

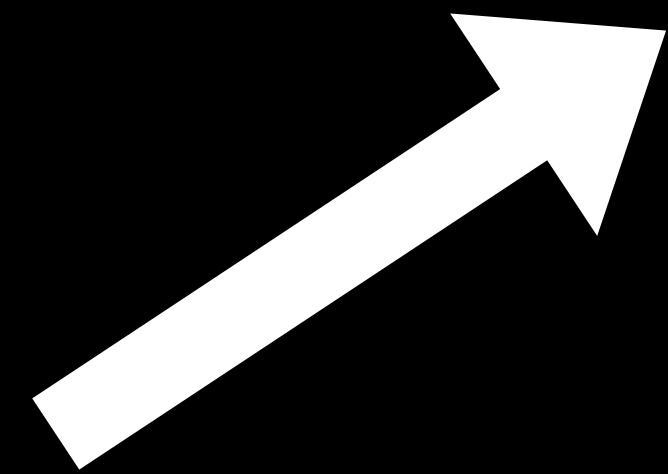
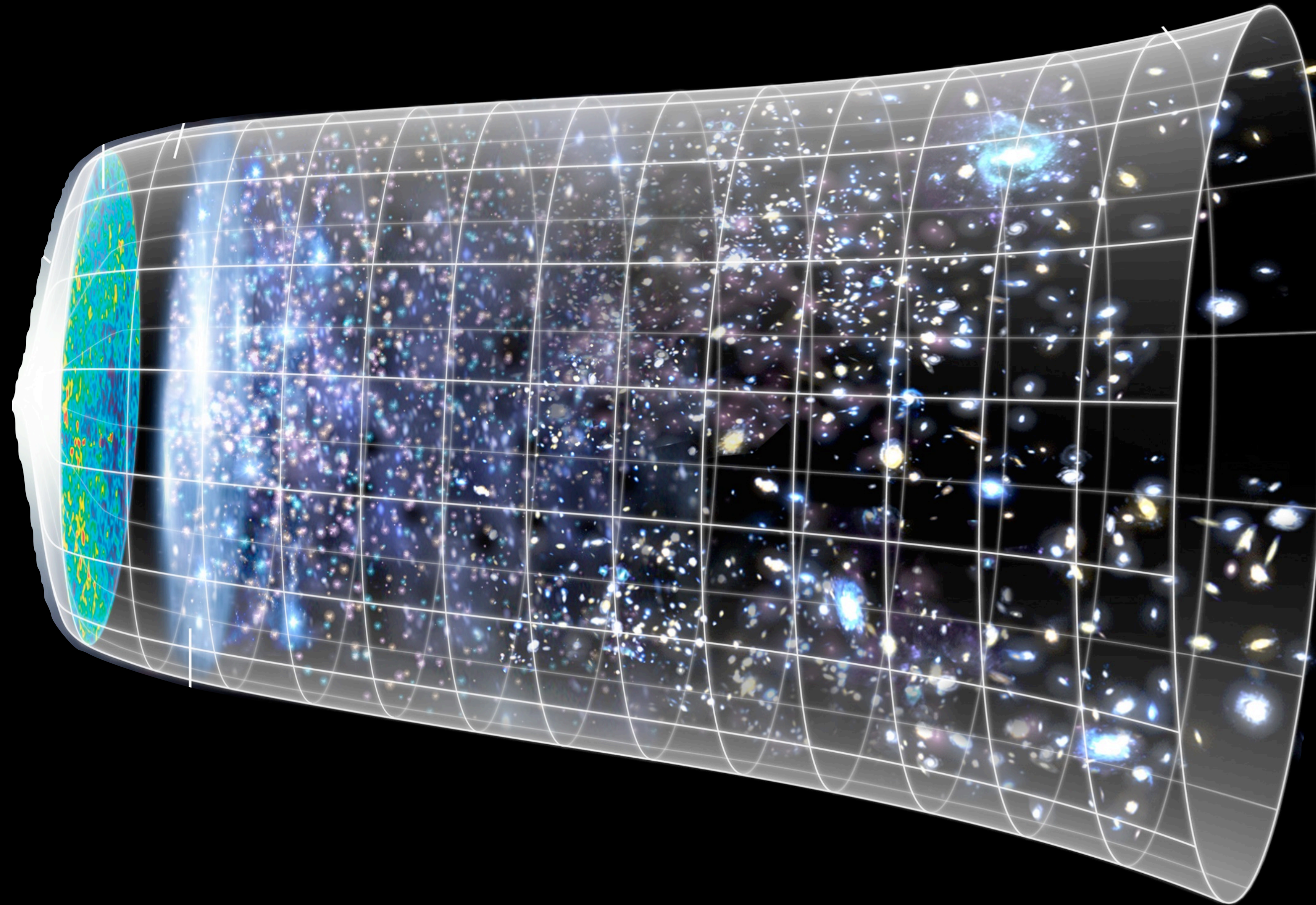
Overview and news from the *LiteBIRD* mission

Léo Vacher

For the *LiteBIRD* collaboration



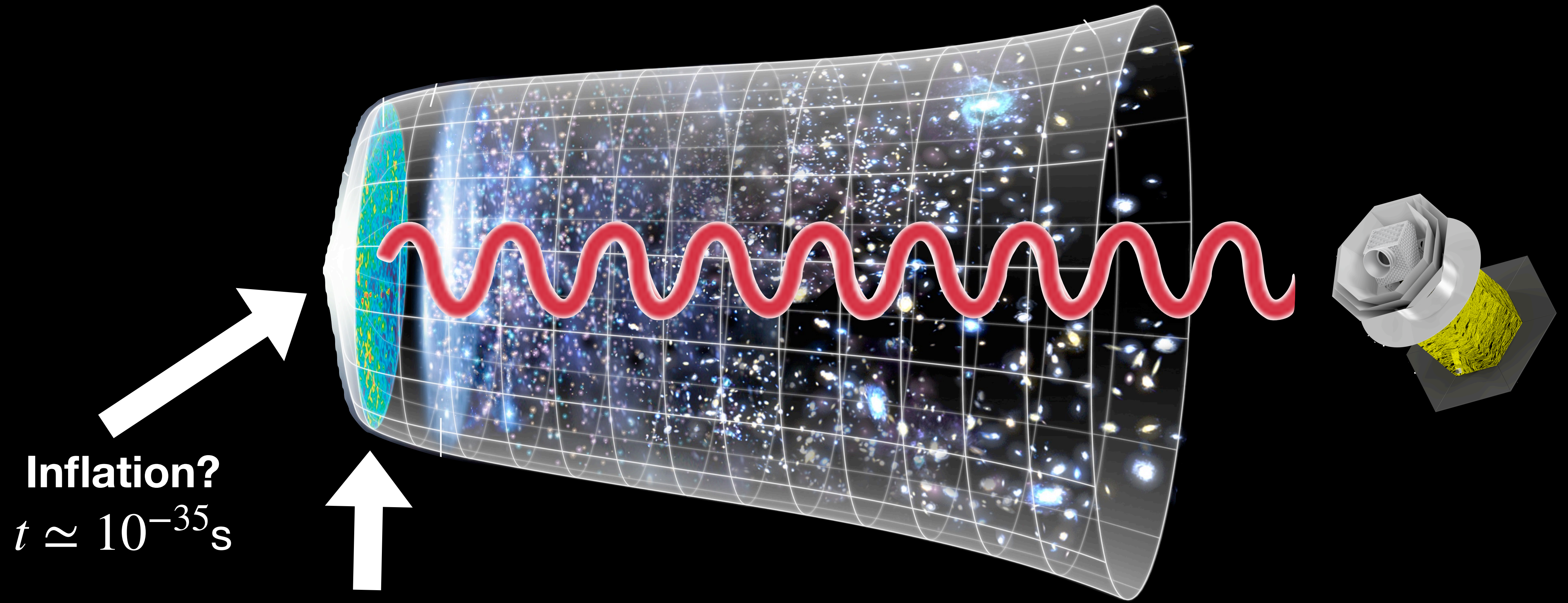
Primordial B -modes and inflation



Inflation?

$$t \simeq 10^{-35} \text{ s}$$

Primordial B -modes and inflation



Inflation?

$$t \simeq 10^{-35} \text{ s}$$

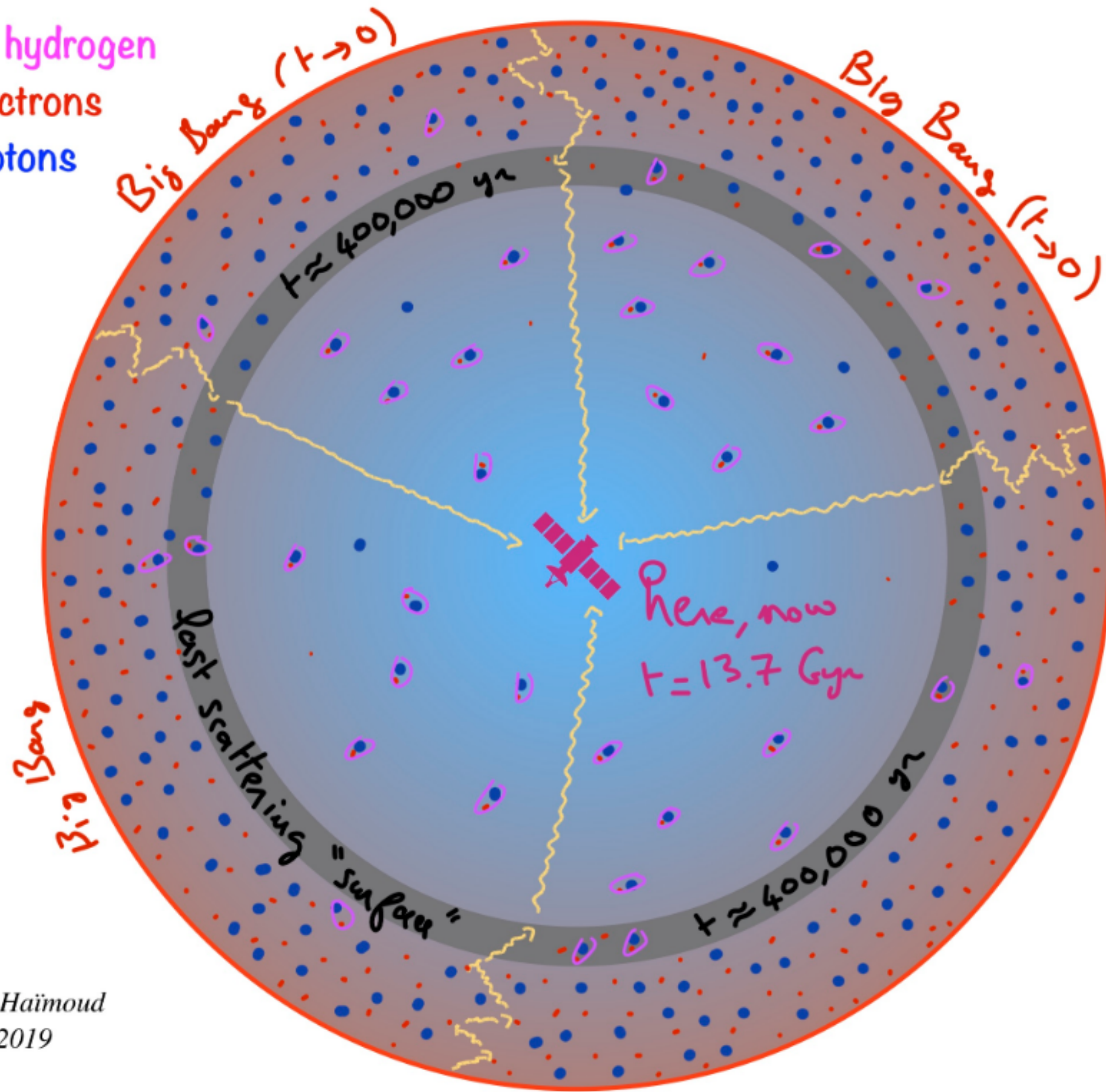
Cosmic microwave background (CMB)

