USING THE HISPARC NETWORK TO MEASURE THE GERASIMOVA-ZATSEPIN EFFECT

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Introduction

This thesis is written within the framework of my master in education and physics at the Radboud University Nijmegen and University Utrecht. I performed my research under supervision of dr. Charles Timmermans at the department of experimental high energy physics at the Institute of Mathematics, Astrophysics and Particle Physics (IMAPP) at the Radboud University Nijmegen.

In this research project we try to find experimental proof for the Gerasimova-Zatsepin effect that might occur as cosmic rays enter our Solar System. By understanding this effect in our Solar System, we might also learn more about similar processes that occur in our Galaxy and beyond that. To detect this phenomena we use the Hisparc detector network which is mostly located in the Netherlands and has a station in England and one in Denmark. The idea of this research started with the thesis of Erik Hermsen[7], who investigated the GZ-effect with the Hisparc data from Nijmegen and Venray.

Therefore firstly some theory about cosmic radiation and this effect is explained in chapter 1. Then the detector network as experimental setup is explored in chapter 2. In chapter 3 the statistical methods, among which the Feldman and Cousins method, are considered to better understand the results of chapter 5. But before the results, first the analysis to find the Gerasimova-Zatsepin effect is explained in chapter 4.

After the conclusion of chapter 6 the most important chapter is included: the recommendations for the Hisparc network. For several reasons the network is not optimal yet and the problems we found during this research could help to improve it. We hope that these improvements will be achieved to make the network more reliable.

Because of the involvement of pupils and teachers in the Hisparc network and because of my interest in physics education, I wrote an appendix in Dutch. This appendix contains a brief description of my research and most importantly an overview of the steps I made in my analysis. In this way, some pupils might be able to reproduce this research in a few years, when the network is stabilized and more reliable.

Margot Peters

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Theory

1.1 Cosmic Rays

After the discovery of radioactivity by Henri Becquerel in 1896 [3], the German Theodor Wulf [17] tried to measure the radioactivity of natural minerals in a cave in Valkenburg with a self-made electrometer. He expected the radiation to come from the inside of the Earth, but as he went down in the cave he found a decrease in radiation intensity. He suggested the radiation might come from above and he explored this phenomena with measurements on the top of the Eiffel tower. Unfortunately this was not high enough to give a significant increase in radiation. The Swiss physicist Albert Gockel was the first to start with balloon flights in 1909 and in 1911 Victor Hess [8] used a balloon to measure the radiation levels at altitudes beyond 5000 m (see figure 1.1). He found a significant increase of the radiation as a function of altitude. For this he was rewarded with a Nobelprize in 1936.



Figure 1.1: Victor Hess in a balloon in 1912.

In 1925 the term cosmic ray was introduced by Robert Millikan to describe a highly energetic particle from the cosmos. These particles can be protons, nuclei, photons, electrons, positrons or neutrinos. Their energies range from 10⁹ to 10²⁰ eV and their flux decreases rapidly with increasing energy.

1.1.1 Sources

The nearest provider of cosmic rays is the Sun, but the energy density of particles from the Sun is way too small to explain the total observed energy of cosmic rays. Pulsars that erupt particles in jets are also rejected as the main source, because their energy spectrum does not agree with the energy spectrum of the cosmic rays. For now, good candidates for sources of cosmic rays of energies below 10^{15} eV are supernova remnants. The expanding

shockwave, resulting from the giant explosion of massive stars, accelerates and ejects highly energetic particles. This idea is confirmed by the observed energy spectrum of particles that are ejected by supernova remnants, that matches the measured energy spectrum of cosmic rays.

The energy of the particles that are erupted from the supernova remnants is not yet high enough to match the cosmic ray energy distribution measured at Earth. Different mechanisms inside the sources are suggested that could enable cosmic particles to accelerate. Among those are first and second order Fermi acceleration [5]. In first order Fermi acceleration, particles can get trapped and reflected many times in an inhomogeneous relativistic shockwave, until their energy is large enough to escape from the shockwave. The energy gain is linearly proportional to the shock's velocity divided by the speed of light. During second order Fermi acceleration, particles undergo multiple reflections in non-relativistic moving magnetized clouds, thereby gaining energy proportional to the square of the cloud's velocity divided by the square of the speed of light. In all mechanisms the particles will be accelerated as long as their energy loss on the way through the cloud or shockwave is less than the energy gain by reflections. These two acceleration mechanisms enable the supernova remnants in our Galaxy to be a provider of cosmic rays.

Because of the magnetic field inside a galaxy, the particles with low energies remain captured in the galaxy from which they originate. Only high energy particles can escape from their galaxy, because their Larmor radius is comparable or larger than the radius of the galactic disc. The Larmor radius or cyclotron radius r_{Larmor} is the radius of deflection of a particle with charge q and mass m by a magnetic field B:

$$r_{\text{Larmor}} = \frac{mv_{\perp}}{qB},$$
 (1.1)

with v_{\perp} the velocity of the particle perpendicular to the magnetic field. As no galactic source of ultra-high energy comic rays has yet been identified, the particles with extremely high energy that are detected on Earth are most likely to originate from extragalactic sources. A possible type of extragalactic sources are the active galactic nuclei (AGNs), the highly luminous and compact regions in the centers of some galaxies. The radiation of this region is probably caused by the accretion of mass into the massive black hole. The accretion discs produce jets to get rid of the energy won by the accretion and the jets slow down as they propagate through the intergalactic medium. Shock waves arise during the slowing down, in which particles can be accelerated very effectively by first order Fermi acceleration.

1.1.2 Propagation through space

In the interstellar matter the randomly oriented magnetic fields (B $\approx 3~\mu$ G) change the propagation direction of the cosmic rays continuously, causing a nuclear particle with kinetic energy of 1 GeV to travel a random walk in the galaxy for about $15 \cdot 10^6$ years before it interacts [9]. The most important type of interaction is spallation: the cosmic particle collides with another particle in the interstellar medium and that particle falls apart. This effect is shown by the large abundance of lithium, beryllium and boron in the cosmic rays, while they do not occur that much in our Solar System, as is shown in figure 1.2. It is therefore suggested that these elements are produced by spallation of carbon, oxygen and nitrogen in our Galaxy. Also spallation can occur when the low energy photons of the cosmic microwave background [15] collide with the highly energetic cosmic particles.

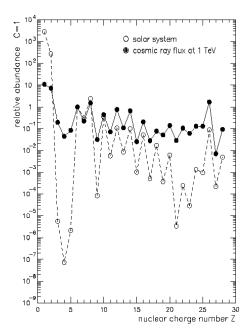


Figure 1.2: The abundances of nuclei in the Solar System and in cosmic rays, as measured in balloon flights and by the ESA-NASA Ulysses mission.

Other types of interactions are radioactive decay, whereby particles are lost but also other particles are produced, and the emission of photons by the charged cosmic particles that are deflected by other charged particles (Bremsstrahlung) or by a magnetic field (cyclotron radiation).

1.2 The Gerasimova-Zatsepin effect

Inside the Solar System the same processes as in the interstellar medium influence the cosmic rays: deflection by magnetic fields and spallation. Here the magnetic field of the Sun provides the deflection and the spallation is caused by the elements inside the Solar System. Also, the solar photons could cause the spallation through photodisintegration. After a nucleon is ejected from the cosmic particle, the two new particles are deflected by the solar magnetic field differently because of the difference in mass-charge ratio.

This special case was first considered by Gerasimova and Zatsepin [18] and [6] and is therefore

called the Gerasimova-Zatsepin (GZ) effect, shown in figure 1.3. By exploring this effect, also the spallation and deflection processes outside our Solar System might be better understood. Moreover, if the existence of this effect is demonstrated, it is proven that also composed cosmic nuclei reach our Solar System.

1.2.1 Photodisintegration

Solar photons with energies of a few eV are capable of disintegrating the cosmic particles. As the Lorentzfactor for a cosmic proton with a kinetic energy of 10^{17} eV is 10^8 , the photons are boosted to an energy of several MeV's in the frame of the moving cosmic nucleus. Therefore all photon energies that are mentioned below are the boosted energies in the center of mass of the nucleus.

The disintegration is enabled by the nuclear giant dipole resonance at lower photon energies and non-resonance processes at higher photon energies [12]. As the photon passes by, the charged protons of the cosmic particle are collectively shifted to one side by the striking electromagnetic radiation,

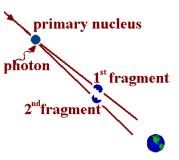


Figure 1.3: Schematic overview of the GZ-effect.

while the neutrons stay unaffected [2]. This new distribution of nucleons is mostly an unstable one, and while the strong nuclear force pulls the protons back, one or more nucleons are ejected from the nucleus. Giant dipole resonance occurs at photon energies between

15 and 25 MeV: the correct amount of energy to enable the nucleus to eject exactly one nucleon. At energies above the resonance range the same process takes place with more emitted nucleons, until photo-pion production is enabled at energies of 145 MeV. Then, due to the striking photon, pions in stead of nucleons are emitted from the nucleus.

1.2.2 Magnetic field of the Sun

Akasofu, Gray and Lee modeled [1] the interplanetary magnetic field in 1980 as a linear superposition of the following components:

- (a) the magnetic dipole component
- (b) the sunspot component: a large number of smaller magnetic dipoles located inside the Sun
- (c) the dynamo component: the field of the poloidal current system generated by the solar unipolar induction
- (d) the ring current component: the field of an extensive current disc around the Sun.

The latter two components dominate the field. All these components, shown in figure 1.4, change direction every solar cycle of eleven years.

The cosmic particles that approach Earth during daytime are deflected so strongly that it is expected to be impossible to detect both particles on the surface of the Earth. Therefore the GZ-effect is expected to be detected more often during the night. Medina-Tanco and Watson calculated [12] that an iron nucleus with a Lorentzfactor of 10^7 that looses a proton at a distance of one astronomical unit from Earth, hits the Earth hundreds of kilometers away from a proton that started from the same position, due to the solar magnetic field.

