



# Probing dark matter with strong lensing and the line of sight

**Daniel Johnson**

CNRS/Université de Montpellier

In collaboration with Pierre Fleury,  
Julien Larena, Theo Duboscq,  
Natalie Hogg, Giacomo Queirolo,  
Lucia Marchetti, and many others

An overview:

## An overview:

1. Gravitational lensing is an excellent probe of dark matter

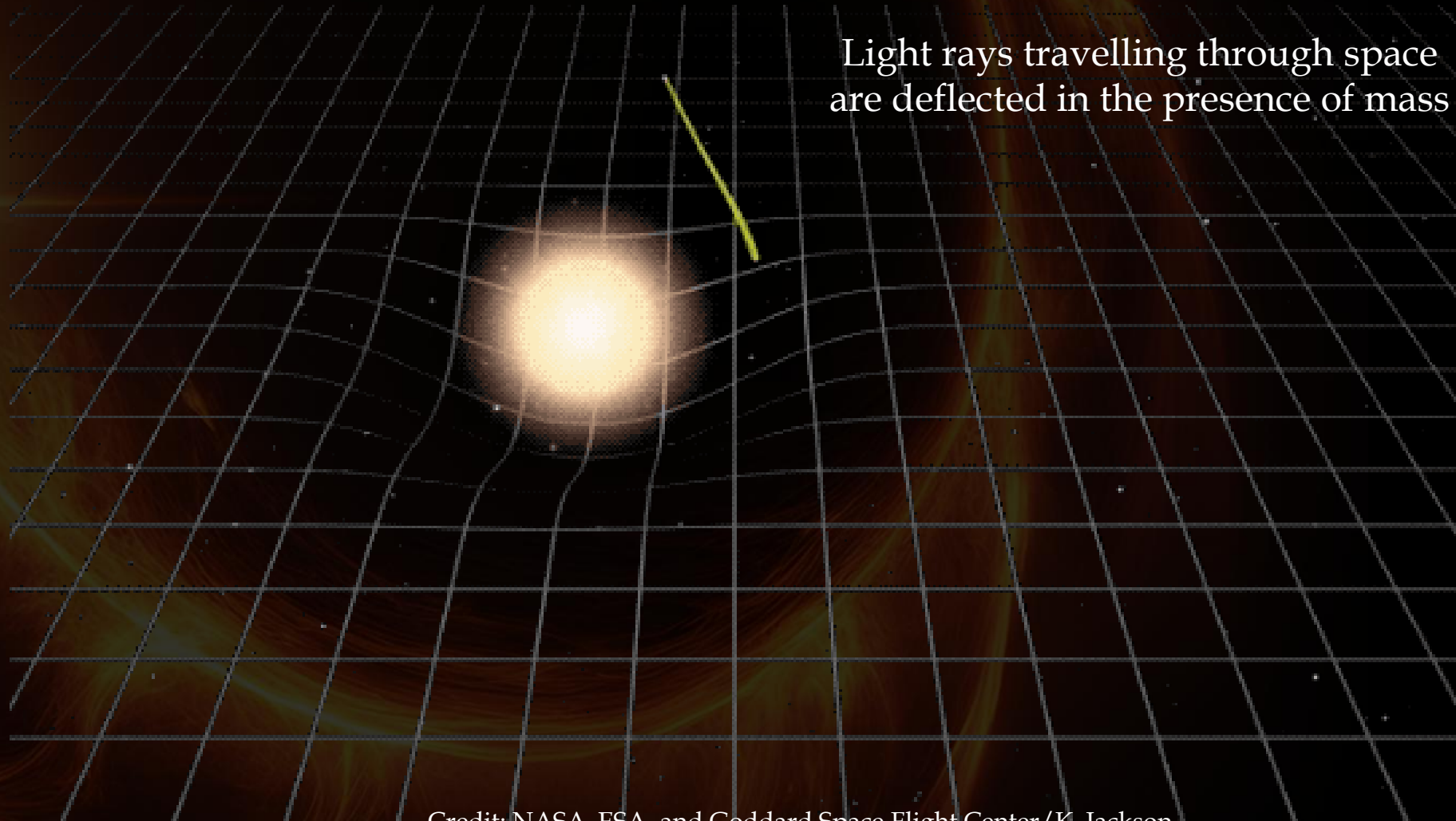
## An overview:

1. Gravitational lensing is an excellent probe of dark matter
2. Strong gravitational lensing is affected by matter along the line of sight of the lens system (the “weak lensing of strong lensing”)

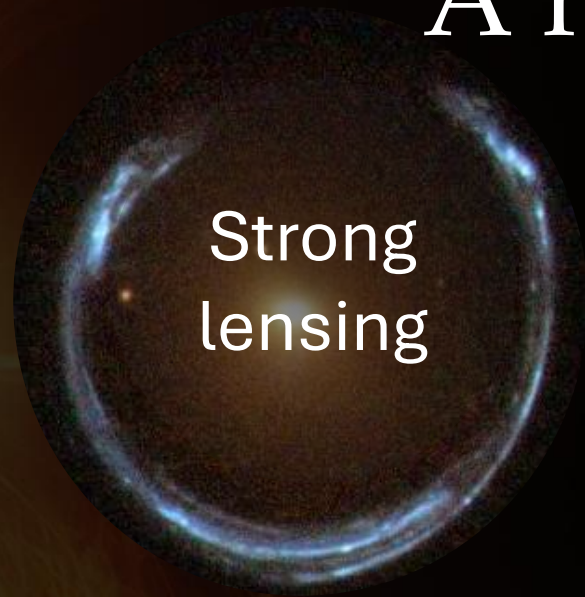
## An overview:

1. Gravitational lensing is an excellent probe of dark matter
2. Strong gravitational lensing is affected by matter along the line of sight of the lens system (the “weak lensing of strong lensing”)
3. These effects offer novel constraints on the matter power spectrum

# Gravitational lensing



# A historical division



Strong  
lensing

Strong, non-linear distortions by a galaxy or galaxy cluster, often resulting in multiple images



Weak lensing

Small distortions to magnifications and shapes – an integrated effect along the line of sight

# Lensing and dark matter



# Lensing and dark matter


Strong  
lensing



Weak lensing



Galaxy dark  
matter content by  
comparing light  
and mass profiles



# Lensing and dark matter



Strong  
lensing

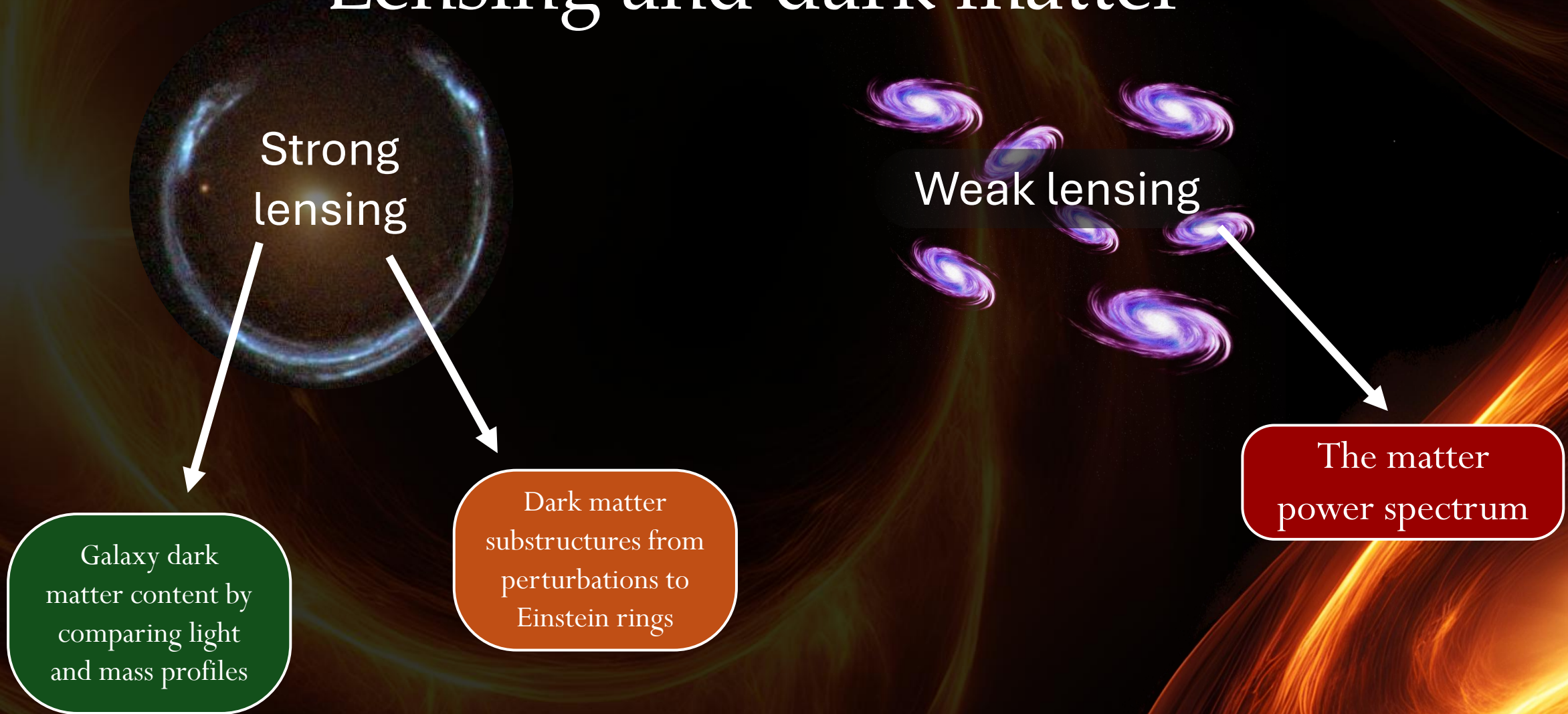


Weak lensing

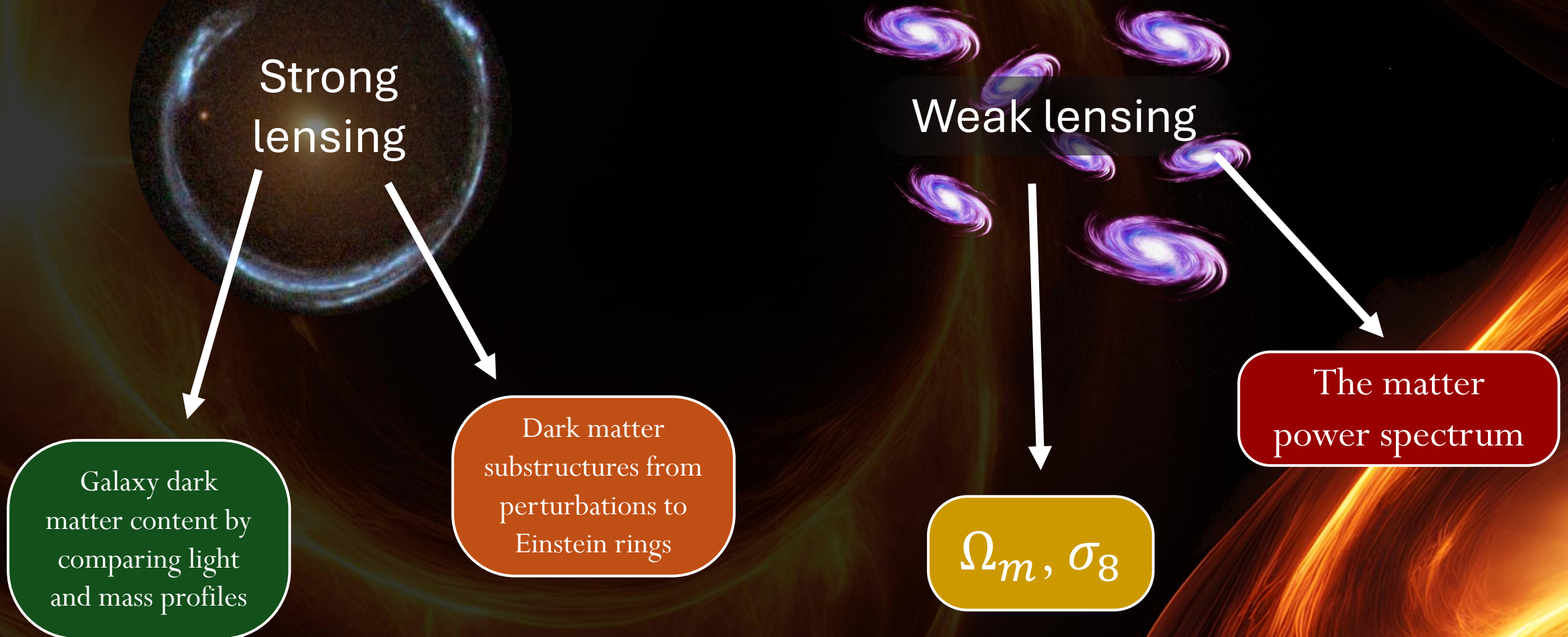
Galaxy dark  
matter content by  
comparing light  
and mass profiles

