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ON COSMIC-RAY PRODUCTION EFFICIENCY AT SUPTERNova REMNANT SHOCKS
PROPAGATING INTO REALISTIC DIFFUSE INTERSTELLAR MEDIUM

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ABSTRACT

Using three-dimensional magnetohydrodynamics simulations, we show that the efficiency of cosmic-ray (CR) production in supernova remnants is over-predicted if it could be estimated based on proper motion measurements of Hα filaments in combination with shock-jump conditions. Density fluctuations of the upstream medium cause shock waves to be rippled and oblique almost everywhere. The kinetic energy of the shock wave is transferred into downstream turbulence as well as thermal energy related to the shock velocity component normal to the shock surface. Our synthetic observations show that the CR acceleration efficiency, as estimated from a lower downstream plasma temperature, is overestimated by 10%–40% because a rippled shock does not immediately dissipate all of the upstream kinetic energy.

Key words: acceleration of particles – ISM: supernova remnants – proper motions – shock waves – turbulence

1. INTRODUCTION

The energy density of Galactic cosmic rays (CRs) around the Earth is explained if 1%–10% of supernova explosion energy is used for CR acceleration. The CR production efficiency in supernova remnants (SNRs) has been widely discussed and seems to be ubiquitously so high that the back reaction of CRs onto the background shock structure is significant. One way to estimate the CR production efficiency is through a combination of measurements of the proper motion of the shock front and the temperature of the shocked gas (e.g., Hughes et al. 2000; Tatischeff & Hernandez 2007; Helder et al. 2009; Morlino et al. 2013, 2014). The expansion speed of the SNR has been measured in various wavelengths, from which the downstream temperature $T_{\text{down}}$ is predicted using the Rankine–Hugoniot shock-jump condition. If the actual downstream temperature $T_{\text{down}}$ can be independently measured, then the CR production efficiency $\eta$ is given by

$$\eta = \frac{T_{\text{proper}} - T_{\text{down}}}{T_{\text{proper}}},$$

where we assume that all of the missing thermal energy goes into CR production. Note that $\eta$ can be related to $\beta$ which was given by Equation (22) of Vink et al. (2010) as $\eta = 1 - \beta$. Observations of the northeast region of the young SNR RCW 86 gives us an example. The proper motion velocity of the synchrotron X-ray filaments is measured as $\sim 6000 \pm 2800$ km s$^{-1}$ (Helder et al. 2009), while those of the Hα filaments range from 300 to 3000 km s$^{-1}$ with a mean of $1200$ km s$^{-1}$ (Helder et al. 2013). Let the expansion speed of the SNR be $3000$ km s$^{-1}$ so that the X-ray and Hα observations are consistent with each other. If the proper motion velocity is equivalent to the shock velocity, then the downstream proton temperature is predicted by the Rankine–Hugoniot relation as $T_{\text{proper}} = 17.6$ keV. This value is different from the direct measurement, $T_{\text{down}} = 2.3 \pm 0.3$ keV, given by the line width of the broad component of the Hα emission (Helder et al. 2009). Then, we obtain $\eta \approx 87\%$ which suggests extremely efficient CR acceleration. Even if the shock velocity is as low as $1200$ km s$^{-1}$, the efficiency is $18\%$.

In previous discussions, it was assumed that the shock was plane parallel—that is, that the shock normal is parallel to the flow—and that the measured proper motion velocity was identical to the shock velocity. These assumptions would be suitable for a spherically symmetric shock wave propagating into a homogeneous medium. However, they may not be true for actual SNRs. The observed velocity of the proper motion of Hα filaments is dispersed (e.g., Helder et al. 2013), which implies shock propagation through an inhomogeneous medium. At present, it is widely accepted that the interstellar medium is highly inhomogeneous (e.g., de Avillez & Breitschwerdt 2007), in particular, near young SNRs (e.g., Fukui et al. 2003; Moriguchi et al. 2005). So far, we have investigated the effects of upstream inhomogeneity and shown that various observational results can be explained (Inoue et al. 2009, 2010, 2012, 2013). Some predictions of magnetohydrodynamics (MHD) simulations regarding magnetic field amplification due to a turbulent dynamo downstream (Giacalone & Jokipii 2007; Inoue et al. 2009, 2012; Sano et al. 2012) have been observationally confirmed (Bamba et al. 2003, 2005a, 2005b; Vink & Laming 2003; Yamazaki et al. 2004; Uchiyama et al. 2007; Sano et al. 2013, 2014). In this paper, we will show that the above approximations may lead to overestimates of the CR production efficiency in SNRs. In order to study the influence of upstream inhomogeneities, we perform a three-dimensional (3D) MHD simulation of a shock wave propagating into an inhomogeneous medium, and we simulate Hα filaments whose proper motion is synthetically measured.