Also Lafebre et al. [11] computed a distance of several hundreds of kilometers between the two particles. In this case the differenct in path length caused by the photodisintegration is estimated at only 15 kilometers, so the deflection by the magnetic field is dominant in determining the distance between the places where the two particles hit the Earth. The time difference between the two hits is due to the path length difference. For straight tra-

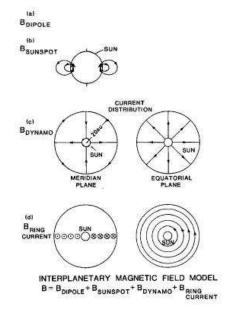


Figure 1.4: The four components of the solar magnetic field [1].

jectories this is at most the horizontal distance between the two detectors that are hit.

1.3 Air showers

After travelling through our Galaxy and the Solar System, some cosmic particles reach our atmosphere which consists of nitrogen and oxygen molecules. While striking these molecules, secondary particles are produced by spallation, which in turn hit other air molecules etcetera. In this way a cascade of secondary particles is produced out of the primary cosmic ray. The primary particles that hit the atmosphere are mainly protons (89%), but also helium nuclei (9%), heavier nuclei (1%), electrons (1%) and photons are observed. Although most of the produced particles are absorbed in the atmosphere, a primary particle with an energy of 10^{15} eV still results in around 10^6 particles at sealevel.

When the energy of the secondary particles becomes too low to produce new particles, the maximum of the shower is reached and the amount of particles decreases because of absorption in the atmosphere. Because of the high Lorentzfactor of the cosmic ray the secondary particles generally move in the same direction as the primary. With higher primary energy, the diameter of the shower becomes larger and its particle multiplicity increases.

The showers are usually described to consist of three different components of cascades: an electromagnetic, a hadronic and a muonic component.

\bullet Electromagnetic cascade

In the electromagnetic cascade only e^+ , e^- and γ occur. Photons are produced by Bremsstrahlung: when an electron or positron is deflected by another charged particle and thus accelerated, it emits a photon ($e^\pm \to e^\pm + \gamma$). By pair production ($\gamma \to e^+ + e^-$) electrons and positrons are produced via interaction of a photon with an atomic nucleus. A neutral pion can start the electromagnetic cascade by decaying into two photons.

• Hadronic cascade

A hadronic cascade starts with cosmic hadrons that interact with the molecules in the atmosphere. In every hadronic interaction all types of pions are produced roughly in equal amounts, thus as much π^0 as π^+ as π^- . These feed the electromagnetic and muonic components through $\pi^0 \to \gamma + \gamma$ and $\pi^{\pm} \to \mu^{\pm} + \nu_{\mu}$.

• Muonic cascade

Muons are only produced in the decay of charged pions, with muon neutrino's as a byproduct. Then the muon decays into an electron or positron, an electron neutrino and a muon neutrino: $\mu^- \to e^- + \nu_\mu + \bar{\nu_e}$ and $\mu^+ \to e^+ + \bar{\nu_\mu} + \nu_e$. After such a reaction no new cascades are produced any more.

In addition to the processes listed above, other effects are observed from air showers.

- As the particles travel through the atmosphere, Čerenkov radiation is produced by the charged particles with velocity larger than the speed of light in air.
- The charged particles can excite the nitrogen molecules in air to produce fluorescent light.
- Radiowaves are produced as charged particles in the air shower are deflected by the magnetic field of the Earth (geosynchrotron radio-emission).

These types of radiation are also used for the detection of air showers.

1.3.1 Measuring the GZ-effect via air showers

The residual cosmic nucleus and its ejected nucleon each cause an air shower as they hit our atmosphere. It is expected that the fraction of cosmic particles that participates in the GZ-effect is in the order of 10^{-5} [11], so accurate detectors with a large uptime are needed. The Hisparc network, as described in the following chapter, is most suitable to measure this effect, given the expected distance between the two showers. Furthermore, Hisparc's detectors are clustered closely within cities, thus it should be possible to not only measure two simultaneously arriving particles at Earth, but also identify the two different showers. If multiple detectors per city are hit, this could support the theory of Gerasimova and Zatsepin even more.

In terms of surface area, the Pierre Auger observatory in Argentina could also be a good candidate¹, but because of the larger distance (1.5 km) between the detectors, the energy cut-off is too high to measure lower energy air showers. In Hisparc also lower energy particles, with narrow showers, can be measured.

Simulations of Lafebre [11], Medina-Tanco and Watson [12] show that it will be difficult to proof the GZ-effect experimentally. Scientists at the LAAS experiments² searched for deviations in air shower pairs in the lunar and solar direction, but for the solar direction no deviation and for the lunar direction no significant deviation are found [10].

In the future also the composition of the original particle could be derived from the energy measurements of the two particles, because the original nucleus mass $A = \frac{E_0}{E_1}$ (assuming only one nucleon is ejected), with E_0 the original energy and E_1 the energy of the ejected nucleon.

¹The Pierre Auger network occupies an area a bit larger than Luxembourg.

 $^{^{2}}$ LAAS is a network of arrays of detectors in Japan with distances between the detectors that range from 0.1 to 1000 km.

Experimental setup

Hisparc is a network of 86 detector stations in the Netherlands, clustered in 26 cities and coordinated by the Nikhef institute. Every detector is placed at the roof of a high school and most of the detectors are built by the pupils of the schools. Since 2002 the first detectors are operating in Nijmegen, the others followed starting from 2004. The aim of this network is dual: to detect and measure ultra-high energy comic rays and to let pupils become acquinted with real experimental research [16].

2.1 The detector

A single detector station consists of 2 detectors located at distances of a few meters. Each detector consists of a scintillator plate, with an area of about 0.5 m², and a phototube, as is shown in figure 2.1. When a charged particle hits the scintillator plate, it looses energy to the material, which is converted into blue photons. The frequency of this light is matched to the sensitivity of the phototube. About 1 in 3 photons that hit the photocathode create an electron through the photoelectric effect.

To increase the signal, the electrons are multiplied and accelerated through a number of dynodes or electrodes. The positive voltage on the electrodes increases as the electrons

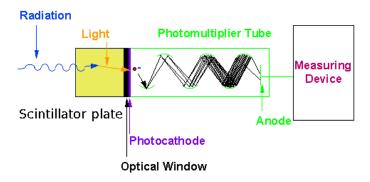


Figure 2.1: Schematic overview of a detector with on the left the scintillator plate and next to the plate the photomultiplier tube.

approach the end of the tube. More electrons are created, thus a large pulse of electrons hits the positive anode at the end of the tube.

The signals from the phototubes are sent to a digital oscilloscope, which is read out when both tubes have a signal above threshold. In this way thermal noise is reduced and single muons are not recorded. Only air showers are of interest for this research.

2.2 The detector network

The stations are located in clusters in Aarhus, Alkmaar, Almelo, Alphen aan de Rijn, Amsterdam, Deventer, Eindhoven, Enschede, Groningen, Haaksbergen, Haarlem, Hengelo, Hoorn, Kennemerland, Leiden, Middelharnis, Nijmegen, Panningen, Science Park Amsterdam, Sheffield, Tilburg, Utrecht, Venray, Weert, Zaanstad and Zwijndrecht. In most cities multiple stations are installed. As is shown in figure 2.2, the spacings between the stations are between a few hundred meters till 700 km, which makes this network perfect to measure the GZ-effect. All distances that can be achieved by combining the Hisparc stations are counted in the histogram of figure 2.3.



Figure 2.2: The Hisparc network.

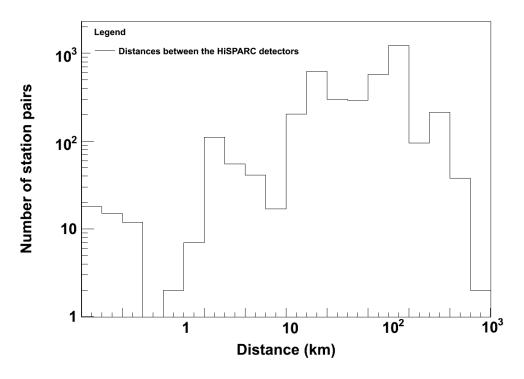


Figure 2.3: All possible distances between the detectors of the Hisparc network.

Statistical methods

In all experimental research it is essential to make a connection between the measured value and the true value of an unknown parameter. Statistical methods are studied to generate a level of confidence about the true value, given the experimental outcome. In this chapter the most relevant concepts are briefly explained.

3.1 Poisson distribution

This research deals with cosmic ray induced particles that are detected on Earth, which will be called events. The arrival times of the events are assumed to be independent and the event rate in a detector is approximately constant, thus the Poisson probability density function (p.d.f.) is applicable [13]. A p.d.f. gives the probability of measuring a value x, given a set of parameters. In the case of the Poissonian distribution, shown in figure 3.1 and equation (3.1), the only parameter is an average or mean value μ .

$$p(x|\mu) = \frac{e^{-\mu}\mu^x}{x!},$$
 (3.1)

with x the observed number of events (a discrete number) and μ the mean number of events, which may be fractional. If for example the mean amount of events $\mu = 1.16$ per day (one of the results in tabular 5.2), the probability of measuring x = 3 events per day is 0.082 according to this equation. When adding a Poissonian distributed background, the resulting distribution is given by

$$p(x|\mu, b) = \frac{e^{-(\mu+b)}(\mu+b)^x}{x!},$$
(3.2)

with b the mean background. Even though μ is not known in this research, this distribution is used to make statements about the opposite: what is the probability that our measurement x was induced from a process with a mean value μ ?

3.2 Confidence intervals

After the measurement the results must be interpreted. Suppose we measure a background of 3 events per day and a signal of 10 events per day. To express the certainty about the true

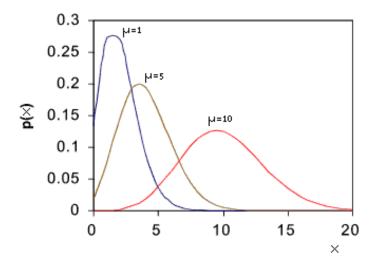


Figure 3.1: The Poisson distribution (equation (3.1)) for different values of μ is shown, depending on the measured value x.

value of the signal, given this experimental outcome, an upper and lower limit for the true value of the parameter can be calculated. The goal of this section is to explain the method developed by Feldman and Cousins [4] for determining these limits. To avoid common misunderstanding and misinterpretation of their method, first the Bayesian interpretation of such limits and some important concepts Bayes introduced are treated. Second the method of Neyman is discussed, which introduces the classical confidence intervals that Feldman and Cousins then will extend.

