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Manuscript Type: Research article

Title: Lidar observations of pyrocumulonimbus smoke plumes in the UTLS over Tomsk (Western Siberia, Russia) from 2000 to 2017

Point-by-point response to Dr. Fromm

General comments

Comment I: This paper is a broad survey of a single aerosol lidar data set covering 18 years. The instrument's data record has been examined by this team in prior papers, focused solely on the lower stratosphere (LS) and volcanic aerosols. In this work auth nudge their reportable lower data bound down to 11 km, i.e. into the upper troposphere (UT). Their aim is to expand their scope from volcanic plumes to include pyrocumulonimbus smoke plumes.

Auth are to be commended for their rigorous accounting for pyroCb events. They use published works and a pyroCb blog to identify a large number of pyroCb events, from which plumes might have crossed over the Tomsk lidar. Considering that the Tomsk aerosol lidar is positioned in a region otherwise poorly instrumented for aerosol profiling, and has been operated for years before space-based lidar data became available, this is a strategic data set. And considering that auth have methodically undertaken an accounting for UTLS pyroCb smoke, this stands as a first to my knowledge. Hence this paper merits consideration in ACP.

Response I: We deeply thank Dr. Fromm for his interest in our work as well as for valuable comments, questions and suggestions which allowed us to improve our manuscript.

Comment II: Auth make many convincing connections between Tomsk UTLS aerosol layers and specific pyroCb events. However, there are also a few unconvincing cases reported here. Auth also attempt to attribute a weak UT aerosol layer with Bogoslof volcano over a very long trajectory path. I found this to be unconvincing. It may be possible to bolster each one of the less than convincing cases but substantial work is needed to do so. For instance, during the CALIPSO era, the space-based lidar data can be used to corroborate the Tomsk observations and infer particle type (based on depolarization). Auth cite an example of a work (Vaughan et al.) that performed such an analysis. Perhaps auth might follow that example in testing their connections.

My recommendation is for auth to make the substantial changes needed to make all the cases convincing or remove those that are not improvable.

Response II: In general, we agree with Dr. Fromm's standpoint and have made some corrections and changes in the manuscript. The main goal of our paper is to demonstrate the possibility to observe pyroCb plumes from North America in the UTLS over Tomsk using a one-wavelength aerosol ground-based lidar, and we showed several cases of pyroCb plume detection. All results and conclusions we presented are based on the Tomsk lidar measurements, HYSPLIT trajectory analysis, and data on pyroCb events from scientific papers if the events were documented from 2000 to 2012 and at <http://pyrocb.ssec.wisc.edu/> for pyroCbs that occurred after May 2013. Nevertheless, we have analyzed available CALIPSO data (for the 2013 – 2017 period) to corroborate the Tomsk observations and, as a result, we have excluded two cases from consideration. First, the aerosol layer detected on 23 September 2013 with high probability represented a cirrus cloud and, second, we have found no strong evidence that the aerosol layer detected over Tomsk on 16 June 2017 was an aftereffect of the 28 May 2017 Bogoslof volcano eruption. The corresponding parts of the text have been removed from the revised manuscript. The CALIPSO data for the other cases of aerosol layers detected in the UTLS over Tomsk are given in the supplementary materials.

The Dr. Fromm's proposal to use the CALIPSO data to infer particle type via depolarization measurements in the 2004–2012 period is very interesting and valuable, but is the subject of future and extensive research.

We have added the following sentences to the revised manuscript:

“We have also analyzed available CALIPSO data to corroborate the Tomsk observations for the 2013–2017 period. The CALIPSO data are given in the Supplement.”

[Page 5, lines 17–18, revised manuscript]

Comment III: One general concern is the use of both “above ground level” and “above mean sea level” altitude reference frames. I strongly recommend that auth use just ASL. AGL can be confusing in the HYSPLIT plots because altitude variations of a UTLS air parcel often have nothing to do with the ground, yet the AGL plots make it look like big excursions are occurring when in many cases it’s just because of topographic changes. HYSPLIT does allow one to plot the time series in the ASL reference frame, so this valuable improvement would come with little effort.

Response III: We agree and have recalculated all the HYSPLIT air mass backward trajectories “above mean sea level” (AMSL). Thus, all altitudes are now given AMSL, whereas all abbreviations “a.s.l.” and “a.g.l.” have been deleted in the revised manuscript.

Instead of

“All altitudes H of aerosol layers detected with the SLS aerosol channel, tropopause altitudes determined at the nearest meteorological stations, and MPAs H_{MPA} for pyroCbs determined with space based instruments are given above sea level (a.s.l.), whereas altitudes H_{traj}^{back} for the HYSPLIT air mass backward trajectories are calculated above ground level (a.g.l.). Since the SLS is situated at an altitude of 148 m a.s.l., the difference between altitudes H (a.s.l.) and H_{traj}^{back} (a.g.l.) for each initial point of the HYSPLIT backward trajectories (in the UTLS over Tomsk) is simply determined as $H - H_{traj}^{back} = 148$ m. All dates and times in this study are given in UTC.”

We write

“All altitudes in this study are given above mean sea level (AMSL), whereas all dates and times are given in UTC.”

[Page 5, line 6, revised manuscript]

Comment IV: It is a good idea to consider UT aerosol instead of the high LS cutoff used in prior papers. Auth now have chosen a fixed altitude (11 km) that is sometimes in the UT and sometimes in the LS. They need to defend the choice of this fixed altitude.

Response IV: Since there is a problem in determining the tropopause altitude over Tomsk due to the absence of meteorological stations launching radiosondes in Tomsk, we use a fixed altitude of 11 km that: 1) is clearly situated in the UTLS region, 2) does not allow us to miss pyroCb plumes from North America, and 3) excludes the tropospheric aerosol sources with the exception of cirrus clouds. The clouds are excluded from consideration based on the criteria presented in Appendix A. The fixed 11–30 km altitude region allows making a comparative analysis of aerosol loading over Tomsk due to both volcanic eruptions and pyroCb events from 2000 to 2017.

Instead of

“where the lower limit $H_1 = 11$ km falls within either the UT or LS due to the variability of the local tropopause altitude and does not allow missing pyroCb plumes in the UTLS, and the upper limit is the calibration altitude $H_2 = H_0 = 30$ km.”

We write

“where the lower limit $H_1 = 11$ km can fall within the UT, TR* or LS due to the variability of the local tropopause altitude and the upper limit is the calibration altitude $H_2 = H_0 = 30$ km. The use of the fixed 11-km altitude is a compulsory measure because there is a problem in determining the tropopause altitude over the lidar site due to the absence of a meteorological station launching radiosondes in Tomsk. Nevertheless, the 11-km lower limit does not allow missing pyroCb plumes from Northern America and excludes the tropospheric aerosol sources with the exception of cirrus clouds. Moreover, the fixed 11–30 km altitude region allows us (regardless of the real tropopause altitude) to make a comparative analysis of aerosol loading over Tomsk due to both volcanic eruptions and pyroCb events from 2000 to 2017.”

*TR means tropopause region

[Page 4, lines 2–8, revised manuscript]

Comment V: Another general concern is that auth regularly refer to “weak” and “strong” aerosol layers but they do not define the terms. I would suggest that if they want to continue using those qualifiers, to establish a quantifiable distinction up front.

Response V: The adjectives “weak” and “strong” applied for aerosol layers are only comparative ones. To avoid misunderstandings, we have removed them from the text.

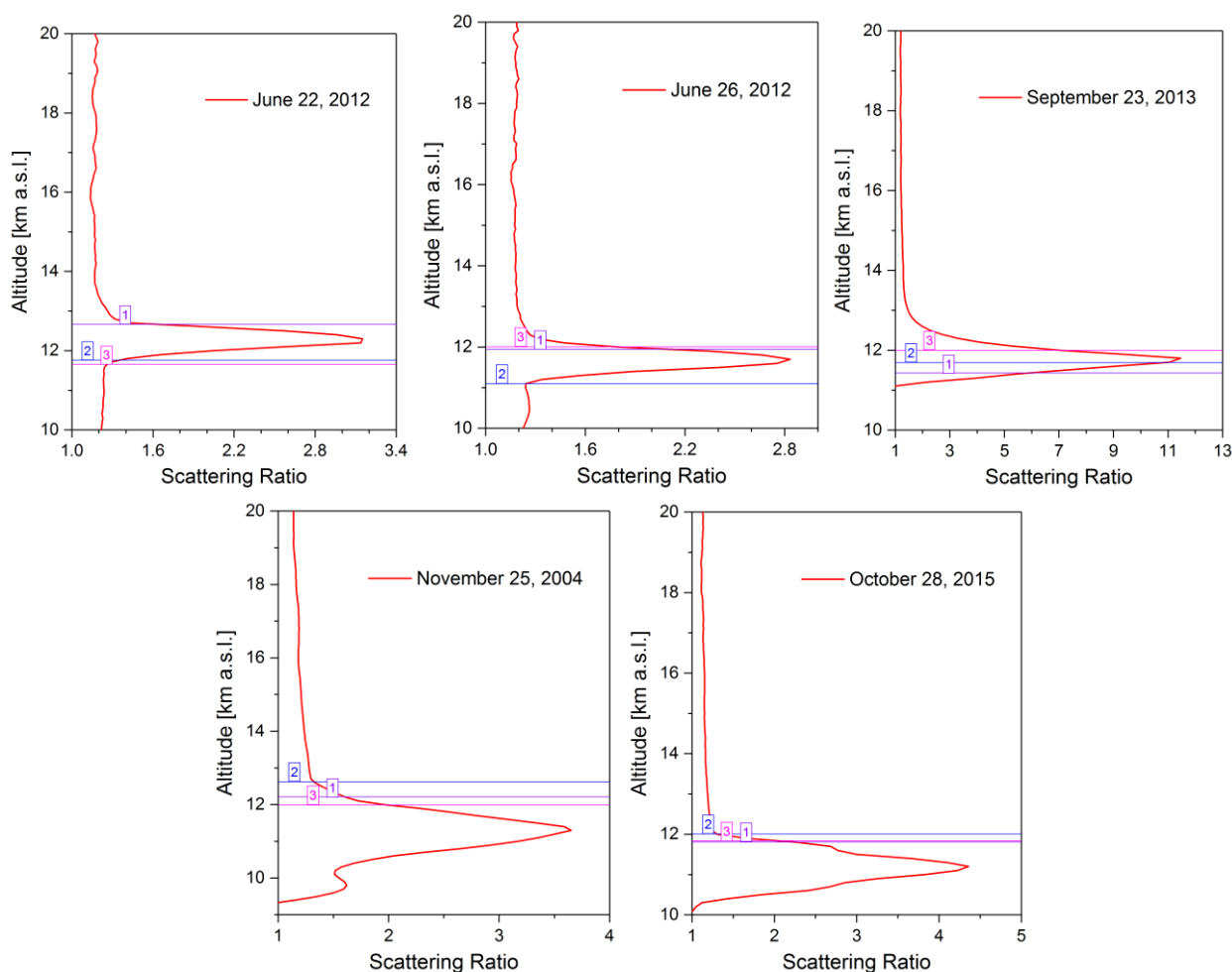
Comment VI: It is surprising that auth do not find any UTLS aerosol layers attributable to pyroCbs in the 9-year period 2004-2012, given their tabulation of strong pyroCb events and the fact that a number of convincing connections were made before and since. In addition to the table provided we know that the frequency of

pyroCbs was roughly the same in this period as in others. In fact the pyroCb community has been able to discern pyroCb smoke and volcanic sulfates in the UTLS at the same time (e.g. in July 2011, CALIPSO showed Grimsvotn, Nabro sulfates and pyroCb smoke from the Las Conchas pyroCb (New Mexico) over Europe). It may be beyond the scope of this paper to revisit this period, but I would ask auth to provide an accounting of the dates of lidar measurements deemed to be cirrus free. Such a table in an appendix or supporting information section would be of great value to researchers assessing the lidar data coverage through the years.

Response VI: As was noted in **Response II**, the aerosol particle type determination in the period of volcanic activity (2004–2011) is not the subject of the current research. Our conclusion that aftereffects of pyroCb events are comparable to those of volcanic eruptions with VEI ~3 is in agreement with the findings obtained by Peterson et al. (2018), which clearly showed that even multiple pyroCb events cannot compete with volcanic eruptions with VEI = 4. Taking into account that 11 out of 12 volcanic eruptions in the 2004–2011 period had VEI = 4, we can conclude that these eruptions were the principal source of aerosol loading in the UTLS over Tomsk from 2004 to 2011 and plumes from individual pyroCb events could not be discerned against the background of the volcanic plumes using our lidar.

The information on cirrus cloud detection will not be of interest to pyroCb community because only three cirrus clouds at altitudes higher than the lower limit of integration $H_1 = 11$ km (see Eq. (2)) were detected in the warm half year (on 22 and 26 June 2012 and 23 September 2013). The other cases were observed in the cold (October–March) half year when no pyroCb events occurred in the boreal zone of North America and North-East Asia. These three “warm” cirrus clouds together with a couple of the cold-half-year cirrus clouds are presented below. The criteria to discern cirrus clouds have been corrected in Appendix A of the revised manuscript.

Peterson, D., Campbell, J., Hyer, E., Fromm, M., Kablick, G., Cossuth, J., and DeLand, M.: Wildfire-driven thunderstorms cause a volcano-like stratospheric injection of smoke, *NPJ Clim. Atmos. Sci.*, 1, 30, <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41612-018-0039-3>, 2018.



The numbers 1, 2, and 3 indicate the tropopause altitudes estimated in Kolpashevo, Emeljanovo, and Novosibirsk, respectively, on the corresponding day.

Specific comments

(marked in the manuscript with comment bubbles containing minor and technical suggestions)

Abstract

Comment 1: page 1, line 20. Do you mean "age" rather than "lifetime?" Presumably these plumes didn't all reach Tomsk at the end of their detectable lifetime.

Response 1: To avoid misunderstandings, we substituted "lifetime of" with "time duration for" here and in Section 5.

Instead of

"We conclude that the lifetimes of pyroCb plumes to be detected in the UTLS..."

We write

"We conclude that the **time durations for** pyroCb plumes to be detected in the UTLS..."

[Page 1, line 20, and Page 17, line 5, revised manuscript]

Comment 2: page 1, line 24. Auth's findings should be summarized here in the abstract.

Response 2: We have added the conclusions drawn from a comparative analysis of the contributions from pyroCb events and volcanic eruptions with $VEI \geq 3$ to aerosol loading of the UTLS over Tomsk to the abstract. The reference to the 28 May 2017 Bogoslof volcanic eruption was removed from the abstract (see also **Response II**).

Instead of

"A comparative analysis of the contributions from pyroCb events and volcanic eruptions with $VEI \geq 3$ to aerosol loading of the UTLS over Tomsk has also been made. ~~Finally, an aerosol plume from the Aleutian volcano Bogoslof erupted with $VEI = 3$ on 28 May 2017 was detected at altitudes between 10.8 and 13.5 km over Tomsk on 16 June 2017.~~"

We write

"A comparative analysis of the contributions from pyroCb events and volcanic eruptions with $VEI \geq 3$ to aerosol loading of the UTLS over Tomsk **showed the following. Plumes from two or more pyroCbs that have occurred in North America in a single year are able to markedly increase the aerosol loading compared to the previous year. The annual average value of the integrated aerosol backscatter coefficient B_{π}^a increased by 14.8% in 2017 compared to that in 2016 due to multiple pyroCbs occurred in British Columbia (Canada) in August 2017. The aftereffects of pyroCb events are comparable to those of volcanic eruptions with $VEI \leq 3$, but even multiple pyroCbs can hardly compete with volcanic eruptions with $VEI = 4$.**"

[Page 1, lines 22–28, revised manuscript]

1 Introduction

Comment 3: page 3, line 3. Consider combining this paragraph with the previous one. I think it would improve the line of argument.

Response 3: OK. Done.

2 Lidar instruments and methods

Comment 4: page 3, line 16, Eq. (1). Since this is a single wavelength lidar, this formula can be simplified. Consider using a "532" subscript and eliminating the lambda dimension.

Response 4: We agree with this suggestion and now use $R_{532}(H)$, $\beta_{\pi,532}^m(H)$, $\beta_{\pi,532}^a(H)$, and $B_{\pi,532}^a$ instead of $R(H, \lambda)$, $\beta_{\pi}^m(H, \lambda)$, $\beta_{\pi}^a(H, \lambda)$, and $B_{\pi}^a(\lambda)$, respectively, in Section 2. The shorter notation $R(H)$ is used in the other sections.

Comment 5: page 3, line 16, Eq. (1). Technical point. "z" is the more commonly accepted symbol for height.

Response 5: We would like to use "H" for altitude, because we used the same symbol in our previous paper (Zuev et al., 2017).

Zuev, V. V., Burlakov, V. D., Nevzorov, A. V., Pravdin, V. L., Savelieva, E. S., and Gerasimov, V. V.: 30-year lidar observations of the stratospheric aerosol layer state over Tomsk (Western Siberia, Russia), *Atmos. Chem. Phys.*, 17, 3067-3081, <https://doi.org/10.5194/acp-17-3067-2017>, 2017.

Comment 6: page 3, line 27. Presumably auth are trying to articulate how they treat the UT part of the integrating column. This needs to be clarified.

Response 6: We determine the UT part via analyzing the tropopause altitudes estimated from radiosonde data of three neighbor meteorological stations. We have revised the atmospheric regions where cirrus clouds can be and slightly changed Appendix A.

Instead of

“When analyzing the perturbed scattering ratio $R(H, \lambda)$ profiles, cirrus clouds are excluded from consideration based on the following two criteria. First, a detected aerosol layer is definitely located in the UT and, second, the layer has a thickness of < 1 km and the value of $R(H) > 2.45$ for $\lambda = 532$ nm (see Appendix A).”

We write

“When analyzing perturbed scattering ratio $R_{532}(H)$ profiles, cirrus clouds are excluded from consideration based on the criteria presented in Appendix A.”

