



1 **Measurement report: Comprehensive Seasonal Study of the** 2 **Composition and Sources of Submicron Aerosol during the** 3 **JULIAC Campaign in Germany**

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18 **Abstract.** The seasonal variations of aerosol sources and their atmospheric evolution are investigated using
19 observations from the year-long JULIAC campaign (January–November 2019) in Jülich, Germany. Non-
20 refractory submicron aerosol components were continuously measured alongside oxidants (OH, O₃, NO₃), trace
21 gases, and meteorological conditions. Organic aerosols (OA) dominated the aerosol composition throughout the
22 year (39–58%), with secondary formation being the major source. OA, including organic nitrate and
23 organosulfur, peaked during a summer heatwave event due to enhanced daytime and nighttime secondary OA
24 formation driven by elevated concentrations of atmospheric oxidants. Changes in the OA composition during
25 the heatwave suggest shifts in the formation pathways, where isoprene may play an important role. Biomass-
26 burning, mainly wildfires and anthropogenic activities (e.g., heating, industry), is the dominant primary OA
27 source (45–83%), which may grow in influence due to climate change and the expected energy transition. Air
28 masses containing OA from regional transport from marine and wildfire sources are identified through source
29 apportionment. Analysis and modeling prove this method to be more reliable than traditional tracer-based
30 methods. Regional transport to this study site typically shows a cleansing effect on the aerosol concentration,
31 except in winter. Furthermore, seasonal variations in the effects of regional transport are seen, where identical
32 transport pathways led to different influences on aerosol properties, driven by seasonal differences in biogenic



33 and anthropogenic emissions. This study enhances understanding of seasonal variation in submicron aerosol
34 properties in response to their sources, atmospheric evolution, and transport.

35 **1 Introduction**

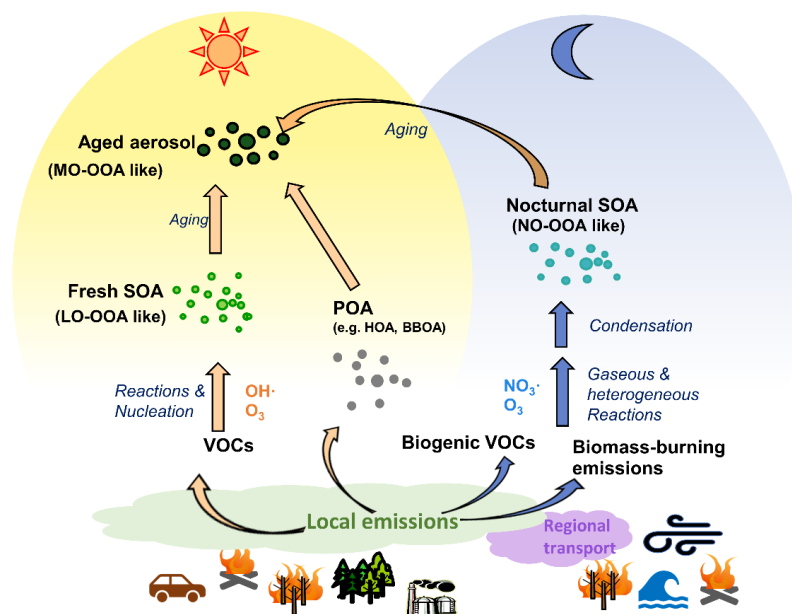
36 Atmospheric submicron aerosols affect air quality, climate-ecology interaction (Boucher et al., 2013;
37 Ramanathan et al., 2001), and also human health (Dockery et al., 1993; Dockery and Stone, 2007; Pope and
38 Dockery, 2006; Lelieveld et al., 2015). The chemical and physical properties of aerosols change according to
39 diverse primary emissions, secondary formations, and their chemical transformation (e.g., oligomerization,
40 fragmentation, photochemical aging) in the atmosphere (Canagaratna et al., 2010; Jimenez et al., 2009; Ng et al.,
41 2010). Hence, their effect on the climate by direct and indirect radiative forcing varies (Fanourgakis et al., 2019;
42 Myhre et al., 2013). Therefore, understanding the processes determining the aerosol properties and their
43 corresponding emissions and secondary formation are essential for evaluating aerosol climate effects.

44 Among submicron aerosol compounds, organic aerosols (OA) contribute 20% to 90% of the total submicron
45 aerosol mass in the troposphere (Zhang et al., 2007; Jimenez et al., 2009), thus playing a key role in altering the
46 environmental impact of aerosols. OA can be emitted directly from primary sources, including anthropogenic
47 activities (e.g., residential heating, traffic exhaust) and biogenic sources (e.g., wildfire). Additionally, abundant
48 secondary OA (SOA) forms predominantly via atmospheric oxidation of various biogenic and anthropogenic
49 volatile organic compounds (VOCs) by different oxidants (OH, O₃, and NO₃). For example, the particular
50 organic nitrate, as a typical secondary species mainly formed via NO₃ oxidation (Xu et al., 2015b; Lee et al.,
51 2016), has been shown to contribute 34% to 44% of measured submicron aerosol nitrate on a continental scale
52 (Kiendler-Scharr et al., 2016). Organosulfur, another important SOA component, which is essential for
53 determining aerosol physicochemical properties, affects the formation of cloud condensation nuclei (CCN)
54 (Chen et al., 2019). However, sources of organosulfur compounds in the atmosphere are diverse, originating
55 from both gas-phase (Yang et al., 2023) and liquid-phase chemistry (Tan et al., 2022a). While the prevailing
56 view has been that interactions between anthropogenic and biogenic sources primarily contribute to the
57 formation of organosulfur compounds, a recent study (Bruggemann et al., 2020) suggests that reactions of
58 purely anthropogenic precursor species or direct emissions from fossil fuel and biomass-burning may contribute
59 significantly to the formation of organosulfur compounds. Nevertheless, the sources and formation mechanisms
60 of organosulfur compounds remain uncertain and require further studies.

61 To investigate the complex sources and evolution of OA, receptor models are commonly used to analyze the OA
62 composition, identifying several source factors. These factors primarily include primary OA (POA) components,
63 as well as oxidized OA (OOA) formed through secondary oxidation, as shown in Figure 1. Previous ambient
64 studies aiming to identify sources primarily attributed OOA formation to photochemical processes (Hildebrandt
65 et al., 2010; Jimenez et al., 2009; Sun et al., 2012; Kostenidou et al., 2015), like less oxidized oxygenated OA
66 (LO-OOA) and more oxidized oxygenated OA (MO-OOA) in Figure 1. However, laboratory experiments have
67 demonstrated significant OOA production from nocturnal chemistry (Fry et al., 2009; Ng et al., 2008), which
68 has also been supported by model simulations (Hoyle et al., 2007; Pye et al., 2010; Russell, 2005).
69 Observational studies further suggest night-time OOA formation, as evidenced by observations of the



enhancement of oxidized OA during the night (Saarikoski et al., 2012; Crippa et al., 2013; Florou et al., 2017; Cheng et al., 2021). The study by Liu et al. (Liu et al., 2024), which investigates data from the JULIAC campaign, highlights nocturnal OOA formation (marked as NO-OOA in Figure 1) from NO_3 oxidation during all seasons. Building upon this finding, the present study provides a more detailed analysis of the seasonal variations of nocturnal OOA formation from the perspective of its precursors.



75

76 **Figure 1: Overview of sources and evolution processes of organic aerosol identified in this study.**

77

78 In addition to local primary emissions and secondary formation, long-term regional transport affects
79 atmospheric conditions as well as aerosol properties. For example, methanesulfonic acid (MSA, $\text{CH}_3\text{SO}_3\text{H}$) is a
80 secondary product from the oxidation of dimethyl sulfide (Zorn et al., 2008; Ge et al., 2012) and can affect CCN
81 activity and, therefore, affect climate (Yan et al., 2019). MSA is widely regarded as a tracer for marine air
82 transport because its precursor, dimethyl sulfide, is primarily produced by phytoplankton and anaerobic bacteria
83 in the ocean (Charlson et al., 1987). Methanesulfonic acid-containing organic aerosol (MSA-OA) has been
84 resolved in previous studies, not only in the coastal and oceanic environments (Schmale et al., 2013), but also at
85 continental sites (Crippa et al., 2014).

86 Several studies (Hass-Mitchell et al., 2024; Otu-Larbi et al., 2020; Ma et al., 2019) have analysed that strong
87 SOA formation is associated with intensive photochemistry during heatwave events with coincident elevated O_3
88 and biogenic VOC (mainly isoprene) concentrations. However, the detailed changes in aerosol properties and
89 the dominant SOA formation mechanism are less frequently discussed. In this multi-seasonal study, an
90 unusually warm summer is observed, which is reported as the third warmest summer in Germany over the past



39 years (Matzarakis et al., 2020). Notably, that abnormal heatwave lasts ten days, with ambient air temperatures reaching 36.6°C at 50 m above ground. The continuous measurement during the heatwave provides a valuable case study for understanding changes in SOA formation under shifts in VOC emissions due to heat and drought stress of vegetation. In this study, comprehensive measurements and analyses are conducted to investigate the seasonal variations in aerosol composition, with a particular focus on organic aerosol contributions from local primary emissions, secondary formation, and long-range regional transport. Special attention is given to the summer period, when a significant heatwave event occurs.

2 Methodology

2.1 Campaign site and setup

The JULIAC (Jülich Atmospheric Chemistry Project) campaign, conducted from January to November 2019 at Forschungszentrum Jülich, Germany (50.91N, 6.41E), aimed to explore annual variations of and source contributions to oxidant concentrations (Cho et al., 2022), the composition of gas-phase species (Tan et al., 2022b), and submicron aerosols (Liu et al., 2024). Intensive measurements were conducted during four periods in the different seasons: winter (JULIAC-I: 15 January – 10 February), spring (JULIAC-II: 8 April – 5 May), summer (JULIAC-III: 7 August – 1 September), and autumn (JULIAC-IV: 28 October – 24 November). The site, near a mixed forest and various anthropogenic sources such as a coal-fired power plant and a sugar factory, is influenced by both biogenic and anthropogenic emissions. During the JULIAC campaign, ambient air was sampled from 50 m height into the SAPHIR atmospheric chamber (Simulation of Atmospheric Photochemistry in a Large Reaction Chamber) (Bohn and Zilken, 2005; Bohn et al., 2005) and then analyzed by instruments connected to the chamber, minimizing the influence from local near-ground emissions, so that the air was representative of the region. Instruments measured radicals, trace gases, OH reactivity, and submicron aerosol components and the aerosol size distribution.

