

Compressed Sensing Image Reconstruction for CASA

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Today

Abstract

Solar Flares Abstract

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1 Image Reconstruction for Interferometers

The angular resolution of a radio antenna is proportional to the wavelength divided by the dish diameter. To achieve high angular resolution the diameter should be as large as possible. But real world limitations like steering accuracy and price limit the diameter. Currently the largest single dish antenna has a diameter of about 500 meters[?].

Interferometers however, achieve high angular resolutions without the need for huge dish diameters. Several smaller antennas are spaced apart from each other. Together, they act as a single antenna. Interferometers have seen wide use in for radio wavelengths with instruments like VLA and LOFAR.

Interferometers do not observe the sky directly. The observed image has to be reconstructed from the measurements. The reconstruction is an ill-posed inverse problem. In Radio Astronomy, the CLEAN class of algorithms[1][2][3][4] are used to reconstruct the image and is the de-factor standard.

Fixed assumption about the image

New Interferometers on the horizon with SKA. To improve reconstruction, we would like to model our prior knowledge about the. New observations new effects. CLEAN has a rigid assumption about what the reconstructed image should look like. It cannot be adapted as our knowledge of the universe changes.

The Theory of Compressed Sensing[5][6] has seen success in solving ill-posed inverse problems.

It is flexible in its application and can be used in de-noising[?], in-painting[?] and super-resolution[?].

Using prior knowledge about the reconstructed image. Push to a plausible image reconstruction

In this project, a proof of concept Compressed Sensing reconstruction algorithm was developed and implemented in the Common Astronomy Software Application(CASA).

1.1 Deconvolution: Ill-posed Inverse Problem

Interferometers do not observe the image directly. Instead, they measure approximately three dimensional Fourier components. An accurate measurement equation and are important for wide field of view imaging. In this project small field of view reconstruction was considered. For small field of View, the measurement equation can be approximated by the two dimensional Fourier Components(Visibility). Each antenna pair measures a complex Visibility. Therefore the observed image can be calculated from the (small field of view) observations by using the two dimensional Fourier Transform.

If the interferometer could sample all Visibilities, then the Fourier Transform would produce the observed image. However, since there are a limited number of antenna pairs, we measure the same limited number of Visibilities. The measurement is under-sampled and the image of the Fourier Transform is "dirty". The undersampling convolves the observed image with a point spread function(PSF). The task is to deconvolve the image and remove the effects of undersampling (1.1).

$$x \star PSF + N = I_{dirty} \quad (1.1)$$

the PSF models the instrumental effects of undersampling, antenna beam patterns. The point spread function models the instrument effects. The task is now to deconvolve the image in a noisy environment. .

Equation (1.1) is an ill posed problem::

- It is unknown if a solution exists
- There may be many solutions

- a small change in the measurement may lead to very different solutions

incoherence

CASA produces a the I_{dirty} image and the PSF.

