



UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA

**DEVELOPMENT OF IMPROVED PROTOCOLS FOR PLANT
REGENERATION AND GENETIC TRANSFORMATION OF RUBBER
(*Hevea brasiliensis* Muell. Arg.)**

MD. MAHBUBUR RAHMAN

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BERILMU BERBAKTI

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By

MD. MAHBUBUR RAHMAN

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

June 2014

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*S*pecially dedicated

to

My respected late father Dr. Md. Monsur Rahman,

My dearest mother Asia Khatun

&

My beloved wife Dr. Waheeda Parvin

Abstract of thesis presented to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia in fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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**Chairman: Professor Maziah Mahmood, PhD
Faculty: Biotechnology and Bio-molecular Sciences**

Hevea brasiliensis Muell. Arg. is the major source of commercial natural rubber which accounts for 99% of the world natural rubber production. The narrow genetic base, highly heterozygous nature, the long breeding cycle, low fruit set etc are the major limitations of crop improvement by conventional breeding of rubber tree. The recombinant DNA technology combined with tissue culture technique provides opportunity to introduced novel characters into commercially important crop plants, which cannot be achieved easily by conventional breeding. This study was undertaken to establish embryogenic callus culture and plant regeneration protocol via somatic embryogenesis from potential explants of *H. brasiliensis* (Clone RRIM 901) and evaluate the potential target tissues to design a genetic transformation protocol through *Agrobacterium* mediated transformation. In attempt to establish the embryogenic callus and somatic embryos of *H. brasiliensis*, the potential of zygotic embryo, leaf, cotyledon and root in forming embryogenic callus were examined in the basal MS (Murashige and Skoog) medium supplemented with different auxins and cytokinins at various concentrations. The highest callus formation frequency was observed from zygotic embryo explants, in MS medium containing 2.0 mg/L 2,4- D (90%) followed by NAA (50%), picloram (40%) and Dicamba (20%) after 8 weeks of culture. In response to embryogenic callus induction the highest 50% of the zygotic embryo explants produced embryogenic callus. A higher yield 70% of embryogenic callus was obtained when explants were cultured in MS medium containing 2.0 mg/L 2,4- D and 2.0 mg/L KIN (6-furfuralaminopurin) in presence of 0.5 mg/L NAA. Maximum embryos induction frequency (76.66%) were obtained on modified MS medium supplemented with 1.0 mg/L BAP (6- benzylaminopurine), and 2.0 mg/L GA₃ (Gibberellic acid) in presence of 0.1 mg/L NAA after 4 weeks of culture. Frequency of embryo maturation was improved (70%) by inducing amino acid glutamin 100 mg/L in the culture medium. Maximum plant conversion (80%) was observed on a medium supplemented with 0.3 mg/L GA₃ and 0.2 mg/L IBA (Indole - 3- butyric acid). The *in vitro* micro-propagation capacity of somatic embryo derive plants in compare to mature grafted mother tree was evaluated. Maximum mean number of shoots (9.33 shoots / explant) formation were observed in MS medium supplemented with 2.0 mg/L BAP alone and 9.66 shoots / explant were produced in a

combine effect of 2.0 mg/L BAP with 0.5 mg/L KIN after 8 weeks of culture. Root formation was observed only the shoot regenerated from the explant of somatic embryo derive plant. The plants were successfully acclimatized in natural conditions. A transformation protocol with LBA 4404 harbouring pCAMBIA1304 was established by evaluating the effect of different parameters on transformation efficiency by the expression of reporter gene *gfp* in rubber callus culture. The maintenance conditions for the embryogenic callus cultures, particularly a high auxin to cytokinin ratio (2.0 mg/L 2,4 D : 2.0 mg/L BAP : 0.5 mg/L NAA), the age of the culture and the use of a yellow green callus phenotype, were the most important factors for achieving efficient transformation. At the histological level, successful transient expression was related to the number of pro-embryogenic masses present in the embryogenic callus tissue. Transformed callus lines were selected and the stable expression of *gfp* gene detected without antibiotic pressure in rubber callus. In conclusion, the plant regeneration protocol via somatic embryogenesis developed using zygotic embryo explants of *H. brasiliensis* (Clone RRIM 901) has not been reported previously that could be applied to several rubber genotypes for production of large scale planting materials. The present regeneration system also used for developing transgenic callus lines by *Agrobacterium*- mediated gene transfer.

