REPORTS

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Martian Surface Paleotemperatures from Thermochronology of Meteorites

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The temporal evolution of past martian surface temperatures is poorly known. We used thermochronology and published noble gas and petrographic data to constrain the temperature histories of the nakhlites and martian meteorite ALH84001. We found that the nakhlites have not been heated to more than 350°C since they formed. Our calculations also suggest that for most of the past 4 billion years, ambient near-surface temperatures on Mars are unlikely to have been much higher than the present cold (<0°C) state.

Daily mean equatorial temperatures on Mars are close to 215 K. Surface geomorphic evidence of the flow of liquids, weathering minerals indicative of liquid/rock interactions, and the enrichment of heavy isotopes of several atmospheric species have led to suggestions that early Mars was significantly warmer, with temperatures possibly remaining above 273 K for extended periods of time (1). On the basis of crater counting statistics, the colder, drier conditions are thought to have emerged at ~ 3.7 billion years ago (Ga), with large ($\sim 10^8$ to 10^9 years) uncertainties (2). The growing geochemical and petrographic data set for martian meteorites (3)provides an opportunity to constrain the martian paleoclimate using multiple independent samples. We used noble gas thermochronometry of meteorites as an indicator of the evolution of surface temperatures on Mars.

K/Ar and 40 Ar/ 39 Ar dating studies have been conducted on all seven known nakhlites (4) and on martian meteorite ALH84001 (5, 6). Fifteen K/Ar analyses on the nakhlites all give ages of ~1.3 Ga, which are nearly identical to crystallization ages specified by the Rb/Sr,

U/Pb, and Sm/Nd chronometers (7) and much older than the 11 million years ago (Ma) age of ejection from Mars, as specified by cosmic ray exposure dating (8, 9). (U-Th)/He dating of the nahklites meteorites Nakhla, Lafayette, and MIL03346 (10, 11) has measured similarly ancient (~ 0.8 to 1.2 Ga) ages. The coincidence of the K/Ar and (U-Th)/He ages with the other chronometers suggests that the nakhlites have experienced no major heating since they formed. Similarly, the ancient 4 Ga 40Ar/39Ar age (6) and 4 Ga U/Pb apatite age (12) for ALH84001 suggests that this meteorite, which has Rb/Sr and Sm/Nd crystallization ages of 4.5 Ga and a cosmic ray exposure age of 15 Ma (13), has not experienced any major heating since 4 Ga. This is generally consistent with (U-Th)/He dating of ALH84001 phosphate, which gives a wide range of ages between 0.1 and 3.5 Ga (14). Like the nakhlites, the 40 Ar/ 39 Ar age of Chassigny is ~1.3 Ga and is close to its Sm/Nd and Rb/Sr crystallization ages (6, 13). ⁴⁰Ar/³⁹Ar ages for most shergottites are ambiguous because of significant abundances of trapped Ar (6, 13).

Using whole-rock ³⁹Ar release data of Swindle and Olson (15) and following the methods of (5, 16), we estimated the temperature dependence of the Ar diffusion coefficient D(T) through the feldspar in Nakhla and Lafayette, assuming a spherical diffusion domain geometry (17). We first considered Swindle and Olson's Nakhla subsample 1. We assumed that the colinearity observed for the Alfred P. Sloan Fellowship Program (2004). We thank the Materials Research Science and Engineering Center Program of the NSF under award number DMR-0213574 and by the NYSTAR for financial support for M.L.S. and the shared instrument facility.

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Materials and Methods Figs. S1 to S5 Table S1 References

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first ~80% of the released 39 Ar (Fig. 1) indicates that the diffusion of Ar in Nakhla is thermally activated over this range. We also assumed that the presence of distinct arrays clearly separated by breaks in slope (Fig. 1) indicates that multiple diffusion domains are present. From this, we identified three (or possibly even four) primary arrays from the ³⁹Ar data and adopted the interpretation of (15) that the first three domains [the lowretentivity domain (LRD) and the one or two high-retentivity domains, which we will refer to as HRD and HHRD] likely represent iddingsite (LRD) and predominantly potassium feldspar admixed with plagioclase (HRD and HHRD). The final array, composed of the final $\sim 20\%$ of gas released, appears to be from a phase (probably clinopyroxene) implanted with recoiled ³⁹Ar (15, 18).

