

WKB, Eigenvalue Problems and Quantisation in QM

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Spring school on asymptotic methods and applications

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March 22 & 26, 2021

Outline

Lecture I: Basics of WKB and local analysis

Lecture II: Global analysis, Stokes automorphisms, exact quantization

Lecture III: Exact quantization, a geometric approach

References that I follow the closest:

- Delabaere Pham, *Resurgent methods in semi-classical asymptotics*
- Kawai, Takei, *Algebraic Analysis of Singular Perturbation Theory*
- Voros, *Spectre de L'équation de Schrödinger et Méthode BKW*

Exact WKB in a nutshell

Time independent Schrödinger equation

$$\left(-\frac{\hbar^2}{2} \frac{d^2}{dx^2} + V(x) \right) \psi(x; \hbar) = E \psi(x; \hbar)$$

Wave-functions? , Spectrum ?

$\psi(x, \hbar), E(\hbar)$: Resurgent functions of \hbar

$$\hbar^n, e^{-\frac{c}{\hbar}}, \log \hbar \dots$$

BPS spectra of $\mathcal{N} = 2$ SUSY theories [Nekrasov, Shatashvili,...]
wall crossing [Gaiotto, Moore, Nietzke...], cluster algebras [Iwaki, Nakanishi],
Integrable models [Dorey, Dunning, Tasseo...],...

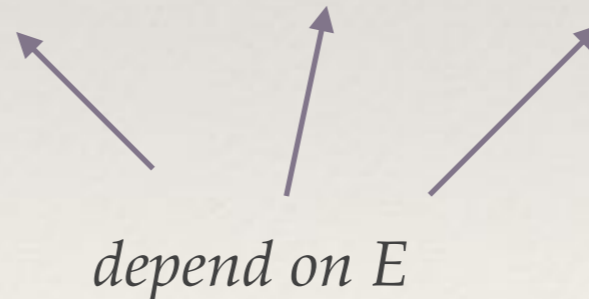
Riccati Equation

$$\left(-\frac{d^2}{dx^2} + \hbar^{-2}Q(x) \right) \psi(x; \hbar) = 0, \quad Q(x) := 2(V(x) - E)$$

WKB Ansatz: $\psi(x; \hbar) := e^{-\frac{1}{\hbar} \int_{x_0}^x P(x; \hbar) dx}$

$$P^2(x; \hbar) - \hbar \frac{dP}{dx} = Q(x)$$

Resurgent expansion: $P(x; \hbar) \sim P_0(x) + \hbar P_1(x) + \hbar^2 P_2(x) + \dots$



*assume $V(x)$: polynomial, see [Koike, Schafke] for $V(x)$: rational function

Riccati Equation

$$P(x; \hbar) \sim \sum_{n=0}^{\infty} \hbar^n P_n(x)$$

$$P^2(x; \hbar) - \hbar \frac{dP}{dx} = Q(x)$$

Zeroth order solution: $P_{0,\pm}(x) = \pm \sqrt{Q(x)}$

Two branches \longleftrightarrow independent solutions of the Schrödinger eqn.

Once the branch is chosen, the higher order terms are determined recursively (without solving any differential equation!):

$$P_1(x) - \frac{1}{2} \frac{d}{dx} \log P_0(x) = 0$$

$$2P_0(x)P_{n+1}(x) + \frac{dP_n}{dx} + \sum_{k=1}^n P_k(x)P_{n+1-k}(x) = 0$$

[Dunham, 1932]

Riccati Equation

We can organize the expansion as

$$P_{\pm}(x; \hbar) := \pm P_{\text{even}}(x; \hbar) + P_{\text{odd}}(x; \hbar)^*$$

$$P_{\text{odd}}(x) + \frac{\hbar}{2} \frac{d}{dx} \log P_{\text{even}}(x) = 0$$

\swarrow
 $\sqrt{Q(x)} + \hbar^2 P_2(x) + \dots$

\searrow
 $\hbar P_1(x) + \hbar^3 P_3(x) + \dots$

$$\psi(x; \hbar) = \sqrt{\frac{\hbar}{P_{\text{even}}(x; \hbar)}} e^{\pm \frac{1}{\hbar} \int_{x_0}^x P_{\text{even}}(x; \hbar) dx} \sim e^{\pm \frac{1}{\hbar} \int_{x_0}^x \sqrt{Q(x)} dx} \sum_n \psi_{n, \pm}(x) \hbar^{n+1/2}$$

$$P_0(x) = \sqrt{2(V(x) - E)}, \quad P_2(x) = \frac{-5V'(x)^2 + 4(-E + V(x))V''(x)}{32\sqrt{2}(-E + V(x))^{5/2}}, \dots$$

*: the even/odd label here agrees with Delabaere / Pham but is opposite of Takei.


Note: From now on I will drop the "even" subscript from P

WKB and resurgence

$$\psi(x; \hbar) = \sqrt{\frac{\hbar}{P_{\text{even}}(x; \hbar)}} e^{\pm \frac{1}{\hbar} \int_{x_0}^x P_{\text{even}}(x; \hbar) dx} \sim e^{\pm \frac{1}{\hbar} \int_{x_0}^x \sqrt{Q(x)} dx} \sum_n \psi_{n, \pm}(x) \hbar^{n+1/2}$$

- Each $\psi_{n, \pm}(x)$ is holomorphic near $U = \{x \in \mathbb{C} \mid Q(x) \neq 0 \text{ and } Q(x) = \text{holomorphic}\}$
- For any $K \subset U \quad \exists A_K, C_K$ s.t. $|\psi_{n, \pm}| < A_K C_K^n n!$, $\forall x \in K$

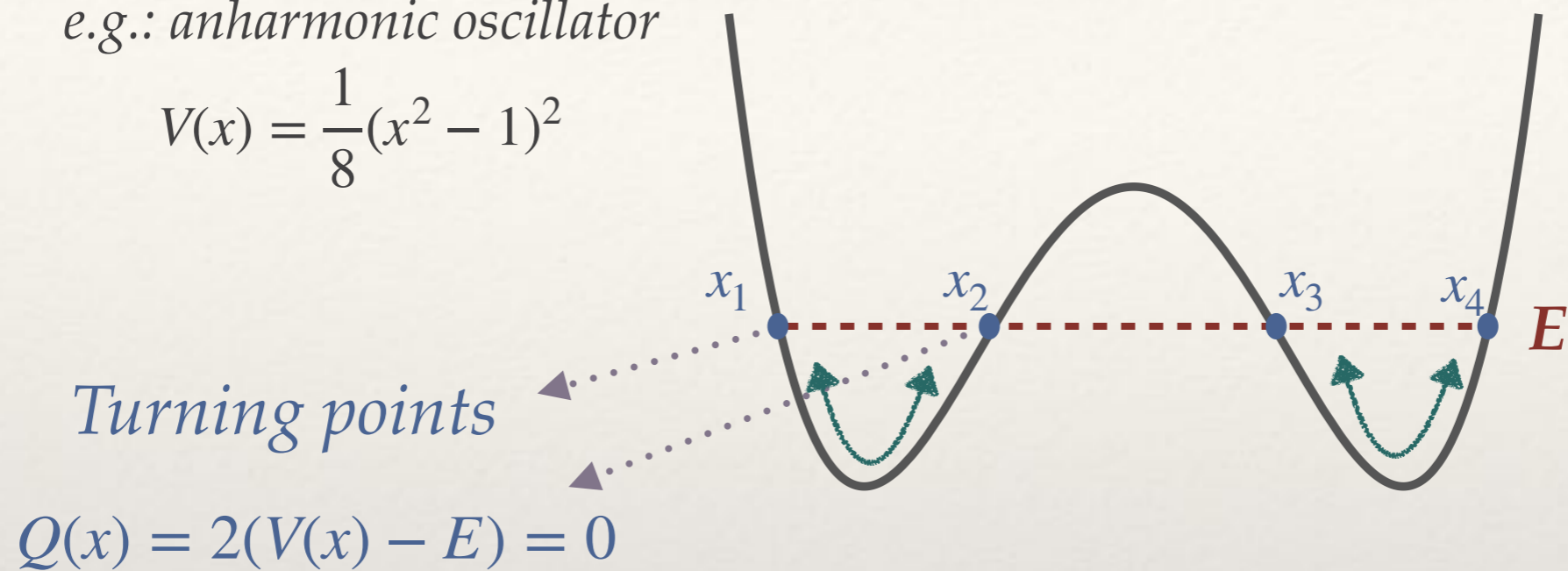
[Kawai, Takei]

- 
- ψ : resurgent asymptotic series, whose coefficients depend on x and E .
 - It is Borel summable in the absence of Stokes phenomenon
 - *Exact WKB* : (i) Patching local WKB expansions in different Stokes regions to construct an analytic function of x .
(ii) exact quantization condition $f(E)=0$: determines E as a resurgent function

Classical Mechanics

e.g.: anharmonic oscillator

$$V(x) = \frac{1}{8}(x^2 - 1)^2$$

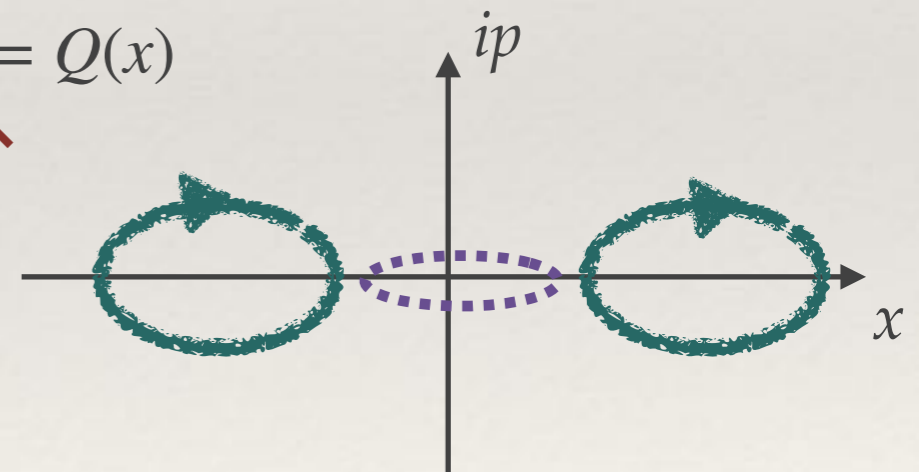


0 th order Riccati: Hamilton-Jacobi *

$$P^2(x; \hbar) - \hbar \frac{dP}{dx} = Q(x)$$

$$-\frac{1}{2}p^2 + V(x) = -\frac{1}{2} \left(\frac{dS_0}{dx} \right)^2 + V(x) = E$$

Classical action $S_0(x) = \int_{x_i}^x P_0(x) dx$

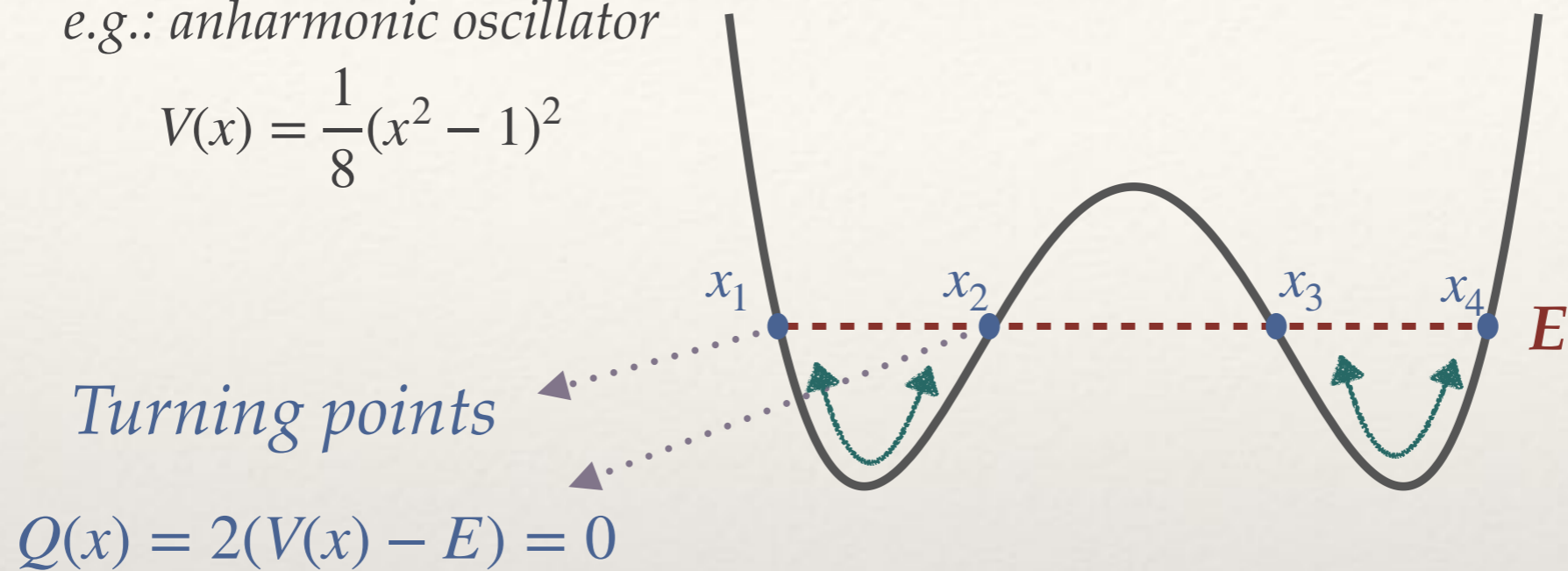


* note that the "momentum", p, differs from the physics convention by a factor of i

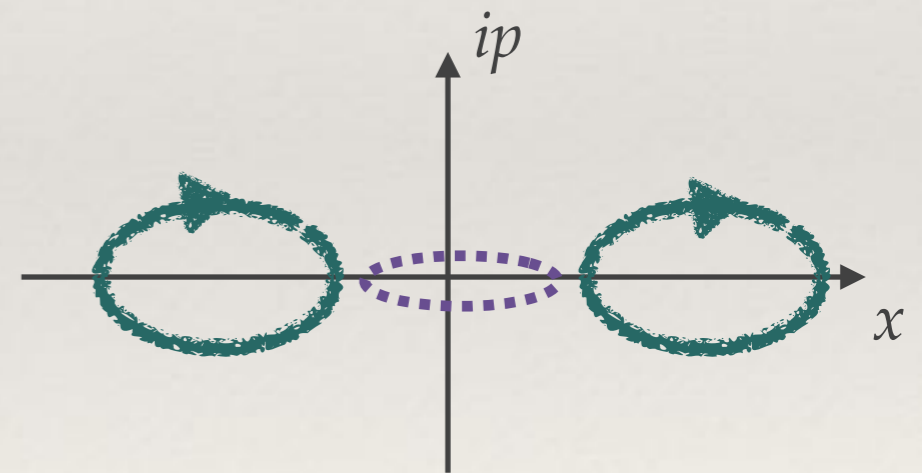
Classical Mechanics

e.g.: anharmonic oscillator

$$V(x) = \frac{1}{8}(x^2 - 1)^2$$



$$S_0(E) = 2 \int_{x_1}^{x_2} P_0(x) dx = -2i \int_{x_1}^{x_2} \sqrt{2(E - V(x))} dx$$