[Page 4, lines 16–17, revised manuscript]

In Appendix A:

Instead of

“Aerosol layers detected in the UT with ground-based lidars are identified as cirrus clouds if the scattering ratio $R(H) > 10$ for a laser wavelength $\lambda_1 = 532$ nm (Tao et al., 2008; Samokhvalov et al., 2013). However, according to Sassen et al. (1989), the minimum value of $R(H)$ can be 5.2 in the case of invisible to the naked eye co-called “subvisual” cirrus clouds (for a laser wavelength $\lambda_2 = 694.3$ nm) with a thickness of < 1 km.”

We write

“Aerosol layers detected in the UT/TR with ground-based lidars are identified as cirrus clouds if the scattering ratio $R(H) > 10$ for a laser wavelength $\lambda_1 = 532$ nm (Tao et al., 2008; Samokhvalov et al., 2013). However, according to Sassen et al. (1989), the minimum value of $R(H)$ can be 5.2 in the case of invisible to the naked eye co-called “subvisual” cirrus clouds (for a laser wavelength $\lambda_2 = 694.3$ nm) with a thickness of < 1 km. **Note, however, that the thickness of other cirrus cloud types can often be more than 1 km (Goldfarb et al., 2001).**”

Goldfarb, L., Keckhut P., Chanin, M.-L., and Hauchecorne, A.: Cirrus climatological results from lidar measurements at OHP (44° N, 6° E), *Geophys. Res. Lett.*, 28, 1687–1690, <https://doi.org/10.1029/2000GL012701>, 2001.

[Page 18, lines 8–12, revised manuscript]

Comment 7: page 3, line 28. Delete this if auth adopt the "532" subscript.

Response 7: This comment is no longer relevant due to the changes made in a revised manuscript (see also the changes after **Response 6**).

Comment 8: page 4, line 1. Consider simplifying to "tropopause-relative location."

Response 8: This comment is no longer relevant due to the changes made in a revised manuscript (see also the changes after **Response IV**).

Instead of

“In some cases, however, there is a problem in determining the location of detected aerosol layers (i.e., whether the layers are in the UT or LS) due to the absence of meteorological stations launching radiosondes in Tomsk. For this reason, to estimate the tropopause altitude over the lidar site, we use data for vertical temperature profiles from the three nearest to Tomsk meteorological stations launching radiosondes twice a day (at 00:00 and 12:00 UTC).”

We write

“To estimate the tropopause altitude over the lidar site, we use vertical temperature profiles from three neighbor meteorological stations launching radiosondes twice a day (at 00:00 and 12:00 UTC).”

[Page 4, lines 9–10, revised manuscript]

Comment 9: page 4, line 7. What tropopause definition are they using? Please clarify and cite.

Response 9: We have added the following sentences to the revised manuscript:

“The lower boundary of the tropopause is determined by the temperature lapse rate of 2 K/km according to the criterion provided by the World Meteorological Organization (WMO, 1957). All temperature profiles and estimated tropopause altitudes that we used in our study are also given in the Supplement.”

WMO: World Meteorological Organization: Definition of the tropopause, Bulletin of the World Meteorological Organization, 6, 136–137, 1957.

[Page 4, lines 14–16, revised manuscript]

Comment 10: page 4, line 9. Move "nearest to Tomsk" to after "stations". Give distances.

Response 10: We have corrected Figure 1 and its caption.

Instead of

“Three nearest to Tomsk meteorological stations launching radiosondes twice a day.”

We write

“Three neighbor meteorological stations (with the distances between them and Tomsk) launching radiosondes twice a day.”

[Page 4, line 19, revised manuscript]

Comment 11: page 4, line 20. What is the difference between MPA (maximum plume altitude) and HMPA (presumably "height of maximum plume altitude")?

Response 11: Yes, you are right. MPA is an abbreviation of the maximum plume altitude, whereas H_{MPA} is a designation of the maximum plume altitude (along with H_0 , H_1 , H_2 , $H_{traj.}^{back.}$).

3.1 Detection of pyroCb smoke plumes in the UTLS

Comment 12: page 5, line 20. 1) Auth do not present any data on the height of the tropopause near the USA endpoints. 2) Also, one cannot come to conclusions regarding MPA from a single plume observation. Maybe the part of the plume that blew over Tomsk wasn't the highest part of the pyroCb plume.

Response 12: First, the data on the tropopause altitudes near pyroCb events or places of plume detection in the USA and Canada are now given both in the text and Supplement (see **Response 9**). Second, we agree with this comment and have corrected our conclusion regarding MPA.

Instead of

“Based upon the end points of the trajectories (with $H_{traj.}^{back.} \leq 10.5$ km a.g.l.) that are below latitude 45° N (Fig. 2b), the MPA H_{MPA} did not exceed the tropopause at the place of the pyroCb origin.”

We write

“According to radiosonde data from two close stations located in Green Bay (44.48° N, 88.13° W; USA) and Davenport (41.61° N, 90.58° W; USA), the tropopause was at 15.0–15.9 km on that day. Based upon the end points of the trajectories (with $H_{traj.}^{back.} \leq 10.2$ km) and tropopause altitude, the Jasper Fire smoke came to the Tomsk TR from the UT over the place of the pyroCb plume observation in Iowa.”

[Page 5, lines 27–30, revised manuscript]

Comment 13: page 5, line 24. Why are the quotation marks needed? Consider removing them.

Response 13: This comment is no longer relevant due to the changes made in a revised manuscript (see **Response V**).

Comment 14: page 5, line 27. Delete "example."

Response 14: OK. Done.

Comment 15: page 7, line 7. "example" is not necessary. Consider deleting.

Response 15: This comment is no longer relevant due to the changes made in a revised manuscript (see the changes after **Response 16**).

Comment 16: page 7, line 8. This is vague. Please provide a more detailed characterization of this single observation of the pyroCb plume.

Response 16: We agree with this comment and have corrected this part of the manuscript.

Instead of

“Based on the behavior of the example trajectories (Fig. 4b) and the tropopause altitudes determined at the three nearest to Tomsk meteorological stations (Fig. 4a), we suppose that the pyroCb plume was spreading in the UT in a given period of time.”

We write

“Radiosonde data from the Churchill station (58.73° N, 94.08° W; Canada) to the west of the plume registration showed the tropopause altitude of ~11.4 km. According to the Inukjuak station (58.45° N, 78.11° W; Canada) to the east of the plume registration, the tropopause was at ~11.9 km on that day. Thus, we can conclude that the Conibear Lake Fire smoke came to the Tomsk UT/TR from the UT/TR over Hudson Bay.”

[Page 8, lines 1–4, revised manuscript]

Comment 17: page 7, line 15. "only" isn't needed here. Please consider deleting it, unless auth think it helps their statement.

Response 17: We agree. Done.

Comment 18: page 7, line 16. Why are quotation (“weak”) marks needed?

Response 18: As was noted in **Response V**, we have removed from the text all comparative adjectives “weak” and “strong”.

Comment 19: page 8, line 10. This is confusing because it suggests that there is a first strong layer but none was mentioned. If auth are going to use the terms "weak" and "strong" they should provide a customized definition of them.

Response 19: See please **Response 18**.

Comment 20: page 8, line 19. There does appear to be a thin cirrus deck over Tomsk according to Aqua MODIS 11µm brightness temperature imagery at 20:15 UTC. Auth's argument could be bolstered if they showed CALIPSO data from that night. There is an orbit pretty close to Tomsk.

Response 20: We agree with this comment. We have analyzed the corresponding CALIPSO data and then have removed the aerosol layer detected on 23 September 2013 in the UTLS over Tomsk from consideration (see also **Response II**).

Comment 21: page 11 line 4. Please cite Peterson et al 2018. <https://www.nature.com/articles/s41612-018-0039-3>.

Response 21: We have added this paper to the list of references.

Comment 22: page 11 line 15. I don't think observations this distant from the source can be used to connect to an individual pyroCb within that cluster of pyroCbs. It is sufficient just to connect these to the 12 August event in general.

Response 22: The HYSPLIT trajectory analysis has attributed all three aerosol layers observed over Tomsk on 26, 29, and 31 August to two pyroCbs detected at (51.8° N, 123.2° W) and (53.1° N, 121.0° W) around 03:30 and 05:30 on 12 August, respectively. However, we do not exclude that the layers could contain aerosol from the other three pyroCbs and note this possibility in the manuscript.

3.2 Detection of the Bogoslof volcanic plume in 2017

Comments 23 and 24 on page 12 are no longer relevant because **Section 3.2 Detection of the Bogoslof volcanic plume in 2017** has been removed from the text (see also **Response II**).

3.3 PyroCb events in 2004–2012

Comment 25: page 14, Table 1. The plume dates attributable to Guan et al. are the dates of the aerosol index measurement, not the pyroCb.

Response 25: We have made some corrections in this section.

Instead of

“Several strong pyroCbs, the plumes of which reached UTLS altitudes with $H_{MPA} \geq 12$ km a.s.l. and could potentially be detected in the UTLS over Tomsk, were documented in the Northern Hemisphere between 2004 and 2011 (Table 1). However, no aerosol layers associated with these pyroCb events were observed at the SLS during the period. This was due to unfavorable weather conditions or pyroCb plumes could have diffused or passed by the SLS and, therefore, might not be detected.”

We write

“Several biomass burning plumes with $H_{MPA} \geq 12$ km, which resulted from pyroCbs and could potentially be detected over Tomsk, were documented in the UTLS of the Northern Hemisphere between 2004 and 2011 (Table 1). However, no aerosol layers associated with these plumes were observed at the SLS during the period. This was due to unfavorable weather conditions (rain, snow, fog, clouds) or pyroCb plumes could have diffused or passed by the SLS and, therefore, might not be detected.”

[Page 12, lines 8–10 and page 13, lines 1–2, revised manuscript]

Instead of

“**Table 1.** List of some documented pyroCbs with $H_{MPA} \geq 12$ km a.s.l. occurred in the Northern Hemisphere, the plumes of which could potentially be detected in the UTLS over Tomsk, in the 2004–2011 period.”

We write

“**Table 1.** List of biomass burning plumes with $H_{MPA} \geq 12$ km that were documented in the Northern Hemisphere and could potentially be detected in the UTLS over Tomsk in the 2004–2011 period. MPA: maximum plume altitude.”

[Page 13, lines 7–8, revised manuscript]

Instead of

“PyroCb plume location”

We write

“Plume location”

[Page 13, Table 1, revised manuscript]

4 Time series of the integrated aerosol backscatter coefficient (2001–2017)

Comment 26: page 14, line 10. What is the rationale for the 10-day averaging? How many data points are typically averaged together? It would be beneficial to have some discussion of the frequency of good aerosol-only profiles should be included. If that information is contained in a prior paper, please mention and cite it.

Response 26: Three to four measurements on average are made within a month. The rationale for the use of the 10-day averaging is presented below.

Instead of

“To estimate the contribution of the pyroCb events discussed above to aerosol loading of the UTLS over Tomsk, we have analyzed the 2001–2017 time series of the aerosol backscatter coefficient B_{π}^a values, obtained from the SLS observations at $\lambda = 532$ nm and integrated over the 11–30 km altitude range. The upper part of Fig. 12 presents the 10-day average B_{π}^a values with the annual average B_{π}^a ones assigned to 1 July of each year. PyroCb events and volcanic eruptions (Tables 2

and 3), the plumes of which were observed in the UTLS over Tomsk between 2000 and 2017, are indicated by red and black vertical bars, respectively, in the lower part of Fig. 12.”

We write

“To estimate the contribution of the pyroCb events discussed above to aerosol loading of the UTLS over Tomsk, we have analyzed the 2001–2017 time series of the annual average $B_{\pi,532}^a$ values (see Sect. 2). The upper part of Fig. 10 presents both the 10-day and annual average $B_{\pi,532}^a$ values obtained from the SLS observations. Due to weather conditions in Tomsk, the observations are often irregular in time and periods without lidar measurements can last up to several months. To obtain a homogeneous time series of $B_{\pi,532}^a$ values for the time intervals when measurement data are available, all the data for every 10-day period are averaged. The average values for the periods from days 1 to 10, 11 to 20, and 21 to 30 (31) of a month are assigned to the 5th, 15th, and 25th days of the month, respectively. The same data processing method was used in (Zuev et al., 1998, 2017). The annual average B_{π}^a values are assigned to 1 July of the corresponding year. PyroCb events and volcanic eruptions (Tables 2 and 3), the plumes of which were observed in the UTLS over Tomsk between 2000 and 2017, are indicated by red and black vertical bars, respectively, in the lower part of Fig. 10.”

[Page 13, lines 10–19, revised manuscript]

Comment 27: page 15, line 3. This sentence is grammatically flawed. It states that 6 pyroCbs "injected smoke" but also "resulted in a negative trend." Perhaps this should be reworded to state that a negative trend was observed in spite of the several pyroCb injections?

Response 27: We agree and have reworded this sentence.

Instead of

“Namely, only two volcanic eruptions that could perturb the UTLS over Tomsk occurred for a given period of time (Table 3). Six pyroCb events injected smoke into the UTLS in 2013 and 2015–2017 (Table 2) resulted, however, in a negative trend in the annual average B_{π}^a values.”

We write

“Only the 2014 Mt. Kelut volcanic eruption could slightly perturb the UTLS over Tomsk in a given period of time (Table 3). Thus, a negative trend in the annual average $B_{\pi,532}^a$ values was observed in spite of five pyroCbs that injected smoke into the UTLS in 2013 and 2015–2017 (Table 2).”

[Page 14, lines 6–9, revised manuscript]

Comment 28: page 15, line 6. It is important to acknowledge, either in this section, or up front, that the single wavelength lidar with no depolarization information content is inadequately constrained for composition assessment. Therefore the conclusions drawn here come with large uncertainty.

Response 28: We have noted this moment in the text.

Instead of

“PyroCbs generated by wildfires from 2004 to 2011 (including documented ones listed in Table 1) also had to perturb the UTLS over Tomsk, but we could not unambiguously discern the pyroCb plumes against the background of more powerful volcanic plumes observed during this period. Therefore, the positive trend in the period 2004 to 2011 should have been mostly caused by volcanic eruptions (the same conclusion was reached by Zuev et al. (2017), when integrating $\beta_{\pi}^a(H, \lambda)$ over the 15–30 km altitude range).”

We write

“PyroCbs generated by wildfires from 2004 to 2011 (including documented ones listed in Table 1) also had to perturb the UTLS over Tomsk. But the use of our single-wavelength lidar with no depolarization information makes it impossible to unambiguously discern the pyroCb plumes against the background of more powerful volcanic plumes for the same period. Nevertheless, a comparison of the annual average $B_{\pi,532}^a$ values in periods (a) and (c) of volcanic quiescence with those in period (b) of volcanic activity shows that the positive trend in the period 2004–2011 should have been mostly caused by volcanic eruptions. The same conclusion was reached by Zuev et al. (2017) when integrating $\beta_{\pi,532}^a(H)$ over the 15–30 km altitude range.”

[Page 14, lines 15–21, revised manuscript]

Comment 29: page 15, line 7. Insert "that".

Response 29: OK. Done.

Comment 30: page 16 line 2. The black sloping lines are not described in this caption.

Response 30: We have added the required description to the figure caption.

The following sentence was added to Fig. 10 capture

“The black sloping lines show the trends in the annual average $B_{\pi,532}^a$ values for the 2001–2004, 2004–2011, and 2011–2017 periods.”

[Page 15, line 6, revised manuscript]

6 Data availability

Comment 31: page 18, line 24. Are the lidar data available?

Response 31: We have added both the 10-day and annual average $B_{\pi,532}^a$ values obtained from the SLS observations to supplementary materials.

Sincerely,
Authors

Manuscript Number: acp-2018-1153

Manuscript Type: Research article

Title: Lidar observations of pyrocumulonimbus smoke plumes in the UTLS over Tomsk (Western Siberia, Russia) from 2000 to 2017

Point-by-point response to Referee 2

General comment

Comment: The contribution is an important documentation of pyrocumulonimbus-related aerosol events occurring in the upper troposphere and lower stratosphere. Long-term lidar observations taken over Tomsk, Siberia, Russia, from 2000-2017 are carefully analysed, presented, and discussed. The result is a well written paper that even may guide other lidar groups to re-analyze their own lidar observations. Nevertheless, only few stations around the world can provide such results as presented here.

I recommend: Minor revisions.

Response: We thank Referee 2 for a positive review and useful comments. Our point-by-point responses to Reviewer #1 comments and changes made are presented below.

Specific comments

Comment 1: Abstract: Remove the first lines... Start with: In this paper... The abstract should be always compact and as short as possible: Goals, methods, key results, not more. All motivating points shall be given in the Introduction (only).

Response 1: Perhaps, you are right, but we follow the manuscript preparation guidelines for authors provided by ACP. Namely: “The abstract should be intelligible to the general reader without reference to the text. After a brief introduction of the topic, the summary recapitulates the key points of the article and mentions possible directions for prospective research...”

https://www.atmospheric-chemistry-and-physics.net/for_authors/manuscript_preparation.html

Comment 2: P2, L13-15: Satellite remote sensing is not able to provide us with the top of the smoke layers, the retrieved tops are at much too low altitudes. That should be clearly mentioned. Only lidars are able to resolve smoke plumes correctly. Satellites often provide the erroneous impression that most of the smoke is in the PBL, which is contradiction with almost all lidar observations around the world (e.g., as monitored by EARLINET teams of Amiridis et al., ACP and JGR, Nicolae et al., JGR, and also Mattis et al., JGR 2008: : :). So, on a global scale, only CALIOP can do a reliable job.

Response 2: We agree and have never declared in our manuscript that satellite remote sensing provides us with the top of the smoke layers. Due to this reason, only 2 maximum pyroCb plume altitudes are known (see Table 2). We estimated the altitudes from which air masses containing pyroCb plumes arrived in Tomsk from North America based on the HYSPLIT backward trajectories. However, we now use available CALIPSO data (version 4.10) to corroborate the Tomsk observations for the 2013–2017 period. The CALIPSO data are given in the Supplement.

