

# Black-Hole Ringdown Analysis with LIGO-Virgo-KAGRA O4 data

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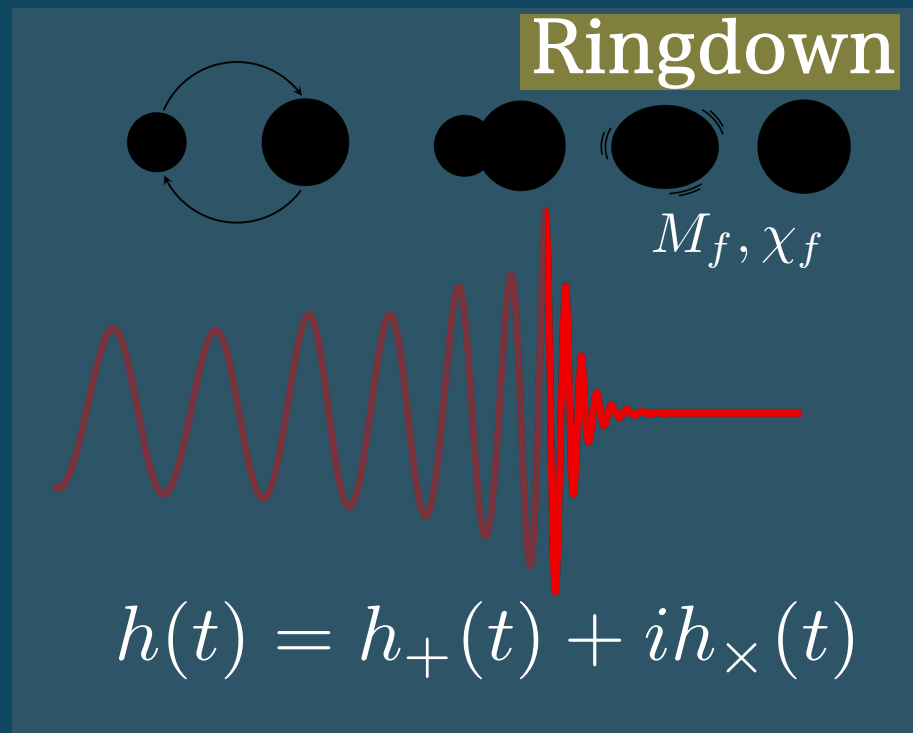
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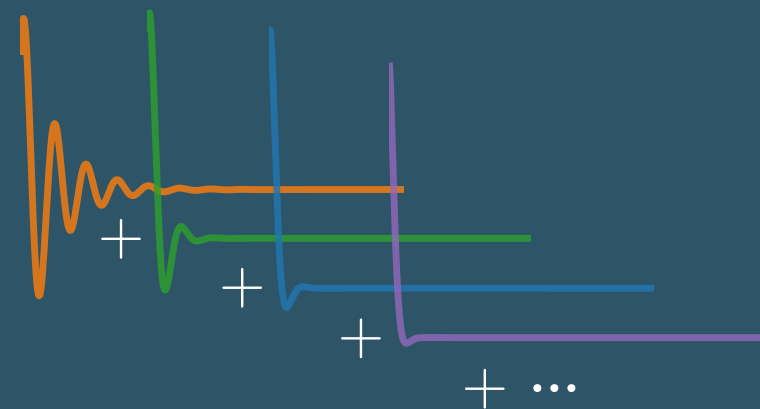


MMA 3rd annual conference  
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Image credit: LIGO/T. Pyle



## Quasi-Normal Modes (QNMs)



$$\sum_{\ell m n} \left[ A_{\ell m n} e^{-t/\tau_{\ell m n}} e^{-i2\pi f_{\ell m n} t} + A'_{\ell m n} e^{-t/\tau_{\ell m n}} e^{i2\pi f_{\ell m n} t} \right]$$

$\ell, m$ : Angular indices     $n$ : **Overtone number**

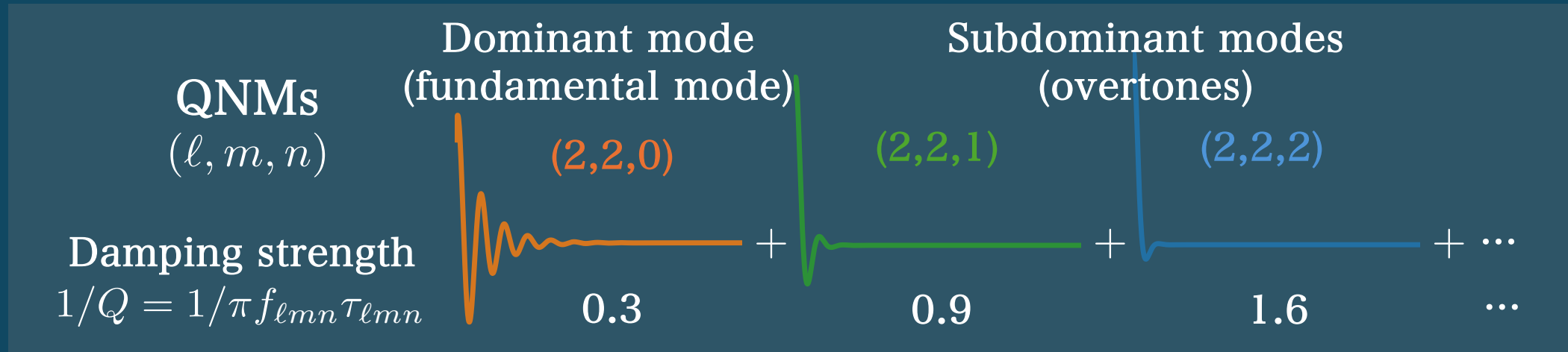
- Ringdown signal can be modeled as a superposition of damped sinusoids.
- **Frequency  $f_{\ell m n}$**  and **damping time  $\tau_{\ell m n}$**  are determined solely by the remnant BH's mass  $M_f$  and spin  $\chi_f$  (BH no-hair theorem).



# Challenges in Ringdown

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- Typically, the **(2,2,0) mode** is the dominant one, and in recent years, overtones ( $n \geq 1$ ) have gained attention as subdominant modes. (M. Isi et al. 1905.00869, LVK Collaboration 2509.08099, and many others.)
- Overtones decay rapidly.

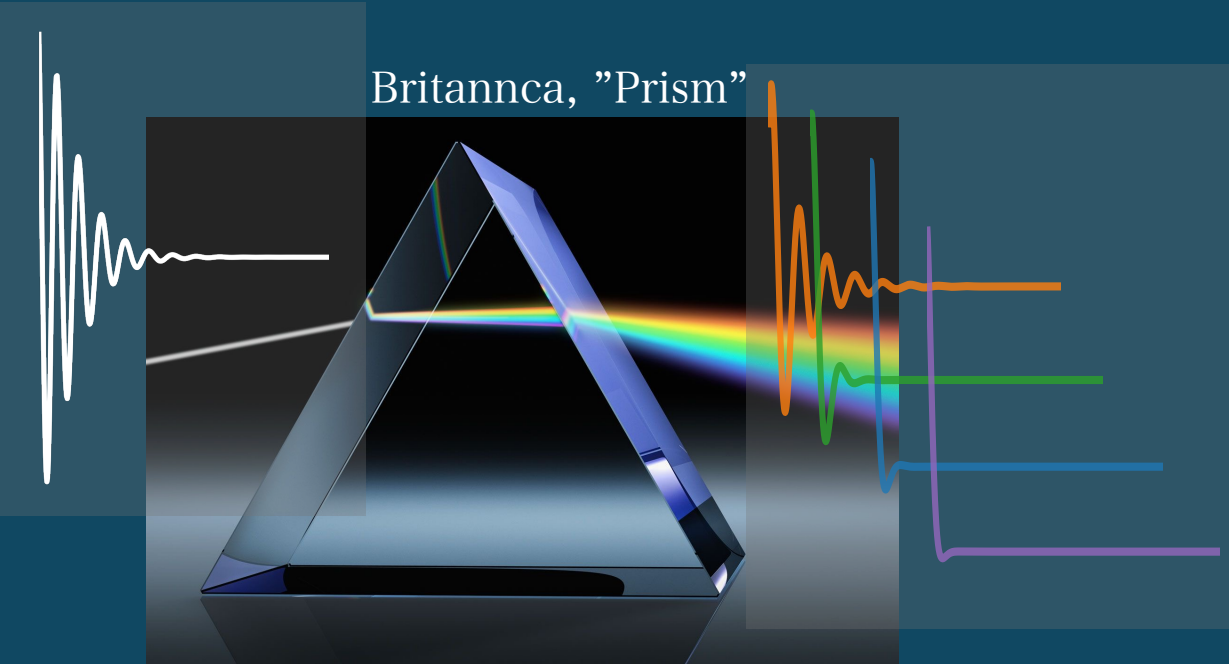


- It is unclear when the perturbation theory becomes valid.



# Test of General Relativity in Ringdown

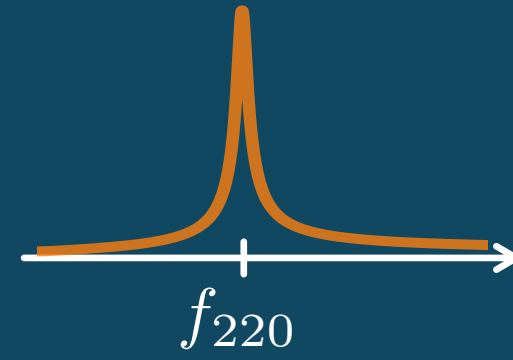
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## Black-hole spectroscopy

1. Estimate  $M_f$  and  $\chi_f$  from the observed spectrum of the dominant mode.
2. Compare the calculated spectrums and observed spectrums of the subdominant modes.

