ON THE INITIATION OF LIGHTNING IN THUNDERCLOUDS

Ashot Chilingarian Yerevan Physics Institute





May 4 2016

Road to Aragats opened: ASEC Engineer Samvel Parsamyan 1.75 m height Aragats staff changing scintillator of STAND1 detector near SKL experimental hall

Lightnings are common on Aragats





Aragats 2015/06/03 15:33:54

AnaSats CAMERA 1

2015-06-00 15:30:55-04 Amagats CAMERA 1 Aregett 2015/06/03 15:35:05

Origin of Secondary Cosmic Rays



Electron energy losses in the atmosphere and energy gain from the intracloud electric field: **RB/RREA process**



Gurevich et al., (1992), Symbalisty et al. (1998), Babich et al. (1998), Dwyer (2003), Chilingarian (2014)

Electric field (kV/cm

Particle detector and electric mill networks comprise stacked STAND1 detectors and Boltek's EFM-100 sensors







We continuously measure time-series of particle fluxes and their coincidences. Peaks in time series are the periods of enhanced fluxes – Thunderstorm Ground Enhancements – TGEs. ASNT detector data prove the Near-Vertical flux of electrons and gamma rays









Intensity (m^{2,} mim[,] MeV) ⁻¹

First Detection of the gamma ray and electron energy release spectra: largest TGE on 19 September 2009







ECS and EAS



Extensive cloud showers (ECSs, or MRBs, or inverse TGFs or gamma ray bursts) are systematically different from Extensive air showers (EASs). Density spectra of 2 classes: ECS (with ~20% EAS



16

Neutron Detection in TGE: photonuclear reaction in the atmosphere and in the lead: ArNM and SEVAN evidence



September 19, 2009; Time (UT)

Neutrons from photonuclear reactions





GEANT4 simple simulation

- Uniform electric field above Aragats from 5000m down until 3400- 3200 m, field strength varied 0.8 -2 kV/cm;
- Seed particles Cosmic Ray electrons generated by EXPACS WEB-calculator (PARMA model), energies 0.1 -300 MeV;
- Thinning of atmosphere with height was introduced as well;
- All electromagnetic processes in GEANT4 were switched on.

Simulation of the "pure" RB/RREA process: electron and gamma energy spectra from electrons accelerated in electric field of 1.8 kV/cm prolonged from 5000 till 3300 m with 1 MeV electrons as seeds



MOdification of CR electrons energy Spectra (MOS process) – electric field strength is below RREA threshold; seed particles – CR electrons with energies up to 100 and 300 MeV gain energy from the electric field and radiate more gamma rays



Comparison of background gamma ray spectrum with the MOS gamma rays spectrum: MOS do not cause avalanches and do not multiply particle flux!



CR electrons were accelerated in the homogenous field of strength 1.18 kV/cm below the critical field for the RREA initiation

The electric field at ground due to the vertical tripole according to the "atmospheric electricity" sign convention





⁻³² 21:46:00 21:50:00 21:54:00 21:58:00 22:02:00 22:06:00 22:10:00 22:14:00 22:18:00 22:22:00 22:26:00 22:30:00 22 July 10, 2011; Time

50e+5 🕻

ASEC (Aragats Space Environmental Center; 3200m a.s.l.)









Recovering of the Electron and gamma ray fluxes by CUBE detector





Date 28 July 2016	Uppe	r scintillator	Bottom scintillator			
	e intensity (1/m ² min)	γ intensity (1/m ² min)	e/γ (%)	e intensity (1/m ² min)	γ intensity (1/m ² min)	e/γ (%)
13:54-13:55	460	23328	2.0	0	3524	-
13:55-13:56	992	15608	6.4	760	9532	8.0
13:56-13:57	92	8540	1.1	0	1500	-
13:57-13:58	0	772	-	0	460	-



March 4 - 5, 2016; Time (UT)







"The balloon passed through a region of high electric field on which time increase in X ray intensity of 2 orders of magnitude occurred, lasting for approximately 1 min. The X ray intensity returned to background level at the time of a lightning flash that reduced the electric field strength measured at the balloon", near Norman, Oklahoma in the spring of 1995.