Dark matter  
substructures from  
perturbations to  
Einstein rings

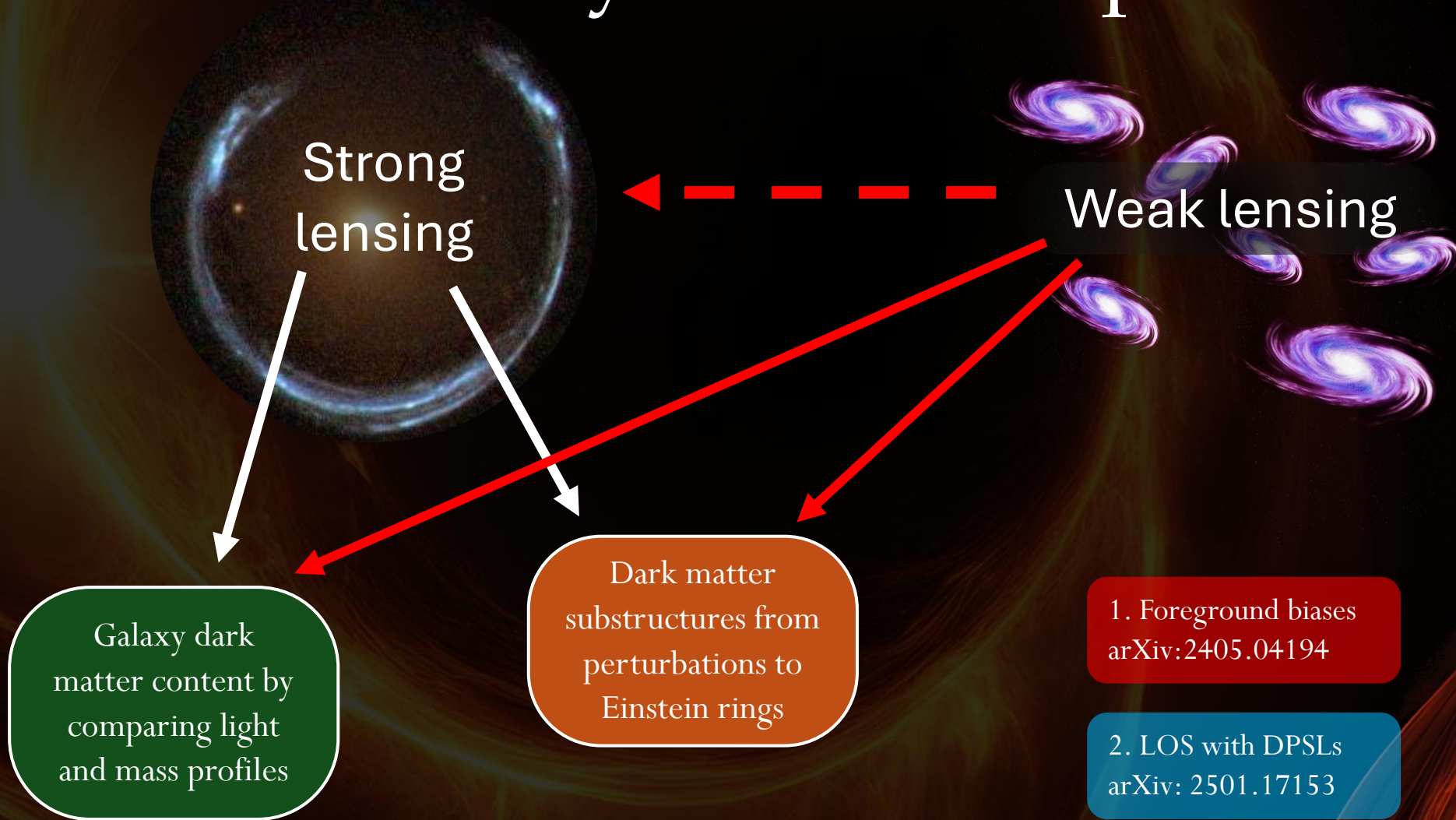
# Lensing and dark matter



# Lensing and dark matter



# But they're not independent!



Strong lensing

Weak lensing

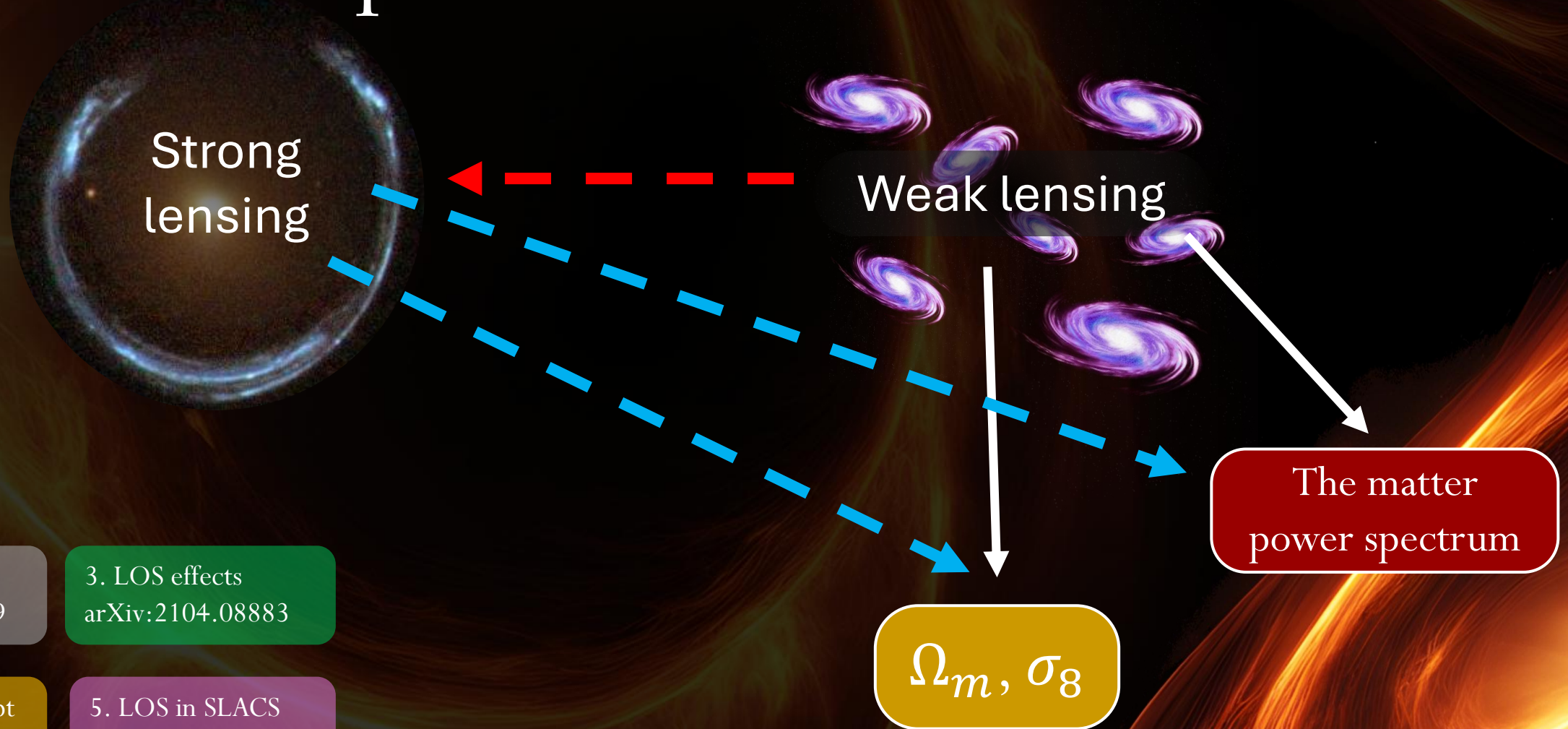
Galaxy dark matter content by comparing light and mass profiles

Dark matter substructures from perturbations to Einstein rings

1. Foreground biases  
arXiv:2405.04194

2. LOS with DPSLs  
arXiv: 2501.17153

# Perhaps this could be useful?



LOS inference  
arXiv:1610.01599

3. LOS effects  
arXiv:2104.08883

4. Proof of concept  
arXiv:2210.07210

5. LOS in SLACS  
arXiv:2501.16292

$\Omega_m, \sigma_8$

The matter  
power spectrum

# Weak lensing of galaxies



# Weak lensing of galaxies



*convergence*

An orange arrow pointing from the white circle to the orange circle, indicating the direction of convergence.

