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悉生条件下 3 株嗜盐古菌对卤虫生长及其抗弧菌感染的影响

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摘要: 嗜盐古菌存在于高盐水体中, 是高盐环境微生物种群的重要组成部分。本研究利用从日晒盐场结晶池卤水中分离得到的 3 株红色嗜盐古菌, 分别命名为 *Haloarcula* sp. HG-1、*Haloferax* sp. KN-4 和 *Halorubrum* sp. IT-5。采用悉生实验系统, 探讨不同盐度(30、100 和 150)条件下 3 株古菌能否作为卤虫(*Artemia*)的唯一饵料, 并比较其作为饵料对卤虫存活、生长和抗鳗弧菌(*Vibrio anguillarum*)感染能力的影响。结果表明, 在盐度 30 的悉生系统中, 投喂 3 株古菌组卤虫存活率和体长均保持较高水平; 鳗弧菌攻毒条件下, 卤虫存活率有所下降, 其中投喂 *Haloferax* sp. KN-4 菌株组卤虫抗鳗弧菌感染能力最强。正常和攻毒条件下, 在盐度 100 和盐度 150 悉生系统中分别投喂 3 株古菌, 卤虫均保持较高存活率和体长, 其中投喂 *Haloarcula* sp. HG-1 菌株组卤虫具有最高存活率和最长体长, 但攻毒组卤虫存活率和生长普遍优于未攻毒组, 这可能与高盐条件下 *V. anguillarum* 毒力下降有关。本研究利用“卤虫-古菌”悉生实验系统, 证实了 3 株嗜盐古菌均可作为卤虫的唯一饵料, 为卤虫提供营养; 利用“卤虫-古菌-致病菌”攻毒实验系统, 证实 3 株嗜盐古菌均可以增强卤虫抗鳗弧菌感染能力。本研究结果为研究古菌在高盐环境食物链中的作用提供了基础数据。

关键词: 嗜盐古菌; 悉生卤虫; 鳗弧菌; 存活; 生长

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古菌(Archaea)属于生命三域之一的古菌域(domain archaea), 常被发现于各种极端自然环境中。嗜盐古菌是盐度超过 200 的高盐环境(如盐湖和日晒盐场等)中的优势菌群^[1], 其参与多种物质的循环与能量传递, 是生态系统的重要组成部分^[2-3]。嗜盐古菌在高盐和高渗环境下具有特殊的生存能力, 其细胞可积累某些具有特殊结构和功能的活性物质, 在高盐废水处理^[4]、食品发酵以及酶工业^[5-6]、医药^[7]和生物电子^[8]等领域具有较高的应用价值。

卤虫是一类广泛分布于内陆盐湖和日晒盐场蒸发池中的小型鳃足甲壳动物, 是高盐生态系统中的主要消费者和生态调节者。卤虫可非选择性滤食粒径小于 50 μm 的微型生物和有机碎屑, 因此嗜盐或耐盐微生物(细菌或古菌)是卤虫食物链

的重要组成部分^[9]。Quiroz 等^[10]指出智利 8 个盐湖中的野生卤虫肠道细菌菌群与其所栖息生境卤水的细菌群落具有很高的相似性。Riddle 等^[11]研究了美国大盐湖中细菌、古菌与卤虫的相互作用关系, 在卤虫成虫中发现有 5 个古菌属。Rahmani 等^[12]发现, 尽管 Urmia 盐湖水体中存在 3 株嗜盐古菌, 却仅在该环境下卤虫体内分离得到一株盐红菌属古菌(*Halorubrum*)。由于古菌细胞膜脂是非皂化性甘油二醚的磷脂和糖脂的衍生物, 其膜脂不易被消化, 一般认为古菌不适合作为动物饵料^[13]。但近期有报道指出, 海洋多毛类(*Ophryotrocha labronica*)能以盐沼嗜盐杆菌(*Halobacterium salinarium*)和沃氏嗜盐富饶菌(*Haloferax volcanii*)两种嗜盐古菌为食^[14]。然而, 当卤虫与嗜盐微生物共同存在于高盐环境时, 嗜盐古菌能否被

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卤虫利用以及古菌对水生生物健康的影响, 目前尚无研究报道。

