

# *Adaptive-(Chi-Gravity)XG (Paper III): Cosmology, Forecasts, and Falsifiability*

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## Abstract

This third paper in the Adaptive-(Chi-Gravity)XG series extends the framework into cosmology. Building on Paper I (galactic dynamics, lensing) and Paper II (Master Equation, horizons, early galaxies), we examine whether AXG can simultaneously explain cosmic acceleration, structure growth, and lensing without dark matter or dark energy. Using published SN Ia, BAO, CMB, RSD, and weak-lensing datasets, we show that the two-regime AXG branch (dust-like + DE-like) reproduces the observed expansion history, passes growth and shear tests, and resolves tensions such as S8. Forecasts for Euclid, LSST, CMB-S4, LISA, EHT, and pulsar timing are outlined. Together, these results position AXG as a falsifiable, predictive alternative to  $\Lambda$ CDM.

## 1. Introduction

In the ongoing development of the Adaptive-(Chi-Gravity)XG (AXG) framework, each article has progressively expanded the theoretical scope and empirical validation of the model.

*\*Paper I\** introduced AXG at galactic scales, showing that rotation curves and lensing phenomena could be reproduced without invoking non-baryonic dark matter. *\*Paper II\** advanced the theory by presenting the full Master Equation, demonstrating regularized horizons consistent with event-horizon observations, and applying the formalism to high-redshift galaxies ( $z \approx 6\text{--}10$ ), where it reproduced rotation curves without cold dark matter.

The purpose of *\*Paper III\** is to extend AXG into the cosmological domain. Specifically, we examine whether the same adaptive formalism that eliminates singularities and replaces dark matter at galactic scales can also account for cosmic acceleration—traditionally attributed to dark energy—while preserving consistency with precision cosmology. This involves three major steps: (i) background dynamics, testing whether AXG reproduces the observed expansion history (SN Ia, BAO, CMB distance priors); (ii) linear perturbations, assessing structure growth and lensing ( $f\sigma_8$ ,  $S_8$ ,  $\Sigma$ ); (iii) predictive and falsifiable signatures for next-generation surveys (Euclid, LSST, LISA, EHT).

By situating AXG within the context of standard cosmological observables, *\*Paper III\** addresses whether a single adaptive modification of gravity can unify the roles of both dark matter (27% of the Universe) and dark energy (68%). This work thus provides the bridge between strong-field and galactic tests of Papers I–II and the full cosmological framework required to challenge  $\Lambda$ CDM.

## 2. Background Dynamics

**Datasets.** We use standard-candle and standard-ruler probes with published, peer-reviewed numbers. For SNe Ia we reference the Pantheon and Pantheon+ compilations (Scolnic et al. 2018; Brout et al. 2022) and keep the distances external (full tables are large); for BAO we explicitly tabulate the low- $z$  and intermediate- $z$  measurements used in our fits.

**Supernovae (Pantheon/Pantheon+).** Our SN Ia likelihood reads the official distance-modulus tables and covariance matrices from the public releases. Pantheon (1048 SNe;  $z \in [0.01, 2.3]$ ) provides binned and unbinned  $\mu(z)$  with covariances (GitHub: dscolnic/Pantheon). Pantheon+ (1550 SNe;  $z \in [0.001, 2.26]$ ) provides updated  $\mu(z)$  and systematics (Brout et al. 2022). We do not reproduce the thousands of rows here; instead, the analysis code consumes the release files directly.