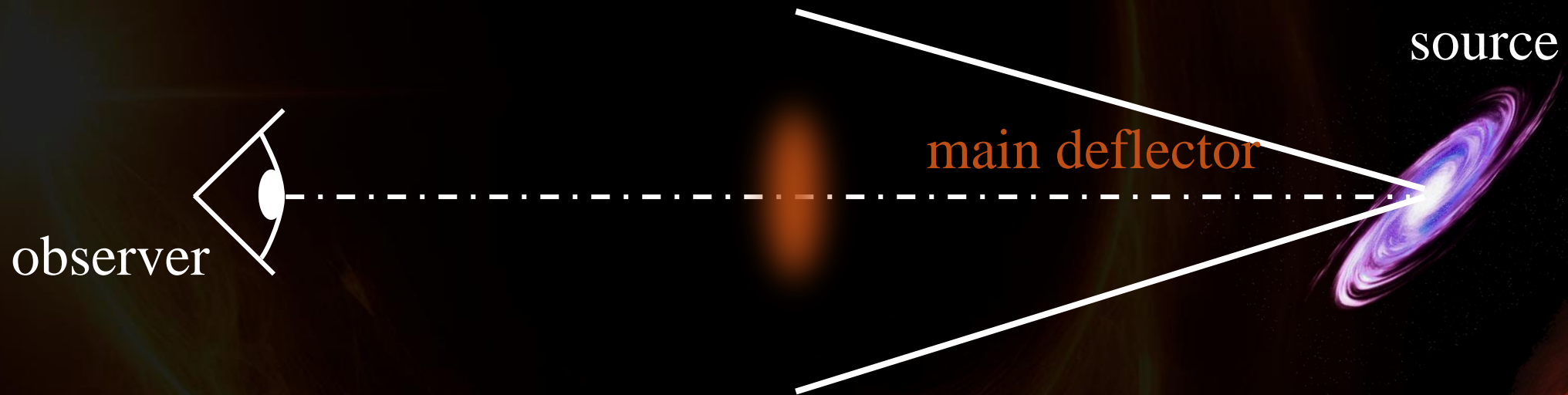
# Weak lensing of galaxies



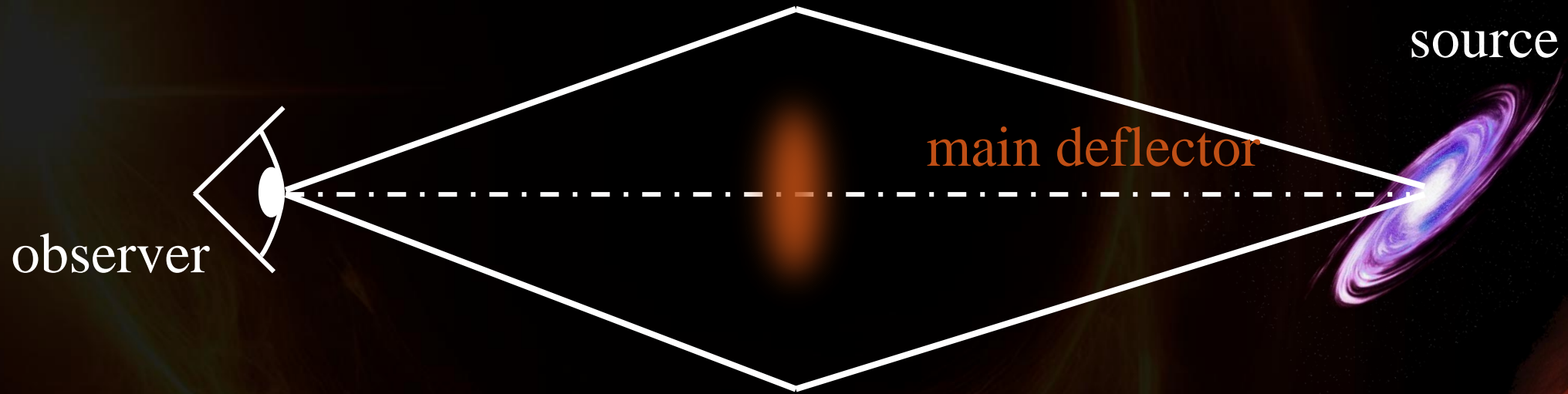
# Strong lensing



# Strong lensing

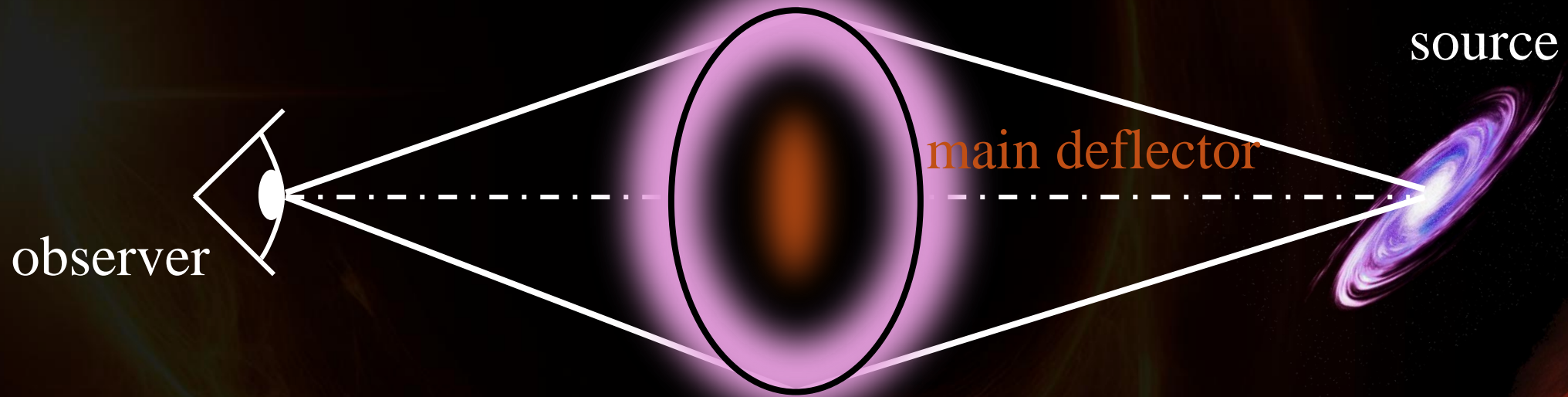


# Strong lensing

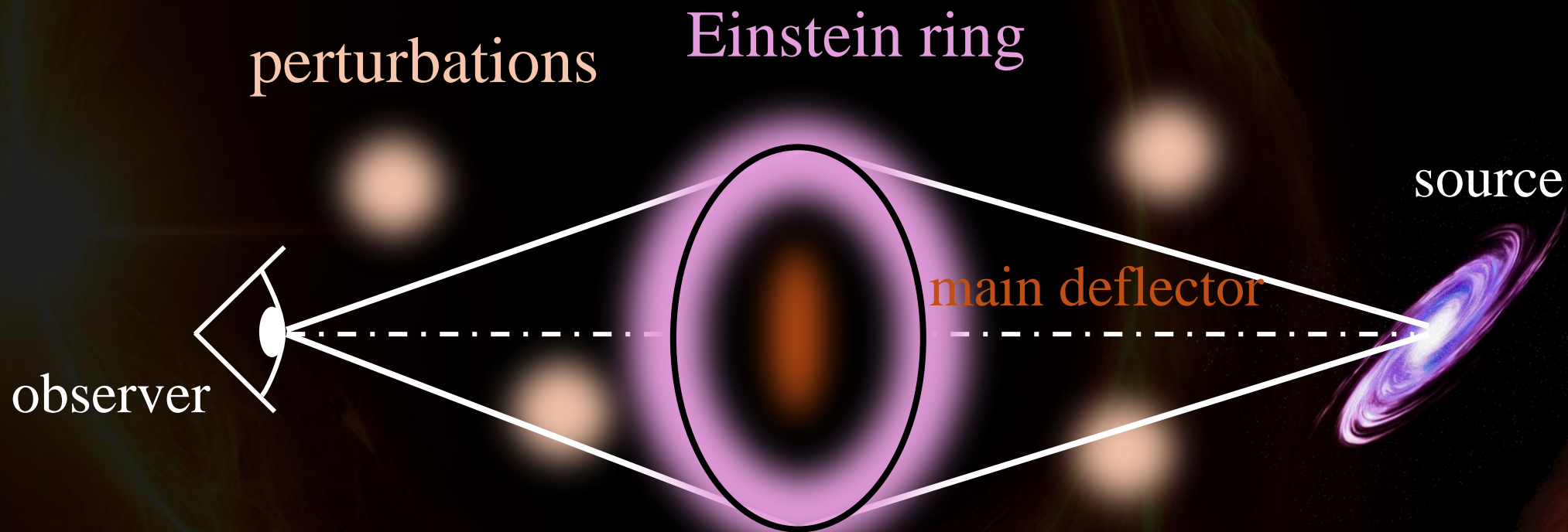


# Strong lensing

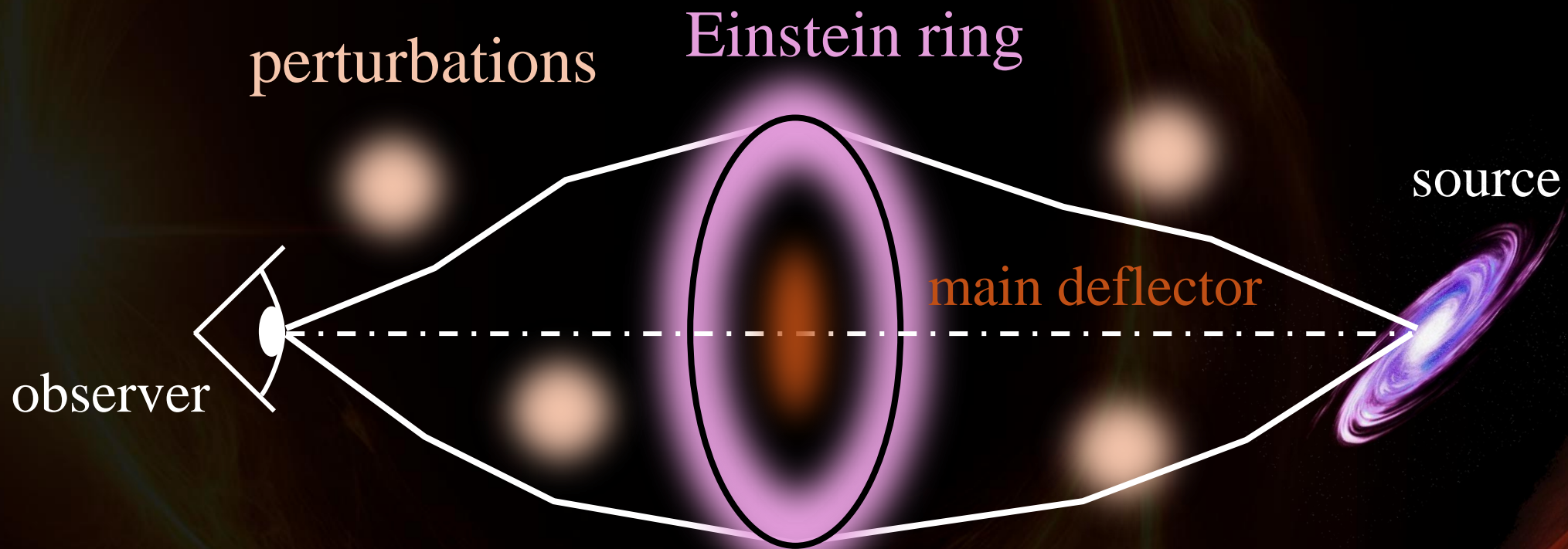
Einstein ring



# Weak lensing of strong lensing

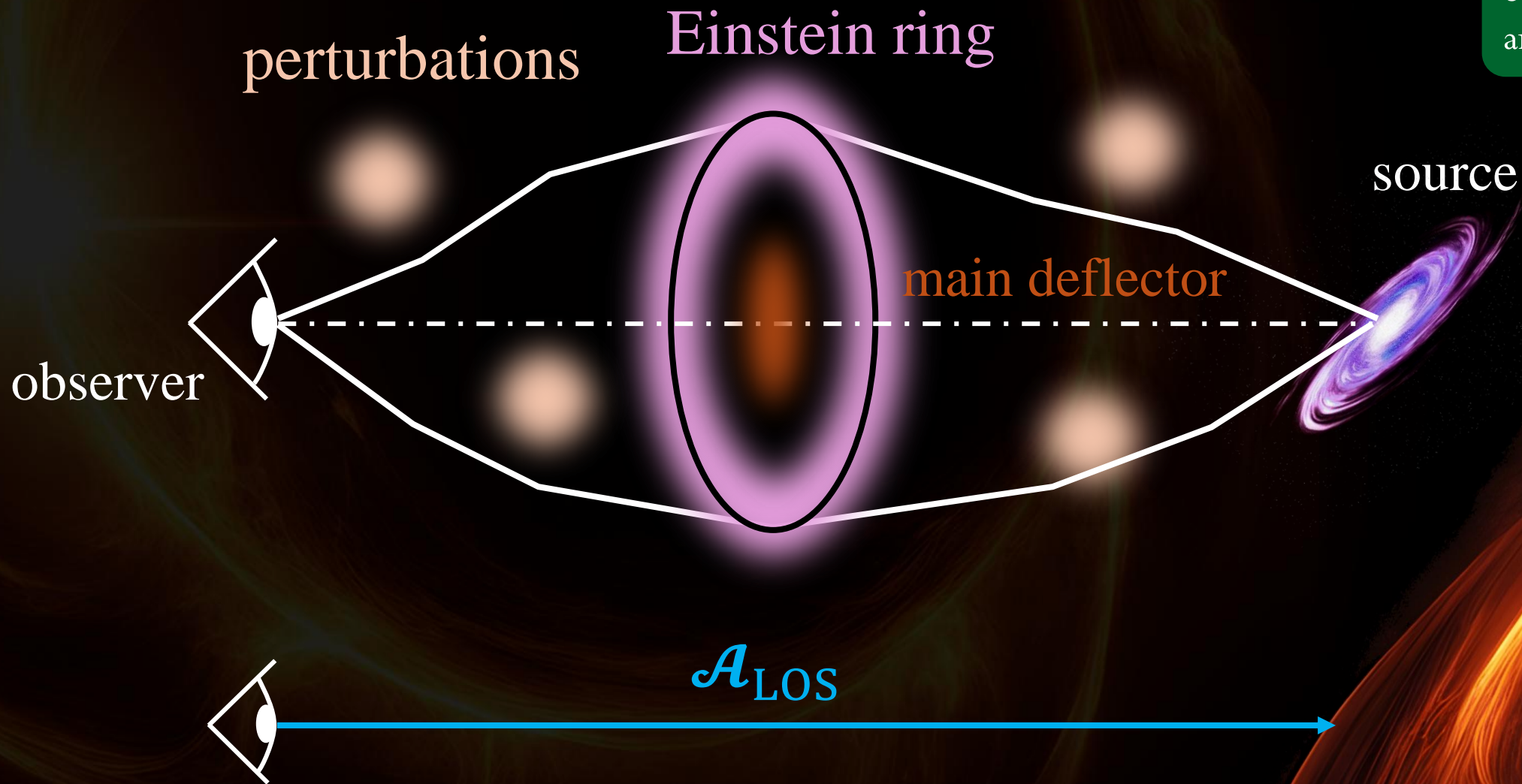


# Weak lensing of strong lensing



# Weak lensing of strong lensing

3. LOS effects  
arXiv:2104.08883



# Weak lensing of strong lensing



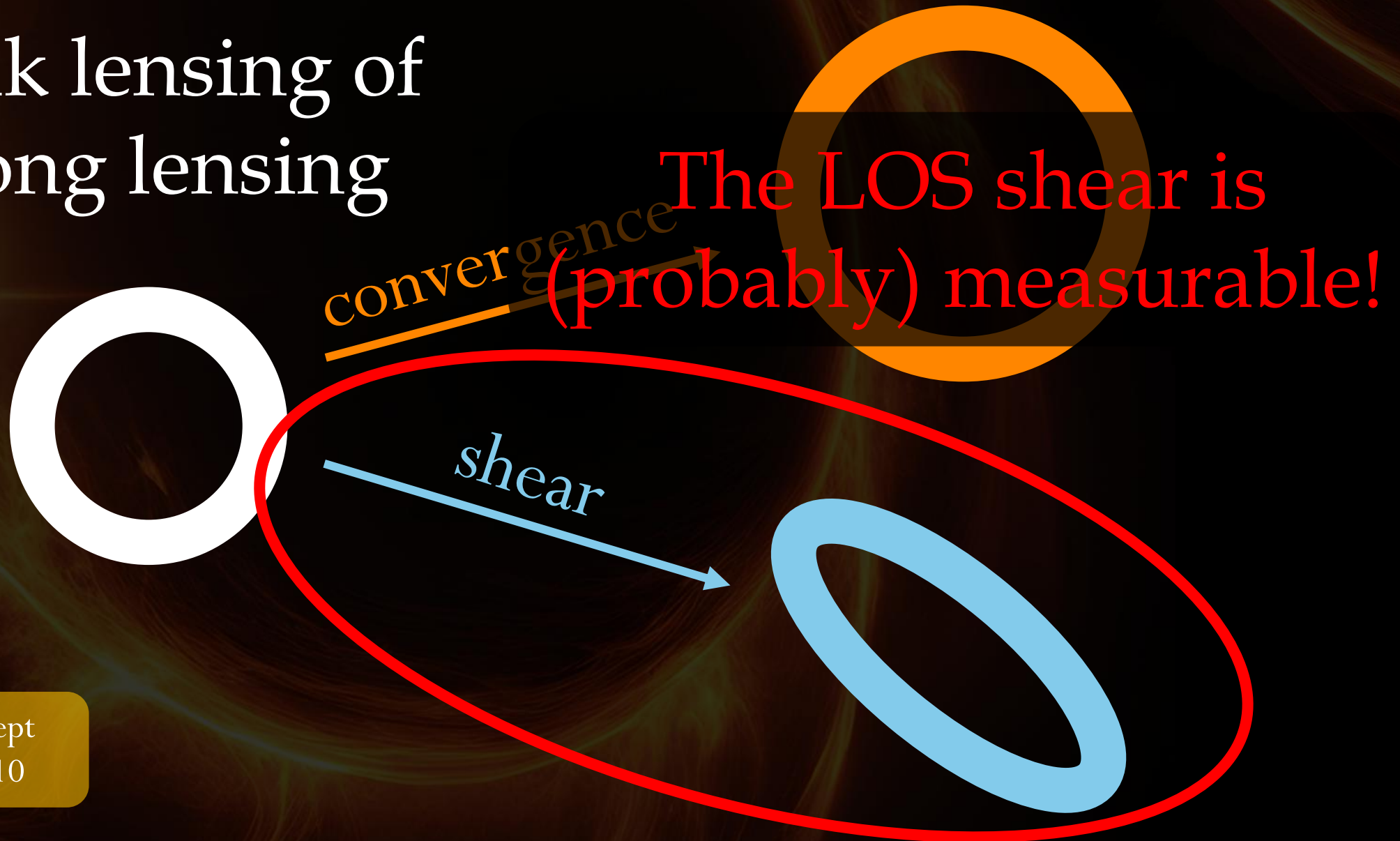
*convergence*



*shear*



# Weak lensing of strong lensing



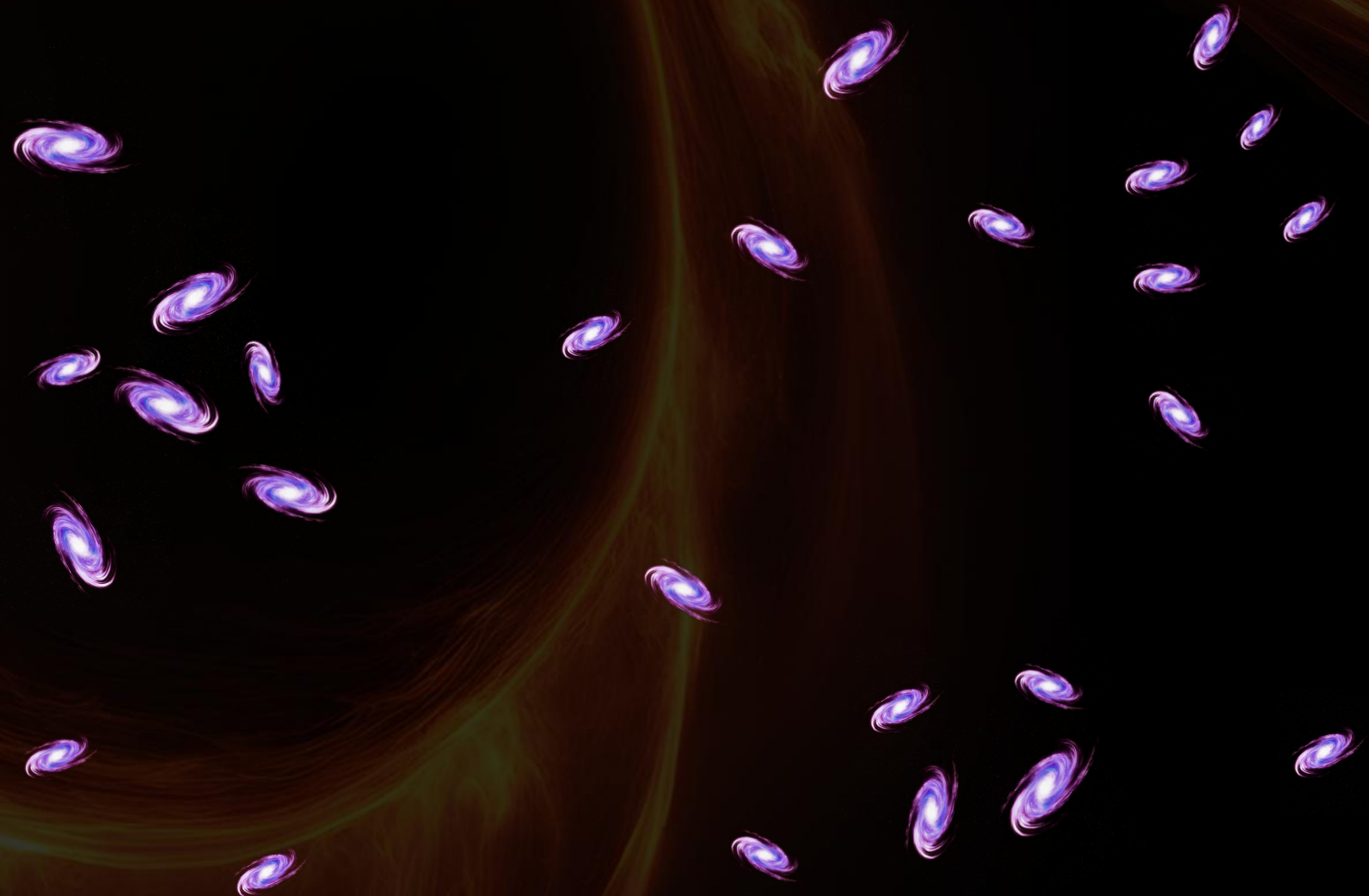
Why is this interesting?

