



Early Dark Energy and Phantom Crossing in axio-dilaton Systems

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The dark energy scale is in the **meV range**: apparent fine-tuning compared to standard model scales.

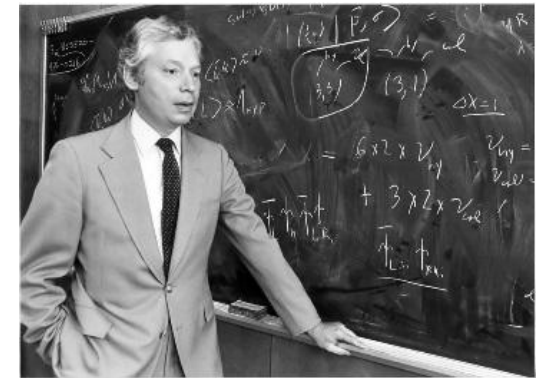
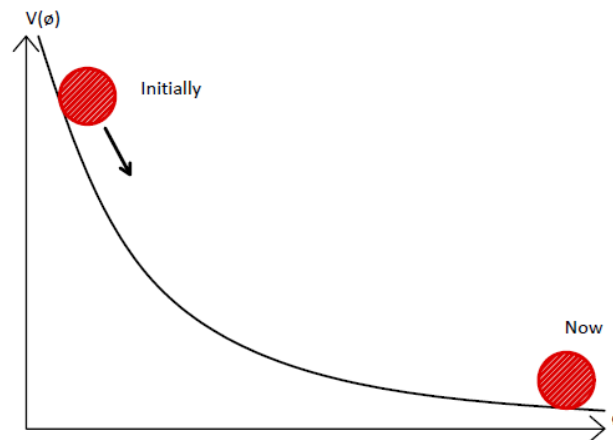
$$\delta\rho_\Lambda = M^4, \quad M \sim 100\text{GeV}$$

Weinberg's theorem states that there is no non fine-tuned nearly vanishing vacuum energy in a 4d quantum field theory respecting **Poincare invariance**.

Dynamical configurations



Dark energy

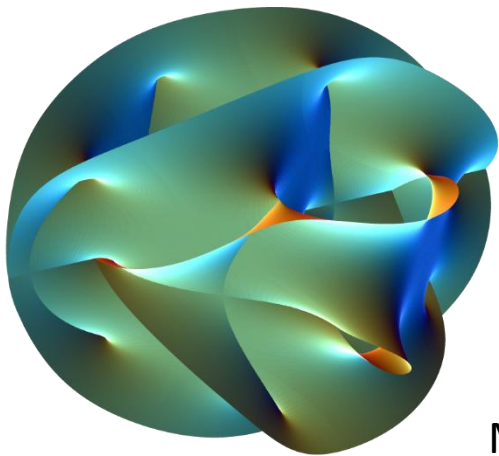


Scalar field rolling down its potential
A good example: the dilaton of broken scale invariance can be such a candidate.

Important stringy *conjectures* for dark energy are:

In an ideal world, string theory or any other version of quantum gravity would be finite so the vacuum energy could be calculable. Not the case in ordinary Quantum Field Theory.

- ✓ **The de Sitter conjecture:** a pure vacuum energy with no dynamics is not compatible with string theory (?)
- ✓ **The vacuum conjecture:** Empty space-time is described by the dynamics of at least one scalar field with a potential such that



Moduli could be “sizes” of extra-dimensions

$$\left| \frac{dV}{d\phi} \right| \geq c \frac{V}{m_{\text{Pl}}}$$

$$c = \mathcal{O}(\sqrt{2})$$

This forbids very flat potentials. This favours runaway potentials where the field is a “modulus”.

Some expected features of dark energy:


- Dark energy is determined by the position of the field now:

$$3\Omega_\Lambda H_0^2 m_{\text{Pl}}^2 = V(\phi_{\text{now}})$$

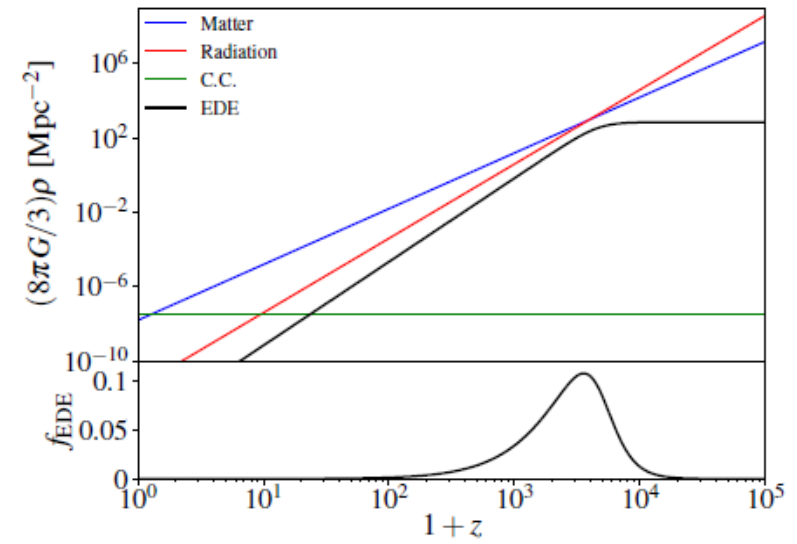
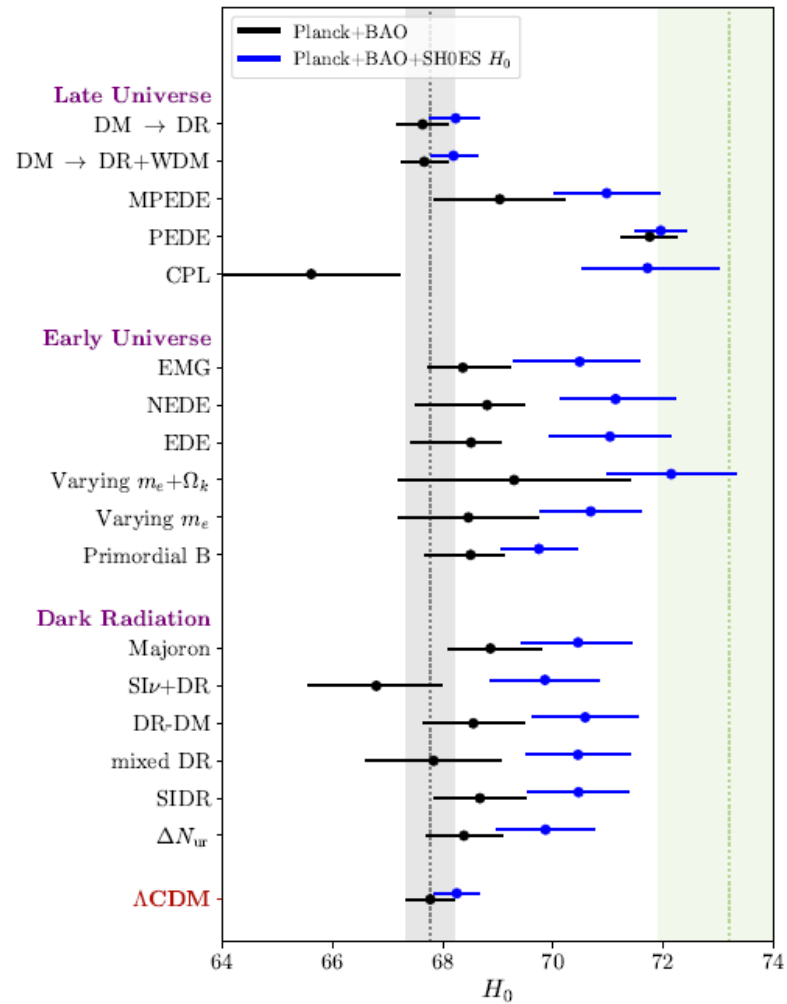
- The field is ***extremely light***:

$$m_\phi^2 = \left. \frac{d^2 V}{d\phi^2} \right|_{\text{now}} \sim \frac{V_{\text{now}}}{m_{\text{Pl}}^2} = 3\Omega_\Lambda H_0^2$$