Comment 3: P3, L21-25: Any comment? Why not using always the tropopause as H1 in Eq.(2)? The tropopause height is always available from GDAS... And the reader (at least this reviewer) wants to obtain a clear picture of the smoke impact on stratospheric aerosol conditions.

Response 3: The use of the fixed 11-km altitude is a compulsory measure. As we noted in the manuscript, we are not able to precisely determine the tropopause altitude above the lidar site due to the absence of meteorological stations launching radiosondes in Tomsk. So, we use sonde data from the three nearest to Tomsk stations (launching sondes twice a day), which allow us to estimate the tropopause altitude more precisely (and closer in time to aerosol layer observation) than that from GDAS data. Due to an 11-km fixed altitude and,

therefore, a fixed 11–30 km altitude region, we can (regardless of the real tropopause altitude) make a comparative analysis of aerosol loading over Tomsk from both volcanic eruptions and pyroCb events in the 2000–2017 period. In addition, a fixed altitude of 11 km excludes the tropospheric aerosol sources and does not allow us to miss pyroCb plumes from North America.

Instead of

“where the lower limit $H_1 = 11$ km falls within either the UT or LS due to the variability of the local tropopause altitude and does not allow missing pyroCb plumes in the UTLS, and the upper limit is the calibration altitude $H_2 = H_0 = 30$ km.”

We write

“where the lower limit $H_1 = 11$ km can fall within the UT, TR* or LS due to the variability of the local tropopause altitude and the upper limit is the calibration altitude $H_2 = H_0 = 30$ km. The use of the fixed 11-km altitude is a compulsory measure because there is a problem in determining the tropopause altitude over the lidar site due to the absence of a meteorological station launching radiosondes in Tomsk. Nevertheless, the 11-km lower limit does not allow missing pyroCb plumes from Northern America and excludes the tropospheric aerosol sources with the exception of cirrus clouds. Moreover, the fixed 11–30 km altitude region allows us (regardless of the real tropopause altitude) to make a comparative analysis of aerosol loading over Tomsk due to both volcanic eruptions and pyroCb events from 2000 to 2017.”

*TR means tropopause region

[Page 4, lines 2–8, revised manuscript]

Comment 4: P7, P15: No event from 2003 to 2013? Can you say something about the reasons? Was it wet in western Canada, western United states? Or was the long range transport blocked?

Response 4: Several pyroCb events, the plumes from which could potentially be detected in Tomsk in the 2004–2011 period, are listed in Table 1. Section 3 reports the facts of pyroCb plume detection in the UTLS over Tomsk, whereas the reasons of the absence of detected pyroCb aftereffects in Tomsk are discussed in Sections 4 and 5. According to our findings and the conclusions provided, e.g., by Peterson et al. (2018), pyroCb aftereffects are comparable to those from volcanic eruptions with $VEI \leq 3$, whereas 11 out of 12 volcanic eruptions, detected in Tomsk in the 2004–2011 period, had $VEI = 4$. Therefore, the main reason is that we cannot unambiguously discern the pyroCb plumes against the background of more powerful volcanic plumes through the use of only one-wavelength aerosol ground-based lidar. The use of space-based lidar measurement data to infer particle type in the 2004–2011 volcanic period is not the subject of the current research. Nevertheless, we could draw some conclusions about the pyroCb smoke impact on UTLS aerosol conditions due to two periods of volcanic quiescence (2001–2004 and 2012–2017), during which no significant volcanic eruptions (with $VEI \geq 3$) occurred in the Northern Hemisphere (see Sections 4 and 5).

Peterson, D.; Campbell, J.; Hyer, E.; Fromm, M.; Kablick, G.; Cossuth, J.; DeLand, M. Wildfire-driven thunderstorms cause a volcano-like stratospheric injection of smoke. NPJ Clim. Atmos. Sci. 2018, 1. <https://www.nature.com/articles/s41612-018-0039-3>

Comment 5: P15, L6-24: What about bad weather conditions? ... and the probability that you missed several short-term PyroCB events...? Is your lidar automated? Probably not, so the probability is at least not zero that you missed some nice events.

Response 5: You are right. Bad (cloudy) weather conditions led to the absence of lidar data for 290 out of 630 (~46%) ten-day periods from 2000 to 2017. See please “Data for Figure 10.opj” in the Supplement. To open the file, the scientific graphing and data analysis software “Origin” is required (<https://www.originlab.com/>), the trial version of which can be downloaded at: <https://www.originlab.com/demodownload.aspx>. Taking into account the 2004–2011 volcanic period, we can say that many pyroCb events could be definitely missed.

Sincerely,
Authors

Manuscript Number: acp-2016-1153

Manuscript Type: Research article

Title: Lidar observations of pyrocumulonimbus smoke plumes in the UTLS over Tomsk (Western Siberia, Russia) from 2000 to 2017

List of corrections

General comments

1. Figures 6a, 6b, 11a, and 11b were removed from the manuscript; the other figures were substituted by new ones. Captions of all figures were corrected. The figures were renumbered starting with Fig. 7, i.e.:

~~Fig. 6,~~

Fig. 7 → Fig. 6,

Fig. 8 → Fig. 7,

Fig. 9 → Fig. 8,

Fig. 10 → Fig. 9,

~~Fig. 11,~~

Fig. 12 → Fig. 10

2. The parts of the text concerning the aerosol layer observed over Tomsk on **23 September 2013 (page 8)** and **Section 3.2 Detection of the Bogoslof volcanic plume in 2017 (pages 12–13)** were removed from the revised manuscript, i.e.:

~~“The second “strong” layer was observed over Tomsk at altitudes between 11.2 and 12.8 km with the maximum $R(H) = 11.4$ at $H = 11.8$ km a.s.l. on 23 September 2013 (Fig. 6a). A trajectory analysis showed that the layer can be assigned to a pyroCb event observed in British Columbia ($\sim 54^\circ$ N, $\sim 126^\circ$ W; Canada) using the GOES 15 visible, shortwave IR, and longwave IR imageries between 23:30 UTC on 15 September and 02:30 UTC on 16 September (<http://pyrocb.ssec.wisc.edu/archives/272>). Three example HYSPLIT air mass backward trajectories that started from altitudes of ~ 12.15 km a.s.l. over Tomsk at 17:30 UTC on 23 September and then passed close to the place of the pyroCb origin at altitudes $H_{\text{traj}}^{\text{back}} \approx 10.7$ – 11.7 km a.g.l. on 16 September are shown in Fig. 6b. Despite the high value of the scattering ratio $R(H)$, which is representative of cirrus clouds, the tropopause altitudes determined at the nearest to Tomsk meteorological stations show that the aerosol layer maximum was definitely in the LS (Fig. 6a). This allows us to conclude that the layer was a stratospheric one and could not be a cirrus cloud.”~~

~~and Section 3.2 → Section 3.1.~~

3. The notations $R(H, \lambda)$, $\beta_{\pi}^{\text{m}}(H, \lambda)$, $\beta_{\pi}^{\text{a}}(H, \lambda)$, and $B_{\pi}^{\text{a}}(\lambda)$ were substituted by the $R_{532}(H)$, $\beta_{\pi,532}^{\text{m}}(H)$, $\beta_{\pi,532}^{\text{a}}(H)$, and $B_{\pi,532}^{\text{a}}$ ones, respectively, throughout the revised manuscript (including Eqs. (1) and (2)). The shorter notation $R(H)$ is also used in **Section 3.1** and **Appendix A**.

4. All the HYSPLIT air mass backward trajectories were recalculated “above mean sea level” (AMSL). Therefore, all altitudes are now given AMSL, while all abbreviations **a.s.l.** and **a.g.l.** were removed from the revised manuscript.

5. All dates and times are given in **UTC** and the abbreviation **UTC** was removed from the revised manuscript with the exception of figure captions.

6. The adjectives “**weak**” and “**strong**” applied for aerosol layers were removed from the revised manuscript.

Page 1

Instead of

“Using the HYSPLIT trajectory analysis, we have reliably assigned ten aerosol layers to nine out of more than 100 documented pyroCb events, the aftereffects of which could potentially be detected in the UTLS over Tomsk. All of the nine pyroCb events occurred in the USA and Canada: one event per year was in 2000, 2002, 2003, 2015, and 2016, whereas two events per year were in 2013 and 2017. No plumes from pyroCbs originating in the boreal zone of Siberia and the Far East (to the east of Tomsk) were observed in the UTLS over Tomsk between 2000 and 2017. We conclude that the lifetimes of pyroCb plumes to be detected in the UTLS using ground-based lidars are less than about a month, i.e. plumes from pyroCbs generated by wildfires to the east of Tomsk can significantly diffuse before reaching the Tomsk lidar station by the westerly zonal transport of air masses. A comparative analysis of the contributions from pyroCb events and volcanic eruptions with $\text{VEI} \geq 3$ to aerosol loading of the UTLS over Tomsk has also been made. Finally, an aerosol plume from the Aleutian volcano Bogoslof erupted with $\text{VEI} = 3$ on 28 May 2017 was detected at altitudes between 10.8 and 13.5 km over Tomsk on 16 June 2017.”

we wrote

“Using the HYSPLIT trajectory analysis, we have reliably assigned **nine** aerosol layers to **eight** out of more than 100 documented pyroCb events, the aftereffects of which could potentially be detected in the UTLS over Tomsk. **All the eight** pyroCb events occurred in the USA and Canada: one event per year was in 2000, 2002, 2003, **2013**, 2015, and 2016, whereas two events were **in 2017**. No plumes from pyroCbs originating in the boreal zone of Siberia and the Far East (to the east of Tomsk) were observed in the UTLS over Tomsk between 2000 and 2017. We conclude that the **time durations for** pyroCb plumes to be detected in the UTLS using ground-based lidars are less than about a month, i.e. plumes from pyroCbs generated by wildfires to the east of Tomsk can significantly diffuse before reaching the Tomsk lidar station by the westerly zonal transport of air masses. A comparative analysis of the contributions from pyroCb events and volcanic eruptions with $VEI \geq 3$ to aerosol loading of the UTLS over Tomsk **showed the following**. **Plumes from two or more pyroCbs that have occurred in North America in a single year are able to markedly increase the aerosol loading compared to the previous year. The annual average value of the integrated aerosol backscatter coefficient $B_{\pi,532}^a$ increased by 14.8% in 2017 compared to that in 2016 due to multiple pyroCbs occurred in British Columbia (Canada) in August 2017. The aftereffects of pyroCb events are comparable to those of volcanic eruptions with $VEI \leq 3$, but even multiple pyroCbs can hardly compete with volcanic eruptions with $VEI = 4$.”**

[Page 1, lines 15–28, revised manuscript]

Page 3

Instead of

“To consider the effect of only volcanic eruptions on stratospheric aerosol loading and definitely exclude from consideration any aerosol perturbations in the upper troposphere (UT) (such as cirrus clouds) and tropopause region, we analyzed the results of lidar measurements at altitudes higher than 13–15 km. It is clear that this altitude limitation could lead to the loss of information on aerosol events like pyroCb plumes in the UTLS over Tomsk.

The possibility to observe stratospheric smoke plumes in Tomsk from massive forest fires occurred in North America was noted in Zuev et al. (2017). In this paper, we analyze all aerosol perturbations in the 11–30 km altitude region over Tomsk that could be caused by massive wildfires in North America and North-East Asia from 2000 to 2017.”

we wrote

“To consider the effect of only volcanic eruptions on stratospheric aerosol loading and definitely exclude from consideration any aerosol perturbations in the upper troposphere (UT) (such as cirrus clouds) and tropopause region (TR), we analyzed the results of lidar measurements at altitudes higher than 13–15 km. It is clear that this altitude limitation could lead to the loss of information on aerosol events like pyroCb plumes in the UTLS over Tomsk. **The possibility to observe stratospheric smoke plumes in Tomsk from massive forest fires occurred in North America was noted in Zuev et al. (2017). In this paper, we analyze aerosol perturbations in the 11–30 km altitude region over Tomsk that could be caused by massive wildfires in North America and North-East Asia from 2000 to 2017.”**

[Page 3, lines 4–11, revised manuscript]

Instead of

“Here $\beta_{\pi}^m(H, \lambda)$ and $\beta_{\pi}^a(H, \lambda)$ are the altitude- and wavelength-dependent molecular...”

we wrote

“Here $\beta_{\pi,532}^m(H)$ and $\beta_{\pi,532}^a(H)$ are the **altitude-dependent** molecular...”

[Page 3, line 23, revised manuscript]

Page 4

Instead of

“where the lower limit $H_1 = 11$ km falls within either the UT or LS due to the variability of the local tropopause altitude and does not allow missing pyroCb plumes in the UTLS, and the upper limit is the calibration altitude $H_2 = H_0 = 30$ km.

When analyzing the perturbed scattering ratio $R(H, \lambda)$ profiles, cirrus clouds are excluded from consideration based on the following two criteria. First, a detected aerosol layer is definitely located in the UT and, second, the layer has a thickness of < 1 km and the value of $R(H) > 2.45$ for $\lambda = 532$ nm (see Appendix A). In some cases, however, there is a problem in determining the location of detected aerosol layers (i.e., whether the layers are in the UT or LS) due to the absence of meteorological stations launching radiosondes in Tomsk. For this reason, to estimate the tropopause altitude over the lidar site, we use data for vertical temperature profiles from the three nearest to Tomsk meteorological stations launching radiosondes twice a day (at 00:00 and 12:00 UTC).”

we wrote

“where the lower limit $H_1 = 11$ km **can fall within the UT, TR or LS** due to the variability of the local tropopause altitude and the upper limit is the calibration altitude $H_2 = H_0 = 30$ km. **The use of the fixed 11-km altitude is a**

compulsory measure because there is a problem in determining the tropopause altitude over the lidar site due to the absence of a meteorological station launching radiosondes in Tomsk. Nevertheless, the 11-km lower limit does not allow missing pyroCb plumes from Northern America and excludes the tropospheric aerosol sources with the exception of cirrus clouds. Moreover, the fixed 11–30 km altitude region allows us (regardless of the real tropopause altitude) to make a comparative analysis of aerosol loading over Tomsk due to both volcanic eruptions and pyroCb events from 2000 to 2017.

To estimate the tropopause altitude over the lidar site, we use vertical temperature profiles from three neighbor meteorological stations launching radiosondes twice a day (at 00:00 and 12:00 UTC).”

[Page 4, lines 2–10, revised manuscript]

The following sentences were added to the manuscript:

“The lower boundary of the tropopause is determined by the temperature lapse rate of 2 K/km according to the criterion provided by the World Meteorological Organization (WMO, 1957). All temperature profiles and estimated tropopause altitudes that we used in our study are also given in the Supplement. When analyzing perturbed scattering ratio $R_{532}(H)$ profiles, cirrus clouds are excluded from consideration based on the criteria presented in Appendix A.”

[Page 4, lines 14–17, revised manuscript]

Instead of

“Figure 1. Three nearest to Tomsk meteorological stations launching radiosondes twice a day.”

we wrote

“Figure 1. Three neighbor meteorological stations (with the distances between them and Tomsk) launching radiosondes twice a day.”

[Page 4, line 19, revised manuscript]

Page 5

Instead of

“All altitudes H of aerosol layers detected with the SLS aerosol channel, tropopause altitudes determined at the nearest meteorological stations, and MPAs H_{MPA} for pyroCbs determined with space-based instruments are given above sea level (a.s.l.), whereas altitudes H_{traj}^{back} for the HYSPLIT air mass backward trajectories are calculated above ground level (a.g.l.). Since the SLS is situated at an altitude of 148 m a.s.l., the difference between altitudes H (a.s.l.) and H_{traj}^{back} (a.g.l.) for each initial point of the HYSPLIT backward trajectories (in the UTLS over Tomsk) is simply determined as $H - H_{traj}^{back} = 148$ m. All dates and times in this study are given in UTC.”

we wrote

“All altitudes in this study are given above mean sea level (AMSL), whereas all dates and times are given in UTC.”

[Page 5, line 6, revised manuscript]

The following sentences were added to the manuscript:

“We have also analyzed available CALIPSO data to corroborate the Tomsk observations for the 2013–2017 period. The CALIPSO data are given in the Supplement.”

[Page 5, lines 17–18, revised manuscript]

Instead of

“Figure 2b shows, as an example, three air mass backward trajectories started from altitudes of 12.05–12.15 km a.s.l. over Tomsk at 19:30 UTC on 4 September and passed close to the Jasper Fire pyroCb plume location at altitudes H_{traj}^{back} of 9.3–10.5 km a.g.l. on 27 August. Based upon the end points of the trajectories (with $H_{traj}^{back} \leq 10.5$ km a.g.l.) that are below latitude 45° N (Fig. 2b), the MPA H_{MPA} did not exceed the tropopause at the place of the pyroCb origin.”

we wrote

“Figure 2b shows, as an example, three air mass backward trajectories started from altitudes of 12.0–12.15 km over Tomsk at 19:30 on 4 September and passed close to the Jasper Fire pyroCb plume location at altitudes H_{traj}^{back} of 9.3–10.2 km on 27 August. According to radiosonde data from two close stations located in Green Bay (44.48° N, 88.13° W; USA) and Davenport (41.61° N, 90.58° W; USA), the tropopause was at 15.0–15.9 km on that day. Based upon the end points of the trajectories (with $H_{traj}^{back} \leq 10.2$ km) and tropopause altitude, the Jasper Fire smoke came to the Tomsk TR from the UT over the place of the pyroCb plume observation in Iowa.”

