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**Travel report on the 10th international congress on autoimmunity
April 6-10, 2016, Leipzig, Germany**

The 10th international congress on auto-immunity took place from April 6 till April 10 in the Leipzig congress center (CCL). The meeting opened in the evening with a short lecture discussing the influence of hot spices that contain capsaicin on the immune system. This was combined with an award ceremony and several forms of entertainment. The program continued the next days with several plenary and parallel sessions, which resulted in a large variety of topics and speakers.

My own work focuses on the presence of a specific type of autoantibodies (anti-Carbamylated Protein (anti-CarP) antibodies) in rheumatoid arthritis (RA). During this congress, I was able to present my research on this topic during two of the parallel sessions. It started off with a session on anti-CCP antibodies, in which I presented the fine-specificity and cross-reactivity of anti-Carp antibodies and received some interesting questions. During the Saturday session in which I presented, professor R. Perricone showed a very interesting overview of the autoantibodies that can be present in forms of inflammatory arthritis, after which I presented my data on the identification of alpha-1-anti-trypsin as a suitable ELISA antigen to detect anti-CarP antibodies in RA patients.

During this meeting, there were several interesting talks that were relevant and / or interesting with regards to my own research. An example of this is the talk of R. van Vollenhoven who discussed several interesting treatment options in (early) rheumatoid arthritis, such as neuro-immunomodulation, activation of T regulatory cells and the use of biologicals. Also, both R.E Schmidt and A. Alunno discussed how rituximab, which is thought to target CD20 expressing B cells, might also exert an effect via T cells. Furthermore, M. Huijbers presented some interesting data on how IgG4 antibodies might be able to mediate disease development, in this case mainly myasthenia gravis. This is an interesting subject since we also find IgG4 autoantibodies in rheumatoid arthritis, although the mechanisms at work are probably completely different. And as a last interesting talk would like to mention a very interesting overview from T. Dorner on the role of B cells in autoimmunity, discussing for example that mainly long lived B cells and germinal centers are critical for the continued presence of autoimmune diseases. Also, the targeting of these and other B cells in disease was discussed.

Finally, I would like to thank the Dutch society for immunology for the opportunity to visit this very interesting meeting, during which I was able to present my own data and where I could meet some of our collaborators and other investigators in my research field.