

Revisiting Fracture Mechanic Handbooks with (Interpretable) Sparse Regression

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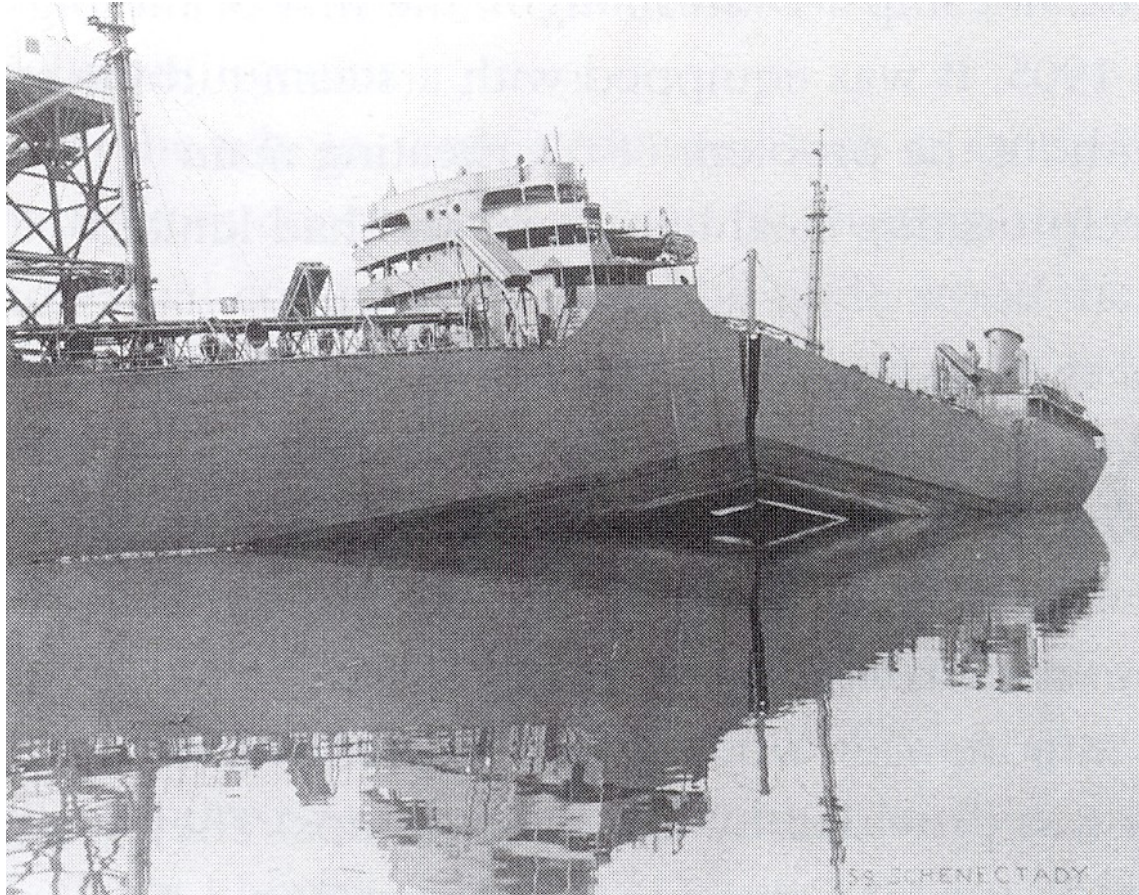
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MePhy & I-Gaia Day: Machine Learning in mechanics and physics

December 9, 2025.

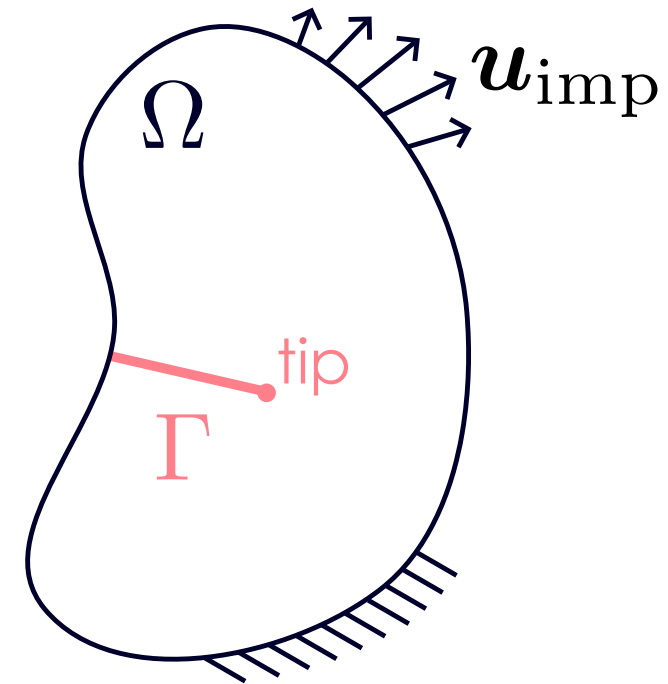
Linear Elastic Fracture Mechanics



The S.S. Schenectady tanker split apart by brittle fracture while in harbor, 1943.
Source : https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fracture_mechanics.

TYPICAL PROBLEM

An elastic body Ω with a crack Γ under a given load.

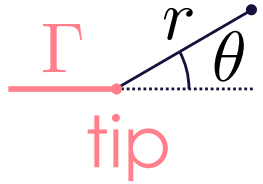


Assumption : Non-linearities are confined close to the crack tip.

QUESTION : Does the crack propagates ?

Crack tip singularity

STRESS FIELD (WILLIAMS, 1957)