[Page 5, lines 24–30, revised manuscript]

Page 6

Instead of

“**Figure 2. (a)** Detection of the Jasper Fire pyroCb plume in the UTLS over Tomsk. The numbers 2 and 3 indicate the tropopause altitudes determined in Emeljanovo and Novosibirsk, respectively. **(b)** Air mass backward ensemble trajectories started from altitude of 12.05–12.15 km a.s.l. (11.9–12.0 km a.g.l.) over Tomsk at 19:30 UTC on 4 September 2000.”

we wrote

“**Figure 2. (a)** Detection of the Jasper Fire pyroCb plume in the UTLS over Tomsk. The numbers 2 and 3 indicate the tropopause altitudes **estimated** in Emeljanovo and Novosibirsk, respectively, **at 19:30 UTC on 4 September 2000**. **(b)** Air mass backward ensemble trajectories started from altitudes of **12.0–12.15 km over Tomsk at the same time**.”

[Page 6, lines 3–5, revised manuscript]

Instead of

“**Figure 3. (a)** Detection of the Mustang Fire pyroCb plume in the LS over Tomsk. The numbers 2 and 3 indicate the same as in Fig. 2a. **(b)** Air mass backward ensemble trajectories started from altitude of ~12.1 km a.s.l. over Tomsk at 17:00 UTC on 15 July 2002.”

we wrote

“**Figure 3. (a)** Detection of the Mustang Fire pyroCb plume in the LS over Tomsk. The numbers 2 and 3 indicate the tropopause altitudes **estimated** in Emeljanovo and Novosibirsk, respectively, **at 17:00 UTC on 15 July 2002**. **(b)** Air mass backward ensemble trajectories started from altitudes of ~12.1 km over Tomsk **at the same time**.”

[Page 6, lines 8–10, revised manuscript]

Page 7

Instead of

“Figure 3b presents the HYSPLIT air mass backward ensemble trajectories started from altitudes of ~12.1 km a.s.l. over Tomsk at 17:00 UTC on 15 July and passed near the place of origin of the Mustang Fire pyroCb at altitudes $H_{\text{traj.}}^{\text{back.}} \approx 12.5\text{--}14.0$ km a.g.l. on 2 July. The example trajectories allow us to assume that air masses containing the pyroCb plume were also spreading in the LS during the period from 2 to 15 July 2002.”

we wrote

Figure 3b presents the HYSPLIT air mass backward ensemble trajectories started from altitudes of ~12.1 km over Tomsk at 17:00 on 15 July and passed near the place of origin of the Mustang Fire pyroCb at altitudes $H_{\text{traj.}}^{\text{back.}} \approx 11.9\text{--}12.4$ km on 1 July. **The analysis of radiosonde data from the meteorological station located in Riverton (43.06° N, 108.48° W; USA) revealed that the tropopause altitude was around 13.0 km on that day and, therefore, we can assume that the pyroCb MPA did not exceed the local tropopause. Air masses containing the Mustang Fire pyroCb plume came to the Tomsk LS from the UT over a place close to the pyroCb origin.**”

[Page 7, lines 4–9, revised manuscript]

Instead of

“**Figure 4. (a)** Detection of the Conibear Lake Fire pyroCb plume in the UT over Tomsk. The numbers 1, 2, and 3 indicate the tropopause altitudes determined in Kolpashevo, Emeljanovo, and Novosibirsk, respectively. **(b)** Air mass backward ensemble trajectories started from altitude of ~11.75 km a.s.l. over Tomsk at 17:00 UTC on 29 August 2003.”

we wrote

“**Figure 4. (a)** Detection of the Conibear Lake Fire pyroCb plume in the UT/TR over Tomsk. The numbers 1, 2, and 3 indicate the tropopause altitudes **estimated** in Kolpashevo, Emeljanovo, and Novosibirsk, respectively, **at 17:00 UTC on 29 August 2003**. **(b)** Air mass backward ensemble trajectories started from altitude of ~11.7 km over Tomsk **at the same time**.”

[Page 7, lines 12–14, revised manuscript]

Instead of

“As seen in Fig. 4b, the HYSPLIT air mass backward trajectories, started from altitudes of ~11.75 km a.s.l. over Tomsk at 17:00 UTC on 29 August, passed over the pyroCb plume location at altitudes $H_{\text{traj.}}^{\text{back.}} \approx 11.7\text{--}12.0$ km a.g.l. on 18 August. Based on the behavior of the example trajectories (Fig. 4b) and the tropopause altitudes determined at the three nearest to Tomsk meteorological stations (Fig. 4a), we suppose that the pyroCb plume was spreading in the UT in a given period of time.”

we wrote

“As seen in Fig. 4b, the HYSPLIT air mass backward trajectories, started from altitudes of ~11.7 km over Tomsk at 17:00 on 29 August, passed over the pyroCb plume location at altitudes $H_{\text{traj.}}^{\text{back.}} \approx 11.7\text{--}11.9$ km on 18 August. **Radiosonde data from the Churchill station (58.73° N, 94.08° W; Canada) to the west of the plume registration showed the tropopause altitude of ~11.4 km. According to the Inukjuak station (58.45° N, 78.11° W; Canada) to the east of the plume registration, the tropopause was at ~11.9 km on that day. Thus, we can conclude that the Conibear Lake Fire smoke came to the Tomsk UT/TR from the UT/TR over Hudson Bay.**”

[Page 7, lines 19–20 and page 8, lines 1–4, revised manuscript]

Page 8

Instead of

“**Figure 5. (a)** Detection of the Eastmain pyroCb plume in the UTLS over Tomsk. The numbers 1, 2, and 3 indicate the same as in Fig. 4a. **(b)** Air mass backward ensemble trajectories started from altitude of 10.6–10.7 km a.s.l. over Tomsk at 17:30 UTC on 14 July 2013.”

we wrote

“**Figure 5. (a)** Detection of the Eastmain pyroCb plume in the **UT/TR** over Tomsk. The numbers 1, 2, and 3 indicate the tropopause altitudes **estimated** in Kolpashevo, Emeljanovo, and Novosibirsk, respectively, **at 17:30 UTC on 14 July 2013. (b)** Air mass backward ensemble trajectories started from altitude of 10.6–10.7 km over Tomsk **at the same time.**”

[Page 8, lines 7–9, revised manuscript]

Instead of

“The next two aerosol layers reliably attributed to pyroCb events were registered at the SLS in Tomsk only 10 years later, in July and September 2013. Namely, the first “weak” layer with the maximum $R(H) = 1.27$ at $H = 11.7$ km a.s.l. was observed in the UTLS over Tomsk on 14 July 2013 (Fig. 5a).”

we wrote

“**The next aerosol layer reliably attributed to a pyroCb event was registered at the SLS in Tomsk 10 years later, in July 2013. Namely, the layer with the maximum $R(H) = 1.27$ at $H = 11.7$ km was observed in the UT/TR over Tomsk on 14 July 2013 (Fig. 5a).**”

[Page 8, lines 10–12, revised manuscript]

Instead of

“Based on the behavior of the trajectories, we suppose that the pyroCb plume was spreading in the troposphere during the period of time under consideration.”

we wrote

“**The analysis of radiosonde data from the station located in Moosonee (51.26° N, 80.65° W; Canada) revealed that the tropopause altitude was varying from 10.9 to 11.8 km during the afternoon of 4 July, whereas the data from the La Grande Iv station (53.75° N, 73.66° W; Canada) showed that the local tropopause was around 11.0 km at 00:00 on 5 July. Based upon the behavior of the HYSPLIT trajectories (Fig. 5b), the pyroCb plume was spreading in the middle and upper troposphere before reaching the UT/TR over Tomsk on 14 July.**”

[Page 8, lines 17–20 and page 9, line 1, revised manuscript]

Page 9

Instead of

“Based on the tropopause altitudes determined at the nearest meteorological stations (Fig. 7a) and the behavior of the example trajectories (Fig. 7b), we can assume that the pyroCb plume was spreading in the LS in a given period of time (11–16 July 2015).”

we wrote

“**According to the station located in Prince George (53.90° N, 122.80° W; Canada), the lower boundary of the tropopause was at ~12.2 km at 00:00 on that day. Therefore, the pyroCb plume having $H_{MPA} = 10.5$ km did not exceed the local tropopause and came to the TR/LS over Tomsk from the UT over the place of the pyroCb origin in British Columbia.**”

[Page 9, lines 11–13, revised manuscript]

Instead of

“**Figure 7. (a)** Detection of a pyroCb plume from British Columbia in the LS over Tomsk. The numbers 1–3 indicate the same as in Fig. 4a. **(b)** Air mass backward ensemble trajectories started from altitude of 10.3–10.5 km a.s.l. over Tomsk at 18:00 UTC on 16 July 2015.”

we wrote

“**Figure 6. (a)** Detection of a pyroCb plume from British Columbia in the **TR/LS** over Tomsk. **The numbers 1, 2, and 3 indicate the tropopause altitudes estimated in Kolpashevo, Emeljanovo, and Novosibirsk, respectively, at 18:00 UTC on 16 July 2015. (b)** Air mass backward ensemble trajectories started from altitude of 10.3–10.5 km over Tomsk **at the same time.**”

[Page 9, lines 18–20, revised manuscript]

Page 10

Instead of

“Figure 8b presents the HYSPLIT backward ensemble trajectories started from altitudes of ~ 11.75 km a.s.l. over Tomsk at 17:30 UTC on 27 May and then passed close to the place of the pyroCb origin at altitudes $H_{\text{traj.}}^{\text{back.}} \approx 10.5\text{--}11.3$ km a.g.l. on 16 May. As seen in Fig. 8a, it is difficult to definitely determine whether the aerosol layer was in the UT or LS over Tomsk. Nevertheless, the fact that the layer was completely higher than 11 km and two out of three tropopause altitudes allows us to conclude that the layer was not a cirrus cloud.”

we wrote

“Figure 7b presents the HYSPLIT backward ensemble trajectories started from altitudes of ~ 11.7 km over Tomsk at 17:30 on 27 May and then passed close to the place of the pyroCb origin at altitudes $H_{\text{traj.}}^{\text{back.}} \approx 10.6\text{--}10.8$ km on 16 May.

Radiosonde data from the Fort Nelson station (58.83° N, 122.60° W; Canada) showed the tropopause altitude of around 11.1 km on that day. Hence, air masses containing the pyroCb plume came to the Tomsk TR/LS from the UT over a place close to the pyroCb origin.”

[Page 10, lines 4–8, revised manuscript]

Instead of

“**Figure 8.** (a) Detection of a pyroCb plume from British Columbia in the UTLS over Tomsk. The numbers 1–3 indicate the same as in Fig. 4a. (b) Air mass backward ensemble trajectories started from altitude of ~ 11.75 km a.s.l. over Tomsk at 17:30 UTC on 27 May 2016.”

we wrote

“**Figure 7.** (a) Detection of a pyroCb plume from British Columbia in the TR/LS over Tomsk. The numbers 1, 2, and 3 indicate the tropopause altitudes estimated in Kolpashevo, Emeljanovo, and Novosibirsk, respectively, at 17:30 UTC on 27 May 2016. (b) Air mass backward ensemble trajectories started from altitude of ~ 11.7 km over Tomsk at the same time.”

[Page 10, lines 12–14, revised manuscript]

Page 11

Instead of

“The initial conditions (times and altitudes over Tomsk) for each trajectory can also be found in Fig. 10. Based upon the end points of the trajectories, the MPAs H_{MPA} for both pyroCbs were definitely in the LS within the range of 13.5–15.0 km a.g.l.”

we wrote

“The initial conditions (times and altitudes over Tomsk) for each HYSPLIT trajectory can be found in Fig. 9. All the HYSPLIT backward trajectories that started over Tomsk on 26, 29, and 31 August passed close to the places of origin of both pyroCbs at altitudes $H_{\text{traj.}}^{\text{back.}}$ of 13.7–13.9 km, 13.5–13.7 km, and 14.4–15.1 km, respectively, on 12 August.

According to the stations located in Prince George (53.90° N, 122.80° W; Canada) and Port Hardy (50.68° N, 127.36° W; Canada), the tropopause altitude was not higher than 12.3 km on that day. Therefore, based upon the behavior of the HYSPLIT trajectories (Fig. 9), smoke plumes from both pyroCbs were spreading in the LS before reaching Tomsk at the end of August. This conclusion is also confirmed by the CALIPSO data (see the Supplement).”

[Page 11, lines 4–11, revised manuscript]

Page 12

Instead of

“Several strong pyroCbs, the plumes of which reached UTLS altitudes with $H_{\text{MPA}} \geq 12$ km a.s.l. and could potentially be detected in the UTLS over Tomsk, were documented in the Northern Hemisphere between 2004 and 2011 (Table 1). However, no aerosol layers associated with these pyroCb events were observed at the SLS during the period. This was due to unfavorable weather conditions or pyroCb plumes could have diffused or passed by the SLS and, therefore, might not be detected.”

we wrote

“Several biomass burning plumes with $H_{\text{MPA}} \geq 12$ km, which resulted from pyroCbs and could potentially be detected over Tomsk, were documented in the UTLS of the Northern Hemisphere between 2004 and 2011 (Table 1). However, no aerosol layers associated with these plumes were observed at the SLS during the period. This was due to unfavorable weather conditions (rain, snow, fog, clouds) in Tomsk or pyroCb plumes could have diffused or passed by the SLS and, therefore, might not be detected.”

[Page 12, lines 8–10 and page 13, lines 1–2, revised manuscript]

Page 13

Instead of

“Table 1. List of some documented pyroCbs with $H_{MPA} \geq 12$ km a.s.l. occurred in the Northern Hemisphere, the plumes of which could potentially be detected in the UTLS over Tomsk, in the 2004–2011 period.”

we wrote

“Table 1. List of biomass burning plumes with $H_{MPA} \geq 12$ km that were documented in the Northern Hemisphere and could potentially be detected in the UTLS over Tomsk in the 2004–2011 period. MPA: maximum plume altitude.”

[Page 13, lines 7–8, revised manuscript]

Instead of

“To estimate the contribution of the pyroCb events discussed above to aerosol loading of the UTLS over Tomsk, we have analyzed the 2001–2017 time series of the aerosol backscatter coefficient B_{π}^a values, obtained from the SLS observations at $\lambda = 532$ nm and integrated over the 11–30 km altitude range. The upper part of Fig. 12 presents the 10-day average B_{π}^a values with the annual average B_{π}^a ones assigned to 1 July of each year.”

we wrote

“To estimate the contribution of the pyroCb events discussed above to aerosol loading of the UTLS over Tomsk, we have analyzed the 2001–2017 time series of the annual average $B_{\pi,532}^a$ values (see Sect. 2). The upper part of Fig. 10 presents both the 10-day and annual average $B_{\pi,532}^a$ values obtained from the SLS observations. Due to weather conditions in Tomsk, the observations are often irregular in time and periods without lidar measurements can last up to several months. To obtain a homogeneous time series of $B_{\pi,532}^a$ values for the time intervals when measurement data are available, all the data for every 10-day period are averaged. The average values for the periods from days 1 to 10, 11 to 20, and 21 to 30 (31) of a month are assigned to the 5th, 15th, and 25th days of the month, respectively. The same data processing method was used in (Zuev et al., 1998, 2017). The annual average $B_{\pi,532}^a$ values are assigned to 1 July of the corresponding year.”

[Page 13, lines 10–17, revised manuscript]

Page 14

Instead of

“Namely, only two volcanic eruptions that could perturb the UTLS over Tomsk occurred for a given period of time (Table 3). Six pyroCb events injected smoke into the UTLS in 2013 and 2015–2017 (Table 2) resulted, however, in a negative trend in the annual average B_{π}^a values.”

we wrote

“Only the 2014 Mt. Kelut volcanic eruption could slightly perturb the UTLS over Tomsk in a given period of time (Table 3). Thus, a negative trend in the annual average $B_{\pi,532}^a$ values was observed in spite of five pyroCbs that injected smoke into the UTLS in 2013 and 2015–2017 (Table 2).”

[Page 14, lines 6–9, revised manuscript]

Instead of

“PyroCbs generated by wildfires from 2004 to 2011 (including documented ones listed in Table 1) also had to perturb the UTLS over Tomsk, but we could not unambiguously discern the pyroCb plumes against the background of more powerful volcanic plumes observed during this period. Therefore, the positive trend in the period 2004 to 2011 should have been mostly caused by volcanic eruptions (the same conclusion was reached by Zuev et al. (2017), when integrating $\beta_{\pi}^a(H, \lambda)$ over the 15–30 km altitude range).”

we wrote

“PyroCbs generated by wildfires from 2004 to 2011 (including documented ones listed in Table 1) also had to perturb the UTLS over Tomsk. But the use of our single-wavelength lidar with no depolarization information makes it impossible to unambiguously discern the pyroCb plumes against the background of more powerful volcanic plumes for the same period. Nevertheless, a comparison of the annual average $B_{\pi,532}^a$ values in periods (a) and (c) of volcanic quiescence with those in period (b) of volcanic activity shows that the positive trend in the period 2004–2011 should have been mostly caused by volcanic eruptions. The same conclusion was reached by Zuev et al. (2017) when integrating $\beta_{\pi,532}^a(H)$ over the 15–30 km altitude range.”

[Page 14, lines 15–21, revised manuscript]

Instead of

“For example, the annual average B_{π}^a reached a value of $5.34 \times 10^{-4} \text{ sr}^{-1}$ due to pyroCbs 4 and 5 (Table 2) occurred in 2013 (by comparison, $B_{\pi}^a = 4.20 \times 10^{-4} \text{ sr}^{-1}$ in 2012) and $B_{\pi}^a = 4.34 \times 10^{-4} \text{ sr}^{-1}$ due to pyroCbs 8 and 9 together with the Bogoslof eruption occurred in 2017 ($B_{\pi}^a = 3.78 \times 10^{-4} \text{ sr}^{-1}$ in 2016).”

we wrote

“For example, the annual average $B_{\pi,532}^a$ reached a value of $4.34 \times 10^{-4} \text{ sr}^{-1}$ due to pyroCbs 7 and 8 (Table 2) occurred in 2017 (by comparison, $B_{\pi,532}^a = 3.78 \times 10^{-4} \text{ sr}^{-1}$ in 2016).”

