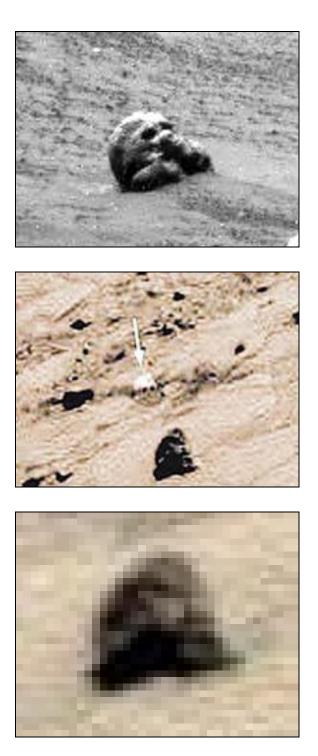


SKULLS ON MARS ARE PROBABLY STATUES

Question asked of MARS: Andy, I have followed with great interest the accounts of small skulls found on the surface of Mars. Do you think the case has been made that the small objects depicted are definitely skulls rather than rocks or something else natural or man-made?



Andrew D. Basiago, president, Mars Anomaly Research Society (MARS): No. Having evaluated the data depicting small skulls on the Martian surface, I have to say that I think the objects depicted are probably statues. As I have commented elsewhere, carving indigenous hills, mesas, and boulders into heads, faces, and masks of hominids is so ubiquitous on Mars that it is the leading form of Martian art. In some places - for example, Tsiolkovski Ridge - such objects literally litter the landscape of Mars. Undoubtedly, your curiosity was piqued by the photo of the alleged gorilla skull on Mars that was widely published in 2009 (top right). If you examine this image closely, however, you will see that the face is irregular and includes other elements suggesting that it is a carving. I think that support for this premise comes in the recent discovery made by the Australian photographer Michael Middleton of an apparent skull in an image taken by NASA's rover Spirit on Sol 1526 of its Mars mission (center right). It resembles a skull, but the stylized bust of the head of a bearded man sculpted in brown stone lies nearby (bottom right). Such statues might serve as markers of burial sites placed on the surface by Mars' underground civilization, just as we mark cemeteries with gravestones on Earth.



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