

**DECOLORIZATION/DETOXIFICATION/DEGRADATION
OF TEXTILE DYES AND DYE WASTEWATERS USING
Cyathus bulleri LACCASE/LACCASE-MEDIATORS**

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BIOTECHNOLOGY**

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OF TEXTILE DYES AND DYE WASTEWATERS USING
Cyathus bulleri LACCASE/LACCASE-MEDIATORS**

by

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*Dedicated to
Nirankari Babaji, Rajmata ji, Pujya mata ji
and my parents*

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the thesis entitled “**Decolorization/detoxification/degradation of textile dyes and dye wastewaters using *Cyathus bulleri* laccase/ laccase-mediators**” being submitted by **Ms. Meenu Chhabra** to the Indian Institute of Technology Delhi for the award of the degree of ‘**Doctor of Philosophy**’, is a record of the bonafide research work carried out by her, which has been prepared under our supervision in conformity with the rules and regulations of the “Indian Institute of Technology Delhi”. The research results presented in this thesis have not been submitted for any degree or diploma in any other University or Institute.

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ABSTRACT

Decolorization of different reactive and acidic dyes, used in wool industry, was performed using laccase from *Cyathus bulleri* in the presence of common natural and synthetic mediators. 2, 2'-Azino-bis(3-ethylbenzthiazoline-6-sulphonic acid) or ABTS was the most effective, among a large number of synthetic mediators tested, and resulted in 80-95% decolorization of the studied dyes. Natural mediators like vanillin were less effective and mediated less (0-45 %) color removal. Laccase-ABTS treatment also led to ~80% color removal of the simulated effluent. No co-relation was found between laccase activity on different mediators and their ability to decolorize. Optimum pH for mediator oxidation coincided with the optimum pH for decolorization using that mediator. The treated and untreated dye samples were also evaluated for toxicity in model microbial systems. Simulated effluent was not toxic to *Pseudomonas putida* but showed cytotoxicity, as indicated by the thinning of the background lawns of *Salmonella typhimurium* in Ames test. The laccase-mediator system removed cytotoxicity and mutagenicity associated with the dye mixture.

Effect of laccase (and mediator assisted laccase) action on two triarylmethane dyes, namely, Basic Green 4 and Acid Violet 17 and an azo dye Acid Red 27 was studied and various products of dye degradation and their toxicity were evaluated. It was found that rates of decolorization were accelerated by 600-800 folds for Basic Green 4 and by nearly 2000-fold for Acid Violet 17 in the presence of the mediator. Acid Red 27 was completely resistant to laccase treatment. However laccase-1-HOBT system led to nearly 90% and laccase-violuric acid system led to nearly 80% decolorization of this dye. Liquid chromatography-electron spray ionization-tandem mass spectrometric analysis was performed on the untreated dyes, dyes treated with laccase alone and dyes treated with

different laccase-mediator combinations to elucidate the pathway of degradation. Decolorization of Basic Green 4 by laccase alone was mainly due to N- demethylation reactions. In the presence of the mediator, apart from N-demethylation, a number of other reactions were initiated from the carbinol form of the dye. Benzaldehyde and N, N dimethyl aniline were identified as the major end products of degradation. Similarly, laccase alone carried out some N-deethylation steps on Acid Violet 17, which were insufficient to exhibit any significant decolorization. Mediator assisted reactions initiated with the formation and oxidation of the carbinol form of the dye. A number of subsequent oxidation reactions then resulted in formyl benzene sulphonic acid, carboxy benzene sulphonic acid and benzene sulphonic acid as the major end products. Laccase-mediator action on Acid Red 27 showed the dye breakdown into small molecular weight fragment initially but it followed the formation of unidentified complex polymeric end products. Toxicity analysis indicated that Basic Green 4 was toxic and treatment with laccase-mediators resulted in 80-100% detoxification. Acid Violet 17 was less toxic and this could be reduced by laccase-mediator treatment. Acid Red 27 was not toxic but was found to be mutagenic. *The laccase-mediator assisted dye decolorization pathways for these dyes are proposed for the first time in this study.*

Laccase immobilization by entrapment was performed in alginate beads cross linked with calcium, copper or zinc and poly vinyl alcohol (PVA) beads crosslinked with boric acid or nitrate. Zinc alginate and copper alginate gave 80 % and 95 % decolorization respectively. Zinc alginate and PVA-nitrate retained stable 65 and 70 % laccase activity after 5 months of storage at 4°C. However, no increased resistance to chloride, EDTA and sodium azide was noted with IC₅₀ values nearly identical to free laccase. It was found that efficient decolorization of Acid Violet 17 could be achieved for

5 cycles for Zinc alginate and PVA nitrate, whereas around 20 cycles of decolorization were observed for Basic Green 4 by PVA-nitrate. PVA-nitrate beads were mechanically and chemically more stable than the alginate beads. Continuous decolorization of the simulated effluent was performed in a packed bed bioreactor using immobilized laccase in calcium alginate, zinc alginate and PVA-nitrate beads. Laccase leaching was substantially reduced in PVA-nitrate beads and almost 95% decolorization could be maintained for more than 108 h.

