

(NASA-CR-196951) ROSAT
OBSERVATIONS OF THE BINARY BE-STAR
AND RADIO PULSAR PSR1259-63 Final
Technical Report, 1 Apr. - 15 Aug.
1994 (Sonoma State Univ.) 17 p

N95-15907

Unclas

G3/89 0030671

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..... Technical Report for NASA NAG 5-1684
Prepared by Dr. Lynn R. Cominsky, Principal Investigator
August 15, 1994

This report covers the period April 1, 1994 through August 15, 1994 for NASA grant NAG 5-1684 through ROSAT Guest Investigator Program, for the project "ROSAT Observations of the Binary Be-star/Radio Pulsar PSR1259-63", Dr. Lynn R. Cominsky, Principal Investigator, Department of Physics and Astronomy, Sonoma State University, Rohnert Park, CA 94928. This grant was a financial continuation of a previous proposal entitled "ROSAT Observations of MXB 1659-29 and EXO 0748-676", for which Dr. Cominsky was a Co-investigator. Work was done on both projects during this time period.

The theory paper written together with Professor Andrew King has been accepted by the Astrophysical Journal, and will appear in the November 1, 1994 issue. In this paper, we propose a new model to explain the X-ray emission from PSR 1259-63, in which we calculate the effects of accretion onto the magnetosphere of the neutron star, rather than onto the light cylinder, which is conventionally assumed. This novel approach work wells to explain the apastron observations in the first paper. This paper is enclosed.

The statistical analysis of the eclipses from EXO0748-676 has also been accepted by the Astrophysical Journal (Hertz, Wood and Cominsky). It will appear in the January 1, 1995 issue of the Journal. A copy of this paper is also enclosed with this report.

Final Publication List for NAG 5-1684:

- 1) Detection of X-ray Emission from the PSR 1259-63/SS 2883 Binary System, Cominsky, L., Roberts, M. and Johnston, S. *ApJ*, 427, 978, (1994)
- 2) Detection of X-ray Emission from the PSR 1259-63/SS 2883 Binary System, Cominsky, L., Roberts, M. and Johnston, S. in the *Proceedings of the Astronomical Society of the Pacific Conference of Interacting Binary Stars*, ed. A. Shafter, Astronomical Society of the Pacific: San Francisco, 424, (1994)
- 3) The Evolutionary Status of PSR 1259-63, Cominsky, L. in the *Proceedings of the 4th Annual Astrophysics Conference in Maryland*, American Institute of Physics: New York, 291, (1994)
- 4) ROSAT Measurement of the Evolving Orbital Period in the Low Mass X-ray Binary EXO0748-676, Hertz, P., Ly, Y., Wood, K. S., and Cominsky, L. R., in the *Proceedings of the 4th Annual Astrophysics Conference in Maryland*, American Institute of Physics: New York, 363, (1994)
- 5) Evidence Against Secular Evolution in the Orbital Period of the Low Mass X-ray Binary EXO0748-676, Hertz, P., Ly, Y., Wood, K. S., and Cominsky, L. R. to appear in the *Proceedings of the ROSAT Science Symposium*, American Institute of Physics: New York, (1994)
- 6) The X-ray Emission of the Pulsar-Be-star Binary PSR 1259-63, King, Andrew and Cominsky, Lynn, to appear in the November 1, 1994 issue of the *Astrophysical Journal*.

7) Eclipse Timings of the Low Mass X-ray Binary EXO 0748-676: Statistical Arguments against Orbital Period Changes, Hertz, Paul, Wood, Kent S., and Cominsky, Lynn, to appear in the January 1, 1995 issue of the Astrophysical Journal.

