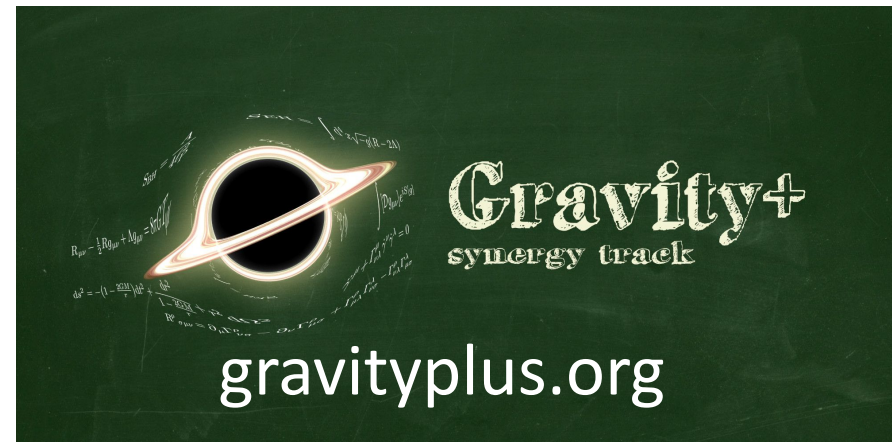


# Black hole tomography

Based on work with Badri Krishnan,  
Ariadna Ribes Metidieri, John Ostor,  
Patrick Bourg, .....

Béatrice Bonga

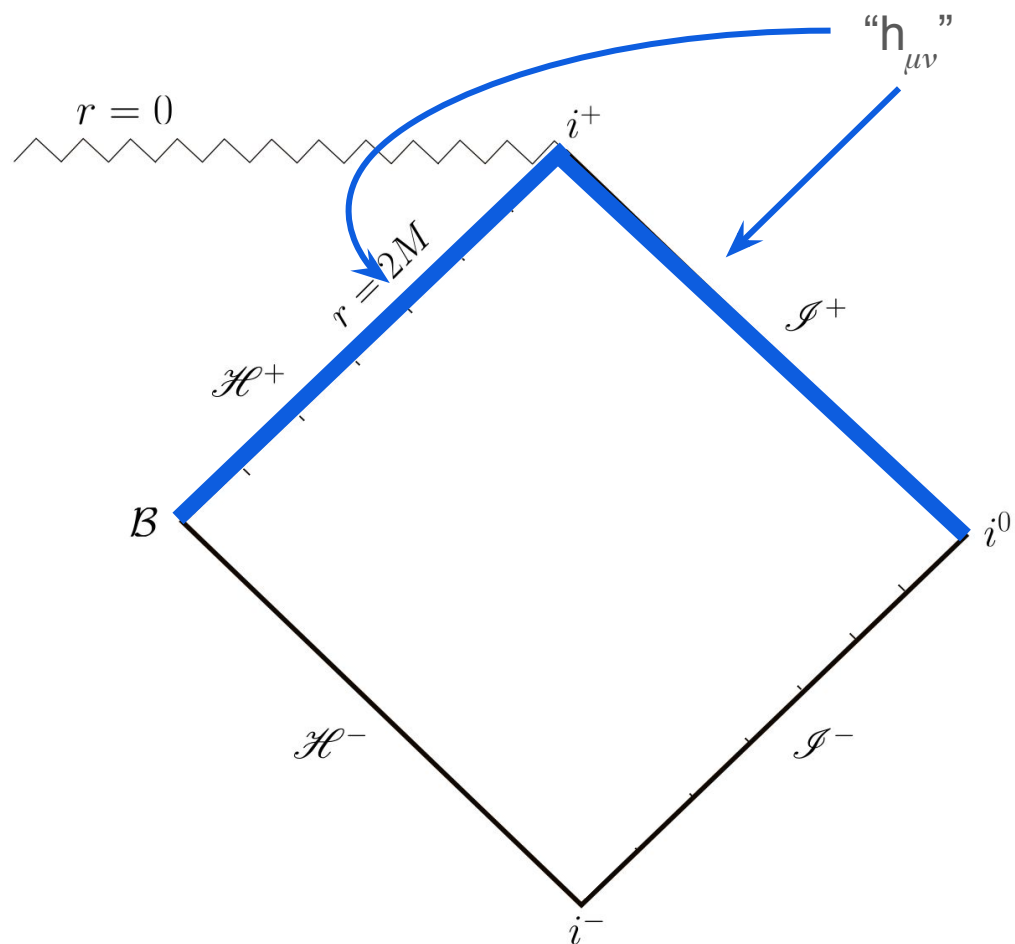
15 Jan 2026



# Black hole tomography

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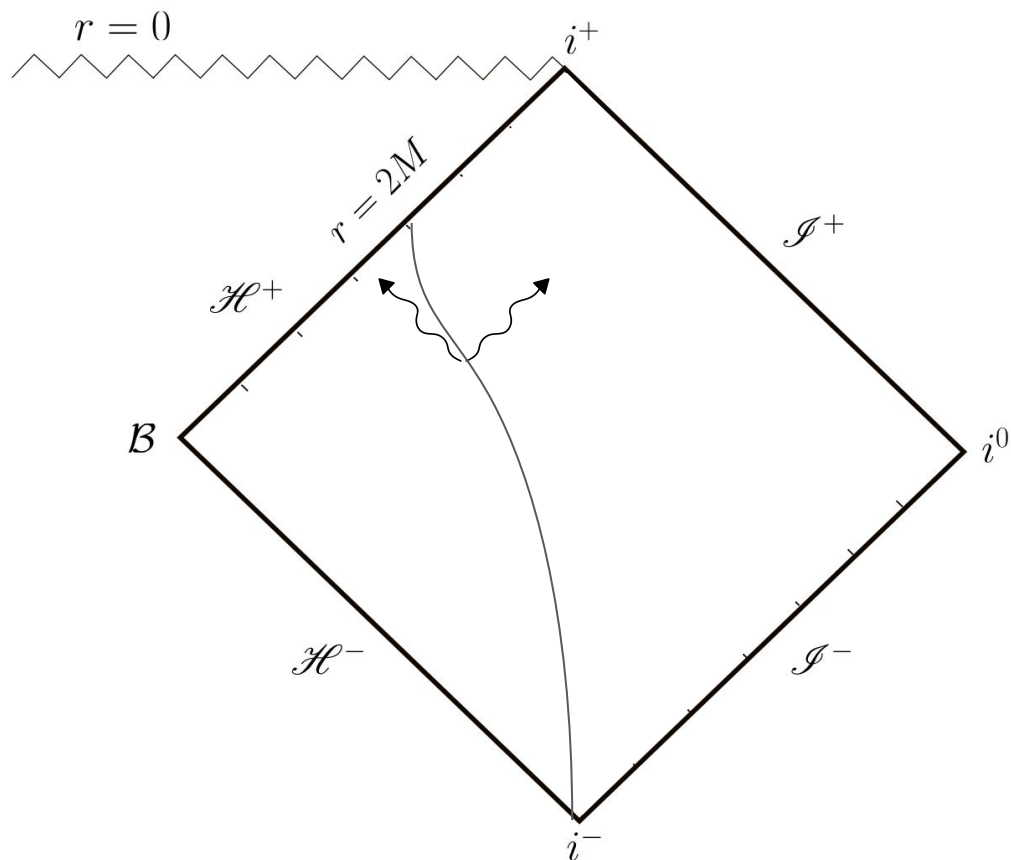
Reconstruct horizon dynamics from gravitational wave observations at null infinity