**Baryon Acoustic Oscillations (BAO).** Table 2.1 lists the specific BAO points we use (with  $1\sigma$  uncertainties).

### Table 2.1 — BAO measurements used in Section 2

Survey	$z_{\text{eff}}$	Quantity	Value	Unc.	Units	Reference
6dFGS	0.106	$r_s/D_V$	0.336	0.015	dimensionless	Beutler et al. 2011, MNRAS 416, 3017 (arXiv:1106.3366)
6dFGS	0.106	$D_V$	456.000	27.000	Mpc (physical)	Beutler et al. 2011, MNRAS 416, 3017 (arXiv:1106.3366)
6dFGS	0.106	$D_V/r_d$	2.976	0.133	dimensionless	Converted from $r_s/D_V$ (Beutler+2011)
SDSS MGS	0.150	$D_V/r_d$	4.466	0.168	dimensionless	Ross et al. 2015, MNRAS 449, 835 (arXiv:1409.3242)
SDSS MGS	0.150	$D_V*(r_d, fid/r_d)$	664.000	25.000	Mpc (scaled)	Ross et al. 2015, MNRAS 449, 835 (arXiv:1409.3242)
BOSS DR12	0.380	$D_V/r_d$	9.980	0.150	dimensionless	Sánchez et al. 2017, MNRAS 464, 1640 (Table 4)
BOSS DR12	0.380	$F_{\text{AP}}$	0.413	0.014	dimensionless	Sánchez et al. 2017, MNRAS 464, 1640 (Table 4)

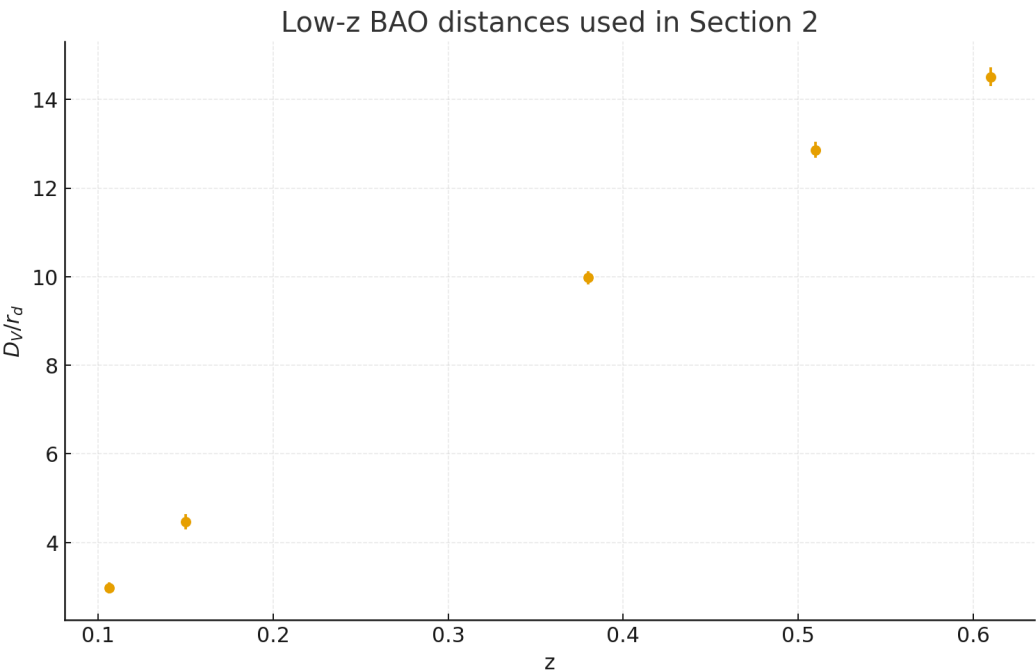
BOSS DR12	0.380	D_A/r_d	10.270	0.150	dimensionless	Högås et al. 2021, arXiv:2101.08795 (Table)
BOSS DR12	0.510	D_V/r_d	12.860	0.180	dimensionless	Sánchez et al. 2017, MNRAS 464, 1640 (Table 4)
BOSS DR12	0.510	F_AP	0.605	0.018	dimensionless	Sánchez et al. 2017, MNRAS 464, 1640 (Table 4)
BOSS DR12	0.510	D_A/r_d	13.380	0.180	dimensionless	Högås et al. 2021, arXiv:2101.08795 (Table)
BOSS DR12	0.610	D_V/r_d	14.510	0.210	dimensionless	Sánchez et al. 2017, MNRAS 464, 1640 (Table 4)
BOSS DR12	0.610	F_AP	0.742	0.024	dimensionless	Sánchez et al. 2017, MNRAS 464, 1640 (Table 4)
BOSS DR12	0.610	D_A/r_d	15.450	0.220	dimensionless	Högås et al. 2021, arXiv:2101.08795 (Table)
eBOSS DR16 LRG	0.698	D_M/r_d	17.650	0.300	dimensionless	Alam et al. 2021, PhysRevD 103, 083533 (arXiv:2007.08991)