Observed spectrum  
of the dominant mode



$M_f^{220}, \chi_f^{220}$

Spectrums of the  
subdominant modes

Calculated Observed

$f_{221}(M_f^{220}, \chi_f^{220})$

Calculated Observed

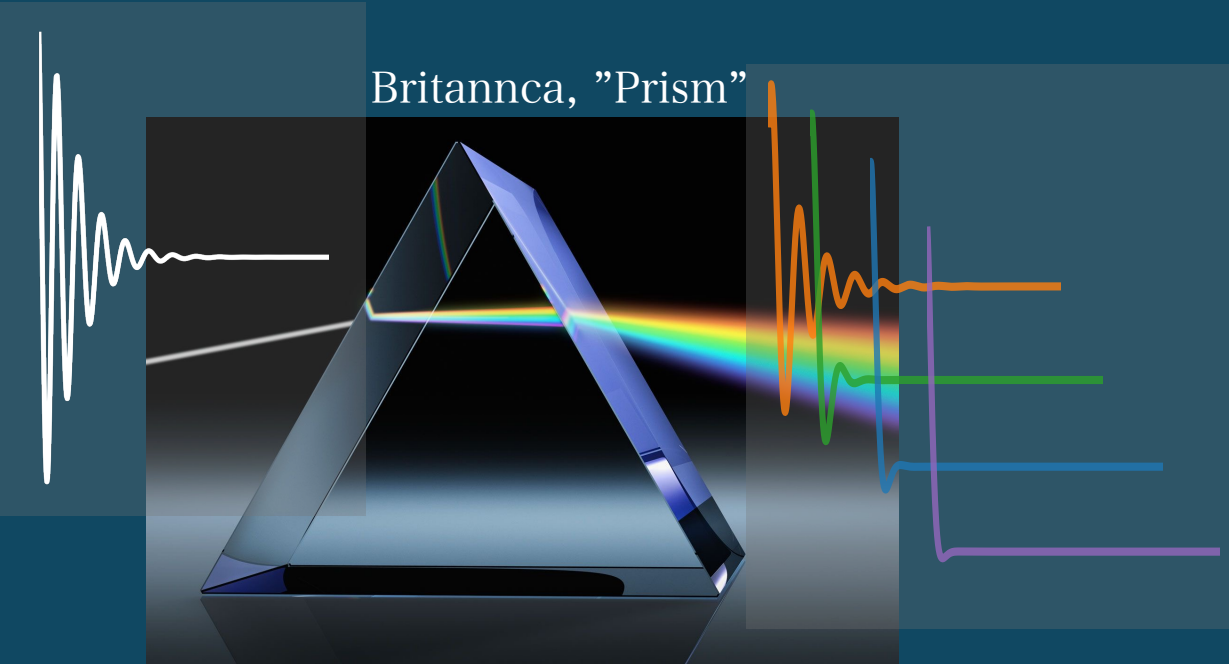
$f_{222}(M_f^{220}, \chi_f^{220})$

Test of  
General Relativity



# Test of General Relativity in Ringdown

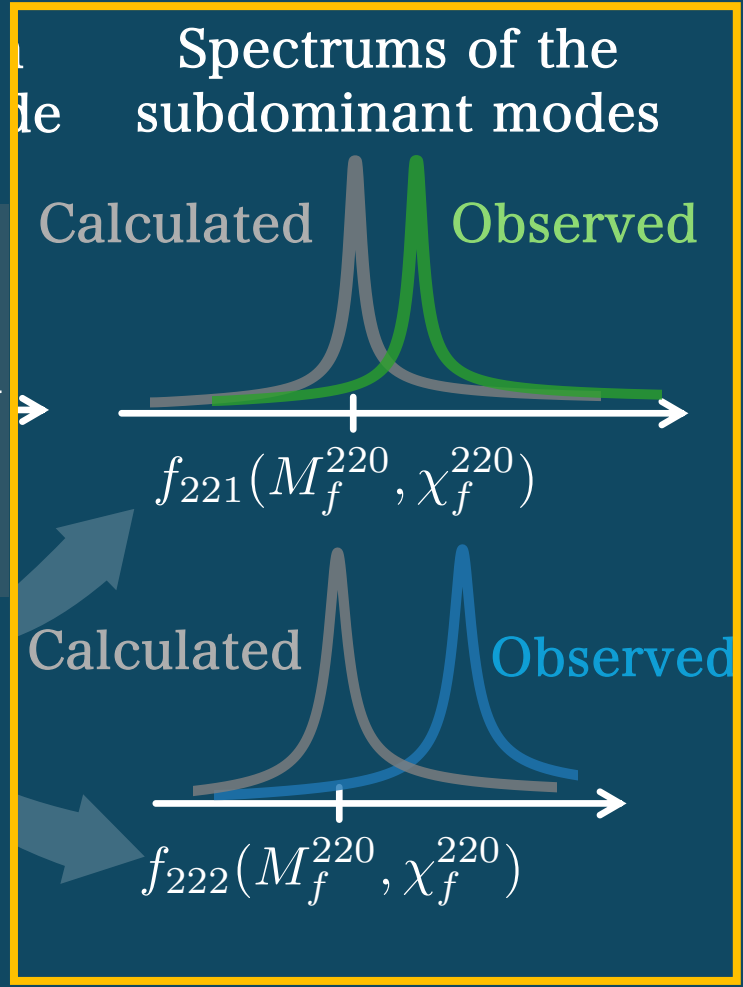
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The more QNMs can be observed, the more accurately we can test general relativity.

## Black-hole spectroscopy

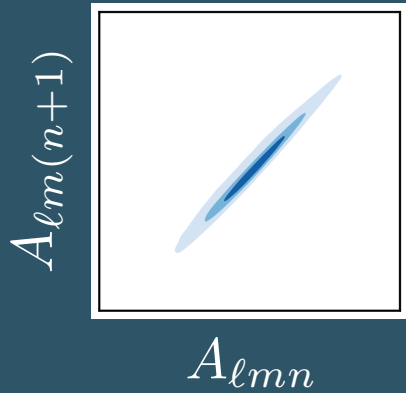
1. Estimate  $M_f$  and  $\chi_f$  from the observed spectrum of the dominant mode.
2. Compare the calculated spectrums and observed spectrums of the subdominant modes.



Test of General Relativity

## Challenges in ringdown analysis with multiple QNMs

1. QNMs are not orthogonal (they have similar oscillatory behaviors).



They cause correlations between mode amplitudes  $A_{\ell mn}$ .

2. Analysis with multiple modes increases the number of parameters.

Template waveform  
 $h(t; M_f, \chi_f, \mathcal{A}_{220}, \mathcal{A}'_{220}, \mathcal{A}_{221}, \mathcal{A}'_{221}, \dots)$

It results in a higher computational cost.



**Semi-analytic method** based on orthonormal QNMs

# Semi-analytic Method

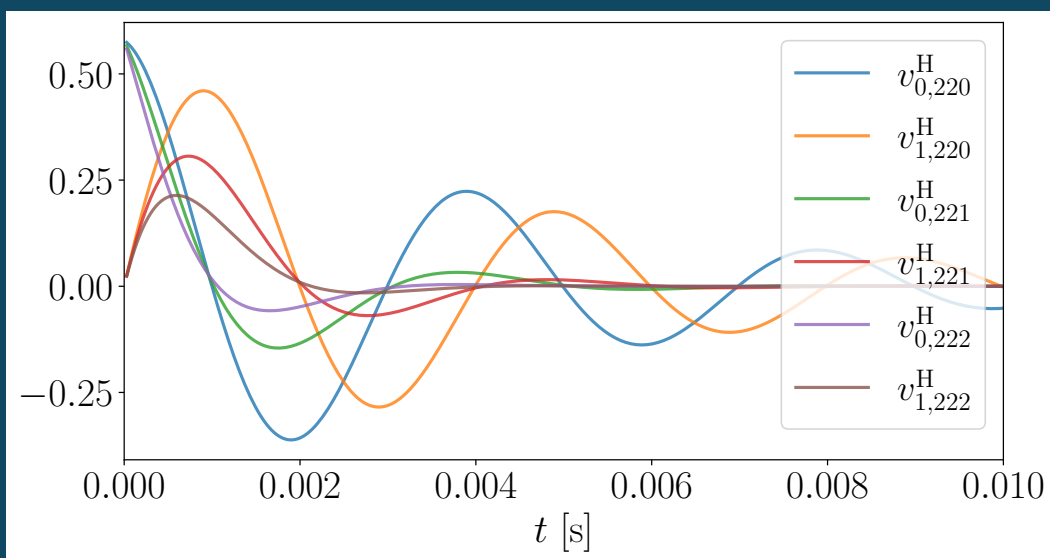
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1. QNMs are not orthogonal (they have similar oscillatory behaviors).

→ We use the numerically orthonormalized QNM templates.

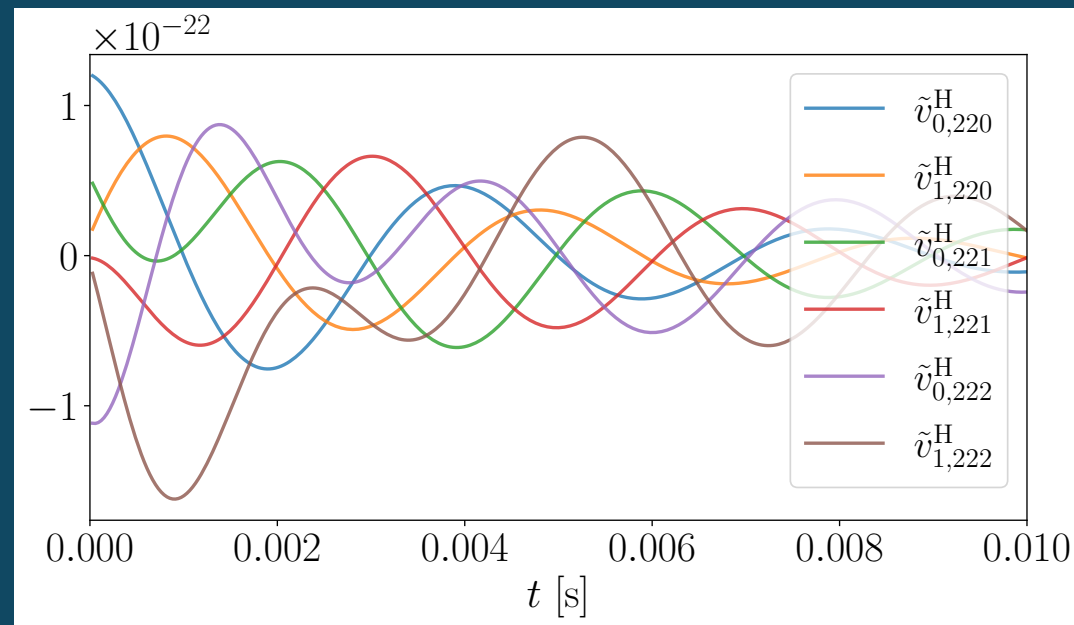
Template waveform

$$h(t) = \sum_{\ell mn} \sum_{j=0}^{D-1} c_{j,\ell mn} v_{j,\ell mn}$$



Orthonormalized template waveform

$$h(t) = \sum_{\ell mn} \sum_{j=0}^{D-1} \tilde{c}_{j,\ell mn} \tilde{v}_{j,\ell mn}$$



Correlations between mode amplitudes are reduced.



2. Analysis with multiple modes increases the number of parameters.

Orthonormalized template waveform

$$h(t) = \sum_{\ell mn} \sum_{j=0}^{D-1} \tilde{c}_{j,\ell mn} \tilde{v}_{j,\ell mn}$$

➤ Likelihood can be analytically marginalized over coefficients  $\tilde{c}_{j,\ell mn}$ :

$$\underbrace{P(M_f, \chi_f)}_{\text{Posterior}} \propto \int d\tilde{\mathbf{c}} \underbrace{\pi(M_f, \chi_f, \tilde{\mathbf{c}})}_{\text{Prior}} \underbrace{\mathcal{L}(M_f, \chi_f, \tilde{\mathbf{c}})}_{\text{Likelihood}}$$

Analytically integrate w.r.t.  $\tilde{c}_{j,\ell mn}$

$$P(M_f, \chi_f) \propto \prod_{\ell mn} \frac{\pi}{4\sqrt{2}} \Gamma\left(\frac{D-1}{2}\right) \left[ 2D {}_1F_1^R\left(\frac{1}{2}, \frac{D}{2} + 1, \frac{\tilde{d}_{\ell mn}^2}{2}\right) + \tilde{d}_{\ell mn}^2 {}_1F_1^R\left(\frac{3}{2}, \frac{D}{2} + 2, \frac{\tilde{d}_{\ell mn}^2}{2}\right) \right]$$

S. Morisaki, H. Motohashi, M. Suzuki, and D. Watarai, arXiv:2507.12376

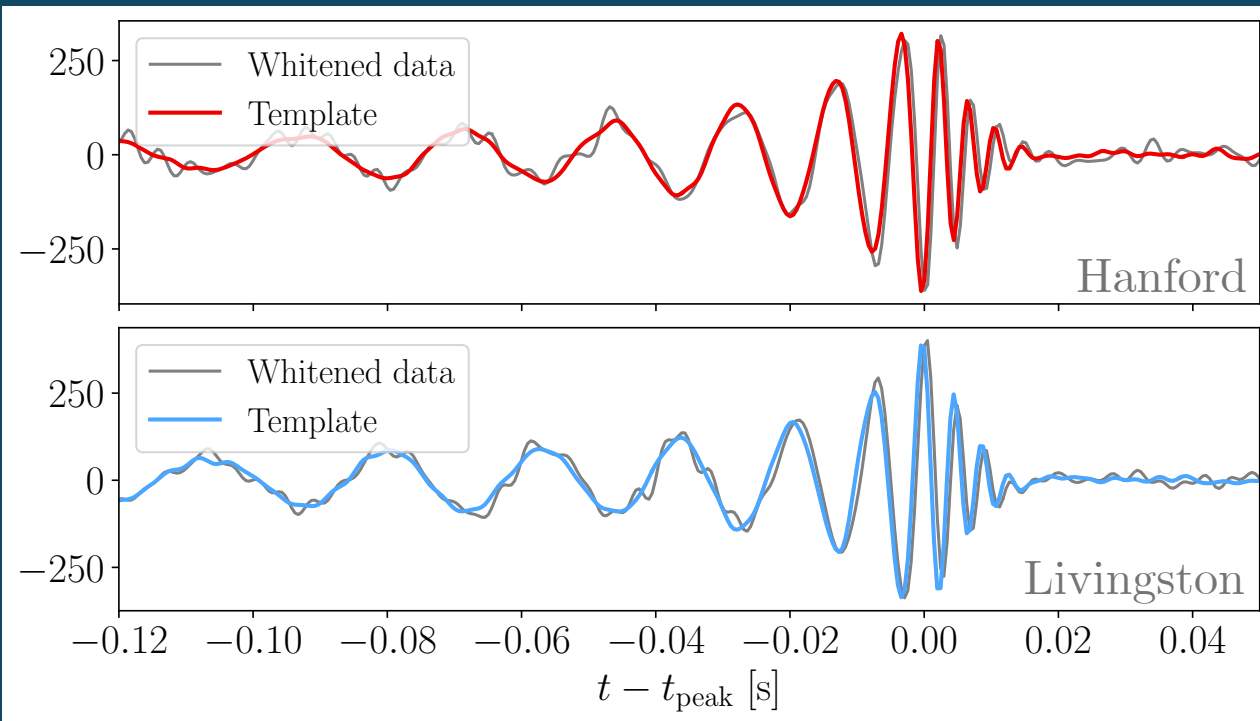
→ We do not need to sample parameters from likelihood  $\mathcal{L}(M_f, \chi_f, \tilde{\mathbf{c}})$  using random sampling methods.