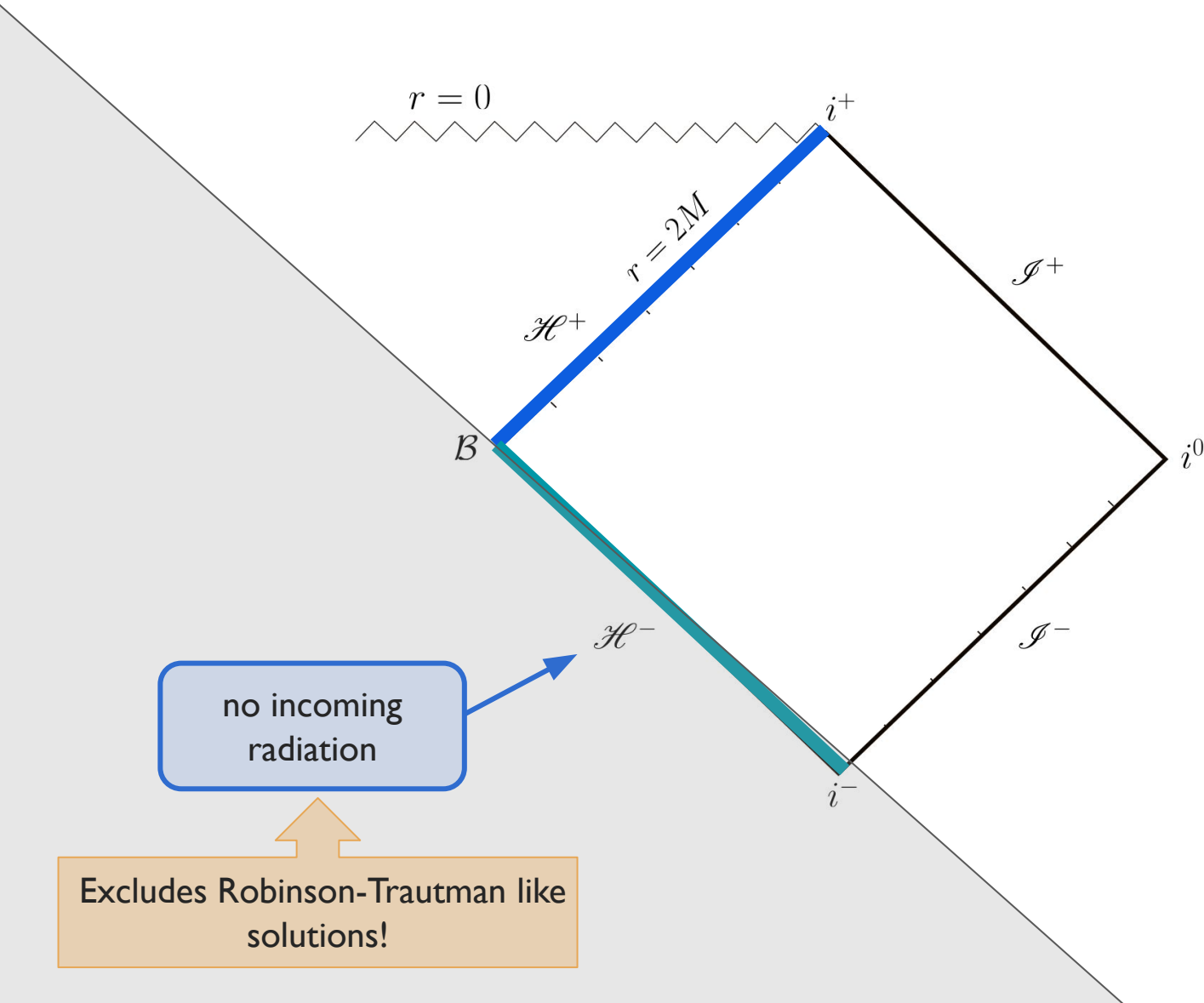
# Black hole tomography

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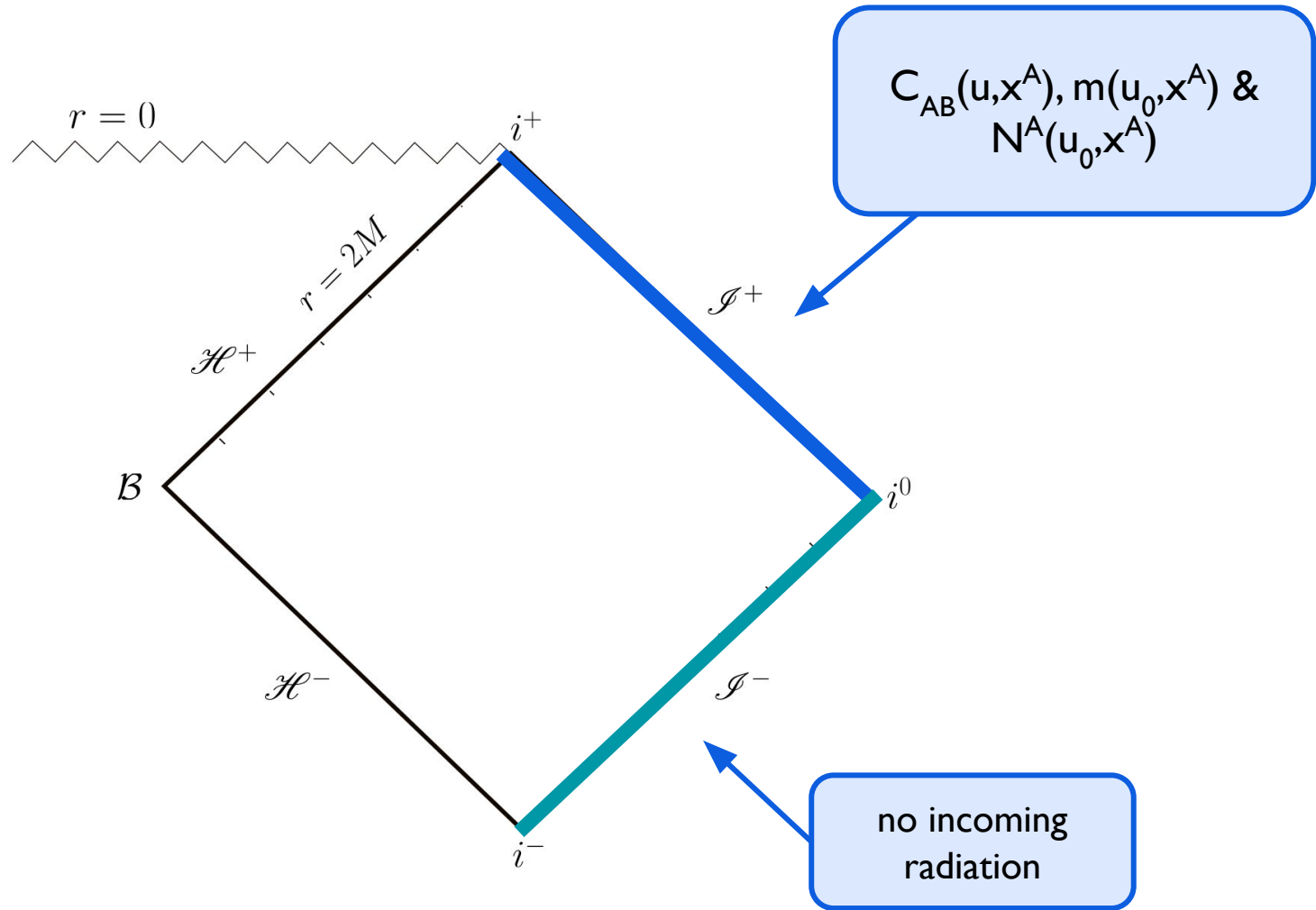
Reconstruct horizon dynamics from gravitational wave observations at null infinity



# Our goal: BH tomography for QNMs

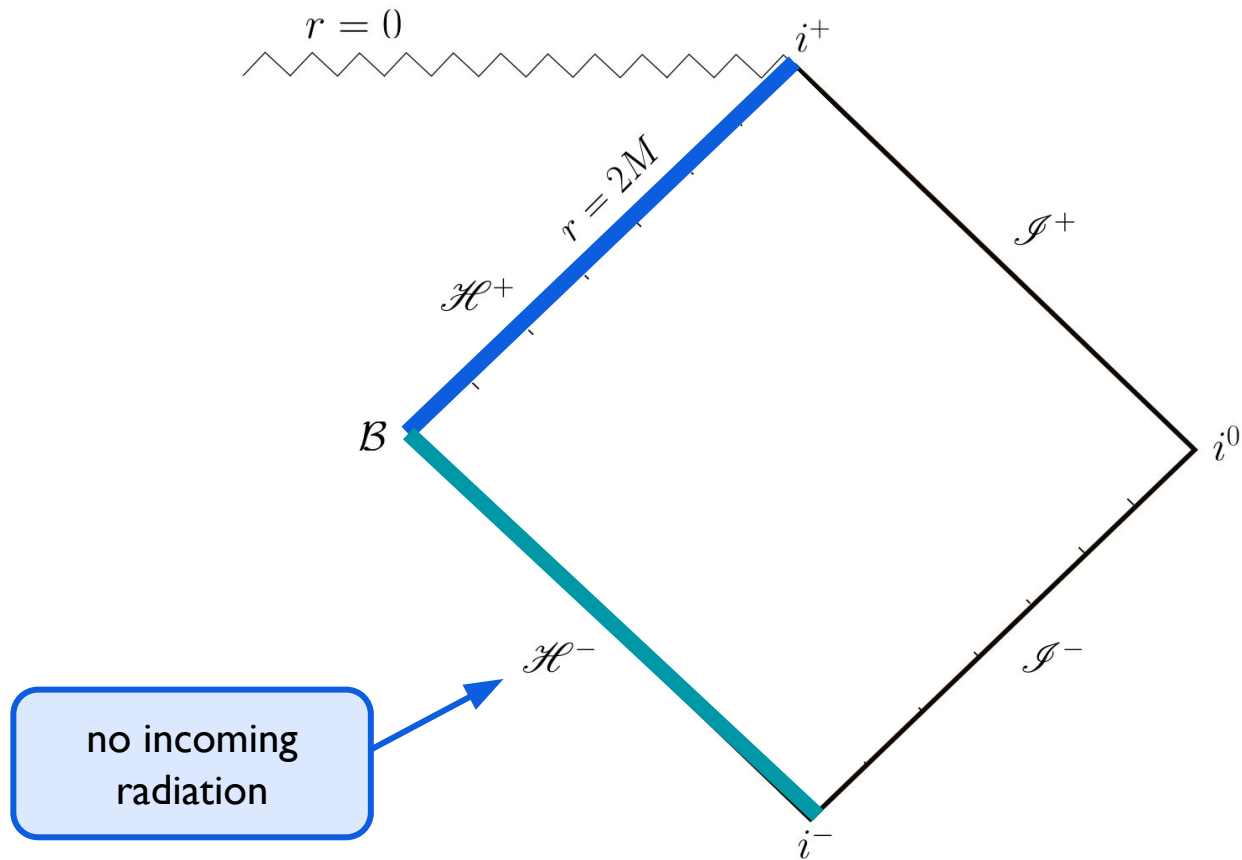


# Similar to Bondi-Sachs framework



# Our goal: BH tomography for QNMs

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# Perturbed isolated horizon

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Tidal deformations	Dynamic perturbations
<p>Time-independent perturbations</p> <p><math>\Psi_2 \rightarrow</math> horizon geometry</p> <p>Note: <math>\theta_1</math> and <math>\sigma_1</math> remain zero</p>	<p>Tidal heating, QNMs, etc.</p> <p><math>\Psi_0 \rightarrow</math> radiation</p> <p>Note: <math>\theta_1</math> and <math>\sigma_1</math> no longer zero (but at linear order <math>\theta_1</math> is)</p>

# Overview scheme

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1. Specify all data on (non-rotating) horizon:

$\Psi_0$  = freely specifiable

Assume  $\Psi_0$  separable & Fourier mode decomposition

2. Using the “radial” equations obtain the solution everywhere
3. Impose “boundary” conditions:
  - ❖ require analyticity  $\rightarrow$  QNMs
  - ❖ stability towards the future  $\rightarrow$  no growing modes

## Result

QNM solutions everywhere satisfying the standard boundary conditions

Relation  $\Psi_0$  at horizon and  $\Psi_4$  at null infinity



# Horizon data

---

1. Gauge choices adapted to horizon
2. Bianchi identities + Einstein's equations

$$\begin{aligned}
 D\tilde{\sigma} - \kappa_{(l)}\tilde{\sigma} &\triangleq \tilde{\Psi}_0, \\
 D\tilde{\Psi}_1 - \kappa_{(l)}\tilde{\Psi}_1 &\triangleq \bar{\delta}\tilde{\Psi}_0, \\
 D\tilde{\Psi}_2 &\triangleq \bar{\delta}\tilde{\Psi}_1, \\
 D\tilde{\pi} &\triangleq \tilde{\tilde{\Psi}}_1,
 \end{aligned}$$

$\Psi_1$  is  
nonzero!

$$\begin{aligned}
 D\tilde{\mu} + \kappa_{(l)}\tilde{\mu} &\triangleq \tilde{\Psi}_2 + \tilde{\tilde{\Psi}}_2, \\
 D\tilde{\lambda} + \kappa_{(l)}\tilde{\lambda} &\triangleq \bar{\delta}\tilde{\pi} + \mu\tilde{\tilde{\sigma}}, \\
 D\tilde{\Psi}_3 + \kappa_{(l)}\tilde{\Psi}_3 &\triangleq \bar{\delta}\tilde{\Psi}_2 + 3\tilde{\pi}\tilde{\Psi}_2, \\
 D\tilde{\Psi}_4 + 2\kappa_{(l)}\tilde{\Psi}_4 &\triangleq \bar{\delta}\tilde{\Psi}_3 - 3\tilde{\lambda}\tilde{\Psi}_2, \\
 D\tilde{a} &\triangleq -\bar{a}\tilde{\tilde{\sigma}} - \tilde{\tilde{\Psi}}_1, \\
 D\tilde{\xi}^{\tilde{z}} &\triangleq \tilde{\tilde{\sigma}}\tilde{\xi}^{\tilde{z}}.
 \end{aligned}$$

$\Psi_3$  is  
nonzero!

