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Probing Beyond Λ CDM Cosmologies with the 21cm Signal

Evolving Dark Energy and EFT Corrections

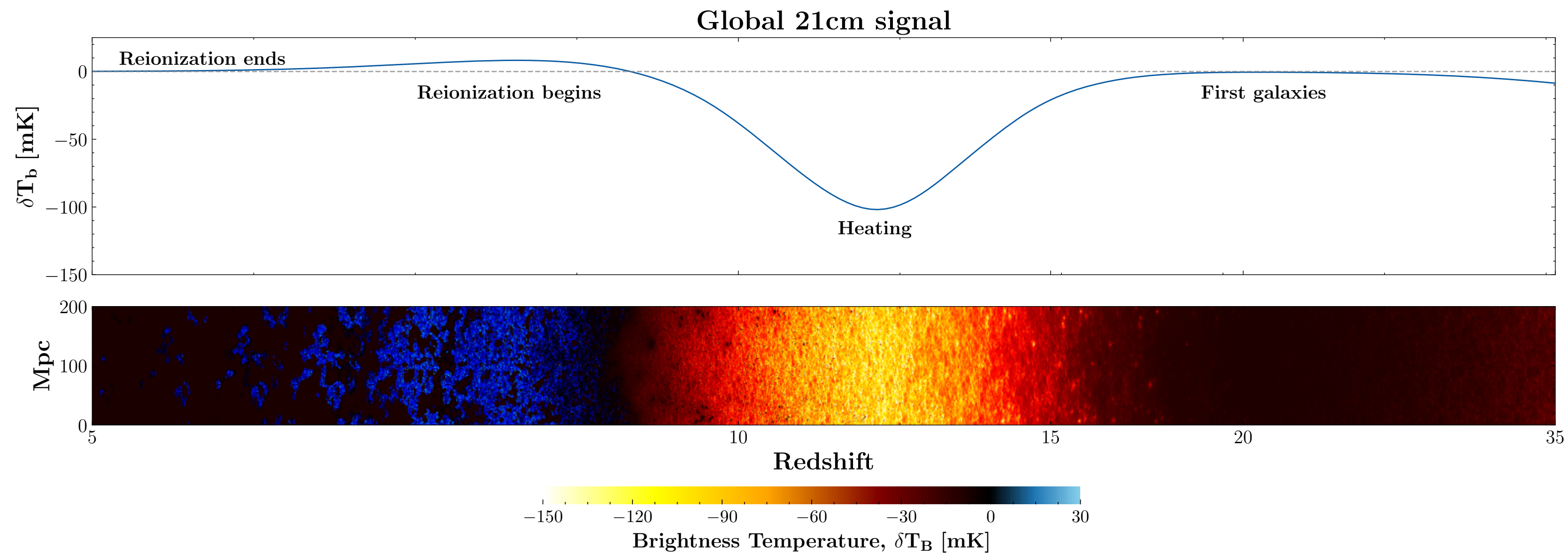
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Supervisor: Dr. Caroline Heneka

Cosmology in the Alps 2026, March 19th 2026, Les Diablerets

The 21cm Signal



- 21cm signal tracks evolution of structure formation and reionization
- Need simulations to connect future observations to theory
- Signal depends strongly on density field:

$$\delta T_b(x, z) = \frac{T_S - T_\gamma}{1 + z} (1 - e^{-\tau_{\nu 0}})$$

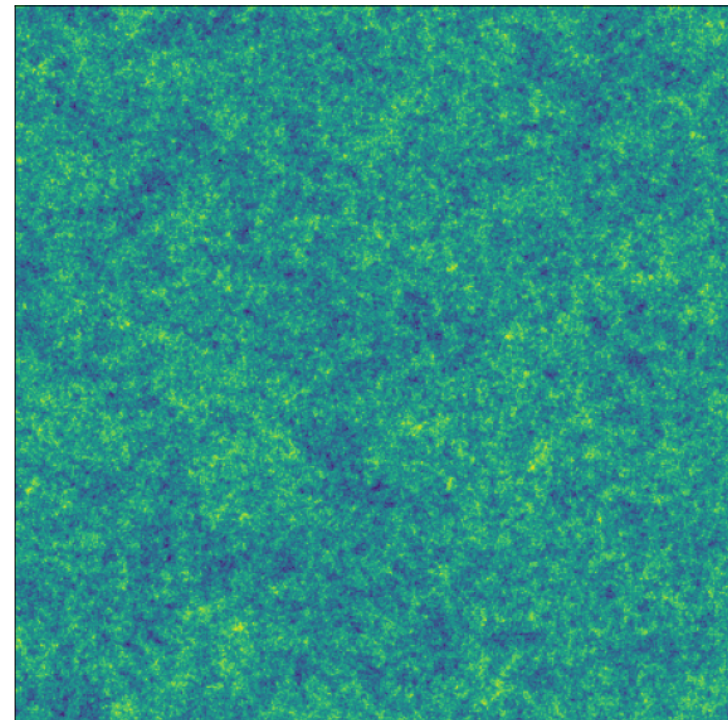
$$\propto x_{\text{HI}} (1 + \delta_{\text{nl}}) \left(\frac{H}{dv_r/dr + H} \right)$$

Questions

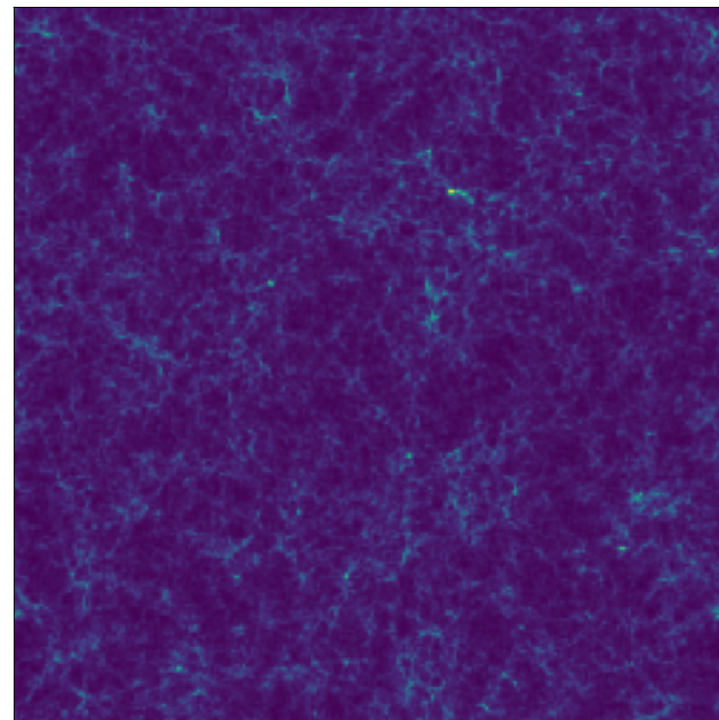
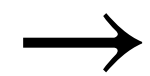
- How does evolving dark energy affect the 21cm signal?
- How do nonlinear corrections to the density field affect the 21cm signal?
- Can we constrain beyond Λ CDM cosmological parameters from simulations via SBI?
- Does extra information at nonlinear scales change inference performance?

How to simulate the 21cm signal?

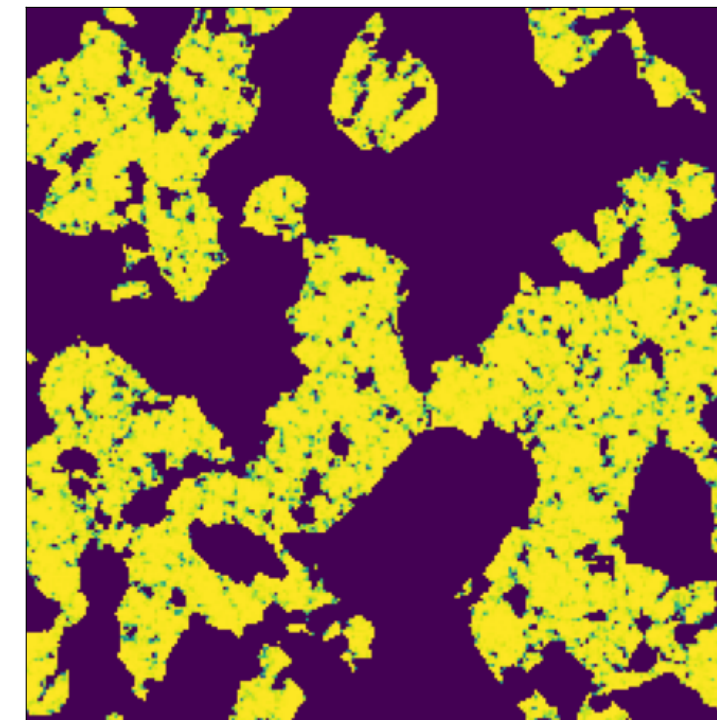
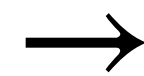
- **21cmFAST:**



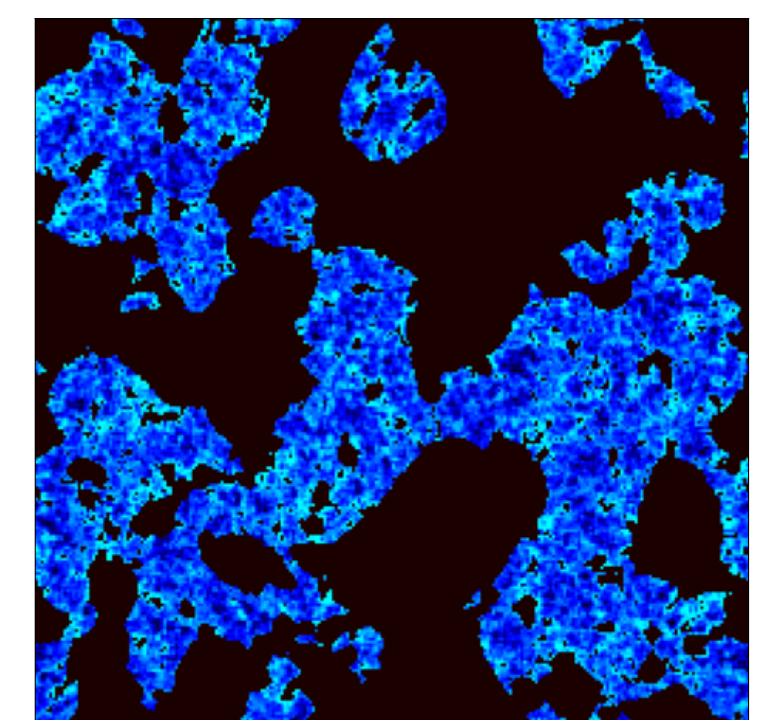
Gaussian random field



Perturbed density (2LPT)



Ionization field



Brightness temperature

- 2nd order perturbations, scaled to higher redshifts via $D(z)$

- Drawbacks:

- Only Λ CDM cosmologies

- 2nd order perturbation theory breaks down at nonlinear scales and low redshifts

$$\delta T_b(x, z) = \frac{T_S - T_\gamma}{1 + z} (1 - e^{-\tau_{\nu_0}})$$

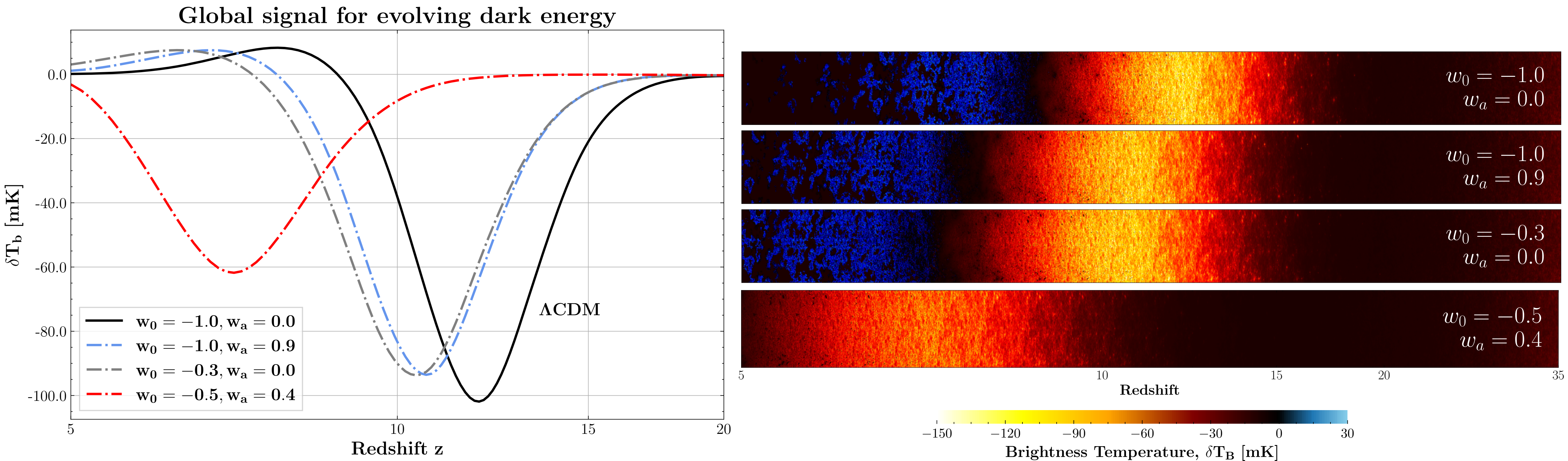
$$\propto x_{\text{HI}}(1 + \delta_{\text{nl}}) \left(\frac{H}{dv_r/dr + H} \right)$$

Beyond Λ CDM cosmologies: evolving dark energy (CPL)

- **CPL model:** $w(a) = w_0 + w_a(1 - a)$
- **Changes to 21cmFAST:** dynamically generate $P_{\text{lin}}(k, z = 0)$ using CLASS, calculate $D_{\text{CPL}}(z)$

Beyond Λ CDM cosmologies: evolving dark energy (CPL)

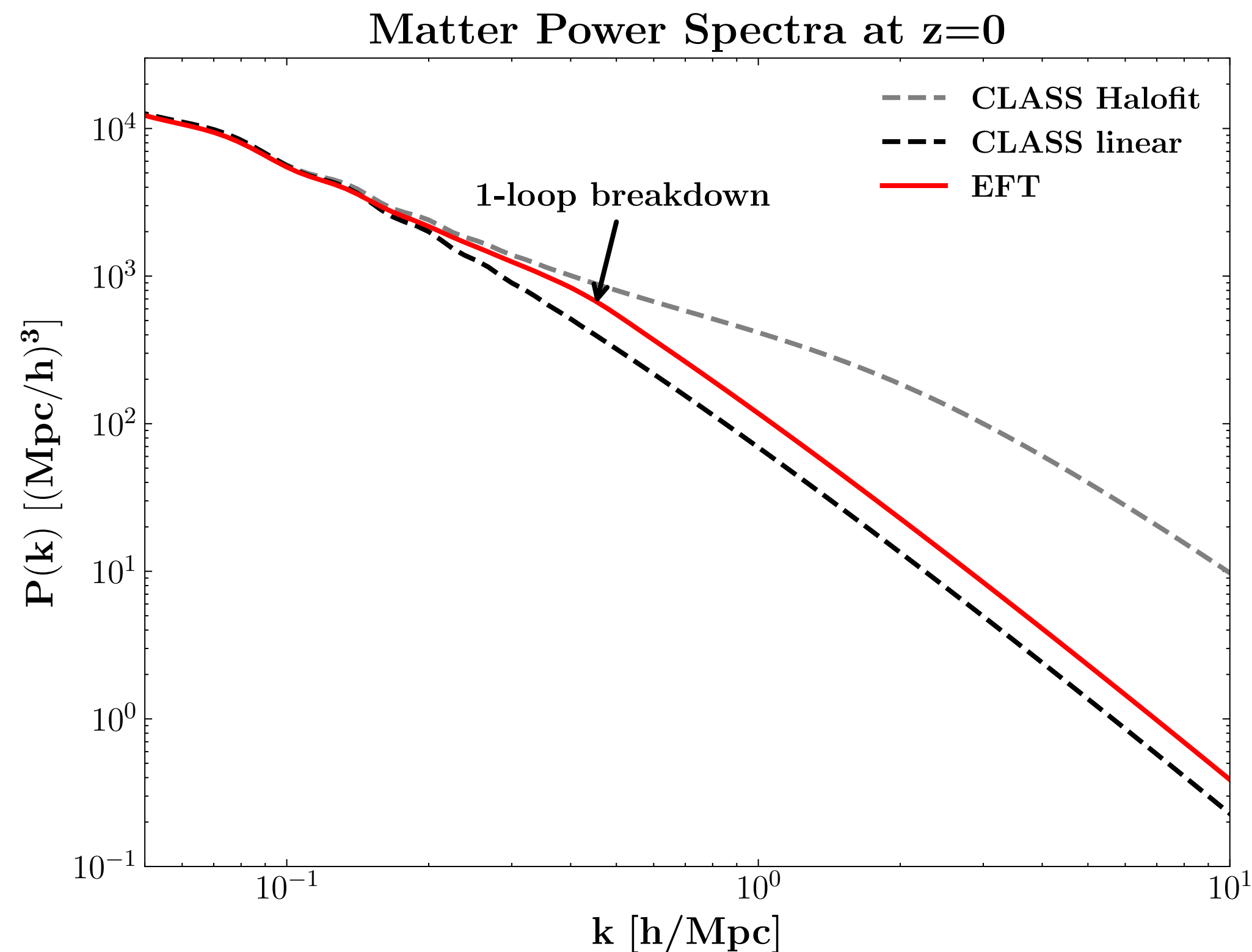
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21cm at (slightly) nonlinear scales? - Effective Field Theory of LSS

- **EFTofLSS**: Standard perturbation theory + effective stress tensor (small scale physics)

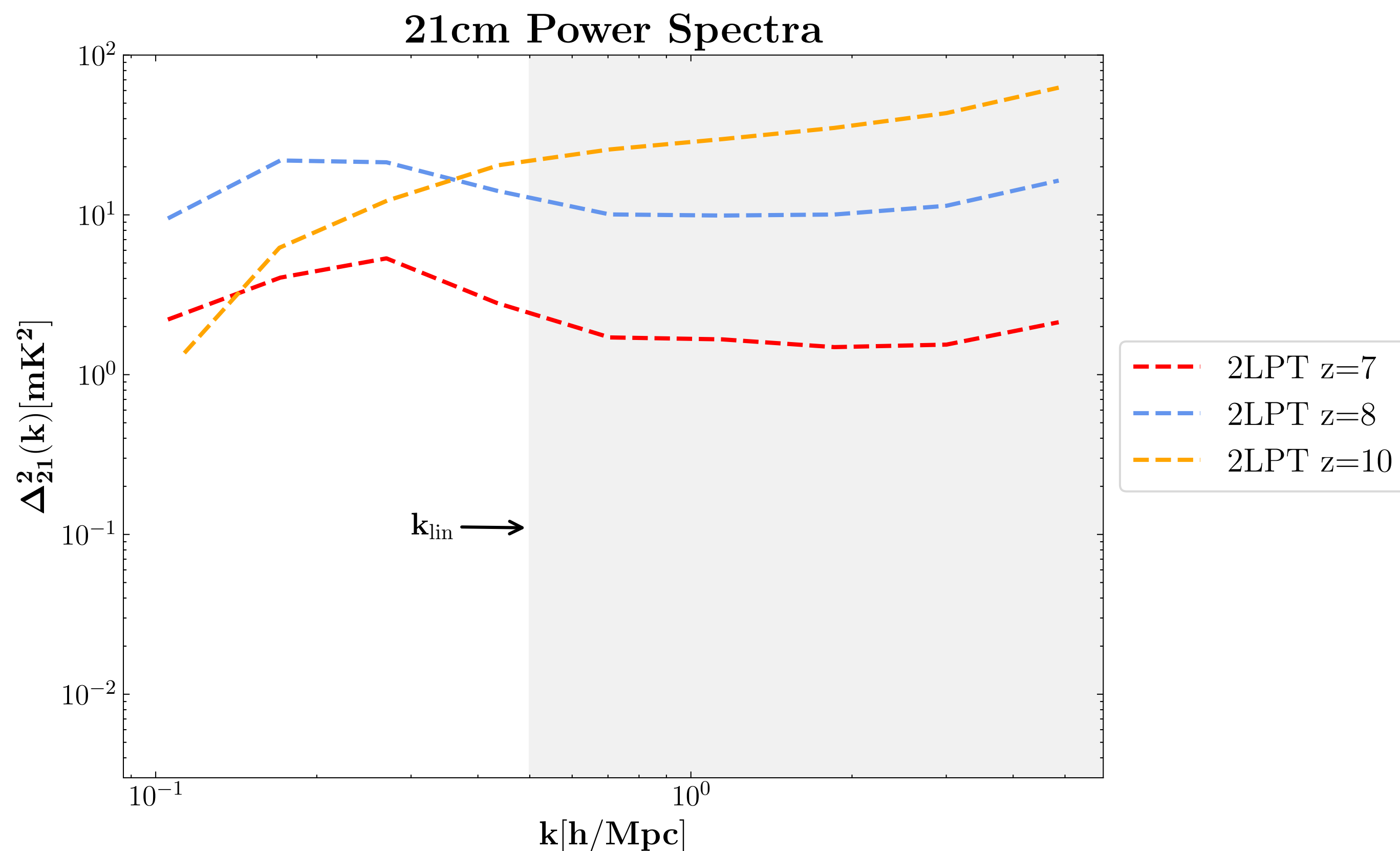
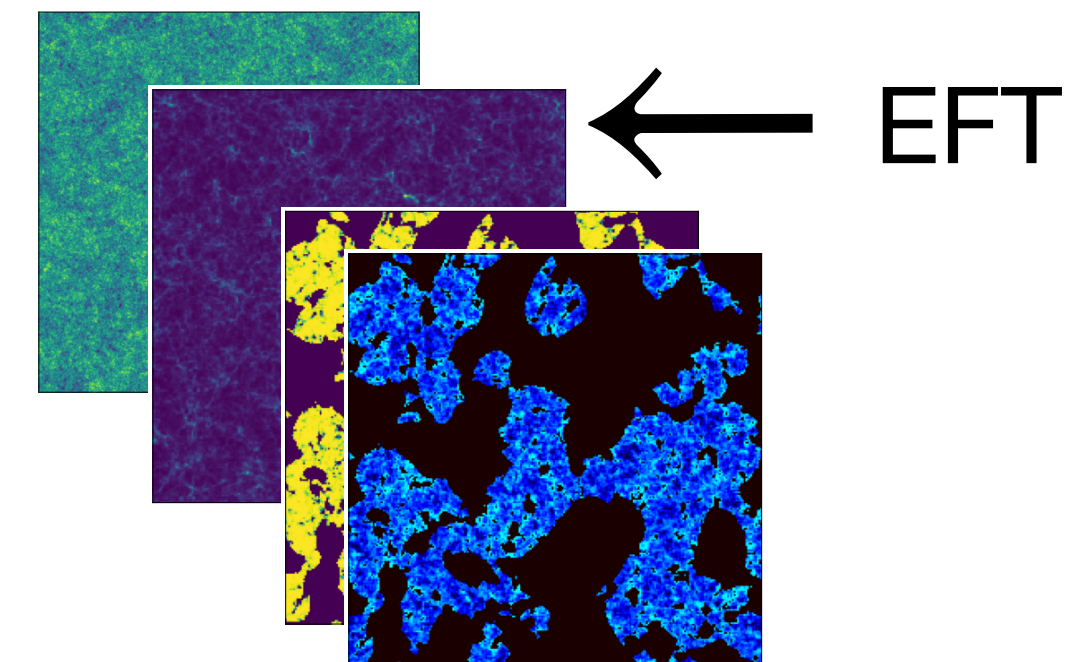
$$\Rightarrow P_{\text{EFT}}^{1\text{-loop}}(k, z) = \underbrace{P_{11}(k, z)}_{\text{tree}} + \underbrace{P_{13}(k, z) + P_{22}(k, z)}_{\text{1-loop}} - \underbrace{2c_s^2(z)k^2 P_{11}(k, z)}_{\text{counter term}}$$



