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Cross-comparison of global simulation models applied to Mercury's dayside magnetosphere

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Key Points:

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30	• First comparison of multiple global simulations of the solar wind interaction with
31	Mercury's dayside magnetosphere
32	• The results of four distinct simulation approaches are juxtaposed with MESSEN-
33	GER observations
34	• In contrast to the magnetosheath thickness, the location of the simulated bow shock
35	depends on the inner boundary condition of the model

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36 Abstract

We present the first comparison of multiple global simulations of the solar wind in-37 teraction with Mercury's dayside magnetosphere, conducted in function of the interna-38 tional collaborative project SHOTS - Studies on Hermean magnetosphere Oriented The-39 ories and Simulations. Two magnetohydrodynamic and two hybrid (ion kinetic, electron 40 fluid) simulation codes are used to investigate a scenario with a northward orientation 41 of the interplanetary magnetic field. We juxtapose the results of the four codes for a the-42 oretical case and a MESSENGER orbit with similar upstream plasma conditions. The 43 different models agree on a bow shock and magnetopause location at 2.1 $R_{\rm M}$ and 1.4 $R_{\rm M}$, respectively. It is found that the location of the simulated bow shock depends on 45 the inner boundary condition of the model. To assess and characterize the different fea-46 tures of each code, the thickness of the magnetosheath has been compared as well. The 47 four models are also used for the comparison with MESSENGER observations, and vir-48 tual sampling of Mio and MPO spacecraft of BepiColombo mission. Our ability to more 49 accurately predict the structure of the Hermean magnetosphere will aid the analysis of 50 BepiColombo's plasma measurements. 51

52 1 Introduction

Mercury is a planet of extremes that is continuously battered by a harsh and dy-53 namic solar wind. The planet's eccentric orbit crosses regions where nearly 40% of the 54 thermal pressure is carried by alpha particles and heavy ions during fast solar wind phases 55 (Gershman et al., 2012). Combined with a highly variable slow solar wind component 56 that includes interplanetary magnetic field magnitudes up to 30 nT and a small Parker 57 spiral angle, Mercury's weak internal magnetic field produces a unique magnetosphere 58 in the solar system (Korth et al., 2018; Slavin et al., 2018). In particular, the significant 59 offset between the magnetic dipole origin and the center of the planet results in a sur-60 face magnetic field strength in the northern hemisphere that is double the nominal value 61 estimated for the southern hemisphere. The estimated distance between the sub-solar 62 magnetopause and the surface is only half of the planetary radius, meaning that often 63 the solar wind can directly interact with the surface, even outside the magnetospheric 64 cusps. Mercury's magnetosphere is a factor of 20 smaller than Earth's magnetosphere. 65 Because Mercury takes up a significant volume within its magnetosphere, particle pre-66 cipitation patterns and differential space weathering are as variable as the upstream so-67 lar wind (Kallio et al., 2008; Raines et al., 2014). The absence of a significant ionosphere 68 makes Mercury's conductive core an integral part of the electrodynamic current closure 69 and complicates the evolution of the complex local plasma environment even more (Johnson 70 et al., 2016). 71

Numerical simulations of the solar wind interaction with the Hermean magneto-72 sphere have thus far adopted multi-fluid/magnetohydrodynamic (e.g., Kabin et al. (2000); 73 Benna et al. (2010); Jia et al. (2015); Dong et al. (2019)) and hybrid approaches (treat-74 ing the electron populations as a (massless) fluid; e.g., Kallio and Janhunen (2003); P. Trávníček 75 et al. (2007); P. M. Trávníček et al. (2010); Wang et al. (2010)). These models, designed 76 to focus on the ion kinetics, have been successful in recreating the general structure of 77 Mercury's local plasma environment. For example, with a hybrid model Müller et al. (2012) 78 characterised a diamagnetic current system that originates from the proton pressure gra-79 dients at Mercury's inner magnetosphere to explain the day- and night-side diamagnetic 80 decreases observed by MESSENGER (Slavin et al., 2008; Anderson et al., 2011). In ad-81 dition, recent numerical developments have produced the first fully kinetic, global sim-82 ulations of the Hermean magnetosphere (Peng, Markidis, Laure, et al., 2015; Peng, Markidis, 83 Vaivads, et al., 2015; Chen et al., 2019). 84

Both Mariner-10 and MESSENGER have shown that including finite-gyroradius
 effects and electron dynamics are insurmountable to fully understand the Hermean plasma

environment (Slavin et al., 2018). The BepiColombo plasma instruments, complemen-87 tary to the previous missions, will focus on direct measurements of the response of Mer-88 cury's magnetosphere and its near-space environment to dynamic changes in the solar 89 wind, including plasma-wave-charged-particle resonances, kinetic-scale instabilities and 90 particle distributions, and energy transfer via field-aligned currents and waves (Slavin 91 et al., 2018). In order to optimally prepare for the measurement campaign and to be able 92 to fully interpret and analyse the data, or in other words, to exploit most efficiently the 93 multi-point measurements allowed by the dual spacecraft and the synergies between the 94 various sensors of the on-board plasma suite, sophisticated modelling tools are required. 95

The SHOTS (Studies on Hermean magnetosphere Oriented Theories and Simulations) project⁽¹⁾ has been established as an integral part of the BepiColombo Young Scientist Working Group⁽²⁾. Its aim is to share and compare simulations results among the BepiColombo Science Working Team to prepare the scientific analysis of the in situ observations gathered by the Mercury Magnetospheric Orbiter (MIO; Mukai et al. (2006)) and Mercury Planetary Orbiter (MPO; Milillo et al. (2010)).

