Some biodeteriorating air-borne fungi in and around Lucknow, India

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ABSTRACT

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The paper presents the result of qualitative and quantitative analyses of mycoflora in the air of Lucknow city and adjoining areas. Burkard slide sampler and Andersen two-stage volumetric samplers were employed for air sampling at forty places of Lucknow at different times of the year from January 1997 to February 1998. As many as thirty-five types of fungal spores and twenty-nine types of fungal colonies were registered.

It has been envisaged that certain fungi such as Alternaria, Aspergillus, Chaetomium, Cladosporium, Curvularia, Diplodia, Epicoccum, Fusarium, Nigrospora, Penicillium, Rhizopus, Torula, Trichoderma, Trichothecium, etc., prevalent in the air are associated with the biodeterioration of cultural properties.

Key-words—Air-borne fungi, Biodeterioration. Cultural properties, Lucknow.

भारत अवस्थित लखनऊ तथा इसके आस-पास उपस्थित कुछ जैवअवनतिकारक वायुजात कवक

आशा खण्डेलवाल, रश्मि तिवारी, लिली मिश्र एवं रश्मि सक्सेना

सारांश

प्रस्तुत शोध पत्र में लखनऊ शहर तथा इससे जुड़े क्षेत्रों के वायुमण्डल में उपस्थित कवक वनस्पतिजात के गुणात्मक तथा मात्रात्मक विश्लेषण के परिणामों की विवेचना की गयी है। इस हेतु जनवरी 1997 से फरवरी 1998 के मध्य के भिन्न-भिन्न कालों में लखनऊ के चालीस स्थानों के वायु नमूने लेने के उद्देश्य से बरकार्ड स्लाइड प्रतिलिपित्र तथा एण्डरसन के दो चरणों वाले आयतनी प्रतिलिपित्र लगाए गए। कवकीय बीजाणुओं के लगभग पैंतीस रूप तथा कवकीय उपनिवेशों के उन्तीस रूप अंकित किए गए।

यह प्रस्तावित किया जाता है कि वायुमण्डल में व्यापक रूप से उपस्थित कुछ कवक जैसे—आल्टरनेरिया, एस्पर्जिलस, कीटोमियम, क्लैडोस्पोरियम, कर्व्यूलिरिया, डाइप्लोडिया, एपिकोकम, फ़्यूजेरियम, नाइग्रोस्पोरा, पेनिसिलियम, राइज़ोपस, टोर्यूला, ट्राइकोडमां, ट्राइकोधीशियम, इत्यादि सांस्कृतिक सम्पत्तियों के जैवअवनतिकरण से सम्बद्ध हैं।

संकेत शब्द—वायुजात कवक, जैवअवनतिकरण, सांस्कृतिक सम्पत्तियाँ, लखनऊ।

INTRODUCTION

THE district of Lucknow (26°30'-27°10' N and 80°30'-81° 13'E) is an irregular, quadrilateral area located in the Gangetic plain of Uttar Pradesh. The climate is characteristically periodic with three well-marked seasons and sub-tropical monsoon type of climate. The flora of this district has changed dramatically over the recent years.

The valuable articles such as manuscripts, books, wall hangings, wood articles, paper crafts and various types of paintings of museums, archives, libraries, etc. get deteriorated due to the attack of different kinds of micro-organisms. This problem is more deterimental in tropical humid climate like India and can be solved to a large extent by estimating the qualitative and quantitative measures of causal organisms in the ambient air followed by suitable control measures. The present study was aimed to determine the correlation of air-borne fungal spores present in different parts of Lucknow and their impact on the properties of cultural heritage.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

The sampling was carried out by two internationally recognised air samplers provided under MEF sponsored project entitled "Aeroallergens and human health: aerobiological studies". These volumetric air samplers are usually employed for aerobiological studies where both qualitative and quantitative estimates of aeromycoflora are required and precise identifications are the prerequisites.

The air samples were collected from forty different places of Lucknow city and suburbs at different times of the year from January 1997 to February 1998 employing both the samplers simultaneously. The slides smeared with safranin-stained glycerine jelly were exposed for 10 min in Burkard slide sampler for identification and estimation of dispersed air-borne fungal spores. It is battery/power operated volumetric sampler, which sucks air at the rate of 10 litres/min. The rectangular cover slips (22 x 50 mm) were used and data was calculated in terms of fungal spores/sq cm of the slide surface.

