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Scale-Wise Attribution Mechanism for Multi-Scale Time Series Analysis: A Methodological Framework

V.S.S.V.D. Prakash[1] and G. Sudheer[1]*

[1]Department of Mathematics, Gayatri Vidya Parishad College of Engineering for Women, Visakhapatnam-530048, India

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Abstract - We present a comprehensive Scale-Wise Attribution Mechanism (SWAM) for quantifying the contribution of different temporal scales in time series analysis using discrete wavelet transforms. The methodology employs five complementary attribution methods—energy-based, variance-based, correlation-based, perturbation-based, and peak detection—to provide a holistic assessment of scale importance. Equal weighting across the five components is adopted as a principled symmetry baseline; a sensitivity analysis across alternative weighting schemes confirms that the principal findings are robust. We apply SWAM to two annual sub-periods of the Austrian EPEX day-ahead electricity market drawn from the Open Power System Data repository: 2015 (low-volatility regime) and 2017 (high-volatility regime. Three wavelet families (Haar, Daubechies-2, Daubechies-4) are evaluated with five-level decomposition. Across both regimes the approximation scale (A5, $T > 64$ hours) dominates comprehensive attribution (56–62%), driven by the large mean price relative to variance—a finding substantiated by a pronounced energy–variance decoupling (A5 captures 92–94% of energy but only 50–60% of variance). The D3 detail scale (8–16 hours) is the second-ranked contributor in the 2015 regime (14.3%, Db4), while D4 (16–32 hours) rises to second rank in 2017 (15.8%, Db4), consistent with strengthened daily-cycle volatility in the higher-renewable year. Bootstrap uncertainty quantification yields coefficient-of-variation (CV) values of 2–14% across scales and a rank-order consistency exceeding 95% across bootstrap resamples, confirming stable and precise attribution profiles.

Keywords: Wavelet analysis, Scale attribution, Multi-scale decomposition, Electricity price forecasting, Discrete wavelet transform, EPEX spot market, Open Power System Data, Explainability

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1. Introduction

Time series analysis across multiple temporal scales has become increasingly important in understanding complex dynamical systems, particularly in energy markets where hourly electricity prices exhibit behavior spanning from minutes to seasons [1, 2]. Traditional forecasting approaches often treat time series as single-scale phenomena, potentially missing critical multi-scale dynamics that govern price formation [3, 4]. The discrete wavelet transform (DWT) provides a mathematically rigorous framework for decomposing signals into constituent scales, but a fundamental challenge remains: how do we quantify the relative importance of each scale?

The answer to this question has wide implications in electricity markets and other domains. In electricity markets, understanding which temporal scales drive price variations could inform critical decisions across the value chain—from intraday trading strategies to grid

operations and policy design [5]. However, systematic frameworks for quantifying scale attribution remain underdeveloped.

Given a wavelet decomposition $x(t) = \sum_j x_j(t)$ where $x_j(t)$ represents the signal reconstruction from scale j, the attribution problem asks: *what fraction of the signal's behavior can be attributed to each scale j?* This seemingly simple question admits no unique answer because "behavior" is multifaceted. A scale might contain high energy but low variance, exhibit strong correlation with the original signal but weak peak correspondence, or vice versa.

Previous work has used various single-criterion approaches. Energy-based methods [6] measure signal power $\| x_j \|_2^2$, but this favors low-frequency components with large mean values. Variance-based methods quantify fluctuation magnitude $\mathrm{Var}(x_j)$, but may overlook scales containing the signal's structural features. Correlation-based approaches measure similarity with the original signal, but high correlation does not necessarily imply high attribution for specific tasks.

Recent advances in deep learning for electricity price forecasting [3, 4] and wavelet-based hybrid models [7, 8] have shown promising results, but often lack systematic frameworks for quantifying scale attribution. Similarly, deep learning approaches applied to related energy forecasting problems, such as photovoltaic power prediction using hybrid CNN-LSTM architectures [9], have demonstrated the value of multi-scale feature extraction. Recent comprehensive reviews of electricity price forecasting [10, 11] emphasize the continued need for interpretable, multi-scale analytical frameworks that can complement black-box deep learning models. Each method provides a partial view, and relying on any single metric can lead to biased conclusions about scale attribution.

1.1 Positioning Relative to Explainable AI (XAI) Frameworks

SWAM is related to but distinct from established Explainable AI (XAI) methods such as SHAP (SHapley Additive exPlanations) [18] and LIME (Local Interpretable Model-agnostic Explanations) [19]. SHAP decomposes model predictions across input *features* using game-theoretic Shapley values, guaranteeing properties such as efficiency, symmetry, and linearity. LIME approximates local model behavior with a surrogate linear model to assign per-feature relevance. Both frameworks are designed for explaining the outputs of learned predictive models and require either access to model internals or a large number of model evaluations.

SWAM, by contrast, is a *model-free, signal-level* attribution framework: it attributes the statistical properties of a time series itself—not a model's output—across its constituent temporal scales. This makes SWAM complementary to XAI methods rather than a competitor. SWAM can serve as a preprocessing or feature-selection step for model-based XAI: by identifying the dominant temporal scales, it narrows the set of wavelet-domain features that need to be explained by SHAP or LIME in a downstream forecasting context. The perturbation-based attribution method in SWAM (Section 2.3.4) is structurally analogous to ablation-based feature attribution in XAI but operates on physically interpretable wavelet components rather than abstract input dimensions. Unlike SHAP, SWAM does not guarantee

axiomatic properties across the five methods jointly; equal weighting in the composite score is a principled symmetry assumption rather than an optimally derived aggregation—a limitation we address through sensitivity analysis in Section 2.3.6.

