

Cerberus

In 2008 the MRO HiRISE CTX camera took an image of the Cerberus region on Mars (P16_007144_1926_XN_12N196W)¹ showing an interesting set of formations along the shores of a dry coastal bed (Figure 1). The Cerberus region is located in the northern eastern hemisphere, just below Utopia Planitia, within the southern part of Elysium Planitia.² It is situated at a northern latitude between 6.23 °N and 16.16 °N, while its easternmost and westernmost longitudes are between 174.72 °E and 154.43 °E. The area is named by Schiaparelli in 1882 after the three headed dog from Greek mythology that guarded the entrance to Hell.³

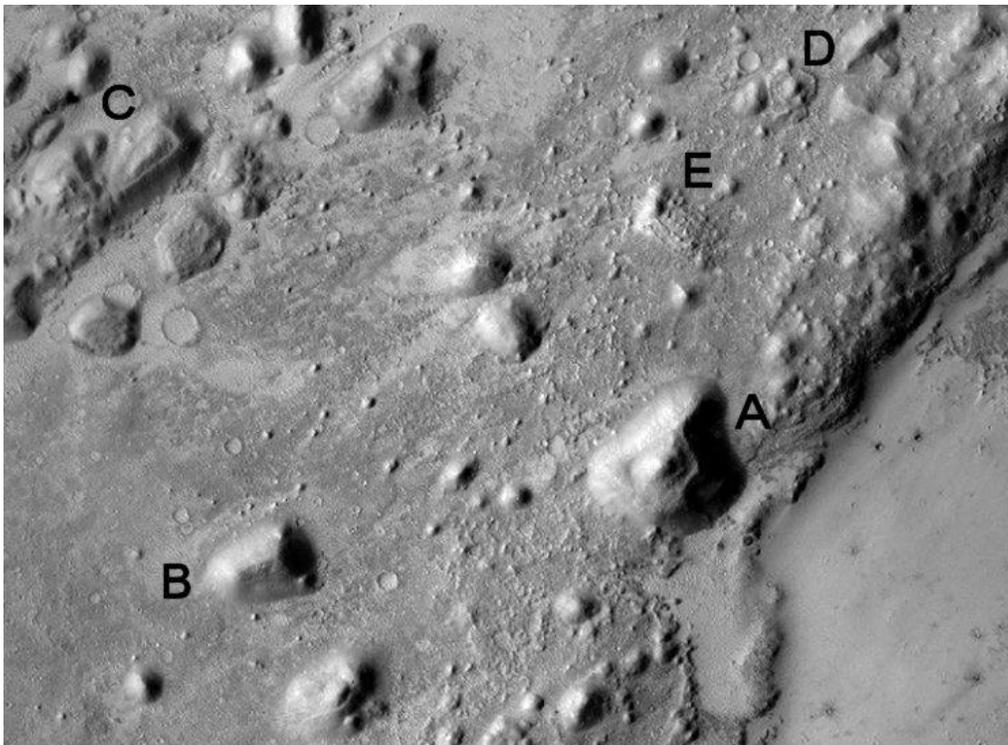


Figure 1
The Cerberus Complex
Detail of CTX image P16_007144_1926_XN_12N196W (2008)
Notated A-E by author.

Structures A-E

The examination of this area will start by looking at the stepped pyramidal formation, located in the lower center of the CTX image, labeled A in figure 1. Notice the long extended ramp and the central mound formation set within a rectangular platform at the top of the structure (Figure 2). The central mound is oval in shape and has two small circular mounds set below it. There is also a thin, cord-like feature that follows the ramp to the eastern edge of the platform and runs down the southern side of the pyramid wall to the ground.

The Long Ramp Pyramid strongly resembles the famous Etowah Mound produced by the indigenous people in Georgia (Figure 2). Notice the central square-shaped mound and the overall spiral, stepped design of both formations.