$$t \simeq 380000 \text{ yrs}$$

Primordial B -modes and inflation



- neutral hydrogen
- free electrons
- free protons

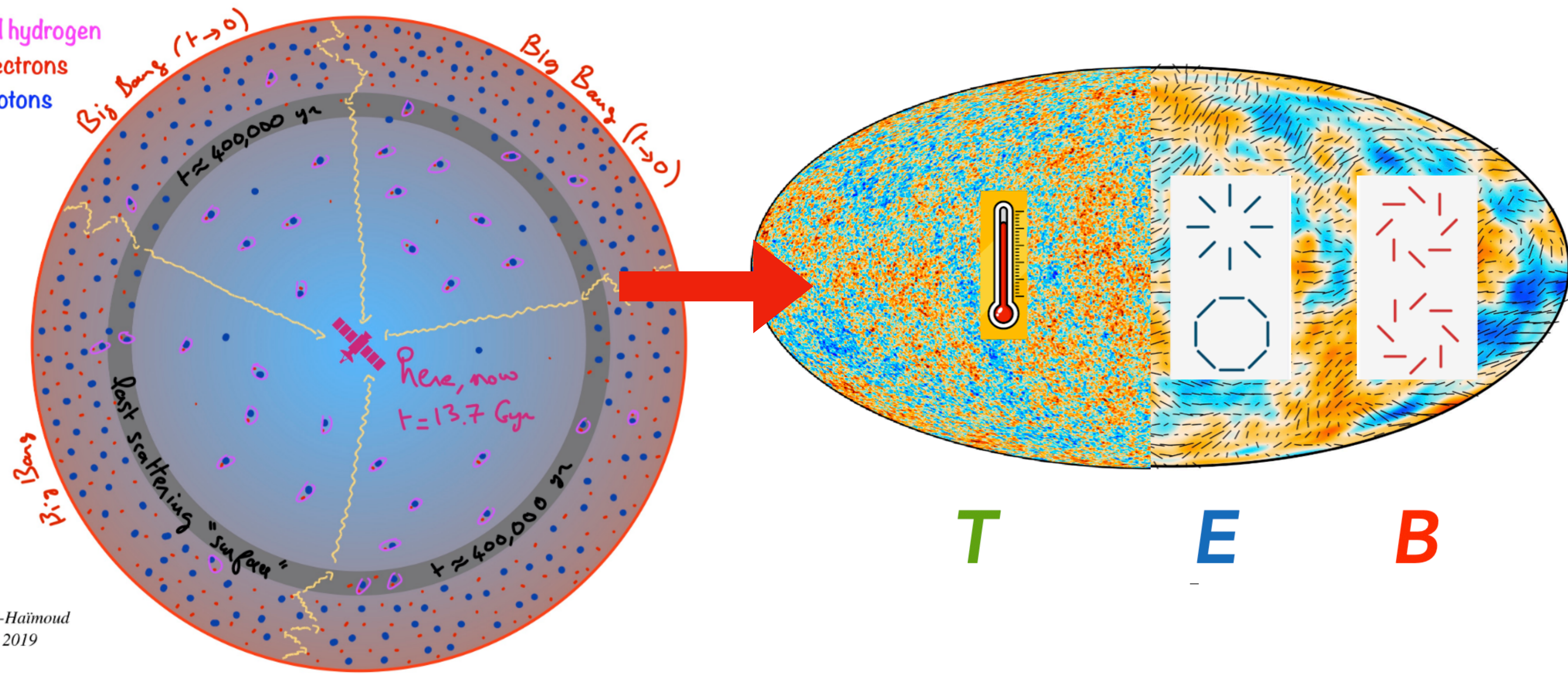


Yacine Ali-Haïmoud
NYU, 2019

Primordial *B*-modes and inflation



- neutral hydrogen
- free electrons
- free protons

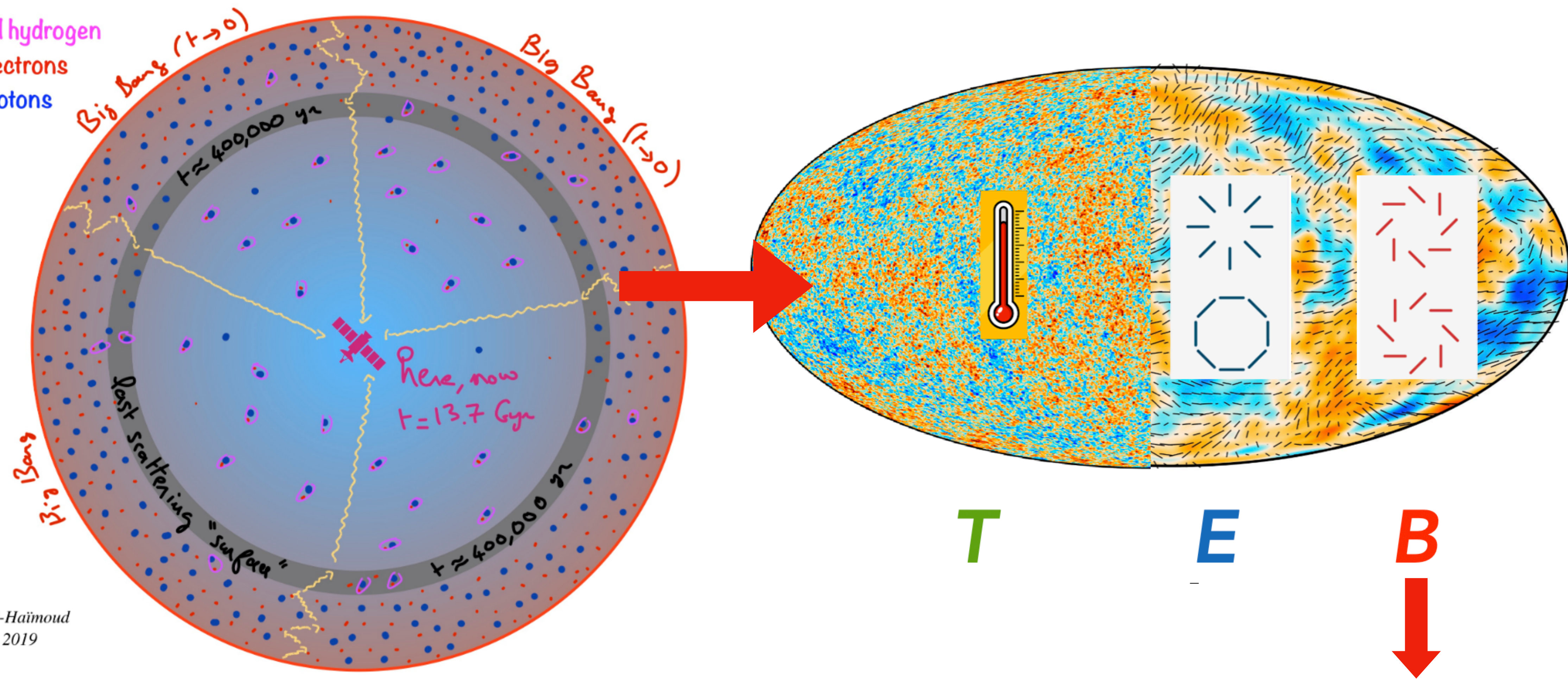


Yacine Ali-Haïmoud
NYU, 2019

Primordial *B*-modes and inflation



- neutral hydrogen
- free electrons
- free protons

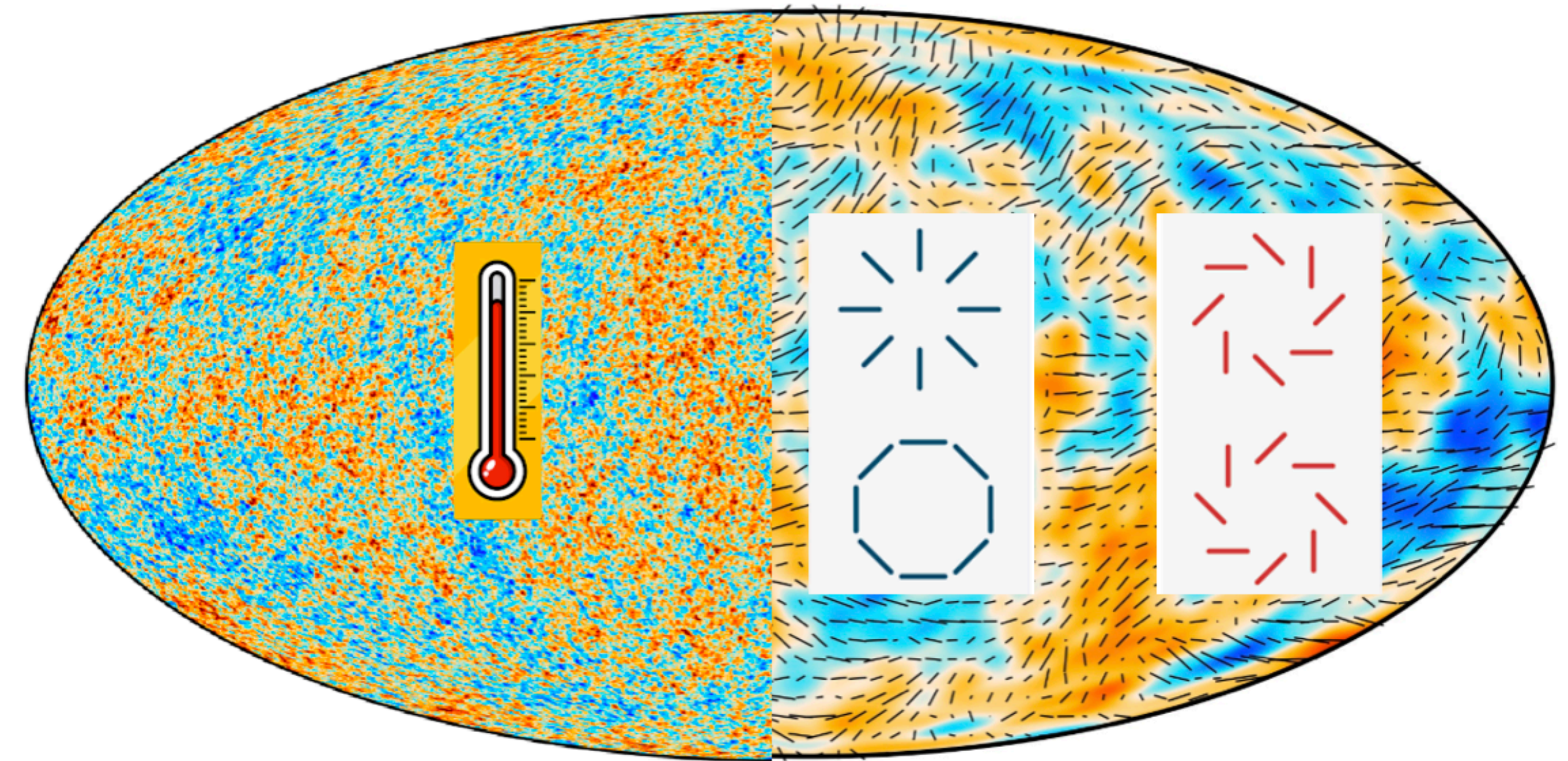


Yacine Ali-Haïmoud
NYU, 2019

Primordial *B*-modes = signature of inflation!

Primordial B -modes and inflation

- The amplitude of the primordial B -modes is the **tensor-to-scalar ratio r** .
It is proportional to the **energy scale of inflation**
- Current best constraint: **$r < 0.032$ (95% C.L.)**
(📖 Tristram et al. 2022, combining BK18 and Planck PR4)
- The final goal of future generation of CMB mission as *LiteBIRD* to reach **a statistical uncertainty of $\sigma(r) \lesssim 0.001$ for $r=0$**
- This would confirm or rule out many of the **simplest inflationary models** and give us insights on the **quantum nature of gravity**



T

E

B



Primordial B -modes = signature of inflation!

Challenges ...



Looking for primordial B -modes is a **major challenge**:

- The B -mode signal is expected to have an amplitude at least 3 orders of magnitude below the CMB temperature anisotropies
- Looking for such a faint signal requires exquisite control of:
 1. **Instrument systematic** uncertainties
 2. **Galactic foreground** contamination (**component separation**)
 3. **“Lensing B -mode signal”** induced by gravitational lensing
 4. ...

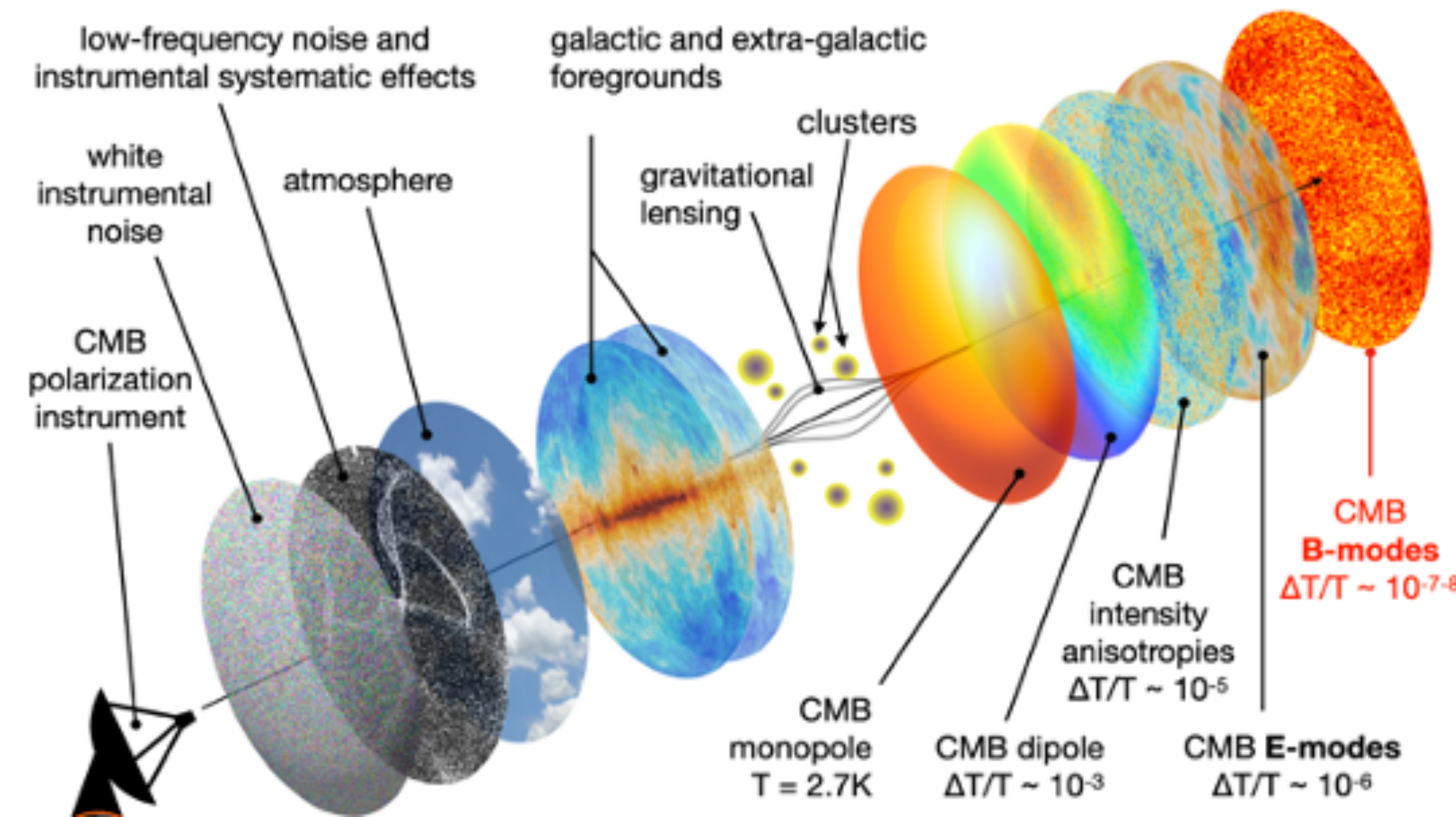


Image credit: Josquin Errard

... and opportunities

But the fine characterisation of CMB polarisation on large scales comes with **multiple scientific outcomes**:

- New high energy-physics in the primordial universe: **inflaton, axions, primordial magnetic fields ...**
- Cosmological principle and **anomalies**
- **Lensing** and mass distribution on large scales
- **Reionisation** (optical depth)
- **neutrino masses** and ordering
- **Cluster physics**: SZ effects
- New Energy injection: **CMB spectral distortions**
- **Galactic science** (magnetic fields, dust, turbulence ...)
- Polarised **point sources**

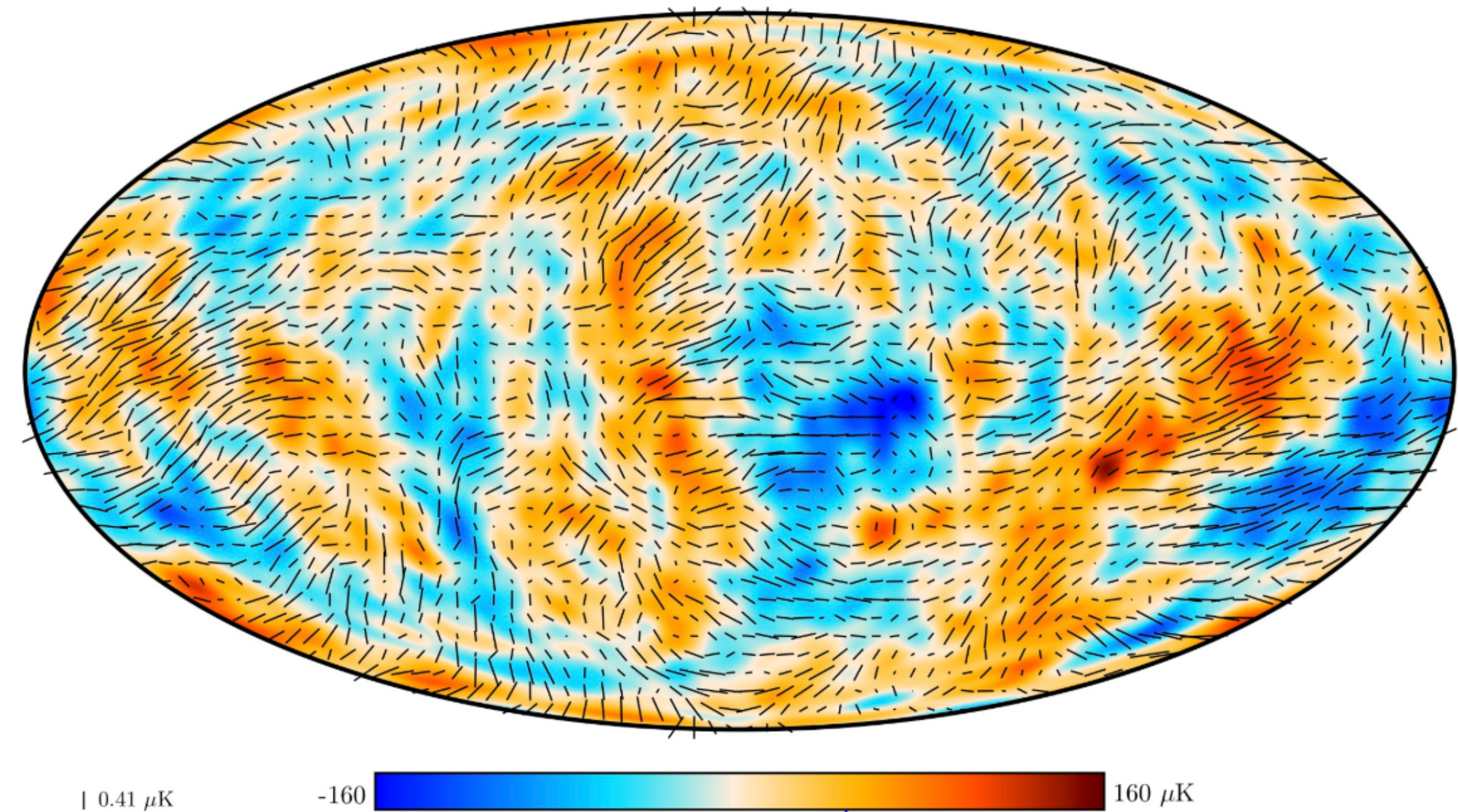


Image credit: Planck team

LiteBIRD Joint Study Group



Around 400 researchers from **Japan**,
Europe and **North America**

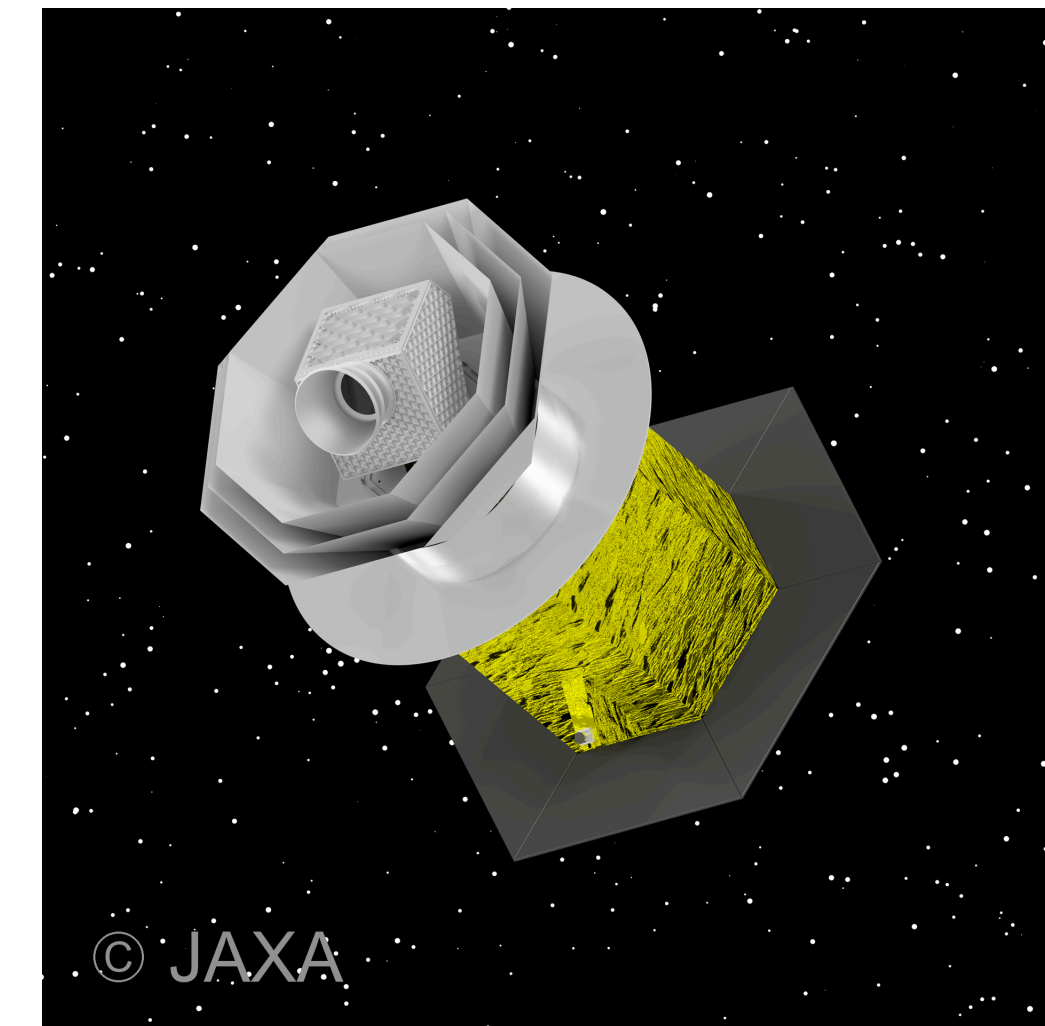
Team experience in CMB experiments,
X-ray satellites and other large projects
(ALMA, HEP experiments, ...)



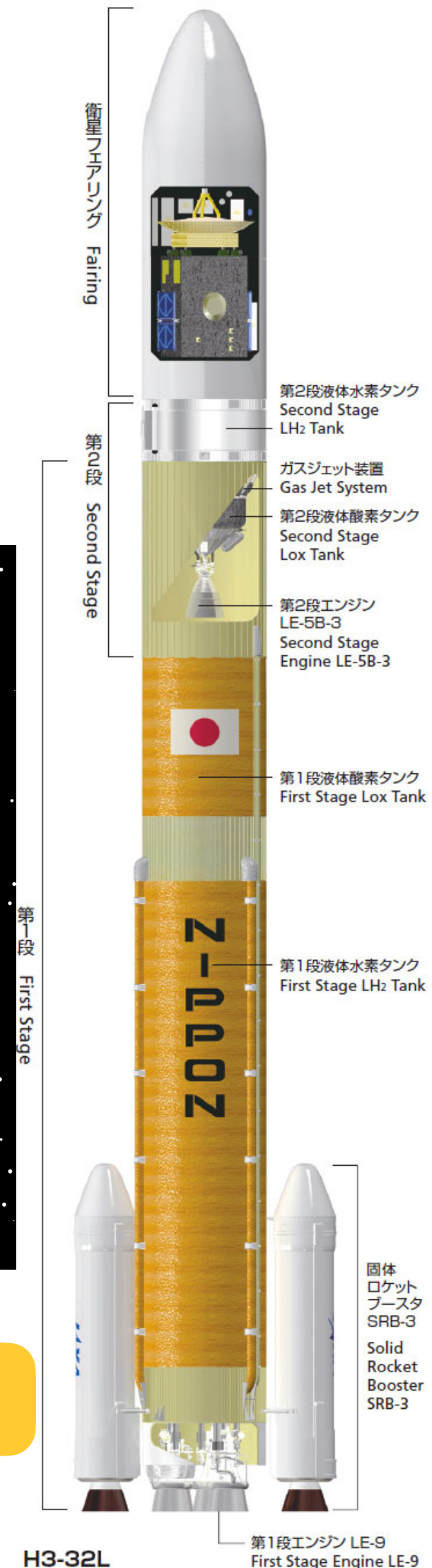
LiteBIRD overview



- Lite (Light) spacecraft for the study of *B*-mode polarization and Inflation from cosmic background Radiation Detection
- JAXA's L-class mission was selected in May 2019 to be launched by JAXA's H3 rocket on **JFY2037**
- **All-sky 3-year survey**, from Sun-Earth Lagrangian point L2
- Large frequency coverage (**40–402/570 GHz**) at **53/6 arcmin** angular resolution for precision measurements of the **CMB *B*-modes**
- Final combined sensitivity: **2.2 $\mu\text{K}\cdot\text{arcmin}$** . Sensitivity level in polarization **~30 times** better than Planck



LiteBIRD collaboration PTEP 2023



H3-32L

LiteBIRD reformation phase



- *LiteBIRD* has been under **rescope studies to consolidate the mission's feasibility while keeping the same scientific objectives**
 - Revisit the error budget
 - **Simplify the mission configuration** (one single telescope instead of three; try to use existing technologies)
 - **Simplify the cryogenic chain**
 - Detectors to be procured by Europe
 - New HWP design based on stacking 6 plates in Pancharatnam configuration, providing large bandwidth

Two different configuration options now being considered, both based on single Crossed-Dragone reflective telescope:

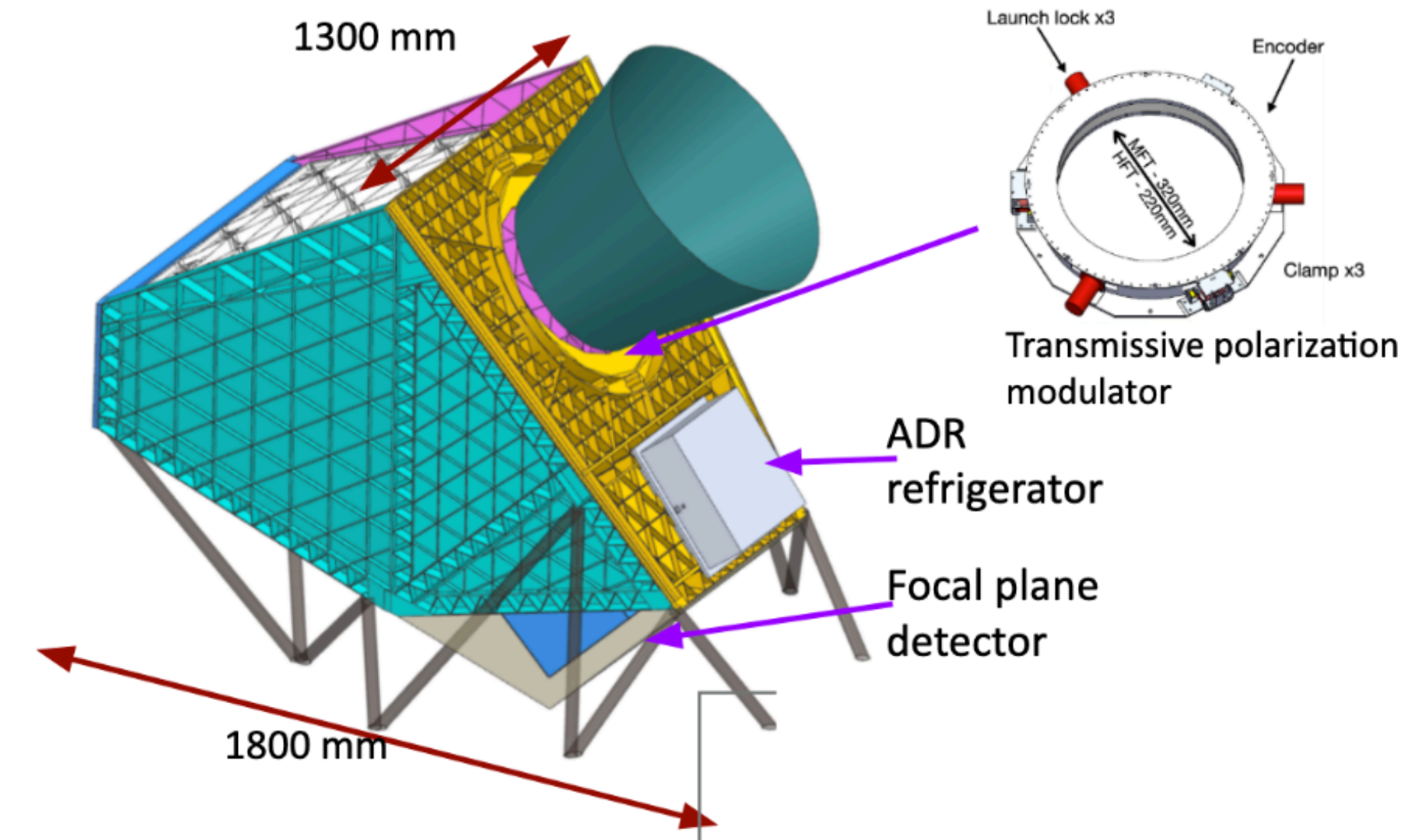
- Option 1 (no HWP) requires a faster spin rate to minimize $1/f$ noise
- Option 2 is based on the possibility of using a wider-band HWP

Option 1

- Aperture 500 mm
- 40-570 GHz
- No HWP
- Spin rate 0.3 rpm

Option 2

- Aperture 500 mm
- 40-402 GHz
- Transmissive HWP
- Spin rate 0.05 rpm



LiteBIRD reformation phase

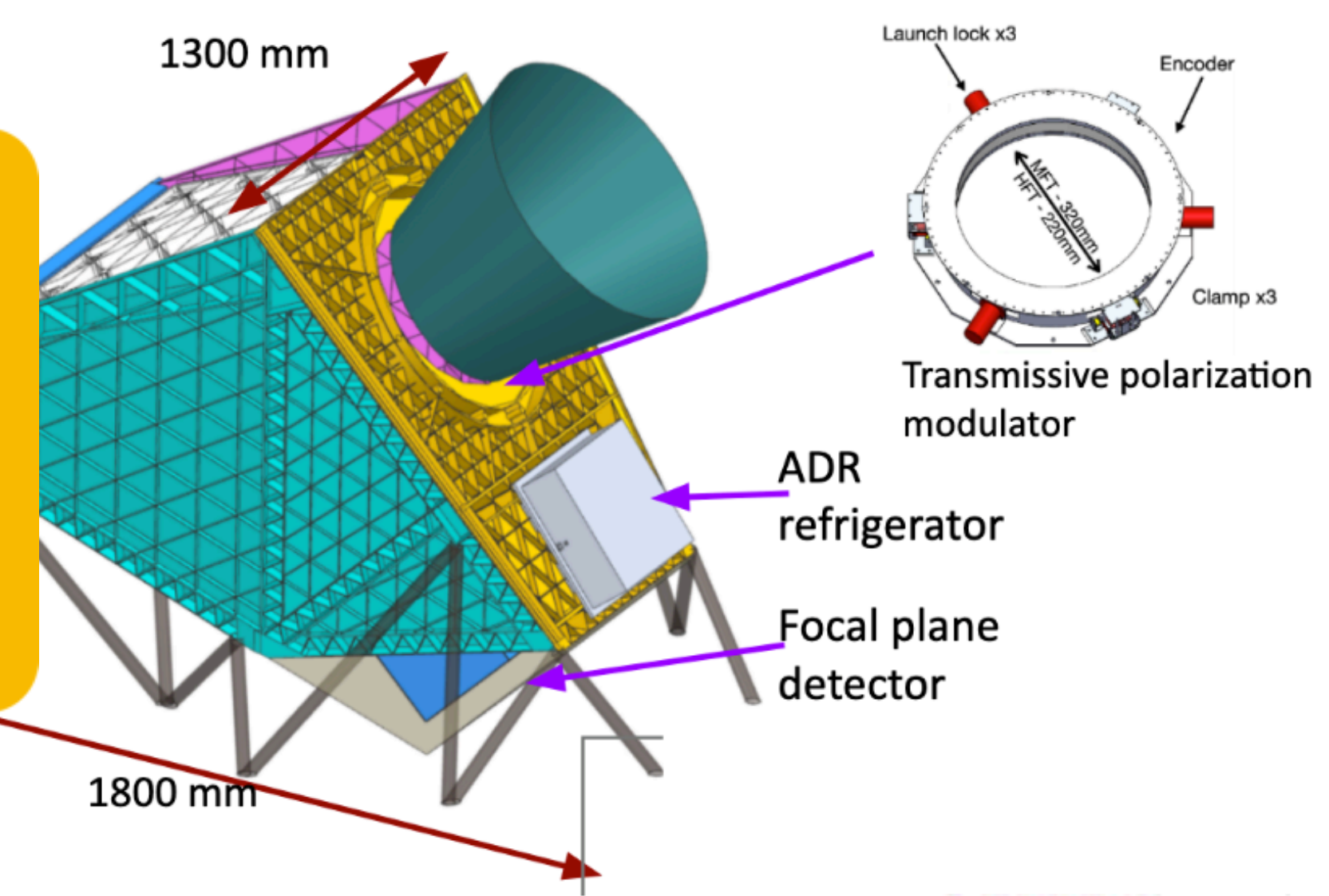
- *LiteBIRD* has been under **rescope studies to consolidate the mission's feasibility while keeping the same scientific objectives**
 - Revisit the error budget
 - **Simplify the mission configuration** (one single telescope instead of three; try to use existing technologies)
 - **Simplify the cryogenic chain**
 - Detectors to be procured by Europe
 - New HWP design based on stacking 6 plates in Pancharatnam configuration, providing large bandwidth

Two different configuration options now being considered, both based on the Dragone reflective telescope:

- Option 1 (no HWP) requires a f to minimize 1/f noise
- Option 2 is based on the possibility of a wider-band HWP

Key Decision point #2 passed in Sep. 2025
 This month: Mission definition review (MDR #2)
 If passed, design is fixed and start of phase A of JAXA (« Project phase »)

- Opti**
- Transmissive HWP
 - Spin rate 0.05 rpm

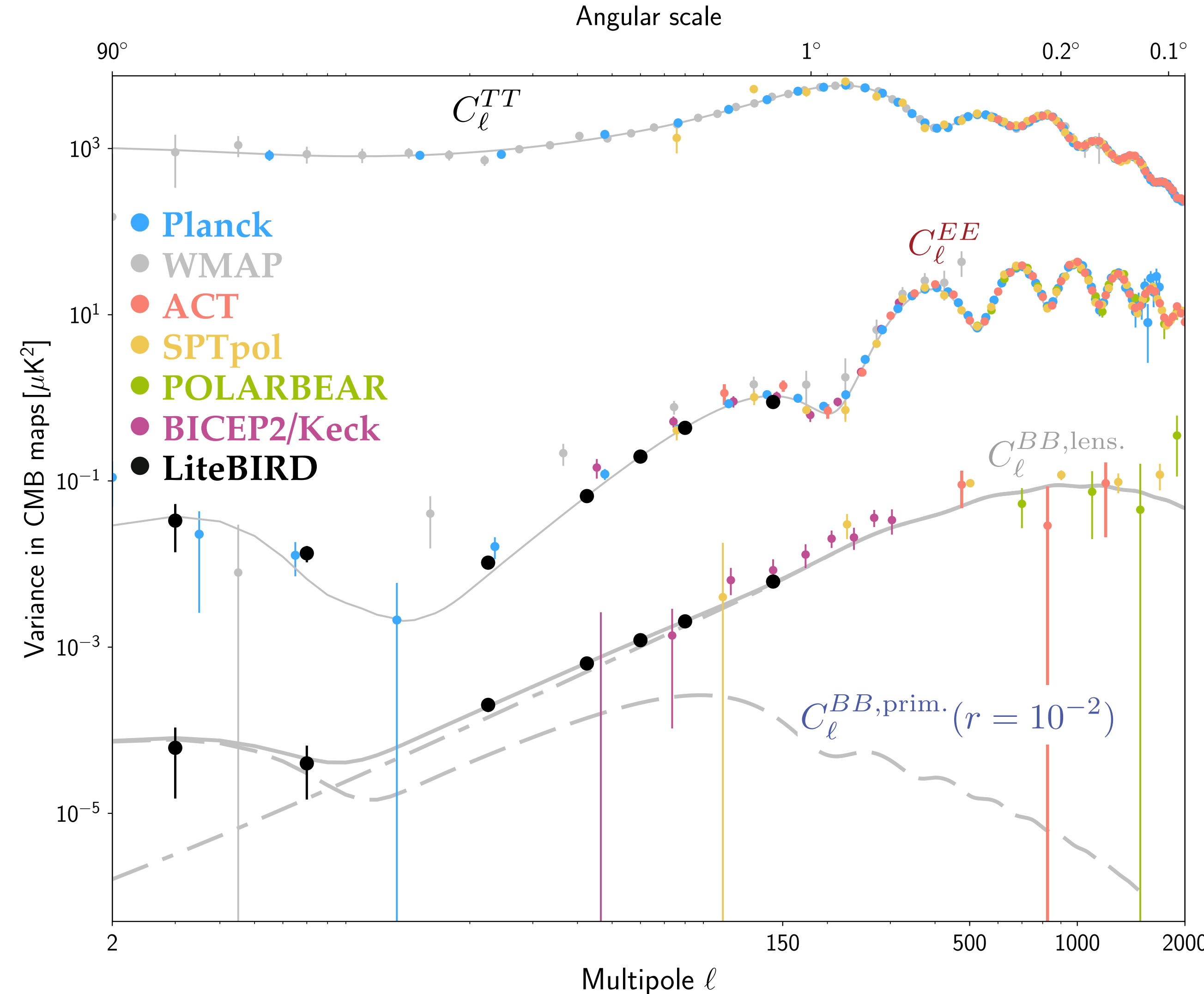


LiteBIRD overview of scientific targets

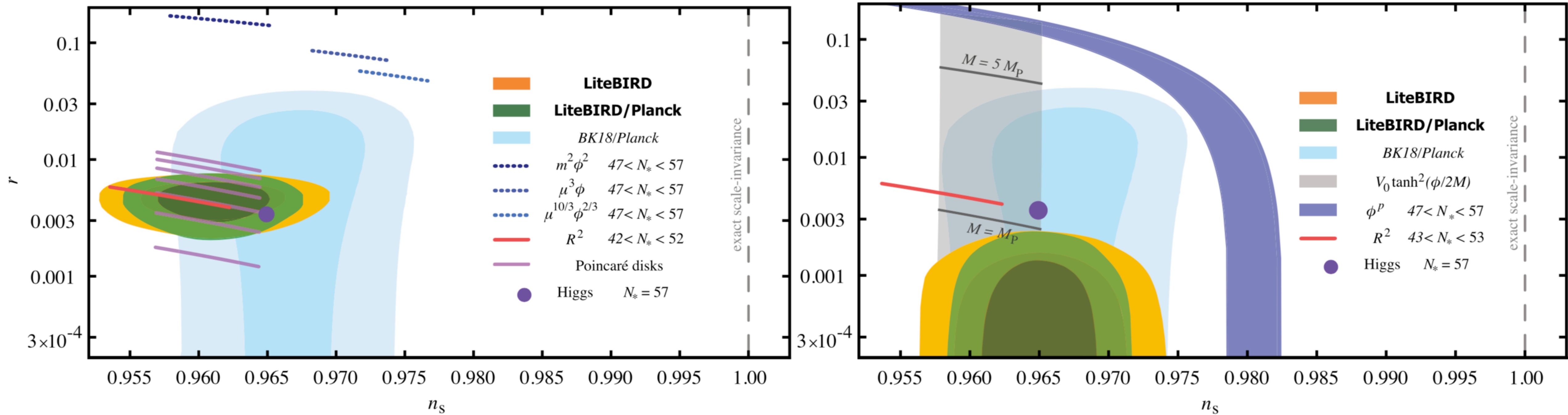


Some of the key scientific outcomes of *LiteBIRD*:

- **5 σ detection of primordial *B*-modes** if $r > 0.01$, else $\delta_r \leq 2 \times 10^{-3}$.
- **Optical depth of reionisation:** $\sigma(\tau) = 0.002$ (cosmic variance limited and 3 times better than Planck).
- **Neutrino masses $\sigma(\sum m_\nu) \approx 18$ meV (LB + SO + BAO)**
5 σ detection for $\sum m_\nu = 60$ meV (minimum mass in normal ordering)
- **5 to 13 σ detection of a 0.3 $^\circ$ cosmic birefringence angle** depending on method for detector angle miscalibration and *EB* signal from Galactic foregrounds (de la Hoz et al. 2025)



