



Inflation beyond slow-roll and non-Gaussianity

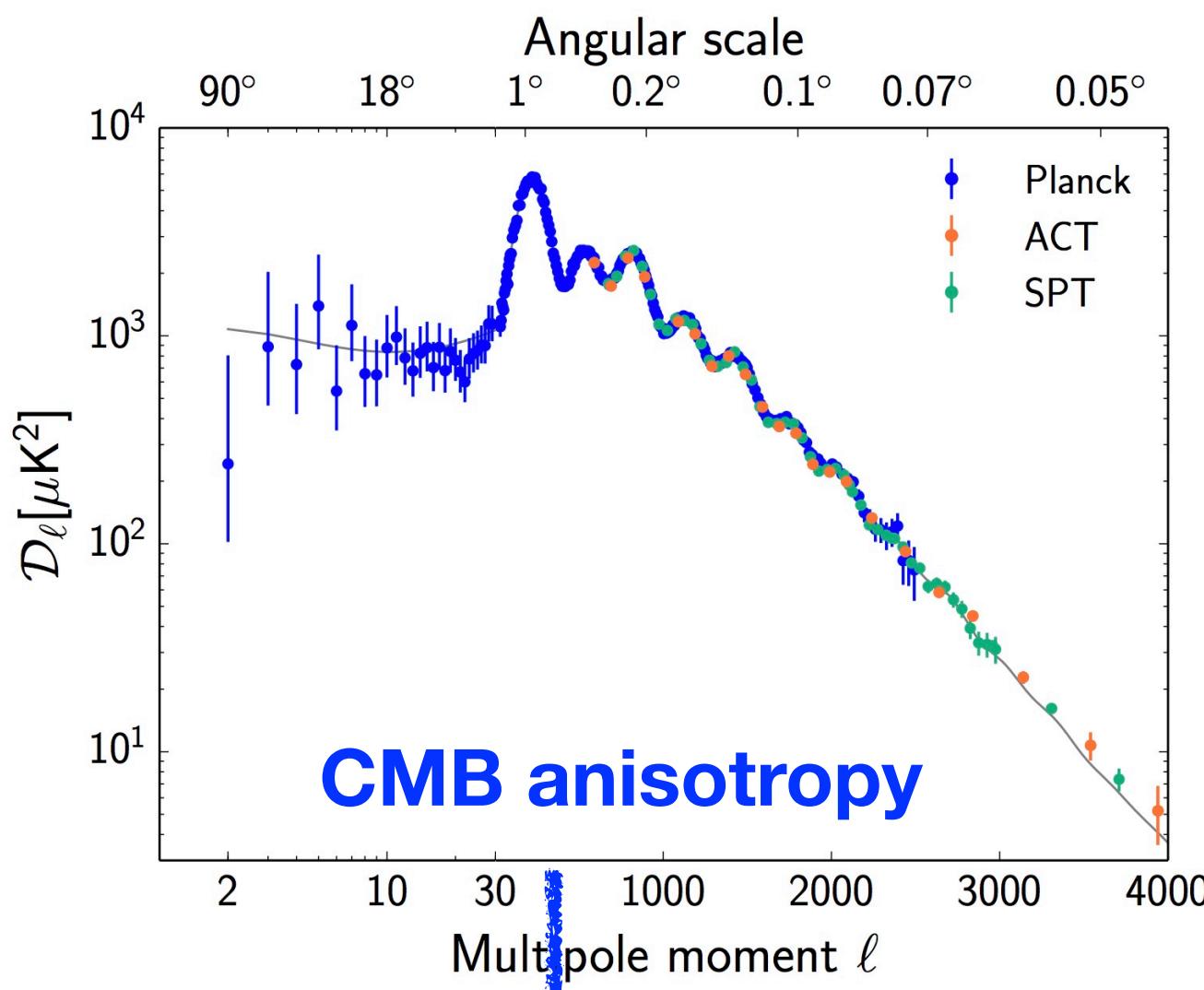
Shi Pi

Institute of Theoretical Physics, Chinese Academy of Sciences

Cosmology Beyond the Analytic Lamppost (CoBALt)
Université Paris-Saclay, June 26th, 2025

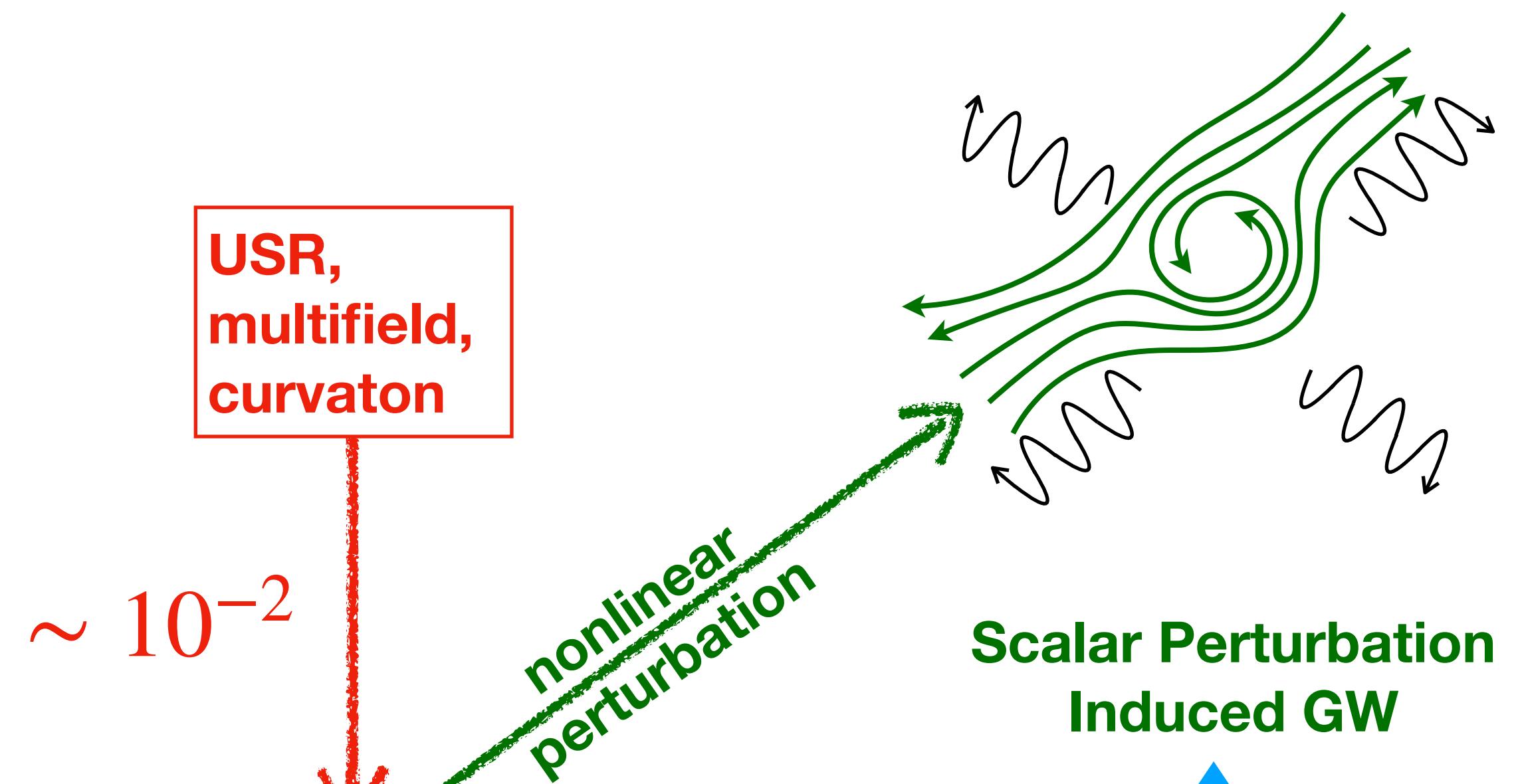
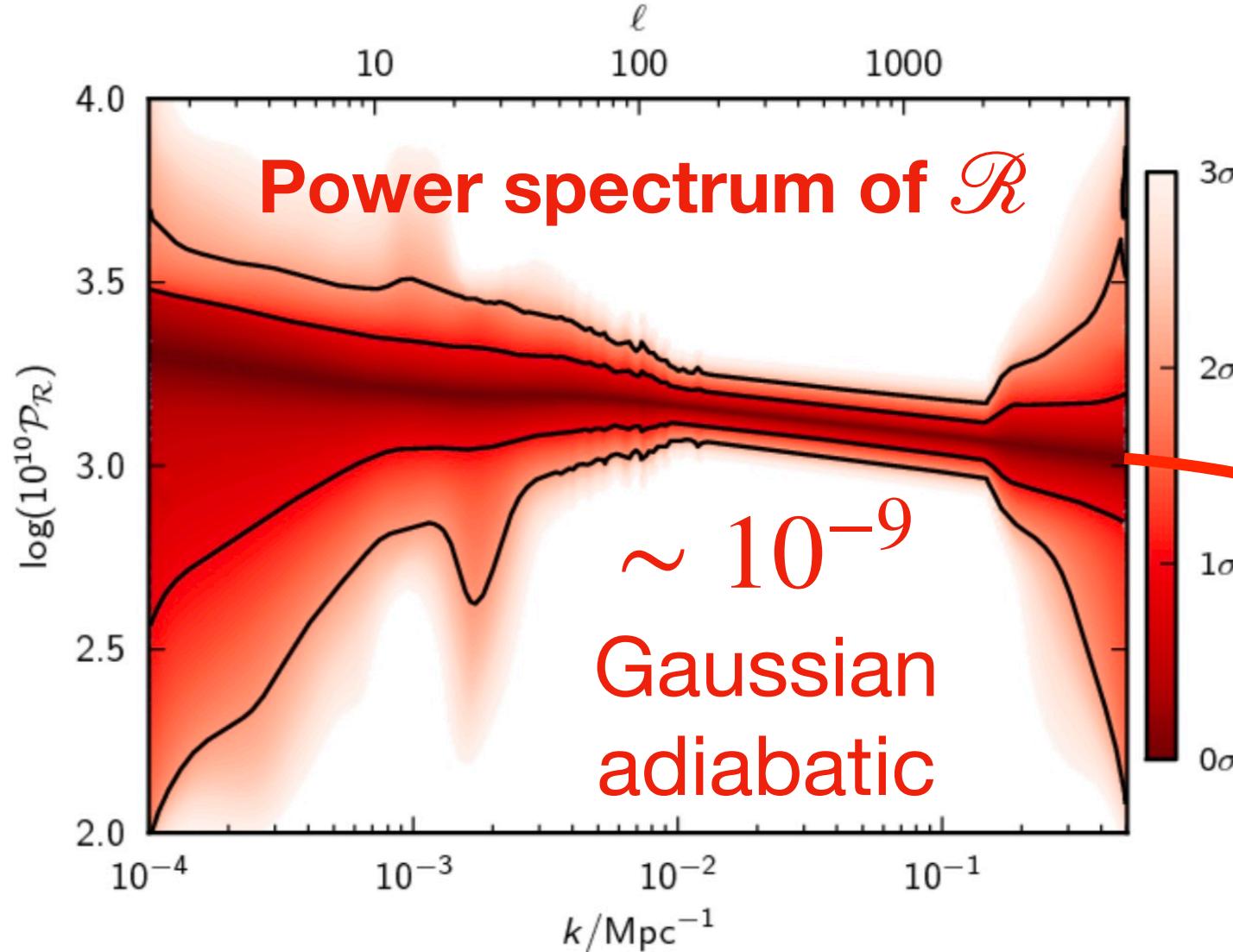
CONTENT

- Introduction: δN formalism
- Application: USR and general single-field
- Recent topics: gradient expansion and bubbles
- Conclusion



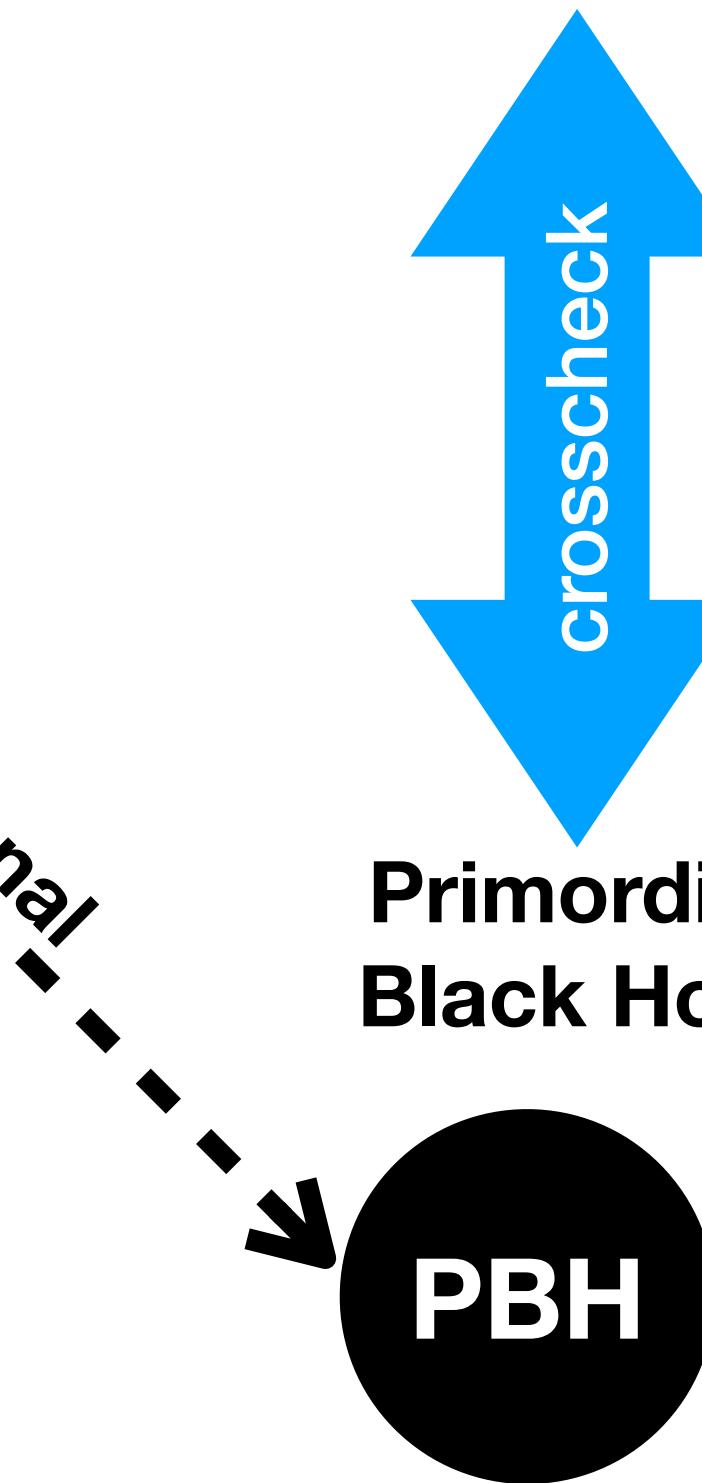
$$\mathcal{R} = \delta N \approx -\frac{H}{\dot{\phi}} \delta \varphi$$

Reconstruction

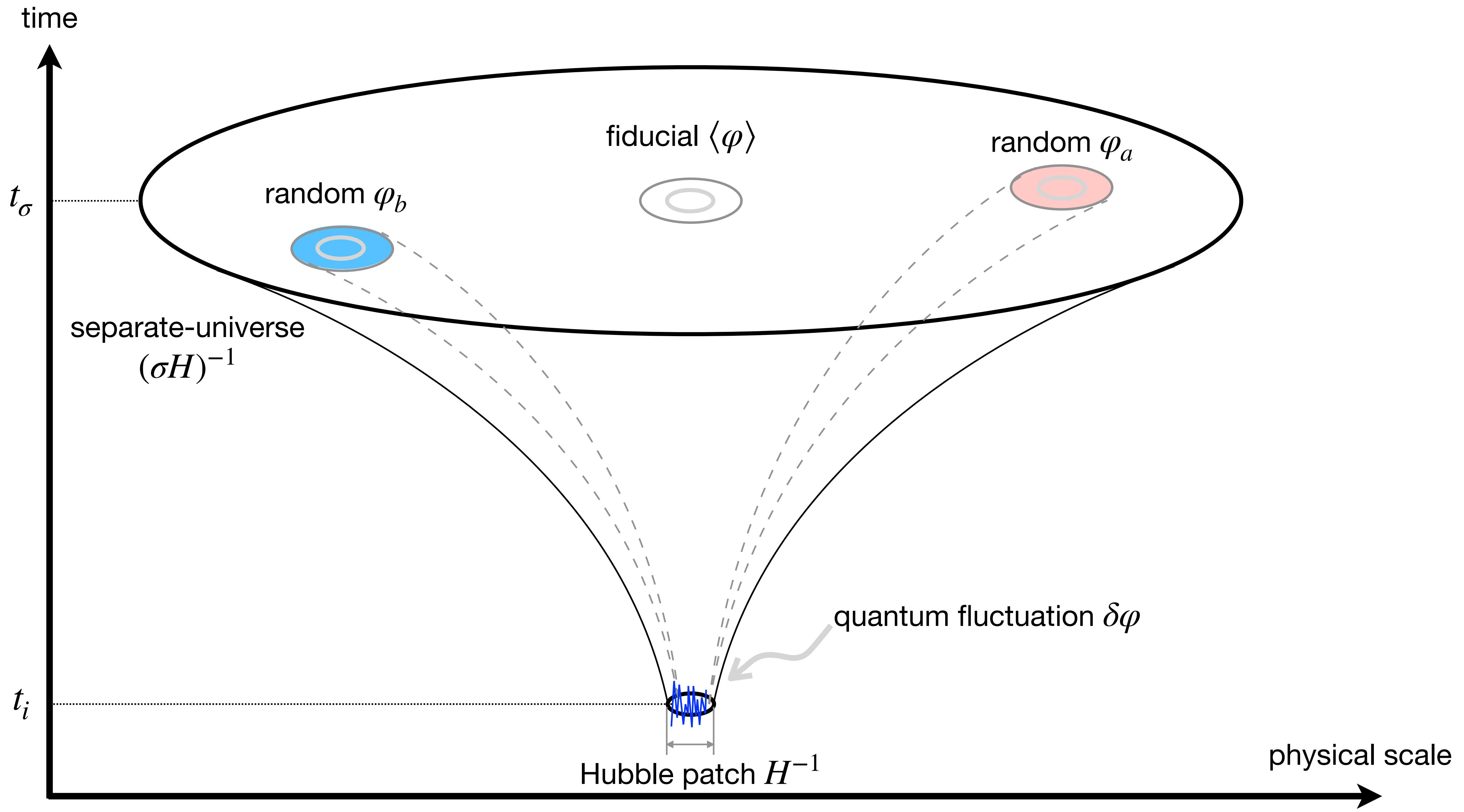


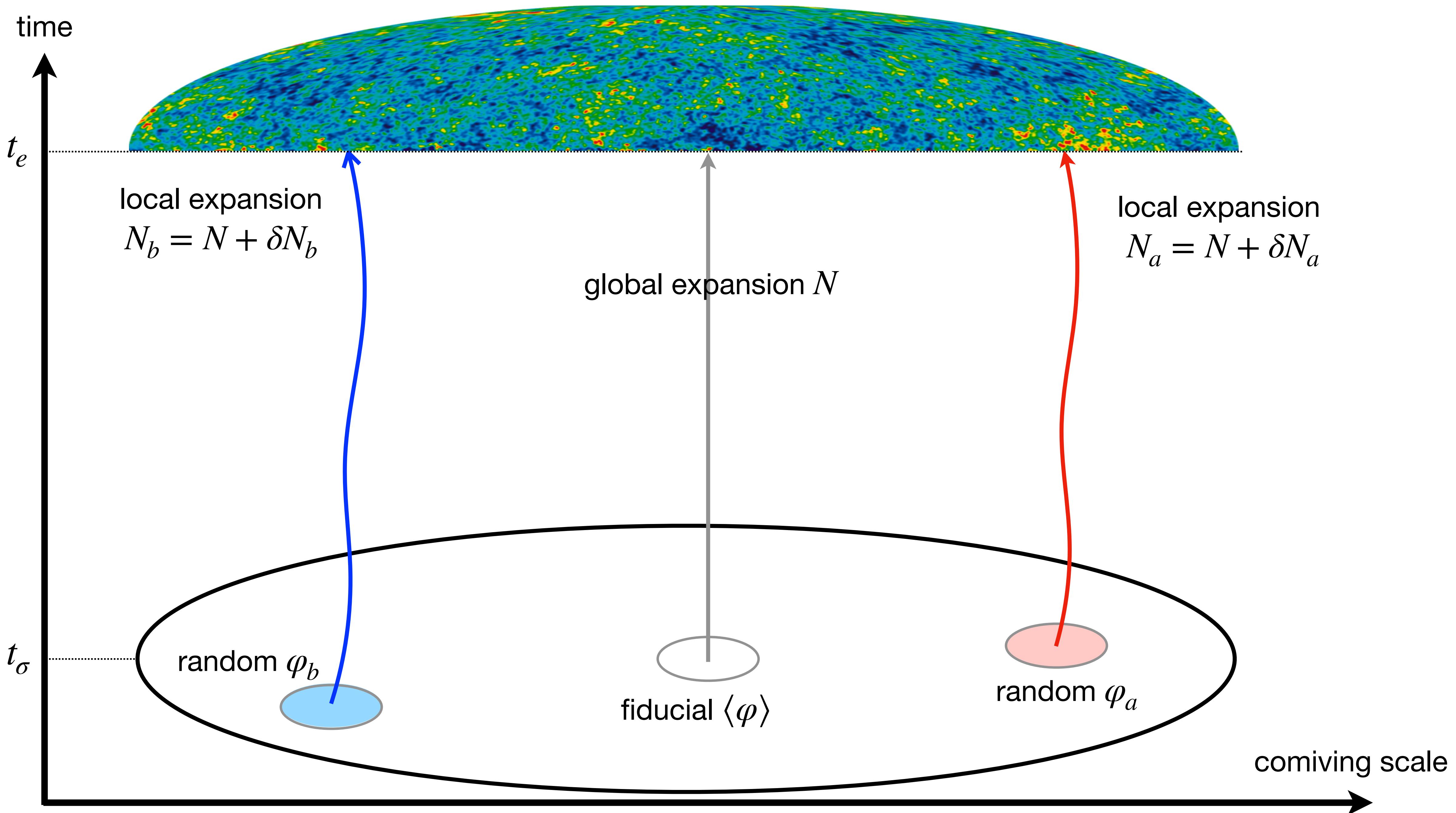
**Scalar Perturbation
Induced GW**

Matarrese et al, PRD 47, 1311;
PRL 72, 320; PRD 58, 043504
Ananda et al, gr-qc/0612013
Bauman et al, hep-th/0703290



Zeldovich & Novikov 1966
Hawking 1971
Carr & Hawking 1974





$$ds^2 \sim a^2 e^{2\mathcal{R}} d\mathbf{x}^2$$

$$\mathcal{R}_a = \delta N(\delta\varphi_a)$$

On linear level:

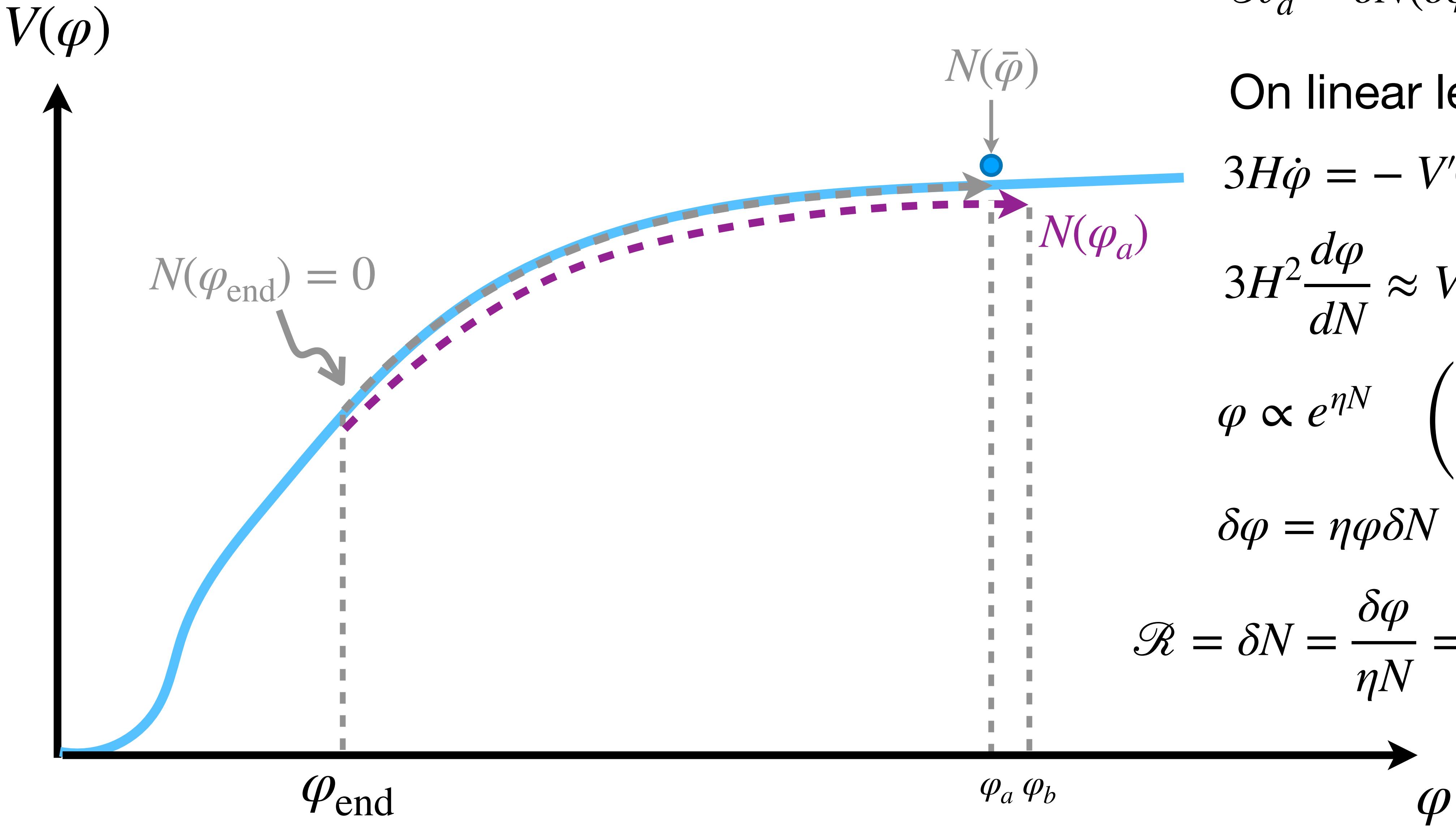
$$3H\dot{\varphi} = -V'(\varphi)$$

$$3H^2 \frac{d\varphi}{dN} \approx V''(\varphi)\varphi$$

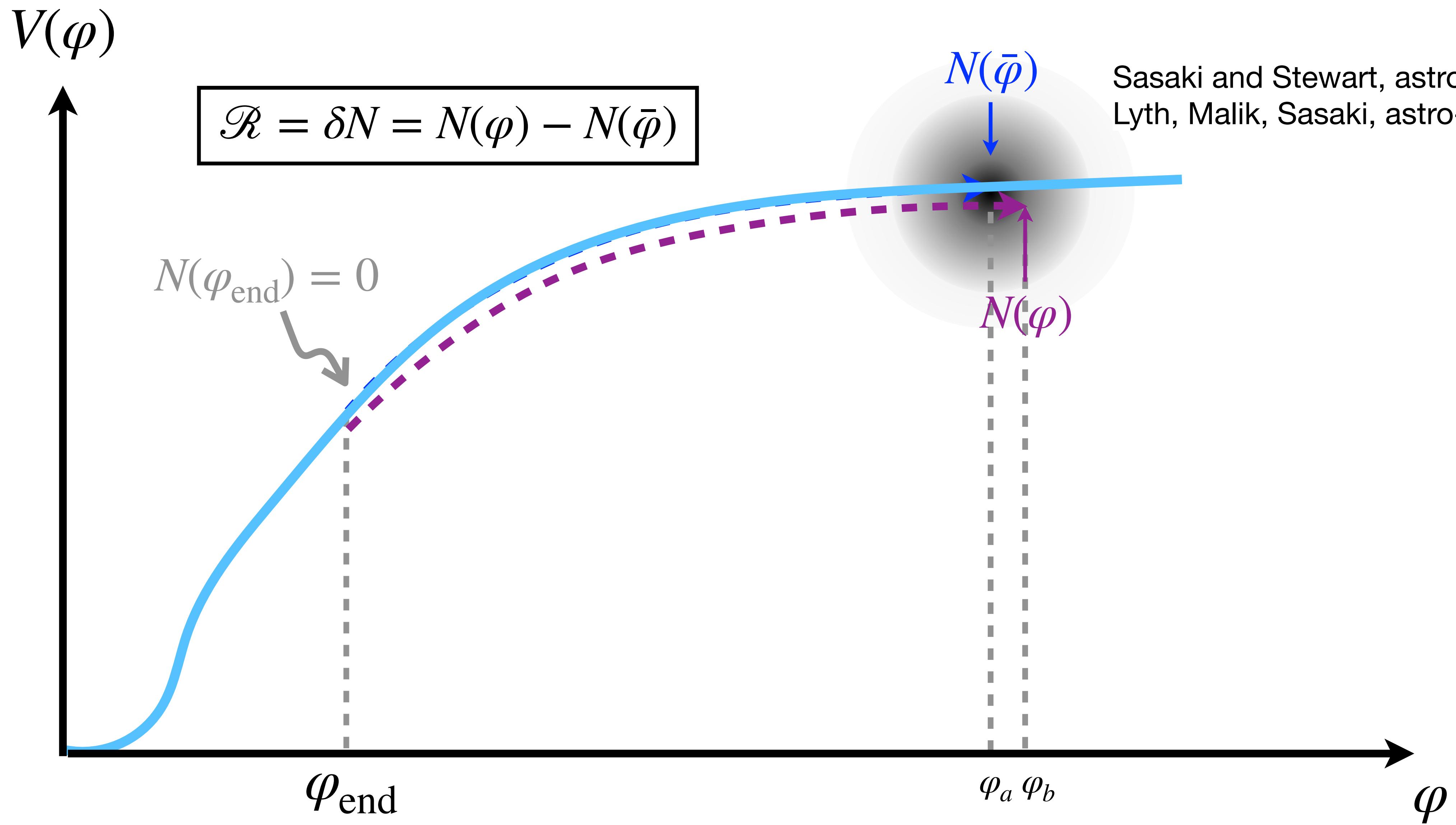
$$\varphi \propto e^{\eta N} \quad \left(\eta \equiv \frac{V''}{3H^2} \right)$$

$$\delta\varphi = \eta\varphi\delta N$$

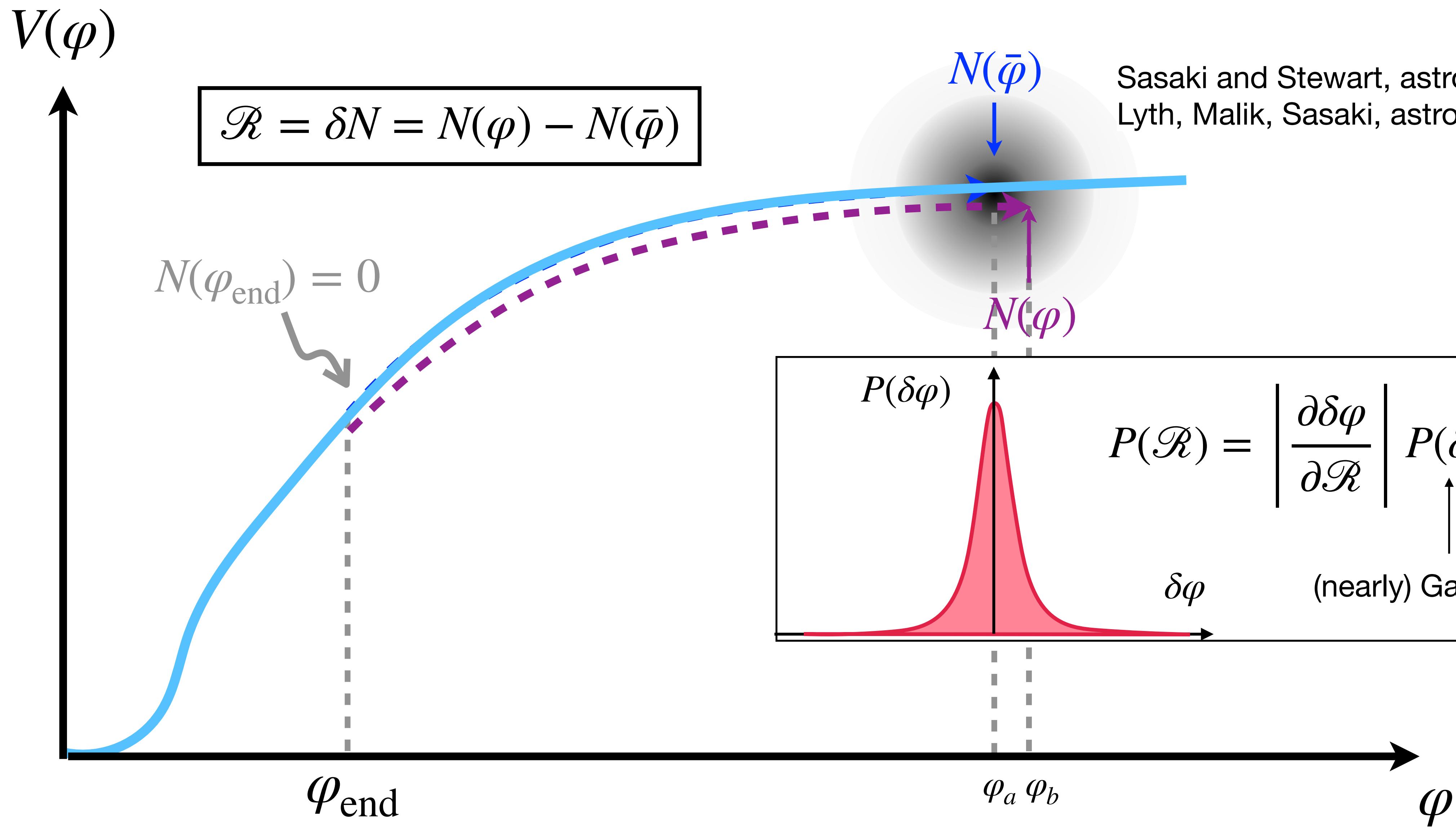
$$\mathcal{R} = \delta N = \frac{\delta\varphi}{\eta N} = -H \frac{\delta\varphi}{\dot{\varphi}}$$