EFT in 21cmFAST

- Implementation in 21cmFAST:

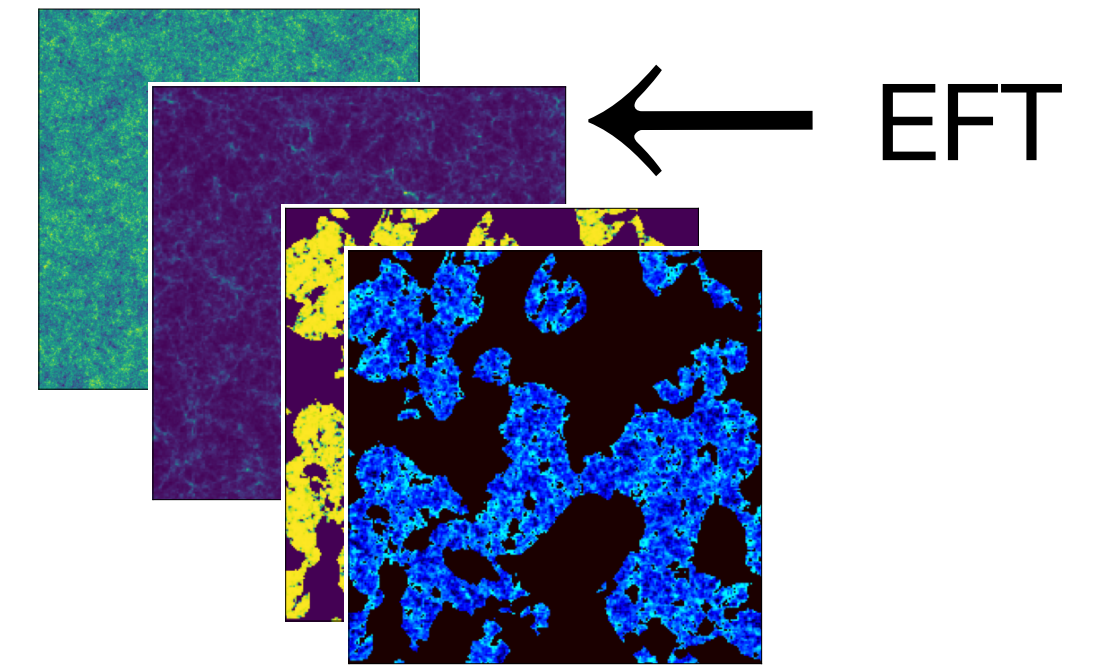
→ lognormal field with EFT 2-point statistics at each redshift (post heating)



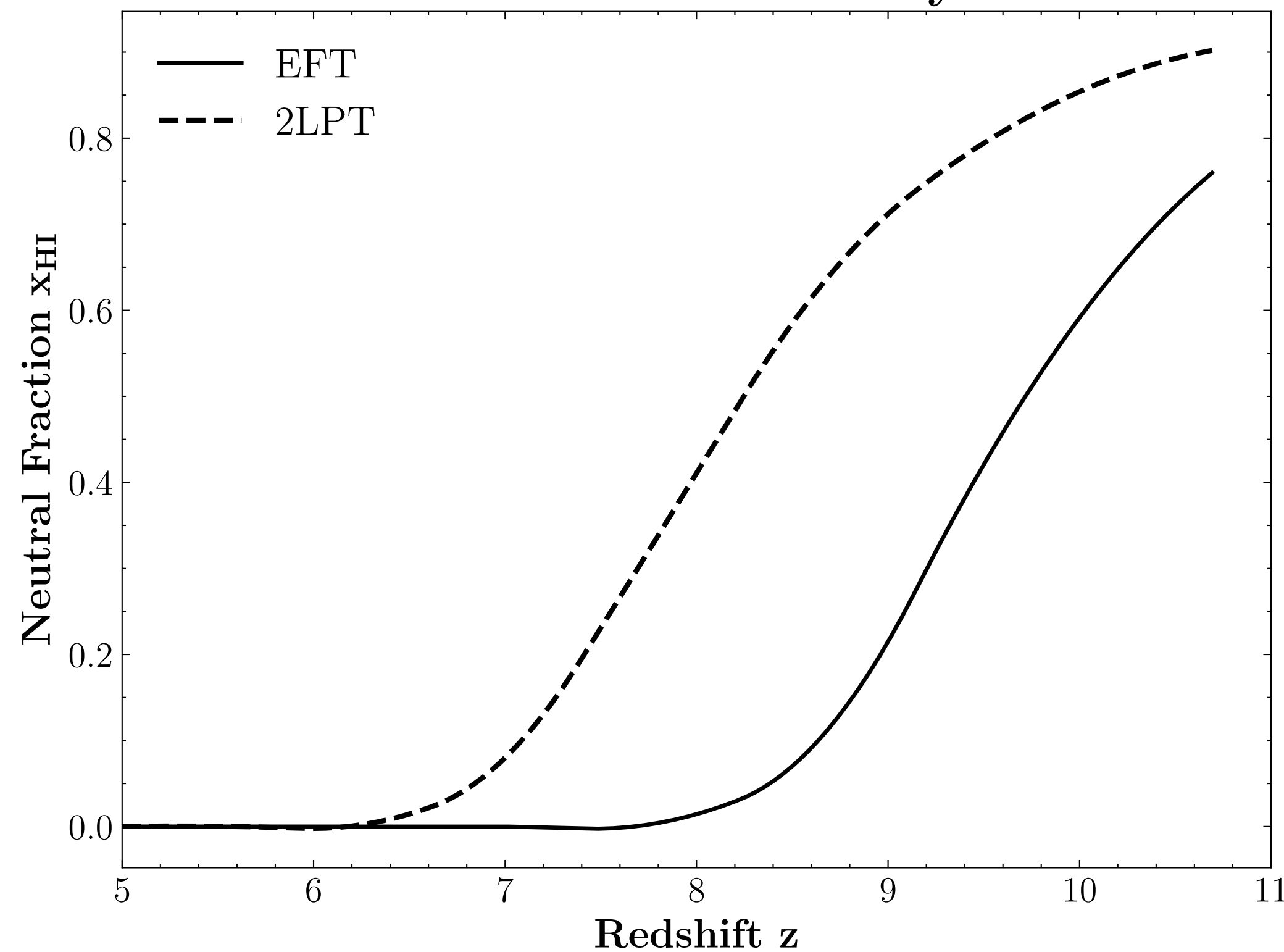
EFT in 21cmFAST

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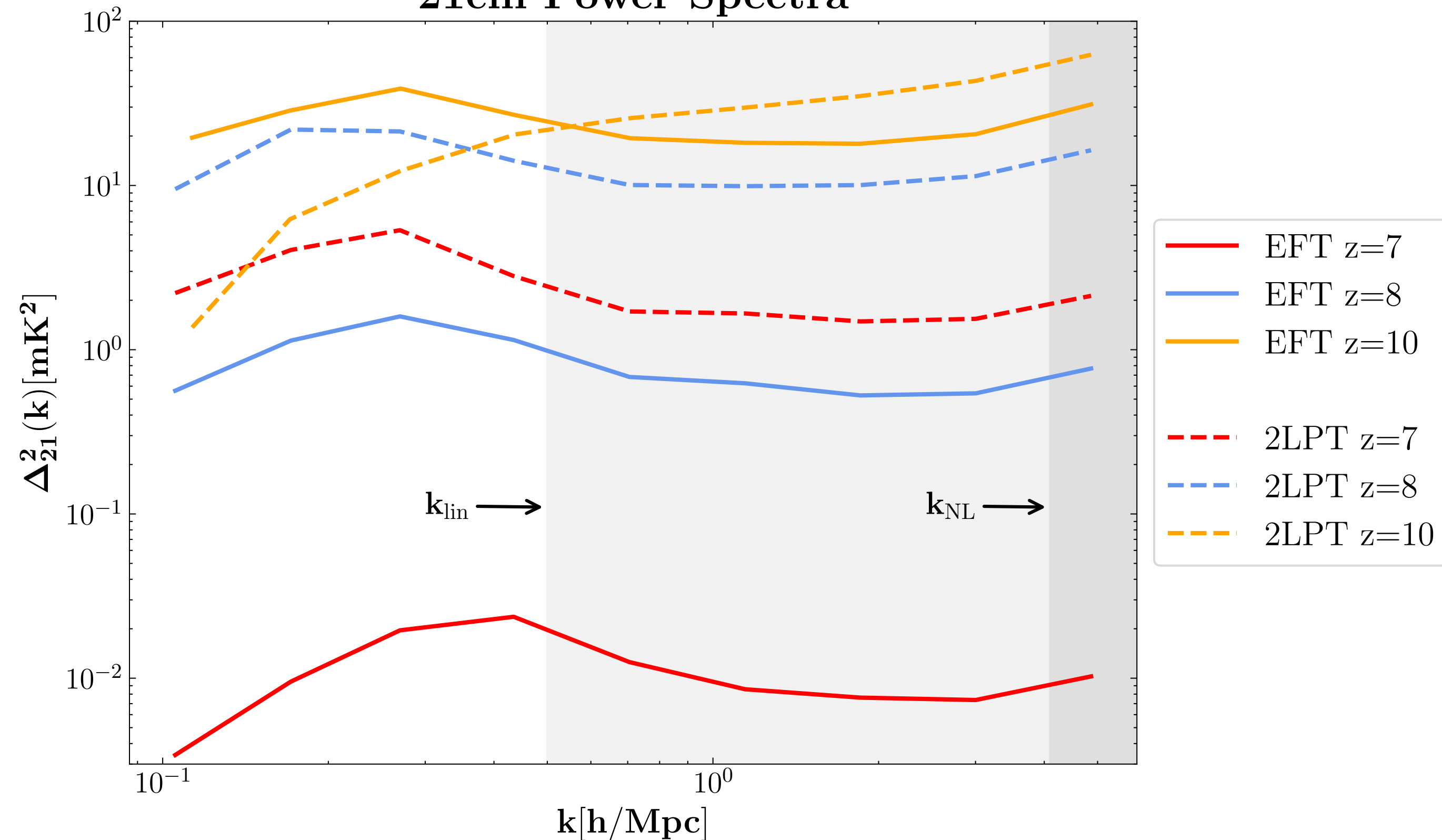
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Reionization History