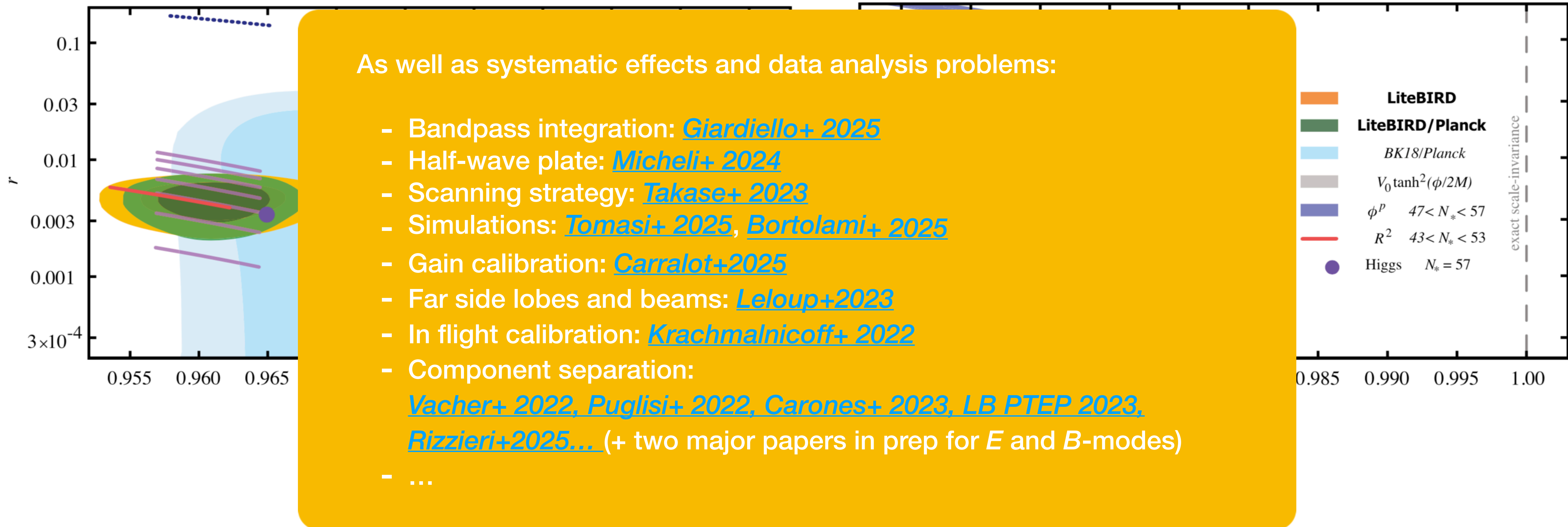
LiteBIRD overview of scientific targets



LiteBIRD collaboration PTEP 2023

LiteBIRD overview of scientific targets

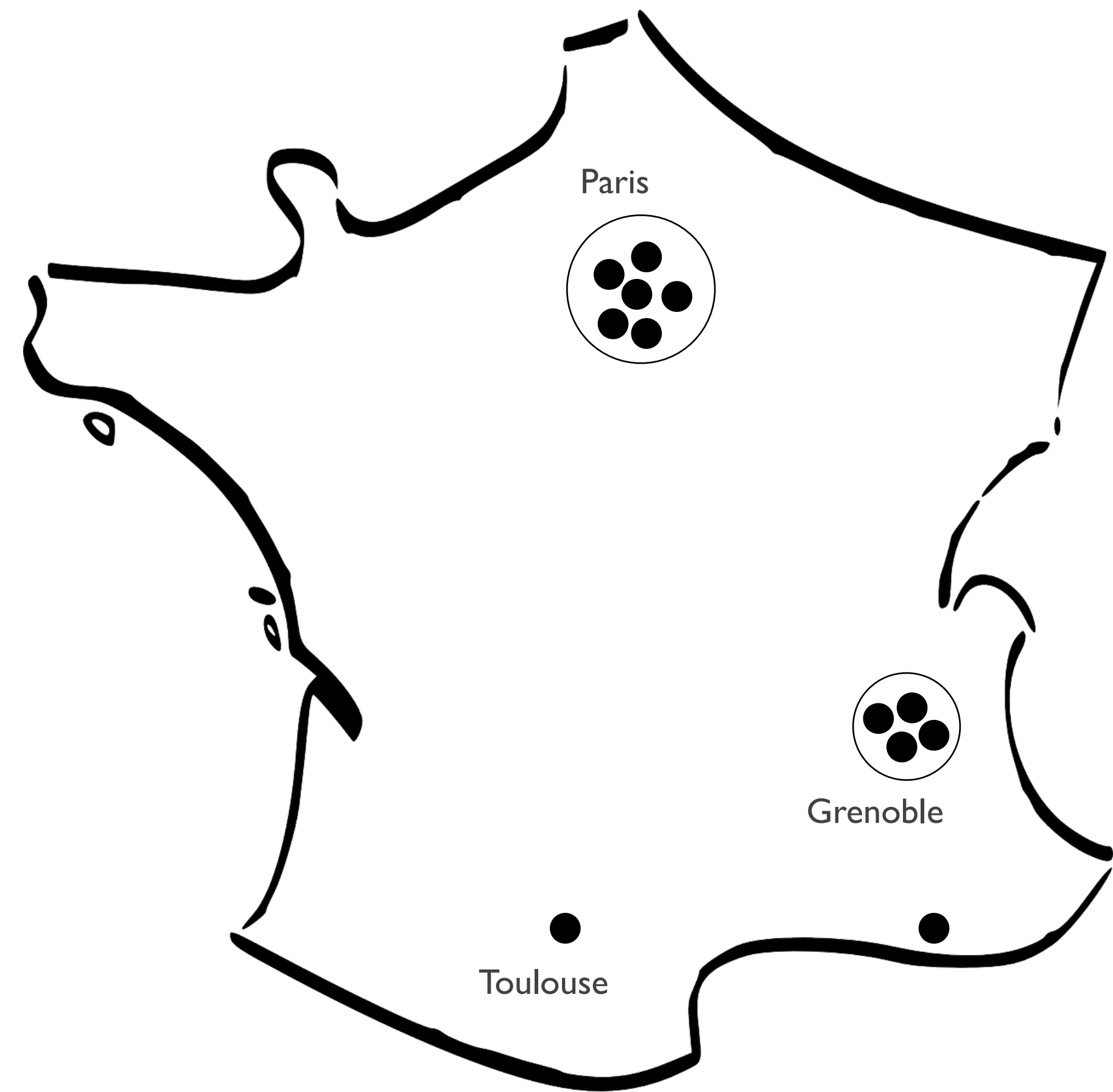




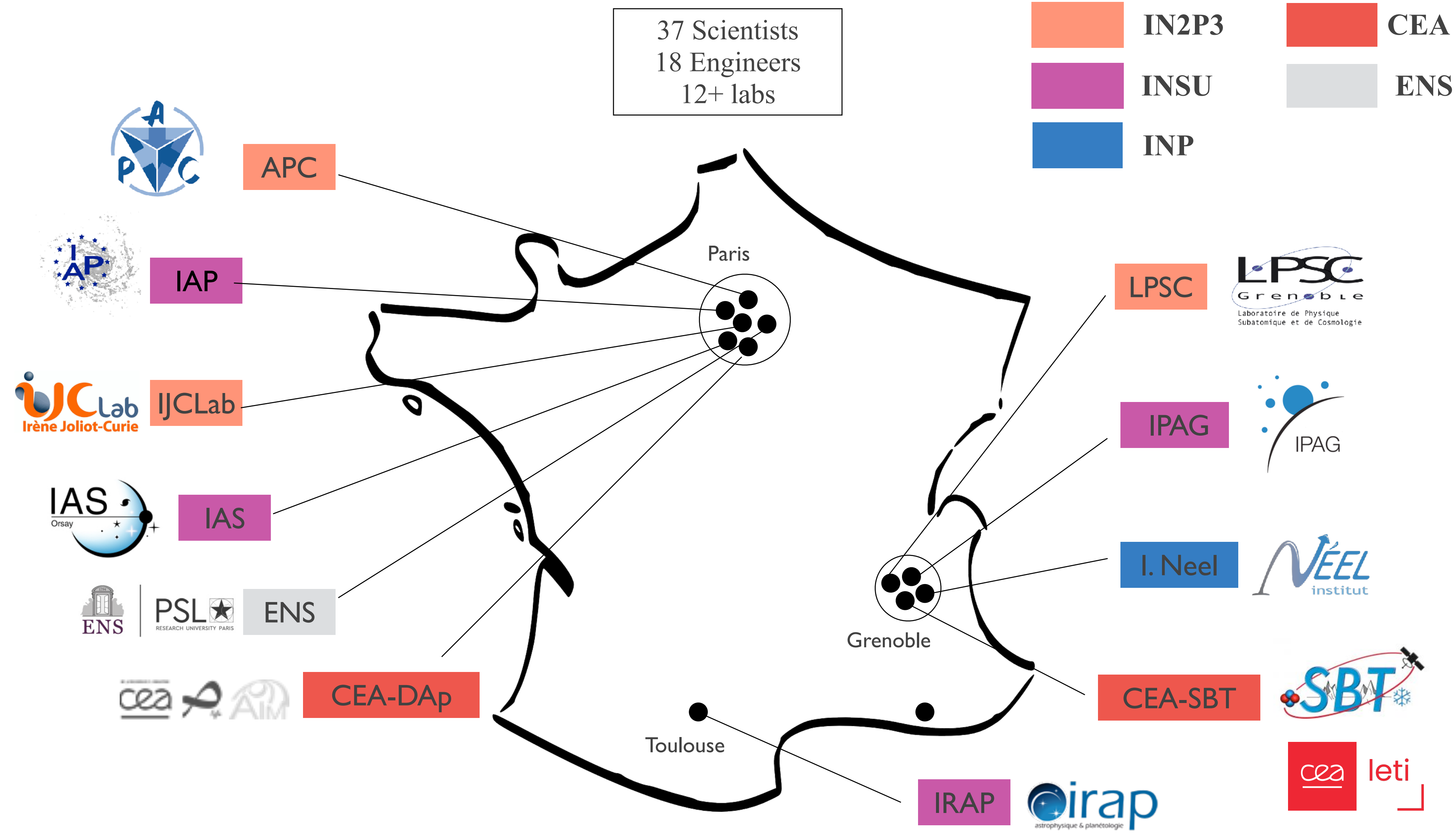
37 Scientists
18 Engineers

Strong French **involvement** with multiple **expertises**:

- Component separation
- Systematic effects
- Data analysis and reduction
- Instrument and detectors
- Galactic astrophysics
- Phenomenology and theory
- ...



LiteBIRD in France

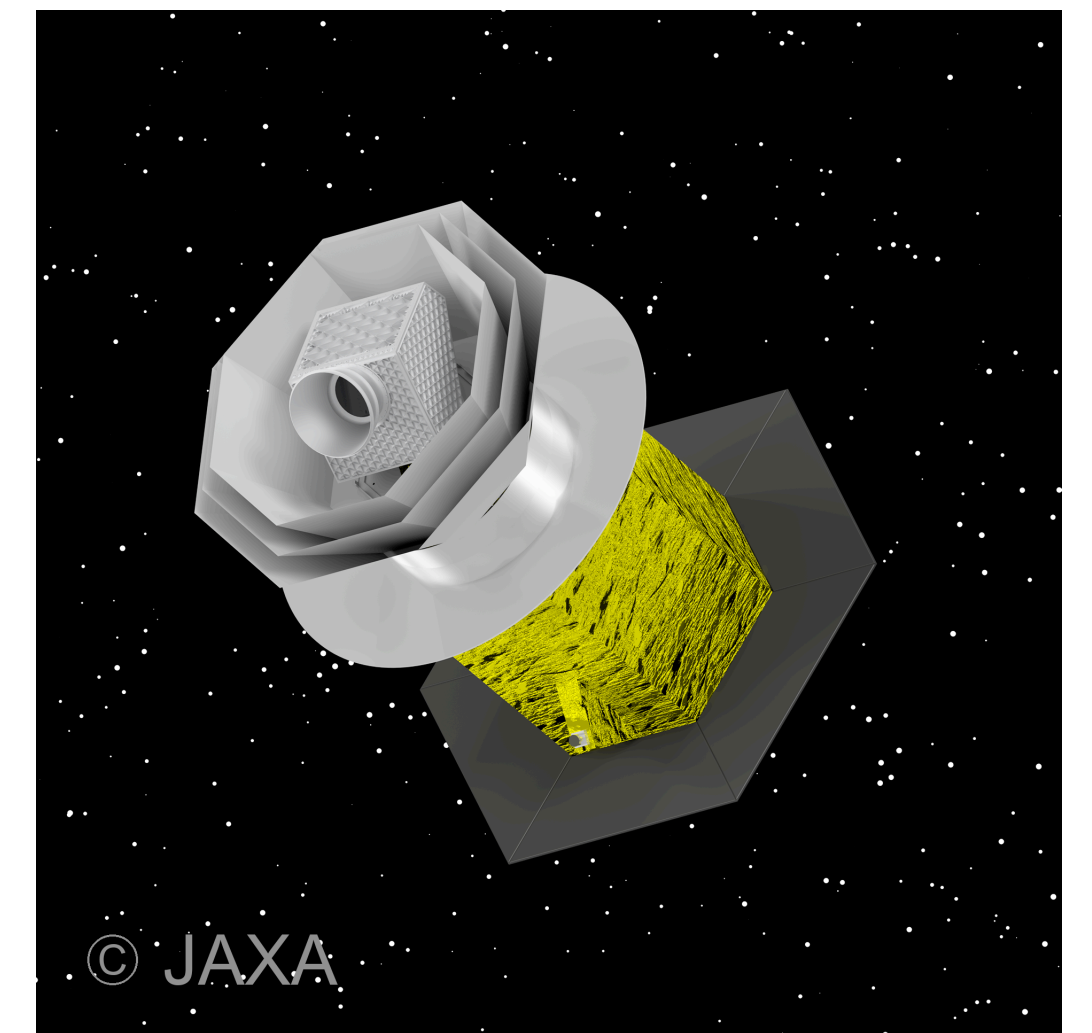


Some recent good news



- We are about to enter **Phase A/Project Phase of JAXA** soon! After **Mission Definition Review** held this month.
- Detectors to be developed in **Europe**: Ongoing R&D **studies for transition edge sensors (TES)** at **SRON** (Netherland) funded by **ESA** and lead by **INFN**.
A **French contribution** lead by LETI (Grenoble) with CEA-DAp, APC and IRAP is currently under study.
- **French contribution** is aligned with JAXA's schedule and is going as expected. In current Phase-A, **CNES** is responsible for the delivery of the unique instrument (LMHFT).

- *LiteBIRD* is an **ambitious project** successor of Planck and targeting **microwave polarisation** on large scales with a **broad frequency range**
- It will have multiple **scientific outcomes** beyond primordial *B*-modes
- The **French community** is strongly involved in the project.

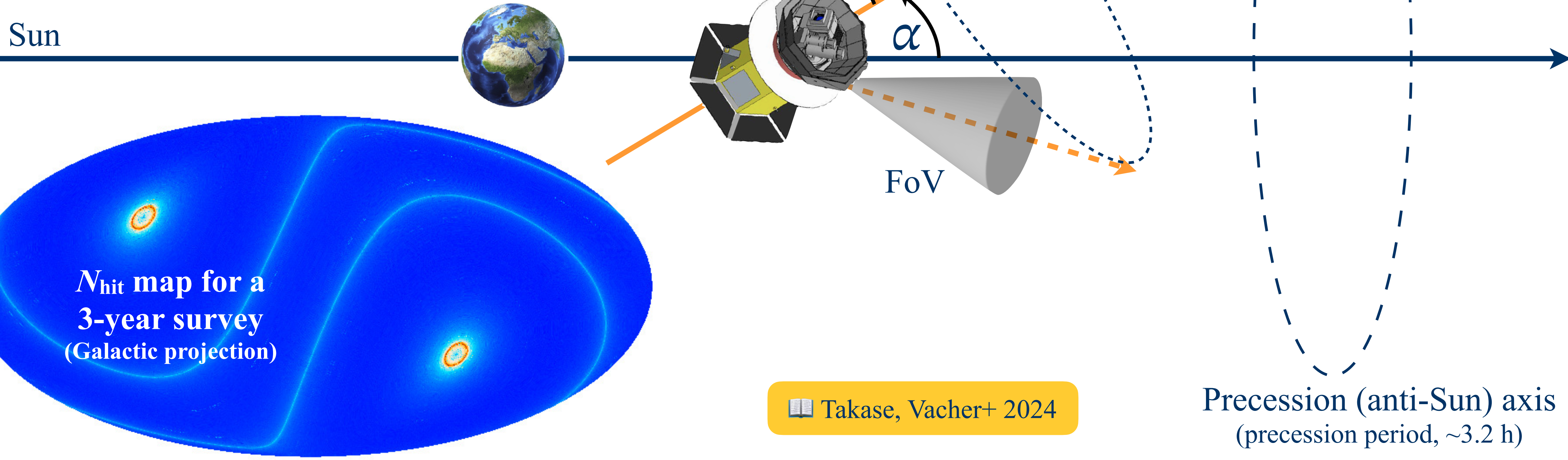




LiteBIRD scanning strategy



- 3-year survey, Sun-Earth L2 Lissajous orbit
- Precession angle: $\alpha = 37.5^\circ$
- Spin angle: $\beta = 57.5^\circ$



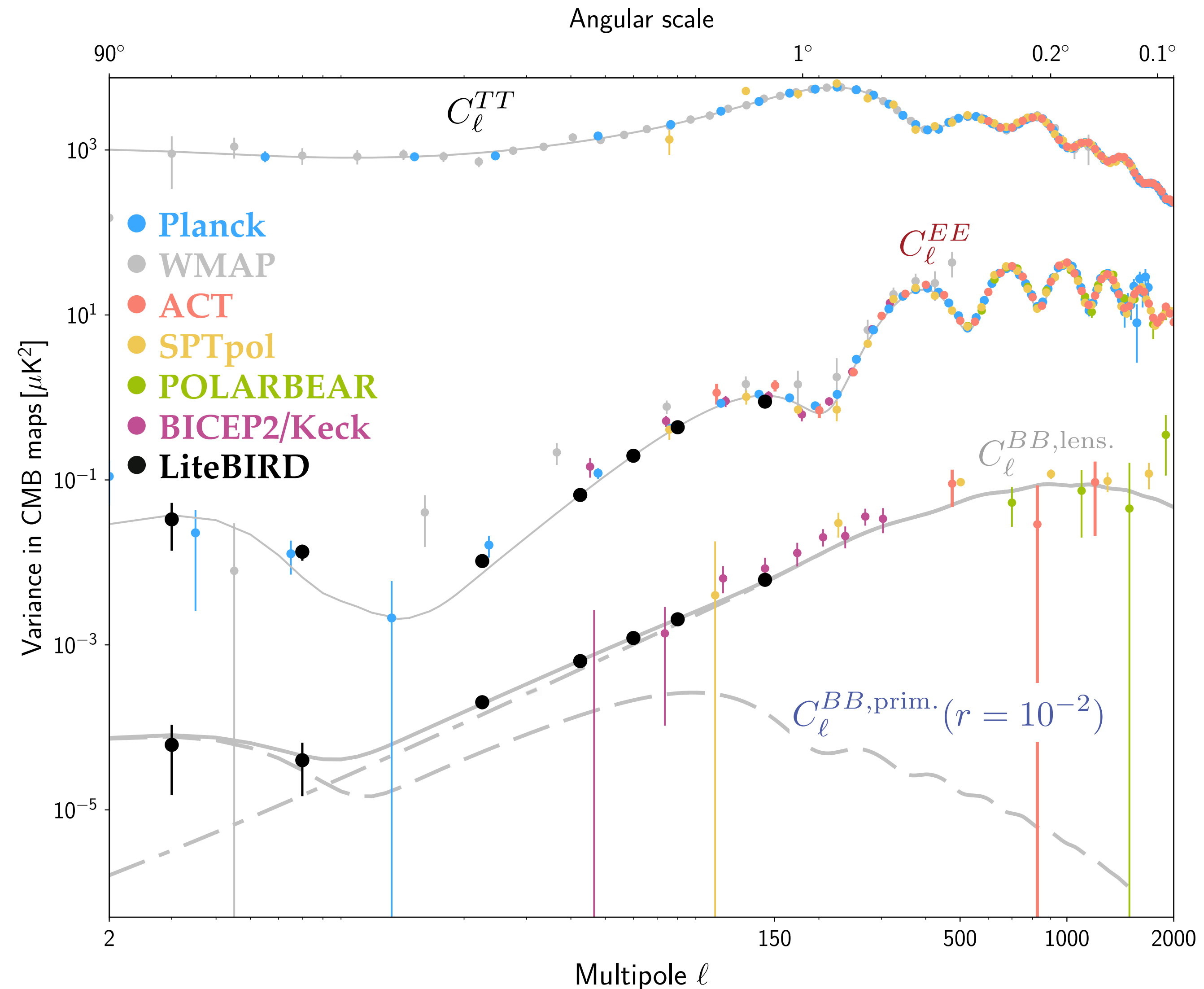
CMB

Takase, Vacher+ 2024

LiteBIRD main scientific objectives



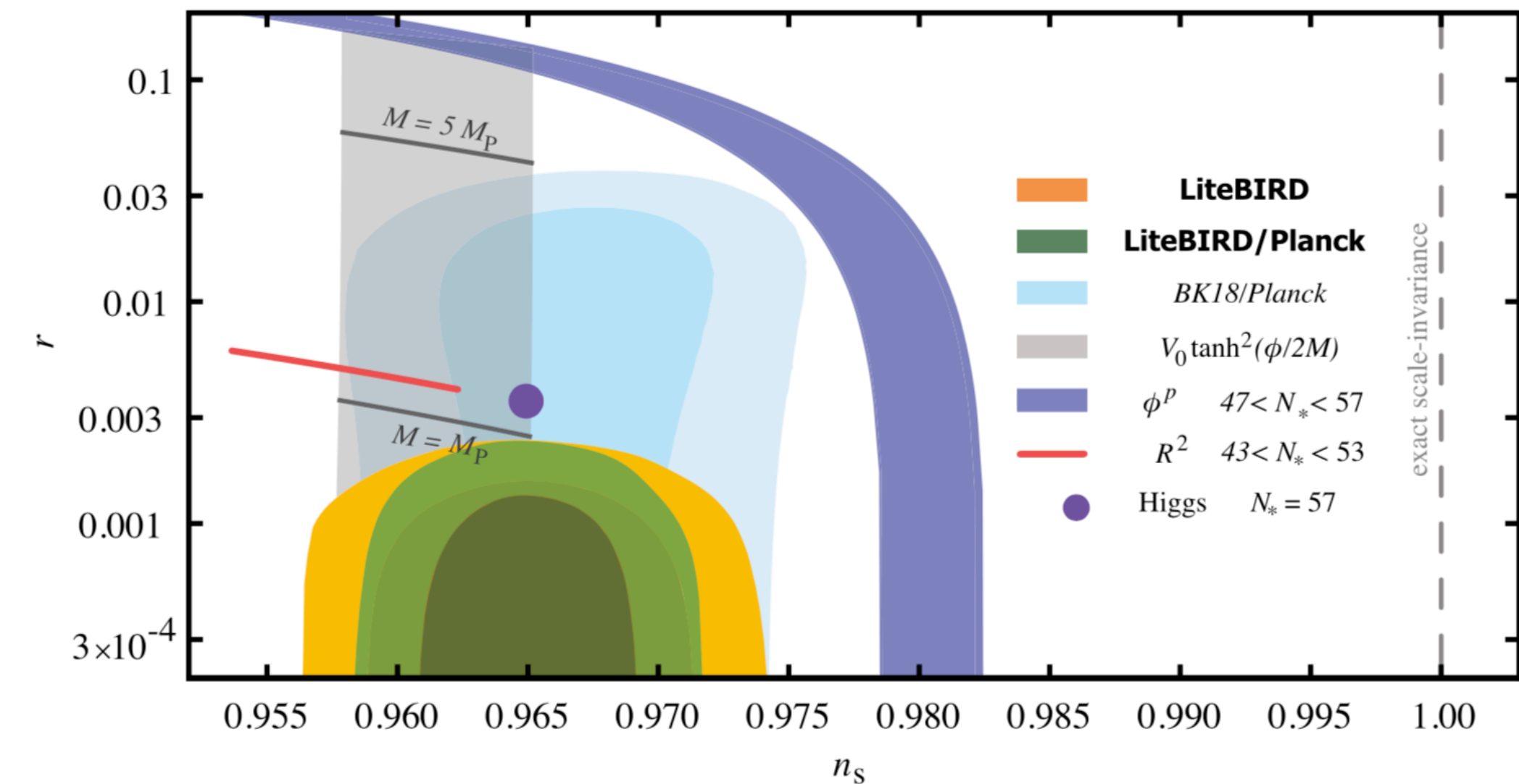
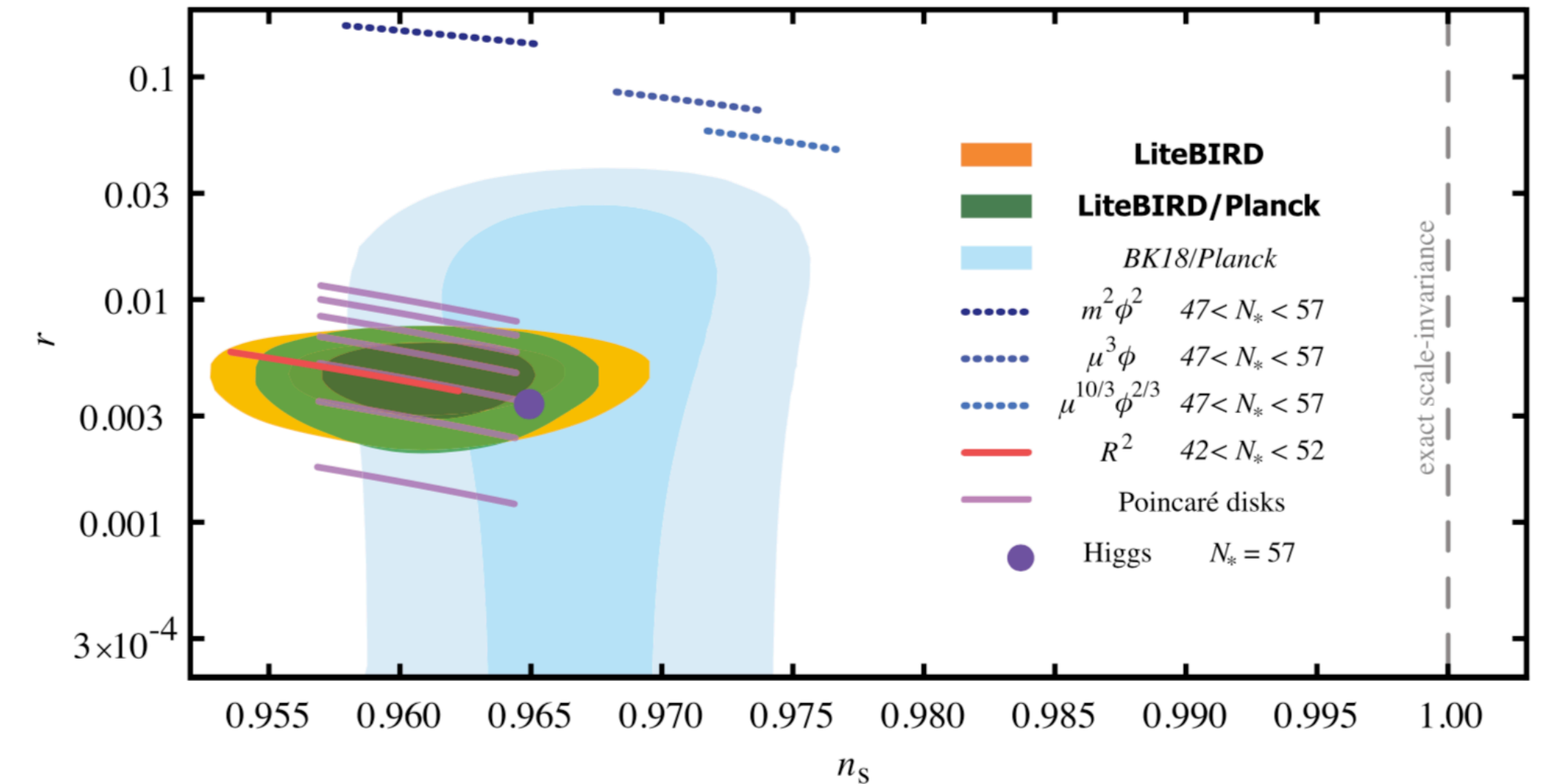
- Definitive search for the ***B*-mode signal** from **cosmic inflation** in the CMB polarization
 - Making a discovery or ruling out well-motivated inflationary models
 - Insight into the quantum nature of gravity
- The inflationary (i.e. primordial) *B*-mode power is proportional to the **tensor-to-scalar ratio, r**
- Current best constraint: $r < 0.032$ (95% C.L.)
(Tristram et al. 2022, combining BK18 and Planck PR4)
- *LiteBIRD* will significantly improve the current sensitivity on r
- The final goal is to achieve **a statistical uncertainty of $\sigma(r) \lesssim 0.001$ for $r = 0$**