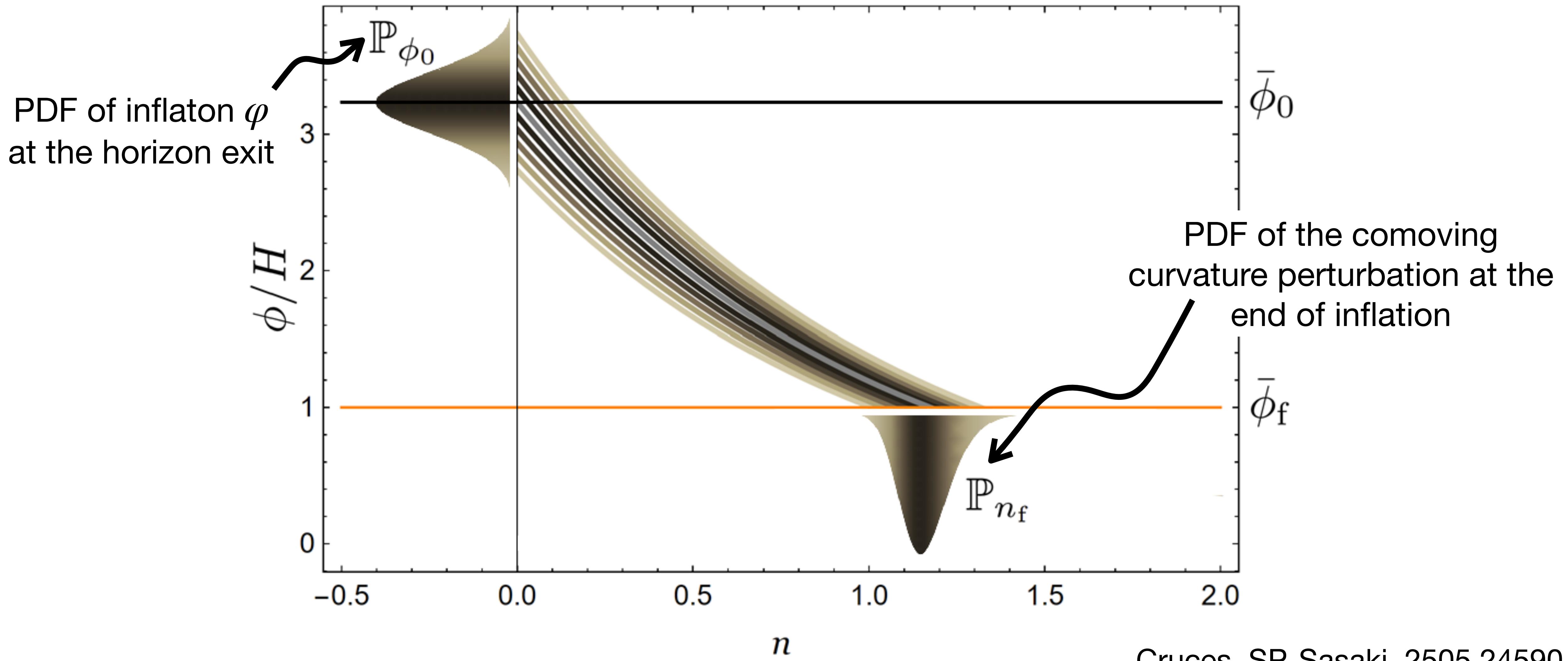
δN formalism



δN formalism



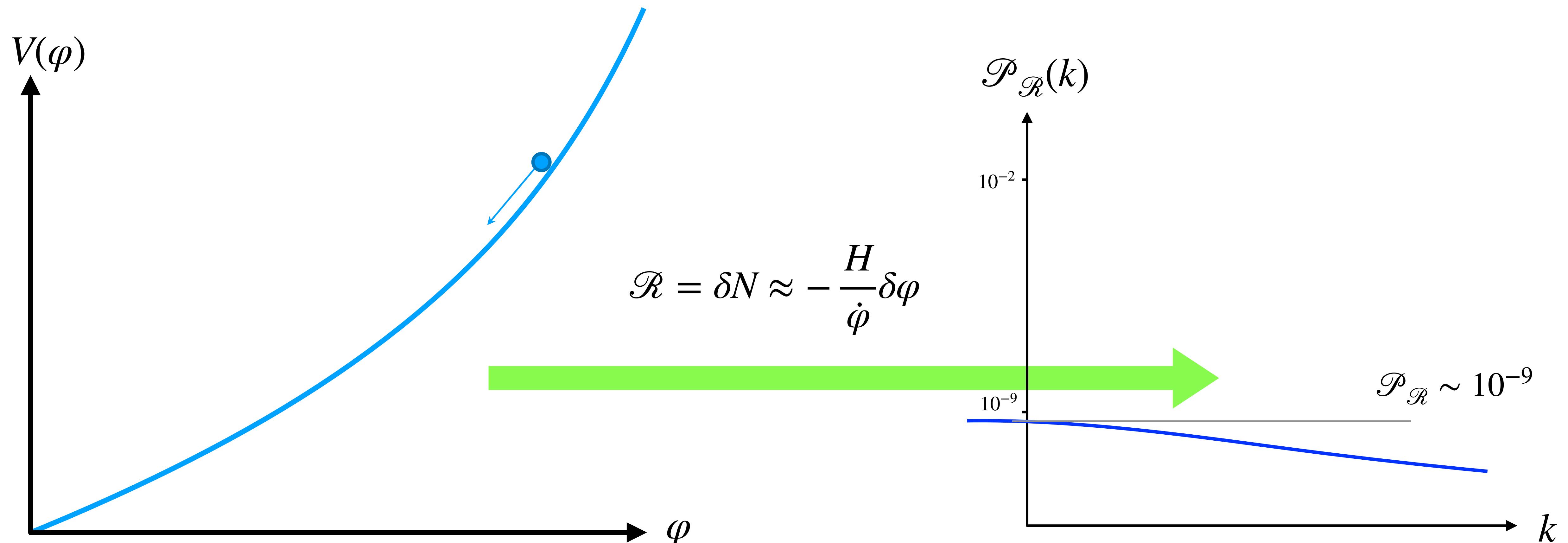
δN formalism



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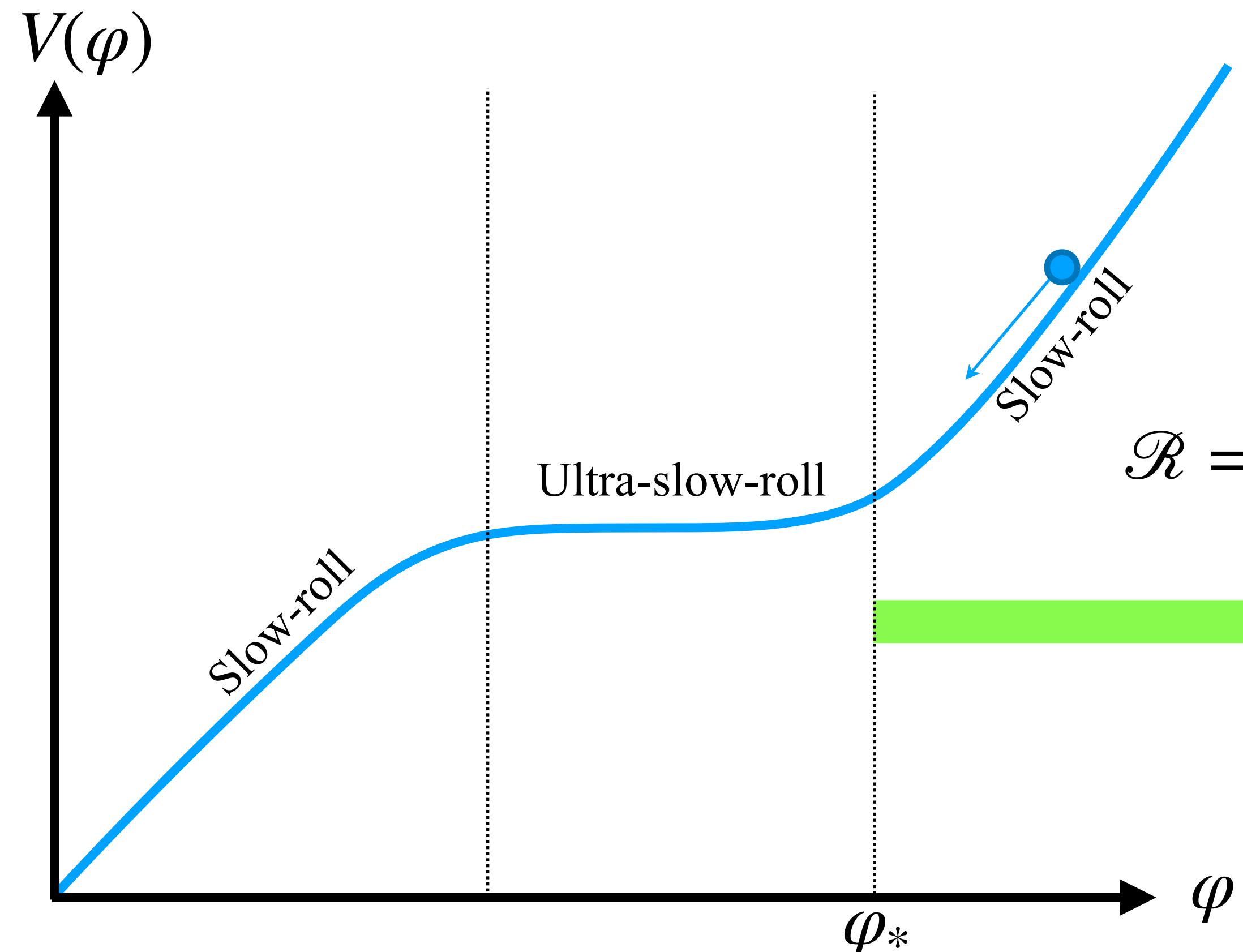
Gaussian Curvature Perturbation



10

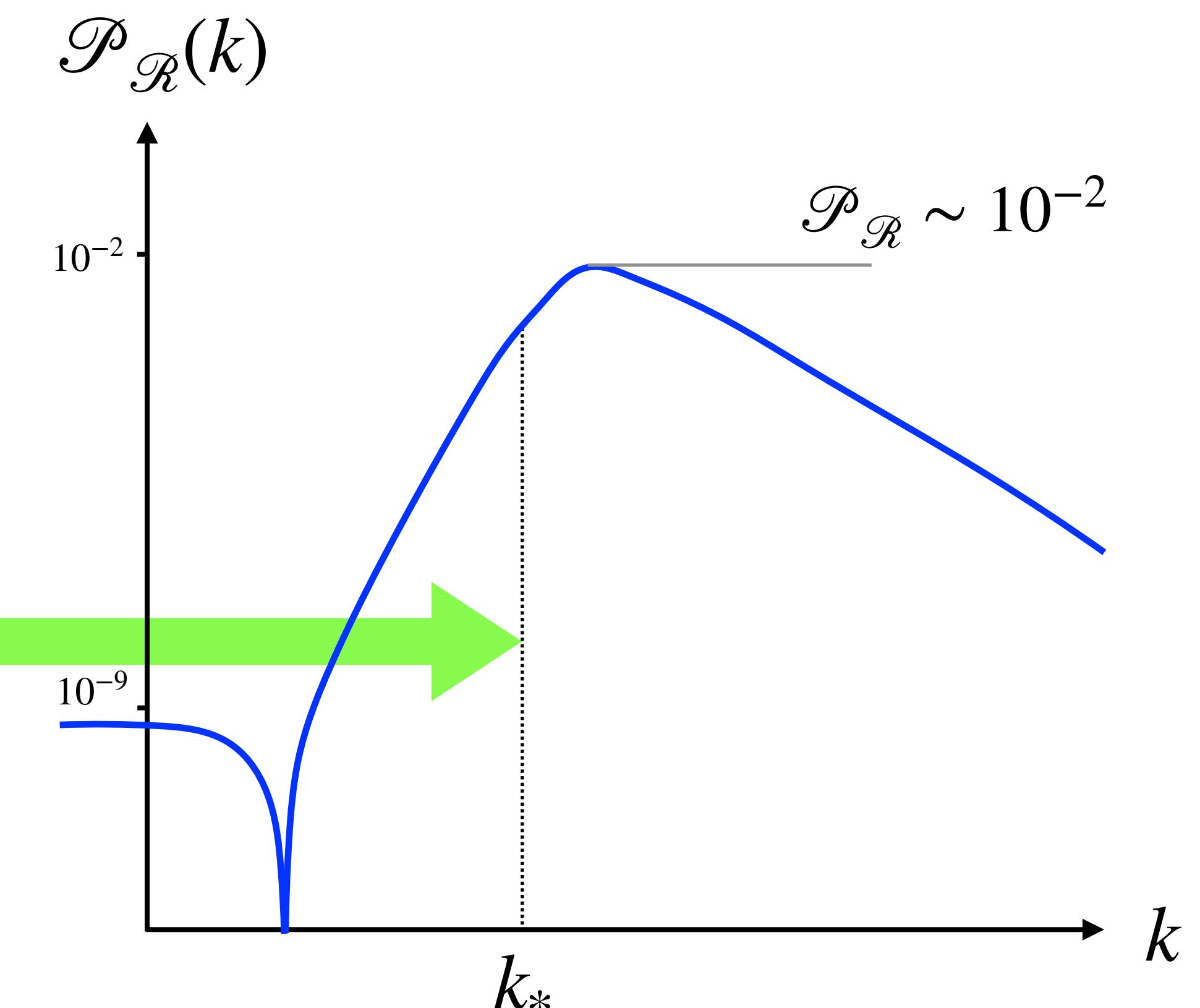
Stewart and Sasaki, astro-ph/9507001
Lyth and Roquinez, astro-ph/0504045

Ultra-slow-roll Inflation



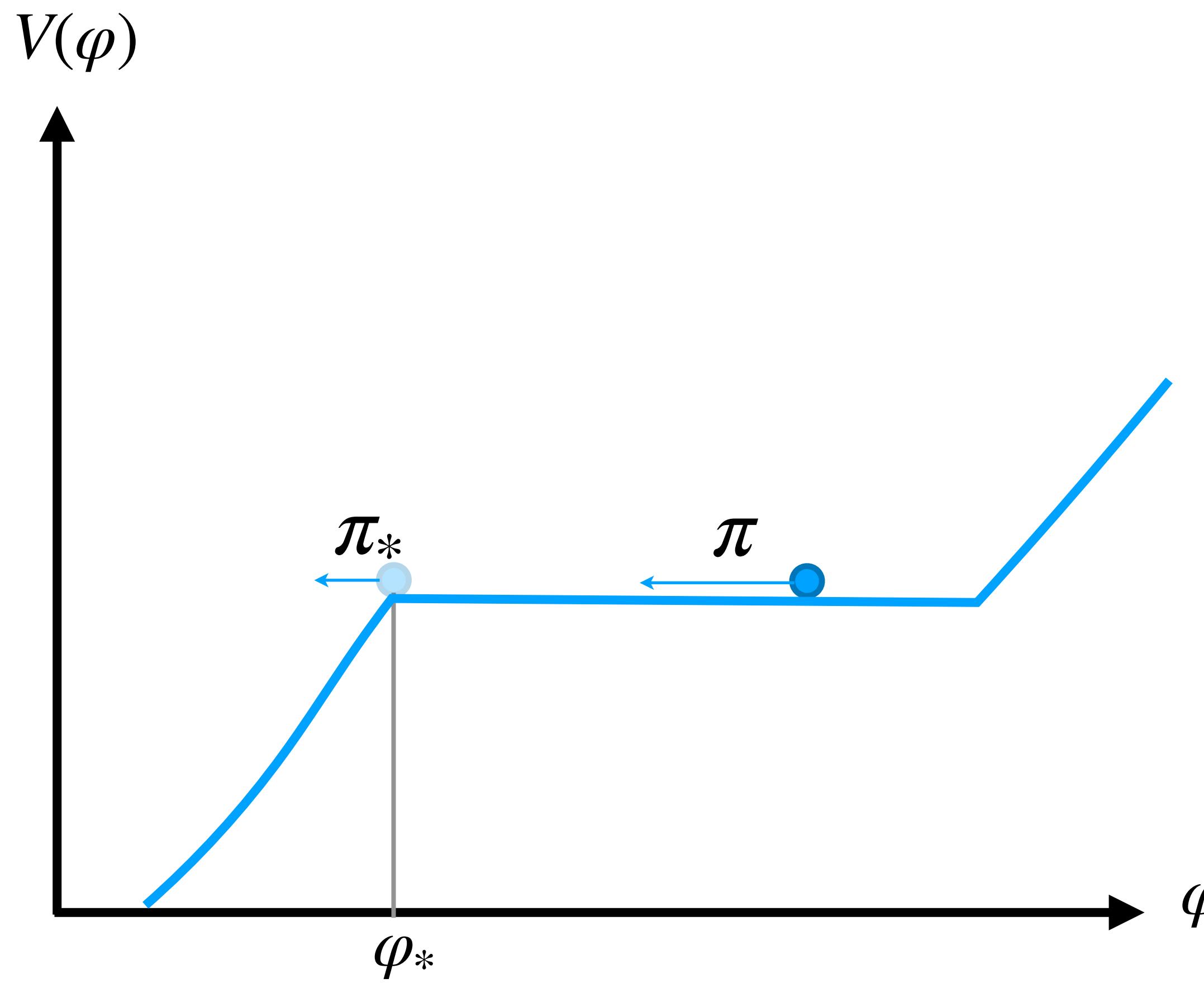
$$\mathcal{R} = \delta N \approx -\frac{H}{\dot{\varphi}} \delta\varphi$$

?



- Starobinski, JETP Lett. 55, 489
- Byrnes, Cole, Patil, 1811.11158
- Cole, Gow, Byrnes, Patil, 2204.07573
- SP & Jianing Wang, 2209.14183

Ultra-slow-roll inflation



$$\frac{d^2\varphi}{dN^2} - 3\frac{d\varphi}{dN} = 0$$

$$N = \int_{t_*}^t H dt$$

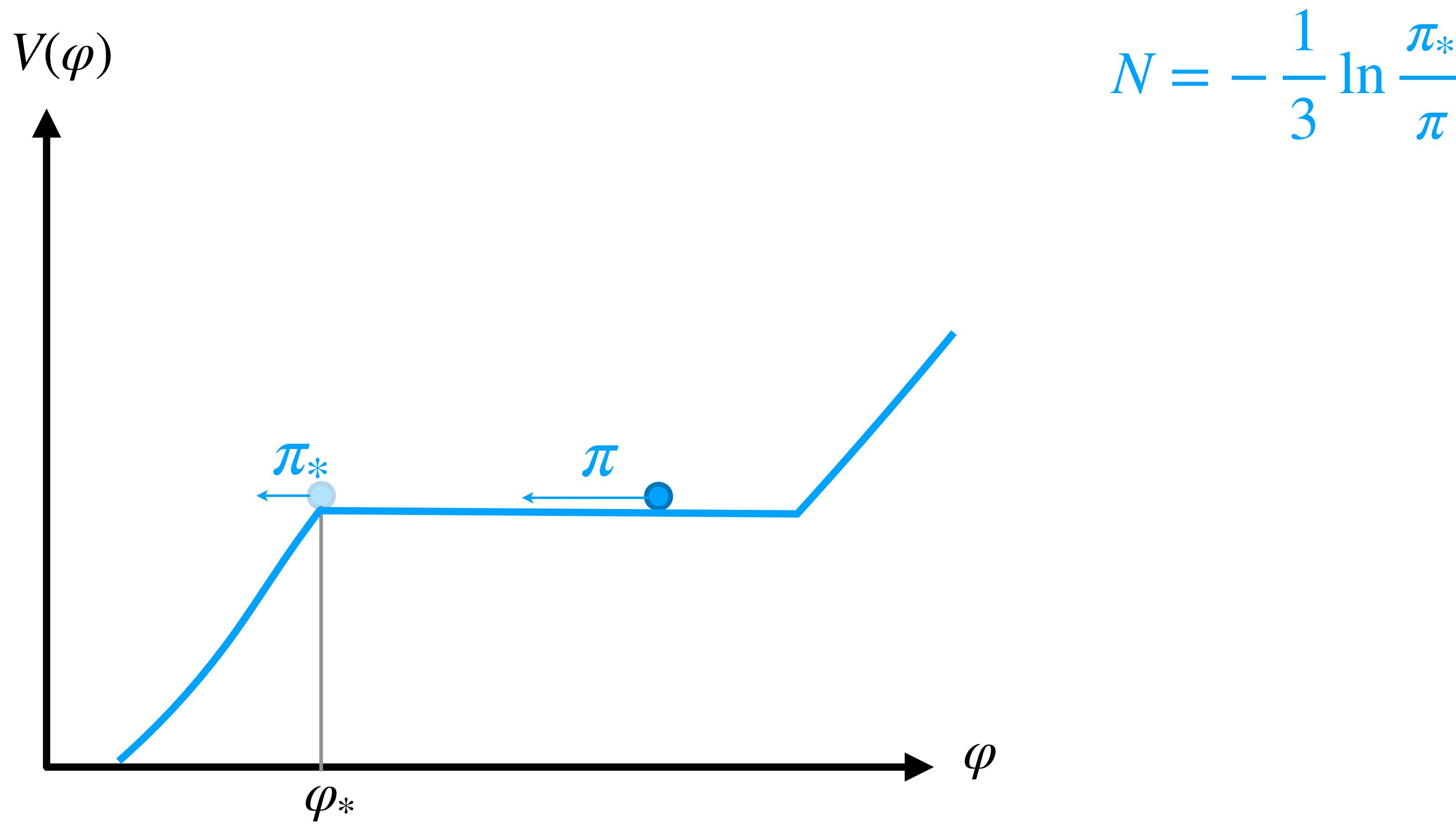
$$\varphi(N) = \varphi_* + \frac{\pi_*}{3} (1 - e^{3N})$$

$$\pi(N) \equiv -\frac{d\varphi}{dN} = \pi_* e^{3N}$$

$$N = -\frac{1}{3} \ln \frac{\pi_*}{\pi}$$

Ultra-slow-roll inflation

In the “fiducial” patch



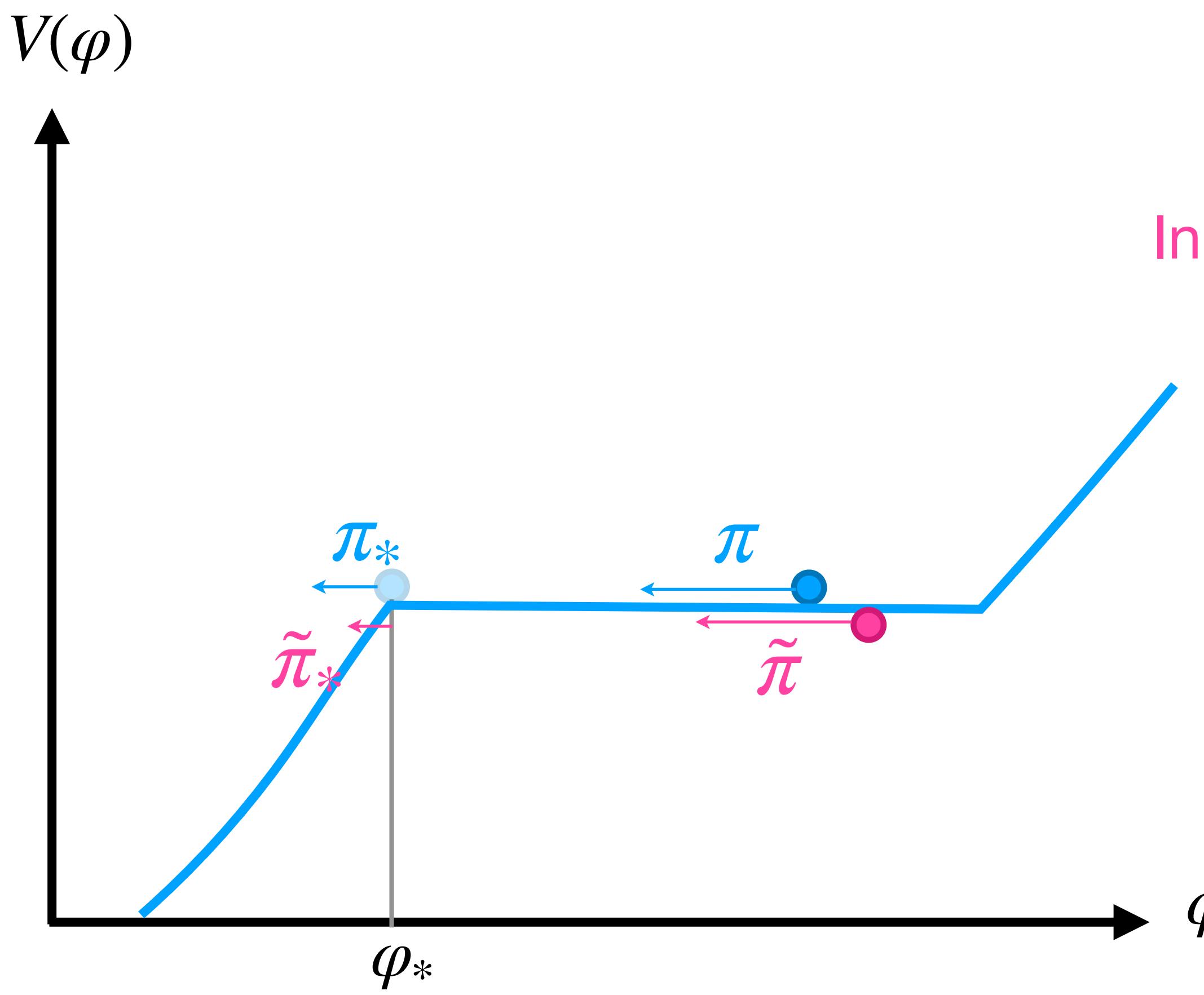
Ultra-slow-roll inflation

In the “fiducial” patch

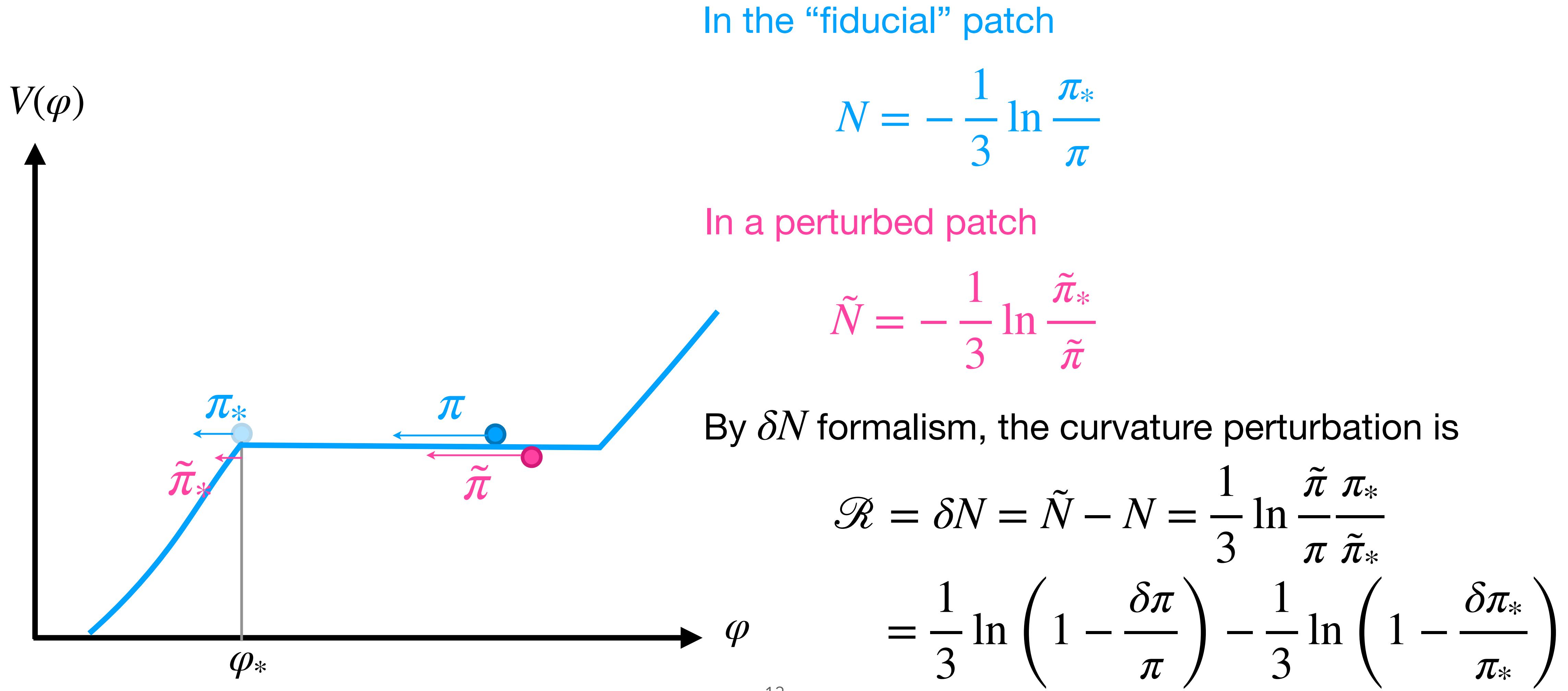
$$N = -\frac{1}{3} \ln \frac{\pi_*}{\pi}$$