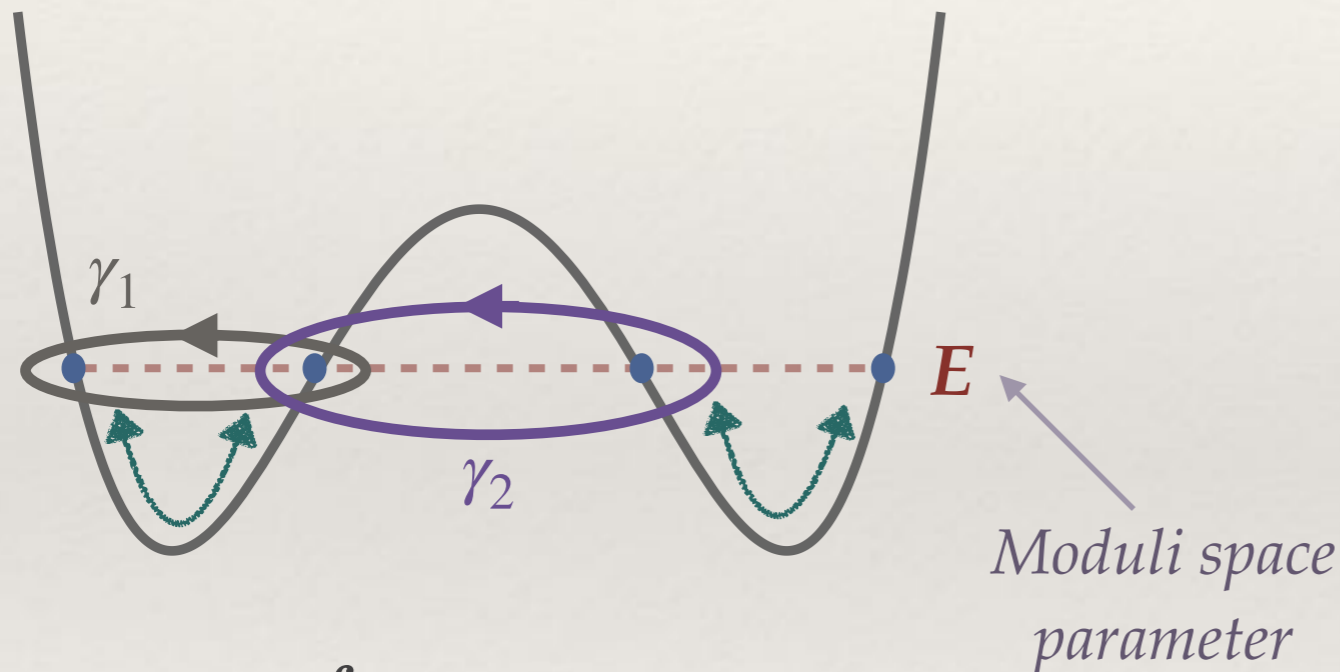


$$\omega_0(E) = \frac{dS_0(E)}{dE} = -2i \int_{x_1}^{x_2} \frac{1}{\sqrt{2(E - V(x))}} dx = 2\pi i \times (\text{Classical period})$$

Classical Mechanics

Spectral curve: $\Sigma = \{(p, x) \in \mathbb{C} \mid p^2 - Q(x) = 0\}$: complex hyper-elliptic curve

e.g.: anharmonic oscillator $p^2 - V(x) - E := p^2 - \prod_{i=1}^4 (x - x_i(E)) = 0$ $g=1$ elliptic curve



$$\mathcal{S}_{\gamma_1,0}(E) = \oint_{\gamma_1} P_0(x) dx$$

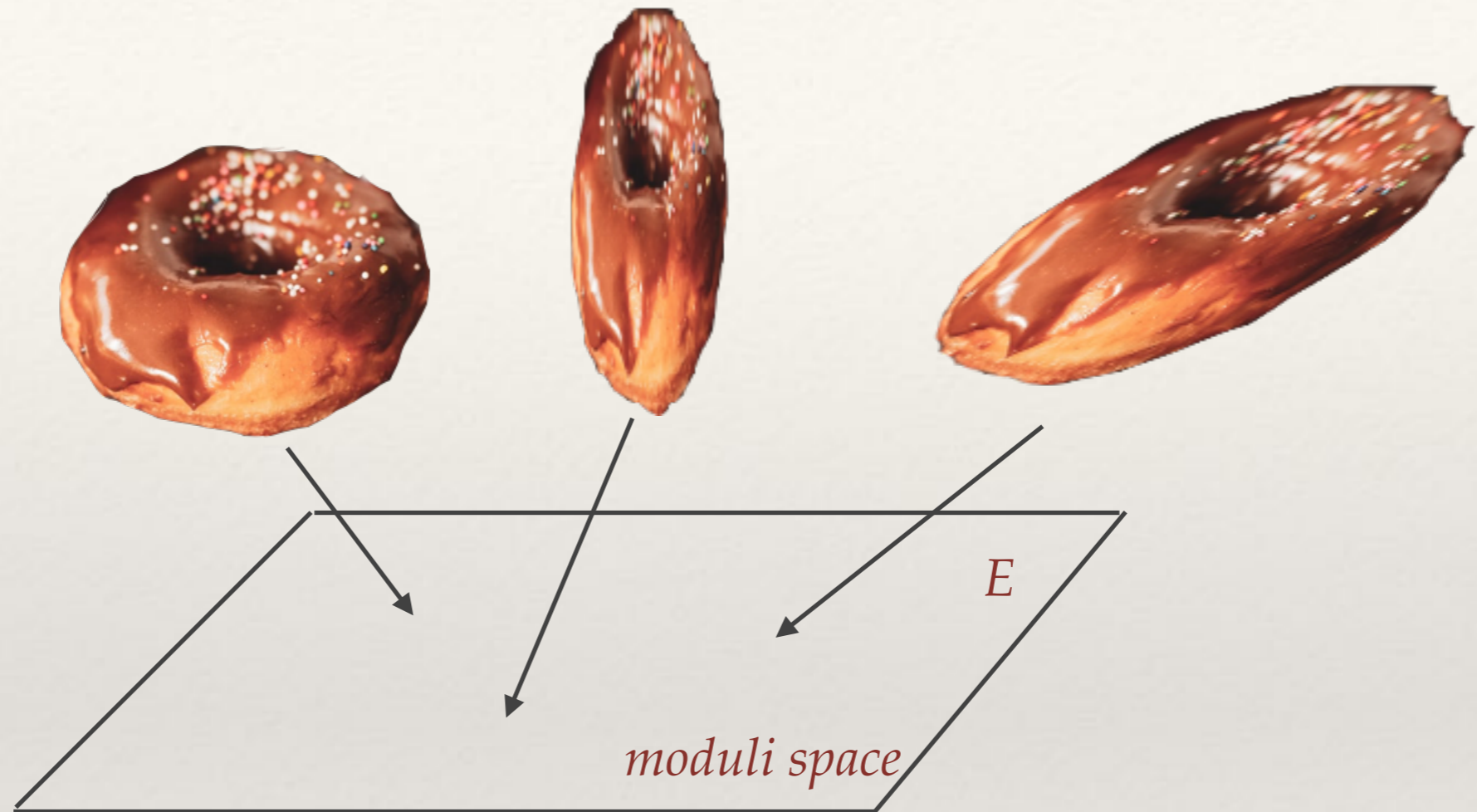
Classical action

$$\mathcal{S}_{\gamma_2,0}(E) = \oint_{\gamma_2} P_0(x) dx$$

"Tunneling action"

WKB actions $\longleftrightarrow \gamma_i \in H_1(\Sigma)$

Classical Mechanics



$$\mathcal{S}_{\gamma_i, 0}(E) = \oint_{\gamma_i} P_0(x) dx$$

Solutions of Picard-Fuchs equation

To be continued...

degenerate points

$$\gamma_i = 0$$

Singularities of PF eqn

e.g.

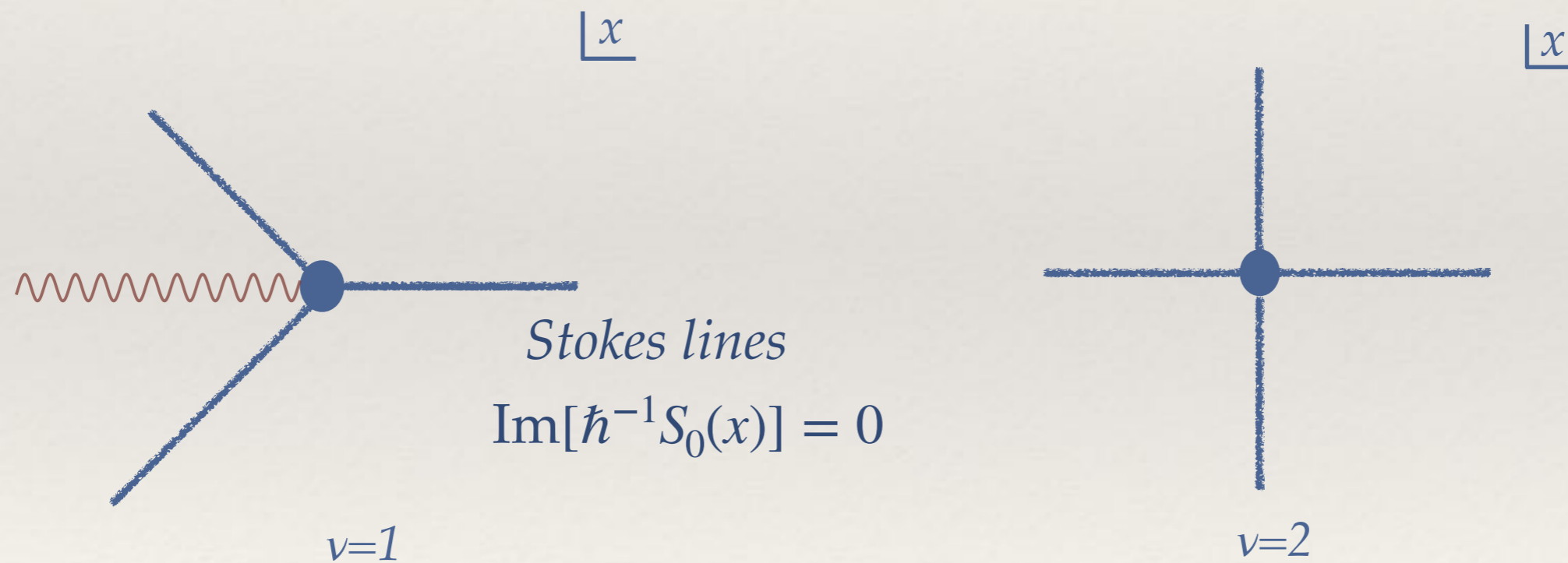


Local analysis: Turning points and Stokes lines

Near a turning point

$$Q(x) \approx (x - x_*)^\nu, \quad P_0(x) \approx (x - x_*)^{\nu/2}, \quad S_0(x) \approx (x - x_*)^{\nu/2+1}$$

$\nu=1$: simple turning point, $\nu=2$: double turning point etc...



Steepest descent and Stokes lines

$$x := x_R + ix_I \qquad \frac{1}{\hbar} S_0(x) := f_R(x) + if_I(x)$$

- Consider the curves, $x(\tau)$, parameterized by τ and satisfy

$$\frac{dx}{d\tau} = \overline{\frac{\partial f(x(\tau))}{\partial x}}$$

$$\Rightarrow \frac{df_R}{d\tau} = \left| \frac{\partial f}{\partial x} \right|^2 > 0, \quad \frac{df_I}{d\tau} = 0$$

Steepest descent curves

- $\operatorname{Re} \left[\frac{1}{\hbar} S_0(x) \right]$ increases fastest
- $e^{-\frac{1}{\hbar} S_0(x)}$ decreases fastest

