



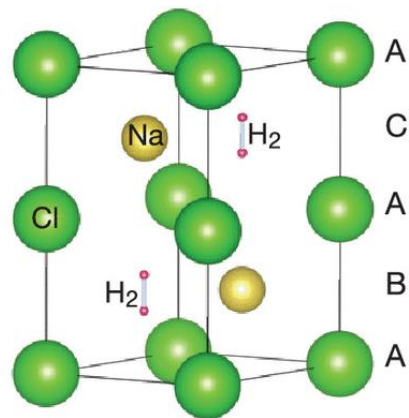
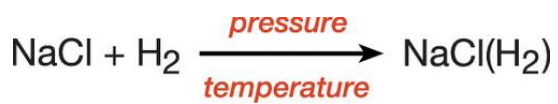
DICTIONARY OF SALT



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CHEMISTRY - In chemistry it is inaccurate to call salt just salt because it might refer to a lot of different salts, being sodium chloride one of them. Sodium chloride (NaCl) can be originated in the acid-base reaction between hydrogen chloride and sodium hydroxide. When an acid reacts with a base, it generates a salt and water. NaCl has a molar mass of 58,44 g/mol and is highly soluble in water (35,9g of salt per 100mL of water at 25°C).



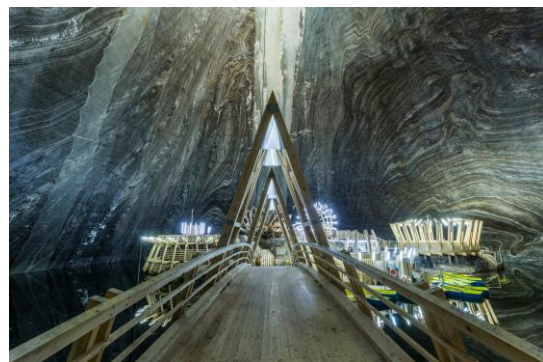
COOKING WITH SALT - Salt is and has been used for cooking and seasoning food since ages. The Romans, for example, used salt as a vital ingredient in most of their dishes. Garum, for instance, is a condiment mainly made of fish brine.



ECONOMICS OF SALT - Salt is referred in Portugal after its own independence in 1143. During the Celtic dominance in Iberia, cities like *Talabriga* (= Aveiro) had already an important value due to salt production. Later on, the Romans continued to explore



and produce salt in that area. Iberian garum, the condiment I showed before, was considered the very best in the Empire. Portuguese salt was also considered top quality and it had a major financial role since Medieval Ages. It is estimated that the salt production in the thirteenth century reached a few thousands of tons.



FOOD PRESERVATIVE - One of the oldest known properties of the salt is that it is a natural meat and fish preservative, this is because salt reduces water activity (that traduces the available water for microbial growth – when the water activity is high it leads to thriving of the bacteria that deteriorate food). Salt can also limit other chemical



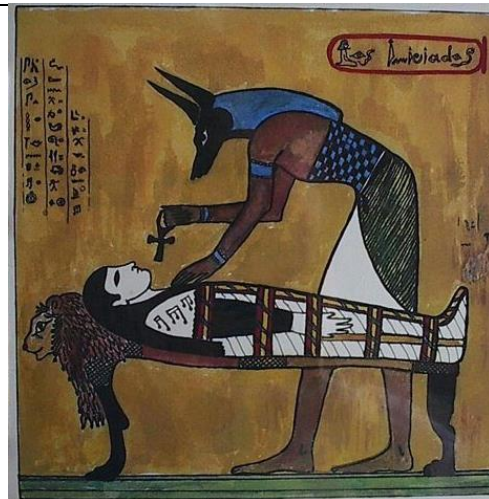
interactions that also result in spoilage/ food spoilage.

HALITE - Salt is the common word for the mineral halite (coming from the Greek words *halos* which means salt or sea and *ite* which is a suffix of the word *lithos* which means stone. So halite roughly means stone of the salt or stone of the sea. Halite is the sodium chloride mineral. It has a cubic shape and a translucent colour. It is composed of sodium and chlorine, 1 atom of each to form the molecule.



PRESERVATION OF MUMMIES

- There are also records that report mummies preserved in salt in the Ancient Egypt since the third millennia, that is 5 thousand years ago!