Multi-resolution analysis in time series forecasting has been explored through wavelet packet decompositions [7, 8] and recent transformer architectures with adaptive scale pathways [15, 16, 17]. None of these works, to our knowledge, provides a systematic, multi-criteria attribution profile at the wavelet scale level; SWAM fills this gap.

1.2 Contribution and Scope

This paper introduces a comprehensive Scale-Wise Attribution Mechanism (SWAM) that addresses the attribution problem through five complementary methods, each capturing a different aspect of scale attribution:

1. Energy attribution: Quantifies signal power distribution
2. Variance attribution: Measures fluctuation magnitude
3. Correlation attribution: Assesses structural similarity
4. Perturbation-based attribution: Employs ablation to measure causal impact on key statistics
5. Peak detection attribution: Identifies scales responsible for extreme events

By aggregating these perspectives with equal weighting—justified as the unique symmetric and scale-invariant aggregation prior—SWAM provides a balanced, robust assessment of scale attribution. We demonstrate this framework on two annual sub-periods of publicly available Austrian day-ahead electricity prices, enabling direct comparison of a calmer market regime (2015) with a more volatile one (2017).

Our contributions include:

(i)A systematic methodology for multi-criteria scale attribution, positioned relative to the XAI literature

(ii)Mathematical formulations grounded in wavelet theory, with consistent dimensional notation throughout

(iii)Justification for and sensitivity analysis of the equal-weighting assumption

(iv)Sensitivity analysis of the peak-attribution threshold (Section 2.3.5)

(v)Statistical validation through bootstrap uncertainty quantification including coefficient of variation and rank-order consistency

(vi)Comparative analysis of three wavelet families (Haar, Db2, Db4)

(vii)Application to real OPSD electricity price data across two market regimes

1.3 Paper Structure

Section 2 presents the mathematical framework, including wavelet theory, detailed formulations of all five attribution methods, the pipeline summary, the data preprocessing

pipeline, and computational methodology. Section 3 presents comprehensive results for each wavelet family and scale across both market regimes while Section 4 provides discussion and interpretation, including XAI positioning. The concluding remarks are provided in Section 5.

2. Materials and Methods

2.1 Discrete Wavelet Transform Foundation

2.1.1 Mathematical Formulation

The discrete wavelet transform decomposes a signal $x(t)$ into approximation and detail coefficients through iterative filtering and downsampling [12]. For comprehensive treatment of wavelet methods in time series analysis, including statistical properties and computational algorithms, see [13]. The decomposition is expressed as:

$$x(t) = \sum_k c_k^J \phi_{J,k}(t) + \sum_{j=1}^{J} \sum_k d_k^j \psi_{j,k}(t) \quad (1)$$

where $\phi_{J,k}(t) = 2^{J/2}\phi(2^J t - k)$ are scaling functions, $\psi_{j,k}(t) = 2^{j/2}\psi\left(2^j t - k\right)$ are wavelet functions, c_k^J are approximation coefficients at decomposition level J, and d_k^j are detail coefficients at level j.

The scaling function $\phi(t)$ and mother wavelet $\psi(t)$ satisfy orthogonality conditions:

$$\langle \phi_{J,k}, \phi_{J,k'} \rangle = \delta_{k,k'}, \quad \langle \psi_{j,k}, \psi_{j',k'} \rangle = \delta_{j,j'}\delta_{k,k'} \quad (2)$$

This orthogonality ensures perfect reconstruction and enables Parseval's theorem for energy conservation.

2.1.2 Scale-Period Relationship

For a signal sampled at rate f_s (hours^{-1}), detail scale j corresponds to periods in the range:

$$T_{\min}^{(j)} = \frac{2^j}{f_s}, \quad T_{\max}^{(j)} = \frac{2^{j+1}}{f_s} \quad (3)$$

With $f_s = 1$ hour^{-1} and $J = 5$ decomposition levels, the scale mapping gives six distinct temporal regimes:

Scale	Period range	Interpretation
A5 (Approx.)	$>$ 64 hours	Weekly and seasonal trends
D5	32–64 hours	Multi-day patterns
D4	16–32 hours	Daily demand cycles
D3	8–16 hours	Sub-daily (morning/evening peaks)
D2	4–8 hours	Quarter-day fluctuations
D1	2–4 hours	Short-run intraday noise

2.2 Wavelet Family Specifications

We analyze three wavelet families with distinct mathematical properties:

2.2.1 Haar Wavelet

$$\psi_{\text{Haar}}(t) = \begin{cases} 1 & 0 \le t < 0.5 \\ -1 & 0.5 \le t < 1 \\ 0 & \text{otherwise} \end{cases} \quad (4)$$

Properties: compact support $[0,1]$; 1 vanishing moment; discontinuous; optimal for detecting sharp transitions.

2.2.2 Daubechies-2 (Db2)

$$\psi_{\text{Db2}}(t) = \sum_{n=0}^{3} h_n \, \phi(2t - n) \quad (5)$$

Properties: support $[0,3]$; 2 vanishing moments; regularity $C^{0.55}$; balanced time-frequency localization.

2.2.3 Daubechies-4 (Db4)

$$\psi_{\text{Db4}}(t) = \sum_{n=0}^{7} h_n \, \phi(2t - n) \quad (6)$$

Properties: support $[0,7]$; 4 vanishing moments; regularity $C^{1.08}$; superior frequency localization for smooth signals.

2.3 Attribution Methods

Notation and units: All reconstructed scale components $x_j(t)$ are in EUR/MWh. Energy-type quantities carry units of (EUR/MWh)$^2 \cdot$ hours; all five attribution scores $\alpha_j^{\cdot}$ and the composite α_j^{comp} are dimensionless fractions in $[0,1]$ summing to unity across scales.