Invited Lectures:

The results on PSR 1259-63 were featured prominently in the following invited lectures:

- 1) An X-ray Emitting Radio Pulsar in a Be-binary system, Stanford Center for Space Sciences and Astrophysics, 11/11/93
- 2) An X-ray Emitting Radio Pulsar in a Be-binary system, Berkeley Center for Extreme Ultraviolet Astrophysics, 11/12/93
- 3) X-ray Binary Pulsars, Stanford Linear Accelerator Center, 2/7/94
- 4) X-ray Emission from Be-binaries, Marcel Grossman 7th Annual Conference, Stanford University, 7/26/94

AAS Abstracts

- 1) Detection of X-rays from the Be-star/Radio Pulsar PSR 1259-63/SS 2883, Cominsky, L., Roberts, M., and Johnston, S., BAAS, 25, 912, (1993)
- 2) The Orbital Period of EXO0748-676: Secular Change or Stochastic Jitter?, Hertz, P., Wood, K. and Cominsky, L. R., BAAS, 25, 1380 (1993)
- 3) Magnetospheric Accretion in the PSR 1259-63 Binary System, Cominsky, L., and King, Andrew, to be presented at the AAS HEAD Meeting in Napa, 11/2-5/94

X-RAY EMISSION OF THE PULSAR-Be STAR BINARY PSR 1259-63 *

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ABSTRACT

X-rays are detected from the pulsar-Be star binary PSR 1259-63 only after apastron passage. We suggest that the X-rays result from accretion on to the pulsar magnetosphere of matter captured from the Be star wind. The capture efficiency changes markedly at this phase, in line with the observations, provided that the wind is slow (\sim sonic) at large distances from the Be star.

Accepted by *The Astrophysical Journal*

^oWork supported in part by grant from the NASA ROSAT Guest Investigator Program, NAG 5-1684, and by Department of Energy contract DE-AC03-76SF00515 (SLAC).

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1. INTRODUCTION

The 47.7 ms radio pulsar PSR 1259-63 discovered by Johnston et al. (1992a) is unique in having a Be star companion (Johnston et al. 1992b). The binary orbit is long (period $P_{orb} = 1237$ days) and highly eccentric, and radio pulsations are observed throughout the entire orbit, except near periastron ($e = 0.87$) (Johnston et al. 1992b, 1994). These properties suggest a close relationship to the class of eccentric Be X-ray binaries such as 4U0115+63 (Cominsky et al. 1978; Rappaport et al. 1978) and A0538-66 (Skinner et al. 1982). Although the latter have much shorter orbital periods (24.3 and ~ 17 days for the two systems quoted), their periastron separations are comparable. This may imply an evolutionary connection (King 1993). Moreover, we might expect PSR 1259-63 to be a strong X-ray source near periastron passage. However, we would expect weak or undetectable X-ray emission at other orbital phases, where the neutron star is far from the Be star. The detection of X-rays by Cominsky, Roberts and Johnston (1994) near apastron is therefore surprising, and not easily explained by currently proposed emission mechanisms.

We study this problem further here. We suggest that the X-rays are produced by accretion of captured stellar-wind material on to the pulsar magnetosphere. The centrifugal barrier prevents this matter penetrating the light cylinder and quenching the radio pulsar. Our picture accounts self-consistently for most features of the observations, and suggests that at large distances (~ 500 stellar radii) the winds of Be stars move with rather low velocities.

2. X-RAY OBSERVATIONS

The X-ray observations of PSR 1259-63 are discussed in detail by Cominsky et al. (1994), and are summarized in Table 1. Significant X-ray emission was detected during two ROSAT PSPC pointed observations ~ 4.1 and ~ 9.6 months after apastron

Table 1: Observational Summary for PSR 1259-63^(a)

Interval	Modified Julian Date	Luminosity ^(b) ($\times 10^{33}$ ergs s^{-1})	Days to Apastron Passage	Orbital Phase
Ginga	48505	< 0.6	-237.75	0.31
B&W	48678.68-48679.78	< 0.2	-63.5	0.45
obs1	48864.527-48869.167	3.1	124.1	0.60
obs2	49025.895-49034.539	4.2	287.45	0.73

^(a) Adapted from Cominsky et al. (1994).

^(b) The photon counting rates for the three ROSAT PSPC data sets were converted into luminosities in the ROSAT 0.07 to 2.4 keV band by using the fitted power law spectral parameters from the longest observation (obs2). The Ginga LAC counting rate upper limit was converted using a Crab-like spectrum, for the energy range 2 to 10 keV. All conversions assumed a distance of 1.5 kpc (Johnston et al. 1994).

passage. However, earlier observations using the Ginga LAC and the ROSAT PSPC (~ 7.9 and ~ 2.1 months prior to apastron, respectively) yielded only upper limits (private communications from F. Makino and T. Aoki and from M. Bailes and N. Watson, respectively, as cited by Cominsky et al. 1994). No pulsations at the radio pulsar period were found in the detected X-rays; the upper limit on these pulsations is approximately 9% for the entire data set, or less than 0.1% of the available spin-down luminosity. The X-ray spectrum is roughly thermal, with plasma temperatures ~ 1 keV in most cases, but $\sim 6 - 8$ keV for part of the second ROSAT detection. In all detections the photoelectric absorption indicated an equivalent hydrogen column density $N_H \simeq 2 - 4 \times 10^{21}$ cm^{-2} .

