NVVI Travel Report
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The European Mucosal Immunology Group (EMIG) meeting takes place every two years and attracts approximately 300 scientists and clinicians from the field of mucosal immunology. It is an interactive and very stimulating scientific meeting, where you have the opportunity to share thoughts and research with world-leading scientist in the field. The 9th meeting of the EMIG was held in Glasgow and consisted of 9 sessions with distinguished invited speakers and selected oral presentations. I was selected to present one of my two abstracts as oral presentation during the session “Dendritic Cells at Mucosal Surfaces”, and my other abstract was selected for the daily poster session.

The meeting started with the opening lecture by Nadine Cerf-Bensussan (Paris, France) on cytokine interactions in celiac disease followed by a lecture from Chuck Elson (Birmingham USA) on host microbe interactions in inflammatory bowel disease and the importance of the bacterial flagellin in stimulating adaptive immune responses. The 1st session called “Innate Immunity at Mucosal Surfaces” started with a very interesting presentation by Kevin Maloy (Oxford, UK) on innate sensing at mucosal surfaces and the role of the inflammasome related pro-inflammatory cytokines IL-1β and IL-18 in Citrobacter rodentium-induced colitis. In the 2nd session called “Mucosal Myeloid Cells”, John Grainger (Manchester, UK) gave a presentation on inflammatory monocytes in the intestine and how they are shaped during infection, which was followed by a talk from Calum Bain (Galsgow, UK) on continuous replenishment of tissue-resident macrophages. The session was followed by a lecture from Hamida Hammad (Ghent, Belgium) who presented her impressive work on dendritic cells in the context of allergic lung diseases. In the final session on the first day, there was a very interesting talk by Simon Milling (Glasgow, UK) on the functional specialisation of migratory intestinal dendritic cells. His lab developed the model in which thoracic duct lymph can be collected in mice lacking the mesenteric lymph nodes, thereby allowing analysis of the phenotype and migratory capacities of intestinal dendritic cells. The session was closed by Mark Travis (Manchester, UK) who is known for his work on αvβ8, an integrin crucial for the conversion of latent TGFβ into its active form and thereby Treg differentiation.

The next day started with the session called “Dendritic cells at the Mucosal surfaces”. Bill Agace (Lund, Sweden) gave a very interesting lecture on IRF4 and IRF8-dependent dendritic cells in the intestine, and there involvement in controlling intra-epithelial lymphocytes. In this session, I gave my talk on the differential induction of dendritic cell-mediated T cell tolerance in the small and large intestine. There were good discussions and I received constructive positive feedback. The session was followed by a talk from Wolf-Dietrich Hardt (Zürich, Switzerland) who presented his impressive work on inflammasome-mediated protective mechanisms by which intestinal epithelial cells restrict pathogen loads during Salmonella infection. In the final session “Mucosal Barrier Function” of that day, Gunnar Hansson (Gothenburg, Sweden) explained very elegantly how mucus controls the adherence of commensal bacteria to intestinal epithelial cells.

On the final day, Andrew MacPherson (Bern, Switzerland) opened the session “Host Microbe Symbiosis” with an outstanding study on the different growth and survival strategies of commensal bacteria within the mucus layer. Oliver Pabst (Aachen, Germany) closed the

meeting with his Keynote lecture on the IgA repertoire that depends on the microbiota composition and is shaped by commensal exposure.

Overall, the scientific level of all presentations was outstanding and the EMIG provided me an excellent setting to present my data and engage discussion with experts in the field. Therefore, I am grateful to the Dutch Society for Immunology to financially support this visit.