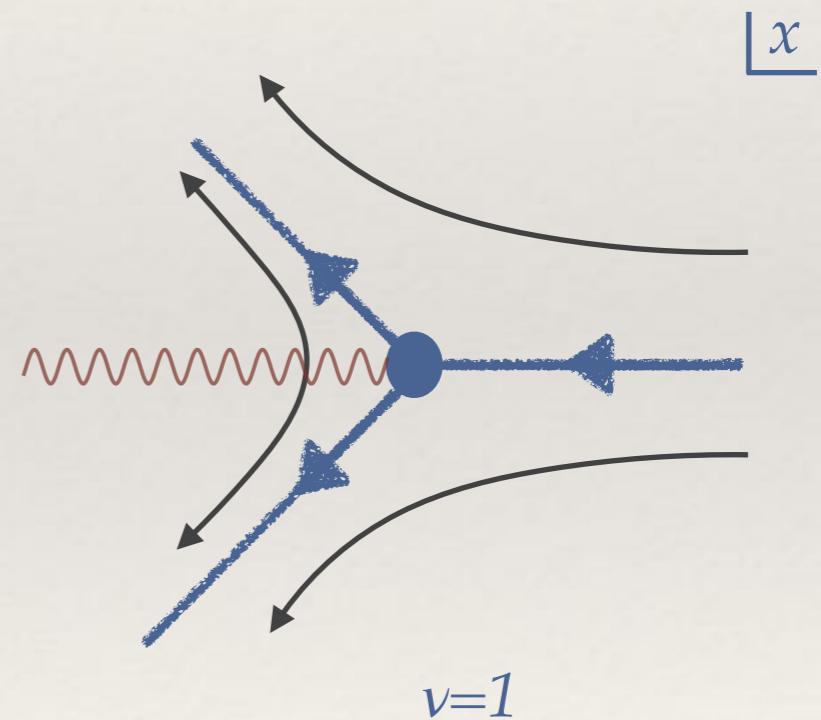
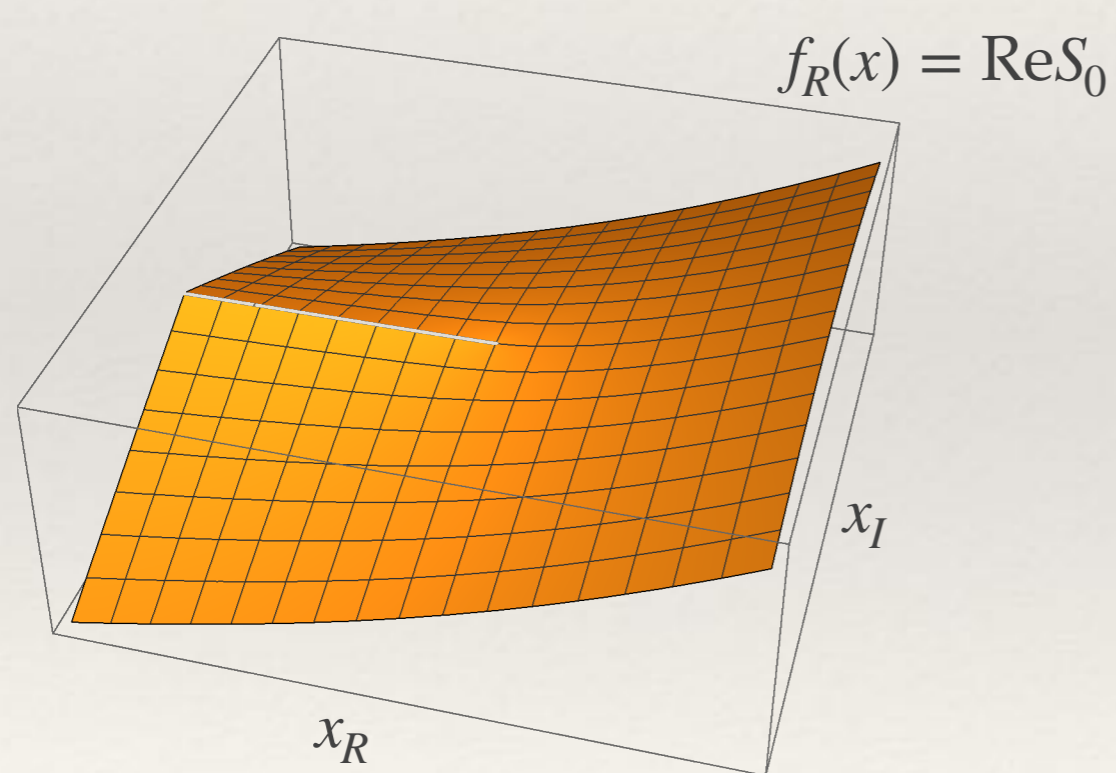
*“steepest ascent”, “Lefschetz thimbles”,
“fading lines” [DDP], ...*

exercise: show that $x(\tau)$ satisfy a gradient flow equation for $S_{0,R}$ and a Hamiltonian equation where $S_{0,I}$ is the Hamiltonian and (x_R, x_I) is the canonical pair

Steepest descent and Stokes lines

recall $\frac{\partial S_0}{\partial x} = P_0(x)$ Turning points: *fixed points* of flow

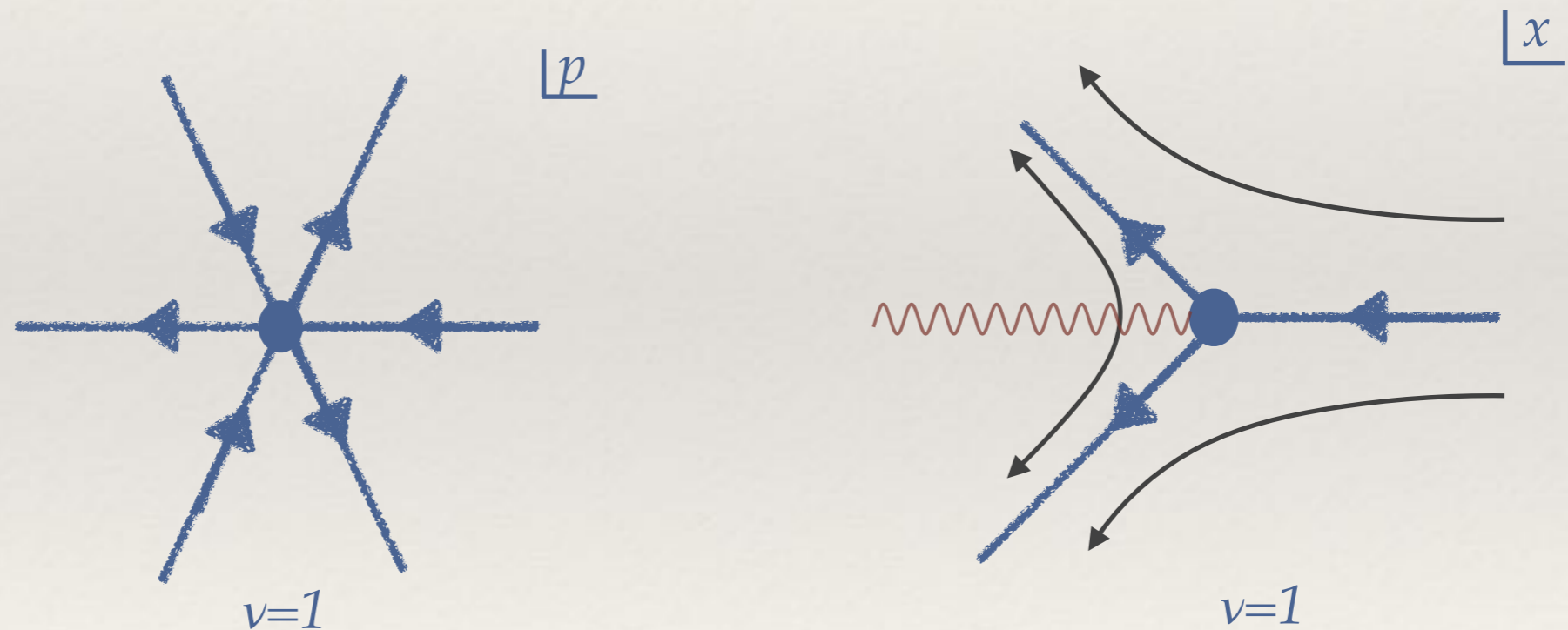
- Around a simple turning point $P_0(x) = \sqrt{x}$, $S_0(x) = 2/3x^{3/2}$



Steepest descent and Stokes lines

recall $\frac{\partial S_0}{\partial x} = P_0(x)$ Turning points: *fixed points* of flow

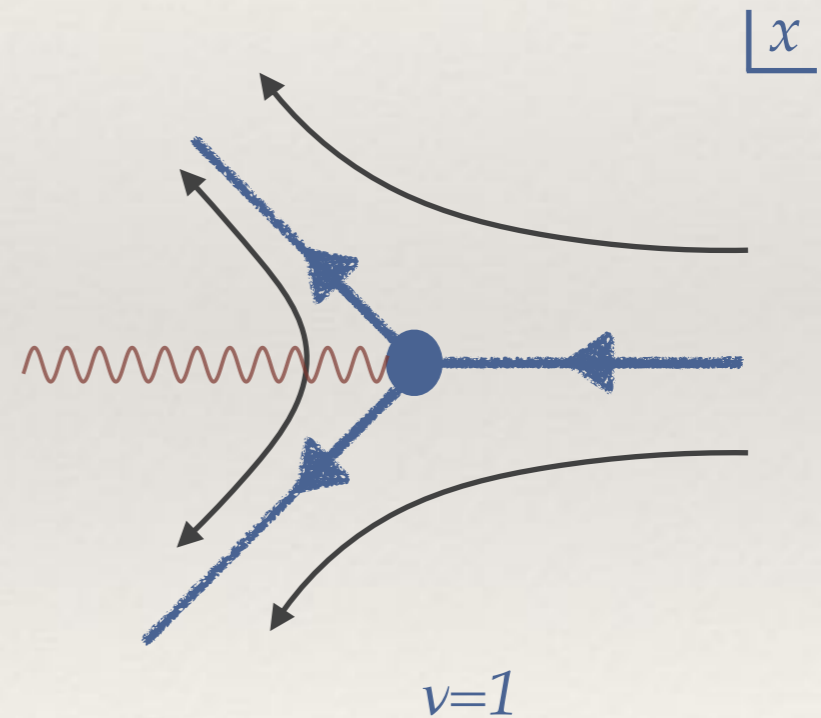
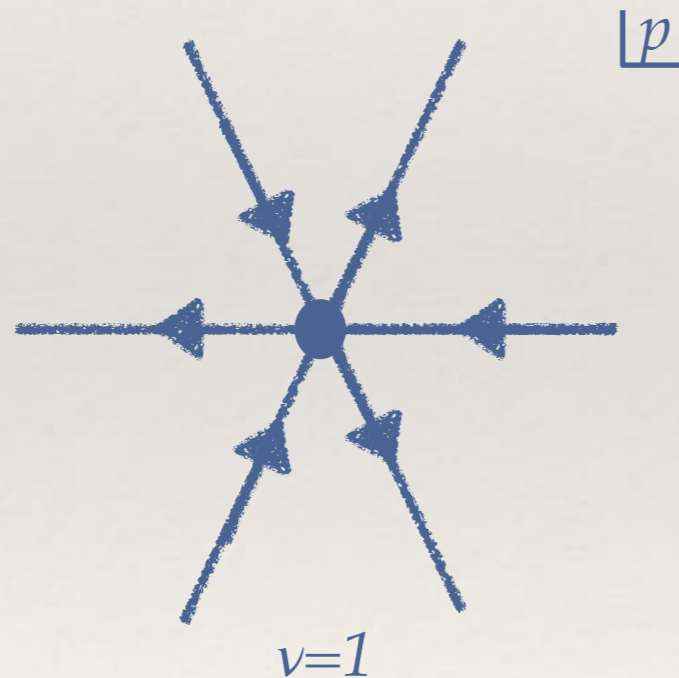
- Around a simple turning point $P_0(x) = \sqrt{x}$, $S_0(x) = 2/3x^{3/2}$



Steepest descent and Stokes lines

recall $\frac{\partial S_0}{\partial x} = P_0(x)$ Turning points: *fixed points* of flow

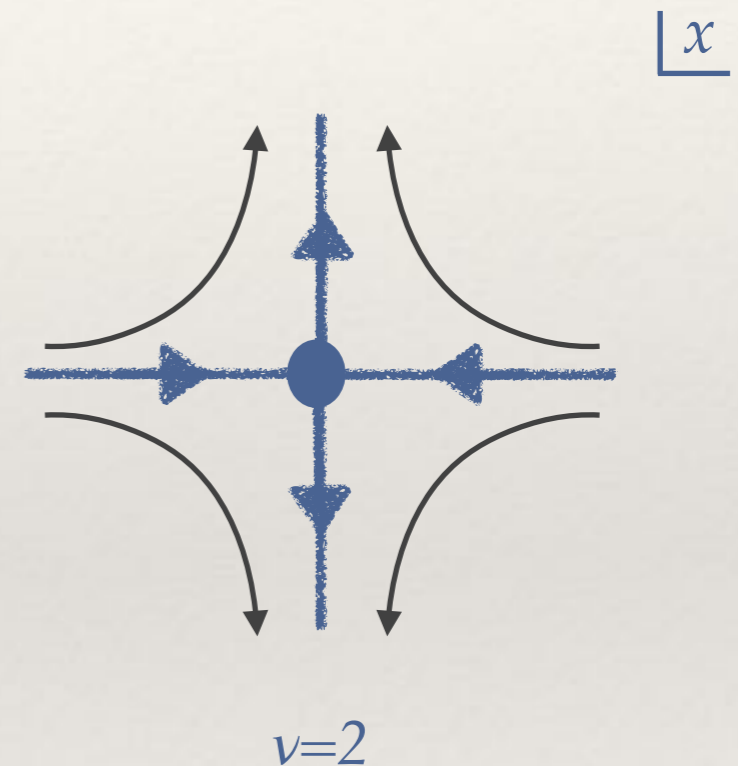
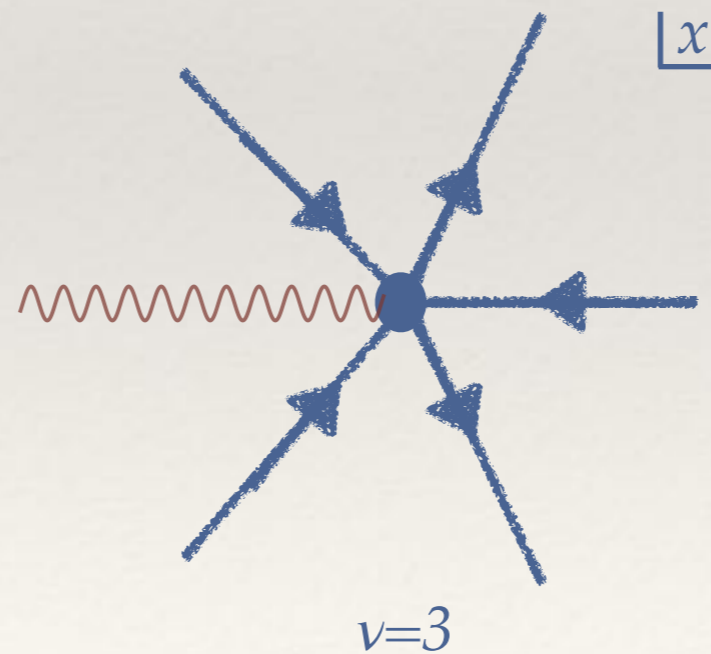
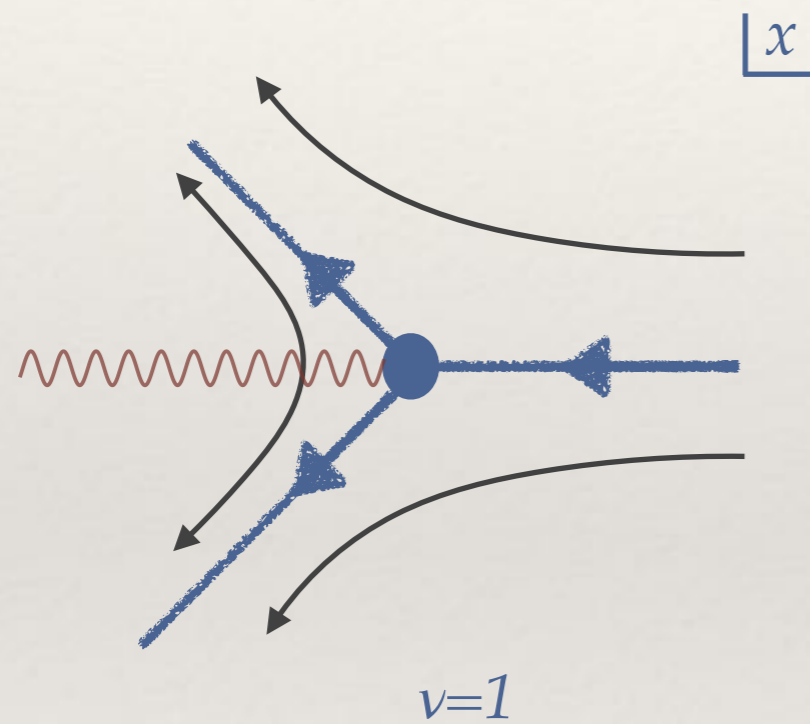
- Around a simple turning point $P_0(x) = \sqrt{x}$, $S_0(x) = 2/3x^{3/2}$