2. SHOCK PROPAGATION THROUGH AN INHOMOGENEOUS ISM

Multi-dimensional MHD simulations of shock propagation through an inhomogeneous diffuse ISM with a Kolmogorov-
like density power spectrum have shown that the shock front is rippled due to the fluctuating inertia of the preshock ISM (see Giacalone & Jokipii 2007 for the 2D case and Inoue et al. 2013 for the 3D case). Their results strongly suggest that an SNR forward shock is locally oblique. For oblique shocks, the downstream temperature is given by the velocity component normal to the shock surface for a rippled shock. The curved red sheet also represents those after a short-time propagation. Thick blue sheet represents a part of the rippled shock front and the emission region of Hα line emission over 10 yr (from $t_{\text{obs}} = 700$ to 710 yr). The Hα emission over 10 yr does not satisfy the Rankine–Hugoniot relations.

In this paper, we use data from the simulation performed by Inoue et al. (2013). Here, we briefly summarize the set up of the simulation by Inoue et al. (2013). They studied shock propagation into an inhomogeneous medium parameterized by the amplitude of the density fluctuation $\Delta \rho / \rho_0$ assuming ideal MHD with adiabatic index $\gamma = 5/3$ and a mean molecular weight of 1.27, where $\rho_0$ is the initial mean density and $\Delta \rho \equiv \left( \rho^2 - \rho_0^2 \right)^{1/2}$ is the dispersion. The fluctuations are given as a superposition of the sinusoidal functions with various wave numbers $(2\pi/L_{\Box} \ll |k| \ll 256\pi/L_{\Box})$. The simulation is performed in a cubic numerical domain with volume $L_{\Box}^3 = (2\text{ pc})^3$ which is resolved by $(1024)^3$ unit cells. The power spectrum of the density fluctuations is given by the isotropic power law, $P_\Box(k) \equiv \rho_0^2 k^2 \propto k^{-5/3}$, for the above range of $k$, where $k_0$ is the Fourier component of the density. The above Kolmogorov spectrum is consistent with the observed big-power-law-in-the-sky (Armstrong et al. 1995).

The initial mean number density, thermal pressure, and magnetic field strength are set to be $\langle n_0 \rangle = 0.5 \text{ cm}^{-3}$, $P/k_B = 4 \times 10^4 \text{ K cm}^{-3}$, and $B_0 = 3.0 \mu\text{G}$, respectively. These are the typical values in the diffuse ISM (Myers 1978; Beck 2000). Thus, the initial mean sound speed and Alfvén velocity are $\langle c_s \rangle = 9.3 \text{ km s}^{-1}$ and $\langle c_A \rangle = 8.2 \text{ km s}^{-1}$, respectively. To induce a blast wave shock, we set the hot plasma to $\rho_\text{H}/k_B = 2 \times 10^8 \text{ K cm}^{-3}$, $n_\text{H} = 0.05 \text{ cm}^{-3}$, and $B_\text{H} = 3.0 \mu\text{G}$ at the $x = 0$ boundary plane. The resulting mean propagation speed of the shock is $1800 \text{ km s}^{-1}$, which is suitable for studying young SNRs, although the local shock velocity has a large dispersion due to shock rippling.

In this paper, we use data from the simulation for $\Delta \rho / \rho_0 = 0.3$, which can be regarded as a typical ISM model. The reason for this is as follows. If we suppose that the turbulence in the ISM is driven by supernovae, then the driving scale of the turbulence and the degree of density fluctuation at the driving scale would be given as $L_{\text{inj}} \sim 100 \text{ pc}$ and $\Delta \rho / \rho_0 \sim 1$, respectively (e.g., de Avillez & Breitschwerdt 2007). In that case, the degree of small-scale density fluctuations due to the cascade of the turbulence at a scale of $L_{\Box} = 2 \text{ pc}$ is estimated as $\Delta \rho / \rho_0 \sim \left( L_{\Box} / L_{\text{inj}} \right)^{1/3} \sim 0.3$.