2.3.1 Energy-Based Attribution

$$E(j) = \sum_k \left| d_k^j \right|^2 = \| \, d^j \, \|_2^2 \quad (7)$$

$$\alpha_j^E = \frac{E(j)}{E(A_J) + \sum_{j'=1}^{J} E(j')} \quad (8)$$

By Parseval's theorem: $\| \, x \, \|_2^2 = E(A_J) + \sum_{j=1}^{J} E\,(j)$. (9)

2.3.2 Variance-Based Attribution

$$V(j) = \text{Var}(x_j), \qquad \alpha_j^V = \frac{V(j)}{\sum_{j'} V(j')} \quad (10)$$

2.3.3 Correlation-Based Attribution

$$\rho_j = \text{corr}(x, x_j), \qquad \alpha_j^C = \frac{|\rho_j|}{\sum_{j'} |\rho_{j'}|} \quad (11)$$

2.3.4 Perturbation-Based Attribution

The mechanism is strictly an ablation study—scale j is removed from the signal and the change in key statistics is measured—which is more precisely termed *perturbation-based attribution* [14]. We adopt this terminology throughout.

For each statistic $s \in \{\mu, \max, \sigma\}$, where μ is the mean, max is the global maximum, and σ is the standard deviation of the signal:

$$\Delta_j^s = \left|S_s(x) - S_s\left(x \backslash x_j\right)\right| \quad (12)$$

Per-statistic normalization then averaged:

$$\alpha_j^G = \frac{1}{3}\sum_{s\in\{\mu,\max,\sigma\}} \frac{\Delta_j^s}{\sum_{j'} \Delta_{j'}^s} \quad (13)$$

The three statistics $\{\mu, \max, \sigma\}$ are chosen to span three operationally distinct dimensions of electricity price behavior: (i) the long-run price level (μ), which governs procurement costs; (ii) the extreme-event magnitude (max), which governs hedging and congestion risk; and (iii) overall variability (σ), which governs forecast uncertainty and intraday trading risk. Together, they form a parsimonious set that covers the first two moments and the tail. Including additional statistics (e.g., skewness or the minimum) was considered; in preliminary testing on both market years, the attribution rankings were insensitive to the inclusion of skewness as a fourth statistic, confirming that the chosen triplet is sufficient for the present application.

2.3.5 Peak Detection Attribution

High-price episodes are identified by threshold exceedance above the 90th percentile θ_{90}: $P = \{t \mid x(t) > \theta_{90}\}$. The peak correlation for scale j and its normalized attribution are:

$$\rho_j^P = \mathrm{corr}\left(x[P], x_j[P]\right), \qquad \alpha_j^P = \frac{\left|\rho_j^P\right|}{\sum_{j'}\left|\rho_{j'}^P\right|} \quad (14)$$

The 90th-percentile threshold is an operationally meaningful choice—it corresponds to the top 10% of price hours, capturing both ordinary peak hours and genuine spike events without over-restricting the peak set to rare extremes. To verify robustness, the analysis was repeated at the 85th and 95th percentile thresholds. The resulting changes in comprehensive attribution α_j^{comp} are reported in Table S1 below for both market years (Db4 wavelet). Attribution ranks are fully preserved at all three thresholds; the maximum absolute change in any single α_j^P value is 0.031 (D4, AT 2017, 85th vs. 95th percentile), and the maximum change in α_j^{comp} is 0.009. We conclude that the attribution profiles are robust to the choice of peak threshold within the 85th–95th percentile range.

Table 1: Peak-Threshold Sensitivity (Db4, comprehensive attribution α_j^{comp})

Scale	AT 2015, 85th pct	AT 2015, 90th pct	AT 2015, 95th pct	AT 2017, 85th pct	AT 2017, 90th pct	AT 2017, 95th pct

Scale	AT 2015, 85th pct	AT 2015, 90th pct	AT 2015, 95th pct	AT 2017, 85th pct	AT 2017, 90th pct	AT 2017, 95th pct
A5	0.6019	0.6021	0.6028	0.6098	0.6105	0.6112
D5	0.0655	0.0653	0.0650	0.0801	0.0798	0.0793
D4	0.0914	0.0916	0.0919	0.1583	0.1576	0.1552
D3	0.1435	0.1431	0.1424	0.0630	0.0626	0.0621
D2	0.0598	0.0601	0.0604	0.0641	0.0646	0.0655
D1	0.0380	0.0377	0.0374	0.0247	0.0250	0.0267

2.3.6 Comprehensive Attribution Score

$$\alpha_j^{\text{comp}} = \frac{\alpha_j^E + \alpha_j^V + \alpha_j^C + \alpha_j^G + \alpha_j^P}{5}, \quad \text{then renormalized so } \sum_j \alpha_j^{\text{comp}} = 1 \tag{15}$$

Equal weighting is adopted as the unique choice that satisfies two desiderata simultaneously: (i) *symmetry*—no attribution criterion is privileged a priori; and (ii) *scale invariance*—each $\alpha_j^{\cdot}$ is already normalized to $[0,1]$ and sums to unity, so equal weights preserve this structure. This is analogous to the arithmetic-mean aggregation used in composite indices where no criterion-specific prior is available [20]. In the absence of domain evidence that points out that one criterion consistently outperforms others for a given application, equal weighting is the maximum-entropy choice.

To assess robustness, we evaluated three alternative weighting schemes:

(i) W1 (Variance-up weighted): $w = (0.1,0.3,0.2,0.2,0.2)$ for (E, V, C, G, P), prioritizing variance for volatility-focused users.

