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Correlations between Sunspots and Planetary Positions

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The periodicity, nature, and cause of sunspots has attracted scientific attention over the years. Most early theories averred that they were of planetary origin.[1] In particular, possible tidal effects were investigated not only in the past but up to the present day.[2] Voight, for example, showed how the combined influences of Neptune, Uranus, Saturn and Jupiter could give a close resemblance to the sunspot curve from 1749 to 1928, while Bollinger constructed a chart showing a consistent relation between the 11.19 year sunspot cycle and a similar cycle found by the 0°, 45°, 90° configurations of Jupiter-Venus-Earth for the period 1749-1955. But not all theorists assumed that gravitational forces were responsible.[3] In 1951 Nelson[4] showed that planetary configurations and sunspots were highly correlated with radio interference on earth, while Williams[5] established a correlation between electric cable failures, sunspots, and planetary positions. Despite these findings, most current literature on solar activity assumes that the planets do not effect it, and conditions internal to the sun are primarily responsible for the solar cycle.[6]

Following the leads of these early investigators and drawing on precise cycle data compiled by Dewey,[7] I have tested the following hypotheses:

(a) Three planets are required to account for any given sunspot period.

(b) Number of sunspots increases when the three planets are aligned (in conjunction or opposition) and/or in quadrature.

(c) Any three planets are equally admissable to account for a given period. Figure 1 illustrates the five general positions which follow from these hypotheses.

As the three planets revolve around the sun they will successively assume one or another of the five configurations. Any given sunspot period is the time taken for the three planets to travel from configuration to configuration. This condition is expressed by the following equalities:

$$P_s = P_1(n_1 + \theta) = P_2(n_2 + \theta + \frac{n_3}{4}) = P_3(n_4 + \theta + \frac{n_5}{4})$$

where p_s = sunspot period

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