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A Psychic Probe of Mercury

(Confirmed by Mariner 10)

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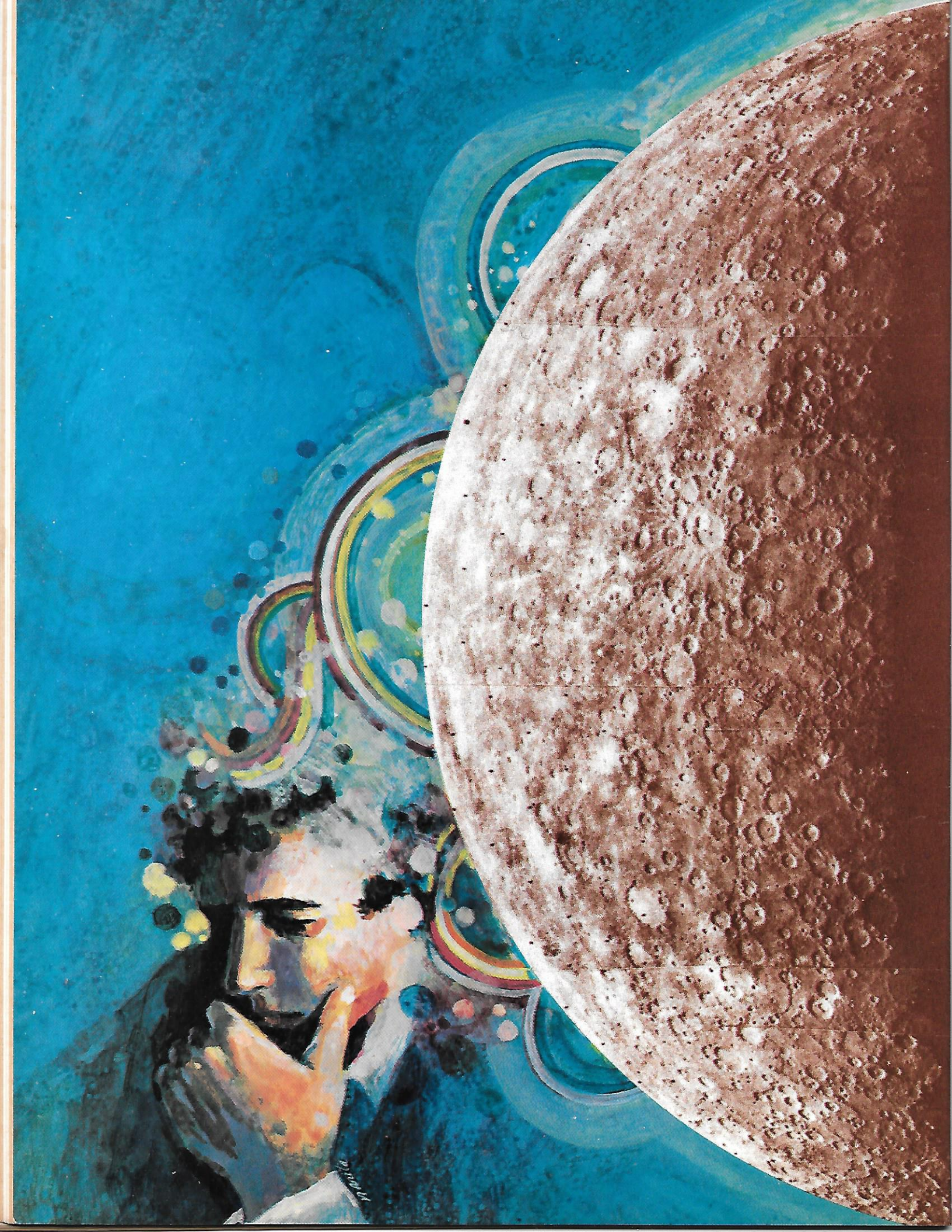
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A PSYCHIC PROBE OF THE PLANET MERCURY

by Janet Mitchell

The planet Mercury is beginning to yield up its mystery — both through science and ESP. On March 11, 1974, two sensitives, Ingo Swann and Harold Sherman, simultaneously but independently attempted to project their consciousness to Mercury to describe that planet psychically. On March 29, the space probe Mariner 10 began to fly by Mercury and radio back to earth scientific data that showed remarkable similarity with the psychic data of Swann and Sherman.