In a perturbed patch

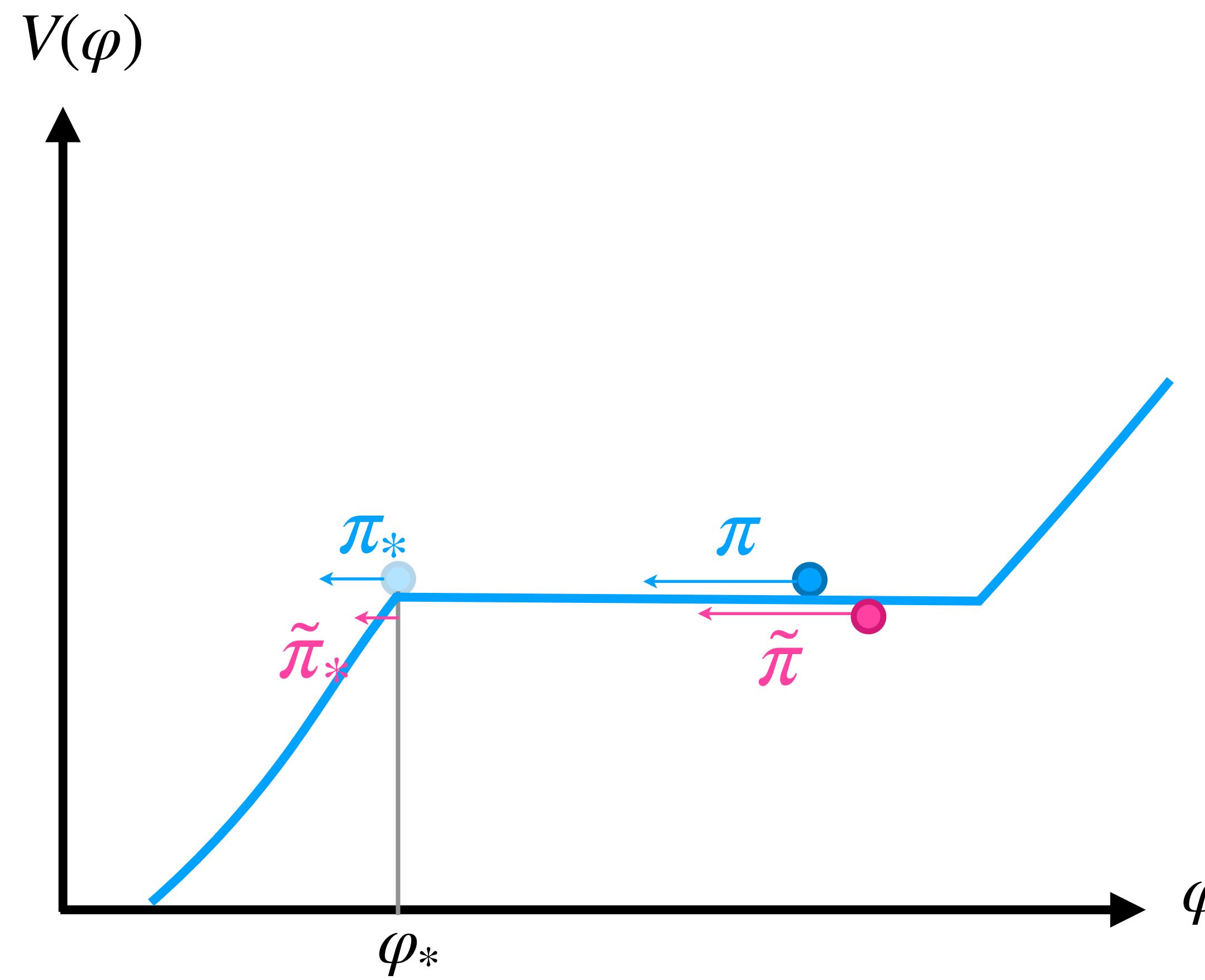
$$\tilde{N} = -\frac{1}{3} \ln \frac{\tilde{\pi}_*}{\tilde{\pi}}$$



Ultra-slow-roll inflation



Ultra-slow-roll inflation



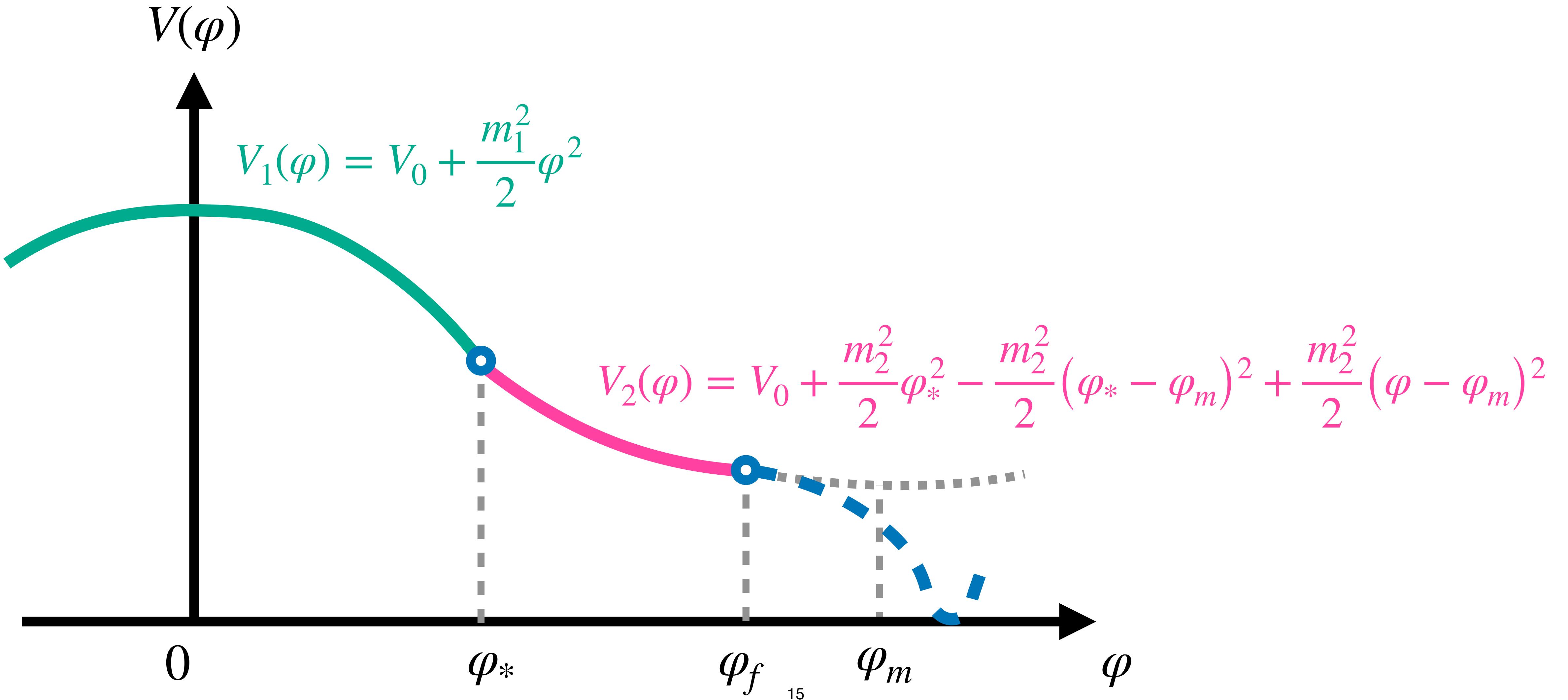
$$\mathcal{R} = -\frac{1}{3} \ln\left(1 - \frac{\delta\pi_*}{\pi_*}\right)$$

$$\left(f_{\text{NL}} = \frac{5}{2}, \quad g_{\text{NL}} = -\frac{25}{3}, \quad \dots \right)$$

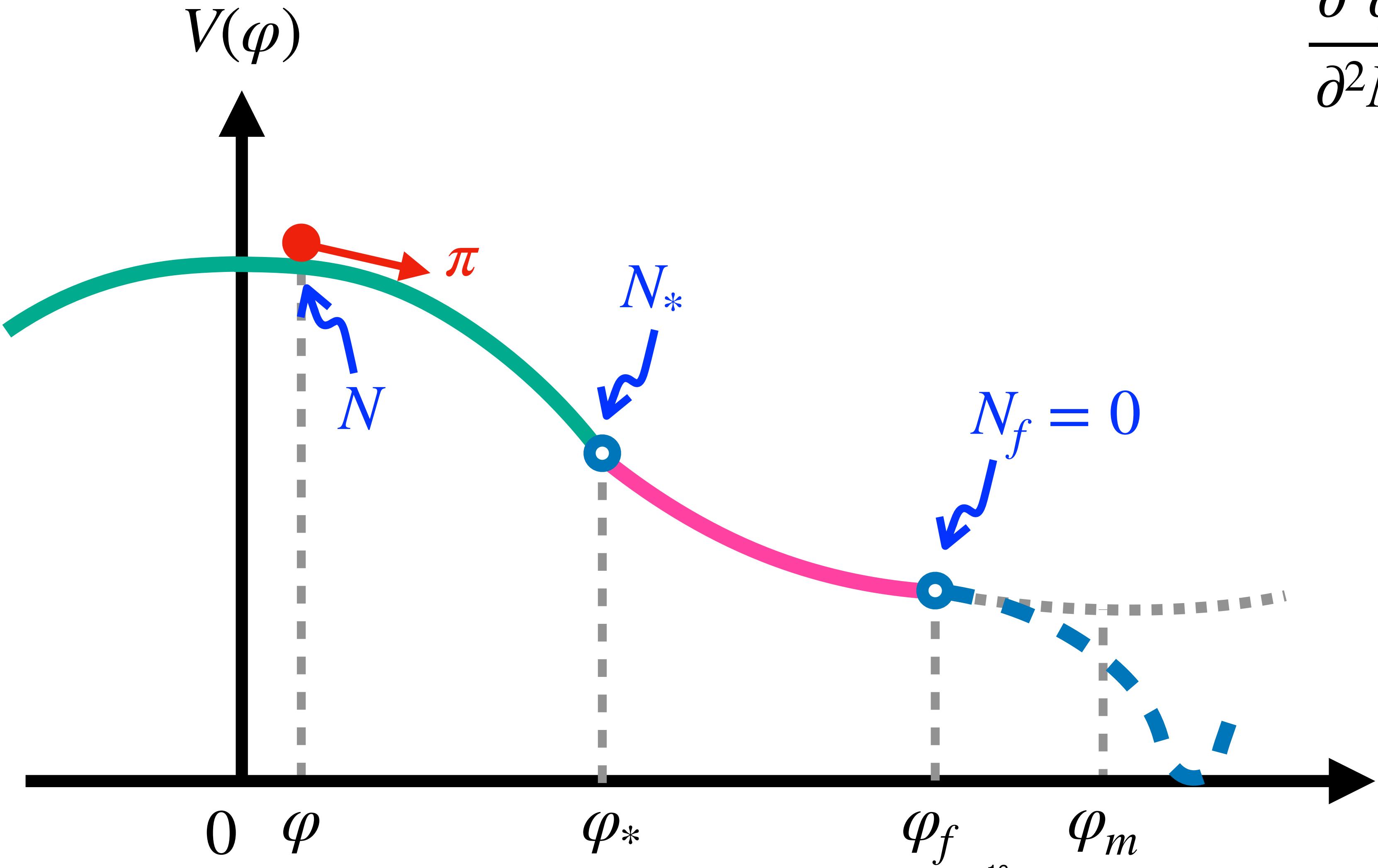
- Namjoo, Firouzjahi, Sasaki, 1210.3692
Chen, Firouzjahi, Komatsu, Namjoo, Sasaki, 1308.5341
Cai, Chen, Namjoo, Sasaki, Wang, Wang, 1712.09998
Biagetti, Franciolini, Kehagias, Riotto, 1804.07124
Passaglia, Hu, Motohashi, 1812.08243
SP and Sasaki, 2211.13932
SP, 2404.06151
Relation with stochastic approach, see e.g.
Jackson et al 2410.13683, Cruces et al 2410.17987

Guillermo and Alejandro's talk

piecewise quadratic potential



piecewise quadratic potential



$$\frac{\partial^2 \varphi}{\partial^2 N} - 3 \frac{\partial \varphi}{\partial N} + 3\eta_V \varphi = 0$$

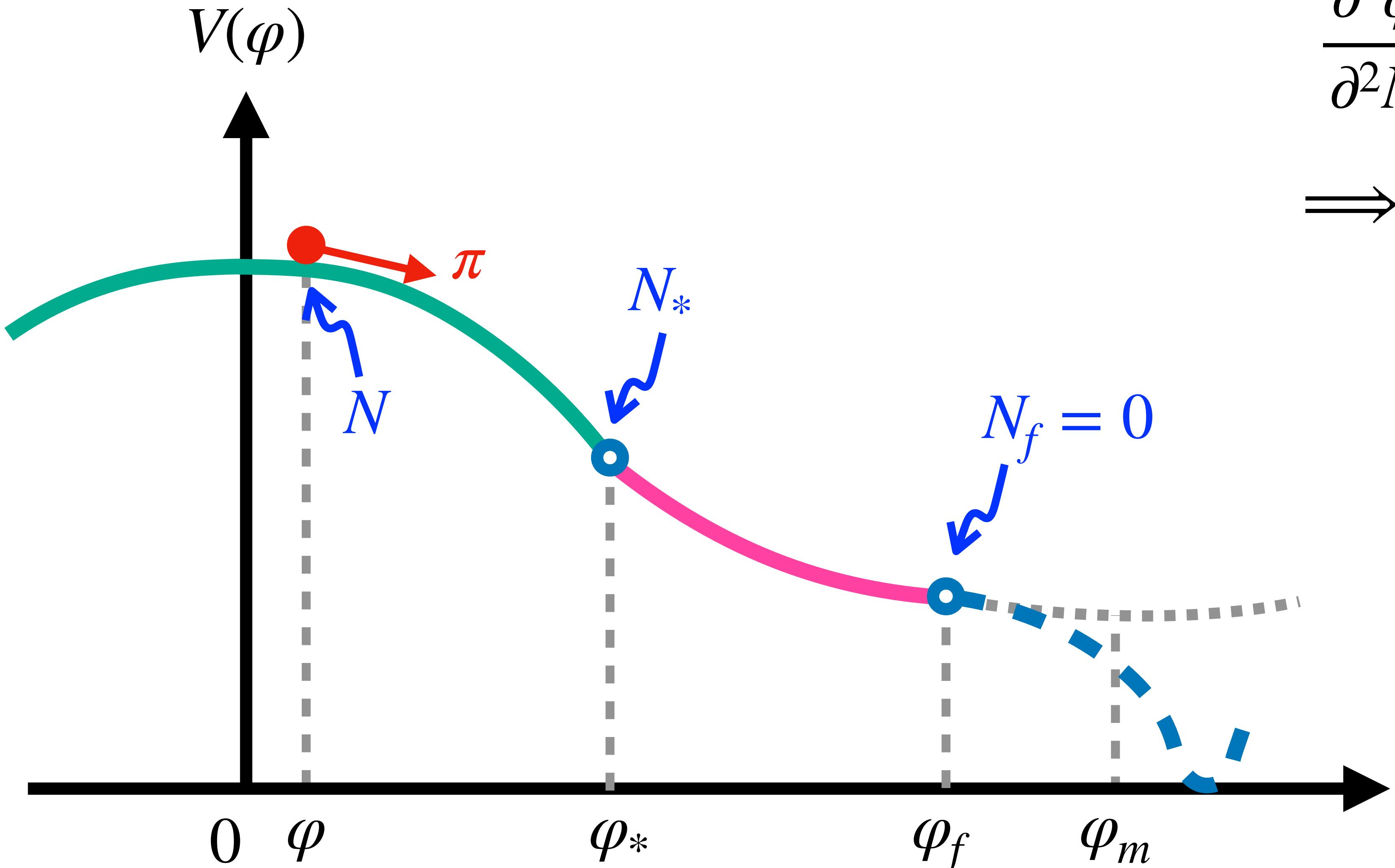
$$\eta_V = \frac{m_1^2}{3H^2}$$

$$N = \int_t^{t_f} H dt$$

$$V_1(\varphi) = V_0 + \frac{m_1^2}{2} \varphi^2$$

$$V_2(\varphi) = V_0 + \frac{m_2^2}{2} \varphi_*^2 - \frac{m_2^2}{2} (\varphi_* - \varphi_m)^2 + \frac{m_2^2}{2} (\varphi - \varphi_m)^2$$

background solution



$$\frac{\partial^2 \varphi}{\partial^2 N} - 3 \frac{\partial \varphi}{\partial N} + 3\eta_V \varphi = 0$$

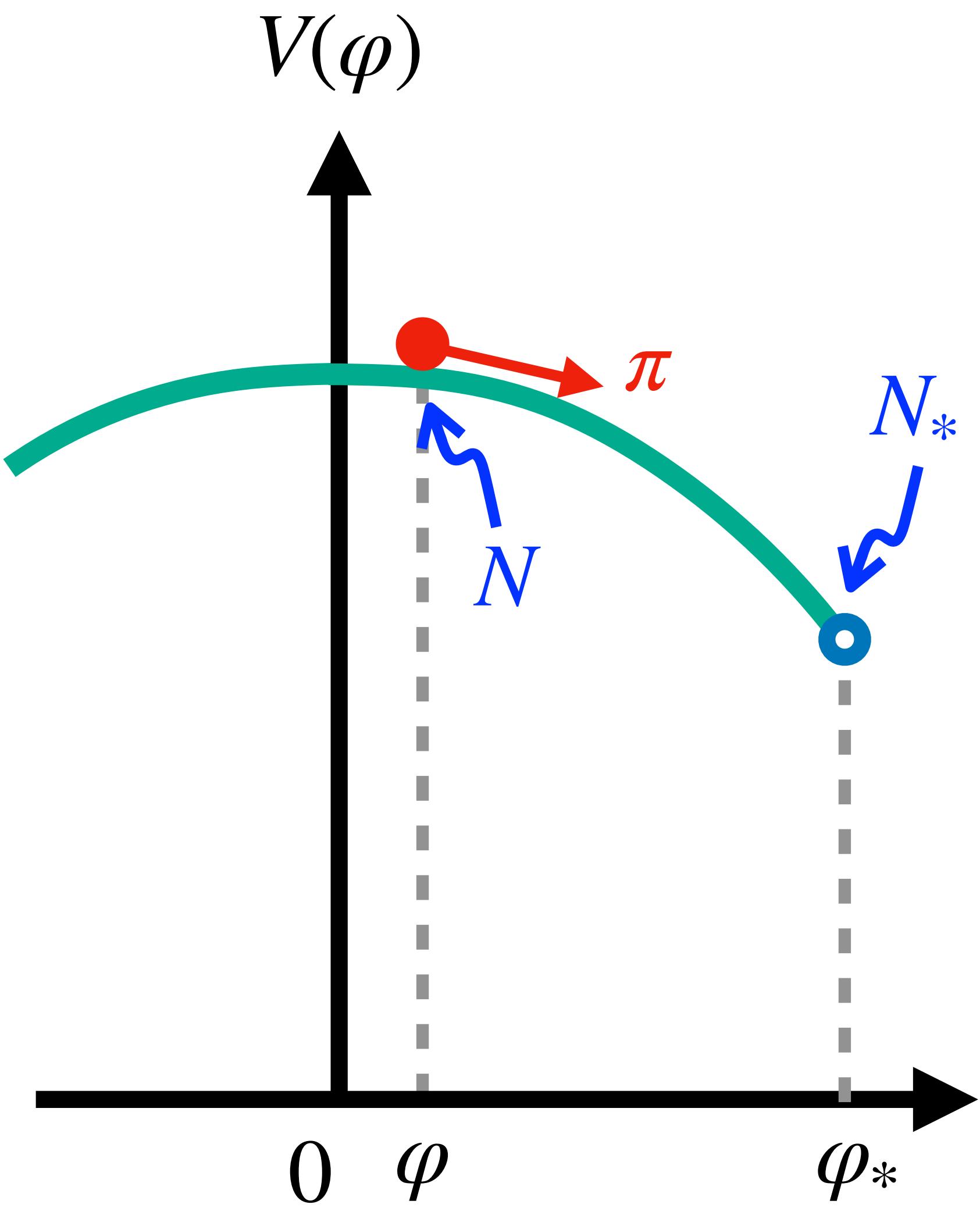
$$\Rightarrow \varphi = c_+ e^{\lambda_+ N} + c_- e^{\lambda_- N}$$

$$\lambda_{\pm} = \frac{3 \pm \sqrt{9 - 12\eta_V}}{2}$$

$$V_1(\varphi) = V_0 + \frac{m_1^2}{2} \varphi^2$$

$$V_2(\varphi) = V_0 + \frac{m_2^2}{2} \varphi_*^2 - \frac{m_2^2}{2} (\varphi_* - \varphi_m)^2 + \frac{m_2^2}{2} (\varphi - \varphi_m)^2$$

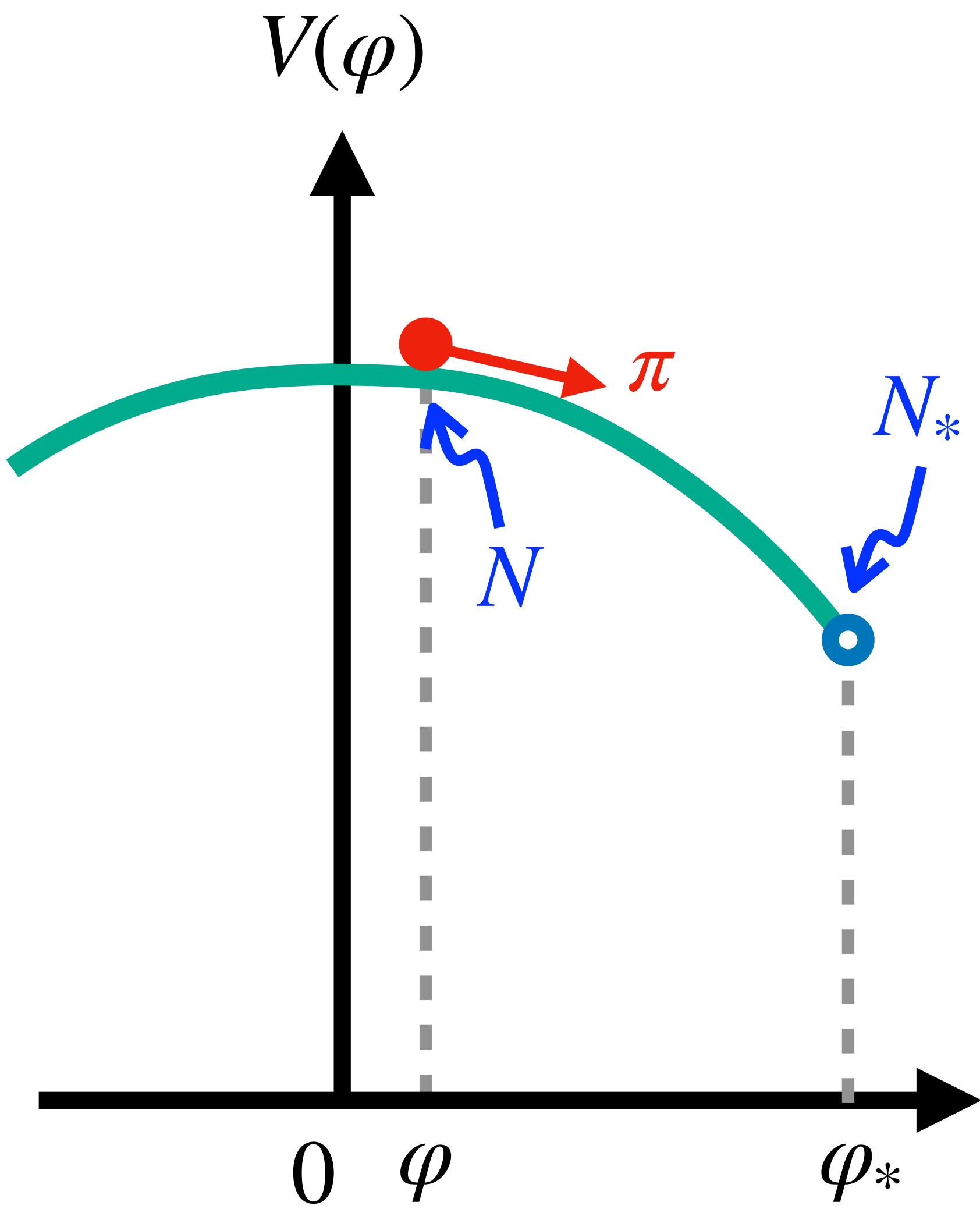
background solution



$$\varphi(N) = c_+ e^{\lambda_+(N-N_*)} + c_- e^{\lambda_-(N-N_*)}$$

$$-\pi(N) \equiv \frac{\partial \varphi}{\partial N} = \lambda_+ c_+ e^{\lambda_+(N-N_*)} + \lambda_- c_- e^{\lambda_-(N-N_*)}$$

background solution



$$\varphi(N) = c_+ e^{\lambda_+(N-N_*)} + c_- e^{\lambda_-(N-N_*)}$$

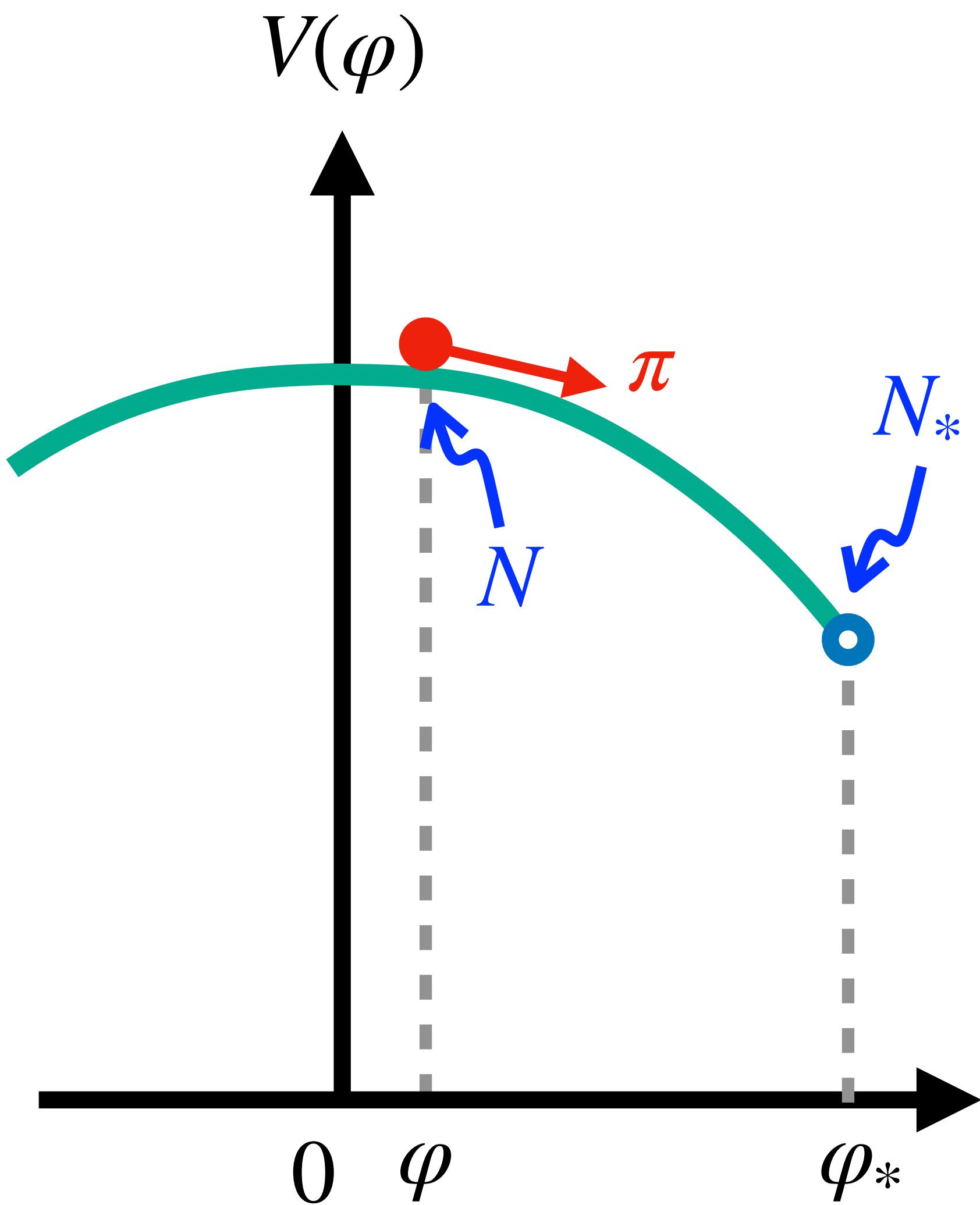
$$-\pi(N) \equiv \frac{\partial \varphi}{\partial N} = \lambda_+ c_+ e^{\lambda_+(N-N_*)} + \lambda_- c_- e^{\lambda_-(N-N_*)}$$

$$\varphi(N_*) \equiv \varphi_* = c_+ + c_-$$

$$-\pi(N_*) \equiv \pi_* = \lambda_+ c_+ + \lambda_- c_-$$

$$\Rightarrow c_{\pm} = \mp \frac{\pi_* + \lambda_{\mp} \varphi_*}{\lambda_+ - \lambda_-}$$

background solution



$$\varphi(N) = c_+ e^{\lambda_+(N-N_*)} + c_- e^{\lambda_-(N-N_*)}$$

$$-\pi(N) \equiv \frac{\partial \varphi}{\partial N} = \lambda_+ c_+ e^{\lambda_+(N-N_*)} + \lambda_- c_- e^{\lambda_-(N-N_*)}$$