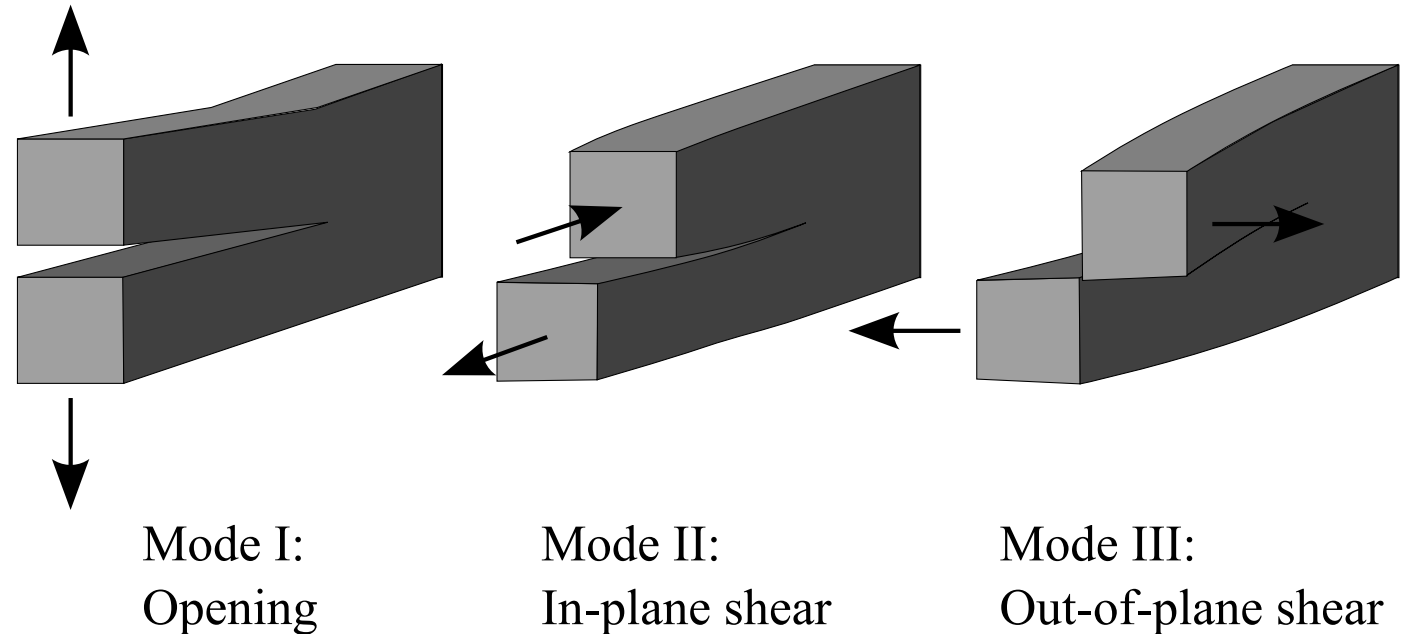
$$\sigma_{ij}(r, \theta) = \frac{K_I}{\sqrt{2\pi r}} f_{ij}^I(\theta) + \frac{K_{II}}{\sqrt{2\pi r}} f_{ij}^{II}(\theta) + \frac{K_{III}}{\sqrt{2\pi r}} f_{ij}^{III}(\theta) + \mathcal{O}(1), \quad \sigma_{ij}(r, \theta) \xrightarrow{r \rightarrow 0} \infty.$$

There is a stress singularity at crack tip.

STRESS INTENSITY FACTORS (SIFs)

Denoted K_m , they :

- represent the crack tip sollicitation,
- depend on geometry and load.



Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fracture_mechanics.

Designing structures with cracks

CRACK PROPAGATION CRITERIA

Propagation criteria rely on the SIFs K_m , *e.g.*,

$$K_I \leq K_{Ic}, \text{ or}$$

$$G = \frac{K_I^2 + K_{II}^2}{E'} + \frac{K_{III}^2}{2\mu} \leq G_c.$$

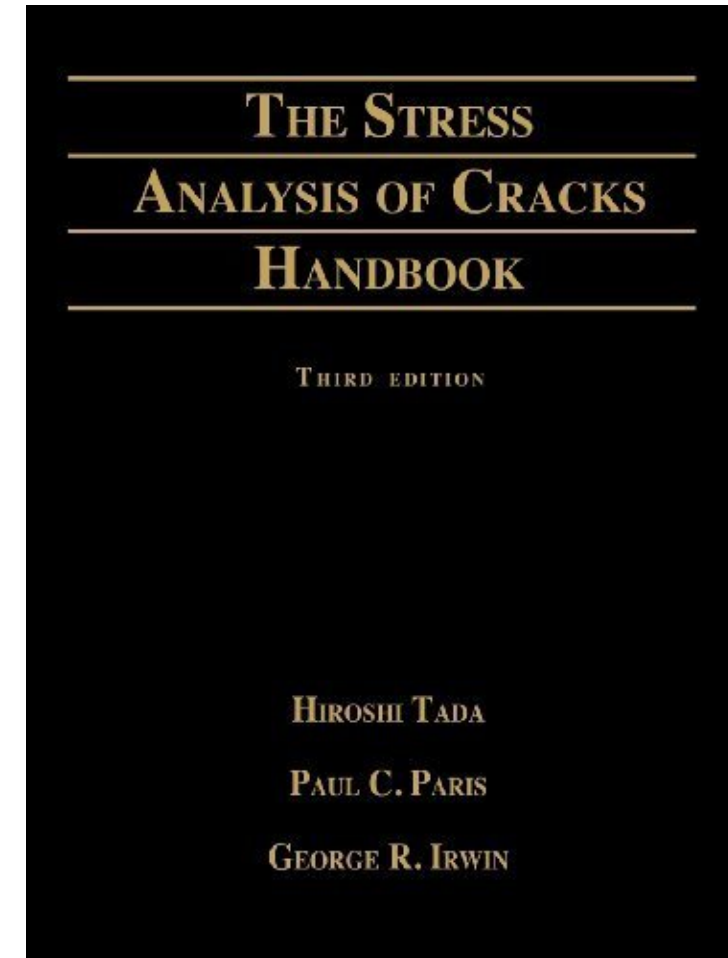
HOW TO DETERMINE THE SIFs ?

Different methods are employed :

- analytical (mostly for simple case, or (semi-)infinite domains),
- numerical (*e.g.*, FEM simulations),
- experimental (*e.g.*, photo-elasticity, DIC.).

→ KNOWN SOLUTIONS HAVE BEEN COMPILED IN HANDBOOKS!

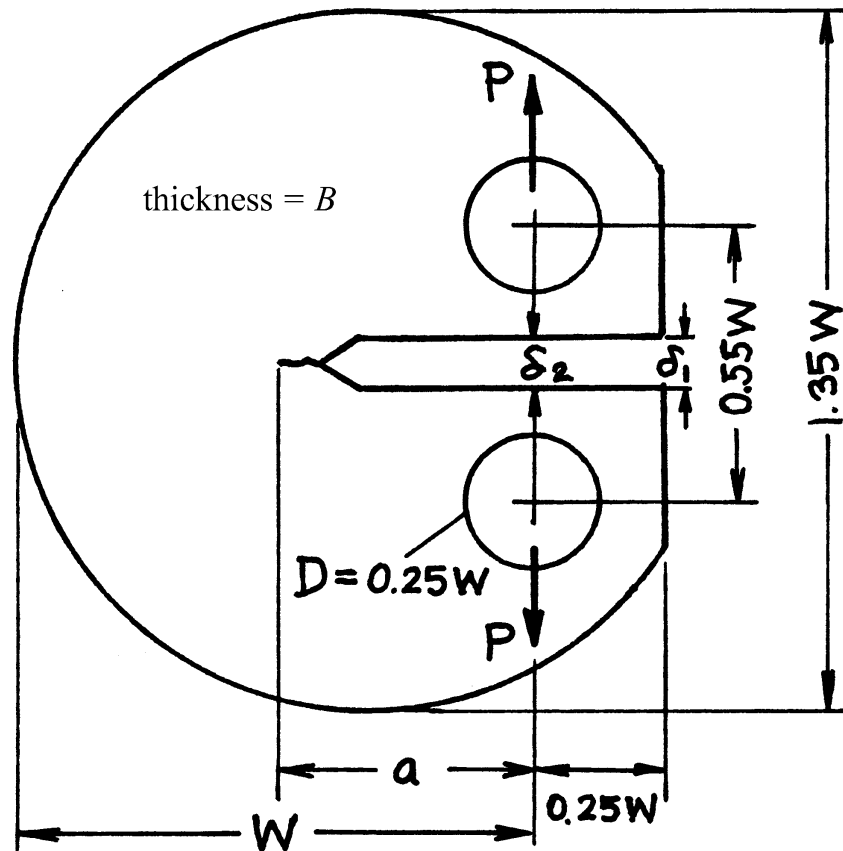
FRACTURE MECHANIC DESIGN HANDBOOKS
(TADA ET AL., 2000)