Although the spacecraft had taken months to travel the fifty-seven million miles to Mercury, Swann, from his New York City apartment, and Sherman, from his home near Mountain View, Arkansas, appeared to project their consciousness to the planet in an instant. I tape recorded their psychic responses separately and independently, which were transcribed and notarized on March 13. The notarized responses were registered with several scientific organizations, including the Central Premonitions Registry.

Swann had successfully demonstrated his ability at "remote viewing" in experiments at Stanford Research Institute and the American Society for Psychical Research (see "Out-of-Body Vision," *Psychic*, April 1973). Sherman, author of many books on ESP, had experimentally demonstrated his ability at long-distance ESP in 1937 by keeping in psychic contact with the arctic explorer Sir Hubert Wilkins (see Sherman's *Thoughts Through Space*).

During the half-hour experiment on the evening of March 11, both Swann and Sherman maintained waking consciousness. Swann reported being up and out into space in minutes and moving away from the moon toward the sun trying to target in on Mercury. Sherman gave no report of his approach to the

planet but started his response with mental impressions. Later he described circling the planet and examining it. Neither man was aware of the other's "presence" there, yet after Sherman telephoned his responses to New York we found that there were some striking similarities in their descriptions.

Prior to Mariner 10's data on Mercury, very little was known about the planet because of its proximity to the sun. Recent editions of American astronomy textbooks state that Mercury has no appreciable atmosphere. Yet, in 1966 the astronomer Carl Sagan wrote in *Intelligent Life in the Universe* that polarimetric observations in France and spectroscopic observations in the Soviet Union "have each indicated that Mercury has a definite, although very thin, atmosphere." This evidence may not have been widely known or accepted since *Science News*, reporting on Mariner 10's data, states (April 6, 1974) that "A major surprise was the discovery that the supposedly airless world has an atmosphere....The atmosphere is extremely thin, less than one hundred-billionth as dense as earth's...but it is indisputably there."

Both sensitives also reported a thin atmosphere. Sherman responded, "I doubt if there is much of any atmosphere. If so, it must be extremely rarified." Swann said, "There seems to be a thin atmosphere, but it doesn't make a blue sky like on earth, so you can see blackness except where the sun is, maybe it is purple. There is not much haze."

A more dramatic finding that confirmed the psychic data was Mariner 10's discovery of a magnetic field around Mercury. This had been previously unknown or hypothesized (at least in American astronomy textbooks). Sherman spoke of "... immense interplay of interchanging particles and ele-

ments in constant motion which are activated by the sun's vast electromagnetic discharge." He felt that "...the powerful electromagnetic radiation from the sun has set up a friction among the countless particles or molecules or elements composing the body of Mercury, and the resultant constant friction is the cause of the intense heat rising from the interior, as well as the surface of Mercury."

Swann seemed to "see" the magnetic field: "...a magnetosphere. Like a circular sphere of magnetism, of magnetic belts around (Mercury) except they are not a sphere but on the sun side of Mercury it is pressed closer to the planet's surface and on the far side of the planet, it is sort of pushed out into space. That may be the solar winds that do that. In other words, on the night side of the planet, the magnetosphere is pushed farther out into space and on the sun side of the planet, it is pushed more close to the surface. It sort of trails behind the planet in the opposite direction it is moving. It might not be a magnetosphere, but a plasma of some sort. It feels hot." Later he said, "The purple sky is beautiful. The refraction of the sun on those — I guess it would have to be an atmospheric type of situation with liquid molecules in it in combination with this fluctuating magnetosphere — it looks like oil on water in a way, that kind of color effects."

Science News (April 6, 1974) confirmed: "The most significant discovery about the atmosphere...was the existence of a helium 'tail,' streaming out from Mercury in a direction away from the sun. It was significant because shaping the tail was another unexpected Mercury feature, a magnetic field About 20 minutes before the spacecraft reached its closest distance to Mercury (about 466 miles), there were very clear signs of a bow shock, a shock



front formed by the solar wind ricocheting off the planet's enveloping magnetic field...."