Steepest descent and Stokes lines

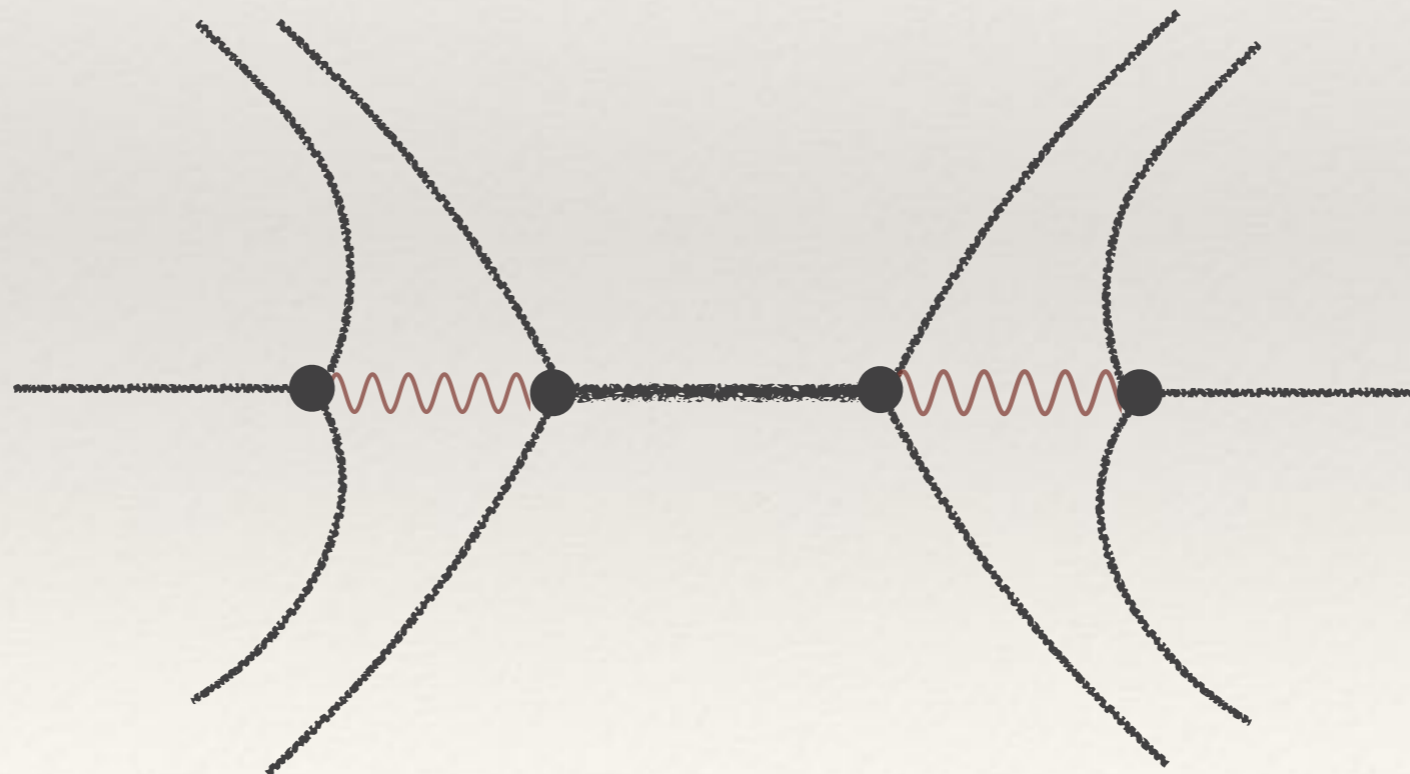
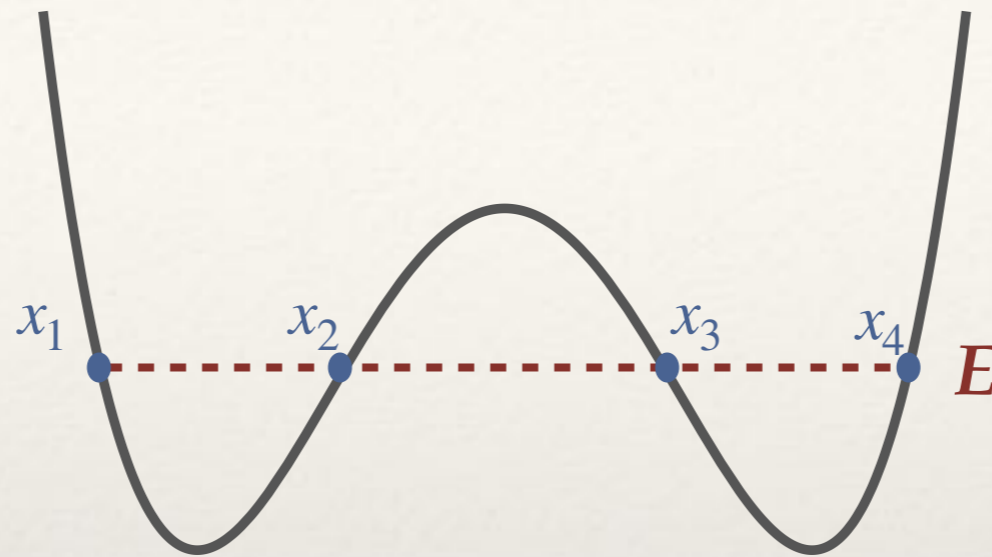
Stokes line $\text{Im}[\hbar^{-1}S_0(x)] = 0 \iff$

Steepest descent curves emanating from a turning pt.