As discussed by Cominsky et al. (1994), none of the current models for X-ray emission (see Kochanek 1993) are easy to reconcile with these observations. The luminosity is larger by factors 15 to 700 than the coronal emission expected from the Be star corona, and the spectrum is harder than that usually observed for B and Be stars (Meurs et al. 1992). The lack of X-ray pulsations and the observed flux variations

argue strongly against emission powered directly by the pulsar spin, as seen in young pulsars such as the Crab. The bow shock of the Be star wind as the neutron star moves through it might conceivably produce X-rays, but these are likely to be even weaker than the coronal emission. The energy available to be radiated by the shocked pulsar wind is, with optimistic assumptions, only barely enough to account for the observed X-rays, and it is difficult to see why it should vary with orbital phase, as observed. The visibility of any shock cone might be phase-dependent, but the fact that X-rays are first detectable almost precisely at apastron would require a rather special orientation of the binary orbit with respect to the line of sight.

Finally, the standard picture of accretion on to the neutron star of material captured from the Be star wind fails for several reasons: notably, the X-rays are not pulsed and the pulsar radio emission is not quenched. In standard accretion scenarios, the presence of radio pulsar emission should be sufficient to inhibit the plasma infall that is required to power the X-ray accretion (e.g., Stella, White, & Rosner 1986.) This mechanism should be operating in the PSR 1259-63 system, perhaps assisted by additional inhibition of plasma infall due to the propeller-like motion of the rapidly rotating magnetosphere.

3. WIND VELOCITY AND MASS CAPTURE

The above objections to accretion as the energy source for the X-rays actually only argue against accretion to *within the pulsar light cylinder*. An accretion flow halted at a larger radius would not quench the radio emission, and would probably not be strongly pulsed. In fact, as Cominsky et al. (1994) point out, the 47.7 ms spin period and magnetic field 3.3×10^{11} G inferred from the period derivative imply a centrifugal barrier to accretion down fieldlines within this radius [see Eq. (11), below]. Accordingly, we shall consider models in which accretion on to the neutron star magnetosphere

powers the X-rays. We note first that all accretion-powered models place very severe restrictions on the velocity structure of the Be star wind.

The typical scale over which the neutron star can accrete matter from the Be star wind is set by the accretion radius

$$R_{\text{acc}} = \frac{2GM_n}{v_{\text{rel}}^2}, \quad (1)$$

where M_n is the neutron star mass and

$$v_{\text{rel}}^2 = (v_w - v_*)^2 + c_s^2. \quad (2)$$

Here v_w and v_* are the wind and neutron star velocities, and c_s the sound speed in the wind (e.g., Frank et al. 1992). If the Be star wind is emitted over solid angle Ω and carries off mass loss rate \dot{M}_w we would expect the neutron star to capture roughly

$$\dot{M} \simeq \frac{\pi R_{\text{acc}}^2}{\Omega r^2} \dot{M}_w, \quad (3)$$

where r is the distance between the two stars, provided that the wind extends at least to distance R_{acc} from the neutron star in all directions. As Be star winds are thought to be partially confined to the equatorial plane (e.g., Waters et al. 1988), we must check that the wind's vertical extent satisfies this condition. In fact, we shall always find $R_{\text{acc}}/r \lesssim 0.1$, whereas the wind's aspect ratio is probably larger than this. Thus Eq. (3) with $\Omega \sim \pi$ is reasonable in all cases.