卤虫休眠卵外部有一层由脂蛋白、几丁质和血红素构成的外壳, 采用标准方法将卤虫卵脱壳, 可去除卤虫卵表面附着的微生物并保持其胚胎活力。脱壳卵在无菌条件下孵化即为无菌卤虫无节幼体, 若此时在系统中加入已知微生物, 即可构成“悉生卤虫”(Gnotobiotic *Artemia*, GART)^[15]。利用悉生系统可去除实验系统中任何未知生物的干扰, 精准研究微生物与宿主的互作关系^[16-17]。本研究利用从日晒盐场卤水中分离得到的3株红色嗜盐古菌, 在悉生卤虫实验系统中, 研究不同盐度下古菌对卤虫存活、生长和抗鳗弧菌感染能力的影响, 为研究古菌在高盐环境中食物链中的作用、古菌微生物资源的开发和利用提供基础数据。

1 材料与方法

1.1 实验材料

本研究采用的3株红色嗜盐古菌均分离自日晒盐场盐田结晶池卤水, 盐度范围为200~270(Atago Refractometer S28M), 经16S rRNA基因测序比对, 3株菌分别属于嗜盐古菌科的3个属, 盐小盒菌属(*Haloarcula*)、富盐菌属(*Haloferax*)和盐红菌属(*Halorubrum*), 分别命名为*Haloarcula* sp. HG-1(Haa, GenBank登录号为KX196801)、*Haloferax* sp. KN-4(Hfx, GenBank登录号为KX196803)和*Halorubrum* sp. IT-5(Hrm, GenBank登录号为KF697239)。

本实验所用卤虫卵为两性生殖旧金山湾卤虫(*Artemia franciscana*), 源于美国大盐湖(GSL), 由亚洲区域卤虫参考中心(AR-ARC)提供。

1.2 实验设计

本实验分别探讨不同盐度(30、100和150)下嗜盐古菌能否作为卤虫唯一饵料, 以及对卤虫存活、生长和抗鳗弧菌感染力的影响(表1)。未攻毒对照组为饥饿卤虫, 攻毒对照组为仅投喂鳗弧菌的卤虫。所有实验组别均设4个平行。因一般嗜盐古菌生长的盐度下限为盐度100, 故未在盐度30条件下培养古菌。

1.3 嗜盐古菌的驯化培养

将从盐度270盐池分离的3株古菌, 分别驯

表1 实验分组
Tab. 1 Experimental design

卤虫培养盐度 <i>Artemia</i> culture salinity	嗜盐古菌* halophilic archaea*						
	100Haa	150Haa	100Hfx	150Hfx	100Hrm	150Hrm	
30	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
100	+	-	+	-	+	-	-
150	-	+	-	+	-	+	-

注: *嗜盐古菌为盐度100(100Haa, 100Hfx, 100Hrm)和盐度150(150Haa, 150Hfx, 150Hrm)下培养的*Haloarcula* sp. HG-1、*Haloferax* sp. KN-4和*Halorubrum* sp. IT-5。“+”表示投喂古菌, “-”表示不投喂古菌。攻毒实验组别分组同上, 但投喂鳗弧菌攻毒。Note: *halophilic archaea is *Haloarcula* sp. HG-1 (Haa), *Haloferax* sp. KN-4 (Hfx) and *Halorubrum* sp. IT-5 (Hrm) cultured at salinity 100 (100Haa, 100Hfx, 100Hrm) and 150 (150Haa, 150Hfx, 150Hrm). “+” represented the experimental groups that *Artemia* were fed with halophilic archaea; “-” represented no halophilic archaea feeding. Challenge test groups were fed with *Vibrio anguillarum*.

化培养至盐度100和盐度150。培养基为改良CM培养基, 将卤水稀释至相应盐度, 加入酸水解酪蛋白(7.5 g/L)和酵母提取物(10 g/L), 调至pH 7.2~7.4。古菌接种量为1% (V/V), 在37℃和150 r/min下培养, 每24 h测定OD_{600 nm}, 绘制其生长曲线。