# Application to the O4 event GW250114

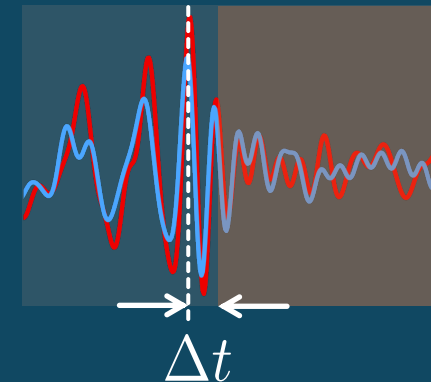
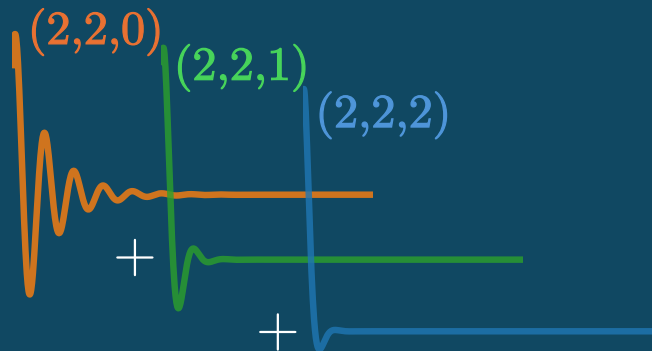
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## GW250114

- Detected on January 14, 2025, during the 4th observing run (O4) of the LIGO-Virgo-KAGRA collaboration.
- The loudest event so far ( $\text{SNR} \sim 80$ ).



- Analyze using a template waveform including  $(\ell, m, n) = (2, 2, 0), (2, 2, 1)$ , and  $(2, 2, 2)$  modes.
- Perform analyses on data segments starting at different times  $\Delta t$ .



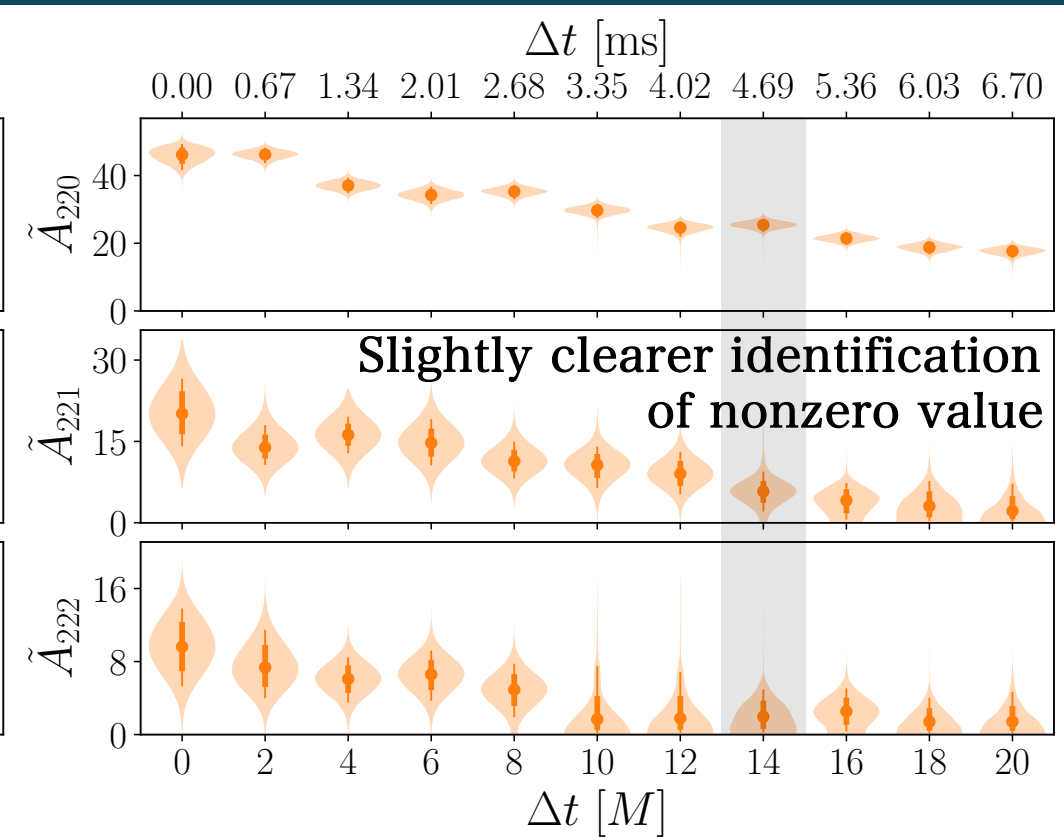
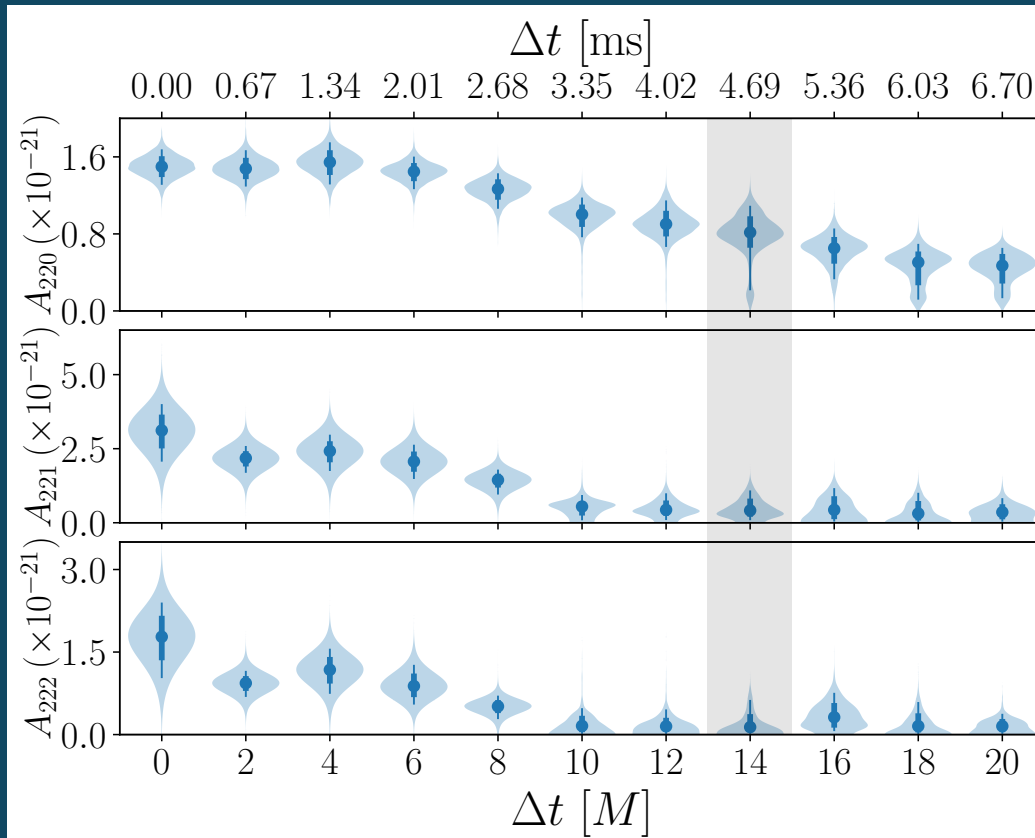
# Application to the O4 event GW250114

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## Posterior distributions for different data segments

Random sampling method  
(original QNMs)

Semi-analytic method  
(orthonormal QNMs)



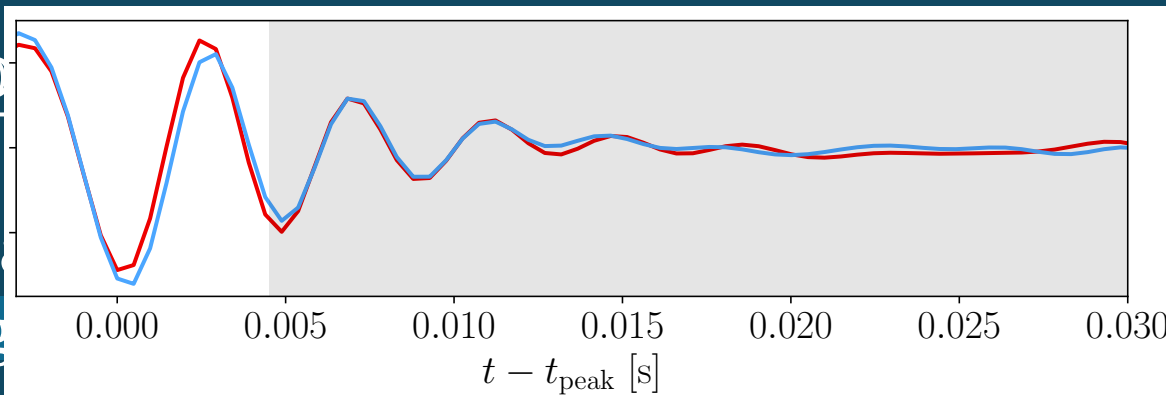


# Application to the O4 event GW250114

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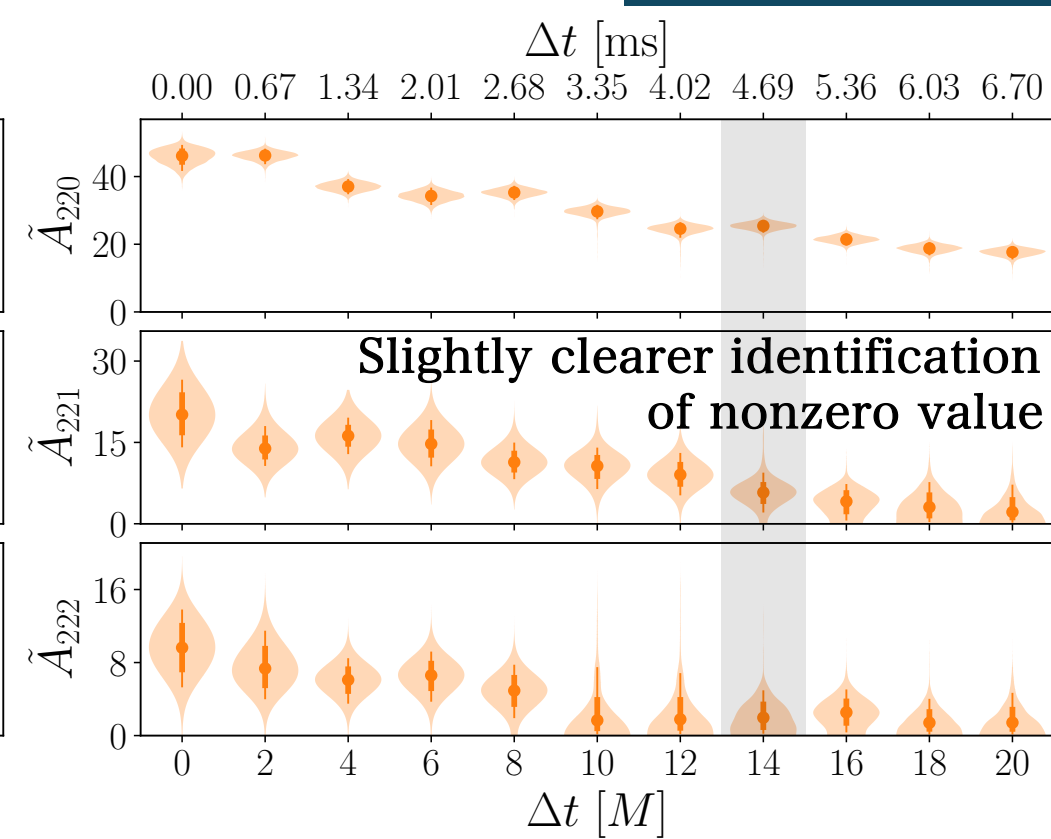
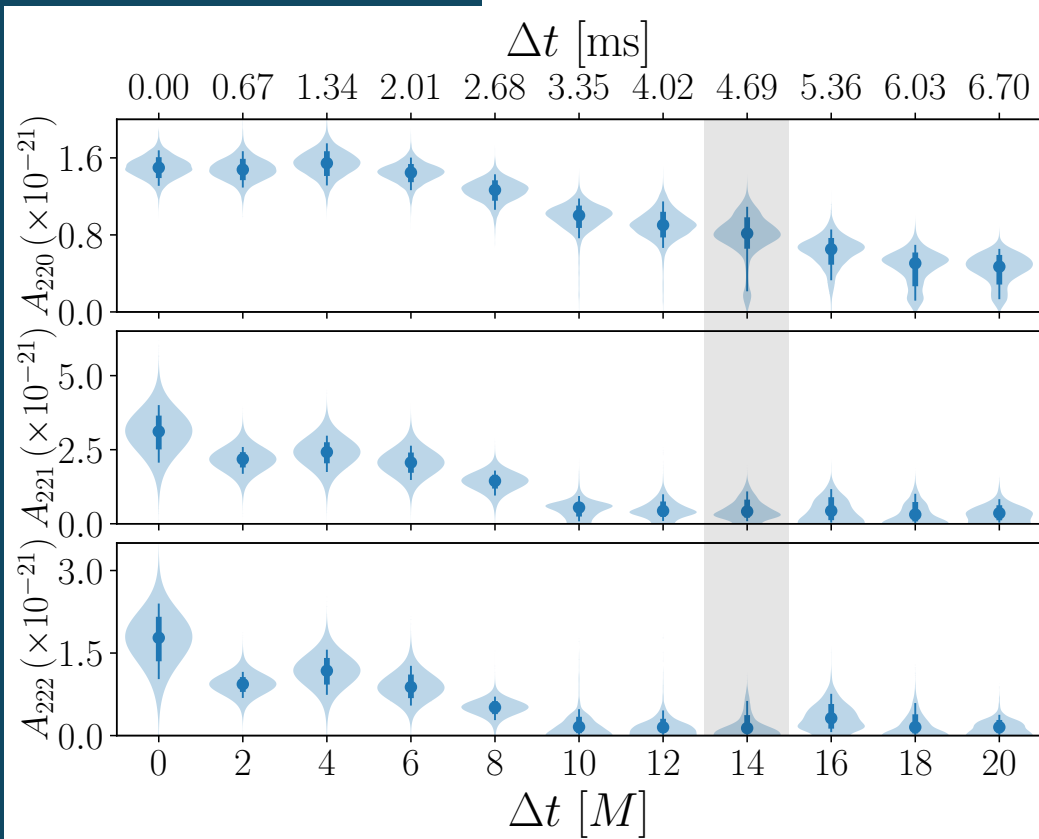
Posterior distrib