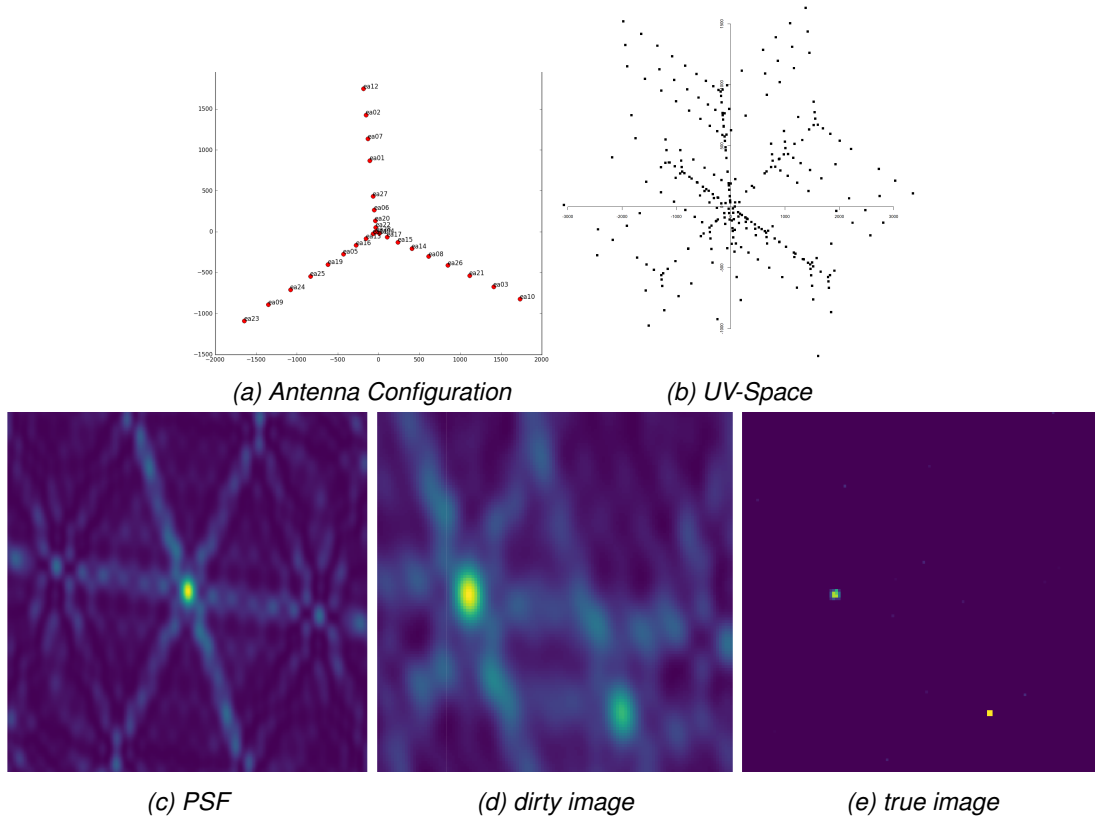


Figure 1: Deconvolution Problem VLA: Retrieve the true image when only PSF and dirty image are known

1.2 Approximation with CLEAN

CLEAN assumes the observed image contains several bright point sources. In each iteration of CLEAN, it searches the highest peak of the dirty image and removes a fraction of the PSF. It stops until the next highest peak is below a threshold, or if the maximum number of iterations was reached. The fraction of the PSF, threshold and number of iterations are all tunable by the user.

It works as an approximation of the original problem. It greedily minimizes the objective (1.2). Note that the L0 norm¹ acts as the indicator² function.

$$\underset{x}{\text{minimize}} \quad \|I_{dirty} - x \star PSF\|_2^2 + \|x\|_0 \quad (1.2)$$

Regularization term, minimum, non-convex function (It may have local minima). The L0 "norm" makes this problem for non-convex: It may be in NP-Hard. There exist optimizers like Matching Pursuit that approximate the solution well enough for practice.

¹This is a common abuse of notation in Compressed Sensing literature: The "L0 norm" is not a norm.

²For the L0 norm to work we need to define $0^0 = 0$

but CLEAN does not minimize to an optima, it stops early. Hard to analyse how close the current solution is to the true minimum.

CLEAN works well when the observed image is indeed contains only point sources. However, the new interferometers have more complex observations, extended emissions. CLEAN regularization scheme is a fixed part of the algorithm.

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1.3 The Compressed Sensing Framework for Image Reconstruction

An image reconstruction algorithm in the Compressed Sensing Framework consists of three parts:

- A prior function $p()$.
- An optimization algorithm.
- An objective with a data and regularization term.

CLEAN is a Compressed Sensing Reconstruction algorithm with specific choices for prior, optimization algorithm. and objective. The prior $p()$ in CLEAN is the L0 "norm", Matching Pursuit as the optimization algorithm. The objective from CLEAN needs a additional parameter λ . which represents the tradeoff between accurate deconvolution and regularization. the more noisy it is, the more regularization is needed. We arrive at the similar (1.3).

$$\underset{x}{\text{minimize}} \|D_{\text{dirty}} - x \star \text{PSF}\|_2^2 + \lambda p(x) \quad (1.3)$$

All that was changes was an additional parameter λ , so why would one want to do this? Applying non-convex optimization techniques, Theoretical guarantees of compressed Sensing. Replacing $p()$ with anything else

Now we can minimize (1.3) with non-convex optimization techniques, we can analyse how calculate lower limits for the objective.

We assume x assumes the x contains a few point sources. In Compressed Sensing terminology, it assumes x is sparse in image space. Since x is already an image.

Compressed sensing reconstruction is able to reconstruct the observation even from undersampled measurements. Even though shannon-nyquist theorem is higher.

The guarantees of Compressed Sensing Reconstruction: Incoherent from the measurement space and sparse space is sparse.

Incoherence is easy. Interferometers measure in the Fourier space(This is an approximation for small field of view imaging. The approximation breaks apart in wide field of view). The image space is maximally incoherent from the Fourier space. Intuitively, A change in a single pixel will change all fourier components. A change in a single fourier component, changes all pixels.

maximize the information gained for each element in the sparse space.

The sparse space is here to distinguish true image from unlikely candidates. It models our prior knowledge.

Then, one can reconstruct the true image from undersampled measurements. How many measurements are needed? that depends on how sparse it is.

Taking again CLEAN as an example, if we know the image contains only one point source, we can locate it with only a few Visibilities. However if the image contains many point sources located closely together, we need more Visibilities.

The average case analysis is not trivial,

The prior and the optimization algorithm are disconnected and the prior $p()$ can be replaced for example with the L2 norm.