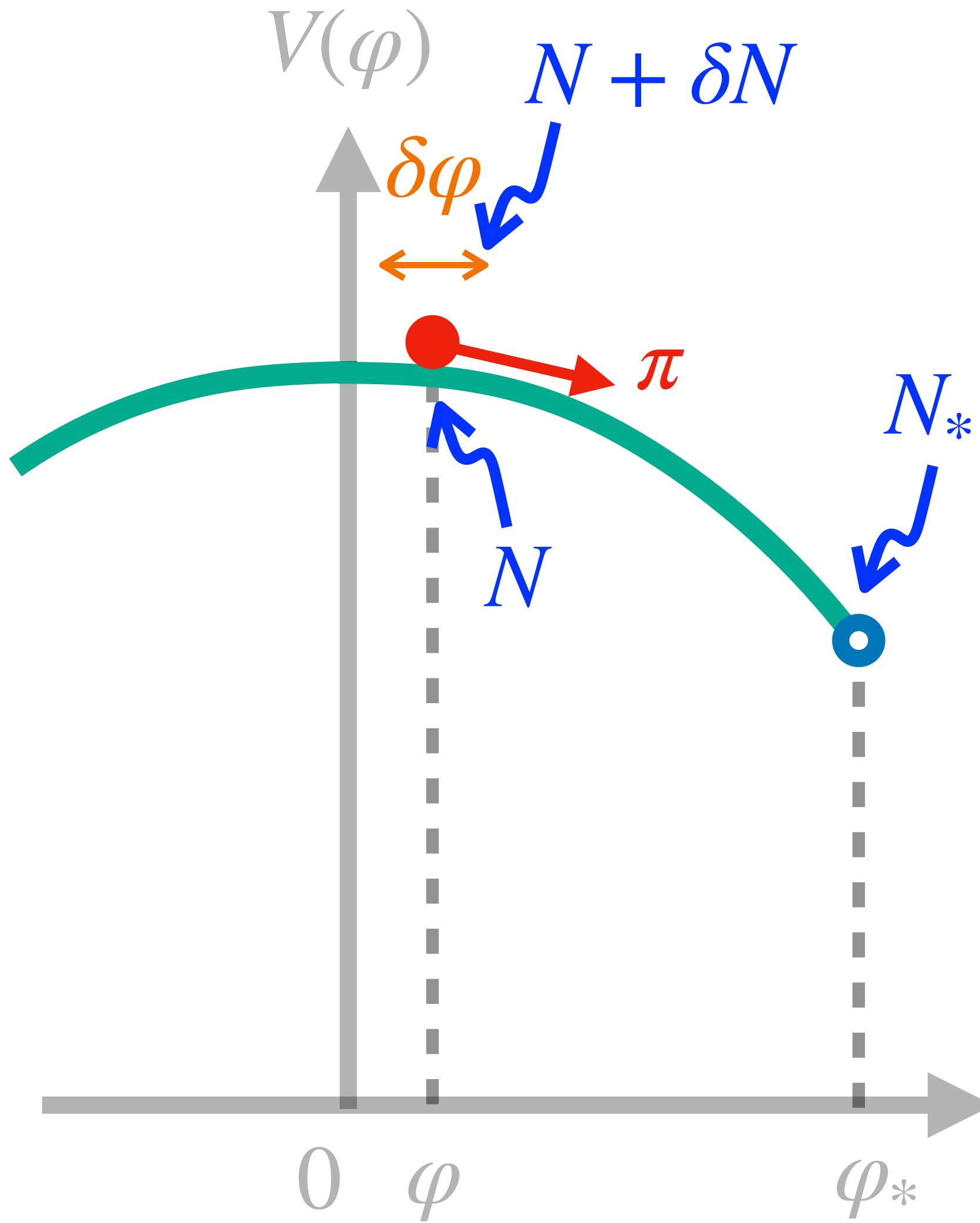
$$\varphi(N_*) \equiv \varphi_* = c_+ + c_-$$

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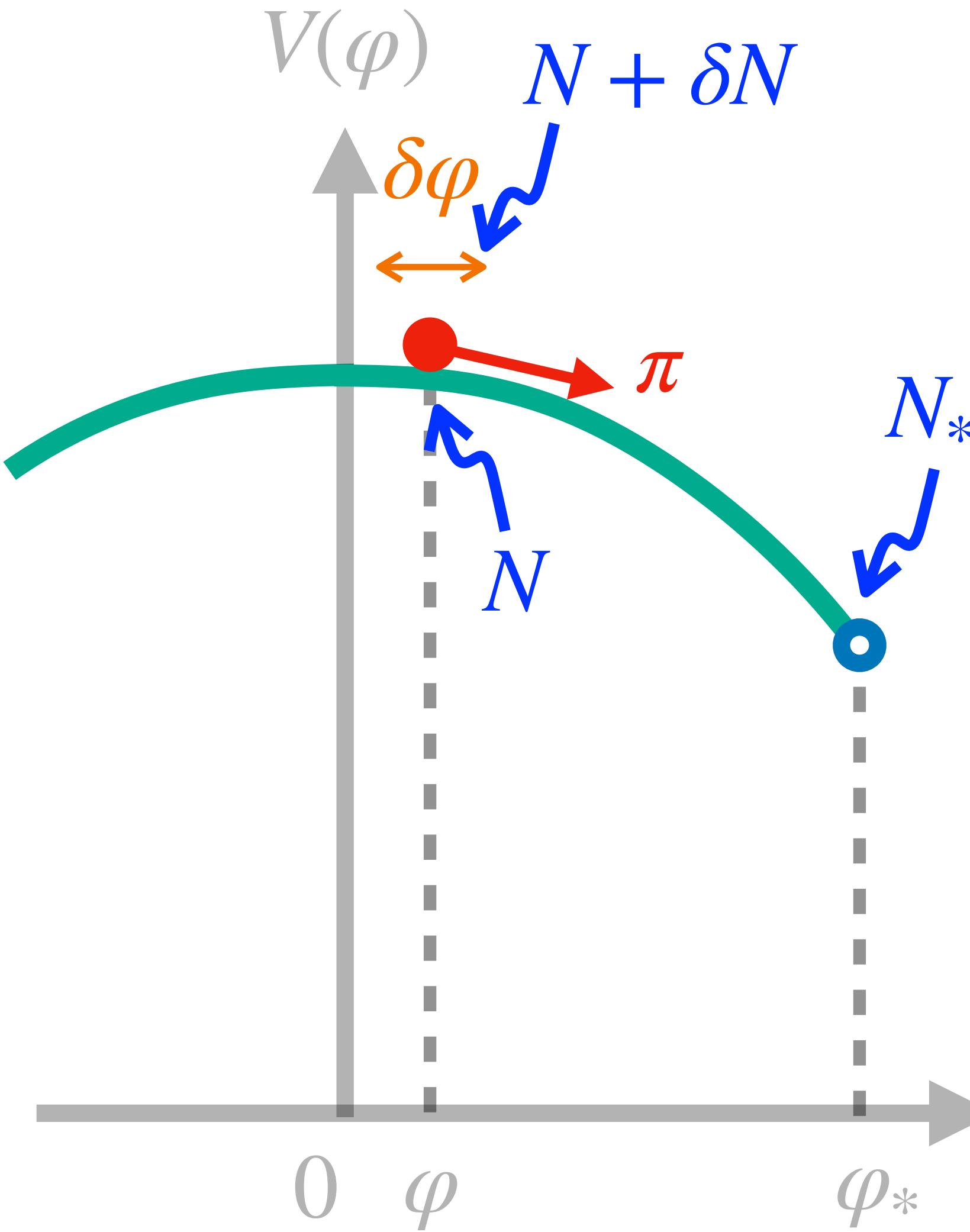
Logarithmic Duality

The (fiducial) e-folding number can be expressed by (φ, π) and their values on the boundary (φ_*, π_*) .



$$\left. \begin{aligned} \frac{\pi + \lambda_+ \varphi}{\pi_* + \lambda_+ \varphi_*} &= e^{\lambda_+(N - N_*)} \\ \frac{\pi + \lambda_- \varphi}{\pi_* + \lambda_- \varphi_*} &= e^{\lambda_-(N - N_*)} \end{aligned} \right\} \Rightarrow N - N_* = \frac{1}{\lambda_{\pm}} \ln \frac{\pi + \lambda_{\mp} \varphi}{\pi_* + \lambda_{\mp} \varphi_*}$$

Logarithmic Duality



The (fiducial) e-folding number can be expressed by (φ, π) and their values on the boundary (φ_*, π_*) .

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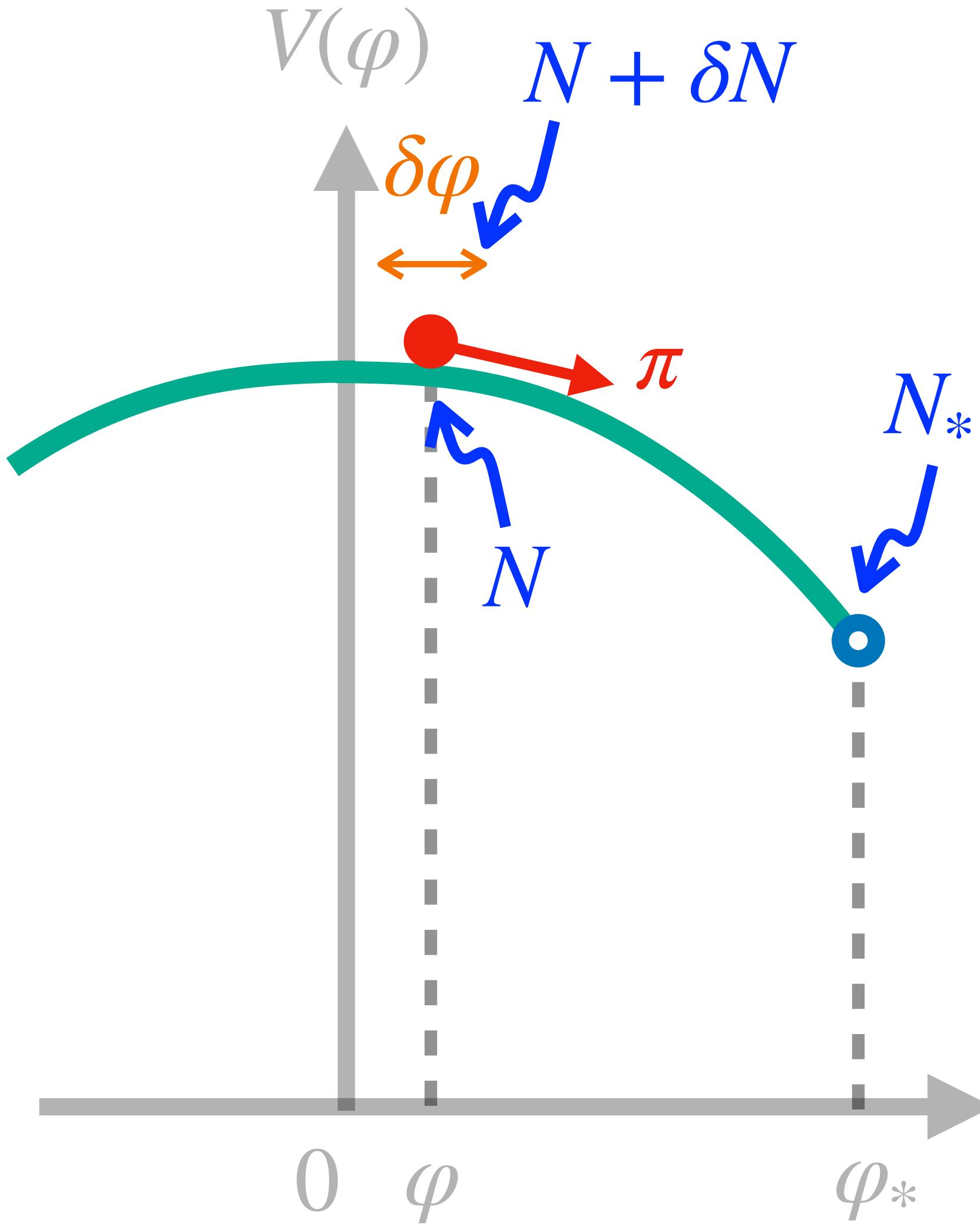
For another trajectory, we take the perturbation as

$$\left. \begin{aligned} N &\rightarrow N + \delta N \\ \varphi &\rightarrow \varphi + \delta\varphi \\ \pi &\rightarrow \pi + \delta\pi \\ \pi_* &\rightarrow \pi_* + \delta\pi_* \end{aligned} \right\}$$

$$N - N_* + \delta(N - N_*) = \frac{1}{\lambda_\pm} \ln \frac{\pi + \delta\pi + \lambda_\mp(\varphi + \delta\varphi)}{\pi_* + \delta\pi_* + \lambda_\mp\varphi_*}$$

And then subtract the fiducial N from $N + \delta N$:

Logarithmic Duality



$$\begin{aligned} \frac{\pi + \lambda_+ \varphi}{\pi_* + \lambda_+ \varphi_*} &= e^{\lambda_+(N - N_*)} \\ \frac{\pi + \lambda_- \varphi}{\pi_* + \lambda_- \varphi_*} &= e^{\lambda_-(N - N_*)} \end{aligned} \quad \left. \right\} \Rightarrow N - N_* = \frac{1}{\lambda_{\pm}} \ln \frac{\pi + \lambda_{\mp} \varphi}{\pi_* + \lambda_{\mp} \varphi_*}$$

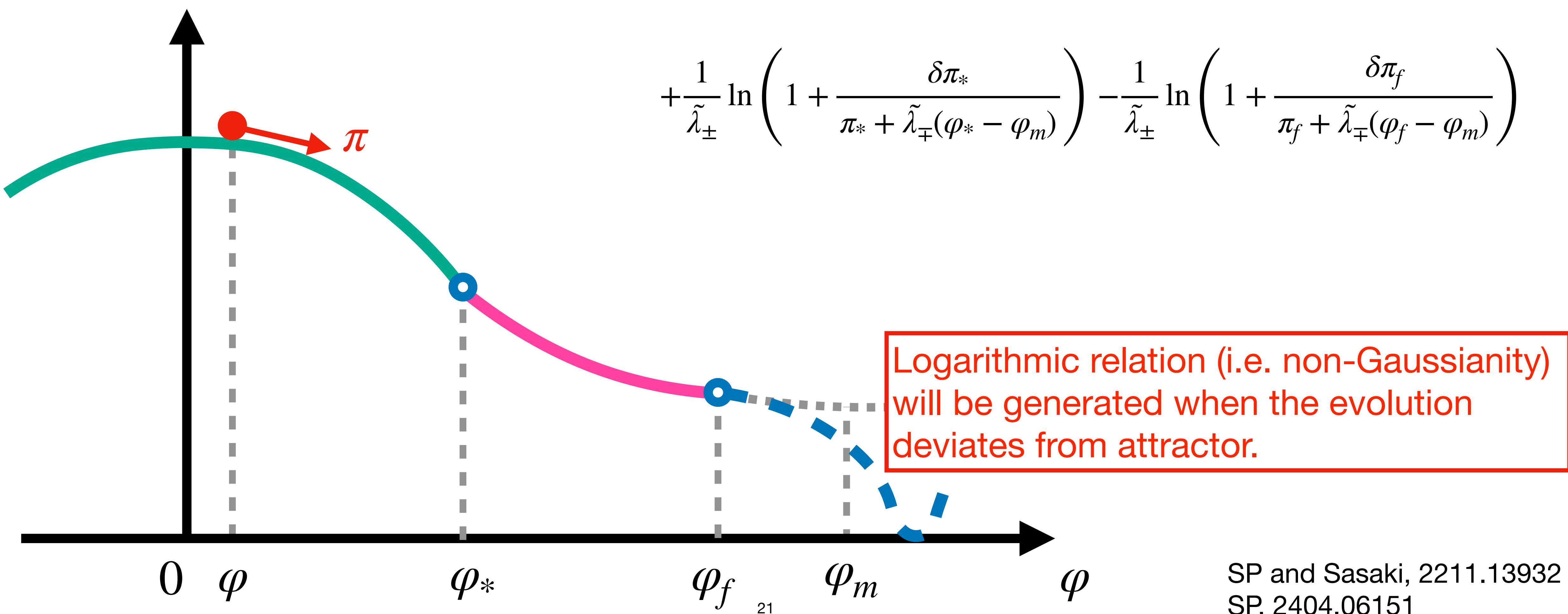
$$\implies \mathcal{R} = \delta(N - N_*)$$

$$= \frac{1}{\lambda_{\pm}} \ln \left(1 + \frac{\delta\pi + \lambda_{\mp} \delta\varphi}{\pi + \lambda_{\mp} \varphi} \right) - \frac{1}{\lambda_{\pm}} \ln \left(1 + \frac{\delta\pi_*}{\pi_* + \lambda_{\mp} \varphi_*} \right)$$

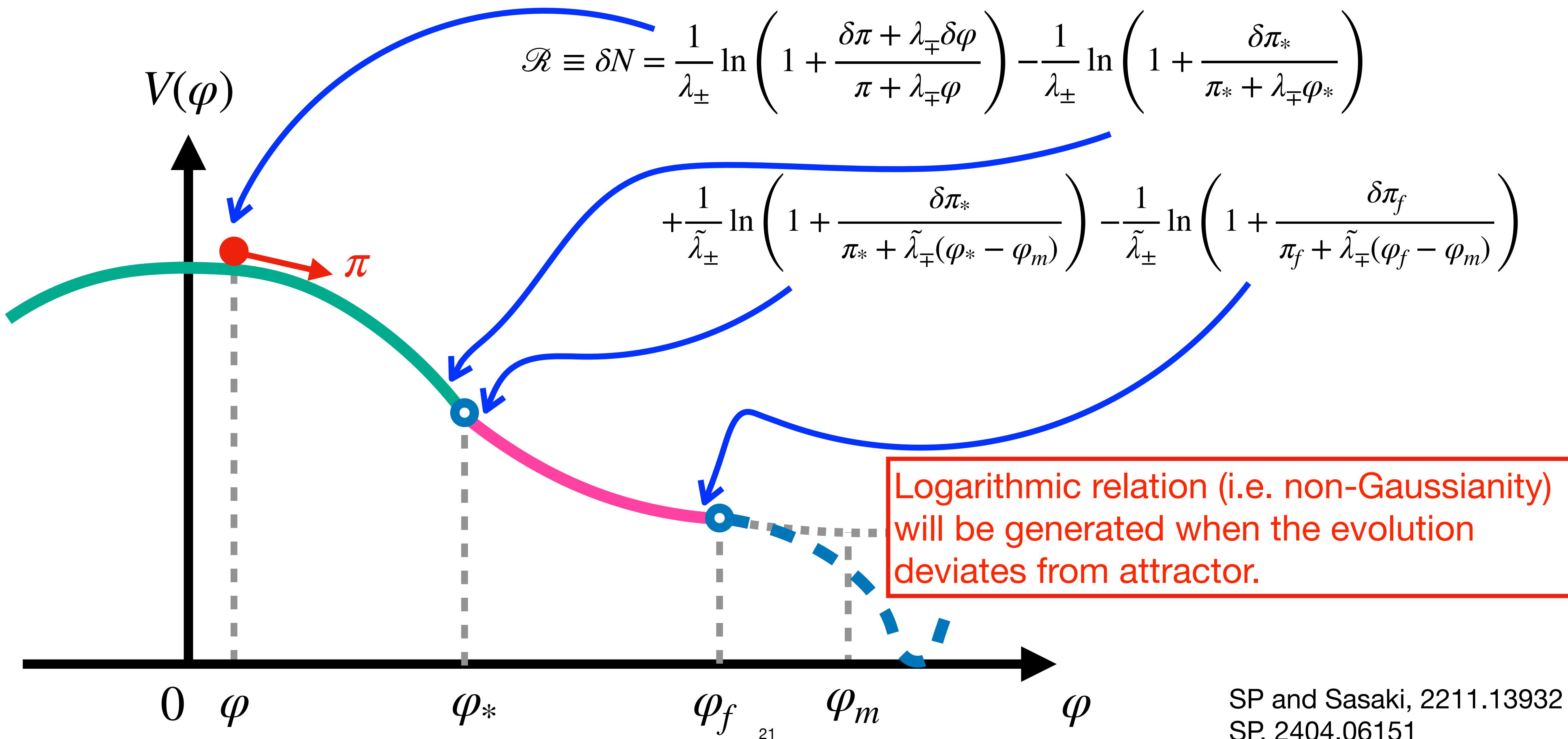
Logarithmic duality of the curvature perturbation

Logarithmic Duality

$$\mathcal{R} \equiv \delta N = \frac{1}{\lambda_{\pm}} \ln \left(1 + \frac{\delta\pi + \lambda_{\mp}\delta\varphi}{\pi + \lambda_{\mp}\varphi} \right) - \frac{1}{\lambda_{\pm}} \ln \left(1 + \frac{\delta\pi_*}{\pi_* + \lambda_{\mp}\varphi_*} \right)$$



Logarithmic Duality



Logarithmic Duality

$$\mathcal{R}(\delta\varphi, \delta\pi)$$

SP and Sasaki, 2211.13932
SP, 2404.06151

$$\mathcal{R} = \frac{1}{\lambda_{\pm}} \ln \left(1 + \frac{\delta\pi + \lambda_{\mp}\delta\varphi}{\pi + \lambda_{\mp}\varphi} \right) - \frac{1}{\lambda_{\pm}} \ln \left(1 + \frac{\delta\pi_*}{\pi_* + \lambda_{\mp}\varphi_*} \right) + \dots$$

$$(f_{NL} = -\frac{5}{6}\lambda_-)$$

$$\mathcal{R} = -H \frac{\delta\varphi}{\dot{\varphi}} + \frac{3}{5} f_{NL} \left(-H \frac{\delta\varphi}{\dot{\varphi}} \right)^2$$

Slow-roll inflation

Stewart and Sasaki, 1995

Lyth and Roquinez, 2005

$$\mathcal{R} = -\mu \ln \left(1 - \frac{\mathcal{R}_g}{\mu} \right)$$

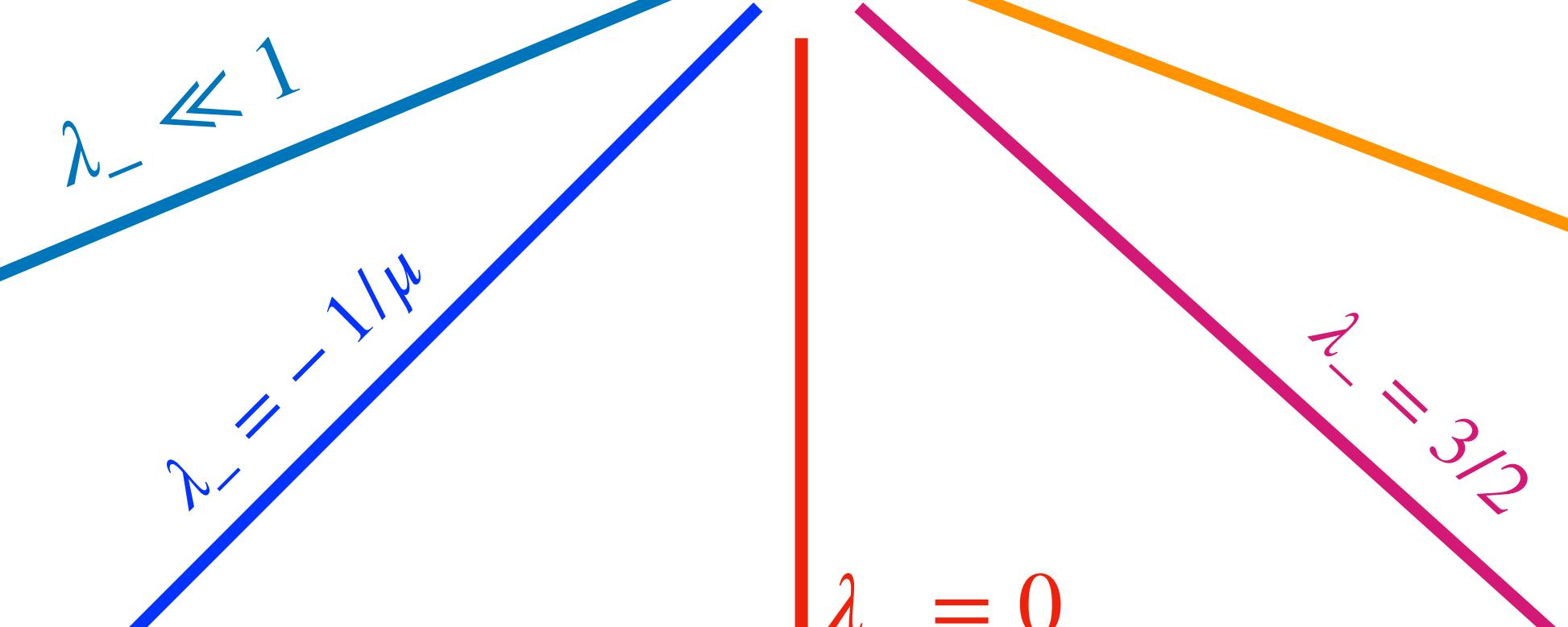
Constant-roll

Atal, Garriga, Marcos-Caballero, 1905.13202

Atal, Cid, Escrivà, Garriga, 1908.11357

Escrivà, Atal, Garriga, 2306.09990

Inui, Motohashi, SP, et al, 2409.13500



$$\mathcal{R} = -\frac{1}{3} \ln \left(1 + \frac{\delta\pi_*}{\pi_*} \right)$$

Ultra-slow-roll

Namjoo, Firouzjahi, Sasaki, 1210.3692

Cai, Chen, et al 1712.09998

Biagetti et al 1804.07124

Passaglia et al 1812.08243

$$\mathcal{R} = -\frac{1}{\lambda} \ln (f(\mathcal{R}_G))$$

Extensions,
Kawaguchi et al, 2305.18140
SP and Yokoyama, in prep

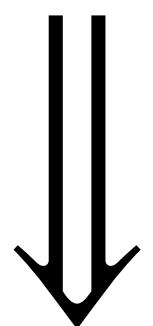
$$\mathcal{R} = \frac{2}{3} \ln (1 + \delta)$$

Curvaton scenario,
SP and Sasaki, 2112.12680
Ferrante et al, 2211.01728
Hooper et al. 2308.00756

Probability Distribution Function

For the simplest single-logarithm case:

$$\mathcal{R} \equiv \delta N = \frac{1}{\lambda_-} \ln \left(1 + \frac{\delta\pi + \lambda_+ \delta\varphi}{\pi + \lambda_+ \varphi} \right)$$



$$P(\mathcal{R})d\mathcal{R} = P(\delta\varphi)d\delta\varphi$$

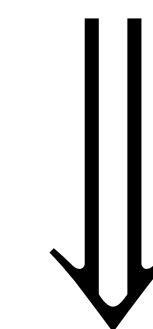
Gaussian PDF with variance $\sigma_{\delta\varphi}^2$

$$P(\mathcal{R}) = \frac{e^{\lambda_- \mathcal{R}}}{\sqrt{2\pi}\sigma_{\delta\varphi}} |\lambda_-| \varphi \exp \left[-\frac{\varphi^2}{2\sigma_{\delta\varphi}^2} (e^{\lambda_- \mathcal{R}} - 1)^2 \right]$$

Probability Distribution Function

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$$\mathcal{R} \equiv \delta N = \frac{1}{\lambda_-} \ln \left(1 + \frac{\delta\pi + \lambda_+ \delta\varphi}{\pi + \lambda_+ \varphi} \right)$$



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Gaussian PDF with variance $\sigma_{\delta\varphi}^2$

$$P(\mathcal{R}) = \frac{e^{\lambda_- \mathcal{R}}}{\sqrt{2\pi}\sigma_{\delta\varphi}} |\lambda_-| \varphi \exp \left[-\frac{\varphi^2}{2\sigma_{\delta\varphi}^2} (e^{\lambda_- \mathcal{R}} - 1)^2 \right]$$