4. RESULTS OF MHD SIMULATION AND SYNTHETIC OBSERVATIONS

In this section, we show our simulation results. The top panel of Figure 2 represents the two-dimensional slice of the proton temperature (upper half) and the number density (lower half) in the $t_{\text{obs}} = 700$ yr and $z = 0 \text{ pc}$ plane. The proton temperature is estimated from $T_p = P/(\rho k_B)$, where $P$ and $\rho$ are the pressure and density. From Figure 2, we observe that shock waves propagate into the realistic ISM with various angles and velocities. As a result, the temperature distribution is inhomogeneous (see the black curve of Figure 3). In this inhomogeneous system, it may be that the relation between the proper motion velocity of Hα and the downstream temperature does not satisfy the Rankine–Hugoniot relations.

In order to estimate the deviation from the Rankine–Hugoniot relations, we calculate the proper motion of the Hα emission over 10 yr (from $t_{\text{obs}} = 700$ to 710 yr). The Hα
emission observed from SNRs sometimes has narrow and broad components. The former is a characteristic of the cold interstellar medium which arises from direct excitation of the neutral hydrogen atoms crossing the shock surface. The latter is a characteristic of the thermal broadening of the shocked protons which arises from hot hydrogen atoms generated by a characteristic of the thermal broadening of the shocked neutral hydrogen atoms crossing the shock surface. The latter is the interstellar medium which arises from direct excitation of the broad components. The former is a characteristic of the cold emission observed from SNRs sometimes has narrow and broad components. The ionization fraction of the upstream gas is sufficiently high because our MHD simulation does not take into account the ionization of neutral hydrogen atoms. Recent studies have shown that the ionization of neutral hydrogen atoms changes the collisionless shock structures (Ohira et al. 2009; Ohira & Takahara 2010; Ohira 2012, 2013, 2014; Blasi et al. 2012). Therefore, we consider a highly ionized upstream gas in this paper because the effects of ionization can be neglected.

According to Heng & McCray (2007), the rate (in units of $s^{-1}$) that hydrogen atoms (denoted H) will have a reaction $X$ ($X = E, I$, and CE for excitation, ionization, and charge exchange) with particles of type $s$ ($s = e$ and $p$ for electrons and protons, respectively) is given by

$$R_{X,s} = n_s \int d^3 \nu_i \int d^3 \nu_f \delta(\nu_i) \sigma_{X,s}(\Delta \nu_f),$$  

(3)

where $n_s$, $\nu_i$, and $f_s$ are the number density, the velocity, and the distribution function for particle $s$, respectively. The velocity and distribution function of hydrogen atoms are described as $\nu_i$ and $f_{HI}$, respectively. The relative velocity between neutral hydrogen atoms and particle $s$ is denoted by $\Delta \nu_f = |\nu_i - \nu_f|$. We assume that distribution functions for each particle are represented by

$$f_{HI} = \delta(\nu_i),$$  

(4)

$$f_s = \left( \frac{m_s}{2\pi k_B T_s(r)} \right)^{3/2} \exp\left( -\frac{m_s \nu^2}{2k_B T_s(r)} \right),$$  

(5)

where $\nu(r) = |\nu_i - \nu(r)|$ and $\nu(r)$ is the downstream fluid velocity. We regard the distribution function of hydrogen atoms as a Dirac delta function because we only consider the narrow component. In addition, we assume that the distribution functions of protons and electrons are Maxwellian with $T_p = P/(\rho k_B)$ and $T_e = 0.01 T_p$, respectively (Ohira & Takahara 2007, 2008; Rakowski et al. 2008). In order to calculate Equation (3), we use our MHD simulation data for $u(r)$, $T_p(r)$, and $n_e(r)$, as well as the data of Janev & Smith (1993) for cross sections. Calculating the excitation rate, $R_X = R_{E,p} + R_{E,e}$, for each cell of our MHD simulation and integrating $n_{H}(r) R_{X}(r)$ along the LOS ($z$ axis), we obtain the surface emissivity of the
$S(x, y) = \int n_\text{H}(r) R_E(r) dz$,  

(6)

where we consider only direct excitation from the ground state to the $n = 3$ level. Neutral hydrogen atoms are ionized in the downstream region. The density of neutral hydrogen atoms in the downstream region is given by

$$n_\text{H}(r) = n_{\text{H},0}(r) \exp \left[ -R_t(r) \left( \tau_{\text{obs}} - \tau_{\text{sh}}(r) \right) \right],$$

(7)

where $R_t(r) = R_{t,p}(r) + R_{CE,p}(r) + R_{t,i}(r)$ and $\tau_{\text{sh}}(r)$ is the time when the shock wave passes through point $r$. For the initial hydrogen density, $n_{\text{H}}$, we assume that the initial ionization fraction of the ISM is uniform. The bottom panel of Figure 2 is the $\alpha$ image obtained from Equations (3)–(7).