2 Inverse Problem for wide Field of View Imaging

So far the small Field of View inverse problem has been introduced where each antenna pair measures a Visibility of the sky brightness distribution. This leads to the small Field of View measurement equation (2.1). It is identical to the two dimensional Fourier Transform. In practice the Fast Fourier Transform (FFT) is used, since it scales with $n \log(n)$ instead of n^2 pixels.

$$V(u, v) = \iint x(l, m) e^{2\pi i(ux+vy)} dl dm \quad (2.1)$$

For wide Field of View imaging, two effects break the two dimensional Fourier Transform relationship: Non-coplanar Baselines and the celestial sphere which lead to the measurement equation (2.2). Note that for small Field of View $1 - x^2 - y^2 \ll 1$, and (2.2) reduces to the 2d measurement equation (2.1).

$$V(u, v, w) = \iint \frac{X(x, y)}{\sqrt{1 - x^2 - y^2}} e^{2\pi i(ux+vy+w\sqrt{1-x^2-y^2})} dx dy \quad (2.2)$$

Non-coplanar Baselines lead to a third component w for each Visibility. Figure 2 shows the the u v and w coordinate system. w is essentially the pointing direction of the instrument. The UV-Plane is the projection of the antennas on a plane perpendicular to the pointing direction. Which point in the UV-Plane get sampled and what w component it has depends on the pointing direction. If the instrument points straight up, the UV-Plane is a tangent to earth's surface, and the w term compensates for earth's surface curvature. If however the instrument points at the horizon, the projected UV-Plane gets squashed and w compensates for antennas which lie far behind the UV-Plane. In essence, w is a phase delay that corrects antenna positions in three dimensions. The wide Field of View measurement equation (2.2) would account for the w phase delay, but it breaks the the two dimensional Fourier relationship and the FFT cannot be used. The W-Projection [7] algorithm approximates the effect of the w term restores the two dimensional Fourier relationship.

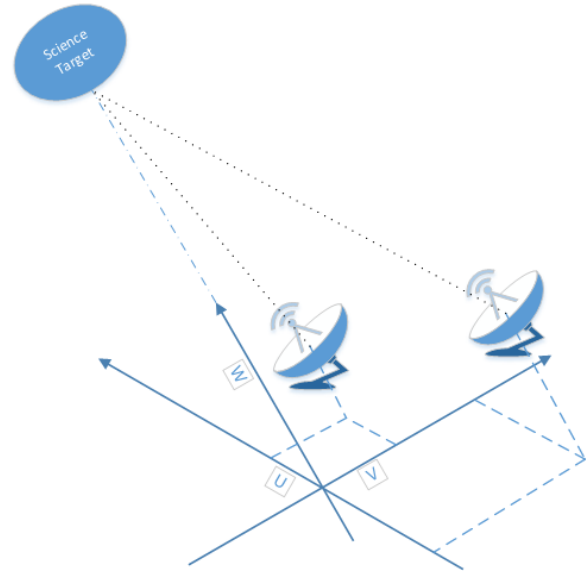


Figure 2: U V and W coordinate space

A-Projection [8]

2.1 Directionally Dependent Effects (DDE)

spread spectrum phenomenon

2.2 Calibration

2.2.1 Self-Calibration

3 Compressed Sensing Image Reconstruction

The Framework Flexibility

A lot of choice in building a reconstruction algorithm. No best

Gurobi[9] was used. constrained optimization.

3.1 Sparseland Prior and Overcomplete Representations

The prior $p()$ can be any function like the LP norm.

We could use L2, but what we mostly want in Compressed Sensing Reconstruction is sparsity. With that, L0 "norm" is often used.

The L1 relaxation however is practically guaranteed to have the same minimum as the L0 norm and results in a convex objective function. Since Gurobi works better on the L1 relaxation it was chosen for this project.

In practice, sparseland priors (3.1) have been used for Compressed Sensing reconstruction: For our signal x we create a dictionary D . Each entry in D represents a signal part of x . D is potentially a large, but has a finite number entries. However, any x we measure consists only of a few entries of D . This means the coefficients for the signal parts in the dictionary α are all zero except for s entries for all valid x .

$$\begin{aligned} x = D\alpha \quad x \in \mathbb{R}^n, \alpha \in \mathbb{R}^m, D \in \mathbb{R}^{n \times m}, \quad n \leq m \\ \|\alpha\|_0 = s \quad s \ll n \leq m \end{aligned} \quad (3.1)$$

In other words, we create a dictionary D in which our signal can be sparsely represented. Together with the L1 norm, the sparseland prior can be thought of as a detector for our signal. Any valid x can be sparsely represented, but noise tends to affect all entries.

In the Compressed Sensing Reconstruction we want to find our x in a noisy environment. The optimization algorithm locates the s significant entries in α and throws away the rest.