3.2.1 Bayesian intervals

T. Bayes suggested in the beginning of the 18^{th} century that prior knowledge about the outcome should be considered while calculating a probability. For a hypothesis A and experimental data B the posterior probability that A is true given B is expressed as follows:

$$P(A|B) = \frac{P(B|A)P(A)}{P(B)},$$
 (3.3)

where P(B|A) is the conditional probability that the data is B, given that A is true. The conditional probability is also called the likelihood function, which we need in the Feldman and Cousins method. P(A) is the prior probability of A (without knowledge about B) and P(B) is the marginal probability of B (without knowledge about A). The prior probability P(A) in equation (3.3) is often called the subjective prior because it contains assumptions, based on the outcomes of previous experiments and on the personal beliefs of the experimentator, which makes this method obviously less objective. To calculate the posterior p.d.f., the value of B has to depend on A in a known way.

With this definition of probability, Bayes builds a credible interval, a precurser of the

confidence interval that will be explained later. For unknown parameter μ and experimental outcomes x, a Bayesian credible interval $[\mu_1, \mu_2]$ is calculated with

$$\int_{\mu_1}^{\mu_2} P(\mu_{true}|x_0) d\mu_{true} = \beta.$$
 (3.4)

Here the degree of belief that the true value μ_{true} is between μ_1 and μ_2 , given the result x_0 , is β . According to equation (3.4), μ_1 and μ_2 can be chosen arbitrary.

Bayes thus uses the *posterior* probability $P(x|\mu)$ for creating a credible interval. In the next part of this section the *conditional* probability $P(\mu|x)$ is used to calculate the confidence intervals.

3.2.2 Neyman's classical intervals

J. Neyman [14] favoured the frequentist interpretation of probability, which states that for a experiment that can be repeated infinitely often and that will give statistically independent results:

$$P(x) = \lim_{N \to \infty} \frac{n_x}{N},\tag{3.5}$$

with N the total amount of trials and n_x the amount of trials where x occurred. This, contrary to the Bayesian interpretation, ignores the prior probability.

With the frequentist interpretation in mind, Neyman introduced the concept of confidence intervals. The interpretation is essentially different from the Bayesian credible interval. Neyman states that the true value is either in the interval or not: the true value is fixed and it can not be in the interval partly. A Neyman or classical confidence interval $[\mu_{min}, \mu_{max}]$ with confidence level β is defined as follows: if we get a certain outcome x out of an experiment 100 times, then in $\beta \cdot 100$ cases the true value of μ is between μ_{min} and μ_{max} .

Neyman's confidence intervals are constructed using the conditional probabilities of Bayes. Suppose the outcome of a measurement gives x_0 events in a certain amount of time. Then $\mu_{min}(x_0)$ and $\mu_{max}(x_0)$ are calculated for x_0 by requiring

$$\int_0^{x_0} P(x|\mu_{min})dx = \beta$$

$$\int_{x_0}^{\infty} P(x|\mu_{max})dx = \beta.$$
(3.6)

In our case $P(x|\mu)$ is given by the Poisson distribution, equation (3.1). Figure 3.2 shows the meaning of μ_{min} and μ_{max} grafically.

The values of $\mu_{min}(x_0)$ and $\mu_{max}(x_0)$ are thus choosen such that μ_{min} is the mean of all values of x that are below the value x_0 with a certainty β and likewise μ_{max} is the mean of all values of x that are above the value x_0 with a certainty β (see figure 3.2).

Suppose we repeat this procedure for every outcome x, then the functions $\mu_{min}(x)$ and $\mu_{max}(x)$ are generated. These functions represent the lower and upper limit of the confidence interval for each possible outcome x.

Unfortunately, with this method it is possible to create a confidence interval that has values in the unphysical region. As Bayes allready suggested, prior information about the

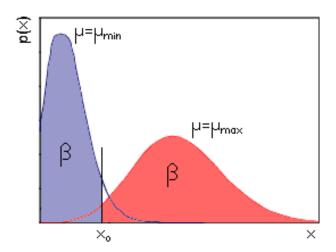


Figure 3.2: The Poisson distribution of μ_{min} and μ_{max} is shown. The values of μ_{min} and μ_{max} are determined by equation (3.6). The two coloured surfaces refer to the integrals with value β .

parameter, such as physical boundaries, should be taken into account. If for example the mass of an object is measured, it is known prior to the experiment that the outcome can not be below zero. Feldman and Cousins have found a solution for this.

3.2.3 The Feldman and Cousins method

G.J. Feldman and R.D. Cousins proposed a new method [4] to find the upper and lower limit of the classical confidence interval.

First the likelihoodratio is introduced, which for a fixed value of μ is defined as follows:

$$R(x) = \frac{P(x|\mu)}{P(x|\mu_{best})}. (3.7)$$

For each value of x, μ_{best} is the value of μ that maximizes $P(x|\mu)$, thus the physically allowed mean that gives the best fit in obtaining the result x. The value of x with the largest ratio R(x) is the first x that is submitted to the acceptance region of μ . Then the value of x with the second highest value of R(x) is added to the acceptance region, then the third etcetera. The adding of values of x stops when the sum of all $P(x|\mu)$ is equal to the required confidence level (for example 95%). This acceptance region of μ represents the region $[x_{min}, x_{max}]$ in which we experimentally find x in a fraction β of the cases, given that the mean is μ . The acceptance region is plotted for every value of μ as a horizontal line in figure 3.3. This figure shows the so-called confidence belt for x and μ .

To construct the confidence intervals $[\mu_{min}, \mu_{max}]$ for each outcome x, the confidence belt (figure 3.3) is used. A vertical line is drawn through a certain outcome x_0 , intersecting the horizontal lines. The top and bottom intersections give the upper and lower limit μ_{max} and μ_{min} for x_0 . This means that if the experimental outcome is x_0 , the true value of μ is found in the region $[\mu_{min}, \mu_{max}]$ in a fraction β of the cases.

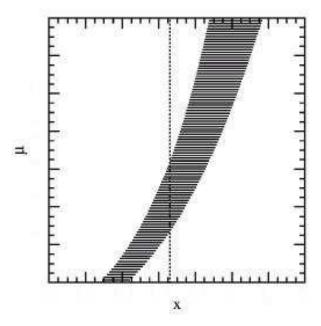


Figure 3.3: An example of a confidence belt, showing the confidence interval for x_0 with the vertical line through x_0 [4]

For every possible outcome x this procedure can be repeated, generating the functions $\mu_{min}(x)$ and $\mu_{max}(x)$. With this algorithm we can find the lower and upper limit of the confidence interval for every possible measurement. For example a measurement of 10 events with a background of 3 gives a 95% confidence interval of [2.25, 14.82]. If the background and the measurement are close to each other, 0 is included in the interval: a measurement of 10 events with a background of 9 events gives the 95% interval [0, 8.82]. In this case there could be no signal at all, while in the first case there is a signal of at least two events with a certainty of 95%.

Analysis

In this chapter the method of searching for coincidences is explained. First detector problems are explored to enable to distinguish between nonsense and real data. Then the background and the signal levels are determined for each combination of clusters, normalized by the total time during which both cities had operating detectors (the uptime). The Feldman and Cousins method from the previous chapter provides a manner to determine the lower and upper confidence interval limit, as is shown in the next chapter.

4.1 Selection of raw data

For several reasons the detectors do not always operate properly. The raw data is grouped in several types of histograms to find out about possible problems that may influence the analysis. The problems found are mostly due to the infancy of the detectors and they are listed in chapter 7. An example of a detector that does not work properly is shown in the histogram of figure 4.1. In this case there is a huge spike in the number of recorded events around 8AM. This is a rather unnatural distribution, which is likely due to human activity.

Because most of these curiosities can be explained by problems with the detectors, it is assumed for now that the event rate is almost constant and that all abnormal peaks are due to detector failures.

In order to avoid having to correct for these anomalies, the average number of events in each 10 minute interval in a day is determined (N). If in one of the intervals the number

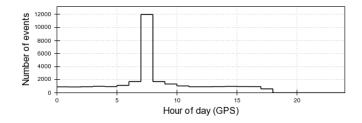


Figure 4.1: Example of a bad day of data: June 4 2010, station 8301 in Weert

of recorded events exceeds $N + 6 \cdot \sqrt{N}$, the data of the whole day is discarded.

4.2 Search for coincidences

4.2.1 The algorithm

To find coincidences between events recorded in two cities, the raw data files of all stations in the two cities are opened by a program and for each station the first timestamp is read. The earliest timestamp is determined and the timestamps of all other stations are compared with the early one. If there are one or more other stations with an event within a certain time window after the early event, these stations and the early one are marked as a coincidence and if both cities are involved in the coincidence this coincidence is written to a file. For the involved stations the next timestamp is read. If no coincidence is found within the time window, only for the earliest station the next timestamp is read. Then again we pick the earliest one out of the read timestamps and the same process repeats itself. In this way the coincidences with the shortest time differences are found.

4.2.2 Background

The time window which is used to search for coincidences is set to 10 ms, while the largest distance between two cities is about 600 km and thus the largest expected time difference is expected to be 600 km divided by the speed of light, thus 2 ms. This large window is used to determine the background, as is explained below.

In a histogram all measured time differences Δt between the two events of a coincidence for a certain combination of two cities can be plotted, as is shown in the example of figure 4.2. These time differences can be negative, because one always substracts the timestamps of one cluster from that of another one.

Now by projecting the whole histogram on the y-axis, a one dimensional histogram of all Δt 's is produced, as shown in figure 4.3. The background is calculated by integrating the histogram from -10 ms to 10 ms and then multiplying this number with two times the appropriate time window (it can also be a negative difference) divided by the total reach of 20 ms. In this way, only the fraction of background particles in the correct time window is selected. The correct time window is defined to be the window that is physically possible to be consistent with the GZ-effect, thus the horizontal distance between the two involved cities, divided by the speed of light. This window is so much smaller than 10 ms (mostly below 0.6 ms) and the number of expected signal events is so small that it should be no problem that a possible signal is included in the background calculation.