2.2 Instrumentations

The physical and chemical properties of ambient submicron aerosol were measured using an Aerodyne aerosol high-resolution time-of-flight aerosol mass spectrometer (HR-ToF-AMS), a scanning mobility particle sizer (SMPS), and a condensation particle counter (CPC). The HR-ToF-AMS provided continuous measurements of mass concentrations and size distributions for non-refractory chemical components of the aerosol (e.g., ammonium, nitrate, sulfate, chlorine, and organics). The SMPS scanned particles in the 10-750 nm range with a 7-minute cycle, while a standalone CPC recorded total particle concentrations (diameter >5 nm). N_2O_5 concentrations were measured by custom-built cavity ring-down spectroscopy (FZJ-CRDS), which is similar to the instrument described in (Wagner et al., 2011), and CO , CO_2 , and CH_4 were detected by a commercial cavity ring-down instrument (Picarro). Nitrogen oxides (NO and NO_2) were detected using a chemiluminescence instrument with a photolytic converter (ECO PHYSICS), while O_3 levels were measured with two UV photometers (Ansyco 41M and Thermo Scientific 49i), both of which showed good agreement (within 5%). Volatile organic compounds (VOCs) were monitored with a proton transfer reaction-time of flight mass spectrometer (PTR-ToF-MS). A spectroradiometer measured spectral actinic flux densities to determine



photolysis frequencies (Bohn and Zilken, 2005; Bohn et al., 2005). OH, HO₂, and RO₂ radicals were measured using the FZJ laser-induced fluorescence (LIF) instrument (Cho et al., 2021), and the total OH reactivity (k(OH)) was measured using a laser-flash photolysis LIF instrument (Fuchs et al., 2017). Additional sensors, such as an ultrasonic anemometer (METEK, USA-1) and humidity, temperature, and pressure sensors (Driesen + Kern) monitored ambient 3D wind data, relative humidity, temperature, and pressure at 50 m above ground and inside the chamber.

2.3 Calculation of particulate organic nitrate and organosulfur concentrations

The concentration of particulate organic nitrate was calculated by an approach using nitrate fragment ratios (NO₂⁺/NO⁺) as shown in Eq. (1) based on HR-ToF-AMS measurements (Kiendler-Scharr et al., 2016; Farmer et al., 2010; Fry et al., 2013; Xu et al., 2015a).

$$pOrgNO_{3,frac} = \frac{(1+R_{OrgNO_3}) \times (R_{measured} - R_{calib})}{(1+R_{measured}) \times (R_{OrgNO_3} - R_{calib})} \quad (1)$$

R_{measured} represents the ratio of NO₂⁺ to NO⁺ ion fragments for aerosol measurements during the JULIAC campaign. R_{calib} represents the corresponding NO₂⁺/NO⁺ fragment ratio measured from ammonium nitrate during biweekly calibrations of the ionization efficiency (IE) of HR-ToF-AMS during the campaign, while R_{OrgNO₃} stands for that ratio for pure organic nitrate, with a value of 0.1 suggested by (Kiendler-Scharr et al., 2016). Based on this method, lower-limit estimations of organic nitrate concentrations having an uncertainty of ± 20% (Xu et al., 2015a; Kiendler-Scharr et al., 2016) were made in this study.

$$pOrgNO_{3,conc} = pOrgNO_{3,frac} \times NO_{3,total} \quad (2)$$

Particulate organosulfur concentrations were calculated from total sulfates measured by HR-ToF-AMS using the sulfate fragment pattern method (Chen et al., 2019). The organosulfur calculation method makes use of the varying degrees of fragmentation of ammonium sulfate, MSA, and organosulfur during AMS measurements, resulting in differences in the distribution of fragments, including SO⁺, SO₂⁺, SO₃⁺, HSO₃⁺, and H₂SO₄⁺. This method used in this study assumes that the fragment of H₂SO₄⁺ is exclusively contributed by ammonium sulfate, while the fragment of HSO₃⁺ originates from only ammonium sulfate and MSA. Then, the mass concentrations of total sulfate measured by the instrument ToF-AMS could be distributed to the sulfate from ammonium sulfate, MSA, and organosulfur, as shown below:

$$[SO_4]_{(Ammonium\ Sulfate)} = \frac{H_2SO_4^+}{f(H_2SO_4^+)_{Ammonium\ Sulfate} \cdot \sum HSO} \cdot [SO_4] \quad (3)$$

$$[SO_4]_{(MSA)} = \frac{(HSO_3^+ - [SO_4]_{(Ammonium\ Sulfate)}) \cdot f(HSO_3^+)_{Ammonium\ Sulfate}}{f(HSO_3^+)_{MSA} \cdot \sum HSO} \cdot [SO_4] \quad (4)$$

$$[SO_4]_{(Organosulfur)} = [SO_4] - [SO_4]_{(Ammonium\ Sulfate)} - [SO_4]_{(MSA)} \quad (5)$$

∑ HSO represents the sum of molar concentrations of fragments of SO⁺, SO₂⁺, SO₃⁺, HSO₃⁺, and H₂SO₄⁺. f(H₂SO₄⁺)_{Ammonium Sulfate} and f(HSO₃⁺)_{Ammonium Sulfate} are the molar fractions of H₂SO₄⁺ and HSO₃⁺ normalized to ∑ HSO for ammonium sulfate, which was measured during biweekly calibrations of the ionization efficiency of the HR-ToF-AMS instrument during the JULIAC campaign. Similarly, f(HSO₃⁺)_{MSA} stands for the molar



fraction of HSO_3^+ normalized to the $\sum \text{HSO}$ concentration for pure MSA. The value of $f(\text{HSO}_3^+)_{\text{MSA}} = 0.0587$ reported by (Chen et al., 2019) was used in this study, as their work showed a similar ammonium sulfate fragment distribution to ours. However, the study by (Schueneman et al., 2021) points out that this method described above is not always reliable for identifying organosulfur. Based on that, the feasibility of this sulfate fragment pattern method is further discussed in Figure 4.

2.4 PMF analysis

Positive matrix factorization (PMF) is applied to attribute the concentrations of aerosol components to various sources (Jimenez et al., 2009; Zhang et al., 2011; Sun et al., 2012; Dai et al., 2019; Crippa et al., 2014). PMF analysis decomposes the variability of a dataset X into a matrix of factor profiles F (source profiles) and a corresponding time series matrix G (source contributions) as shown in Eq. (6). Matrix E represents residuals not attributed to any source. The PMF algorithm minimizes the sum of squared residuals e_{ij} weighted by the uncertainty σ_{ij} for all input points in X , indicated by Q as shown in Eq. (7).

$$X = G \times F + E \quad (6)$$

$$Q = \sum_{i=1}^m \sum_{j=1}^n \left(\frac{e_{ij}}{\sigma_{ij}} \right)^2 \quad (7)$$

To understand the seasonal variations in the sources and contributions of organic aerosols, a PMF analysis was conducted on aerosol organics concentrations (mass to charge ratio, m/z 12–160) detected by HR-ToF-AMS during all four seasons of the JULIAC campaign. The SoFi Pro software (version 8.0.3.1) (Canonaco et al., 2013) was used to control the multilinear engine (ME-2) algorithm (Paatero, 1999) for aerosol source apportionment, allowing for the incorporation of prior mass spectral information to reduce rotational ambiguity (Paatero and Hopke, 2003). A signal-to-noise (S/N) threshold of 2 was applied, and down-weighting was used for S/N values below 1 to reduce errors. Factors identified in prior studies were used as references or for constraining the PMF analysis. The SoFi panel's criteria-based selection function was employed to explore similar results based on user-defined criteria, such as correlations with relevant trace gases (e.g., CO for biomass-burning sources). The optimal PMF solution was selected based on the evaluation of parameters, residuals, factor spectra, correlations with external tracers (e.g., VOCs, radicals, wind direction), and the interpretability of the factor's variation patterns. This involved assessing key parameters (e.g., Unexplained variation (UEV)) in Table S1, characteristics of source mass spectra (Tables S2–S4), and examining the agreement between resolved source factors with their diurnal patterns, related tracer, and atmospheric conditions (Fig. S1).

2.5 Trajectory model

To understand the effect of long-term regional transport on aerosol properties, 24-h and 72-h backward trajectories with a 2-hour resolution from the sampling site were computed during the four JULIAC intensive phases using the HYSPLIT model (Version 5.0.0)(Stein et al., 2015), based on GDAS meteorological data from



NOAA's Air Resources Laboratory (ARL). The trajectory arrival times match the detection times of instruments at the JULIAC campaign. Further analyses, like cluster analysis and concentration field (CF) statistics (Seibert et al., 1994; Debevec et al., 2017), were performed using the ZeFir graphical interface (version 3.7) in Igor Pro (Petit et al., 2017). Additional details on ZeFir's trajectory analysis applications are available in previous studies (Debevec et al., 2021).

2.6 Aerosol liquid water content estimation

The aerosol liquid water content (ALWC) was estimated using the ISORROPIA-II thermodynamic model (Fountoukis and Nenes, 2007). The model predicts the aerosol phase state and composition based on observed ambient relative humidity (RH), temperature (T), and aerosol concentrations of nitrate, sulfate, chloride, ammonium, sodium, and potassium. ISORROPIA-II has been widely validated with in-situ datasets and has demonstrated strong performance compared to other thermodynamic equilibrium models (Nowak et al., 2006; Fountoukis et al., 2009).

3 Results

The variations of non-refractory chemical component concentrations of submicron aerosol (NF-PM₁), including organics, nitrate, ammonium, chlorine, and sulfate, were measured during each season of the JULIAC campaign. As shown in Table 1, the highest average concentration of NF-PM₁ is observed in summer (JULIAC-III) (to be $7.7 \pm 4.8 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$), which is more than seven times higher than the lowest concentration recorded in winter (JULIAC-I) (with $1.1 \pm 1.0 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$). The annual average concentration of NF-PM₁ is $4.0 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ at this semi-rural site, similar to aerosol levels reported in previous studies in Europe and the United States of America (Table 1). In general, organic aerosols are the major component, accounting for 39% to 58% of the total mass of submicron aerosols. Aerosol sulfate (16%-26%) is the second most abundant component, followed by nitrate (5%-26%). The mass fractions of aerosol nitrate and organics show distinct seasonal patterns. During summer, nitrate accounts for only 5% of the total aerosol mass, a sharp decrease compared to 23%-26% in the other seasons. In contrast, organic aerosols contribute a much higher fraction in summer (58%) than in the other seasons (ranging from 39% to 58%), indicating a pronounced seasonal enhancement. The sulfate fraction remains relatively constant (20%-26%) throughout the year. To better understand these trends in aerosol composition and concentration, we conduct a detailed comparison of the properties of organic aerosols in each season. Additionally, the contributions of organic nitrate and organosulfur are estimated to evaluate the seasonal formation processes contributing to these aerosol species.

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Table 1 Overview of the seasonal average concentrations of components of submicron aerosol measured by HR-ToF-AMS, together with the total number and volume of submicron aerosol measured by SMPS, and atmospheric conditions (relative humidity, RH, and ambient temperature) during the four JULIAC intensive phases, compared with previous field observations.