Current models of Be winds invoke two components (e.g., Waters et al. 1988.) The high-density low-velocity equatorial component is associated with the IR emission and the X-ray emission in Be binaries, while the higher-velocity low-density wind at higher latitudes is often observed in UV resonance lines. Waters et al. have used this two-component model to explain the periastron outbursts in many X-ray Be binaries, and calculate outflowing wind velocities ranging from 150 to 600 km s⁻¹, in agreement with those derived from observations of IR excess. Further evidence that Be wind velocities are ~ 100 km s⁻¹ is given by the equilibrium spin-up line for most Be X-ray binaries

which cannot be explained by higher velocities for the accreted material (Corbet 1984, 1986; van den Heuvel and Rapaport 1987).

The suggested wind speeds of ~ 100 to 600 km s⁻¹ would dominate the estimate of v_{rel} and R_{acc} , as $|v_w|, c_s \ll 100$ km s⁻¹, giving $R_{\text{acc}} \sim 10^{10}$ cm. At apastron $r \sim 10^{14}$ cm, so Eq. (3) implies that the neutron star captures only a fraction $\sim 10^{-8}$ of the wind. With typical Be star mass-loss rates, $\dot{M}_w \sim 10^{-8} M_\odot \text{ yr}^{-1}$, the neutron star would capture only $\sim 10^{10}$ g s⁻¹. The observed $L_X \sim 10^{33}$ erg s⁻¹ then requires that $\sim 10^{23}$ erg should be extracted from each gram, which is 100 times the rest-mass energy. Short of invoking relativistic effects, it is clear that accretion from a wind with $|v_w|$ of anything like the suggested order of $\gtrsim 100$ km s⁻¹ is quite incapable of powering the observed X-rays.

We may generalize this argument: the observation that the radio pulses are not quenched sets a limit on the efficiency of energy extraction from accreting matter, and thus on v_{rel} . Since the infalling gas must not penetrate the light cylinder, the accretion luminosity is

$$L \leq \frac{GM_n \dot{M}}{R_L} \quad (4)$$

where $R_L = 2.5 \times 10^8$ cm is the light-cylinder radius. Using (3) for \dot{M} gives

$$\frac{R_{\text{acc}}}{r} \geq \left[\frac{\Omega}{\pi} \frac{LR_L}{GM_n \dot{M}_w} \right]^{1/2}. \quad (5)$$

The escape velocity from the binary at radial distance r is $v_{\text{esc}} = (2GM/r)^{1/2} \simeq 40$ km s⁻¹ at apastron, where M is the total binary mass, since $M \gg M_n$ (Be star mass $\gg M_n$). Using Eq. (1), we get

$$\frac{v_{\text{rel}}}{v_{\text{esc}}} \leq \left(\frac{M_n}{M} \right)^{1/2} \left[\frac{\pi GM_n \dot{M}_w}{\Omega LR_L} \right]^{1/4}. \quad (6)$$

With $M_n = 1.4 M_\odot$, $M = 11 M_\odot$, $\Omega \sim \pi$, $\dot{M}_w = 10^{-8} M_\odot \text{ yr}^{-1}$, $L = 10^{33}$ erg s⁻¹ and $R_L = 2.5 \times 10^8$ cm we find $v_{\text{rel}}/v_{\text{esc}} \lesssim 1.4$. Since the neutron star's orbital velocity is $v_* = [(1-e)/2]^{1/2} v_{\text{esc}} \simeq 0.25 v_{\text{esc}}$ near apastron in PSR 1259-63, we have

$v_{\text{rel}} \simeq v_{\text{esc}}$. In other words, if the X-rays from PSR 1259-63 are powered by accretion, the Be star wind must have a velocity at most of order escape, rather than the $\gtrsim 100$ km s^{-1} sometimes assumed. One possibility is that the equatorial wind is Keplerian ($v_w = 0.7v_{\text{esc}}$). A value of v_{rel} less than escape may well be appropriate in view of the fact that not all of the accretion luminosity has to be radiated as X-rays, so that L may be larger than the 10^{33} erg s^{-1} assumed in the estimate above.