# Horizon solution

$$\tilde{\Psi}_0 \triangleq \frac{1}{2\pi} \sum_{l,m} \left( \int d\omega a_{lm}^- e^{-i\omega v} + \int d\bar{\omega} a_{lm}^+ e^{i\bar{\omega} v} \right) {}_2Y_{lm},$$

$$\tilde{\sigma} \triangleq -\frac{1}{2\pi} \sum_{l,m} \left( \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} d\omega \frac{a_{lm}^-}{\kappa_{(l)} + i\omega} e^{-i\omega v} + \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} d\bar{\omega} \frac{a_{lm}^+}{\kappa_{(l)} - i\bar{\omega}} e^{i\bar{\omega} v} \right) {}_2Y_{lm},$$

$$\tilde{\Psi}_1 \triangleq \frac{1}{2\pi} \sum_{l,m} \left( \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} d\omega \frac{a_{lm}^- \sqrt{(l+2)(l-1)}}{\sqrt{2c}(\kappa_{(l)} + i\omega)} e^{-i\omega v} + \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} d\bar{\omega} \frac{a_{lm}^+ \sqrt{(l+2)(l-1)}}{\sqrt{2c}(\kappa_{(l)} - i\bar{\omega})} e^{i\bar{\omega} v} \right) {}_1Y_{lm},$$

$$\begin{aligned} \tilde{a} \triangleq \frac{1}{2\pi} \left( - \int d\omega \sum_{l,m} \frac{(-1)^m \bar{a}_{lm}^+ e^{-i\omega v}}{i\omega(\kappa_{(l)} + i\omega)} (\bar{a}_{-2} Y_{l-m} + \frac{\sqrt{(l+2)(l-1)}}{\sqrt{2c}} {}_{-1}Y_{l-m}) \right. \\ \left. + \int d\bar{\omega} \sum_{l,m} \frac{(-1)^m \bar{a}_{lm}^- e^{i\bar{\omega} v}}{i\bar{\omega}(\kappa_{(l)} - i\bar{\omega})} (\bar{a}_{-2} Y_{l-m} + \frac{\sqrt{(l+2)(l-1)}}{\sqrt{2c}} {}_{-1}Y_{l-m}) \right), \end{aligned}$$

$$\tilde{\xi}^{\pm} \triangleq \frac{\tilde{\xi}_0^{\pm}}{2\pi} \sum_{l,m} {}_2Y_{lm} \left( \int d\omega \frac{a_{lm}^- e^{-i\omega v}}{i\omega(\kappa_{(l)} + i\omega)} - \int d\bar{\omega} \frac{a_{lm}^+ e^{i\bar{\omega} v}}{i\bar{\omega}(\kappa_{(l)} - i\bar{\omega})} \right),$$

$$\tilde{\Psi}_2 \triangleq \frac{1}{2\pi} \sum_{l,m} \frac{\sqrt{(l+2)(l+1)l(l-1)}}{2c^2} \left( \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} d\omega \frac{a_{lm}^-}{i\omega(\kappa_{(l)} + i\omega)} e^{-i\omega v} - \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} d\bar{\omega} \frac{a_{lm}^+}{i\bar{\omega}(\kappa_{(l)} - i\bar{\omega})} e^{i\bar{\omega} v} \right) Y_{lm},$$

$$\tilde{\pi} \triangleq \frac{1}{2\pi} \sum_{l,m} (-1)^m \frac{\sqrt{(l+2)(l-1)}}{\sqrt{2c}} \left( \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} d\omega \frac{\bar{a}_{lm}^+}{i\omega(\kappa_{(l)} + i\omega)} e^{-i\omega v} - \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} d\bar{\omega} \frac{\bar{a}_{lm}^-}{i\bar{\omega}(\kappa_{(l)} - i\bar{\omega})} e^{i\bar{\omega} v} \right) {}_{-1}Y_{l-m},$$

$$\tilde{\mu} \triangleq \frac{1}{2\pi} \sum_{l,m} \frac{\sqrt{(l+2)(l+1)l(l-1)}}{2c^2} \left( \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} d\omega \frac{[a_{lm}^- Y_{lm} + (-1)^m \bar{a}_{lm}^+ Y_{l,-m}] e^{-i\omega v}}{i\omega(\kappa_{(l)}^2 + \omega^2)} - \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} d\bar{\omega} \frac{[a_{lm}^+ Y_{lm} + (-1)^m \bar{a}_{lm}^- Y_{l,-m}] e^{i\bar{\omega} v}}{i\bar{\omega}(\kappa_{(l)}^2 + \bar{\omega}^2)} \right),$$

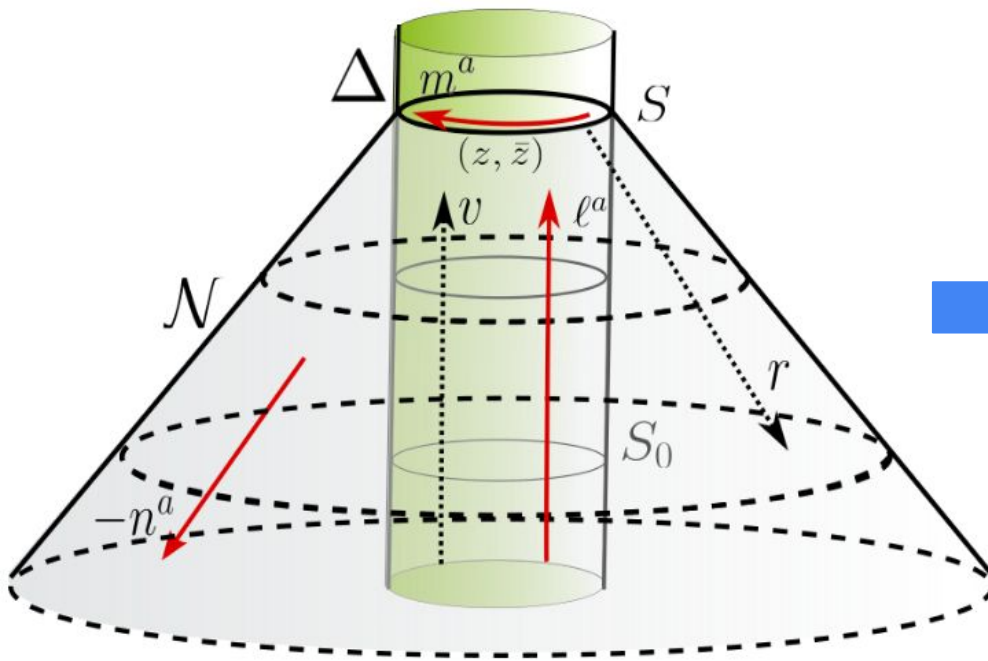
$$\begin{aligned} \tilde{\lambda} \triangleq \frac{1}{2\pi} \sum_{l,m} (-1)^m \left( \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} d\omega \frac{\bar{a}_{lm}^+ e^{-i\omega v}}{2ic^2\omega(\kappa_{(l)}^2 + \omega^2)} (2ic\omega - (l+2)(l-1)) + \right. \\ \left. \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} d\bar{\omega} \frac{\bar{a}_{lm}^- e^{i\bar{\omega} v}}{2ic^2\bar{\omega}(\kappa_{(l)}^2 + \bar{\omega}^2)} (2ic\bar{\omega} + (l+2)(l-1)) \right) {}_{-2}Y_{l-m}, \end{aligned}$$

$$\begin{aligned} \tilde{\Psi}_3 \triangleq -\frac{1}{2\pi} \sum_{l,m} \frac{\sqrt{(l+2)(l-1)}}{2\sqrt{2}c^3} \left( \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} d\omega \frac{[a_{lm-1}^- Y_{lm}(l+1) + 3(-1)^m \bar{a}_{lm-1}^+ Y_{l,-m}] e^{-i\omega v}}{i\omega(\kappa_{(l)}^2 + \omega^2)} \right. \\ \left. - \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} d\bar{\omega} \frac{[a_{lm}^+(l+1)l {}_{-1}Y_{lm} + 3(-1)^m \bar{a}_{lm-1}^- Y_{l,-m}] e^{i\bar{\omega} v}}{i\bar{\omega}(\kappa_{(l)}^2 + \bar{\omega}^2)} \right), \end{aligned}$$

$$\begin{aligned} \tilde{\Psi}_4 \triangleq \frac{1}{8\pi c^4} \sum_{l,m} \left( \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} d\omega \frac{[a_{lm}^-(l+2)(l+1)l(l-1) {}_{-2}Y_{lm} + 6c(-1)^m i\omega \bar{a}_{lm-2}^+ Y_{l,-m}] e^{-i\omega v}}{i\omega(\kappa_{(l)}^2 + \omega^2)(2\kappa_{(l)} - i\omega)} \right. \\ \left. - \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} d\bar{\omega} \frac{[a_{lm}^+(l+2)(l+1)l(l-1) {}_{-2}Y_{lm} - 6c(-1)^m i\bar{\omega} \bar{a}_{lm-2}^- Y_{l,-m}] e^{i\bar{\omega} v}}{i\bar{\omega}(\kappa_{(l)}^2 + \bar{\omega}^2)(2\kappa_{(l)} + i\bar{\omega})} \right). \end{aligned}$$