The petridishes with sabourand's nutrient agar medium were exposed for 10 min time in Andersen two-stage sampler simultaneously with a visual identification method for specific identification of culturable fungi. After recording the data, the average colony concentration was converted into per metric cube of air by using recommended conversion factor. The data generated on these samplers provide specific number and frequency of fungal spores/colonies in a given volume of air, thus increasing the importance of data to be readily used as a prerequisite for aeropalynological studies in general and indoor aeromycological studies in particular.

RESULTS

The qualitative and quantitative analyses of aeromycoflora of forty different places of Lucknow are quite variable. The petridishes exposed in Andersen air sampler recorded the highest colony counts from Kanpur Road followed by Chinhat, Sitapur Road, Lucknow University, Sarojini Nagar, Talkatora Road, Charbagh, Hardoi Road, Bani. River Bank Colony, etc (Fig. 1). Amongst the twenty-nine types of fungal colonies recorded from all the sites, Cladosporium cladosporioides was dominant and Alternaria alternata was subdominant. It was followed by Mucor hiemalis, Fusarium oxysporum, Penicillium funiculosum, Aspergillus niger, Curvularia lunata, Helminthosporium sp., Penicillium citrinum, Aspergillus flavus, A. nidulans, etc.

The composition of dispersed fungal spore obtained on the slides by Burkard sampler was quite different. The site of maximum occurrence of fungal spores was different from that of fungal colonies. The maximum fungal spores were recorded from Sitapur Road followed by Hardoi Road, Sugarcane Research Institute, Residency, Charbagh, Malihabad, CIMAP. Jankipuram, Sardar Patel Marg, etc. (Fig. 2). The spores of Cladosporium were dominant as was the case in registration of fungal colonies. The small round spores ranked second followed by Alternaria, Curvularia, Epicoccum, Helminthosporium, Drechslera, Periconia, Torula, Chaetomium, etc.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

Fungi are ubiquitous and have wide range of genera and species. The earlier aeromycological studies carried out in Lucknow either in Birbal Sahni Institute of Palaeobotany or elsewhere in Lucknow only provided the qualitative estimates of aerobiota. But in the present study both qualitative and quantitative data was obtained by employing the technologically advanced air-samplers.

The botanical specimens, manuscripts, books, wall hangings, wood/paper crafts and various other material of cultural heritage provide an ideal substrates for the growth and proliferation of several fungi and probably in most of the cases they get liberated in the ambient air. In enclosed spaces, the bindery glues, old paper dust, binding fabrics and humidity due to coolers deteriorate the situation manifold. Several species of Aspergillus, Fusarium, Penicillium, Alternaria, Trichoderma, Cladosporium, etc. are found growing on herbarium and other dry preserved materials of National Museum of Natural History, New Delhi (Nair, 1971).

The aerobiological studies in the indoor air of library was conducted by Tilak and Vishwe (1976) recording the presence of air-borne spores of *Aspergillus, Cladosporium, Torula, Penicillium, Trichoderma* and *Chaetomium*. Many cellulose

decomposing fungi such as Alternaria, Monilia, Fusarium, Chaetomium, Myrothecium, Torula, Stachybotrys, Cladosporium, Paecilomyces, Rhizopus and Epicoccum were also reported from a library of Aurangabad (Tilak & Saibaba, 1984). The high prevalence of Cladosporium, Penicillium and Alternaria inside libraries are also reported by Tripathi (1987), Tilak and Pillai (1988) and Singh et al., (1990). Species of Aspergillus, Penicillium and Cladosporium were in great abundance in the indoor air of library of Madras University (Nadimuthu & Vittal, 1995). The agitation of books causes marked increase in the concentration of fungal spores (Burge et al., 1978; Singh et al., 1990; Vittal & Glory, 1985).