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Campaign	Total aerosol ($\mu\text{g}\cdot\text{m}^{-3}$)	Total volume (10^9 $\text{nm}^3\cdot\text{cm}^{-3}$)	Total number (10^3cm^{-3})	Nitrate ($\mu\text{g}\cdot\text{m}^{-3}$)	Sulfate ($\mu\text{g}\cdot\text{m}^{-3}$)	Ammonium ($\mu\text{g}\cdot\text{m}^{-3}$)	Chlorine ($\mu\text{g}\cdot\text{m}^{-3}$)	Organics ($\mu\text{g}\cdot\text{m}^{-3}$)	RH (%)	Temp (°C)	Reference
JULIAC-I, Jan-Feb 2019	1.1 ± 1.0	3.1 ± 2.8	2.5 ± 1.5	0.3 ± 0.4	0.2 ± 0.2	0.1 ± 0.2	0.02 ± 0.02	0.4 ± 0.3	66 ± 18	5 ± 4	This study
JULIAC-II, Apr-May 2019	2.6 ± 2.6	2.2 ± 1.6	2.8 ± 1.3	0.6 ± 1.3	0.5 ± 0.4	0.4 ± 0.5	0.02 ± 0.02	1.1 ± 0.9	44 ± 21	12 ± 6	This study
JULIAC-III, Aug-Sep 2019	7.7 ± 4.8	1.6 ± 1.9	4.0 ± 1.9	0.4 ± 0.5	2.0 ± 1.2	0.8 ± 0.5	0.02 ± 0.01	4.4 ± 3.0	45 ± 21	21 ± 5	This study
JULIAC-IV, Nov 2019	4.2 ± 2.3	1.1 ± 0.7	2.4 ± 1.3	1.0 ± 0.8	0.7 ± 0.4	0.5 ± 0.3	0.04 ± 0.03	2.0 ± 1.1	65 ± 15	15 ± 5	This study
Cabauw, the Netherlands, Jul 2012- Jun 2013	6.2	---	---	1.9	0.9	0.9	0.06	2.2	82	9	(Schlag et al., 2016)
Hyytiälä, Finland, Mar-Apr 2005	2.0	---	---	0.3	0.3	0.2	---	1.2	---	---	(Raatikainen et al., 2010)
Texas, Houston, USA, Feb 2014	6.1 ± 4.3	---	---	1.4 ± 1.4	1.4 ± 0.8	0.9 ± 0.6	0.06 ± 0.09	2.3 ± 1.4	76 ± 18	9 ± 6	(Dai et al., 2019)
Texas, Houston, USA, May 2014	3.6 ± 2.3	---	---	0.1 ± 0.1	1.3 ± 0.6	0.5 ± 0.2	0.02 ± 0.02	1.7 ± 1.4	72 ± 19	24 ± 4	(Dai et al., 2019)
Oklahoma, USA, Nov 2010-Jul 2012	7.0 ± 9.3	---	---	1.5 ± 3.0	0.8 ± 1.0	0.7 ± 1.2	0.02 ± 0.04	4.0 ± 6.2	---	---	(Parworth et al., 2015)

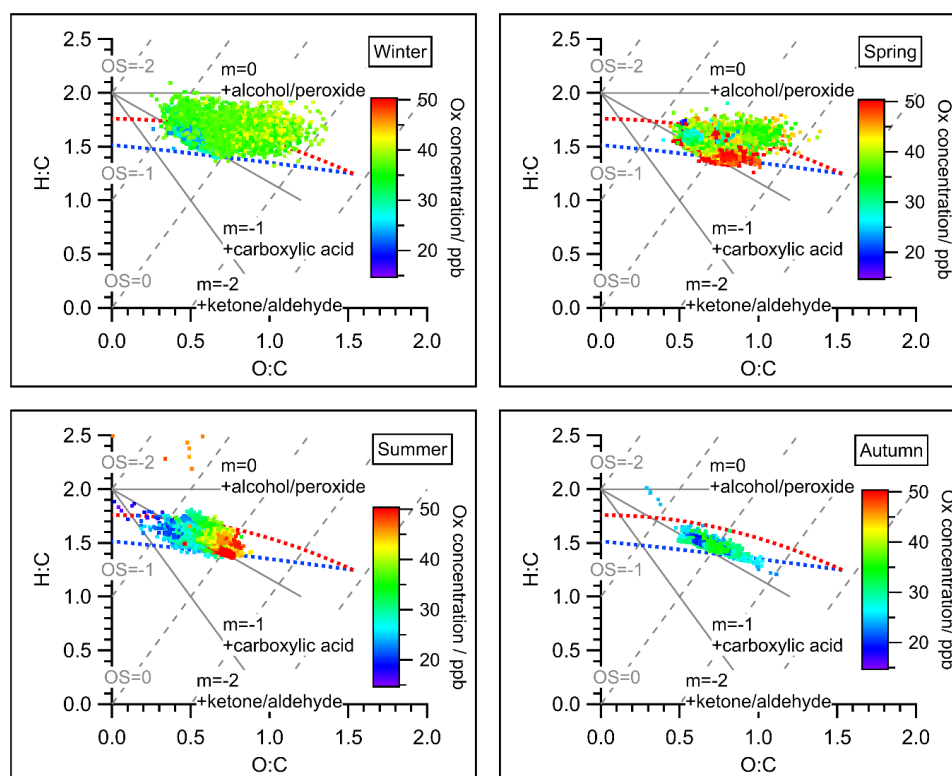
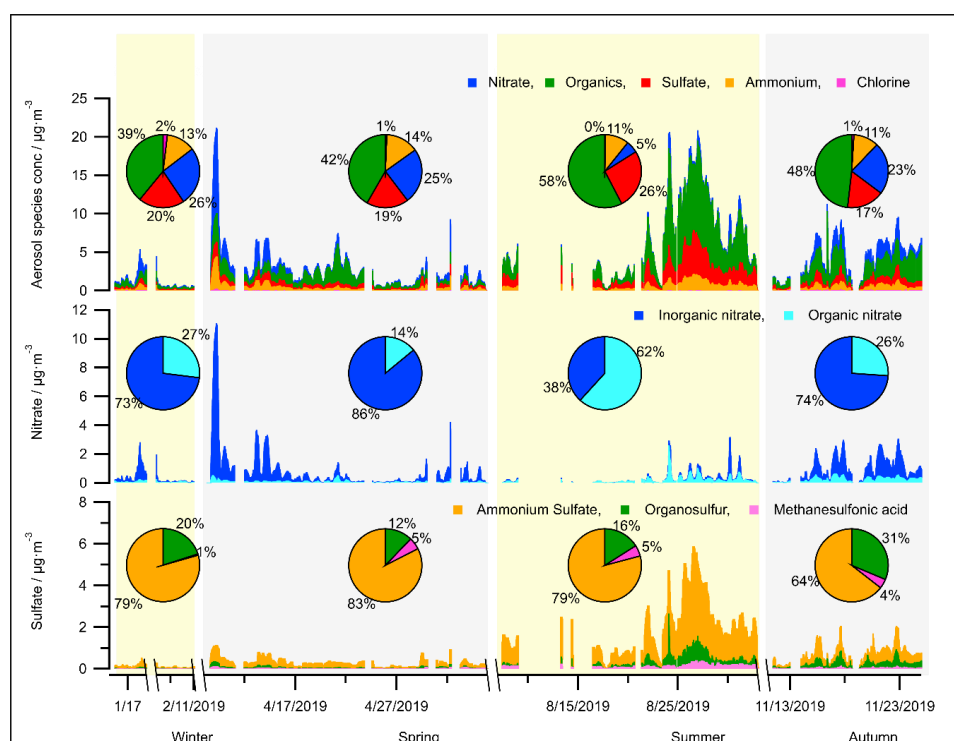


Figure 2: Van Krevelen triangle graph for all measurements of organic aerosol during the four seasons of the JULIAC campaign. Atomic ratio regions of standard groups for alcohol/peroxide, carboxylic acid, and ketone/aldehyde (Aiken et al., 2007) were marked as references. The dots in all graphs were color-coded by the concentration of the oxidant O_x ($NO_2 + O_3$) to represent the intensity of photochemistry. The red and blue dashed line corresponds to the right and left lines of the f_{44}/f_{43} triangle introduced in Ng et al. (2010, representing the lower oxidation level (like primary OA) and higher oxidation level (like secondary OA), respectively. The estimated carbon oxidation states ($OS \approx 2O/C - H/C$) were marked as gray dashed lines. An overview of the averaged elemental ratios $O:C$, $H:C$, and OS with corresponding standard deviations of total organic aerosol for the four JULIAC intensive phases is given in Table S5.

OA dynamically evolves in the atmosphere, converging to a higher oxidation status with time (Ng et al., 2011), which can be indicated by a high elemental $O:C$ ratio or estimated carbon oxidation states ($OS \approx 2O/C - H/C$) (Canagaratna et al., 2015). Hence, the oxidation degree of OA is a key parameter for understanding the atmospheric evolution of OA. In Figure 2, the degrees of oxidation of OA during each season are displayed in a Van Krevelen triangle (Ng et al., 2011), color-coded with O_x concentrations. O_x , defined as the sum of ozone (O_3) and nitrogen dioxide (NO_2), is a conserved quantity under photochemical cycling and is often used as a proxy for atmospheric oxidation capacity and, consequently, the intensity of secondary oxidation in the



248 atmosphere (Li et al., 2015; Canonaco et al., 2015). Only during summer, higher O:C ratios of OA correlate
249 with increased O_x concentrations, suggesting the significant contribution of secondary OA formation to total
250 OA. This assumption is further discussed and supported by the results of the source apportionment analysis
251 presented in Section 4.1. The average oxidation degrees of OA for each season are calculated (Table S5). The
252 overall oxidation degree of OA reaches the minimum during summer with an average O:C of 0.64 and the
253 maximum in spring with an average O:C equal to 0.76. The difference in OA properties originates from the
254 difference in emission sources and SOA formation mechanisms among seasons, which will be confirmed by the
255 aerosol source apportionment analysis below (Section 4.1).