Science (July 12, 1974) elaborated on the discovery of the magnetic field: "Because Mercury rotates slowly (once in 58.6 days) and emits no radio emissions that can be detected from the earth, the early evidence for a magnetic field was surprising.... Rather unexpectedly, a very well-developed, detached bow shock wave, which develops as the super-Alfvenic solar wind interacts with the planet, has been observed.... The complete body of data favors the preliminary conclusion that Mercury has an intrinsic magnetic field. If this is correct, it represents a major scientific discovery in planetary magnetism and will have considerable impact on studies of the origin of the solar system.... Direct observations of the magnetic field environment of Mercury by the magnetic experiment on Mariner 10 show the presence of a well-developed bow shock wave and magnetosphere region. A fundamental question not yet uniquely resolved is whether the magnetic field observations are consistent with an intrinsic planetary magnetic field or with a field induced by solar wind interaction."

Both sensitives reported seeing auroral effects—another unexpected feature of Mercury. Sherman said, "I am emerging on the bright side of Mercury into what could be a blinding, varicolored brilliance to physical eyesight The surface of Mercury seems to glow in areas like a Dante's inferno, reflecting dazzling molten red light as from a great blast furnace. This interplay of matter and energy in a highly volatile state is constantly replenishing itself through magnetic recharging in its association with the sun's magnetic field. The light side of Mercury presents a fiery spectacular." Swann reported, "I see rainbows that seem to leap up. They arch—more like auroras Both water tides and earth tides and a fast condensation cycle ... create these leaping rainbows in all directions sometimes."

Reporting on Mariner 10's data, *The New York Times* (March 30, 1974) said: "...strong auroral glows were observed on the night side of Mercury at ultraviolet wavelengths typical of helium, argon, hydrogen and probably neon." *Science* (July 12, 1974) added that "...high energy electrons and protons are accelerated in some cyclic fashion that is still mysterious.... If Mercury

also has a weak atmosphere, then acceleration of particles in the neutral sheet might lead to precipitation of particles into the polar regions and to 'auroral' events." *Science News* (April 6, 1974) reported that "...trapped charged particles stream continuously off into space (from Mercury), and the surprisingly abundant high energy electrons... must be continuously replenished by some mysteriously potent source."

Sherman sensed "the existence of almost impenetrable, indescribable, black rock formations of great altitudes, as well as great depths. Can they be almost solid iron?" He also felt "that all the elements to be found on earth and our moon are in a constant state of flux on Mercury, but are not as solidified or broken down into water and oxygen and plant life, although there is a great contrast in the dark side of Mercury and the elements are more in formation there. I seem to sense fantastic crystallized shapes of great rigidity." Swann did not "see" any of the elements present on the planet, but got the impression "there is a lot of copper there."

Science News (April 6, 1974) reported that Mercury "could easily have a large iron core.... The major element is helium, measured out to as far as about 300 miles from the planet, possibly delivered by the solar wind. Another source may be the decay of radioactive materials within the planet. This... could mean that Mercury has as much uranium and thorium in its crust as does earth." Sherman predicted elemental similarities and Mariner 10 data reveal core elements to be earth-like on Mercury. It appears from Swann's response that his viewing ability is somewhat more accurate than his impressions.

The iron core was not a total surprise to planetologists and the following had appeared in the 1973 edition of the *Encyclopedia Britannica*: "Because the mass (of Mercury) is comparatively small, the high density cannot be attributed to gravitational compression; instead, it *implies* a high percentage-abundance of iron, 70% higher than that of the earth."

Swann indicated a possible ionosphere, speaking about "... magnetic fluxes, shifting currents and things like that. I'd say that the planet is characterized by sort of a low-keyed electric-magnetic splendor." One scientist (*Science News*, April 6, 1974) evaluating the preliminary Mariner 10 data said, "The sweeping of interplanetary field lines past the planet ... may generate an electrical current flow in the

planet, and/or a possible weak ionosphere, then generates the magnetic field observed."

Both Swann and Sherman gave fairly accurate descriptions of the planet's surface but due to previously recorded hypotheses concerning these characteristics, their descriptions cannot be assumed to be evidential. Swann detected land and water or liquid tides which left the surface chewed down, waterworn, with lots of cracks and fissures in it. Here is Sherman's description of land characteristics: "There appears to be a jellylike quivering of the surface, enormously hot energy bubbles of gigantic size and there seems to be depths or craters from which exude whitish yellow and green vapors. They seem to stand in vacuum-like space as do layers of transparent white mist which extend some miles above the surface. The jagged, at times mountainous, landscape seems to be scarred and pockmarked with great black bands or areas seeming to extend over much of the surface, resembling an immense loop-like figure eight some hundreds of miles in width and length. If Mariner 10 bypasses Mercury close enough without magnetic heat deflection, these markings should show on the photographs."