4.2.3 Signal

Now the signal is determined by simply counting all coincidences in the histogram that have a time difference (Δt) within the correct time window. For Nijmegen and Venray, the distance is 30 km thus the time window is 0.1 ms, as shown in the graph of figure 4.3 by the two red lines around $\Delta t = 0$.

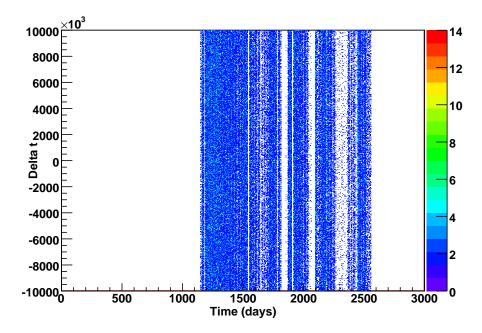


Figure 4.2: Example of a two dimensional histogram with all time differences Δt in nanoseconds for all data (Nijmegen and Venray). The days count from January 1, 2003.

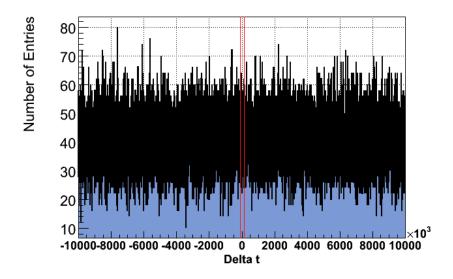


Figure 4.3: Example of a one dimensional histogram with all time differences Δt in nanoseconds for all data: all coincidences between Nijmegen and Venray. Between the red lines the 'correct' time window for Nijmegen and Venray is shown.

4.2.4 Uptime and rate normalization

To make a correct comparison of the amounts of coincidences between different pairs of cities, the total amount should be divided by the total time there was at least one detector operating in each city of the pair. If a detector does not register an event for 10 minutes, then the detector was probably off that 10 minutes. With mean event rates of one event per a few seconds, this should be a correct guideline. Now every total amount of coincidences is divided by the total number of 10 minute bins that both cities had an operating detector. Multiplying by 144 gives the amount of coincidences per day, if the detectors would all be operating all day.

Besides that we should also divide the total number of coincidences by the number of stations in both cities, multiplied by each other. We here assume that two detectors in a city give twice the amount of random or accidental coincidences with another city as one detector in that city would give. In the next chapter the mean amount of coincidences per day that are calculated according to this manner are shown.

4.2.5 Selection of coincidences

Also during the search for coincidences strange results appeared, that are probably due to the detector problems. At distances larger than 2 km a few combinations give a very high number of coincidences against a low background, which results in lower limits higher than 3 coincidences per day per pair of stations. These combinations are removed from the dataset. Some other combinations in Sciencepark Amsterdam give a signal that is more than 1000 times larger than the background. These are also removed and both anomalies are described in more detail in the latter two items of chapter 7.

4.2.6 Problem with leap seconds

All detectors should work with the same software system, to make it easy to compare their timestamps. When the detectors were installed, most of them used the UNIXtimestamp in the UTC frame¹. Later the clocks were set at GPStimestamps². Unfortunately the moments of conversion between the two timestamps is unknown for almost all detectors. We have looked for a sudden change in the number of coincidences between a detector with known conversion moment and a near detector with unknown conversion moment, but the typical distance between two detectors is too large to find a significant signal in short periods, even if they both would work with the same timestamp. Of course this hinders a reliable timestamp comparison and it causes a systematic bias on the measurement.

4.2.7 Zero nanoseconds

In their early years some detectors have difficulties in registering the correct amount of nanoseconds of a timestamp. For example station 2 and 3 in Amsterdam log zero nanoseconds very often, much more than expected, while the amount of seconds is logged

¹The UNIX timestamp gives the amount of seconds that have passed since January 1^{st} 1970, ignoring the leap seconds.

²The GPStimestamp also gives the amount of seconds that have passed since January 1st 1970, but it does not ignore the 15 leap seconds that have passed since 1970.

correctly. The GPS module might have a problem with initializing, because it is not installed right or because the signal is too low (may be the detector is inside a building in stead of on the roof). After a few years this problem disappears. When ignoring this problem, fake coincidences are found, each time at exactly zero nanoseconds. In this analysis the coincidences on zero nanoseconds were deselected, but the accuracy of the other timestamps in that period might be doubted, knowing the system fails sometimes.

Results

The results obtained with the method explained previously are shown in the figures of this chapter. The error bars in every graph give the lower and upper limit of the 95% confidence intervals as obtained with the Feldman and Cousins method.

The first figure (figure 5.1) shows the number of coincidences per day for every combination of cities. To extend to shorter distances, also the number of coincidences between every individual station in Amsterdam, Amsterdam Science Park, Haarlem and Zaanstad are calculated. In this graph the raw data selection as described in section 4.1 is applied. The extremely high number of coincidences with respect to the background that are mentioned in section 4.2.5 are marked red in this graph.

Next, we clustered the data in 20 groups, roughly as a function of the logarithmic distance between the clusters. The grouping is shown in tabel 5.2. The numbers are calculated by summation of all signals in one group and all backgrounds in one group, and then we calculate the total mean and the total upper and lower limit. After that, the total mean, total upper and total lower limit are divided by the total summed uptime, and the result of that calculation is shown in table 5.1. In this calculation the red marked extremely high numbers of coincidences as mentioned in section 4.2.5 are not taken into account.

We have examined the combined time difference plots as described in section 4.2 again, which showed that there is still an enhanced correlation around t=0 ns between the stations in Sciencepark and in Amsterdam and the other stations. When removing the Sciencepark and Amsterdam data this effect is certainly reduced, however an enhancement of the signal above the background is still seen for distances above 70 km. The results without the Sciencepark and Amsterdam stations are shown in table 5.2.

These results are also presented in figure 5.2. For small distances, the single air showers are clearly visible as a decrease in the amount of coincidences as a function of distance. At distances of 100 km and higher an increase is visible. The lower limits of the confidence intervals are non-zero in this range, meaning that there is a signal with 95% certainty. It is noteworthy that the distance clusters of 10 and 20 km have zero coincidences per day,

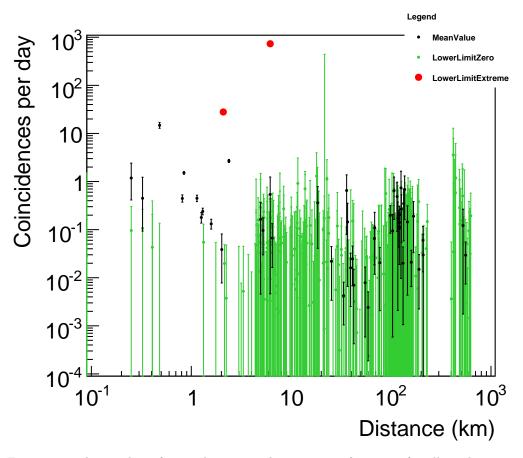


Figure 5.1: The number of coincidences per day per pair of stations for all combinations of cities. The red graph shows the extreme lower limits, that are probably due to detector problems and that are ignored later, in the graph of figure 5.2. The green one shows the data points that have a lower limit of zero and the black points have a non-zero lower limit.

Bin	Maximal distance	Total num- ber of signal	Total number of	Lower limit	Upper limit	Uptime (days)
	(km)	events	background			(days)
			events			
0	0.2	0	0	0	0.0104	298
1	0.4	105	77.7	0.0530	0.272	181
2	0.6	275	75.4	1.08	1.51	155
3	0.8	no data	_	_	_	_
4	1	1215	57.8	1.10	1.24	993
5	2	905	284	0.186	0.225	3027
6	4	13686	8740	0.0273	0.0300	172736
7	6	6941	6913	0	0.0185	10415
8	8	5005	4844	0.00524	0.0371	8124
9	10	3662	3736	0	0.0151	3934
10	20	55219	55371	0	0.00401	80597
11	40	264428	260502	0.00559	0.00945	522498
12	60	103716	102980	0.00116	0.00815	168078
13	80	164714	163350	0.00601	0.0222	97352
14	100	591360	586296	0.00712	0.0132	499621
15	200	1.38e6	1.37e6	0.0171	0.0257	531709
16	400	184516	183168	0.0176	0.0717	30573
17	600	251432	249768	0.0113	0.0424	62461
18	800	19871	19704	0	0.149	2992
19	1000	no data	_	_	_	_

Table 5.1: All data clustered in distance groups. The lower and upper limit show the 95% confidence limits of the number of events per pair of stations per day.

while their uptime is very large. The distance scale of this result is in agreement with the simulations of Lafebre et al. [11] and Medina-Tanco and Watson [12] which state that the distance of the two showers of the GZ-effect should be between hundred and several hundreds of kilometers.

In the evaluation of the results we have assumed that the knowledge of the background is perfect, and that we are only left with statistical uncertainties. The 95 % intervals given therefore are only of a statistical nature. When looking at table 5.2, it is clear that the number of events in the signal region is only marginally above the background level, in the order of 0.5 %. Therefore, the background level should be known to much better than this level in order to be fully confident of the provided limits. Our background estimate originates from about 10 times the number of signal events, as is shown in figure 4.3. For an estimated background of about 50000 events the corresponding uncertainty is of order 0.2 % which is still a bit too high to fully trust the 95 % intervals.

The quality of the data make interpretation of effects of this order very difficult. I have

¹The relative uncertainty is given by the uncertainty $(\sqrt{10*50.000})$ divided by the mean number of events $(10 \cdot 50.000)$.

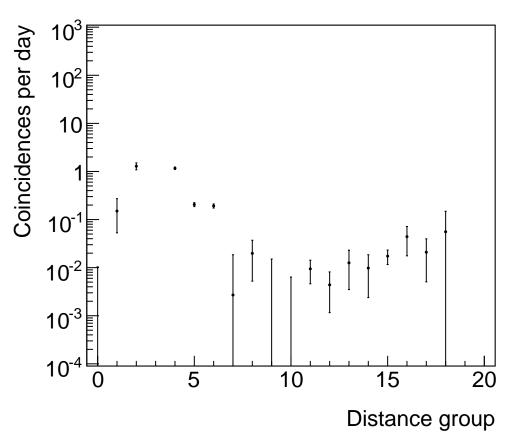


Figure 5.2: The number of coincidences per day per pair of stations versus the distance between the stations. All data points are clustered groups of distance, as is shown in table 5.2.