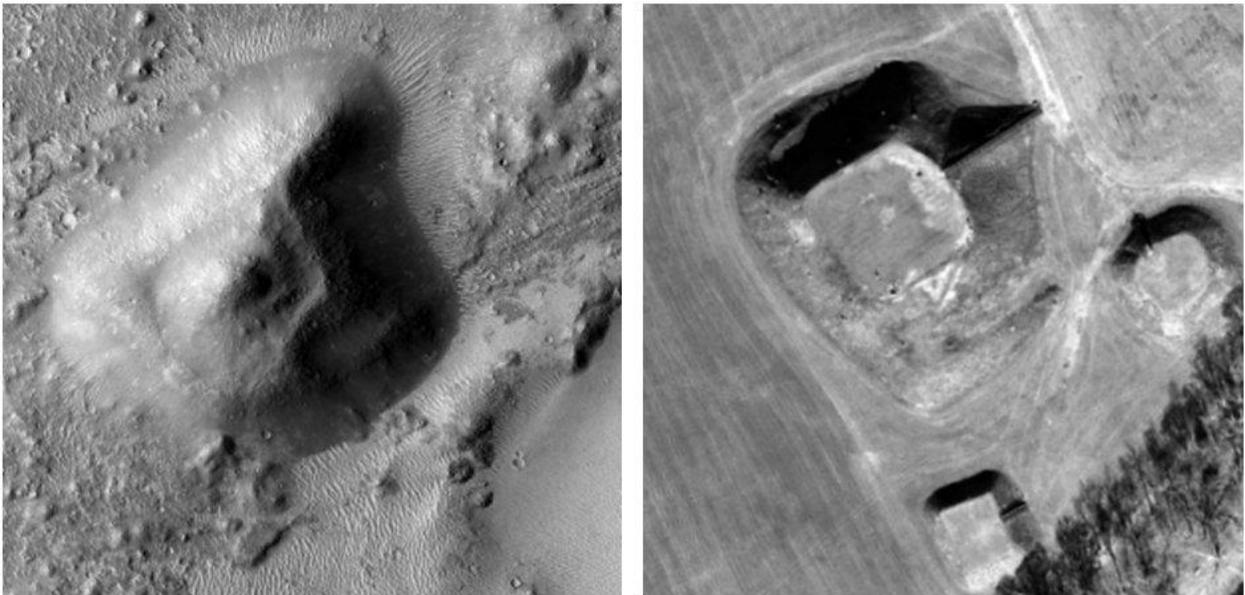


Figure 2

Pyramid comparison

Left: Long Ramp Pyramid (Labeled A in figure 1)
Detail of CTX image P16_007144_1926_XN_12N196W (2008)

Right: Etowah mound (Georgia)
Courtesy Google Earth

Moving across to the other side of the complex, to the far left, we find an oval-shaped structure labeled B in figure 1. The mound has a Y-shaped spine with a pair of circular mounds flanking the tips of the Y-shaped spine (Figure 3).

Like the Long Ramp Pyramid presented in Figure 2, the Oval Mound can also be compared to earthworks produced by the indigenous people of North America. Its oval shape is very similar to a mound produced by the Mississippian culture in Illinois, known as Mound 59.



Figure 3

Oval Mound comparative

Left: Oval Mound (Labeled B in figure 1)

Detail of CTX image P16_007144_1926_XN_12N196W (2008), rotated.

Right: Mound 59, Illinois

Directly above the Oval Mound (Labeled B in figure 1) is a wedge-shaped structure labeled C in figure 1. The formation has a triangular form that resembles a knife's sheath or a spade (Figure 4). In the south-western area of England, in the town of Dorset, there is comparable spade-shaped mound known as the Pilsdon Hill Fort⁴ (Figure 5).



Figure 4
Spade-shaped Mound Comparison
Left: Spade Mound (Labeled C in figure 1)
Detail of CTX image P16_007144_1926_XN_12N196W (2008)
Right: Pilsdon Hill Fort (England)

Looking across the top of the complex, on the far right of the image, is a small conical mound, labeled D in figure 1 that is corralled by a set of compartmentalized walls (Figure 5).