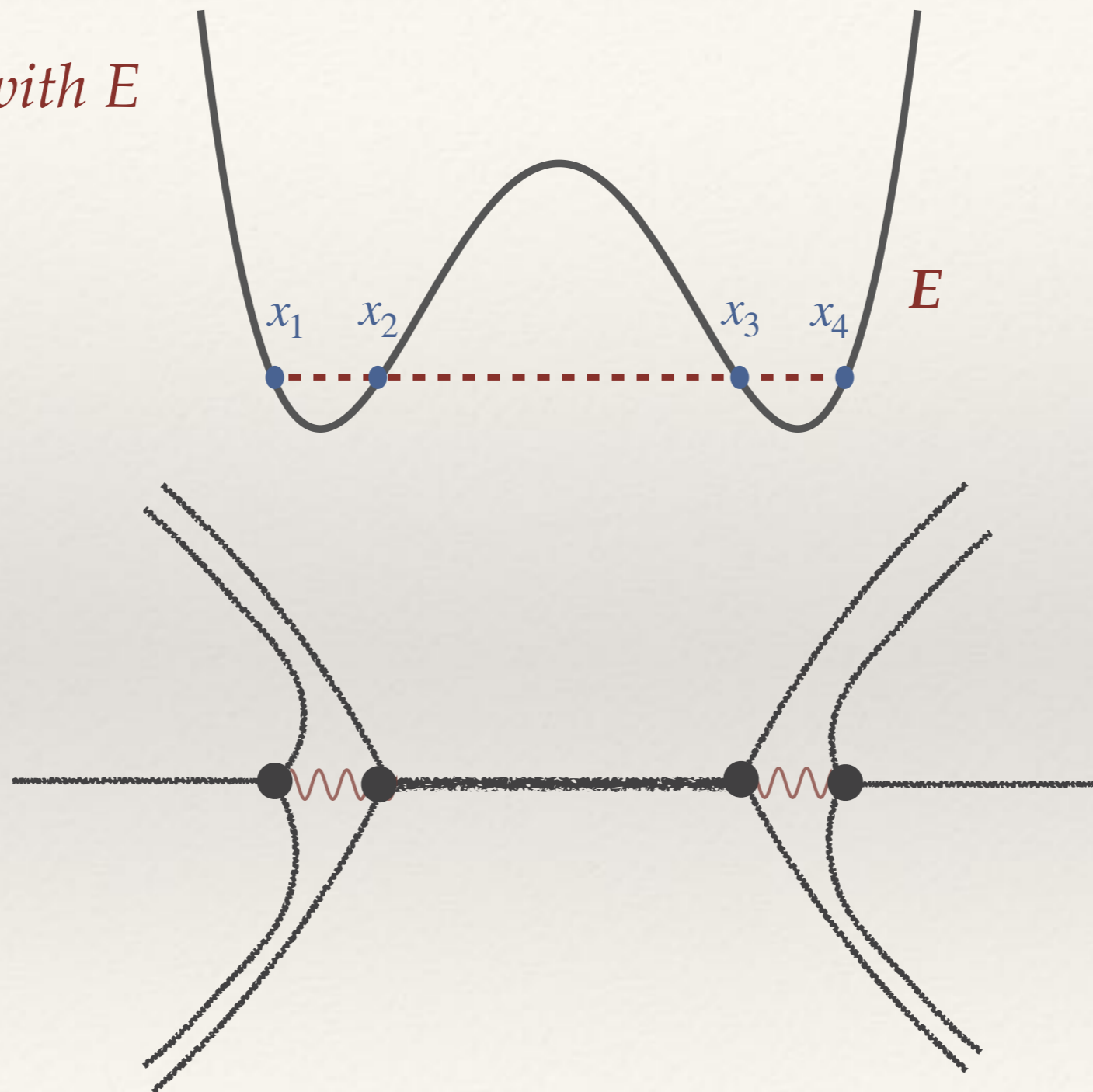
Steepest descent and Stokes lines

Stokes lines move with E



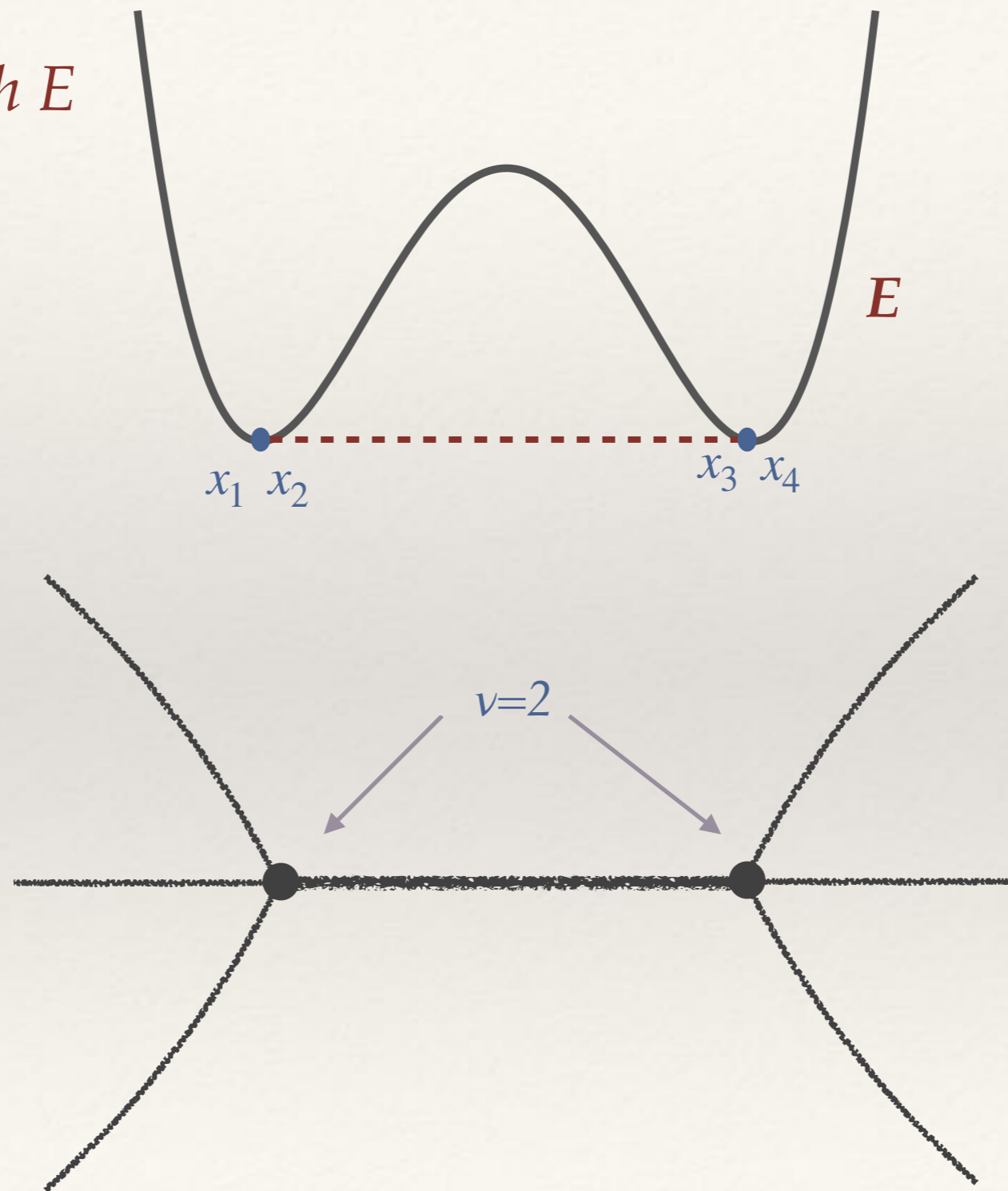
Steepest descent and Stokes lines

Stokes lines move with E



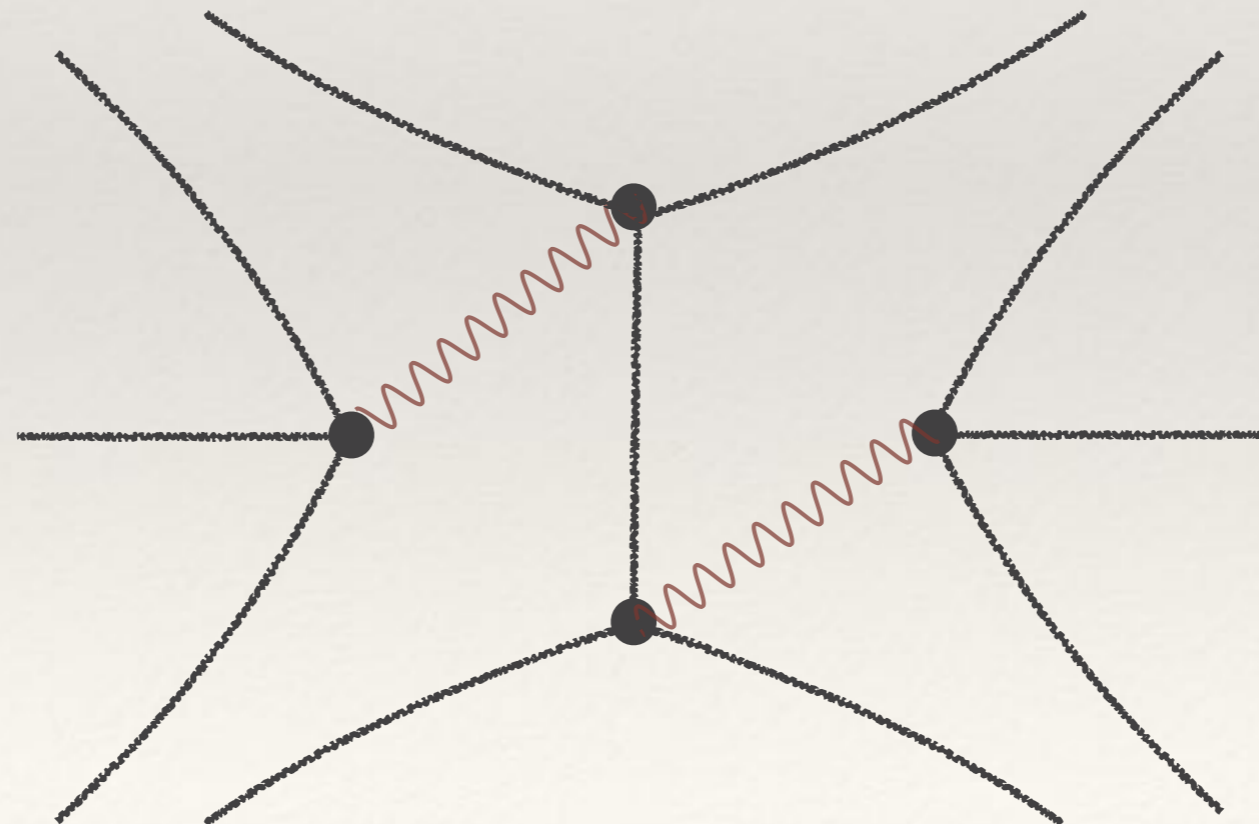
Steepest descent and Stokes lines

Stokes lines move with E



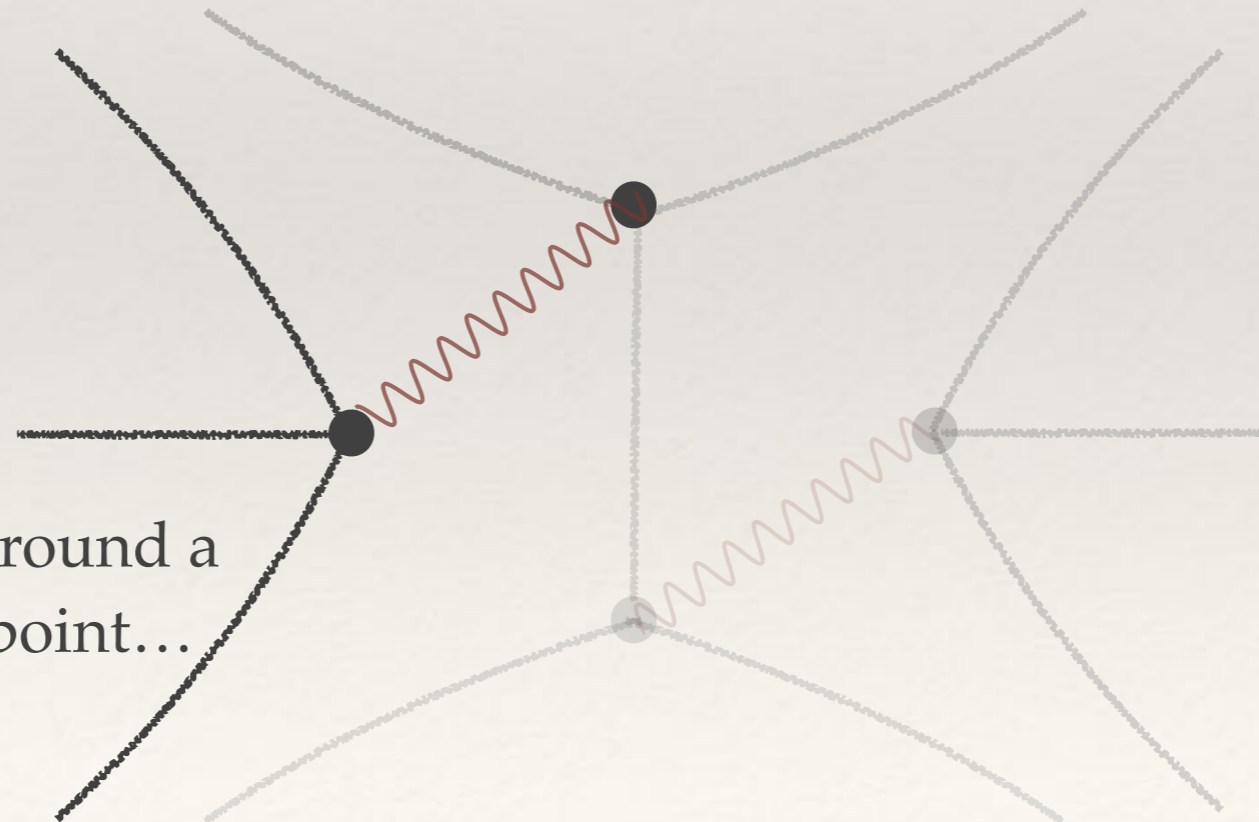
Steepest descent and Stokes lines

Stokes lines move with E



Steepest descent and Stokes lines


Stokes lines move with E



Let's see what happens around a generic simple turning point...

Borel summation

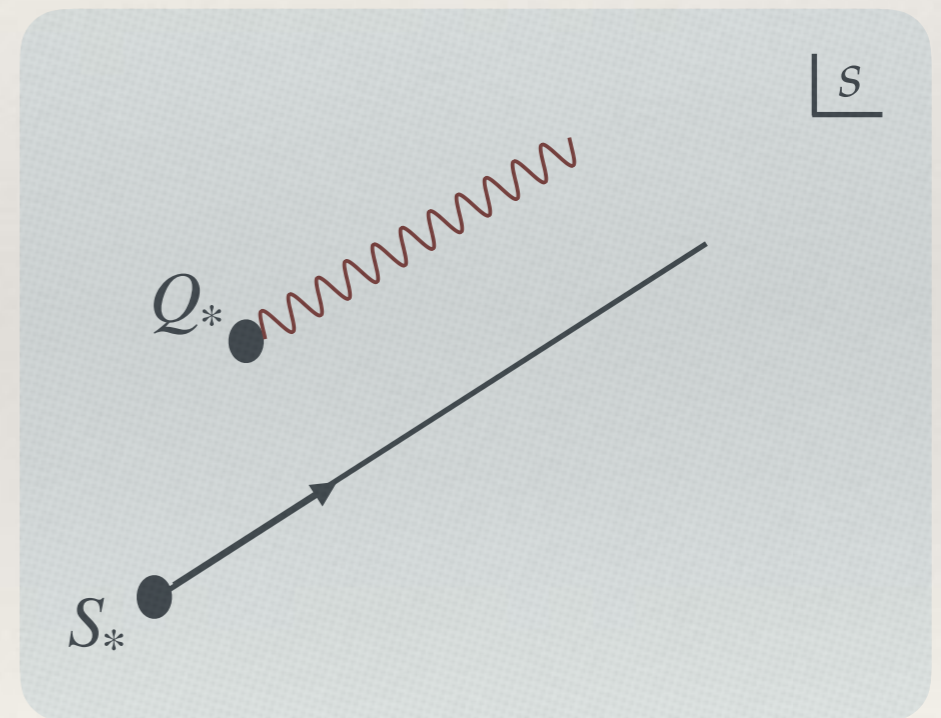
$$f(\hbar) \sim e^{-\frac{S_*}{\hbar}} \sum_{n=0}^{\infty} c_n \hbar^n \quad \mathcal{B}f(s) = \sum_{n=0}^{\infty} \frac{c_n}{\Gamma(n)} (s - S_*)^{n-1}$$


 asymptotic series

$$\mathcal{S}_\theta[\mathcal{B}f](\hbar) = \int_{S_*}^{e^{i\theta}\infty} ds e^{-\frac{s}{\hbar}} \mathcal{B}f(s) \quad \theta := \arg \hbar$$

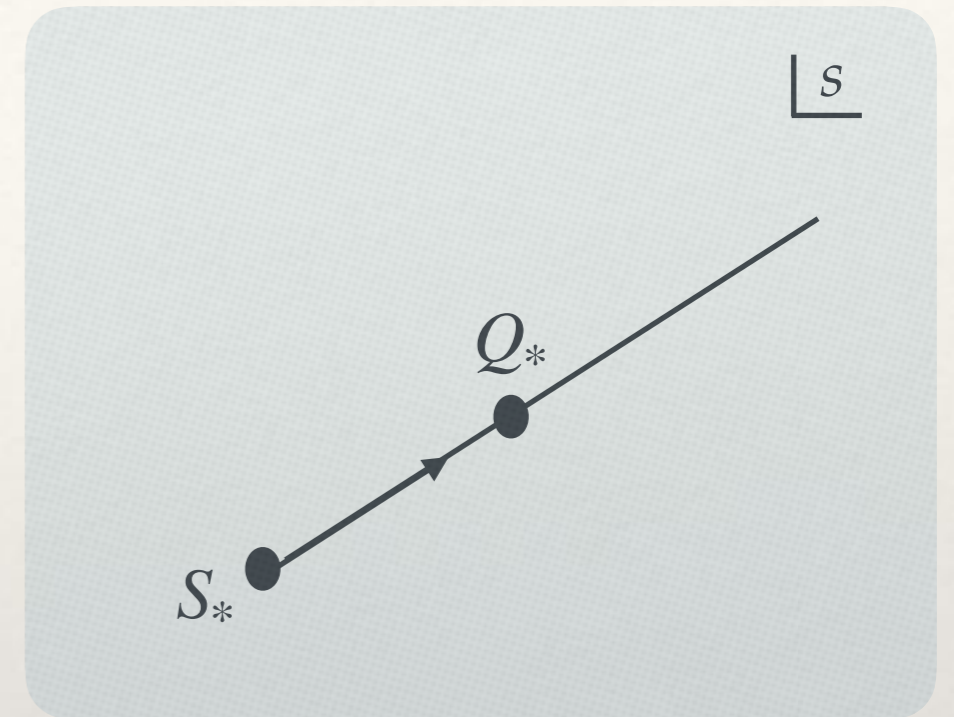
- f is Borel summable if there are no singularities along the integration contour

Note: from now on I will simply use $\mathcal{S}_\theta\psi$ (or $\mathcal{S}\psi$) to denote Borel summation

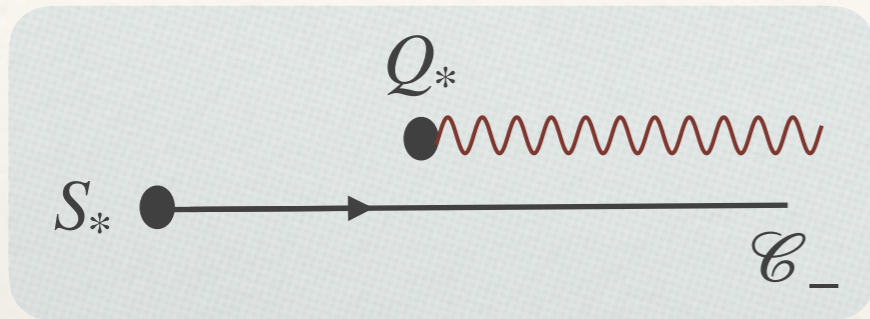


Borel summation

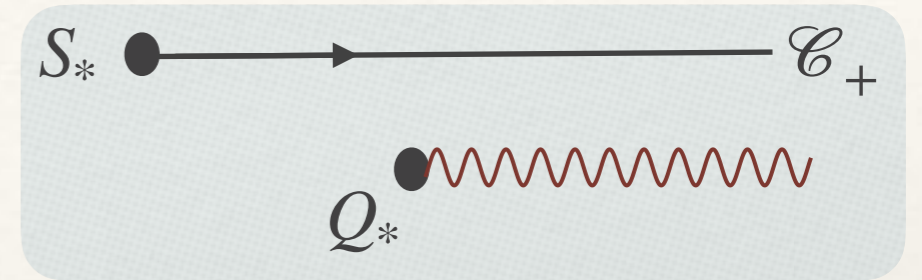
- f is not *Borel summable* if there are singularities along the integration contour
- This might happen for certain values of θ or when the location of the singularities S_* , Q_* depend on some other parameters in the problem (*moving singularities*). In the WKB problem both of these things happen.
- We can slightly change these parameters to move the singularity out of the way: *Lateral Borel summation*