In this first comparative study, we identify the differences of a fluid and hybrid simulation approach to model the structure of the Hermean magnetosphere and its plasma environment. Also, we compare the bow shock and magnetopause locations with a representative set of MESSENGER measurements.

¹⁰⁶ 2 Model description

The four computer models used in this comparison study are briefly described here. Two magnetohydrodynamic (MHD) and two hybrid codes have been employed to identify the consequences of the different assumptions that are implemented in the physical model of the codes.

The MPI-AMRVAC code (hereafter AMRVAC) is a three-dimensional non-relativistic 111 MHD code, previously used, e.g., to investigate the interaction of the solar wind with 112 a planetary environment (Keppens et al., 2012). AMRVAC integrates the MHD equa-113 tions using a two-step Lax-Friedrichs-type scheme (TVDLF) associated with a Wood-114 ward gradient limiter. A Powell correction is also used to satisfy the $\nabla \cdot \mathbf{B} = 0$ condi-115 tion at each time step (Powell et al., 1999). In order to limit magnetic diffusion, the mag-116 netic field ${f B}$ is split into an analytically prescribed background field ${f B}_0$ and a residual 117 field $\mathbf{B_1}$ (Griton et al., 2018). The full system of equations is solved on a spherical grid 118 that is linearly spaced along the angular coordinates θ and ϕ and logarithmically spaced 119 along the radial coordinate r. Hence, the simulation domain itself is a spherical shell. 120 At the outer boundary, free slip conditions $\partial/\partial r = 0$ are applied to all fields where the 121 angle between the solar wind direction and the normal to the boundary direction is <122 80° . Ambient (upstream) solar wind conditions are set at the remaining sides of the do-123 main. At the inner boundary of the simulation domain, here the planetary surface, the 124 radial velocity is set to zero. A free slip condition is applied to the tangential compo-125 nents of the momentum $\rho \mathbf{u}$. If the radial velocity immediately above the surface is pos-126 itive (i.e. in case of outflow), the plasma number density and the total fluid pressure are 127 set to $n_p = n_e = 15 \,\mathrm{cm}^{-3}$ and $p = 0.1 \,\mathrm{nPa}$, respectively. On the other hand, if the ra-128 dial velocity immediately above the surface is negative (i.e. in case of inflow) n_p and p 129 are allowed to float within the range $[15, 150] \text{ cm}^{-3}$ and [0.1, 1] nPa. A free slip condi-130 tion is also applied to the normal component of $\mathbf{B_1}$ at the surface. The tangential com-131 ponents are set to zero. 132

¹ http://shots-bepicolombo.irap.omp.eu

 $^{^{2}\,}https://sites.google.com/view/bepi-ys-wg-workshop$

YAGI's code is the second three-dimensional MHD model we use (Yagi et al., 2009, 133 2010). In contrast to AMRVAC, a uniform Cartesian grid is adopted and the vector po-134 tential **A** is computed instead of the magnetic field, ensuring $\nabla \cdot \mathbf{B} = 0$ by definition. 135 In addition, a Rational-CIP algorithm is implemented to solve the advection term. A 136 fourth-order Runge Kutta and a fourth-order central difference method are used to solve 137 the non-advection terms needed to advance the numerical scheme in time and space, re-138 spectively. The inner boundary of the computational domain is the planetary surface and 139 Mercury is treated as a reflective obstacle, allowing no flux to penetrate across the sur-140 face. We also do not allow any radial pressure and density gradient at the planetary sur-141 face. These conditions accommodate a smooth convection of the dipole magnetic field 142 in the vicinity of the planet, mimicking a conducting obstacle. 143

AIKEF (Adaptive Ion Kinetic Electron Fluid) is a hybrid code that operates on 144 a Cartesian grid. The mesh automatically adapts its resolution in regions where large 145 field gradients exist (Müller et al., 2011). Contrary to MHD, a hybrid model treats ions 146 kinetically and uses computational particles to represent their velocity distribution. Elec-147 trons are included as a massless charge-neutralizing fluid. To include induction effects, 148 a radial resistivity profile is applied. The maximum resistivity is set to 1.21×10^7 [Ohm 149 m] within the mantle. The profile at the core-mantle boundary and the surface are adopted 150 from Jia et al. (2015). Mercury's surface is treated as a perfect plasma absorber, i.e., par-151 ticles impacting the surface are removed. Within the vacuum regions of the nightside 152 magnetosphere, ghost-particles with the same charge-to-mass ratio as the upstream so-153 lar wind protons are inserted to allow local magnetic field diffusion. Their density is ten-154 uous so that no physical feedback onto the dynamics of the magnetosphere is present. 155 The model has previously been applied to Mercury's magnetosphere (Müller et al., 2012; 156 Exner et al., 2018). 157