[Page 14, lines 25–27, revised manuscript]

Page 15

The following sentence was added to Figure 10 caption:

“The black sloping lines show the trends in the annual average $B_{\pi,532}^a$ values for the 2001–2004, 2004–2011, and 2011–2017 periods.”

[Page 15, line 6, revised manuscript]

Page 16

Instead of

“Using the HYSPLIT trajectory analysis, we have reliably assigned ten such layers to nine out of more than 100 documented pyroCb events, the aftereffects of which could potentially be detected at the SLS. All of the nine pyroCb events occurred in North America: one event per year was in 2000, 2002, 2003, 2015, and 2016, whereas two events per year were in 2013 and 2017. Such a small number of observed pyroCbs could be due to unfavorable weather conditions or pyroCb plumes could have passed by the SLS.”

we wrote

“Using the HYSPLIT trajectory analysis, we have reliably assigned **nine** such layers to **eight** out of more than 100 documented pyroCb events, the aftereffects of which could potentially be detected at the SLS. All the **eight** pyroCb events occurred in North America: one event per year was in 2000, 2002, 2003, **2013**, 2015, and 2016, **whereas two events were in 2017**. Such a small number of observed pyroCbs could be due to unfavorable weather conditions **in Tomsk** or pyroCb plumes could have passed by the SLS.”

[Page 16, lines 14–18, revised manuscript]

Page 17

Instead of

“The 10-day average B_{π}^a value after the events can be even higher than that after volcanic eruptions. For example, the 10-day average B_{π}^a for the 20–30 September period reached the maximum value of $3.20 \times 10^{-3} \text{ sr}^{-1}$ after pyroCb event 5 (Table 2) of 16 September 2013 (Fig. 12). Moreover, smoke plumes reached the UTLS over Tomsk from two or more pyroCbs in a single year can lead to a marked increase in aerosol loading compared to that in the previous year. For example, the annual average B_{π}^a value increased by 27.1% in 2013 and 14.8% in 2017 (together with the 2017 Bogoslof eruption). Nevertheless, the contribution from pyroCbs (generated by wildfires in North America and injecting smoke into the UTLS) to the annual average B_{π}^a value integrated over the 11–30 km altitude range is noticeably lower (for Tomsk region) than the contribution from both tropical and northern volcanic eruptions with $\text{VEI} \geq 3$ (due to, among other things, secondary sulfuric acid aerosol).”

we wrote

“**During periods of volcanic quiescence**, smoke plumes **that** reached the UTLS over Tomsk from two or more pyroCbs in a single year can lead to a marked increase in aerosol loading compared to that in the previous year. For example, the annual average $B_{\pi,532}^a$ value increased by 14.8% **in 2017 compared to that in 2016 due to multiple pyroCbs that occurred in British Columbia (Canada) in August 2017**. The contribution from a single pyroCb or multiple ones (originating in North America and injecting smoke into the UTLS) to the annual average $B_{\pi,532}^a$ value for Tomsk region is comparable to the contribution from both tropical and northern volcanic eruptions with $\text{VEI} \leq 3$, but can hardly compete with that from volcanic eruptions with $\text{VEI} = 4$. The last conclusion is in agreement with the findings reported by Peterson et al. (2018).”

[Page 17, lines 13–20, revised manuscript]

Instead of

“The radiosonde data for the Kolpashevo, Emeljanovo, and Novosibirsk meteorological stations are on the web page <http://weather.uwyo.edu/>.”

we wrote

“The integrated aerosol backscatter coefficient and scattering ratio data retrieved from the SLS observations are presented in the Supplement. To open .opj files, the scientific graphing and data analysis software “Origin” is required (<https://www.originlab.com/>), the trial version of which can be downloaded at: <https://www.originlab.com/demodownload.aspx>. The CALIPSO data used to corroborate the Tomsk observations in the 2013–2017 period and radiosonde data from meteorological stations located in Kolpashevo, Emeljanovo, Novosibirsk, and Northern America are also given in the Supplement.”

[Page 17, lines 24–29, revised manuscript]

Page 18

Instead of

“Aerosol layers detected in the UT with ground-based lidars are identified as cirrus clouds if the scattering ratio $R(H) > 10$ for a laser wavelength $\lambda_1 = 532$ nm (Tao et al., 2008; Samokhvalov et al., 2013). However, according to Sassen et al. (1989), the minimum value of $R(H)$ can be 5.2 in the case of invisible to the naked eye co-called “subvisual” cirrus clouds (for a laser wavelength $\lambda_2 = 694.3$ nm) with a thickness of < 1 km.”

we wrote

“Aerosol layers detected in the UT/TR with ground-based lidars are identified as cirrus clouds if the scattering ratio $R(H) > 10$ for a laser wavelength $\lambda_1 = 532$ nm (Tao et al., 2008; Samokhvalov et al., 2013). However, according to Sassen et al. (1989), the minimum value of $R(H)$ can be 5.2 in the case of invisible to the naked eye co-called “subvisual” cirrus clouds (for a laser wavelength $\lambda_2 = 694.3$ nm) with a thickness of < 1 km. **Note, however, that the thickness of other cirrus cloud types can often be more than 1 km (Goldfarb et al., 2001).**”

[Page 18, lines 8–12, revised manuscript]

Pages 18–24 (References)

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Goldfarb, L., Keckhut P., Chanin, M.-L., and Hauchecorne, A.: Cirrus climatological results from lidar measurements at OHP (44° N, 6° E), *Geophys. Res. Lett.*, 28, 1687–1690, <https://doi.org/10.1029/2000GL012701>, 2001.

Peterson, D., Campbell, J., Hyer, E., Fromm, M., Kablick, G., Cossuth, J., and DeLand, M.: Wildfire-driven thunderstorms cause a volcano-like stratospheric injection of smoke, *NPJ Clim. Atmos. Sci.*, 1, 30, <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41612-018-0039-3>, 2018.

WMO: World Meteorological Organization: Definition of the tropopause, *Bulletin of the World Meteorological Organization*, 6, 136–137, 1957.

Wotton B.M., Flannigan M.D., and Marshall G.A.: Potential climate change impacts on fire intensity and key wildfire suppression thresholds in Canada, *Environ. Res. Lett.*, 12, 095003, <https://doi.org/10.1088/1748-9326/aa7e6e>, 2017.

The reference

Hu, Q., Goloub, P., Veselovskii, I., Bravo-Aranda, J.-A., Popovici, I., Podvin, T., Haeffelin, M., Lopatin, A., Pietras, C., Huang, X., Torres, B., and Chen, C.: A study of long-range transported smoke aerosols in the Upper Troposphere/Lower Stratosphere, *Atmos. Chem. Phys. Discuss.*, <https://doi.org/10.5194/acp-2018-655>, in review, 2018.

was substituted by

Hu, Q., Goloub, P., Veselovskii, I., Bravo-Aranda, J.-A., Popovici, I. E., Podvin, T., Haeffelin, M., Lopatin, A., Dubovik, O., Pietras, C., Huang, X., Torres, B., and Chen, C.: Long-range-transported Canadian smoke plumes in the lower stratosphere over northern France, *Atmos. Chem. Phys.*, 19, 1173–1193, <https://doi.org/10.5194/acp-19-1173-2019>, 2019.

Sincerely,

Authors

Lidar observations of pyrocumulonimbus smoke plumes in the UTLS over Tomsk (Western Siberia, Russia) from 2000 to 2017

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Abstract. Large volcanic eruptions with the volcanic explosivity index (VEI) ≥ 3 are widely known to be the strongest source of long-lived aerosol in the upper troposphere and lower stratosphere (UTLS). However, the latest studies have revealed that massive forest (bush) fires represent another strong source of short-term (but intense) aerosol perturbations in the UTLS if combustion products from the fires reach these altitudes via convective ascent within pyrocumulonimbus clouds (pyroCbs). PyroCbs, generated by boreal wildfires in North America and North-East Asia and injecting smoke plumes into the UTLS, have been intensively studied using both ground- and space-based instruments since the beginning of the 21 century. In this paper, we focus on aerosol layers observed in the UTLS over Tomsk (56.48° N, 85.05° E, Western Siberia, Russia) that could be smoke plumes from such pyroCb events **occurring** in the 2000–2017 period. Using the HYSPLIT trajectory analysis, we have reliably assigned **nine** aerosol layers to **eight** out of more than 100 documented pyroCb events, the aftereffects of which could potentially be detected in the UTLS over Tomsk. **All the eight** pyroCb events occurred in the USA and Canada: one event per year was in 2000, 2002, 2003, **2013**, 2015, and 2016, whereas two events were **in 2017**. No plumes from pyroCbs originating in the boreal zone of Siberia and the Far East (to the east of Tomsk) were observed in the UTLS over Tomsk between 2000 and 2017. We conclude that the **time durations for** pyroCb plumes to be detected in the UTLS using ground-based lidars are less than about a month, i.e. plumes from pyroCbs generated by wildfires to the east of Tomsk can significantly diffuse before reaching the Tomsk lidar station by the westerly zonal transport of air masses. A comparative analysis of the contributions from pyroCb events and volcanic eruptions with VEI ≥ 3 to aerosol loading of the UTLS over Tomsk **showed the following. Plumes from two or more pyroCbs that have occurred in North America in a single year are able to markedly increase the aerosol loading compared to the previous year. The annual average value of the integrated aerosol backscatter coefficient $B_{\pi,532}^a$ increased by 14.8% in 2017 compared to that in 2016 due to multiple pyroCbs occurred in British Columbia (Canada) in August 2017. The aftereffects of pyroCb events are comparable to those of volcanic eruptions with VEI ≤ 3 , but even multiple pyroCbs can hardly compete with volcanic eruptions with VEI = 4.**

1 Introduction

There are many sources of aerosol in the troposphere: bio- and fossil-fuel burning, forest and bush fires, power generation and industrial processes, engines, volcanic eruptions, *etc.*, and conversely, only a few such sources exist in the stratosphere. Aircraft emissions (combustion products of carbon-containing fuels) (Blake and Kato, 1995; Hendricks et al., 2004; Koehler et al., 2009; Wilkerson et al., 2010; Balkanski et al., 2010) and troposphere-to-stratosphere transport of air (Kremser et al., 2016) are responsible for background aerosol loading in the lower stratosphere (LS). Large volcanic eruptions with the volcanic explosivity index (VEI) ≥ 3 represent the principal source of strong and long-term stratospheric aerosol perturbations (Robock, 2000; Robock and Oppenheimer, 2003; Kremser et al., 2016), which is confirmed by both spaceborne and ground-based long-term lidar measurements (Vernier et al., 2011; Trickl et al., 2013; Mills et al., 2016; Sakai et al., 2016; Khaykin et al., 2017; Zuev et al., 2017; Friberg et al., 2018). Volcanic plumes persist in the stratosphere for several months to several years, depending on the eruption latitude, VEI, and maximum plume altitude (MPA) after the eruptions (Hofmann et al., 2009). However, studies over the last two decades have revealed that, in addition to volcanic eruptions, there exists another source being able to cause short-term, but locally intense, aerosol perturbations in the LS. This source is massive forest (or bush) fires if combustion products from the fires reach stratospheric altitudes.

Massive forest fires (wildfires), the plumes of which can ascend to the LS, and their aftereffects have been intensively studied since the beginning of the 21 century (Fromm et al., 2000, 2005, 2006, 2008a,b, 2010; Fromm and Servranckx, 2003; Jost et al., 2004; Livesey et al., 2004; Damoah et al., 2006; Cammas et al., 2009; Gonzi and Palmer, 2010; Guan et al., 2010; Siddaway and Petelina, 2011; Dahlkötter et al., 2014; Paugam et al., 2016). Smoke plumes of the overwhelming majority of forest fires are located within the planetary boundary layer (Val Martin et al., 2010; Nikonovas et al., 2017; Rémy et al., 2017), and a small number of them ($< 5\text{--}10\%$) can enter the free troposphere (Sofiev et al., 2013; Peterson et al., 2014). Only in exceptional cases aerosol plumes from the fires are able to reach stratospheric altitudes via convective ascent within pyro-cumulonimbus clouds (pyroCb; <http://glossary.ametsoc.org/wiki/Pyrocumulonimbus>). PyroCbs, injecting aerosol directly into the LS, originate mainly from boreal wildfires in North America (particularly in the Canadian boreal zone) and North-East Asia (Siberia and the Far East) (Fromm et al., 2010; Guan et al., 2010), and bush fires in Australia (Fromm et al., 2006; Siddaway and Petelina, 2011). In particular years, pyroCb events can occur too frequently to be considered as an occasional source of aerosol in the LS. For example, Fromm et al. (2010) identified 17 such pyroCbs in the United States and Canada during the summer of 2002, a part of which reached the LS.

PyroCb stratospheric plumes can spread throughout the hemisphere and are detected by both ground- and space-based lidars for 2 to 4 months after their occurrence (Fromm et al., 2000, 2008b, 2010). Owing to their potential impact on the climate, a lot of attention is currently paid to monitoring pyroCbs via, e.g., the Geostationary Operational Environmental Satellite (GOES) system (<https://www.nasa.gov/content/goes>). The data on pyroCb events occurring throughout the world are accumulated on the web page of the Cooperative Institute for Meteorological Satellite Studies (CIMSS): <http://pyrocb.ssec.wisc.edu/> and their archives have been available since May 2013.

Ground-based lidar observations of stratospheric aerosol perturbations have been almost continuously performed in Tomsk (56.48° N, 85.05° E, Western Siberia, Russia) for more than 30 years (Zuev et al., 1998, 2001, 2017). In the papers, we mainly discussed and focused on aerosol perturbations in the stratosphere over Tomsk after major volcanic eruptions (with VEI ≥ 3), the plumes of which were able to directly enter the stratosphere. To consider the effect of only volcanic eruptions on stratospheric aerosol loading and definitely exclude from consideration any aerosol perturbations in the upper troposphere (UT) (such as cirrus clouds) and tropopause region (TR), we analyzed the results of lidar measurements at altitudes higher than 13–15 km. It is clear that this altitude limitation could lead to the loss of information on aerosol events like pyroCb plumes in the UTLS over Tomsk. **The possibility to observe stratospheric smoke plumes in Tomsk from massive forest fires occurred in North America was noted in Zuev et al. (2017). In this paper, we analyze aerosol perturbations in the 11–30 km altitude region over Tomsk that could be caused by massive wildfires in North America and North-East Asia from 2000 to 2017.**

2 Lidar instruments and methods

The lidar measurements we consider were made using the aerosol channel of the Siberian Lidar Station (SLS) located in Tomsk. The transmitter of the channel represents a Nd:YAG laser (LS-2132T-LBO model, LOTIS TII Co., the Republic of Belarus) that operates at a wavelength of 532 nm with 100 mJ pulse energy and at a pulse repetition rate of 20 Hz. The channel receiver is a Newtonian telescope with a mirror diameter of 0.3 m and a focal length of 1 m. The backscattered signals are registered by a photomultiplier tube R7206-01 (Hamamatsu Photonics, Japan) operating in the photon counting mode with a vertical resolution of 100 m. Owing to the rearrangement and improvement of the SLS, there were two shutdown periods of the aerosol channel from July 1997 to May 1999 and from February to September 2014. A detailed description of the SLS aerosol channel technical parameters is given in (Zuev, 2000; Burlakov et al., 2010).

The scattering ratio $R_{532}(H)$ is used to describe the aerosol vertical distribution in the UTLS

$$R_{532}(H) = \frac{\beta_{\pi,532}^m(H) + \beta_{\pi,532}^a(H)}{\beta_{\pi,532}^m(H)} = 1 + \frac{\beta_{\pi,532}^a(H)}{\beta_{\pi,532}^m(H)}. \quad (1)$$

Here $\beta_{\pi,532}^m(H)$ and $\beta_{\pi,532}^a(H)$ are the **altitude-dependent** molecular (Rayleigh) and aerosol (Mie) backscatter coefficients, respectively; π denotes the angle of the backscatter lidar signal propagation (i.e., π radian). Stratospheric altitudes of ~30–35 km over Tomsk are mostly aerosol-free and, therefore, we use an altitude $H_0 = 30$ km for calibrating the detected lidar signals by normalizing them to the molecular backscatter signal from H_0 (Zuev et al., 2017).

The integrated aerosol backscatter coefficient $B_{\pi,532}^a$ is used to discover the temporal dynamics of aerosol loading in the UTLS over Tomsk in the 2001–2017 period

$$B_{\pi,532}^a = \int_{H_1}^{H_2} \beta_{\pi,532}^a(H) dH, \quad (2)$$

where the lower limit $H_1 = 11$ km can fall within the UT, TR or LS due to the variability of the local tropopause altitude and the upper limit is the calibration altitude $H_2 = H_0 = 30$ km. The use of the fixed 11-km altitude is a compulsory measure because there is a problem in determining the tropopause altitude over the lidar site due to the absence of a meteorological station launching radiosondes in Tomsk. Nevertheless, the 11-km lower limit does not allow missing pyroCb plumes from Northern America and excludes the tropospheric aerosol sources with the exception of cirrus clouds. Moreover, the fixed 11–30 km altitude region allows us (regardless of the real tropopause altitude) to make a comparative analysis of aerosol loading over Tomsk due to both volcanic eruptions and pyroCb events from 2000 to 2017.

To estimate the tropopause altitude over the lidar site, we use vertical temperature profiles from three neighbor meteorological stations launching radiosondes twice a day (at 00:00 and 12:00 UTC). These stations are located in Kolpashevo (58.31° N, 82.95° E), Emeljanovo (56.18° N, 92.61° E), and Novosibirsk (54.96° N, 82.95° E) (Fig. 1), the radiosonde data of which can be found on the web page <http://weather.uwyo.edu/upperair/sounding.html?region=np> of the University of Wyoming (Kolpashevo, Emeljanovo, and Novosibirsk station numbers are 29231, 29572, and 29634, respectively). The lower boundary of the tropopause is determined by the temperature lapse rate of 2 K/km according to the criterion provided by the World Meteorological Organization (WMO, 1957). All temperature profiles and estimated tropopause altitudes that we used in our study are also given in the Supplement. When analyzing perturbed scattering ratio $R_{532}(H)$ profiles, cirrus clouds are excluded from consideration based on the criteria presented in Appendix A.