1.4 无菌卤虫系统的建立与验证

取0.1 g大盐湖卤虫卵于无菌离心管中, 加入25 mL无菌蒸馏水水合1 h后, 加入脱壳液: 330 μL 30% NaOH+6 mL NaClO(有效氯≥10%)进行脱壳。待卤虫卵颜色由棕色变为灰白色, 直至呈橘红色时, 表明去壳完全。迅速加入6 mL 1% Na₂S₂O₃溶液终止反应。反复用经0.22 μm膜过滤的盐度30的灭菌卤水(filtered and autoclaved brine water, FABW)冲洗脱壳卵后, 平均转移到3个无菌离心管中, 分别加入35 mL盐度30 FABW, 放在自制旋转养殖装置上, 转速40 r/min, 孵化温度28℃, 日光灯作为光源。18~20 h后将20只I期卤虫无节幼体转移至装有30 mL FABW的50 mL玻璃瓶中。以上实验所用器具均需灭菌, 操作过程保证严格无菌。

悉生系统实验的关键是确保实验系统中只有已知微生物存在, 实验系统和实验操作环境的无菌状态是整个研究的前提和关键, 需要在卤虫孵化、分离、投喂及实验各阶段, 采用不同盐度(30、100和150)CM固体培养基平板来验证其无菌

状态。无菌卤虫卵孵化完成进行分离培养时, 吸取 200 μL 孵化液进行涂平板操作; 每次对卤虫进行投喂时, 从未攻毒对照组吸取 200 μL 培养液进行涂平板操作; 实验各阶段在超净工作台中放置固体培养基平板。将上述平板置于 37℃ 恒温培养箱, 培养 5 d。若平板上无任何菌落生长, 则认为实验系统和操作环境处于无菌状态。

1.5 “卤虫-古菌”悉生系统实验

在超净工作台中收集不同盐度(100 和 150)培养条件下对数生长期的古菌, 8000 r/min 离心 10 min, 收集离心管底部菌体, 用与古菌培养基盐度相同的 FABW 洗涤离心 3 次, 重新悬浮于少量同盐度 FABW 中。按照 $1 \text{ OD}_{600 \text{ nm}} = 1.2 \times 10^9 \text{ CFU/mL}$ (马克法兰氏浊度标准)计算, 将古菌悬浮液用 FABW 稀释至 $\text{OD}_{600 \text{ nm}}$ 值约 0.8 左右, 将相应盐度下培养的古菌投喂卤虫, 投喂量为 $10^7 \text{ CFU}/(\text{mL} \cdot \text{d})$ 。卤虫培养条件同卤虫卵孵化条件, 实验结束时测定卤虫存活率和体长, 实验结束时间为饥饿空白组卤虫全部死亡时间。

1.6 “卤虫-古菌-致病菌”悉生系统实验

本研究采用鳗弧菌菌株对投喂古菌的卤虫进行攻毒处理, 攻毒方法参照 Defoirdt 等^[18]。每 24 h 对卤虫进行投喂及攻毒处理, 古菌投喂量和鳗弧菌攻毒量均为 10^7 CFU/mL 。本研究所用鳗弧菌株购自中国海洋微生物菌种保藏管理中心(菌株保藏编号 1A07299), 采用 LB 培养基(蛋白胨 10 g/L, 酵母提取物 5 g/L, 氯化钠 10 g/L, 调至 pH 7.0~7.2)培养。卤虫实验培养条件同卤虫卵孵化条件, 实验结束时测定攻毒卤虫存活率和体长, 实验结束时间为饥饿空白组卤虫全部死亡时间。

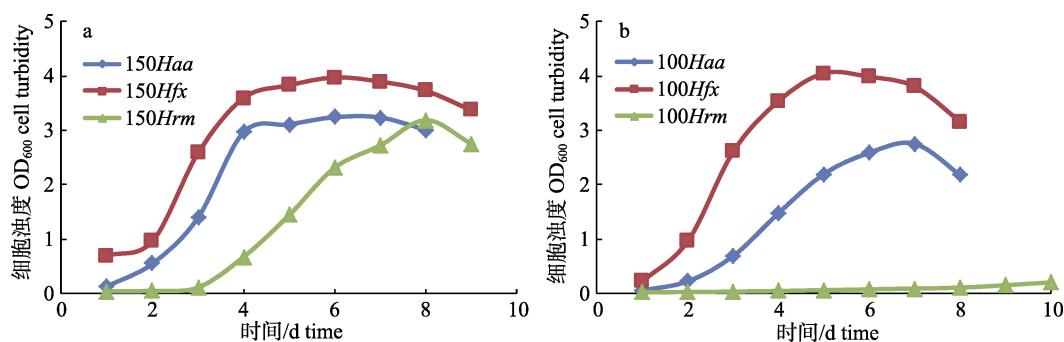


图 1 3 株嗜盐古菌在盐度 150(a)和盐度 100(b)条件下的生长状况

Fig. 1 Growth of three archaea strains at salinity 150(a) and 100(b)