4. MAGNETOSPHERIC ACCRETION

We have seen that a neutron star mass capture rate $\sim 10^{-10} M_{\odot} \text{ yr}^{-1} \sim 10^{16}$ g s^{-1} in PSR 1259-63 is reasonable provided that the wind velocity is low near aastron. In this Section we construct a simple model of the X-ray emission in which this matter is accreted onto the neutron-star magnetosphere and then expelled centrifugally. The analytic estimate by King (1991; his Eq. 11) suggests that matter captured from the stellar wind has too little angular momentum to form an accretion disc about the neutron star in most Be-star binaries. Using the value of $v_*^2/v_{\text{rel}}^2 \lesssim 0.25$ inferred above, the masses and binary period of PSR 1259-63 imply a circularization radius $R_{\text{circ}} \lesssim 2.7 \times 10^8 \eta^2$ cm. Here $\eta < 1$ is an efficiency factor for the capture of angular momentum from the wind which is very unlikely to approach unity (compare with the analytic estimates of Davies & Pringle 1980 and numerical simulations by, for example, Blondin et al. 1990 for somewhat faster winds that yield very small efficiencies $\eta \lesssim 0.05$).

Thus $R_{\text{circ}} < 2.7 \times 10^8$ cm, which is smaller than the magnetospheric radius we shall estimate below. Hence there is too little angular momentum in the wind to form a disc, and gas therefore falls radially inwards in rough spherical symmetry with the free-fall velocity

$$v_{\text{ff}} = \left(\frac{2GM_n}{s} \right)^{1/2} \quad (7)$$

at distance s from the neutron star. From the continuity relation

$$\dot{M} = 4\pi s^2 v_{\text{ff}} \rho, \quad (8)$$

we can find the density ρ , and hence the ram pressure of the infalling gas:

$$P_{\text{ram}} = \rho v_{\text{ff}}^2 = \frac{\dot{M}(2GM_n)^{1/2}}{4\pi r^2 s^{5/2}}. \quad (9)$$

Equating this to the magnetic pressure

$$P_{\text{mag}} = \frac{\mu^2}{8\pi r^6}, \quad (10)$$

where $\mu \sim 10^{30}$ G cm^3 is the neutron star's magnetic moment, determines the magnetospheric radius as

$$R_m = 5 \times 10^8 \mu_{30}^{4/7} M_{16}^{-2/7} M_1^{-1/7} \text{ cm}, \quad (11)$$

where μ , \dot{M} , and M_n are measured in units of 10^{30} G cm^3 , 10^{16} g s^{-1} , and M_{\odot} respectively. Assuming that the accretion flow is stopped at this radius, we find an accretion luminosity

$$L_{\text{acc}} = 2.7 \times 10^{33} \mu_{30}^{-4/7} M_{16}^{9/7} M_1^{8/7} \text{ erg s}^{-1}. \quad (12)$$

The density estimate, Eq. (8), allows us to find the column density of the inflow as

$$N_H \propto \int_{R_m}^{\infty} \rho ds, \quad (13)$$

which gives

$$N_H = 2.5 \times 10^{21} M_{16}^{8/7} \mu_{30}^{-2/7} M_1^{-3/7} \text{ cm}^{-2}. \quad (14)$$

Finally, the maximum possible X-ray temperature is given by that of a strong shock at $s = R_m$ as

$$kT_s < kT_s = \frac{3GM_n \mu' m_H}{8R_m} \simeq 70 \mu_{30}^{-4/7} M_{16}^{2/7} M_1^{8/7} \text{ keV}. \quad (15)$$

Here, $\mu' m_H$ is the mean mass per particle of the flow.

The estimates (11), (12), (14), and (15) are encouraging. The magnetospheric radius where the flow is stopped is larger than the light cylinder radius, as required for consistency, and is, of course, outside the corotation radius where centrifugal and gravity forces balance. Matter coupling to the magnetosphere at R_m is therefore expelled, presumably mainly in the pulsar's equatorial plane. The predicted luminosity (12) is of order that observed in X-rays, and the hydrogen column (14) agrees with observation also. However, the shock temperature (15) is considerably higher than the observed spectral temperature. This difference is always found in observations of quasi-radial accretion, for example in the medium X-ray components of accreting magnetic white dwarfs and neutron stars (see Chapter 6 of Frank et al. 1992, for an extensive discussion). The shock temperature is essentially that of the ions, which have most of the flow's kinetic energy before the shock, whereas the spectral temperature is that acquired by the electrons through Coulomb heating by the ions. Any process cooling the electrons faster than the shocked ions can heat them will depress their temperature below T_s ; the relatively tenuous flow discussed here is likely to be strongly cooled by electron emission, for example. We conclude that quasi-spherical infall on to the neutron star magnetosphere explains most of the observed X-ray properties of PSR 1259-63.