Example (Tada et al., 2000)

THE ROUND (DISK-SHAPED) COMPACT SPECIMEN

METHODOLOGY IN HANDBOOK



Method: Boundary Collocation Method

Accuracy: K_I , 0.3% for $0.2 \leq A \leq 1.0$; δ_1 and δ_2 , 0.5% for $0.2 \leq A \leq 0.8$

References: Newman 1979a, 1981b

1. Dimensional analysis

$$K_I = \bar{\sigma} \sqrt{W} \hat{K}_I(A), \quad \bar{\sigma} = \frac{P}{WB}, \quad A = \frac{a}{W}.$$

2. Data gathering (not if analytical method)

- Observations : (A , $\hat{K}_I$)
- Experimental/Numerical methods

3. Fit polynomial solution to data

$$\hat{K}_I(A) = \frac{(2 + A)(0.76 + 4.8A - 11.58A^4 + 11.43A^3 - 4.08A^4)}{(1 - A)^{3/2}}$$

LIMITATIONS

Dense polynomials, limited to few parameters, etc.

Finding a sparse analytical model

Colors: **Inputs (parameters)** $\mathbf{p}$, **Coefficients** $\mathbf{c}$, **Outputs** K_m .

OBJECTIVE

For a structure and load parameterized by $\mathbf{p} = [p_1, p_2, \dots, p_N]^T$, find the relationship $K_m(\mathbf{p})$.

TOOL : LASSO REGRESSION (TIBSHIRANI, 1996)

We look for a polynomial approximation of degree d (hyperparameter)

$$K_m(\mathbf{p}) \approx \widetilde{K}_m^{\mathbf{c}}(\mathbf{p}) = \sum_{i_1} \sum_{i_2} \cdots \sum_{i_N} c_{i_1, i_2, \dots, i_N} p_1^{i_1} p_2^{i_2} \cdots p_N^{i_N}.$$

For N_{obs} observations $(\mathbf{p}, K_m)$, the optimal coefficients $\mathbf{c}^*$ minimizes

$$\mathbf{c}^* = \arg \min_{\mathbf{c}} \frac{1}{2N_{\text{obs}}} \sum_{\mathbf{p}} \left(\widetilde{K}_m^{\mathbf{c}}(\mathbf{p}) - K_m(\mathbf{p}) \right)^2 + \beta \|\mathbf{c}\|_1, \quad \|\mathbf{c}\|_1 = \sum_n |c_n|,$$

where β is a hyperparameter. The L1-norm of the coefficients $\mathbf{c}$ drives irrelevant coefficients to zero.

ADDING NON-POLYNOMIAL TERMS TO MODEL

Replace $\mathbf{p}$ with $\mathbf{s} = [p_1, p_2, \dots, p_N, f(p_i)]$.

Ex. 1 : CT specimen - Setup & Data

1. DIMENSIONAL ANALYSIS

PARAMETERS AND OBSERVATIONS

$$K_I = \sigma \sqrt{a} \hat{K}_I \left(\frac{a}{b} \right), \quad \sigma = \frac{P}{b}.$$