C-rays in Thunderstorms

interval, from one of the 1984 flights, in Figure 1. The passive channel shows only a thermal noise count rate with no statistically significant deviations during this same time period. In this instance, there is no evidence of electromagnetic interference in the passive detector and we conclude that the count rate increase in the active

> The left- most peak precedes an observed flash near aircraft. Center peak precedes a strike to the aircraft. Rightmost "'hump" is not associated with any observed lightning

McCarthy, M.P., Parks, G.K. 1985. Further observations of X-rays inside thunderstorms. *Geophys. Res. Lett.* 97, 5857–5864



Figure 3. Detail of X ray and electric field sounding near 4 cm msl. Electric field measured at the balloon and the preakeven field strength $(E_{\rm BE})$ are plotted in the top panel. Electric field transients due to lightning are marked by an "L" and vertical dashed lines. The horizontal error bars $(\pm 1 \text{ s})$ depict the timing error between the two plots. X ray intensity for X rays between 30 and 120 keV is plotted in the bottom panel. The vertical error bar represents 3 standard deviations n the count rate.

Eack, K.B, W.H. Beasley, W.D. Rust, T.C. Marshall, M.Stolzenburg, Initial results from simultaneous observations of x rays and electric fields in a thunderstorm, J.Geophys. Res., 101, 29637-29640. 1996.

Lightning terminates particle fluxes on Earth's surface and in aircraft



The large distance to lightning channels probably means that the above enhancements are not directly related to the lightning activity. We can rather suppose that the lightning serves in our case as a switchoff for the electric field.

Alexeenko V.V., Khaerdinov N.S., LidvanskyA.S., and PetkovV.B., 2002. Transient Variations of Secondary Cosmic Rays due to Atmospheric Electric Field and Evidence for Pre-Lightning Particle Acceleration, *Physics Letters A*, 301, 299-306.



Examining the strongest glow measured by the airborne detector for energetic emissions, we show that this glow is measured near the end of a downward RREA, consistent with occurring between the upper positive charge layer and the

negative screening layer above it.

N. A. Kelley, D. M. Smith, and J. R. Dwyer et al., Relativistic electron avalanches as a thunderstorm discharge competing with

lightning, Nat. Commun. 6, 7845 (2015).

2016 TGEs occurs at prolonged (3-7 min)deep negative electrostatic field(~ -30 kV/m); lightning abruptly terminates TGE; largest TGEs occurred when there is no nearby lightnings.





3 seconds of 50 ms particle time series including lightning occurrence and electrostatic field disturbances











Differential Energy release spectrum of TGE (20 sec) by ASNT: red arrow – lightning flash on 28 July 2016 at 13:56:34



Main parameters of the TGE events terminated by lightnings

ĨN	Date	Start of lightning (UT) and el. field value kV/m	Time of maximum (UT) and el. field max value kV/m	Rise time (ms)	Decay time fwhm sec	Drop of flux %	Surge of el. field kV/m	EFM Dist. km	WWLLN Dist km	WWLLN time (UT)
1	11/05 2015	16:29:36.380 -5.7	16:29:36.580 57.3	200	8	24	63	4.0	0.6	16:29:36. 337
2	11/05 2015	16:32:06.550 -6.5	16:32:06.800 60	250	6	70	66.5	7.9	13.7	16:32:06. 521
3	11/05 2015	16:35:06.550 5.5	16:35:06.800 61.5	250	5	44	56	2.9	4.2	16:35:06. 534
4	20/04 2015	18:00:14.100 1.2	18:00:14.350 49.2	250	1.1	91	48	2	6.7	18:00:14. 757
5	20/04 2015	18:02:01.100 -3.4	18:02:01.300 39.2	200	1.2	25	42.6	7.8	N/A	N/A
6	4/10 2014	14:13:32.400 -25.5	14:13:32.550 58.5	150	5	32	84	6.8	N/A	N/A
7	2/06 2014	20:58:10.050 -25.2	20:58:10.350 48.8	300	4	24	74	7.8	N/A	N/A
8	2/06 2014	21:00:11.000 -23.2	21:00:11.000 52.2	350	4	22	75.4	2	N/A	N/A

According to measurements of the electric mill located near GAMMA array the lightning was much closer and amplitude of nearsurface electric field disturbances was much larger. Unfortunately, lightning kills this electric mill and it is another evidence along with staff reports that lightning was much closer than 11 km.

