER I. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Tissue engineering in the central nervous system
  - 1.1.1 Problems of regeneration in the central nervous system
  - 1.1.2 Damages and diseases in the central nervous system
  - 1.1.3 Cell therapy
  - 1.1.4 Biomaterials in central nervous system regeneration

## 1.2 Hyaluronan

- 1.2.1 Sources and structure
- 1.2.2 Rheology of hyaluronan solutions
- 1.2.3 Degradation
- 1.2.4 Biodegradation
- 1.2.5 Biological properties
- 1.2.6 Chemical modifications
- 1.2.7 Medical applications of hyaluronan and its derivatives
- 1.2.8 Engineering of hyaluronan-based scaffolds
- 1.2.9 Hyaluronan-based materials for CNS regeneration
- 1.3 Poly(methacrylates) and poly(acrylates)
  - 1.3.1 Poly(methacrylates) and poly(acrylates) in tissue engineering
  - 1.3.2 Poly(methacrylates) and poly(acrylates) in central nervous system regeneration

#### 1.4 Hypotheses and objectives

- 1.4.1 Hypotheses
- 1.4.2 Objectives

#### CHAPTER II. MATERIALS AND METHODS

#### 2.1 Materials and cell lines

- 2.1.1 Polymers and monomers
- 2.1.2 Crosslinking agents
- 2.1.3 Initiator
- 2.1.4 Other reagents
- 2.1.5 Cell lines and culture media
- 2.2 Methods
  - 2.2.1 Crosslinking of hyaluronan polymer networks
  - 2.2.2 Preparation of crosslinked hyaluronan scaffolds
  - 2.2.3 Synthesis of methacrylated hyaluronan

2.2.4 Synthesis of poly(methacrylated hyaluronan-co-ethyl acrylate) copolymer networks

- 2.3 Material characterization
- 2.4 Preparation of materials for cultures and viability assays
- 2.5 Colonization studies on scaffolds

# CHAPTER III. RESULTS

- 3.1 Crosslinking of hyaluronan with divinyl sulfone
  - 3.1.1 Crosslinking of hyaluronan with divinyl sulfone
  - 3.1.2 Characterization of crosslinked hyaluronan
- 3.2 Crosslinked hyaluronan scaffolds
  - 3.2.1 Preparation of scaffolds
  - 3.2.2 Characterization of scaffolds
- 3.3 Poly(methacrylated-co-ethyl acrylate) copolymer networks
  - 3.3.1 Methacrylated hyaluronan macromer
  - 3.3.2 Synthesis of poly(methacrylated-co-ethyl acrylate) copolymer networks
- 3.4 Enzymatic degradation
  - 3.4.1 Determination of weight loss
  - 3.4.2 Determination of equilibrium water content
  - 3.4.3 Morphological characterization
  - 3.4.4 Determination of by-products
- 3.5 Cell cultures
  - 3.5.1 Viability assays
  - 3.5.2 Cultures of cell populations on scaffolds

### CHAPTER IV. DISCUSSION

- 4.1 Crosslinking of hyaluronan with divinyl sulfone
- 4.2 Crosslinked hyaluronan scaffolds
- 4.3 Poly(MeHA-co-EA) copolymer networks
- 4.4 Enzymatic degradation
- 4.5 Biological performance

CHAPTER V. CONCLUSIONS

References

Abbreviations