256

257 **Figure 3: Seasonal variation in the concentrations of aerosol bulk components (organics, sulfate, nitrate,**
258 **ammonium, chlorine) and calculated concentrations of species (organic nitrate, organosulfur,**
259 **methanesulfonic acid) from HR-ToF-AMS measurements.**

260 Particulate organic nitrates have been reported as ubiquitous components and significant contributors to organic
261 aerosol (OA) mass in both Europe and the United States of America (Kiendler-Scharr et al., 2016; Ng et al.,
262 2017). In this study, a high mass fraction of organic nitrate to total aerosol nitrate, up to 62%, is found during
263 the summer (JULIAC-III) (Figure 3). This is not the first time that a high mass fraction of organic nitrate has
264 been observed in Europe during spring or summer. For instance, the fraction of organic nitrate to total aerosol
265 nitrate was found to be 67% at Cabauw, Netherlands in March 2008, 73% at Melpitz, Germany in March 2009,
266 and 77% at San Pietro Capofiume, Italy, in April 2008 (Kiendler-Scharr et al., 2016). In this previous study
267 based on combined analyses of chemistry transport models, abundant organic nitrate is found to be mainly



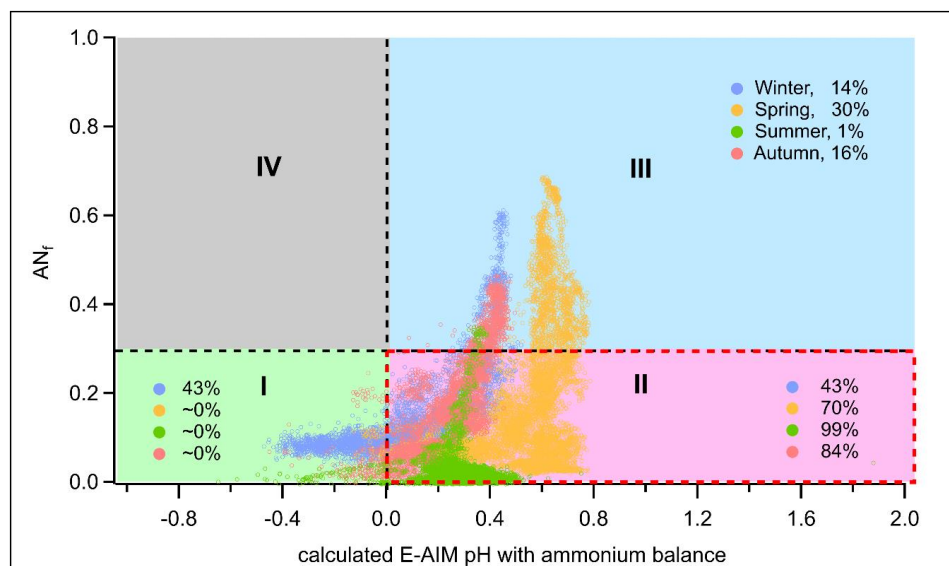
268 formed via the NO_3 oxidation of biogenic VOCs (especially of monoterpenes). In the JULIAC campaign,
269 significant nocturnal oxidized OA production in all seasons is observed, and rich particulate organic nitrate
270 during summer has been found to originate from the NO_3 oxidation of biogenic VOCs in a previous study (Liu
271 et al., 2024). Additionally, a high level of organic nitrate contribution, up to 20% of the submicron nitrate, is
272 observed during wintertime of the JULIAC campaign in Figure 3, which is demonstrated to be related to the
273 NO_3 chemistry of anthropogenic VOCs, such as phenolics from residential heating (Liu et al., 2024).

274 The concentration of organosulfur is the highest in summer (JULIAC-III, up to $6 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$) (Figure 3), followed by
275 autumn (JULIAC-III, up to $2 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$). Previous studies have reported that the most abundant aerosol
276 organosulfur species are mainly derived from the oxidation of isoprene and monoterpenes (Wang et al., 2021a).
277 The strong correlation between organosulfur compounds and biogenic OOA during summer (JULIAC-III; see
278 Fig. S2) indicates that biogenic precursors also play a dominant role in formation of organosulfur compounds
279 during this period. In addition, the high consistency between the variation of biogenic OOA and organosulfur
280 concentrations, as well as the total surface and volume of aerosols detected by SMPS (Table S6), demonstrates
281 that multi-phase reactions involving SOA and sulfur dioxide (SO_2) are one potential pathway for organosulfur
282 formation during summer. A previous chamber experiment on organosulfur formation from multiphase reactions
283 (Yao et al., 2019) emphasizes the crucial role of aerosol liquid water content (ALWC) in regulating the reactive
284 uptake coefficient of SO_2 , ultimately influencing aerosol organosulfur formation. In our study, we observe
285 significantly higher organosulfur concentration during a summertime heatwave event. During the heatwave
286 event, despite a modest 10% decrease in relative humidity (RH), the ALWC increased by a factor of 2.3
287 compared to the summer period before the heatwave. This increase is likely driven by enhanced concentrations
288 of particulate sulfate, nitrate, and organics (Meng et al., 2024), which can contribute to greater aerosol
289 hygroscopicity and subsequently promote SO_2 uptake and organosulfur formation. More investigations of the
290 heatwave event will be discussed in Section 4.2. Figure 3 further illustrates that the mass fraction of
291 organosulfur to the total sulfate shows a high relative value of 20-31% during cold seasons (autumn and winter)
292 compared to values of 12-16% during warmer seasons (spring and summer). Numerous laboratory studies have
293 demonstrated that organosulfur can be produced through aqueous-phase oxidation of aromatic compounds in the
294 presence of inorganic sulfate (Wang et al., 2021b; Huang et al., 2020). The elevated ALWC and enhanced
295 continuous anthropogenic activities during colder seasons, such as residential heating (Section 4.1), may further
296 promote the aqueous-phase formation of organosulfur. However, further research is required to reach a
297 definitive conclusion.

298 The feasibility of the method used here to calculate the concentration of organosulfur (Section 2.3) has been
299 previously tested using data collected in several airborne field campaigns (Schueneman et al., 2021). Results
300 show that the decomposition and fragmentation of organosulfur are affected by multiple factors, particularly in
301 environments with high aerosol acidity or elevated concentrations of ammonium nitrate. The fragmentation
302 method for the determination of organosulfur concentrations exhibits high reliability only in a narrow range of
303 aerosol acidity ($\text{pH} > 0$) and a fraction of ammonium nitrate below 0.3. Figure 4 aims to evaluate the applicability
304 of the organosulfur method to the data derived during the JULIAC campaign. Study of (Schueneman et al.,
305 2021) shows that data points located in Figure 4 condition II (ammonium nitrate fraction < 0.3 and $\text{pH} > 0$, marked
306 by red dashed box) indicate the feasibility of organosulfur fragmentation methods for the corresponding



307 measurement period. During the winter of this study, at a relatively low aerosol pH (<0), only 43% of the
308 measurements fall within condition II. In contrast, during other seasons, 70% to 99% of the measurements
309 predominantly fall within condition II.



310

311 **Figure 4: Distribution of aerosol data points measured during the four seasons of the JULIAC campaign**
312 **for chemical conditions defined by the ammonium nitrate mass fraction (AN_i) and the pH predicted by**
313 **the Extended Aerosol Inorganics Model (E-AIM) as established by (Schueneman et al., 2021). The E-AIM**
314 **pH was estimated from the measured ammonium balance using HR-ToF-AMS via the empirical**
315 **calculation method introduced by (Schueneman et al., 2021). For all seasons, the fractions of data points**
316 **under the four conditions were calculated and displayed within the corresponding areas.**

317 4 Discussion

318 4.1 Overview of seasonal sources of organic aerosols

319

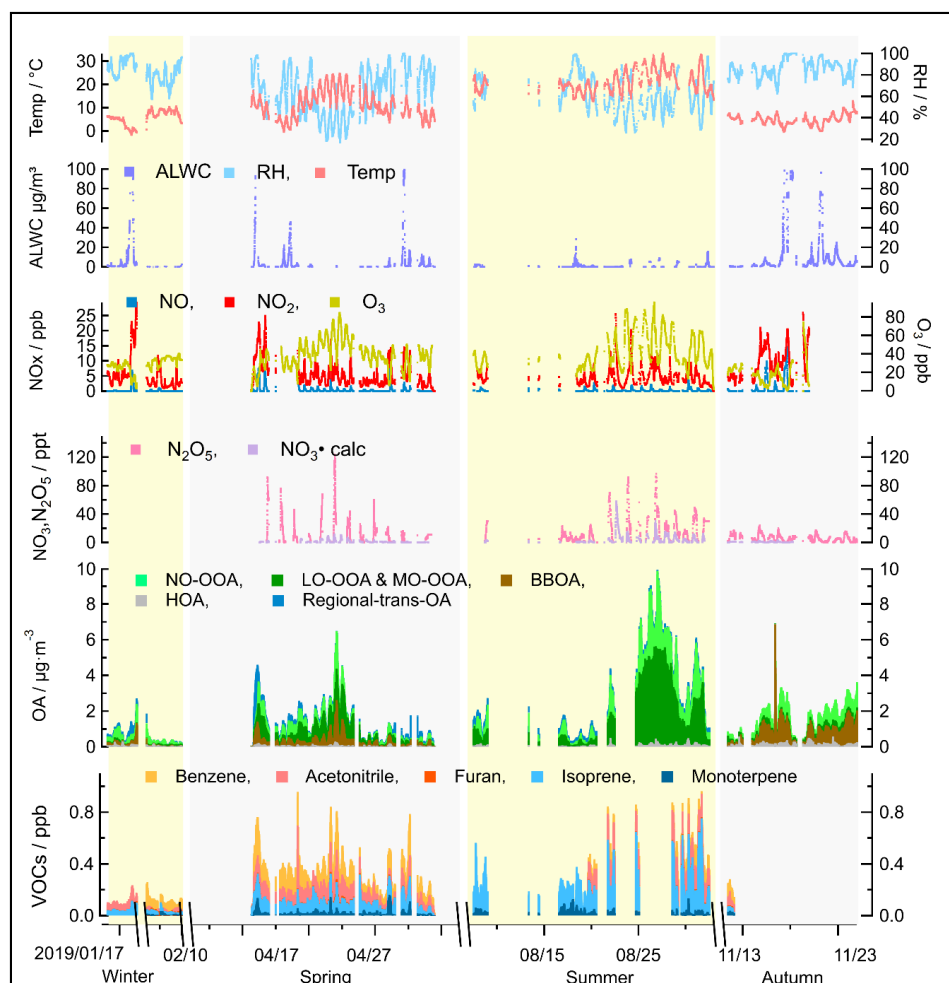


Figure 5: Overview of seasonal variations in source contributions derived from the PMF analysis of OA measurements, including supporting ambient measurements that can be used to identify sources, such as aerosol liquid water content (ALWC), trace gas concentrations (VOCs, O₃, NO_x, N₂O₅, NO₃ radicals), and meteorological parameters (temperature and RH), measured during the JULIAC campaign.

The seasonal variations of meteorological parameters (e.g., RH, wind conditions) and various tracers, including VOCs (e.g., monoterpenes, furan), radicals, trace gases (e.g., NO, NO₂, CO), are displayed in Figure 5. For the OA concentrations, the contributions of identified OA sources are illustrated. The comprehensive measurements enhance and strengthen the accuracy of the identification of primary OA sources and improve the understanding of the dominant mechanisms driving secondary OA formation (Liu et al., 2024).