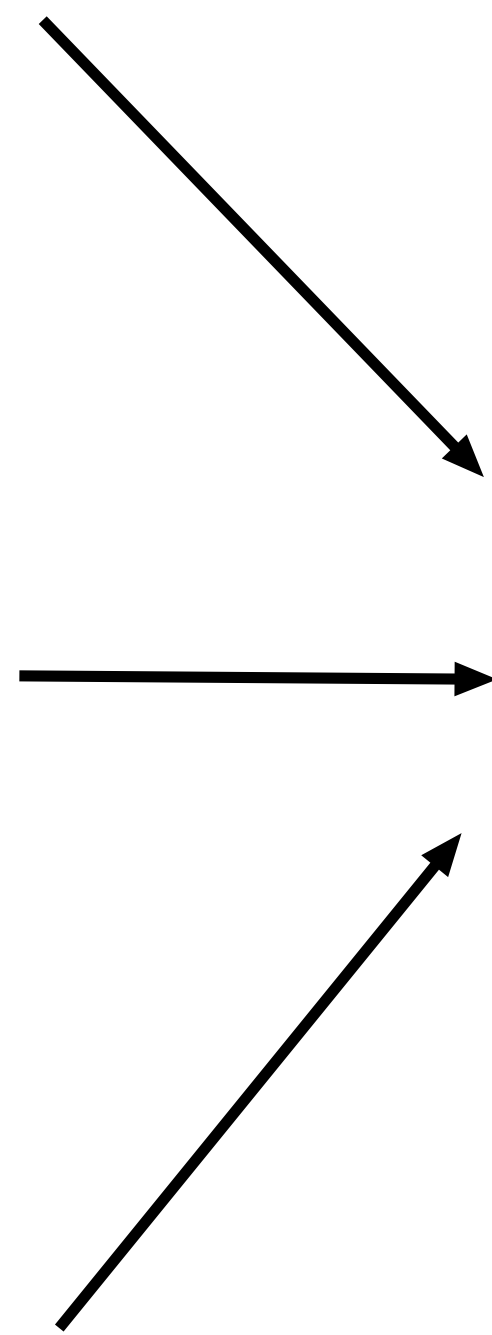
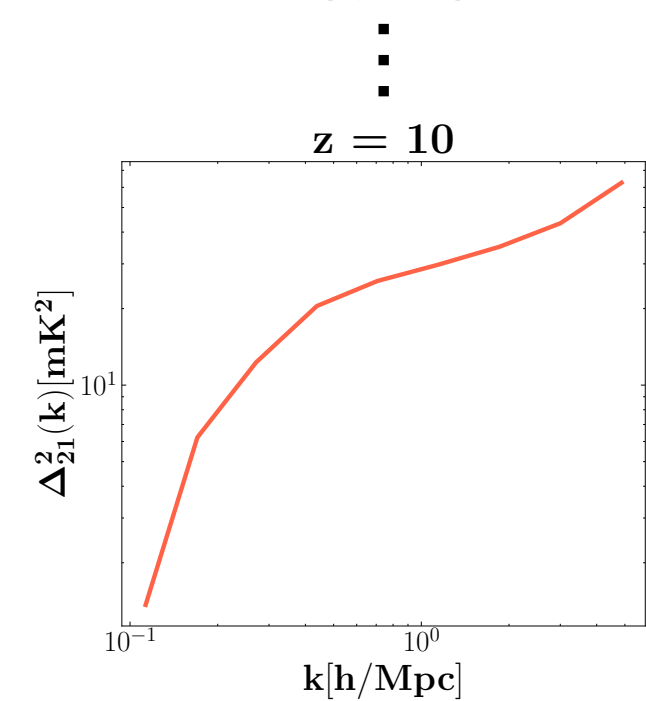
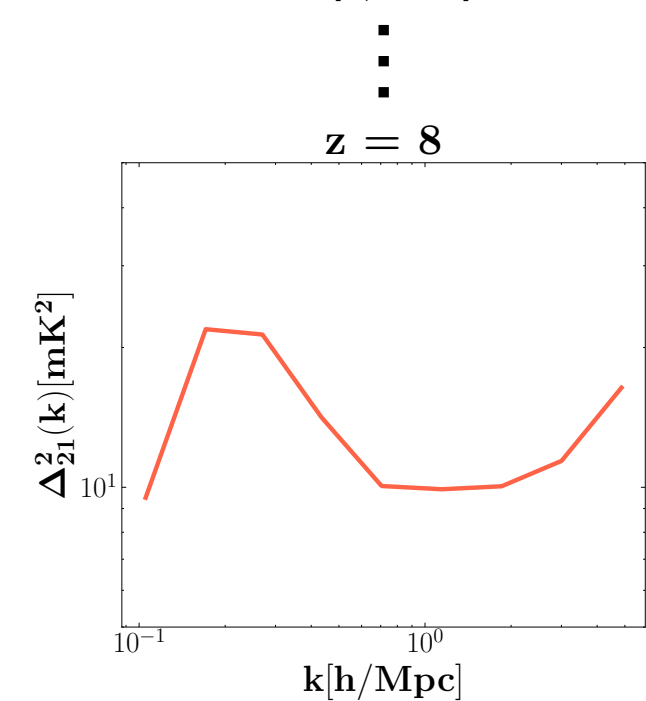
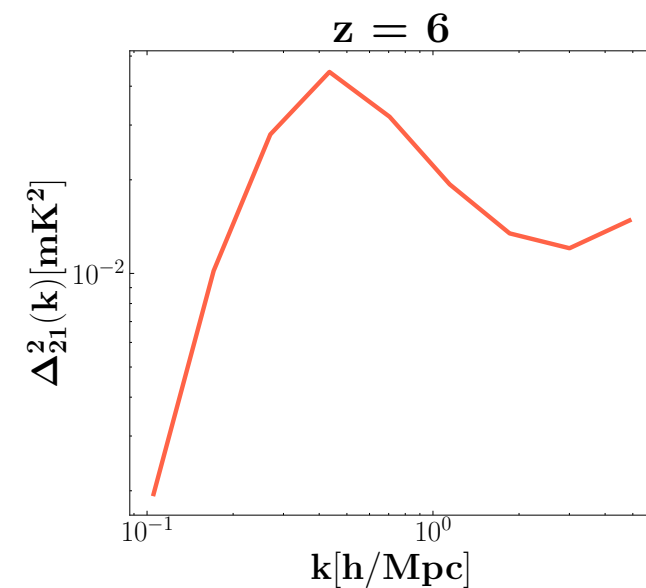


21cm Power Spectra



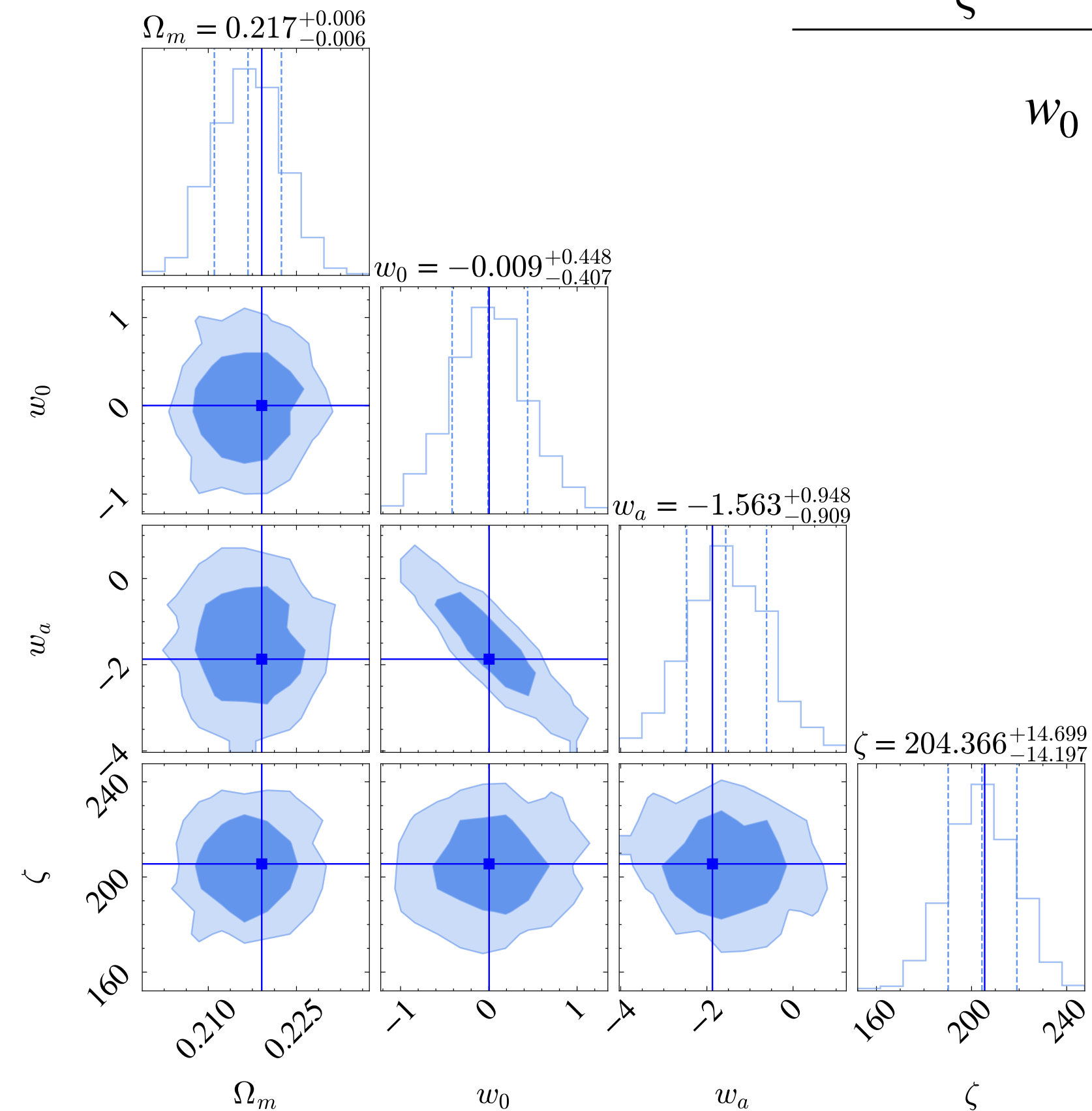
Simulation-based Inference (SBI)