The Amitis (advanced modeling infrastructure in space simulations) is a GPU-based 158 (Graphics Processing Units) three-dimensional hybrid model of plasma that currently 159 runs only on a single CPU-GPU pair. It has been developed to reduce the computational 160 resources that are typically needed for running global simulations and resulted in per-161 formance enhancement of 10x-100x over its CPU-based predecessor (Fatemi et al., 2017) 162 The model kinetically tracks individual positively charged particles (ions) by solving the 163 Lorentz equation of motion while using a fluid description for mass-less electrons. The 164 electric field, **E**, is directly calculated from the electron momentum equation and Fara-165 day's law, $\partial \mathbf{B}/\partial t = -\nabla \times \mathbf{E}$, is used to advance the magnetic field, **B**, in time. The 166 model is grid-based and uses regular-spaced, cell-center Cartesian grids to solve all the 167 equations. The model self-consistently couples the geophysical, induced electromagnetic 168 response of the interior of a planetary body to the electromagnetic response of the in-169 cident plasma and magnetic fields by solving Maxwell's equations for plasma and mag-170 netic diffusion equation $(\partial \mathbf{B}/\partial t = -\nabla \times \nabla \times \mathbf{B}/\mu_0 \sigma)$ for the interior of an object, where 171 μ_0 is the permeability of free space and σ is the conductive profile for the interior of a 172 planetary body (for more details, see Fatemi et al. (2017)). The model allows real-time 173 simulations and it has been extensively applied to study plasma interaction with the Moon, 174 asteroid 16 Psyche, and Mercury and validated against observations by ARTEMIS and 175 MESSENGER (Fatemi et al., 2017; Fatemi et al., 2018; Fatemi & Poppe, 2018; Fuqua Hav-176 iland et al., 2019; Garrick-Bethell et al., 2019; Poppe, 2019). In Amitis, when a parti-177 cle impacts the surface of an object, the particle is removed from the simulation domain, 178 and when a vacuum region forms behind an object, which is due to the plasma absorp-179 tion upstream, the entire vacuum region is assumed to be resistive with resisitivity 10^7 180 $[\Omega \cdot m]$. The resistivity assumption in the vacuum is in contrast to AIKEF that fill in the 181 vacuum region with ghost particles. For our simulations presented here and obtained from 182 the Amitis code, both the particles and electromagnetic fields are assumed to be peri-183 odic along the y and z axis in the MSO coordinate system. The solar wind flows along 184 the -x axis by continuously injecting solar wind ions at the most upstream grid cell. The 185

	Grid	Number of cell	Size of domain	Spatial Resolution
AMRVAC	Spherical	(36, 36, 72)	$r \in R_{\mathrm{M}}[1, 10]$	$213 ext{ x } 161 ext{ km}$
YAGI	Cartesian	(Nx, Ny, Nz)	(, ,)	$122 ext{ km}$
AIKEF	Cartesian	(Nx, Ny, Nz)	$(, ,) \\ (, ,)$	100 m km
AMITIS	Cartesian	(Nx, Ny, Nz)		170 m km

 Table 1.
 Summary of the numerical setting.

The other numerical settings, such as the number of cell, the size of simulation do-188 main, and spatial resolution are summarized in Table 1. In details, because AMRVAC 189 has employed spherical coordinate system, a total number of cells is $(N_r, N_{\theta}, N_{\phi}) = (36, 36, 72)$, 190 covering the radial interval $r \in R_{\rm M}[1,10]$. The horizontal and vertical cell size near 191 the surface are thus 213 km and 161 km, respectively. No mesh refinement is used here, 192 and output file is converted to the Uniform Cartesian grids. YAGI's model performs on 193 the Cardesian grids with the uniform uniform spatial resolution of 122 km. In AIKEF, 194 macro particles are used, which exhibit the same charge-to-mass ratio q_i/m_i as the ion 195 species they are representing. In this study, the uniform Cartesian geometric is applied 196 with the spatial resolution of 100 km and the number of particle per cell is set to 25 to 197 accurately describe Maxwellian and non-Maxwellian distribution of different plasma species. 198 On the other hand, the number of particles per cell is 12 in AMITIS. The spatial res-199 olution is now set to 170 km. 200