We characterized the spatial distribution of radiogenic ⁴⁰Ar (⁴⁰Ar*) and the Ar diffusion kinetics in the HRD alone. The HRD corresponds to the ~ 1.3 Ga 40 Ar/ 39 Ar plateau age identified in (15). We calculated a diffusion domain model by assuming that the neutroninduced ³⁹Ar distributions were initially uniform within two distinct domains. Gas was not permitted to exchange between the domains. We derived the following diffusion parameters for the two-domain (LRD and HRD only) model for the HRD of Nakhla: activation energy $E_{a} =$ $117 \pm 5.4 \text{ kJ mol}^{-1}$ and $\ln(D_0/a^2) = 5.7 \pm$ 0.9 $\ln(s^{-1})$ for diffusivity at infinite temperature D_{a} and diffusive length scale a. These are in good agreement with diffusion parameters estimated for terrestrial potassium feldspars (19). Nearly identical results were obtained for the nakhlite Lafayette and another Nakhla subsample (fig. S1, A and B). Similar [within a factor of ~1.2 and ~2.4 for E_a and $\ln(D_a/a^2)$, respectively] values for the HRD were also obtained for a subset one-domain (HRD only) regression (20) and a three-domain (LRD, HRD, and HHRD) model, indicating that the inferred diffusion kinetics are not strongly sensitive to the form of the domain modeling (21).

In the following calculations, we assume that this Arrhenius relation and corresponding diffusive length scale a have held for the nakhlites' HRD since 1.3 Ga (22). The model

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LRD diffusion kinetics predict essentially no 40 Ar* retention over geologic time, which is consistent with the zero age 40 Ar/ 39 Ar in the first ~3% of extracted 39 Ar observed by (*15*). With the two-domain model (Fig. 1) and a numerical solution to the radiogenic production/ diffusion equation described by (*5*, *23*) using a pre-atmospheric meteorite radius of 0.2 m (*8*), we simulated the expected 40 Ar* distributions within the sample after various thermal perturbations. The model 40 Ar* distributions were calculated for the HRD and then passed through a simulated degassing experiment to produce a set of 40 Ar* release fractions (Fig. 2).

Our calculations demonstrate that only $\sim 1\%$ of the ingrown ⁴⁰Ar* has been diffusively lost from the HRD of Nakhla and Lafayette since 1.3 Ga. From a similar analysis using the Ar release data of Bogard and Garrison (*6*), we confirm our conclusion (*5*) that less than 8% of the ingrown ⁴⁰Ar* has been diffusively lost from the HRD of ALH84001 since 4 Ga (figs. S1C and S2C).

Solving for a sample's continuous thermal history from an observed radiometric age and an inferred spatial distribution of the daughter product is an ill-posed problem: A family of thermal limits can be uniquely constrained, although a single solution does not generally exist (19). For instance, let us suppose that the nakhlites were heated to some peak temperature during ejection from Mars at 11 Ma. If we assume that the meteorites cooled diffusively and degassed ⁴⁰Ar* diffusively solely during this ejection event, then following the methods of (5), we find that the central temperatures of these meteorites could not have exceeded ~350°C for even short periods of time (no more than a few hours) (Fig. 2). This is a conservative upper limit, because we assume (i) that the diffusion domains are spherical and that during the other 1.3 billion years of history (ii) there was no other diffusive loss of 40Ar* and (iii) no loss of ⁴⁰Ar* caused by nonthermal mechanisms (such as weathering or shock). These results are consistent with petrographic constraints, which suggest that the nakhlites have been shocked only to peak pressures of 10 to 20 GPa and peak temperatures of -50° to 100°C, respectively [following (24, 25) and using ambient martian surface temperatures between -120° and 0° C]. Given the petrographic similarities linking the nakhlites, it is likely that the conclusions drawn from Nakhla and Lafayette extend to the five other known meteorites in this class.