Overall, secondary OA formation, consisting of low oxidized OOA (LO-OOA), more oxidized OOA (MO-OOA), and nocturnal oxidized OOA (NO-OOA), dominates the OA mass in most seasons, contributing 46% to



88% of total OA (Figure 5, Figure 6). The only exception was observed in autumn, when primary emissions, particularly from biomass-burning, became more abundant. Nighttime SOA formation via NO_3 -initiated oxidation, represented by NO-OOA, accounts for 21% to 48% of the total OA, highlighting the importance of nocturnal oxidation processes (Liu et al., 2024). The balance of daytime (LO-OOA, MO-OOA) and nighttime (NO-OOA) oxidation varies seasonally, reflecting shifts in the dominant OA formation pathways. In summer, daytime biogenic oxidation processes dominate, contributing more than 50% of the OA mass. Conversely, during colder periods such as autumn and winter, nighttime oxidation surpasses daytime oxidation, indicating a stronger influence of nocturnal pathways. Primary and secondary OA related to biomass-burning sources comprise 83% of the total OA mass during autumn. This emphasizes the need for emission control measures targeting biomass-burning, especially with respect to residential heating and industrial activities (Section 4.1.1) to improve air quality in autumn and winter. The seasonal changes of OA source factors are displayed in the space of fCO_2^+ (fragment fraction of CO_2^+ in OA) vs $\text{fC}_2\text{H}_3\text{O}^+$ (fragment fraction of $\text{C}_2\text{H}_3\text{O}^+$ in OA) as shown in Figure 6, complemented by a correlation analysis of the source spectra (Table S2-S4). Primary emissions, represented by HOA and BBOA, cluster at low fCO_2^+ and low $\text{fC}_2\text{H}_3\text{O}^+$ values, similar to primary source characteristics reported in previous studies (Sun et al., 2012; Zhang et al., 2015; Crippa et al., 2013; Chen et al., 2015). Seasonal variability in biomass-burning emissions is evident from the scattered distribution of BBOA (Section 4.1.1). For secondary sources, LO-OOA factors found during spring and summer have higher $\text{fC}_2\text{H}_3\text{O}^+$ but lower fCO_2^+ than the MO-OOA factors in winter and autumn, which implies biogenic derived SOA formation during spring and summer (Canonaco et al., 2015). For nocturnal oxidation sources, NO-OOA factors cluster closely in the fCO_2^+ vs. $\text{fC}_2\text{H}_3\text{O}^+$ space in spring, autumn and winter, while summer NO-OOA exhibits the highest $\text{fC}_2\text{H}_3\text{O}^+$ and lowest fCO_2^+ values. The distinct oxidation level of summer NO-OOA, as discussed by (Liu et al., 2024), is attributed to biogenic precursors driving NO_3 -initiated oxidation in summer, in contrast to biomass-burning emissions being the precursors in the other seasons.

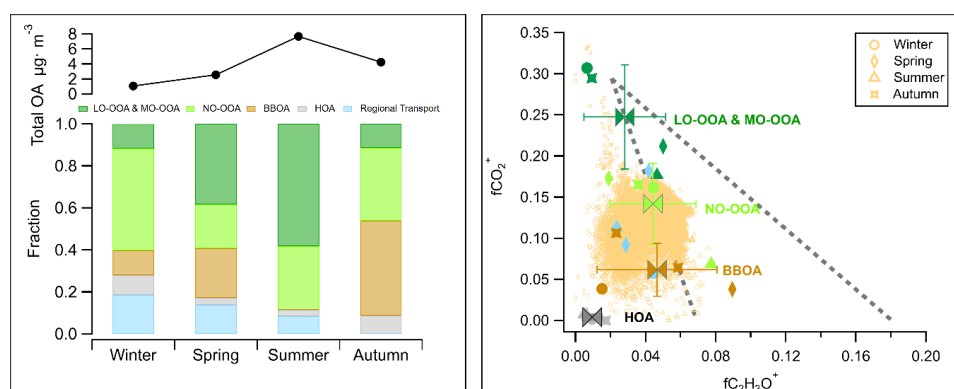


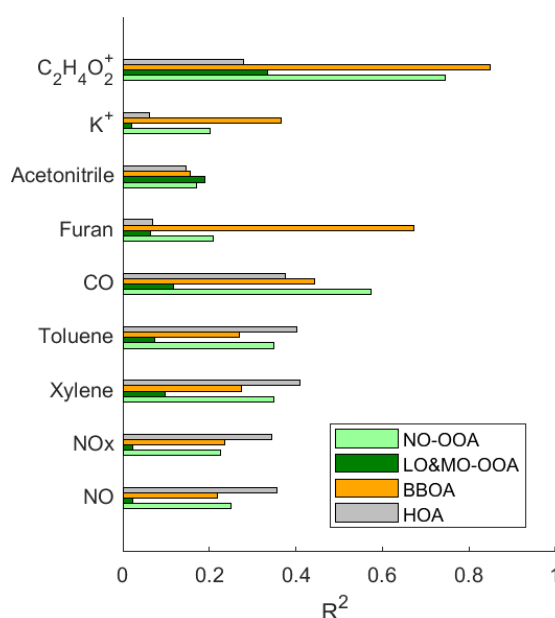
Figure 6: Left panel: Comparison of the average total mass concentration of organic aerosol measured by HR-ToF-AMS and the mass fraction of primary and secondary sources' contributions to OA during the JULIAC campaign. Right panel: fCO_2^+ (fraction of fragment CO_2^+ in OA) vs $\text{fC}_2\text{H}_3\text{O}^+$ (fraction of fragment $\text{C}_2\text{H}_3\text{O}^+$ in OA) for all organic aerosols during the JULIAC campaign (small yellow dots). The OA source factors (including LO-OOA, MO-OOA, NO-OOA, BBOA, HOA, and regional transport



factors) resolved by PMF during each season are shown in fCO_2^+ vs $\text{fC}_2\text{H}_3\text{O}^+$ space (the marker types representing the different seasons, the marker color stands for factor type). Mean values and standard deviations for these four types of source factors are also displayed. The coarser dashed lines represent the f44/f43 distribution triangular region of ambient OOA factors reported in (Ng et al., 2010), where f44/f43 corresponds to the mass to charge ratio of CO_2^+ (m/z 44) to $\text{C}_2\text{H}_3\text{O}^+$ (m/z 43).

4.1.1 Primary emissions of organic aerosol

The HOA factors show the lowest O:C ratios (0.03-0.13) and the highest H:C ratios (1.61-2.1) among all source factors identified in the JULIAC campaign (Fig. S3-6), consistent with previous results (DeCarlo et al., 2010; Mohr et al., 2012; Crippa et al., 2013; Sun et al., 2016). A comparison of the HOA spectra with previous studies is presented in Table S2, showing high correlation coefficients (R^2 ranging from 0.72 to 0.99) and θ , the angular distance between unit mass spectra vectors (Kostenidou et al., 2009), between 12.8° and 33.1° , which confirms the robustness of the method to identify HOA in this study. The diurnal pattern of the HOA factor shows a significant peak during the morning rush hour, indicating that traffic exhaust is the primary source. In Figure 7, the HOA factor shows the highest correlation coefficients with the traffic emission tracer gases compared to other factors, with R^2 values of 0.36 for NO , 0.35 for NO_x , 0.41 for toluene, and 0.40 for xylene. Additionally, the diurnal variations of these traffic emission tracer gases are well correlated with the variation of HOA (Fig. S7), which further supports our conclusion that the HOA source mainly represents the OA contribution from traffic emissions.



379

380 **Figure 7: Cross-correlation R^2 of major organic aerosol sources among tracer gases of car exhaust (NO ,**
381 **NO_x , xylene, toluene), trace gases of combustion and biomass-burning (CO , furan, acetonitrile), and**



382 **characteristic aerosol fragments of biomass-burning (K^+ , $C_2H_4O_2^+$). OA regional transport factors are not**
383 **shown due to their extremely low correlation with all primary emission tracers.**

384 Characteristic fragments $C_2H_4O_2^+$ (m/z 60) and $C_3H_5O_2^+$ (m/z 73) are well-established indicators for biomass-
385 burning in AMS mass spectra (Simoneit et al., 1999; Alfarra et al., 2007). In this study, these ion mass signals
386 are prominently detected in the BBOA factor spectrum. Furthermore, the BBOA time series aligns closely with
387 the time series of fragment $C_2H_4O_2^+$ (m/z 60) during the whole JULIAC campaign, showing the highest
388 correlation coefficient of $R^2 = 0.85$ (Figure 7). In addition, the correlation coefficients between the time series of
389 the OA factors and the biomass-burning tracers, such as furan (Akherati et al., 2020; Coggon et al., 2016) and
390 aerosol potassium (K^+) (Li et al., 2003; Yu et al., 2018; Zhang et al., 2013; Tao et al., 2014) for are shown in
391 Fig. 7. The BBOA factor exhibits a significantly higher correlation value with all mentioned tracers than other
392 primary sources (HOA) and secondary sources (LO-OOA and MO-OOA), supporting its identification as
393 BBOA. The BBOA factors show a lower O:C ratio (0.28 to 0.36) than the OOA factors but a higher ratio than
394 the HOA factors, consistent with previously reported BBOA oxidation levels (Mohr et al., 2012; DeCarlo et al.,
395 2010; Aiken et al., 2009). The high-resolution BBOA spectra from prior studies (Mohr et al., 2012; Hu et al.,
396 2013) are similar to the BBOA spectra from each JULIAC phase (Table S3). The BBOA identified in this study
397 closely resembles findings from (Hu et al., 2013), with R^2 ranging from 0.76 to 0.94 and θ from 14.2° to 27.9° ,
398 confirming the BBOA factor identification.

399 As mentioned above, BBOA source factors show seasonal differences (Figure 6), suggesting distinct types of
400 biomass-burning during each season. The BBOA factor observed in spring is also associated with a different
401 type of biomass-burning, as indicated by the high $fC_2H_3O^+$ ratio (Fig. 6). This is confirmed to be related to the
402 regional transport of wildfire emissions (Section 4.1.3.2). The most abundant OA contribution from biomass-
403 burning is found in autumn, with two distinct BBOA sources identified, which are likely related to residual
404 heating and nearby emissions from the sugar factory, which have active production of sugar only during the
405 autumn phase. Some industries in Germany, such as sugar factories, are adopting biomass fuels like beet pulp to
406 reduce fossil fuel use and achieve climate-neutral production by 2040 (Insight, 2023). This shift is part of a
407 broader energy transition that includes biomass burning as an alternative energy source (Lipäinen et al., 2022;
408 Bataille, 2020). These changes are expected to affect anthropogenic emissions and, in turn, atmospheric
409 chemistry.

410 **4.1.2 Secondary formation of organic aerosol**

411 In this study, LO-OOA is predominantly observed during spring and summer, while MO-OOA is dominant
412 during autumn and winter (Fig. S3-6). Both LO-OOA and MO-OOA spectra exhibited strong contributions from
413 fragments at m/z 44 (with the signal at m/z 28 assumed to be equal to that at m/z 44 (Aiken et al., 2008)), with
414 dominant ion families C_xH_yO and $C_xH_yO_z$ ($z > 1$). The oxidation degrees of LO-OOA and MO-OOA are the
415 highest among OA sources in all seasons, with O:C ratios ranging from 0.7 to 1.0, comparable to previous
416 studies (Hu et al., 2013; Xu et al., 2015c; Sun et al., 2016; Dai et al., 2019). The high-resolution mass spectra of
417 LO-OOA and MO-OOA identified in this study can be compared with those of prior source apportionment
418 studies (Mohr et al., 2012; Crippa et al., 2013; Hayes et al., 2013; Hu et al., 2013; Hu et al., 2015), with R^2 0.93
419 - 0.99 and θ ranging from 5.9° to 15.7° . The highest similarity is observed with the results of (Hu et al., 2013).