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

**PERKEMBANGAN BAGI PENAMBAHBAIKAN PROTOKOL REGENERASI
TUMBUHAN DAN TRANSFORMASI GENETIK GETAH (*Hevea brasiliensis*
Muell. Arg.)**

Oleh

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Jun 2014

Pengerusi : Professor Maziah Mahmood, PhD
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Hevea brasiliensis Muell. Arg. adalah sumber utama getah asli komersial dan ia mencakupi 99% daripada pengeluaran getah asli di dunia. Asas genetik yang terhad, sifat heterozigot semulajadi yang tinggi, kitaran pembiakan yang panjang, penghasilan set buah yang rendah dan sebagainya adalah batasan-batasan utama dalam penambahbaikan tanaman melalui pembiakan konvensional pokok getah. Teknologi DNA rekombinan digabungkan dengan teknik kultur tisu memberi peluang untuk memperkenalkan ciri-ciri baru ke dalam tanaman komersial yang penting, di mana ia tidak boleh dicapai dengan mudah melalui pembiakan konvensional. Kajian ini telah dijalankan untuk memantapkan protokol bagi kultur kalus embriogenik dan regenerasi melalui pembentukan embrio somatik daripada eksplan-eksplan *H. brasiliensis* yang berpotensi (Klon RRIM 901) dan menilai tisu sasaran yang berpotensi untuk membentuk satu protokol bagi transformasi genetik melalui *Agrobacterium*. Dalam usaha untuk menghasilkan kalus embriogenik dan embrio somatik *H. brasiliensis*, embrio zigotik, daun, kotiledon dan akar yang berpotensi dalam pembentukan kalus embriogenik telah diuji di dalam media asas MS (Murashige dan Skoog) ditambah dengan auksin dan sitokinin pada kepekatan yang berbeza. Kekekapan pembentukan kalus yang paling tinggi telah diperhatikan daripada eksplan embrio zigotik di dalam media MS yang mengandungi 2.0 mg/L 2,4- D (90%), diikuti oleh NAA (50%), picloram (40%) dan Dicamba (20%) selepas 8 minggu dikultur. Hasil bagi induksi kalus embriogenik, sebanyak 50% eksplan embrio zigotik menghasilkan kalus embriogenik. Hasil yang lebih tinggi sebanyak 70% kalus embriogenik diperolehi apabila eksplan-eksplan dikulturkan di dalam media MS yang mengandungi 2.0 mg/L 2,4- D, 2.0 mg/L KIN (6-furfuralaminopurin) dan 0.5 mg/L NAA. Kekekapan induksi embrio maksimum (76.66%) diperolehi di dalam media MS yang diubahsuai, di mana ia ditambah dengan 1.0 mg/L BAP (6- benzylaminopurine), 2.0 mg/L GA₃ (Gibberellic acid) dan 0.1 mg/L NAA selepas 4 minggu dikultur. Kekekapan kematangan embrio telah dipertingkatkan (70%) dengan menambah asid amino, 100 mg/L glutamin ke dalam media kultur. Maksimum petukaran tumbuhan (80%) diperhatikan di dalam media yang ditambah dengan 0.3 mg/L GA₃ dan 0.2 mg/L IBA (Indole - 3- butyric acid). Kapasiti mikropropagasi *in vitro* embrio somatik yang terhasil dari pokok berbanding dengan pokok induk matang yang dicantumkan telah dinilai. Purata