# Spacetime solution

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$\Psi_4$  and  $\Psi_0$  satisfy  
Teukolsky equation  
(+Teukolsky-Starobinsky  
identities)

# Analytic solutions

---

$$X_{lm}^{(4)}(r) = k_1 H_c[(l-2)(l+3) + 5\iota, 5\iota, 3-\iota, 3, \iota, -\frac{r}{c}] \\ + k_2 \left(-\frac{r}{c}\right)^{\iota-2} H_c[l(l+1) + \iota^2, \iota(3+\iota), \iota-1, 3, \iota, -\frac{r}{c}]$$

Compare with Leaver:

$$X_{lm}^{(4,1)} = e^{2i\omega r} \left(\frac{r+c}{c}\right)^{-1+2ic\omega} \sum_{k=0}^{\infty} a_k \left(\frac{r}{r+c}\right)^k$$

$$0 = \beta_0 - \frac{\alpha_0 \gamma_1}{\beta_1 - \frac{\alpha_1 \gamma_2}{\beta_2 - \dots}}$$

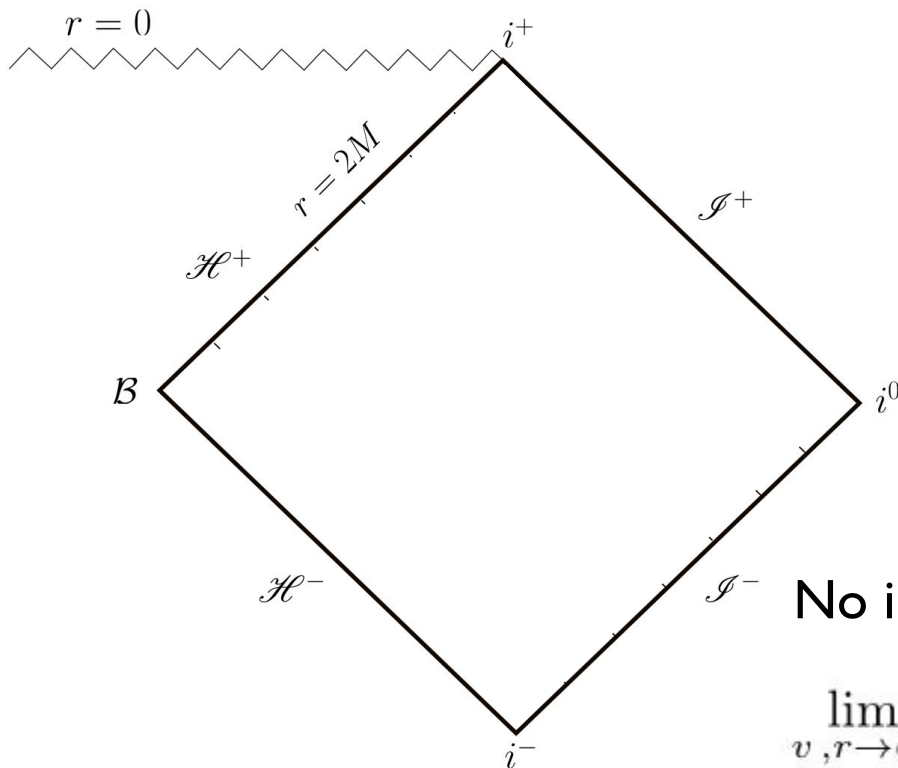
$$\alpha_k = (k+1)(3+k-2ic\omega)$$

$$\beta_k = 3 - l(l+1) - 2k^2 + 4ic\omega + 8c^2\omega^2 + k(-2 +$$

$$\gamma_k = (k - 2ic\omega)(k - 2 - 2ic\omega).$$

# QNM solutions

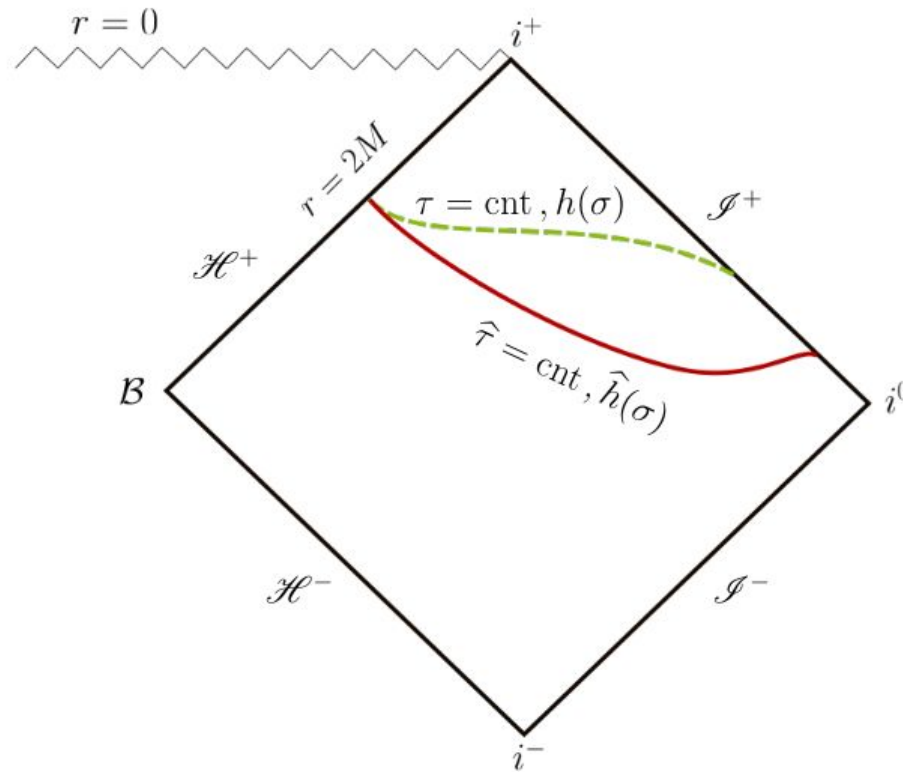
Separability, Fourier mode decomposition, analyticity, stability  
towards future  $\rightarrow$  QNMs



No incoming radiation:  $\Psi_0 \sim r^{-3}$  and  $\Psi_1 \sim r^{-2}$

$$\lim_{v, r \rightarrow \infty} \tilde{\Psi}_0 \propto \frac{1}{r^5} a_{lmn}^{-(1)} e^{i\omega_{lmn}^{\text{QNM}}(-v+2r+2c \ln r/c)} + \frac{1}{r^5} a_{lmn}^{+(1)} e^{-i\bar{\omega}_{lmn}^{\text{QNM}}(-v+2r+2c \ln r/c)}$$

# Connecting horizon to scri



$$\Psi_{4,l0n}^{\mathcal{I}^+,-} = \frac{K_l^2 \Psi_{0,l0n}^{H,-} + 6ic\omega_{l0n} \bar{\Psi}_{0,l0n}^{H,+}}{4c^4 i\omega_{l0n} (\kappa_{(\ell)}^2 + \omega_{l0n}^2) (2\kappa_{(\ell)} - i\omega_{l0n})} \mathcal{F}_{l0n}$$

# Natural extensions

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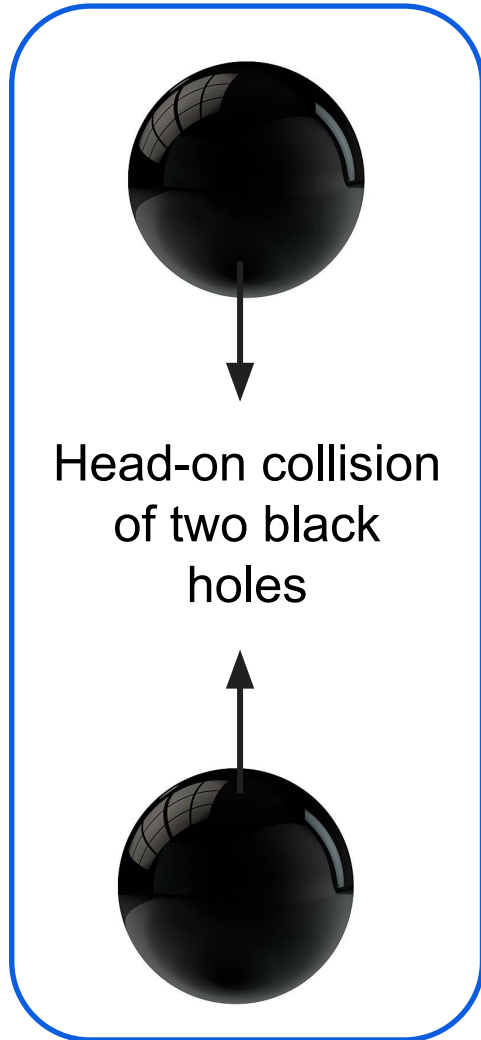
1. Kerr
2. Go to second order probing the dynamic horizon regime
3. Study horizon multipole moments

... go fully non-linear!