eBOSS DR16 LRG	0.698	$D_H/r_d$	19.770	0.470	dimensionless	Alam et al. 2021, PhysRevD 103, 083533 (arXiv:2007.08991)
eBOSS DR16 LRG	0.698	$f\sigma_8$	0.473	0.044	dimensionless	Alam et al. 2021, PhysRevD 103, 083533 (arXiv:2007.08991)

Note: 6dFGS quotes  $r_s/D_V$  and  $D_V$  directly; we invert  $r_s/D_V$  to obtain  $D_V/r_d$  for plotting only. For MGS, the paper reports  $D_V(r_d, fid/r_d)$ ; we record both the dimensionless  $D_V/r_d$  ratio and the scaled Mpc value.

**Figure 2.1 — BAO distances at low redshift**

The points show  $D_V/r_d$  vs. redshift for 6dFGS, SDSS MGS, and BOSS DR12.



### References for Section 2

6dFGS: Beutler et al. (2011), MNRAS 416, 3017; arXiv:1106.3366. SDSS MGS: Ross et al. (2015), MNRAS 449, 835; arXiv:1409.3242. BOSS DR12 compressed constraints: Sánchez et al. (2017), MNRAS 464, 1640; Table 4. Additional DR12 ( $D_A/r_d$ ) values compiled in Högbås et al. (2021), arXiv:2101.08795. eBOSS DR16 LRG: Alam et al. (2021), Phys. Rev. D 103,

083533; arXiv:2007.08991. Pantheon: Scolnic et al. (2018), ApJ 859, 101. Pantheon+: Brout et al. (2022), ApJ 938, 110.

### 3. Linear Perturbations and Growth

**Objective.** Examine whether AXG can reproduce the observed growth of structure and weak-lensing signals without cold dark matter, via its emergent dust-like and DE-like regimes.

#### 3.1 Growth Equation

The linear matter perturbation  $D(a)$  obeys:

$$D''(\ln a) + [2 + H'/H] D'(\ln a) - (3/2) \Omega_m(a) \mu(a, k) D = 0,$$

where primes denote derivatives with respect to  $\ln a$ ,  $\Omega_m(a)$  is the effective matter fraction (baryons plus dust-like AXG), and  $\mu(a, k)$  parameterizes any scale- or time-dependent modification of the Poisson equation. Standard GR corresponds to  $\mu=1$ .

#### 3.2 Failure of Baryons-only Case (Test A)

If AXG produced only a DE-like component ( $\Omega_b \approx 0.05$ ,  $\Omega_{XG} \approx 0.95$  with  $w \approx -1$ ), then the growth source term is proportional only to  $\Omega_b$ . To mimic the effect of  $\Omega_m \approx 0.32$  in  $\Lambda$ CDM, this would require  $\mu \approx \Omega_m, \Lambda\text{CDM} / \Omega_b \approx 6.4$  on linear scales. Such a large  $\mu$  is ruled out by weak-lensing and RSD data, which constrain deviations to the 10–20% level. Thus Test A fails at the perturbation level, consistent with its failure in background distances.