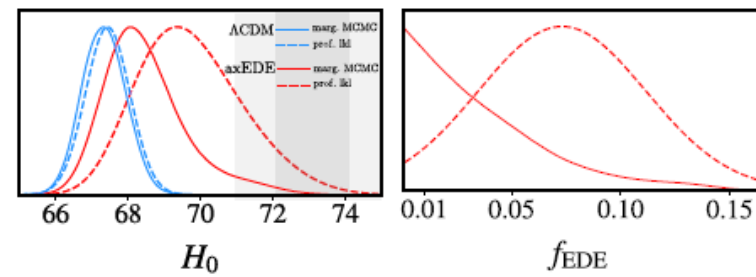
Mass of the order
of the Hubble rate


$$H_0 \sim 10^{-42} \text{ GeV}$$

Early Dark Energy



Early dark energy fraction

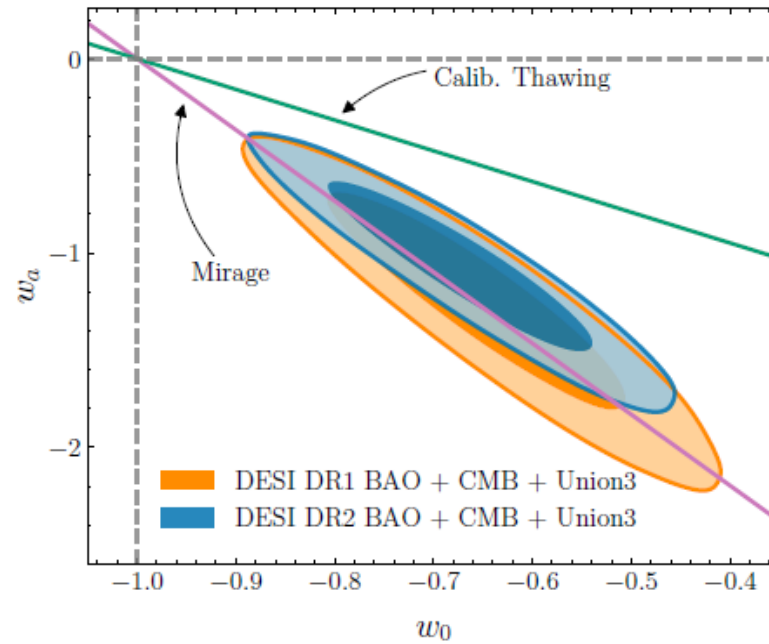


Late Dark Energy

$$w_0 + w_a < -1$$

Phantom crossing

$$w(z) < -1, \quad z \geq 0.5$$

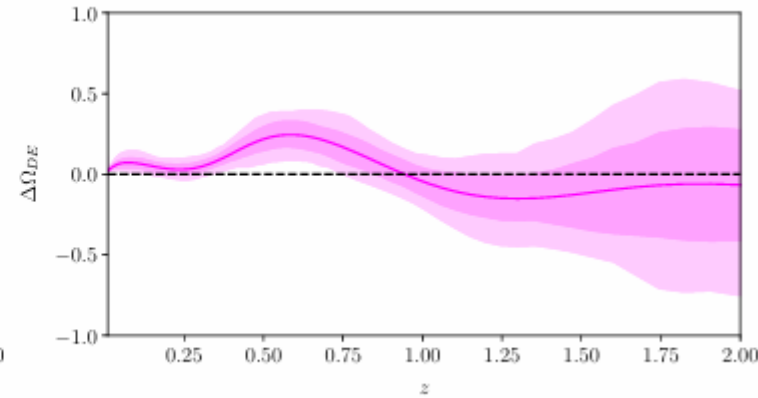
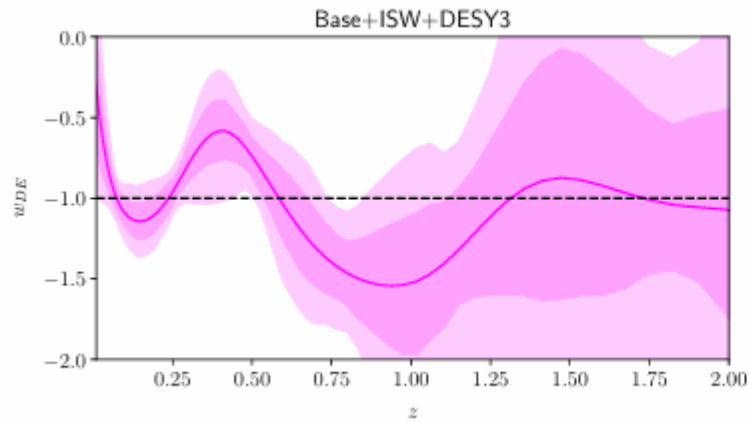
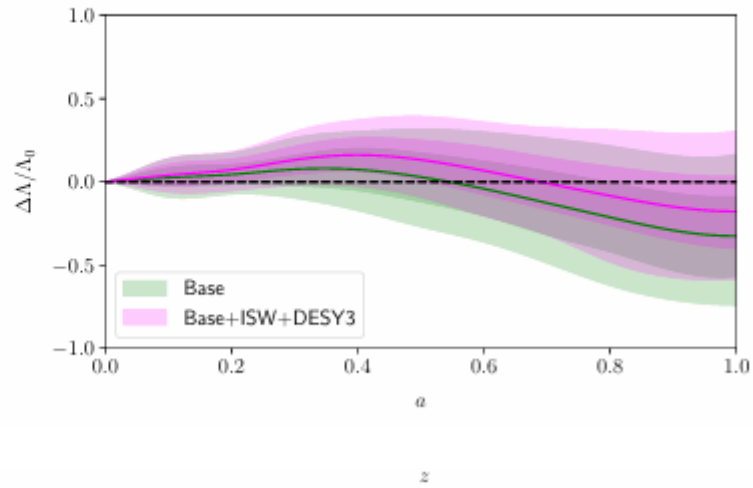
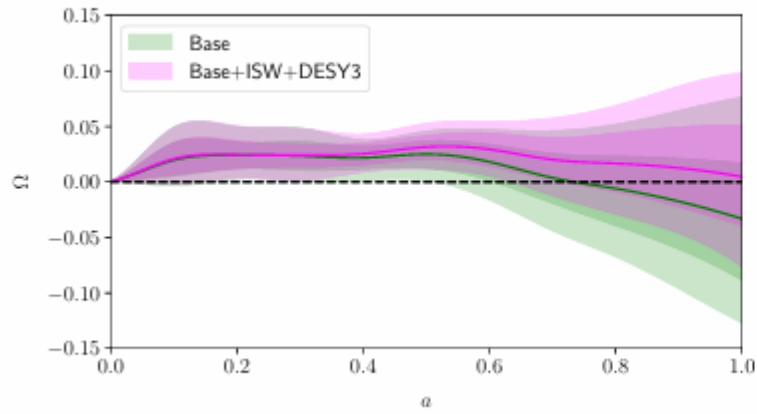