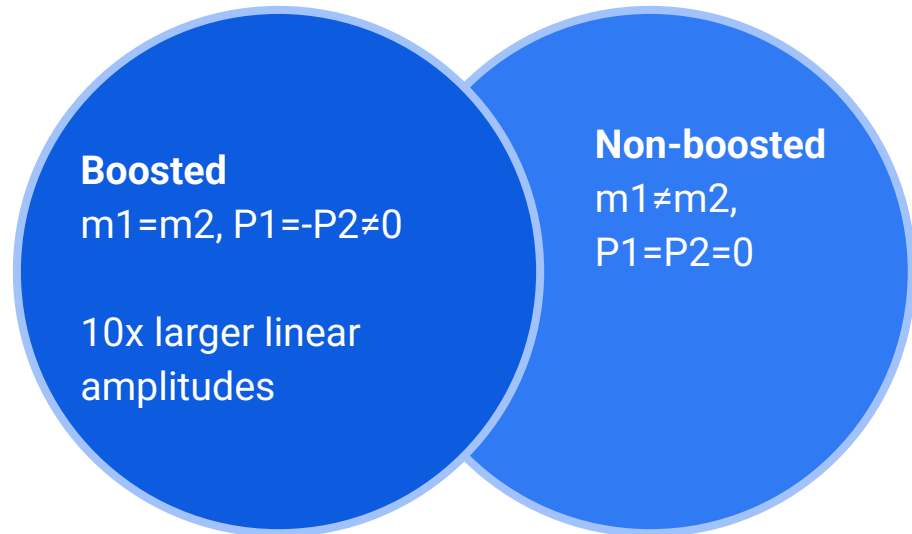


# Two sets of simulations using the Einstein Toolkit

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- (1) Resulting BH is non-rotating
- (2) Axisymmetric simulations  $\rightarrow$  only  $m=0$  modes
- (3) High resolution near horizon (but poor near infinity)



# Choice of time

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Time

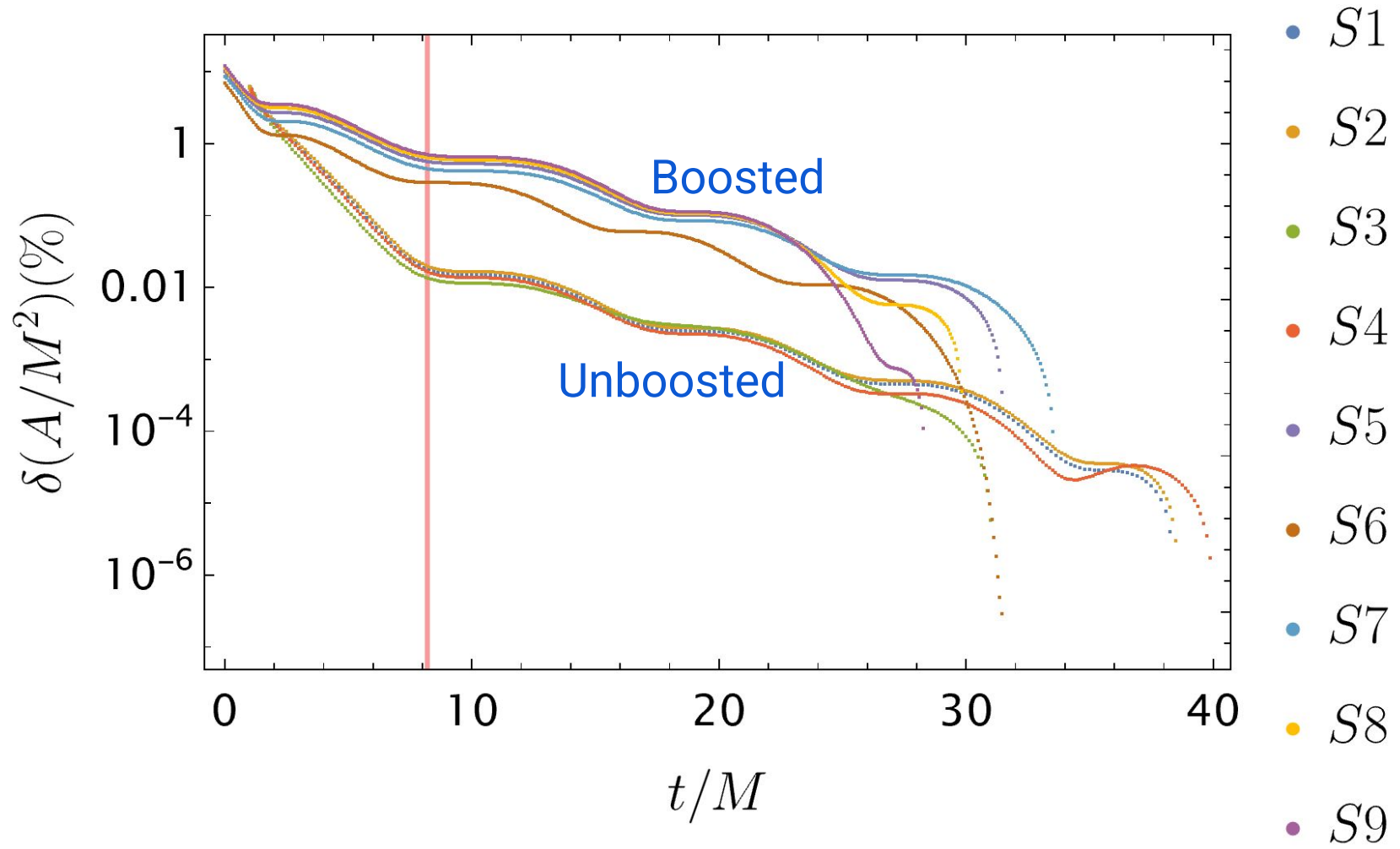


Definition of frequency

Disclaimer: We simply use the simulation time.

Same issue at infinity!