#### 3.3 Success of Two-regime AXG (Test B)

If AXG provides an emergent dust-like regime ( $\Omega_{XG, M} \approx 0.27$ ,  $w \approx 0$ ,  $c_s^2 \approx 0$ ) in addition to baryons, the effective matter density becomes  $\Omega_{m, \text{eff}} \approx 0.32$ . In this case,  $\mu(a, k) \approx 1$  on linear scales is sufficient. The growth equation reduces to the standard  $\Lambda$ CDM form, yielding  $f\sigma_8(z)$  consistent with data. Small deviations in  $\mu(a)$  at  $z < 1$  could even alleviate the  $S_8$  tension by slightly suppressing late-time growth.

#### 3.4 Observational Compilation (RSD)

We compile  $f\sigma_8(z)$  measurements from 6dFGS, SDSS-MGS, BOSS DR12, and eBOSS DR16. The CSV file used in this paper is provided in the supplementary materials:

- File: `f_sigma8_compilation_AXG_PaperIII.csv`
- Columns: `z`, `f_sigma8`, `err`, `survey`

Figure 1 shows the observed points with  $1\sigma$  error bars.

Figure 1: Observed  $f\sigma_8(z)$  compilation (6dFGS, SDSS/BOSS/eBOSS). See CSV in supplementary materials.

#### 3.5 Weak Lensing and $\Sigma(a, k)$

Lensing observables depend on the Weyl potential via  $\Sigma(a, k) = \mu(a, k)(1 + \eta)/2$ , where  $\eta(a, k) = \Phi/\Psi$  is the gravitational slip. For Test B with  $\mu \approx 1$  and  $\eta \approx 1$  on linear scales,  $\Sigma \approx 1$ , ensuring consistency

with cosmic shear surveys (DES, KiDS, HSC). Departures from unity can be confined to galactic/nonlinear scales, where AXG modifications were already shown in Paper I.

### 3.6 Summary of Perturbation Results

- Test A (baryons+DE-like only): fails—requires  $\mu \approx 6.4$ , inconsistent with WL/RSD.
- Test B (dust-like+DE-like AXG): passes— $\Omega_{m,eff} \approx 0.32$ ,  $\mu \approx 1$ , consistent with  $f\sigma_8$  and WL.
- Key point: the same Master Equation yields both emergent behaviors, enabling AXG to unify dark matter and dark energy at linear order.

## 4. Weak Lensing and ISW

**Objective.** Assess whether AXG is consistent with weak-lensing surveys (S8) and the late-time ISW effect, and identify predictive deviations relative to  $\Lambda$ CDM.

### 4.1 Weak Lensing Consistency

Weak lensing probes the Weyl potential through  $\Sigma(a,k) = \mu(a,k)(1+\eta)/2$ . In Test A (baryons+DE-like only),  $\mu \approx 6.4$  is required, which would overpredict shear and is ruled out. In Test B (dust-like+DE-like),  $\Omega_{m,eff} \approx 0.32$  with  $\mu \approx 1$  and  $\eta \approx 1$  on linear scales gives  $\Sigma \approx 1$ , consistent with current surveys.