$$\gamma_{\text{LOS}} \sim -\Omega_m \int_0^{\chi_s} d\chi \int_{\mathbb{R}^2} d^2\mathbf{x} \delta$$

line-of-sight shear      matter density parameter      density contrast

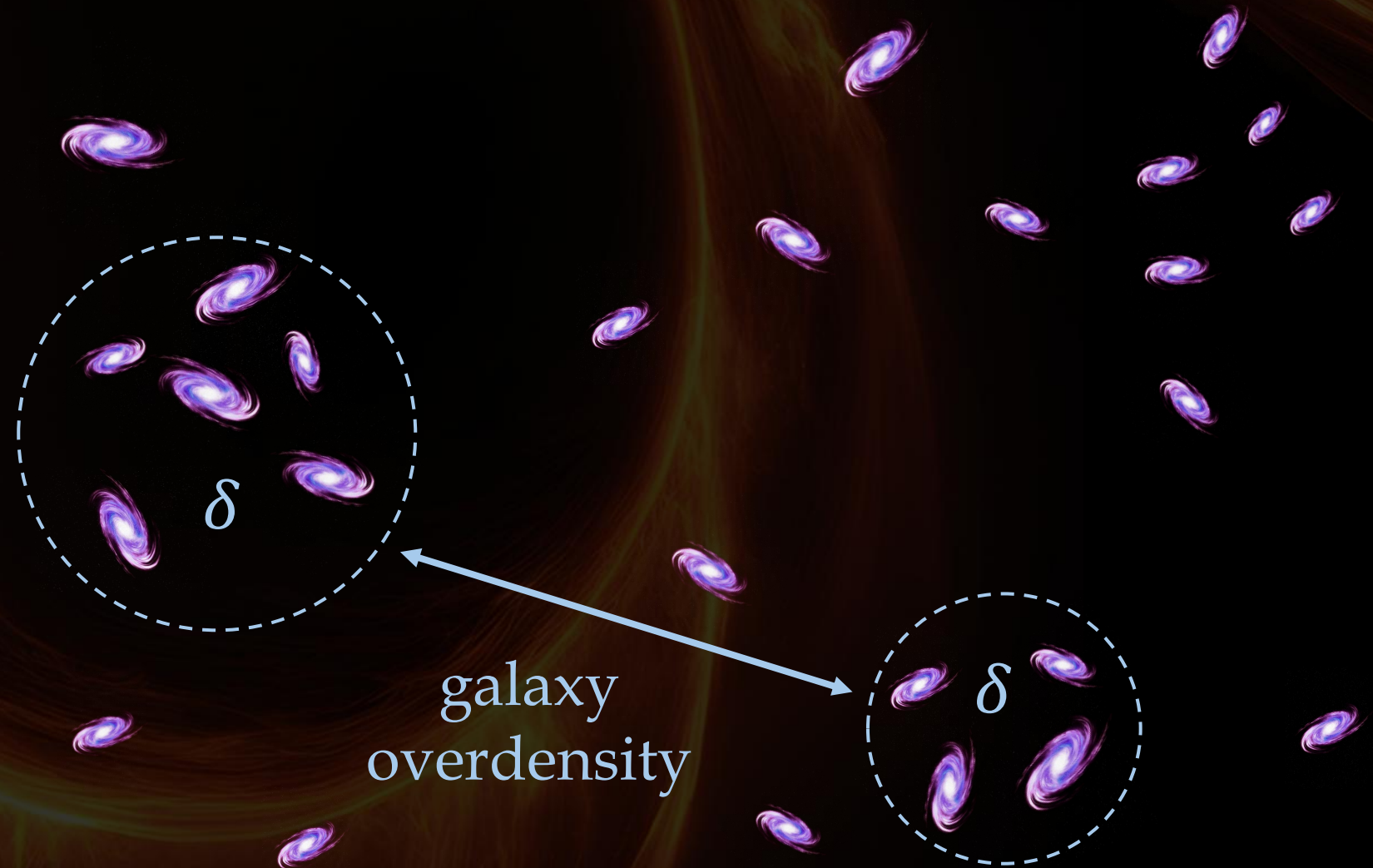
$\gamma_{\text{LOS}}$  depends on the matter power spectrum via an integral of  $\delta$  along the line of sight

