



Study on Different Types of Haemocytes and Their Behaviour in Insects (Orthoptera) Collected from Navegaon and Tadoba National Park and Its Adjoining Areas

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Abstract

Insect immunity consists of cellular and humoral reactions. Cellular reactions comprise haemocytes which include phagocytosis, nodulation (haemocyte aggregation) and encapsulation. Morphologically, haemocytes are distinct variety of cells comparable to the vertebrate leukocytes and macrophages. Many researchers categorised the haemocytes of insects (Orthoptera) as prohaemocytes (PRs), plasmatocytes (PLs), coagulocytes (COs), oenocytoids (OEs), podocytes (POs), granulocytes (GRs) and reticular cells (RTs). The aim of present study was morphological characterization of circulating haemocytes in Orthoptera. Grasshoppers were collected from Navegaon and Tadoba National Park and its adjoining areas of Maharashtra, India during educational visit. Prohaemocytes (PRs), plasmatocytes (PLs), granulocytes (GRs), oenocytoids (OEs), podocytes (POs) were categorized. Haemocyte aggregation and phagocytic behaviour were also noticed. But fundamental studies on insect haemocytes demand more investigations and researches.

Keywords

Haemocytes, Insects, Orthoptera, Phagocytosis, Aggregation.

INTRODUCTION

Tadoba Andhari Tiger Reserve is located in Chandrapur district, Maharashtra, India. It is Maharashtra's oldest and largest national park. Navegaon National Park is located in the Arjuni Morgaon subdivision of Gondia district in the state

of Maharashtra, India. Insect diversity in this area is very high. The Orthoptera fauna of India comprise about 1033 species belonging to 398 genera (Sunil *et al.*, 2018; Chandra *et al.*, 2010), whereas from Maharashtra 143 species of Orthoptera belongs to 98

genera in eight families were reported (Sunil *et al.*, 2018; Chandra and Gupta, 2012).

In general, insect immunity consists of cellular and humoral reactions (Ravindranath, 1977). Cellular reactions involve haemocytes which include phagocytosis, nodulation (haemocyte aggregation) and encapsulation. Morphologically, haemocytes are distinct variety of cells (Price and Ratcliffe, 1974; Mead *et al.*, 1986), comparable to the vertebrate leukocytes and macrophages (Jones, 1950), which constitute the chief and inevitable components of haemolymph in the open circulatory system of insects (hexapods) as well as in other arthropods and invertebrates (Wigglesworth, 1939, 1955 and 1979). Akai and Sato (1979) categorised the haemocytes of *Locusta migratoria* (Orthoptera) as prohaemocytes (PRs), plasmatocytes (PLs) coagulocytes (COs), oenocytoids (OEs), and reticular cells (RTs). However, Sharma and Dutta (1979) recorded the presence of granulocytes (GRs) and vermicytes (VEs) in orthoptera. The aim of present research is morphological characterization of circulating haemocytes. However, type of haemocytes and their role in insects are debatable and need more information on the subject for clarity. However, to-date, there exist lacunae, pitfalls and controversies on overall knowledge about insect haemocytes. Therefore, the scope for fundamental studies on insect haemocytes demands more investigations and researches. In view of this, in the present research attempt has been made to unify the haemocytes classification. In *Drosophila*, plasmatocytes are responsible for the disposal of both microorganisms and apoptotic cells, and to date several candidate

receptors have been described on plasmatocyte (Frank *et al.*, 1996, 1999). Aggregation and encapsulation are reactions achieved by specialised haemocytes reported in *Drosophila* (Carton *et al.*, 1986).

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Grasshoppers (total no.10) were collected from Navegaon and Tadoba National Park and its adjoining areas during educational visit. Haemolymph samples were withdrawn from the insects by means of incision made near the 3rd coxae. Haemolymph was smeared directly on sterilized glass slides and stained by Giemsa, and neutral red. For phagocytosis study activated charcoal particles suspended in normal saline (0.67% NaCl) was injected into insect leg and the aspirate was taken for haemocytes study. Cellular morphology was examined.