LiteBIRD constraints on inflation



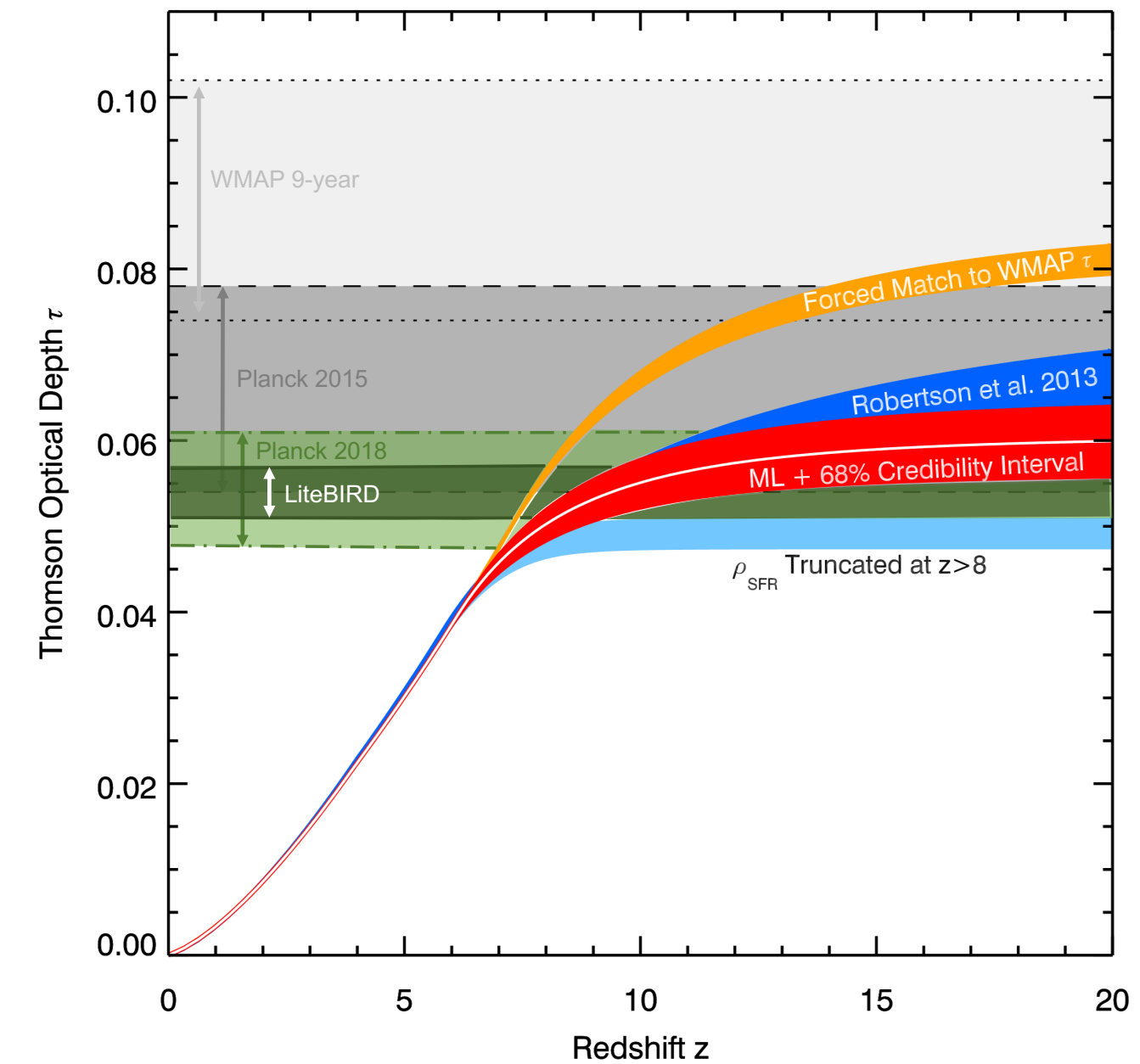
- Huge discovery impact (evidence for inflation, knowledge of its energy scale, and distance traveled by the inflaton...)
- A detection of B-modes by *LiteBIRD* with $r > 0.01$ would imply an excursion of the inflation field that exceeds the Planck mass
 - Such a detection would **constrain theories of quantum gravity** such as superstring theories
- An upper limit from *LiteBIRD* would disfavour the simplest inflationary models, with $\mathcal{M} > M_p$
 - This includes the monomial models, α -attractors with a super-Planckian characteristic scale, including the **Starobinsky model** and models that invoke the Higgs field as the inflaton (📖 Kallosh & Linde 2025)



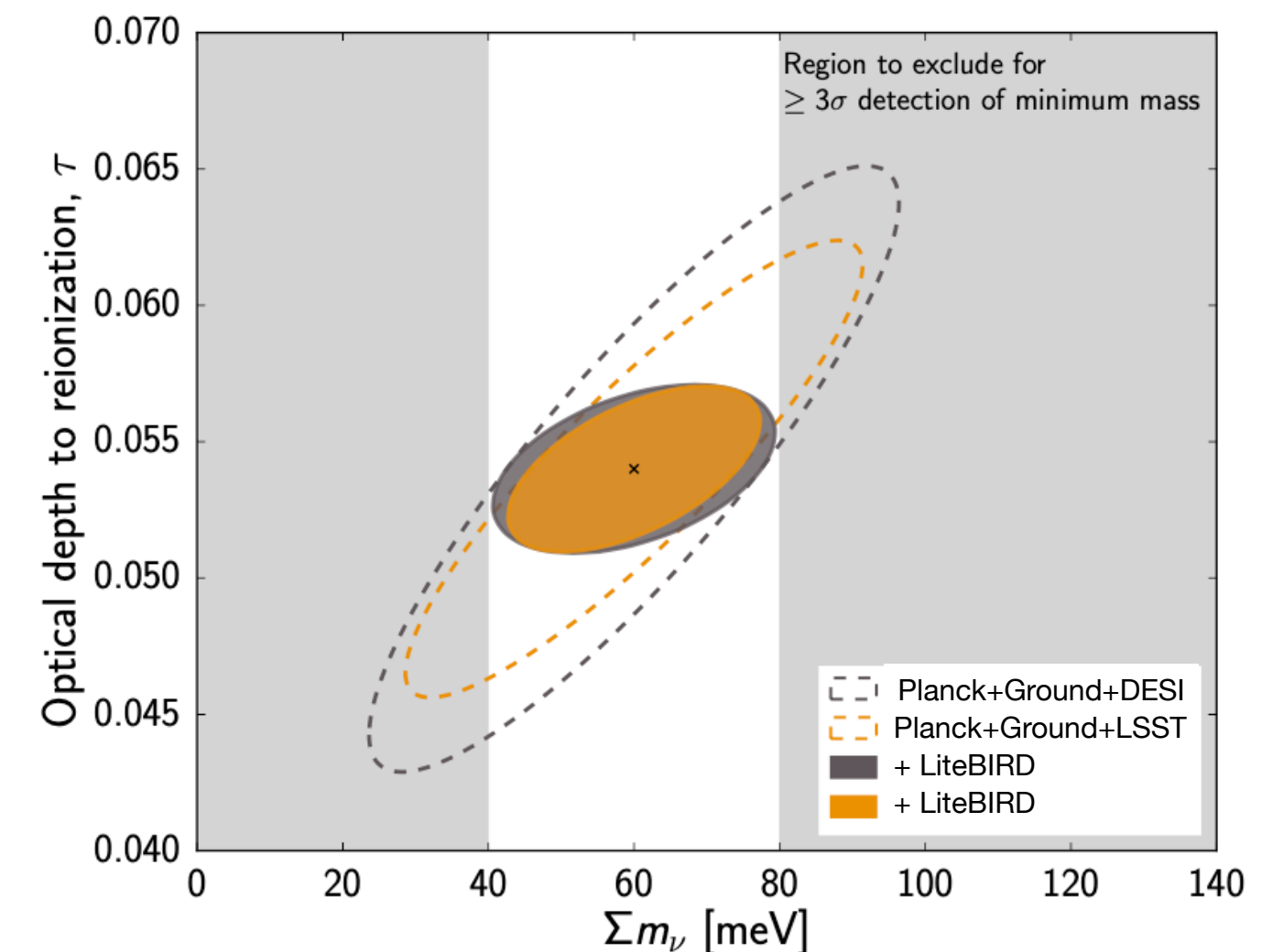
LiteBIRD other science outcomes



- The mission specifications are driven by the required sensitivity on r
- Meeting those sensitivity requirements would allow to address other important scientific topics, such as:
 1. Characterize the B -mode power spectrum and search for source fields (e.g. scale-invariance, non-Gaussianity, parity violation, ...)
 2. Power spectrum features in polarization
 - Large-scale **E -modes**
 - **Reionization** (improve $\sigma(\tau)$ by a factor of 3)
 - **Neutrino mass** ($\sigma(\sum m_\nu) = 12 \text{ meV}$) including external data
 3. Constraints on **cosmic birefringence**
 4. **Gravitational lensing**
 5. **SZ effect** (thermal, diffuse, relativistic corrections)
 6. **Anisotropic distortions** of the CMB spectrum
 7. Constraints on **primordial magnetic fields**
 8. Elucidating **anomalies**
 9. Physics of **Galactic emission** mechanisms
 10. Catalogues of polarized **point sources**



Adapted from
Robertson +2015

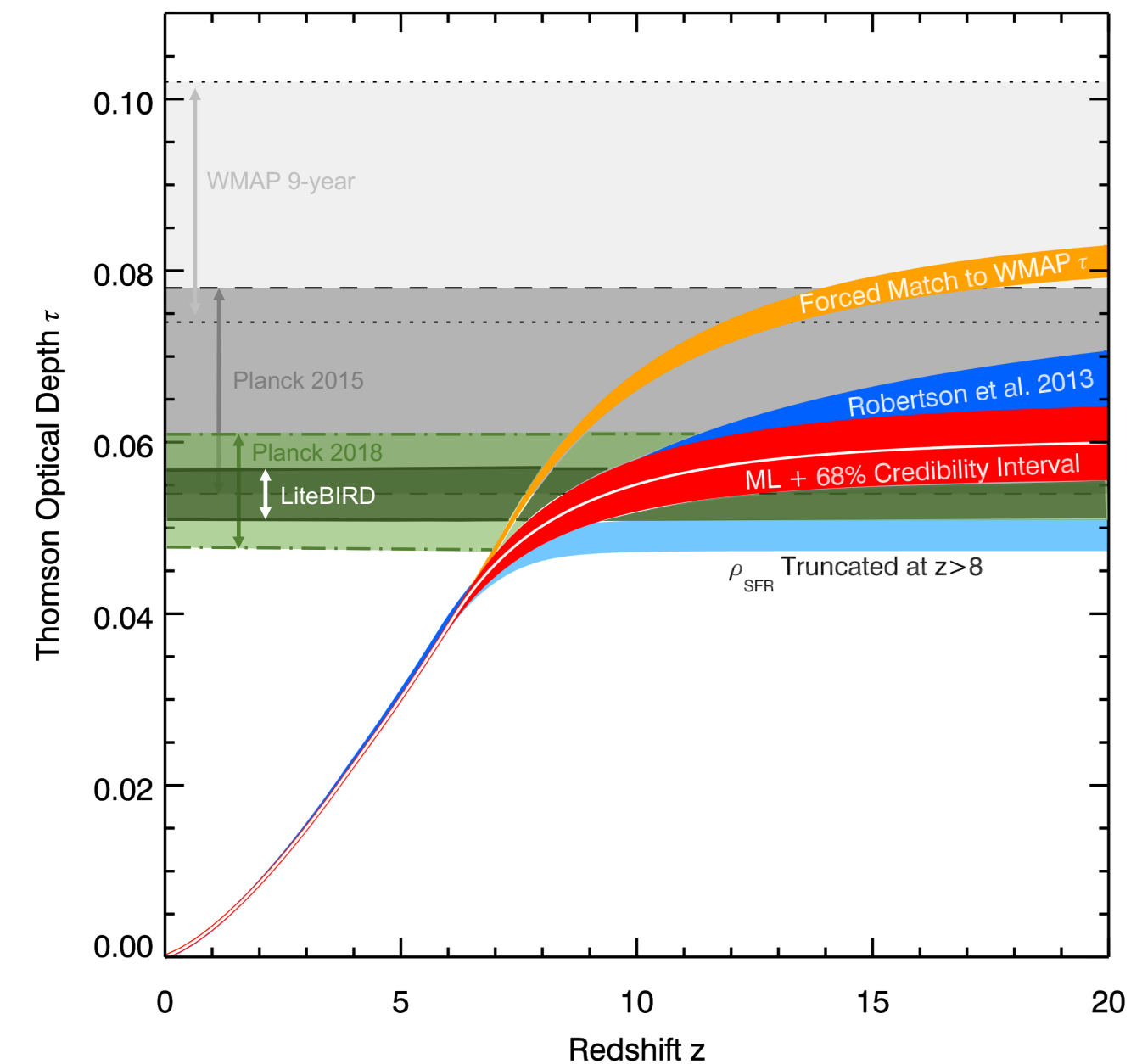


LiteBIRD
collaboration PTEP 2023

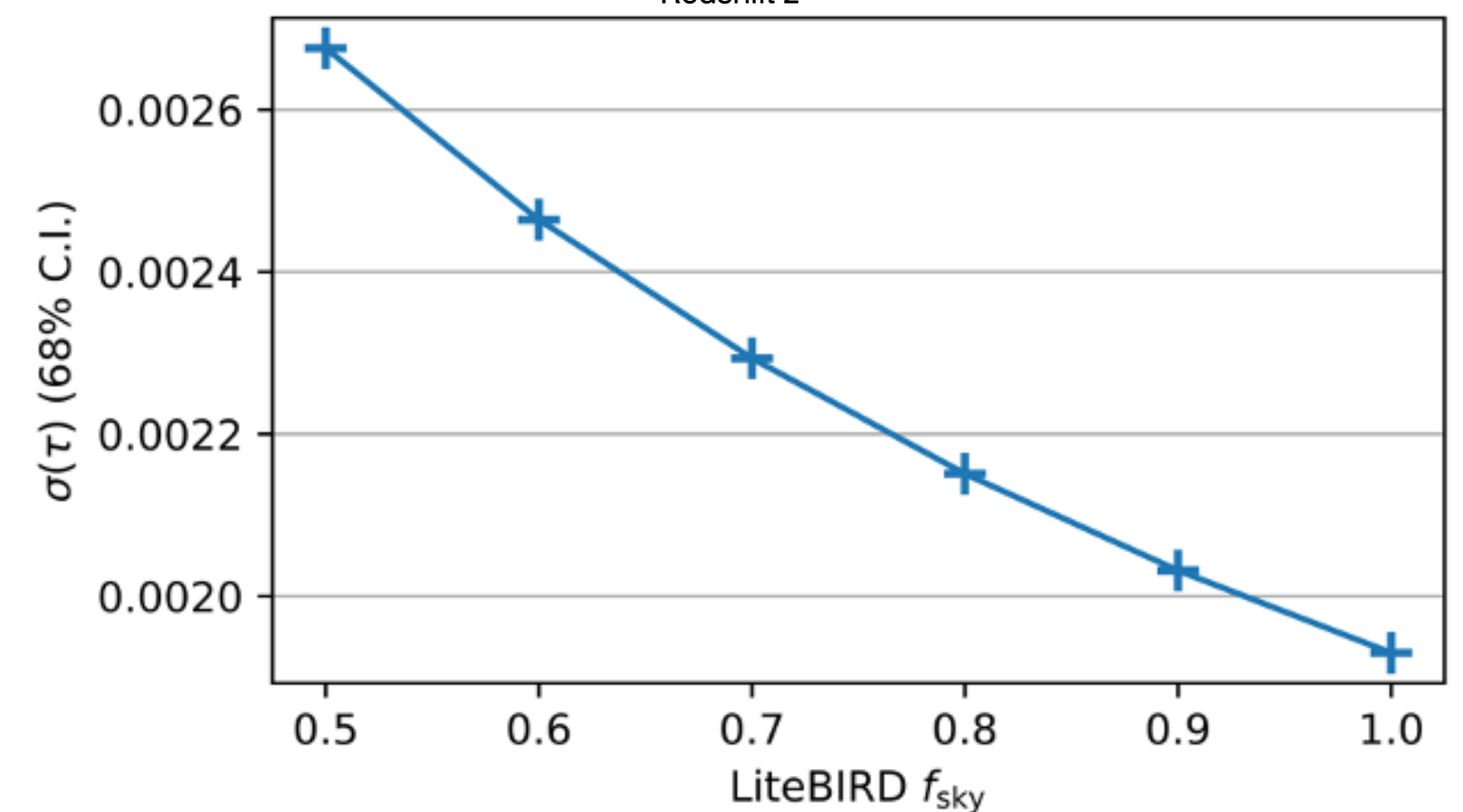
Optical depth, reionization and neutrino masses