1.7 指标测定

实验结束后测定卤虫存活数和体长。单个玻璃瓶中, 若卤虫存活数大于 50%, 随机选取 10 只, 利用显微镜(Olympus S261)和西格光电图像采集系统测定其体长; 若卤虫存活数小于 50%, 则测定所有存活卤虫个体体长。

1.8 数据处理

数据统计采用 SPSS 19.0 统计软件, 对不同组别卤虫的存活率和体长进行单因素分析(One way ANOVA), 用 Duncan 多重比较分析不同组别的差异显著性, 若 $P < 0.05$ 则为有显著差异; 若 $P < 0.01$ 则为有极显著差异。

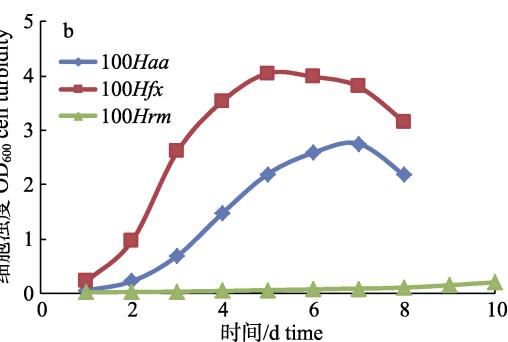
2 结果与分析

2.1 不同盐度下古菌的生长

在 37℃ 和 150 r/min 培养条件下, 盐度 150 时, *Haa* 和 *Hfx* 细胞生长在培养到 4 d 后达到稳定生长期, *Hrm* 细胞生长培养约 8 d 时 OD_{600} 达到最大(图 1)。盐度 100 时, *Hfx* 细胞生长到 4 d 后达到稳定生长期, *Haa* 在培养 6 d 后达到稳定生长期, *Hfx* 细胞 OD_{600} 最大, *Hrm* 细胞培养约两周 OD_{600} 仍小于 0.5。表明嗜盐古菌 *Hfx* 和 *Haa* 在盐度 150 和盐度 100 条件下均有较好的生长, 而 *Hrm* 对盐度 100 的适应能力差, 生长缓慢, 但离心后观察, 菌体仍呈红色。

2.2 盐度 30 条件下古菌对卤虫存活、生长和抗鳗弧菌感染的影响

盐度 30 条件下, 分别投喂盐度 100 和盐度 150 下培养的古菌, 盐度 100 和盐度 150 下培养的 3 株古菌对卤虫存活、生长和抗鳗弧菌感染的



影响状况见图2。结果表明,所有实验组别卤虫存活率无显著差异($P>0.05$),但攻毒条件下卤虫存活率明显低于未攻毒组卤虫存活率($P<0.05$)。未攻毒条件下,盐度30条件下投喂盐度150培养的*Haa*组卤虫(150*Haa*)体长显著长于投喂150*Hfx*、150*Hrm*和100*Haa*、100*Hfx*组别卤虫体长($P<0.05$)。攻毒条件下,盐度30条件下投喂100*Hfx*和150*Hfx*组卤虫体长显著长于其余攻毒组卤虫体长($P<0.05$)。未攻毒条件下,在盐度30培养条件下投喂盐度100培养古菌,与100*Haa*和100*Hfx*相比,投喂100*Hrm*组卤虫具有最高存活率(92.5%)和最长体长(1.07 mm);在盐度30培养条件下投喂盐度150培养古菌,与150*Hfx*和150*Hrm*相比,投喂150*Haa*组卤虫具有最高存活率(90%)和最长体长(1.09 mm)。攻毒条件下,与100*Haa*和100*Hrm*组相比,100*Hfx*组卤虫存活率