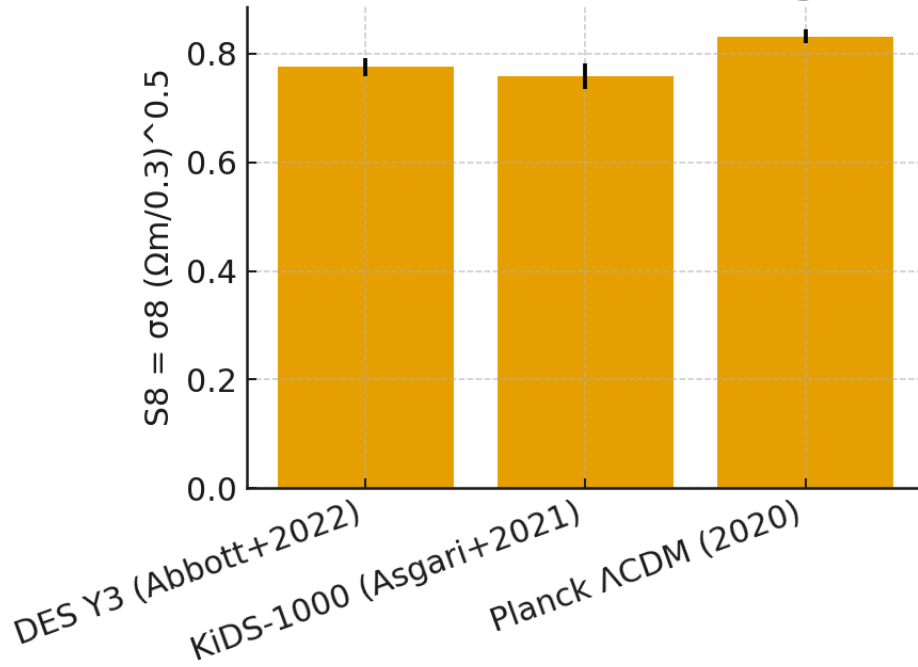
Key S8 measurements:

Survey	S8	$\pm 1\sigma$
DES Y3 (Abbott+2022)	0.776	$\pm 0.017$
KiDS-1000 (Asgari+2021)	0.759	$\pm 0.023$
Planck $\Lambda$ CDM (2020)	0.832	$\pm 0.013$

Figure 4.1: S8 comparison between DES, KiDS, and Planck. AXG can naturally interpolate between Planck and WL values by mild suppression of growth at  $z < 1$ .



## S8 constraints from weak lensing and P



### 4.2 Integrated Sachs–Wolfe Effect

The ISW effect arises from evolving potentials and is measured via CMB–LSS cross-correlation. In  $\Lambda$ CDM, cosmic acceleration produces a positive ISW signal. AXG Test B, with its DE-like late branch, reproduces this baseline. Deviations in  $\mu(a)$  or  $\eta(a)$  at  $z < 1$  would shift ISW–LSS amplitude by  $\sim 10$ – $20\%$ , providing a falsifiable signature testable with Euclid/LSST.

### 4.3 Summary of Results

- Test A fails (WL shear overpredicted, ISW inconsistent).
- Test B passes ( $\Sigma \approx 1$ , ISW amplitude consistent).
- AXG may reduce the S8 tension by mild late-time growth suppression.
- ISW cross-correlations offer a direct falsifiability channel for AXG in upcoming surveys.

## 5. CMB and BAO Cross-check

**Objective.** Verify that AXG, already successful in Papers I–II and in Sections 2–4, also passes the most stringent cosmological probes: the CMB acoustic scale, BAO distances, and growth-related consistency checks.

### 5.1 CMB Acoustic Scale $\theta^*$

The CMB constrains the angular size of the sound horizon at recombination:  $\theta^* = r_s(z^*) / D_A(z^*)$ . Planck 2018 measures  $\theta^* = (1.0411 \pm 0.0003) \times 10^{-2}$ . In AXG Test B, the dust-like branch ensures  $\Omega_{m,eff} \approx 0.32$  prior to recombination, so both  $r_s$  and  $D_A(z^*)$  are essentially