RESULT

Following haemocyte categories were recognized

Prohaemocytes (PRs) and Granulocytes (GRs)

PRs are usually the smallest haemocytes found in the haemolymph, round or oval cells with variable sizes. The nucleus is large, round, usually centrally located and almost filling the most part of cytoplasm. A thin peripheral layer of cytoplasm surrounds the nucleus (Fig 1A).

GRs are small to large, spherical or oval cells of variable sizes. The nucleus is rounded and is centrally located. The cytoplasm is characteristically granular and the cell membrane is usually articulated (Fig 1B).

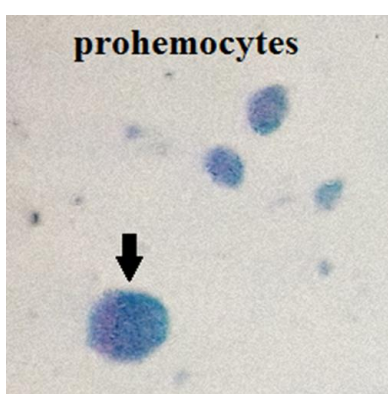


Fig 1A

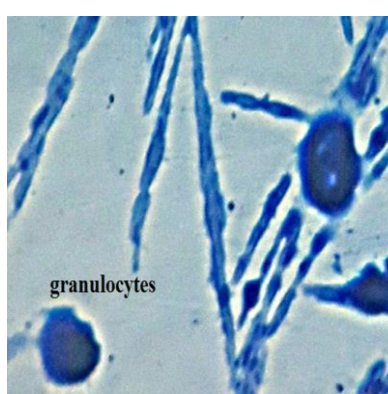


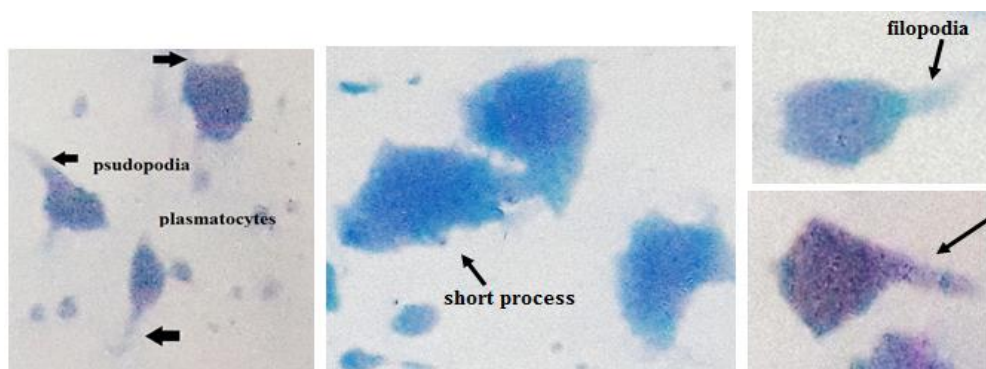
Fig 1B

Fig1A and B: Giemsa stained prohaemocytes (Fig 1A) and granulocytes (Fig 1B) (x400)

Plasmatocytes (PLs)

PLs are small to large, polymorphic cells. The cytoplasm is abundant. The cytoplasmic membranes

have filopodia. The nucleus may be centrally placed or eccentric (Fig 1C).

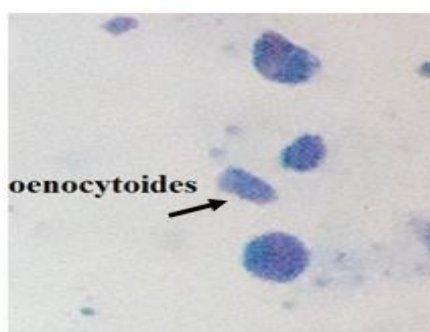


(Fig 1C)

Fig1C: Giemsa stained plasmatocytes with pseudopodia and filopodia (x400)

Oenocytoids (OEs)

OEs are small to large, oval or spherical cells. The plasma membrane is generally without processes (Fig 1D).