maksimum pembentukan pucuk (9.33 pucuk / eksplan) telah diperhatikan di dalam media MS ditambah dengan 2.0 mg/L BAP, manakala 9.66 pucuk / eksplan telah diperoleh daripada gabungan 2.0 mg/L BAP dengan 0.5 mg/L KIN selepas 8 minggu dikultur. Pertumbuhan akar hanya diperhatikan pada pucuk yang diperolehi daripada somatik embrio. Tumbuhan ini telah berjaya diaklimatisasi dalam keadaan semula jadi. Satu protocol transformasi dengan LBA 4404 yang mengandungi pCAMBIA1304 telah dimantapkan dengan menilai parameter yang berbeza terhadap kecekapan transformasi melalui ekspresi gen pelapor *gfp* di dalam kultur kalus getah. Keadaan terbaik untuk penyelerengaraan kultur kalus embriogenik adalah nisbah auksin kepada cytokinin yang tinggi (2.0 mg/L 2,4 D : 2.0 mg/L BAP : 0.5 mg/L NAA), umur kultur dan penggunaan kalus berfenotip hijau kuning, merupakan faktor-faktor yang paling penting bagi mencapai transformasi yang cekap. Di peringkat histologi, ekspresi transien' yang berjaya adalah bilangan gumpalan pro-embriogenik yang hadir dalam tisu kalus embriogenik. Kalus-kalus yang ditransformasi dipilih dan ekspresi gen *gfp* yang stabil dikesan tanpa tekanan antibiotik dalam kalus getah. Kesimpulannya, protokol bagi regenerasi tumbuhan melalui pembentukan embrio somatik dengan menggunakan eksplan embrio zigotik *H. brasiliensis* (Klon RRIM 901) yang tidak pernah dilaporkan sebelum ini boleh digunakan untuk beberapa genotip getah untuk pengeluaran bahan tanaman secara skala besar. Sistem regenerasi ini juga boleh digunakan untuk menghasilkan kalus transgenik melalui pemindahan gen dengan *Agrobacterium*.

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I certify that a Thesis Examination Committee has met on 12 June 2014 to conduct the final examination of Md. Mahbubur Rahman on his thesis entitled "Development of Improved Protocols for Plant Regeneration and Genetic Transformation of Rubber (*Hevea brasiliensis* Muell. Arg.)" 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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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
ABSTRACT	ii
ABSTRAK	iv
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	vi
APPROVAL	vii
DECLARATION	ix
LIST OF TABLES	xiv
LIST OF FIGURES	xv
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	xix
CHAPTER	
1 INTRODUCTION	1
2 LITERATURE REVIEW	3
2.1 Rubber tree (<i>Hevea brasiliensis</i> Muell. Arg.)	3
2.2 Historical aspect	3
2.3 Botanical aspects	5
2.3.1 Flowering	6
2.3.2 Fruit set	7
2.3.3 Seed	7
2.4 Propagation	8
2.4.1 Polyclonal seed generation	8
2.4.2 Vegetative methods	9
2.5 Plant propagation and conventional methods	9
2.6 Crop improvement in <i>H. brasiliensis</i> : Conventional methods, achievements and constraints	10
2.7 The slump and revival of Malaysian rubber industries – an overview	12
2.8 Biotechnological approach for crop improvement in <i>Hevea brasiliensis</i>	13
2.8.1 Development of <i>in vitro</i> plant regeneration system	14
2.8.2 Somatic embryogenesis as a means of micro-propagation	15
2.9 Somatic embryogenesis in <i>H. brasiliensis</i>	18
2.10 Factor influencing plant regeneration via somatic embryogenesis	19
2.10.1 Growth regulators	19
2.10.2 Explant types	20
2.10.3 Basal media	21
2.10.4 Nitrogen sources	21
2.10.5 Carbon sources	22
2.10.6 Abscisic acid and osmoticum	22
2.11 Plant genetic transformation: Overview	23
2.12 Genetic transformation in <i>Hevea brasiliensis</i>	26
2.13 Genetic transformation systems	29