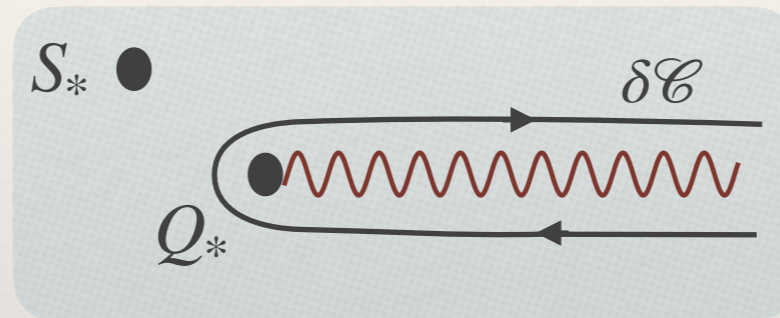
Lateral Borel summations



$$\mathcal{S}_- f(\hbar) := \int_{\mathcal{C}_-} ds e^{-\frac{s}{\hbar}} \mathcal{B}f(s)$$



$$\mathcal{S}_+ f(\hbar) := \int_{\mathcal{C}_+} ds e^{-\frac{s}{\hbar}} \mathcal{B}f(s)$$



Stokes phenomenon:

$$\mathcal{S}_+ f(\hbar) - \mathcal{S}_- f(\hbar) = \int_{\delta\mathcal{C}} ds e^{-\frac{s}{\hbar}} \mathcal{B}f(s) := \underbrace{ie^{-\frac{1}{\hbar}Q_*}}_{\text{exponentially suppressed}} \underbrace{\mathcal{S}_- f_Q(\hbar)}_{\text{resurgent function}}$$

Alien derivative: $\Delta_{Q_*} f = if_Q$

Stokes automorphism: $\mathfrak{S} = \mathcal{S}_+ \circ \mathcal{S}_-^{-1} = e^{\Delta_{Q_*}}$

pointed alien derivative: $\dot{\Delta}_{Q_*} := e^{-\frac{1}{\hbar}Q_*} \Delta_{Q_*}$

generalize to multiple singularities
see e.g. [Aniceto, Basar, Schiappa,

A Primer on Resurgent Transseries and Their Asymptotics]

Borel summation for WKB

$$\psi(x, \hbar) = c_+ \psi_+(x; \hbar) + c_- \psi_-(x; \hbar)$$

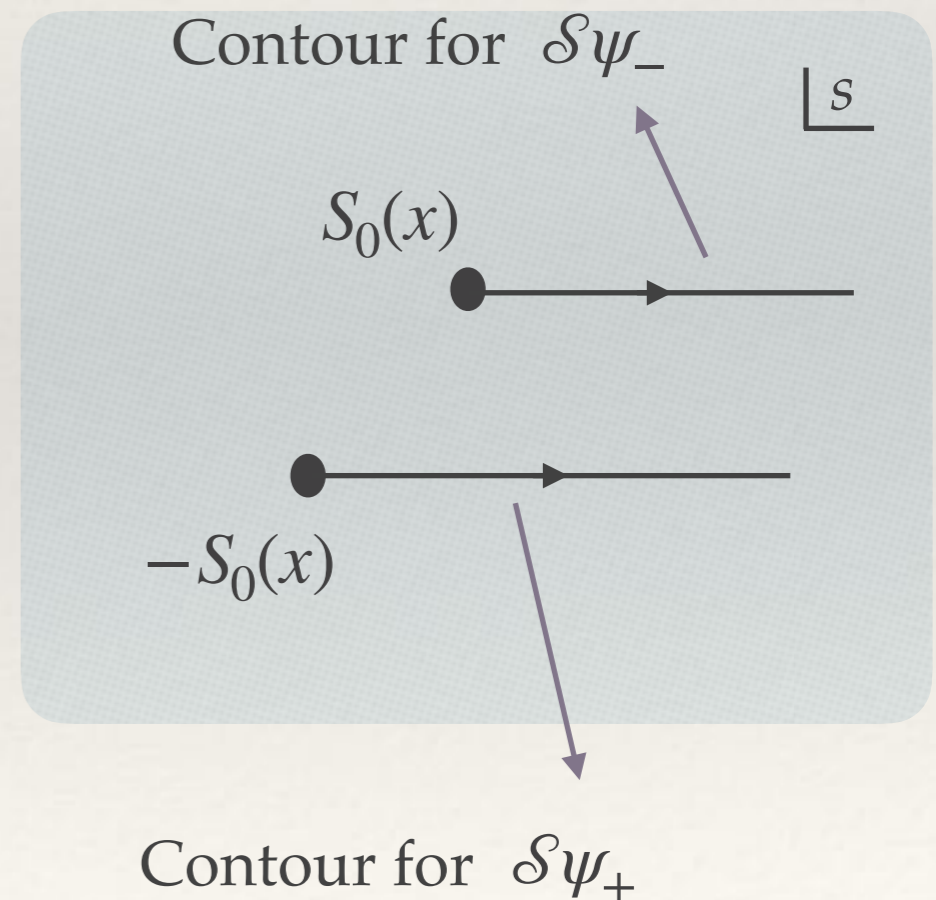
$$\psi_{\pm}(x; \hbar) \sim e^{\pm \frac{1}{\hbar} S_0(x)} \sum_n \psi_{n,\pm}(x) \hbar^{n+1/2}$$

$$\mathcal{S}_{\theta}[\mathcal{B}\psi_{\pm}](\hbar) = \int_{\pm S_0(x)}^{e^{i\theta}\infty} ds e^{-\frac{s}{\hbar}} \mathcal{B}[\psi(x)](s)$$

- Moving singularities: positions depend on x, E
- Let's assume E is generic (all turning points are simple)

$\psi(x; \hbar)$ is Borel summable as long as

$$\text{Im}[\hbar^{-1} S_0(x)] \neq 0$$



Borel summation

$$\psi_{\pm}(x; \hbar) \sim e^{\pm \frac{1}{\hbar} S_0(x)} \sum_n \psi_{n,\pm}(x) \hbar^{n+1/2}$$

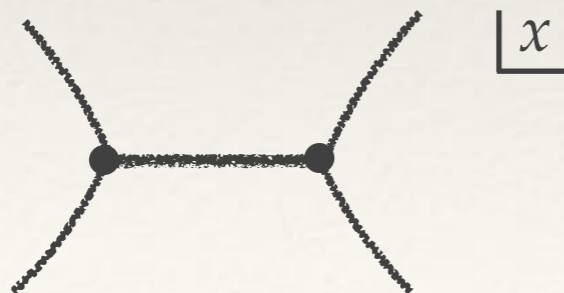
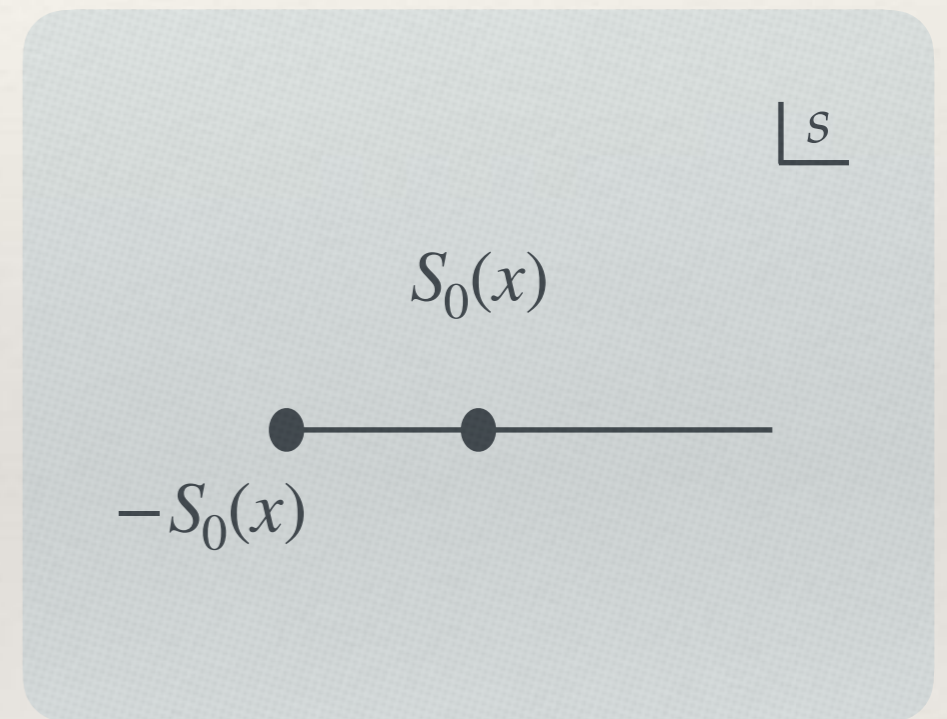
$$\mathcal{S}_{\theta} \psi_{\pm}(\hbar) = \int_{\pm S_0(x)}^{e^{i\theta} \infty} ds e^{-\frac{s}{\hbar}} \mathcal{B}[\psi(x)](s)$$

- Moving singularities: positions depend on x, E
- Let's assume E is generic (all turning points are simple)

$\psi(x; \hbar)$ is **not** Borel summable when

$$\text{Im}[\hbar^{-1} S_0(x)] = 0$$

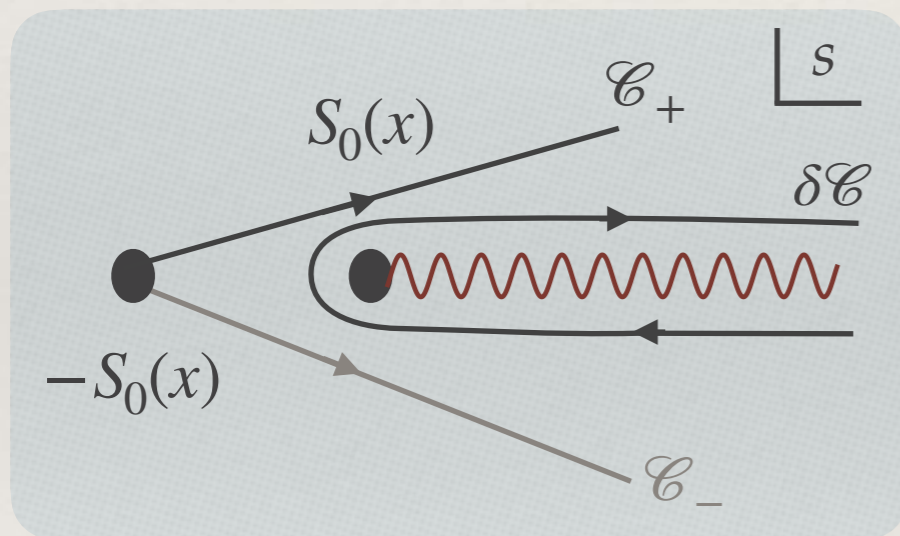
- This happens when two turning points are by a Stokes line (“degenerate Stokes line”)



Borel plane: crossing the Stokes line

$$\psi_{\pm}(x; \hbar) \sim e^{\pm \frac{1}{\hbar} S_0(x)} \sum_n \psi_{n,\pm}(x) \hbar^{n+1/2} \quad \mathcal{S}_{\theta} \psi_{\pm}(\hbar) = \int_{\pm S_0(x)}^{e^{i\theta} \infty} ds e^{-\frac{s}{\hbar}} \mathcal{B}[\psi(x)](s)$$

- Assume $\theta = 0$, $\hbar > 0$, $\text{Re} S_0(x) > 0 \rightarrow \psi_+$: exp. large, ψ_- : exp. small



$$\psi_+ \rightarrow \psi_+ + i\psi_-$$

$$\psi_- \rightarrow \psi_-$$

$$\Delta_{S_0(x)} \psi_+ = i\psi_-$$

$$\Delta_s \psi_- = 0$$

alternatively

$$\begin{pmatrix} c_+ \\ c_- \end{pmatrix} \rightarrow \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 0 \\ i & 1 \end{pmatrix} \begin{pmatrix} c_+ \\ c_- \end{pmatrix}$$

- Strategy:
- 1) Analyze the Stokes phenomena around each turning point to construct locally
 - 2) Patch the local solutions to construct the global wave-function.

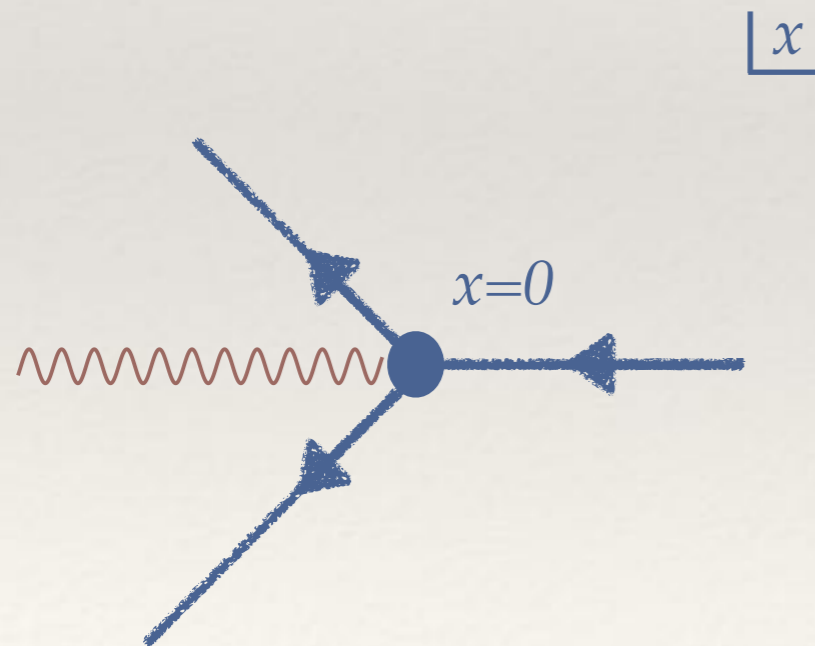
Stokes automorphisms, local analysis

- Let's analyze the Stokes phenomena near a turning point

$$2(V(x) - E) \approx c(x - x_*)$$

- shift, rescale x such that the turning point is at $x=0$

$$\left(-\hbar^2 \frac{d^2}{dx^2} + x \right) \psi(x) = 0 \quad \text{Airy equation}$$



$$\text{classical action: } S_0(x) = \int_0^x \sqrt{x'} dx' = \frac{2}{3} x^{3/2}$$

$$\text{Resurgent expansion: } \psi_{\pm}(x) = e^{\pm \hbar \frac{2}{3} x^{3/2}} \sum_{n=0}^{\infty} \psi_{n\pm}(x) \hbar^{n+\frac{1}{2}}$$

$$\psi = c_+ \psi_+ + c_- \psi_-$$

Airy equation

From Riccati recursion relations,
$$P_{n+1}(x) = \frac{1}{2P_0(x)} \left(\frac{dP_n}{dx} - \sum_{k=1}^n P_k(x)P_{n+1-k}(x) \right)$$

$$P_0 = \sqrt{x}, P_1 = (2x)^{-1}, \quad P_n(x) \propto x^{-1-3/2(n-1)}, \psi_n(x) \propto x^{-1/4-3/2n}$$