$$\omega = \frac{p}{\rho}$$

$$\omega = \omega_0 + \omega_a(1 - a)$$

E par si muove!

G.G.(1633)



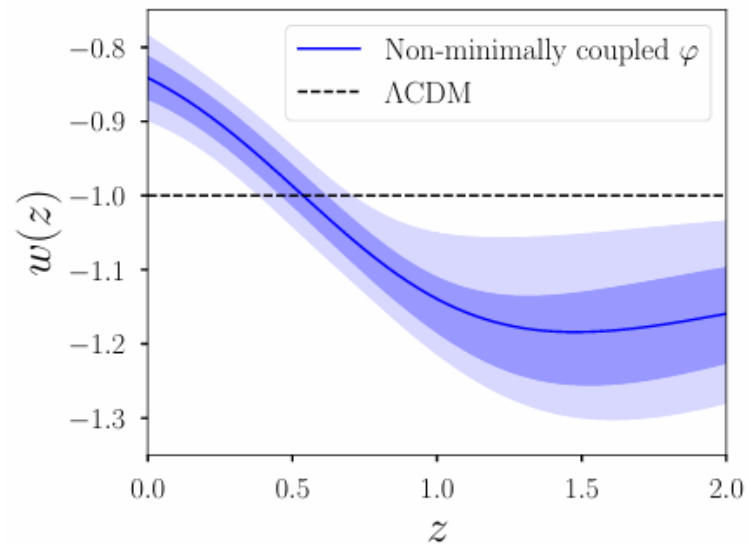
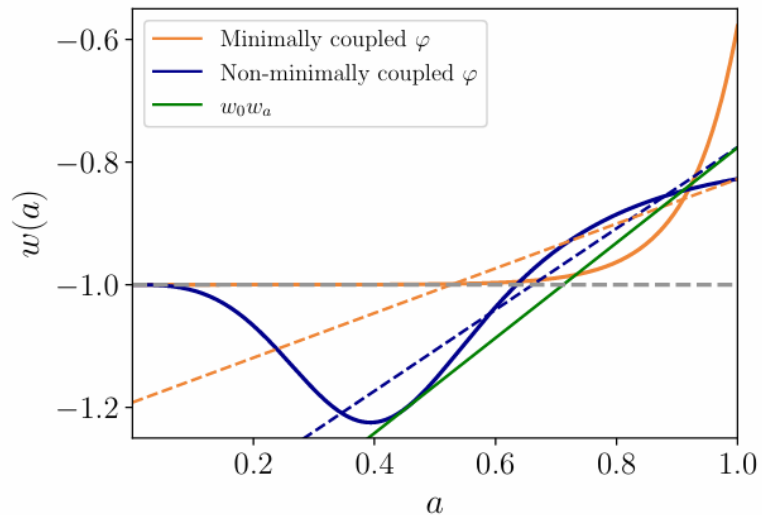
Parameterisation-independent reconstruction of the cosmological background in the effective dark energy action.