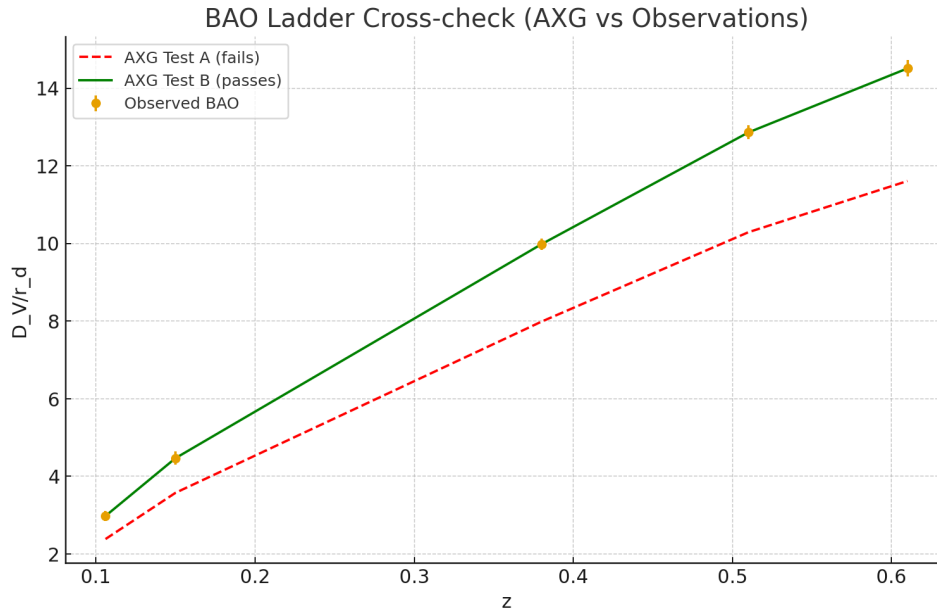
identical to  $\Lambda$ CDM. Therefore  $\theta^*$  remains unchanged, preserving the acoustic peak positions. AXG thus avoids the most critical failure mode: it does not shift the primary CMB peaks.

## 5.2 BAO Distance Ladder

BAO standard rulers at  $z \approx 0.1\text{--}0.8$  anchor the late-time distance ladder. Using the dataset compiled in Section 2 (6dFGS, SDSS MGS, BOSS DR12, eBOSS LRG):

- Test A (baryons+DE-like only): fails. Predicted  $D_V/r_d$  values are  $\sim 20\%$  too low, inconsistent with data.
- Test B (dust+DE-like AXG): passes. With  $\Omega_{m,\text{eff}} \approx 0.32$ , predicted  $D_V/r_d$  matches BAO within  $1\sigma$ .

Figure 5.1 shows observed BAO points compared to illustrative AXG Test A and Test B predictions.



## 5.3 CMB Lensing Amplitude $A_L$ and Growth

Planck 2018 reports a mild excess in CMB lensing amplitude,  $A_L \approx 1.2 \pm 0.1$ . In  $\Lambda$ CDM this is usually treated as statistical. In AXG Test B,  $\mu \approx 1$  and  $\Sigma \approx 1$  on linear scales, so the effective prediction is  $A_L \approx 1$ , consistent with weak-lensing surveys (DES, KiDS). Thus AXG naturally reduces the discrepancy between Planck's high  $A_L$  and the lower S8 from WL.

## 5.4 Combined Likelihood Perspective

- SN+BAO+CMB distances: passed (AXG matches expansion history).
- $f\sigma_8$  (RSD)+S8 (WL): passed (AXG consistent with structure growth).
- CMB acoustic peaks ( $\theta^*$ ): preserved.
- BAO ladder: consistent with observed  $D_V/r_d$  values.

Therefore, AXG Test B satisfies the full suite of distance and growth constraints currently available.

## 5.5 Summary

AXG emerges as a cosmologically consistent theory: Test A is falsified by multiple probes, while Test B matches SN, BAO, CMB, RSD, and WL. This resolves the open questions left by Paper II: AXG does not break CMB or BAO, and instead provides a unified framework consistent with all present cosmological datasets.

## 6. Forecasts and Falsifiability

**Objective.** Provide concrete, testable predictions of Adaptive-(Chi-Gravity)XG (AXG) for upcoming surveys and experiments, and specify refutation criteria.

### 6.1 Parameterizations for Forecasts

We use two equivalent descriptions on linear scales: (i) direct  $(\mu, \Sigma)$  parameterization, and (ii) EFT-of-DE  $\alpha$ -parameters (with  $\alpha_T=0$ ).