Exercise: find the coefficients

Borel transform

$$\mathcal{B}\psi_{\pm}(s) = \frac{1}{x} \sum_{n=0}^{\infty} \frac{c_{n\pm}}{\Gamma(n + 1/2)} \left(\frac{s}{x^{3/2}} \pm \frac{2}{3} \right)^{n-1/2} := \frac{1}{x} B_{\pm}(sx^{-3/2})$$

Airy equation

mostly from [Kawai,Takei]

$$\left(-\hbar^2 \frac{d^2}{dx^2} + x \right) \psi(x) = 0 \quad \xrightarrow{\text{Borel tr.}} \quad \left(\frac{\partial^2}{\partial x^2} - x \frac{\partial^2}{\partial s^2} \right) \frac{1}{x} B_{\pm}(sx^{-3/2}) = 0$$

$$8B(\hat{s}) + 27\hat{s} \frac{dB}{d\hat{s}} + (9\hat{s}^2 - 4) \frac{d^2B}{d\hat{s}^2} = 0 \quad \hat{s} := sx^{3/2}$$

Hypergeometric differential equation

$B_{\pm}(s)$: independent solutions

$$\mathcal{B}\psi_{\pm}(s) \propto \frac{1}{x} \left(\frac{3s}{4x^{3/2}} \pm \frac{1}{2} \right)^{-1/2} {}_2F_1 \left(\frac{5}{6}, \frac{1}{6}, \frac{1}{2}; \frac{1}{2} \pm \frac{3s}{4x^{3/2}} \right)$$

Exercise: derive this from the explicit coefficients

Airy equation

$$\mathcal{B}\psi_+(s) \propto \frac{\sqrt{u}}{x} {}_2F_1\left(\frac{5}{6}, \frac{1}{6}, \frac{1}{2}; u\right), \quad \mathcal{B}\psi_-(s) \propto \frac{\sqrt{u-1}}{x} {}_2F_1\left(\frac{5}{6}, \frac{1}{6}, \frac{1}{2}; 1-u\right) \quad u := \frac{1}{2} + \frac{3s}{4x^{3/2}}$$

dlmf.nist.gov

Chapter 15 Hypergeometric Function

[A. B. Olde Daalhuis](#)

School of Mathematics, Edinburgh University, Edinburgh, United Kingdom.

Connection formula (Stokes phenomenon):

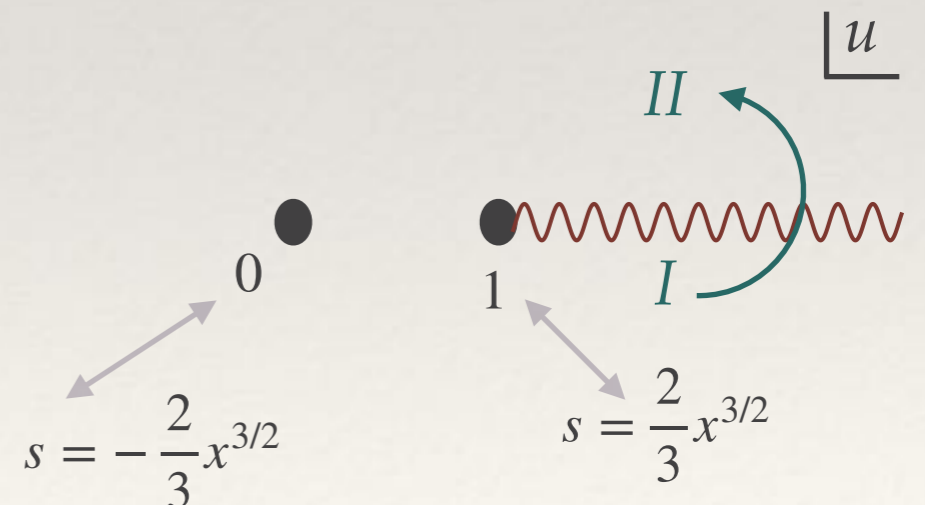
$${}_2F_1\left(\frac{5}{6}, \frac{1}{6}, \frac{1}{2}; u + i\epsilon\right) - {}_2F_1\left(\frac{5}{6}, \frac{1}{6}, \frac{1}{2}; u - i\epsilon\right) = i(1+u)^{1/2}(u-1)^{-1/2} {}_2F_1\left(\frac{5}{6}, \frac{1}{6}, \frac{1}{2}; 1-u\right), \quad u > 1$$

I \longrightarrow II

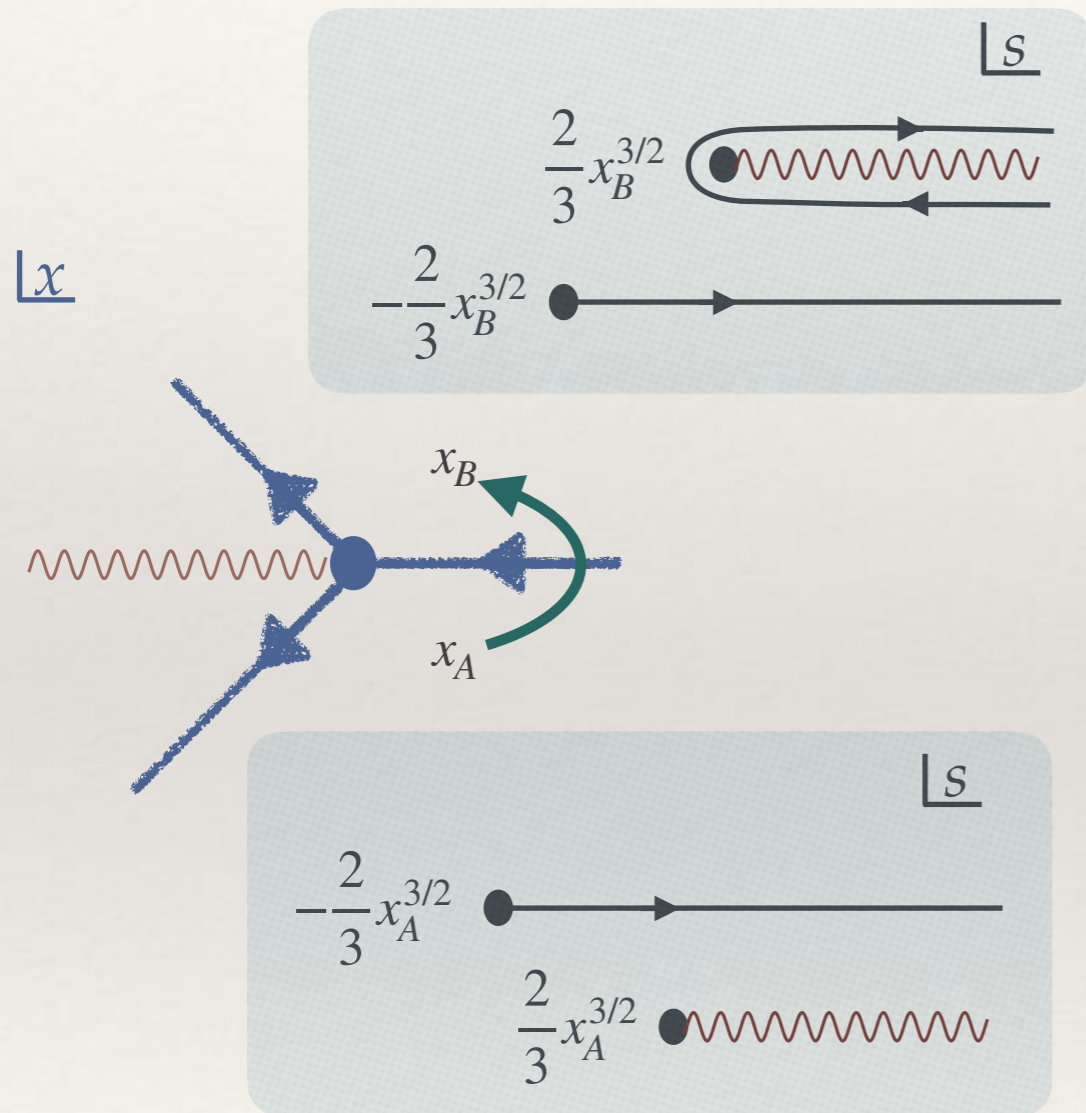
$$\mathcal{B}\psi_+(s) \rightarrow \mathcal{B}\psi_+(s) + i\mathcal{B}\psi_-(s)$$

$$\mathcal{B}\psi_-(s) \rightarrow \mathcal{B}\psi_-(s)$$

$$\Delta_{\frac{2}{3}x^{3/2}}\psi_+ = i\psi_-, \quad \Delta_s\psi_-=0$$



Airy equation



$$\psi_+(x) \rightarrow \psi_+(x) + i\psi_-(x)$$

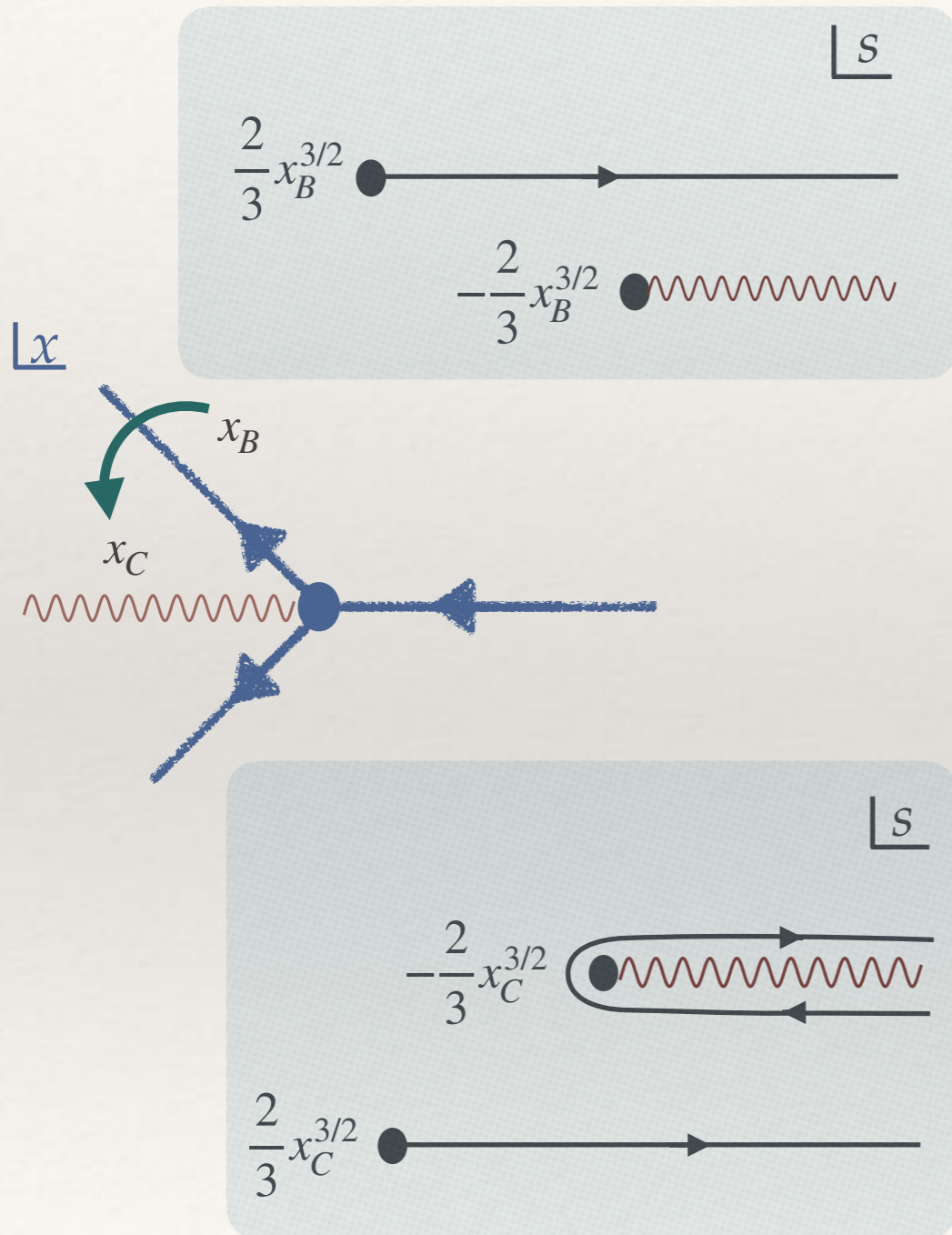
$$\sim e^{\frac{1}{\hbar} \frac{2x^{3/2}}{3}} \quad \sim e^{\frac{1}{\hbar} \frac{2x^{3/2}}{3}} \quad \sim e^{-\frac{1}{\hbar} \frac{2x^{3/2}}{3}}$$

$$\psi_-(x) \rightarrow \psi_-(x)$$

$$\begin{pmatrix} c_+ \\ c_- \end{pmatrix}_B = \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 0 \\ i & 1 \end{pmatrix} \begin{pmatrix} c_+ \\ c_- \end{pmatrix}_A$$

$$A \uparrow B : M_i = \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 0 \\ i & 1 \end{pmatrix}$$

Airy equation



$$\psi_-(x) \rightarrow \psi_-(x) + i\psi_+(x)$$

$$\sim e^{\frac{1}{\hbar} \frac{2|x|^{3/2}}{3}} \quad \sim e^{\frac{1}{\hbar} \frac{2|x|^{3/2}}{3}} \quad \sim e^{-\frac{1}{\hbar} \frac{2|x|^{3/2}}{3}}$$

$$\psi_+(x) \rightarrow \psi_+(x)$$

$$\begin{pmatrix} c_+ \\ c_- \end{pmatrix}_C = \begin{pmatrix} 1 & i \\ 0 & 1 \end{pmatrix} \begin{pmatrix} c_+ \\ c_- \end{pmatrix}_B$$