- *LiteBIRD* will provide a cosmic-variance limited measurement of the **E-mode** power spectrum on large scales ($2 \leq \ell \leq 200$)
- This will lead to improved constraints on:
 - **Reionization**
 - Signal-dominated measurement of the **optical depth** to reionization $\Rightarrow \sigma(\tau) \approx 0.002 \Rightarrow \times 3$ improvement w.r.t Planck
 - Only limited by the sky fraction after cleaning
 - Signal-dominated regime reached after 6 months, allowing $\sigma(\tau) \approx 0.003$. Full survey crucial to maximise f_{sky}
 - Impact on reionization history currently under investigation



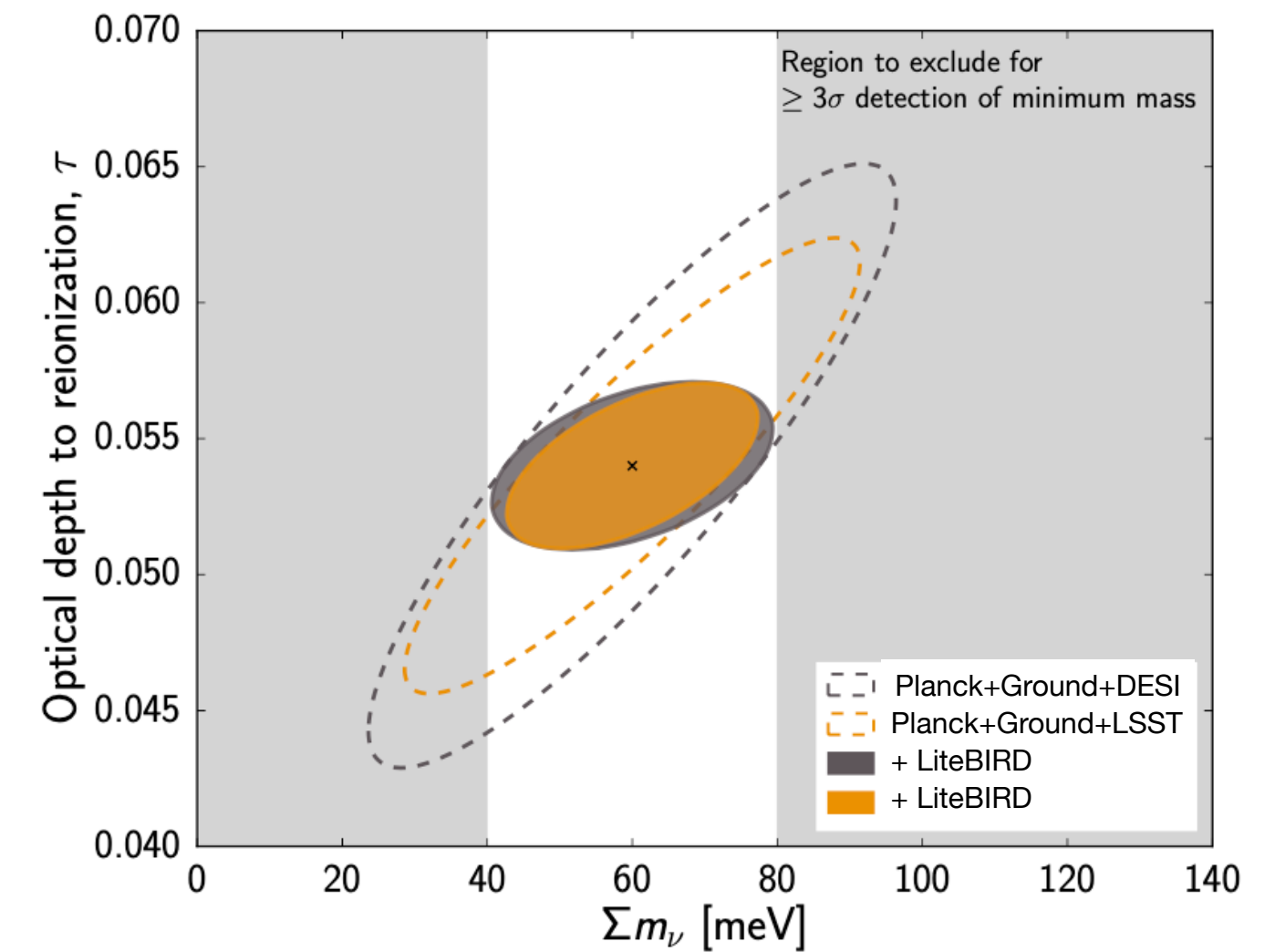
Adapted from Robertson +2015



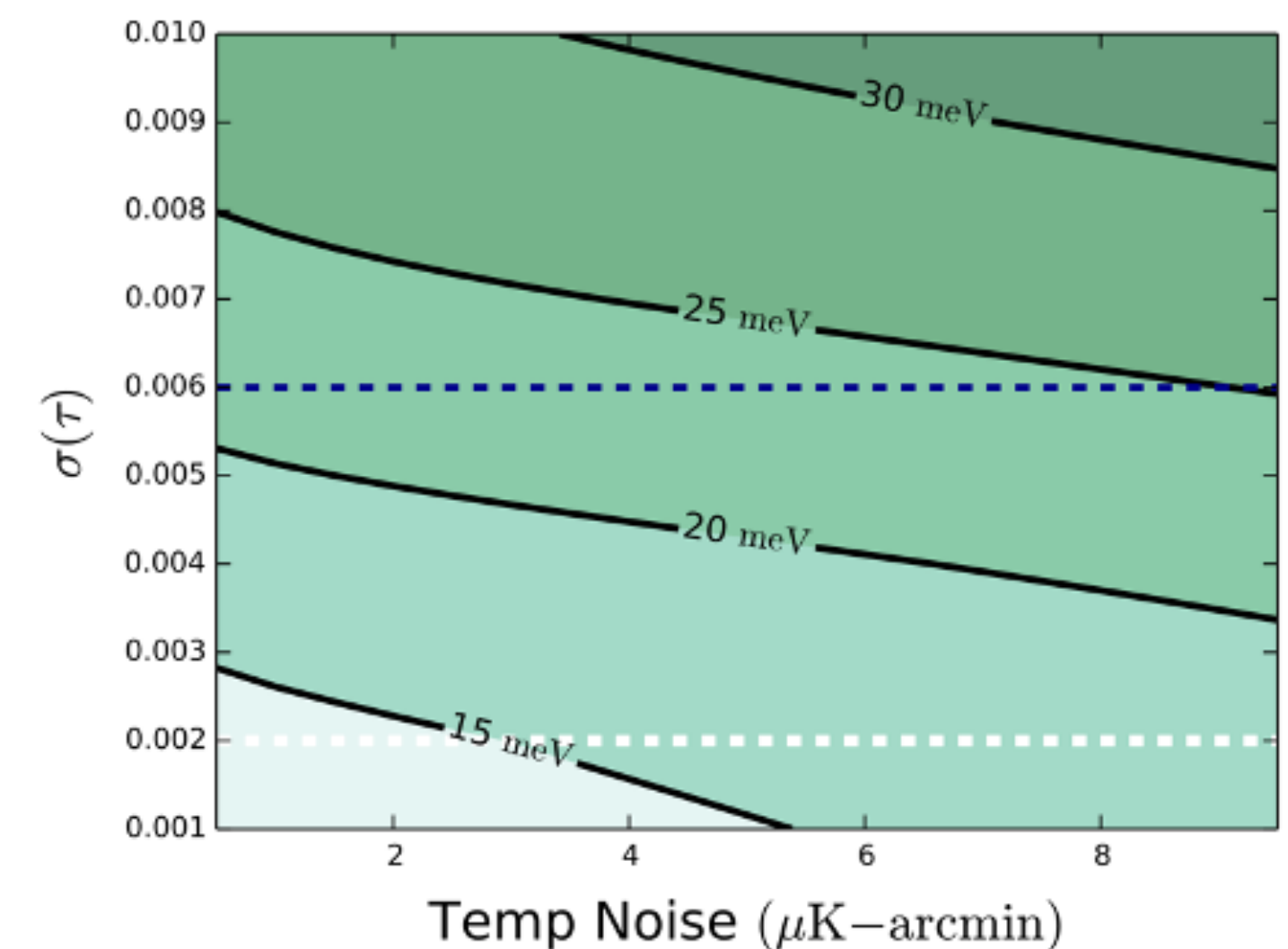
Optical depth, reionization and neutrino masses



- *LiteBIRD* will provide a cosmic-variance limited measurement of the ***E*-mode** power spectrum on large scales ($2 \leq \ell \leq 200$)
- This will lead to improved constraints on:
 - **Sum of neutrino masses**
 - The sum of neutrino masses can be constrained via combination with high-resolution CMB measurements (ground-based data)
 - The improved measurement of the optical depth provided by LiteBIRD will allow:
 - ➔ $\sigma(\sum m_\nu) \approx 18 \text{ meV}$ with CMB-ground (SO)+BAO
 - ➔ $\sigma(\sum m_\nu) \approx 12 \text{ meV}$ with CMB-ground (improved)+BAO
 - ➔ $\times 3\text{-}4$ improvement w.r.t current constraint
 - Potentially allow to **rule out the inverted neutrino mass ordering**
 - 5σ detection for $\sum m_\nu = 60 \text{ meV}$ (minimum mass in normal ordering)



LiteBIRD collaboration
PTEP 2023



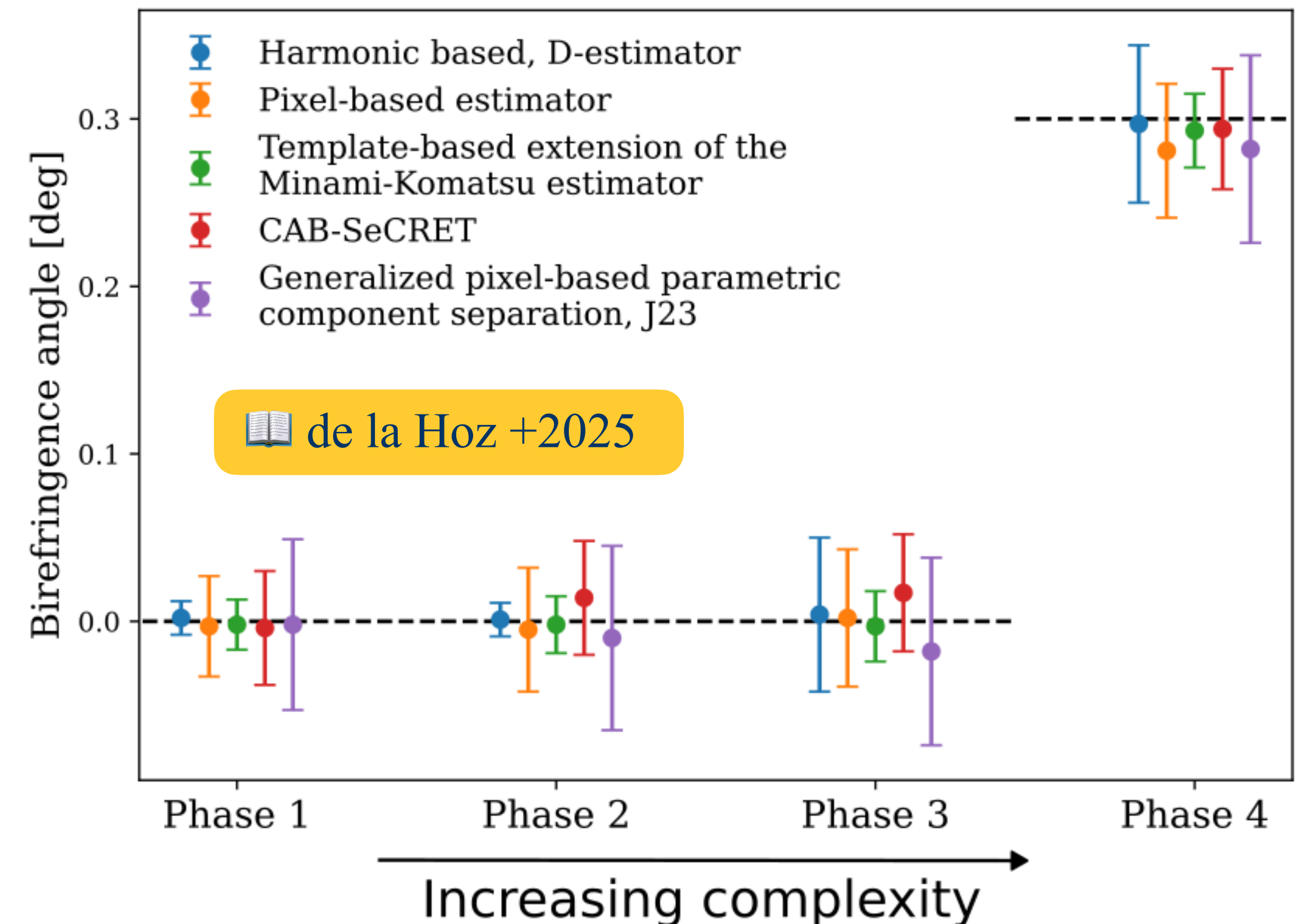
CMB-S4 Science Book

Constraints on cosmic birefringence

- Dark matter or dark energy could be a parity-violating pseudo-scalar field that couples to electromagnetism and rotates the linear polarization of photons propagating through the Universe.
- This effect, known as **cosmic birefringence**, induces non-zero TB and EB correlations and also a B -mode signal.
- Recent measurements show tentative detections of rotations:
 - $(0.34 \pm 0.09)^\circ$ from the combined analysis of *WMAP* and *Planck* PR4 (📖 Eskilt & Komatsu 2022)
 - $(0.20 \pm 0.08)^\circ$ from ACT DR6 (📖 Louis et al. 2025)

which are potentially compatible with cosmic birefringence.

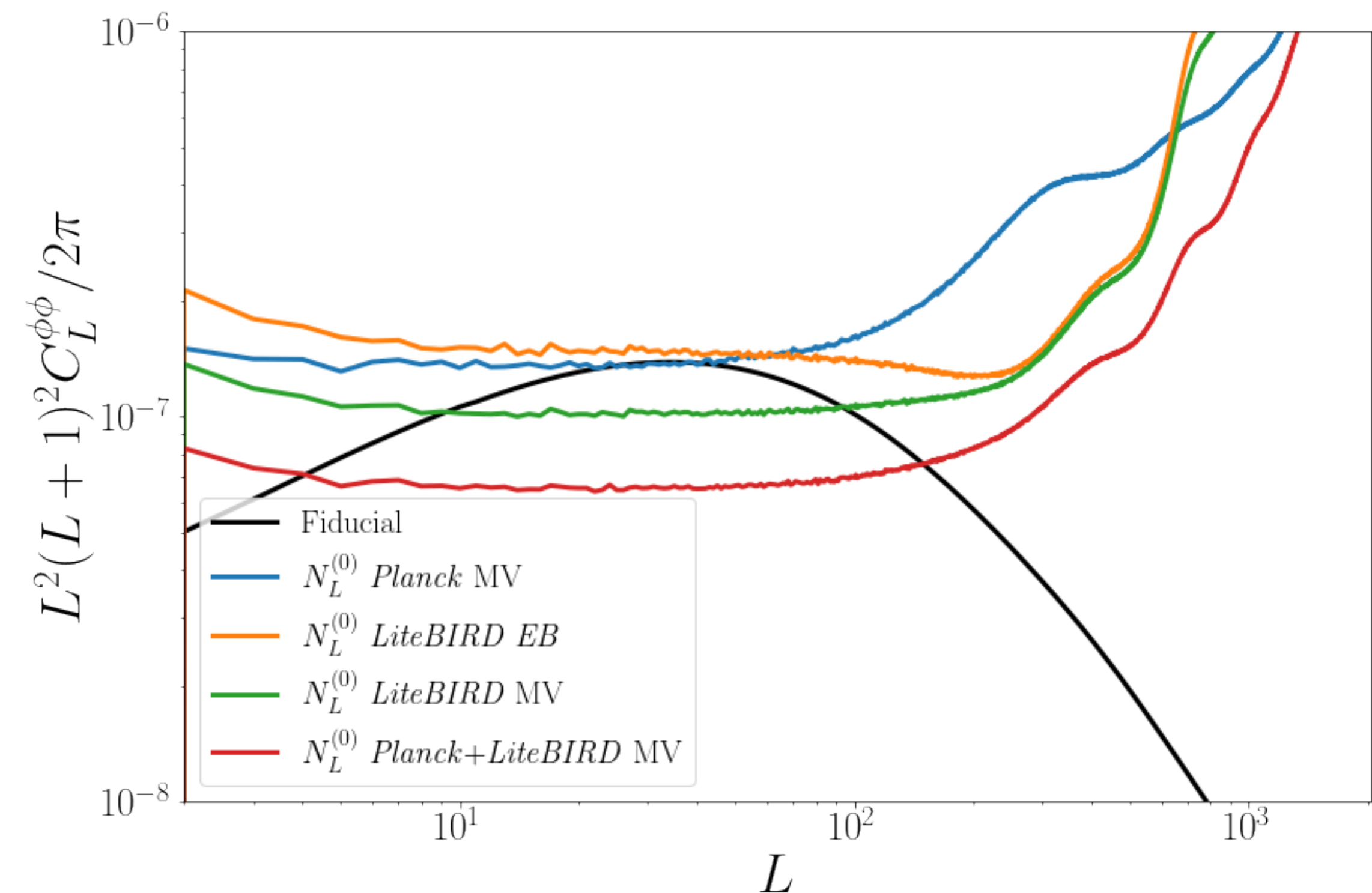
- *LiteBIRD* has the potential to:
 - Reduce the error bar on isotropic birefringence, leading to a **5 to 13 σ detection of a 0.3° angle** depending on the method used to account for possible detector angle miscalibration and the EB signal from Galactic foregrounds (📖 de la Hoz et al. 2025)
 - **Distinguish between dark matter and dark energy** by probing **EB around the reionization peak** (📖 Nakatsuka et al. 2022, 📖 Namikawa et al. 2025)
 - Produce a full-sky map of birefringence **anisotropies** to further test the **nature and origin of the field**.



Weak gravitational lensing

- CMB photons are deflected by large-scale structure through **gravitational lensing**, which introduces higher-order correlations in CMB anisotropies.
- These higher-order correlations can be used to reconstruct the lensing deflections and map the integrated matter distribution along the line of sight, probing the growth of structure up to high redshifts.
- **LiteBIRD will provide a 49 to 58 σ detection of the lensing power spectrum** over 80% of the sky, depending on the final complexity of polarized Galactic emission.
 - 85% of the S/N of *LiteBIRD*'s lensing reconstruction will come from polarization.
- **The combination of *Planck* and *LiteBIRD* will provide the best full-sky lensing map in the 2030s** with a 72 to 78 σ detection over 80% of the sky, almost doubling *Planck*'s sensitivity.
 - These combinations will improve the constraint on S_8 by a factor 2 compared to *Planck*.

