0028 Is there life on Mars?

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1. Is there life on Mars?

On Earth, some of the oldest evidence for life /comes in the form of stromatolites 叠层(石). These **stratified (a.)分层的;形成阶层的 structures** form (v.) [**in shallow water**] when **colonies (同地生长的植物或动物)群,群体,集落:殖民地定居者群体 of** microbes grow [layer upon layer], trapping 使落入险境;使陷入困境;卡住;夹住;缠住 sediment 沉积物 [as they do so]. The most ancient examples are thought(=think) to be those found in Greenland in 2016, which have been dated (v.) to 3.7bn years before the present day. [If there was sufficient time for **stromatolite 叠层(石)-forming organisms** 有机体;生物体;微生物 to evolve (v.) on Earth by this date] then **there is no obvious reason** why they might not also have evolved on Mars.

Example 1. 标题

stromatolite:

stro-mato-lite /strəʊˈmætəˌlaɪt/ N a rocky mass(n.)团;块;堆(consisting of layers of calcareous 含碳酸钙的;钙质的 material and sediment formed by the prolific (动物、人、植物)多产的 growth of cyanobacteria 蓝藻细菌): such structures date(v.) back to 追溯到;始于;自...至今 Precambrian 前寒 武纪的 times. 叠层

⇒来自古希腊语στρώματα (复数形式:στρώμα("layer")) + λίθος("stone, rock").



stratify:

strat·ify / strætɪfaɪ/ v. (formal) [VN] (technical 术语) to arrange sth in layers or strata (使) 分层 , 成层

- ⇒来自 PIE*ster,展开,伸展,词源同 strew,street.后 用于科学术语指岩层,地层等。
- a highly stratified society 高度分化的社会
- stratified rock 成层岩

在地球上,最古老生命的证据,来自于叠层石.层叠石的分层结构,形成于浅水中,当微生物菌落,一层一层地生长,并在此过程中捕获水中其他的沉积物时,层叠石就逐渐形成了。层叠石的最古老的例子,被认为是2016年时,在格陵兰岛所发现的,那里的层叠石可追溯至37亿年前。如果那段时间足以使地球上演化出叠层石有机体,那么就没有明显的理由来解释,为什么它们不能在火星上演化了。

叠层石(原核生物所建造的有机沉积结构):叠层石是是由藻类在生命活动过程中,将海水中的钙、镁碳酸盐,及其碎屑颗粒粘结、沉淀而形成的一种化石。随着季节的变化、生长沉淀的快慢,形成深浅相间的复杂色层构造,叠层石的色层构造,有纹层状、球状、半球状、柱状、锥状及枝状等。

叠层石是藻类繁衍生息形成的生物遗迹岩石。假如当时叠层石所生活的海洋中有海浪或海流的话,藻类又没有什么可抓扶的地方,必然会被海水冲走。然而叠层石是藻类世世代代在一个固定地方生息形成的,藻类没有被海水冲走,说明藻类生存在静水环境之中。

叠层石只生存于清洁的海水中,因为有黏土沉积的话,藻类群就会被掩埋掉, 这说明黏土没进入海洋中。而黏土没有进入海洋中,需要具备两个条件:一、 不能有河流入海(有河流的话,黏土会被带入海洋);二、不能有稍大的风。 因此说叠层石存在的地方,必然具备下述4种地理环境特征:1、无风(微风);2、没有海浪或者是微浪;3、没有海流;4、没有河流。也说是说,叠层石能指示上述4种地理环境特征。

Confusingly, in chemistry-speak 行话, an organic molecule is not necessarily of biological origin. The term just means that /it is built(v.) around 在...基础上 创出 carbon atoms 碳原子, so organic molecules can also originate(v.)起源;发源;发端于;创立;创建;发明 inorganically 无机地,无机物地,无组织体系地, as it were. The biological nature 生物特性 of an organic molecule has thus to be justified by other evidence.