# The 3x2pt correlation scheme



# The 3x2pt correlation scheme

$$\langle \delta \times \delta \rangle$$



# The 3x2pt correlation scheme

$$\langle \delta \times \delta \rangle$$

$$\langle \varepsilon \times \varepsilon \rangle$$



galaxy  
overdensity

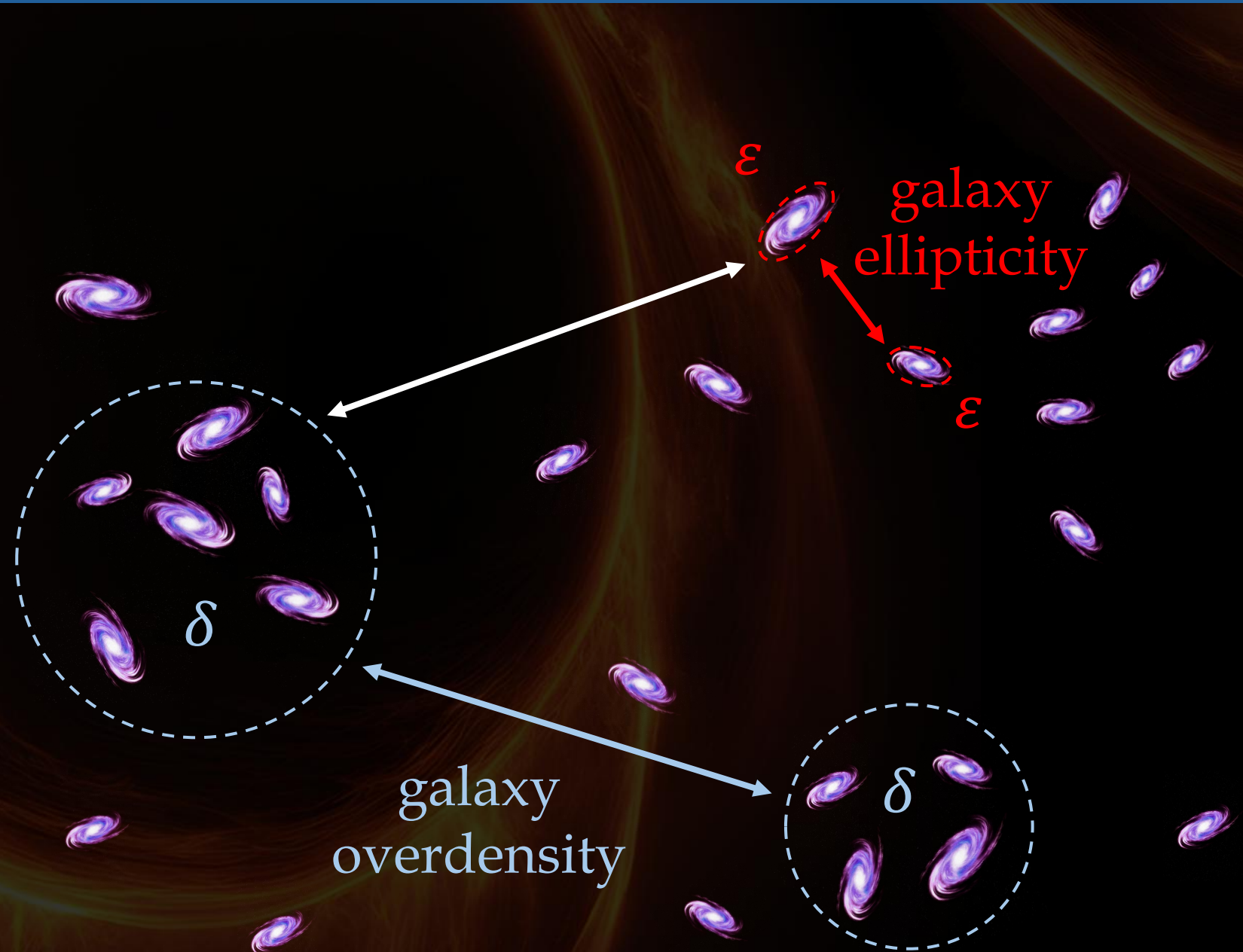


# The 3x2pt correlation scheme

$$\langle \delta \times \delta \rangle$$

$$\langle \varepsilon \times \varepsilon \rangle$$

$$\langle \delta \times \varepsilon \rangle$$



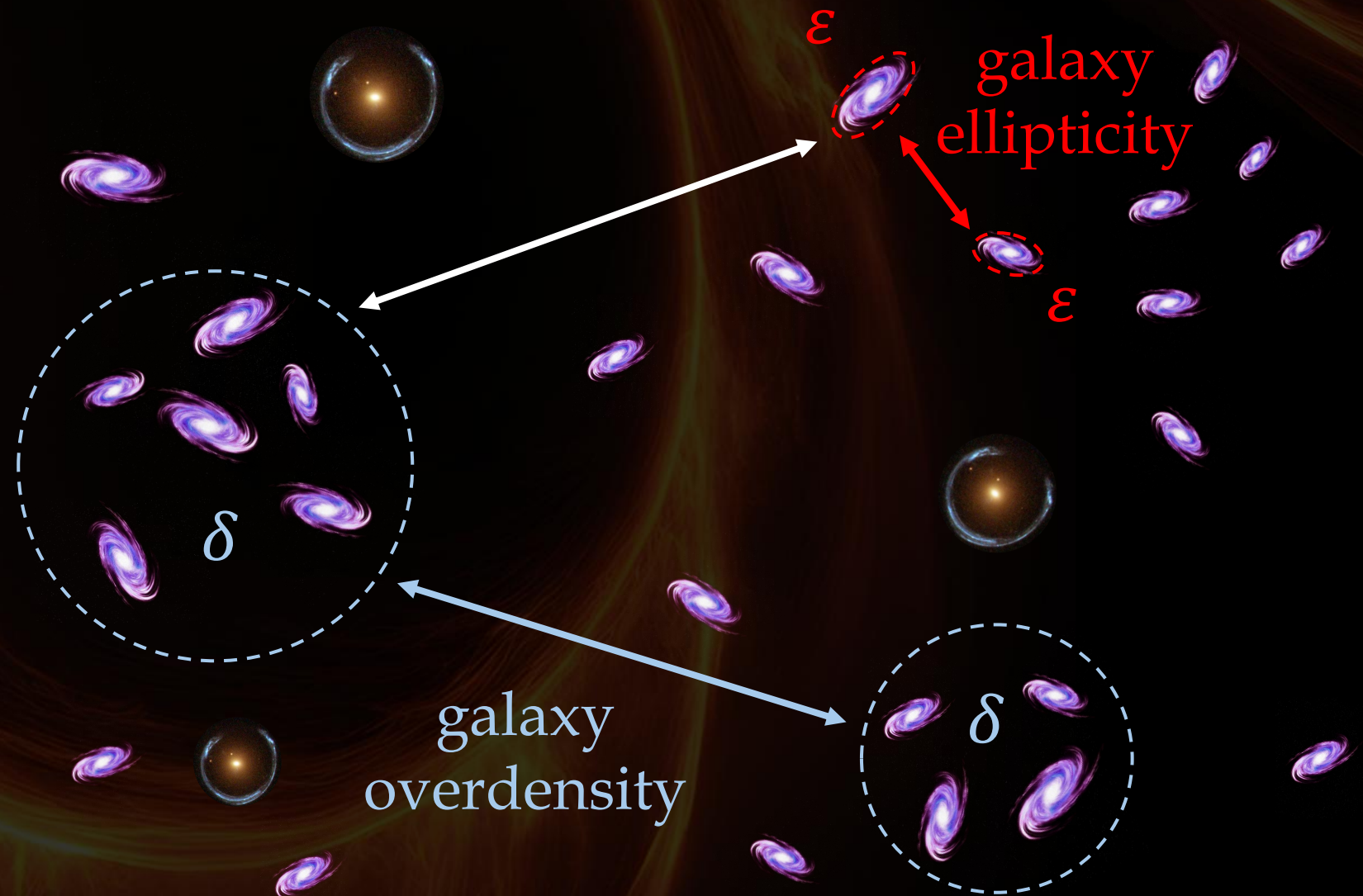
# The 3x2pt correlation scheme

$$\langle \delta \times \delta \rangle$$

$$\langle \varepsilon \times \varepsilon \rangle$$

$$\langle \delta \times \varepsilon \rangle$$

$\sim 10^5$  lenses with *Euclid*



galaxy ellipticity

galaxy overdensity

# The 6x2pt correlation scheme

$$\langle \delta \times \delta \rangle$$

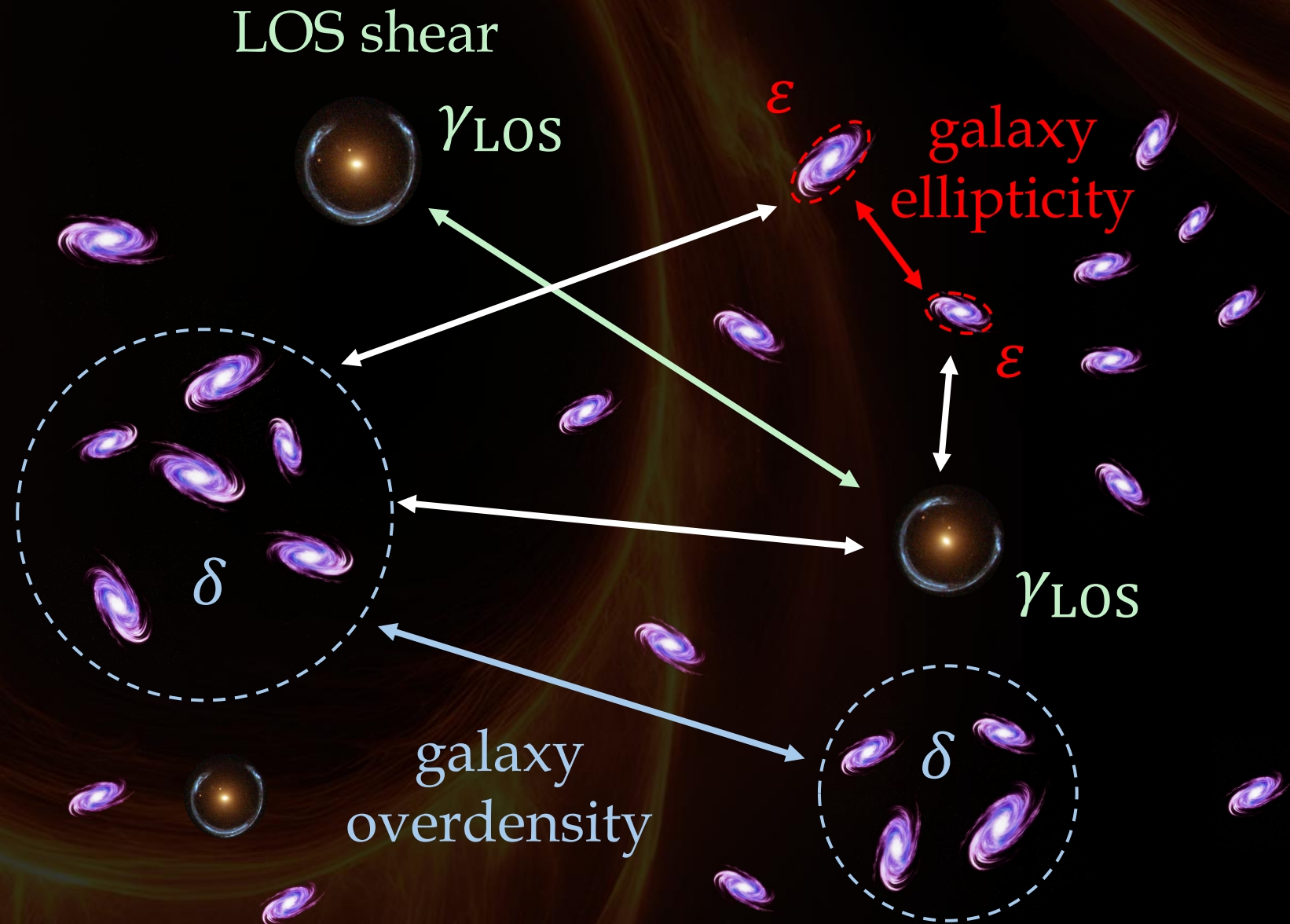
$$\langle \varepsilon \times \varepsilon \rangle$$

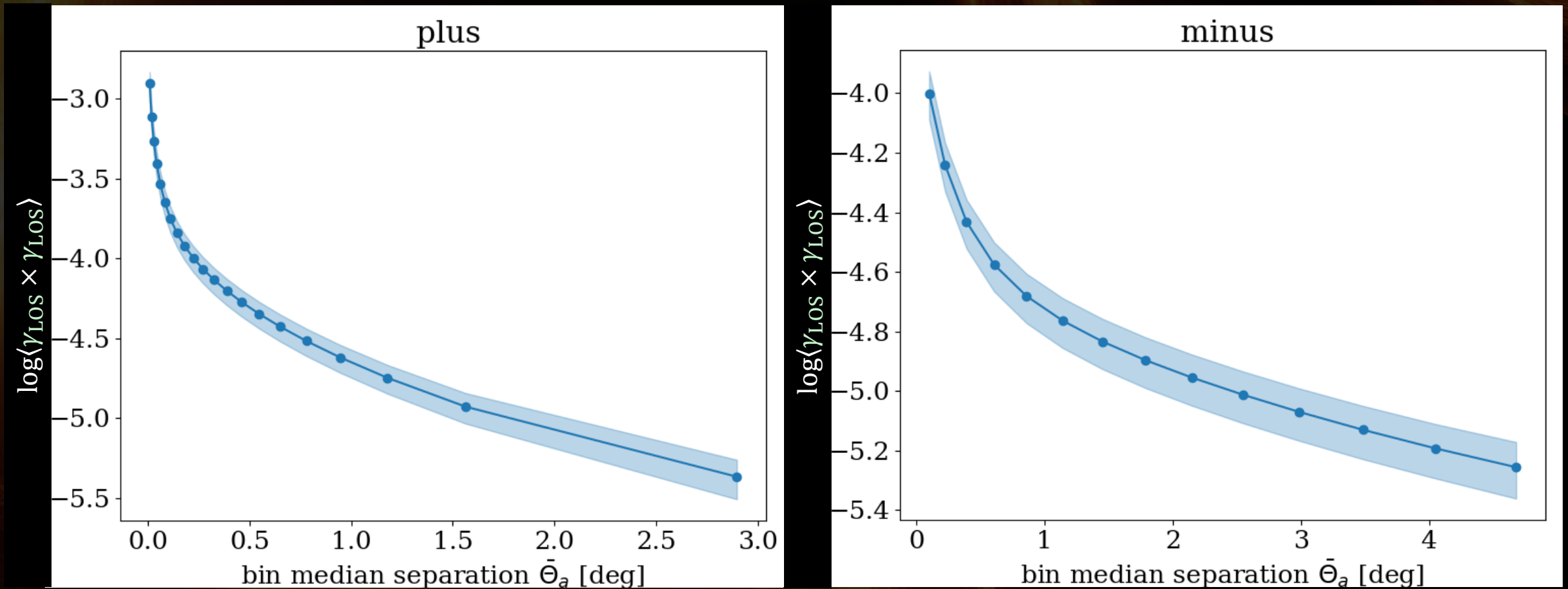
$$\langle \delta \times \varepsilon \rangle$$

$$\langle \gamma_{\text{LOS}} \times \gamma_{\text{LOS}} \rangle$$

$$\langle \gamma_{\text{LOS}} \times \delta \rangle$$

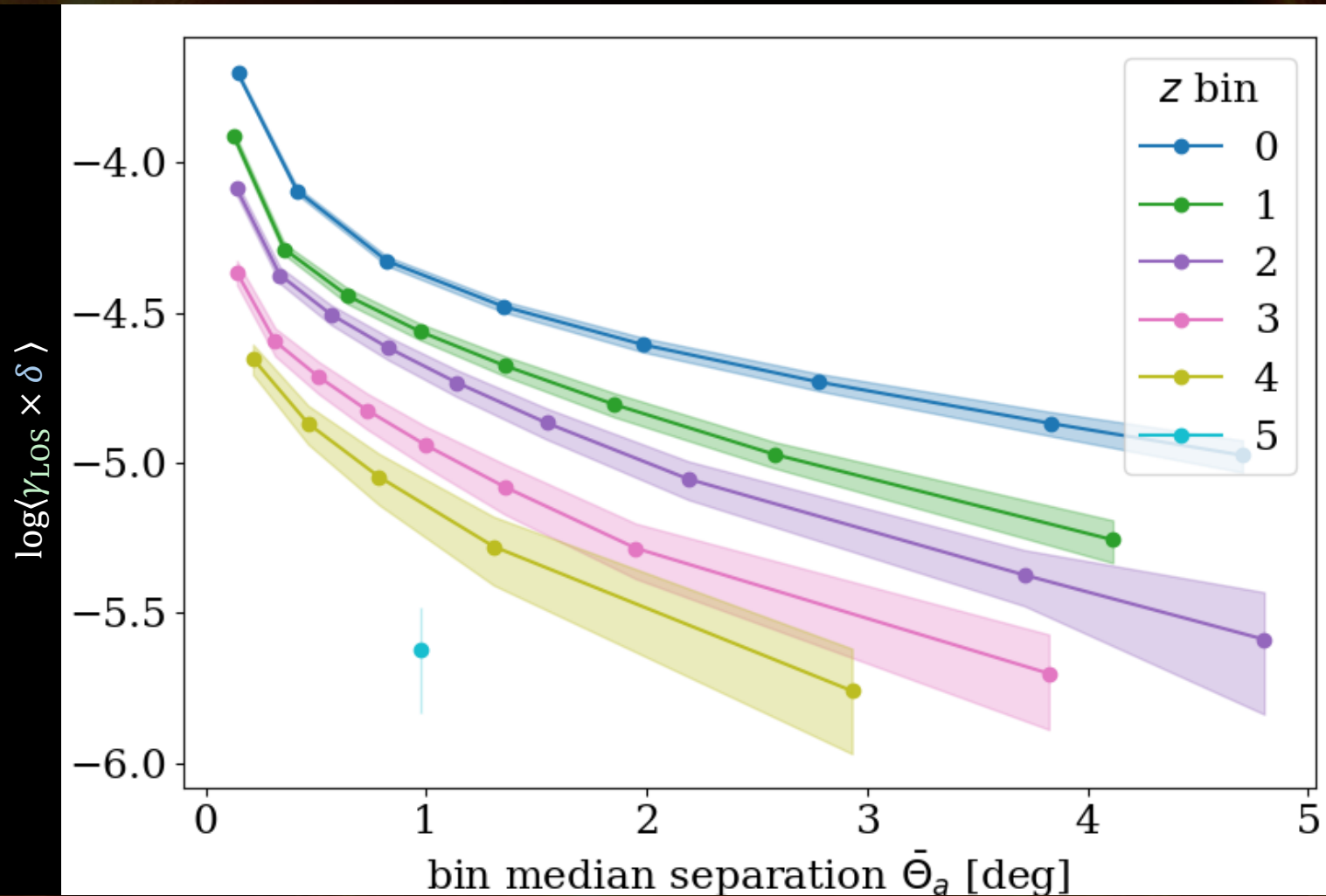
$$\langle \gamma_{\text{LOS}} \times \varepsilon \rangle$$



LOS shear  $\times$  LOS shear correlation function

$$\sigma_{\text{LOS}} = 1\%$$

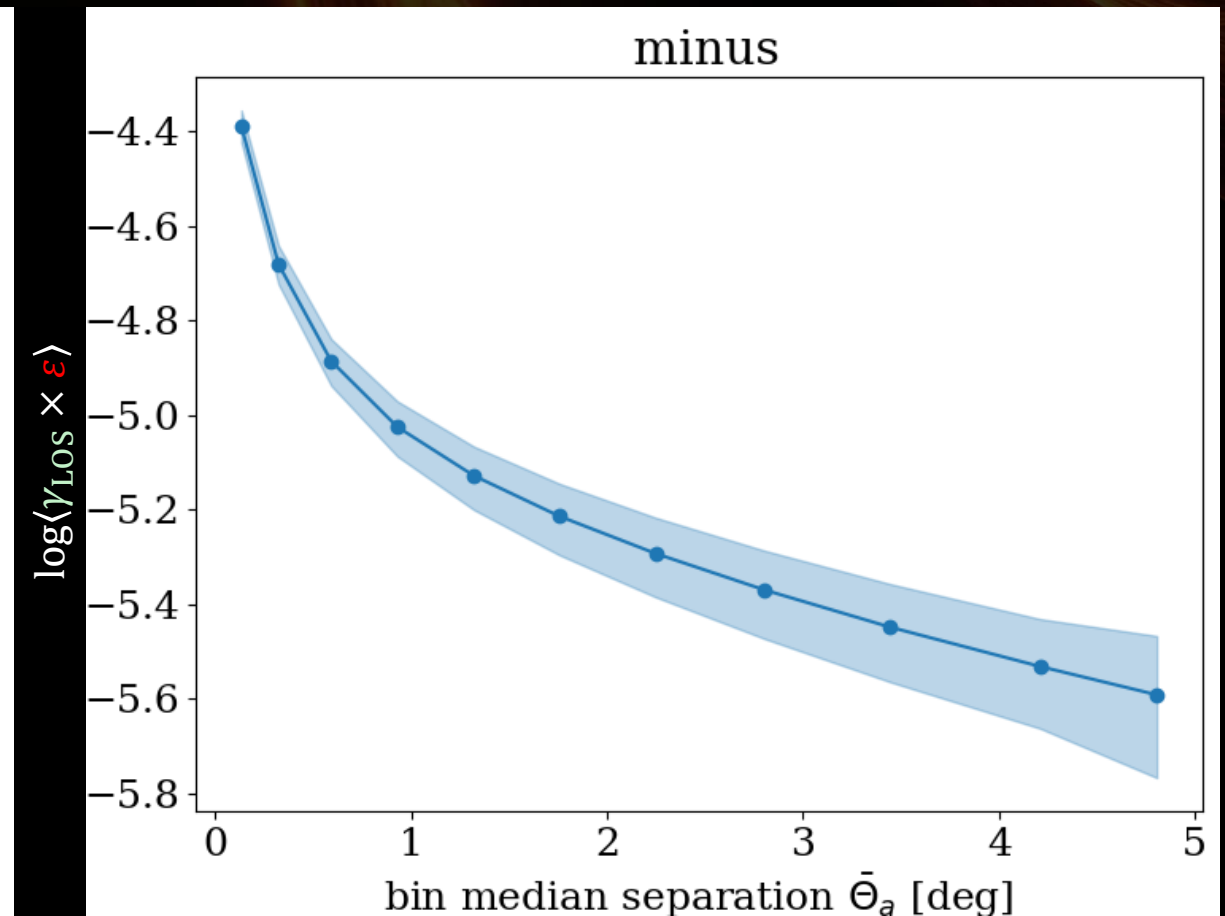
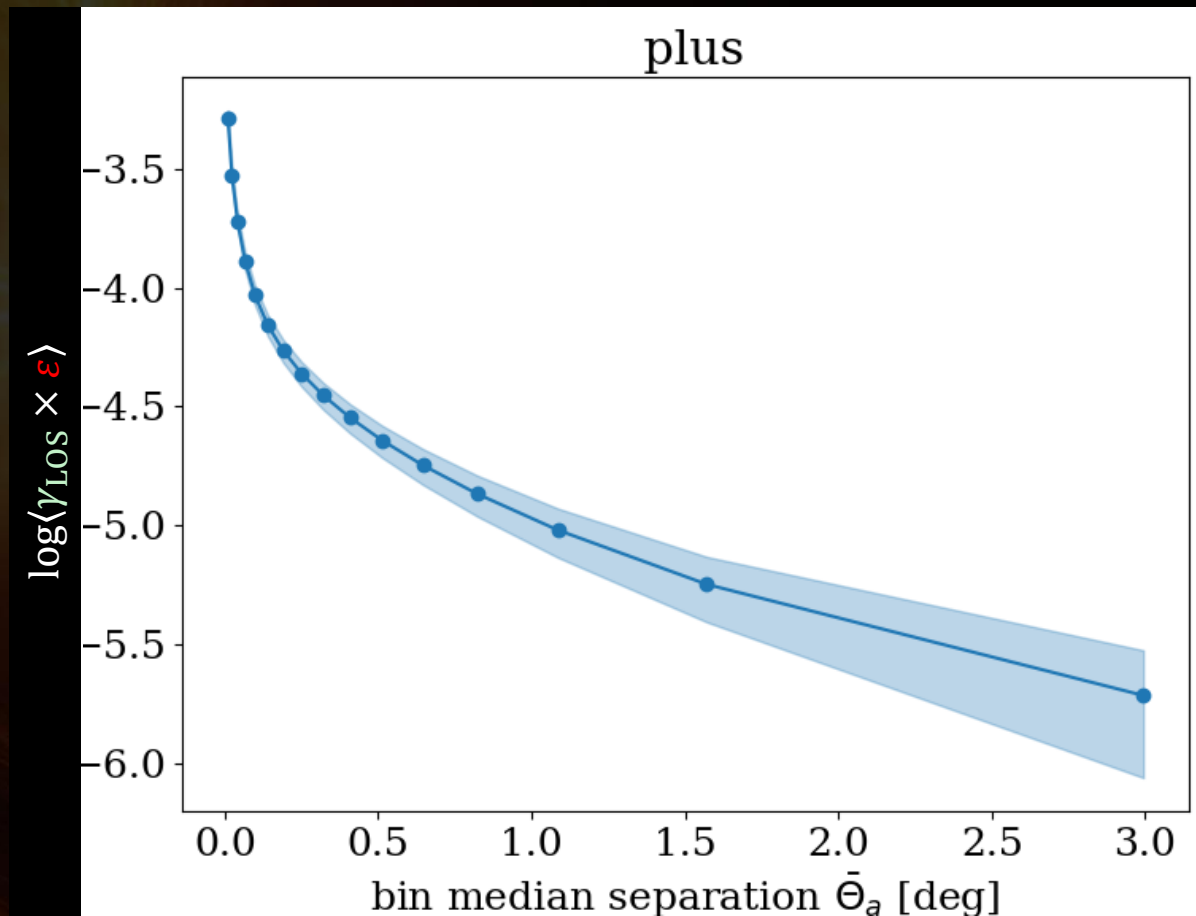
$$N_{\text{lens}} = 10^5$$