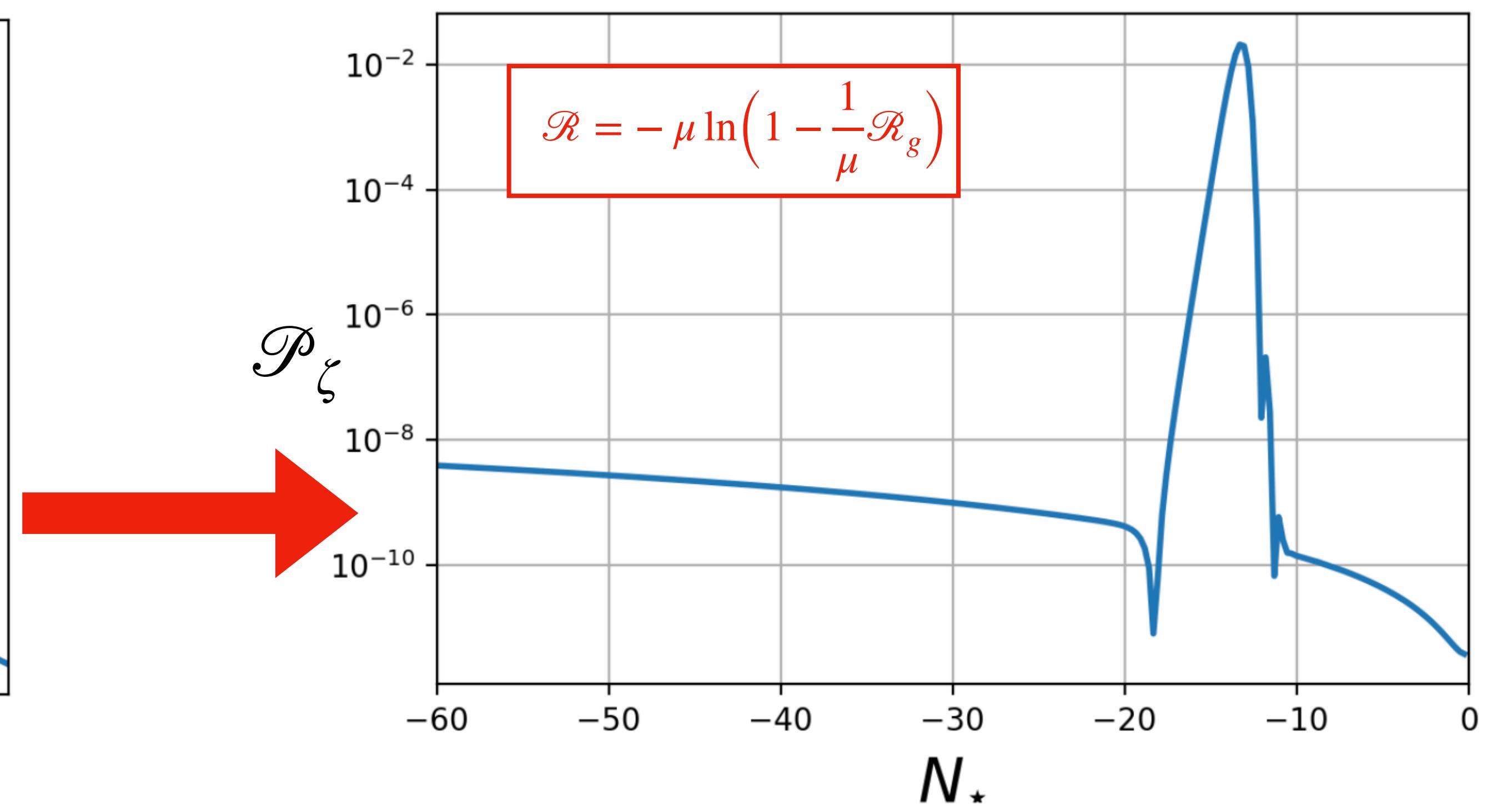
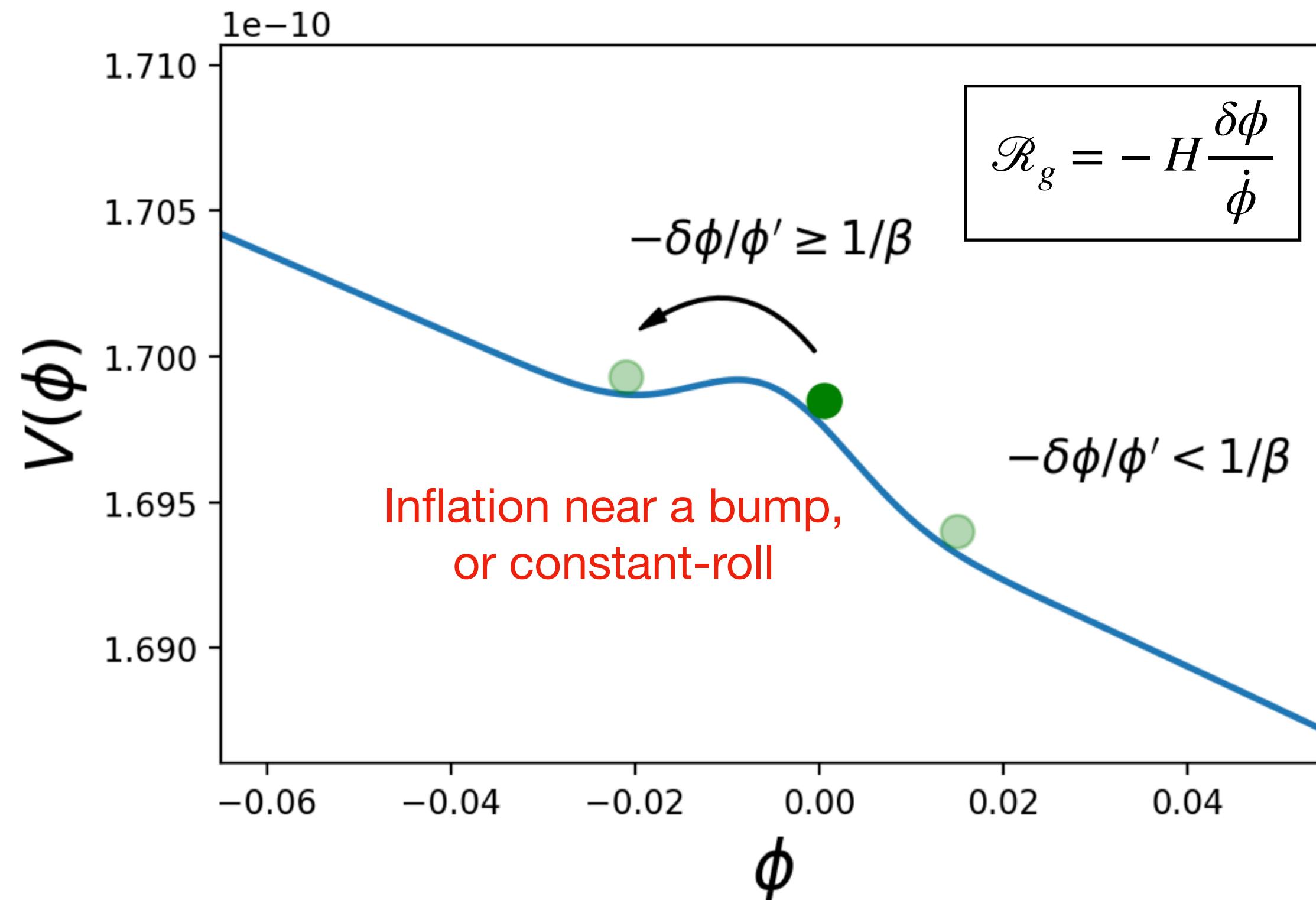
$$P(\mathcal{R}) \sim e^{\lambda_- \mathcal{R}}$$

exponential tail

$$P(\mathcal{R}) \sim \exp(-c^2 e^{2\lambda_- \mathcal{R}})$$

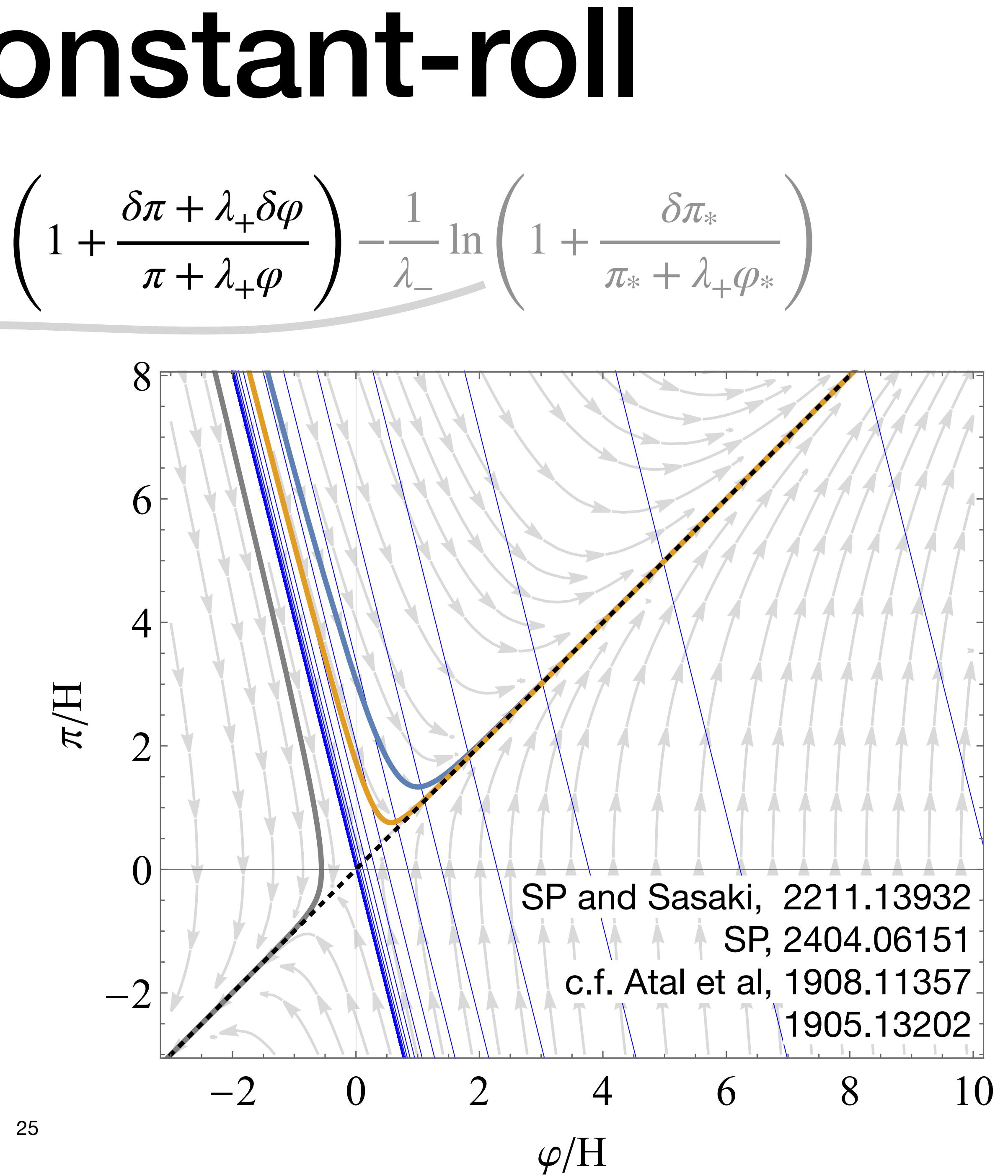
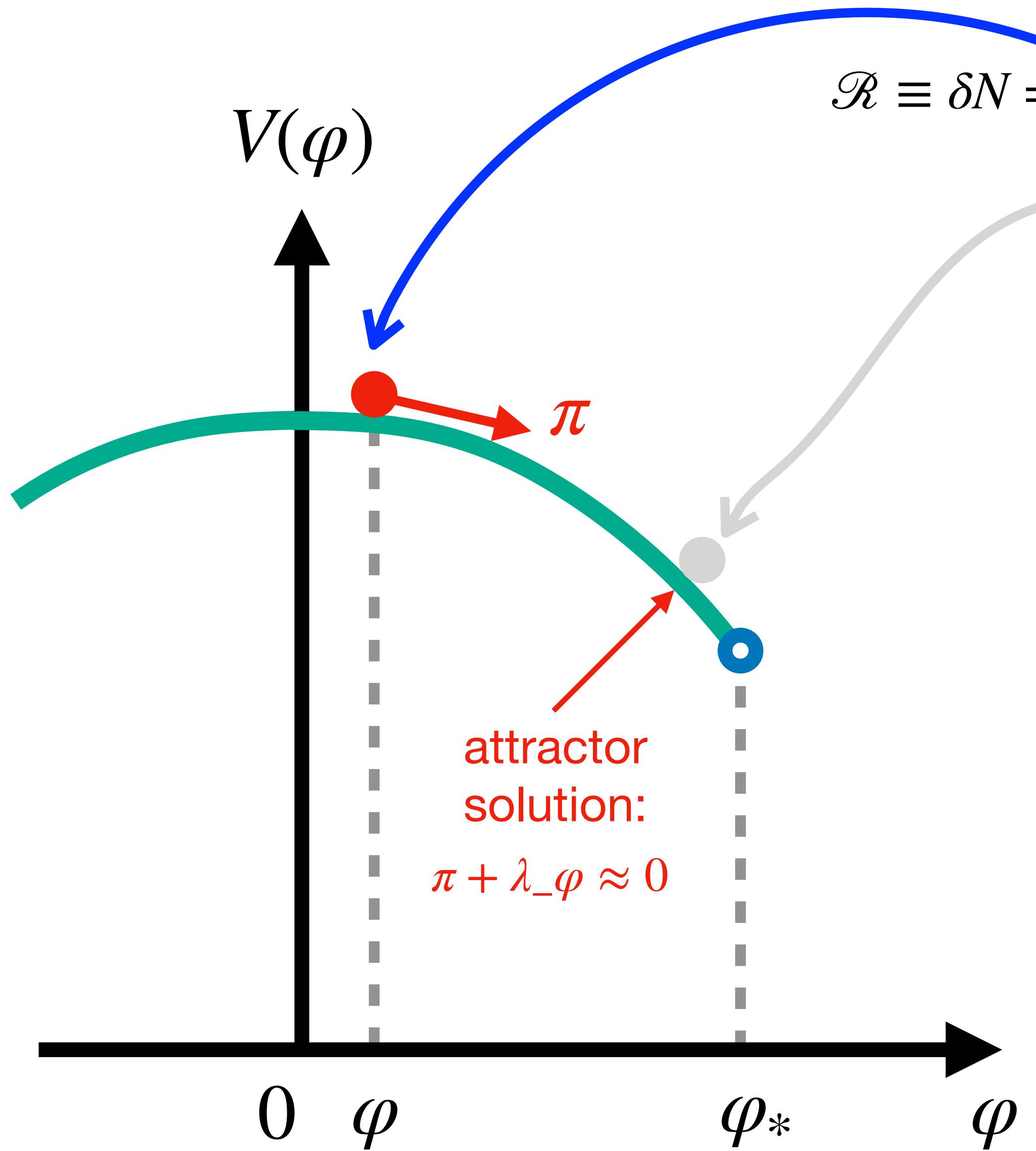
Gumbel-distribution-like tail

Case1: Constant-roll



Atal, Garriga, Marcos-Caballero, 1905.13202
 Atal, Cid, Escrivà, Garriga, 1908.11357
 Escrivà, Atal, Garriga, 2306.09990

Case1: Constant-roll

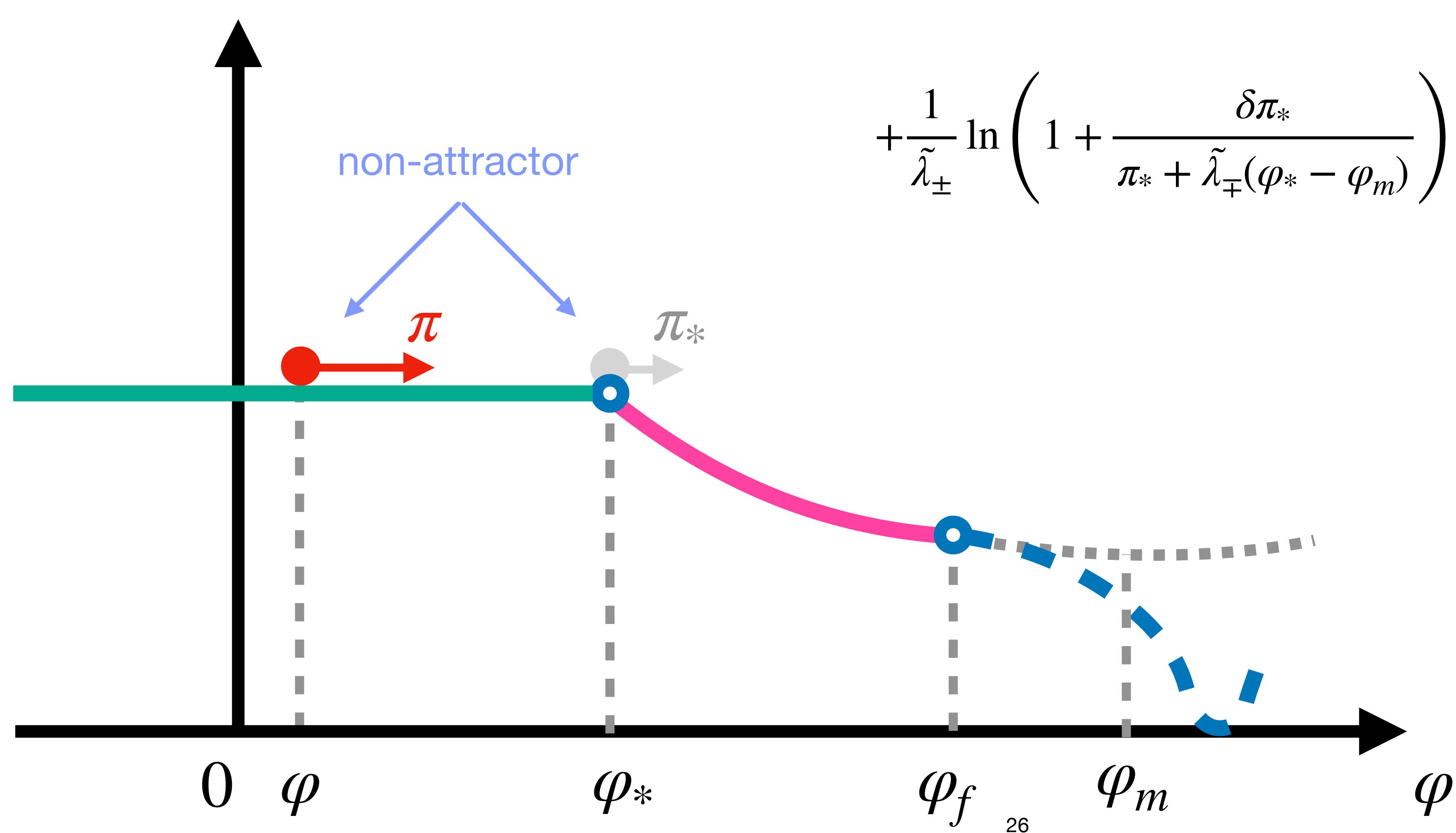


Case 2:USR

$$(\lambda_- = 0, \quad \lambda_+ = 3) \\ (\tilde{\lambda}_- = \tilde{\eta}, \quad \tilde{\lambda}_+ = 3 - \tilde{\eta})$$

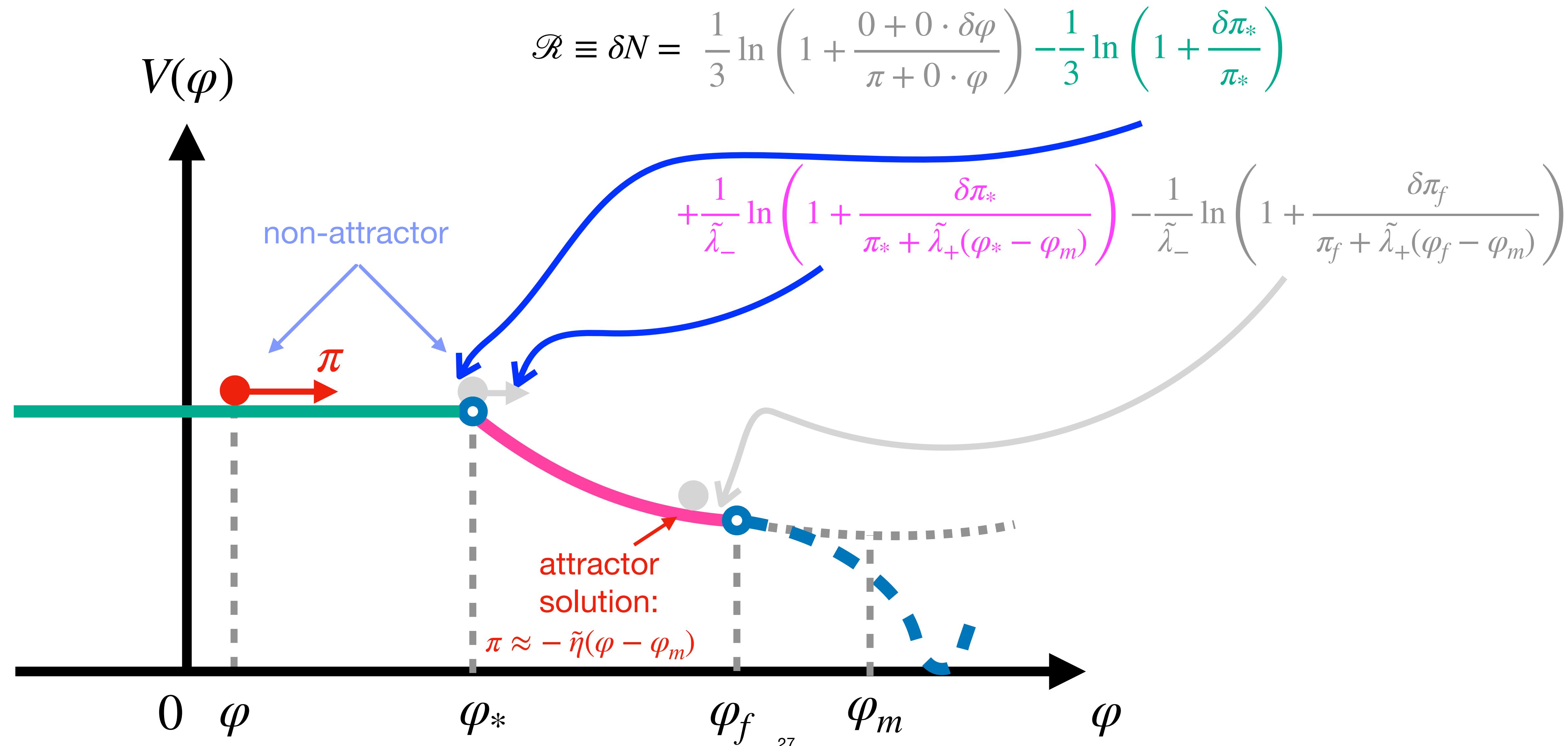
$$\mathcal{R} \equiv \delta N = \frac{1}{\lambda_{\pm}} \ln \left(1 + \frac{\delta\pi + \lambda_{\mp}\delta\varphi}{\pi + \lambda_{\mp}\varphi} \right) - \frac{1}{\lambda_{\pm}} \ln \left(1 + \frac{\delta\pi_*}{\pi_* + \lambda_{\pm}\varphi_*} \right)$$

$$+ \frac{1}{\tilde{\lambda}_{\pm}} \ln \left(1 + \frac{\delta\pi_*}{\pi_* + \tilde{\lambda}_{\mp}(\varphi_* - \varphi_m)} \right) - \frac{1}{\tilde{\lambda}_{\pm}} \ln \left(1 + \frac{\delta\pi_f}{\pi_f + \tilde{\lambda}_{\pm}(\varphi_f - \varphi_m)} \right)$$



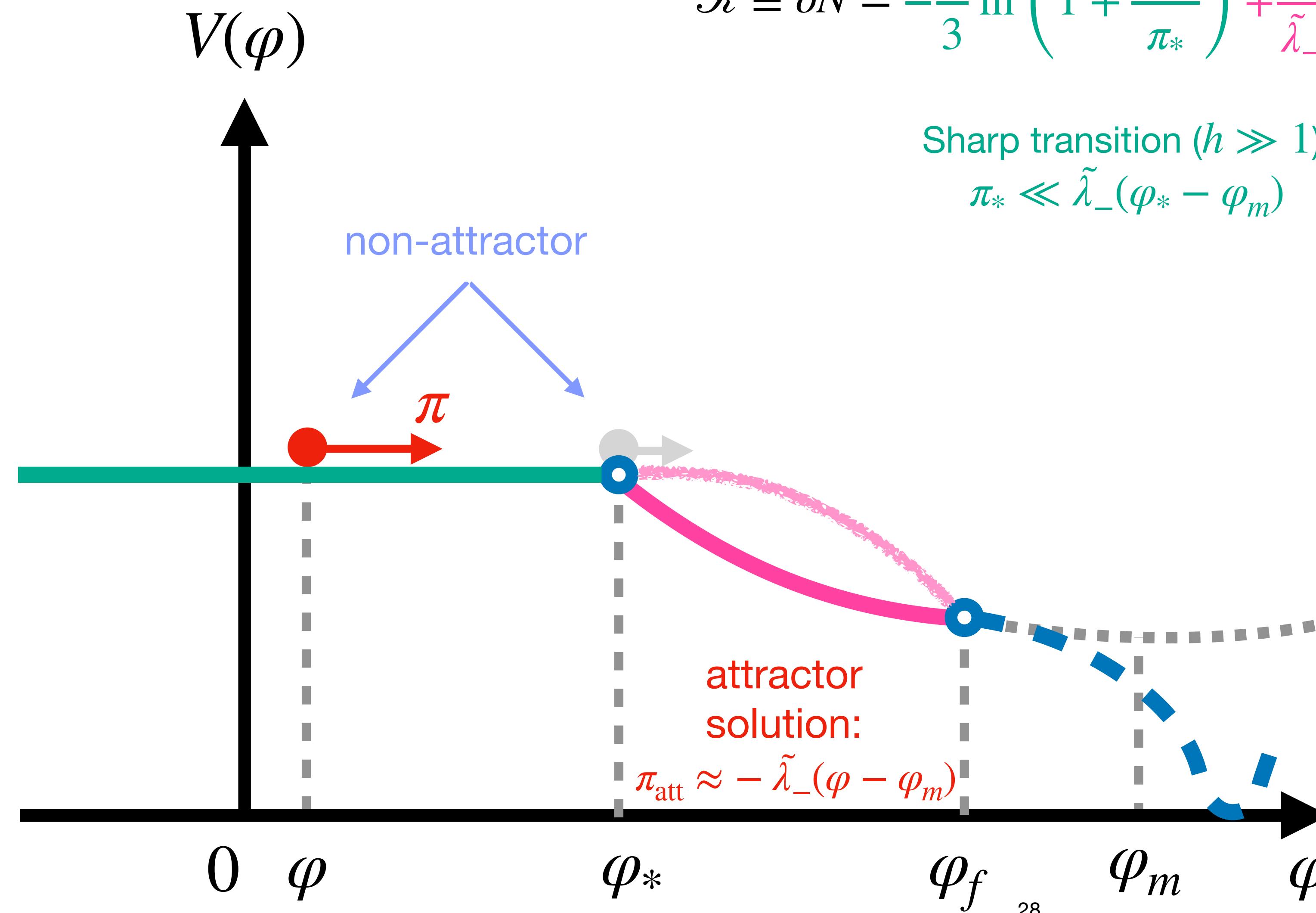
Case 2:USR

$$(\lambda_- = 0, \quad \lambda_+ = 3) \\ (\tilde{\lambda}_- = \tilde{\eta}, \quad \tilde{\lambda}_+ = 3 - \tilde{\eta})$$



Case 2:USR

$$(\lambda_- = 0, \quad \lambda_+ = 3) \\ (\tilde{\lambda}_- \approx \tilde{\eta}, \quad \tilde{\lambda}_+ \approx 3 - \tilde{\eta})$$



$$\mathcal{R} \equiv \delta N = -\frac{1}{3} \ln \left(1 + \frac{\delta \pi_*}{\pi_*} \right) + \frac{1}{\tilde{\lambda}_-} \ln \left(1 + \frac{\delta \pi_*}{\pi_* + \tilde{\lambda}_+(\phi_* - \phi_m)} \right)$$

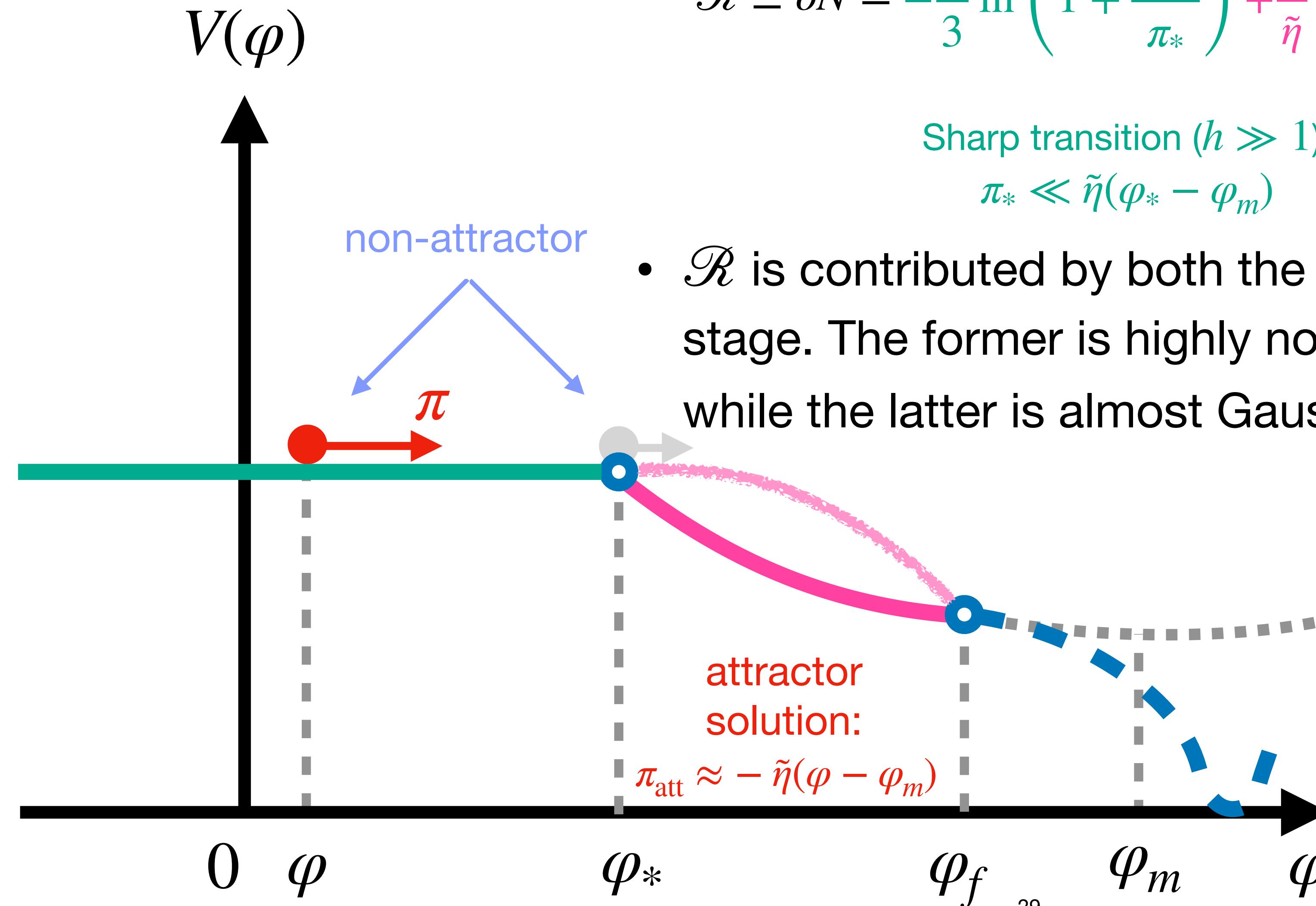
Sharp transition ($h \gg 1$):
 $\pi_* \ll \tilde{\lambda}_-(\phi_* - \phi_m)$

Smooth transition ($h \ll 1$)
 $\pi_* \gg \tilde{\lambda}_-(\phi_* - \phi_m)$

Case 2:USR

$$(\lambda_- = 0, \lambda_+ = 3)$$

$$(\tilde{\lambda}_- \approx \tilde{\eta}, \tilde{\lambda}_+ \approx 3 - \tilde{\eta})$$



$$\mathcal{R} \equiv \delta N = -\frac{1}{3} \ln \left(1 + \frac{\delta \pi_*}{\pi_*} \right) + \frac{1}{\tilde{\eta}} \ln \left(1 + \frac{\delta \pi_*}{\pi_* + (3 - \tilde{\eta})(\varphi_* - \varphi_m)} \right)$$