最高为37.5%,体长最长为1.09 mm;与150*Haa*和150*Hrm*组相比,150*Hfx*组卤虫存活率最高为45%,体长最长为1.08 mm。

2.3 盐度100条件下古菌对卤虫存活、生长和抗弧菌感染的影响

盐度100条件下,投喂盐度100培养的古菌,3株古菌对卤虫生长和抗弧菌感染的影响如图3所示。未攻毒条件下,所有实验组别卤虫存活率无显著差异($P>0.05$);*Haa*组卤虫体长显著长于*Hrm*组($P<0.05$)。攻毒条件下,投喂3株古菌卤虫的存活率均显著高于仅投弧菌对照组($P<0.05$),且高于未攻毒组卤虫存活率;*Haa*组体长显著长于其余组别($P<0.05$)。无论在攻毒或未攻毒条件下,与*Hfx*和*Hrm*组相比,*Haa*组卤虫均具有最高存活率和最长体长;其中*Haa*攻毒组卤虫存活率最高,为86.3%,体长最长,为0.917 mm。

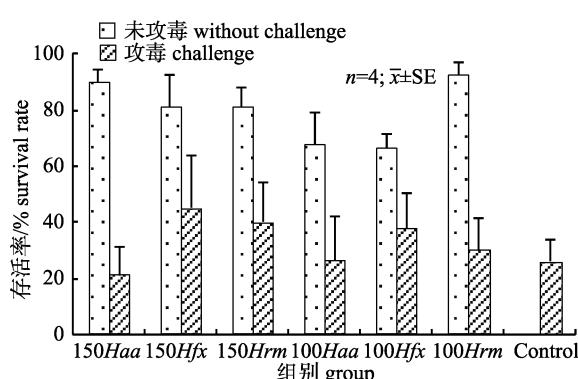


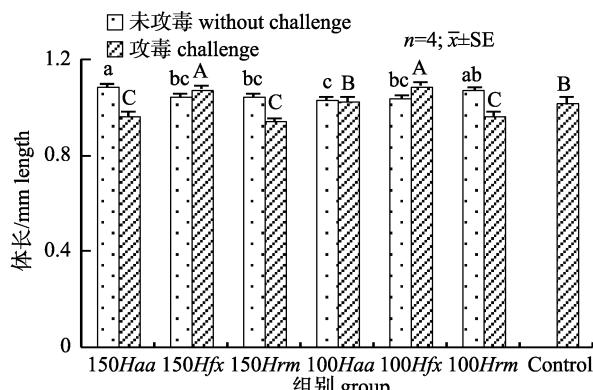
图2 盐度30条件下3株古菌对卤虫存活、生长和抗弧菌感染的影响

不同小写字母表示未攻毒条件下各组别间差异显著($P<0.05$),不同大写字母表示攻毒条件下各组别间差异显著($P<0.05$)。

Fig. 2 Survival rate, growth and *Vibrio anguillarum* challenge resistance of *Artemia* fed with three archaea strains at salinity 30
Different lowercase letters represent significant difference among the unchallenged groups ($P<0.05$). Different capital letters represent significant difference among the challenged groups ($P<0.05$).

2.4 盐度150条件下古菌对卤虫存活、生长和抗弧菌感染的影响

盐度150条件下,投喂盐度150培养的古菌,3株古菌对卤虫生长和抗弧菌感染的影响如图4所示。所有投喂古菌组卤虫存活率均无显著差异($P>0.05$);*Haa*组卤虫体长显著长于其余组($P<0.05$)。攻毒条件下,投喂3株古菌组卤虫存活率均显著高于仅投弧菌对照组($P<0.05$);3株古菌组卤虫体长并无显著差异($P>0.05$),但3株古菌攻毒组卤



虫存活率和体长均高于其未攻毒组。无论攻毒或未攻毒条件下,与*Hfx*和*Hrm*组相比,*Haa*组卤虫都具有最长体长,分别为0.932 mm和0.812 mm;攻毒条件下,与*Hfx*和*Hrm*组相比,*Haa*组卤虫具有最高存活率85%。

