



UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA

**NOVEL ACTINOBACTERIA DISCOVERY AND BIOSYSTEMATICS OF
BACTERIA FROM ANTARCTIC SOILS ON BARRIENTOS ISLAND**

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**NOVEL ACTINOBACTERIA DISCOVERY AND BIOSYSTEMATICS OF
BACTERIA FROM ANTARCTIC SOILS ON BARRIENTOS ISLAND**



By

LEE LEARN HAN

**Thesis Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies, Universiti Putra Malaysia, in
Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy**

April 2012

Dedicated to my parents



Abstract of thesis presented to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia in fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

NOVEL ACTINOBACTERIA DISCOVERY AND BIOSYSTEMATICS OF BACTERIA FROM ANTARCTIC SOILS ON BARRIENTOS ISLAND

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April 2012

Chair: Cheah Yoke Kqueen, PhD

Faculty: Medicine and Health Sciences

The Antarctic, one of the most poorly explored areas on Earth has emerged as a prospective region for the discovery of novel bacteria and bioactive metabolites. A total of 17 soil samples were collected from different areas of Barrientos Island to determine the distribution of bacteria in the soil and the potential of soil bacteria (particularly *Actinobacteria*) in producing bioactive secondary metabolites. The Biolog EcoPlate system and RAPD both demonstrated that soils with different types of rookery and characteristics could affect the soil DNA sequences and soil microbial diversity. The PCR-DGGE used to study the diversity of bacteria, especially *Actinobacteria* successfully displayed the diverse types of bacteria found within the soil and also provided estimations of their densities. A total of 96 bacterial strains were isolated using 12 different types of isolation media, 39 strains from phylum *Actinobacteria* and 57 strains from phylum *Proteobacteria*. Tests for bioactive secondary metabolites were performed and a total of 15 and 14 isolates of *Actinobacteria* and *Proteobacteria* were bioactive. The novel strain, 39^T was fully characterized by using the polyphasic

approach and results showed that it have many differences from the other genera in the family *Dermacoccaceae* on the basis of phylogenetic, chemotaxonomic, phenotypic and signature nucleotide pattern of the 16S rRNA gene. Therefore, it is suggested that strain 39^T be classified as a novel genus in the family *Dermacoccaceae*, as *Barrientosiimonas* gen. nov., the type species of which is *Barrientosiimonas humi* gen. nov., sp. nov. It is evident from this study that the soil of Barrientos Island is a rich source of taxonomically diverse bacteria, especially *Actinobacteria*. The wide distribution of these bacteria in the Antarctic implies that they are endemic and therefore the bio-prospecting of soil bacteria from a wide range of geographic locations like the Antarctic regions would be of great benefit.

Abstrak tesis yang dikemukakan kepada Senat Universiti Putra Malaysia sebagai memenuhi keperluan untuk ijazah Doktor Falsafah

**PENEMUAN ACTINOBACTERIA BARU DAN BIOSISTEMATIKS BAKTERIA
DARI TANAH ANTARTIK PADA BARRIENTOS ISLAND**

Oleh

LEE LEARN HAN

April 2012

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Antartika, salah satu kawasan yang paling kurang diterokai di Bumi telah muncul sebagai rantau yang bakal bagi penemuan bakteria novel dan metabolit bioaktif. Sejumlah 17 sampel tanah telah dikutip dari lokasi berbeza di Barrientos Island untuk menentukan pengagihan bakteria di dalam tanah dan potensi bakteria dari tanah (terutamanya *Actinobacteria*) untuk menghasilkan metabolit sekunder bioaktif. Sistem Biolog Ecoplate dan RAPD kedua-dua kaedah menunjukkan bahawa tanah dengan ciri-ciri yang berlainan mungkin memberi kesan urutan DNA dan kepelbagaian mikrob tanah. PCR-DGGE digunakan untuk mengkaji kepelbagaian bakteria dan berjaya memaparkan pelbagai jenis bakteria yang dijumpai dalam tanah dan juga memberikan anggaran terhadap kepadatan mereka. Sejumlah 96 strain bakteria telah diasingkan dengan menggunakan 12 jenis media pengasingan, 39 strain dari divisi *Actinobacteria* dan 57 strain dari divisi *Proteobacteria*. Ujian untuk bioaktif metabolit sekunder telah dijalankan dan sejumlah 15 dan 14 strain strain dari *Actinobacteria* dan *Proteobacteria* adalah bioaktif. Strain baru, 39^T dicirikan dengan menggunakan pendekatan polyphasic