LO-OOA and MO-OOA are the only source factors showing distinct diurnal peaks around noon (Fig. S3–S6), a pattern characteristic of secondary organic aerosol formed through photochemical processes. High correlations between O_3 and LO-OOA or MO-OOA time series are observed during the warmer seasons, specifically in spring and summer, with R^2 values of 0.56 and 0.71, respectively. Therefore, the LO-OOA and MO-OOA factors identified during the JULIAC campaign are mainly dominated by daytime oxidation processes.

The NO-OOA factor resolved in this study is attributed to nocturnal OOA formation dominated by NO_3 chemistry, with the O:C ratios varying from 0.39 to 0.91 depending on the seasonal precursors, biogenic VOCs, particularly monoterpenes in summer, and biomass-burning emissions in the colder seasons. (Liu et al., 2024). The potential phase partitioning, nocturnal boundary layer development, and various reaction pathways (such as ozonolysis, aqueous phase reactions, and NO_3 chemistry) have been thoroughly discussed in the study of (Liu et al., 2024). That study has introduced an improved source apportionment method, using PMF analysis of aerosol organic and nitrate bulk measurements to differentiate between the OOA formed from nocturnal and daytime oxidation. Also, the NO-OOA factor shows typical characteristics, such as a higher ion intensity fraction of nitrate fragments ($NO^+ + NO_2^+$) normalized to the total ion intensity ($f(NO^+ + NO_2^+) > 0.1$) and higher nitrogen to carbon ratios (N:C, 0.05–0.15) than the OOA formed from daytime oxidation (LO-OOA and MO-OOA). High OA mass fractions of NO-OOA (21%–48%) highlight a significant formation via NO_3 -initiated nocturnal oxidation in all seasons.

Overall, secondary OA sources, represented by OOA factors (LO-OOA, MO-OOA, NO-OOA), contribute 46%–88% of the total OA mass throughout the campaign. Seasonal variations in the relative contributions of daytime (LO-OOA, MO-OOA) and nighttime (NO-OOA) oxidation pathways show that OOA formation is dominated by daytime oxidation of biogenic VOCs in summer, while in the other seasons, nocturnal oxidation surpasses daytime oxidation (MO-OOA) and predominates OOA formation.

4.1.3 Regional transport effect on organic aerosol

In this study, OA transport events are identified by a PMF analysis. These events are air masses originating from marine regions or wildfires. The regional influences inferred from source factor characteristics align well with trajectory model results, further supporting the PMF analysis as an appropriate method for resolving regional transport events. However, the PMF analysis becomes less effective under conditions of persistent and strong regional influence. For instance, during autumn, sustained strong winds can create a continuous influx of regional air masses, leading to a more homogeneous aerosol composition. This continuity reduces the variability needed for PMF to distinguish between distinct sources or transport patterns. Additional discussion on the regional transport of OA is provided below.

4.1.3.1 Regional transport from the marine area

The OA contribution from regional transport of the marine area is attributed during spring (JULIAC-II) and summer (JULIAC-III) to the MSA-OA source factor. As shown in Figure 8, the MSA-OA factor contains typical marker fragments: $CH_3SO_2^+$ (m/z 44.98), $CH_2SO_2^+$ (m/z 77.98), $CH_3SO_2^+$ (m/z 78.99), and $CH_4SO_3^+$ (m/z 95.99). Among these fragments, $CH_3SO_2^+$ is regarded to be a characteristic fragment for the MSA containing ambient aerosols and has been reported as the most abundant organosulfur ion in the MSA-OA factor profile in



previous studies (Zorn et al., 2008; Huang et al., 2017). The MSA-OA factor in this study shows a high similarity in the marker fragments as well as in the full mass spectrum ($R^2=0.84$) with the MSA-OA factor resolved by (Schlag et al., 2017). We also find the ion fragment CH_3S^+ (m/z 47.00) in the MSA-OA factor, which has been mentioned in (Schmale et al., 2013). The low intensity of the CH_3S^+ (m/z 47.00) ion mass signal may be one possible reason why it has not been reported frequently so far and is not commonly considered a stable marker ion.

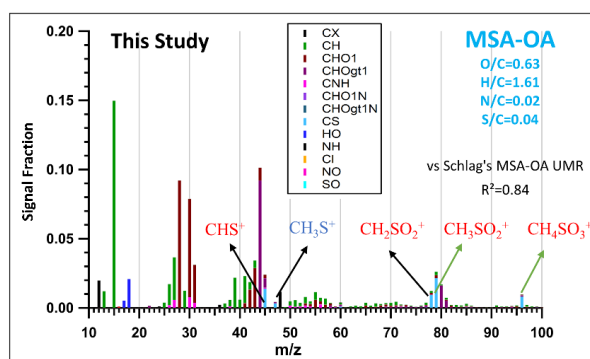
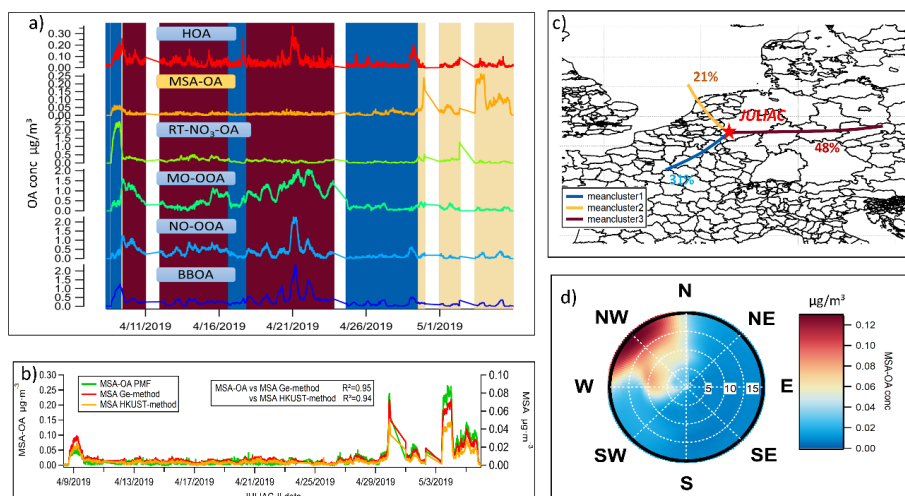


Figure 8: MSA-OA factor profile of this study. Typical MSA marker fragments: CHS^+ (m/z 44.98), CH_3S^+ (m/z 47.00), CH_2SO_2^+ (m/z 77.98), CH_3SO_2^+ (m/z 78.99), and CH_4SO_3^+ (m/z 95.99) are highlighted in the factor profile. Normalized ion attribution is colored by corresponding ion family groups, and elemental ratios (O/C, H/C, N/C, S/C) of the MSA-OA factor are also marked in the graph. The y-axis presents the ion signal intensity fraction.

In Figure 9 c), 24-hour back-trajectories (yellow) show a fast air mass transport from marine areas to the measurement site, which occurred 21% of the time during spring (JULIAC-II). During this time, the concentration of the MSA-OA factor increases while the contributions of other sources remain low and stable. The polar diagram in Figure 9 d) shows that high MSA-OA concentrations ($>0.1 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$) are associated with high wind speeds ($>10 \text{ m/s}$) originating from the northwest, which align well with the marine origin trajectory. Additionally, the time series of the aerosol MSA is calculated using two different characteristic ion methodologies (Ge et al., 2012; Huang et al., 2015) (Figure 9 b), which also shows good agreement with the variations of MSA-OA factor, with a correlation coefficient $R^2=0.95$ for MSA-OA vs MSA (Ge method, (Ge et al., 2012) and 0.94 for MSA-OA vs MSA (HKUST method, (Huang et al., 2015)). Because the MSA-OA factor is not only composed of MSA but also contains other organic fragments, the concentration level of the MSA-OA factor is around 3 times higher than the concentration of the aerosol MSA. Overall, this comparison supports the influence of marine transport at this inland site.



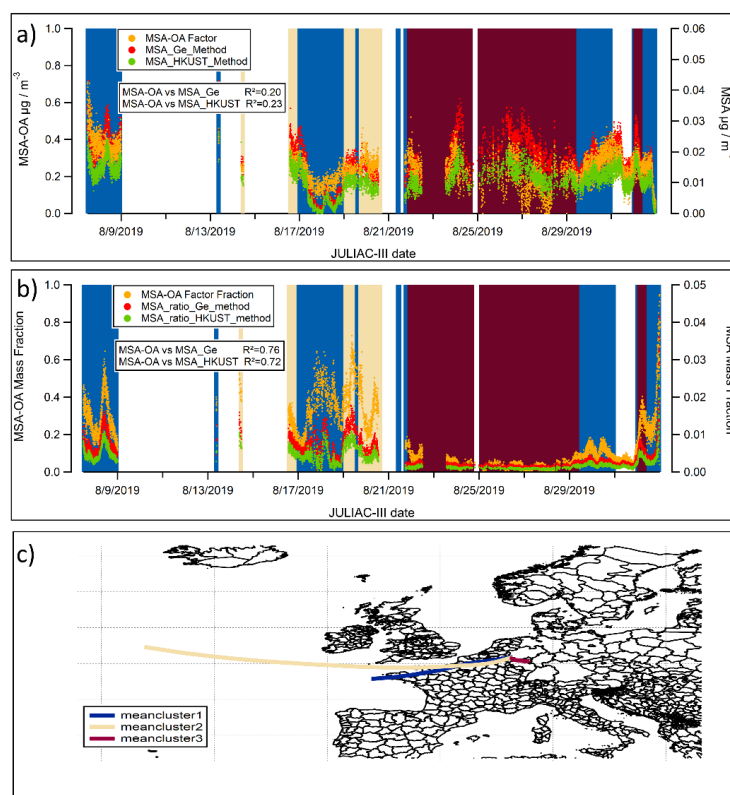
481

482 **Figure 9: a) Time series of all source factors of OA resolved by the PMF analysis during spring (JULIAC-**
483 **II) with the background color corresponding to different clusters of the 24-hour back-trajectories (of**
484 **panel c); b) Comparison of MSA variations calculated using the Ge method (Ge et al., 2012) and the**
485 **HKUST method (Huang et al., 2015), and the contribution variation of MSA-OA source resolved by PMF**
486 **during spring (JULIAC-II). c) Clusters of 24-hour back-trajectories simulated by HYSPLIT4 during**
487 **spring (JULIAC-II) at the Jülich site, with the proportion of each trajectory cluster marked. d) Polar**
488 **diagram of MSA-OA concentration during spring, based on non-parametric wind regressions. The wind**
489 **speeds are shown as the radius with the unit of m/s.**