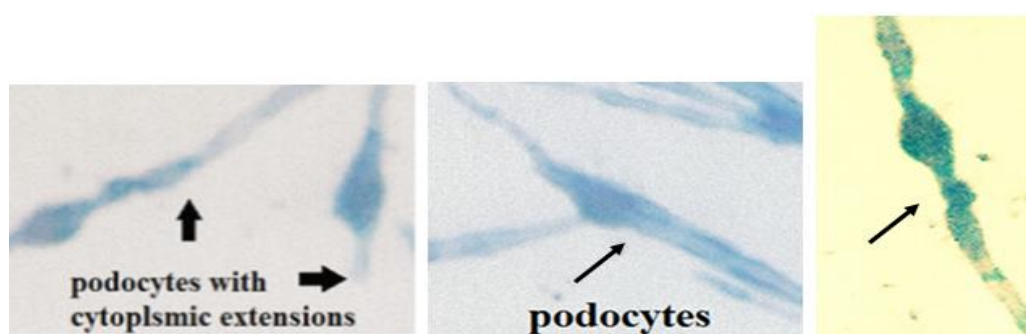
(Fig 1D)

Fig1D: Giemsa stained oenocytoids (indicated by arrow) (x400)

Vermicytes (VEs) and Podocytes (POs)

VEs are extremely elongated cells with slightly granular or agranular cytoplasm. The nucleus may be located centrally or eccentrically (picture not

shown). POs are very large in size, extremely flattened with several cytoplasmic extensions (Fig 1E).



(Fig 1E)

Fig1E: Giemsa stained podocytes (indicated by arrow) (x400)

Phagocytic behaviour of haemocytes

Haemocytes showed different stages of phagocytosis like attachment of charcoal particle on cell surface, phagocytosis of charcoal by cell or internalization of

charcoal by cell. Formation of small cytoplasmic process, food cup and filopodia were noticed (Fig 2A).

Haemocytes showed neutral red positive reaction indicating the presence of lysosomal compartments (Fig 2B).

