

## **Index**

Abstract.....	i
Resumen.....	iii
Resum .....	v
General purposes .....	vii
Specific purposes.....	vii
Chapter 1. Introduction .....	1
1.1 Osteochondral biology.....	1
1.1.1 Structure and function of articular cartilage.....	1
1.1.2 Composition, structure and function of subchondral bone.....	6
1.1.3 Cartilage injuries.....	12
1.1.4 Articular cartilage repair conventional therapies .	14
1.1.5 Tissue engineering (TE) approach for the regeneration of articular cartilage .....	17
1.1.6 TE approach for the regeneration of bone.....	21
1.2 Osteochondral tissue engineering .....	26
1.2.1 Purpose of the strategy.....	26
1.2.2 Layered scaffolds for osteochondral TE: an overview .....	27
1.3 Bioactivity.....	30
1.3.1 In vivo bioactivity .....	30
1.3.2 Bioactive materials and mechanism of apatite formation.....	33
1.4 Synthetic polymers biodegradation.....	36
1.4.1 Mechanisms of biodegradation.....	36
1.4.2 Effect of different parameters on the rate of biodegradation .....	38
1.5 Poly(L-lactic acid) and poly(L-lactic acid)/ inorganic composite scaffolds .....	39
1.5.1 Main properties of poly(L-lactic acid).....	39
1.5.2 An overview to poly(L-lactic acid) scaffold fabrication techniques .....	41

1.5.3	Bioactive poly(L-lactic acid)/inorganic composites .....	44
Chapter 2.	Materials and methods.....	47
2.1	Materials.....	47
2.1.1	Micro and macro porous scaffolds.....	47
2.1.2	Hybrid scaffolds PLLA/bioactive particles.....	50
2.1.3	Bioactivity test .....	53
2.1.4	Oxygen plasma treatment.....	54
2.1.5	Sonication .....	54
2.1.1	Static degradation .....	54
2.1.2	Fatigue essay.....	55
2.1.3	Biconstruct fabrication: bilayered scaffold for osteochondral regeneration.....	56
2.2	Characterization techniques .....	57
2.2.1	Scanning Electron Microscopy (SEM).....	57
2.2.2	Elemental analysis (EDS) .....	58
2.2.3	Porosity.....	58
2.2.4	Compressive test .....	59
2.2.5	Dynamic mechanical spectroscopy (DMS) .....	61
2.2.6	Differential scanning calorimetry (DSC) .....	61
2.2.7	Gel permeation chromatography (GPC) .....	61
2.2.8	Thermogravimetric analysis (TGA) .....	61
2.2.9	Calcination experiments .....	62
2.2.10	Fourier transform infrared analysis (FTIR) .....	62
Chapter 3.	Results .....	63
3.1	Scaffolds fabrication: Processing, morphology and properties relationships .....	63
3.1.1	Scaffold morphology .....	64
3.1.2	Porosity.....	71
3.1.3	Mechanical properties .....	73
3.1.4	Calorimetric properties .....	78
3.2	Degradation experiments.....	83
3.2.1	Static degradation .....	84
3.2.2	Fatigue essay.....	102
3.3	Reinforcement and bioactivity of the material .....	117

3.3.1	2D hybrid structure .....	118
3.3.2	3D hybrid structure .....	134
3.4	Osteochondral bilayer construct.....	169
Chapter 4.	Discussion .....	171
4.1	Scaffolds fabrication: Processing-morphology-properties relationships .....	171
4.1.1	Effect on the scaffold properties.....	171
4.1.2	Selection of a composition .....	176
4.1.3	Partial conclusions.....	176
4.2	Degradation experiments .....	178
4.2.1	Partial conclusions.....	180
4.3	Reinforcement and bioactivity of the material .....	181
4.3.1	Effect of the filler content on the membrane's properties .....	181
4.3.2	Effect of the filler content on the scaffold's properties .....	184
4.3.3	Effect of filler type .....	187
4.3.4	Partial conclusions.....	188
4.4	Bilayer construct .....	191
Chapter 5.	Conclusions .....	193
Chapter 6.	Appendix. <i>In vitro</i> and <i>in vivo</i> biological response .....	197
6.1	<i>In vitro</i> culture.....	197
6.2	Implantation .....	204
Glossary	.....	207
References	.....	211