²⁰¹ 3 Methodology constraints

3.1 Common visualization tools

We use netCDF as a multidimensional format with meta information for all sim-203 ulations. It allows us to have a unified format for comparative visualizations, data in-204 teroperability and reusability. In the present study, we employ Paraview for 3D data visualization and analysis. In addition, we use 3Dview and AMDA, which makes use of 206 the SPASE simulation data model (Jacquev et al., 2010; Génot et al., 2010; Génot et al., 207 2018; Roberts et al., 2018). Using SPICE kernels, 3Dview is a 3D JAVA tool that pro-208 vides visualizations of the positions and attitudes of planetary missions and bodies in 209 combination with observational data, simulations, and analytical models. AMDA is an 210 online database and analysis tool in which in-situ observations, ground based observa-211 tions, and models can be browsed, manipulated and downloaded (a workspace is avail-212 able for each user). AMDA and 3Dview are developed by the CDPP (Centre de Données 213 de la Physique de Plasmas), and are now widely used by the space physics and plane-214 tology communities and available to contributing developers under a GPLv3 licence. 215

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3.2 Common input parameters and simulation setup

In this work we discuss two cases: (a) a classical textbook case under purely northward interplanetary magnetic field conditions, and (b) a direct comparison with a preselected MESSENGER orbit. Using 4 different simulation frameworks inevitably leads to a variety of numerical settings, such as boundary conditions, grid and spatial resolutions, and the treatment of particles and electromagnetic fields at the planetary surface. As a consequence, next to the physical model of each framework, also the numerical treatment of the latter may influence the plasma behaviour in the simulated computational domain.

All models work in the Mercury Solar Orbital (MSO) frame. The x-axis points towards the Sun and the y-axis is chosen opposite to the orbital motion of Mercury. The z-axis points to the geophysical north and completes the right-handed coordinate system. The intrinsic magnetic field of the planet is set as an ideal dipole with a 480 km offset towards the north from the planetary centre. The dipole moment is 200 nT x $R_{\rm M}^{-3}$. To avoid further numerical complexities, we do not include Mercury's exosphere in our simulations. An overview of all common input parameters is summarized in Table 2.

3.2.1 Case a: Northward IMF

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Northward IMF conditions are chosen to ensure a most stable dayside magnetosphere structure. Typically, a southward IMF gives rise to unstable magnetosphere conditions as the relatively short Dungey cycle at Mercury produces dayside magnetic reconnection events in rapid succession, not allowing the system to relax in between (Slavin
et al., 2019).

The IMF magnitude is set to 20 nT and adopt a solar wind proton density of 30 cm^{-3} , Alfvén Mach number of 5, and a total plasma beta of 1.3. The solar wind speed measures 400 km s⁻¹ (Sarantos et al., 2001; Winslow et al., 2013). In the MHD models the density and temperatures are set using the sum of the respective proton and electron values (Table 2).

243 3.2.2 Case b: MESSENGER comparison

We select a MESSENGER orbit that allows a simulation setup as close as possible to our theoretical northward IMF case. Due to its mid-day to midnight orientation (X-Z plane), orbit 1415 (November 8, 2012) allows for the easiest comparison. The orbit has a Disturbance Index less than 25, the lowest magnetic activity quartile; the zcomponents of the IMF at the inbound an outbound bow shock crossings are positive and within 2 nT of each other; and the IMF variability along the entire orbit is less than 10 nT, indicating stable solar wind conditions.

We use the inbound part of the orbit to compute an average IMF condition to be inserted in our models. Further, the Alfvén Mach number is set to 5, the solar wind speed equals $459 \,\mathrm{km \, s^{-1}}$, the proton and electron temperature measure $12 \,\mathrm{eV}$, and $18 \,\mathrm{eV}$, respectively (Marsch et al., 1982; Wilson et al., 2018).

	Northward case	MESSENGER case
Planetary radius R_M [km]	2440	2440
Planetary dipole moment $[nT \times R_M^3]$	200	200
Northward dipole offset $[km]$	480	480
$\overline{\text{SW proton density } [cm^{-3}]}$	30	40
SW proton + electron temperature $[MK]$	0.25 + 0.25	$0.14 {+} 0.21$
SW total plasma β	1.3	0.69
SW Alfvén Mach number	5	5
SW plasma velocity $[km s^{-1}]$	400	459
SW Sonic Mach number	6.8	8.5
IMF (X,Y,Z) components $[nT]$	(0, 0, +20)	(25.28, -6, 4.92)

Table 2. Summary of the common input parameters. SW denote the solar wind.

255 4 Results

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4.1 Purely northward IMF case

The purely northward IMF configuration gives the stable magnetopshere, thus, all 257 simulation reaches the stationary state after the certain computational time (300 sec). 258 Here the results from four different models have been compared to characterize each model. 259 Figure 1 shows the density maps of solar wind proton in the X-Z plane on a logarith-260 mic scale with the magnetic field lines. The two left panels show the results from MHD 261 codes and the two right panels present the results from hybrid codes. It is clear that all 262 models show a similar global structure of the Hermean magnetosphere, i.e., the shape 263 of bow shock, high density in the magnetosheath, and the location of the cusp. However, 264 the density population near the planet and inside the nightside magnetosphere, location 265 of the magnetopause in the nightside look different among them. 266

Looking at each result, AMRVAC shows the less sharp shock structure at the bow shock, clear structure of the dayside magnetosphere with low density, some density concentration near the planet, and asymmetric magnetic field structure in the nightside magnetosphere which tends to the southward. Especially, the density concentration and southward tilting seem to be unique features of AMRVAC compared to others.