Lonappan +2024, Ruiz-Granda +2025

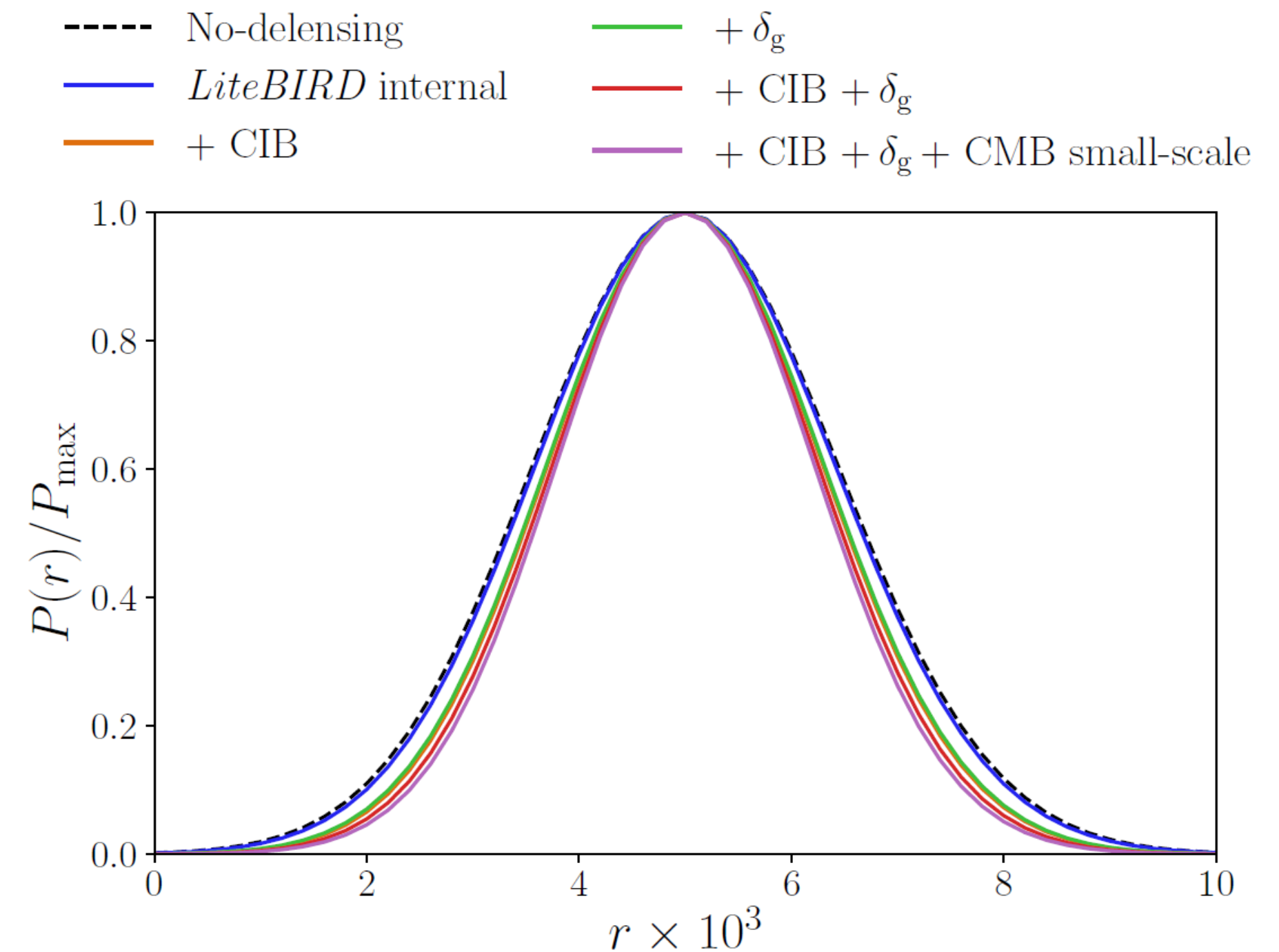


B-mode delensing



- If the lensing potential is known, lensing deflections can be reverted to recover an undistorted view of the last scattering surface. This process is called **delensing**.

- Constraints on r will tighten by about 5% when delensing using only *LiteBIRD* data (internal delensing).
- Through the **combination of different mass tracers**, like the cosmic infrared background (CIB) or galaxy surveys such as Euclid and LSST (δ_g), and **high-resolution CMB maps**, we can achieve a more efficient delensing that **tightens constraints on r by about 20%**.



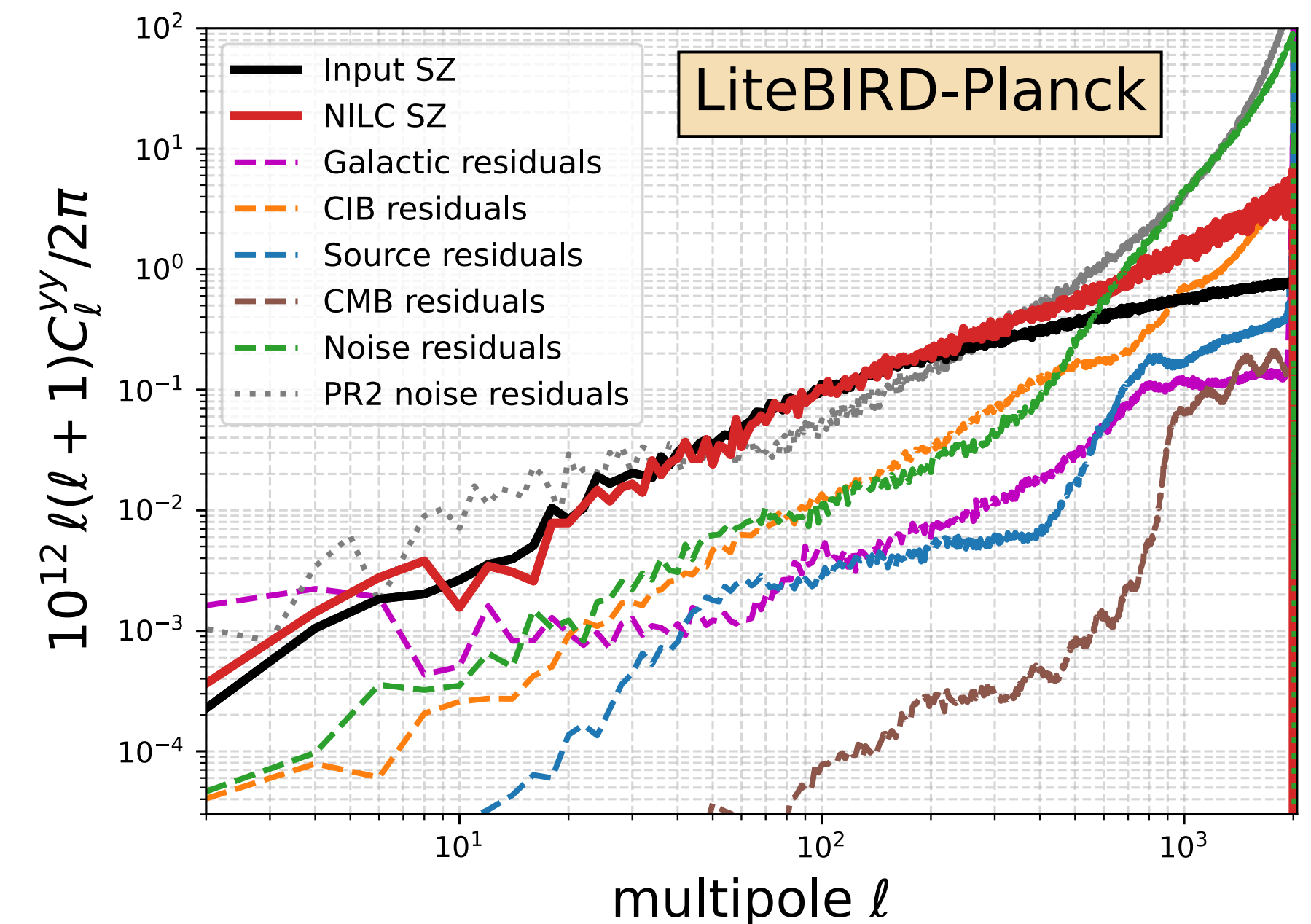
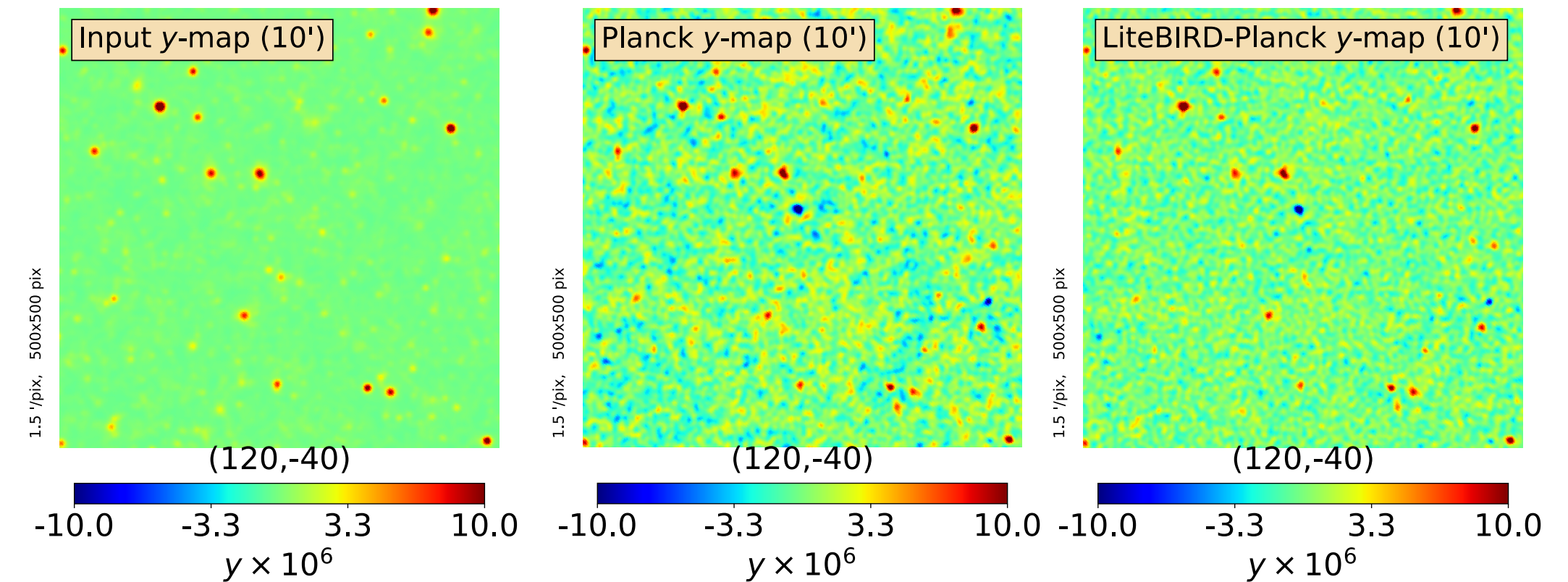
Namikawa +2024

- **Synergy between *LiteBIRD* and ground-based experiments** to carry out a detailed study on how much:
 - *LiteBIRD*'s high- and low-frequency maps will improve foreground cleaning for ground-based experiments (SO, BICEP/Keck).
 - The small-scale information from ground-based experiments will improve *B*-mode delensing for *LiteBIRD*.

Mapping the hot gas in the Universe



- The **Sunyaev-Zel'dovich** effect provides a mean to map the distribution of hot electrons in the Universe
- Improved sensitivity and frequency coverage of *LiteBIRD* crucially contributes to improve these studies
- Combination with Planck adds the benefit of angular resolution
- *LiteBIRD* will **improve $\times 10$ the noise in the SZ map** wrt Planck
- This will allow to:
 - Produce a high-fidelity SZ map over the full-sky essentially **free of contamination at $\ell < 200$**
 - Test theories of structure formation via **hot-gas tomography** from SZ \times galaxy surveys correlations
 - Search for **WHIM** in filaments connecting clusters
 - Study an **inhomogeneous reionization** process via cross-correlations of SZ \times CMB optical depth
 - Measure the mean gas T_e via the relativistic SZ
 - Improve constraints on $S_8 = \sigma_8(\Omega_m/0.3)^{0.5}$ by 15%

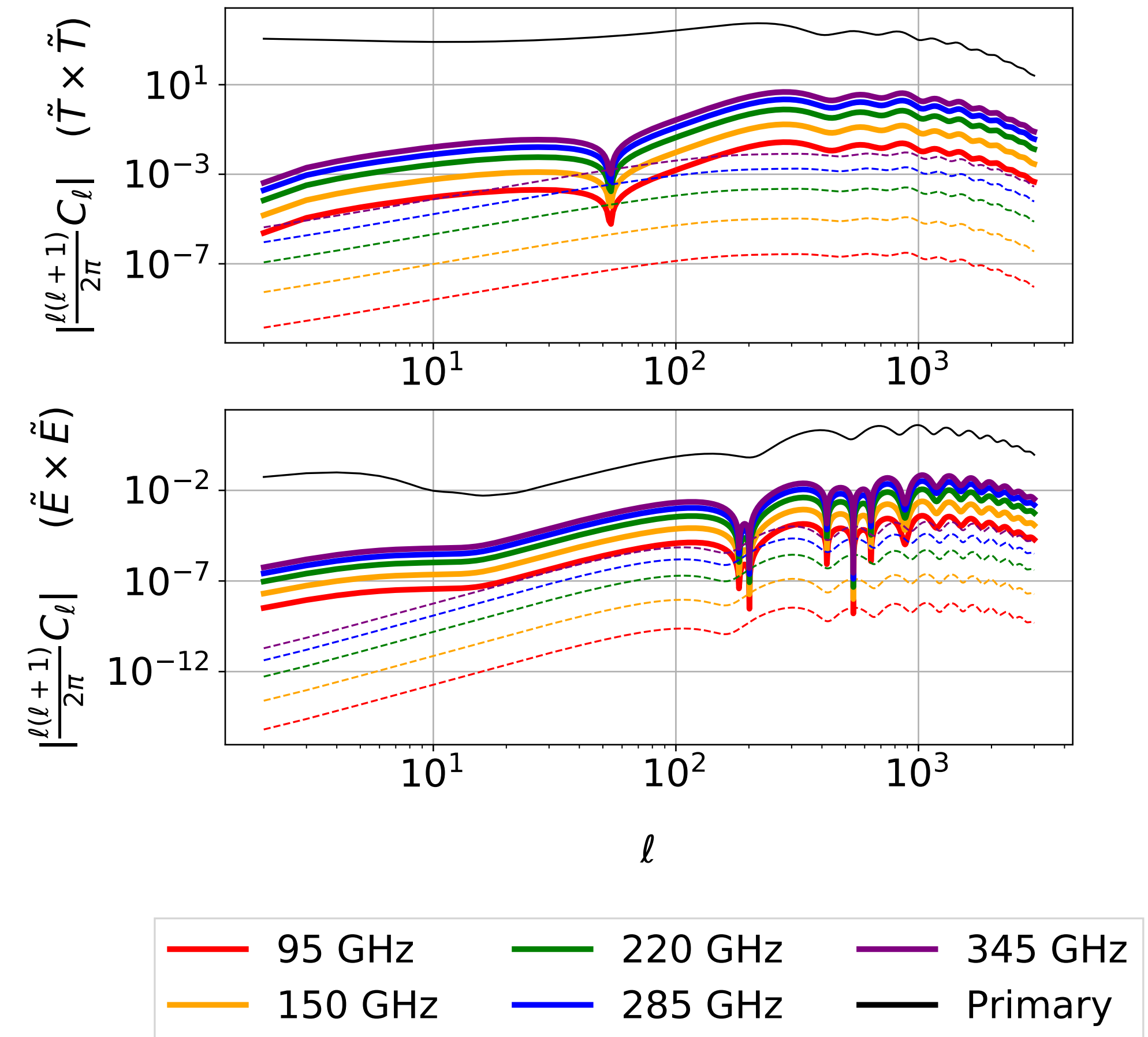


Remazeilles+ JCAP 2024

Anisotropic CMB spectral distortions



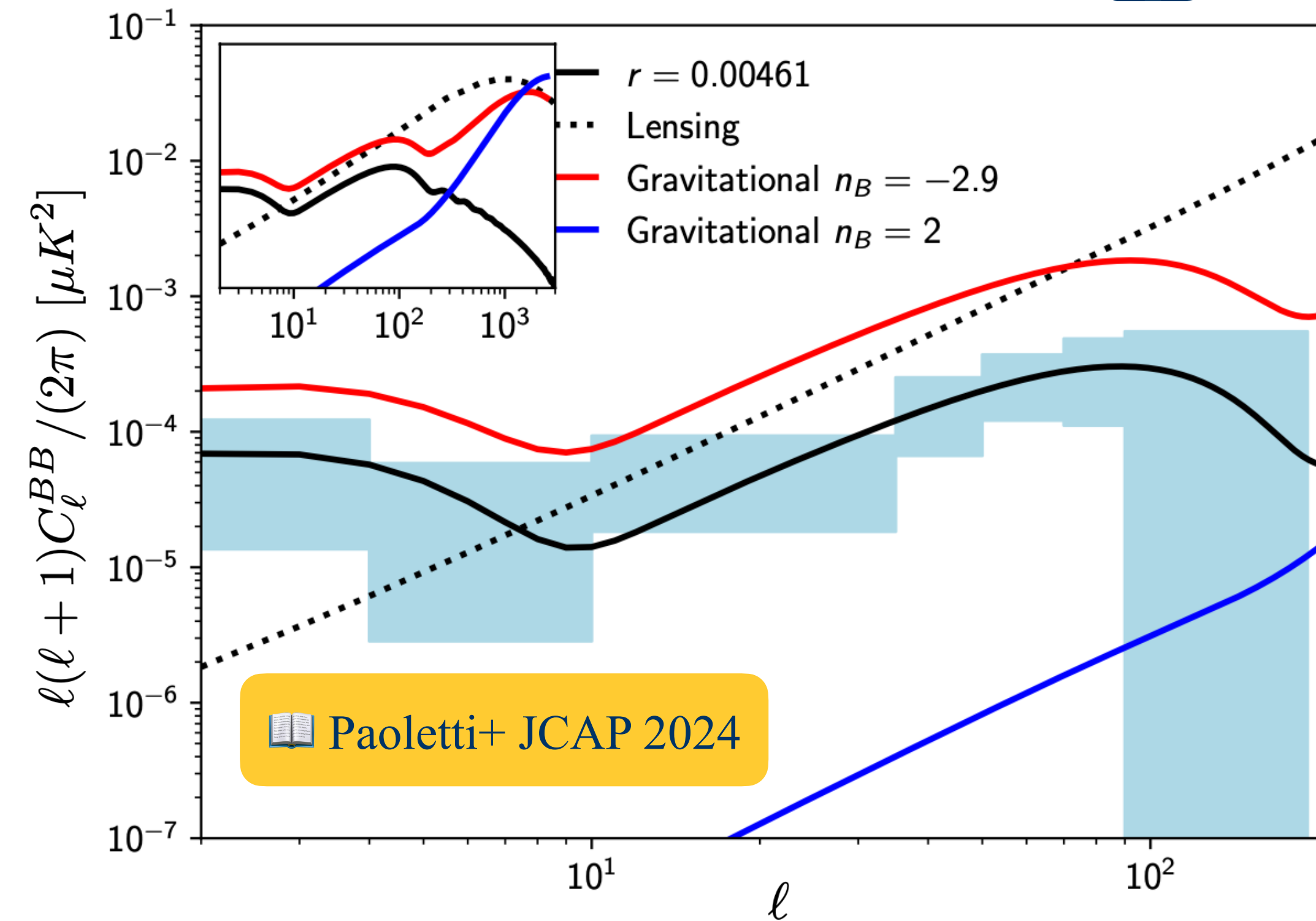
- *LiteBIRD* will be sensitive to any **spatially-varying CMB spectral distortion**, beyond the SZ effect
 - **Rayleigh scattering**. *LiteBIRD* will have sensitivity to measure at **25-sigma** (📖 Beringue et al. 2021) the frequency-dependent CMB anisotropies due to Rayleigh scattering by HI at the LSS
 - ➔ Such a detection would allow to derive improved constraints on N_{eff} and $\sum m_\nu$
 - **μ distortion**. *LiteBIRD* can detect an anisotropic μ distortion induced by non-Gaussian fluctuations induced during inflation
 - ➔ This would offer a power test of inflation at its onset
 - **Axion decay**. *LiteBIRD* can look for polarized spectral distortions produced by resonant conversion of axions into photons by the Galactic magnetic field