Sharp transition ($h \gg 1$):

$$\pi_* \ll \tilde{\eta}(\varphi_* - \varphi_m)$$

Smooth transition ($h \ll 1$)

$$\pi_* \gg \tilde{\eta}(\varphi_* - \varphi_m)$$

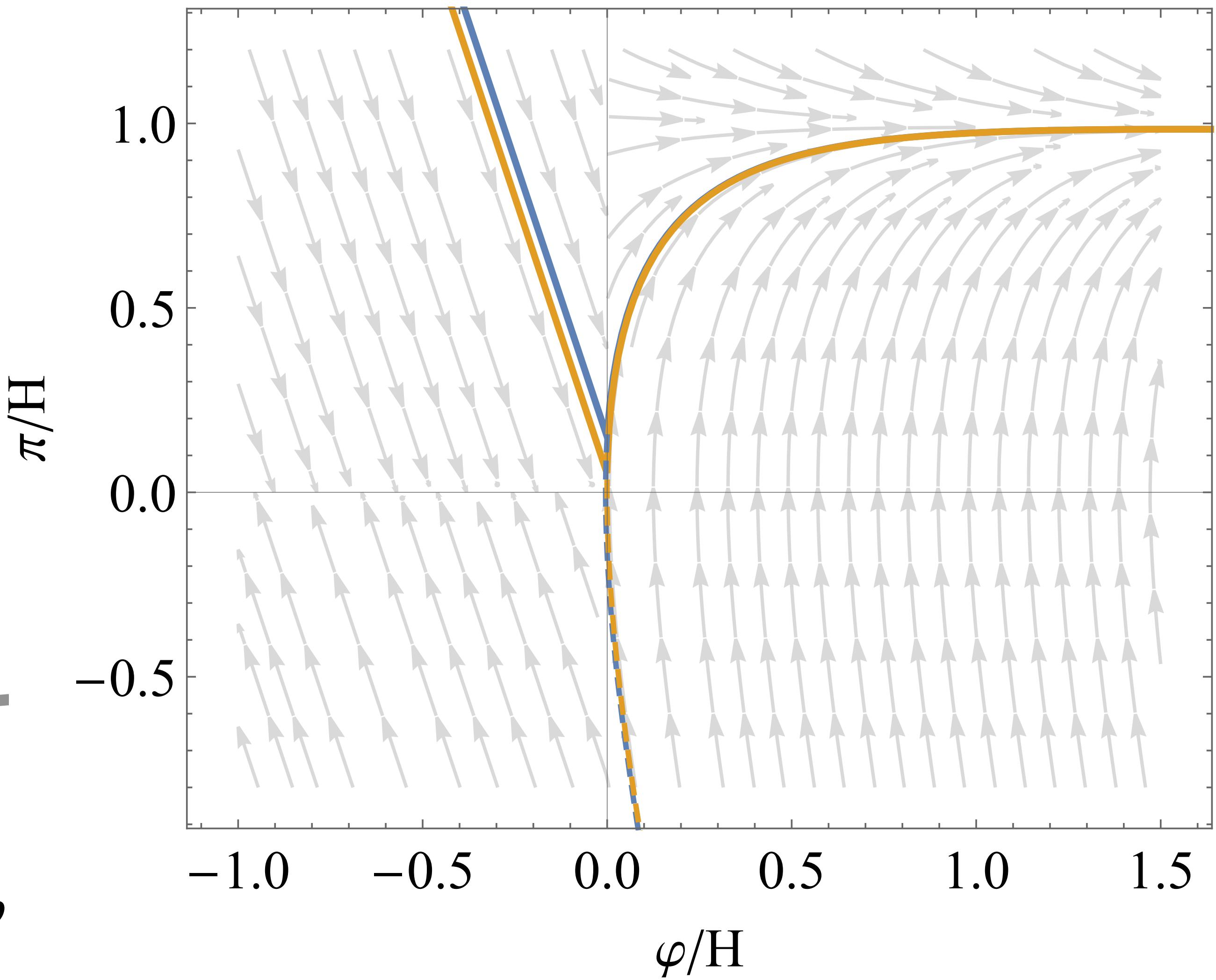
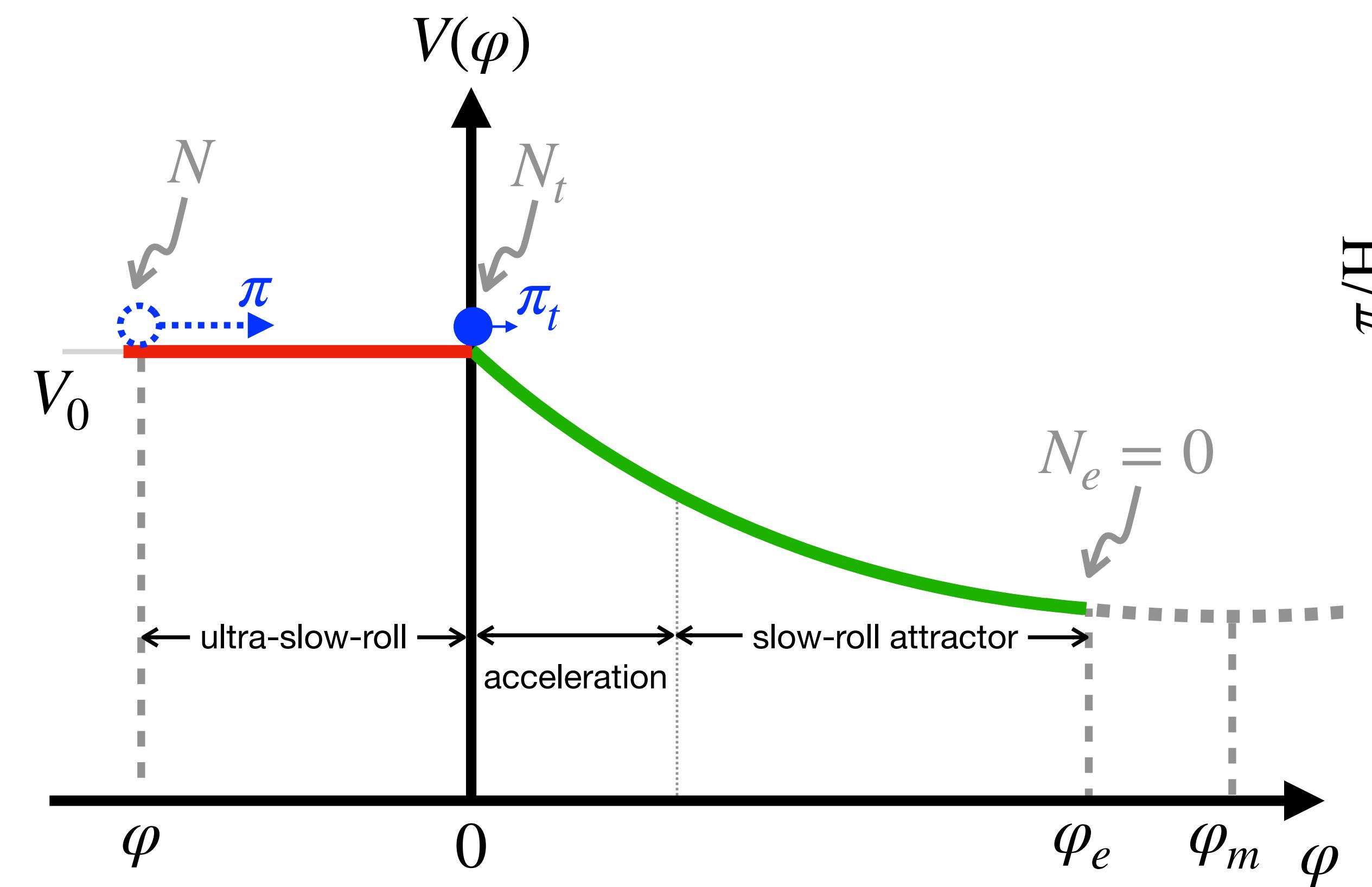
- \mathcal{R} is contributed by both the USR stage and the later slow-roll stage. The former is highly non-Gaussian (i.e. exp tail, $f_{\text{NL}} = 5/2$), while the latter is almost Gaussian ($f_{\text{NL}} = -5\tilde{\eta}/6$).

- c.f. The h defined in 1712.09998

$$h \equiv -6\sqrt{\frac{\epsilon_V}{\epsilon_*}} = 6 \left| \frac{\lambda_-(\varphi_* - \varphi_m)}{\pi_*} \right|$$

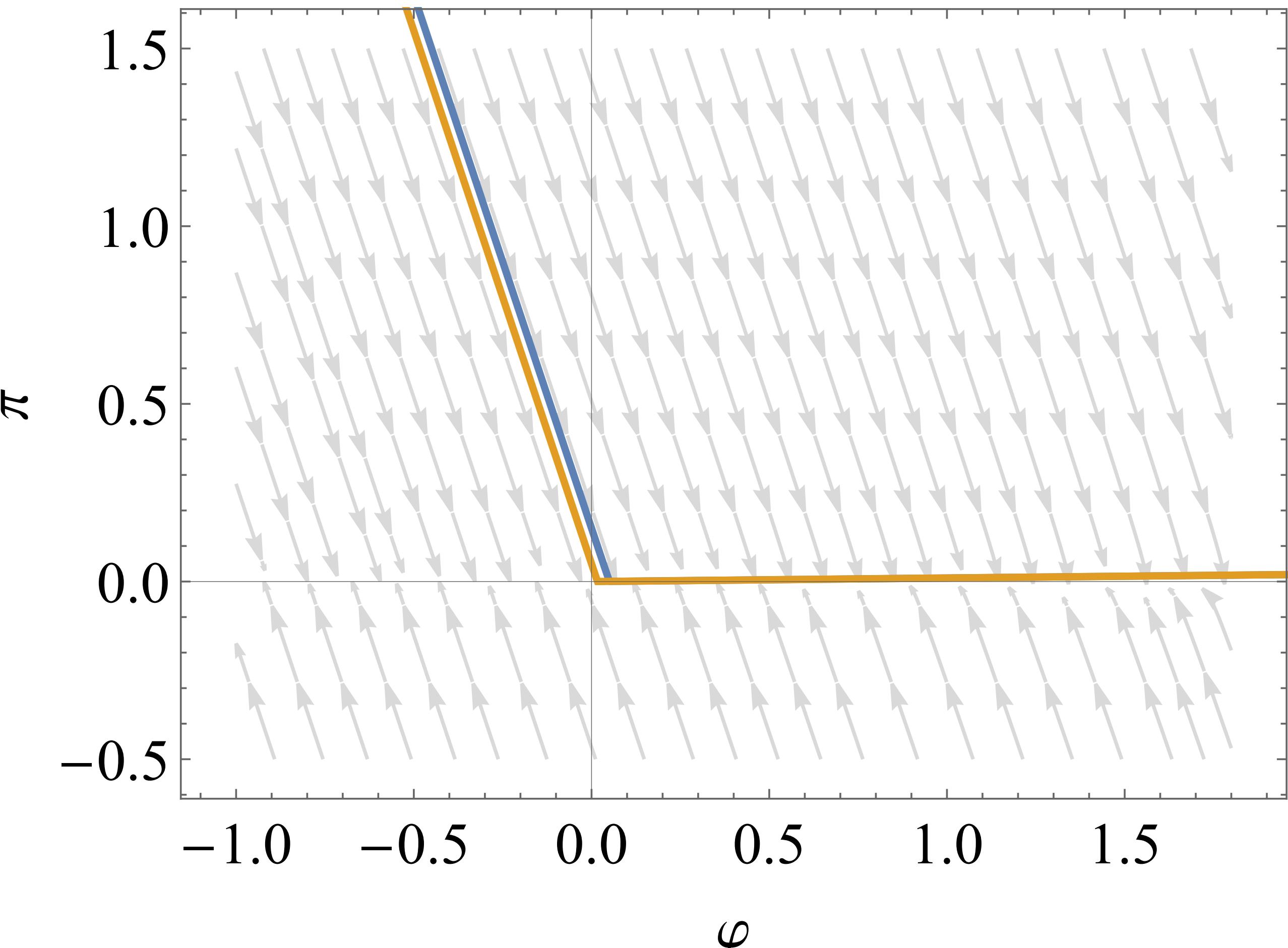
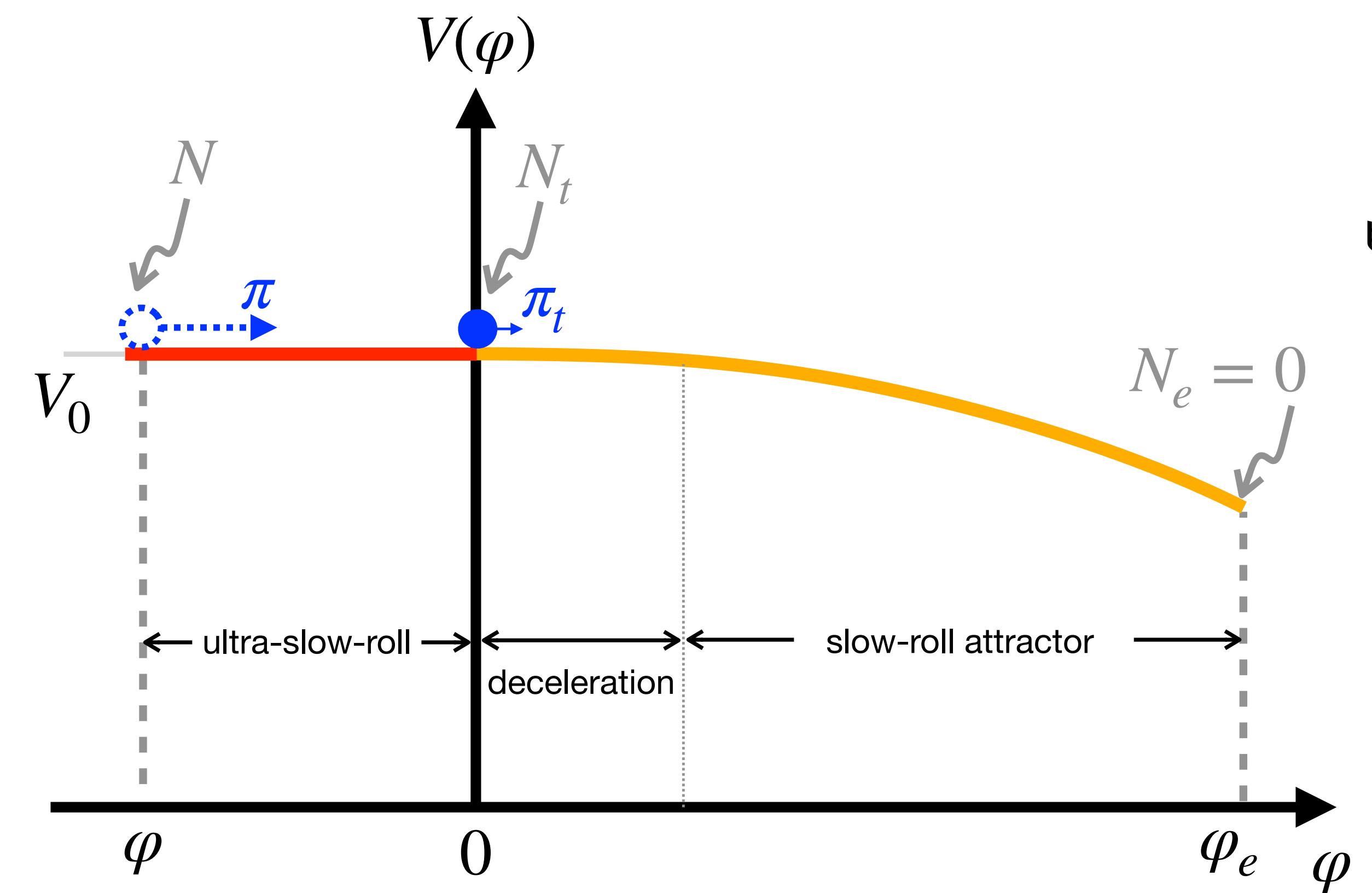
- When $h \sim \mathcal{O}(1)$, both of the logarithms are of the same order.

USR: Sharp end



SP and Sasaki, 2211.13932
SP, 2404.06151
c.f. Cai et al, 1712.09998

USR: Smooth end

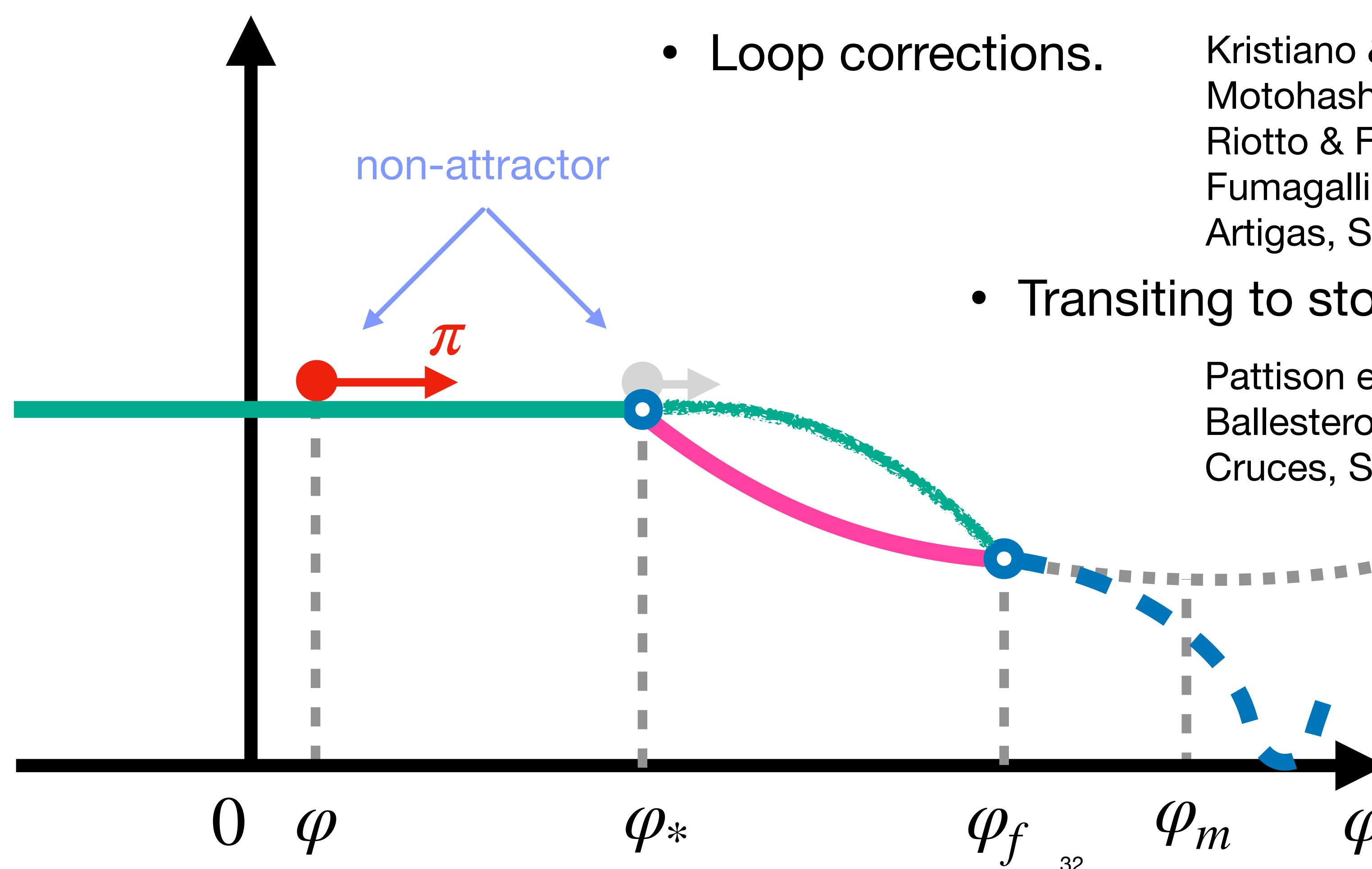


SP and Sasaki, 2211.13932
 SP, 2404.06151
 c.f. Cai et al, 1712.09998

USR

$$(\lambda_- = 0, \quad \lambda_+ = 3) \\ (\tilde{\lambda}_- = \tilde{\eta}, \quad \tilde{\lambda}_+ = 3 - \tilde{\eta})$$

$$\mathcal{R} \equiv \delta N = -\frac{1}{3} \ln \left(1 + \frac{\delta \pi_*}{\pi_*} \right) + \frac{1}{\tilde{\eta}} \ln \left(1 + \frac{\delta \pi_*}{\pi_* + (3 - \tilde{\eta})(\varphi_* - \varphi_m)} \right)$$



- Loop corrections.

Kristiano & Yokoyama, 2211.03395, 2405.12145

Motohashi & Tada. 2303.16035

Riotto & Firouzjahi, 2304.07801

Fumagalli. 2305.19263

Artigas, SP, Tanaka, Urakawa, to appear

- Transiting to stochastic approach

Pattison et al., 2101.05741

Ballesteros et al 2406.02417

Cruces, SP, Sasaki, in preparation.

Laura's talk

Guillermo's talk

- Sharp transition will make the separate universe approach (thus δN formalism) invalid transiently.

Domenech et al., 2309.05750

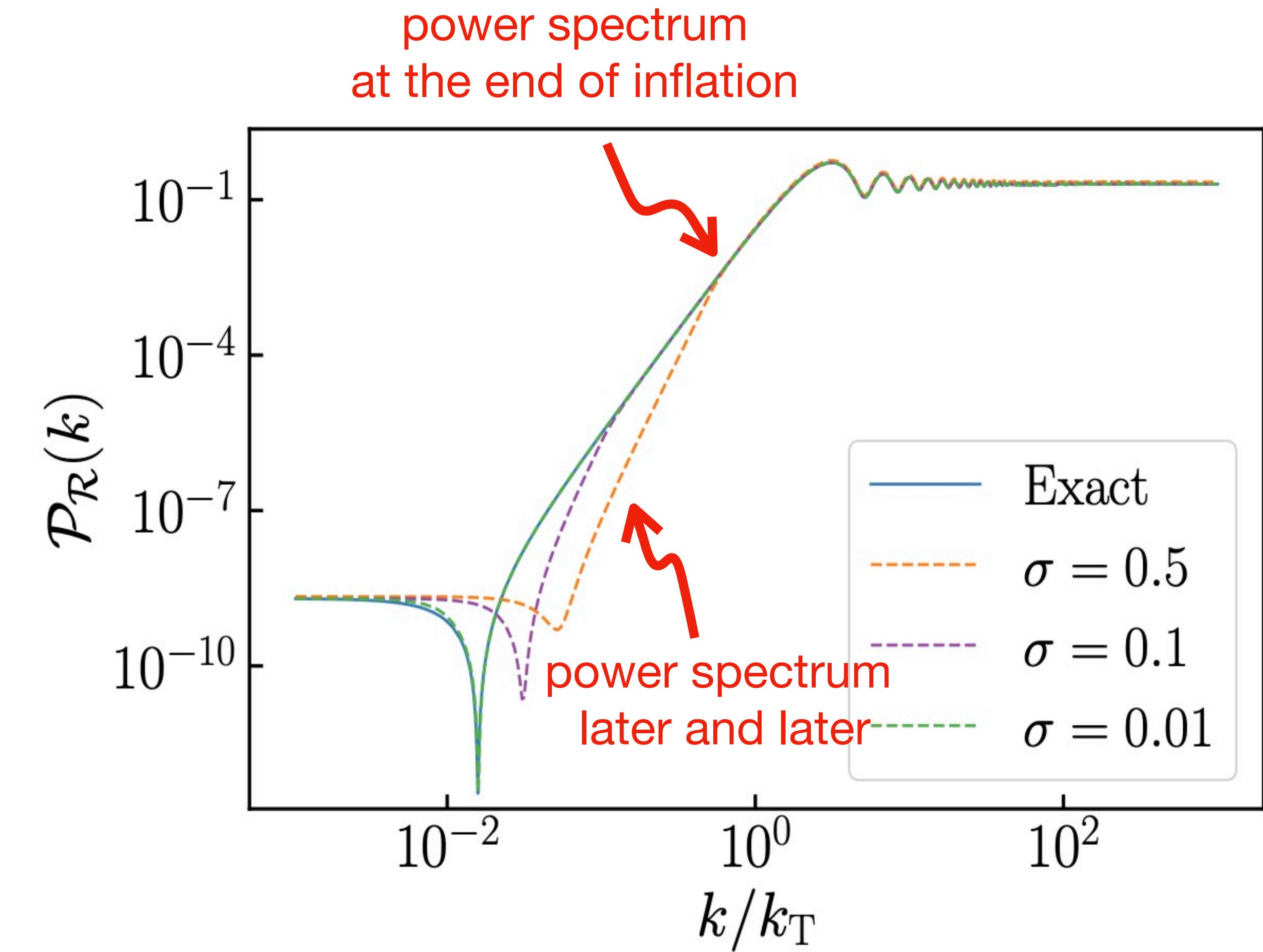
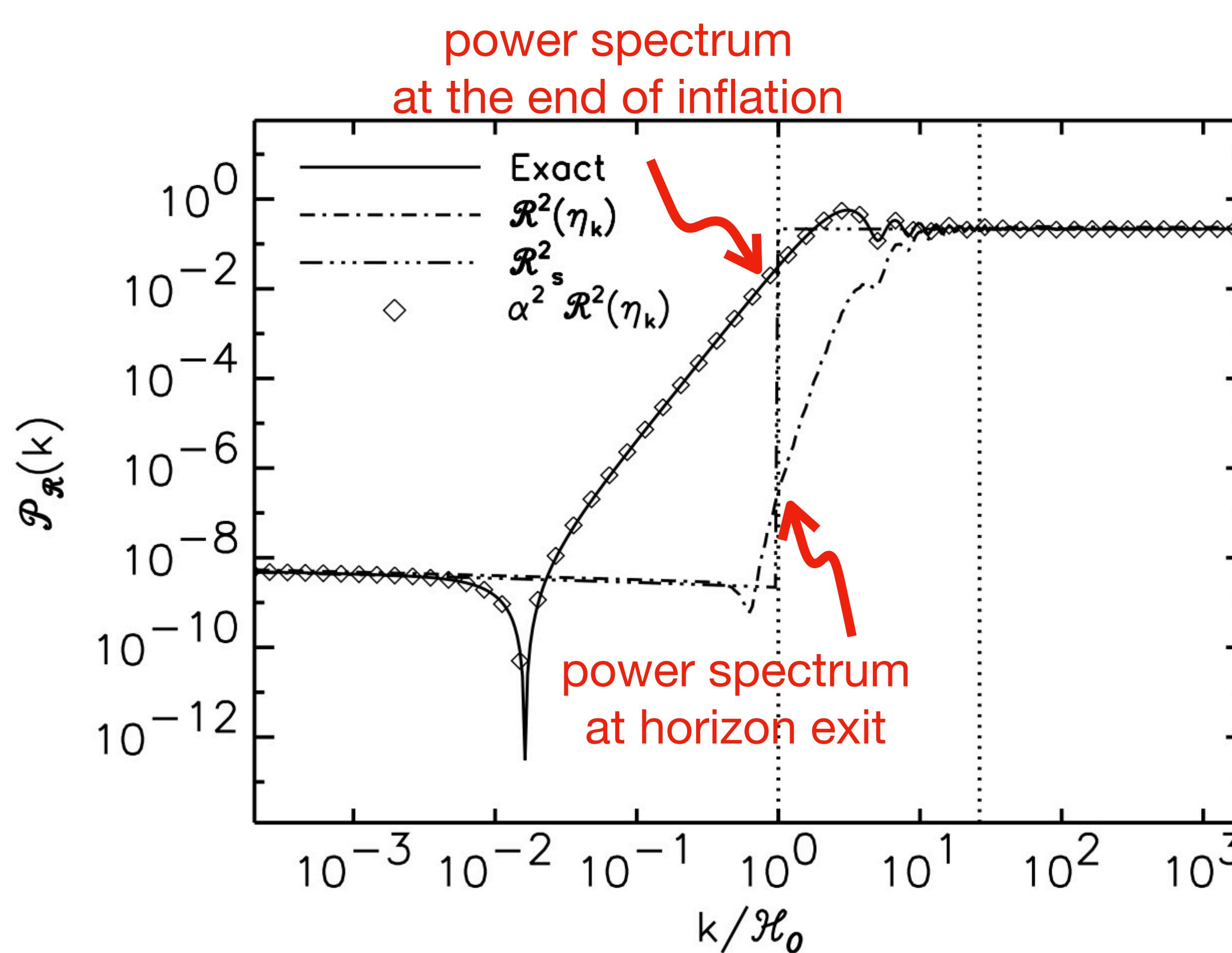
Jackson et al., 2311.03281

Artigas, SP. Tanaka. 2408.09964

CONTENT

- Introduction: δN formalism
- Application: USR and general single-field
- Recent topics: gradient expansion and bubbles
- Conclusion

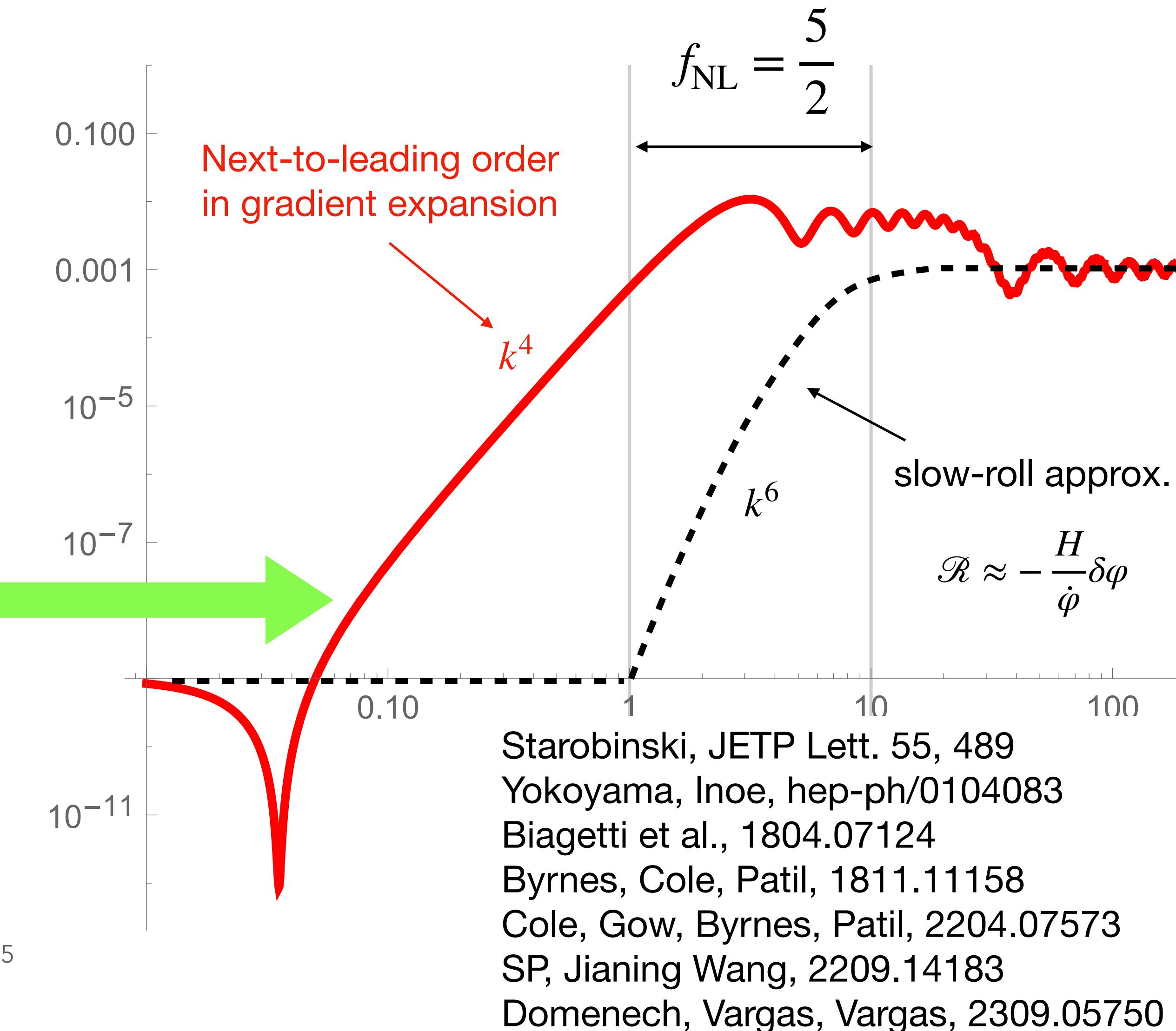
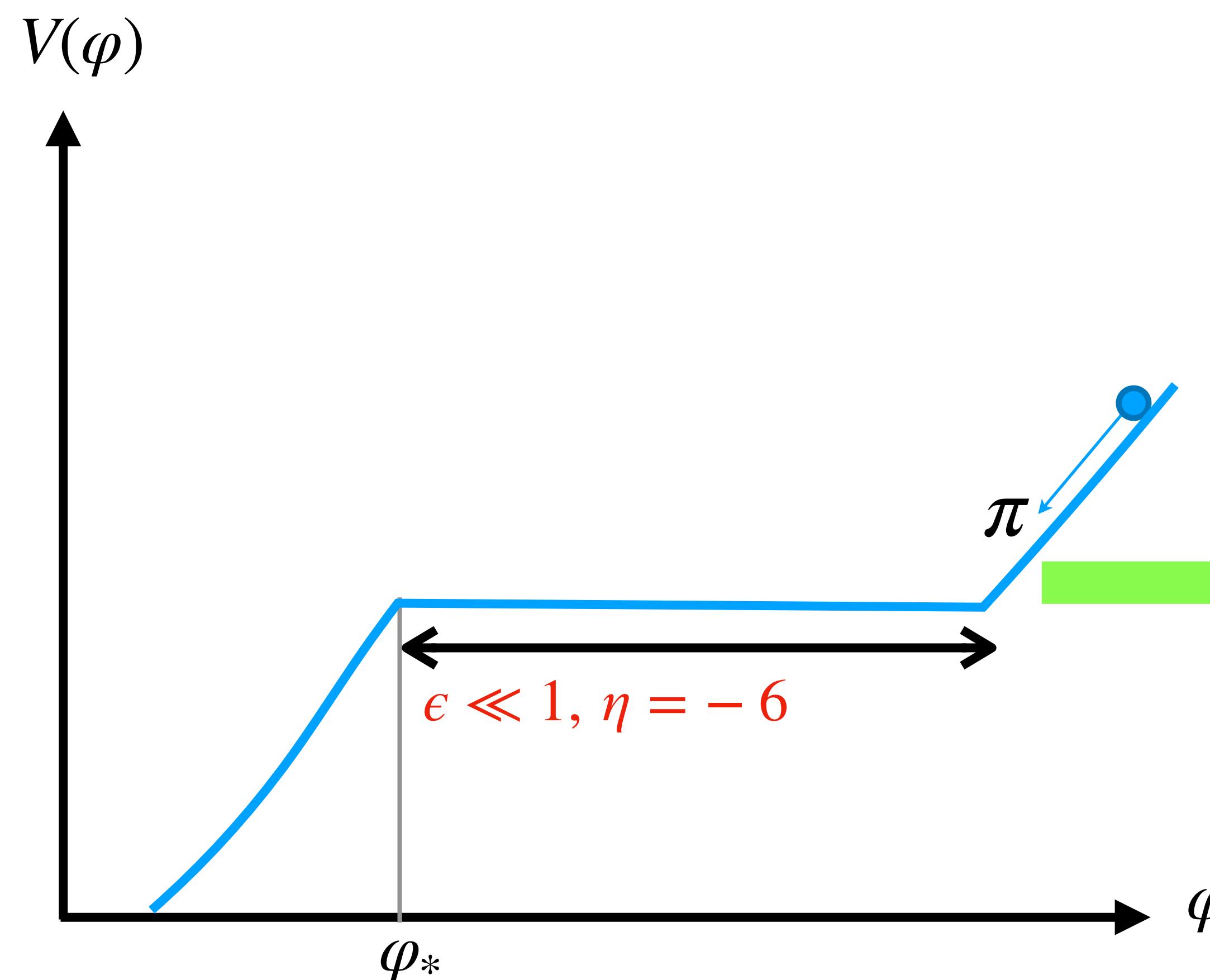
Ex1: Separate Universe