5. X-RAY VARIABILITY

The one feature of the X-ray behavior of PSR 1259-63 left to account for is the fact that X-rays are detected in only two of four observations. The defining parameter in our model is the accretion rate, and there are two different ways in which it can make the X-rays unobservable. Accretion rates $\dot{M}_{16} \lesssim 0.1$ would reduce the accretion luminosity below $\sim 10^{32}$ erg s^{-1} and make them undetectable at the distance of PSR 1259-63. Accretion rates $\dot{M} \gtrsim 10^{17}$ would raise N_H above $\sim 3 \times 10^{22}$ cm^{-2} . Given the observed spectrum of the object, the X-rays would be too heavily absorbed to be detectable by

ROSAT. The X-ray variability thus probably results from changes in \dot{M} . The nature of these changes depends on whether we take as significant the fact that only upper limits are found before apastron, and detections after apastron. Future observations covering apastron passage (for example, by ASCA) will ultimately decide the question by demonstrating the repeatability or spectral evolution of the phase dependence, but these will take on the order of a decade because of the long orbital period.

If we dismiss the phase dependence as coincidental, we can ascribe the X-ray variability simply to changes in the Be star wind (for example, either an increase or a decrease in \dot{M}_w). However if the link with orbital phase is systematic, the variation must be caused by the motion of the neutron star through the stellar wind. The velocity components in a Kepler ellipse of semimajor axis a are

$$v_{*,r} = v_K \frac{1 + e \cos \theta}{(1 - e^2)^{1/2}}, \quad (16)$$

and

$$v_{*,\theta} = v_K \frac{e \sin \theta}{(1 - e^2)^{1/2}}, \quad (17)$$

where $v_K = (GM/a)^{1/2}$. For PSR 1259-63, we have $M \simeq 1.1 M_\odot$, $a \simeq 7.5 \times 10^{13}$ cm and $e = 0.87$, so that

$$v_{*,r} = 78 \sin \theta \text{ km s}^{-1}, \quad (18)$$

and

$$v_{*,\theta} = 90(1 + 0.87 \cos \theta) \text{ km s}^{-1}. \quad (19)$$

Now from Eq. (3) and the relation

$$r = \frac{a(1 - e^2)^{1/2}}{1 + e \cos \theta}, \quad (20)$$

we find

$$\dot{M} \propto \frac{(1 + 0.87 \cos \theta)^2}{\{[v_{w,\theta} - 90(1 + 0.87 \cos \theta)]^2 + [v_{w,r} - 78 \sin \theta]^2 + c_S^2\}^{1/2}}. \quad (21)$$

With suitable choices of $v_{w,r}$, $v_{w,\theta}$ and c_S the denominator of Eq. (21) can be made mainly sensitive to the term involving $v_{w,r}$ at apastron ($\theta = \pi$). The sign change of $v_{*,r}$

reduces the mass capture rate on to the neutron star quite markedly as the star passes apastron: if the $v_{w,\theta}$ and c_S terms are negligible we have $\dot{M} \sim (v_{w,r} - 78 \sin \theta)^{-4}$, which varies rapidly near $\theta = \pi$ if $v_{w,r}$ is comparable with $v_{*,r}$ there. Physically, this effect arises because before apastron the neutron star moves nearly radially outwards and is almost stationary with respect to a sufficiently slow outflowing wind, whereas after apastron the relative velocity of wind and star increases because the star reverses its radial motion. The c_S term always damps this effect, but $v_{w,\theta}$ may amplify or damp the change of \dot{M} depending on its size. Figures 1 and 2 plot the predicted ratio of $N_H \propto \dot{M}^{8/7}$ in the Bailes and Watson pre-apastron observation to that of the post-apastron detection 'obs1' as a function of $v_{w,r}$ for various $v_{w,\theta}$, with $c_S = 0$ in Fig. 1 and $c_S = 10 \text{ km s}^{-1}$ in Fig. 2. The sound speed $c_S = 12T_4^{1/2} \text{ km s}^{-1}$, where T_4 is the wind temperature in units of 10^4 K . As the surface temperature of the B2e star SS 2883 (Johnston et al. 1994) is about $2 \times 10^4 \text{ K}$, we would not expect c_S to exceed $\sim 16 \text{ km s}^{-1}$ in any case.