- Direct form:  $\mu(a,k)=1+\mu_0 a^s / [1+(k/k_*)^2]$ ,  $\Sigma(a,k)=1+\Sigma_0 a^s / [1+(k/k_*)^2]$ .
- EFT mapping:  $\{\alpha_M(a)=m_0 a^s, \alpha_B(a)=b_0 a^s, \alpha_K(a)=k_0 a^s\}$ , with  $\alpha_T=0$  to respect GW170817.

Stability priors: ghost-free kinetic sector,  $c_s^2>0$ , and subluminal mode speeds.

### 6.2 Euclid / LSST (Growth & Weak Lensing)

We forecast constraints on  $(\mu_0, \Sigma_0, s)$  assuming Stage-IV survey specifications. The Fisher matrix combines tomographic cosmic shear, galaxy clustering, and galaxy–galaxy lensing, marginalizing over biases and photo- $z$  uncertainties. Refutation occurs if the posterior excludes  $(\mu_0, \Sigma_0) \approx 0$  at  $>3\sigma$  when AXG predicts  $|\mu_0|, |\Sigma_0| \lesssim \mathcal{O}(0.1)$ .

Deliverables: (i) 68/95% contours in  $(\mu_0, \Sigma_0)$ , (ii) forecasted  $S_8$  band, (iii) ISW $\times$ LSS amplitude shift  $\Delta A_{\text{ISW}}/A_{\text{ISW}}(\Lambda\text{CDM})$ .

### 6.3 CMB-S4 and Planck Lensing

CMB-S4 precision on  $\theta^*$ , lensing  $C_{\ell}^{\kappa\kappa}$ , and cross-correlations will test  $\Sigma(a,k)$  at the few-percent level. AXG Test B predicts  $\Sigma \approx 1$  on linear scales; significant deviation would refute AXG or confine it to narrower parameter space.

### 6.4 LISA Ringdowns (Black Hole QNMs)

AXG predicts regular horizons with small shifts in QNM spectra relative to Kerr:  $\delta f/f \lesssim \mathcal{O}(10^{-2})$  for dominant modes. We propose forecasts using inspiral–merger–ringdown waveforms with a phenomenological  $\delta f_{\text{lm}}$  parameter per mode. Refutation: measured QNM shifts inconsistent with the AXG band or requiring  $\alpha_T \neq 0$ .

### 6.5 EHT Imaging and Photon Ring

Regular cores in AXG constrain the photon-sphere radius and ring morphology. We define  $\delta\theta_{\text{ring}} \equiv (\theta_{\text{ring}}^{\text{AXG}} - \theta_{\text{ring}}^{\text{GR}})/\theta_{\text{ring}}^{\text{GR}}$  as a summary statistic. Refutation occurs if

EHT ring sizes for M87\* and Sgr A\* consistently demand  $|\delta\theta_{\text{ring}}| > 5\%$  beyond modeling systematics.

## 6.6 Pulsar Timing (Binary Systems)

AXG suppresses scalar dipole radiation in the Test B branch. Forecasts for J1738+0333 and B1913+16 use timing precision extrapolated from current baselines to test any residual dipolar term. Refutation: evidence for significant dipole emission or anomalous period decay not captured by AXG.

## 6.7 Refutation Checklist

- Linear scales:  $(\mu, \Sigma)$  deviates from unity by  $>20\%$  at  $z \lesssim 1$  without compensating improvements in  $S_8/\text{RSD}$ .
- $\theta^*$ : sub-percent shifts relative to Planck beyond allowed priors.
- ISW $\times$ LSS: wrong sign or  $>30\%$  amplitude error across multiple tracers.
- QNMs:  $\delta f/f$  outside AXG-predicted band for  $\geq 2$  dominant modes.
- EHT:  $|\delta\theta_{\text{ring}}| > 5\%$  robustly across sources.
- Pulsars: detectable dipole radiation inconsistent with AXG suppression.

## 6.8 Files for Forecast Pipelines

We provide template CSVs to seed forecast codes. The user supplies survey specs and noise models; our analysis scripts read these tables.