490 In contrast, during summer (JULIAC-III), the contribution of the MSA-OA factor and the calculated
491 concentration of MSA (using the Ge and HKUST methods) both increase during periods when air masses are
492 not transported from marine areas (Figure 10a). The corresponding 72-hour back trajectory cluster (Figure 10c)
493 shows a slow movement of air masses or relatively steady conditions of the local atmosphere in summer,
494 suggesting that local emissions are the dominant influence at the site during this period. Additionally, poor
495 agreement of the time series in calculated MSA and MSA-OA factors is also shown, with an R^2 value of
496 approximately 0.2. The strong local formation of organosulfur during summer (Figure 3) may complicate the
497 identification of MSA and potentially introduce a bias. Another possibility is the existence of unidentified
498 terrestrial sources for aerosol MSA formation, as suggested by previous studies (Zhou et al., 2017; Young et al.,
499 2016; Ge et al., 2012), though the mechanisms remain unclear and warrant further investigation. However, using
500 the mass fraction of MSA-OA normalized to the total OA and the mass fraction of MSA normalized to the total
501 aerosol leads to notable differences in the results. In Figure 10 b, the variations in MSA-OA and MSA mass
502 fractions show an increasing trend in their similarity ($R^2 = 0.72-0.76$) and exhibit better agreement with the
503 back trajectory analysis. In conclusion, the observed increase in the MSA-OA concentration during the non-
504 marine-transported period in summer could be attributed to a methodological bias or a potential unknown



505 formation pathway of MSA. Compared to their absolute concentration, the mass fraction of the MSA-OA factor
506 serves as a more reliable indicator of marine transport influences, especially during summer.



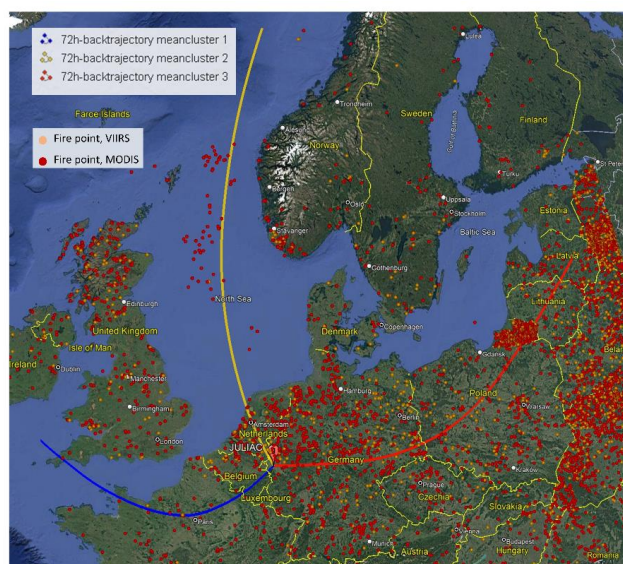
507
508 **Figure 10: a) Time series of the contribution of the MSA-OA factor and the concentrations of calculated**
509 **MSA using the Ge and HKUST methods during the summer (JULIAC-III), with background colors**
510 **matching the corresponding back-trajectory clusters; b) Mass fraction of the MSA-OA factor**
511 **(normalized to the aerosol organic mass) and MSA (normalized to the total aerosol mass) calculated using**
512 **the Ge and HKUST methods during the summer (JULIAC-III); c) Clusters of 72-hour back-trajectories**
513 **during the summer (JULIAC-III), simulated by HYSPLIT4.**

514 4.1.3.2 Regional transport of wildfire plumes from the Russian area

515 A regional transport event of wildfire plumes during spring is confirmed using source apportionment analysis
516 coupled with the analysis of 72-h back trajectories (an extension of the previous 24-h back trajectory) and the
517 hotspot data from MODIS (Aqua & Terra) with a resolution of 1 km and VIIRS (S-NPP, NOAA-20 & NOAA-
518 21) with a resolution of 375 m, provided by the Fire Information for Resource Management System (FIRMS) of
519 NASA (Figure 11). Concentrated fire events are observed during spring in the Russian region and affect this
520 study area via long-distance transport. During this time, BBOA concentrations peak in spring. This further
521 confirms that the BBOA in spring is primarily influenced by the regional transport of fire emissions. The high
522 frequency of fires in Russia during spring is consistent with the results of previous studies on the occurrence of



523 Russian wildfires (Kharuk and Ponomarev, 2017). As discussed previously (Liu et al., 2024), the nocturnal
524 OOA formation during spring is predominantly driven by nitrate radical (NO_3) chemistry of biomass-burning
525 emissions. Consequently, the primary organic aerosol and secondary organic aerosol (SOA) linked to the
526 regional transport of wildfire plumes contribute to approximately half of the total organic aerosol (OA) observed
527 during spring. This highlights wildfire emissions transport as a key factor influencing the atmospheric
528 conditions at the site during spring.



529
530 **Figure 11: Trajectory clusters (yellow, blue, and red lines) of the 72-hour back-trajectories simulated by**
531 **HYSPLIT4 at the measurement site in Jülich during spring (JULIAC-II). Hotspot counts during spring**
532 **are shown as yellow (VIIRS) and red (MODIS) dots, provided by the Fire Information for Resource**
533 **Management System (FIRMS) of NASA (accessible at <https://firms.modaps.eosdis.nasa.gov/>). Map**
534 **background © Google Earth, image © 2025 Maxar Technologies.**



4.1.3.3 Seasonal variability of regional contributions to aerosols

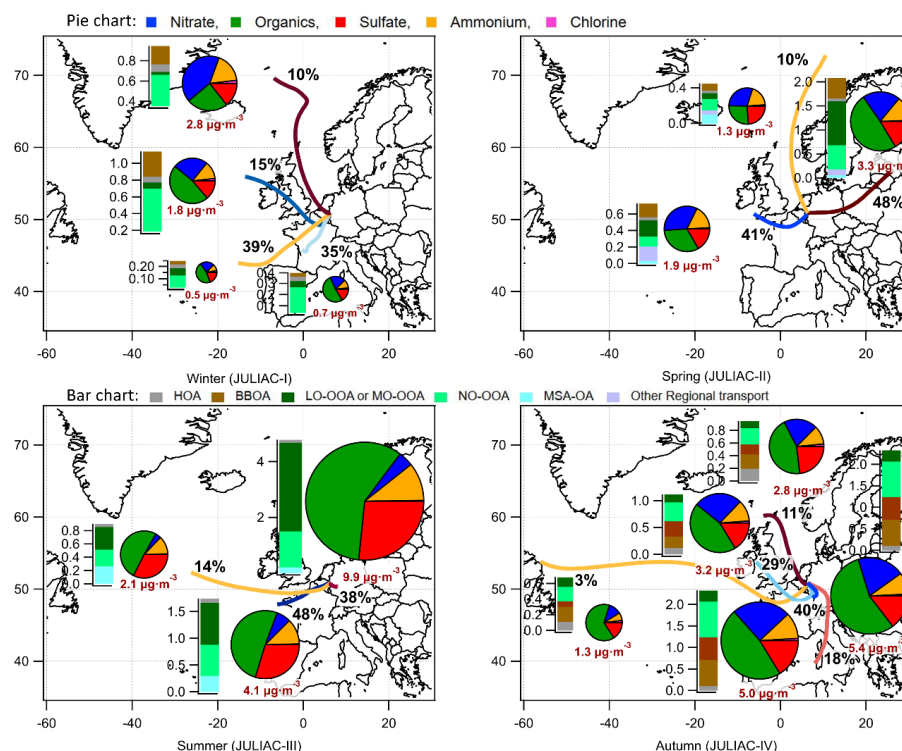


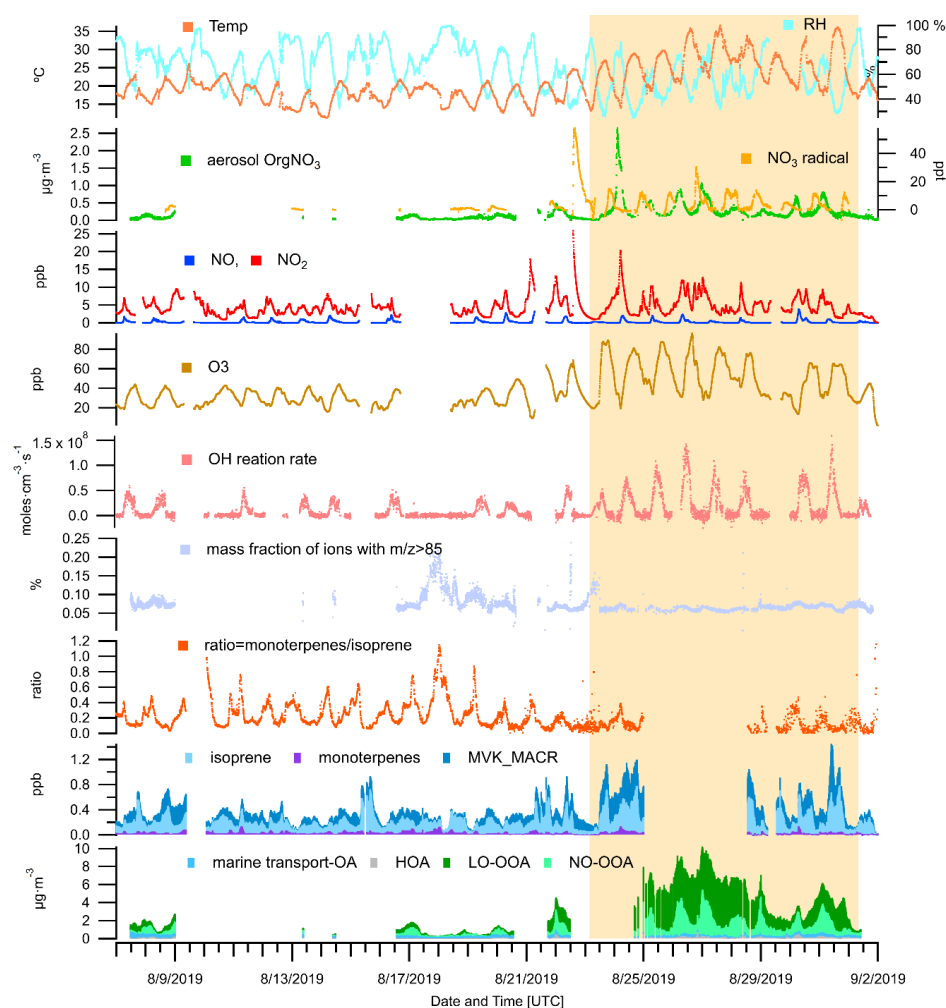
Figure 12: Trajectory clusters representing 72-hour back-trajectories simulated by HYSPLIT4 for each season at the Jülich site, annotated with the frequency proportions of each respective cluster. Additionally, the average composition and concentration of submicron aerosols, together with the average source contributions of organics derived from PMF analysis, are presented for each corresponding cluster period.