On the other hand, YAGI's code shows the sharper bow shock even though it is the same MHD model. The dayside magnetosphere can be identified by the structure of the magnetic field whereas it is filled with a higher density, which is almost the same or less as that in the magnetosheath. The structure of the magnetic field in the nighside is more symmetric or a little bit tilted to the northward, and there is no high density concentration.

The two panels on the right are the results from AIKEF and AMITIS. AIKEF also 278 shows very sharp bowshock and the dayside magnetosphere can be identified also by the 279 less dense plasma and the size of cusps seem to be narrow compared to that of MHDs. 280 Because of no density concentration in the nightside, the cusp regions in the northern 281 and southern hemispheres are easily identified in the density map. In the nightside, the 282 magnetic field are slightly tilted to the north as YAGI's code does. Interestingly, AIKEF 283 provides the curved magnetic field lines in the solar wind region. This is due to the smooth-284 ing effect in the code which can reduce the numerical instability. The right bottom panel 285 represents the results from AMITIS. Because AMITIS does not employ any smoothing 286 routine, the figure is busy compared to others. However, we see that the bowshock and 287 magnetopause are clearly structured, and the solar wind plasma cannot penetrate into 288 the dayside magnetosphere which is indicated by the lower density. The cusp structure 289

- is similar to that of AIKEF, and the magnetic field configuration in the nightside is sym-
- ²⁹¹ metric. Compared to other results, the density in the nightside seems to be low.



Figure 1. Density map in X-Z plane in log scale for 4 simulations. The panels on the left (right) are the results from MHD (hybrid) simulations. Length scales are normalized by Mercury radius.

In order to discuss the differences among them quantitatively, the pressure profile 292 along the subsolar line is shown in Figure 2. The dynamic and magnetic pressure is ex-293 tracted and the locations of bowshock and magnetopause have been identified. The four 294 panels correspond to the four simulations. A solid line shows the dynamic pressure, $\rho \mathbf{v}^2$, 295 while dashed line represents the magnetic pressure, $B^2/2\mu$. There is also a gray dot-dashed 296 line showing the magnetic pressure by the uncompressed dipole magnetic field to eval-297 uate how much the planetary magnetic field is compressed by the solar wind. Please note 298 that the current setting of the intrinsic magnetic field is the same in all four simulations. 299 The gray vertical line at $x = 1.12 R_{\rm M}$, showing the point where the dynamic pressure 300 and the uncompressed magnetic pressure as the reference magnetopause location. The 301 position of bow shock (BS) has been visually identified by the maximum gradient of ve-302 locity and density (vertical solid red line), and the location of the magnetopause (MP) 303 has been identified by three ways, the one is the topology of the magnetic field line as 304 the farthest closed magnetic field line from the planet using Paraview, the other one is 305 the pressure equilibrium, and another is the current density. Because the MP location 306 identified by both the pressure equilibrium and the current density shows good agree-307 ment, we take its value as a location of magnetopause indicated by the vertical dashed 308 red line in Figure 2. 309



Figure 2. Dynamic (solid) and magnetic (dashed) pressure profiles along the X-axis (Sun-Mercury direction) from 3 $R_{\rm M}$ to the planet surface on the day side, for the four simulation codes. The two MHD codes are on the top two panels and the hybrid ones in the two bottom panels. Positions of the bow-shock (BS) and magnetopause (MP) are shown with vertical red solid and dashed lines. The grey vertical line gives the theoretical expected position of the magnetopause.

In Figure 2, first of all, the locations of both bowshock and magnetopause vary slightly 310 among the models. The maximum difference for the bowshock is about 0.23 $R_{\rm M}$ and 311 for the magnetopause is about 0.2 $R_{\rm M}$. The exact number of shock locations are sum-312 marized in Table 2. The mean position of the magnetopause is 1.425 $R_{\rm M}$, and 2.15 $R_{\rm M}$ 313 for the bowshock. The standard deviation for the bowshock location is $\sigma = 0.078$ with 314 the standard error of ± 0.039 , and $\sigma = 0.094$ with the standard error of ± 0.047 for the 315 magnetopause location. According to Table 2, the location of the magnetopause varies 316 more than that of the bow shock, which can be understood due to the boundary con-317 dition applied at the surface and inside of the planet. In order to compare those results 318 with minimum influence of numerical setting of the boundary condition, here we derive 319 the thickness of the magnetosheath as a key parameter. The mean value is $0.725 R_{\rm M}$ 320 and its standard deviation σ is 0.027 with the standard error of ± 0.019 . Although the 321 results from hybrids seem to have the wider thickness, the error among four results is 322 small. 323