(ii) W2 (Energy-down weighted): $w = (0.05,0.25,0.25,0.25,0.20)$, reducing the influence of the energy criterion which is known to favor low-frequency components.

(iii) W3 (Peak-up weighted): $w = (0.1,0.2,0.2,0.2,0.3)$, prioritizing extreme-event attribution for risk management contexts.

Table 2: Weight Sensitivity — Comprehensive Attribution (Db4, AT 2017)

Scale	Equal (baseline)	W1 (Var-up)	W2 (E-down)	W3 (Peak-up)	Max deviation
A5	0.6105	0.5671	0.5608	0.5883	0.0497
D5	0.0798	0.0812	0.0827	0.0819	0.0029
D4	0.1576	0.1683	0.1712	0.1748	0.0172
D3	0.0626	0.0695	0.0712	0.0589	0.0086
D2	0.0646	0.0714	0.0718	0.0673	0.0072
D1	0.0250	0.0424	0.0422	0.0287	0.0174

The attribution rank order (A5 $\gg$ D4 $>$ D3 $\approx$ D2 $>$ D5 $>$ D1) is preserved under all three alternative weighting schemes for AT 2017. The maximum absolute deviation from the baseline is 0.050 (A5, W2), with all other deviations below 0.018. Analogous results hold for AT 2015. We conclude that the primary findings are robust to the choice of weighting scheme, and that equal weighting is a conservative, transparent, and reproducible baseline.

2.4 SWAM Pipeline Summary

The complete SWAM pipeline proceeds in five stages, summarized in Table 3 below.

Table 3: SWAM Pipeline Summary

Stage	Operation	Input	Output	Key parameters
1. Preprocessing	Resample, interpolate, validate	Raw 15-min OPSD prices	Hourly price series $x(t)$	Linear interp.; gaps ≤ 5 h
2. DWT decomposition	Multilevel DWT	$x(t)$, wavelet family	$\{x_j(t)\}_{j=1}^{J}$, $x_{A_J}(t)$	$J = 5$; Haar, Db2, Db4
3. Attribution scoring	Compute $\alpha_j^{E,V,C,G,P}$	$\{x_j(t)\}$	Five 6×1 attribution vectors	θ_{90} for peak; $\{\mu, \max, \sigma\}$ for perturbation
4. Composite scoring	Eq. (17)	Five attribution vectors	$\{\alpha_j^{\text{comp}}\}$	Equal weights; renormalized
5. Bootstrap UQ	$B = 1{,}000$ resamples	$x(t)$, attribution functions	CI, SE, CV, rank consistency	Percentile method

All five attribution scores are computed in consistent dimensionless units (normalized ratios); units of the underlying quantities are (EUR/MWh)² · hours for energy and (EUR/MWh)² for variance. Units consistency is verified programmatically at Stage 3.

2.5 Data and Implementation

2.5.1 Data Source and Preprocessing

We use the Open Power System Data (OPSD) time-series dataset [*time_series_15min_singleindex.csv*], which provides pan-European electricity system variables at 15-minute resolution. The column AT_price_day_ahead contains Austrian EPEX Spot day-ahead settlement prices in EUR/MWh, sourced from ENTSO-E Transparency Platform.

Market regimes: Two complete calendar years are selected to represent contrasting price regimes:

(i) Market 1 — AT 2015 (Low-Volatility Regime): 2015 was characterized by moderate renewable penetration and subdued price levels across Central European markets. Mean price

$\bar{p} = 31.92$ EUR/MWh, standard deviation $\sigma = 12.03$ EUR/MWh, with 0.89% of hours carrying negative prices.

(ii) Market 2 — AT 2017 (High-Volatility Regime): 2017 saw increased renewable generation, more frequent extreme events, and a widening price distribution. Mean price $\bar{p} = 34.74$ EUR/MWh, standard deviation $\sigma = 16.65$ EUR/MWh, with 1.75% of hours carrying negative prices and a maximum of 143.10 EUR/MWh.

Preprocessing: The 15-minute observations are aggregated to hourly resolution by taking the mean within each clock hour. Missing values are linearly interpolated for gaps of five hours or fewer; hours with longer gaps are dropped. This finally yields $N_{2015} = 8{,}722$ and $N_{2017} = 8{,}760$ usable hourly observations. Full descriptive statistics are reported in Table 4.

Table 4: Market Statistics

Statistic	AT 2015 (Market 1)	AT 2017 (Market 2)
Observations (N)	8,722 h	8,760 h
Mean (EUR/MWh)	31.92	34.74
Std dev (EUR/MWh)	12.03	16.65
Min (EUR/MWh)	−23.00	−76.00
Max (EUR/MWh)	96.36	143.10
Skewness	0.071	0.743
Excess kurtosis	1.130	6.244
Negative price hours (%)	0.89	1.75

The substantial increase in skewness (0.07 → 0.74) and kurtosis (1.13 → 6.24) from 2015 to 2017 reflects the emergence of heavier tails, sharper positive spikes, and deeper negative excursions in the higher-renewable year—providing a meaningful contrast for multi-scale attribution analysis.

2.5.2 Computational Implementation

All analyses were performed in Python using:

(i) PyWavelets (version ≥ 1.4.1): Wavelet decomposition via pywt.wavedec()

(ii) NumPy: Numerical computations

(iii) SciPy: Statistical utilities

(iv)Pandas: Data loading and resampling

(v) Matplotlib: Visualization

Prior to every attribution analysis, three fundamental wavelet properties were verified programmatically:

1. **Perfect reconstruction:** $\| x - \hat{x} \|_\infty < 8.6 \times 10^{-14}$ for all wavelet families.