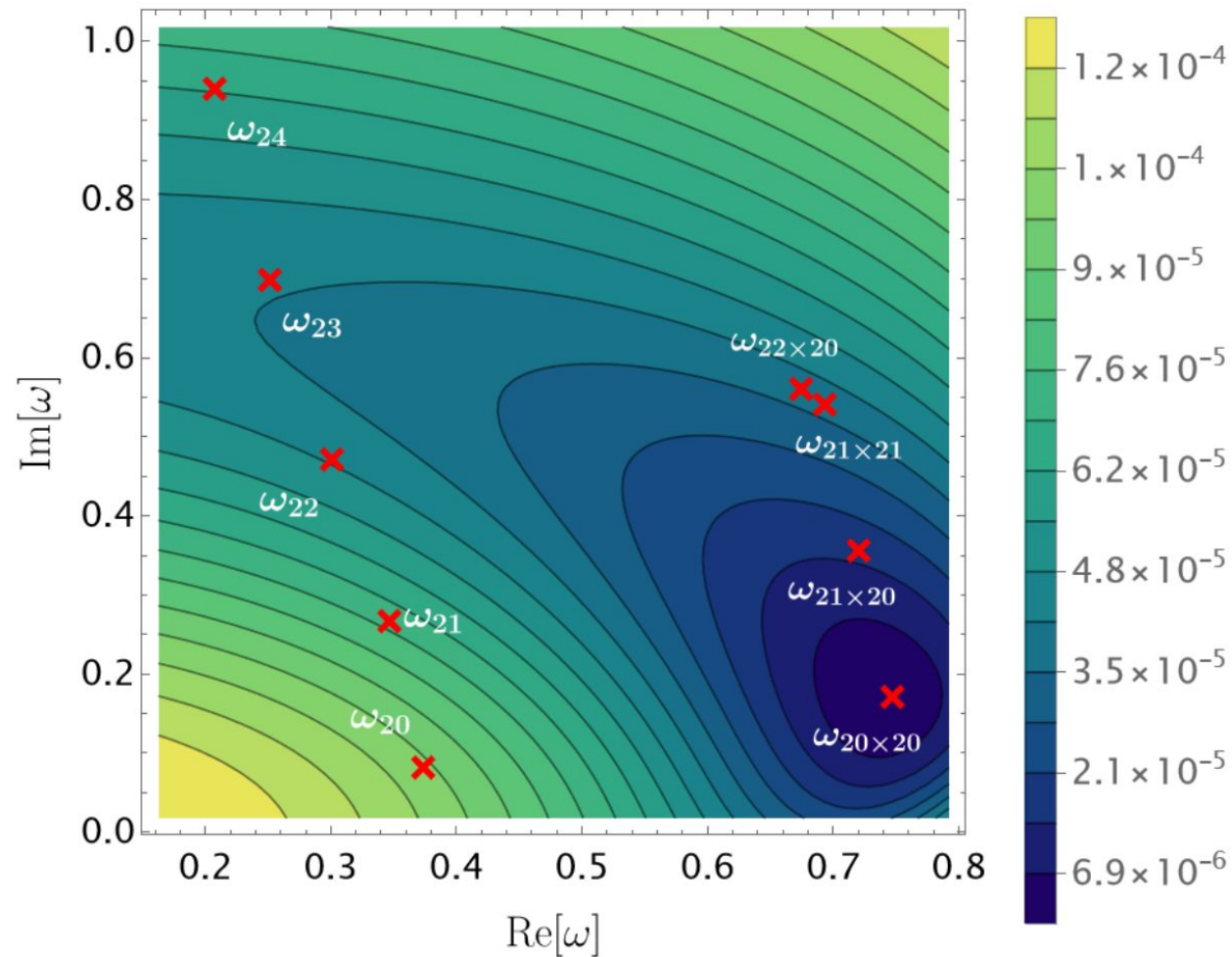
# Ringdown: Mass changes $\leq 1\%$



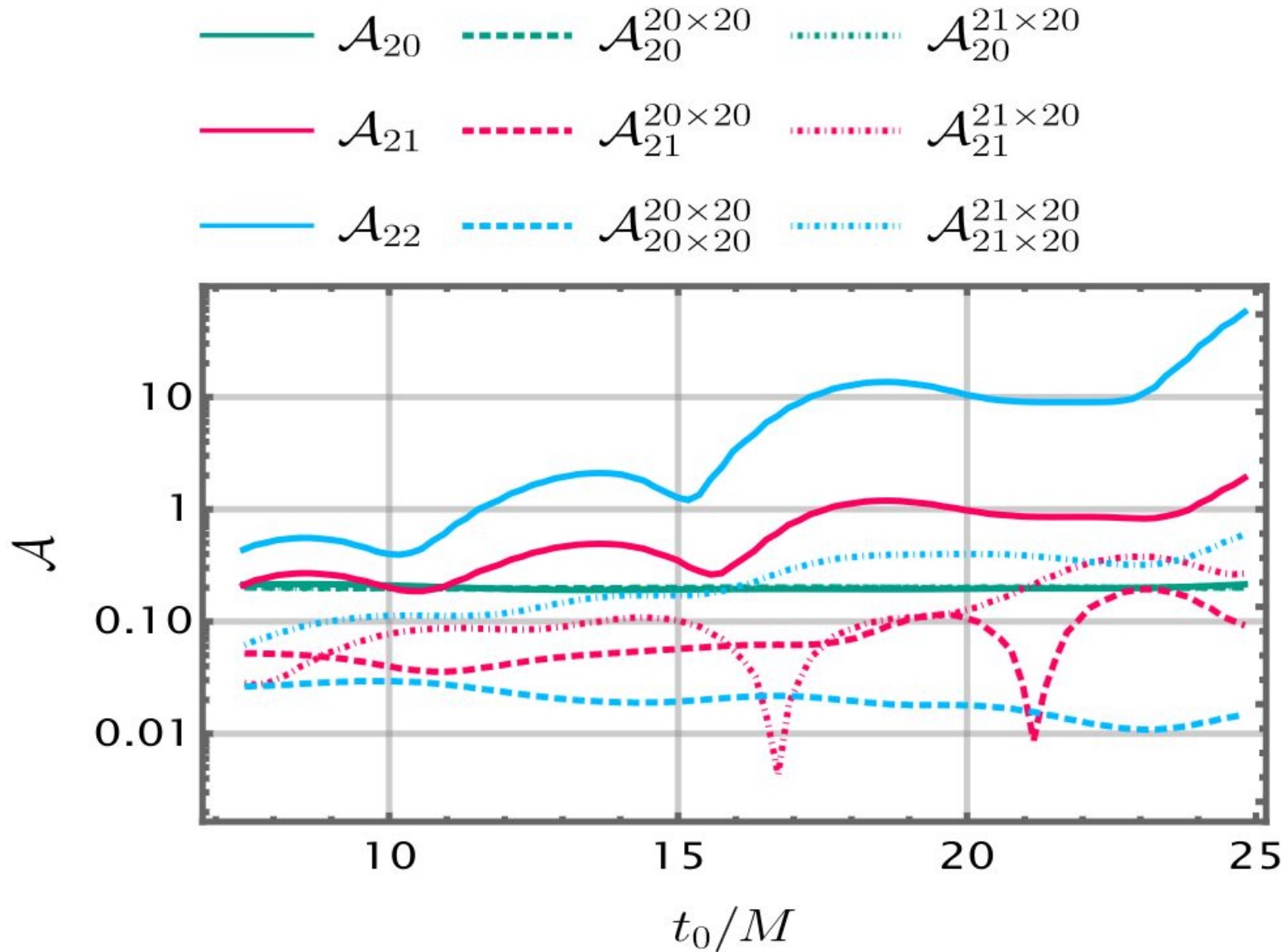
We take  $t_{\text{ringdown}} = 8.2 M$

# Mismatch after fixing $\omega_{200}$ and $\omega_{201}$

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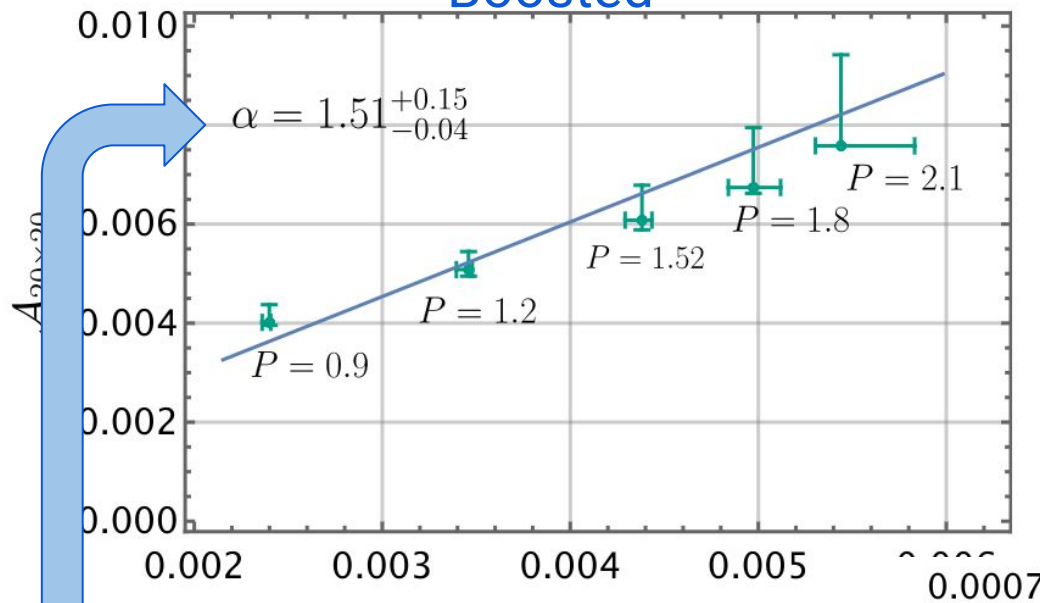


# Stability amplitude

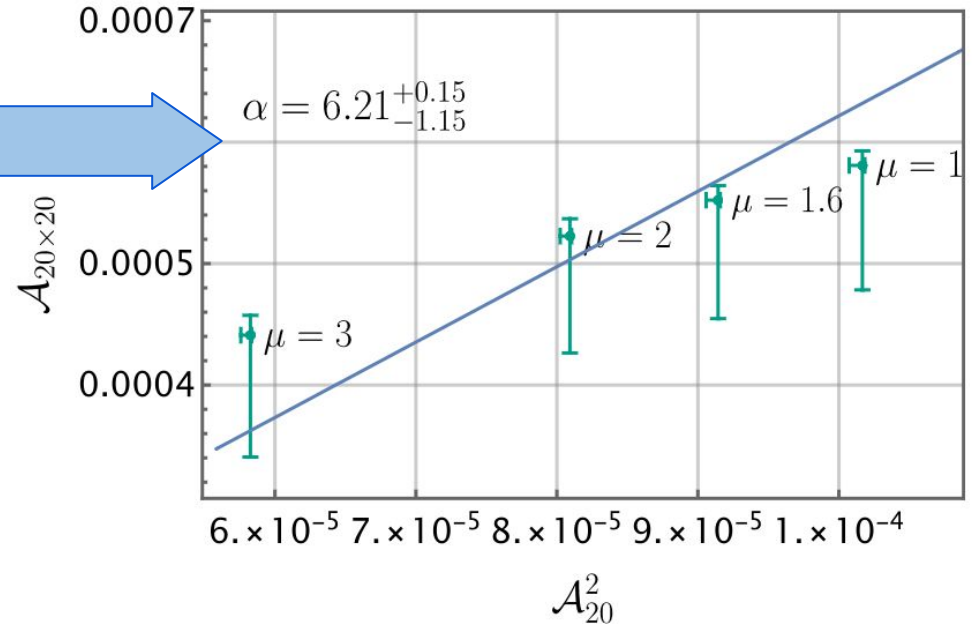


# Amplitude relation

Boosted



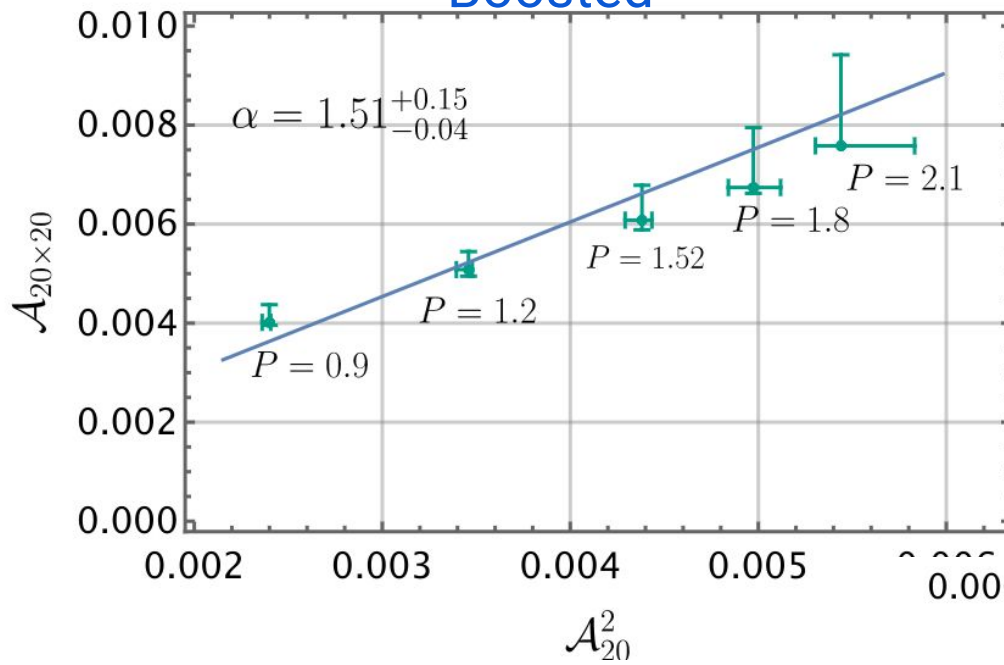
Unboosted



Puzzle: Why are these slopes different?

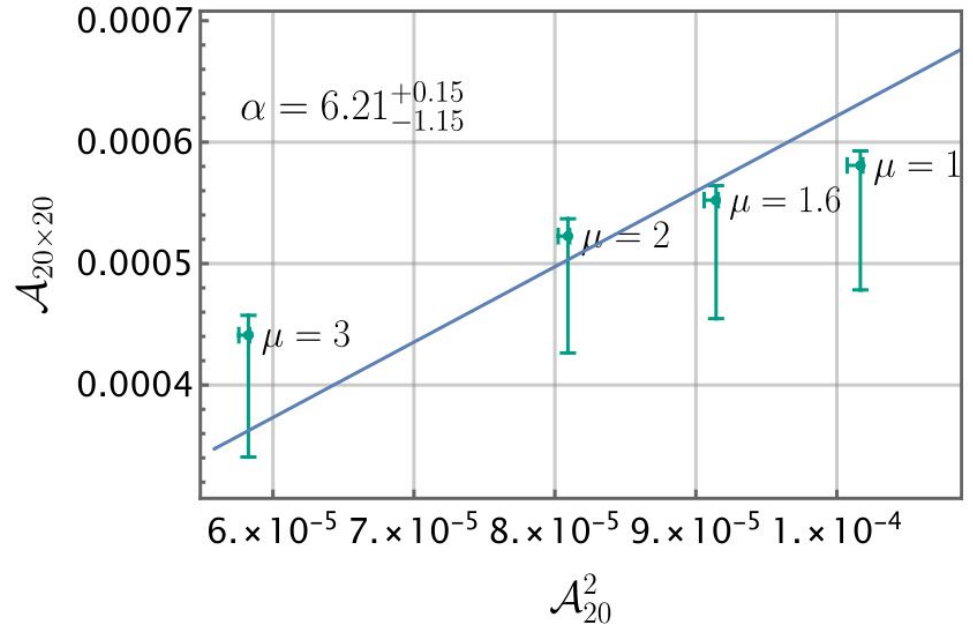
# Amplitude relation explained?