Bin	Maximal	Total num-	Total num-	Lower limit	Upper limit	_
	distance	ber of signal	ber of			(days)
	(km)	events	background			
			events			
0	0.2	0	0	0	0.0104	298
1	0.4	105	77.7	0.0530	0.272	181
2	0.6	275	75.4184	1.08	1.51	155
3	0.8	no data	_	_	_	_
4	1	1215	57.8	1.10	1.24	993
5	2	905	284	0.186	0.225	3027
6	4	1627	820	0.173	0.211	4202
7	6	6941	6913	0	0.0185	10415
8	8	5005	4844	0.00524	0.0371	8124
9	10	3662	3736	0	0.0151	3934
10	20	27559	27674	0	0.00638	34913
11	40	60242	59302	0.00462	0.0143	99667
12	60	103716	102980	0.00116	0.00815	168078
13	80	112112	111324	0.00350	0.0231	62618
14	100	164526	163635	0.00238	0.0186	90987
15	200	764638	759501	0.0116	0.0232	295608
16	400	184516	183168	0.0176	0.0717	30573
17	600	143363	142533	0.00506	0.0397	39675
18	800	19871	19704	0	0.149	2992
19	1000	no data	_	_	_	_

Table 5.2: All data clustered in distance groups, without the data from the sciencepark cluster. The lower and upper limit show the 95% confidence limits of the number of events per pair of stations per day.

removed known and unknown peculiarities in the data which show up as enhancements of an excess. There is no proper way of doing the same for effects in the data which reduce the amount of correlation. Such effects are easy to envision, for instance the GPS vs UTC timing clearly reduces the sensitivity of the setup for this study.

Conclusion

By studying the theory of cosmic radiation and the Gerasimova-Zatsepin (GZ) mechanism and with the help of the statistical method of Feldman and Cousins, an analysis is made to study the effect of the GZ mechanism. The GZ mechanism states that cosmic particles that enter our Solar System have a chance to be disintegrated by solar photons after which each fragment is deflected by the solar magnetic field. Some of the remaining cosmic nuclei and their ejected nucleons will then hit our atmosphere and both cause an air shower on Earth. As was predicted by Lafebre et al. and by Medina and Watson, these air showers should be between hundred and several hundreds of kilometers away from each other.

Although the analysis was troubled by several detector problems, a significant signal is found in the data collected with the Hisparc detector network. For every combination of two cities within the network, the total amount of coincident events is measured and interpretated. In this way, a small increase in amount of coincident events per day is found between two clusters within a distance between 40 and 700 kilometers. The 95% confidence intervals of Feldman and Cousins give mean values of at least 0.09 coincidences per day per detector pair for this distance range. Besides that, for distances smaller than one kilometer the number of coincidences increases for decreasing distances, as is expected due to single air showers. This validates the method of the measurements.

These results are promising and could be improved by solving the problems in the Hisparc detector network as given in chapter 7.

Recommendations

The typical distances between the Hisparc detectors make this network convenient for measuring the GZ-effect. However, the signal is expected to be very low, thus the timestamps of the detectors should be known very accurately. Currently the data shows many peculiarities that negatively influence the analysis possibilities of the data set recorded.

Below the problems and their possible solutions that are found during this research are listed.

- As mentioned in section 4.2.6, there are two types of timestamp notation, which are both used. A choice should be made between the two types of timestamps and at one logged date all detectors should be converted to this type, so that the timestamps can be compared correctly. Then, after a few years, this analysis could be done again and it would definitely give more reliable results.
- For several reasons the detectors are often out of operation. The software then needs an update or the computer is unplugged accidentally. The activity of each detector should be monitored by a programm and the coordinating person should be warned if the detector is not working, so that the problem can be solved and the time that the detector is turned off is shortened.
- It should not only be checked whether or not the detector is working, but also peculiarities as in figure 4.1 should be registered and investigated. For example in Weert (station 8301): for several days in May and June 2010 a large peak in incoming particles is measured at around 8.00 am (GMT time zone). Maybe the system is overloaded because at that time all computers in the building are switched on. Here it only occurs in one phototube, so the tube may be broken or may be installed near the airco installation. Also the weather might have an influence on the event rate, especially in the summer if the Sun is pointed at the detector, but also the rain might cause a raise in the measured number of coincidences between the two scintillator plates of the station. This should be researched further.
- Twice a year, exactly on the days that daylight saving time starts and ends, the system of most detectors is confused for about an hour. Suddenly several (sometimes even fifteen) particles are registered in one second, while the event rate is normally one particle per three to twenty seconds. In theory the daylight saving time should

Detectors	Total signal:	Total background:	Uptime in days:
501 and 502	559471	74.69	327
501 and 503	409633	102.8	408
502 and 503	40857	28.9	335
502 and 505	25426	19.3	242
503 and 504	329892	40.3	372

Table 7.1: Extremely high numbers of coincidences for stations in Sciencepark Amsterdam

not cause a problem to the system since the timestamps are synchronized with the GMT timezone, but apparently something is wrong here.

- Between August 2008 and December 2008 a lot of stations fail dramatically. Every day one or two events are registered, both exactly at 14:29:45 and 524 milliseconds. This happens for the stations 1001, 1006, 101, 102, 1099, 11001, 2004, 201, 22, 3, 3101, 3102, 4001, 4002, 4003, 4004, 401, 4099, 501, 502, 503, 504, 505, 506, 507, 601, 7001, 7101, 7301, 7401, 8001, 8004, 8005, 8006, 8101, 8104, 8301, 8302, 98 and 99. According to drs. D. Fokkema from Nikhef this is a result of a research of students. Such data should not appear on the dataservers any more, or at least should be flagged, to prevent wrong interpretations.
- As is mentioned in section 4.2.7 some detectors have some difficulties in registering the correct amount of nanoseconds. This appears to be a software problem, that is solved for most stations. However, it should be checked whether this still occurs after the detectors are installed.
- Some combinations of cities give a low coincidence rate at first, then for a while no coincidences at all and after that they show a much higher activity. For example Haarlem and Sciencepark (fig. 7.1) show much higher activity after 2500 days (counted from January 1 2003). This could be due to the change of software package, to a changing of voltage or threshold settings or to the fact that the detectors were turned off more often in the beginning. This should be reconsidered while installing new detectors.
- Although all the remarks above are considered in the data analysis performed, still strange peaks in the histograms with the coincidences remain for some combinations of detectors. For example the combination of station 501 and 502 in Sciencepark shows a signal that is 10000 times as large as the background (see figure 7.2). They are almost at the same spot, so a high signal is expected, but other station combinations at the same distances give much smaller signals. The strange combinations are listed in table 7.1:

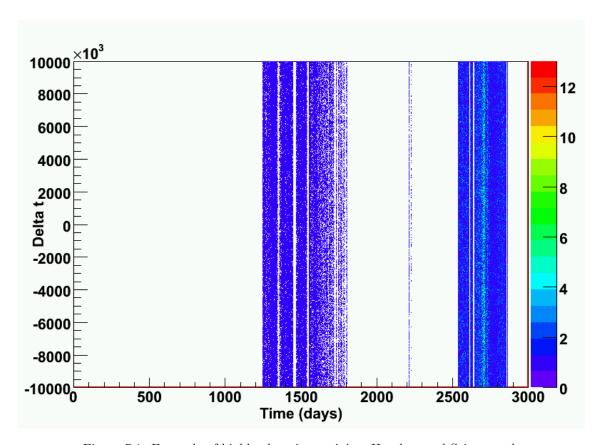


Figure 7.1: Example of highly changing activity: Haarlem and Sciencepark

• Also strange results are produced from the combination of station 7 and 22 (uptime 323 days, lower limit 27.3763, upper limit 28.5337, distance 2.09 km) and the combination 9 and 98 (uptime 5.6 days, lower limit 710.859, upper limit 755.883, distance 6.17 km). These stations and the one from the previous item are all located in Amsterdam. We haven't found an explanation for these extreme values yet. It is unlikely that this is due to cosmic radiation, as all other combinations at the same distance have lower values.

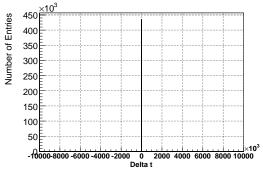


Figure 7.2: Histogram of all time differences between the two events of coincidences between station 501 and 502 in Sciencepark Amsterdam.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank Charles Timmermans for being a helpful, instructive and supportive supervisor. Also lots of thanks to the whole group of students, PhD's and staff at the department for including me in your group so easily; I felt very welcome thanks to you.

Also I am very grateful to David Fokkema and Bob van Eijk from the Nikhef institute, for helping me with the data, being interested in my research and for answering all my questions so patiently.

The special thanks are for Harm, Stefan, José, Alexander and adopted roommate Thijs, who not only gave me the necessary lessons in understanding Charles, but who also made my stay at the department very pleasant. Because of them I enjoyed these five months much more than I could have ever thought.

Thank you!

Margot

Appendix A Bijlage voor leerlingen

Beste leerling,

Elke seconde knallen er miljoenen deeltjes uit de kosmos op de Aarde. Sommigen gaan dwars door ons dak heen, dwars door ons lijf en zelfs dwars door de Aarde! We weten niet waar deze deeltjes vandaan komen en niet wat voor soort deeltjes het precies zijn. Het enige dat we weten is dat ze een extreem hoge energie hebben, nog hoger dan de energiën die in de grote deeltjesversneller in Genève¹ worden geproduceerd.

Om meer over deze deeltjes te leren hebben we heel Nederland vol gebouwd met deeltjesdetectoren: het Hisparc detector netwerk. Door de data van de detectoren slim met elkaar te combineren, kunnen we ontdekken hoe het zit met die deeltjes. Zo denken we bijvoorbeeld dat een kosmisch deeltje dat langs onze Zon scheert in tweeën gesplitst zou kunnen worden door het licht van de Zon. Als dat zo is, dan zouden we tegelijkertijd twee deeltjes op Aarde moeten kunnen meten.