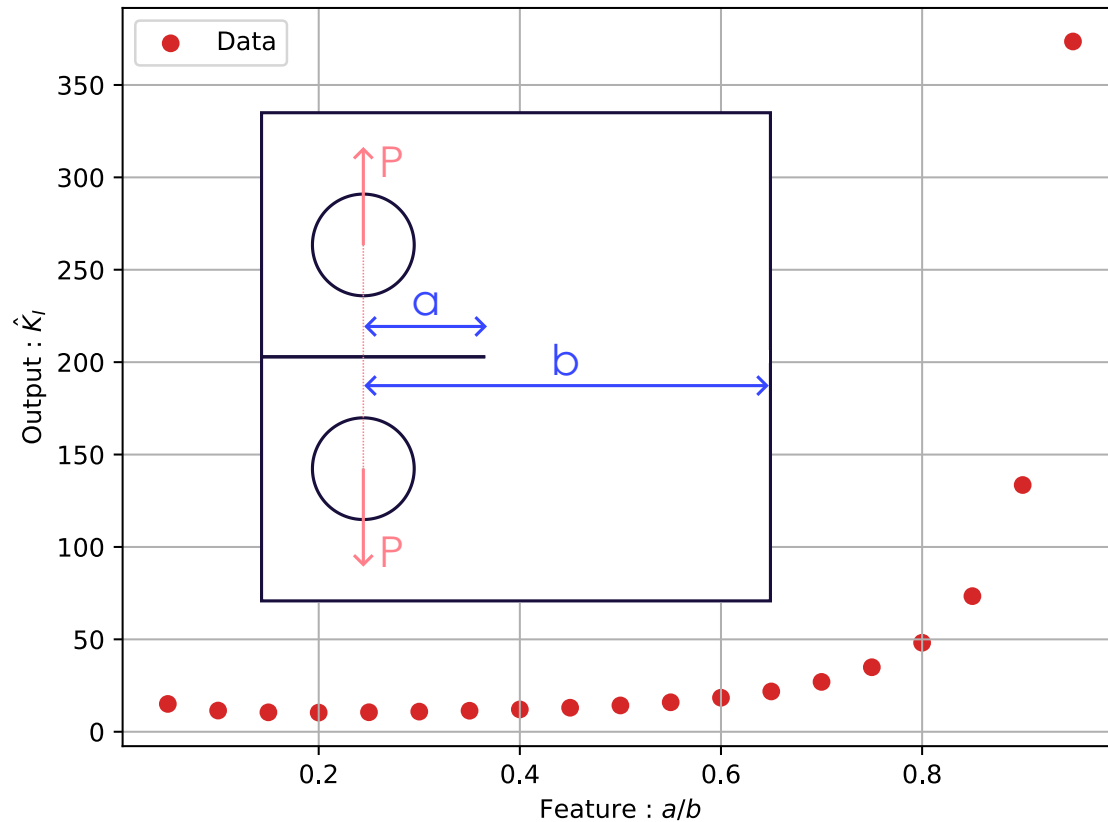
2. DATA GATHERING

- Observations (elastic simulations) : $\left(\frac{a}{b}, \hat{K}_I \right)$

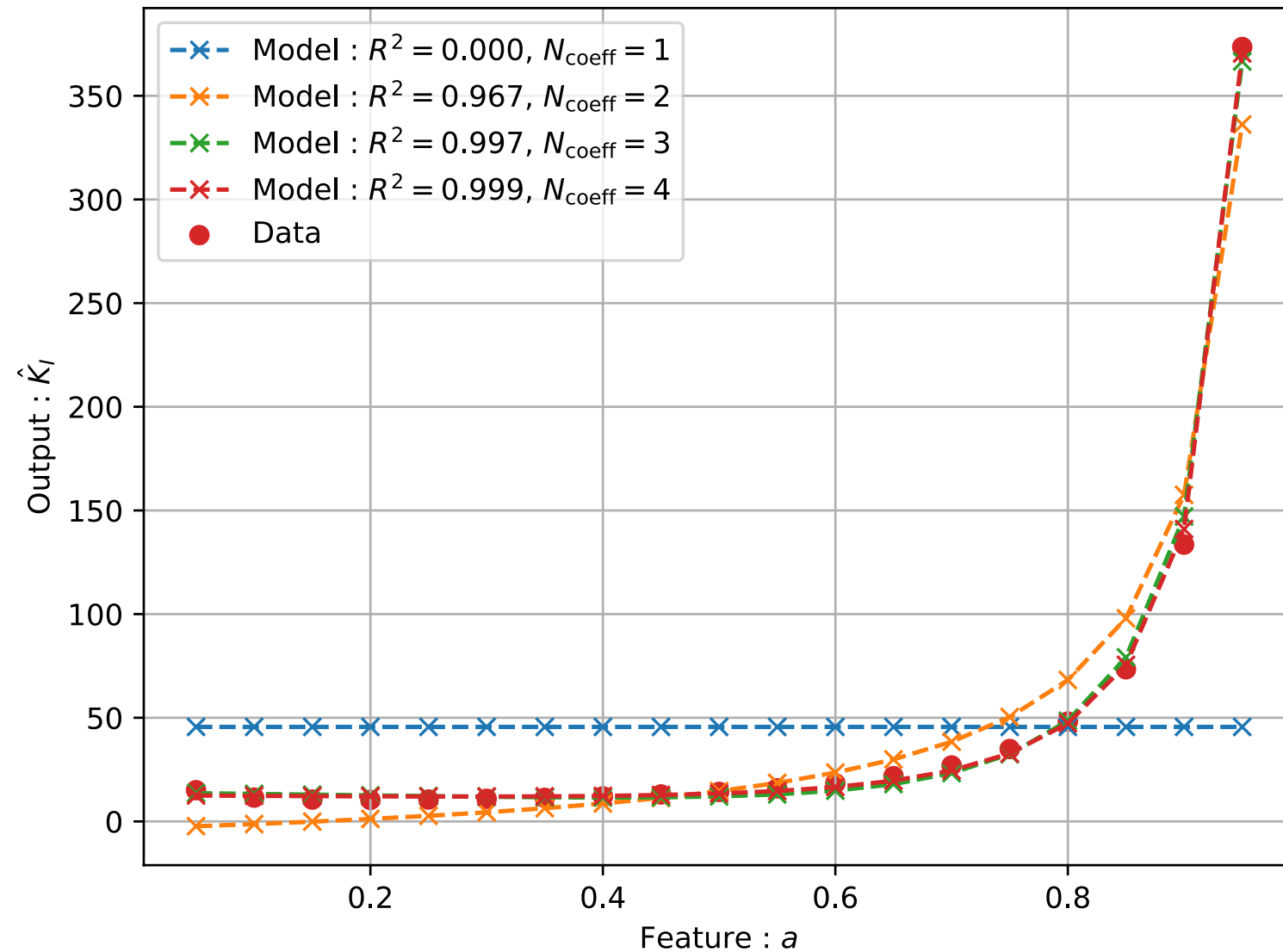
3. SPARSE REGRESSION

$$\mathbf{p} = \left[\frac{a}{b}, \exp(a/b), \frac{1}{\sqrt{1 - a/b}} \right]$$

- Hyperparameters :
 - Vary $\beta \rightarrow$ find good accuracy-simplicity tradeoff
 - $d = 2$, increase until satisfied.