		BS $[R_{\rm M}]$	MP $[R_{\rm M}]$	Sheath thickness $[R_{\rm M}]$
MHD	AMRVAC	1.99	1.30	0.69
	YAGI	2.21	1.50	0.71
Hybrid	AIKEF	2.18	1.42	0.76
	AMITIS	2.22	1.48	0.74
Mean value		2.14	1.41	0.73
Standard Deviation σ		0.094	0.078	0.027
Standard Error $\sigma_{\overline{x}}$		± 0.047	± 0.039	± 0.013
		$(\pm 2.2\%)$	$(\pm 2.7\%)$	$(\pm 1.9\%)$

Table 3.Summary of the bow shock and magnetopause locations, and the thickness of themagnetosheath for the four simulations (AMRVAC, YAGI's code, AIKEF and AMITIS).

In addition to the shock location along the sub-solar line, here the reconnection site 324 (so-called null point) around the cusp and location of the magnetopause in the night-325 side are also investigated as an important factor to determine the structure of the Her-326 mean magnetosphere. Figure 3 shows the X - Z map of the null points (indicated by 327 colored circles) and locations of the magnetopause (represented by colored crosses) at 328 $X = -2 R_M$ for each code. Two gray dashed lines represent the bowshock and magne-329 topause model (Slavin et al., 2009; Shue et al., 1997; Winslow et al., 2013) as references. 330 The null point is normally identified by the high magnetic beta or very small magnitude 331 of the magnetic field, or the topology of the magnetic field. In this study, because we have 332 the simplest IMF configuration, the topology of the magnetic field showing the struc-333 ture of the magnetic reconnection is used for the identification using Paraview. It is clearly 334 seen that the null points around the northern cusp are located more in the nightside and 335 farther away from the planet while those around the southern cusp are near the termi-336 nator (except YAGI's code) and close to the planet due to the offset of dipole field. Those 337 reconnection sites are normally determined in each model depending on not only the phys-338 ical parameter we used such as the solar wind, dipole moment, but also the numerical 339 parameters such as the resistivity, and they may play a big role to determine the loca-340 tion of shocks and the whole structure of the magnetosphere. For example, AMRVAC 341 shows the largest asymmetry on the null point, and due to the rapid and continuous re-342 connection may make the titled southward structure of the magnetic field in the night-343 side and it may result in some high-density concentration near the surface. On the other 344 hand, the locations of magnetopause in the night at $X = -2 R_M$, are obtained by 345 the gradient of the density and current density. Except AMRVAC, other three models 346 are located inside the referenced magnetopause model as we see in Figure 2. In partic-347 ular, the reference magnetopause model by Shue et al. (1997) with the parameters of $R_{ss} =$ 348 $1.45 R_{\rm M}$ and $\alpha = 0.5$ is the best fit model for the MESSENGER observations. Con-349 sidering variations with this best fit model of the magnetopause, all four simulations show 350 a good agreement with it even though our input IMF was purely northward. Northward 351 IMF case shows that all models show very similar results in terms of the dayside mag-352 netosphere even different scale modelings. 353



Figure 3. The locations of null points (colored circles) and magnetopause (colored crosses) for four codes in X-Z plane. The dashed lines show the bow shock (BS) and magnetopause (MP) from models by Slavin et al. (2009) for BS and Shue et al. (1997) for MP. The paraboloid of MP has parameters given by $R_{ss} = 1.45 R_{\rm M}$ and $\alpha = 0.5$, and parameters of BS model are $p = 2.75 R_{\rm M}$, $\epsilon = 1.04$, and $X_0 = 0.5 R_{\rm M}$.

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4.2 MESSENGER case

In this section, we compare the simulation results with the magnetic field obtained 355 by MESSENGER. Profiles of the three components of the magnetic field and its mag-356 nitude with the data from MESSENGER, and solar wind proton density and magnitude 357 of velocity from four different models are shown in Figure 4. The profiles of four sim-358 ulations are presented using colored lines, and MESSENGER magnetometer data is shown 359 using a black plain line. MESSENGER data corresponds to measurements during or-360 bit 1415 from 4:30 UT to 10:00 UT. During this period, the spacecraft entered the mag-361 netosphere from the tail side from the southern hemisphere and exited on the dayside. 362 crossing the bowshock and the magnetopause twice in its path. Four vertical lines in-363 dicate the shock locations for both inbound and outbound crossings of MESSENGER. 364 The figure shows that all four codes produce results in close agreement with MESSEN-365 GER data, especially inbound orbit. On the other hand, non of 4 models reproduce nei-366 ther the location of bowshock and magnetopause on the outbound orbit. This may be 367 due to the variation of the solar wind during the one orbit despite the quiet orbit was 368 selected as much as possible. And also, due to the limitation of the particle instrument 369 and its orbit, velocity and density of solar wind are arbitrary taken. Changing those val-370 ues may make the fitting of shock locations better. Interestingly, there are clear differ-371 ences between MHDs and hybrids on the fourth panel of Figure 4 around 7:50. Two hy-372 brid lines show agreement with the observations while both MHD show lower intensity 373 of the magnetic field. This may be related to the ion kinetics. 374

