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Sommario/riassunto	"Part of the complex relationship which society has had over the centuries with fossils is at least in part associated with the conceptual problem of exactly how fossils are formed. It was not always assumed that these structures were plant or animal in origin, for a very good reason. From the earliest years of a monotheistic culture, the mortal remains were seen as disposable, epitomised by the Book of Common Prayer of 1662 where the funeral oratory includes the well-known 'earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust' indicating almost by redundant usage that mortal remains will not survive in any shape or form. So it was naturally assumed that with this authority, everything would disappear, and if nothing remained, those stone-like inclusions within rocks could not possibly be animal or plant in origin."--