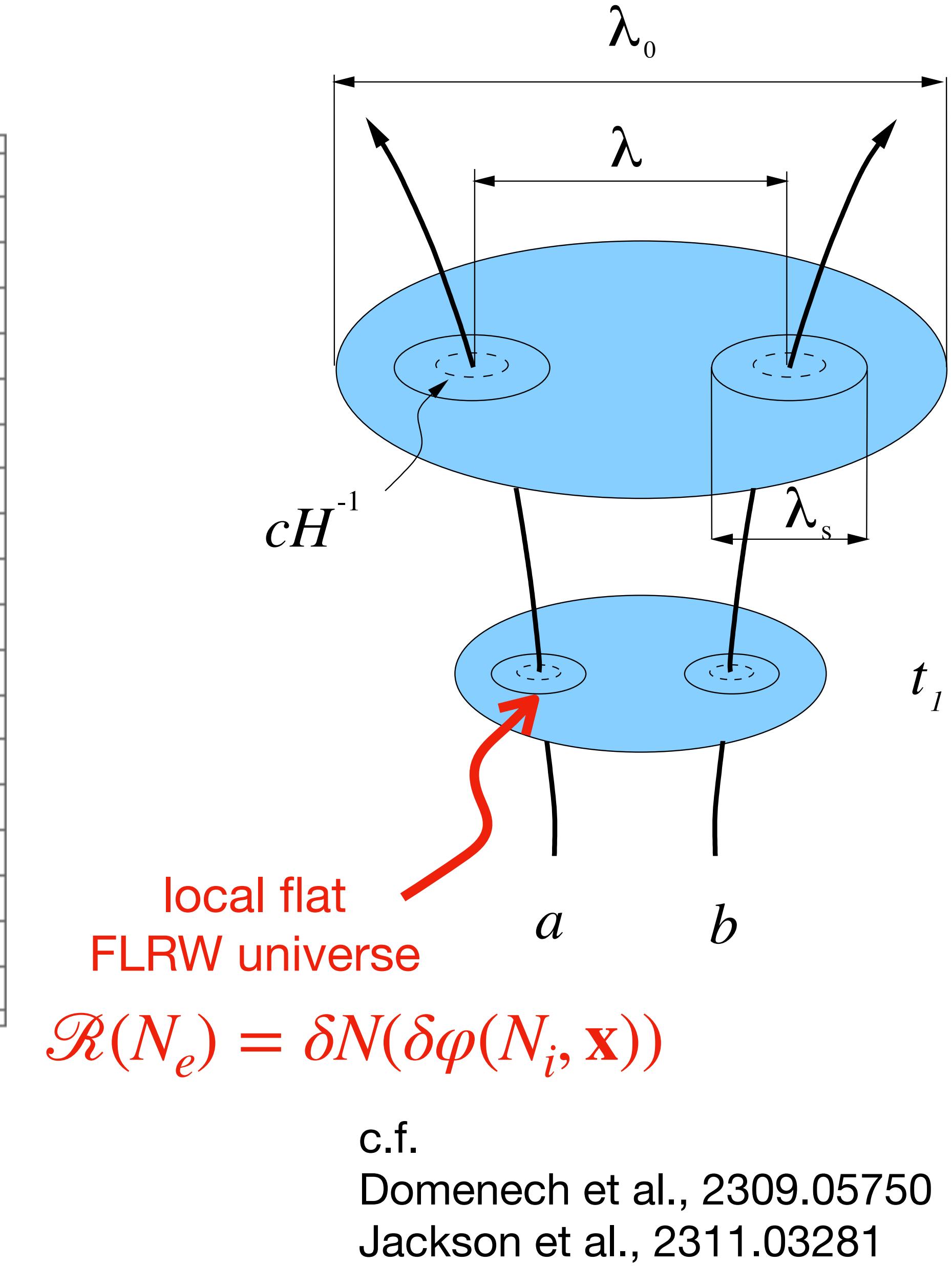
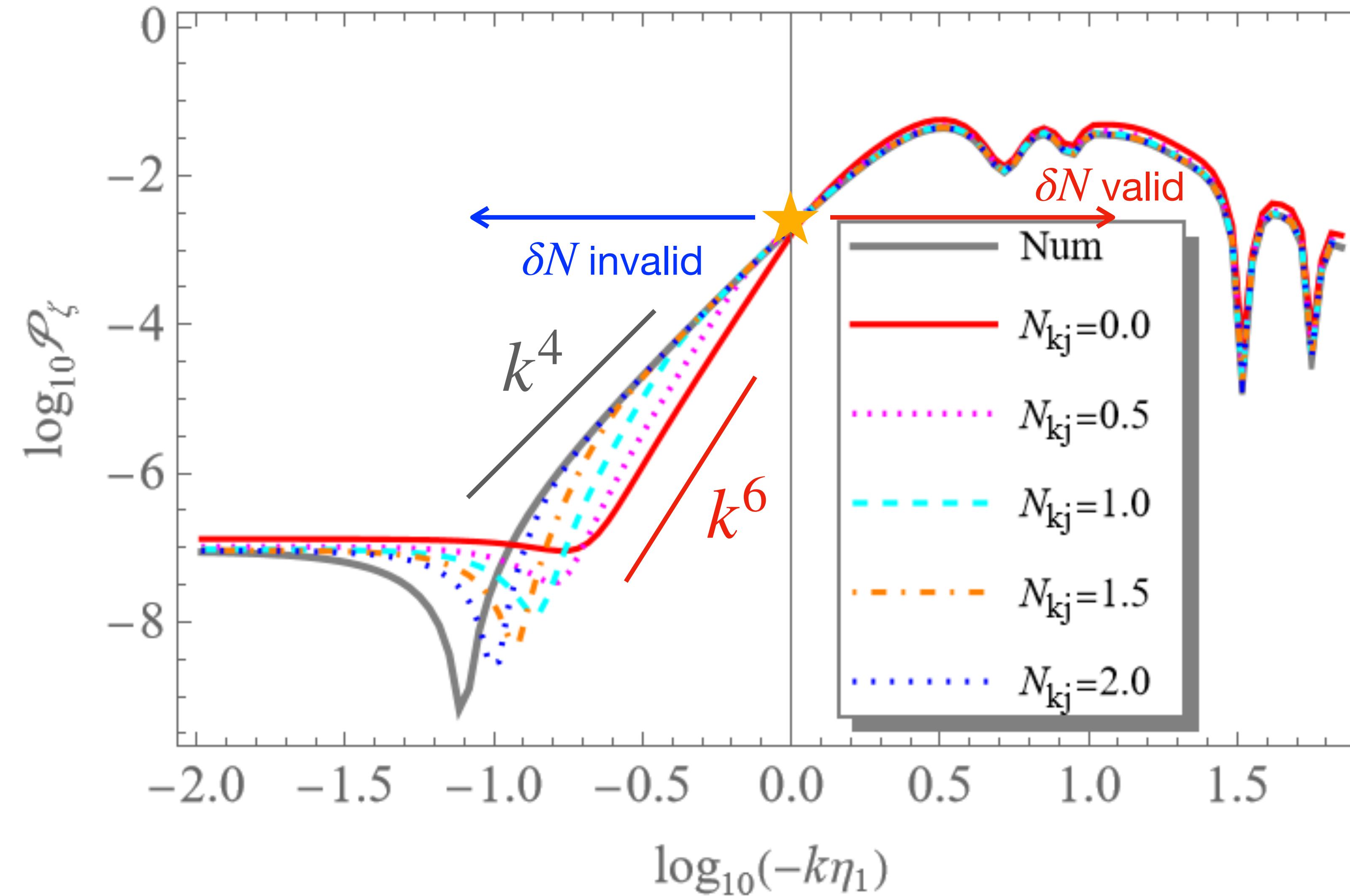
Leach, Sasaki, Wands, Liddle, astro-ph/0101406
 SP and Jianing Wang, 2209.14183

Domenech et al., 2309.05750
 Jackson et al., 2311.03281

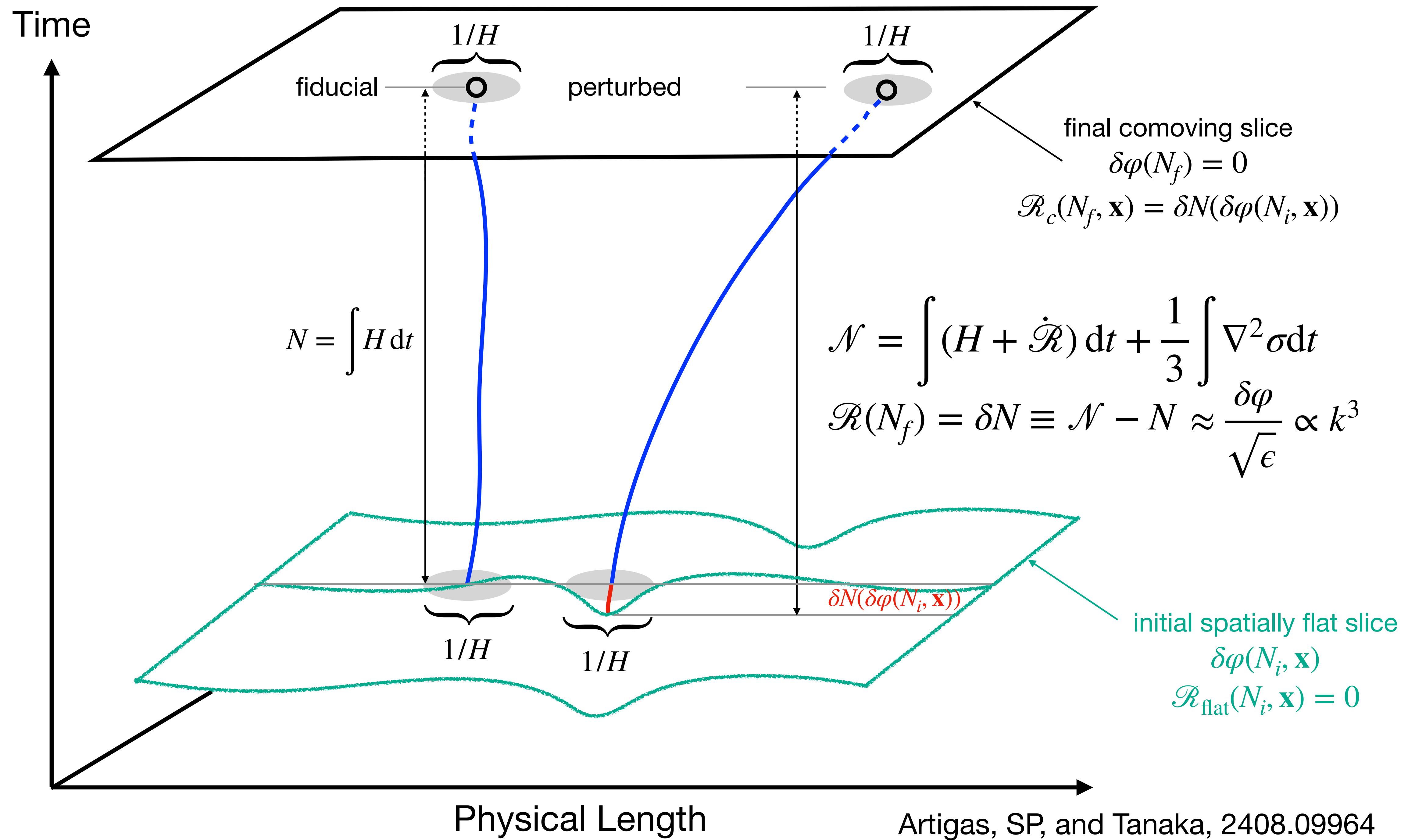
Ultra-slow-roll inflation



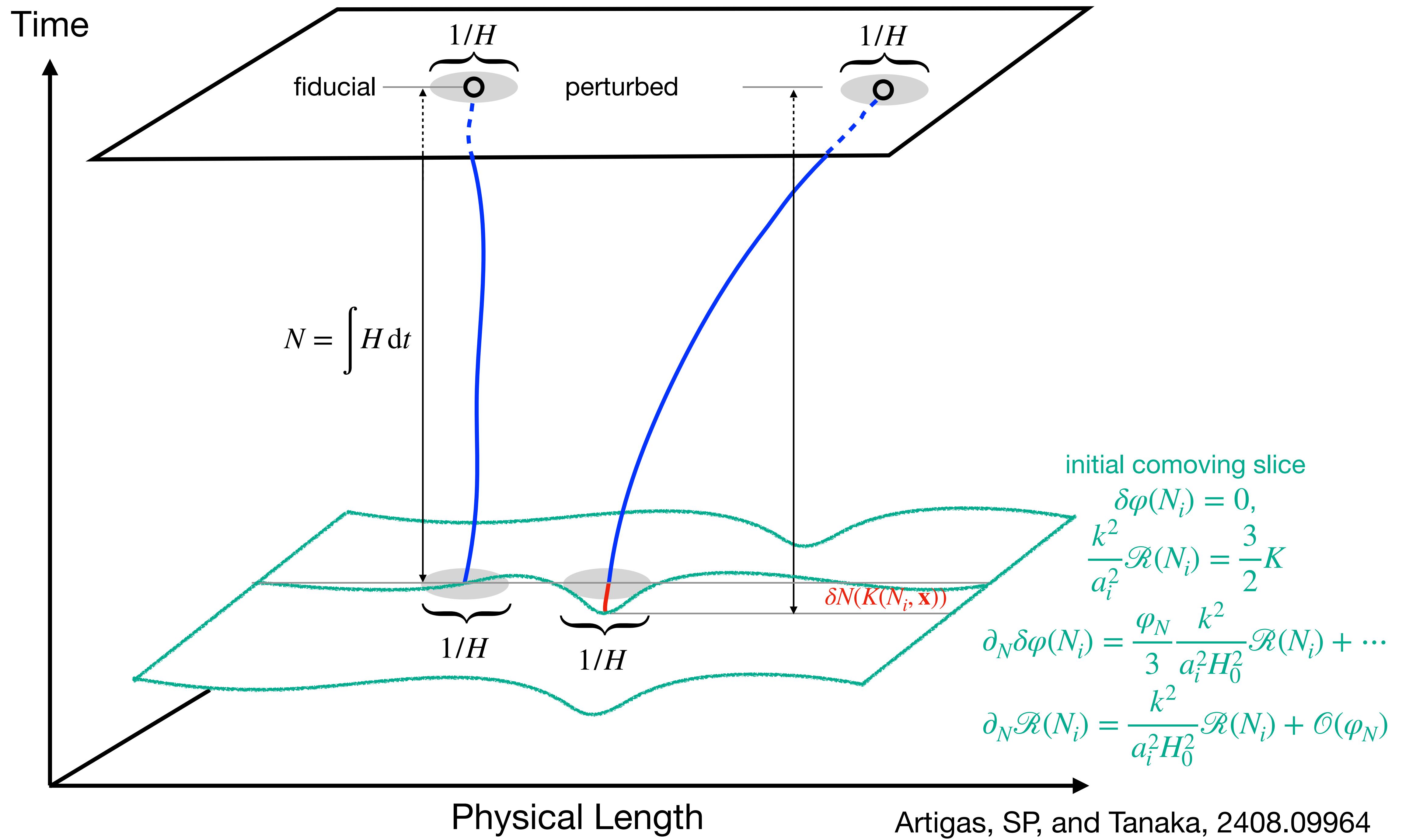
Separate Universe



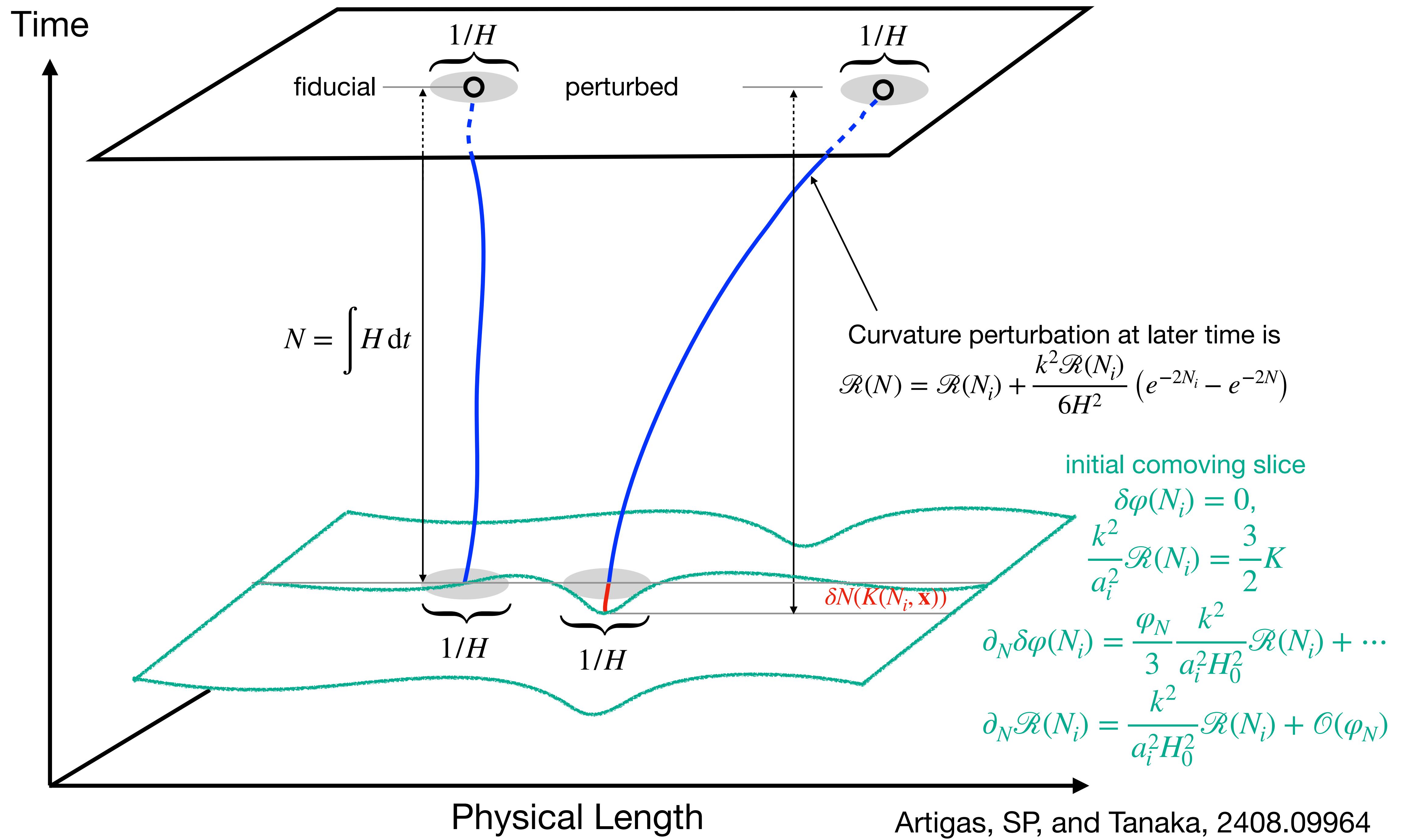
δN formalism



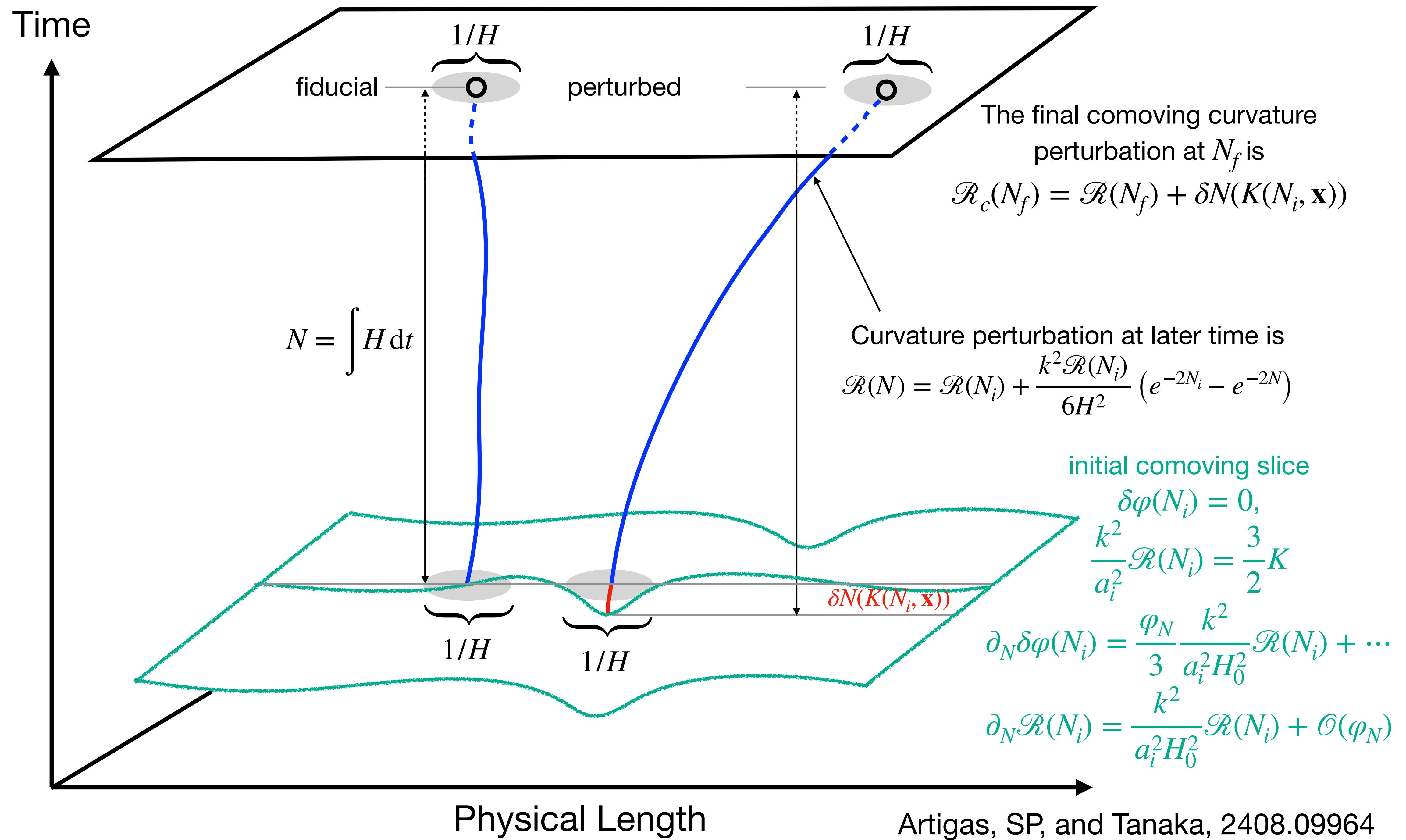
δN formalism



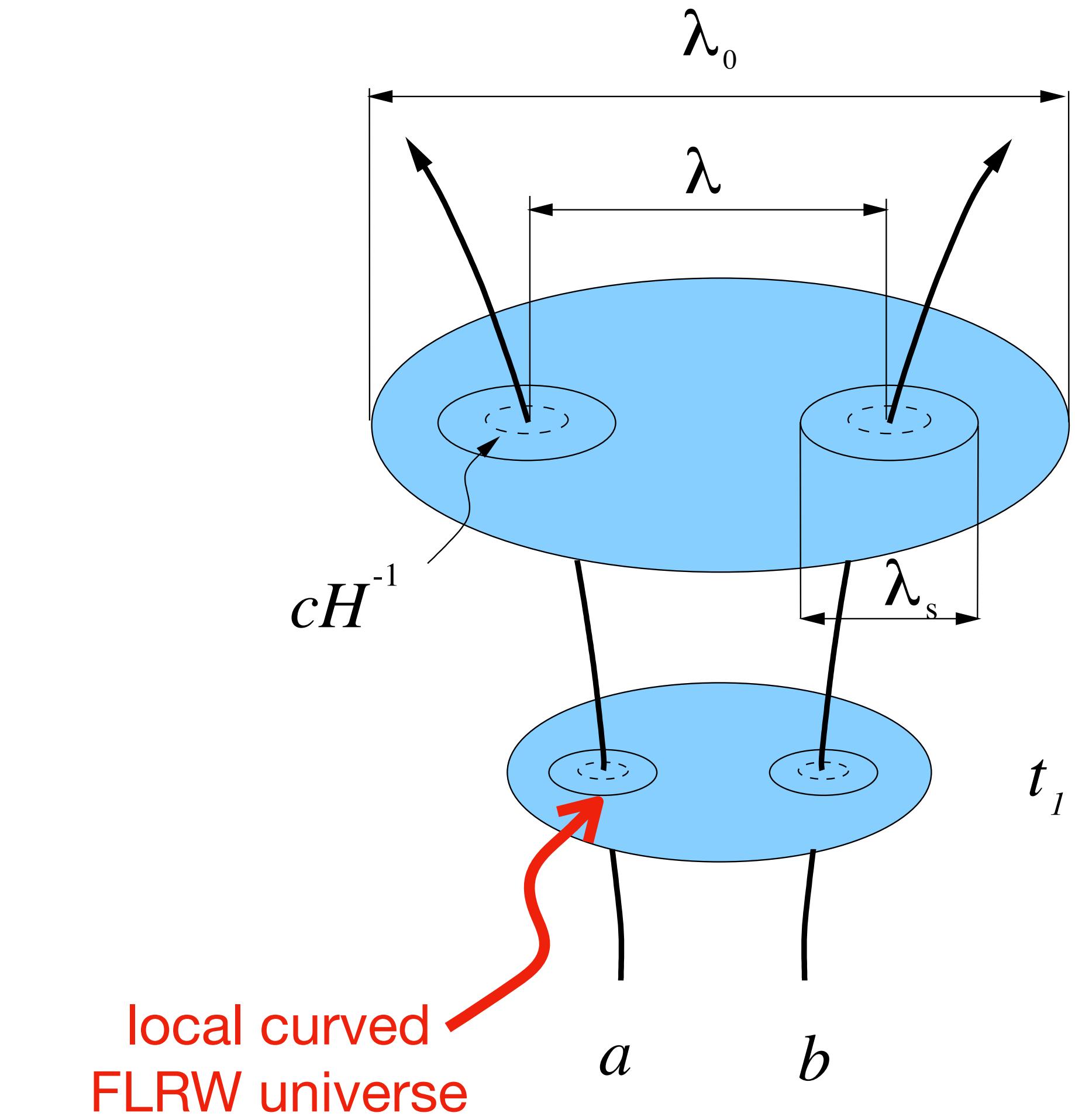
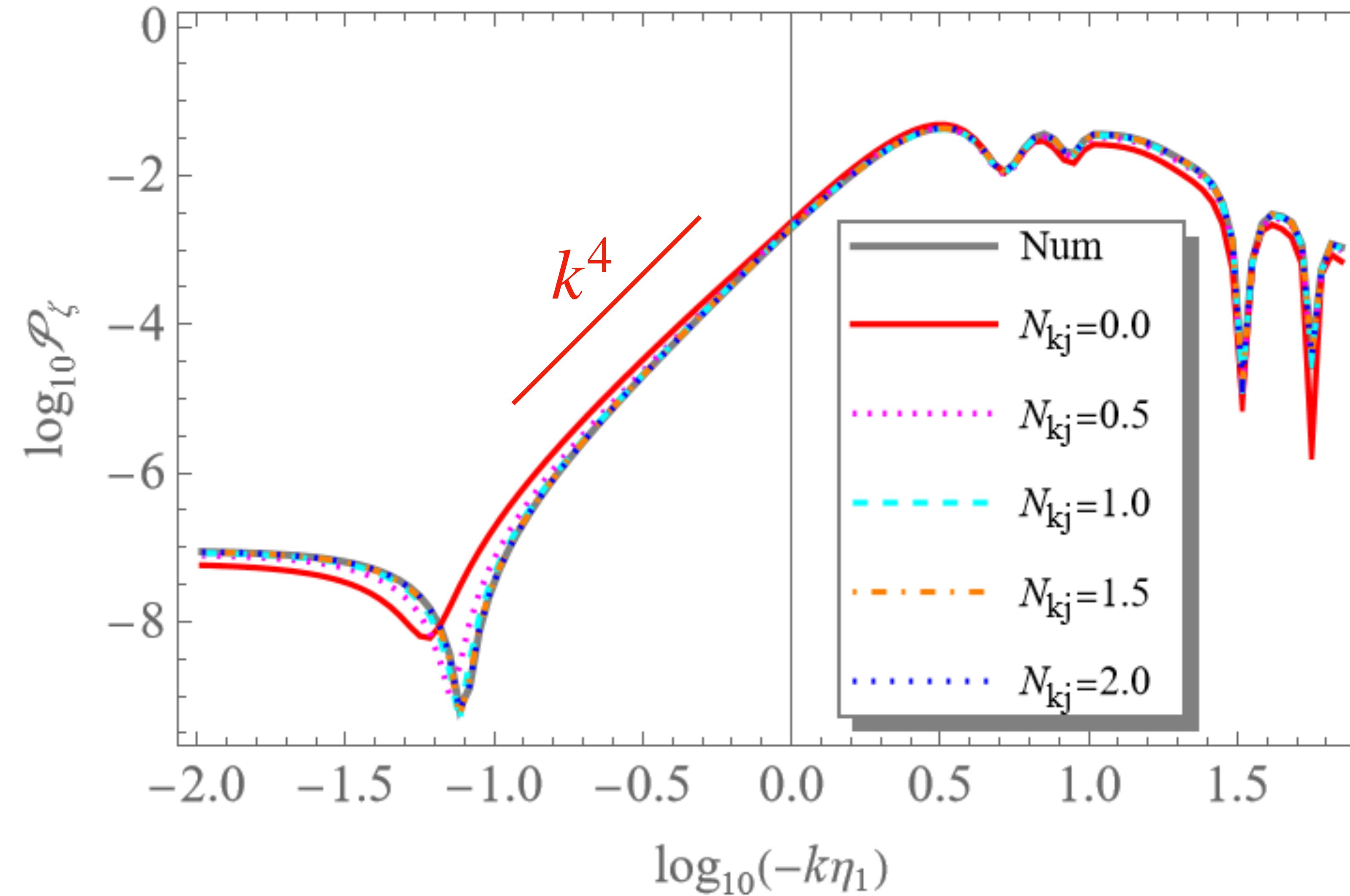
δN formalism