Alternaria alternata, Aspergillus sydowii, A. niger, Cladosporium cladosporioides, Penicillium citrinum were found occurring on different cellulosic materials such as manuscript and books, wood craft, paintings, wall hangings, etc. in Gorakhpur (Lakshmikant & Mathur, 1989). Aspergillus flavus, A. nidulans, A. niger, A. sydowii, A. terreus, A. ustus, A. versicolor, Alternaria, Chaetomium, Cladosporium, Diplodia, Epicoccum, Fusarium, Paecilomyces varioti, Penicillium citrinum, Rhizopus, Torula, Trichoderma, Trichothecium, etc. recorded in the present study, have been identified for the considerable damage of miniature paper paintings and lithographs by Dhawan and Agarwal (1986). Most of the fungi encountered in the present survey are generally similar to those found in indoor environment. The outdoor fungal spores get easy access in indoor air through open doors and windows and on getting optimum environmental conditions and proper substrates they start growing and proliferating. The air-monitoring inside the Ajanta and Ellora caves (Tilak et al., 1972) and in Aurangabad (Tilak & Kulkarni, 1972) has established a correlation between air borne micro-organisms and environmental conditions that led to the biodeterioration of wall paintings of Ajanta and sculptures of Ellora. Thus, from the study of aerial survey it may be concluded that fungal spores suspended in the air must be traced back to their sources to which much attention has not been paid by the scientist so far. Hence, studies on biodeterioration aspects of conservation of cultural properties need to be expanded and strengthened in order to save the cultural heritage. The role of micro-organisms in causation of allergic rhinitis and bronchial asthma from library dust is well documented and should also be properly assessed in indoor environments.

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5	Chaetomium globosum	mn																				
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2.1	Emericella nidulans																		2			
a	Fusarium roseum				2	2	2		4	2	2	9	2				4			-	2	
2	F. oxysporum	3	-	3	5		4	9	3	9	4	3	4	3			_	-	2	2	2	
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7.7	Penicillium funiculosum	uns			2	6	-	4	4	3	3	∞	3		-	_	2	-	3	3	-	
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Locality Jail F	Date of collection 25-7-97 1-8-97 19-8-97 19-8-97	Name of fungal spores	Acmaraillus candidus	asperginus canaiaus	A. Havus	A. nidulans	A. niger	A. carneus	A. fumigatus	A. sydowii	A. terreus	A. versicolor	A. sulphureus	A. tamarii	Alternaria alternata	Curvularia lunata	C. tetramera	Chaetomium globosum	Cladosporium	cladosporioides	Emericella nidulans	Fusarium roseum	F. oxysporum	Helminthosporium sp.	Monilia sitophila	Mucor hiemalis	Penicillium funiculosum 2	P. citrinum	Rhizoctonia sp.	Rhizopus stolonifer	Trichoderma lignorum	Trichothecium roseum	Unidentified fungal colonies	Total
7	1	S.N.	_			3 A	4 A	5 A	6 A	7 A	8 4	9 A	10 A	11 A	12 A	13 C	14 C	15 C	91		17 E	18 F	19 E	20 H	21 N	22 N	23 P						30 6	T

Fig. 1—Number of fungal species (CFU/m¹) during sampling period (Andersen two-shape sampler).

	Locality	Rae Bareli Rd.	Rac Aishbagh Residency areli Rd.	Residency	River Bank Colony	R	Kanpur Charbagh (15 km)		Nirala Hardoi Rd Nagar (15 km)	An's A College	Art's Musabagh ollege	River Bank Colony	Sardar Paiel Marg	CIMAP	Road	Janki -puram	Sitapur Rd. (10 km)	Rail Nagar	SGPGI	Sarojim Mohanlal Nagar Ganj	ohanlal Ganj
		(10 km)																			
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_	Alternaria sp.	_	2	7	5	3	13	2	9	5	9	7	∞	1.5	7	7	20	10	4	8	3
7	Bispora sp.	-	3	2	2	2			-	7	7		3	7	2						_
3	Beltrania sp.		2	_	-																
4	Cercospora sp.																7	8	4		_
S	Chaetomium sp.					2		2	7			7	2	-		3	9				_
9	Cladosporium sp.	9	13	17	14	13	14	8	15	7	10	10	10	20	20	27	3	4	8	01	7
7	Curvularia sp.	4	2	9	2	_	4	-		-	2	3	2	7	4	8	4	_		7	
8	Dictyosporium sp.								2												
6	Didymosphaeria sp.																				
10	Drechslera sp.	7		3	_	3	-	9	4	-	2	-	7	2	-	3	7	2			_
Ξ	Epicoccum sp.	-	7	27	7	2		2		4	7	7	7	6		4		-	4		
12	Exosporium sp.								-		-	7									_
13	Fusariella sp.																				
14	Fusarium sp.	4	_	3		4	10				2		7								-
15	Ganoderma sp.																				
9	Helminthosporium sp.		2	3	3	4	6	4	4	4		4	3	01	3	ĸ	S	-	9		2
17	Heterosporium sp.				2	2				2											
18	Leptosphaeria sp.						2		2			7	7	7	7						
1 9	Lophiostoma sp.																				
20	Myrothecium sp.								4							7					
21	Nigrospora sp.	-					2	2	3	-			-	3	-		2				_
22	Periconia sp.	2	2	12	3	_	9	-	6	-		-	2								
23	Pithomyces sp.	2													,						
24	Pleospora sp.	-		2			_	-					∞		2		3				_
25	Sordaria sp.																				
50	Spegazzinia sp.	-		t		,		-	•	,	-	-	-	,		7					
7 6	Sporidesmium sp.	_		_	•	7		1	1	7	-	- ‹	-	۷.							
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30	lorula sp.	~	7		_	ς.	-	7	7			7									
31	Trichothecium sp.							4								1					
32	2-4 celled spores										3					S	12				
33	Round spores									14	3	4	7	9	9	∞	12	9	7	2	2
34	Uredo. of Puccinia	2	2	7	4		2	-	-		-	_	7								
35	Smut spores																				
36	Unidentified spores	∞	6	-	6	14	4	13										-	-		
	TOTAL	41	42	86	55	56	91	54	09	45	35	46	65	81	48	72	109	35	44	27	25