Science News (April 6, 1974; describes Mercury as having "...a lightweight, moonlike surface....The entire surface is pocked with crater upon crater. Some are young enough—perhaps tens of millions of years—that dust or the darkening effects of the solar wind have not had a chance to hide the light-colored rays left by material blasted outward during the craters' formation. The planet is blanketed in some fine material in a remarkably even layer perhaps a few centimeters deep with 'almost no exposed rocks'..." There were no mountain ranges or hot energy bubbles detected and centimeters of fine material may have appeared to Sherman as miles of transparent white mist and therefore, regardless of the correct information given in the response, these data are less convincing than the atmospheric or magnetic field data.

Sherman sensed great changes in Mercury's temperature ranging from extreme heat to incredible cold. This was confirmed in *Science News*, April 6, 1974: "Mercury (has) a temperature range of more than 1,000 degrees F., by far the widest in the solar system."

Swann reported on additional features which could neither be confirmed nor denied by Mariner 10 since it did not get close enough to the planet. Swann said,

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"I see some clouds—sort of electrical storms now. These clouds come and go very fast and they form sort of on the day side of the planet—on the two peripheries of the day side." Swann also sensed some sort of primitive life: "...lichens, sort of a water life which attaches to the rocks and goes through its cycle that way." Probably the only sure way of confirming such a statement would be an actual landing on Mercury.

Amazingly, the psychic impressions of both sensitives contained no outright errors when compared with Mariner 10 data.

Dr. Jacques Vallee, an astrophysicist with a keen interest in psychic phenomena was kind enough to examine these data and comment on them: "This experiment raises an interesting question and points to new testable hypotheses. We may ask what it is the sensitive really 'sees' in a remote viewing experiment (since the image is not constructed from light radiation received by the eye) and whether it is necessarily true that the best target is a material one. The sensitives' apparent success at describing electromagnetic phenomena suggests laboratory experiments where subjects would be asked to describe field configurations rather than material targets."

Non-material targets have already been used in some laboratories in an attempt to check this possibility. Some astonishing results in remote viewing were obtained by Swann at Stanford Research Institute when geographical coordinates were used as targets. It is possible that more accurate information can be obtained about our universe by the use of coordinates on a particular planet rather than using the whole mass as a target.

How is it possible to describe a location fifty-seven million miles away? Here is Harold Sherman's method: "My method is simply to make myself unself-conscious of my physical surroundings, to fix my conscious mind's attention on the objective, at whatever seeming distance, and let myself 'wonder' what exists at that point. Through experimentation I have determined that 'wonder' is the 'key' word for me. It frees my imagination from trying to guess or embroider whatever impressions I may be receiving—so long as I can maintain this fixation of attention.

"Apparently some faculty of mind makes contact instantly, unlimited by time or space, with the area it is directed to concentrate upon. If it were possible to hold the mind's attention on the

locale or person, once contact is made, for more than the split second of initial contact, then a state of awareness could be retained long enough to bring back reliable data on what may exist at that point, even including the reactionary feelings engendered in the sensitive during the contactual experience.

"Who knows but that many science fiction writers who have been imaginatively creating, as they think, fantastic ideas of other planets and civilizations—

past, present or future—may instead have been psychically tuning in on actual conditions from some higher sources, coloring them somewhat with their own creativity but basically producing facts, often later substantiated by scientific discoveries or by actual earth happenings. This is an area of mind well worth extensive study and experimentation."



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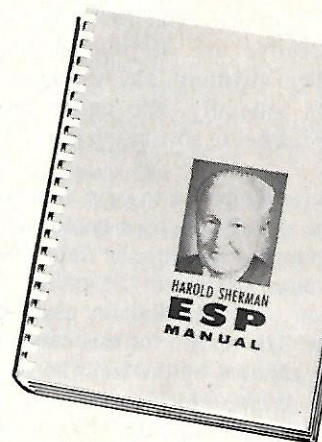
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