The early growth of (sub-L*) super-massive black holes as seen by Chandra (and Lynx)



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Optically selected z≈6 QSOs are extremely massive! log(M_BH/Msun)~9-10

(e.g., Mortlock+11, Wu+15, Banados+18a)



How can you form such massive BH in <1Gyr??

SMBH formation



Seed mass distribution, Eddington ratio distribution, occupation fraction, radiation efficiency, feedback, etc....

Low-L AGN at high redshift: why do we care?



Different combinations of the physical parameters driving the formation and growth of BH seeds (e.g. seed mass, occupation fraction, Eddington ratio distribution, etc.) produce different shapes of the AGN XLF faint end!

Why X-rays?

1) Ubiquitous in AGN

2) Obscuration



3) Galaxy dilution

Brandt & Alexander 2015



NGC 3783

Clean and less biased selection (especially at high-z)!

But optical/IR data needed for identification





The data-set 7 Ms CDF-S (Luo+17)

- Deepest X-ray survey to date! Flim~6.4 x 10⁻¹⁸ erg cm⁻² s⁻¹
- A~484 arcmin²
- Deep radio-UV coverage (e.g. CANDELS/GOODS-S)
- 1008 X-ray sources
- ~98.5% multi-wavelength identification,
- ~98% redshift (~65% spec-z, phot-z from Straatman+16, Santini+15, Hsu+14, Skelton+14, etc.)

2 Ms CDF-N (Xue+16)

- Second deepest X-ray survey to date!
 - $F_{lim} \sim 1.2 \times 10^{-17} erg cm^{-2} s^{-1}$
- A~447 arcmin²
- Deep radio-UV coverage (e.g. CANDELS/GOODS-N)
- 683 X-ray sources
- ~98% multi-wavelength identification,
- >93% redshift (>50% spec-z, phot-z from Yang+14, Skelton+14, Kodra+ in prep.)

Final sample of ~101 AGN at 3<z<6

Parameter distributions





Vito+18

AGN X-ray luminosity function



Most accurate observational derivation of the faint-end at z>3! No evidence for very steep slopes, i.e. AGN unlikely to drive cosmic Reionization

AGN space density



Decline at high-L driven by evolution of number of massive galaxies?

Hints for steepening at low-L (not matched by low-mass galaxies): change of the accretion parameters (Eddington ratio, occupation fraction, etc.)?

AGN space density



Main problem: spectroscopic identification

Need for follow-up campaigns to confirm the high-z candidates e.g. VLT (FORS2, MUSE, XSHOOTER) and ALMA

In the near future, VLT/MOONS and JWST

XLF faint end at high-z as a tool to study BH seed formation and growth



Need to push at lower-L and higher-z! E.g. Lynx

Lynx (Weisskopf et al. 2015)



- Chandra-like angular resolution
- f.o.v.=0.12 deg²=15x Chandra (for sub-arcsec resolution)
- 30-50x effective area of Chandra
- 20x Chandra sensitivity

Credits: Alexey Vikhlinin



Hunting BH seeds in the early universe



~1000 accreting BH at z=8-9 with logL_x \gtrsim 41 and log(M_{BH}/M_{\odot}) \gtrsim 4 in ~ 1 deg²

Need deep (m~29.5) IR observations to identify them as high-z sources! JWST and WFIRST can do it! (e.g., Mason+15)

XLF faint-end shape, IR colors (e.g., Natarajan+16, Pacucci+15, Valiante+18a,b) and IR/X-ray flux ratio will constrain typical seed mass



~1000 accreting BH at z=8-9 with logLx \gtrsim 41 and log(M_BH/M_{\odot}) \gtrsim 4 in ~ 1 deg^2

Enough to sample accurately the XLF and place tight constraints to physical parameters regulating BH seed formation and growth

But significant uncertainties due to...

1. modelling

(e.g. factors of several in space density)

- 2. XRB contribution/confusion
- 3. ancillary data

(i.e. NIR/MIR with JWST/WFIRST, we need rest-frame UV m~29.5)

Work in progress here!

https://wwwastro.msfc.nasa.gov/lynx/



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