1D PS [z=5-10]



EoRFlow

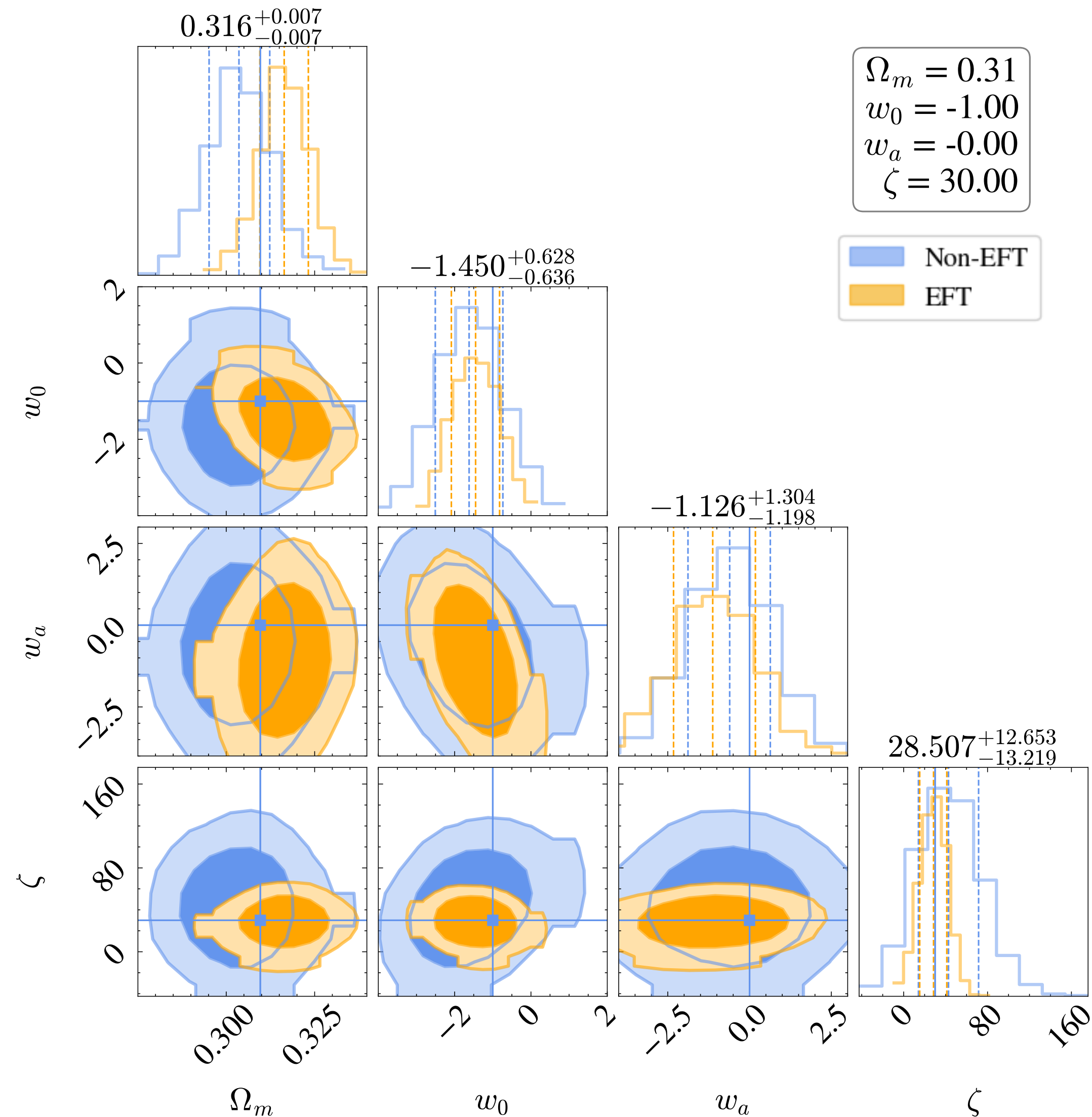
Posteriors



Parameter	Prior range
$\Omega_{m,0}$	$\mathcal{U}[0.2, 0.4]$
w_0	$\mathcal{U}[-3.0, 1.0]$
w_a	$\mathcal{U}[-3.0, 2.0]$
ζ	$\mathcal{U}[10, 250]$

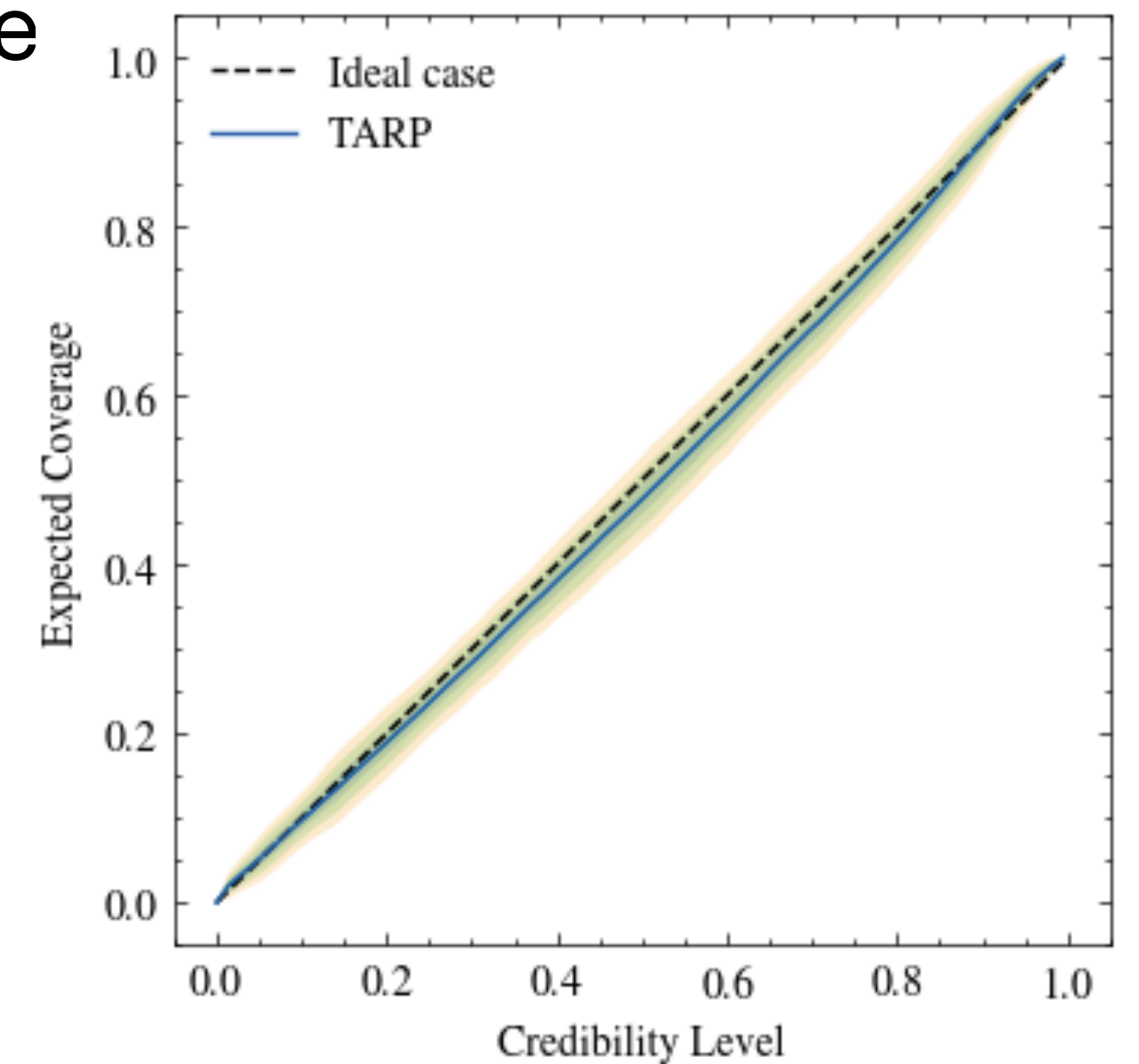
$$w_0 + w_a < 0$$

SBI in beyond Λ CDM cosmologies



First results:

- EFT slightly more constrained, sims faster
- Posteriors: Ω_m , w_a similar for both models;
 w_0 , ζ tighter for EFT
- $w_0 w_a$ degenerate



Conclusions

- **How does evolving dark energy affect the 21cm signal?**

→

- **How do nonlinear corrections to the density field affect the 21cm signal?**

→

- **Can we constrain beyond Λ CDM cosmological parameters from simulations via SBI?**

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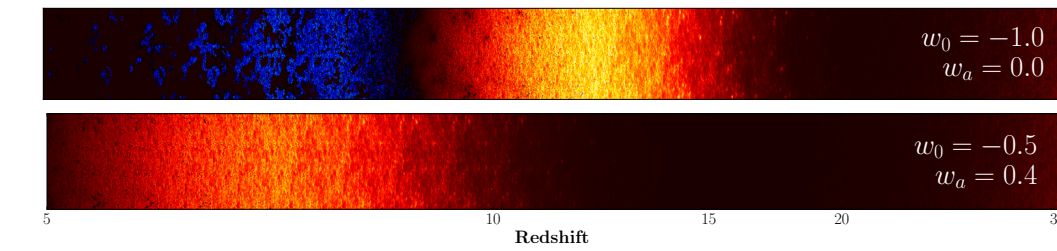
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→ shifts global 21cm signal, time of reionization