δN formalism

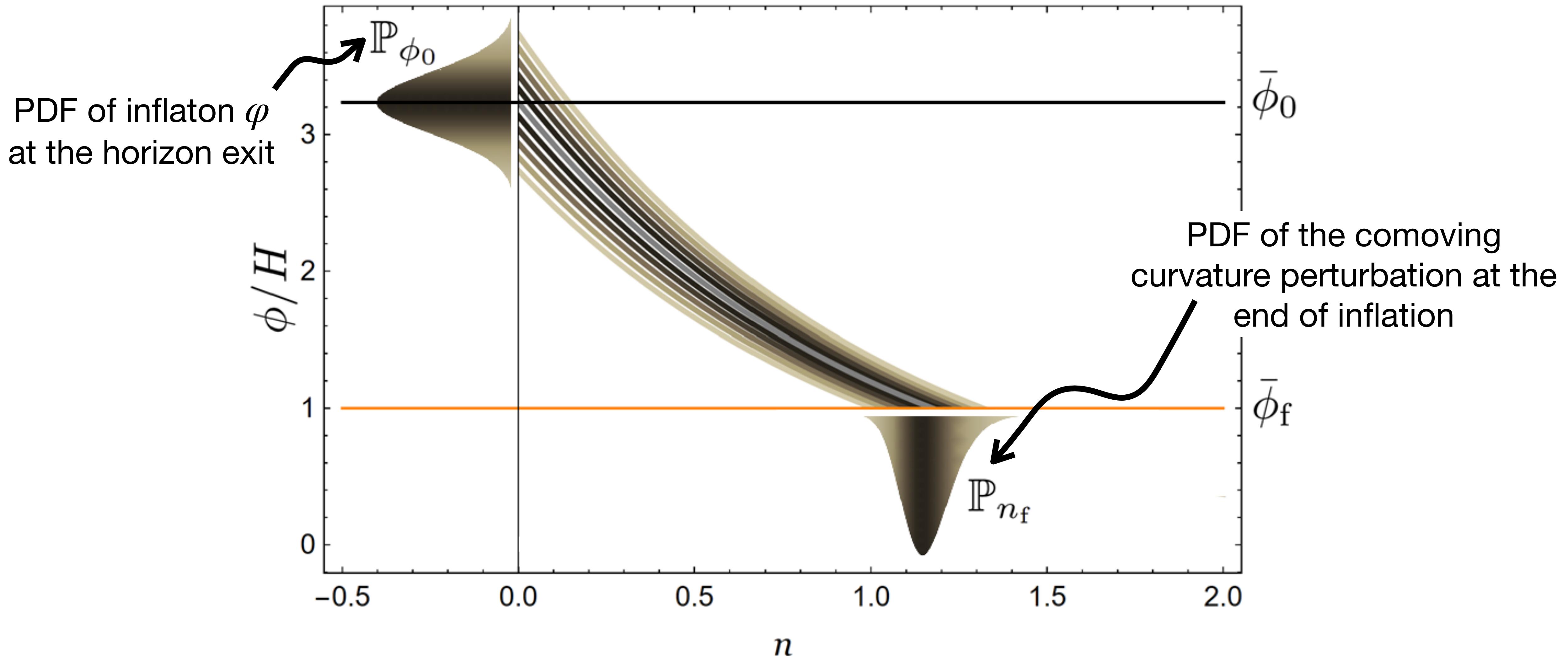


Separate Universe

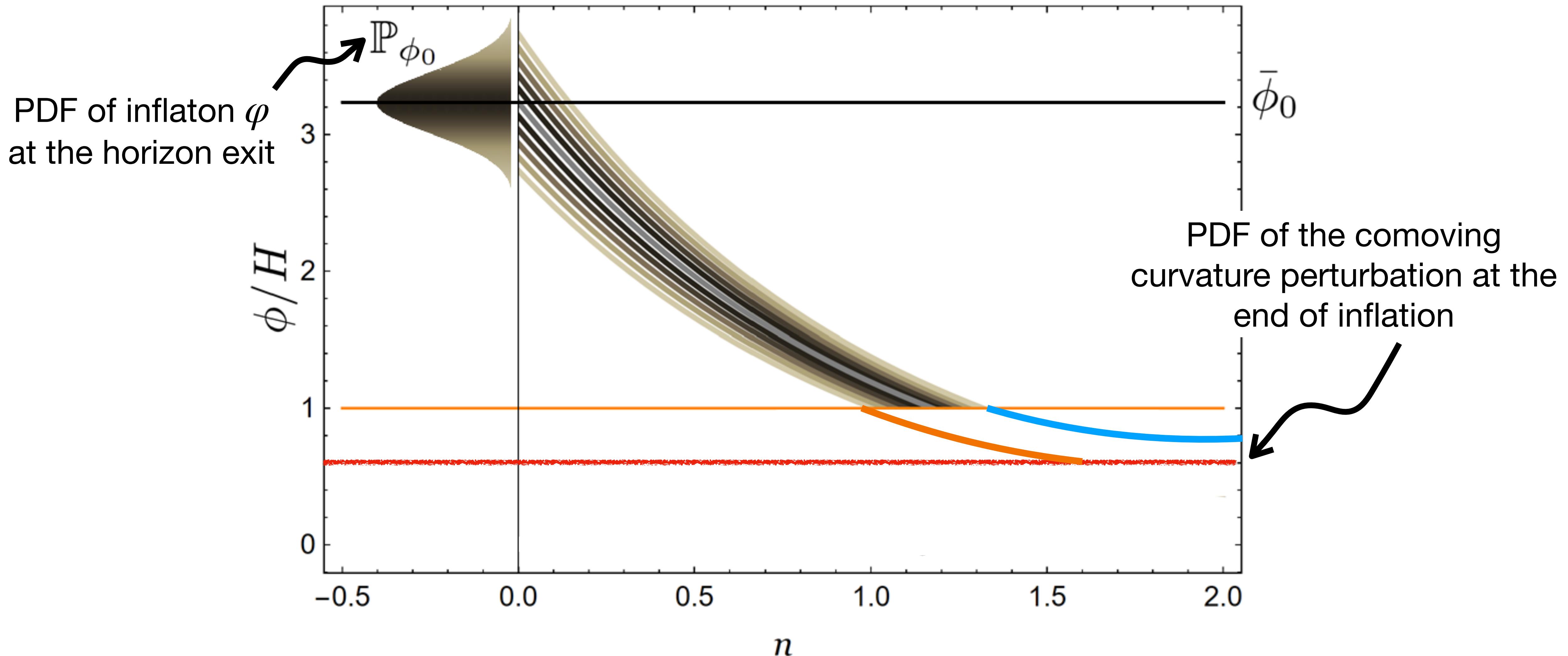


$$\mathcal{R}(N_e) = \mathcal{R}(N_i) + \delta N(k^2 \mathcal{R}(N_i))$$

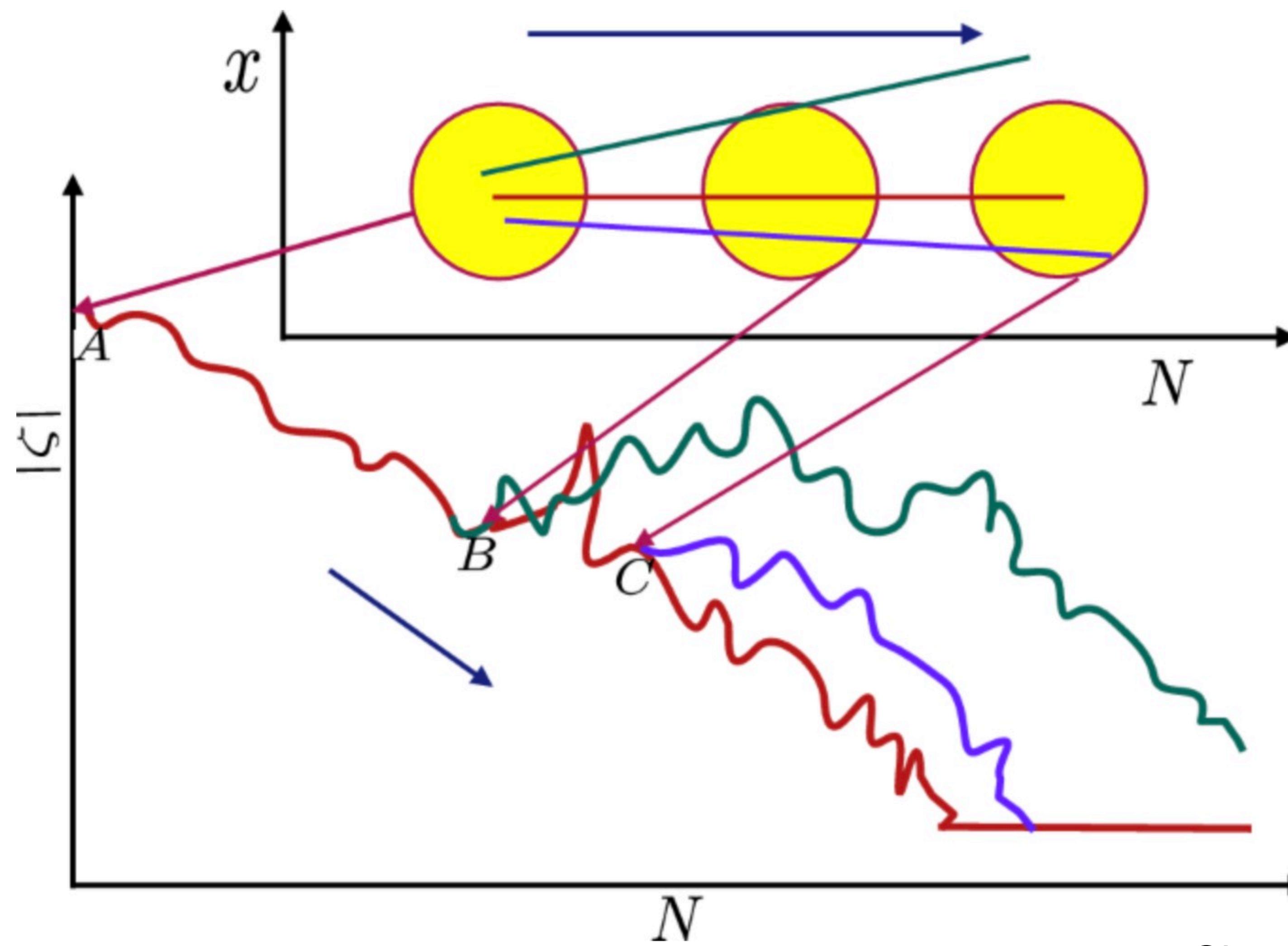
Ex2: Probability conservation



Probability conservation

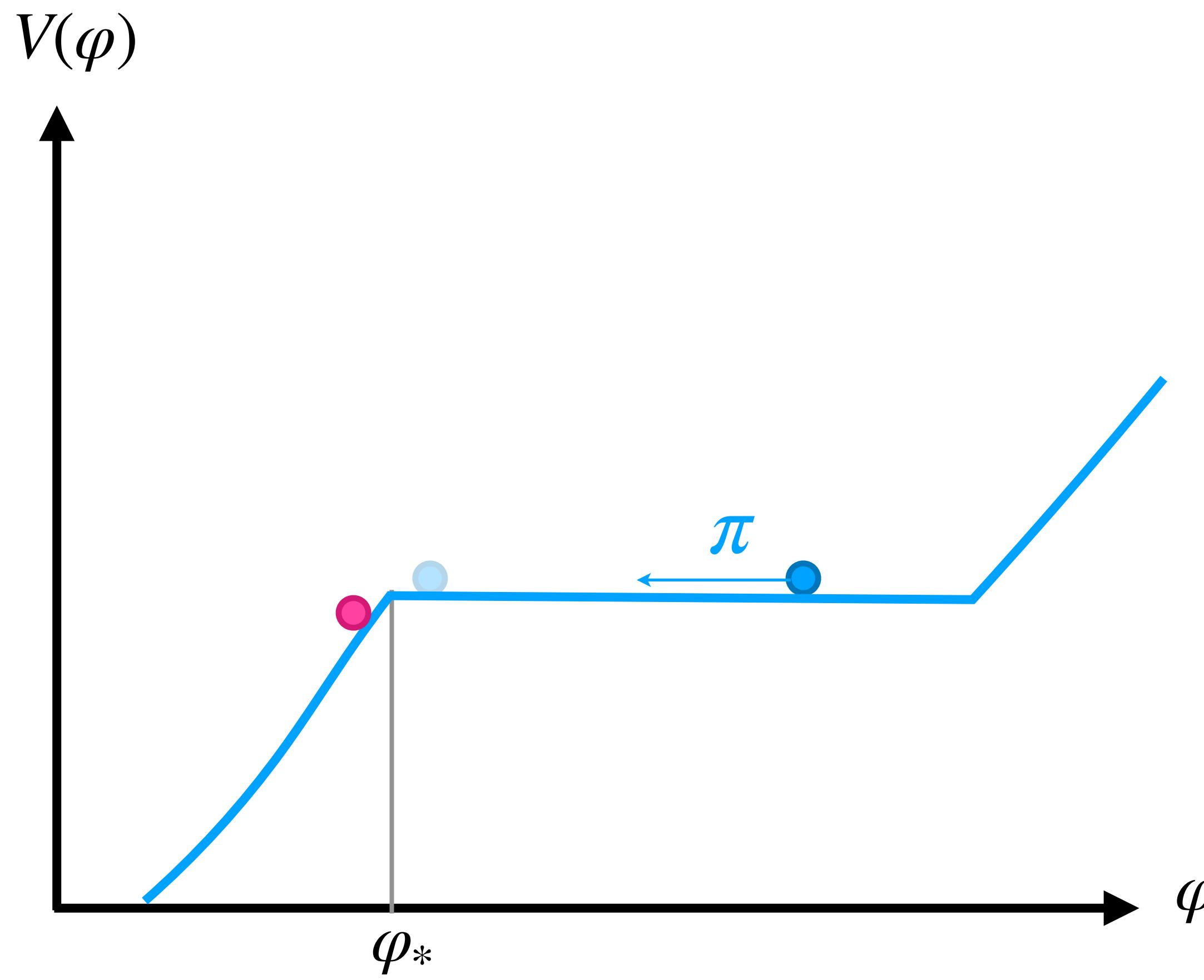


Probability conservation



Choudhury et al, 2403.13484

Ultra-slow-roll inflation

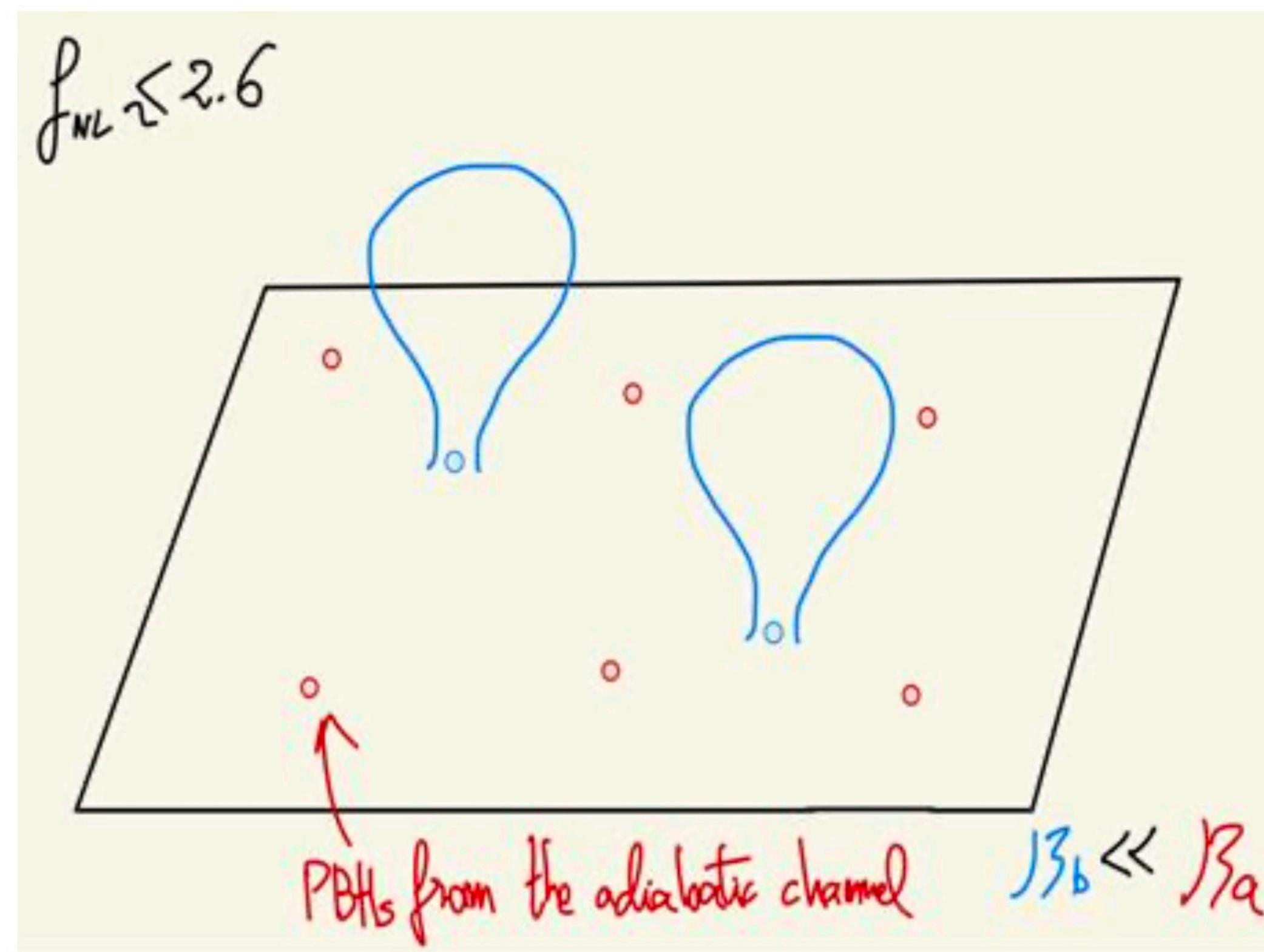


$$\mathcal{R} = -\frac{1}{3} \ln\left(1 - \frac{\delta\pi_*}{\pi_*}\right)$$

with $\delta\pi_*/\pi_* > 1$

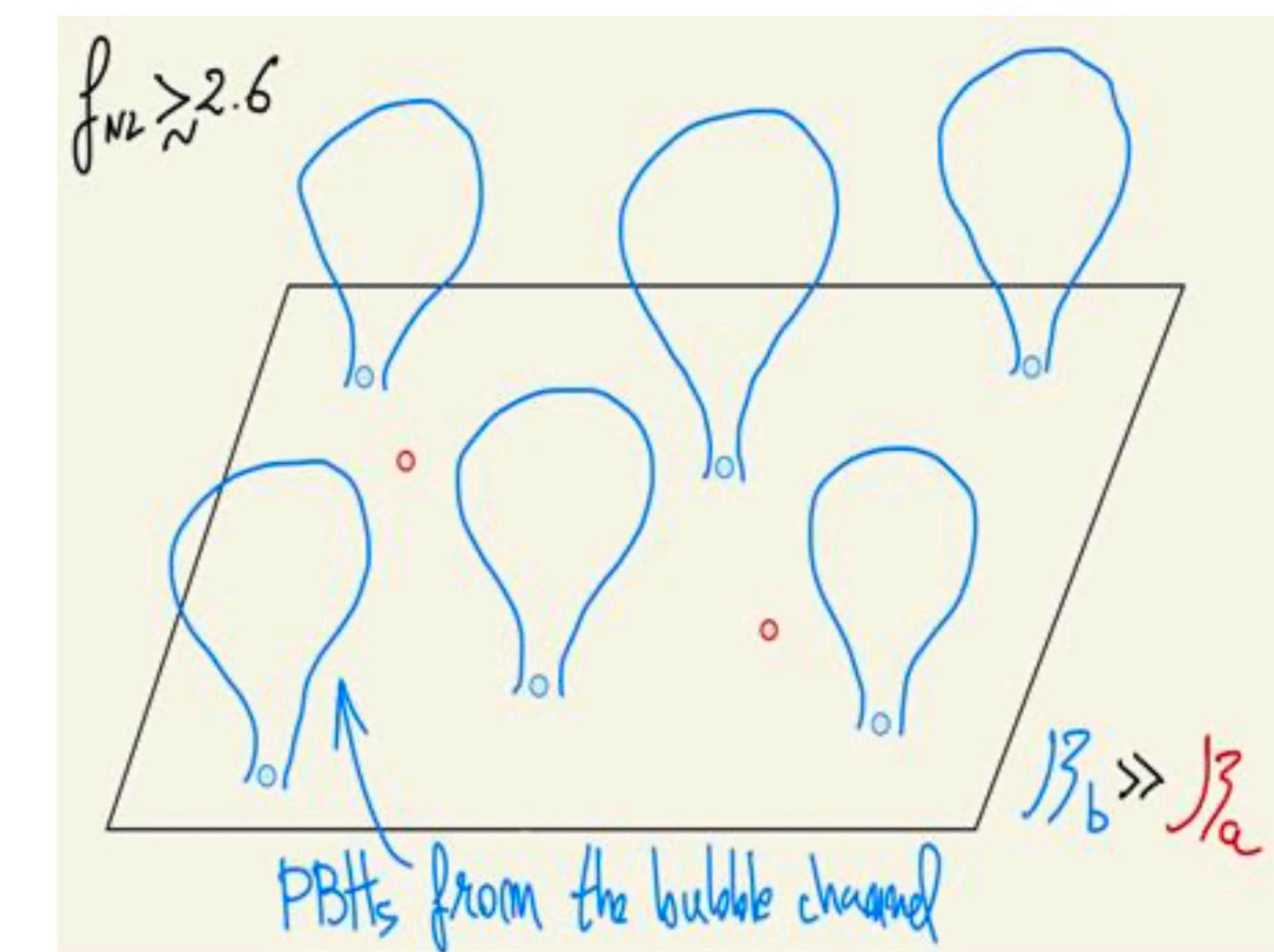
Qualitative picture

Fluctuations type I-> dominant contribution

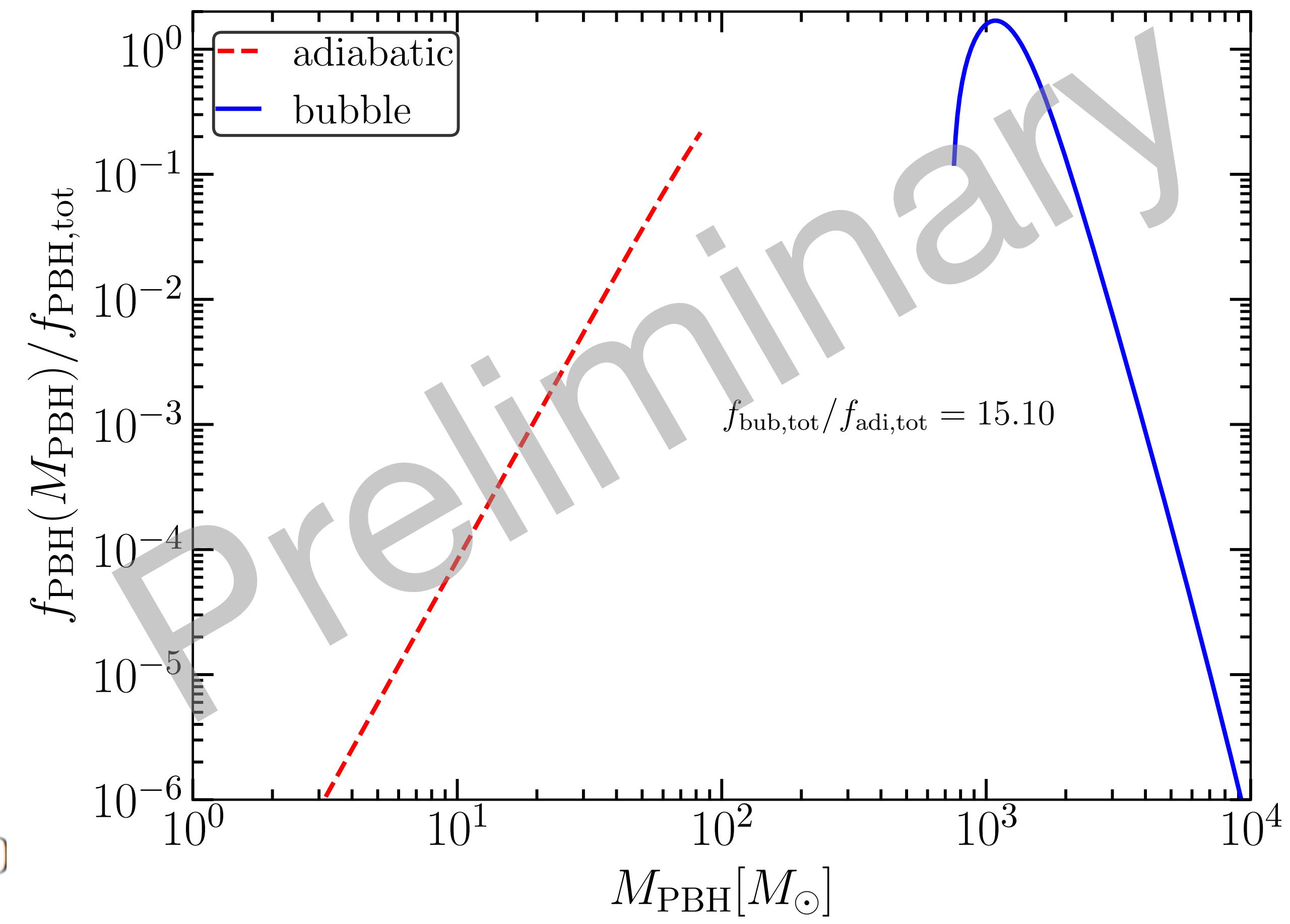
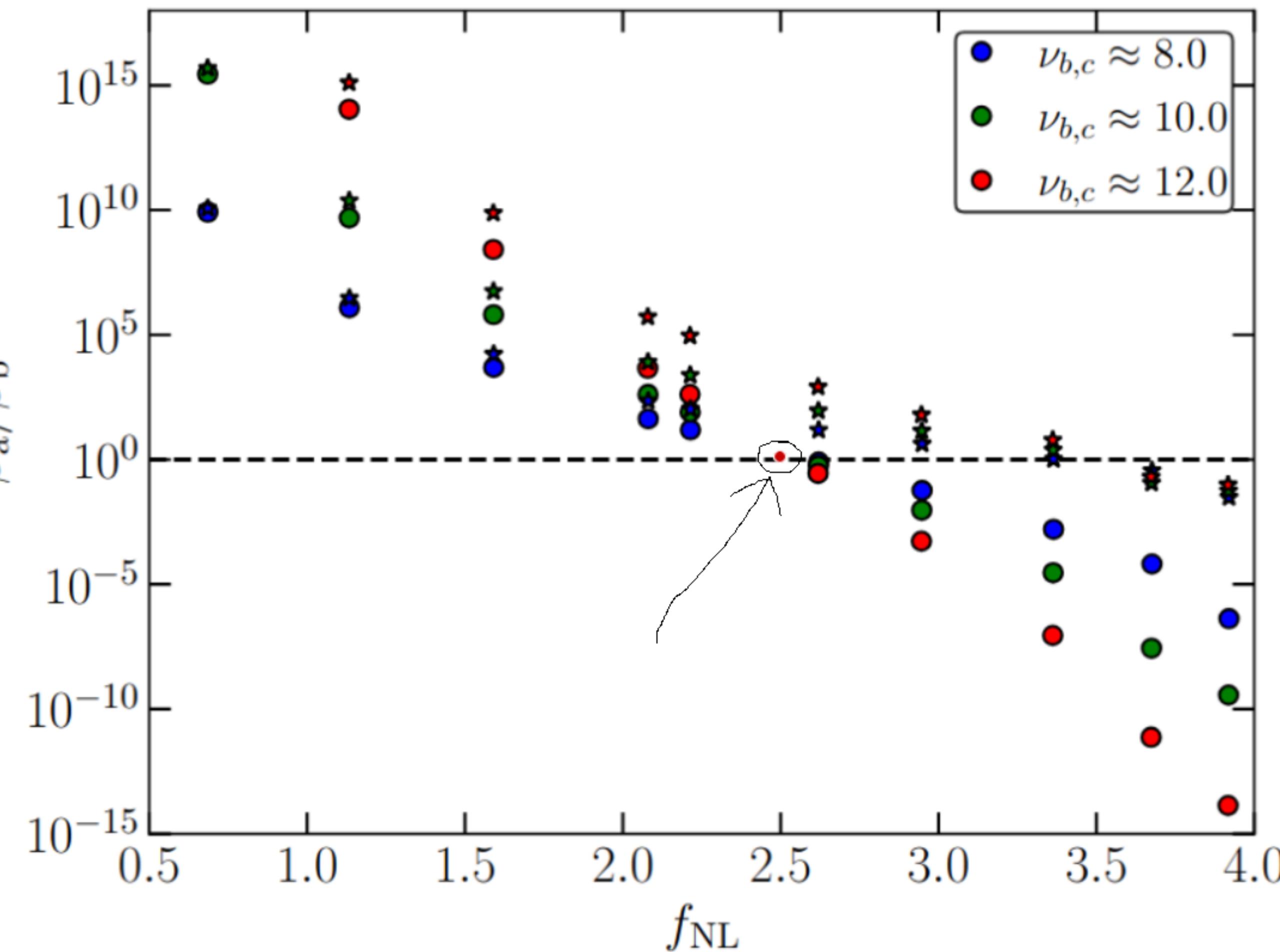


From Jaume Garriga's slide at Paris IHT

Fluctuations type II-> dominant contribution



Probability conservation



Conclusion

- In USR, the curvature perturbation are enhanced on superhorizon scales, which usually changes non-Gaussianity significantly.
- The NG generated on superhorizon scales can be calculated by δN formalism. Such a NG depends crucially on the boundary conditions.
- Original δN based on separate-universe approach fails to deal with decaying mode. We proposed the extended δN by considering K as the random variable.