Ex. 1 : CT specimen - Tradeoff - $d = 2$



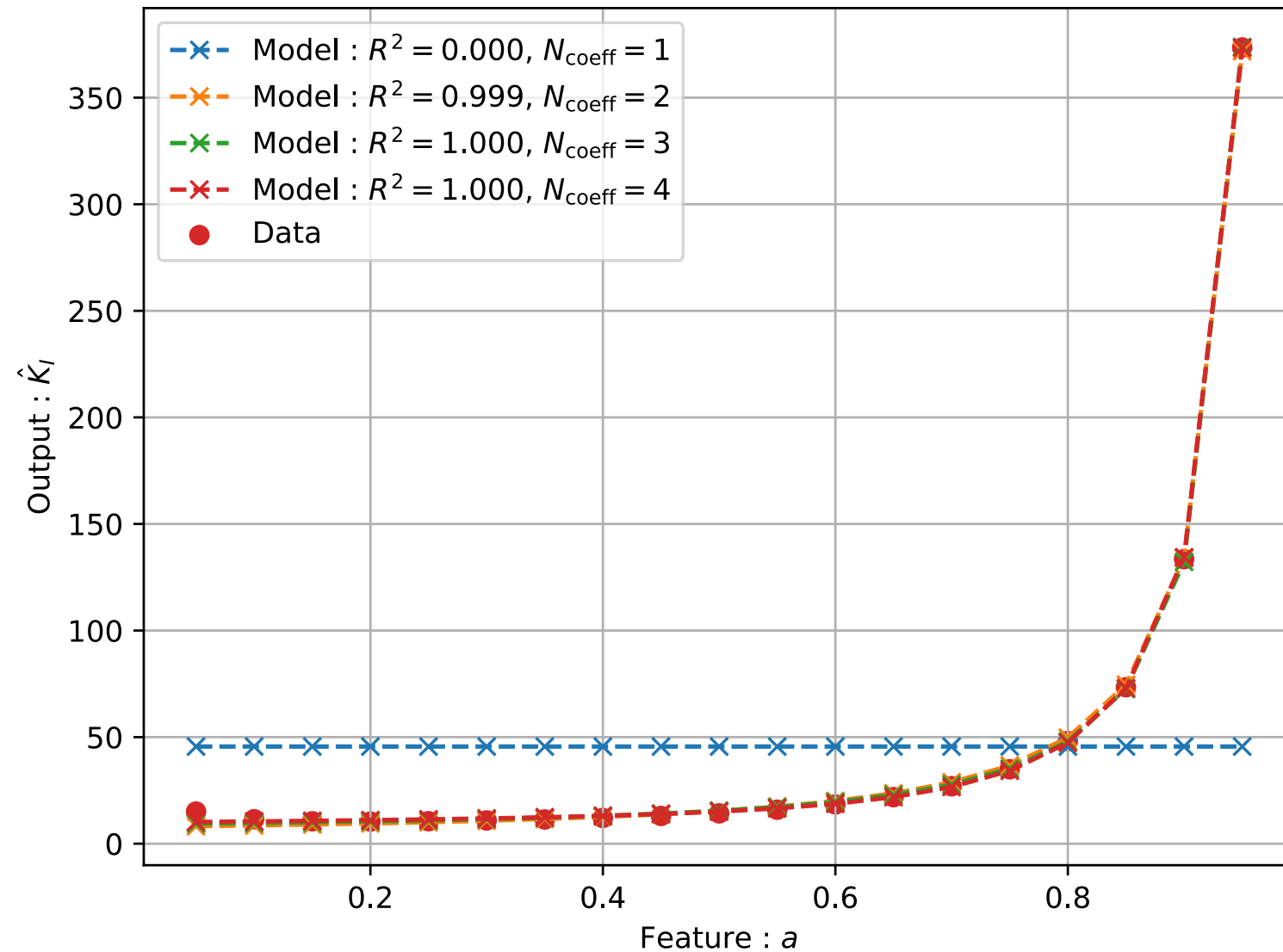
CODE OUTPUT

```

1  === Model 1
2  Assessment :
3    - Hyperparameter beta      : 3.83e+02
4    - Number of coefficients    : 1
5    - R2 score                  : 0.000
6  LaTeX expression:
7  \hat{K}_{\text{I}}(a/b) =
8    +45.6
9
10 === Model 2
11 Assessment :
12   - Hyperparameter beta      : 1.02e+01
13   - Number of coefficients    : 2
14   - R2 score                  : 0.967
15 LaTeX expression:
16 \hat{K}_{\text{I}}(a/b) =
17   -21.1
18   +17.9 \frac{1}{\sqrt{1-a/b}}^2
19
20 === Model 3
21 Assessment :
22   - Hyperparameter beta      : 5.11e-01
23   - Number of coefficients    : 3
24   - R2 score                  : 0.997
25 LaTeX expression:
26 \hat{K}_{\text{I}}(a/b) =
27   +5.43
28   -14.4 \exp(a/b)^2
29   +22.9 \frac{1}{\sqrt{1-a/b}}^2

```

Ex. 1 : CT specimen - Tradeoff - $d = 3$



CODE OUTPUT

```

1  === Model 1
2  Assessment :
3      - Hyperparameter beta      : 1.79e+03
4      - Number of coefficients    : 1
5      - R2 score                  : 0.000
6  LaTeX expression:
7  \hat{K}_{\text{I}}(a/b) =
8      +45.6
9
10 === Model 2
11 Assessment :
12     - Hyperparameter beta      : 3.43e+00
13     - Number of coefficients    : 2
14     - R2 score                  : 0.999
15 LaTeX expression:
16 \hat{K}_{\text{I}}(a/b) =
17     +3.75
18     +4.11 \frac{1}{\sqrt{1-a/b}}^3
19
20 === Model 3
21 Assessment :
22     - Hyperparameter beta      : 6.13e-01
23     - Number of coefficients    : 3
24     - R2 score                  : 1.000
25 LaTeX expression:
26 \hat{K}_{\text{I}}(a/b) =
27     +5.32
28     -0.383 \exp(a/b)^3
29     +4.19 \frac{1}{\sqrt{1-a/b}}^3
    
```

Ex. 2 : Rotating structure - Setup & Data

PLATE GEOMETRY

EXPERIMENTAL SETUP

By G. Eliyahu-Yakir and P. Reis (EPFL)