Reconstructing an image from measurements is related to lossy image compression. Indeed, we know our image can be compressed in a dictionary D , the same D works well for reconstruction: For example images depicting nature scenes are sparse in the wavelet domain. If x in (3.1) are nature scenes, we can create a Dictionary D of wavelets. A single image x can be represented with a few wavelets, meaning the number of non-zero entries s in α is far lower than the number of pixels n . All that is left to do for compression is save the non-zero entries of α . In the noisy environment, we save the s largest elements of α and save a de-noised image.

Find a Dictionary D in which radio can be seen as finding a compression space.

Finding the right sparseland prior is a modelling task. It codes our prior knowledge about radio sources and what they might produce. Sparseland priors are in use by for example with Starlets[10] and Curvelets[11].

Any combination of functions

Sparseland priors naturally lend themselves to overcomplete representations. D has many more rows than columns.

3.2 Choosing the Objective Function

Until now, the objective function was used as a deconvolution. This is not a requirement of Compressed Sensing. It is a design choice.

Different ways of choosing the objective function with a sparseland prior.

There are three different reconstruction objectives: The analysis method, where the image x is minimized directly, the synthesis method where the sparse vector α is minimized, or by in-painting the missing Visibilities V_2 .

$$\begin{aligned} \text{analysis :} \quad & \underset{x}{\text{minimize}} \quad \|I_{\text{dirty}} - x \star \text{PSF}\|_2^2 + \lambda \|Px\|_1 \\ \text{synthesis :} \quad & \underset{\alpha}{\text{minimize}} \quad \|I_{\text{dirty}} - D\alpha \star \text{PSF}\|_2^2 + \lambda \|\alpha\|_1 \\ \text{in - painting :} \quad & \underset{V_2}{\text{minimize}} \quad \|I_{\text{dirty}} - F^{-1}MV_2\|_2^2 + \lambda \|PF^{-1}V_2\|_1 \end{aligned}$$

All three objective functions have the same global minimum. Retrieving x for the analysis objective is trivial, or the second and third objective x can be retrieved by $x = D\alpha$ and by $x = F^{-1}V_2$ respectively. [Empirical and theoretical studies have shown an advantage of the analysis objective over the other two [?]]. However, depending on the measurement space and prior, an objective might become more practical.

The analysis and in-painting objective require the inverse of the dictionary D^{-1} . It exists for orthogonal transformation like the Haar Wavelet transform and for specialized over-complete dictionaries like starlets. In general, over-complete dictionaries do not have an inverse. The synthesis objective is suited for general dictionaries as it does not use the inverse.

During this project, no reconstruction algorithm was found which uses the in-painting method. Convolutions in image space are equivalent to a multiplication in Fourier Space.

Useful when the Dictionary transformation is defined as a deconvolution.

3.3 Compressed Sensing Reconstruction Algorithms in Astronomy

multiple

3.3.1 PURIFY

Prior: Mixture of Dirac functions and Daubechies Wavelet (DB1 - DB8)

Objective: analysis

Optimizer: SDMM

Dirac is a fancy way of saying "it is sparse in pixel space"

3.3.2 Vis-CS

Prior: dictionary of gaussians

Objective: Synthesis

Optimizer: Coordinate descent

3.3.3 SASIR

Was chosen because it has an inverse. Multiscale effects included in prior.

Prior: Starlets

Multi scale prior, over complete representation but with a transformation from image space in starlet space.

Objective: synthesis

Optimizer: FISTA

3.4 Implementation In CASA

CASA is a software package built for re-constructing images for VLA.

CASA works in two separate cycles, the major and minor cycle. The major cycle transforms the Visibilities to image space and back using the Fourier Transform. The minor cycle is the deconvolution algorithm, which tries to find the true image from a dirty image and a PSF.

The first major cycle iteration creates the PSF and the dirty image. Then, several minor cycle deconvolve the dirty image. The major cycle then continues, transforms the deconvolved image back to Visibilities. The major cycle ends by calculating the residual Visibilities from the measurement and the deconvolution. The next major cycle continues by transforming the residual Visibilities. At the end of several major cycle, the model column should contain an approximation of the true visibilities while the residuals should be noise.

In CASA the major cycle is fixed. It was evaluated if it can be modified, but a modification was too time consuming in the context of the project. However CASA allows for the addition of new deconvolution algorithms.

Compressed Sensing Algorithm was implemented as a CASA deconvolver. The Data term of the objective is fixed to be the deconvolution ($D_{dirty}x \star PSF$).

Major cycle is more expensive to compute than a CLEAN minor cycle.

CLEAN needs potentially many major cycle iterations. A Compressed Sensing Reconstruction would converge to the optimum in one major cycle. Here lies a potential speedup for the Compressed Sensing Reconstruction.

