

CONTENTS

Preface	vii
List of Figures	xiii
List of Tables	xvi
1. Mercury From A Systems Perspective.....	1
1.1 Mercury in Context.....	1
1.2 Physical and Orbital Measurements.....	1
1.3 Difficulties and Anomalies Uncovered in Observing Mercury ..	2
1.4 A Planet as a System of Subsystems.....	6
1.5 Types of Systems	6
1.6 In the Beginning: Solar Nebula System for Planet Formation....	8
1.7 Interior and Surface Formation: Sources, Sinks, Processes	12
1.8 Atmosphere Formation: Sources, Sinks, and Processes	14
1.9 Magnetosphere Formation: Sources, Sinks, and Processes	15
1.10 Summary	17
1.11 References.....	17
1.12 Some Questions for Discussion	19
2. Past and Planned Missions to Mercury	20
2.1 NASA's Successful Mariner 10 Mission to Mercury	20
2.2 The Mariner 10 Spacecraft.....	22
2.3 The Mariner 10 Scientific Payload	24
2.4 Overview of Mariner 10 Observations	24
2.5 Mariner 10 Mission Objectives.....	26
2.6 NASA's Ongoing MESSENGER Mission	26
2.7 The MESSENGER Spacecraft and Payload	28
2.8 The MESSENGER Mission Objectives.....	30
2.9 The ESA/ISAS Planned Bepi Colombo Mission.....	30
2.10 The Bepi Colombo Spacecraft and Payload	32

2.11	The Bepi Colombo Mission Objectives	33
2.12	Summary	35
2.13	References	35
2.14	Some Questions for Discussion.....	36
3.	Mercury's Interior	37
3.1	Present understanding of Mercury's Interior.....	37
3.2	Bulk Properties	37
3.3	Magnetic Field and Core Formation.....	38
3.4	Structure of Mercury's Core.....	40
3.5	Shape, Gravity Field, and Internal Structure of Mercury	44
3.6	Search for a Liquid Core/Shell.....	45
3.7	Solar system Formation.....	46
3.8	Equilibrium Condensation Model	46
3.9	Mercury's High Bulk Abundance of Iron	49
3.10	Direct Accretion of Reduced Components.....	49
3.11	The Selective Accretion Model.....	50
3.12	Post-Accretion Vaporization and Giant Impact Models.....	51
3.13	Infall of Cometary/Asteroid Materials	53
3.14	Discrimination between the Models.....	53
3.15	Summary	55
3.16	References	56
3.17	Some Questions for Discussion.....	60
4.	Mercury's Surface	61
4.1	Present Understanding of Mercury's Surface.....	61
4.2	Physical Properties of the Surface and Regolith	65
4.3	Composition of Mercury's Surface and Regolith.....	68
4.4	Space Weathering as Regolith Modification Process.....	76
4.5	Nature and Composition of Major Terranes.....	77
4.6	Concise Summary of Mercury's Geological History	81
4.7	Impact activity and Chronology	83
4.8	Volcanism.....	89
4.9	Tectonic Activity.....	91
4.10	Polar Features.....	96
4.11	Summary	99
4.12	References	100
4.13	Some Questions for Discussion.....	106
5.	Mercury's Exosphere	107
5.1	The Exosphere Concept.....	107



5.2	From Atmosphere to Exosphere	107
5.3	Mariner 10 Observations.....	108
5.4	Post-Mariner 10 Understanding Mercury's Atmosphere.....	109
5.5	Ground-based Observations of Sodium and Potassium.....	111
5.6	The Sodium Tail of Mercury	115
5.7	Discovery of Calcium in Mercury's Atmosphere.....	115
5.8	Mercury's Exosphere after Sodium and Potassium Detection	116
5.9	Current Understanding of Source and Loss Processes.....	119
5.10	Proposed Source and Loss Processes.....	121
5.11	Models of Mercury's Atmosphere	124
5.12	Summary of Constituent Source and Loss Mechanisms.....	126
5.13	Mercury's Exo-Ionosphere	128
5.14	Space Weathering as Atmosphere Modification Process	128
5.15	Summary.....	132
5.16	References.....	132
5.17	Some Questions for Discussion	138
6.	Mercury's Magnetosphere	139
6.1	Pre-Mariner 10 Knowledge of Mercury's Magnetosphere	139
6.2	Mariner 10 Magnetosphere Detection.....	139
6.3	Mariner 10 Magnetometer Measurements	143
6.4	Origin of Mercury's Magnetic Field.....	148
6.5	Mariner 10 Plasma Observations.....	148
6.6	Mariner 10 ULF Observations	150
6.7	Magnetosphere Structure	152
6.8	Magnetopause Structure.....	154
6.9	Magnetosphere Dynamics.....	157
6.10	Substorm Activity	163
6.11	Field Aligned Currents.....	164
6.12	Detectable Magnetosphere/Exosphere Interactions.....	169
6.13	Magnetosphere/Surface Interactions.....	174
6.14	Recent Modeling of Mercury's Magnetosphere	174
6.15	Summary.....	179
6.16	References.....	179
6.17	Some Questions for Discussion	184
7.	The Future of Mercury Exploration.....	185
7.1	Need for Further Investigation of Mercury's Interior	185
7.2	Ground-based Observations for Interior Exploration	186
7.3	Planned Missions and the Interior.....	186
7.4	The Future Exploration of Mercury's Interior	187
7.5	Need for Further Investigation of Mercury's Surface.....	189
7.6	Ground-based Observations for Surface Exploration	189



7.7	Planned Missions and the Surface	190
7.8	The Future Exploration of Mercury's Surface	192
7.9	Need for Further Investigation of Mercury's Exosphere.....	194
7.10	Ground-based Observations and the Exosphere.....	194
7.11	Planned Missions and the Exosphere	195
7.12	The Future Exploration of Mercury's Exosphere.....	196
7.13	Need for Further Investigation of Mercury's Magnetosphere.	197
7.14	Ground-based Observations for Magnetosphere Exploration .	198
7.15	Planned Missions and the Magnetosphere	198
7.16	The Future Exploration of Mercury's Magnetosphere	199
7.17	Conclusions: A New Approach.....	201
7.18	References	208
7.19	Some Questions for Discussion.....	211
Index	213