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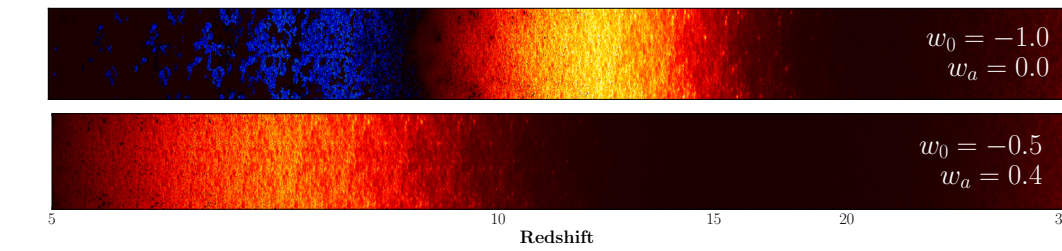
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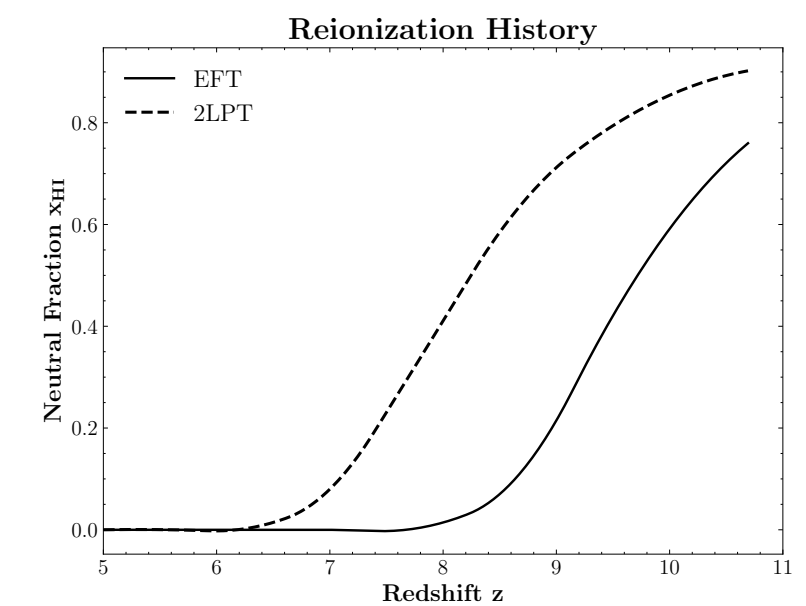
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→ more power at small scales leads to earlier reionization



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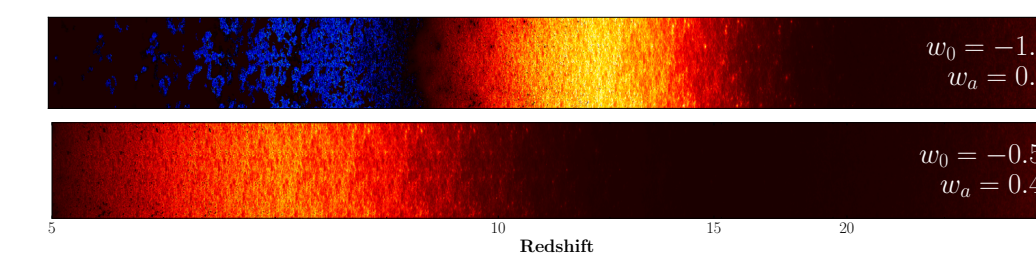
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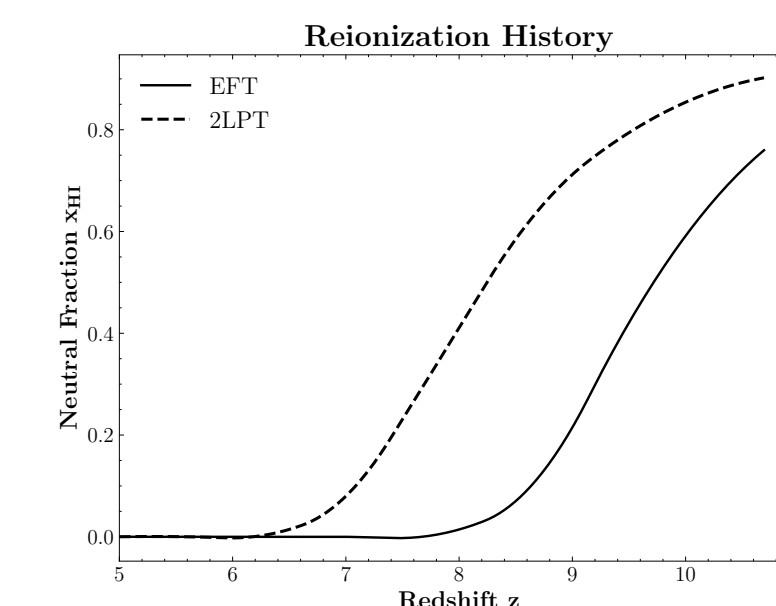
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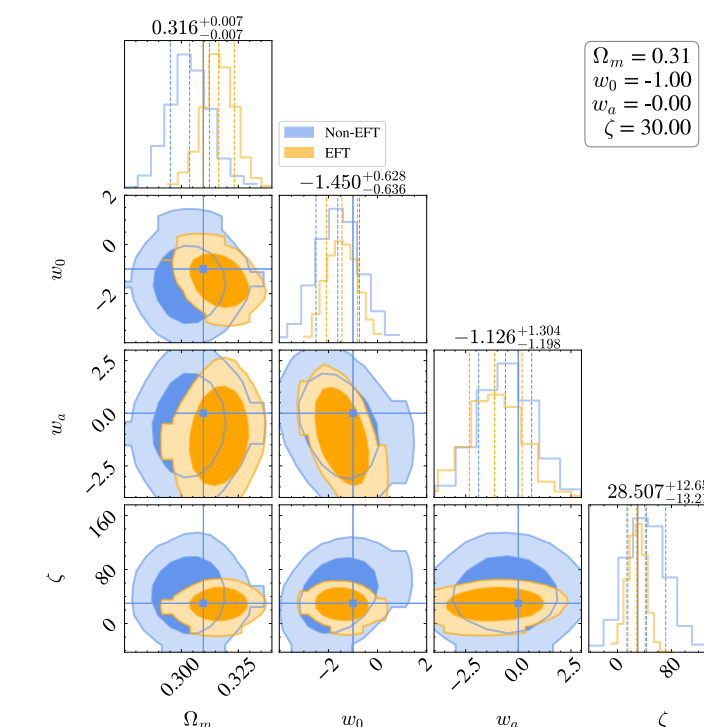


- **Can we constrain beyond Λ CDM cosmological parameters from simulations via SBI?**

→ yes, but remaining degeneracies

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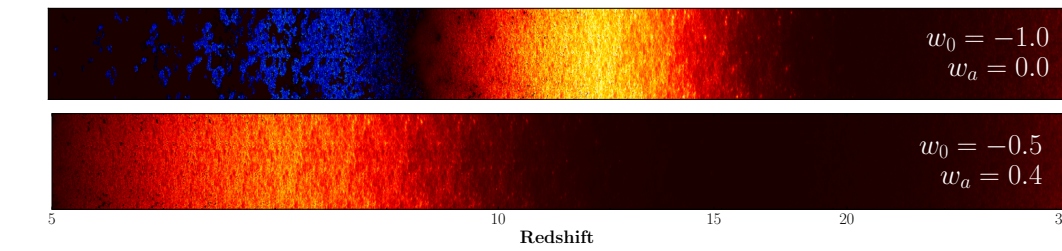
→



Conclusions

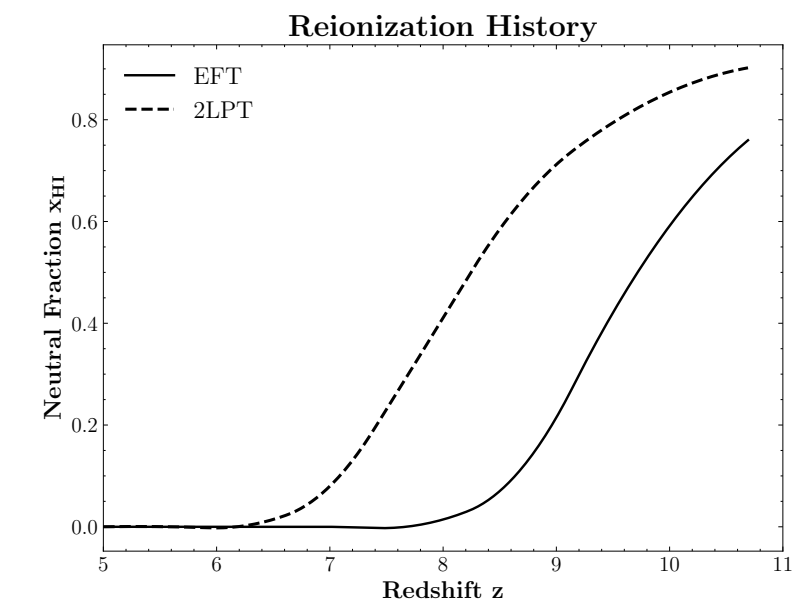
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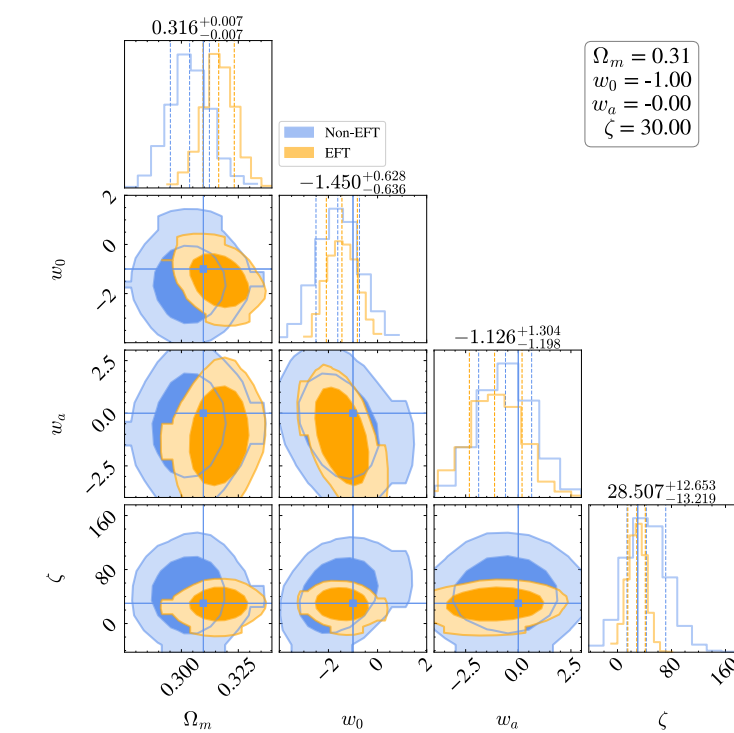


- **Can we constrain beyond Λ CDM cosmological parameters from simulations via SBI?**

→ yes, but remaining degeneracies

- **Does extra information at nonlinear scales change inference performance?**

→ yes, tighter constraints for ζ and w_0



Thank you for listening!