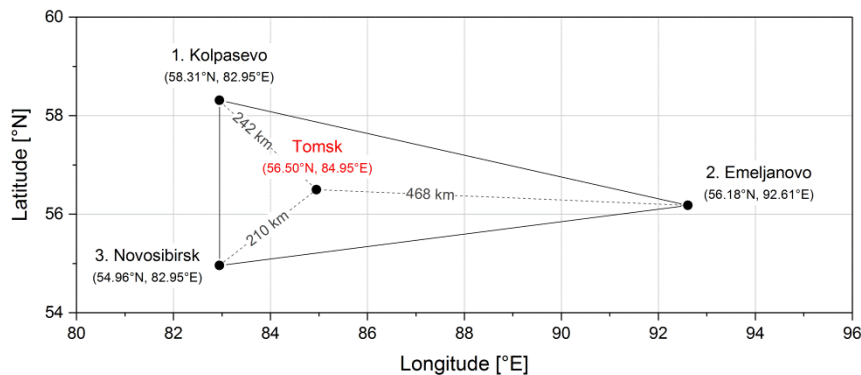


Figure 1. Three neighbor meteorological stations (with the distances between them and Tomsk) launching radiosondes twice a day. The stations are numbered for convenience.

We took data on pyroCb events from scientific papers if the events were documented from 2000 to 2012, and at <http://pyrocb.ssec.wisc.edu/> for pyroCbs occurred after May 2013. The required data on volcanic eruptions for the 2004–2017 period were taken from the Smithsonian Institution Global Volcanism Program (GVP; <http://volcano.si.edu/>; Section: Reports; Subsections: Smithsonian/USGS Weekly Volcanic Activity Report and Bulletin of the Global Volcanism Network).

To assign aerosol layers detected in the UTLS over Tomsk to their sources (pyroCbs or volcanic eruptions), we analyze air mass backward trajectories calculated with the NOAA's PC Windows-based HYSPLIT trajectory model (February 2018 Release; Stein et al., 2015; <http://ready.arl.noaa.gov/HYSPLIT.php>) and the HYSPLIT-compatible NOAA meteorological data from the NCEP/NCAR Reanalysis (2000 to 2003), the Global Data Assimilation System (GDAS) one-degree (July 2013 and May to August 2017) and half-degree (September 2013 to May 2016) archives.

All altitudes in this study are given above mean sea level (AMSL), whereas all dates and times are given in UTC.

3 Results of lidar observations in Tomsk for the 2000–2017 period

There were no eruptions of both tropical and northern volcanoes to be recorded at the SLS in Tomsk from the middle of 2000 to the end of 2004 and in the 2012–2016 period (Zuev et al., 2017), with the exception of the 13 February 2014 Kelut eruption, the plume of which, however, could not be detected at the SLS due to the 2014 shutdown period (see Sect. 2). When analyzing aerosol layers observed over Tomsk and pyroCb events documented in the Northern Hemisphere over the period 2000–2017, we have discovered more than 100 pyroCbs (with known and unknown MPAs), the plumes of which could potentially be detected in the UTLS over Tomsk. However, only a few of the detected layers have been reliably attributed to the selected pyroCb events using the HYSPLIT trajectory analysis. To illustrate the correlation between the pyroCbs and corresponding layers over Tomsk, we present only the most successful examples of the HYSPLIT trajectories that passed over or close to the places of origin of the pyroCbs (or near the known pyroCb plume locations when the exact coordinates and time of the pyroCb events are unknown). We have also analyzed available CALIPSO data to corroborate the Tomsk observations for the 2013–2017 period. The CALIPSO data are given in the Supplement.

3.1 Detection of pyroCb smoke plumes in the UTLS

The first aerosol layer we consider was observed in the TR over Tomsk at altitudes between 11.4 and 12.5 km with the maximum $R(H) = 2.42$ at $H = 12.1$ km on 4 September 2000 (Fig. 2a). The HYSPLIT trajectory analysis showed that this layer was with high probability a smoke plume initially detected in the UTLS over Iowa ($\sim 42^\circ$ N, $\sim 92^\circ$ W; USA) by the Total Ozone Monitoring Spectrometer (TOMS) on 27 August (Fromm et al., 2010). The plume originated from a pyroCb that occurred due to the massive “Jasper Fire” in the Black Hills National Forest (South Dakota, USA). Figure 2b shows, as an example, three air mass backward trajectories started from altitudes of 12.0–12.15 km over Tomsk at 19:30 on 4 September and passed close to the Jasper Fire pyroCb plume location at altitudes $H_{\text{traj.}}^{\text{back.}}$ of 9.3–10.2 km on 27 August. According to radiosonde data from two close stations located in Green Bay (44.48° N, 88.13° W; USA) and Davenport (41.61° N, 90.58° W; USA), the tropopause was at 15.0–15.9 km on that day. Based upon the end points of the trajectories (with $H_{\text{traj.}}^{\text{back.}} \leq 10.2$ km) and tropopause altitude, the Jasper Fire smoke came to the Tomsk TR from the UT over the place of the pyroCb plume observation in Iowa.

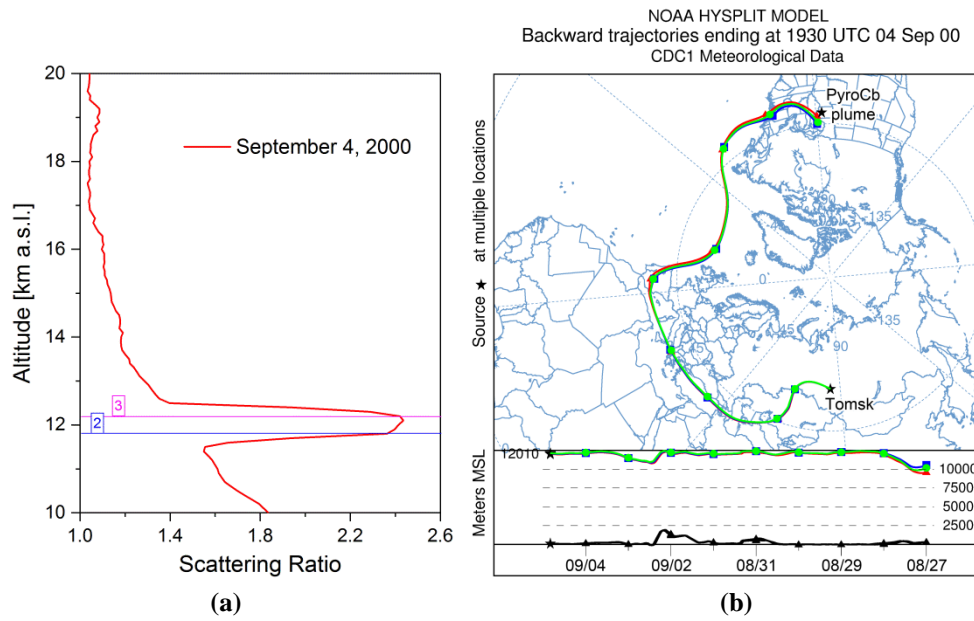


Figure 2. (a) Detection of the Jasper Fire pyroCb plume in the UTLS over Tomsk. The numbers 2 and 3 indicate the tropopause altitudes estimated in Emeljanovo and Novosibirsk, respectively, at 19:30 UTC on 4 September 2000. (b) Air mass backward ensemble trajectories started from altitudes of 12.0–12.15 km over Tomsk at the same time.

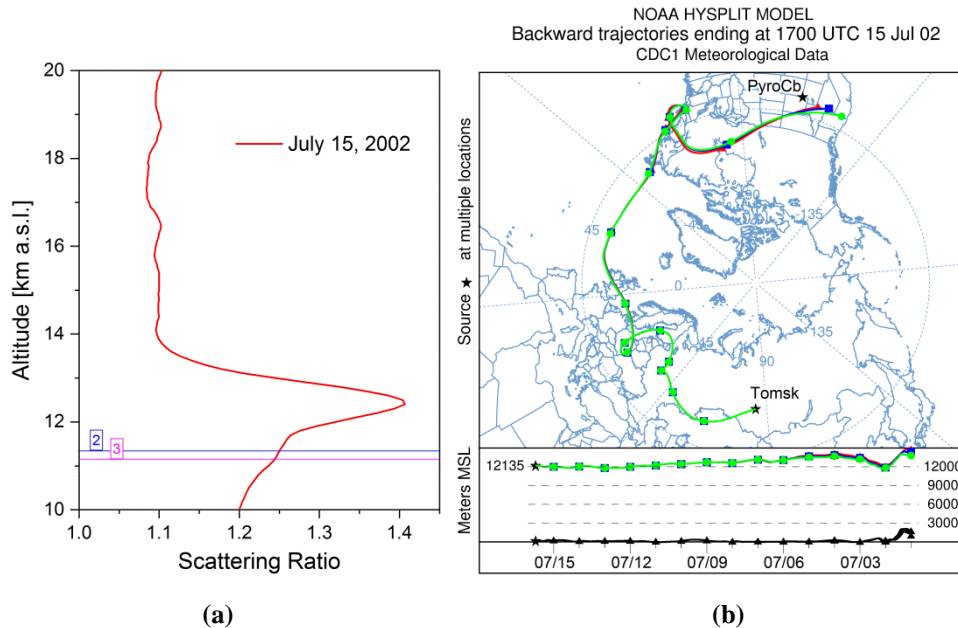


Figure 3. (a) Detection of the Mustang Fire pyroCb plume in the LS over Tomsk. The numbers 2 and 3 indicate the tropopause altitudes estimated in Emeljanovo and Novosibirsk, respectively, at 17:00 UTC on 15 July 2002. (b) Air mass backward ensemble trajectories started from altitudes of ~12.1 km over Tomsk at the same time.

According to Fromm et al. (2010), a pyroCb generated by the “Mustang Fire” was registered with $H_{MPA} = 13$ km on the border of Utah and Wyoming (41.0° N, 109.3° W; USA) on 1 July 2002. Two weeks after the event, on 15 July, an aerosol layer was observed in the LS over Tomsk at altitudes of ~11.7–13.5 km with the maximum $R(H) = 1.41$ at $H = 12.4$ km (Fig. 3a). Figure 3b presents the HYSPLIT air mass backward ensemble trajectories started from altitudes of ~12.1 km over Tomsk at 17:00 on 15 July and passed near the place of origin of the Mustang Fire pyroCb at altitudes $H_{traj}^{back} \approx 11.9$ –12.4 km on 1 July. The analysis of radiosonde data from the meteorological station located in Riverton (43.06° N, 108.48° W; USA) revealed that the tropopause altitude was around 13.0 km on that day and, therefore, we can assume that the pyroCb MPA did not exceed the local tropopause. Air masses containing the Mustang Fire pyroCb plume came to the Tomsk LS from the UT over a place close to the pyroCb origin.

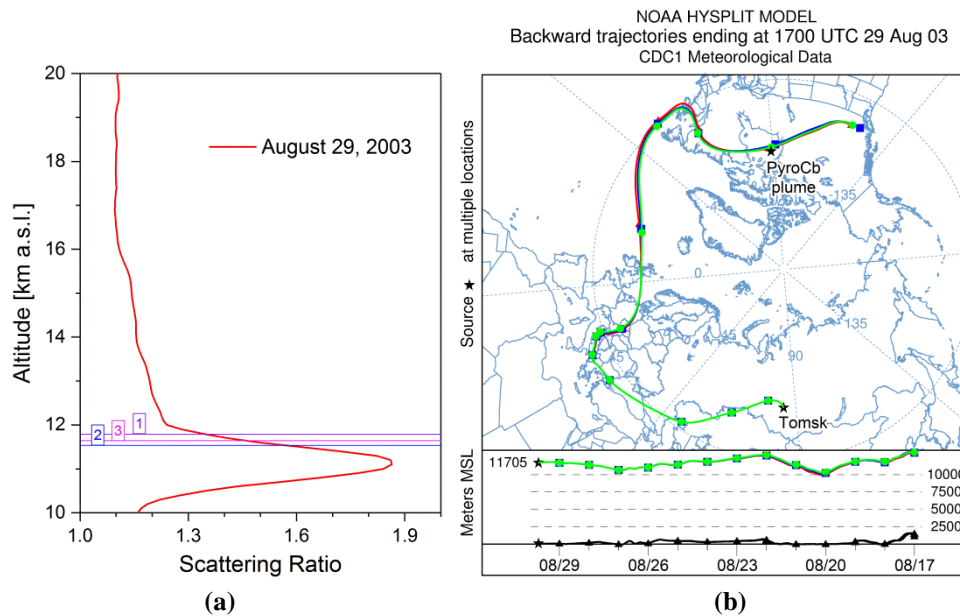


Figure 4. (a) Detection of the Conibear Lake Fire pyroCb plume in the UT/TR over Tomsk. The numbers 1, 2, and 3 indicate the tropopause altitudes estimated in Kolpashevo, Emeljanovo, and Novosibirsk, respectively, at 17:00 UTC on 29 August 2003. (b) Air mass backward ensemble trajectories started from altitude of ~11.7 km over Tomsk at the same time.

Another aerosol layer potentially associated with a pyroCb event was observed in the UT/TR over Tomsk between 10 and 12 km with the maximum $R(H) = 1.87$ at $H = 11.1$ km on 29 August 2003 (Fig. 4a). Eleven days earlier, on 18 August, a pyroCb plume was registered over Hudson Bay (61° N, 89° W; Canada) by the TOMS. The pyroCb was previously generated by the “Conibear Lake Fire” in the Wood Buffalo National Park (Alberta/Northwest Territories, Canada) (Fromm et al., 2010). As seen in Fig. 4b, the HYSPLIT air mass backward trajectories, started from altitudes of ~11.7 km over Tomsk at 17:00 on 29 August, passed over the pyroCb plume location at altitudes $H_{traj}^{back} \approx 11.7$ –11.9 km on 18 August.

Radiosonde data from the Churchill station (58.73° N, 94.08° W; Canada) to the west of the plume registration showed the tropopause altitude of ~11.4 km. According to the Inukjuak station (58.45° N, 78.11° W; Canada) to the east of the plume registration, the tropopause was at ~11.9 km on that day. Thus, we can conclude that the Conibear Lake Fire smoke came to the Tomsk UT/TR from the UT/TR over Hudson Bay.

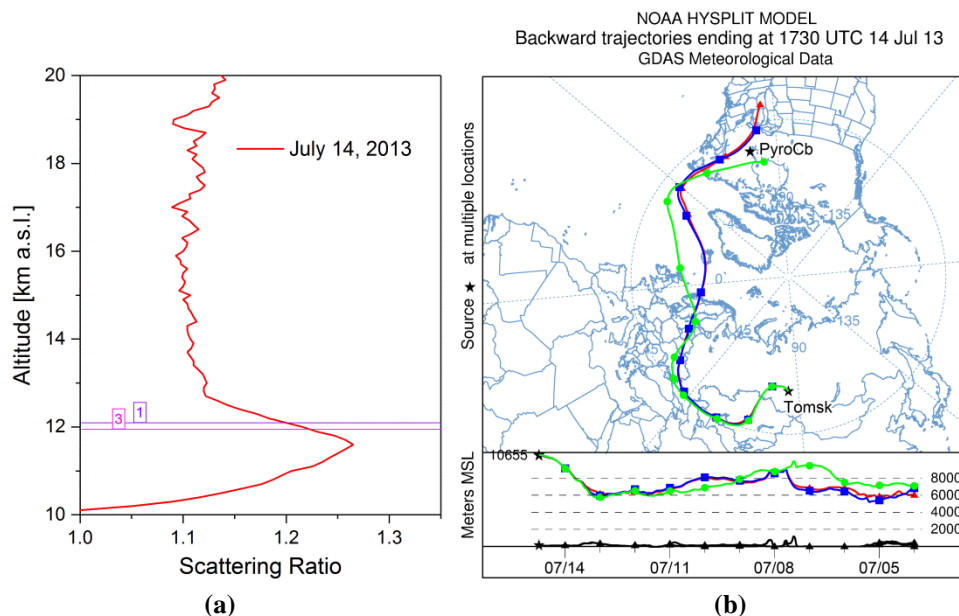


Figure 5. (a) Detection of the Eastmain pyroCb plume in the UT/TR over Tomsk. The numbers 1, 2, and 3 indicate the tropopause altitudes estimated in Kolpashevo, Emeljanovo, and Novosibirsk, respectively, at 17:30 UTC on 14 July 2013. (b) Air mass backward ensemble trajectories started from altitude of 10.6–10.7 km over Tomsk at the same time.

The next aerosol layer reliably attributed to a pyroCb event was registered at the SLS in Tomsk 10 years later, in July 2013. Namely, the layer with the maximum $R(H) = 1.27$ at $H = 11.7$ km was observed in the UT/TR over Tomsk on 14 July 2013 (Fig. 5a). The HYSPLIT trajectory analysis showed that the layer could represent a smoke plume from a pyroCb generated by large fires that were burning in the Eastmain region of Quebec (~52° N, ~78° W; Canada) in June–July 2013. The Eastmain pyroCb was discovered using the 1-km resolution GOES-13 0.63 μm visible channel after 21:55 on 4 July (http://pyrocb.ssec.wisc.edu/archives/136). Figure 5b shows three example HYSPLIT air mass backward trajectories started from altitudes of 10.6–10.7 km over Tomsk at 17:30 on 14 July and passed near the place of origin of the Eastmain pyroCb at altitudes $H_{\text{traj.}}^{\text{back.}}$ of 5.5–7.2 km on 4 July. The analysis of radiosonde data from the station located in Moosonee (51.26° N, 80.65° W; Canada) revealed that the tropopause altitude was varying from 10.9 to 11.8 km during the afternoon of 4 July, whereas the data from the La Grande Iv station (53.75° N, 73.66° W; Canada) showed that the local tropopause was around 11.0 km at 00:00 on 5 July. Based upon the behavior of the HYSPLIT trajectories (Fig. 5b), the pyroCb plume was spreading

in the **middle and upper troposphere before reaching the UT/TR** over Tomsk on 14 July. Note that the aftereffects of the summer 2013 fire season in North America were also widely observed in the troposphere over central Europe (Trickl et al., 2015; Markowicz et al., 2016).