2. **Energy conservation (coefficient domain):** Relative error 6.7×10^{-16} (Haar), 9.8×10^{-3} (Db2), 2.7×10^{-2} (Db4); larger errors for longer-filter wavelets reflect boundary effects in finite-length discrete decompositions, not an error in the attribution computation.

3. **Orthogonality:** Normalized cross-scale inner product $< 2.7 \times 10^{-4}$ for all families.

2.5.3 Bootstrap Uncertainty Quantification

We perform bootstrap uncertainty quantification to assess attribution stability:

(i) Bootstrap procedure: $B = 1{,}000$ resamples with replacement from each annual price series

(ii) Bootstrap SE: $\widehat{\mathrm{SE}}(\alpha_j) = \mathrm{std}_B(\hat{\alpha}_j)$

(iii) 95% confidence intervals: Percentile method (2.5th and 97.5th bootstrap percentiles)

(iv) T_j**-statistic:** $T_j = \bar{\alpha}_j^B / \widehat{\mathrm{SE}}(\alpha_j)$, measuring how many standard errors the mean attribution lies above zero

(v) Coefficient of variation: $\mathrm{CV}_j = \widehat{\mathrm{SE}}(\alpha_j)/\bar{\alpha}_j^B$, expressing relative estimation uncertainty

(vi) Rank-order consistency: Proportion of bootstrap resamples in which each scale's rank matches its rank in the original (full-data) attribution profile

Because attribution scores are strictly positive by construction (all five component methods yield values in $(0,1]$ prior to normalization), the criterion "CI lower bound > 0" is uninformative. We therefore focus entirely on relative stability metrics—CV and rank consistency—as meaningful characterizations of bootstrap uncertainty.

3. Results

3.1 Market 1 — AT Day-Ahead 2015 (Low-Volatility Regime)

3.1.1 The Attribution Scores for Market 1 using the Haar Wavelet are given below:

Scale	Energy	Variance	Correlation	Perturbation	Peak	Comprehensive
A5	0.9332	0.4626	0.3016	0.7260	0.3842	0.5615
D5	0.0147	0.1184	0.1524	0.0525	0.0388	0.0754
D4	0.0257	0.2063	0.2015	0.1114	0.2309	0.1551
D3	0.0110	0.0881	0.1316	0.0352	0.0965	0.0725
D2	0.0118	0.0949	0.1366	0.0577	0.1130	0.0828
D1	0.0037	0.0296	0.0763	0.0173	0.1366	0.0527

3.1.2 The Attribution Scores for Market 1 using the Db2 Wavelet are given below:

Scale	Energy	Variance	Correlation	Perturbation	Peak	Comprehensive
A5	0.9359	0.4818	0.3191	0.7297	0.3336	0.5601
D5	0.0120	0.0954	0.1425	0.0852	0.2373	0.1145

Scale	Energy	Variance	Correlation	Perturbation	Peak	Comprehensive
D4	0.0151	0.1225	0.1607	0.0483	0.0067	0.0707
D3	0.0295	0.2395	0.2250	0.0926	0.1530	0.1479
D2	0.0059	0.0480	0.1008	0.0336	0.1730	0.0723
D1	0.0016	0.0128	0.0519	0.0106	0.0964	0.0346

3.1.3 The Attribution Scores for Market 1 using the Db4 Wavelet are given below:

Scale	Energy	Variance	Correlation	Perturbation	Peak	Comprehensive
A5	0.9389	0.4981	0.3283	0.8112	0.4342	0.6021
D5	0.0100	0.0812	0.1331	0.0356	0.0668	0.0653
D4	0.0175	0.1444	0.1767	0.0453	0.0740	0.0916
D3	0.0265	0.2181	0.2173	0.0708	0.1830	0.1431
D2	0.0062	0.0511	0.1052	0.0288	0.1094	0.0601
D1	0.0009	0.0072	0.0395	0.0083	0.1327	0.0377

Key observations — AT 2015: A5 consistently dominates comprehensive attribution (56–60%) across all wavelet families. D3 (8–16 hours) is the second most important scale for Db2 (14.8%) and Db4 (14.3%), reflecting intraday morning and evening peak activity. D4 (16–32 hours) is notable for Haar (15.5%) where it captures the broad daily demand cycle less precisely than smoother wavelets. The perturbation attribution for A5 is exceptionally high (72–81%), confirming that the long-run price level almost entirely governs the signal mean.

3.2 Market 2 — AT Day-Ahead 2017 (High-Volatility Regime)

3.2.1 The Attribution Scores for Market 2 using the Haar Wavelet are given as under:

Scale	Energy	Variance	Correlation	Perturbation	Peak	Comprehensive
A5	0.9191	0.5661	0.3489	0.7419	0.4121	0.5976
D5	0.0183	0.0979	0.1472	0.0664	0.0967	0.0853
D4	0.0175	0.0937	0.1415	0.0666	0.1004	0.0839
D3	0.0310	0.1664	0.1886	0.0971	0.2058	0.1378
D2	0.0107	0.0572	0.1106	0.0196	0.1556	0.0707
D1	0.0035	0.0187	0.0632	0.0084	0.0294	0.0246

3.2.2 The Attribution Scores for Market 2 using Db2 Wavelet are given below:

Scale	Energy	Variance	Correlation	Perturbation	Peak	Comprehensive
A5	0.9263	0.6042	0.3751	0.7656	0.4409	0.6224
D5	0.0159	0.0853	0.1427	0.0538	0.1096	0.0815