LOS shear  $\times$   
galaxy density  
correlation  
function

$$\sigma_{\text{LOS}} = 5\%$$

$$N_{\text{lens}} = 10^5$$

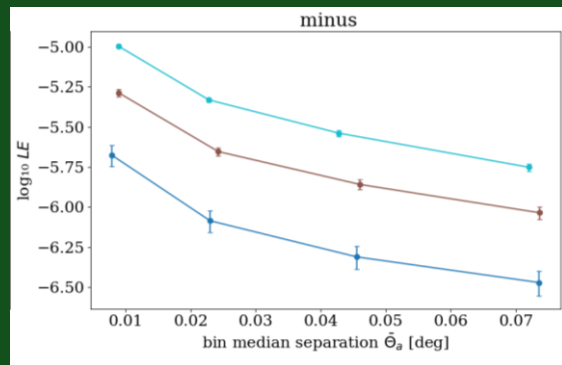
LOS shear  $\times$  galaxy ellipticity correlation function

$$\sigma_{\text{LOS}} = 10\%$$

$$N_{\text{lens}} = 10^4$$

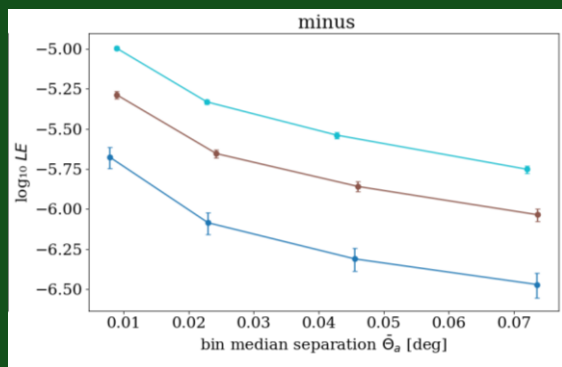
## Observed Correlation Functions

How the relationship between  
observables changes as their separation  
increases



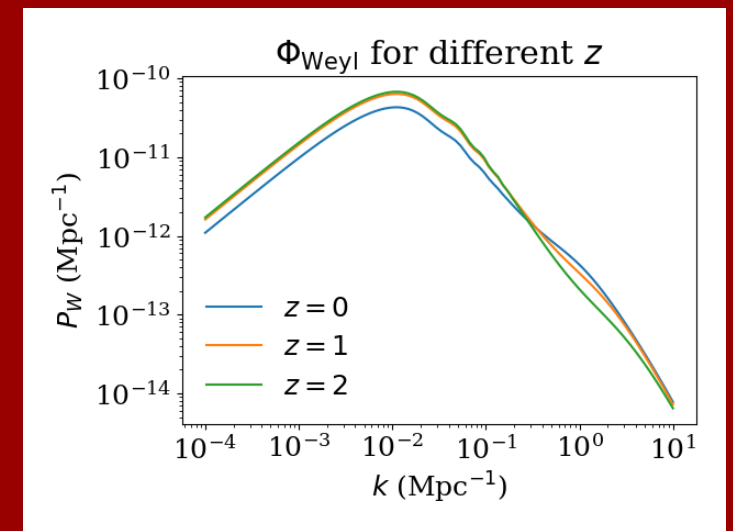
## Observed Correlation Functions

How the relationship between observables changes as their separation increases



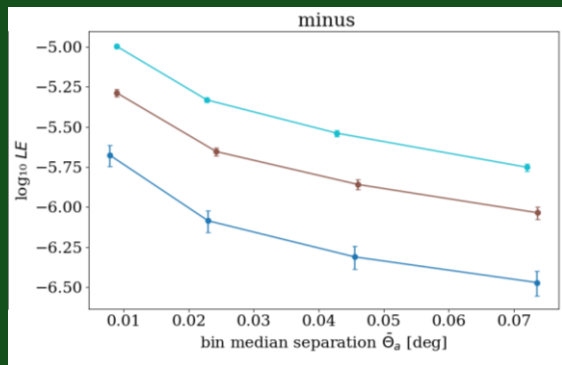
## Matter power spectrum

How matter is distributed through the universe



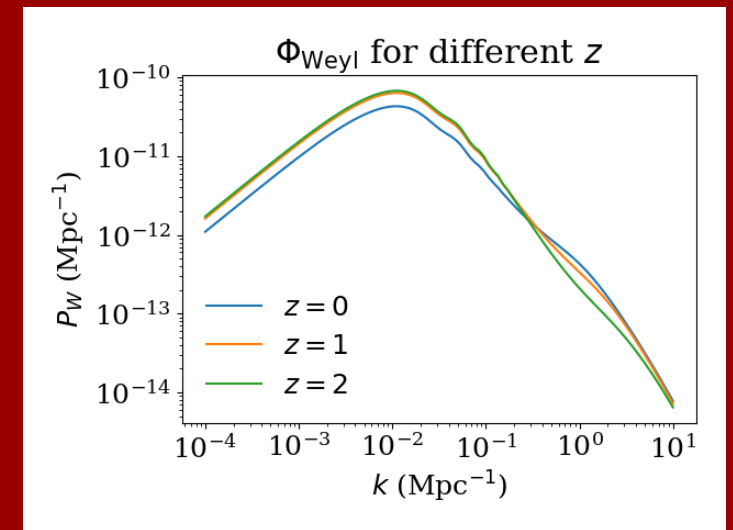
## Observed Correlation Functions

How the relationship between observables changes as their separation increases



## Matter power spectrum

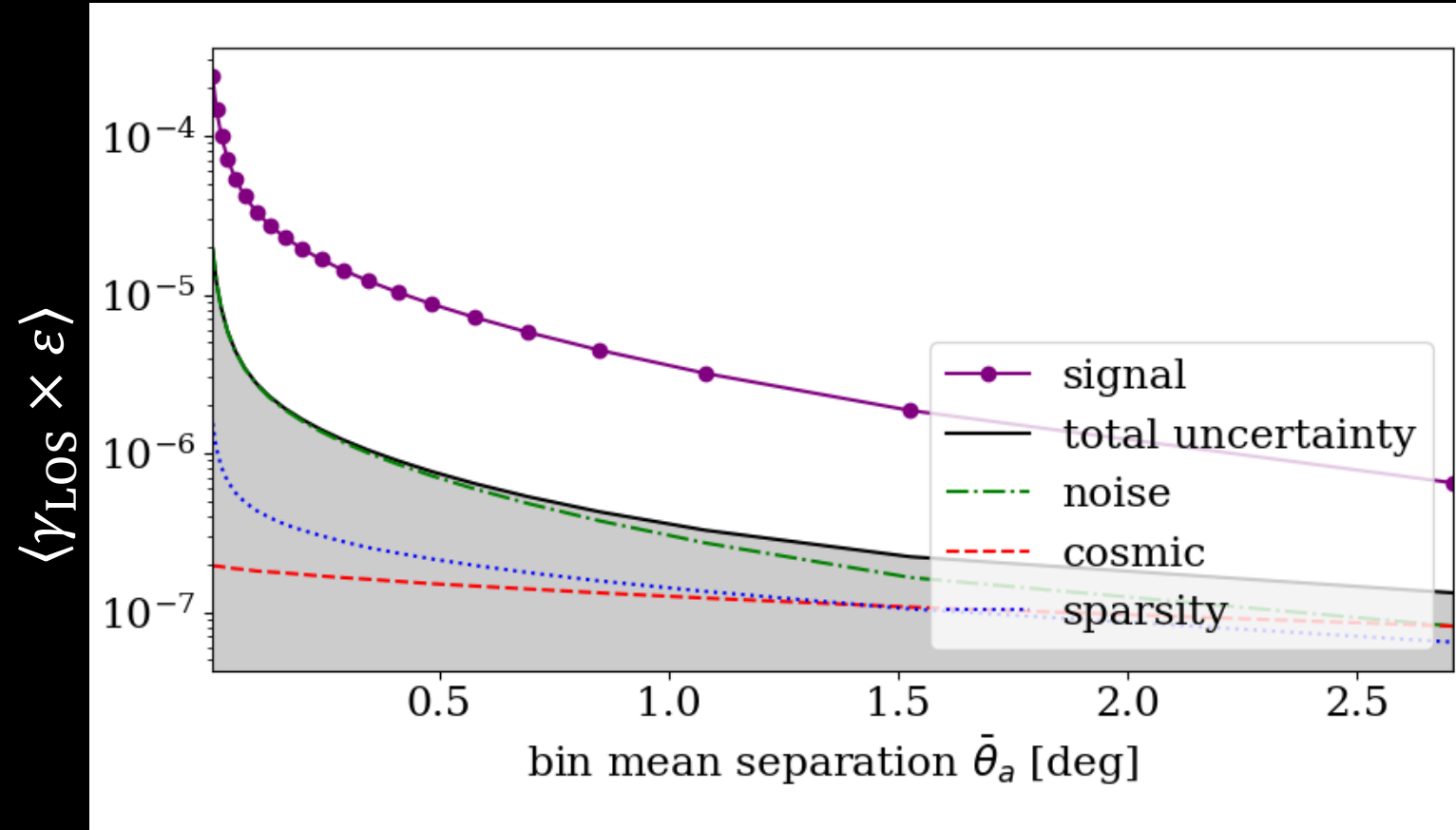
How matter is distributed through the universe



Dark matter distribution

# Sources of uncertainty

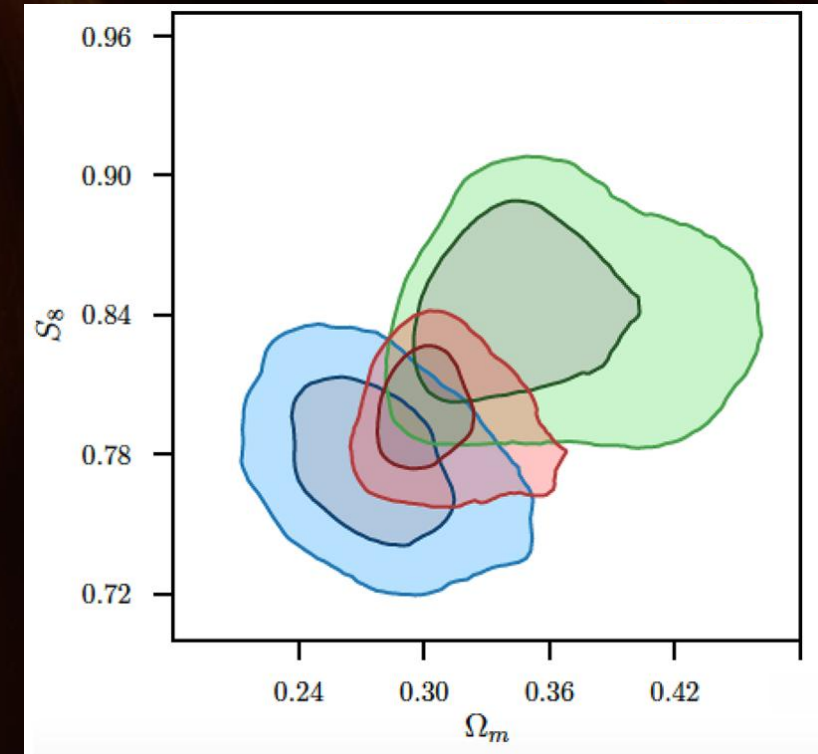
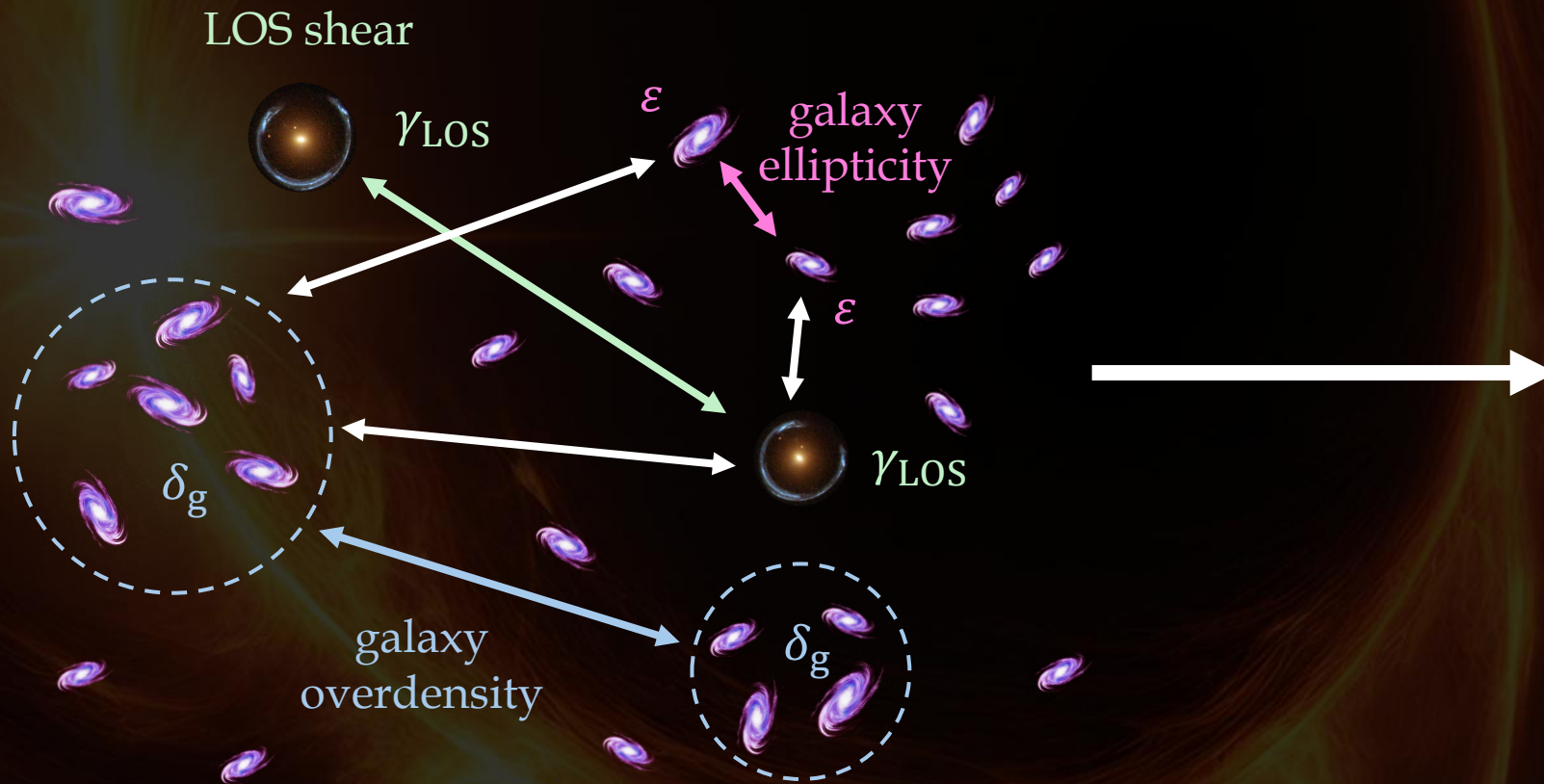
noise  
sparsity  
cosmic