As shown in the bottom panel of Figure 2, we select 16 regions which contain clear filamentary structure of $\alpha$ to measure proper motion. We extract a surface brightness profile from these regions and analyze their proper motions in the same way as Helder et al. (2013). To measure the proper motion, we shift the normalized profiles over one another in steps of one bin, calculating the $\chi^2$ values for each shift. The length of one bin is taken as $1.9 \times 10^8$ cm, which is comparable to the angular resolution of the optical instrument for the typical distance to the source of a few kiloparsecs. The best-fitting shift is determined by fitting a parabola to the three $\chi^2$ values surrounding the minimal $\chi^2$. We estimate the $1\sigma$ uncertainties on the best-fitting proper motion, which correspond to $\Delta \chi^2 = 1$. Then, the best-fit proper motion velocity $V_{\text{proper}}$ is related to $T_{\text{proper}}$ as $T_{\text{proper}} = 3 m_p V_{\text{proper}}^2 / 16 k_B$, which is the same as in previous actual observational studies.

In order to evaluate $\eta$ from Equation (1), we calculate the downstream proton temperature $T_{\text{down}}$ in two ways. First, we take $T_{\text{down}}$ as the mean of the downstream temperatures of fluid cells just behind the shock surface of the LOS crossing the $\alpha$ filament (Case 1). As a typical example, in Figure 3, we show the distributions of the proton temperature $T_{\text{down}}$ of the fluid cell just behind the shock surface; the black curve represents the whole shock surface, while the blue represents the surface on the LOS crossing the $\alpha$ filament of Region 3. Note that the proper motion velocity of Region 3 corresponds to the mean of our 16 regions (see Table 1). The vertical magenta line represents $T_{\text{proper}}$ for Region 3 with the magenta belt showing the associated error. The value of $T_{\text{proper}}$ is higher than the mean of $T_{\text{down}}$. We calculate, from Equation (1), the apparent CR production efficiency as $\eta \sim 0.3 \pm 0.1$.

Next, we consider a situation similar to actual observations where the downstream temperature $T_{\text{down}}$ is estimated from the line width of the broad $\alpha$ component (Case 2). It is hard to calculate exactly the broad emission component in our model. Instead, we perform a simple, approximate calculation. We obtain $T_{\text{down}}$ from the FWHM of the sum of the shifted Maxwellian weighted by the brightness of the broad $\alpha$ component, $n_{\text{H},0}(r) \xi_{CE}(r)$, of the fluid cell at $r$ just behind the shock surface on the LOS crossing the $\alpha$ filament, where $\xi_{CE}(r) = R_{CE,p}(r) \int \left( R_{t,p}(r) + R_{t,i}(r) \right)^{-1}$. Then, we find that $\eta$ becomes slightly larger than for Case 1 (Table 1). This is because the hot hydrogen atom emitting the broad $\alpha$ component is generated by a charge exchange reaction, whose cross-section decreases rapidly if the relative velocity is higher than $\approx 2000$ km s$^{-1}$. Thus, the observed downstream temperature may be biased against the particular temperature. This effect has already been investigated for a one-dimensional shock wave through detailed analysis of $\alpha$ emission (van Adelsberg et al. 2008). Since a rippled shock front generates dispersion in the downstream fluid velocity, one might consider the line width to be spread by downstream bulk motion. If this Doppler effect would be significant, then the measured $T_{\text{down}}$ would tend to be higher than the actual downstream proton temperature, resulting in lower $\eta$. However, this is not the case for our present synthetic observation. It is known for oblique shocks that in the upstream rest frame, the downstream fluid velocity $u$ is parallel to the shock normal (Figure 1(b)). Hence, if the rippled shock front is viewed nearly edge-on as in