and ia didapati mempunyai banyak perbezaan daripada genus yang lain dalam keluarga *Dermacoccaceae* di atas asas filogenetik, kemotaksonomi, fenotipik dan corak tandatangan nukleotida gen 16S rRNA. Oleh itu, adalah dicadangkan bahawa strain 39^T dikelaskan sebagai genus baru dalam famili *Dermacoccaceae*, sebagai *Barrientosiimonas* gen. nov., species jenis yang baru ialah *Barrientosiimonas humi* gen. nov., sp. nov. Kajian ini jelas menunjukkan bahawa tanah Barrientos Island adalah sumber yang kaya dengan pelbagai bakteria, terutama *Actinobacteria*. Pengagihan secara meluas bakteria ini di Antartika membayangkan bahawa mereka adalah sangat endemik, terutamanya di dalam tanah, dan oleh itu bio-prospektif bakteria tanah dari pelbagai lokasi geografi seperti kawasan Antartika akan memberikan manfaat yang besar.

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I certify that a Thesis Examination Committee has met on 17 April 2012 to conduct the final examination of Lee Learn Han on his thesis entitled “Novel Actinobacteria Discovery and Biosystematics of Bacteria from Antarctic Soils on Barrientos Island” in accordance with the Universities and University Colleges Act 1971 and the Constitution of the Universiti Putra Malaysia [P.U.(A) 106] 15 March 1998. The Committee recommends that the student be awarded the Doctor of Philosophy.

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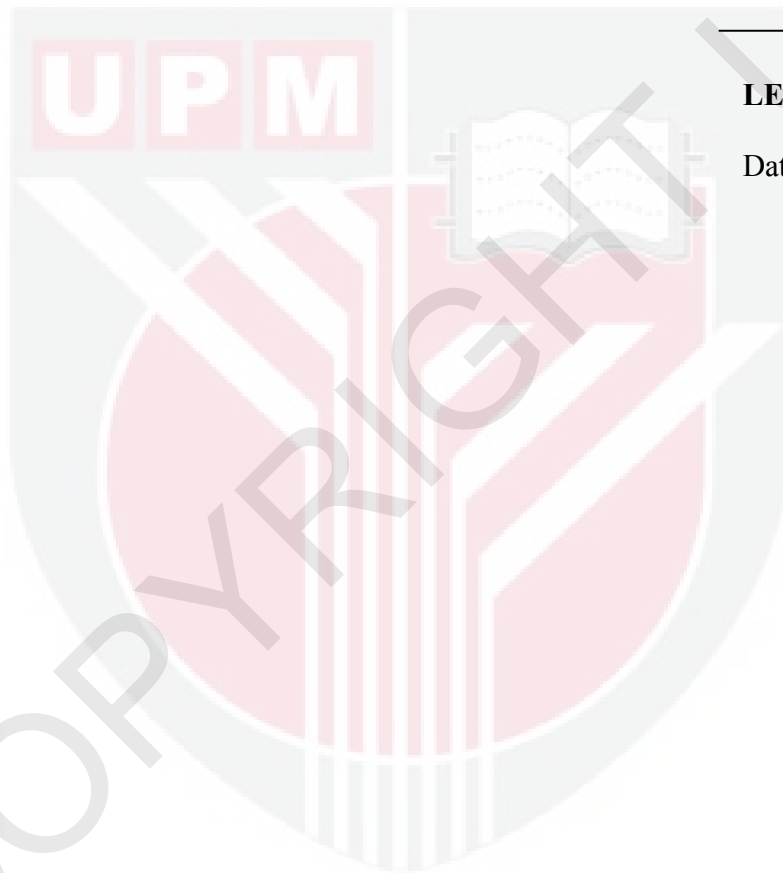
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DECLARATION

I declare that the thesis is my original work except for quotations and citations which have been duly acknowledged. I also declare that it has not been previously, and is not concurrently, submitted for any other degree at Universiti Putra Malaysia or at any other institution.