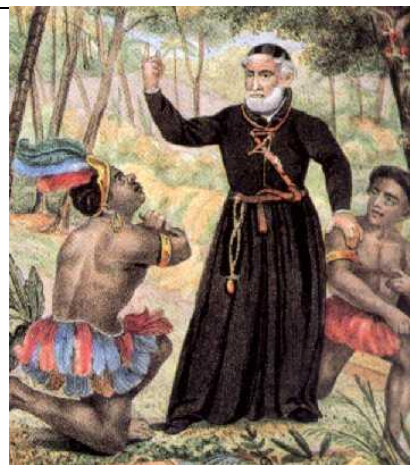
SALARY - There are many evidences showing the extreme importance of the salt throughout the time. The word salary, for example is derived from salt once it was a common way of paying back in the days.

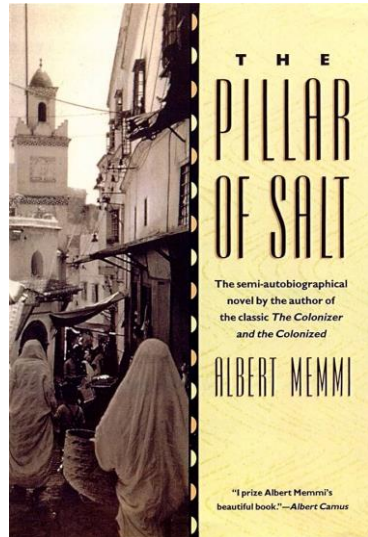
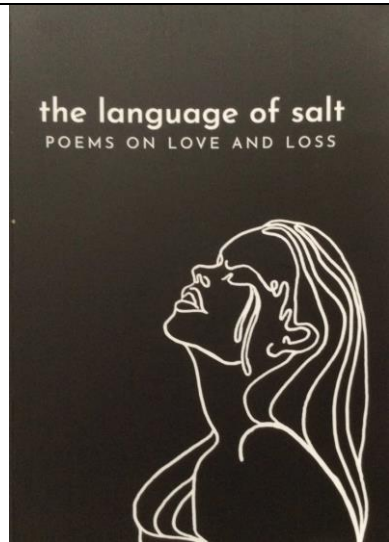


SALT EXTRACTION - Due to its rich mineral content it is actually healthier to consume salt extracted by the traditional method rather than the industrial method. The taste also reflects that.

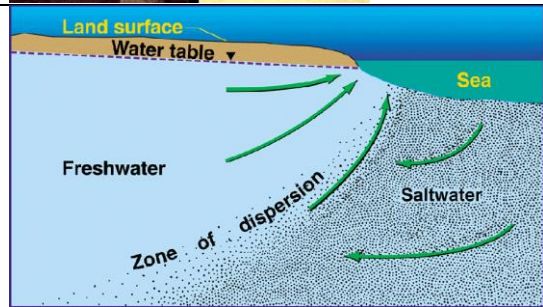


SALT IN LITERATURE - Salt is also mentioned in many literary works such as the “Sermão de Santo António aos Peixes” – a metaphorical text that criticised slavery and hypocrisy of the Portuguese settlers back in 1654. The writer makes an analogy referring the bible “*vos estis sal terrae*”, meaning that people should be like good salt and prevent corruption and spoilage of the right human values.





SEA WATER - The salt (term used to refer sodium chloride) is mostly present in sea water due to geological activity like volcanism and rock erosion. Note that sea water salinity is in average 35 ‰. Thus, salt can be easily and abundantly extracted from the sea in the coastline. When salted water evaporates, the minerals of halite start to form. The salt we use for culinary purposes is often industrially purified or



refined in a very complex process that includes a series of procedures based of concentration, crystallization, harvest and washing.

SALT AS A SYMBOL - Salt was a symbol of hospitality, friendship and trust "*compartir el pan y sal*".

Our ancestors threw salt into the fire to drive away demons. In Japan, the art of Feng Shui uses salt to clean the interior of houses from negativity.

Jews and Muslims believed that salt protected them from the evil eye.

Across Europe, the practice of submerging newborns in salt water and placing salt on the tip of their tongue became popular.

It was believed that when there was salt in a house, the money would never run out.

It was also believed that when salt was spread on street corners on April 1st, it protected livestock from disease.

To prevent an unbaptized child from being the object of sorcery, a bag of salt was tied to his clothes while he slept.



Spilled salt portends catastrophes, superstitious people threw 3 handfuls of salt over their left shoulder to scare away evil spirits.