Continuous decolorization using free enzyme was performed in an enzyme membrane reactor (EMR). Effective decolorization (>95 %) was achieved for a period of more than 25 days and nearly 45 % laccase activity could be recovered after 25 days. ABTS recovery from the treated effluent was performed by ammonium sulphate precipitation. The reactor was operated at different hydraulic retention times (HRT) and effect on decolorization achieved, mediator recovery and membrane fouling was studied. With an increase in HRT from 4-16 h, the decolorization varied from 82-95 % and the membrane fouling increased from nil to 42.36 % and ABTS recovery decreased from 72 to 30 %. ***The continuous decolorization in EMR while conserving both enzyme and mediator has been successfully demonstrated for the first time.***

The effectiveness of combination treatments for the decolorization of the real industrial effluent from a textile mill was also assessed. Optimized laccase-ABTS system led to nearly 60 % decolorization whereas coagulation of the dye using alum led to 90 % color removal, but with formation of dye sludge. Thus, neither of the processes alone was found to be very effective for color removal. The combination of both treatments led to >80 % color removal. Laccase-ABTS treatment followed by alum coagulation did not

prove to be very effective for continuous decolorization purpose. The sequence involving alum coagulation first followed by laccase-ABTS treatment in an EMR was found to be better for continuous decolorization of the effluent in terms of retention of laccase activity (55% activity retained after 15 days), ABTS recovery (60%) from the permeate, membrane fouling (Nil after 15 days) and long term operation (> 15 days) of the EMR.

CONTENTS

	Page No.
Certificate	i
Acknowledgements	ii-iii
Abstract	iv
Contents	viii
List of figures	xv
List of tables	xix
1. Introduction and objectives	1-5
1.1. General introduction	1
1.2. Objectives set for the study	4
1.3. Thesis structure	5
2. Review of Literature	5-40
2.1. Textile effluents and its composition	6
2.2. Color discharge consents	10
2.3. Dyes used in the textile industry	12
2.3.1. Classification of dyes	13
2.3.2. Nomenclature of dyes	13
2.4. Toxicity of dyes and dye effluents	13
2.4.1. Toxicity to bacteria	14
2.4.2. Toxicity to fish	15
2.4.3. Toxicity to mammals	16
2.4.4. Mutagenicity/carcinogenicity of dyes	16
2.5. Dye removal techniques	17

2.5.1. Physical methods for color removal	17
2.5.1.1. Adsorption	17
2.5.1.2. Biosorption	17
2.5.1.3. Membrane filtration	18
2.5.2. Chemical methods	18
2.5.2.1. Coagulation/Flocculation	18
2.5.2.2. Advanced Oxidations Processes (AOPs)	18
2.5.2.2.1. H₂O₂/Fe (II) salts (Fenton's reagent)	18
2.5.2.2.2. Ozonation (O₃)	19
2.5.2.2.3. Ozone (O₃)/ultraviolet (UV) light	19
2.5.2.2.4. Photochemical (H₂O₂/UV) treatment	20
2.5.2.2.5. Ozone (O₃)/H₂O₂/UV treatment	20
2.5.3. Compleximetric methods	20
2.5.4. Biological methods	21
2.5.4.1. Aerobic bacteria	21
2.5.4.2. Actinomycetes	22
2.5.4.3. Anaerobic bacteria	22
2.5.4.4. Sequential anaerobic-aerobic treatment	22
2.5.4.5. White rot fungi (WRF)	23
2.5.5. Enzymatic methods of dye removal	25
2.5.5.1. Manganese Peroxidases (MnP)	25
2.5.5.2. Lignin peroxidases (LiP)	27
2.5.5.3. Laccases	29
2.6. Application of laccases for dye declorization purposes	32
2.7. Laccases in polymerization	33

2.8. Laccase mediators	35
2.8.1. Dye decolorization using laccase-mediators	36
2.9. Laccase immobilization	38
2.10. Use of laccases in different types of reactors	38
2.11. Other applications of laccases	40
3. Determination of dye decolorization parameters and toxicity evaluation	41-71
3.1. Introduction	41
3.2. Materials and Methods	42
3.2.1. Dyes and mediators	42
3.2.2. Microbial culture and maintenance	42
3.2.3. Laccase production and purification	42
3.2.4. Screening different natural and synthetic mediators for dye decolorization	45
3.2.5. Effect of mediator concentration	45
3.2.6. Laccase activity on various mediators	46
3.2.7. Determination of the rate of dye degradation	46
3.2.8. Preparation of simulated effluent	47
3.2.9. Effect of initial pH on the decolorization of the simulated effluent.	47
3.2.10. Determination of toxicity	47
3.2.11. Determination of the genotoxicity/ mutagenicity	48
3.3. Results	50
3.3.1. Decolorization of individual dyes	50
3.3.2. Laccase activity on different mediators	53
3.3.3. Effect of mediator concentration	54