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Date: 17 April 2012

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
DEDICATION	ii
ABSTRACT	iii
ABSTRAK	v
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	vii
APPROVAL	ix
DECLARATION	xi
LIST OF TABLES	xvi
LIST OF FIGURES	xviii
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	xxi
CHAPTER	
1 GENERAL INTRODUCTION	1
General Introduction	1
General objectives of the study	4
2 LITERATURE REVIEW	5
2.1 Biodiversity	5
2.2 Analysis of Soil Microbial Community	6
2.2.1 Dilution plating and culturing methods	7
2.2.2 Community-level physiological profiles (CLPP) by Biolog	9
2.2.3 Culture-independent methods of community analysis	11
2.3 Biotechnology	19
2.4 The Antarctic environment	22
2.5 Bacteria from Antarctic habitats	23
2.6 Bacteria as source of new natural products	26
2.7 Microbial Systematics	32
2.7.1 Phenotypic characterization	33
2.7.2 Chemical characterization (Chemotaxonomy)	35
2.7.3 Genotypic characterization	47
2.8 Polyphasic characterization	59
3 DIVERSITY OF MICROORGANISMS ESPECIALLY BACTERIA AND ACTINOBACTERIA IN SOILS OF BARRIENTOS ISLAND	62
3.1 Introduction	62
3.2 Objectives of the study	63
3.3 Materials and Methods	64
3.3.1 Environmental sampling	64
3.3.2 Biolog EcoPlate inoculation and incubation	64
3.3.3 Biolog data analysis	65
3.3.4 Soil DNA extraction and purification	66
3.3.5 PCR-RAPD amplifications and fragments visualization	67
3.3.6 RAPD fingerprints data analysis	67

3.3.7	RAPD-based cluster analysis	69
3.3.8	PCR-DGGE – The amplifications of 16S rRNA gene fragments	70
3.3.9	Denaturing gradient gel electrophoresis	71
3.3.10	Sequencing of DGGE fragments	71
3.3.11	DGGE sequence and phylogenetic analysis	72
3.3.12	Nucleotide sequence accession numbers	73
3.3.13	DGGE pattern analysis	73
3.4	Results and Discussion	74
3.4.1	Biolog analysis – Average well color development (AWCD)	74
3.4.2	Biolog analysis – Shannon’s diversity	76
3.4.3	Biolog analysis – Principle component analysis	77
3.4.4	RAPD analysis	78
3.4.5	RAPD analysis – Diversity of soil microbial communities DNA sequence	81
3.4.6	RAPD analysis – UPGMA clustering analysis of RAPD profiles	84
3.4.7	PCR-DGGE of <i>Actinobacteria</i> and bacterial 16S rRNA gene	85
3.4.8	UPGMA analysis of DGGE profiles	94
3.4.9	<i>Actinobacteria</i> abundance with soil characteristics	96
3.5	Conclusion	97
4	ISOLATION, MOLECULAR IDENTIFICATION AND SCREENING OF ACTINOBACTERIA AND PROTEOBACTERIA FROM ANTARCTIC SOILS FOR ANTIMICROBIAL METABOLITES	100
4.1	Introduction	100
4.2	Objectives of the study	101
4.3	Materials and Methods	101
4.3.1	Environmental sampling	101
4.3.2	Selective isolation of bacteria from soils	102
4.3.3	Preparation of crude extracts	103
4.3.4	Biological assays for antimicrobial activity	103
4.3.5	DNA extraction from pure cultures	104
4.3.6	PCR amplification and determination of 16S rRNA gene sequences	105
4.3.7	Putative isolates identification by cloning, sequencing and phylogenetic analysis	106
4.3.8	Nucleotide sequence accession numbers	107
4.4	Results and Discussion	107
4.4.1	Selective isolation of bacteria	107
4.4.2	Bioactivity of actinobacteria and proteobacteria isolates	112
4.4.3	Taxonomy diversity of bioactive actinobacteria and proteobacteria isolates	115
4.4.4	16S rRNA gene sequencing of bioactive isolates showing activity against <i>S. aureus</i>	118
4.4.5	16S rRNA gene sequences of bioactive isolates showing	119