Because the magnetization of the nakhlites is thought to be dominated by titanomagnetite with a Curie point of \sim 500° to 550°C (26), much of the magnetization measured in the nakhlites is likely to have been a thermoremanence that originated on Mars at 1.3 Ga. However, this remanence is likely to have been modified by shock (27). Our results are consistent with the observed low shock state of nakhlites (24, 25), which implies that they were not heat-sterilized (that is, they were cooler than ~100°C) during ejection from Mars and transfer to Earth. Although ALH84001 also is thought to have experienced only mild heating during its transfer to Earth (5, 28), the case for the nakhlites is stronger because of their substantially lower shock state (29). This illustrates the efficiency of mechanisms for ejecting weakly shocked rocks from Mars (24, 30) and underscores the possibility that the terrestrial planets have not been biologically isolated from one another.

Fig. 1. Diffusivity as a function of temperature (Arrhenius plot) for martian meteorite Nakhla (subsample 1) inferred from ³⁹Ar release data of Swindle and Olson (15). Circles are the diffusion coefficients as calculated following (16). The bold gray curve shows the best-fit two-domain model, which contains a volume fraction f_{v} of 3% LRD mixed with 97% HRD. The solid and dotted black lines show model $D(T)/a^2$ for the HRD and LRD, respectively. The dashed black line shows the onedomain model, given by the linear regression fit only to the subset HRD array [it includes the 375° to 675°C steps (20)]. Error bars (specified by a vertical line through each point) are smaller than the size of the circle for all but the two lowest temperature steps. Similar results are obtained for both a second Nakhla subsample and for Lafayette (fig. S1).

Fig. 2. Measured and modeled ⁴⁰År*/³⁹Ar ratio evolution spectra for martian meteorite Nakhla (subsample 1). These spectra were calculated using the two-domain model in Fig. 1 for various assumed diffusively cooling thermal pulses experienced by the HRD. Following (19), we found that it takes several hours for the meteorites to cool to ambient temperatures. The LRD was assumed to contain no radiogenic Ar (40Ar*), and the spatial distribution of 40Ar* within the HRD was assumed to be uniform before ejection. Shown are the calculated ⁴⁰Ar*/³⁹Ar ratios R (normalized to the bulk ratio R_{bulk} plotted as a function of the cumulative ³⁹Ar release fraction ΣF^{39} Ar. Circles are the data of (15). Solid curves correspond to various peak temperature pulses during ejection from Mars at 11 Ma: black, no difREPORTS

Finally, these results highlight the difference in thermal histories between Mars and Earth. The small amounts of 40 Ar* degassing observed for the nakhlites and particularly for ALH84001 require that they must have been at low temperatures for nearly their entire histories. Linearly extrapolating the HRD Arrhenius relations (Fig. 1 and fig. S1) to low temperatures, we find that during the past 1.3 billion years, the three nakhlites could not have been at a constant temperature exceeding -8° to -49°C, depending on which Arrhenius model for the HRD is used (Fig. 3A and fig. S3A). A constant temperature of no more than -2° to -43°C lasting for 200 million





fusive loss experienced by the HRD; green, 250°C; pink, 300°C; red, 350°C. Dashed curves are the same calculations using the one-domain model shown in Fig. 1. Error bars (specified by a vertical line through each point) are smaller than the size of the circle for all but the nine lowest temperature steps. Similar results are obtained for both a second Nakhla subsample and for Lafayette (fig. S2).