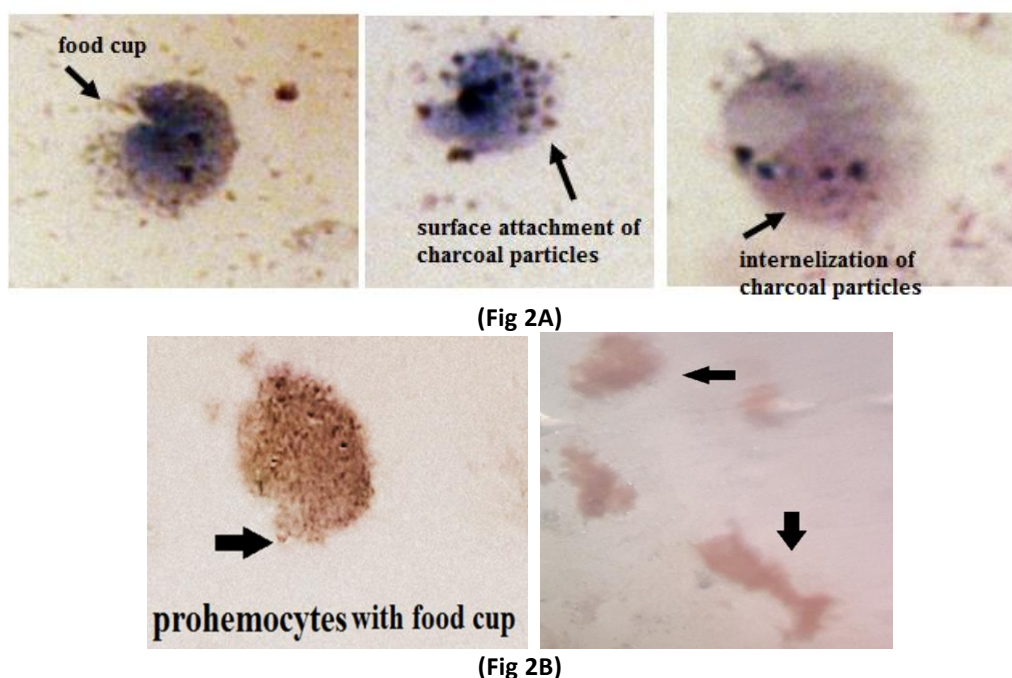


Fig2: Haemocytes showed different stages of phagocytosis (Fig 2A) and neutral red positive reaction (Fig 2B) (x400)

Cellular aggregation

Haemocyte aggregation was noticed (Fig 3).

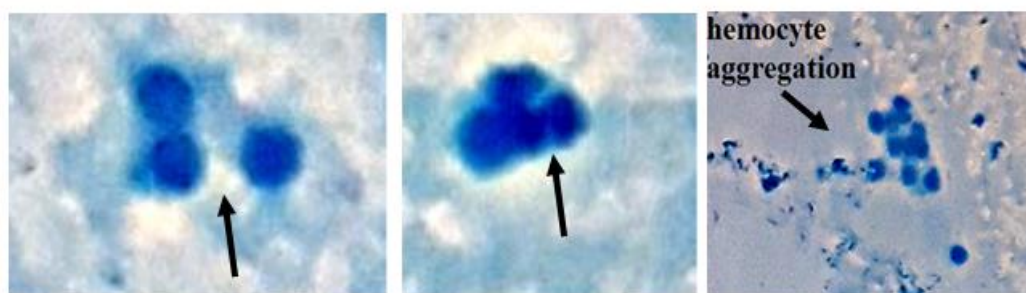


Fig3: Different stages of aggregation response of haemocytes (giemsa stained) of grasshopper

DISCUSSION

Blood cells or haemocytes are reported as chief immune effector cells of invertebrates and are capable of performing multiple immunological functions including aggregation, phagocytosis, encapsulation, nodulation and generation of cytotoxic agents. Invertebrates including arthropods rely on innate immune defences (Galloway and Depledge, 2001). Neutrophils, macrophages and dendritic cells of vertebrate are professional

phagocytes and have a regulatory role in adaptive immunity by producing co-stimulatory molecules and immune-modulatory cytokines (Aderem and Underhill, 1999). Phagocytosis is a primordial aspect of innate immunity and is conserved in all arthropoda: in *Drosophila*, plasmatocyte resembles the mammalian monocyte/macrophage lineage exerts this function (Girardin *et al.*, 2002). Our result revealed different types of haemocytes that corroborated previous studies (Fig 1) (Akai and Sato,

1979; Sharma and Dutta, 1979; Guria *et al.*, 2016). Phagocytosis is considered a classical innate immune response reported in the majority of the invertebrate phyla. It is an established immunological response and is considered as a biomarker of any pollution (Oliver and Fisher, 1999; Guria *et al.*, 2016). Phagocytic cells are known to be enriched with lysosomal vesicles and the degree of lysosomal membrane fragility can be quantitated by neutral red retention assay (Guria, 2018).

We reported the phagocytic response of insect haemocytes under the challenge of charcoal particle and our result showed neutral red positive response (Fig 2). Cell-cell aggregation is considered as an immunological response for host defence. Aggregation of haemocytes around invaded microorganisms is termed as “encapsulation response” and is considered as an important immunological reaction (Nappi and Christensen, 2005; Guria *et al.*, 2016). Our result also revealed haemocyte aggregation (Fig 3).

Most recent studies of both the humoral and cellular components of the invertebrate immune system have revealed that invertebrates share many of the fundamental immunological mechanisms with vertebrates, including humans. This article includes brief speculation on how the insect immune system may have evolved (Gupta, 2001).

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interests regarding the publication of this paper.

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