



Biology Centre of the ASCR, v. v. i.

Branišovská 31, 370 05 České Budějovice, Czech Republic

Supervisor's evaluation of Lucie Hanzálková's bachelor's project: "Functional analysis of two subunits of the putative mitochondrial RNA binding complex 1 in *Trypanosoma brucei*"

Lucie Hanzálková joined the Laboratory of Molecular Biology of Protists in 2008, during a chaotic time when the project she has been involved in, understanding the function and composition of the mitochondrial RNA binding complex 1 (MRB1) in *Trypanosoma brucei*, seemed to change on a weekly basis based on new results from our group as well as those from our competitors. Furthermore, her supervisor did not give her much attention at this time since he was both a novice in leading a project as well as confused and intimidated by the situation.

Despite such an inhospitable start, for which I apologize to her wholeheartedly, she has pushed forward a very fruitful project, dealing with two subunits of MRB1, here called MP100 and MP102. Since nothing is straightforward in trypanosomes, she found that knocking down one MP seemed affect the other due to their high sequence similarity. After confirming their role in the mitochondrial RNA metabolism by real time PCR, she generated single knockdowns specifically knocking down each individual transcript. And while initial results indicate that they have redundant roles in the mitochondrion, during the process of writing her thesis, she performed more experiments indicating that they may not be as redundant as she initially expected.

I think that this data that could not be included into her thesis is important to mention because it shows her drive to understand a biological problem that was dropped into her lap when she entered the lab. Her rather insightful questions and opinions, which sometimes take her supervisor off guard, show that she possesses the ability to think critically at an early stage in her studies, a skill that I find often lacking in her peers. So my apparent irritation at her



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questioning the "gospel" of her supervisor belies his belief that these are often stimulating discussions that are both enjoyable and for the better of the project. And yes, that "gospel" sometimes falls to her interrogations, which helps to focus the project.

Lucy has demonstrated the ability to generate data by employing basic molecular biology methods, as well as harder techniques such as real time PCR. She also demonstrates in her thesis the ability to write about it in excellent English. She has accepted to stay on in the lab to continue on this project dealing with MRB1, hoping to expand her repertoire of methods as well as addressing different questions about this complex. I thank you Lucy for a job well done on your bachelor's and look forward to our continued collaboration during your master's studies.

In České Budějovice, May 24th, 2010

Hassan Hashimi, Ph.D.