TGEs terminated by lightning



Scatter plot: distances to 8 lightnings detected both by WWLLN and EFM-100, correlation coefficient R~ 0.2



One from numerous randomly emerging TGEs in the thundercloud open path to the lightning leader!



Research of Thunderstorm Ground Enhancements (TGEs)

- Observations during 2009-2016 of the TGEs and their energy spectra on Aragats as well as detection on the millisecond time scales particle fluxes, lightning flashes and disturbances of the electrostatic field allows:
- Confirm the RB/TGE process as a source of the highenergy particle fluxes from thunderclouds;
- Confirm the mechanism of lightning initiation (RB/TGE);
- Thundercloud is full of radiation and randomly the RB/TGE process is initiated in several places of cloud cell. By chance one of the TGE made enough ionization to make easier the lightning leader path through the LPCR and –CG flash strikes! If LPCR is to thick normal intracloud flash happened.



THUNDERSTORMS & ELEMENTARY PARTICLE ACCELERATION



A. Chilingarian



Yerevan Physics Institute

THUNDERSTORMS ND EHEMENTARY PARTICLE ACCELERATION

Internationanl symposium

From March 2017 Registration open!!!

STRUCTURE OF THE SYMPOSIUM:

We anticipate the following sessions:

 Models of high-energy emissions in thunderclouds;
 Multivariate observations of thunderstorms from the Earth's surface and from space;
 Particle fluxes and lightnings — any causal relations?
 K. Research of the Thunderstorm ground enhancements

(TGEs); 5. Research of the Terrestrial gamma-ray flashes (TGF); 6. Extensive air showers, lightning and RB/RREA

process; 7. Atmospheric High-energy phenomena observations by space-born facilities 8. Instrumentation

Topics to be covered during oral and poster sessions:

Research of the Thunderstorm ground enhancements (TGE3), measurements of electrons, gamma rays and neutrons by networks of particle detectors located on Earth's surface.
Research of he Terrestrial gamma-ray flashes (TGFs) observed by the arbiting gamma-ray subservatories;

Radio emissions produced by atmospheric discharges and particle fluxes; Lightning initiation and its relation to particle fluxes originated in thunderclaud

* Neutron production during thunderstorms; * Ultraviolet and infrared emissions during

thunderstorms; * Monitoring of thunderclouds and particle emission from orbit;

 Nonitoring of the thunderstorms by high speed cameras e;
 Nethods of the remote sensing of the thundercloud

structure and electric field; * X-ray emissions from the lightning; * Abrupt termination of the particle flux by the

lightning flash; * Precise electronics for the high-energy atmospheric research; * Relations to the climate and space weather issues;

1Ŷ

Possibility of joint observations by space-born and ground-based facilities. The global electrical circuit.

October 2 - 6

Nor Amberd International Conference Centre Yerevan Physics Institute, Byurakan, Aragatsotn Province, Armenia



BACKGROUND:

New emerging field of high-energy atmospheric physics (HEAP) is still lacking firmly established concepts and theories. The relationship of lightning and elementary particle fluxes in the thunderclouds is not fully understand to date HEAP presently includes 2 main physical phenomena: Terrestrial Gamma Flashes (TGFs) - brief burst of gamma radiation (sometimes also electrons and positrons) registered by the orbiting gamma ray observatories in the space and Thunderstorm ground enhancements (TGEs) -the prolonged particle fluxes registered on the ground level |. Both TGFs and TGEs are related to the thunderstorms and lightning flashes: TGEs - by directly detecting electric field and lightning occurrences above the detector site; TGFs by making rather complicated synchronization with worldwide lightning detecting networks. The central engine initiated TGE is believed to be the Relativistic Runaway Electron avalanches (RREA) accelerated seed electrons from ambient population of cosmic rays (CR) in the large-scale thundercloud electric field up to 40-50 MeV. Observation of numerous TGEs by the Japanese, Russian, Armenian, Chines, Slovakian groups prove that RREA is a robust and realistic mechanism for electron acceleration and multiplication leaving no doubts about correctness of the RREA model for the TGE initiation. Models using CERN origin GEANT4 code support in situ measurements of electron and gamma ray energy spectra at Aragats. Another model of the gamma glow initiation was used for explaining gamma ray detections by TERA array in Florida. The main idea of the model is thermal electron acceleration in the streamer tins up to energies of []65 keV thereafter these electrons runaway and accelerate further by the extreme electric field in the streamer zone in vicinity of negative lightning leader. This 2-stage model includes development of very strong electric fields in very short times. Correspondingly the model includes compatible theories and models with several parameters which values are very difficult to measure or estimate (for instance the electric field of 260 kV/cm in the lightning leader tin or-field strength and elongation in the streamer zone where runaway electrons suppose to reach MeV energies). Thus, many questions about thundercloud electrification and discharge mechanisms, lightning initiation, propagation and attachment processes, the global electrical circuit, and transient luminous events do not have a complete and common accepted explanation yet. One of the most important problems "do lightning flashes produce relativistic particles or not?" is still open. TEPA meeting is great opportunity for scientist to meet, discuss, invent new ideas and make new bridges for collaborative works.

INTERNATIONAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE:

Ashot Chilingarian, Yerevan Physics Institute, Armenia.co-chair

Lev Dorman, Israel Cosmic Ray Center and Emilio Segre' Observatory, Israel

Joseph Dwyer, Space Science Center (EOS) and Department of Physics University of New Hampshire, USA

Gerald Fishman, NASA-Marshall Space Flight Center, Huntsville, USA)

Hartmut Gemmeke, Karlsruhe Institute of Technology, Germany

David Smith, University of California, Berkeley Johannes Knapp, DESY Zeuthen, Germany

Karel Kudela, Institute of Experimental Physics, Slovakia

Alexandr Lidvanski, Nuclear Physics Institute, Russian Academy of Science, Russian Federation Jean Lilensten, Institut de Planétologie et

d'Astrophysique de Grenoble, France

Evgeny Mareev, Institute of Applied Physics, Nizhny Novgorod, Russian Federation

Razmik Mirzoyan, NPI, Munich, Germany Yasushi Muraki, STE laboratory, Nagoya University, Japan

Michail Panasyuk, Moscow State University, Russian Federation.co-chair

Vladimir Rakov, University of Florida

Marco Tavani, INAF and University of Rome "Tor Vergata", Italy

Tatsuo Torii, Japan Atomic Energy Agency, Tsuruga,

Japan Harufumi Tsuchiya, Cosmic Radiation Laboratory.Riken, Japan.

Lev Zeleny, Space Research Institute, Russian Academy of Sciences, Russian Federation









Miscellaneous

Percolation theory describes the behavior of connected clusters in a random 3-dimensional graph: will the discharges be able to make its way via the ionization "spots" and reach the earth's surface making lightning flash?















Intensity (m^{2,} mim[,] MeV) ⁻¹



Intensity (m²· mim· MeV) -1



An Airbus A340 aircraft flew over Northern Australia with ILDAS system installed on-board: The most intense emission was observed at 12 km altitude and lasted for 20 s. Its intensity was 20 times the background counts and it was abruptly terminated by a distant lightning flash.



The gamma glow was abruptly terminated by a distant lightning flash. This is consistent with previously formulated assumption that glows are created by high E-filed regions inside thunderclouds.

The Telescope Array (TA) experiment, located in Midwest Utah, USA(39.3N, 112.9W)





TA operates Surface Detector (SD) comprised from 507 plastic scintillation counters with equivalent energy for trigger threshold ~ 0.7 MeV. The counters are deployed as a square grid array with 1.2 km spacing, and covers 680 km² altogether. When three adjacent detectors detect a signal, each of which corresponds to more than three particle equivalent in 8 μ s, judges that their signals are from an air shower, causing signal waveforms to be digitized from all detectors within ±32 μ s of the trigger time. In the trigger data collected from May 11, 2008 to May 04, 2013 the authors of (Abassi et al., 2017) found ten cases in which at least three air shower triggers were recorded within 1 ms, called bursts. The reconstructed air shower directions for individual bursts appear to point to small regions at altitudes lower than the expected first interaction depth of cosmic ray air showers of comparable size. These bursts were checked against the Vaisala lightning database from U.S. National Lightning Detection Network (NLDN, Nag et al., 2011). The number of the detected lightning was 10,073. All 10 selected shower burst events were under thunderstorm, though only 4 of them were clearly synchronized with negative intracloud lightning. The peak current of the synchronized lightning is very large for the currents observed for negative intracloud lightning. Synchronized burst shower events occur nearly at the same time of lightning or earlier than lightning.