3 讨论

大多数嗜盐古菌最低可耐受的盐度为90^[19],低盐度下细胞可能因内外渗透压差过大而破裂。

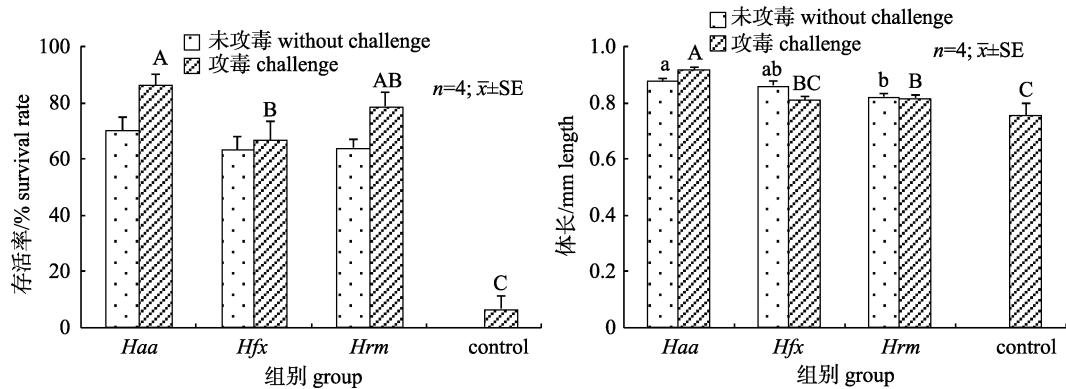


图 3 盐度 100 条件下古菌对卤虫存活、生长和抗鳗弧菌感染的影响

不同小写字母表示未攻毒条件下各组别间差异显著($P<0.05$)，不同大写字母表示攻毒条件下各组别间差异显著($P<0.05$)。

Fig. 3 Survival, growth and *Vibrio anguillarum* challenge resistance of *Artemia* when fed three archaea strains at salinity 100
Different lowercase letters represent significant difference among the unchallenged groups ($P<0.05$). Different capital letters
represent significant difference among the challenged groups ($P<0.05$).

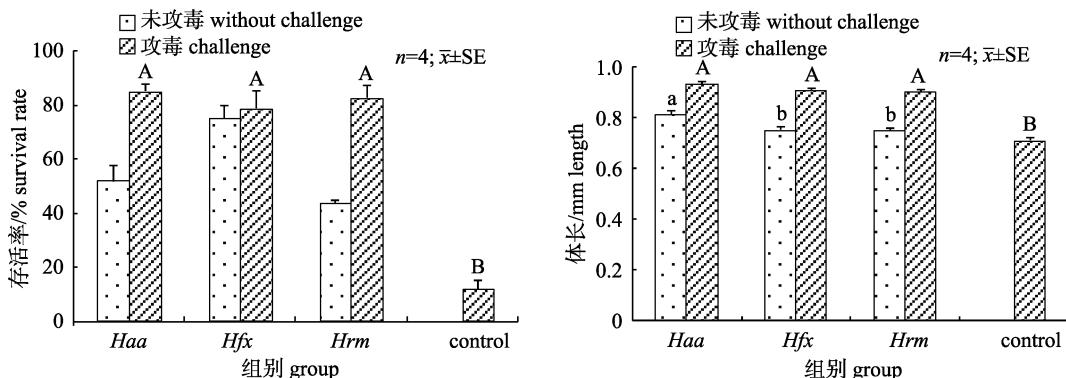


图 4 盐度 150 条件下古菌对卤虫存活、生长和抗鳗弧菌感染的影响

不同小写字母表示未攻毒条件下各组别间差异显著($P<0.05$)，不同大写字母表示攻毒条件下各组别间差异显著($P<0.05$)。

Fig. 4 Survival, growth and *Vibrio anguillarum* challenge resistance of *Artemia* when fed three archaea strains at salinity 150
Different lowercase letters represent significant difference among the unchallenged groups ($P<0.05$). Different capital letters
represent significant difference among the challenged groups ($P<0.05$).

本研究所采用的 3 株古菌均分离自日晒盐场盐田卤水(盐度 270)，经过驯化，3 株古菌均可在盐度 150 条件下良好生长，在盐度 100 条件下，*Haloarcula* sp. HG-1 和 *Haloferax* sp. KN-4 生长状况较好，而 *Haloferax* sp. KN-4 生长比 *Haloarcula* sp. HG-1 好，这与 Oren^[19-20]曾指出地中海富盐菌(*Haloferax mediterranei*)在开放生态系统中具古菌属最宽泛的生长盐度(60~300)相符。Cui 等^[21]研究发现海滨盐红菌(*Halorubrum litoreum* sp. nov.)的生长盐度最低为 117，本研究同样发现 *Halorubrum* sp. IT-5 在盐度 100 条件下生长缓慢。