Taking advantage of this virtual sampling, we also extract the particle data, pro-375 ton density and the velocity along the MESSENGER trajectory. Because of the kinetic 376 effect of ions, the lines from hybrid models are a little bit busy. However, the density pro-377 files among four models show good agreement while the velocity profiles diverse more. 378 Around 7:50 UT, the spacecraft is passing through the northern cusp and then moving 379 towards the dayside region. At 8:10 UT, where you can see the peak signature in the den-380 sity panel, which shows the compressed magnetosheath. The velocity profile of AIKEF 381 shows off-trend at 6:30 to 7:00 UT, where the density becomes very low, this may be due 382 to the handling of vacuum region in hybrid code. 383



Figure 4. Magnetic field and particle data along orbit 1415 of the MESSENGER. Blue, green, orange, and red lines shows the results from AMRVAC, YAGI, AIKEF, AMITIS, respectively. The black line shows the magnetometer data from MESSENGER. Bow shock (BS) and Magnetopause (MP) crossings identified by observation are indicated using vertical solid and dashed line, respectively.

384 5 Discussion

Due to the limited particle instrument onboard MESSENGER and the single space-385 craft, it is difficult to fit the locations of bowshock and magnetopause with models and 386 observations. The solar wind varies in time in the real situation and there is no infor-387 mation about its velocity and density from the observation. It is necessary to assume 388 those parameters so far. That's why it is normal that we do not have matched shock lo-389 cations. However, in order to discuss more details, we derive the differences between mag-390 netic field from observations and modelings (see Figure 5). Because the MESSENGER 391 392 pass through the night region of the magnetophere from 6:15 UT to 7:45 UT, the differences become larger so here we discuss only the differences around cusp and day-393 side region. Just before 5:00 UT, MESSENGER encounter the first bowshock crossing. 394 Although all models show similar behaviors, the error time of this crossing is about 15 395 min. Then, while The z-component of magnetic field is well fit for all four models, y com-396 ponent is underestimated in four models. The first magnetopause crossing is fitted with 397 some of models but models show more broad magnetopause crossing. At 7:50 UT where 398 the MESSENGER moves from the nightside to the dayside in the northern hemisphere, 399 two hybrids and two MHDs show similar behavior respectively. This is exactly after the 400 cusp crossing and before entering the magnetosheath and the MESSENGER seems to 401 be moving around the dayside magnetopause. Although our four models have small dif-402 ferences in the structure of the dayside magnetosphere, MESSENGER is along the mag-403 netopause in MHDs while it is just inside the dayside magnetosphere in hybrids. It seems 404 to be that hybrid models has magnetic pile-up in the dayside magnetosphere. Accord-405 ing to Figure 2, MHD models show the similar profile inside magnetosphere as non-compressed 406 one while the profiles of hybrids show more straight. It indicates that additional com-407 ponent, most probably the compression of magnetic field appears in hybrid, and this could 408 be why MESSENGER in hybrids detects rather the higher magnetic field. 409

According to our results, some differences seen among multiple scale models seem 410 to be rather due to the characteristics of each model, i.e., the numerical settings than 411 the ion kinetics. The question that emerged here is : do we see any effects on the overview 412 of the Hermean magnetosphere due to the ion kinetics?. One of those effects could be 413 the dawn-dusk asymmetry. In general, the thickness of the magnetopause is different be-414 tween on dusk and dawn due to the finite Larmor radius effect of ions, i.e., when the IMF 415 is northward, the thickness of the magnetopause is going to be thicker on dawn and thin-416 ner on dusk. Since it is difficult to define the thickness of the magnetopause from our 417 output, the thickness of the magnetosheath at the terminator has been compared. Of 418 course no asymmetry could be observed in MHD, but in hybrids, we confirm that the 419 thickness of the magnetosheath on dawn is 10% thicker than that on dusk. 420



Figure 5. Subtraction between each model and MESSENGER observation of Magnetic field. and Blue, green, orange, and red lines shows the subtracted results from AMRVAC, YAGI, AIKEF, AMITIS, respectively. Bow shock (BS) and Magnetopause (MP) crossings identified by observation are indicated using vertical solid and dashed line, respectively.

421 5.1 Virtual sampling along Mio/MPO orbits

The aim of this SHOTS project is not only to compare the multiple codes and MES-SENGER observation but also to prepare for the forthcoming BepiColombo observations by making a catalog of Mercury's magnetosphere under different solar wind conditions.