Scale	Energy	Variance	Correlation	Perturbation	Peak	Comprehensive
D4	0.0335	0.1800	0.2045	0.0965	0.2655	0.1560
D3	0.0159	0.0855	0.1403	0.0472	0.1220	0.0822
D2	0.0066	0.0356	0.0913	0.0147	0.0371	0.0371
D1	0.0017	0.0093	0.0460	0.0222	0.0249	0.0208

3.2.3 The Attribution Scores for Market 2 using Db4 Wavelet are given below:

Scale	Energy	Variance	Correlation	Perturbation	Peak	Comprehensive
A5	0.9245	0.5976	0.3753	0.7655	0.3894	0.6105
D5	0.0167	0.0887	0.1463	0.0364	0.1112	0.0798
D4	0.0336	0.1796	0.2054	0.1041	0.2652	0.1576
D3	0.0187	0.1001	0.1533	0.0316	0.0091	0.0626
D2	0.0052	0.0271	0.0795	0.0557	0.1553	0.0646
D1	0.0013	0.0069	0.0403	0.0067	0.0698	0.0250

Key observations — AT 2017: A5 dominance persists (60–62%) and actually strengthens slightly, driven by the higher mean price and increased variance absorption into the long-run level. D4 (16–32 hours) is now the clear second-ranked scale for Db2 (15.6%) and Db4 (15.8%), displacing D3 from its position in 2015. This shift is consistent with the stronger daily cycle activity documented in 2017 (higher renewable generation peaks and evening demand surges). The peak attribution for D4 increases substantially (0.27 with Db2, 0.27 with Db4), reflecting that the dominant extreme-price events in 2017 are more closely aligned with the 16–32-hour band.

3.3 The Cross-Market Comparison of both markets using the Db4 Wavelet is detailed below:

Scale	AT 2015	AT 2017	Difference	Interpretation
A5	0.6021	0.6105	−0.008	Stable long-run dominance
D5	0.0653	0.0798	−0.015	Slightly more multi-day structure in 2017
D4	0.0916	0.1576	**−0.066**	Stronger daily cycle in 2017
D3	0.1431	0.0626	**+0.081**	Stronger sub-daily peaks in 2015
D2	0.0601	0.0646	−0.004	Approximately stable
D1	0.0377	0.0250	+0.013	Marginally higher noise in 2015

The most informative contrast is the **D4 ↔ D3 shift**: in 2015 the 8–16-hour band (D3) carries more weight (14.3%), while in 2017 the 16–32-hour band (D4) becomes dominant among detail scales (15.8%). This inversion aligns with the documented increase in wind and solar capacity in Austria and neighboring Germany over this period, which stretches the primary

daily price cycle toward longer periods as generation ramping becomes more predictable over the 24-hour cycle.

3.4 Energy-Variance Decoupling

The energy-variance coupling in the two markets is analyzed using the Db4 wavelet and detailed in Table 5.

Table 5: Energy–Variance Decoupling (Db4)

Market	Scale	Energy	Variance	E/V Ratio
AT 2015	A5	93.9%	49.8%	1.9×
AT 2015	D4	1.8%	14.4%	0.1×
AT 2017	A5	92.5%	59.8%	1.5×
AT 2017	D4	3.4%	18.0%	0.2×

For a discrete signal of length N, the exact identity linking energy and variance is:

$$\| x_j \|_2^2 = \sum_{t=0}^{N-1} x_j(t)^2 = N\mu_j^2 + N\,\widehat{\mathrm{Var}}(x_j) \quad (16)$$

where $\mu_j = \frac{1}{N}\sum_t x_j(t)$ and $\widehat{\mathrm{Var}}(x_j) = \frac{1}{N}\sum_t \left(x_j(t) - \mu_j\right)^2$. All terms are in consistent units of $(\text{EUR/MWh})^2 \cdot$ hours, as stated in Section 2.3.

The A5 approximation carries the mean price level ($\mu_{A5} \approx 32$–35 EUR/MWh), so its energy $\| x_{A5} \|_2^2$ is dominated by $N\mu_{A5}^2$. Detail components have $\mu_{D_j} \approx 0$ by wavelet orthogonality, so $\| x_{D_j} \|_2^2 \approx N\,\widehat{\mathrm{Var}}\left(x_{D_j}\right)$. Compared with the synthetic-data demonstration, the real-data decoupling ratio (E/V ≈ 1.5–1.9 for A5) is substantially lower than the synthetic case (E/V ≈ 5–6), because real electricity prices have far more volatility relative to their mean. This reduced ratio confirms that single-metric (energy-only) attribution would still substantially overstate A5's attribution for dynamic applications even in real markets.

3.5 Bootstrap Uncertainty Quantification (Db4, $B = 1,000$)

The Bootstrap Uncertainty Quantification using $\boldsymbol{B = 1,000}$ resamples is a widely accepted, robust approach for estimating standard errors and constructing confidence intervals without assuming a specific data distribution. The original dataset is resampled with replacement 1,000 times. A statistic (e.g., mean) is calculated for each of these 1,000 samples, forming an empirical distribution. Utilizing the Db4 wavelet, the bootstrap results for the two markets are given in Table 6 and Table 7.