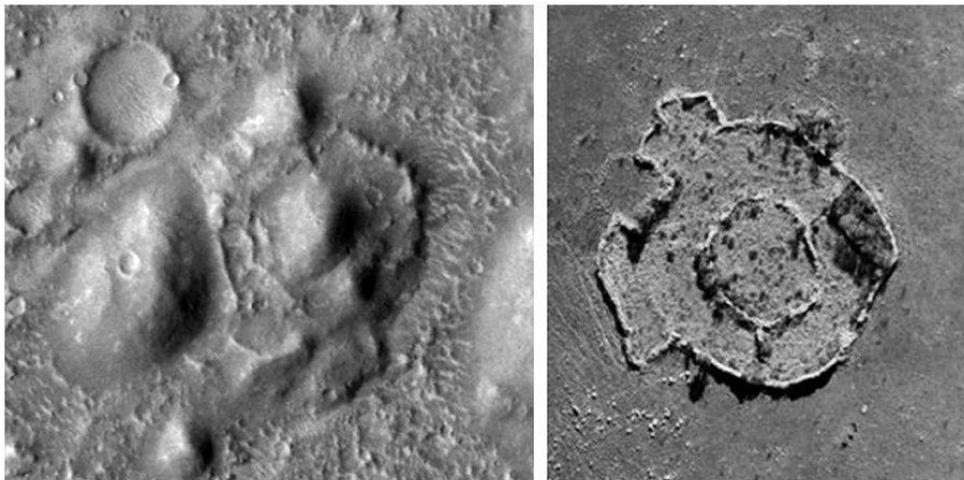


Figure 5
Corral-shaped Mound Comparison
Left: Corralled Mound (Labeled D in figure 1)
Detail of CTX image P16_007144_1926_XN_12N196W (2008)
Right: Corralled enclosure (South Africa)

The connective walls create a hexagonal target shape with a circular mound at its center. There is also an L-shaped mound that extends along the outer rim of the top wall and there is also a square-shaped platform attached to the lower wall. A similar collection of walled enclosures was brought to the public's attention in 2003 by a pilot that was flying over the mountains of South Africa⁵ (Figure 5). He found hundreds of structures that had multiple walls and enclosures.

Just below the south western side of the Corralled Mound (labeled D in figure 1) is an odd surface feature, labeled E in figure 1 that appears as a rectangular grid of compartmentalized cells (Figure 6). This grid pattern appears as the bombed out remains of a city or the ruins of a massive pueblo (Figure 6). Notice the fragmented linear structure and collapsed cells observed in each formation.

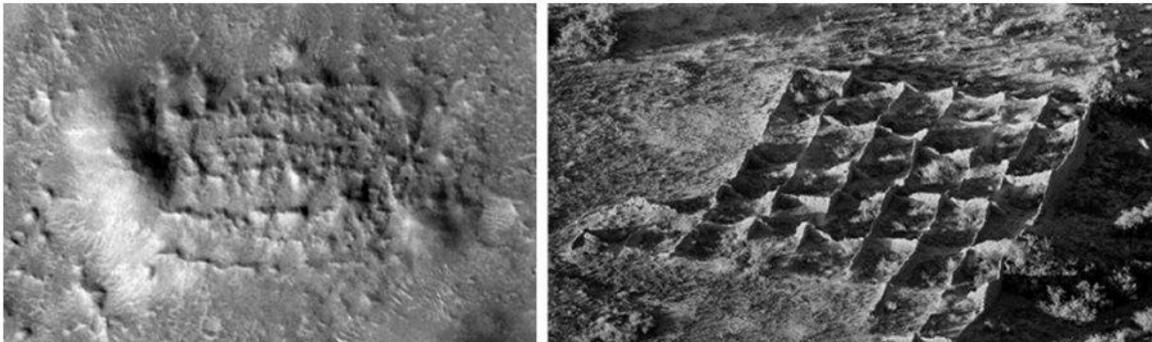


Figure 6

Grid Structure Comparison (Labeled E in figure 1)

Left: Grid Structure.

Detail of CTX image P16_007144_1926_XN_12N196W (2008)

Right: Tiwa pueblo ruins (New Mexico).

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Footnotes

1. MRO CTX HiRISE, *Tartarus Montes region*, CTX P16_007144_1926_XN_12N196W, 2008. http://viewer.mars.asu.edu/planetview/inst/ctx/P16_007144_1926_XN_12N196W#P=P16_007144_1926_XN_12N196W&T=2

2. William K. Hartmann, *A Traveler's Guide to Mars*, (Workman Publishing, New York 2003), 322.
3. Gazetteer of Planetary Nomenclature, Cerberus Fossae, International Astronomical Union.
<https://planetarynames.wr.usgs.gov/Feature/1109;jsessionid=A00BEFDA78AB1F2F7E97F064A5D7AC11>
4. An Inventory of the Historical Monuments of Dorset: Volume 1, (Her Majesty's Stationery Office, London, 1952), 179-80.
5. Bryan Hill, *Adam's Calendar: Oldest Megalithic Site in the World?*, Ancient-Origins.net, June 2, 2015.