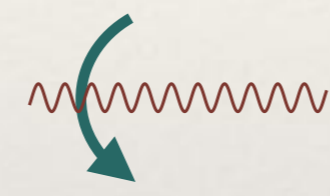
$$C \begin{matrix} \curvearrowright \\ \uparrow \\ \bullet \end{matrix} B : M_0 = \begin{pmatrix} 1 & i \\ 0 & 1 \end{pmatrix}$$

Airy equation

$$\psi(x; \hbar) = \sqrt{\frac{\hbar}{P_{\text{even}}(x; \hbar)}} e^{\pm \frac{1}{\hbar} \int_{x_0}^x P_{\text{even}}(x; \hbar) dx}$$

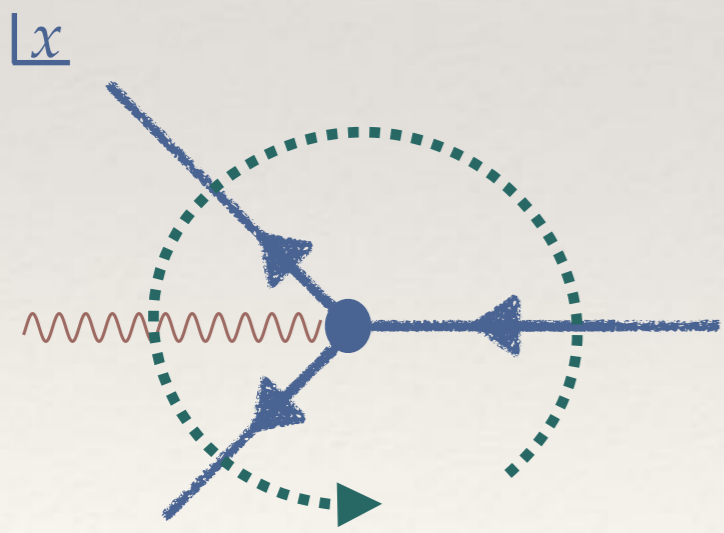
Crossing the branch cut:

$$\sqrt{Q(x)} \rightarrow -\sqrt{Q(x)} \quad \rightarrow \quad P_{\text{even}}(x; \hbar) \rightarrow -P_{\text{even}}(x; \hbar)$$



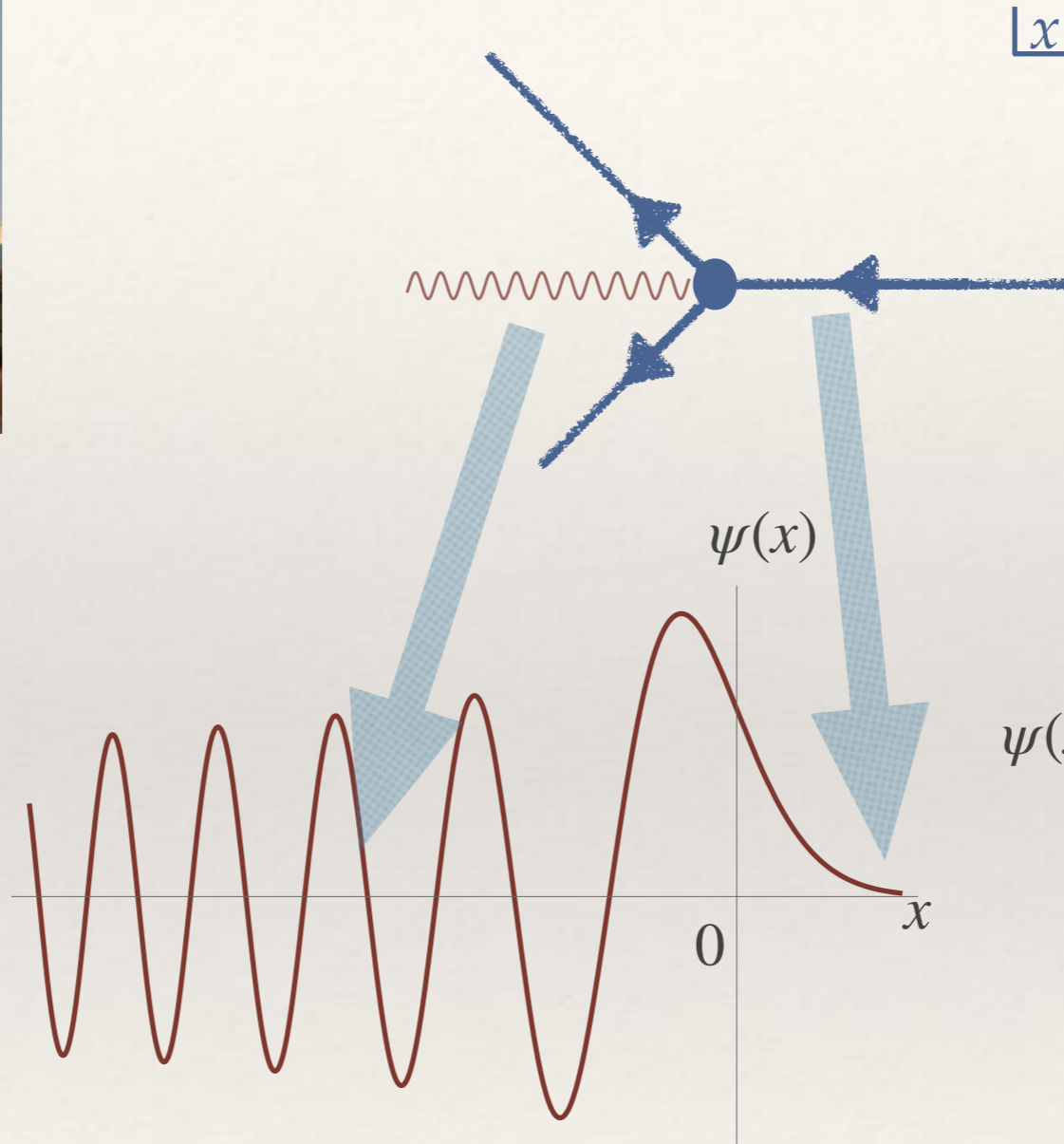
$$M_{br} \equiv \begin{pmatrix} 0 & -i \\ -i & 0 \end{pmatrix}$$

Monodromy:



check: $M_i M_o M_{br} M_o = \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 0 \\ 0 & 1 \end{pmatrix}$

Airy equation

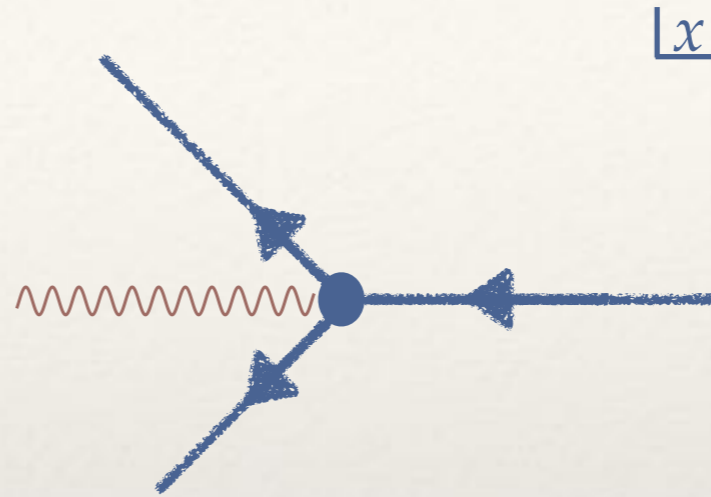


$$\psi(x) = c_+ \psi_+ + c_- \psi_-$$

$$\sim \cos\left(\frac{2}{3}|x|^{2/3} - \frac{\pi}{4}\right)$$

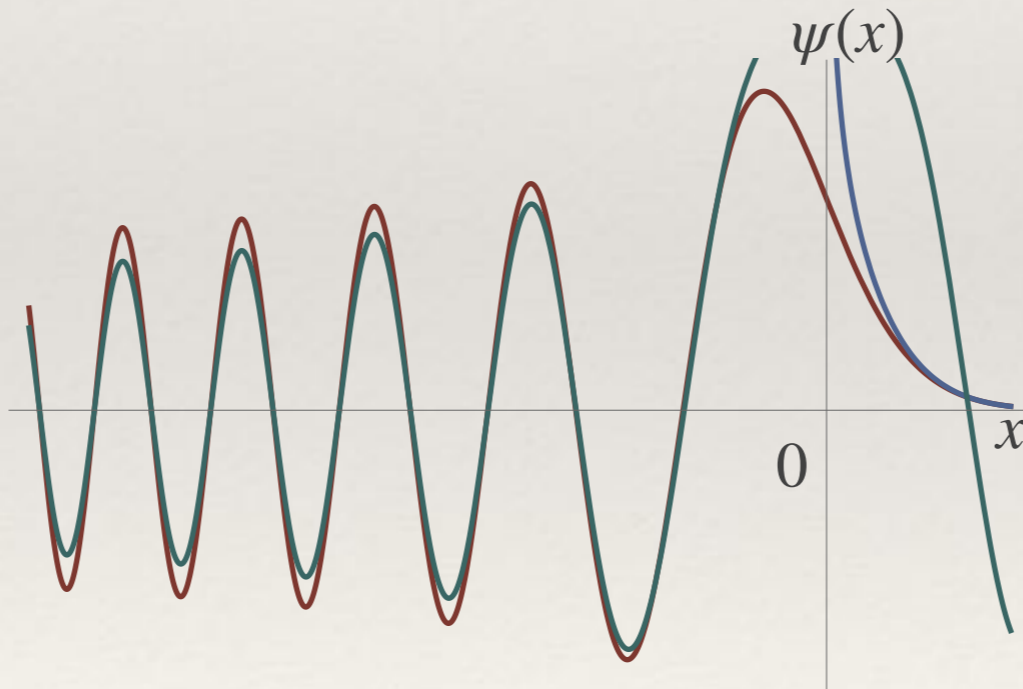
$$\psi(x) = c_- \psi_- \sim e^{-\frac{2}{3}x^{2/3}}$$

Airy equation



$$\psi(x) = c_+ \psi_+ + c_- \psi_-$$

$$\sim \cos\left(\frac{2}{3}|x|^{2/3} - \frac{\pi}{4}\right)$$



$$\psi(x) = c_- \psi_- \sim e^{-\frac{2}{3}x^{2/3}}$$

From local to global analysis

Outlook for lecture II

- In general there are multiple turning points.
- Around each turning point we have local solutions of the form

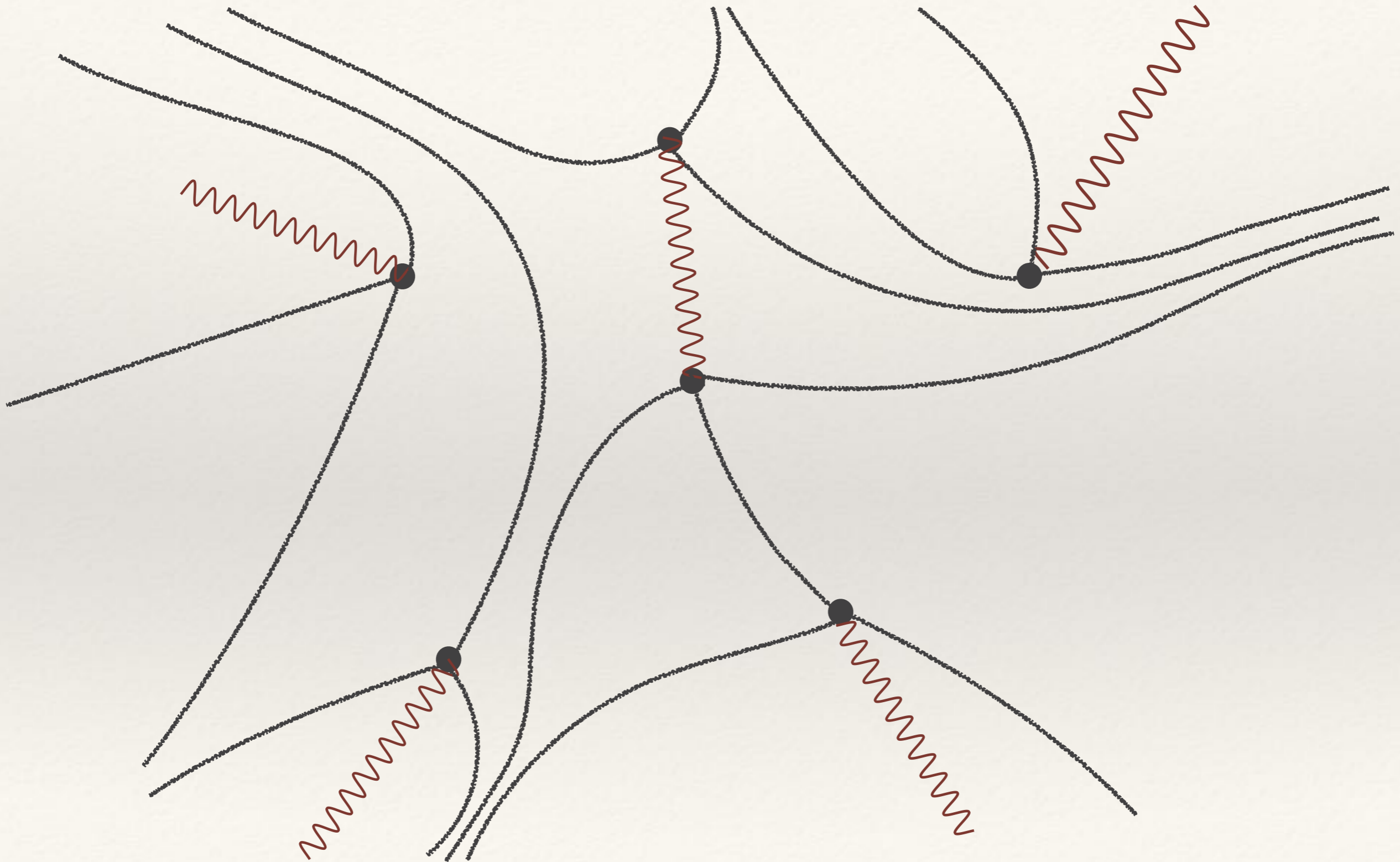
$$c_+\psi_+ + c_-\psi_-$$

where c_+, c_- are resurgent functions (x independent) and uniquely determined once the branches for p are chosen.

- Globally we have resurgent functions that are solutions of the Schrödinger equation and depend analytically on x , constructed by gluing the c s obtained from different turning points

$$\psi \sim c_+\psi_+ + c_-\psi_-$$

From local to global analysis



End of Lecture I