Clearly, to get any significant effect we require a fairly cool wind (temperature $\lesssim 5000 \text{ K}$) which is slow ($v_{w,r} \sim v_{w,\theta} \sim 10 - 15 \text{ km s}^{-1}$). Formally, it is not possible to get the required change of N_H between Observations 2 and 3 with a wind velocity corresponding to unbound material (this requires $(v_{w,r}^2 + v_{w,\theta}^2)^{1/2} \gtrsim 45 \text{ km s}^{-1}$). However, given the crudeness of the estimate (3) of the capture rate, this discrepancy is probably not significant. Indeed, we have seen that the wind is not very supersonic, whereas a hypersonic wind is assumed in the reasoning leading to (3). We conclude that it may be possible to explain a systematic X-ray turn-on at apastron in terms of accretion on to the magnetosphere from a near-sonic wind at this orbital phase.

6. DISCUSSION.

We have shown that the X-ray emission from PSR 1259-63 may be reasonably explained by a model in which stellar wind material is captured, and falls quasi-spherically

on to the neutron star magnetosphere. If the appearance of the X-rays at apastron is a systematic effect, this may also be understandable if the wind is almost sonic there.

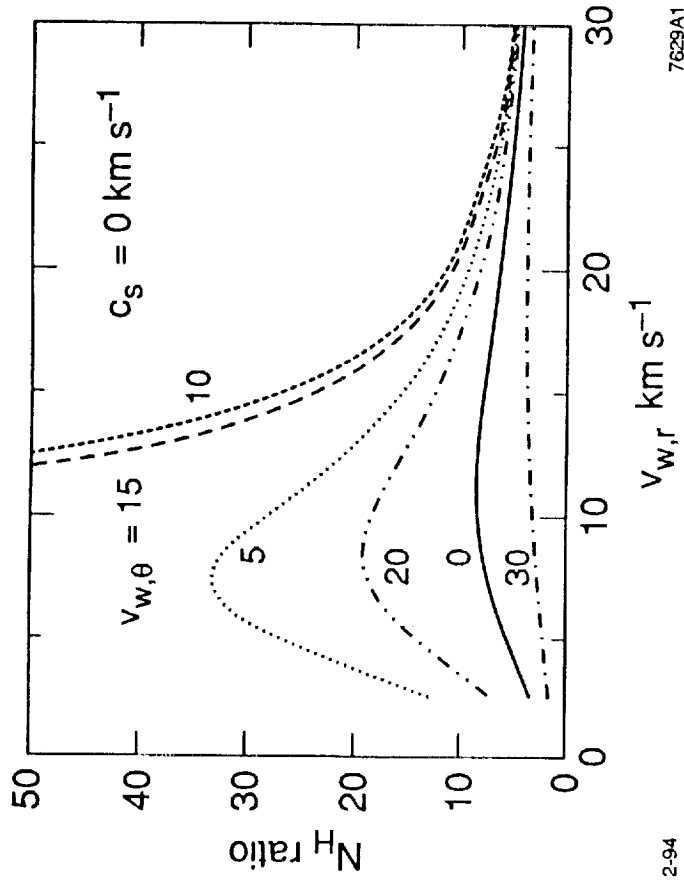
The main requirement of our model is that the equatorial wind of the Be star must be very slow; i.e., at most comparable with the escape speed. This is smaller than normally found in models of Be star winds (Waters et al. 1988). However, the neutron star in PSR 1259-63 is sampling much more remote parts of these winds than normally considered (distances ~ 500 stellar radii). There is some observational evidence that the velocities of Be star winds may indeed be lower than assumed in conventional models. Although Be stars have long been known (e.g., Slettebak 1979) to exhibit large $v \sin i$ values, indicating rotation rates near breakup, observations of radial outflow velocity using UV line data have only been done for a few stars—and there is considerable disagreement as to the interpretation of these data. High-speed wind components are indicated by resonance lines of N V and Si IV, whereas low-speed wind components are indicated by studies of Fe III shell lines (Snow, Peters, & Mathieu 1979). The fact that both types of lines are found in spectra from a single star has been used as an argument for a spherically symmetric wind distribution (Doazan, Stalio, & Thomas 1982.) In contrast, high-resolution studies of UV shell lines in rapidly rotating Be stars by Oegerle and Polidan (1984) have led to the picture of a low-velocity outflowing region of the wind, which must occur in a flattened disk-like structure. Furthermore, these authors find that the velocities, relative to the star, of these lines are consistent with zero, and in no case are in excess of 40 km s^{-1} . Just as the discovery of the Be star X-ray binaries has provided additional support for the current picture of a dense, slow-moving equatorial outflow in Be stars (e.g., Waters et al. 1988), the discovery of X-rays from PSR 1259-63 may be giving clues to the wind velocity structure at large distances.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We acknowledge the assistance of Mallory Roberts in interpreting some of the ROSAT data, and useful discussions with R. Romani.