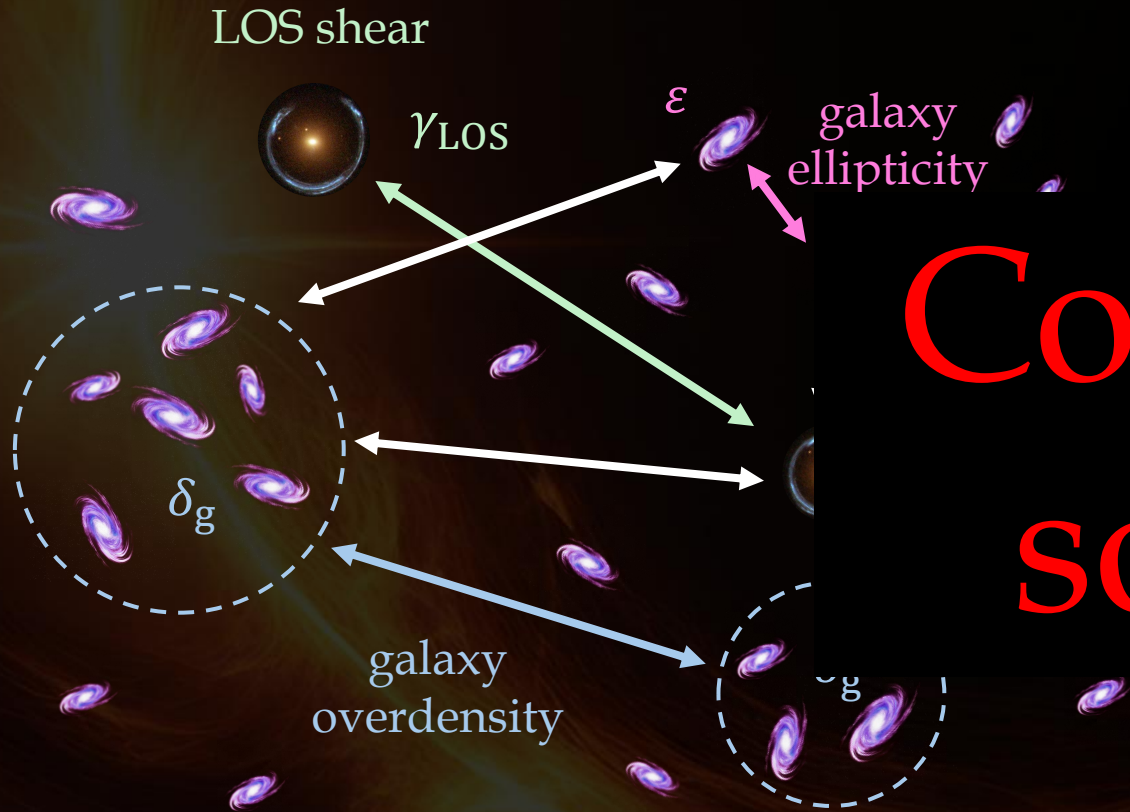


# The goal

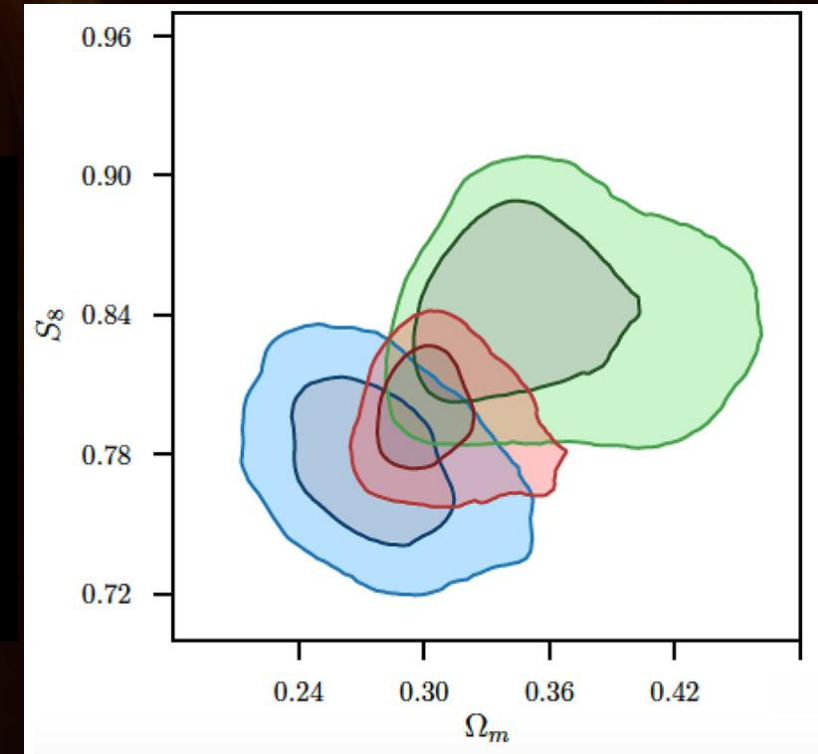


Credit: T. M. C. Abbott *et al.*, Phys. Rev. D (2018)

# The goal



**Coming soon!**



Credit: T. M. C. Abbott *et al.*, Phys. Rev. D (2018)

# Conclusions

- Gravitational lensing is a powerful observational tool for studying dark matter

# Conclusions

- Gravitational lensing is a powerful observational tool for studying dark matter
- Matter along the line of sight has a non-negligible effect on strong lensing observables

# Conclusions

- Gravitational lensing is a powerful observational tool for studying dark matter
- Matter along the line of sight has a non-negligible effect on strong lensing observables
- Measurements of these effects offers a new way to probe the matter power spectrum

# Thanks for listening!

daniel.johnson@umontpellier.fr

## Further reading:

Pierre Fleury, Julien Larena, Jean-Philippe Uzan,  
*Line-of-sight effects in strong gravitational lensing*, JCAP 08 (2021) 024, arXiv:2104.08883

Natalie B. Hogg, Pierre Fleury, Julien Larena, Matteo Martinelli,  
*Measuring line-of-sight shear with Einstein rings: a proof of concept*, MNRAS 520 (2023) 04, arXiv:2210.07210

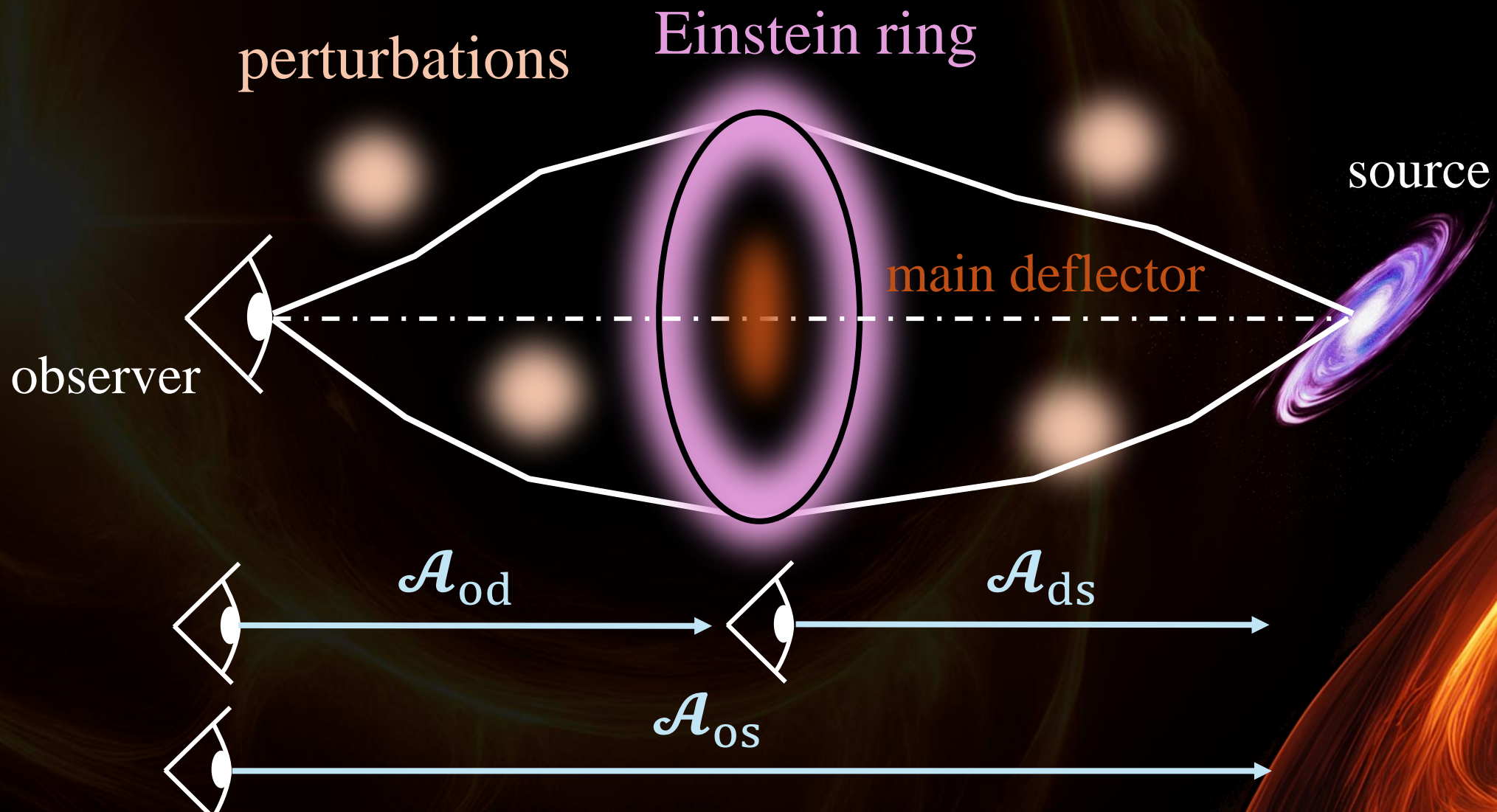
Natalie B. Hogg, Anowar J. Shajib, Daniel Johnson, Julien Larena,  
*Measuring line-of-sight shear with Einstein rings: a proof of concept*, MNRAS 520 (2023) 04, arXiv:2210.07210

Daniel Johnson, Pierre Fleury, Julien Larena, Lucia Marchetti,  
*Foreground biases in strong gravitational lensing*, JCAP 10 (2024) 055, arXiv:2405.04194

Daniel Johnson, Thomas Collett, Tian Li, Pierre Fleury,  
*Line-of-sight effects on double source plane lenses*, arXiv:2501.17153