In deze bijlage laten we zien dat we dit effect inderdaad gemeten hebben, met het Hisparc netwerk! We laten niet alleen het resultaat zien maar ook de theorie en de methode, zodat je het zelf ook kan proberen te meten. Op het moment dat dit onderzoek plaatsvond, mankeerde er nog een hoop aan het detector systeem. Nu wordt daaraan gewerkt en in de tussentijd is er ook weer data bij gekomen, dus misschien vind je een nog veel interessanter resultaat als je dit onderzoek herhaalt! Je kan dit document ook gebruiken als een voorbeeld, en dan zelf een eigen onderzoek verzinnen met het Hisparc netwerk.

Dr. Charles Timmermans van de Radboud Universiteit Nijmegen (c.timmermans@hef.-ru.nl) en drs. David Fokkema van het Nikhef instituut² (davidf@nikhef.nl) weten er alles van en kunnen je helpen met het begrijpen en aansturen van de computerprogramma's die nodig zijn om de data te analyseren. Ze kunnen je ook helpen om de programma's aan te passen aan je wensen, zodat je kan onderzoeken wat je wilt. Omdat de technische details van de analyse wat pittig zijn, staan ze helemaal achteraan in het document. Je hoeft ze niet in je eentje door te spitten, Charles of David zal ze samen met jullie doorspreken en jullie begeleiden bij dit stuk van het onderzoek.

Bij vragen kan je altijd bij ons terecht.

Veel plezier!

Margot Peters Masterstudent Natuur- & Sterrenkunde, Radboud Universiteit Nijmegen margotpet@gmail.com Februari 2011

¹In Genève worden in de Large Hadron Collider deeltjes met enorme energiën op elkaar geschoten.

²Het Nikhef is het nationale instituut voor elementaire deeltjesfysica, dat bijvoorbeeld ook onderzoek doet aan de grote deeltjesversneller (de LHC) in Cern, Genève.

A.1 Theorie

Hier volgt een korte samenvatting van wat we al weten over kosmische deeltjes. Als je meer wilt weten kan je altijd het Engelse, uitgebreidere, verslag nalezen of klikken op de links in de tekst.

A.1.1 Kosmische straling

Victor Hess ontdekte precies honderd jaar geleden dat er deeltjes met enorme energiën vanuit de kosmos op onze aarde knallen. Dit noemen we kosmische straling. Tot nu toe denken we dat de straling vooral bestaat uit protonen, maar ook uit samengestelde kernen, fotonen, neutrino's, elektronen en positronen³.

De Zon is de dichtstbijzijnde bron van deze deeltjes, maar kan nog lang niet de extreme energiedichtheid die wij meten verklaren. Gelukkig hebben we ook andere kandidaten op het oog: supernova explosies en actieve sterrenstelsels zouden goede bronnen kunnen zijn.

Nadat een deeltje is weggeschoten door een supernova explosie of een actief sterrenstelsel, begint het aan zijn tocht door het heelal. Twee mechanismen spelen dan een rol:

- In het medium tussen de sterren zijn een hele hoop magneetvelden, die allemaal een willekeurige richting hebben. Geladen deeltjes die door een sterrenstelsel reizen worden steeds afgebogen door die velden en zo kunnen ze miljoenen jaren rondzwerven. De magnetische velden houden de deeltjes dus gevangen in hun stelsel, tenzij de energie van de deeltjes zo groot is dat ze kunnen ontsnappen.
- De kosmische deeltjes worden niet alleen gedwarsboomd door magneetvelden, maar ook door andere deeltjes in het sterrenstelsel. Als de deeltjes botsen, vallen ze uit elkaar in fragmenten die ieder hun eigen weg gaan. Dit heet *spallatie*.

Uiteindelijk komt een deel van de kosmische deeltjes via omwegen aan op Aarde. Zodra ze de atmosfeer raken, veroorzaken ze daar een enorme lawine van deeltjes.

A.1.2 Deeltjeslawine

De lucht rondom de Aarde zit vol met zuurstof- en stikstofmoleculen waar de kosmische deeltjes langs schampen. Uit de botsing ontstaan dan nieuwe deeltjes. Deze secundaire deeltjes krijgen ieder wat energie van het primaire deeltje en schieten in bijna dezelfde richting weg. De fragmenten botsen steeds opnieuw met andere deeltjes en zo ontstaat een lawine ofwel een air shower, zoals in figuur A.1.

We proberen de secundaire deeltjes uit de deeltjeslawines te detecteren op Aarde via netwerken van deeltjesdetectoren, zoals het Pierre Auger Observatorium en natuurlijk het Hisparc netwerk. Indirect kunnen we zo meer leren over

Figure A.1: Artistieke impressie van een ing. deeltjeslawine.

Primary cosmic rays

³Een positron is hetzelfde als een elektron, maar dan met positieve lading.

de primaire deeltjes. Zo is de afmeting van de deeltjeslawine

op Aarde bijvoorbeeld een maat voor de energie van het primaire deeltje: deeltjes met hogere energie veroorzaken bredere deeltjeslawines. Daarnaast proberen we via metingen aan de dichtheid van secundaire deeltjes te achterhalen wat de energie van het oorspronkelijke deeltje was.

A.1.3 Het Gerasimova-Zatsepin effect

De Russische wetenschappers Gerasimova en Zatsepin bedachten zo'n 60 jaar geleden dat de afbuiging door magneetvelden en spallatie door andere deeltjes vast ook voorkomt in ons Zonnestelsel. Hier zorgen de fotonen van de Zon voor de spallatie: het foton zorgt dat er een proton of een neutron uit de kern van het kosmische deeltje wordt geknikkerd. Daarna buigt het magneetveld van de zon de twee fragmenten ieder op een andere manier af, omdat ze een andere lading en andere massa hebben. Dit mechanisme is uiteraard naar zijn ontdekkers vernoemd: het Gerasimova-Zatsepin effect (GZ-effect), zoals te zien in afbeelding A.2. Er is tot nu toe nog geen experimenteel bewijs gevonden voor dit effect, maar we zouden er iets van moeten kunnen zien op Aarde.

Als beide fragmenten door onze atmosfeer heen gaan, veroorzaken ze namelijk elk een deeltjeslawine. Wetenschappers hebben met computers gesimuleerd hoe dat eruit zou zien en hebben berekend dat de afstand tussen die twee lawines in de orde van 100 kilometer zou moeten zijn.

De detectoren van Hisparc zijn geclusterd in steden, die een onderlinge afstand van een paar kilometers tot een paar honderd kilometers hebben. Dit netwerk is dus perfect om het GZ-effect te meten! Elk detectorstation slaat

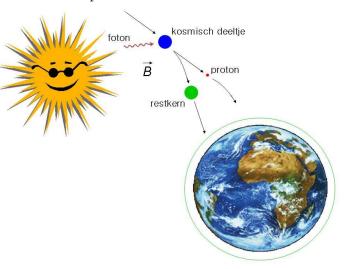


Figure A.2: Het Gerasimova-Zatsepin effect

de tijd van inslag van een deeltje op. Als we dus tegelijkertijd in twee steden een deeltjeslawine meten, zou dat een bewijs kunnen zijn voor het GZ-effect, zeker als in elke stad meerdere detectorstations tegelijk geraakt worden.

A.1.4 De detectoren

In elke stad die meedoet aan het Hisparc project staan een aantal stations, op een paar kilometer van elkaar af. De meeste stations staan op het dak van een school of een universiteit. Elk station bestaat uit twee detectoren die een paar meter uit elkaar staan. De theorie die je nodig hebt om de werking van de detectoren te begrijpen kan je vinden op Routenet. Belangrijk is dat er alleen een tijdstempel wordt geregistreerd als beide detectoren van een station tegelijkertijd een deeltje meten. We zijn immers alleen geinteresseerd in de deeltjeslawines.

A.2 Resultaten

De resultaten die we hebben verkregen staan in figuur A.3. Hier zie je het aantal coincidenties per dag per stationspaar voor alle combinaties van steden, uitgezet tegen de afstand tussen de twee detectoren van die combinatie. De punten geven de gemiddelde waarde aan, de strepen erboven en eronder zijn de boven- en onderlimiet volgens de methode van Feldman en Cousins. Het zekerheidsniveau is hier op 95% gezet, wat betekent dat het werkelijke aantal coincidenties per dag met 95% zekerheid tussen de onder- en bovemlimiet ligt.

In de grafiek in figuur A.3 kan je al goed zien dat voor kleine afstanden het aantal coincidenties af neemt als functie van de afstand tussen de detectoren. Dat is een mooi resultaat, want dit kunnen we verklaren: dit zijn de enkele deeltjeslawines. Een lawine heeft een afmeting van ongeveer een kilometer. Kosmische deeltjes met een hogere energie veroorzaken een bredere lawine en komen minder vaak voor. Het is daarom logisch dat het aantal coincidenties afneemt voor de lage afstanden.

Daarnaast zien we dat er iets gebeurt van 40 tot ongeveer 700 kilometer. Omdat het niet meteen duidelijk is door al die datapunten, hebben we al deze data geclusterd in groepjes. We hebben de afstand van 0 tot 1 km, van 1 tot 10 km, van 10 tot 100 km en van 100 tot 1000 km ieder in vijf groepen verdeeld en alle datapunten in die afstandsgroep samengenomen. Zo krijgen we 20 groepen, zoals je ziet in figuur A.4.

Hier zien we heel duidelijk een resultaat! Tussen 40 en 700 km zien we een duidelijke verhoging in het aantal coincidenties per dag. Dit zou heel goed door het GZ-effect kunnen komen.

We kunnen nu concluderen dat het mogelijk is om het Gerasimova-Zatsepin effect zichtbaar te maken met behulp van het Hisparc detector netwerk. De grafiek laat voor kleine afstanden een afname in coincidenties per dag als functie van afstand tussen detectoren zien, wat betekent dat we enkele deeltjeslawines meten. Daarnaast zien we voor grotere afstanden een duidelijke verhogen in het aantal coincidenties, wat zou kunnen zijn veroorzaakt door het Gerasimova-Zatsepin effect.

Het zou natuurlijk mooi zijn als we dit signaal nog duidelijker in beeld kunnen brengen. Als we dit effect goed begrijpen en als het overeenkomt met de simulaties die eerder door wetenschappers gedaan zijn, dan kloppen onze modellen over kosmische straling blijkbaar goed. Daarnaast begrijpen we dan iets beter hoe die twee belangrijkste mechanismen, spallatie en deflectie, werken, zodat we ook in de rest van het Universum meer kunnen zeggen over die twee mechanismen. Tot slot is dit bewijs belangrijk omdat het aantoont dat de kosmische straling ook zwaardere samengestelde kernen bevat en niet alleen protonen, elektronen, positronen, neutrino's en fotonen.