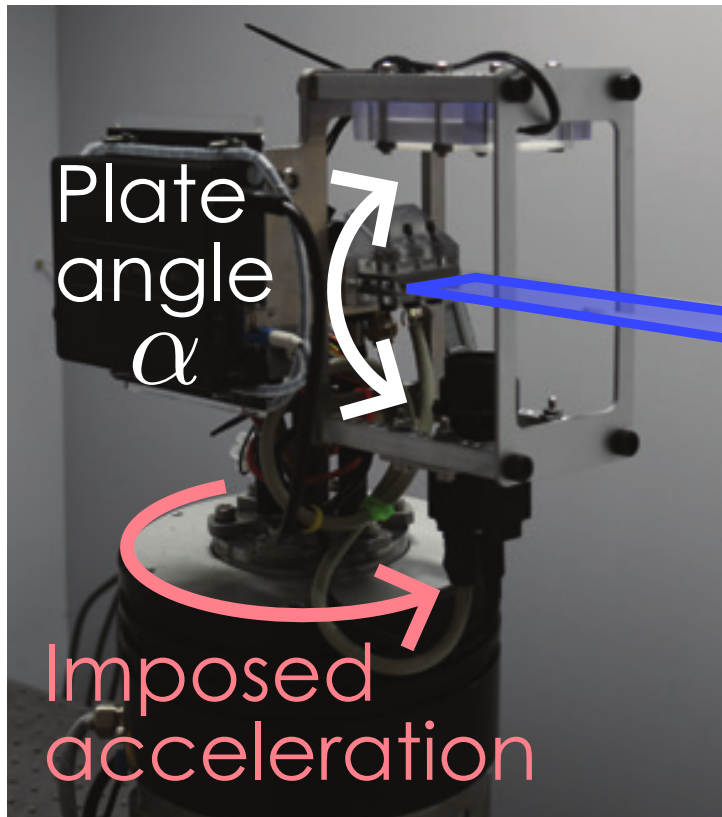
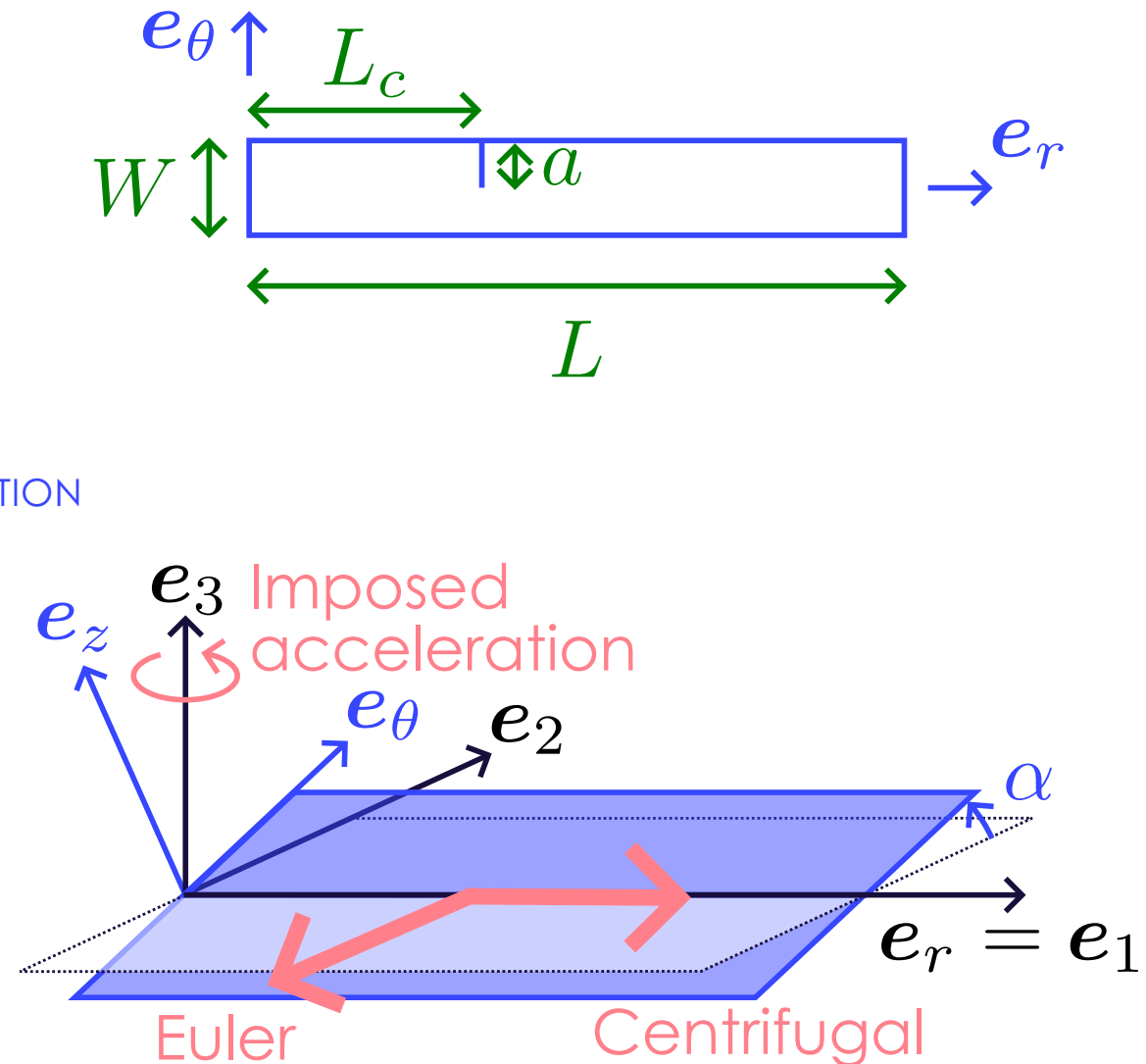


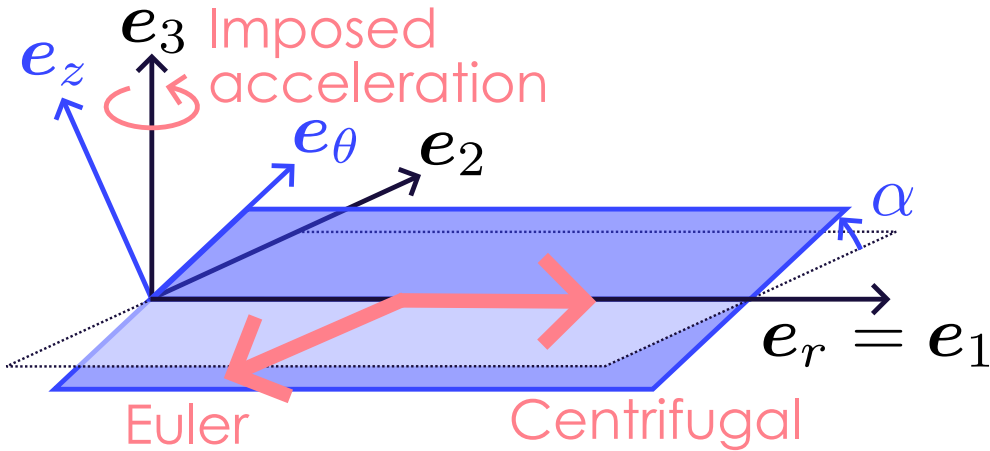
Plate with crack

ILLUSTRATION



Ex. 2 : Rotating structure - Physics

ILLUSTRATION



7-PARAMETER PROBLEM

- Geometry: W, L, a, L_c .
- 3D volumic loads:
 - centrifugal : $\mathbf{f}_\Omega(r, \theta) \propto \Omega$
 - along $\mathbf{e}_r$ and $\mathbf{e}_\theta$,
 - Euler : $\mathbf{f}_{\dot{\Omega}}(r, \theta) \propto \dot{\Omega}$
 - along $\mathbf{e}_2 = \cos(\alpha)\mathbf{e}_\theta - \sin(\alpha)\mathbf{e}_z$.

DIMENSIONAL ANALYSIS (TOWARDS A 3-PARAMETER PROBLEM)

The superposition principle ($K_m = K_m^\Omega + K_m^{\dot{\Omega}}$) and the Buckingham Π theorem give ($\frac{L}{W}$ is fixed)

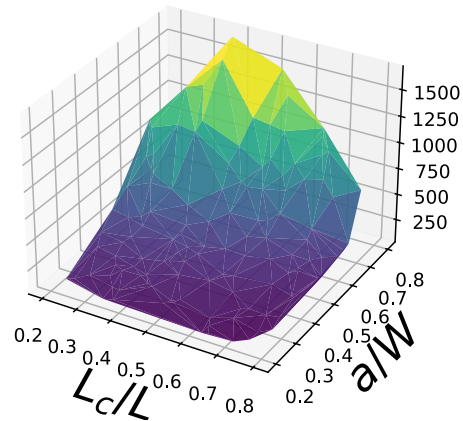
- centrifugal load
 - $K_I^\Omega = \rho \Omega^2 W^{5/2} \hat{K}_I^\Omega \left(\frac{a}{W}, \frac{L_c}{L}, \frac{L}{W} \right)$
 - $K_{II}^\Omega = \rho \Omega^2 W^{5/2} \hat{K}_{II}^\Omega \left(\frac{a}{W}, \frac{L_c}{L}, \frac{L}{W} \right)$
 - $K_{III}^\Omega = 0,$
- Euler load
 - $K_I^{\dot{\Omega}} = \rho \dot{\Omega} W^{5/2} \cos(\alpha) \hat{K}_I^{\dot{\Omega}} \left(\frac{a}{W}, \frac{L_c}{L}, \frac{L}{W} \right)$
 - $K_{II}^{\dot{\Omega}} = \rho \dot{\Omega} W^{5/2} \cos(\alpha) \hat{K}_{II}^{\dot{\Omega}} \left(\frac{a}{W}, \frac{L_c}{L}, \frac{L}{W} \right)$
 - $K_{III}^{\dot{\Omega}} = \rho \dot{\Omega} W^{5/2} \sin(\alpha) \hat{K}_{III}^{\dot{\Omega}} \left(\frac{a}{W}, \frac{L_c}{L}, \frac{L}{W} \right).$