Boosted



**Up-down symmetry**  
no odd modes!

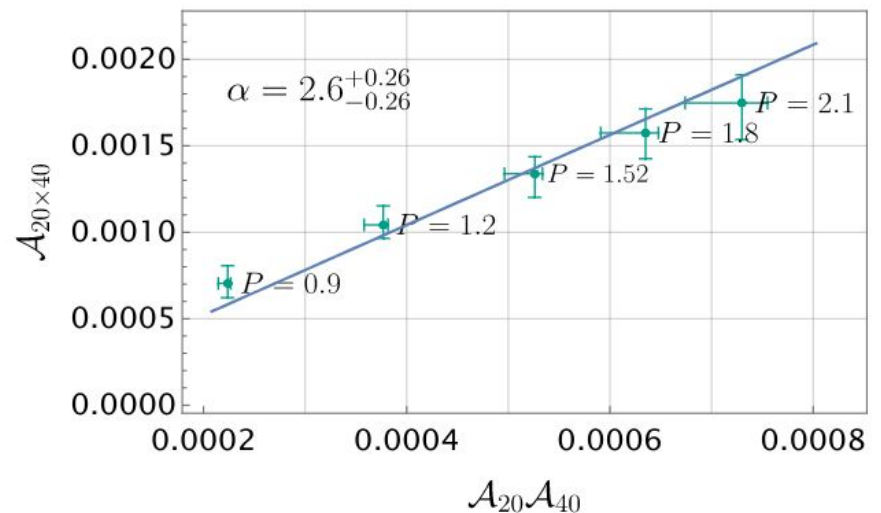
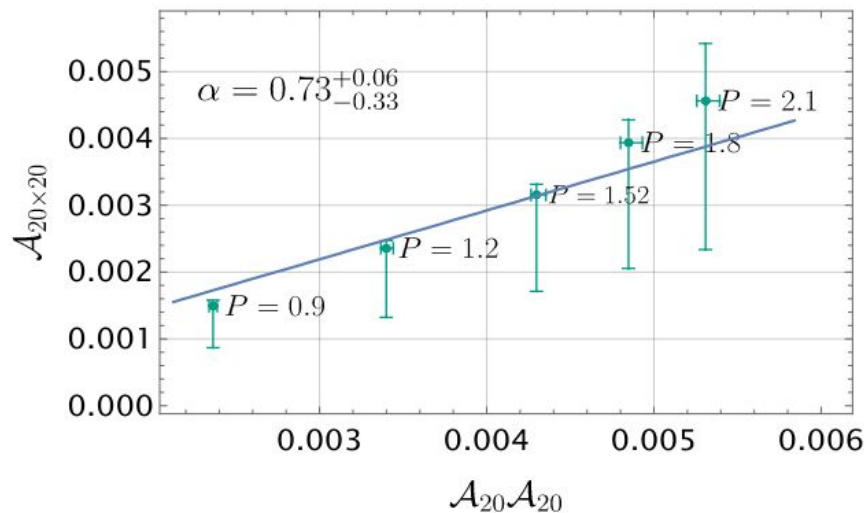
Unboosted



**No up-down symmetry**  
odd and even modes  
excited



# Amplitude relation $l=4$



Data prefers model with fundamental tone + 2 quadratic modes!

# Non-linear black hole tomography?

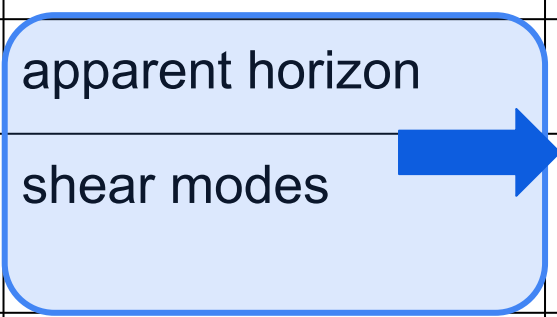
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- ❖ Same modes found at infinity in similar simulations (with poor resolution near horizon)
- ❖ Comparing amplitudes at horizon and infinity not (yet) feasible

# Challenges in comparing NR to BHPT

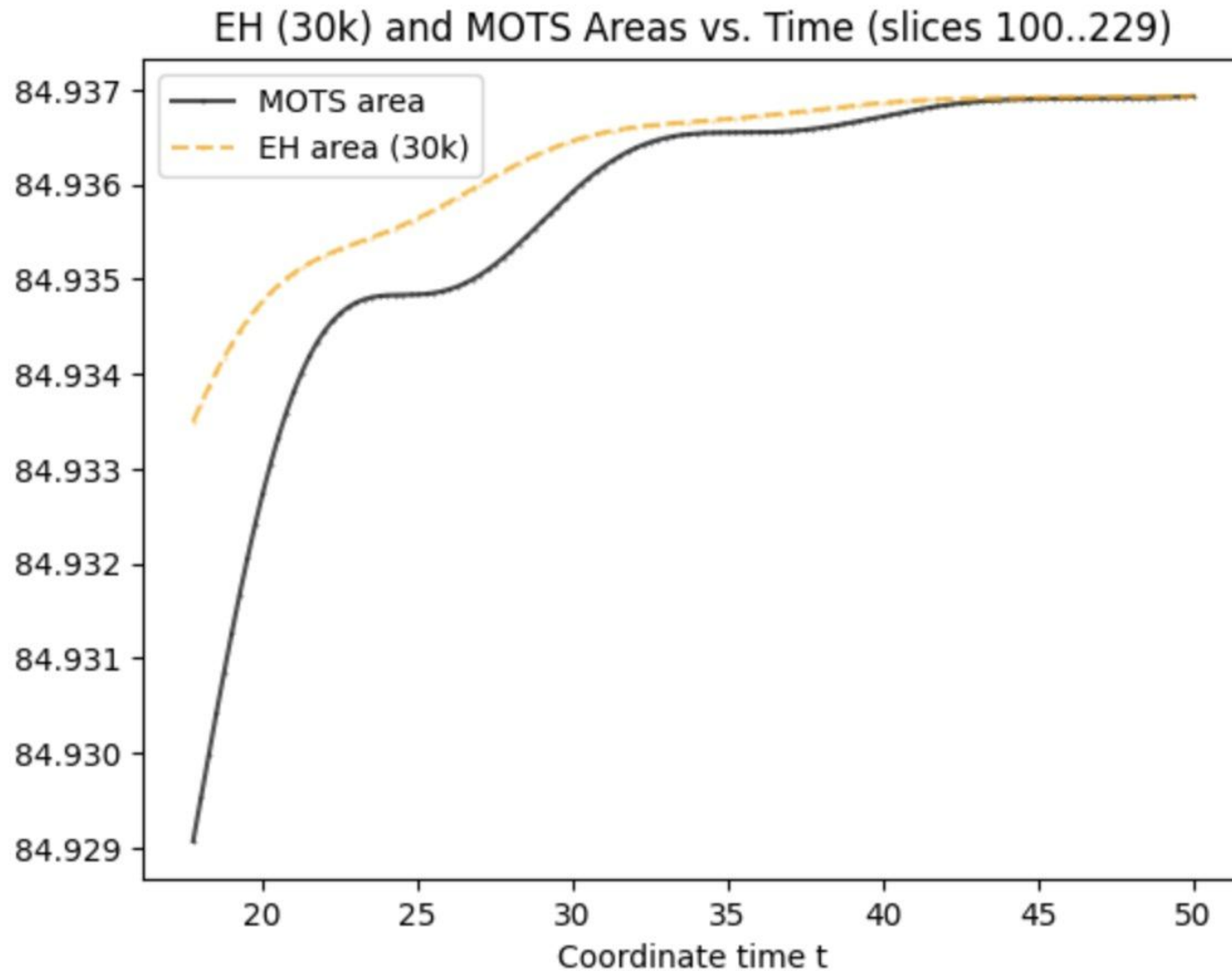
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	NR	Black hole perturbation theory
location	apparent horizon	event horizon
quantity	shear modes	$\Psi_0$
gauge	1+log & $\Gamma$ -driver shift	IRG