Kortom: we zijn iets heel interessants op het spoor!

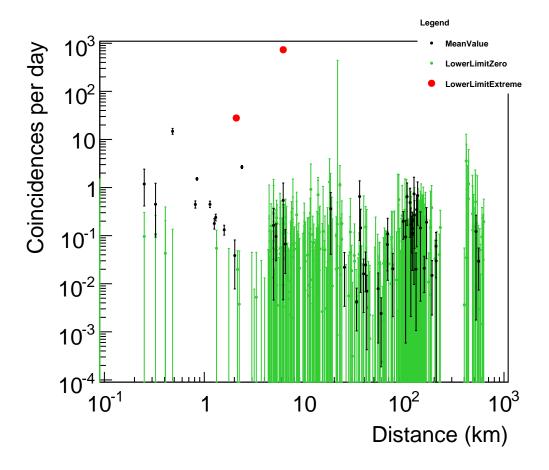


Figure A.3: Alle data bij elkaar: het aantal coincidenties per dag per stationspaar voor alle combinaties van steden, uitgezet tegen de afstand tussen de twee detectoren van die combinatie. De rode punten vertrouwen we niet omdat ze zo'n extreme piek hebben, zoals in figuur A.6. De groene punten hebben een onderlimiet die nul is, de zwarte punten hebben een onderlimiet die groter is dan nul.

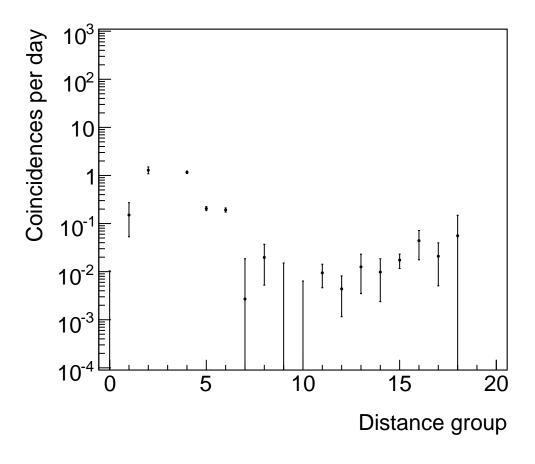


Figure A.4: De geclusterde grafiek. De x-as is verdeeld in 20 groepen volgens de logaritmische schaal. De data is bij elkaar opgeteld en de boven- en ondergrens zijn opnieuw bepaald.

A.3 Analyse

In dit hoofdstuk wordt het algemene concept uitgelegd waarop de analyse gebaseerd is, met daarbij de programma's die je daarvoor nodig hebt. De programma's zijn voorzien van Nederlands commentaar tussen de regels, dus je kan alles nazoeken in de code. Dit stuk is best pittig en niet bedoeld om in je eentje door te spitten; je hebt hier echt de hulp van Charles of David bij nodig. Gebruik het dus, met hulp, als handleiding terwijl je achter de computer zit of als naslagwerk om nog wat in op te zoeken nadat je de analyse hebt uitgevoerd.

A.3.1 Programma's bewerken en uitvoeren

Allereerst is het handig om te weten hoe je een programma opent, bewerkt en uitvoert. Daarvoor kom je naar de Radboud Universiteit Nijmegen of naar het Nikhef instituut en ga je achter een computer zitten die Charles of David je aanwijst. Op de universiteit werken we met andere soort computers dan op school, want we doen alles via commando's die we in een schermpje intypen. Dat schermpje noemen we een terminal. Als je een terminal opent (Charles en David laten je zien waar die staat), dan log je jezelf eerst in op de server waar de data op staat, die 'utrecht' heet. Om in te loggen typ je ssh -X nahsa@utrecht en daarna het wachtwoord, dat je van Charles of David krijgt. Als je klaar bent met de data, dan kan je de gevonden coincidenties gaan verwerken op een ander systeem, dat 'zalk' heet. Om daarop in te loggen typ je ssh -X nahsa@zalk en daarna hetzelfde wachtwoord als op utrecht.

Als je bent ingelogd op utrecht of zalk vind je daar de map $leerling^4$, die speciaal voor jullie is bedoeld. Hier staan alle programma's in die je nodig hebt. Op de commando lijst kan je de veelgebruikte commando's vinden die je nodig hebt om vooruit te komen in de terminal. Daar zie je bijvoorbeeld dat als je naar de map leerling wilt, dan typ je cd leerling. Als je dan wilt zien wat daar in staat, typ je ls. Dan zie je een overzicht van alle bestanden in de map. Om bijvoorbeeld het programma makecoinc.cc te openen, typ je ls legal makecoinc.cc legal m

Na het bekijken en eventueel aanpassen van de code sla je hem weer op, maar dan kan je de code nog niet meteen uitvoeren. We moeten er eerst een uitvoerbaar bestand van maken door het te compileren. Dat kan op twee manieren: met een Makefile en via het commando g++.

• *g++*

Deze methode gebruik je voor de programma's **makecoinc.cc**, **amstmakecoinc.cc**, **convertnijmven.cc**, **stukjeshakker.cc** en **tijdsvolgorde.cc**. Om bijvoorbeeld **stukjeshakker.cc** te compileren, typ je g++ stukjeshakker.cc -o stukjeshakker in je terminal. Tijdens het compileren controleert de computer of je code wel klopt en of hij al je functies begrijpt. Als dat niet zo is, dan geeft hij aan waar de fout zit zodat je die kan verbeteren. Als alles klopt dan geeft hij geen fouten en produceert hij het

⁴Voor David en Charles: het volledige pad is op beide systemen /home/nahsa/leerling.

programma **stukjeshakker**, dus zonder **.cc**. Nu kan je het programma uitvoeren door *./stukjeshakker* te typen. Deze manier van compileren wordt gebruikt voor alle bestanden die op utrecht staan.

• Makefile

De Makefile staat ook in de map leerling en wordt gebruikt voor ingewikkeldere programma's. Tijdens het compileren met een Makefile worden er bibliotheken met software-pakketten gebruikt die nodig zijn voor het programma. Om bijvoorbeeld histogram.cc te compileren typ je make histogram. Als dat lukt, wordt een programma met de naam histogram geproduceerd. Dit kan je dan weer uitvoeren door ./histogram te typen. Deze methode wordt gebruikt voor de programma's limits.cc, histogram.cc en drawgraph.cc. Alle programma's die met een makefile werken staan op zalk.

Het compileren is dus verschillend, maar uitvoeren gaat altijd door een punt, een slash en dan de naam van het programma te typen. In de map *leerling* zijn alle programma's al gecompileerd, dus je kan ze ook gewoon uitvoeren zonder ze eerst te compileren. Compileren hoeft alleen als je iets veranderd hebt in het programma.

A.3.2 Dataopslag

Allereerst moet alle data in heel Nederland op dezelfde manier opgeslagen staan, anders kunnen we straks geen tijdstempels met elkaar vergelijken. Daarom staan er twee programma's klaar op utrecht:

- De data uit Nijmegen (2001 t/m 2009) en Venray (2101 t/m 2103) staat zo genoteerd: 200603020453561234567, wat betekent dat er op 2 maart 2006 (de eerste 8 cijfers) om 4 uur, na 53 minuten, 56 seconden en 1234567 subseconden (=100 nanoseconden) een event is geregistreerd. Deze tijd is in de GMT tijdzone, dus zoals in Greenwich zonder zomertijd. In de rest van Nederland staat dit tijdstempel zo genoteerd: 1141275236 123456700. Het eerste getal geeft het aantal seconden dat is verstreken sinds 1 januari 1970 en het tweede getal is het aantal nanoseconden dat bij het tijdstempel hoort. Je kunt dit zelf narekenen met de Epoch converter. Een tweede verschil is dat in Nijmegen en Venray ook de voltages van het signaal worden opgeslagen, terwijl we die voor dit onderzoek niet nodig hebben. Het programma convertnijmven.cc zet de tijdstempels om en gooit de voltages weg.
- Het programma dat straks de coincidenties zal gaan zoeken, heeft als input per station per dag losse bestanden nodig. De data in de rest van Nederland staat allemaal bij elkaar in een bestand per dag, waar de events van alle stations achter elkaar staan. Om deze bestanden in stukjes te hakken gebruik je **stukjeshakker.cc**.
- In Nijmegen en Venray staan alle tijdstempels op chronologische volgorde, maar in de rest van Nederland is dat niet zo. Omdat ons coincidentieprogramma erop gebaseerd is dat de tijden op volgorde staan, is er het programma tijdsvolgorde.cc, die alle tijdstempels van alle data van de rest van Nederland in 'e'en keer in volgorde zet.

Na deze veranderingen zou de data er zo uit moeten zien:

1136332802 51665807 1136332803 225520674 1136332805 778942420 1136332821 821623784 1136332828 97856047 1136332835 396169485 1136332840 113847773,

waar het eerste getal het aantal seconden sinds 1 januari 1970 geeft en het tweede getal het aantal nanoseconden dat bij het tijdstempel hoort. Als het op deze manier opgeslagen staat, kunnen de andere programma's ermee werken.

Het zou goed kunnen dat het format van de data verandert in de tussentijd, dan heb je bovenstaande programma's helemaal niet nodig. David en Charles zullen je hiermee helpen.

A.3.3 Coincidenties zoeken

Het programma **comjob.csh** op utrecht zoekt de coincidenties, door voor alle combinaties van steden en voor elke datum van 1 januari 2003 tot 1 januari 2011 het programma **make-coinc.cc** (ook op utrecht) aan te roepen. Elke stad krijgt een nummer, zoals te zien in tabel A.1.