Ex. 2 : Rotating structure - Data

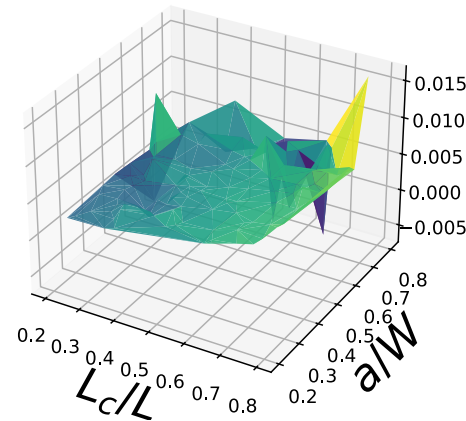
DATA GENERATION

Elastic FEM
simulations

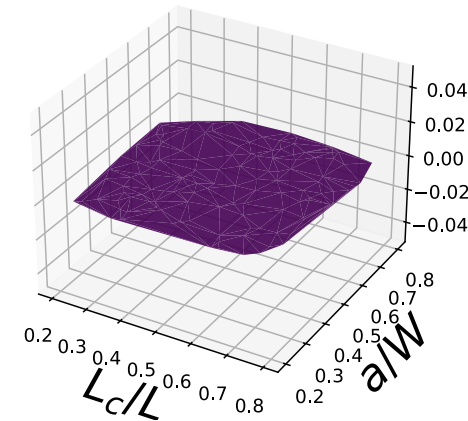
$\hat{K}_I^\Omega$ (centrifugal)



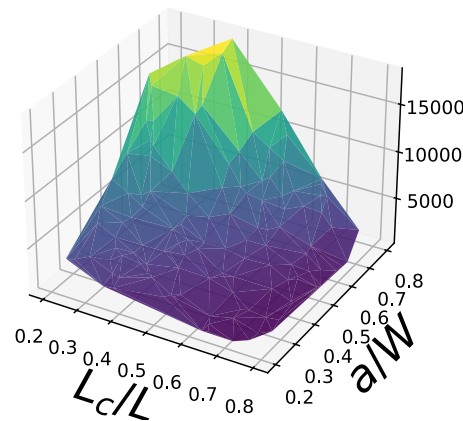
$\hat{K}_{II}^\Omega$ (centrifugal)



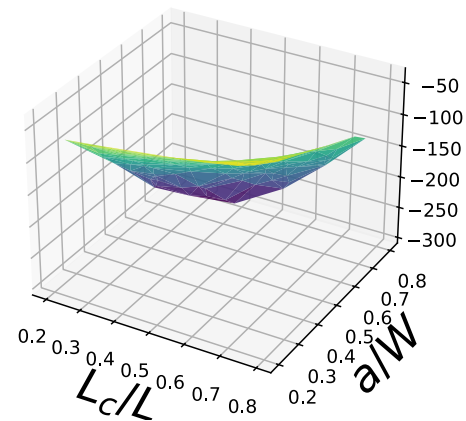
$\hat{K}_{III}^\Omega$ (centrifugal)



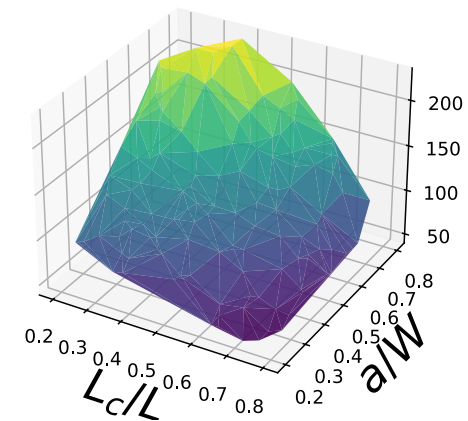
$\hat{K}_I^{\dot{\Omega}}$ (euler)