3.3.4. Rates of dye decolorization	56
3.3.5. Decolorization of simulated effluent	56
3.3.6. Respiratory and Geno-Toxicity determination	62
3.4. Discussion	65
3.5. Conclusions	71
4. Determination of dye decolorization pathways and toxicity of the degradation products	72-110
4.1. Introduction	72
4.2. Materials and methods	74
4.2.1. Dyes, mediators and laccase	74
4.2.2. Dye decolorization with laccase and mediator	74
4.2.3. Determination of the rate of dye degradation	76
4.2.4. LC-MS/MS analysis	76
4.2.5. Time course of appearance and disappearance of dye degradation products	77
4.2.6. Determination of toxicity and mutagenicity	78
4.3. Results	78
4.3.1. Screening mediators	78
4.3.2. Decolorization rates	81
4.3.3. LC- MS/MS analysis of Basic Green 4	82
4.3.4. LC-MS/MS analysis of Acid Violet 17	88
4.3.5. LC-MS/MS analysis of Acid Red 27	94
4.3.6. Toxicity of the decolorized dye samples	96
4.3.7. Mutagenicity of the dye samples	96

4.4. Discussion	100
4.5. Conclusions	110
5. Continuous dye decolorization studies using immobilized and free laccase	111-132
5.1. Introduction	111
5.2. Materials and Methods	112
5.2.1. Laccase immobilization	112
5.2.2. Determination of laccase leaching and bead stability	114
5.2.3. Immobilized laccase characterization	115
5.2.4. Decolorization experiment using immobilized enzyme	115
5.2.5. Continuous decolorization in a packed bed column	115
5.2.6. Continuous decolorization in an enzyme membrane reactor (EMR)	117
5.2.7. Recovery of ABTS using ammonium sulfate precipitation	119
5.3. Results	120
5.3.1. Laccase immobilization and leaching	120
5.3.2. Bead stability	121
5.3.3. Immobilized laccase characterization	122
5.3.4. Batch decolorization using the immobilized laccase	123
5.3.5. Continuous decolorization using immobilized laccase	124
5.3.6. Continuous decolorization experiments in an EMR.	121
5.4. Discussion	129
5.5. Conclusions	132
6. Decolorization of the industrial effluent using combination of physico-chemical and laccase/mediator treatment	133-147
6.1. Introduction	133

6.2. Materials and methods	135
6.2.1. Characterization of the actual effluent	135
6.2.2. Decolorization of the actual effluent using laccase-mediators	135
6.2.3. Effect of laccase concentration on the decolorization of the actual effluent	135
6.2.4. Effect of the mediator (ABTS) concentration on the decolorization of the actual effluent	136
6.2.5. Analysis of degradation by mass spectrometry	136
6.2.6. Precipitating residual color (after laccase-ABTS treatment) using alum	136
6.2.7. Effect of initial pH on chemical precipitation by alum	136
6.2.8. Decolorization of the effluent using alum followed by laccase-ABTS.	137
6.2.9. Continuous decolorization	137
6.2.10. Laccase-ABTS treatment followed by alum treatment	137
6.2.11. Alum treatment followed by laccase-ABTS treatment	138
6.3. Results	138
6.3.1. Characterization of the effluent	138
6.3.2. Decolorization of the effluent using laccase-mediators	139
6.3.3. Effect of laccase concentration on the decolorization of effluent	140
6.3.4. Effect of ABTS concentration on the decolorization of effluent	142
6.3.5. Mass spectral analysis of the raw effluent and effluent decolorized with laccase-ABTS	142

6.3.6. Effect of alum concentration and initial pH on the removal of the residual color after laccase-ABTS treatment	143
6.3.7. Alum treatment followed by laccase-ABTS treatment	145
6.3.8. Continuous treatments	145
6.3.8.1. Laccase-ABTS treatment followed by alum treatment	145
6.3.8.2. Alum treatment followed by laccase-ABTS treatment	145
6.4. Discussion	148
6.5. Conclusions	151
7. Summary and recommendations	152-155
7.1. Summary	152
7.2. Recommendations	155
8. References	156-180
9. Appendices	181-195
Appendix I: Chemicals/consumables and equipments	181
Appendix II: Composition of microbiological media and other reagents and solutions	184
Appendix III: Absorption scans graphs	188
Appendix IV: HPLC chromatograms	191
Appendix V: Mass chromatograms	193
Biodata of author	200-202