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>$V_{\text{proper}}$ ($10^8$ cm s$^{-1}$)</th>
<th>$T_{\text{proper}}$ (keV)</th>
<th>$T_{\text{down}}$ (keV)</th>
<th>$\eta$</th>
<th>$T_{\text{down}}$ (keV)</th>
<th>$\eta$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.8 ± 0.1</td>
<td>6.0 ± 0.5</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>0.06 ± 0.07</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>0.08 ± 0.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.8 ± 0.0</td>
<td>6.6 ± 0.3</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>0.09 ± 0.04</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>0.14 ± 0.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.7 ± 0.1</td>
<td>5.8 ± 0.8</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>0.27 ± 0.09</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>0.33 ± 0.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.4 ± 0.1</td>
<td>3.7 ± 0.4</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>0.19 ± 0.08</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>0.22 ± 0.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>1.4 ± 0.1</td>
<td>3.7 ± 0.4</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>0.28 ± 0.08</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>0.29 ± 0.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>1.4 ± 0.0</td>
<td>4.0 ± 0.2</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>0.28 ± 0.04</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>0.30 ± 0.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>1.4 ± 0.1</td>
<td>3.9 ± 0.6</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>0.20 ± 0.10</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>0.20 ± 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>1.7 ± 0.1</td>
<td>5.4 ± 0.6</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>0.24 ± 0.08</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>0.28 ± 0.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>2.0 ± 0.1</td>
<td>7.5 ± 0.9</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>0.32 ± 0.07</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>0.34 ± 0.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
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<td>8.2 ± 0.2</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>0.33 ± 0.02</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>0.36 ± 0.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
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<td>8.2 ± 0.3</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>0.37 ± 0.02</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>0.39 ± 0.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
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<td>7.2 ± 0.6</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>0.40 ± 0.05</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>0.41 ± 0.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>1.6 ± 0.1</td>
<td>5.2 ± 0.5</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>0.33 ± 0.06</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>0.35 ± 0.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>1.6 ± 0.1</td>
<td>5.0 ± 0.6</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>0.10 ± 0.10</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>0.22 ± 0.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>1.4 ± 0.1</td>
<td>4.0 ± 0.4</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>0.27 ± 0.07</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>0.29 ± 0.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>2.0 ± 0.0</td>
<td>8.2 ± 0.1</td>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>0.11 ± 0.01</td>
<td>7.7</td>
<td>0.06 ± 0.01</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Mean/std. dev. 1.7/0.24 5.8/1.6 4.4/1.3 0.24/0.10 4.2/1.3 0.27/0.10
the present case, then the Doppler broadening is not so significant.

Table 1 shows the measured proper motion velocity and apparent CR production efficiency \( \eta \) for the 16 regions. As expected in Section 2, \( T_{\text{proper}} \) is higher than \( T_{\text{down}} \) and the efficiency \( \eta \) is positive, even though our simulations do not involve the effects of Compton acceleration.

5. DISCUSSION

We have shown that the CR production efficiency \( \eta \) seems to be overestimated in the shock wave of SNRs propagating into a realistic ISM if the post-shock temperature \( T_{\text{proper}} \) is estimated from the proper motion of the \( H\alpha \) filaments in combination with the Rankine–Hugoniot relation for a plane-parallel shock. It may not be a suitable assumption for actual SNR shocks that the shock wave is plane parallel and that the measured proper motion velocity is equivalent to the shock velocity. Density fluctuations of a realistic ISM make the rippled, locally oblique shock front almost everywhere. For the oblique shocks, the post-shock temperature is given not by the shock velocity itself but by the velocity component normal to the shock surface \( \nu_{\perp} \) as shown by Equation (2). Because proper motion measurements give us the velocity component transverse to the LOS (see Figure 1), the predicted post-shock temperature \( T_{\text{proper}} \) given by the Rankine–Hugoniot relation with the assumption of a plane parallel shock is larger than actual downstream temperature \( T_{\text{down}} \). Therefore, we claim that the CR production efficiency \( \eta \) has some uncertainty and can be positive (up to 0.4 in our case) despite no CR acceleration.

As shown in the Appendix, a simple analytical argument gives the upper and lower bounds of \( \eta \) as

\[
\left( \frac{\Delta \rho}{\rho_0} \right)^2 \lesssim \eta \lesssim 2 \frac{\Delta \rho}{\rho_0},
\]

where \( \Delta \rho/\rho_0 \) is the upstream density fluctuation at scale \( L_{\text{box}} = 2 \) pc. Since we have set \( \Delta \rho/\rho_0 = 0.3 \) in our present simulation study, this analytical formula is roughly consistent with our numerical result. RCW 86 is likely an SNR expanding with our numerical result. RCW 86 is likely an SNR expanding simulation study, this analytical formula is roughly consistent
Then, we find \( \eta = 1 - \cos^2 \theta \approx \left( \Delta \rho / \langle \rho \rangle_0 \right)^2 \) for the former case and \( \eta = 1 - \left( V_+/V \right)^2 \cos^2 \theta \approx 2 \Delta \rho / \langle \rho \rangle_0 \) for the latter case. In a more complicated case of our present simulation study, we expect \( V_+ \lesssim V_{\text{sh}} \lesssim V_\perp \) and these values of \( \eta \) may give lower and upper bounds, so that \( \left( \Delta \rho / \langle \rho \rangle_0 \right)^2 \lesssim \eta \lesssim 2 \Delta \rho / \langle \rho \rangle_0 \).

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