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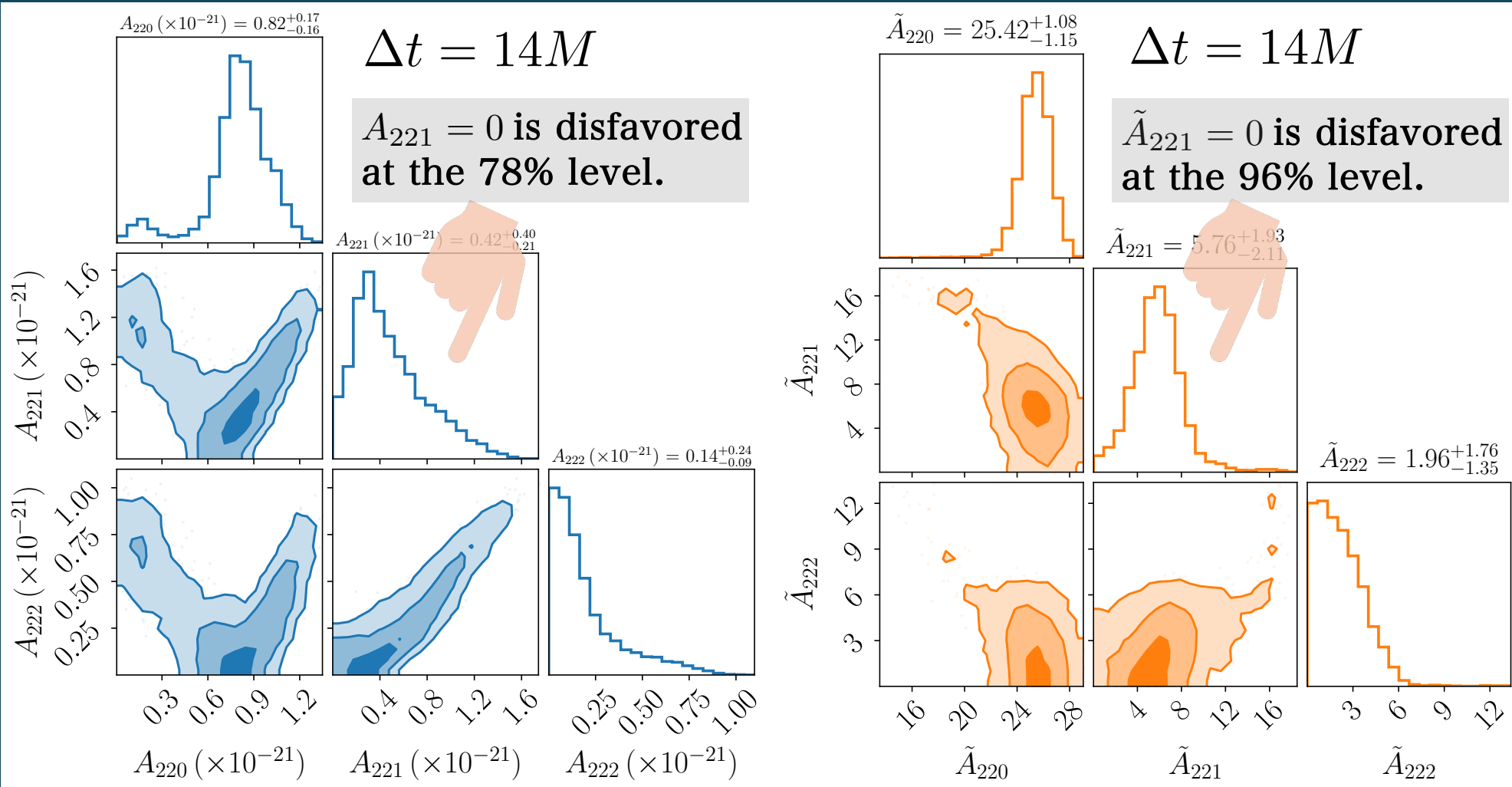


# Application to the O4 event GW250114

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Random sampling method  
(original QNMs)

Semi-analytic method  
(orthonormal QNMs)



➤ Semi-analytic method **reduces correlations** (e.g., (2,2,1) vs (2,2,2)).



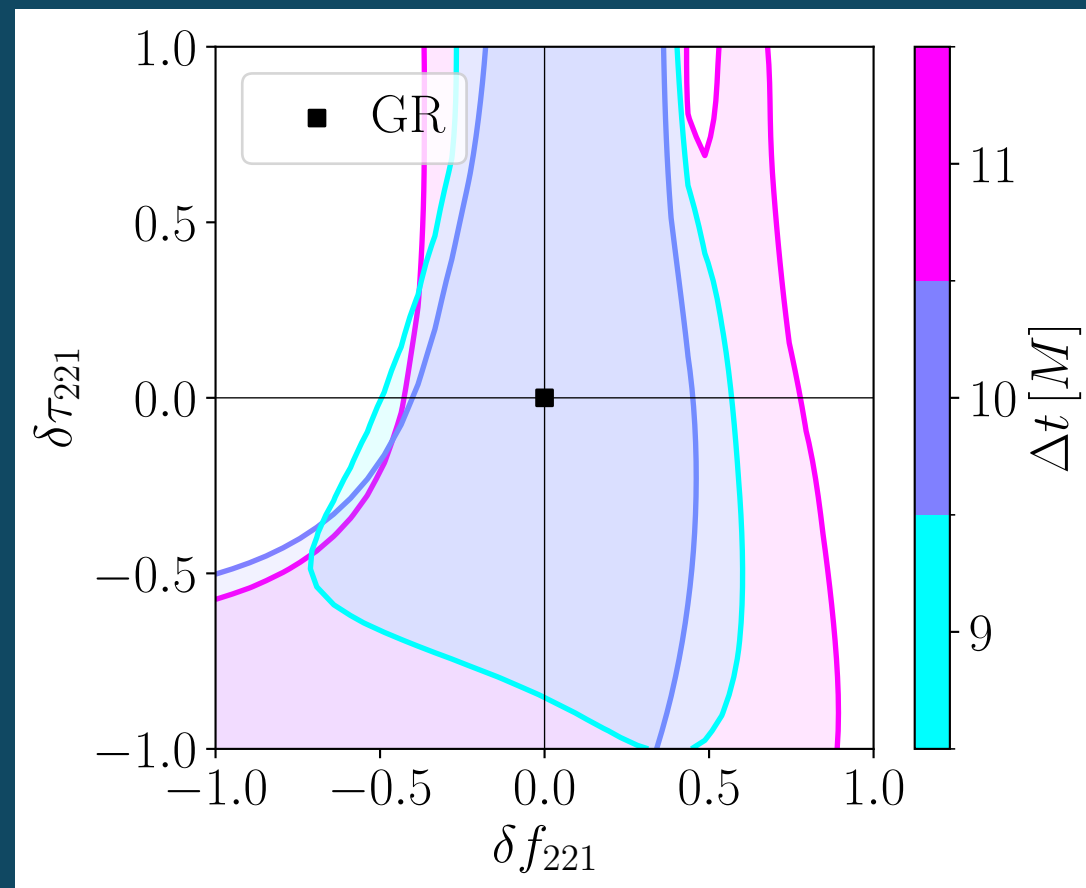
Semi-analytic method gives **stronger support** for the presence of the (2,2,1) mode.

## Testing GR with GW250114

- Analyze using a template waveform including the (2,2,0) and (2,2,1) modes.
- Introduce the deviation parameters  $\delta f_{221}$ ,  $\delta \tau_{221}$  in the (2,2,1) mode, where  $\delta f_{221} = \delta \tau_{221} = 0$  corresponds to GR.

(2,2,0):  $f_{220}(M_f, \chi_f)$ ,  $\tau_{220}(M_f, \chi_f)$

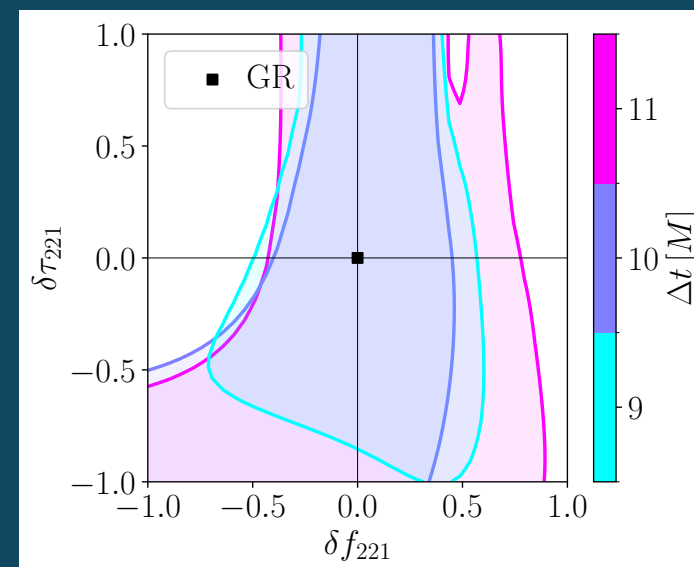
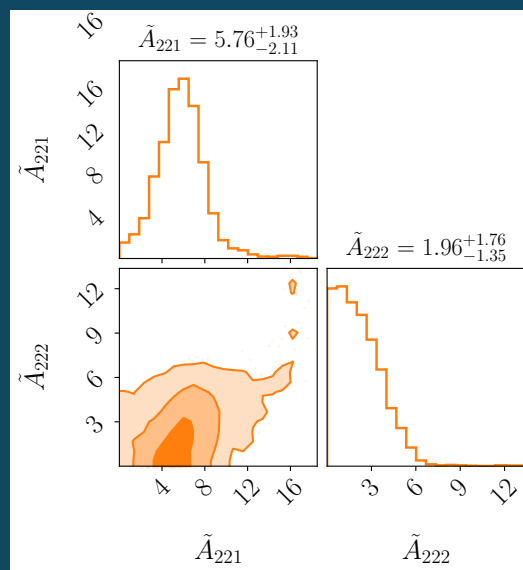
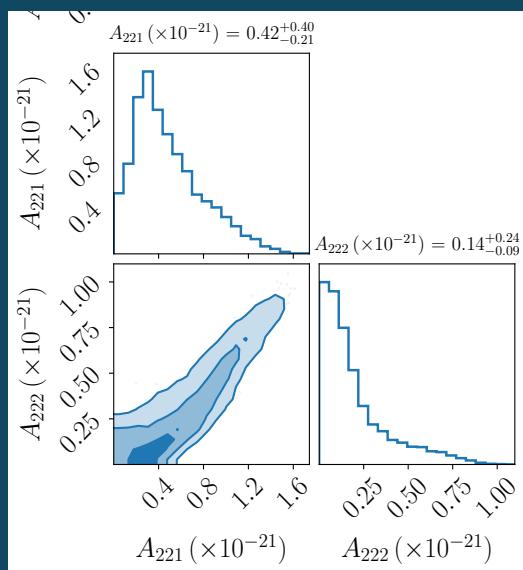
(2,2,1):  $f_{221}(M_f, \chi_f)e^{\delta f_{221}}$ ,  $\tau_{221}(M_f, \chi_f)e^{\delta \tau_{221}}$



- ❑ With the current detector sensitivity, the deviation parameters cannot be well constrained.
- ❑ No significant deviation from general relativity is found.



- By using orthonormalized QNM templates, the likelihood function can be analytically marginalized, enabling the semi-analytic method.
- It reduces not only the computational cost but also parameter correlations.
- It is valid for real data, and we found stronger evidence for the existence of the (2,2,1) mode in GW250114 compared to the conventional method.
- No significant deviation from general relativity is found in the ringdown regime of GW250114.