Alle steden worden een voor een gecombineerd. Eerst worden de bestanden met data van elk station geopend. Voor elk station leest het programma de eerste regel in en kiest het het vroegste station uit. Dan zoekt het in de andere tijdstempels of er een ander station is dat binnen 10 milliseconden een deeltjeslawine geregistreerd heeft. Zo nee, dan wordt voor de vroegste de volgende tijdstempel ingelezen en bepalen we opnieuw de vroegste. Zo ja, dan hebben we een coincidentie gevonden. De coincidentie wordt dan weggeschreven naar een bestand en voor alle stations die betrokken zijn in de coincidenties wordt de volgende regel ingelezen. Zo worden alle combinaties van clusters stations gescreend op coincidenties.

Om straks ook iets te kunnen leren over coincidenties over kleine afstanden, zoeken we ook coincidenties tussen de individuele clusters van Amsterdam, Sciencepark, Haarlem en Zaanstad. Dat gaat op precies dezelfde manier als hierboven beschreven, maar nu vergelijken we niet twee clusters maar alle individuele stations apart. Daarom hebben we daarvoor een aangepaste versie van **makecoinc.cc** en **comjob.csh** gemaakt: **amstmakecoinc.cc** en **amstcomjob.csh** (waar 'amst' voor Amsterdam staat). Om alle coincidenties te maken zet je dus **comjob.csh** en **amstcomjob.csh** aan op utrecht, die dan na ongeveer 3 dagen alle coincidenties hebben gevonden. De bestanden met **.csh** achter de naam zijn programma's die je nooit hoeft te compileren. Ze worden alleen ge-

Stad	Nummer
AARHUS	1
ALKMAAR	2
ALMELO	3
ALPHEN	4
AMSTERDAM	5
DEVENTER	6
EINDHOVEN	7
ENSCHEDE	8
GRONINGEN	9
HAAKSBERGEN	10
HAARLEM	11
HENGELO	12
HOORN	13
KENNEMERLAND	14
LEIDEN	15
MIDDELHARNIS	16
NIJMEGEN	17
PANNINGEN	18
SCIENCEPARK	19
SHEFFIELD	20
TILBURG	21
UTRECHT	22
VENRAY	23
WEERT	24
ZAANSTAD	25
ZWIJNDRECHT	26

Table A.1: Tabel met de nummering van de steden.

bruikt om andere programma's in een bepaalde volgorde aan te roepen. Je kan er iets in veranderen en het dan opslaan en daarna kan je het .csh bestand gewoon uitvoeren door ./naamvanbestand.csh te typen.

A.3.4 Signaal en achtergrond

Vanaf nu gaan we over op het systeem zalk. Nu hebben we een map vol met bestanden die voor elke combinatie van clusters of stations de coincidenties weergeven, waarbij 'co-incidentie' betekent dat het tijdsverschil tussen de twee tijdstempels maximaal 10 milliseconden is. Het kan natuurlijk goed zijn dat een deel van deze coincidenties toevallig zijn. Daarom berekenen we per combinatie van stations wat het maximale tijdsverschil is wat je zou verwachten als de coincidentie wordt veroorzaakt door het GZ-effect. Als de deeltjeslawines loodrecht op Aarde komen is het tijdsverschil zo goed als nul, maar als ze onder een hoek aankomen dan zit er meer tijd tussen de twee inslagen op Aarde. Het maximale verschil krijg je als de deeltjeslawines helemaal horizontaal invallen en het

tijdsverschil is dan de horizontale afstand tussen de detectoren gedeeld door de lichtsnelheid. Bijvoorbeeld: Nijmegen en Venray liggen 30 km van elkaar af, dus je verwacht een maximaal tijdsverschil van $\frac{30km}{300.000\frac{km}{s}}=0.1$ ms. We kunnen nu de coincidenties met grotere tijdsverschillen gebruiken om de achtergrond te bepalen, want daarvan verwachten we dat ze niet door het GZ-effect veroorzaakt zijn.

We produceren daarom met behulp van het programma histogram.cc op zalk een histogram met alle tijdsverschillen tussen de twee inslagen van een coincidentie, voor een bepaalde combinatie. Dit programma gebruikt als input de coincidenties die we met comjob.csh gemaakt hebben. Als je het programma uitvoert, vraagt het je te kiezen of je de clusters in alle steden met elkaar wilt vergelijken of de individuele stations rondom Amsterdam onderling. Daarna kan je de gewenste twee stations opgeven. Als je Amsterdam hebt gekozen, kan je het nummer van het station gebruiken. Als je de clusters van heel Nederland kiest, moet je de nummers van de steden ingeven zoals in de tabel hierboven. Dan, als het programma uitgevoerd is, kan je de grafiek openen met behulp van het programma root. Daarvoor typ je in je terminal op zalk root -l en vervolgens .x histootje.c. Als het goed is verschijnt nu het grafiekje in je beeld. Root is een pittig programma, dus als je meer wilt weten over hoe dat precies werkt kan je het het beste aan Charles of David vragen. Nu kan je je grafiek nog aanpassen door boven in de menubalk View en dan Editor te kiezen.

In de grafiek die **histogram.cc** maakt, zie je alle coincidenties voor alle tijdsverschillen van -10 ms tot 10 ms. Een voorbeeld van zo'n grafiek is te vinden in het Engelse verslag, in figuur 4.3. Je ziet hier tussen de rode lijnen het tijdsframe waarbinnen we de coincidenties door het GZ-effect zouden verwachten. Om de achtergrond te bepalen, integreren we nu de hele grafiek, en vermenigvuldigen we die met het juiste tijdsframe gedeeld door het totale tijdsframe. Zo krijgen we het deel van de gemiddelde achtergrond dat tussen de rode lijnen zit. Daarna bepalen we het signaal door alle coincidenties die tussen de rode lijnen zitten op te tellen. Deze analysestap gebeurt in het programma **limits.cc** op zalk, dat als input de coincidenties gebruikt die wij al met **comjob.csh** gemaakt hebben. Als je zelf nieuwe coincidenties hebt gemaakt, moet je even de invoergegevens zoals die genoemd staan in de code van **limits.cc** veranderen, zodat hij jouw coincidenties neemt.

In **limits.cc** wordt eerst voor elk station dat meedoet aan de combinatie een dataselectie gedaan. Er gebeuren namelijk regelmatig vreemde dingen in de detectoren, zoals bijvoorbeeld in de grafiek van figuur A.5. Het programma scant alle rauwe detectordata en gaat op zoek naar zulke vreemde pieken. De data van een dag met zo'n piek wordt weggegooid tijdens de analyse.

De output van **limits.cc** geeft voor elke stedencombinatie de volgende informatie: NL/AMST - stad1 - stad2 - afstand - uptime (in dagen) - totale achtergrond - totale signal - onderlimiet - bovenlimiet. Bij NL/AMST staat dus NL of AMST, zodat je weet of die regel een resultaat is van de combinatie van gehele clusters in Nederland of van de individuele stations rondom Amsterdam. De uptime wordt in het programma berekend door de uptimefunction, die uitrekent gedurende hoeveel dagen er in beide steden minstens 1 detector werkend is. De onder- en bovenlimiet worden uitgerekend volgens de methode van Feldman en Cousins. Hun methode gebruikt het gemeten signaal en de gemeten achter-

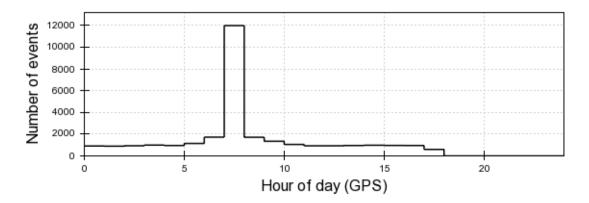


Figure A.5: Voorbeeld van gekke data: dit zijn het aantal geregistreerde deeltjes per uur van een detector in Weert op 4 juni 2010.

grond als input om te berekenen wat de onder- en bovengrens voor het werkelijke aantal coincidenties per dag is. We gebruiken een zekerheidsniveau van 95%, wat betekent dat we met 95% zekerheid kunnen zeggen dat de werkelijke waarde tussen die twee grenzen ligt. De Feldman en Cousins methode is ook helemaal verwerkt in **limits.cc**.

A.3.5 Grafiek

Tot slot willen we natuurlijk een grafiek waarin we kunnen zien wat het aantal coincidenties per dag is voor elke mogelijke afstand tussen de detectoren. Daarvoor gebruiken we drawgraph.cc op zalk, die alle resultaten die door limits.cc gemaakt worden in een grafiek zet. Je kunt drawgraph uitvoeren en dan wordt je gevraagd of je de totale grafiek wilt zoals in figuur A.3, of de geclusterde grafiek van figuur A.4. In de eerste zie je alle datapunten verzameld, in de tweede staan ook alle datapunten maar dan geclusterd in groepjes van afstanden. Ook tussen de coincidenties vinden we soms rare dingen. Bijvoorbeeld: station 501 en station 502 geven een heel scherpe piek rondom 0 nanoseconden, zoals te zien in figuur A.6. Het is nog niet helemaal duidelijk hoe dit komt; op het Nikhef wordt eraan gewerkt. In de analyse willen we zulke vreemde data niet meenemen, dus in het programma drawgraph.cc negeren we alle combinaties die een signaal geven dat meer dan 1000 keer zo groot is. Daarnaast verwachten we geen onderlimieten van groter dan 3 als de afstand tussen de twee detectoren verder dan 2 kilometers uit elkaar staan. Daarom negeren we die ook. Deze laatste selectie vindt slechts twee combinaties, die beiden zo'n extreme piek geven als in figuur A.6.

Als het programma uitgevoerd is, kan je de grafiek weer via root bekijken. Je typt daarvoor root -l in je terminal en vervolgens .x tekentotalegrafiek.c of .x tekenclustergrafiek.c, afhankelijk van of je de totale of geclusterde grafiek gekozen had. Nu verschijnt de grafiek op je scherm, als het goed is. Meer informatie over deze grafieken vind je in de paragraaf over onze resultaten: A.2.

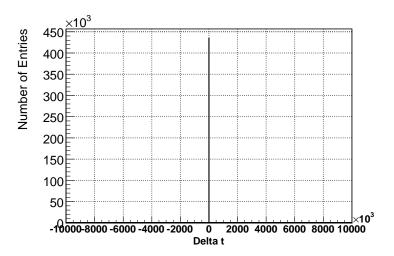


Figure A.6: Extreem veel coincidenties met 0 nanoseconden tijdsverschil tussen station 501 en 502 in Amsterdam Sciencepark

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