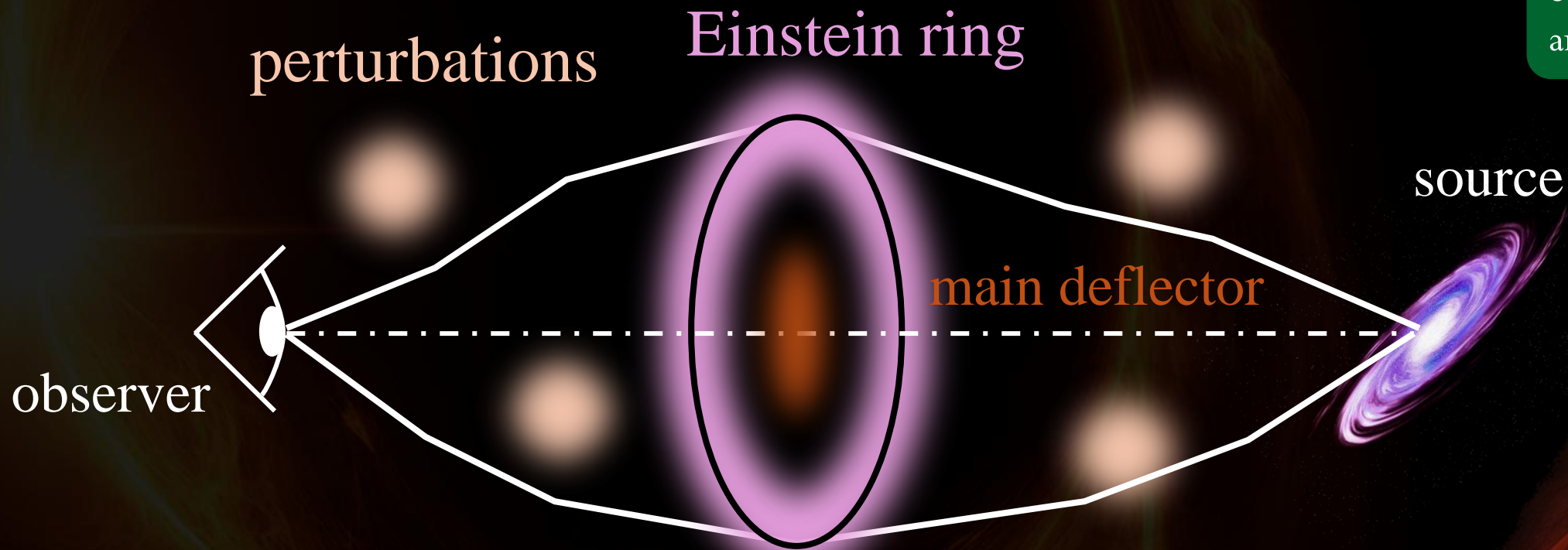


# Line-of-sight effects



# Line-of-sight effects

3. LOS effects  
arXiv:2104.08883



$$\mathcal{A}_{\text{LOS}} \approx \mathcal{A}_{\text{od}} + \mathcal{A}_{\text{os}} - \mathcal{A}_{\text{ds}}$$

# The minimal lens model

Fleury et al. 2021, 2104.08883

$$\tilde{\beta} = \mathcal{A}_{\text{LOS}} \theta - \frac{d\psi_{\text{eff}}}{d\theta}$$

(A single main lens + tidal line-of-sight effects)

# The minimal lens model

Fleury et al. 2021, 2104.08883

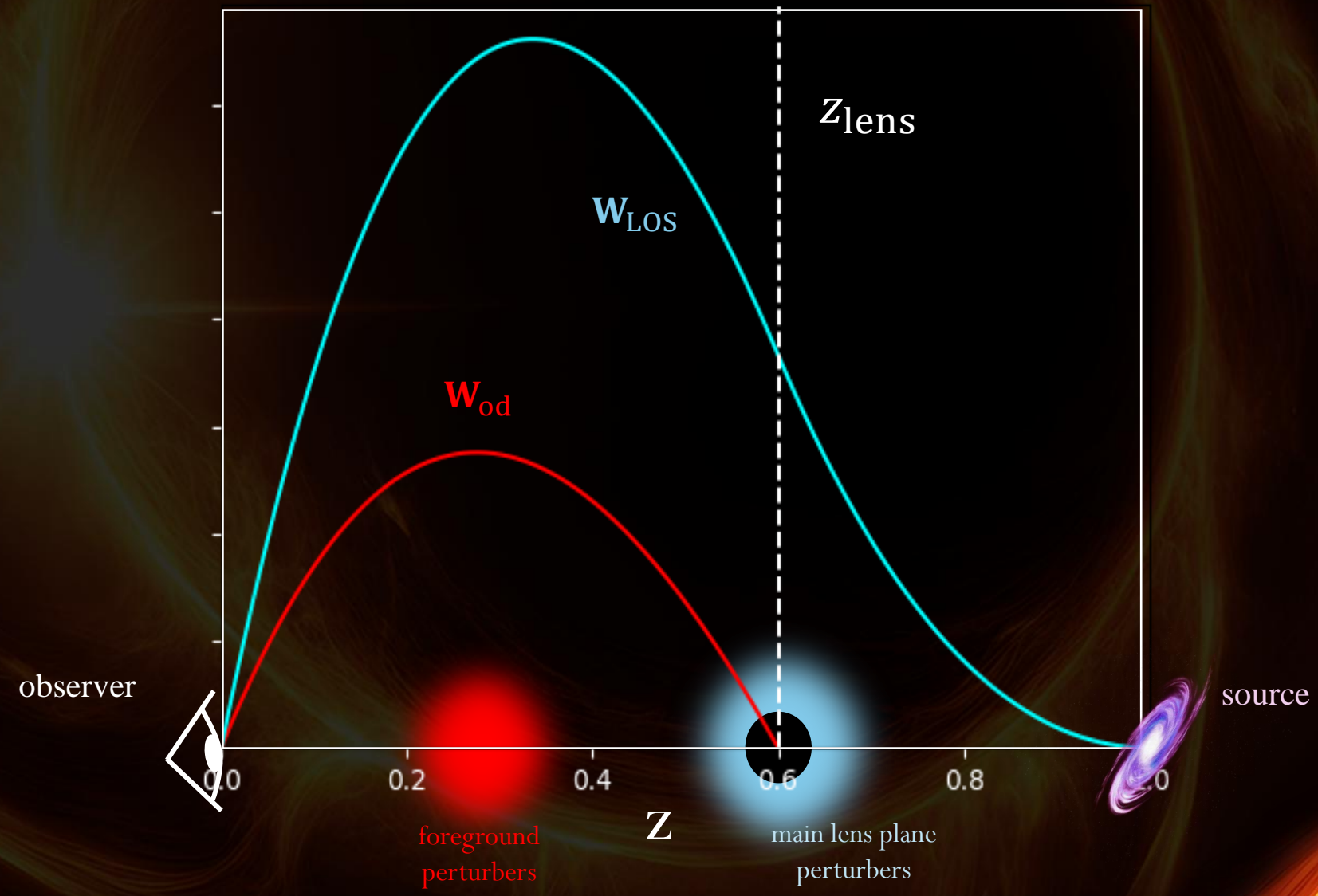
$$\tilde{\beta} = \mathcal{A}_{\text{LOS}} \theta - \frac{d\psi_{\text{eff}}}{d\theta}$$

“External” convergence  
and shear

$$\psi_{\text{eff}}(\theta) \equiv \psi[\mathcal{A}_{\text{od}} \theta]$$

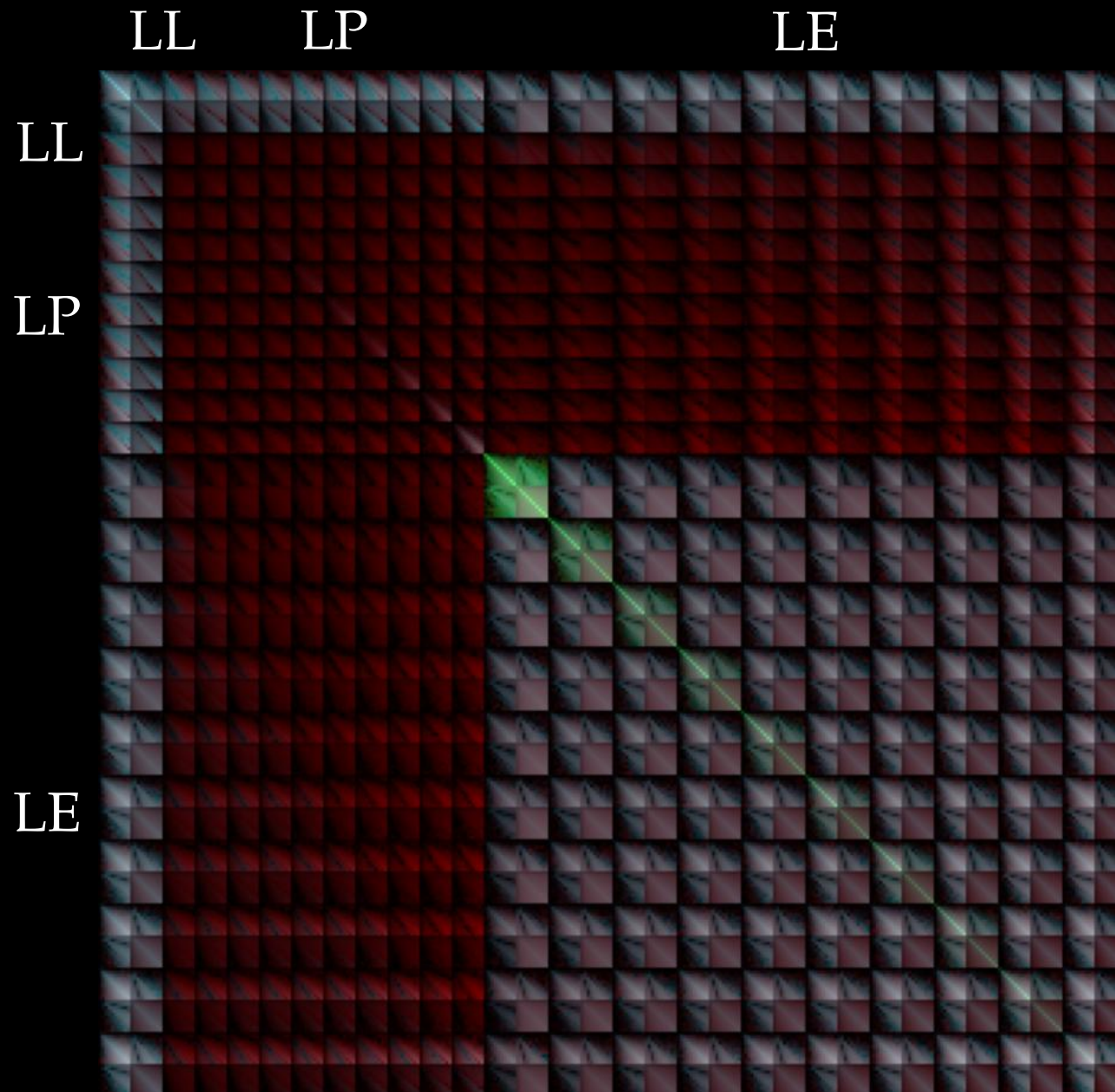
Foreground convergence  
and shear

# Weight functions

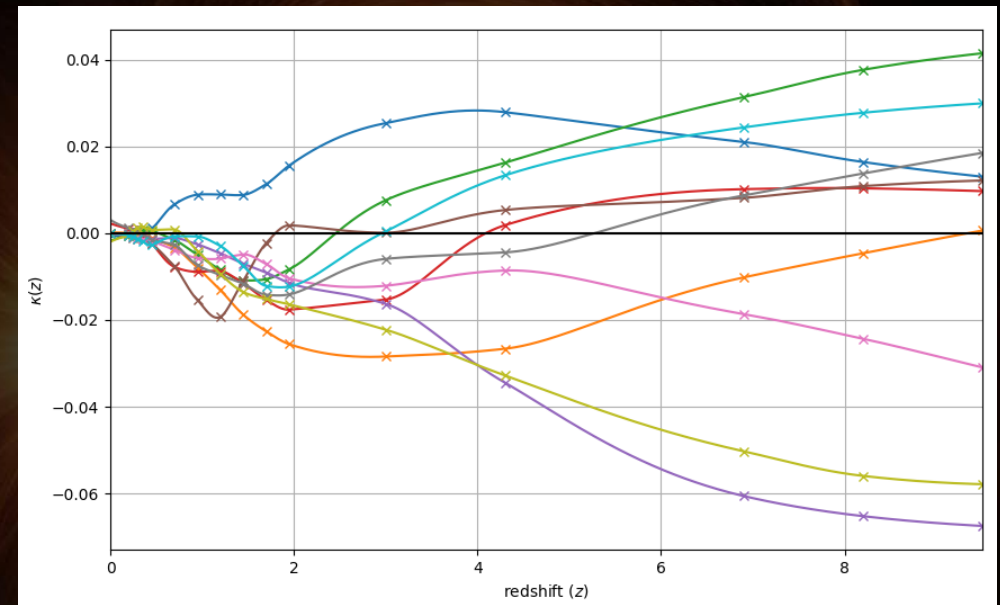
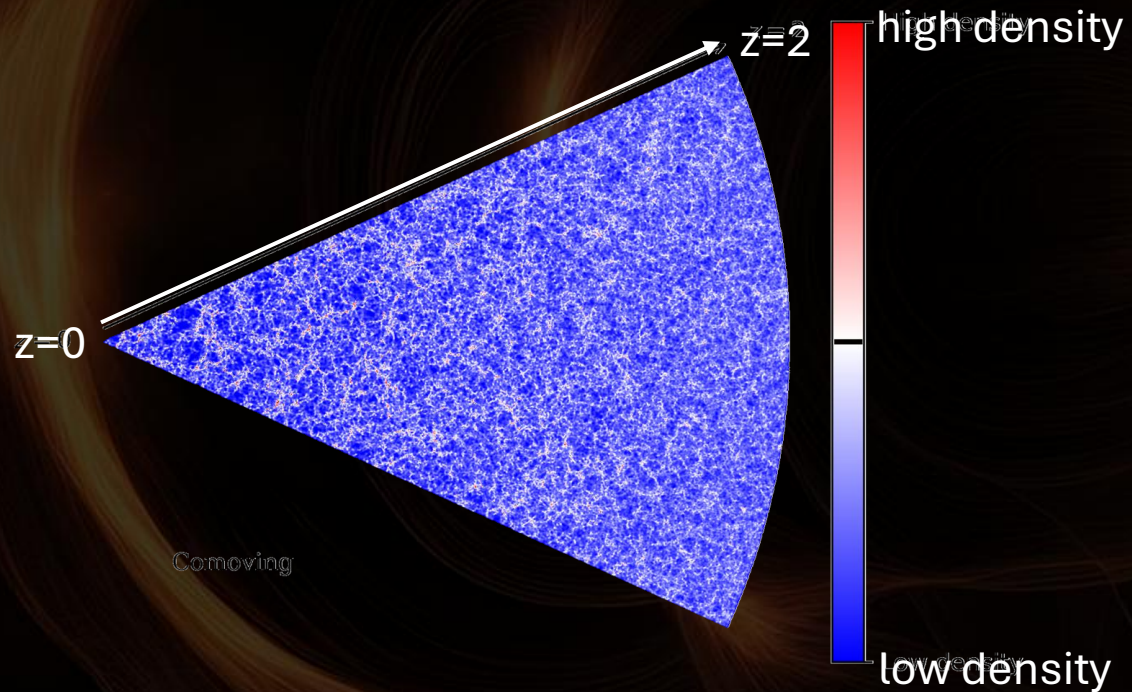


# Covariance matrices

noise  
sparsity  
cosmic



# Generating lines of sight



- Interpolate between datapoints
- Integrate to determine background terms

# Foreground shear effects (ellipticity is biased)

$$\varepsilon_{\text{eff}} \equiv \varepsilon + 2(5 - \gamma)g_{\text{od}}$$

If the **foreground shear** is left out of a model, you will measure an effective ellipticity. However, other parameters should be unaffected