

Magnetic reconnection in the near tail of Mercury

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Mercury and Earth are supposed to have similar magnetosphere. On the other hand, Mercury's ionosphere is quite tenuous, when compared to Earth's ionosphere. Thus the role of the ionosphere in magnetospheric dynamics could be better understood by comparing Mercury and Earth. In this paper I will discuss whether or not the near-tail reconnection is common in planets with intrinsic magnetic field. I also point out that observations of plasmoids are critical in understanding the role of the ionosphere in magnetospheric dynamics.