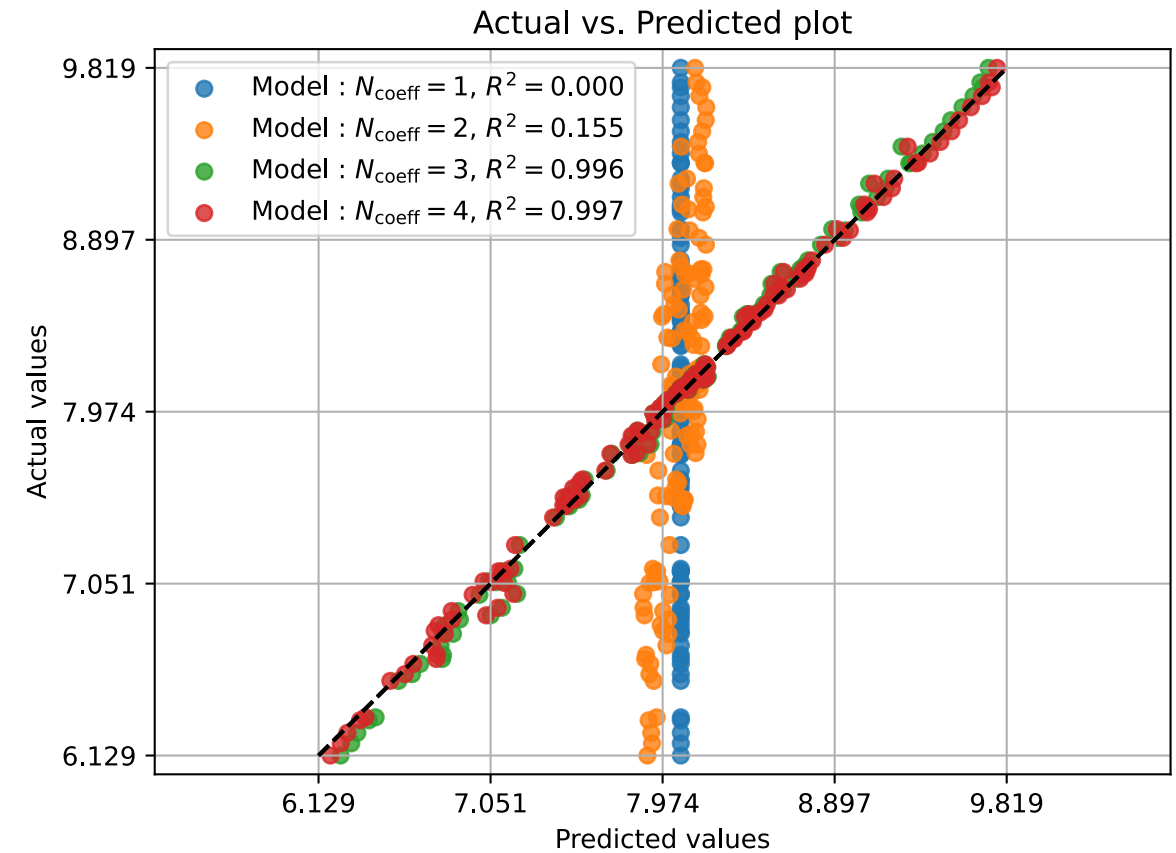
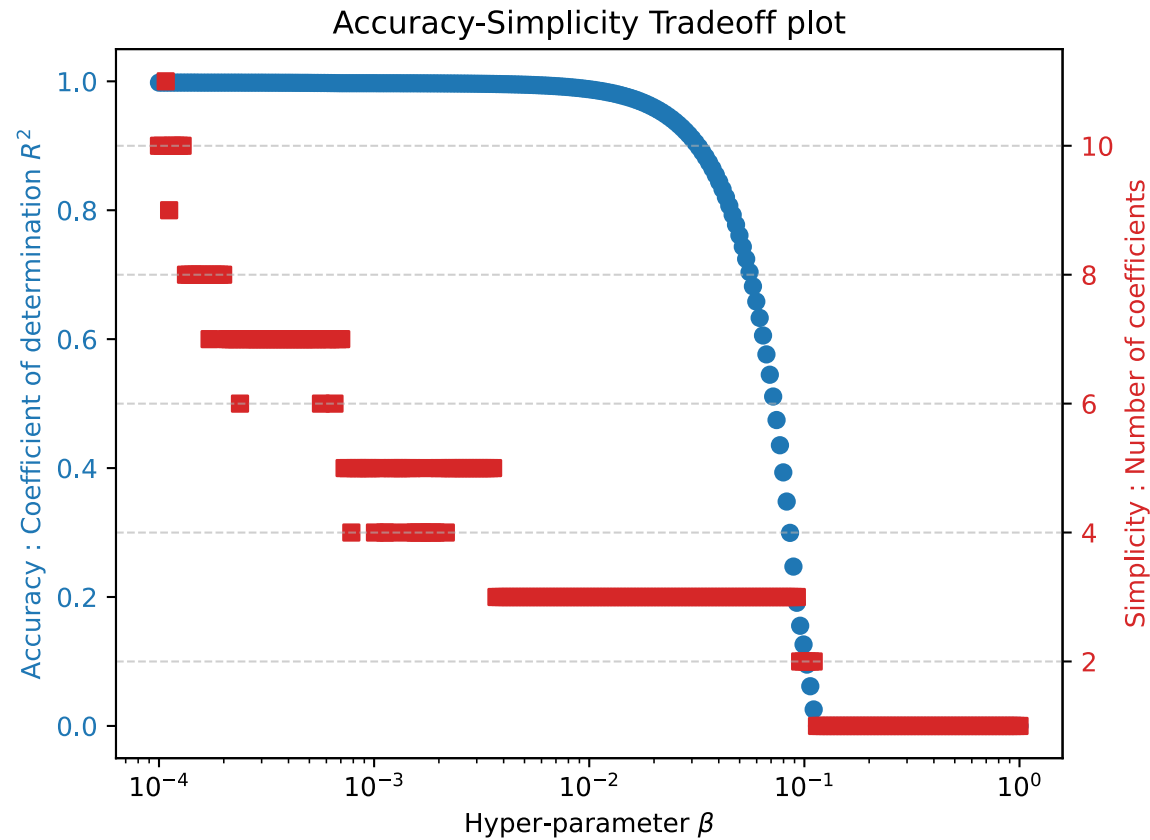
$\hat{K}_{II}^{\dot{\Omega}}$ (euler)



$\hat{K}_{III}^{\dot{\Omega}}$ (euler)



Ex. 2 : Rotating structure - Model $\hat{K}_I^{\dot{\Omega}}$



Ex. 2 : Rotating structure - All the SIFs

Model	N_{coeff}	R^2
$\hat{K}_I^\Omega = \exp\left(2.77 + 2.72 \exp\left(\frac{a}{W}\right) - 0.986 \exp\left(\frac{Lc}{L}\right)\right)$	3	0.995
$\hat{K}_{II}^\Omega = 0$	-	-
$\hat{K}_{III}^\Omega = 0$	-	-
$\hat{K}_I^{\dot{\Omega}} = \exp\left(8.25 + 3.25\left(\frac{a}{W}\right)^2 - 3.9\left(\frac{Lc}{L}\right)^2\right)$	3	0.996
$\hat{K}_{II}^{\dot{\Omega}} = -5.75 - 127\left(\frac{a}{W}\right)^2 - 394\frac{a}{W}\left(1 - \frac{Lc}{L}\right)$	3	0.989
$\hat{K}_{III}^{\dot{\Omega}} = 52.7 + 238\left(\frac{a}{W}\right)\left(1 - \frac{Lc}{L}\right) + 97.4\left(\frac{a}{W}\right)^3 - 66.6\left(\frac{Lc}{L}\right)^3$	4	0.995

The fracture mechanics problem is now fully analytical.

Conclusion

SUMMARY OF THE METHODOLOGY

1. Physics : Dimensional analysis + Superposition

- Isolate independent SIFs
- Find the proper dimensionless parameters

2. Generation of the data

- Sampling of the parametric space (LHS)
- Elastic simulations

3. Machine learning : Sparse regression

- Large polynomial + L1-regularization
- Injection of non-linear terms as model input

4. Result : Sparse analytical approximation of the SIFs

BENEFITS IN FRACTURE MECHANICS

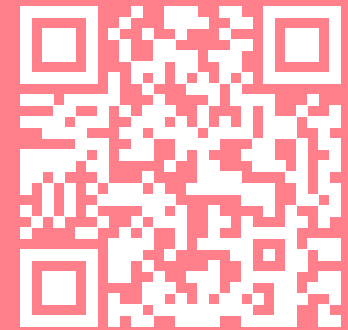
A problem of fracture can now be **fully analytical** facilitating

- uncertainty quantification,
- design (parametric optimization of structure),
- stability analysis,
- etc.

Thanks for your attention !

F. Loiseau, Y. Epongoue Djeugoue, G. Eliyahu-Yakir, P. Reis, V. Lazarus.

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Presentation

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Références

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