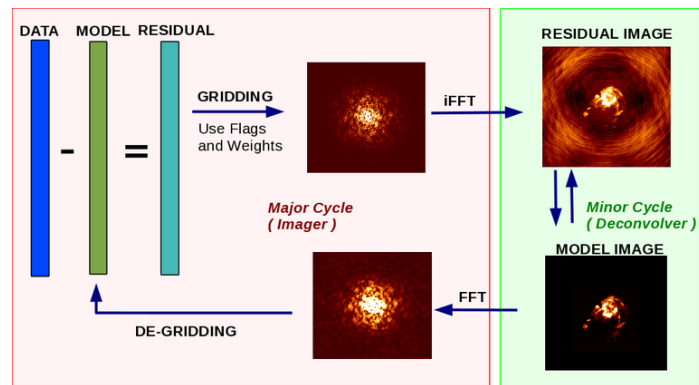


Figure 3: Casa Major Minor Cycle. Source [12]

4 Reconstruction for VLA Observations

Compressed Sensing Reconstruction used on two different tasks:

- Center detection on sunburst data
- Reconstruction from incomplete measurements of Supernova Remnant G55

Two different problems. One is the

Structure potentially smaller than the primary beam.

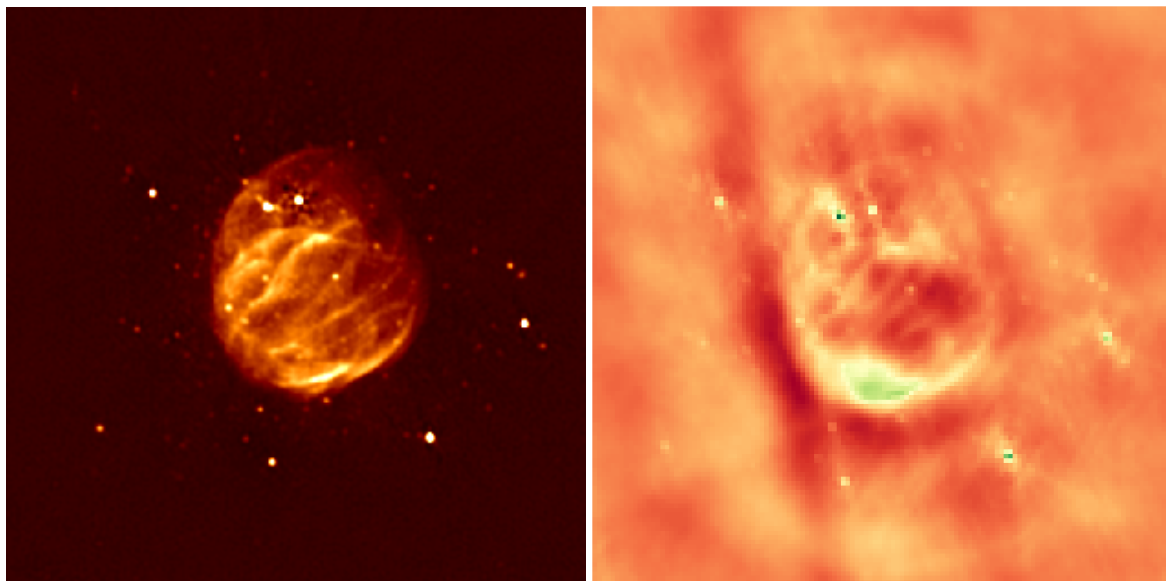
4.1 Sunburst Center Detection

Sub- Primary Beam. CS Objective Function

Figure: Dirty Map Peak, CLEAN, Single Peak Clean, Single Peak CS Reconstruction

Wider Variance

4.2 Reconstruction of Supernova Remnant G55



(a) Reconstruction by NRAO. Source:[13]

(b) Dirty Image

Figure 4: SNR G55 source observed by VLA.

The supernova remnant (SNR) G55 was observed by VLA. 10 seconds of the 8 hour observation is publicly available through the CASA imaging tutorial[14]. 4b is the dirty image calculated from the 10 second observation. The full 8 hours are not readily available. The image 4a is a reconstruction from an unknown VLA observation. The deconvolution algorithm is also unknown. For this project, the reconstructed image is assumed to show the true image of the sky.

4 shows G55 to be a slightly "egg shaped" extended emission with six strong point sources. Several fainter point sources are inside and around the egg shaped extended emission. The dirty image 4b shows a corrupted

version of G55. The six strong point sources are clearly visible as are the brighter parts of the extended emission. The dirty image also shows a negative "trench" striking through the image as well as brighter regions around the remnant.

The size of the images 4 is about twice the size of the primary beam (the primary beam is approximately the size of the extended emission). In the real world, wide field imaging would be used. In this project, small field of view imaging was used because it is quicker to compute. It limits the dynamic range of the dirty image, the whole task gets harder.