Additional Slides

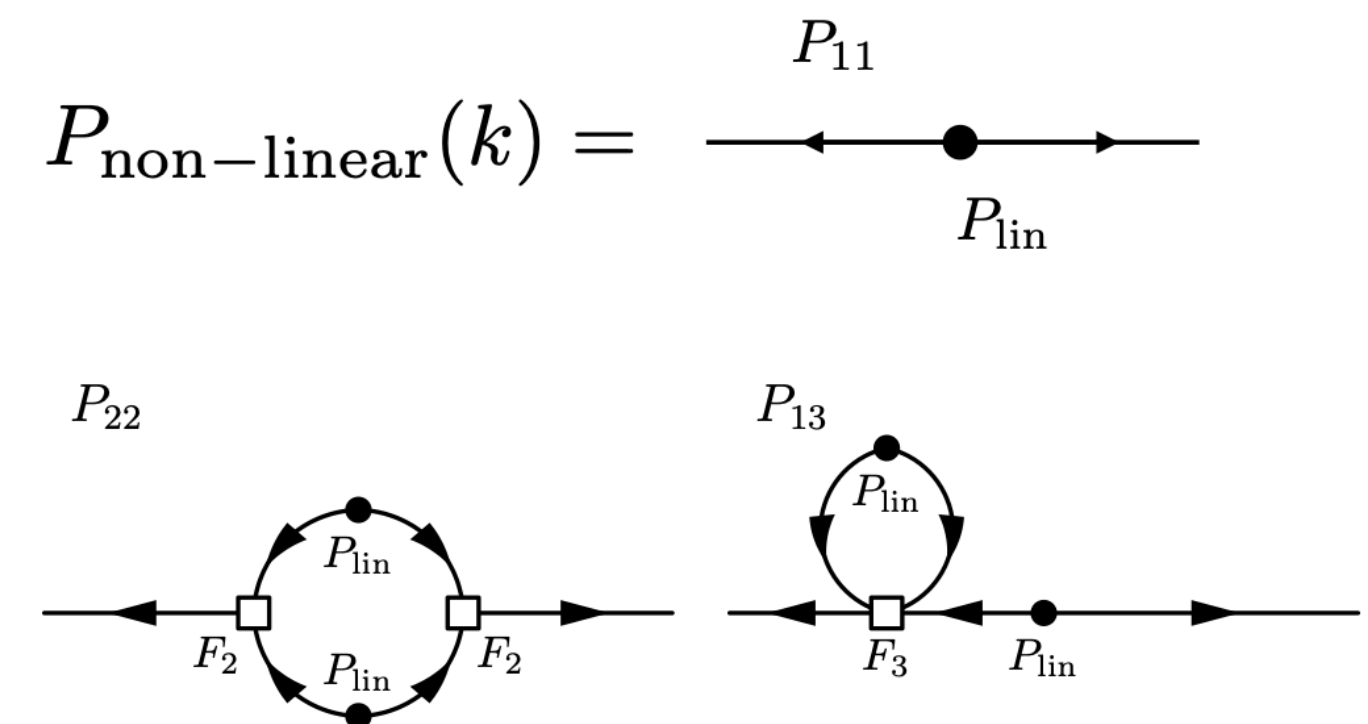
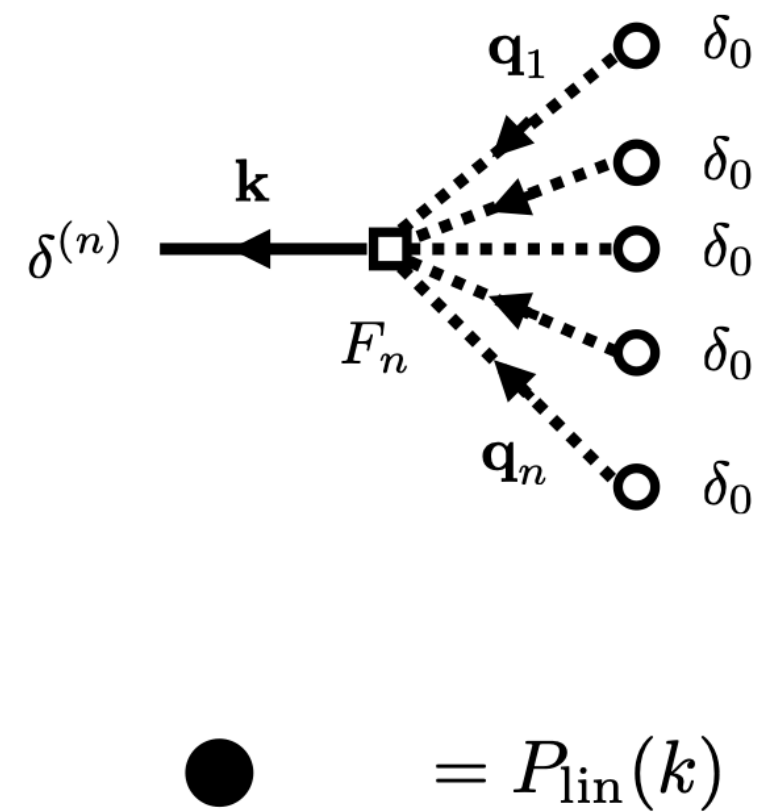
Effective Field Theory of Large Scale Structure

$$\delta^{(n)}(\mathbf{k}) = \left[\prod_{i=1}^n \int_{\mathbf{q}_i} \right] \delta_D^{(3)}(\mathbf{k} - \mathbf{q}_{1\dots n}) F_n(\mathbf{q}_1, \dots, \mathbf{q}_n) \left[\prod_{i=1}^n \delta_0(\mathbf{q}_i) \right]$$

$$P_{22}(k) = \langle \delta_{\mathbf{k}}^{(2)} \delta_{\mathbf{k}'}^{(2)} \rangle' = 2 \int_{\mathbf{q}} [F_2(\mathbf{q} - \mathbf{k}, \mathbf{q})]^2 P_{11}(q) P_{11}(|\mathbf{k} - \mathbf{q}|)$$

$$P_{13}(k) = 2 \langle \delta_{\mathbf{k}}^{(1)} \delta_{\mathbf{k}'}^{(2)} \rangle' = 6 P_{11}(k) \int_{\mathbf{q}} F_3(\mathbf{k}, \mathbf{q} - \mathbf{q}) P_{11}(q).$$

$$c_s^2 = - \frac{P_{\text{nl}} - P_{11} - P_{1\text{-loop}}}{2k^2 P_{11}}$$



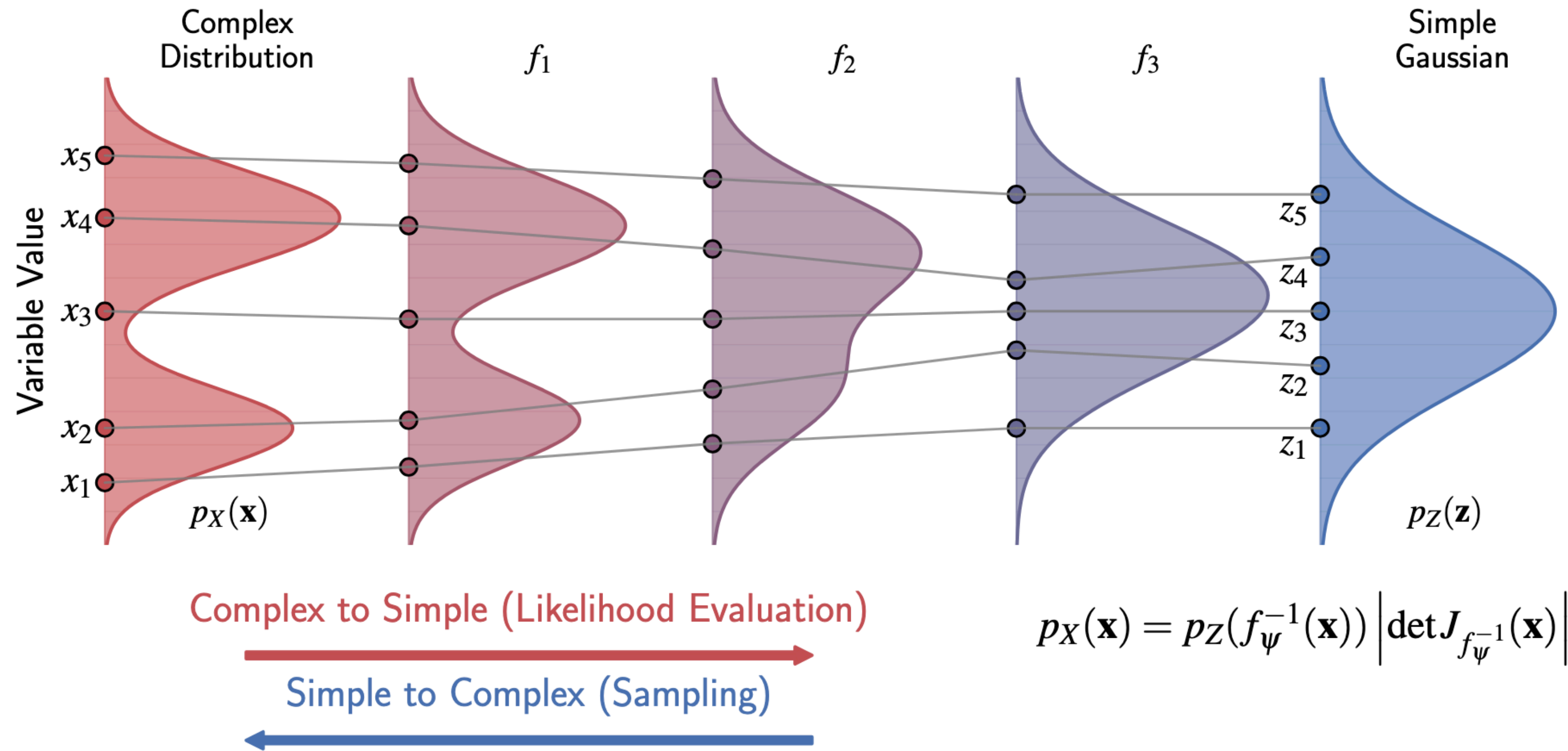
Lognormal distribution

1. Correlation function: $\xi(r) = \frac{1}{V} \sum_k P(k) e^{ikr}$
2. Gaussian correlation function: $\xi_G(r) = \ln(1 + \xi(r)) \rightarrow P_G(k)$
3. Generate gaussian random field with $P_G(k)$: $G(k) = \sqrt{\frac{P_G(k)V}{2}} (a_r + ia_i)$
4. Lognormal field: $\delta(x) = \exp\left(G(x) - \frac{\sigma_G^2}{2}\right) - 1$