Only one aerosol layer associated with pyroCb events was detected in the **TR/LS** over Tomsk in 2015. More precisely, the layer was observed between 10.1 and 12.0 km with the maximum $R(H) = 1.62$ at $H = 11.0$ km on 16 July (Fig. 6a). Five days before, on 11 July, two pyroCbs were registered in British Columbia using the GOES-15 0.63 μm visible, 3.9 μm IR, and 10.7 μm IR channels (<http://pyrocb.ssec.wisc.edu/archives/985>). The **former** pyroCb was observed at (56.4° N, 123.9° W) with $H_{\text{MPA}} = 10.5$ km around 00:30, whereas the **latter** one was detected at (52.2° N, 124° W) with $H_{\text{MPA}} = 10$ km 4.5 hours later, at ~05:00. As seen in Fig. 6b, three HYSPLIT backward trajectories that started from altitudes of 10.3–10.5 km over Tomsk at 18:00 on 16 July passed near and over the place of the former pyroCb origin at altitudes $H_{\text{traj.}}^{\text{back}} \approx 11.0\text{--}11.5$ km on 11 July. According to the station located in Prince George (53.90° N, 122.80° W; Canada), the lower boundary of the tropopause was at ~12.2 km at 00:00 on that day. Therefore, the pyroCb plume having $H_{\text{MPA}} = 10.5$ km did not exceed the local tropopause and came to the TR/LS over Tomsk from the UT over the place of the pyroCb origin in British Columbia. We could not connect the aerosol layer under consideration with the latter pyroCb event.

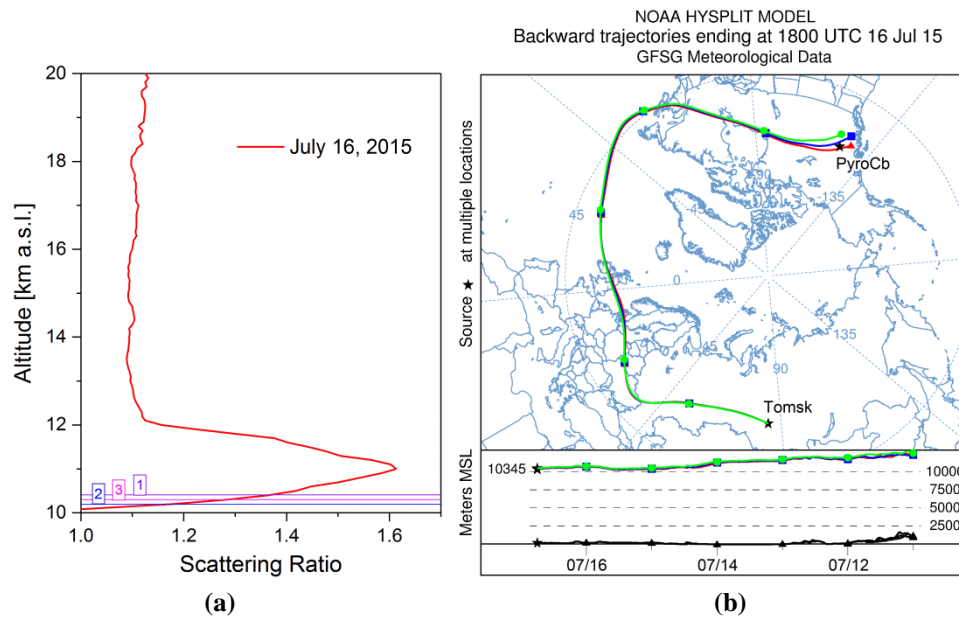


Figure 6. (a) Detection of a pyroCb plume from British Columbia in the TR/LS over Tomsk. The numbers 1, 2, and 3 indicate the tropopause altitudes estimated in Kolpashevo, Emeljanovo, and Novosibirsk, respectively, at 18:00 UTC on 16 July 2015. (b) Air mass backward ensemble trajectories started from altitude of 10.3–10.5 km over Tomsk at the same time.

Another marked pyroCb formed in British Columbia was observed at ($\sim 56^\circ$ N, $\sim 122^\circ$ W) by the GOES-15 visible and IR channels at 22:00 on 16 May 2016 (<http://pyrocb.ssec.wisc.edu/archives/1622>). Eleven days after the event, on 27 May, a thin aerosol layer with a thickness of ~ 0.8 km and the maximum $R(H) = 2.48$ at $H = 11.3$ km was detected in the TR/LS over Tomsk (Fig. 7a). Figure 7b presents the HYSPLIT backward ensemble trajectories started from altitudes of ~ 11.7 km over Tomsk at 17:30 on 27 May and then passed close to the place of the pyroCb origin at altitudes $H_{\text{traj}}^{\text{back}} \approx 10.6\text{--}10.8$ km on 16 May. Radiosonde data from the Fort Nelson station (58.83° N, 122.60° W; Canada) showed the tropopause altitude of around 11.1 km on that day. Hence, air masses containing the pyroCb plume came to the Tomsk TR/LS from the UT over a place close to the pyroCb origin. The smoke from the pyroCb was also observed in the UTLS over the UK with Raman lidars between 23 and 31 May 2016 (Vaughan et al., 2018).

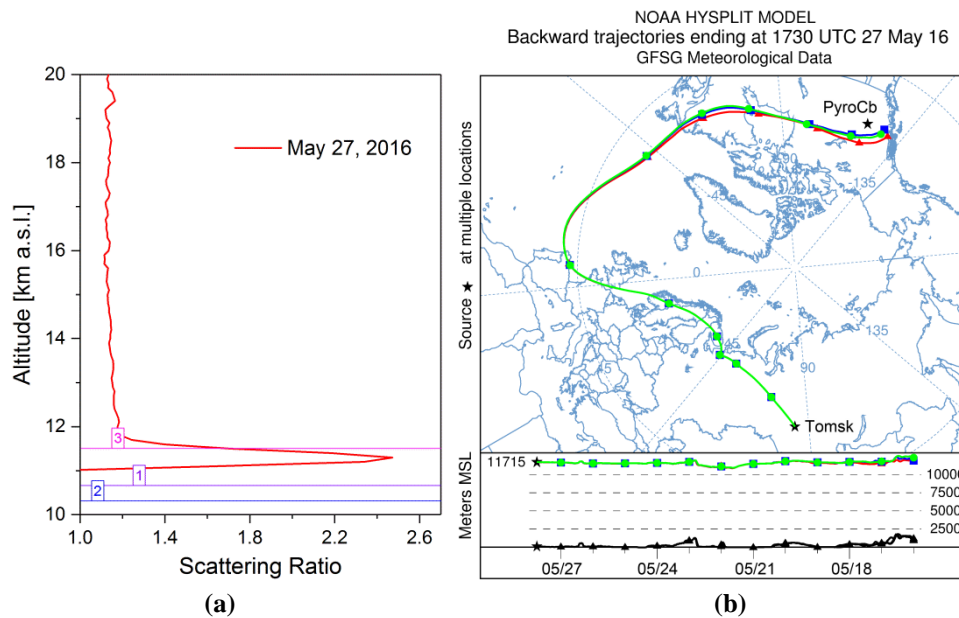


Figure 7. (a) Detection of a pyroCb plume from British Columbia in the TR/LS over Tomsk. The numbers 1, 2, and 3 indicate the tropopause altitudes estimated in Kolpashevo, Emeljanovo, and Novosibirsk, respectively, at 17:30 UTC on 27 May 2016. (b) Air mass backward ensemble trajectories started from altitude of ~ 11.7 km over Tomsk at the same time.

In August 2017, massive forest fires in British Columbia generated several strong pyroCbs, the plumes of which reached stratospheric altitudes. The aftereffects of these Canadian wildfires and pyroCb events were widely observed in the UTLS over Europe in August and September 2017 and have already been intensively studied by different research groups (Ansmann et al., 2018; Haarig et al., 2018; Khaykin et al., 2018; Hu et al., 2018; Peterson et al., 2018). We could attribute three aerosol layers observed in the LS over Tomsk at the end of August to two out of five pyroCbs detected by the GOES-15 instruments at (51.8° N, 123.2° W) and (53.1° N, 121.0° W) around 03:30 and 05:30 on 12 August, respectively

(<http://pyrocb.ssec.wisc.edu/archives/2135>). The first aerosol layer was observed between 15.0 and 15.8 km with the maximum $R(H) = 5.8$ at $H = 15.4$ km two weeks after the event, on 26 August (Fig. 8a). Three days later, on 29 August, the second layer was detected with the maximum $R(H) = 1.37$ at $H = 14.5$ km (Fig. 8b). Finally, the third layer was observed between 14.3 and 16.2 km with the maximum $R(H) = 3.1$ at $H = 15.7$ km on 31 August (Fig. 8c). The initial conditions (times and altitudes over Tomsk) for each HYSPLIT trajectory can be found in Fig. 9. All the HYSPLIT backward trajectories that started over Tomsk on 26, 29, and 31 August passed close to the places of origin of both pyroCbs at altitudes $H_{\text{traj.}}^{\text{back.}}$ of 13.7–13.9 km, 13.5–13.7 km, and 14.4–15.1 km, respectively, on 12 August. According to the stations located in Prince George (53.90° N, 122.80° W; Canada) and Port Hardy (50.68° N, 127.36° W; Canada), the tropopause altitude was not higher than 12.3 km on that day. Therefore, based upon the behavior of the HYSPLIT trajectories (Fig. 9), smoke plumes from both pyroCbs were spreading in the LS before reaching Tomsk at the end of August. This conclusion is also confirmed by the CALIPSO data (see the Supplement). We cannot exclude that the layers observed over Tomsk on 26, 29, and 31 August could contain aerosol from the other three pyroCbs detected by the NOAA-18 instruments on the evening of 12 August.

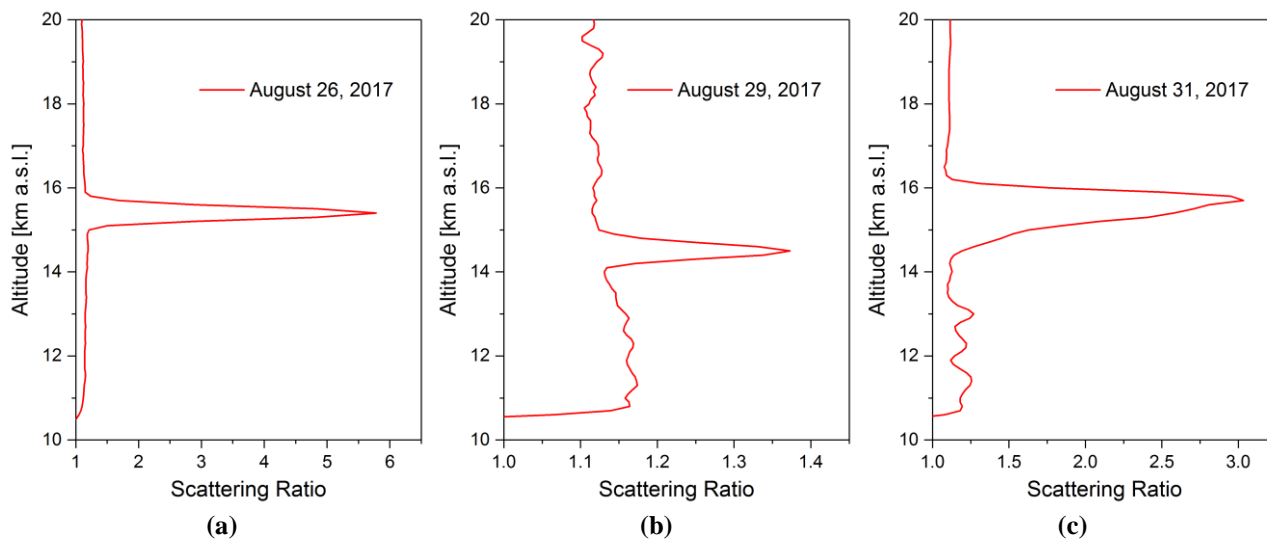
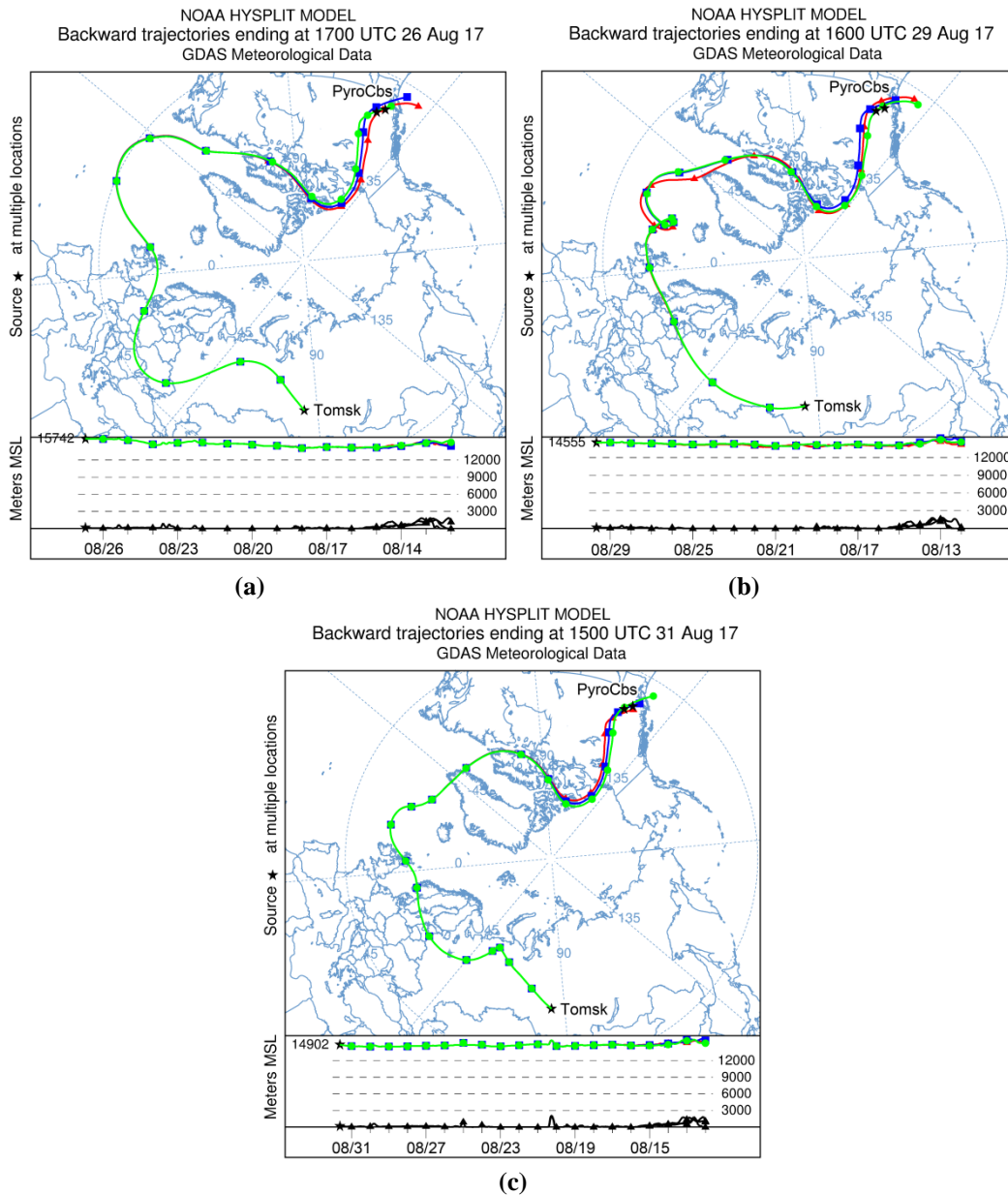


Figure 8. (a), (b), (c) Detection of pyroCb plumes from British Columbia in the LS over Tomsk on 26, 29, and 31 August 2017, respectively.



5 **Figure 9.** Air mass backward ensemble trajectories started from altitude of (a) ~15.75 km over Tomsk at 17:00 UTC on 26 August 2017, (b) ~14.55 km at 16:00 UTC on 29 August 2017, and (c) ~14.9 km at 15:00 UTC on 31 August 2017.

3.2 PyroCb events in 2004–2012

Several biomass burning plumes with $H_{MPA} \geq 12$ km, which resulted from pyroCbs and could potentially be detected over Tomsk, were documented in the UTLS of the Northern Hemisphere between 2004 and 2011 (Table 1). However, no aerosol
 10 layers associated with these plumes were observed at the SLS during the period. This was due to unfavorable weather

conditions (rain, snow, fog, clouds) in Tomsk or pyroCb plumes could have diffused or passed by the SLS and, therefore, might not be detected. Note also that twelve explosive eruptions with VEI = 3–4 of both tropical and northern extratropical volcanoes, the aftereffects of which were reliably registered in the stratosphere over Tomsk, occurred in the 2004–2011 period (Zuev et al., 2017). We do not exclude that pyroCb plumes could hardly be discerned against the background of the volcanic plumes in the UTLS over Tomsk in this period. There were no significant events (volcanic eruptions and pyroCbs) to be recorded at the SLS in 2012.

Table 1. List of biomass burning plumes with $H_{MPA} \geq 12$ km that were documented in the Northern Hemisphere and could potentially be detected in the UTLS over Tomsk in the 2004–2011 period. MPA: maximum plume altitude.