The CLEAN algorithm gets compared to Compressed Sensing Reconstructions. The parameters of CLEAN were taken from the CASA imaging tutorial[14]. The reconstructed images of Compressed Sensing are constrained to have no negative pixels. Negative pixels are not physically plausible and was shown to improve Compressed Sensing reconstructions for synthetic data[15]. In total six different priors were tested with the analysis objective:

1. No Regularization
2. L1
3. L2
4. L1+L2
5. Total Variation
6. Starlet Transform

The regularization parameter λ needs to be estimated for each prior. The Miller[16] λ estimation was used and is shown in equation (4.1). [Estimation of the noise level e , divided and E]. An approximate solution is needed to define the noise level and the amount of regularization. In this project, the result with no regularization was used for the λ estimation.

This is not an ideal estimation, the image effectively gets reconstructed twice. Other Compressed Sensing Reconstructions approximate x of equation (4.1) by running their optimizer a couple of iterations without regularization, which reduces the computational costs.

$$\lambda \approx e/E \quad \|I_{dirty} - x \star PSF\|_2^2 \leq e \quad p(x) \leq E \quad (4.1)$$

Two figures compare the Dirty Image, CLEAN and the Compressed Sensing Reconstructions. Figure 5 shows the reconstructed images on the same intensity scale. Figure 7 shows the flux profile of a cut through the reconstructed images. The Cut through the remnant is located in the center of the profile image.

CLEAN: CLEAN detects the brightest point sources, but finds only part of the extended emission. The top half of the "egg" emission is missing. The structures of the remnant are blurred compared to the Compressed Sensing reconstructions. With the parameters of the imaging tutorial, CLEAN models the trench as a region with negative emissions. This is not physically plausible, although the behaviour can be changed with additional parameters. The profile 7 shows that CLEAN accurately reconstructs the flux of the large peaks, although the peaks are wide in comparison.

No Regularization: Detects the Egghead of the remnant and the non-negativity constraint keeps it from modelling the negative trench. It detects the smaller emissions around the remnant, but also detects "fake" extended emissions. The profile 7 shows two smaller peaks in the center which also appear in 4a as do the two small point sources at the edge of the remnant. However, the dirty image has a rise in flux at the borders of the image, which is likely an artefact of the measurement, considering it does not exist in the NRAO reconstruction 4a.

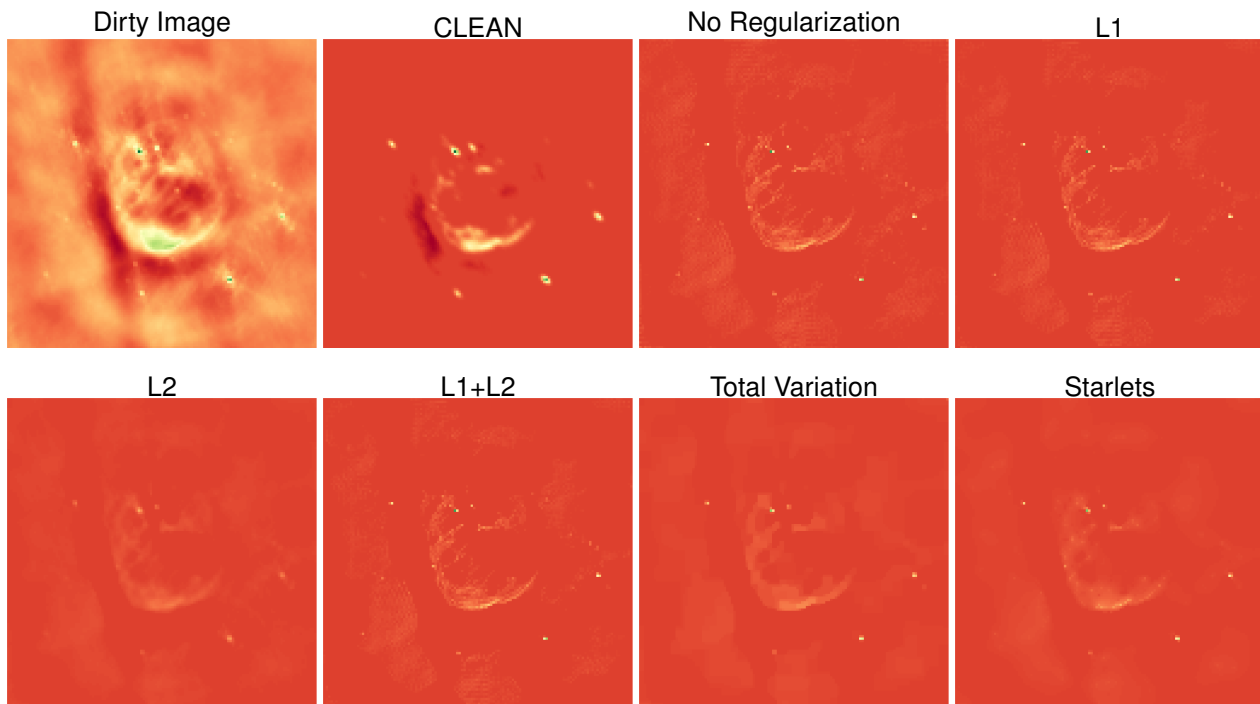


Figure 5: Reconstructed images of CLEAN and the different Compressed Sensing priors.