As the first step of this project, we employed four different MHD and hybrid codes. Fig-425 ure 6 and 7 shows the virtual sampling of Mio and MPO during the nominal orbital phase 426 of BepiColombo with the input parameters of MESSENGER case. For an easy compar-427 ison, the orbital plane is completely in x - z plane which corresponds to the orbit on 428 the 4th of April, 2026. In this period, both Mio and MPO moves inside the magneto-429 sphere and collect all of plasma information around Mercury. In particular, plasma en-430 vironment will be observed by the magnetometer onboard both Mio and MPO, MPPE 431 and PWI onboard Mio, SERENA onboard MPO . 432

In both Figure 6 and 7, the solid vertical lines show the crossing of southern and 433 northern terminators (indicated by T₋S and T₋N), and dashed vertical line shows the 434 point where the spacecraft crosses the subsolar point. In this case, Mio is moving along 435 the frontside magnetopause from 15:15 to 15:35, thus the enhancement of the magnetic 436 field intensity and velocity can be seen. The profiles close to the planet may change with 437 being closer to the planet due to the inner boundary condition at the surface or inside 438 the planet. Then Mio will move above the cusp region, and re-enter to the northern mag-439 netosphere in the nightside. As you can see, after the crossing of northern terminator 440 at 15:50, the density and velocity profiles diverse more and more while the profile of mag-441 netic field is still less varied. Those differences on the density and velocity are highly de-442 pendent on the numerical settings such as a treatment of vacuum region in hybrid model, 443 the size of simulation domains. 444

On the other hand, MPO has a shorter orbital period and it passes through very 445 close to the planet. MPO is leaving from the southern magnetosphere in the nightside, 446 then cross the terminator, and enter the dayside magnetosphere. Just before 15:00, two 447 hybrids show the big bumping signatures in the density profile, indicating the cusp re-448 gion (hatched by gray). Also, around 15:35, there are the small bumps again in the den-449 sity profile, showing the trapped particles in the mid-night (represented by gray hatched 450 region). MPO's virtual sampling will be very useful to understand the structure and dy-451 namics of the magnetosphere close to the planet. Overall, four models provide similar 452 virtual data along the orbit especially for the magnetic field. However, because of the 453 different models, we have different predictions for the timing of magnetopause crossing, 454 or of entering a certain region of the magnetosphere. From Mio's and MPO's virtual sam-455 pling with various kinds of solar wind parameters and/or models, we are able to predict 456 the crossing of the cusp, the plasma sheet, or shocks with certain margins. Those mar-457 gins contains the characteristics of model, or ion/electron kinetics. It should be stressed 458 here that the prediction from multiple-scale model would be necessary to maximize the 459 return of BepiColombo mission. In order to discuss more details with a Mio/MPO or-460 bit, the simulation domain should be taken larger. In addition to those line profiles, vir-461 tual sampling of energy-time spectrogram will be also provided in the near future. More-462 over, not only those four MHDs and hybrids but also other codes will be soon employed 463 and discussed together. A number of questions raised here will be investigated with much 464 effort and work of the community, which will contribute to the detailed understanding 465 of solar wind interaction with Mercury's environment. 466



Figure 6. Magnetic field and particle data along the MIO orbit. The dots along the MIO orbit shows the position of MIO every 30 min. The figure format is same as Figure 4.



Figure 7. Magnetic field and particle data along the MPO orbit. The format is same as Figure 6. Two gray hatched regions indicate the cusp crossing and plasma sheet crossing.

467 6 Conclusions

Four different models run with the same input parameters of solar wind and results 468 are stored in the same output format and compared by the common visualization tool. 469 We found that, although all models show similar overview of the Hermean magnetosphere, 470 the shock locations are highly affected by each numerical settings. However, the thick-471 ness of the magnetosheath in each model does not diverse. Generally, model compari-472 son cannot remove any numerical effect which is also the characteristics of each model, 473 however, we show that one clear result showing the effect of ion kinetics in hybrids is the 474 dawn-dusk asymmetry. This classical comparison is useful to support the further devel-475 476 opment of each models, and also could be an assessment for the newly employed code in the future. In addition, the comparison with MESSENGER observation has also been 477 conducted and confirmed that all four models are well developed and they show good 478 agreement with observations. The further comparison with other orbits of MESSENGER 479 will be conducted soon. One of SHOTS' purpose is to prepare the simulation catalog of 480 the Hermean magnetosphere under different solar wind conditions and to work towards 481

maximizing the science return of the forthcoming BepiColombo observation using nu-482 merical simulations. In this study, we have extracted the data from multiple models along 483 both Mio and MPO orbits and compared them for the first time. Those results could 484 be helpful when Mio/MPO start to obtain the data. The continuous project-based works 485 with community-wide effort will be very important not only for the nominal orbital phase 486 but also for the Mercury flybys. 487

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.com/jandeca/Aizawa_etal_PSS_2020 (DOI: XXX.XXX.XXX) in accordance with the 496 FAIR data project. The magnetometer data from MESSENGER observations is avail-497

able in Planetary Data System. 498

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