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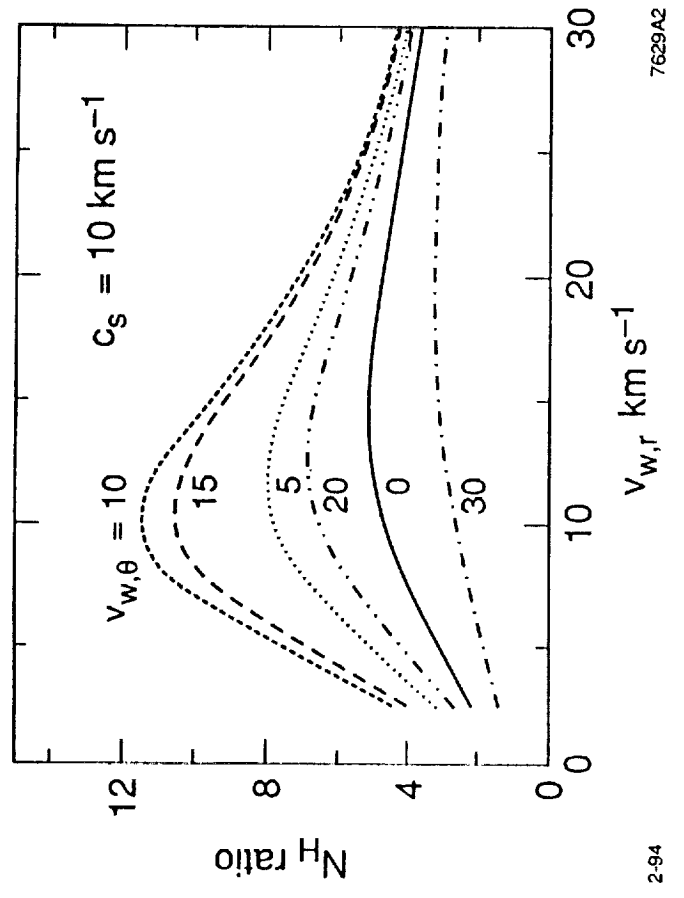
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Figure 1. The ratio of the hydrogen column density, N_H for the pre-apastron Bailes and Watson (B&W) observation to the post-apastron detection "obs1" (Cominsky et al. 1994). Six models are shown with different values of the azimuthal stellar wind velocity component, $v_{w,\theta}$ as a function of $v_{w,r}$. In all models, the value of the sound speed in the wind, c_s , is assumed to be zero. An N_H ratio $\gtrsim 10$ can account for the difference in flux between these two observations.



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Figure 2. The same models as in Figure 1, but in this case, the sound speed in the wind, c_s , is assumed to be 10 km s^{-1} .

ROSAT observations of the binary Be-star and radio pulsar PSR1259-63

ABQ: NC
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CIN: BGB
KIN: EJS
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This report discusses the ROSAT guest investigator program for the project 'ROSAT Observations of the Binary Be-star/Radio Pulsar PSR1259-63'. Work was done on this, and a previous grant entitled ROSAT Observations of MXB 1659-29 and EXO 0748-676 during this reporting period. A theory paper was written which proposes a new model to explain the X-ray emission from PSR 1259-63, in which the effects of accretion onto the magnetosphere of the neutron star, rather than onto the light cylinder which is conventionally assumed, is calculated. This approach works well to explain the apastron observations noted earlier. A statistical analysis of the eclipses from EXO0748-676 is also described.

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