悉生系统是在无菌条件下建立的封闭养殖系统中添加一个或多个微生物，可准确研究微生物

和宿主动物之间的关系，亦可用于研究单一营养源对水产动物的生长及抗鳗弧菌感染力的影响。Situmorang 等^[22]利用悉生系统养殖罗非鱼(*Oreochromis niloticus*)幼苗，并用爱德华氏菌(*Edwardsiella ictaluri*)进行攻毒，发现投喂聚羟基丁酸酯(PHB)强化卤虫可促进罗非鱼幼体生长并提高其存活率；Baruah 等^[23]通过在卤虫悉生系统中投喂大肠杆菌(*Escherichia coli*)或卤虫热休克蛋白(Hsp70)，证明两种来源的 Hsp70 不但可为卤虫提供营养促进其生长，而且能显著提高卤虫对坎氏弧菌(*Vibrio campbellii*)的抵抗力。针对高盐环境中古菌与卤虫肠道微生物的相互关系虽然有相关报道^[11-12]，但研究对象均为自然生态系统中

的卤虫, 古菌能否作为唯一食物被卤虫利用尚不清楚。本文通过“卤虫-古菌”悉生实验系统研究发现, 在低、中、高3种不同盐度培养条件下, 饥饿卤虫依靠消耗卵黄中的营养仅存活3~4 d^[17], 而投喂3株古菌组卤虫仍保持较高存活, 说明*Haloarcula* sp. HG-1、*Haloferax* sp. KN-4和*Halorubrum* sp. IT-5在不同盐度条件下均可作为卤虫的唯一食物来源, 为其提供营养并促进其生长。

为进一步探究3株嗜盐古菌作为饵料对卤虫生长的作用, 本研究用不同盐度下培养的嗜盐古菌投喂卤虫并比较其生长差异, 结果发现3株古菌对卤虫生长和存活的影响有所不同。盐度30条件下, 投喂盐度100培养的*Halorubrum* sp. IT-5组卤虫存活率最高, 投喂盐度150培养的*Haloarcula* sp. HG-1组卤虫体长最长; 卤虫在盐度100和盐度150条件下, 投喂相应盐度培养的*Haloarcula* sp. HG-1组都具有最高存活率和最长体长。高盐环境下嗜盐古菌细胞膜或胞内积累多种物质(如色素、特殊的脂类、四羟嘧啶, 聚羟基丁酸酯等), 这些物质对细胞抗氧化、渗透压调节和能量积累等起到重要作用。不同嗜盐古菌细胞膜构成及脂类成分差异较大^[24-25], 其色素成分^[26]和胞内积累物也不尽相同, 如*Haloferax mediterranei*细胞内可积累聚羟基丁酸酯PHB^[27], 而嗜盐小盒菌属古菌(*Haloarcula* sp.)可产胞外多糖^[28]。因此推测3株嗜盐古菌对卤虫的促生长作用的差异可能与上述细胞成分不同有关。

本研究利用悉生系统研究不同盐度对卤虫存活率和生长的影响, 发现高盐度(100和150)下悉生卤虫存活率和体长均不及低盐度(30)组别。*Nougué*等^[29]同样发现悉生卤虫在低盐环境中生存得更好。虽然卤虫具有高效的渗透压调节系统, 可在盐度10~340范围内生长繁殖^[30], 但卤虫在高盐条件下需消耗大量能量进行渗透压调节^[31-32], 因此高盐度限制卤虫的生长和发育。

鳗弧菌能产生外毒素、血溶素、鳗弧菌素等多种毒力因子侵染宿主使其致病^[33], 是对海水养殖鱼虾类危害最大的弧菌之一^[34], *Defoirdt*等^[18]采用悉生系统养殖卤虫并用鳗弧菌NB10等攻毒, 发现用鳗弧菌攻毒卤虫与对照组相比存活率降低

了65%。大多数鳗弧菌生长盐度为5~50^[35-36], 本实验在利用“悉生卤虫-嗜盐古菌-致病菌”攻毒系统的研究中发现, 盐度30条件下, 投喂古菌攻毒组卤虫存活率明显低于只投喂古菌组, 说明鳗弧菌在低盐度下具有一定毒性; 而在盐度100和盐度150条件下, 投喂古菌攻毒组相比于仅投鳗弧菌组, 卤虫的存活率和体长均有不同程度提高, 甚至高于仅投喂古菌组, 这可能是由于高盐度限制了鳗弧菌的增殖而致使其毒力下降的缘故, 同时毒力减弱的鳗弧菌也可为卤虫提供部分营养食物。