In general, a twin mode  $\tilde{\omega}'_{lmn}$  appears as a pair with the original mode  $\tilde{\omega}_{lmn}$ , satisfying the relation

$$\tilde{\omega}'_{lmn} = -\tilde{\omega}_{l-mn}^*$$

(i.e.  $\omega'_{lmn} = -\omega_{l-mn}$ ,  $\tau'_{lmn} = \tau_{l-mn}$ )

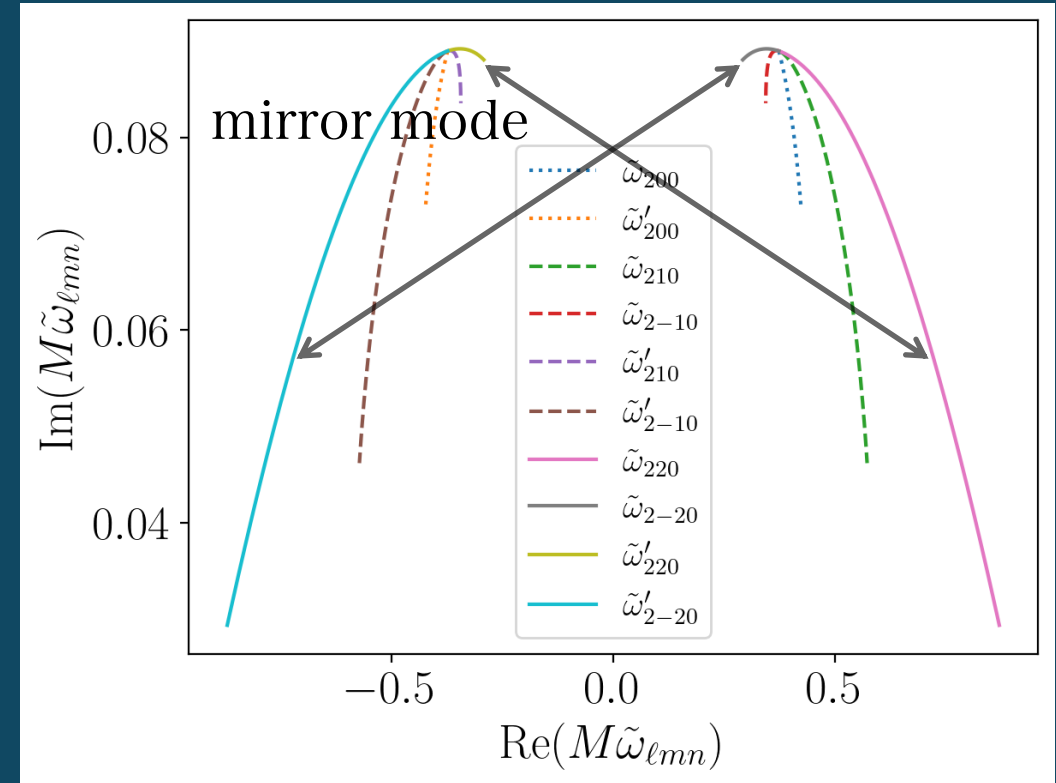
$$\begin{aligned} h(t) &= \sum_{lmn} [\mathcal{C}_{lmn} e^{-i\tilde{\omega}_{lmn}t} {}_{-2}S_{lmn}(\iota, \phi) \\ &\quad + \mathcal{C}'_{lmn} e^{-i\tilde{\omega}'_{lmn}t} {}_{-2}S'_{lmn}(\iota, \phi)] \\ &= \sum_{lmn} [\mathcal{C}_{lmn} e^{-i\tilde{\omega}_{lmn}t} {}_{-2}S_{lmn}(\iota, \phi) \\ &\quad + \mathcal{C}'_{lmn} e^{i\tilde{\omega}_{l-mn}^*t} {}_{-2}S_{lmn}(\iota, \phi)] \\ &= \sum_{lmn} [\mathcal{C}_{lmn} e^{-i\tilde{\omega}_{lmn}t} {}_{-2}S_{lmn}(\iota, \phi) \\ &\quad + \mathcal{C}'_{l-mn} e^{i\tilde{\omega}_{lmn}^*t} {}_{-2}S_{l-mn}(\iota, \phi)] \\ &= \sum_{lmn} [\mathcal{C}_{lmn} e^{-i\tilde{\omega}_{lmn}t} {}_{-2}S_{lmn}(\iota, \phi) \\ &\quad + \mathcal{C}'_{lmn} e^{i\tilde{\omega}_{lmn}^*t} {}_{-2}S_{l-mn}(\iota, \phi)] \end{aligned}$$

$$({}_{-2}S'_{lmn}(\iota, \phi) = {}_{-2}S_{lmn}(\iota, \phi))$$

$$(m : -\ell \rightarrow \ell \Rightarrow \ell \rightarrow -\ell)$$

$$(\mathcal{C}'_{l-mn}(-1)^\ell \rightarrow \mathcal{C}'_{lmn})$$

$m > 0$  : Prograde modes  
 $m < 0$  : Retrograde modes





The gravitational wave strain recorded by  $I$ -th detector:

$$h^I(t) = \text{Re}[F^I h(t - t_S^I)] = F_+^I h_+(t) + F_\times^I h_\times(t)$$

- $F^I = F_+^I - iF_\times^I$  : Complex antenna pattern function of  $I$ -th detector
- $t_S^I$  : Analysis start time at  $I$ -th detector

$$h^I(t) = \sum_{\alpha} \sum_{j=0}^3 c_{j,\alpha} v_{j,\alpha}^I(t)$$

Coefficients

$$\begin{aligned} c_{0,\alpha} &= \text{Re} [\mathcal{C}_\alpha S_\alpha(\iota, \phi) + \mathcal{C}'_\alpha S_{\alpha'}(\iota, \phi)], \\ c_{1,\alpha} &= \text{Im} [\mathcal{C}_\alpha S_\alpha(\iota, \phi) - \mathcal{C}'_\alpha S_{\alpha'}(\iota, \phi)], \\ c_{2,\alpha} &= \text{Im} [\mathcal{C}_\alpha S_\alpha(\iota, \phi) + \mathcal{C}'_\alpha S_{\alpha'}(\iota, \phi)], \\ c_{3,\alpha} &= \text{Re} [-\mathcal{C}_\alpha S_\alpha(\iota, \phi) + \mathcal{C}'_\alpha S_{\alpha'}(\iota, \phi)], \end{aligned}$$

Basis vectors

$$\begin{aligned} v_{0,\alpha}^I(t) &= F_+^I e^{-\frac{t-t_S^I}{\tau_\alpha}} \cos(\omega_\alpha(t - t_S^I)), \\ v_{1,\alpha}^I(t) &= F_+^I e^{-\frac{t-t_S^I}{\tau_\alpha}} \sin(\omega_\alpha(t - t_S^I)), \\ v_{2,\alpha}^I(t) &= F_\times^I e^{-\frac{t-t_S^I}{\tau_\alpha}} \cos(\omega_\alpha(t - t_S^I)), \\ v_{3,\alpha}^I(t) &= F_\times^I e^{-\frac{t-t_S^I}{\tau_\alpha}} \sin(\omega_\alpha(t - t_S^I)). \end{aligned}$$

- Theoretically, the ringdown waveform can be represented as a superposition of an infinite set of QNMs; however, in practical analyses, it is modeled using only a finite number of modes.

$$\{\alpha_0, \alpha_1, \dots, \alpha_{K-1}\}$$

- $K$  : The number of modes included in the template

- For single-detector events, or when the detectors are nearly co-aligned,  $v_{2,\alpha}^I(t)$  and  $v_{3,\alpha}^I(t)$  become degenerate with  $v_{0,\alpha}^I(t)$  and  $v_{1,\alpha}^I(t)$ . In such case, we set  $c_{2,\alpha} = c_{3,\alpha} = 0$ .

- $D = 2$  or  $4$  : The number of coefficients used per mode

Template waveform

$$h^I(t) = \sum_{k=0}^{K-1} \sum_{j=0}^{D-1} c_{j,\alpha_k} v_{j,\alpha_k}^I(t)$$

To reduce correlations between QNMs and to make the likelihood analytically marginalizable, we utilize orthonormalized basis:

$$\tilde{V} = (\tilde{\mathbf{v}}_{0,\alpha_0}, \dots, \tilde{\mathbf{v}}_{D-1,\alpha_0}, \tilde{\mathbf{v}}_{0,\alpha_1}, \dots, \tilde{\mathbf{v}}_{D-1,\alpha_{K-1}}) = VU$$

- $U$  : Upper triangular matrix that represents the Gram-Schmidt orthogonalization process w.r.t. the inner product

$$(\mathbf{v}_{j,\alpha_k}, \mathbf{v}_{j',\alpha_{k'}}) = \mathbf{v}_{j,\alpha_k}^T R^{-1} \mathbf{v}_{j',\alpha_{k'}}$$

$$\text{➤ } \tilde{V}^T R^{-1} \tilde{V} = \mathbb{I}$$

$$\ln \mathcal{L}(\boldsymbol{\theta}, \mathbf{c}) = \mathbf{d}^T R^{-1} V \mathbf{c} - \frac{1}{2} \mathbf{c}^T V^T R^{-1} V \mathbf{c} + \text{const.}$$

$$= \mathbf{d}^T R^{-1} \tilde{V} U^{-1} \mathbf{c} - \frac{1}{2} \mathbf{c}^T (U^{-1})^T \tilde{V}^T R^{-1} \tilde{V} U^{-1} \mathbf{c} + \text{const.}$$

$$= \tilde{\mathbf{d}}^T \tilde{\mathbf{c}} - \frac{1}{2} \tilde{\mathbf{c}}^T \tilde{\mathbf{c}} + \text{const.}$$

$$= -\frac{1}{2} (\tilde{\mathbf{c}} - \tilde{\mathbf{d}})^T (\tilde{\mathbf{c}} - \tilde{\mathbf{d}}) + \tilde{\mathbf{d}}^T \tilde{\mathbf{d}} + \text{const.}$$

$$\text{➤ } \tilde{\mathbf{d}} \equiv \tilde{V}^T R^{-1} \mathbf{d}$$

$$\text{➤ } \tilde{\mathbf{c}} \equiv U^{-1} \mathbf{c}$$

## Sampling procedure of the semi-analytic method

1. Draw samples of the pair  $(M_f, \chi_f)$  from the marginal posterior  $p_{\alpha_k}^{A,\beta}(\theta)$ .
2. Draw samples of  $\tilde{A}_{\alpha_k}$  from the conditional posterior corresponding to each sampled pair  $(M_f, \chi_f)$ ,  $p_{\alpha_k}^{\beta}(\tilde{A}_{\alpha_k}|\theta)$ .
3. Draw angular parameters from  $\mathcal{L}_{\alpha_k}$ .

————→ Sample sets  $\{M_f^{(i)}, \chi_f^{(i)}, \tilde{c}_{0,\alpha_0}^{(i)}, \dots, \tilde{c}_{D-1,\alpha_{K-1}}^{(i)}\}_{i=1,2,\dots,N_{\text{samples}}}$

We do not need to use random sampling techniques such as the Markov Chain Monte Carlo method.



## Mode identification

To identify subdominant QNMs from observed data, we adopt the probability that the marginal posterior  $p(\tilde{A}_{\alpha_k})$  excludes  $\tilde{A}_{\alpha_k} = 0$ .

The orthonormalization is performed in order of significance:  $c_n \begin{cases} \neq 0 & \text{for } n \leq N \\ = 0 & \text{for } n > N \end{cases}$

And we observe  $\tilde{c}_n \begin{cases} \neq 0 & \text{for } n \leq \tilde{N} \\ = 0 & \text{for } n > \tilde{N} \end{cases}$

