Morphodynamics

Adolf Seilacher, Alan D. Gishlick

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Morphodynamics is defined as the unique interaction among environment, functional morphology, developmental constraints, phylogeny, and time—all of which shape the evolution of life. These fabricational patterns and similarities owe their regularity not to a detailed genetic program, but to extrinsic factors, which may be mechanical, chemical, or biological in nature. These self-organizing mechanisms are the focus of **Morphodynamics**.

Illustrated by numerous examples from across the biological spectrum, this book embodies the foundation of noted paleontologist Adolf Seilacher's thinking on the study of morphodynamics. It represents his unique approach of presenting paleontology from an ecological and constructional perspective, rather than a purely taxonomic one.

The hallmark of Seilacher's storied career has been a constructional and functional focus. He begins by discussing the basic principles—form, pattern formation, ecology and evolution, as well as the factors that override those processes. Next, he examines how morphodynamic principles are implemented in various invertebrates including single-celled protists, Ediacarans, sponges, coelenterates, shelled organisms, worms, arthropods, and echinoderms.

The final chapter explores how morphogenetic principles may apply to clonal colonial organisms. Summarizing seventy years of research into the interactions of form, function, and evolution, the book is copiously illustrated with the author's own distinctive drawings and an abundance of photos. It provides a framework for readers to pose their own questions and sharpen their interpretive skills on this fascinating topic.



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