•	Sall Road	Colony F	Colony Rd (15 km)		Citutura Barateania Rd.	Wala	Wala	n c	University	Road	RJ	Rd.	Rd	Marg Institute		Road	Colony	Rd. Rd		Rd.	
Date of collection 25-7-97	25-7-97	1.8.97	1.8.97	19.8.97	(15 km) 1 9.97	Park 3-9-97	4.9.97		6-10-97 16 10-97 20-10-97		(10 km) 4·11·97 I	(12 km) 2-11-97 13	(15 km) 3-11-97 15	1.12.97	(10 km) (12 km) (15 km) 4-11-97 12-11-97 13-11-97 15-12-97		9.1.98 2	(15 km) (1 20-1-98 6	(14 km) (1 6.2.98 9	(13 km) 9.2.98	Total
Name of fungal spores	ores																				
Alternaria sp.		2	2	9	3	10	26	-	-	9	2	-	13	-	2	~	4	-	_	6	273
Bispora sp.			7			1		4	-	7		-	3	-	61	80	7				09
Beltrania sp.																					4
Cercospora sp.	2			2	4	3	5		2	9	9	2	2	7		-	7	7			65
Chaetomium sp.		2	3	2	2	_	2	3	7	7	3	2	3	2	33	7	-	-		2	67
Cladosporium sp.	3	4	∞	9	8	2		2	7	9	8	7	18	9	∞	4	6	19	9	17	385
Curvularia sp.		9	-	_	-	10	0 1	2	e	3	-	-	4	7	7	-	_		2	٣	121
Dictyosporium sp.																					7
Didymosphaeria sp.	ć							4													4
Drechslera sp.		2	2			_	4	-	2	4	2	3	S		4			2		3	84
Epicoccum sp.	2	-							4		2	_	3			3	-	?	3	4	111
Exosporium sp.											_										7
Fusariella sp.			C)																		7
Fusarium sp.					3			3	2		-	2	9	2	8				7	CI	58
Ganoderma sp.			2			2		-			-										9
Helminthosporium sp.	sp.		2	7	2	7	01		-			7	2				2		_	2	110
Heterosporium sp.							2														∞
Leptosphaeria sp.					-		2	2			7					-					20
Lophiostoma sp.								-													-
Myrothecium sp.															7						13
Nigrospora sp.		-	_		2	-	2	-	3	2	4	3	2		3	2	-	_	3	-	52
Periconia sp.			-		2	2			2	-	3	2	8	2	4	3	-	_	-	4	7.8
Pithomyces sp.									-	-		-	_		3		-				10
Pleospora sp.															4						23
Sordaria sp.								C1							7	-					S
Spegazzinia sp.																					7
Sporidesmium sp.			2			_	2		2							-				7	43
Teichospora sp.																					4
Tetraploa sp.							2											-	_		4
Torula sp.						_	C1	7	-	3		2	7	-	2	7	-	21	_		7.0
Trichothecium sp.															3						00
2-4 celled spores	5	-			4		4														34
Round spores	4	4	Ξ	4	∞	2		9	14	13	1.2	8	26	14	16	6	13	Ξ	_	1.5	283
Uredo. of Puccinia		-					-	2	-				C1						2	2	47
Smut spores				9																	9
Unidentified spores	-	-			2		2			-									2	-	70

Fig. 2—Number of fungal spores (No./m¹) during sampling period (Burkard Slide Sampler).