	activity against MRSA	
4.4.6	16S rRNA gene sequences of bioactive isolates showing activity against <i>C. albicans</i>	121
4.5	Conclusion	124
5	MOLECULAR CHARACTERIZATION OF ACTINOBACTERIA AND PROTEOBACTERIA USING ENTEROBACTERIAL REPETITIVE INTERGENIC CONSENSUS PCR (ERIC-PCR), RANDOM AMPLIFIED POLYMORPHIC DNA (RAPD) AND COMPOSITE ANALYSIS	126
5.1	Introduction	126
5.2	Objectives of the study	127
5.3	Materials and Methods	127
5.3.1	Environmental sampling	127
5.3.2	Bacteria isolates	128
5.3.3	DNA extraction from pure cultures	128
5.3.4	PCR amplification and determination of 16S rRNA gene sequences	128
5.3.5	Phylogenetic analysis of 16S rRNA gene sequences of bioactive actinobacteria and proteobacteria isolates	128
5.3.6	ERIC-PCR fingerprinting	129
5.3.7	RAPD fingerprinting of actinobacteria isolates	130
5.3.8	Data analysis of ERIC-PCR and RAPD fingerprints	131
5.3.9	Calculation of discrimination indices	131
5.4	Results and Discussion	132
5.4.1	ERIC-PCR fingerprinting	132
5.4.2	RAPD fingerprinting	143
5.4.3	Composite analysis of ERIC-PCR and RAPD fingerprints	150
5.5	Conclusion	158
6	<i>BARRIEROSIIMONAS HUMI</i> GEN. NOV., SP. NOV., A NOVEL ACTINOBACTERIUM OF THE FAMILY <i>DERMACOCCACEAE</i>	161
6.1	Introduction	161
6.2	Objective of the study	162
6.3	Materials and Methods	162
6.3.1	Environmental sampling	162
6.3.2	Selective isolation of <i>Actinobacteria</i> from soil samples	163
6.3.3	DNA extraction from pure cultures of strain 39 ^T	163
6.3.4	PCR amplification of 16S rRNA gene sequences of strain 39 ^T	163
6.3.5	Identification of strain 39 ^T by purification, cloning and sequencing	164
6.3.6	Analysis of 16S rRNA gene sequence data for strain 39 ^T	164
6.3.7	Chemotaxonomic characterization of strain 39 ^T	165
6.3.8	Phenotypic characterization of strain 39 ^T	171
6.4	Results and Discussion	178
6.4.1	16S rRNA gene sequences analysis of strains 39 ^T , 40 and 41	180
6.4.2	16S rRNA signature nucleotide patterns of strain 39 ^T	180

6.4.3	Chemotaxonomic characteristics of strain 39 ^T	184
6.4.4	Polyphasic characteristics of strain 39 ^T	185
6.5	Conclusion	191
6.5.1	Description of the novel genus <i>Barrientosiimonas</i> gen. nov.	191
6.5.2	Description of the novel species <i>Barrientosiimonas humi</i> sp. nov.	192
7	SUMMARY, GENERAL CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH	195
7.1	Summary and General Conclusion	195
7.2	Recommendation for future research	198
	REFERENCES	203
	APPENDICES	251
	BIODATA OF STUDENT	269
	LIST OF PUBLICATIONS	279