REPORTS

Fig. 3. Long-duration temperature limits for (A) Nakhla (subsample 1) and (B) ALH84001. Curves depict the maximum temperature that each meteorite could have experienced during a single assumed temperature excursion as a function of the time before the present (age) in martian history when the excursion begins. Each curve corresponds to a particular assumed duration for the excursion. The HRDs of the meteorites are assumed to experience no diffusive loss of ⁴⁰Ar* at all times other than during the temperature excursion.



Each model is constrained to match the deficit gas fraction (the diffusively lost proportion of ⁴⁰Ar* relative to complete retention) observed in the HRD of each meteorite today (1 and 8% for Nakhla and ALH84001, respectively).

These curves were calculated using the two-domain Arrhenius relations in Fig. 1. Figure S3 shows the sensitivity of these time/temperature constraints to the uncertainties in the diffusion kinetics.

years of the past 1 billion years of Nakhla's history is also required. This result is consistent with constraints derived from ALH84001, which suggest that since 4 Ga, it could not have been at a constant temperature exceeding -60° to -70° C, and since 3.5 Ga it could not have been warmer than -7° to $+7^{\circ}$ C for all but the briefest time period (1 million years) (Fig. 3B and fig. S3B). Given our assumptions, these are conservative upper limits. In all, four subsamples from three rocks taken from two martian meteorite classes with vastly different ages, petrographic textures, compositions, and argon diffusion kinetics give similar constraints on martian temperatures.

Our results may seem surprising given that Mars' obliquity and surface temperatures are thought to have regularly reached high values over the planet's entire history, with dominant frequencies of ~120,000 years and longer (1, 31). However, because temperature changes at the martian surface will be attenuated at depth, deeply buried rocks may not sample these events (1, 32). Although the burial depths of the martian meteorites are largely unknown, it is conceivable that ALH84001 was at more than 1 km depth for the past 4 billion years, whereas the nakhlites likely resided at depths of between a few meters to no more than a few hundred meters (33). Therefore, all of the meteorites subjected to the thermochronological calculations described here should not have been subject to diurnal or annual thermal variations. ALH84001 may not have sampled even the longest-period obliquity-induced thermal waves. However, the nakhlites formed at such shallow depths that they almost certainly experienced elevated temperatures associated with the full frequency range of obliquity changes since 1.3 Ga.

Our calculations imply that during the past 4 billion years, average temperatures within the top few kilometers of the martian crust were not significantly warmer than the present cold (subzero) conditions and therefore that pure liquid water was not likely to have been stable at the martian surface for extended periods of time. This is consistent with suggestions (34) that the secondary minerals only observed in these meteorites are the products of brief (less than a few days) interactions with liquid water.

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possible that the observed low-temperature paleomagnetic remanence was affected by viscous remagnetization. The thermal histories experienced by shergottites and chassignites are less well known because of the paucity of magnetic analyses and high-resolution ⁴⁰Ar/³⁹Ar age spectra free of trapped Ar for these rocks. (U-Th)/He dating of the shergottite Los Angeles (35) found that the meteorite was strongly heated (to probably at least several hundred degrees C) during ejection, but the peak temperature is not well constrained because the diffusivity of helium in Los Angeles merrillite is not currently known.

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to 10 m and >30 m, respectively. These estimates are consistent with but more restrictive than depth estimates inferred from studies of Theo's Flow, which are ultramafic lavas several hundred meters thick thought to be a terrestrial analog for the nakhlite source region (37, 38). ALH84001 probably formed as a cumulate in a deep (several tens of kilometers) intrusion (7). However, given our thermal constraints, two observations suggest that it was later excavated to much shallower depths. First, the thermal gradient on Mars, although not well constrained, is thought to be $\sim\!10^\circ\text{C/km}.$ Second, ALH84001 was strongly shocked at least twice (once before 4 Ga and then again at 4 Ga) (5, 7, 39) and then ejected from Mars without experiencing postshock temperatures greater than 350°C. This suggests that by the 15 Ma ejection event, it resided in the spall zone of the impactor. For a 10-km impactor, this would imply a burial depth of no more than a few kilometers (40).