2.13.1	<i>Agrobacterium tumefaciens</i> :	
	A natural vector for genetic transformation	29
2.13.2	Selectable marker genes and screen able marker genes	30
3	SOMATIC EMBRYOGENESIS AND PLANT REGENERATION OF RUBBER (<i>H. BRASILIENSIS</i> MUELL. ARG).	34
3.1	Introduction	34
3.2	Materials and Methods	35
3.2.1	Plant materials	35
3.2.2	Selection of potential explants for establishment of embryogenic callus culture in <i>H. brasiliensis</i>	35
3.2.3	Optimization of callus growth medium	37
3.2.4	Production of embryogenic callus and maintenance	38
3.2.5	Somatic embryo development and maturation	38
3.2.6	Plantlet regeneration from mature somatic embryos	39
3.2.7	Morphological and histological studies	40
3.2.8	Statistical analysis	41
3.3	Results and Discussion	41
3.3.1	Callus induction from potential explants	41
3.3.2	Optimization of callus proliferation and embryogenic callus induction	50
3.3.3	Production of embryogenic callus and maintenance	68
3.3.4	Somatic embryo induction	74
3.3.5	Embryo maturation	76
3.3.6	Embryo germination and regeneration of plantlet	80
3.3.7	Histological studies	80
3.4	Conclusion	82
4	REJUVENATION AND MICRO-PROPAGATION CAPACITY OF SOMATIC EMBRYO DERIVED PLANTS OF <i>HEVEA BRASILIENSIS</i>	84
4.1	Introduction	84
4.2	Materials and methods	84
4.2.1	Plant materials	84
4.2.2	Direct regeneration and multiple shoot production from different explants of <i>in vitro</i> grown soma plants	85
4.2.3	Effect of auxin on <i>in vitro</i> rooting	86
4.2.4	Statistical analysis	86
4.3	Results and Discussion	86
4.3.1	Effect of basal media on multiple shoot formation	86
4.3.2	Effect of different strength of sucrose on multiple shoot formation from apical shoot tip culture	89
4.3.3	Effect of cytokinins on multiple shoot formation	90
4.3.4	Effect of different explants types on multiple shoot Formation	95
4.3.5	Effect of sub culturing on multiple shoot formation	96
4.3.6	Effect of different concentrations of auxin on <i>in vitro</i> rooting	97
4.3.7	Transfer of <i>in vitro</i> grown plantlets onto soil	100
4.4	Conclusion	100

5	PRODUCTION OF TRANSGENIC CALLUS LINES IN <i>H. BRASILIENSIS</i> (MUELL. ARG.) USING STABLISH ZYGOTIC EMBRYO DERIVED EMBRYOGENIC CALLUS THROUGH <i>AGROBACTERIUM</i> MEDIATED GENETIC TRANSFORMATION	102
5.1	Introduction	102
5.2	Materials and Methods	103
5.2.1	Plant materials	103
5.2.2	Establishment of embryogenic callus cultures	103
5.2.3	<i>Agrobacterium tumefaciens</i> strain and binary vector	104
5.2.4	Preparation of <i>Agrobacterium</i> culture for infection	104
5.2.5	Preparation of co- cultivation and selection medium	104
5.2.6	<i>Agrobacterium</i> infection and co- culture	104
5.2.7	Co-cultivation and selection of transformed callus lines	105
5.2.8	Identification of the ideal culture conditions at improving the efficiency of genetic transformation	105
5.2.9	Selection and evaluation of transformation efficiency by <i>gfp</i> in rubber embryogenic callus	106
5.2.10	Antibiotic sensitivity test and identification of ideal antibiotic for rubber callus culture	106
5.2.11	Statistical analysis	107
5.3	Results and Discussion	107
5.3.1	Establishment of embryogenic callus for <i>Agrobacterium</i> infection	108
5.3.2	Effect of explant and co-cultivation conditions on transformant efficiency	108
5.3.3	Influence of the composition of the embryogenic callus proliferation culture medium on subsequent transformation efficiency	111
5.3.4	Influence of phenotype of the embryogenic callus culture on transformation efficiency	112
5.3.5	Influence of the age of embryogenic callus culture on transformation efficiency	115
5.3.6	Identification of ideal antibiotic for rubber callus culture	117
5.3.7	Production of transgenic callus lines without antibiotic pressure in <i>Hevea</i> callus	120
5.4	Conclusion	122
6	SUMMARY, GENERAL CONCLUSION AND RECOMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH	123
	REFERENCES	126
	APPENDICES	157
	BIODATA OF STUDENT	169
	LIST OF PUBLICATIONS	170