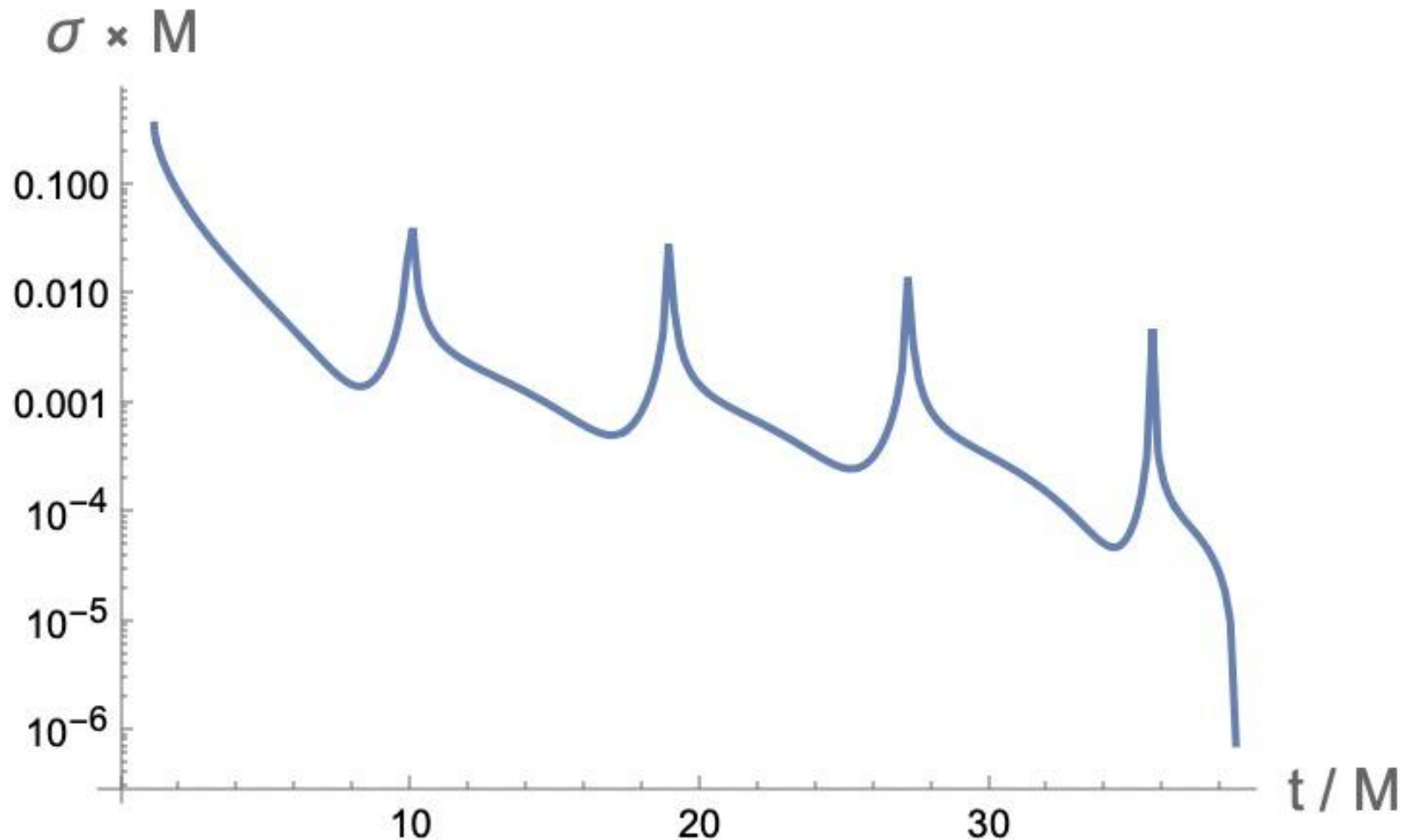
# Preliminary: area EH vs MOTS

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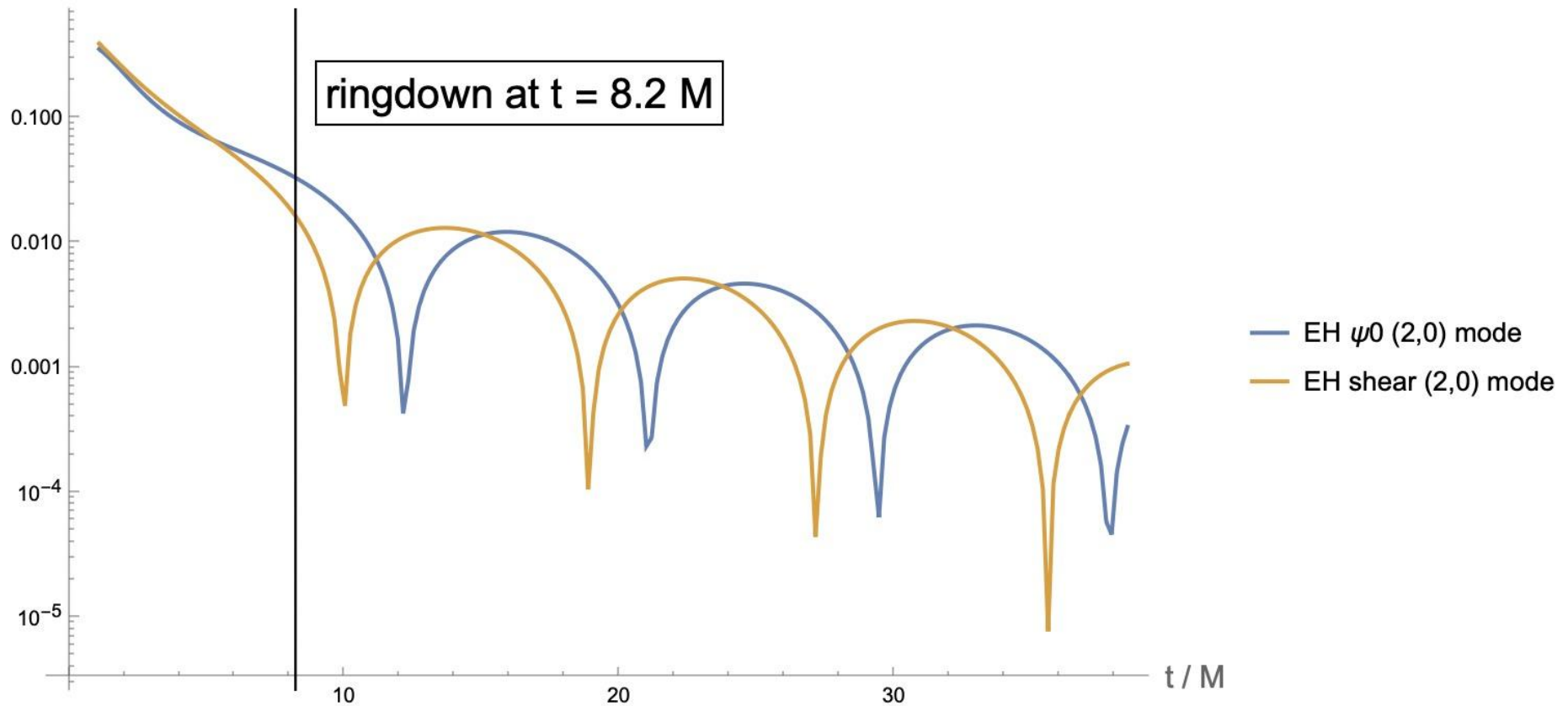


# Preliminary: relative difference $\sigma_{l=2}$ EH vs MOTS

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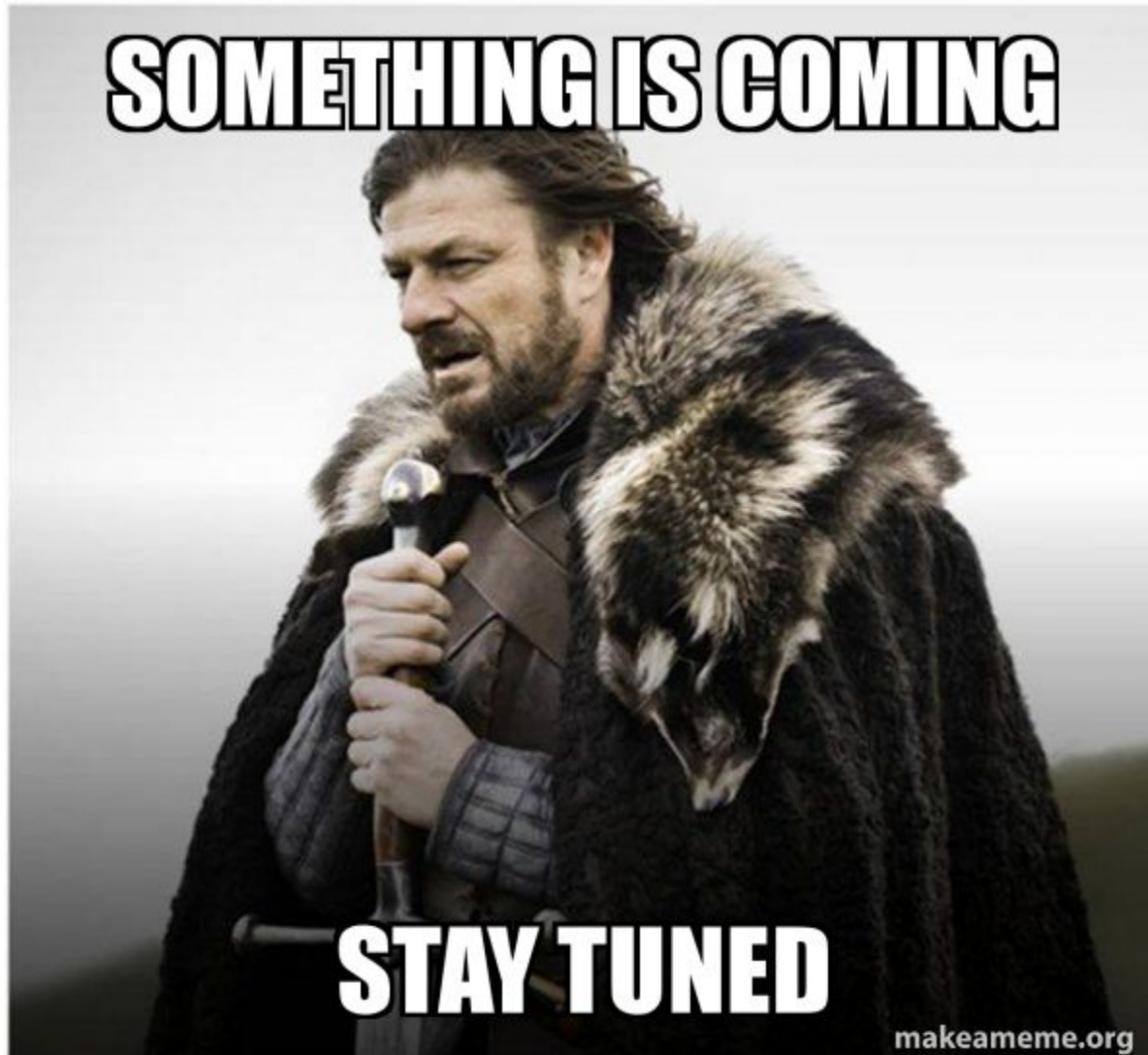


# Preliminary: event horizon geometry



For QNM comparison...

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# Conclusion

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- ★ First explicit analytic construction of black hole tomography
- ★ QNMs describe horizon geometry nicely
- ★ Comparison with black hole perturbation theory ongoing
- ★ Observations of quadratic modes very likely with ET & LISA, so the future is bright!