📖 Dibert+ PhysRevD 2022

Constraints on primordial magnetic fields

- Primordial magnetic fields (PMFs) affect the CMB via different effects:
 - **Gravitational effects** with magnetically-induced perturbations
 - Impact on the **ionization history** of the Universe due to their post-recombination dissipation
 - Induce a **Faraday rotation** of the CMB polarization
 - **Non-Gaussianity** induced in the CMB polarization anisotropies
- *LiteBIRD*:
 - Is a **sensitive probe** to PMFs through all these effects, thanks mainly to its remarkable sensitivity in polarization
 - Will **break the nG threshold** improving current upper limits by a factor of ~ 3
 - Will be able to **univocally identify the PFMs contribution to CMB** by joining all these effects together
 - Will allow a detection of **nG fields** with high significance

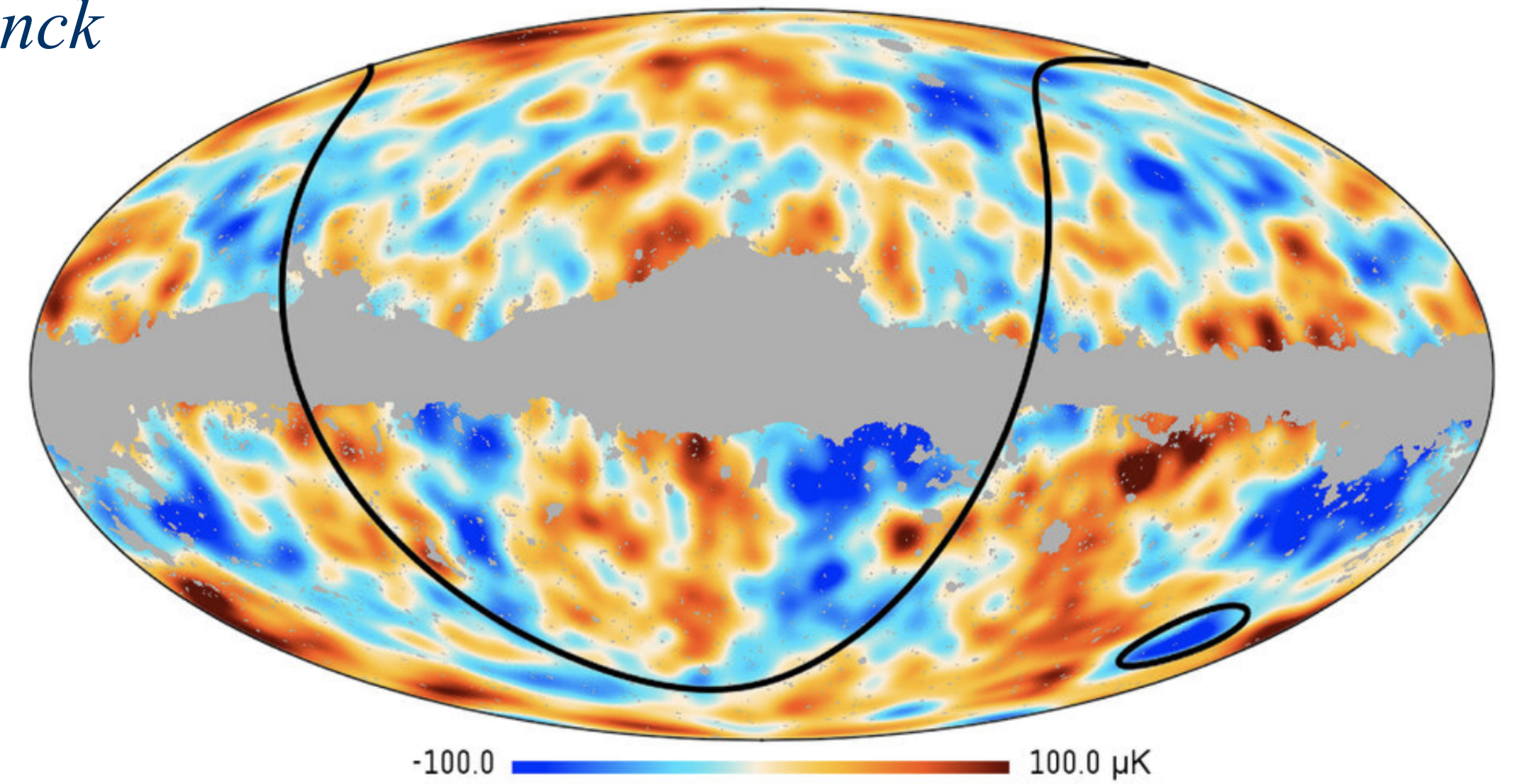


Upper limits on PMF amplitude for $n_B = -2.9$	
Gravitational effect	$B_{1\text{Mpc}} < 0.8 \text{ nG}$
Ionization history	$\sqrt{\langle B^2 \rangle} < 0.7 \text{ nG}$
Faraday rotation	$B_{1\text{Mpc}} < 3.2 \text{ nG}$
Non-Gaussianities	$B_{1\text{Mpc}} \lesssim 1 \text{ nG}$

Confronting statistical anomalies with polarization



- Various so-called anomalies have been found in *WMAP* and *Planck* temperature data that exert a mild tension against the Λ CDM cosmological model:
 - anomalously low temperature variance
 - a lack of power on large angular scales
 - a lack of correlation at large angular scales
 - a hemispherical asymmetry in power on the sky
 - the alignment of the quadrupole and octopole moments
 - parity asymmetry in the power associated with even/odd mode
 - an anomalous "Cold Spot" on a scale of $\sim 10^\circ$



Credit ESA/Planck Collaboration

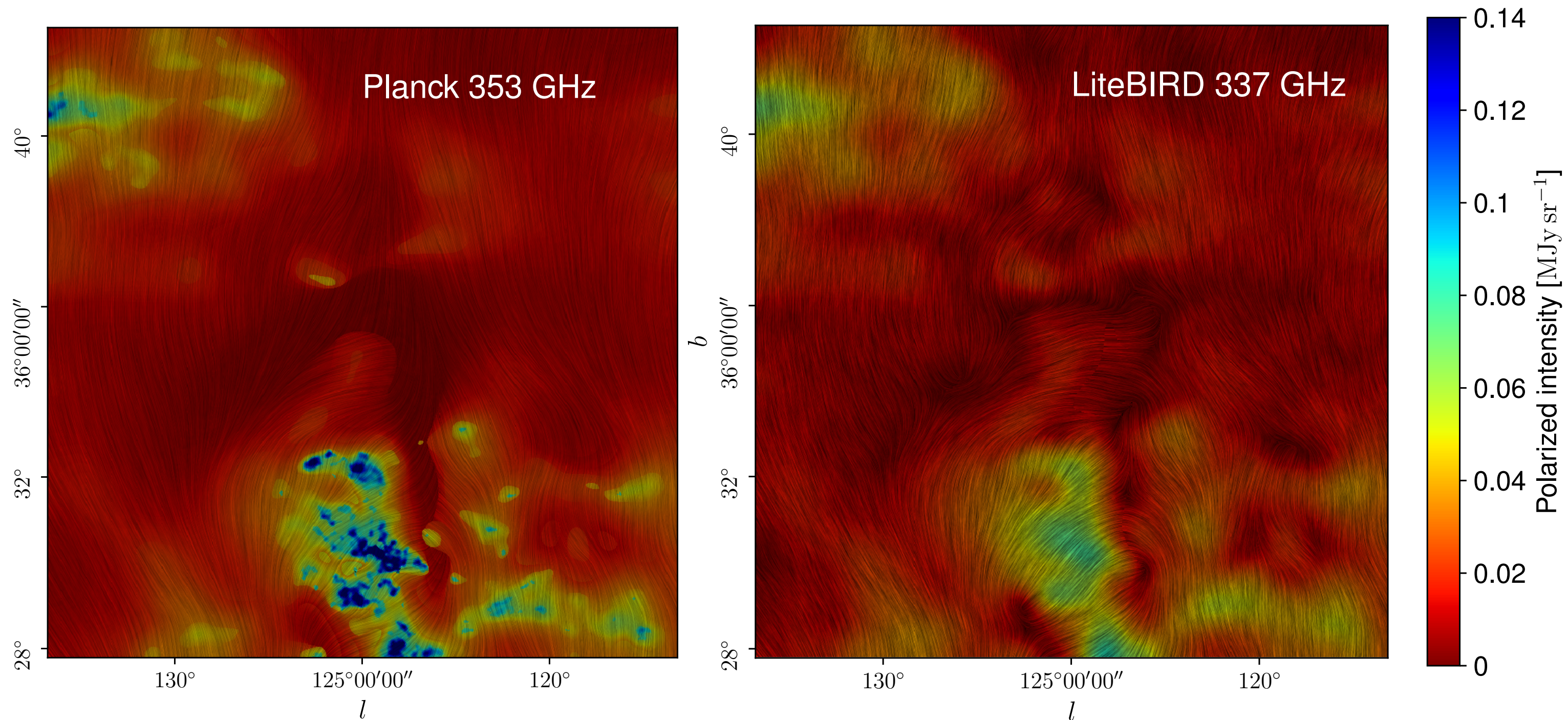
- Given their modest statistical significance, these could simply be statistical flukes. However, they may also be hints of **new physics** beyond the standard model.
- Polarized CMB anisotropies provide independent information on the fluctuations that source the temperature anisotropy and therefore a cross-check of the detected anomalies avoiding the look-elsewhere effect.
- **LiteBIRD E-mode polarization sky maps will allow further tests** at close to the cosmic-variance level of sensitivity. The fluke hypothesis can be assessed using temperature \times *E*-mode statistics. Anomalies seen directly in *E* modes will strongly challenge the Λ CDM model.

Banday+ JCAP 2025

- *LiteBIRD* will provide 12 high-sensitivity polarization full-sky maps from 40 to 402 GHz
- Sensitivity improved by a factor of 5 at 40 GHz and 10 at 402, with respect to Planck
- Gain in spectral resolution

- **Wealth of Galactic science possible:**

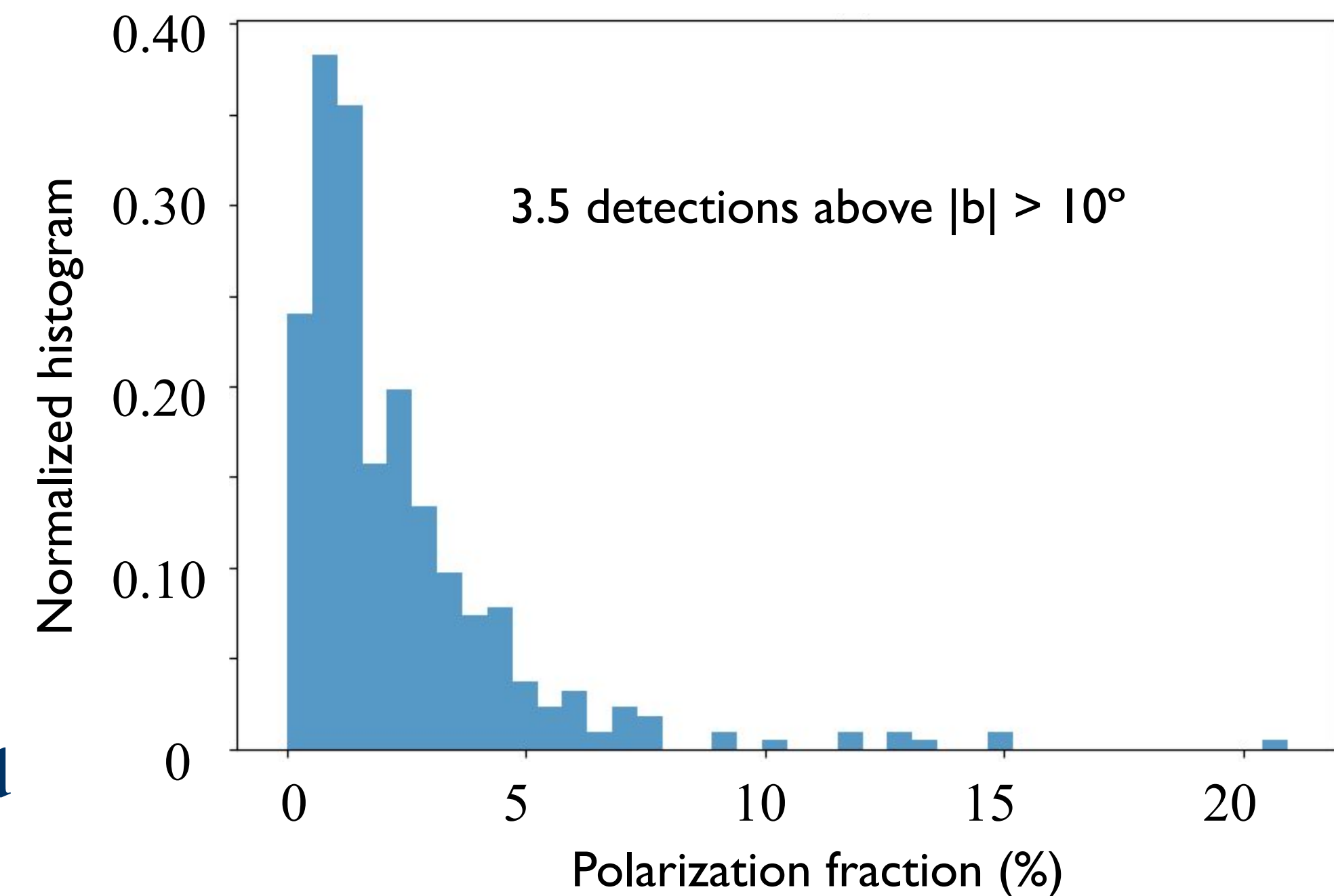
- Geometry of the Galactic magnetic field
- Interstellar turbulence
- Dust composition
- Grain alignment
- Cold clumps
- Geometry of synchrotron-bright loops
- SED of the synchrotron emission
- Nature of AME and spectral variations...
- ... and many others!



Polarized Compact Source Catalogues



- Production of a **unique multi-frequency all-sky catalogue of polarized compact sources** significantly improving Planck catalogues
- Possibility to produce an Early (Launch+6 months) and a Full Mission catalogue
- Study the impact of resolved and unresolved polarized compact source contamination in CMB analyses
- Possible **scientific outcomes** from these source catalogues
 - Probe magnetic field structures in radio and dusty galaxies
 - Constrain AGN structure and properties through number counts
 - Measure polarization properties of faint galaxy populations via stacking
 - Trace evolution of galactic-scale magnetic fields beyond the Milky Way
 - Enable multi-wavelength studies of galaxy dust and magnetism through cross-survey correlations
 - Constrain polarization properties of the cosmic infrared background
- Support to **mission operations**
 - Monitor pointing accuracy and calibration with astrophysical sources
 - Monitor flaring transient events to minimize impact on TOD and map-making algorithms



Foreground cleaning

Foreground modelling

- **Synchrotron**: power law with spatially-varying index

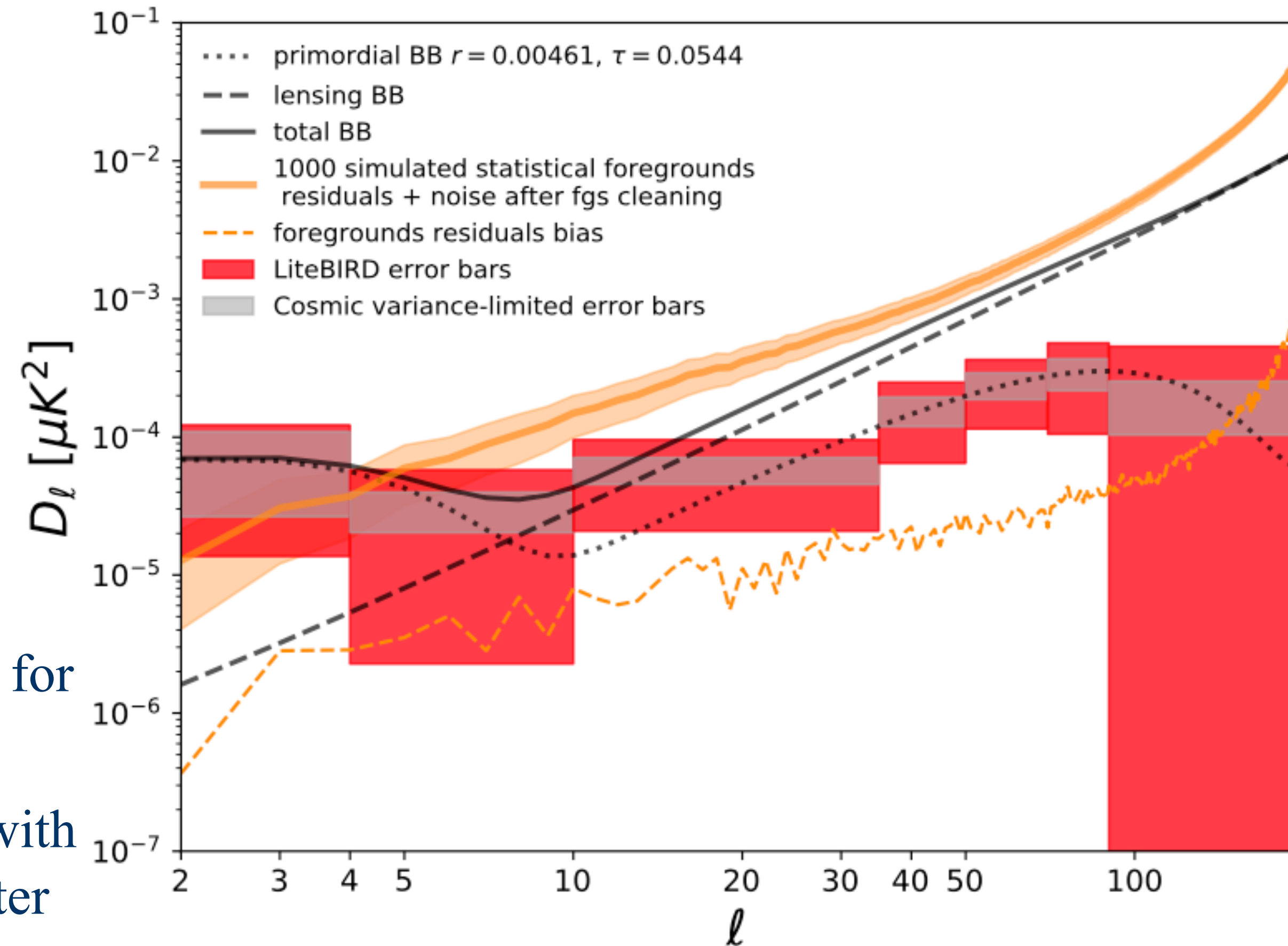
$$[Q_s, U_s](\hat{n}, \nu) = [Q_s, U_s](\hat{n}, \nu_\star) \cdot \left(\frac{\nu}{\nu_\star}\right)^{\beta_s(\hat{n})}$$

- **Dust**: modified blackbody

$$[Q_d, U_d](\hat{n}, \nu) = [Q_d, U_d](\hat{n}, \nu_\star) \cdot \left(\frac{\nu}{\nu_\star}\right)^{\beta_d(\hat{n})-2} \frac{B_\nu(T_d(\hat{n}))}{B_{\nu_\star}(T_d(\hat{n}))}$$

- **7 parameters** in each sky patch
- **Multi-Clustering** interface with foregrounds data to account for spatial variability (📖 Puglisi et al. 2022, Carones et al. 2023)
- Current baseline for fitting foregrounds: $12 \times (N_{\text{side}})^2$ patches with N_{side} between 8 and 64, depending on the foreground parameter
- Performance verification through FGBuster derived XForecast procedure

Impact of foreground residuals



Foreground cleaning



- “Multi-Clustering technique” (extension of xForecast)
- Distribution of the recovered r in 1000 simulations with input $r = 0$, with and without foreground residuals
- Bias from foreground (PySM d1s1) residuals is found to be small
- Final value: $r = (3.3 \pm 6.2) \times 10^{-4}$