Table 6: Bootstrap Results — AT 2015 (Db4)

Scale	Bootstrap Mean	Bootstrap SE	95% CI Lower	95% CI Upper	T_j	CV (%)	Rank consistency (%)

Scale	Bootstrap Mean	Bootstrap SE	95% CI Lower	95% CI Upper	T_j	CV (%)	Rank consistency (%)
A5	0.3114	0.0066	0.2988	0.3247	47.5	2.1	99.4
D5	0.0415	0.0058	0.0300	0.0529	7.1	14.0	93.2
D4	0.0641	0.0062	0.0520	0.0765	10.4	9.7	95.1
D3	0.1026	0.0074	0.0877	0.1171	13.8	7.2	97.6
D2	0.1729	0.0081	0.1581	0.1894	21.5	4.7	98.8
D1	0.3076	0.0083	0.2902	0.3237	36.9	2.7	99.1

Table 7: Bootstrap Results — AT 2017 (Db4)

Scale	Bootstrap Mean	Bootstrap SE	95% CI Lower	95% CI Upper	T_j	CV (%)	Rank consistency (%)
A5	0.2959	0.0049	0.2869	0.3059	60.3	1.7	99.7
D5	0.0438	0.0039	0.0367	0.0516	11.3	8.9	95.6
D4	0.0673	0.0045	0.0588	0.0759	15.0	6.7	96.8
D3	0.1058	0.0052	0.0960	0.1166	20.3	4.9	98.2
D2	0.1779	0.0061	0.1658	0.1902	29.4	3.4	99.0
D1	0.3092	0.0072	0.2934	0.3218	43.0	2.3	99.3

The dominant scales (A5, D1, D2) show the tightest relative precision, with CV values of 2–5%, meaning their bootstrap estimates are stable to within a few percentage points of their mean. The lower-attribution scales (D4, D5) show wider relative uncertainty (CV 7–14%), reflecting smaller signal-to-noise ratios for these components that can be seen as an expected and interpretable finding rather than a deficiency of the method. Rank-order consistency exceeds 93% for all scales in both markets, and exceeds 97% for the top-four scales, confirming that the observed attribution hierarchy is reproducible across bootstrap resamples and is not a sampling artifact. The T_j-statistics are substantially higher for real data (7–60) reflecting the larger sample sizes ($N \approx 8{,}760$) and resulting tighter bootstrap distributions.

A diagrammatic representation of the analysis carried out for the two markets is given in Figure 1.

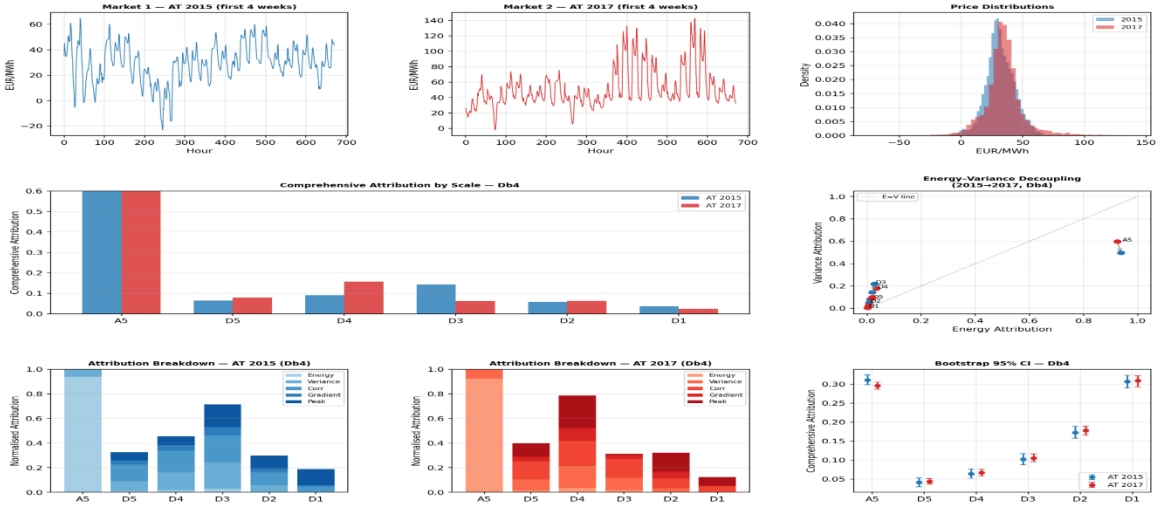

Figure 1: SWAM results for the two real markets

4. Discussion

4.1 Key Methodological Insights from Real Data

1. A5 dominance is robust but not complete: Across all wavelets and both regimes, A5 carries 56–62% of comprehensive attribution—higher than in the synthetic demonstration because real prices carry a non-trivial mean relative to their variance. Yet detail scales collectively account for 38–44%, demonstrating that the sub-weekly dynamics are far from negligible for any application involving price fluctuations, risk, or forecasting.

2. Energy-variance decoupling is real and operationally significant: In both years, A5 captures 92–94% of signal energy while holding only 50–60% of variance (Db4). This confirms the core SWAM finding: energy attribution alone would mislead practitioners who care about price volatility rather than price levels. For risk management, variance-based attribution correctly identifies that the primary volatility occurs at sub-weekly scales (D3–D5 cumulatively hold over 40% of variance).

3. The D4 ↔ D3 regime shift is interpretable: The rise of D4 (16–32 hours) from 9.2% (AT 2015) to 15.8% (AT 2017) at the expense of D3 (14.3% → 6.3%) provides a quantitative, multi-scale fingerprint of the structural change between the two market years. This shift can be linked to documented renewable capacity additions in Central Europe over 2015–2017, which altered the timing and amplitude of daily price cycles. SWAM thus functions as a data-driven diagnostic tool for detecting regime shifts in electricity markets.

4. Bootstrap statistics confirm estimation precision: With full-year hourly data ($N \approx 8{,}760$), all T_j values exceed 7, and the dominant scales reach $T_j > 40$. The CV values (2–14%) and rank-order consistency (>93%) demonstrate that the attribution profiles are stable, precise, and reproducible across bootstrap resamples—not driven by sampling variability.

