



NASA'S SWIFT SATELLITE - A MULTI-WAVELENGTH SPACE-BASED OBSERVATORY MAKING OBSERVATIONS ABOUT GAMMA-RAY BURST (GRB) SCIENCE - RECORDS THE X-RAY AFTERGLOW OF AN EVENT CALLED GRB090423, THE MOST DISTANT COSMIC EXPLOSION EVER SEEN

GRB090423 originates from very far in the past: it is the burst of a dying star, one that occurred when the universe was just 630 million years old, less than 5% what it is now. Gamma-ray bursts are the most luminous explosions in the universe. However, because the universe's perpetual expansion turns all "optical emissions" beyond a certain distance into infrared wavelengths, the lack of visible light seen by SWIFT suggests from just how far away/long ago this explosion came. SWIFT captured the event using its infrared/optical and x-ray telescopes. Ground-based telescopes following the event after SWIFT's discovery were used to calculate GRB090423's origin: 13.035 billion light-years away.

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