4 结论

综上, 在盐度30的悉生实验条件下, 投喂盐度100培养*Halorubrum* sp. IT-5和盐度150培养*Haloarcula* sp. HG-1对卤虫促生长作用最为明显; 用鳗弧菌攻毒时, 投喂盐度150培养*Haloferax* sp. KN-4可使卤虫具有最强抗鳗弧菌感染能力。在盐度100和盐度150的悉生实验条件下, 投喂相应盐度培养的*Haloarcula* sp. HG-1不仅能最大限度促进卤虫生长, 并可使其抗鳗弧菌感染力得到最大提高。本研究表明嗜盐古菌不仅能作为卤虫唯一食物, 而且能提高其对鳗弧菌感染的抵抗能力。但古菌的有效营养成分及其抗鳗弧菌机制还有待进一步研究。

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Comparison of three halophilic archaea on growth and *Vibrio anguillarum* challenge resistance of *Artemia* under gnotobiotic conditions

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Abstract: Halophilic archaea inhabit hypersaline environments and are an important component of microbial communities. High salt concentration enable archaea cells accumulating bioactive compounds with unique molecular structure and biochemical functions. Therefore, archaea are also important resources for commercial application. As a non-selective filter feeder, *Artemia* plays an important role in the food chains of hypersaline environments, even though the high salinity of such environments limits the complexity of the food web. It is well known that *Artemia* populations are supported by rich phytoplankton communities. Recently, the important role of microbiota in the life cycle of *Artemia* and in hypersaline food chain has drawn much interest. The present study focused on archaea, which are important but often neglected microorganisms that comprise the third domain of life. Their cells contain ether-linked membrane lipids, instead of the ester-lipids found in bacterial and eukaryotic cells. Archaea are considered unsuitable as a food resource for aquatic animals, since the ether-linked lipids are difficult to digest and do not provide the essential fatty acids needed to support animal growth and survival.

Three red halophilic archaea strains (*Haloarcula* sp. HG-1, *Haloferox* sp. KN-4, and *Halorubrum* sp. IT-5) were isolated from a crystallization pond of a solar saltworks. The gnotobiotic *Artemia* culture system was used to determine whether *Artemia* can survive on a sole diet of halophilic archaea and to investigate the effect of halophilic archaea on *Artemia* survival, growth, and resistance to *Vibrio anguillarum* at different salinities (30, 100, and 150, respectively). The archaea cells were cultured at 100 and 150, with modified CM medium. All three halophilic archaea strains grew faster at 150, and under the condition of salinity 100, the growth of *Haloarcula* sp. HG-1 and *Haloferox* sp. KN-4 is better than that of *Halorubrum* sp. IT-5.

The *Artemia* that were fed the three archaeal strains exhibited higher survival rates and body lengths when cultured at salinity 30 than when cultured at salinity 100 or salinity 150. The greatest survival rate was observed when the *Artemia* were fed *Halorubrum* sp. IT-5 at salinity 100, whereas the greatest body length was observed when the *Artemia* were fed *Haloarcula* sp. HG-1 at salinity 100. When challenged with *V. anguillarum*, the survival rate of all groups decreased, but the greatest survival rate and body length were observed when the *Artemia* were fed *Haloferox* sp. KN-4. At salinity 100 and 150, all the *Artemia* groups exhibited high rates of survival and growth. However, the *V. Anguillarum*-challenged *Artemia* generally exhibited greater survival rates and body lengths than the unchallenged groups, thereby indicating that the virulence of *V. anguillarum* decreased at high salinity and the cells could be ingested as food by *Artemia*.

In conclusion, using a gnotobiotic *Artemia*-archaea experimental system, the present study provides evidence that *Artemia* can survive and grow on a sole diet of halophilic archaea over a wide range of salinities (30–150). In addition, halophilic archaea can improve *Artemia* survival and resistance against *V. anguillarum*, a pathogen that frequently occurs in marine aquaculture systems. These results provide a basis for investigating the role of archaea in the food chains of hypersaline environments.

Key words: halophilic archaea; gnotobiotic *Artemia*; *Vibrio anguillarum*; survival; growth

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