Figure 6: profile cut

L1: There is almost no visible difference between no regularization and L1. This is possibly an interaction with the Miller λ estimation, since the result of no regularization was used to estimate the λ of L1. The L1 regularization removes part of the "fake" extended emission, particularly in the top region, but also a few structures in the center. The peaks in the profile 7 of L1 and no regularization are narrower than CLEAN, although they do not reach the same peak flux. L1 is prone to produce unlikely extended emissions: L1 also tries to approximate extended emissions with a number of faint point sources. This can introduce artefacts like pixel wide holes in extended emissions.

L2: Forces the extended emissions to be more smooth. It also considerably lowers the flux of bright point sources. The profile 7 shows L2 forces the bright peak to widen and lower. The peak is almost as wide as the CLEAN reconstruction. In the remnant center, it smoothers the smaller peaks.

L1+L2: Since L1 does a good job with point sources, but needs to be more continuous for extended emissions, why does one not combine both regularizations? The flexibility of Compressed Sensing Reconstructions allows for it. Sadly, the result is indistinguishable from the L1 regularization. In the dirty image, all pixels are very close to zero (Maximum: 0.0076 in Dirty Image). If the L1 and L2 regularization receive the same λ , the L1 term dominates. If the dirty image would contain pixels much larger than 1, then the L2 term would dominate.

Total Variation: A simple prior that has its origins in image de-noising. The objective is to reduce the gradients over the image. With an infinite λ , the Total Variation forces all pixels of the reconstruction to have the same value. The idea of the prior is to work well for both extended emissions and point sources. It has trouble with point sources inside extended emissions. In the profile, it is clearly visible how Total Variations cuts the peaks inside the remnant.

Starlets: Is a more sophisticated prior which also tries to model both point sources and extended emissions. It locates the point sources accurately. In the profile 7 it also finds the faint point sources in the extended

