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Plains-forming Materials

Plains-forming materials show flat to gently rolling surfaces at A-frame resolutions, but locally appear rough or exhibit small scale roughness on B-camera photographs. Although plains-forming materials occur in most areas of the quadrangle, they are most prevalent in the central belt, where they cover a broad low area. The plains units show a decrease in crater density and increase in smoothness from rolling plains to smooth plains, with plains, mottled plains and ridged plains as

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Relief-forming materials are those units that are higher and rougher than plains-forming materials. The surface roughness may be an intrinsic property of the materials or a secondary characteristic developed by faulting or erosion. In general, these materials occupy upland regions of high crater density and in places may be considered as local basement consisting of highly brecciated rocks formed by multiple impacts.

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classification has significantly fewer most craters and superpositions are not readily apparent, the crater classification is primarily morphologic rather than chronological. Topographic sharpness, depth, and rim development are used to infer relative ages. The sharpest craters (C_0) are interpreted to be the youngest; the more subdued craters have been degraded by subsequent impact, volcanism, erosion, and/or sedimentation. Craters are classified into three age groups: C_0 (youngest), C_1 (intermediate), and C_2 (oldest). Craters C_0 are small, sharp peaks, but none in this quadrangle have extensive rim deposits or satellite crater fields. Most larger craters are floored by younger materials of coltan or mass-wasting origin. The largest crater in the quadrangle (215 km across), Kepler 47 ($S, 219^\circ W$), contains an incomplete ring of mountainous peaks on the floor similar to rings observed in some large lunar craters (Wilhelms, 1975). Kepler

No fresh-appearing craters (c_{40} or c_{30}) are observed on the mottled rough material or mottled plains south of 50° S lat. Assuming a normal distribution of craters, it appears that all craters within the winter polar cap have been modified by active, polar-related processes and have reached a more degraded state than craters of similar age north of this zone.

Three crater chains and two irregular craters occur within the Eridania quadrangle. The crater chain consists of three craters that are not unequivocally related to any primary crater nor to volcanism. The irregular crater is 50° S, 120° W and has a raised rim and internal peak and is probably of impact origin. The irregular crater at 32° S, 234° W has a multiple, scalloped outline, flat floor, and little or no raised rim, and may be of volcanic origin.

The most prominent faults and lineaments are found chiefly in older terranes. Scarps and narrow linear elements occur mostly in the mortified growth materials in the south and may be related to erosion of the surface by wind-blown sand. The scarp trend is generally parallel to the dominant NW-SE structural preferrence for N. 70° W., N. 30° E., and N. 60° E. trends. The N. 70° W. trend is 30° SE of the scarp trend, primarily in the southern part of the quadrangle; are radial and concentric fractures are observed in the older materials in the oldest materials, they may be related to the formation of the Hellas Basin.

The prominent trend of linear elements at N. 60° E. parallels the major trend of the 2,000-km-long fracture zone which crosses the entire area. This trend is also parallel to the major trend of the fracture zone although changes strike to approximately east-west. These fractures cut younger material than other fracture sets. The N. 60° E. trend is not radial to any nearby basin but may be associated with the formation of the Hellas Basin.

Furrows and gullies, some with dendritic patterns, are numerous within the low-albedo band in the northern part of the quadrangle. Where the furrows are especially numerous, the terrain is mapped as furrowed materials. A few channels are barely recognizable in the northern part of the quadrangle. Some of the furrows may be related to the martian ice sheet or to abrasion of the surface by Mars dust particles. Many furrows are poorly resolved at Aframe resolution and unmappped.

Light and dark wind streaks are common downwind from craters. Light streaks are parallel to the southeasterly trends seen in the Acolis quadrangle and are mostly concentrated near 35°S , 200°W . Dark plumes are numerous in a broad band from 33°S , 210°W . to 36°S , 225°W . These streaks trend west to southwest, delineating a changing wind-pattern along the band. The dark streaks appear to occur in a low trough that might channel surface wind flow. Light wind streaks appear to be deposits of eolian material down-range from obstacles, whereas dark plumes may be more accreted areas of rock or lag gravels (Sagan and others, 1973).

Distinctive, elongate, linear, and somewhat sinuous, low-contrast features that vary in composition and thickness of the surficial cover. Some intercrater dark patches are dune fields (Cuttis and Smith, 1973), and B-frame (DAS 5912928), and some dark patches that cut across crater rims or are in troughs may be lag gravels or volcanic deposits.

GEOLOGIC HISTORY

The early history of the region was dominated by a high flux of meteoroids and impact cratering. The impact responsible for the Hellas Basin occurred during this late stage of planetary accretion (Potter, 1976). Furlrowing of slopes, probably by aqueous fluids, may have been widespread soon after this early stage of surface development.

Following the formation of the Hellas Basin, volcanic flows were deposited across the central belt, filling the regional depression with rolling plains material; volcanism continued with the emplacement of the ridged plains material. Structural adjustments in the Hellas Basin and surrounding areas were active during the deposition of these units. As cratering by impact waned, other plains materials of volcanic and eolian origin were deposited in lowlying basins. The sources of the volcanic materials are not known, but they were represented extrusions from fissures, as no volcanic constructs are recognized in the quadrangle.

Erosion has probably been continuous, though of variable intensity. Running water, frost action, volcanism, mass-wasting, and eolian transport have been the most critical agents or processes in producing changes on the Martian surface in this region of the planet.

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