To further understand the effect of long-range transport on the aerosol composition at the site, the back-trajectory clusters combined with the average aerosol composition and source contributions of organics during the corresponding cluster periods are analyzed. As shown in Figure 12, more than half of the long-range transport plumes originate from the west of the site. During the periods influenced by transport from these directions, the total aerosol mass consistently shows a clear decrease compared to the periods dominated by local emissions in each season, implying a general cleansing effect for the aerosol level at the site by regional transport. The only exception occurred in winter (JULIAC-I), when the aerosol mass reaches a maximum due to regional influences from air masses originating in the northwest, with an enhanced mass fraction of nitrate and an increased BBOA contribution. A clear increase in the contributions of sulfate is also observed when trajectories originate from marine regions. This increase is accompanied by a rise in the MSA-OA fraction, which is associated with the enhanced activity of phytoplankton and anaerobic bacteria in the ocean during summer, the primary natural sources of sulfur-containing compounds (Charlson et al., 1987). A similar increase in sulfate and MSA-OA is observed during spring for marine-origin transport but is absent in colder seasons.



555 This suggests that the seasonal activity of phytoplankton and anaerobic bacteria plays a significant role in
556 modulating the influence of marine regional transport. In conclusion, regional influences are highly diverse,
557 affected not only by the source regions but also by the seasonal variations in biogenic and anthropogenic activity
558 within these regions.

559 4.2 Heatwave-induced changes in the formation of OOA



560

561 **Figure 13: An overview of OA source contributions, ambient measurements of trace gases (VOCs, O₃,**
562 **NO_x, N₂O₅, NO₃ radicals), meteorological parameters (temperature and RH), and calculated parameters**
563 **are provided for the JULIAC summer period. The calculated parameters include the OH reaction rate**



564 **(derived from measured OH concentrations and OH reactivity), the mass fraction of ions with $m/z > 85$ in**
565 **OA measured by the ToF-AMS, and the concentration ratio of monoterpenes to isoprene. The period of**
566 **the heatwave event observed in summer is highlighted with a yellow background.**

567 A previous chamber study (Mentel et al., 2013) has demonstrated that heat and drought stress can reduce
568 monoterpenes emissions, thereby suppressing biogenic OOA formation. In this study, a decrease in
569 monoterpene concentrations is observed during a heatwave event, with the average levels dropping to 60% of
570 the pre-heatwave values (Figure 13). Conversely, isoprene concentration increases by a factor of 1.4, leading to a
571 substantial shift in the monoterpene-to-isoprene concentration ratio, which decreases from 0.24 to 0.11 during
572 the heatwave event. Despite the reduced monoterpene concentrations, no suppression of biogenic OOA
573 formation is observed. On the contrary, total biogenic OOA mass increases notably during the heatwave, with
574 the contribution of LO-OOA rising by a factor of 5 and NO-OOA by a factor of 3. This suggests that, beyond
575 changes in biogenic emissions, other atmospheric processes induced by the heatwave conditions play a critical
576 role in enhancing the OOA formation.

577 The increase of the atmospheric oxidation potential during heatwave events, triggered by elevated temperatures,
578 low humidity, and intense radiation, has been reported in previous studies (Desai et al., 2024; Zhang et al.,
579 2024). This phenomenon is primarily reflected in the rise of the concentration of oxidants and the reaction rate
580 of BVOCs. In this study, a similar rise in atmospheric oxidation capacity is suggested by the observed increases
581 in O_3 and NO_3 concentrations, as well as the total reaction rate of OH (Cho et al., 2022), as shown in Figure 13.
582 Consequently, the enhanced formation of OOA from both daytime (LO-OOA) and nighttime (NO-OOA)
583 chemistry may be linked to this increased atmospheric oxidation potential. Additionally, the observed decrease
584 in monoterpene concentrations could be partially attributed to their faster oxidation in the presence of high
585 oxidant levels.

586 In addition, the changes in OA properties during the heatwave event are examined to assess whether shifts in the
587 dominant SOA formation pathways occurred. Figure 14 compares the average OA composition before and
588 during the heatwave, revealing a noticeable decrease in the fraction of ions with $m/z > 85$ relative to total ions
589 during the heatwave. This decline occurs sharply at the onset of the heatwave event, as shown in Fig. 13.
590 Additionally, although the fraction of CO_2^+ ions increases during the heatwave, the average O/C ratio of OA
591 remains relatively stable (0.57 before and 0.59 during the heatwave). This suggests that the shift of OA
592 composition is not driven by the increased fragmentation of highly oxygenated OA. Previous studies have used
593 the fraction of ions with $m/z > 85$ as an indicator for the abundance of oligomers in SOA (Faust et al., 2017;
594 Liggio and Li, 2006; Riva et al., 2019). The rapid formation of highly oxygenated organic molecules (HOM)
595 from the oxidation of BVOCs, primarily monoterpenes, is a well-known pathway for biogenic SOA formation
596 (Bianchi et al., 2019). In addition, isoprene has been reported to suppress HOM formation and subsequent SOA
597 production by OH scavenging (McFiggans et al., 2019). However, in this study, a co-increase of isoprene and
598 OOA is observed during the heatwave. As shown in Fig. 14, the isoprene-derived SOA tracer ion, $C_5H_8O^+$ (m/z
599 82) (Hu et al., 2015), increases in the OA during the heatwave event, with the mass fraction varying from 1.7‰
600 to 4‰ (Fig. S10). When source apportionment is conducted separately for the periods before and during the
601 heatwave, the increase in $C_5H_8O^+$ (m/z 82) within LO-OOA is more pronounced (Fig. S8). These findings
602 suggest a potential shift in the SOA formation pathways during the heatwave, where isoprene may play a role in



the aerosol formation and growth. Additionally, particulate organic nitrates and organosulfates both reach their annual maximum during the heatwave period (Figure 3). These findings highlight the need for further investigations of the atmospheric chemistry during heatwaves. A combination of gas- and aerosol-phase molecular measurements could provide new insights into the potential impacts of extreme heat events on SOA formation in the ambient atmosphere.

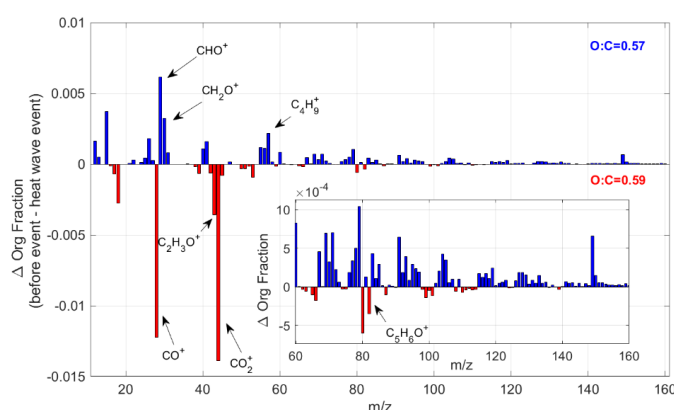


Figure 14: The change in the average organic signal mass fraction, normalized to total OA mass, between pre-heatwave and heatwave periods. The insert window shows the detailed mass spectrum difference at regions of higher molecular weight with $m/z > 60$. The blue color bar shows the ion peaks, which have a higher intensity before the heatwave event, while the red color bar represents the ions enhanced during the heatwave event.

5 Conclusion

The 2019 Jülich Atmospheric Chemistry Project (JULIAC) campaign conducted continuous measurements of submicron aerosol composition, trace gases, and atmospheric conditions at a rural site in Germany during four seasons. Ambient air was sampled from a height of 50 m into the SAPHIR atmospheric simulation chamber, ensuring that all connected instruments sampled the same air and minimizing influence from local emissions. This study indicates that organic aerosols dominated the submicron aerosol composition throughout the year, comprising 39%-58% of the aerosol mass, followed by sulfate (16%-26%) and nitrate (5%-26%). Peak organic nitrate concentrations occur in summer, contributing up to 62% of the bulk nitrate, driven by nocturnal NO_3 oxidation. Organosulfur compounds reach their maximum concentrations in summer, likely driven by biogenic formation pathways. Interestingly, organosulfur also contributes significantly to the bulk aerosol sulfate (20% - 31%) during winter and autumn, though their source remains uncertain and requires further investigation.

As the major compound of submicron aerosol, organic aerosol (OA) shows distinct seasonal variations in both mass and chemical properties. The highest OA concentrations with the lowest oxidation levels occur during summer. In contrast, autumn and winter exhibit lower OA concentrations but higher oxidation degrees, with a



more pronounced nocturnal increase in OA concentration. Seasonal source apportionment analysis reveals that over 80% of OA mass originates from secondary OA (SOA) formed via both daytime and nighttime oxidation of biogenic emissions during summer. In contrast, OA is dominated by biomass-burning sources during autumn and winter, with primary OA and related SOA formation of biomass-burning sources contributing 60% to 83% of OA mass. Traffic emissions are found to be a minor OA source throughout the year (3%-10%). These findings suggest that effective air quality mitigation during the cold season should focus on controlling biomass-burning emissions, such as those from residential heating and industrial activities. In addition, the enhancement of SOA formation during the heatwave is attributed to increased atmospheric oxidation potential, driven by elevated oxidant levels (O_3 , NO_3 , and OH). A shift in SOA formation pathways during the heatwave, potentially influenced by isoprene chemistry, is also observed. These findings highlight the need for further investigation into heatwave-induced changes in atmospheric composition, particularly using molecular-level measurements.

This study examines the seasonal influence of regional transport on aerosol composition. While summer aerosol composition is primarily driven by local emissions and biogenic SOA formation, regional transport significantly influences the colder seasons. OA mass contributions from regional transport sources (marine, wildfire) resolved by source apportionment align well with back trajectory model results, suggesting that source apportionment is a more robust framework than traditional tracer-based methods for interpreting regional influences. Overall, the influence of regional transport at this site generally led to a decrease in total aerosol concentration, except in winter. Notably, identical regional transport pathways exhibit distinct seasonal impacts. For instance, marine plumes contribute clearly to OA only in warmer seasons, driven by enhanced phytoplankton and anaerobic bacterial activity.

Code and data availability

The data used in this study are available from the Jülich DATA platform (<https://doi.org/10.26165/JUELICH-DATA/TPPXNL>).

Author Contributions

AH designed the JULIAC campaign and coordinated its execution together with TH, HF, and FH. LL conducted the aerosol measurements, performed data analysis, and drafted the manuscript. All co-authors contributed to data processing and provided valuable input through extensive discussions during the manuscript preparation.

Competing interests

At least one of the (co-)authors is a member of the editorial board of Atmospheric Chemistry and Physics.

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