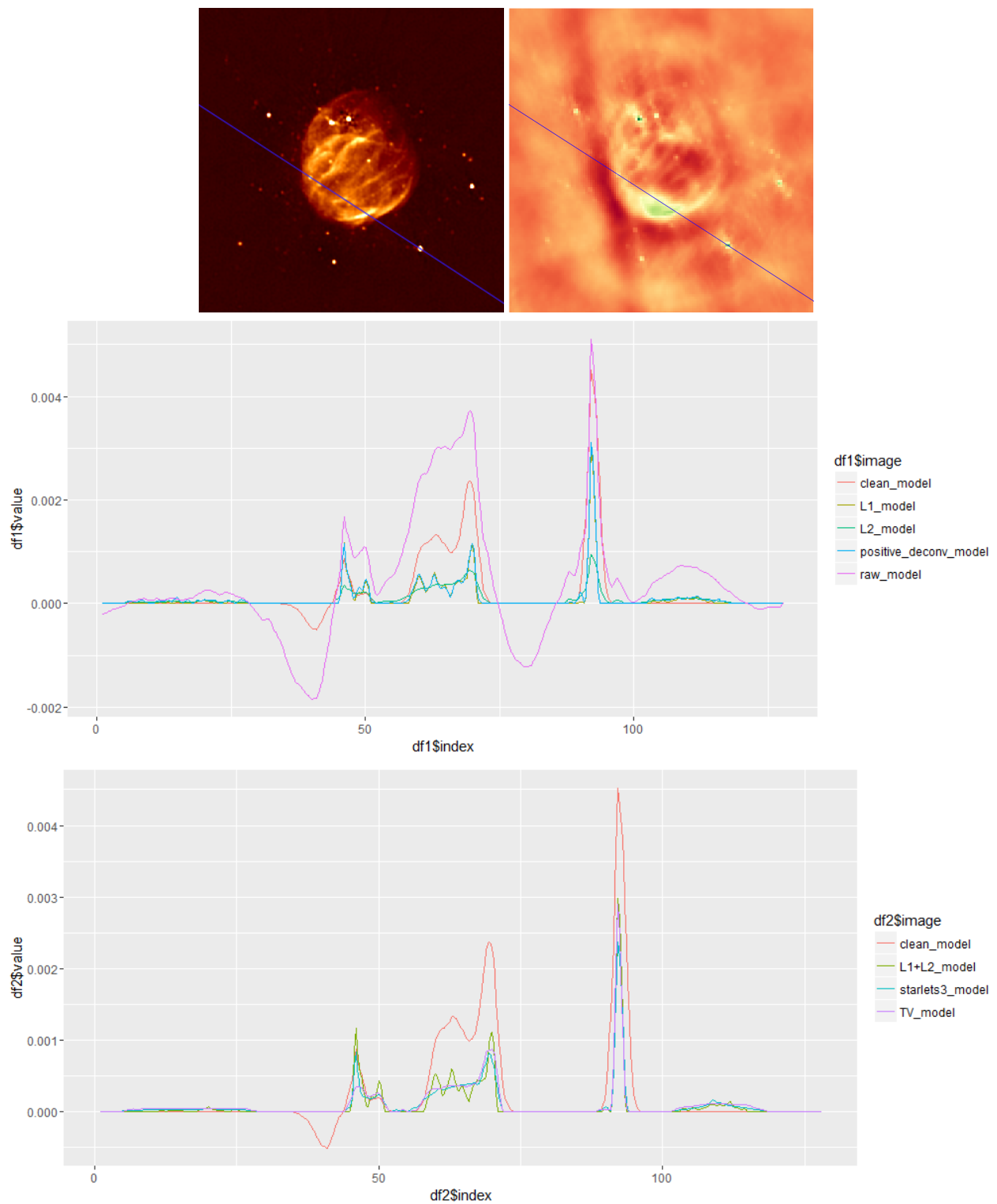


Figure 7: Intensity profile of CLEAN and the different Compressed Sensing priors.

emission. However, it also smoothed out the structure inside the remnant. For the LOFAR instrument, the starlet regularization was able to find smaller structures than the antenna beam-width[17]. The smallest starlet has a $5 * 5$ pixels dimension. For this reconstruction, the antenna beam-width is about two pixels wide. The resolution might be too coarse for the starlet regularization.

CLEAN produces the most accurate flux for strong point sources, even though in other reports Total Variation and Starlets reconstructed comparable peak flux to CLEAN [?] [15]. This is due to the implementation in CASA: The PSF CASA produces does not sum up to one. Convolving an image with the PSF increases the total flux, and naturally a deconvolution decreases the flux. CLEAN is the only algorithm that comes close to the measured flux, because in the last iteration, the reconstructed image gets convolved with the beam pattern (usually a 2d gaussian function), which is also not normalized. If we also convolve the Compressed Sensing reconstructions with the beam pattern (and smear away details), the fluxes become similar.

In this example, the L1 normalization was able to find smaller, plausible structures than CLEAN inside the remnant. Outside the remnant, all Compressed Sensing Reconstructions found "fake" extended emissions. The L2 and starlet were also expected to find smaller structures. One possible explanation is that the antenna beam-width is about two pixels wide. Any structure smaller than the beam-width is one pixel wide.

For higher resolutions it is expected that L1 introduces more artefacts. The current implementation cannot increase the resolution since it needs a quadratic amount of memory per pixel: The image size of about 128^2 was the maximum which was feasible to solve on a laptop. The convolution operation $x \star PSF$ gets modelled as a matrix-vector product. The matrix therefore has 128^4 entries.

5 Future Compressed Sensing Reconstruction

The flexibility of Compressed Sensing Reconstructions allows us to change the prior according to our previous knowledge, all while keeping the same objective and optimization algorithm. The prior can be updated as our knowledge changes. It was able to find plausible structures smaller than the antenna beam-width. Using Compressed Sensing Reconstructions gives us theoretical guarantees that, if our prior models the observation well enough, we reconstruct the true image from under-sampled measurements.

There are many possible combinations of prior, optimization algorithm and objective. So far, no optimal combination has been found.

A proof of Compressed Sensing Reconstruction was implemented in CASA as a deconvolver. It takes the dirty image and point spread function as input and calculates the optimal deconvolution according to the objective. The current implementation has a quadratic memory requirement. It does not scale to any practical image size for VLA observations. New interferometers like MeerKAT will require even larger images. The current implementation is not suited for large scale reconstructions.

and does not handle the effects of wide field of view observations. New interferometers like MeerKAT will require an even higher amount of pixels. The data amount will scale up by several factors compared to VLA and require scalable image reconstruction. Furthermore, they are built with wide field of view imaging in mind.

Calibration for these instruments get more complicated. Compressed Sensing Reconstructions are flexible enough and can potentially improve self-calibration tasks.

The next step is to add the effects of wide field of view imaging and see how they scale.

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6 Ehrlichkeitserklärung

Hiermit erkläre ich, dass ich die vorliegende schriftliche Arbeit selbstständig und nur unter Zuhilfenahme der in den Verzeichnissen oder in den Anmerkungen genannten Quellen angefertigt habe. Ich versichere zudem, diese Arbeit nicht bereits anderweitig als Leistungsnachweis verwendet zu haben. Eine Überprüfung der Arbeit auf Plagiate unter Einsatz entsprechender Software darf vorgenommen werden.

Windisch, July 26, 2018

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