Example 2. 标题

texture:

N-VAR The texture of something, especially food or soil, is its structure, for example, whether it is light with lots of holes, or very heavy and solid. (尤指食品、土壤等的) 结构

be+of+抽象名词,其意思等于与名词相对应的be+形容词。

be of + n. = be + adj. Eg. be important = be of importance

build sth around sth:

[常用被动态] to create sth, using sth else as a basis 在...基础上创出

• The story is built around a group of high school dropouts. 故事围绕着一群辍学的中学生展开。

make a case:

to make a case is to argue that something is the best thing to do, giving your reasons. 如果你认为某件事是正确的,你讲出你的理由希望说服别人,这个行为就叫make a case (for something).

Make a case最初也是一个法庭用语。当一方律师通过庭审辩论说服了法官接受他/她的意见,就叫make a case. 这里的case就是诉讼案件的意思。

• Your friend here has been making quite a strong case for why I should hire you. (面试官对应聘者说:) 你朋友说服了我,所以我决定录用你。

make a case会有几个小变体。例如 **make a case for**, **make one's case for** 等等。记住这个for是唯一的正确搭配。有时候case前面还可以加上其他形容词,例如 make a strong case for.

令人困惑的是,从化学的角度来看,有机分子不一定是由生物创造的。这个术语只意味着,它是一碳原子为基础生成的,因此,有机分子也可以是从无机物发展出来的。因此,有机分子的生物学性质,必须要从其他证据来证明。

主 The jackpot (在碰运气游戏中的)头奖,最高奖 of this treasure 金银财宝;珠宝;财富 hunt 系 would be to find(v.) things like sugars, phospholipids 磷脂 (constituents of the membranes (身体内的)膜;(植物的)细胞膜 of cells), nucleotides 核苷酸 (the "letters" of genetic material) or amino 氨基 acids 氨基酸 (the building blocks 建筑模块 of proteins 蛋白质; 朊) that are characteristic(a.)典型的;独特的;特有的 of life on Earth. But 主 consolation 使感到安慰的人(或事);安慰;慰藉 prizes 系 might be available /in the form of less direct signals of biology within the chemistry—traces 痕迹;遗迹;踪迹;微量;少许 of the actions of enzymes 酶, for example.

Example 3. 标题

bountiful:

- a. in large quantities; large 大量的;巨大的/giving generously 慷慨的;大 方的
 - ⇒来自词根bon, 好,同bonus. -ty, 抽象名词后缀。
 - a. a bountiful supply of food 富足的食物供应
 - b. belief in a bountiful god 对宽宏的神的信仰

jackpot

⇒ jack,扑克J,pot,罐子,钱罐。一种扑克赌博游戏,直到某持牌方至少持有两张 J或更大牌才可以开牌并取得胜利。后引申词义大奖,头奖。比较 blackjack.

phospholipid:

/ˌfɒsfə'lɪpɪd/ N any of a group of compounds composed of fatty acids, phosphoric acid, and a nitrogenous base: important constituents of all membranes 磷脂 (Also called phosphatide)

磷脂是组成生物膜的主要成分. 常与蛋白质、糖脂、胆固醇等其它分子共同构成脂双分子层,即细胞膜的结构。 **至今,人们已发现磷脂几乎存在于所有机体细胞中**, 在动植物体重要组织中,都含有较多磷脂.

membrane:

/membrem/ ⇒ membrane包膜,身体内的膜,植物的细胞膜来自拉丁语 membrana,皮肤,membrum,肢体,四肢,器官,部分。引申词义身体内的 膜,植物的细胞膜。

nucleotide:

/ˈnuːkliətaɪd/ N a compound consisting of a nucleoside linked to phosphoric acid. Nucleic acids are made up of long chains (polynucleotides) of such compounds 核苷酸

"核苷酸"是"核糖核酸"及"脱氧核糖核酸"的基本组成单位,是体内合成"核酸"的前身物。"核苷酸"随着"核酸"分布于生物体内各器官、组织、细胞的核及胞质中,并作为"核酸"的组成成分参与生物的遗传、发育、生长等基本生命活动。

amino:

/ə'mino/ N of, consisting of, or containing the group of atoms -NH2 氨基

• amino acid n. [化]氨基酸

characteristic:

/ˌkærəktəˈrɪstɪk/ a. ~ **(of sth/sb)** very typical of sth or of sb's character 典型的;独特的;特有的

• She spoke with characteristic enthusiasm. 她说话带着特有的热情。

enzyme:

/'enzamz/ N-COUNT An enzyme is a chemical substance found in living creatures that produces changes in other substances without being changed itself. 酶

酶 (enzyme) 是由活细胞产生的、对其底物具有高度特异性和**高度催化效能的蛋白质或RNA。**

酶是一类极为重要的生物催化剂(biocatalyst)。由于酶的作用,生物体内的化学反应,在极为温和的条件下,也能高效和特异地进行。

酶的化学本质是蛋白质(protein)或RNA(Ribonucleic Acid),因此它也具有一级、二级、三级,乃至四级结构。按其分子组成的不同,可分为单纯酶和结合酶。仅含有蛋白质的称为单纯酶;结合酶则由酶蛋白和辅助因子组成。

结合酶的蛋白质部分称为酶蛋白(apoenzyme),非蛋白质部分统称为辅助因子(cofactor),两者一起组成全酶(holoenzyme);只有全酶才有催化活性,如果两者分开则酶活力消失。

人体和哺乳动物体内含有至少5000种酶。 它们或是溶解于细胞质中,或是与各种膜结构结合在一起,或是位于细胞内其他结构的特定位置上,只有在被需要时才被激活,这些酶统称胞内酶;另外,还有一些在细胞内合成后再分泌至细胞外的酶──胞外酶。

酶是一类生物催化剂,它们支配着生物的新陈代谢、营养和能量转换等许多催 化过程,与生命过程关系密切的反应大多是酶催化反应。

synthesize:

/ˈsɪnθəsaɪz/ v. (technical 术语) to produce a substance by means of chemical or biological processes (通过化学手段或生物过程)合成 ⇒ syn-共同,同时 + thesis放置 同源词:thesis

fatty acid: 脂肪酸

脂肪酸是由碳、氢、氧三种元素组成的一类化合物,**是中性脂肪、磷脂和糖脂的主要成分。**

不管饱和的或不饱和的,**生物体内脂肪酸的碳原子数大多是偶数,极少含有奇数碳原子**,尤其是在高等动植物体内主要存在12碳以上的高级脂肪酸,一般在14-24个碳,以16和18碳脂肪酸最为常见。奇数碳原子脂肪酸仅在一些植物、反刍动物、海洋生物、石油酵母等体内部分存在。

syntheses:

/ˈsin θ isi:z/ N-COUNT A synthesis of different ideas or styles is a mixture or combination of these ideas or styles. 结合体

His novels are a rich synthesis(n.) of Balkan history and mythology.
他的小说是一个巴尔干半岛的历史和神话的丰富结合。

N-VAR The synthesis of a substance is the production of it by means of chemical or biological reactions. 合成

 ...the genes that regulate the synthesis of these compounds. ...控制这些 化合物合成的基因。

这次寻宝的大奖,是找到糖、磷脂(细胞膜的组成成分)、核苷酸(遗传物质的"字母")或氨基酸(蛋白质的组成成分)等地球生命所特有的东西。但安慰奖可能会以"在化学中的不那么直接的生物信息"的形式出现—例如,酶发生作用的痕迹。

2. <pure> Is there life on Mars?

On Earth, some of the oldest evidence for life [comes in the form of stromatolites. These stratified structures form in shallow water [when colonies of microbes grow [layer upon layer], trapping sediment as they do so. The most ancient examples [are thought to be those found in Greenland in 2016, which have been dated to 3.7bn years [before the present day. If there was sufficient time [for stromatolite-forming organisms to evolve on Earth by this date [then there is no obvious reason [why they might not also have evolved on Mars.

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