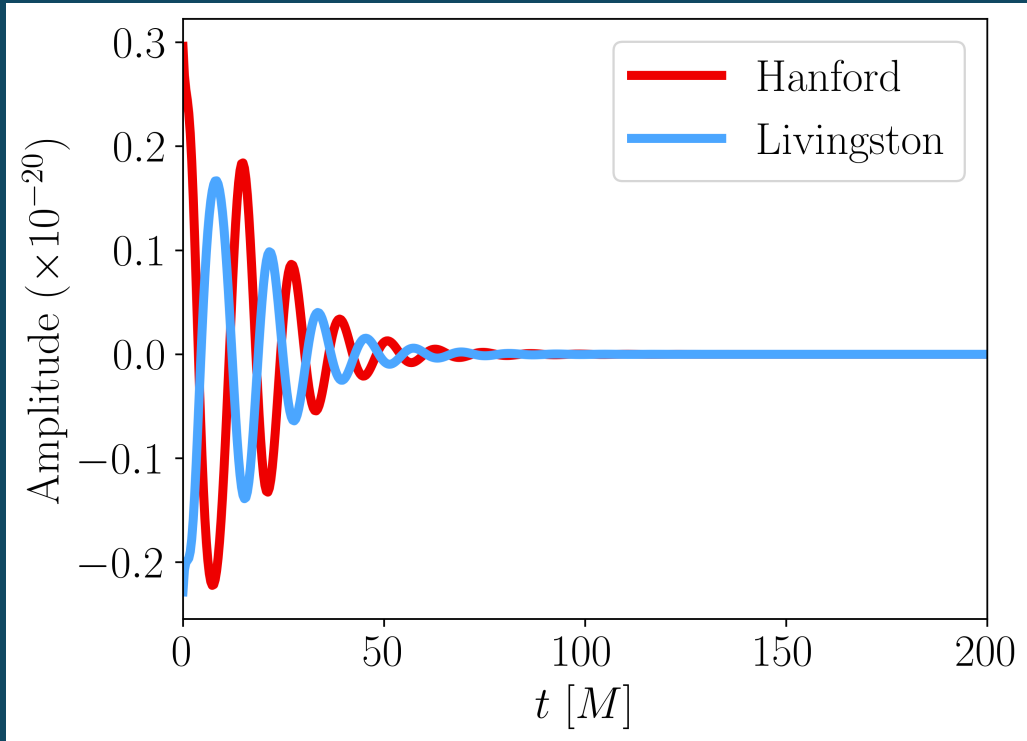
$$\implies c_n = \sum_{m=0}^{KD-1} U_{nm} \tilde{c}_m = \sum_{m=0}^{\tilde{N}-1} U_{nm} \tilde{c}_m = \sum_{m=n}^{\tilde{N}-1} U_{nm} \tilde{c}_m \quad (U_{nm} = 0 \text{ for } n > m)$$

$$\therefore \tilde{c}_n \begin{cases} \neq 0 & \text{for } n \leq \tilde{N} \\ = 0 & \text{for } n > \tilde{N} \end{cases} \implies c_n \begin{cases} \neq 0 & \text{for } n \leq \tilde{N} \\ = 0 & \text{for } n > \tilde{N} \end{cases}$$

$$\text{e.g., for a given mode } \tilde{A}_{\alpha_k} \begin{cases} \neq 0 & \text{for } k \leq k_{\max} \\ = 0 & \text{for } k > k_{\max} \end{cases} \implies A_{\alpha_k} \begin{cases} \neq 0 & \text{for } k \leq k_{\max} \\ = 0 & \text{for } k > k_{\max} \end{cases}$$

We apply this semi-analytic method to mock data consisting of a superposition of damped sinusoids with GW150914-like parameters.

$$h^I(t) = \sum_{k=0}^{K-1} \sum_{j=0}^{D-1} c_{j,\alpha_k} v_{j,\alpha_k}^I(t)$$



### Setup for mock data

- Modes:  $(\ell, m, n) = (2, 2, 0), (2, 2, 1), (2, 2, 2), (2, 2, 3)$
- Final mass and spin:  $M_f = 68.2M_\odot$ ,  $\chi_f = 0.692$
- Sky localization:  $\alpha = 1.95 \text{ rad}$ ,  $\delta = -1.27 \text{ rad}$ ,  $\psi = 0.82 \text{ rad}$
- Coefficients ( $\times 10^{-20}$ ):

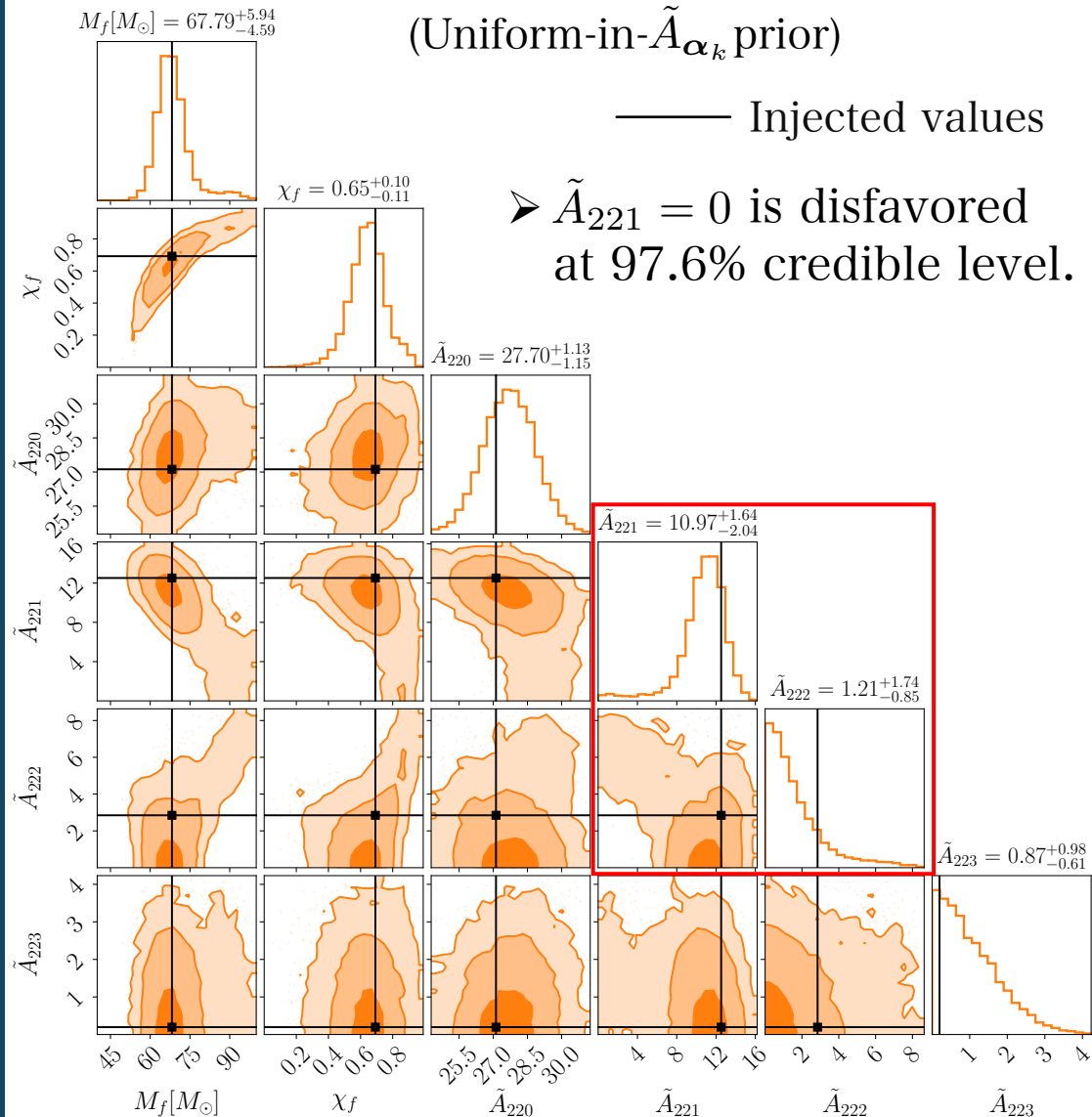
$k$	$c_{0,\alpha_k}$	$c_{1,\alpha_k}$	$c_{2,\alpha_k}$	$c_{3,\alpha_k}$	$A_{\alpha_k}$
0	-0.4768	0.8502	-0.3376	-0.3609	1.0929
1	2.0116	-0.7439	-0.2217	0.7646	2.2877
2	-0.4013	-0.0456	0.2399	-0.0094	0.46989
3	-0.7062	-0.1697	0.1110	-0.0951	0.7409

- Observed by LIGO Hanford and Livingston
- No random detector noise
- The resulting post-merger SNR is 30.

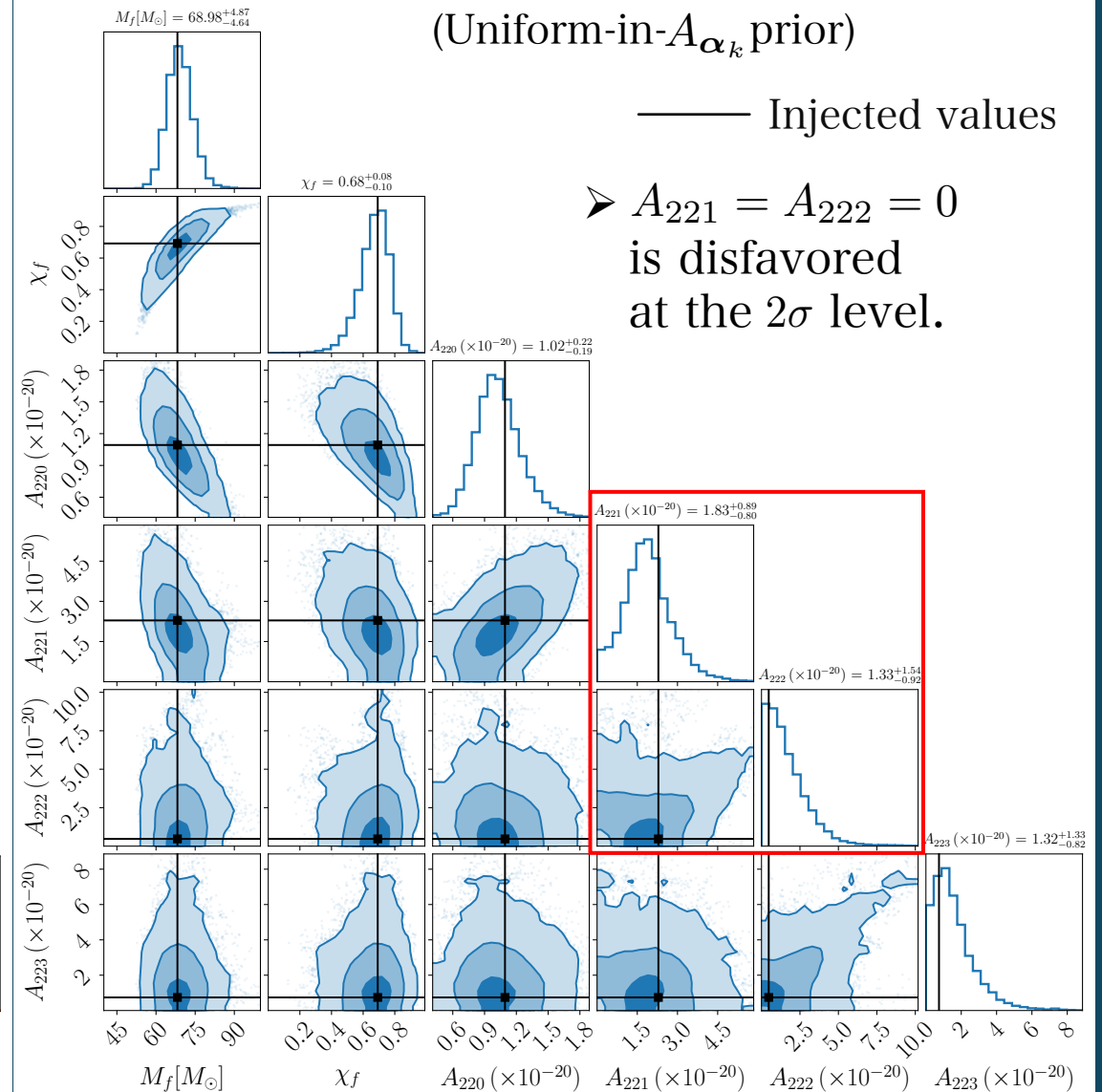
### Analysis setup

- Sampling rate: 2048 Hz
- Analysis duration:  $300M$  ( $\approx 0.1 \text{ s}$ )