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Genomic Sequencing of Pleistocene Cave Bears

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Despite the greater information content of genomic DNA, ancient DNA studies have largely been limited to the amplification of mitochondrial sequences. Here we describe metagenomic libraries constructed with unamplified DNA extracted from skeletal remains of two 40,000-year-old extinct cave bears. Analysis of \sim 1 megabase of sequence from each library showed that despite significant microbial contamination, 5.8 and 1.1% of clones contained cave bear inserts, yielding 26,861 base pairs of cave bear genome sequence. Comparison of cave bear and modern bear sequences revealed the evolutionary relationship of these lineages. The metagenomic approach used here establishes the feasibility of ancient DNA genome sequencing programs.

Genomic DNA sequences from extinct species can help reveal the process of molecular evolution that produced modern genomes. However, the recovery of ancient DNA is technologically challenging, because the molecules are degraded and mixed with microbial contaminants, and individual nucleotides are often chemically damaged (1, 2). In addition, ancient remains are invariably contaminated with modern DNA, which amplifies efficiently compared with ancient DNA, and therefore inhibits the detection of ancient genomic sequences (1, 2). These factors have limited most previous studies of ancient DNA sequences to polymerase chain reaction (PCR) amplification of mitochondrial DNA (3–8). In exceptional cases, small amounts of singlecopy nuclear DNA have been recovered from ancient remains less than 20,000 years old obtained from permafrost or desert environments, which are well suited to preserving ancient DNA (9–12). However, the remains of most ancient animals, including hominids, have not been found in such environments.

To circumvent these challenges, we developed an amplification-independent directcloning approach to constructing metagenomic libraries from ancient DNA (Fig. 1). Ancient remains are obtained from natural environments in which they have resided for thousands of years, and their extracted DNA is a mixture of genome fragments from the ancient organism and sequences derived from other organisms in the environment. A metagenomic approach, in which all genome sequences in an environment are anonymously cloned into a single library, may therefore be a powerful alternative to the targeted PCR approaches that have been used to recover ancient DNA mol-

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SOM Text Figs. S1 to S3 References

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ecules. We chose to explore this strategy with the extinct cave bear instead of an extinct hominid, to unambiguously assess the issue of modern human contamination (1, 2). In addition, because of the close evolutionary relationship of bears and dogs, cave bear sequences in these libraries can be identified and classified by comparing them to the available annotated dog genome. The phylogenetic relationship of cave bears and modern bear species has also been inferred from mitochondrial sequences, providing the opportunity to compare the phylogenetic information content of cave bear mitochondrial and genomic DNA (13).

We extracted DNA from a cave bear tooth recovered from Ochsenhalt Cave, Austria, and a cave bear bone from Gamssulzen Cave, Austria, dated at 42,290 (error +970/-870) and 44,160 (+1400/-1190) years before the present, respectively, by accelerator mass spectrometry radiocarbon dating (table S1). We used these ancient DNA molecules to construct two metagenomic libraries, designated CB1 and CB2 (Fig. 1) (14). These libraries were constructed in a laboratory into which modern carnivore DNA has never been introduced. Ancient DNA molecules were blunt end-repaired before ligation but were otherwise neither enzymatically treated nor amplified. We sequenced 9035 clones [1.06 megabases (Mb)] from library CB1 and 4992 clones (1.03 Mb) from library CB2. The average insert sizes for each library were 118 base pairs (bp) and 207 bp, respectively.

We compared each insert in these libraries to GenBank nucleotide, protein, and environmental sequences, and the July 2004 dog whole genome shotgun assembly, by using Basic Local Alignment Search Tool (BLAST) software with an expect value cutoff of 0.001 and a minimum hit size of 30 bp (14–16). 1.1% of clones in library CB1 (Fig. 2A) and 5.8% of clones in library CB2 (Fig. 2B) had significant hits to dog genome or modern bear sequences. Our direct-cloning approach produces chimeric inserts, so we defined as candidate cave bear

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