

GRB 060117: Reverse + forward shock solution^(*)

M. JELÍNEK⁽¹⁾(**), M. PROUZA⁽²⁾(⁽³⁾)(***), P. KUBÁNEK⁽¹⁾, R. HUDEC⁽⁴⁾,
M. NEKOLA⁽⁴⁾, J. ŘÍDKÝ⁽³⁾(***), and J. GRYGAR⁽³⁾(***)

⁽¹⁾ *Instituto de Astrofísica de Andalucía - 180 08 Granada, Spain*

⁽²⁾ *Nevis Institute and Department of Physics, Columbia University
New York, NY 10027, USA*

⁽³⁾ *Fyzikální ústav AV ČR - Na Slovance 2, Praha 8,*

⁽⁴⁾ *Astronomický ústav AV ČR - Fričova 298, Ondřejov, Czech Republic*

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Summary. — We present a discovery and observation of an extraordinarily bright prompt optical emission of the GRB 060117 obtained by a wide-field camera atop the robotic telescope FRAM of the Pierre Auger Observatory from 2 to 10 minutes after the GRB. We found rapid average temporal flux decay of $\alpha = -1.7 \pm 0.1$ and a peak brightness $R = 10.1$ mag. We interpret the shape of the light curve as a transition between reverse and forward shock emission.

PACS 95.55.Cs – Ground-based ultraviolet, optical and infrared telescopes.

PACS 95.75.De – Photography and photometry (including microlensing techniques).

PACS 98.70.Rz – γ -ray sources; γ -ray bursts.

1. – Swift detection

A bright long-soft GRB 060117 was detected by *Swift* satellite on January 17, 2006, at 6:50:01.6 UT. It showed a multi-peak structure with $T_{90} = 16 \pm 1$ s with maximum peak flux 48.9 ± 1.6 ph cm⁻² s⁻¹. Thus, GRB 060117 was—in terms of peak flux—the most intense GRB detected so far by *Swift*. Coordinates computed by *Swift* were available within 19 s and immediately distributed by GCN [1].

2. – FRAM and optical transient observation

FRAM is part of the Pierre Auger cosmic-ray observatory [2], and its main purpose is to immediately monitor and its main purpose is to immediately monitor the atmospheric transmission. FRAM works as an independent, RTS2-driven, fully robotic system, and

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(**) E-mail: mates@iaa.es

(***) For the Pierre Auger Collaboration.

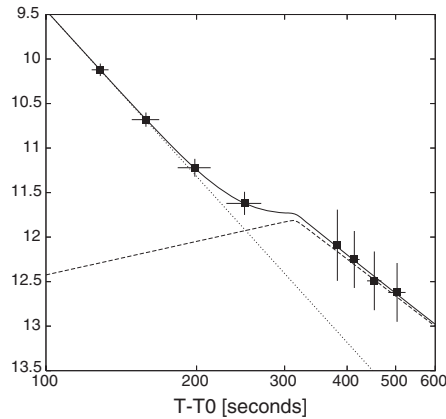


Fig. 1. – The *R*-band afterglow light curve of GRB 060117. The light curve is fitted as a superposition of reverse shock (dotted line) and forward shock (dashed line).

it performs a photometric calibration of the sky on various UV-to-optical wavelengths using a 0.2 m telescope and a photoelectric photomultiplier.

FRAM received the notice at 06:50:20.8 UT, 19.2 s after the trigger and immediately started the slew. The first exposure started at 06:52:05.4, 123.8 s after the GRB. Eight images with different exposures were taken before the observation was terminated. A bright, rapidly decaying object was found, and its presence was reported by [3] soon after the discovery. The FRAM light curve for this optical transient is in fig. 1.

3. – Interpretation

Our preferred interpretation (based on the work of [4]) is to fit the data as a transition between the reverse and the forward shock with the passage of the typical frequency break ν_m through the observed passband at time $t_{m,f}$. Corresponding decay indices are $\alpha_{\text{Reverse}} = 2.49 \pm 0.05$ and $\alpha_{\text{Forward}} = 1.47 \pm 0.03$.

Other possible interpretations and more details about FRAM telescope, data processing and other follow-up attempts can be found in [5].

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