## Semi-analytic method

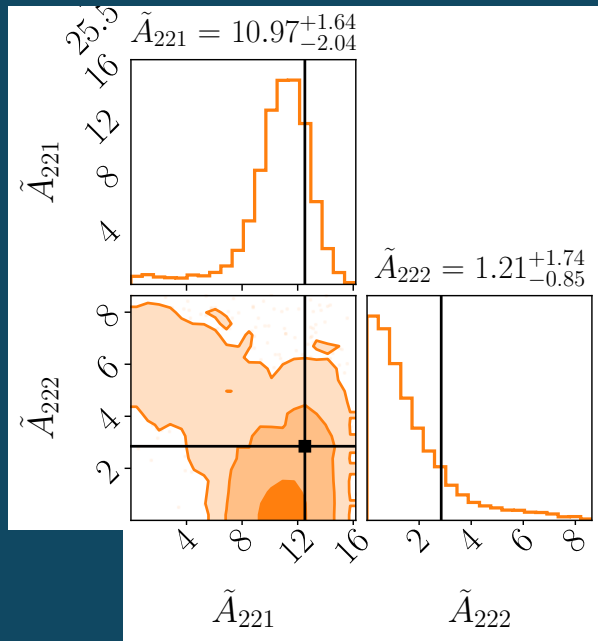


## Random sampling method



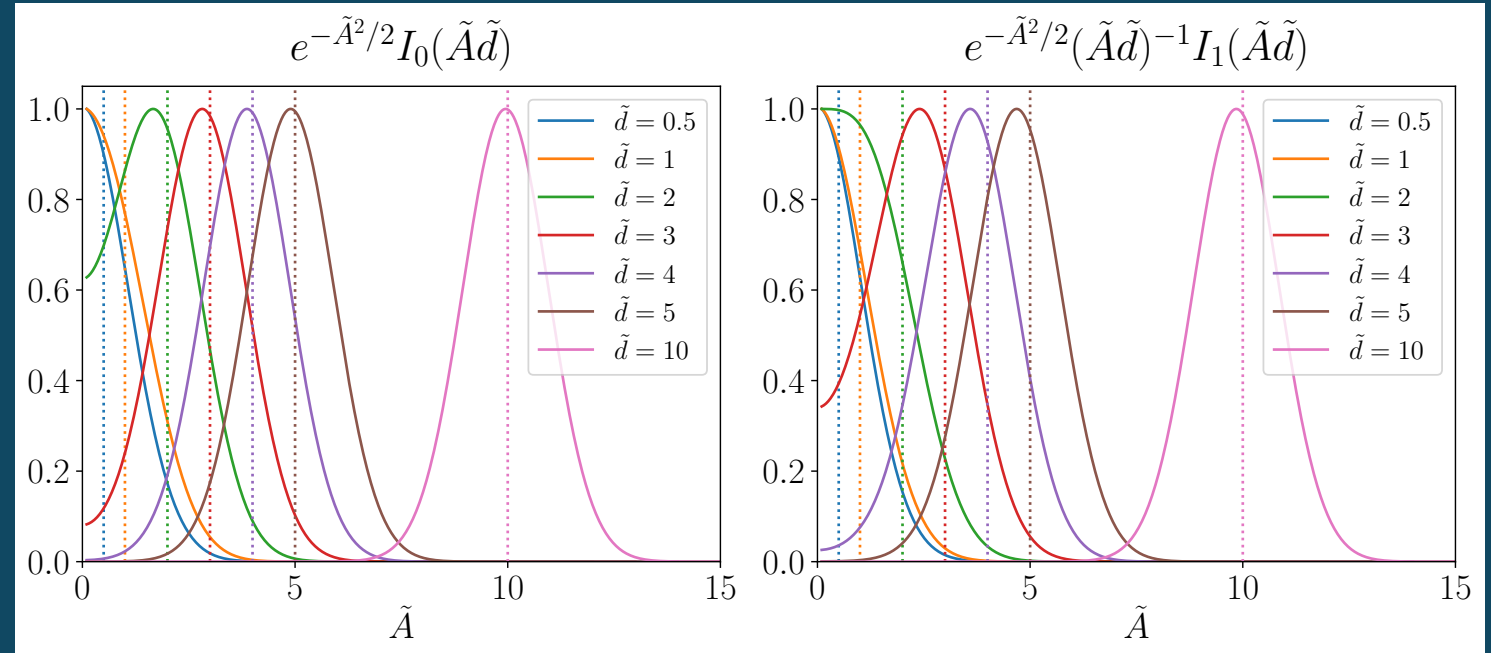
The peak of the distribution is shifted from the true values.

Semi-analytic method  
(Uniform-in- $\tilde{A}_{\alpha_k}$  prior)



Marginal posterior

$$p_{\alpha_k}^{\beta}(\boldsymbol{\theta}, \tilde{A}_{\alpha_k}) \propto \begin{cases} e^{-\tilde{A}_{\alpha_k}^2/2} I_0(\tilde{A}_{\alpha_k} \tilde{d}_{\alpha_k}) & (D = 2), \\ e^{-\tilde{A}_{\alpha_k}^2/2} (\tilde{A}_{\alpha_k} \tilde{d}_{\alpha_k})^{-1} I_1(\tilde{A}_{\alpha_k} \tilde{d}_{\alpha_k}) & (D = 4). \end{cases}$$

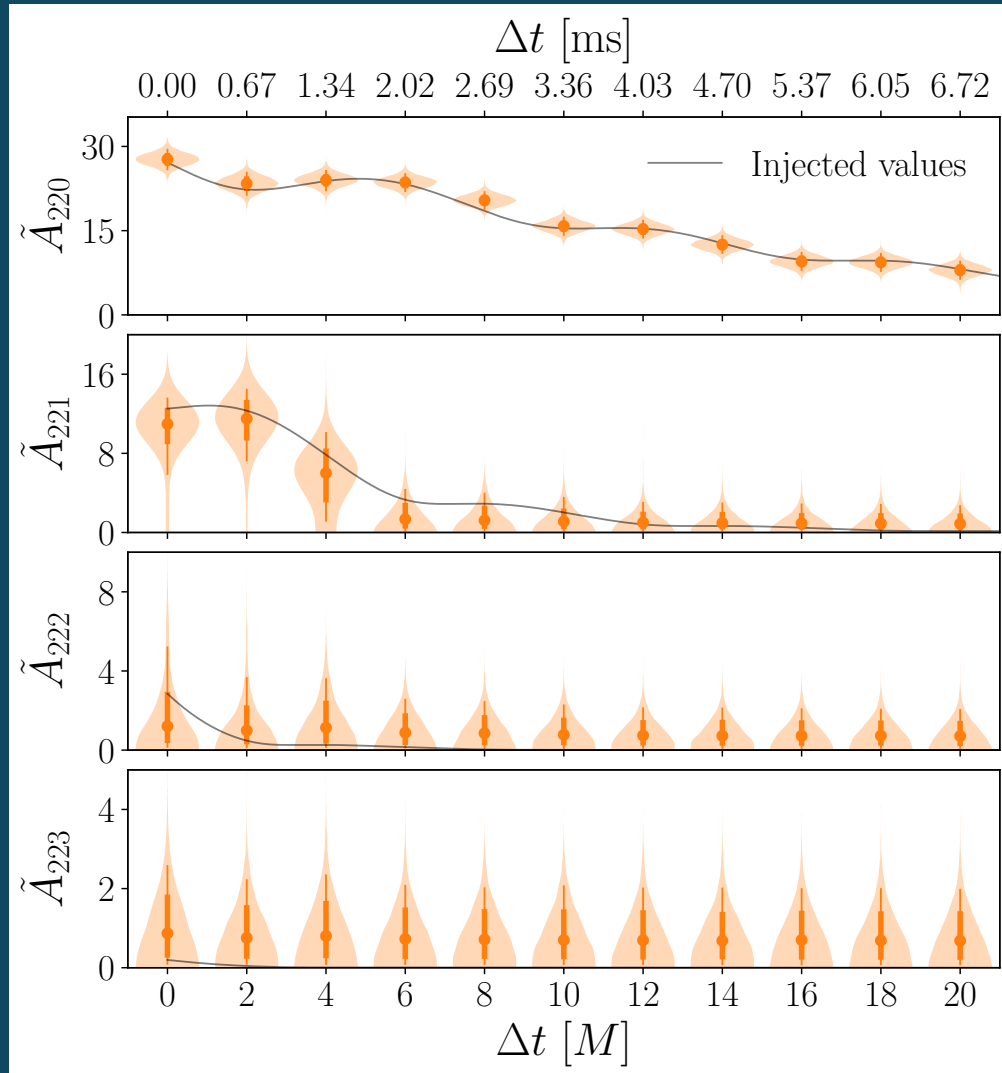


The marginal posterior exhibits an offset toward supporting values smaller than the true ones, particularly when the true value is small.

It does not lead to false positives.



## Results with shifted analysis start times



- Shift of the analysis start time from the peak time:  $\Delta t$
- For all choices of the analysis start time, and in particular for late times when the template contains more modes than are actually present in the signal, we observe no indication of false positives in the inferred mode amplitudes.

## Reweighting samples

In principle, we can obtain the samples under the uniform-in- $A_{\alpha_k}$  by reweighting samples generated under the uniform-in- $\tilde{A}_{\alpha_k}$  prior.

$$\{M_f^{(i)}, \chi_f^{(i)}, c_{0,\alpha_0}^{(i)}, \dots, c_{D-1,\alpha_{K-1}}^{(i)}\}_{i=1,2,\dots,N_{\text{samples}}}$$

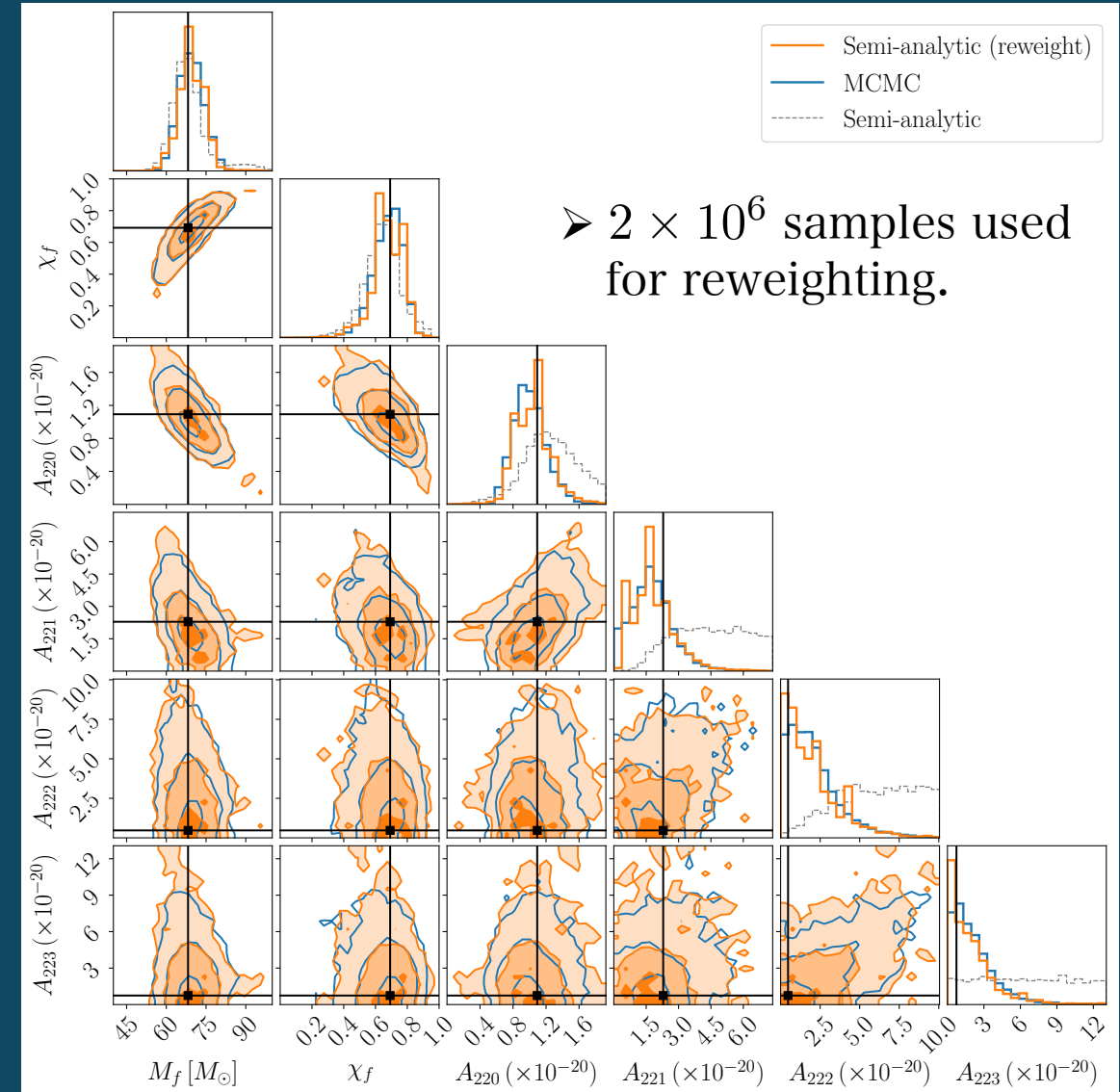
under the uniform-in- $\tilde{A}_{\alpha_k}$  prior

$$w^i = \left| \det U(M_f^{(i)}, \chi_f^{(i)}) \right| \prod_{k=0}^{K-1} \left( \frac{\tilde{A}_{\alpha_k}^{(i)}}{A_{\alpha_k}^{(i)}} \right)^{D-1}$$

$$\{M_f^{(i)}, \chi_f^{(i)}, c_{0,\alpha_0}^{(i)}, \dots, c_{D-1,\alpha_{K-1}}^{(i)}\}_{i=1,2,\dots,N_{\text{samples}}}$$

under the uniform-in- $A_{\alpha_k}$  prior

- Reweighted results (orange) are agree with the direct inference results (blue).
- Lack of smoothness in reweighted results (e.g.  $A_{221}$ ) due to the prior difference.



We apply the semi-analytic method to real data.