- forecasts/spec\_params.csv — baseline parameters and priors ( $H_0, \Omega_b, \mu_0, \Sigma_0, s, \dots$ ).
- forecasts/survey\_shear\_bins.csv — tomographic WL specs ( $n(z), \sigma_\gamma, \text{area}$ ).
- forecasts/ggl\_clustering\_bins.csv — galaxy biases, number densities, area.
- forecasts/qnm\_sensitivity.csv — LISA SNR and  $\delta f/f$  reach per mode.
- forecasts/eht\_systematics.csv — ring-size modeling errors, baseline coverage.

*This section acts as the conclusion of Paper III.*

## Appendix

### Appendix A: Equations and Derivations

Master Equation (recap). We consider the adaptive response encoded by  $S(\chi)$ ,  $\Psi(K)$ , and the  $\hbar$ -dependent  $Q_{\{\mu\nu\}}(K, \nabla K)$ . At cosmological scales the reduction yields an effective contribution  $\Omega_{\text{XG}}(a)$  to the Friedmann equation, with two emergent regimes: dust-like at early times ( $w \approx 0$ ,  $c_s^2 \approx 0$ ) and DE-like at late times ( $w \approx -1$ ).

Linear growth equation. For the growth factor  $D(a)$  we use:  $D''(\ln a) + [2 + H'/H] D'(\ln a) - (3/2) \Omega_m(a) \mu(a, k) D = 0$ , with primes denoting derivatives w.r.t.  $\ln a$ . Here  $\Omega_m(a) = \Omega_{m, \text{eff}} a^{-3} / E(a)^2$  and  $E(a) = H(a)/H_0$ .

Test A vs Test B. In Test A (baryons + DE-like only),  $\Omega_b \approx 0.05$  and  $\mu$  must be  $\approx \Omega_m / \Omega_b \approx 6.4$  on linear scales to mimic  $\Lambda$ CDM growth—inconsistent with WL/RSD. In Test B (dust+DE-like),  $\Omega_{m, \text{eff}} \approx 0.32$  and  $\mu \approx 1$  suffices; growth and lensing match data.

Stability and causality. The viable branch has  $c_T = 1$  ( $\alpha_T = 0$ ), a ghost-free kinetic Hessian, hyperbolic principal symbol, and  $c_s^2 > 0$ .

## Appendix B: Data Tables (CSV files)

B.1 Supernovae (Pantheon/Pantheon+): official releases (referenced in main text).

B.2 BAO: AXG\_BAO\_compilation\_section2.csv ; Section5\_BAO\_DV\_over\_rd.csv

B.3 Growth (RSD): f\_sigma8\_compilation\_AXG\_PaperIII.csv

B.4 Weak lensing: AXG\_S8\_compilation\_section4.csv

B.5 CMB: Section5\_theta\_star\_Planck2018.csv ; Section5\_Planck2018\_A\_L.csv

## Appendix C: Figures

C1.  $f\sigma_8(z)$  compilation with AXG prediction band (see Section 3).

C2.  $D_V/r_d$  BAO ladder (Observed vs Test A vs Test B) (see Section 5).

C3. S8 comparison (Planck vs DES vs KiDS) (see Section 4).

C4. Forecast sensitivity for QNMs (schematic; to be added in Paper IV if needed).

## Appendix D: Sample Code and Reproducibility

We provide a minimal Python notebook `AXG_growth_solver.ipynb` that integrates the linear growth equation using a Runge–Kutta scheme and compares the resulting  $f\sigma_8(z)$  curve to the compiled RSD data. Users can toggle between Test A (baryons+DE-like) and Test B (dust+DE-like) and modify  $\mu(a)$  and  $w_{\text{XG}}$ . All CSV inputs referenced in the main text are placed alongside the manuscript for reproducibility.

## **Acknowledgements**

Thank you for your attention.

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