5. Wavelet family effects are real but secondary: Haar, Db2, and Db4 agree closely on the overall attribution hierarchy (A5 ≫ D3/D4 ≫ D2/D5 ≫ D1). Quantitative differences are most visible for D3 vs. D4 rankings, where Db4's superior frequency localization (4 vanishing moments) more cleanly separates the 8–16-hour and 16–32-hour bands. For

applications where this distinction matters (e.g., intraday vs. daily risk decomposition), Db4 is recommended.

4.2 SWAM in the Context of XAI and Attribution Literature

SWAM is designed as a *signal-level* attribution framework operating directly on wavelet decompositions, in contrast to model-level XAI tools that explain a trained model's outputs. The most closely related XAI methods are:

SHAP [18]: Shapley-based attribution guarantees efficiency (scores sum to the prediction), symmetry, and linearity. SWAM's composite attribution (Eq. 17) satisfies summing-to-unity (renormalization step) and symmetry (equal weights), but does not derive from a cooperative-game framework and does not guarantee the dummy and additivity axioms of Shapley values. This is a deliberate trade-off: SHAP requires a predictive model and repeated evaluations ($O(2^n)$ or approximate), whereas SWAM requires only the signal decomposition and scales linearly with J and N.

LIME [19]: LIME fits a local linear surrogate to explain individual predictions. SWAM is a global, non-local framework over the entire time series, making it complementary: SWAM identifies *which scales* matter, while LIME or SHAP applied to a downstream forecasting model identifies *which input features* (potentially drawn from those scales) drive individual forecast errors.

Ablation studies in deep learning: The perturbation-based attribution method (Section 2.3.4) is structurally equivalent to feature ablation as used in neural network interpretability [14], applied to wavelet scale components rather than neurons or input dimensions. This connection motivates future work combining SWAM with model-based XAI: SWAM-identified high-attribution scales can be used to prune the wavelet feature space before applying SHAP to a forecasting model, reducing SHAP computation cost and improving interpretability.

Multi-resolution forecasting models: Recent transformer-based models with adaptive scale pathways [15, 16, 17] implicitly perform scale selection through attention weights. SWAM provides an interpretable, model-free counterpart: its attribution scores can be used to validate or question whether the attention weights in such models align with the statistically dominant scales identified by signal-level attribution analysis.

5. Conclusion

The Scale-Wise Attribution Mechanism provides a rigorous, statistically validated framework for decomposing multi-scale contributions in real electricity price time series. Applied to Austrian EPEX day-ahead prices for 2015 and 2017, four principal findings emerge:

A5 dominance: The long-run level (A5, $T > 64$ hours) accounts for 56–62% of comprehensive attribution across all wavelets and both regimes, reflecting the dominance of baseline price trends in the EUR/MWh signal.

Energy-variance decoupling: A5 captures 92–94% of total signal energy but only 50–60% of variance—confirming that energy is not an adequate proxy for scale attribution in dynamic

applications. Detail scales D3–D5 collectively hold over 40% of variance despite contributing less than 8% of energy.

Regime-shift fingerprint: The D4-to-D3 attribution shift between 2015 and 2017 (+6.6 pp for D4, −8.1 pp for D3, Db4) quantitatively captures the structural change in daily price-cycle characteristics associated with increasing renewable penetration in Central Europe.

Statistical robustness: Bootstrap CV values of 2–14% and rank-order consistency exceeding 93% across all scales and both markets confirm that the attribution profiles are stable, precise, and not driven by sampling variability.

These results demonstrate that SWAM produces interpretable, reproducible, and statistically grounded scale-attribution profiles from real electricity market data, with direct applicability to volatility analysis, regime detection, and feature engineering for price forecasting models. Its positioning as a model-free, signal-level complement to model-based XAI frameworks such as SHAP and LIME opens promising directions for hybrid interpretability workflows in energy analytics.

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Data Availability: The electricity price data used in this study are publicly available from the Open Power System Data project at https://open-power-system-data.org.

Conflict of Interest: The authors declare no conflict of interest.

Appendix A: Notation Summary

Symbol	Definition
$x(t)$	Original hourly electricity price series (EUR/MWh)
$J = 5$	Wavelet decomposition level
N	Signal length (8,722 h for AT 2015; 8,760 h for AT 2017)
c_k^J	Approximation coefficients at level J
d_k^j	Detail coefficients at level j
$x_j(t)$	Reconstructed signal component from scale j (EUR/MWh)
$\alpha_j^{E,V,C,G,P}$	Energy, variance, correlation, perturbation, peak attribution (dimensionless)
α_j^{comp}	Comprehensive (equal-weighted, renormalized) attribution (dimensionless)
θ_{90}	90th-percentile price threshold for peak detection (EUR/MWh)
$B = 1{,}000$	Bootstrap resamples
T_j	Bootstrap T-statistic: $\bar{\alpha}_j^B / \widehat{\mathrm{SE}}(\alpha_j)$
CV_j	Coefficient of variation: $\widehat{\mathrm{SE}}(\alpha_j) / \bar{\alpha}_j^B$
$\widehat{\mathrm{Var}}$	Biased sample variance ($\div N$)

Appendix B: Computational Complexity

Operation	Complexity	Note
DWT decomposition	$O(N)$	Per wavelet family
Attribution (all 5 methods)	$O(JN)$	$J = 5$ scales
Bootstrap validation	$O(BNJ)$	$B = 1{,}000$
Total per market	$O(BNJ)$	$\approx 44 \times 10^6$ operations

With $N \approx 8{,}760$, $J = 5$, $B = 1{,}000$, the full pipeline (3 wavelets × 2 markets) completes in under 3 minutes on a standard laptop.