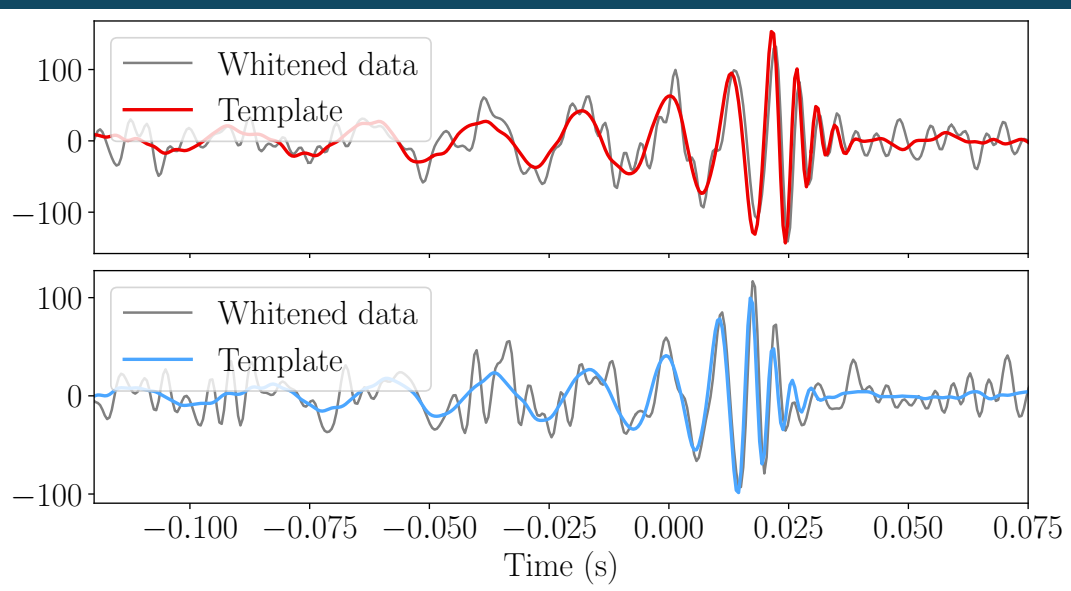
## GW150914

### Data setup

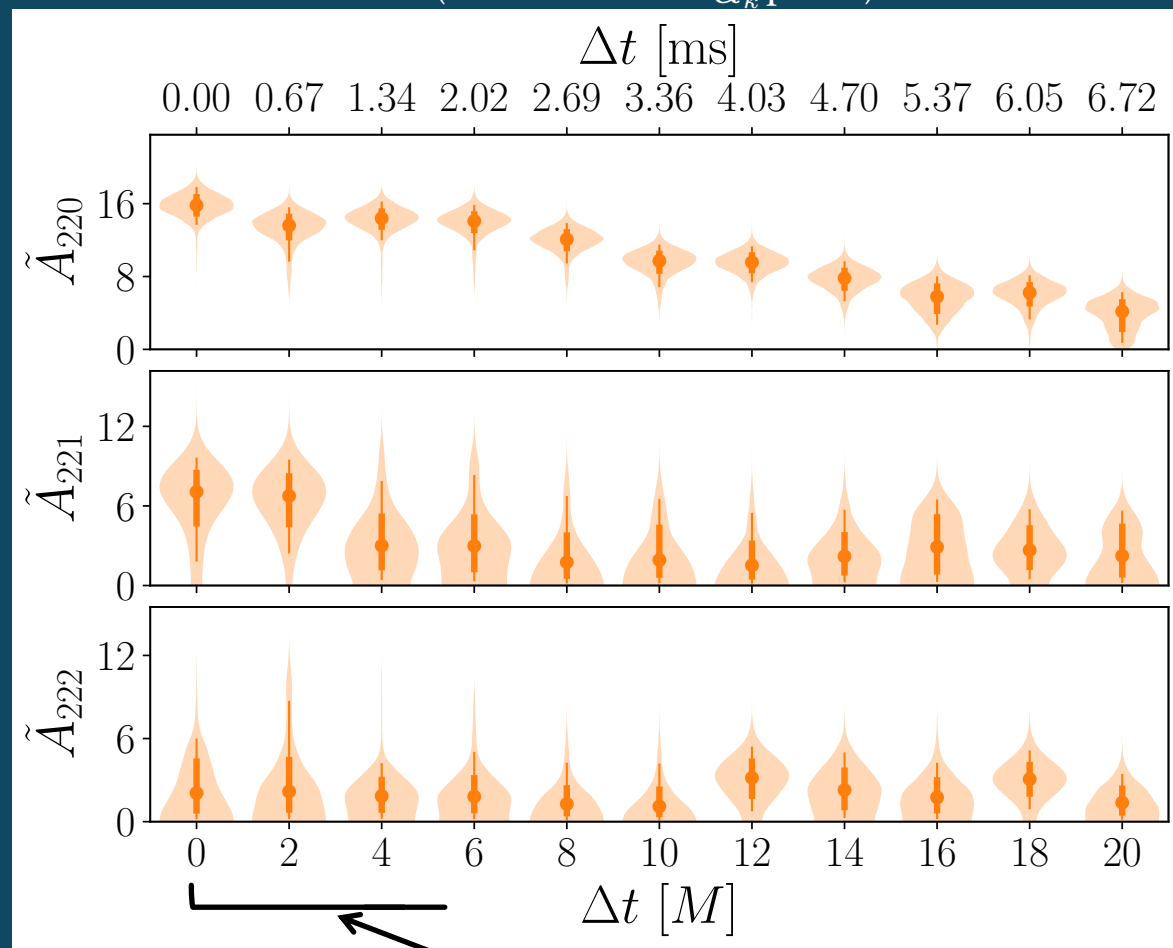
- Analyze data from LIGO Hanford and Livingston
- Sky localization:  $\alpha = 1.95$  rad,  $\delta = -1.27$  rad,  $\psi = 0.82$  rad
- Geocentric arrival time:  $t_{\text{geocent}} = 1126259462.4083147$  s

### Analysis setup

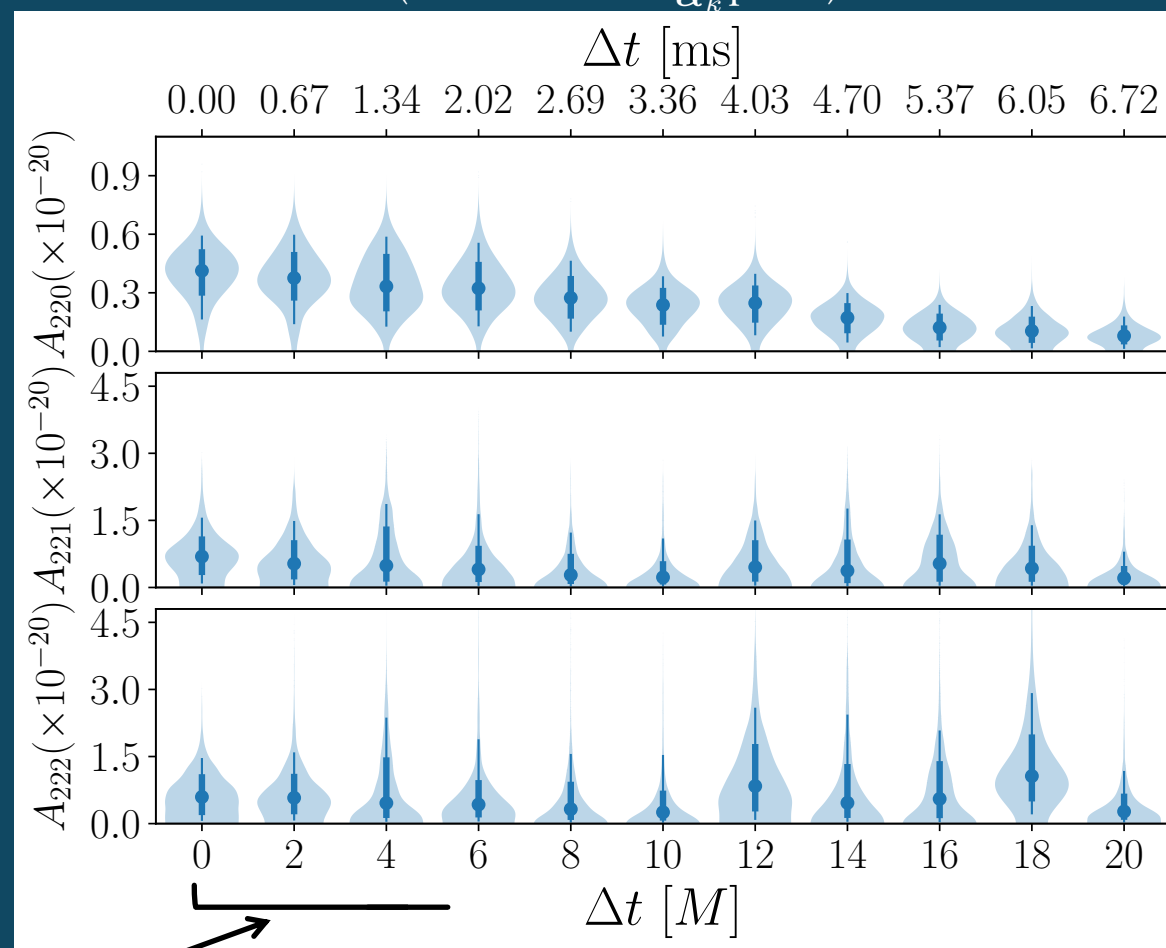
- Sampling rate: 4096 Hz
- Apply a high-pass filter at 20 Hz
- Analysis duration:  $300M$  ( $\approx 0.1$  s)
- Modes included in template:  
 $(\ell, m, n) = (2, 2, 0), (2, 2, 1), (2, 2, 2)$



## Semi-analytic method

(Uniform-in- $\tilde{A}_{\alpha_k}$  prior)

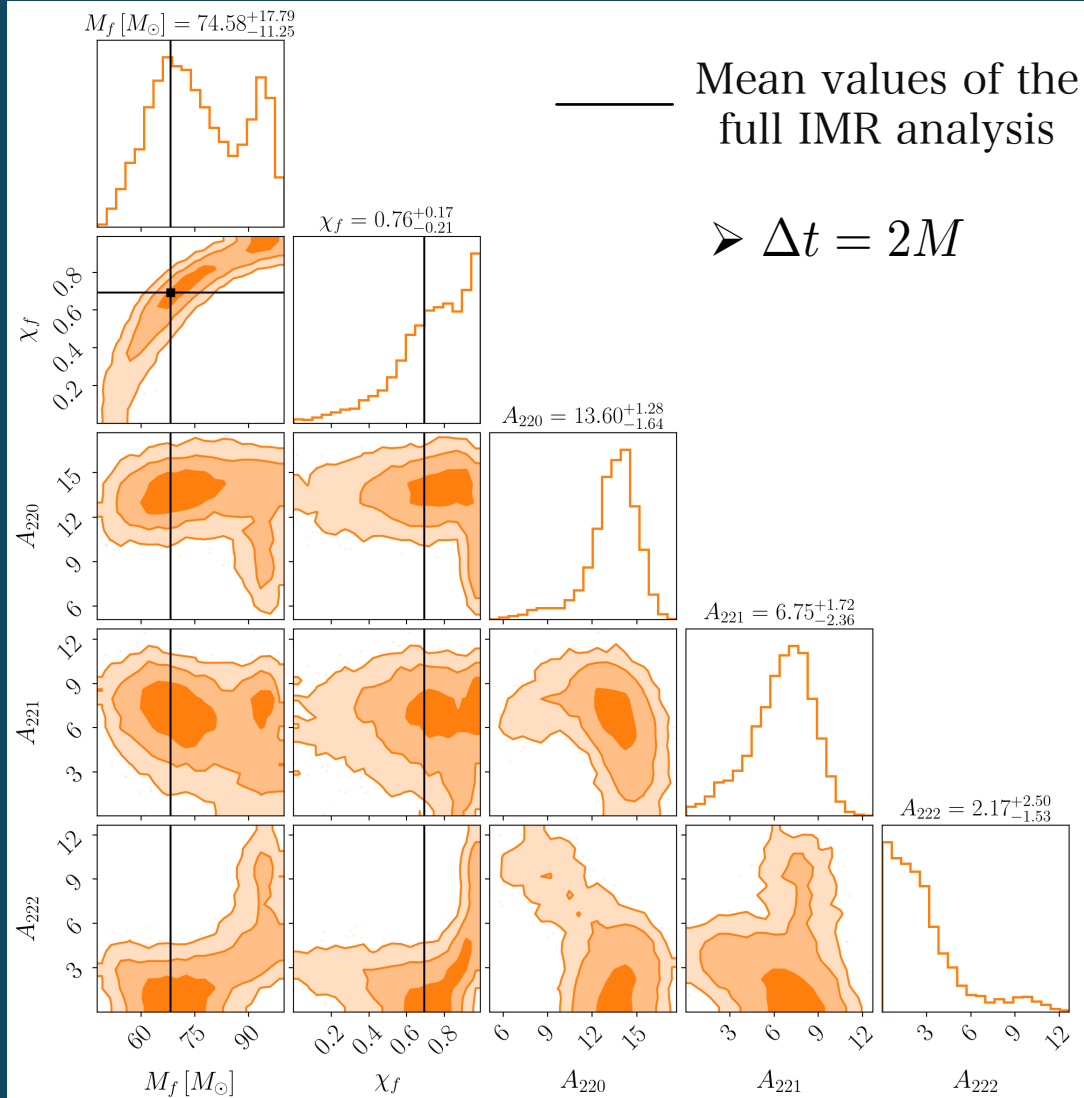
## Random sampling method

(Uniform-in- $A_{\alpha_k}$  prior)

Linear QNMs might not completely describe the early post-merger signal.  
(Non-linearity, direct waves, ...)



## Semi-analytic method (Uniform-in- $\tilde{A}_{\alpha_k}$ prior)



## Random sampling method (Uniform-in- $A_{\alpha_k}$ prior)