Plume date	Plume location	H_{MPA} , km	Reference
30 Jun 2004	43.1° N, 89.4° W	13.0	Damoah et al., 2006
27 Jul 2006	64.5° N, 114.5° E	12.6	Guan et al., 2010; Gonzi and Palmer, 2010
5 Sep 2006	48.5° N, 89.5° W	12.3	Guan et al., 2010
10 Jun 2007	39.5° N, 122.5° E	15.6	Guan et al., 2010
8 Jul 2007	33.5° N, 104.5° W	12.0	Guan et al., 2010
27 Jul 2008	60.7° N, 114.4° W	12.0	Paugam et al., 2016
12 Sep 2011	47.9° N, 91.5° W	13.6	Dahlkötter et al., 2014

4 Time series of the integrated aerosol backscatter coefficient (2001–2017)

To estimate the contribution of the pyroCb events discussed above to aerosol loading of the UTLS over Tomsk, we have analyzed the 2001–2017 time series of the annual average $B_{\pi,532}^a$ values (see Sect. 2). The upper part of Fig. 10 presents both the 10-day and annual average $B_{\pi,532}^a$ values obtained from the SLS observations. Due to weather conditions in Tomsk, the observations are often irregular in time and periods without lidar measurements can last up to several months. To obtain a homogeneous time series of $B_{\pi,532}^a$ values for the time intervals when measurement data are available, all the data for every 10-day period are averaged. The average values for the periods from days 1 to 10, 11 to 20, and 21 to 30 (31) of a month are assigned to the 5th, 15th, and 25th days of the month, respectively. The same data processing method was used in (Zuev et al., 1998, 2017). The annual average $B_{\pi,532}^a$ values are assigned to 1 July of the corresponding year. PyroCb events and volcanic eruptions (Tables 2 and 3), the plumes of which were observed in the UTLS over Tomsk between 2000 and 2017, are indicated by red and black vertical bars, respectively, in the lower part of Fig. 10.

The time series can be divided into three periods with different trends in the annual average $B_{\pi,532}^a$ values: 2001–2004, 2004–2011, and 2011–2017 (Fig. 10). The first 2001–2004 period (a) is marked by a negative trend in the values caused by the absence of volcanic eruptions with VEI ≥ 3 in the Northern Hemisphere. Despite the fact that three pyroCb plumes were

detected from 2000 to 2003, the minimum (background) annual average $B_{\pi,532}^a = 3.07 \times 10^{-4} \text{ sr}^{-1}$ was reached in 2004. Note that when integrating the aerosol backscatter coefficient $\beta_{\pi,532}^a(H)$ over the 15–30 km altitude range, the minimum annual average $B_{\pi,532}^a = 1.29 \times 10^{-4} \text{ sr}^{-1}$ is also reached in 2004 (Zuev et al., 2017). During the second 2004–2011 period (b), the aftereffects of twelve volcanic eruptions (Table 3) measurably perturbed the UTLS over Tomsk and, therefore, were registered at the SLS. This volcanic activity led to a positive trend in the annual average $B_{\pi,532}^a$ values. The last 2011–2017 period (c) is characterized by comparatively low activity of both tropical and northern volcanoes. Only the 2014 Mt. Kelut volcanic eruption could slightly perturb the UTLS over Tomsk in a given period of time (Table 3). Thus, a negative trend in the annual average $B_{\pi,532}^a$ values was observed in spite of five pyroCbs that injected smoke into the UTLS in 2013 and 2015–2017 (Table 2).

The trends in Fig. 12 show that for Tomsk region the aftereffects of tropical and northern volcanic eruptions with VEI ≥ 3 are stronger and longer-lasting than those of pyroCb events that occurred mainly due to wildfires in North America. Indeed, volumes and lifetimes of primary (volcanic ejecta) and secondary (sulfuric acid) aerosols in the UTLS from explosive volcanic eruptions are known to be higher (Hofmann et al., 2009) compared to those of aerosols from pyroCb plumes (Fromm et al., 2010). Hence, volcanic eruptions for period (b) naturally led to an increase in aerosol loading of the UTLS over Tomsk and, therefore, to a positive trend in the annual average $B_{\pi,532}^a$ values. PyroCbs generated by wildfires from 2004 to 2011 (including documented ones listed in Table 1) also had to perturb the UTLS over Tomsk. But the use of our single-wavelength lidar with no depolarization information makes it impossible to unambiguously discern the pyroCb plumes against the background of more powerful volcanic plumes for the same period. Nevertheless, a comparison of the annual average $B_{\pi,532}^a$ values in periods (a) and (c) of volcanic quiescence with those in period (b) of volcanic activity shows that the positive trend in the period 2004–2011 should have been mostly caused by volcanic eruptions. The same conclusion was reached by Zuev et al. (2017) when integrating $\beta_{\pi,532}^a(H)$ over the 15–30 km altitude range.

The presence of pyroCb plumes in the UTLS over Tomsk in periods (a) and (c) did not allow the annual average $B_{\pi,532}^a$ values to decrease to the background level (as it was in 2004 in the absence of both volcanic and pyroCb plumes). On the other hand, plumes from two or more pyroCbs that have occurred in North America in a single year are able to markedly increase aerosol loading of the UTLS over Tomsk compared to the previous year (Fig. 10). For example, the annual average $B_{\pi,532}^a$ reached a value of $4.34 \times 10^{-4} \text{ sr}^{-1}$ due to pyroCbs 7 and 8 (Table 2) occurred in 2017 (by comparison, $B_{\pi,532}^a = 3.78 \times 10^{-4} \text{ sr}^{-1}$ in 2016). This substantiates the assumption that the effect of pyroCbs on aerosol loading of the UTLS sometimes can be comparable to that of volcanic eruptions (Fromm et al., 2010).

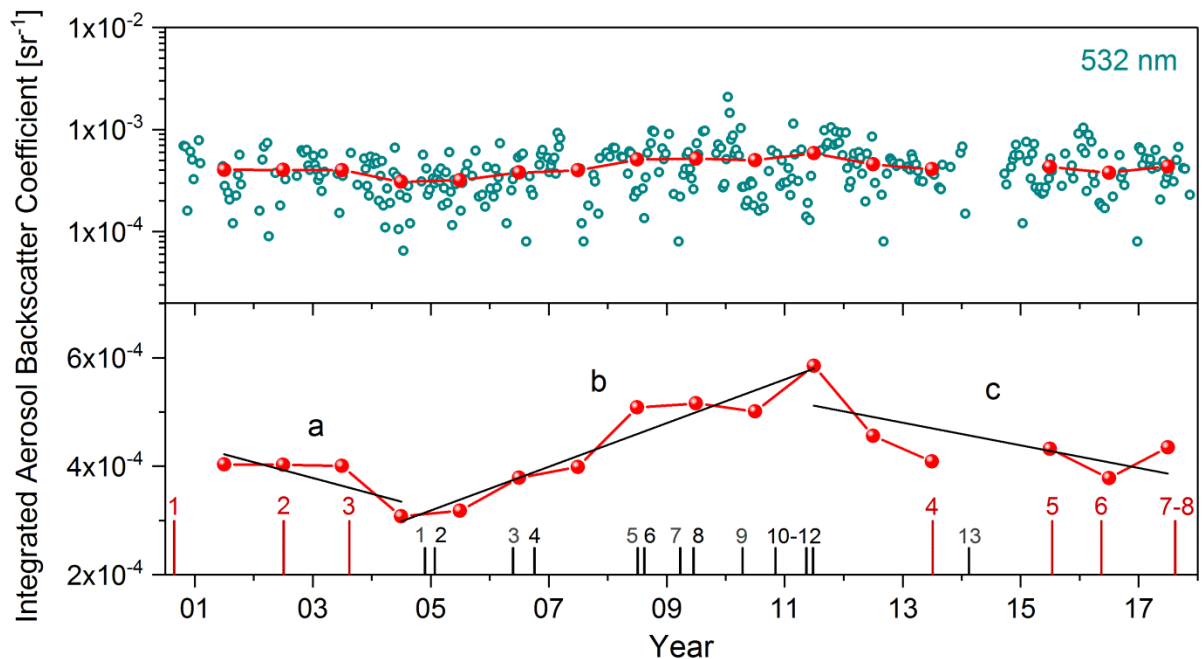


Figure 10. The 2001–2017 time series of the integrated aerosol backscatter coefficient $B_{\pi,532}^a$ obtained from lidar observations at $\lambda = 532$ nm in the 11–30 km altitude range. Open dark-green circles denote the 10-day average $B_{\pi,532}^a$ values; solid red circles show the annual average $B_{\pi,532}^a$ values assigned to 1 July of each year. Red and black vertical bars in the lower part of the figure indicate, respectively, pyroCbs and volcanic eruptions (see also Tables 2 and 3), the plumes of which were observed in the UTLS over Tomsk between 2000 and 2017. The black sloping lines show the trends in the annual average $B_{\pi,532}^a$ values for the 2001–2004, 2004–2011, and 2011–2017 periods.

Table 2. List of documented pyroCbs, the plumes of which perturbed the UTLS over Tomsk during the 2000–2017 period.

N	Plume date	PyroCb event location	PyroCb plume location	H_{MPA} , km
1	27 Aug. 2000 ^{a)}		42° N, 92° W	
2	1 July 2002 ^{a)}	41.0° N, 109.3° W		13
3	18 Aug. 2003 ^{a)}		61° N, 89° W	
4	4 July 2013 ^{b)}	52° N, 78° W		
5	11 July 2015 ^{b)}	56.4° N, 123.9° W		10.5
6	16 May 2016 ^{b)}	56° N, 122° W		
7	12 Aug. 2017 ^{b)}	51.8° N, 123.2° W		
8	12 Aug. 2017 ^{b)}	53.1° N, 121° W		

^{a)} Fromm et al., 2010

^{b)} pyrocb.ssec.wisc.edu

Table 3. List of volcanic eruptions that have perturbed the UTLS over Tomsk from 2004 to the present day. The list was retrieved from the GVP data.

N	Date/Period	Volcano	Location	H_{MPA} , km	VEI
1	24 Nov. 2004	Manam	Papua New Guinea (4.1° S, 145.0° E)	18	4
2	27 Jan. 2005	Manam	Papua New Guinea (4.1° S, 145.0° E)	24	4
3	20 May 2006	Soufriere Hills	West Indies (16.7° N, 62.2° W)	17	4
4	7 Oct. 2006	Rabaul	Papua New Guinea (4.3° S, 152.2° E)	18	4
5	12 Jul. 2008	Okmok	Aleutian Islands (53.4° N, 168.1° W)	15	4
6	7 Aug. 2008	Kasatochi	Aleutian Islands (52.2° N, 175.5° W)	14	4
7	22 Mar. 2009	Redoubt	Alaska (60. 5° N, 152.7° W)	20	3
8	11–16 Jun. 2009	Sarychev Peak	Kuril Islands (48.1° N, 153.2° E)	21	4
9	14–17 Apr. 2010	Eyjafjallajökull	Iceland (63.6° N, 19.6° W)	9	4
10	4–5 Nov. 2010	Merapi	Indonesia (7.5° S, 110.4° E)	18.3	4
11	21 May 2011	Grimsvötn	Iceland (64.4° N, 17.3° W)	20	4
12	13 Jun. 2011	Nabro	Eritrea (13.4° N, 41.7° E)	13.7*	4
13	13 Feb. 2014	Kelut	Indonesia (7.9° S, 112.3° W)	17	4

* ~18 km (Fromm et al., 2014)

5 Concluding remarks

5 The increasing number and intensity of boreal forest fires in North America and North-East Asia due to climate warming for the last decades (Wotton et al., 2010, 2017; Sofiev et al., 2013; Rémy et al., 2017) lead to an increasing number of pyroCbs, the plumes of which are able to reach the UTLS (Fromm et al., 2010; Guan et al., 2010). Boreal wildfires are usually active during the warm half year (April to September) and spread in the UTLS for long distances mainly due to the westerly zonal transport of air masses in the Northern Hemisphere. Therefore, the plumes of pyroCbs occurred in North
10 America are frequently detected in the UTLS over Europe, and more rarely over Siberia, and the Far East by both ground- and space-based lidars.

In this study, we have considered and analyzed aerosol layers in the UTLS (11–30 km) over Tomsk that could represent smoke plumes from pyroCbs generated by massive wildfires in North America and North-East Asia between 2000 and 2017. Using the HYSPLIT trajectory analysis, we have reliably assigned **nine** such layers to **eight** out of more than 100
15 documented pyroCb events, the aftereffects of which could potentially be detected at the SLS. All the **eight** pyroCb events occurred in North America: one event per year was in 2000, 2002, 2003, 2013, 2015, and 2016, **whereas two events were in 2017**. Such a small number of observed pyroCbs could be due to unfavorable weather conditions **in Tomsk** or pyroCb

plumes could have passed by the SLS. Unfortunately, we could not unambiguously discern plumes from pyroCbs occurred in the 2004–2011 period (Table 1) against the background of more powerful plumes from twelve volcanic eruptions observed during this period (Table 3).

Massive forest fires generating pyroCbs are also known to occur in North-East Asia (pyrocb.ssec.wisc.edu). However, no plumes in the UTLS over Tomsk from pyroCbs that occurred in the boreal zone of Siberia and the Far East (to the east of Tomsk) were detected at the SLS between 2000 and 2017. We can assume that the time durations for pyroCb plumes to be detected in the UTLS using ground-based lidars are less than about a month. In other words, plumes from pyroCbs generated by wildfires to the east of Tomsk can significantly diffuse before reaching the SLS due to the westerly zonal transport. This probably explains a comparatively “low” contribution from pyroCbs to aerosol loading of the UTLS over Tomsk and, therefore, the negative trends in the annual average $B_{\pi,532}^a$ values in the absence of, and at a low, volcanic activity in time periods (a) and (c), respectively (Fig. 12).

Based on the results of lidar observations at the SLS between 2000 and 2017, we can conclude the following. During a short-term period (up to three weeks) after pyroCb events have occurred in North America, their aftereffects in the UTLS over Tomsk are comparable to those of volcanic eruptions with VEI ~ 3 . During periods of volcanic quiescence, smoke plumes that reached the UTLS over Tomsk from two or more pyroCbs in a single year can lead to a marked increase in aerosol loading compared to that in the previous year. For example, the annual average $B_{\pi,532}^a$ value increased by 14.8% in 2017 compared to that in 2016 due to multiple pyroCbs that occurred in British Columbia (Canada) in August 2017. The contribution from a single pyroCb or multiple ones (originating in North America and injecting smoke into the UTLS) to the annual average $B_{\pi,532}^a$ value for Tomsk region is comparable to the contribution from both tropical and northern volcanic eruptions with VEI ≤ 3 , but can hardly compete with that from volcanic eruptions with VEI = 4. The last conclusion is in agreement with the findings reported by Peterson et al. (2018).

6 Data availability

The NOAA’s HYSPLIT model used to calculate all air mass backward trajectories is available at <http://ready.arl.noaa.gov/HYSPLIT.php>. The volcanic eruption data can be found at <http://volcano.si.edu/> and the data on pyroCb events occurred after May 2013 are located at <http://pyrocb.ssec.wisc.edu/>. The integrated aerosol backscatter coefficient and scattering ratio data retrieved from the SLS observations are presented in the Supplement. To open .opj files, the scientific graphing and data analysis software “Origin” is required (<https://www.originlab.com/>), the trial version of which can be downloaded at: <https://www.originlab.com/demodownload.aspx>. The CALIPSO data used to corroborate the Tomsk observations in the 2013–2017 period and radiosonde data from meteorological stations located in Kolpashevo, Emeljanovo, Novosibirsk, and Northern America are also given in the Supplement.

Author contributions. VVZ and VVG performed main analysis of all data and wrote the paper. AVN made measurements at the SLS and processed lidar data. ESS performed the HYSPLIT trajectory analysis. VVG and ESS retrieved data on pyroCbs, the plumes of which could potentially be detected in the UTLS over Tomsk.

Competing interests. The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest.

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Appendix A: Scattering ratio $R(H, \lambda)$ values for cirrus clouds

Aerosol layers detected in the UT/TR with ground-based lidars are identified as cirrus clouds if the scattering ratio $R(H) > 10$ for a laser wavelength $\lambda_1 = 532$ nm (Tao et al., 2008; Samokhvalov et al., 2013). However, according to Sassen et al. (1989),
10 the minimum value of $R(H)$ can be 5.2 in the case of invisible to the naked eye co-called “subvisual” cirrus clouds (for a laser wavelength $\lambda_2 = 694.3$ nm) with a thickness of < 1 km. **Note, however, that the thickness of other cirrus cloud types can often be more than 1 km (Goldfarb et al., 2001).** To calculate the minimum $R(H)$ value for $\lambda_1 = 532$ nm, one can use the fact that the aerosol backscatter coefficient $\beta_{\pi}^a(H, \lambda)$ is considered to be independent of the scattered light wavelength if aerosol particles are much greater than the wavelength (Measures, 1984). Since cirrus cloud particles (~ 25 μm , Sassen et al., 1989)
15 are greater than both considered wavelengths λ_1 and λ_2 , we can assume $\beta_{\pi}^a(\lambda_1) = \beta_{\pi}^a(\lambda_2)$ for each altitude H . Therefore, using Eq. (1), we can write the following equality

$$[R(\lambda_1) - 1] \beta_{\pi}^m(\lambda_1) = [R(\lambda_2) - 1] \beta_{\pi}^m(\lambda_2). \quad (\text{A1})$$

Taking into account the dependence $\beta_{\pi}^m(\lambda) \sim \lambda^{-4}$, for the scattering ratio we have

$$R(\lambda_1) = 1 + [R(\lambda_2) - 1] (\lambda_1/\lambda_2)^4. \quad (\text{A2})$$

- 20 Substituting $\lambda_1 = 532$ nm, $\lambda_2 = 694.3$ nm, and $R(\lambda_2) = 5.2$ into Eq. (A2), we finally obtain $R(\lambda_1) = 2.45$.

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