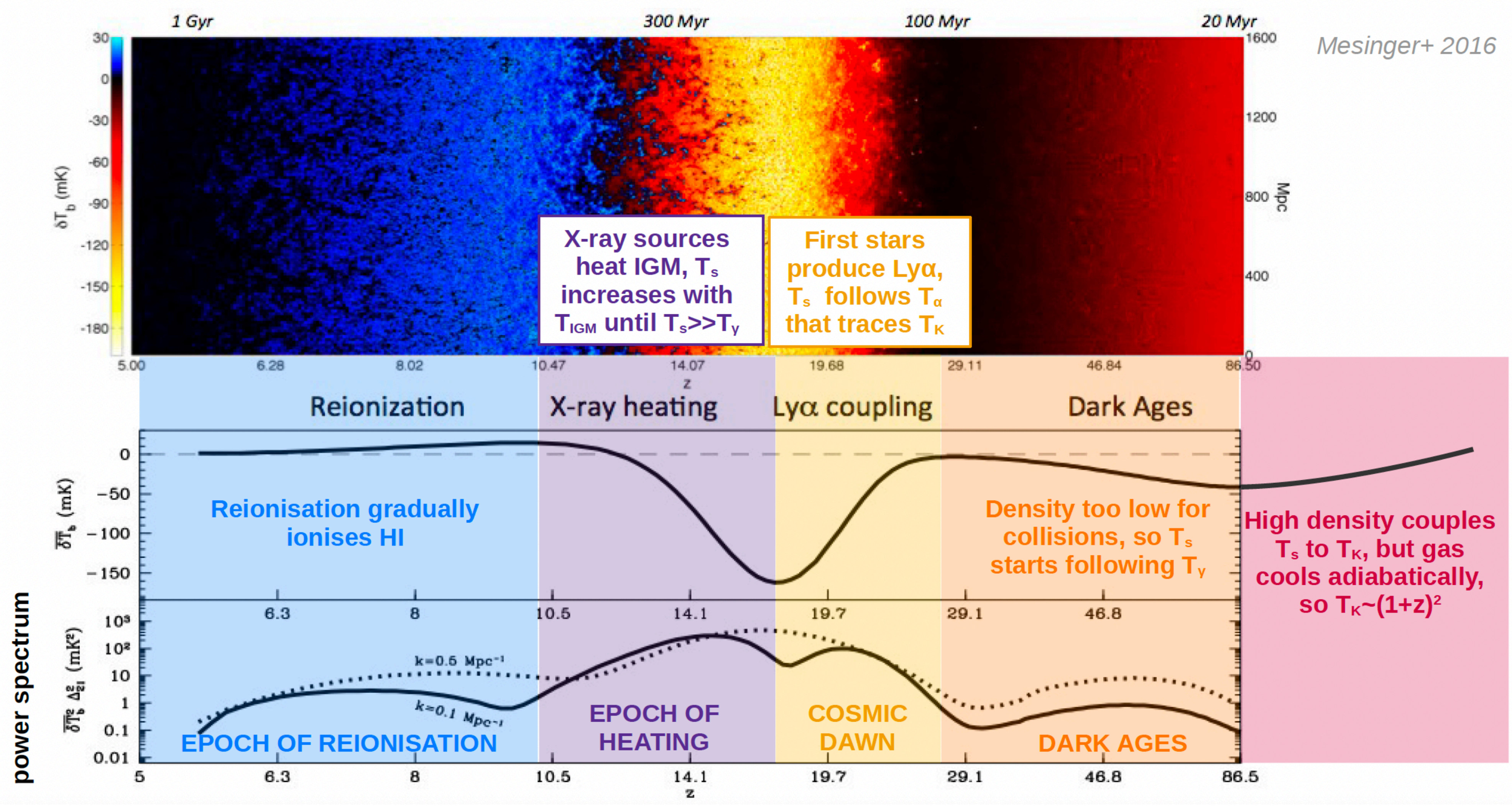
⇒ Resulting field has $\delta(x) \geq -1$

Normalizing Flows

(a) Normalizing Flows: Direct Transformation Between Distributions



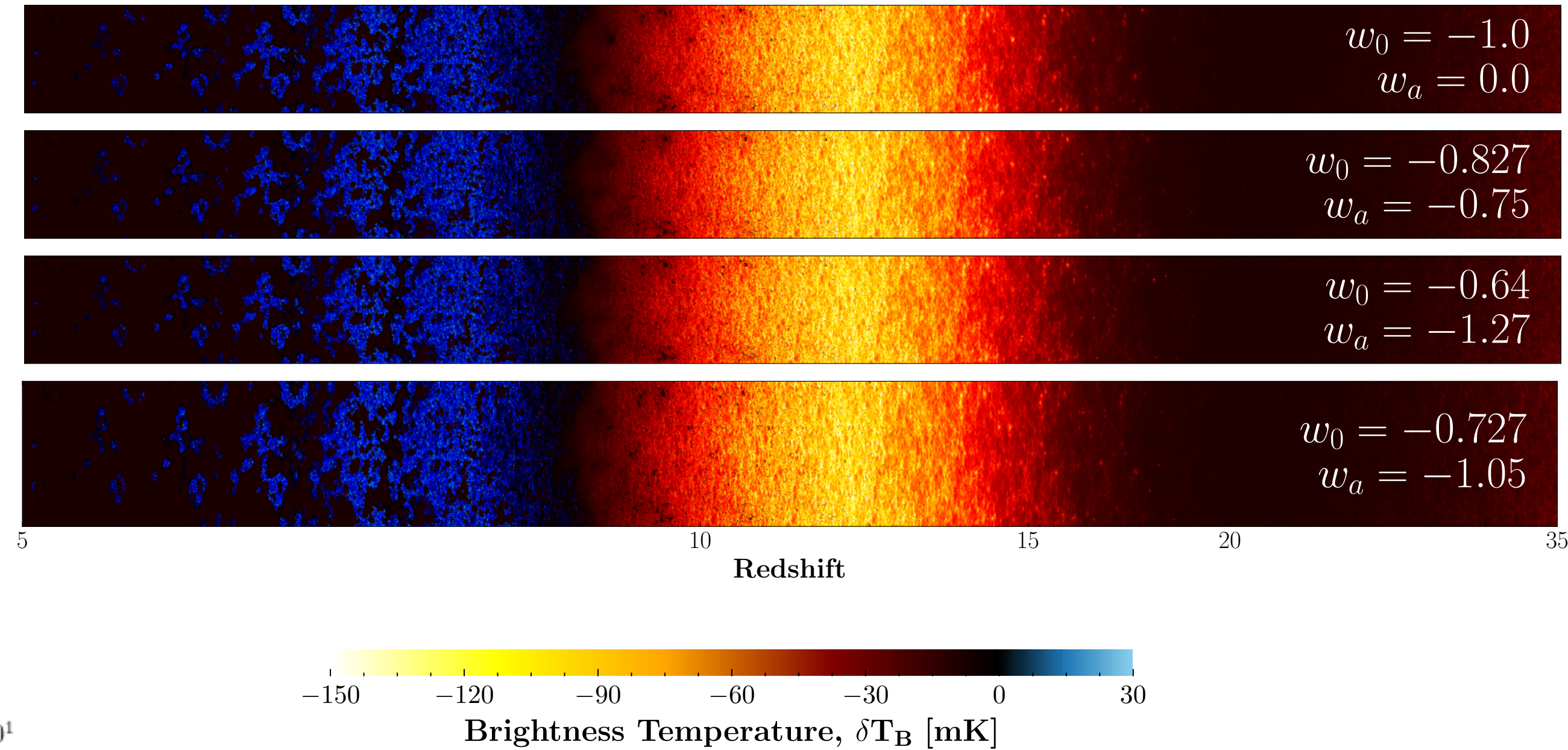
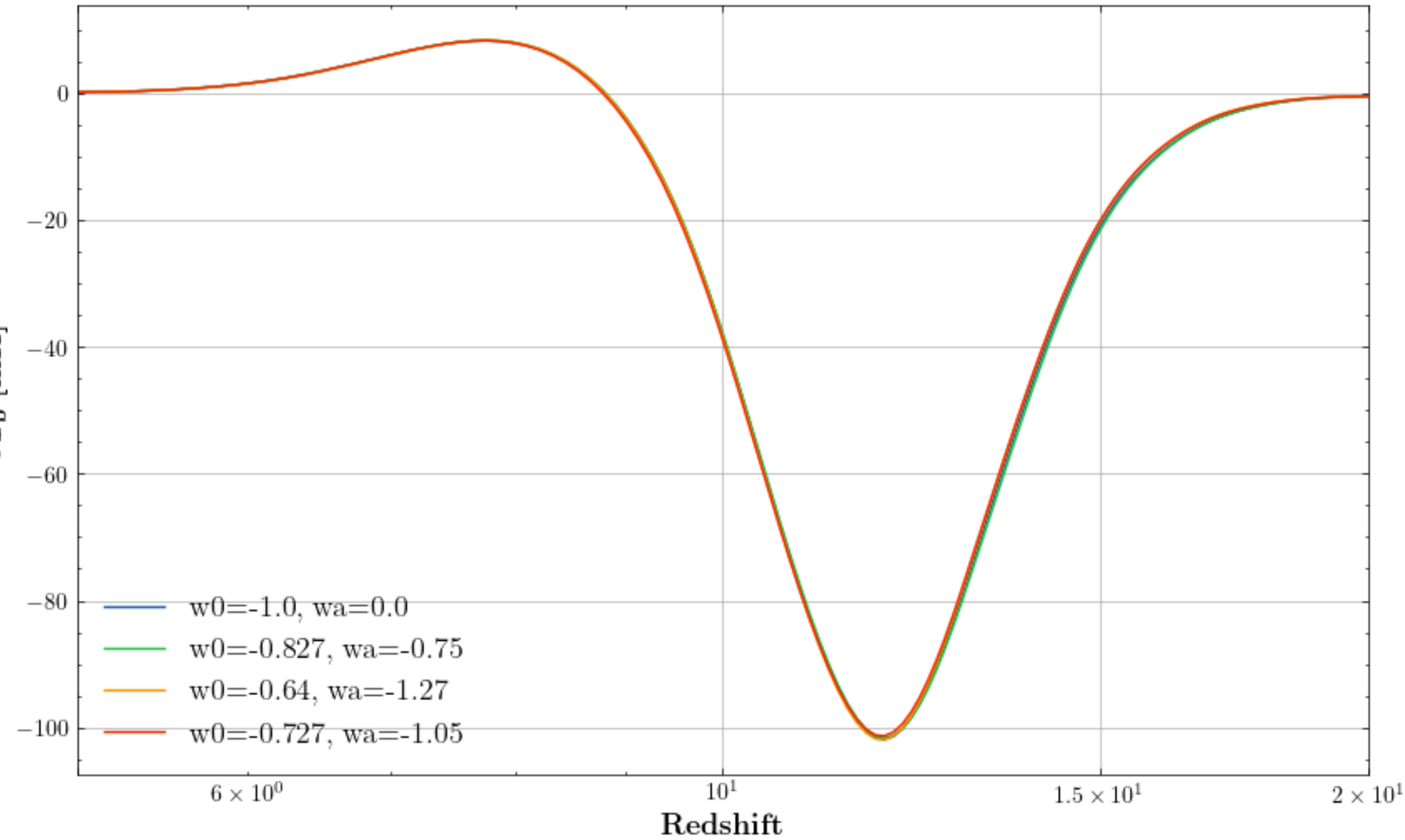
21cm signal evolution



DESI values in 21cmFAST

$$E^2(a) = \Omega_{m,0}a^{-3} + \Omega_{r,0}a^{-4} + \Omega_{\Lambda}a^{-3(1+w_0+w_a)}e^{-3w_a(1-a)}$$

Global signal for evolving dark energy



$$\left. \begin{aligned} w_0 &= -0.827 \pm 0.063, \\ w_a &= -0.75^{+0.29}_{-0.25}, \end{aligned} \right\} \begin{array}{l} \text{DESI+CMB} \\ \text{+PantheonPlus} \end{array}$$

$$\left. \begin{aligned} w_0 &= -0.64 \pm 0.11, \\ w_a &= -1.27^{+0.40}_{-0.34}, \end{aligned} \right\} \begin{array}{l} \text{DESI+CMB} \\ \text{+Union3,} \end{array}$$

$$\left. \begin{aligned} w_0 &= -0.727 \pm 0.067, \\ w_a &= -1.05^{+0.31}_{-0.27}, \end{aligned} \right\} \begin{array}{l} \text{DESI+CMB} \\ \text{+DESY5,} \end{array}$$