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Simplest extension:

Effective dark energy action

$$S = \int d^4x \sqrt{-g} \left(\frac{m_{\text{Pl}}^2}{2} (1 + \Omega(t)) R + \Lambda(t) + \dots \right)$$

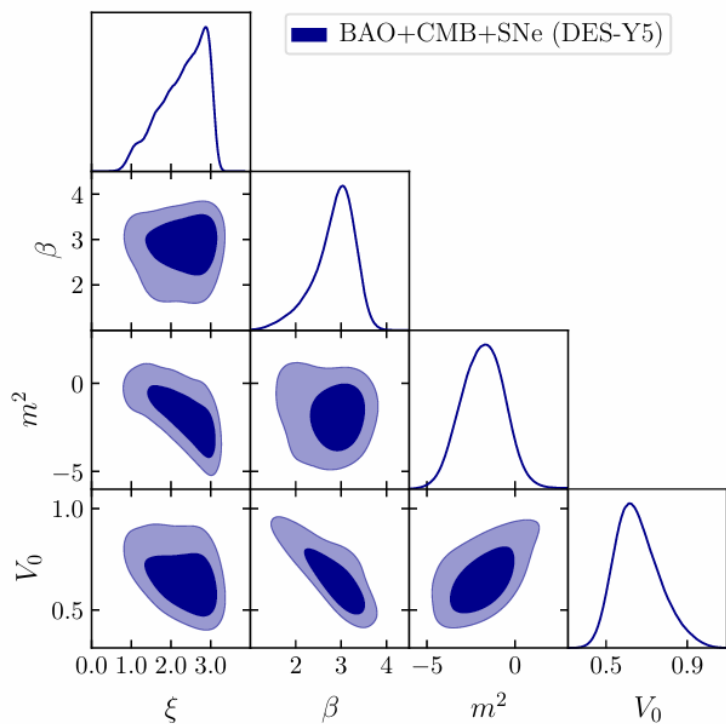


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$$S = \int d^4x \sqrt{-g} \left(\frac{m_{\text{Pl}}^2}{2} F(\phi) R - V(\phi) \right)$$

$$F(\phi) = 1 - \xi \frac{\phi^2}{m_{\text{Pl}}^2}$$

$$V(\Phi) = V_0 + \beta\phi + \frac{1}{2}m^2\phi^2$$



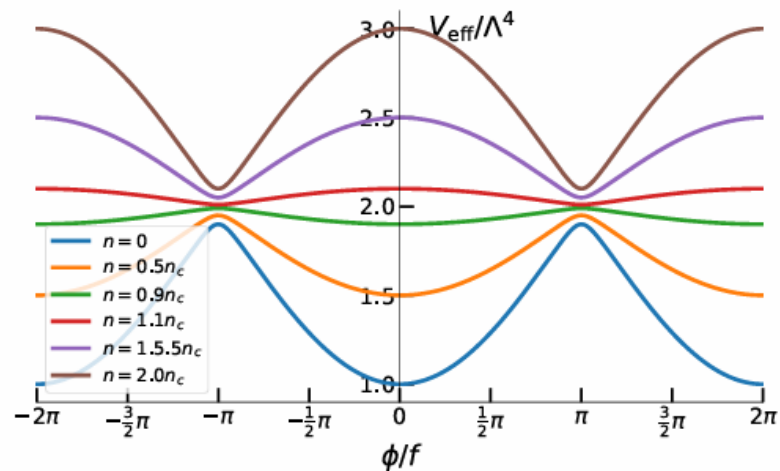
Evidence for scalar-tensor models

The models here are in the Jordan frame

QCD inspired model:

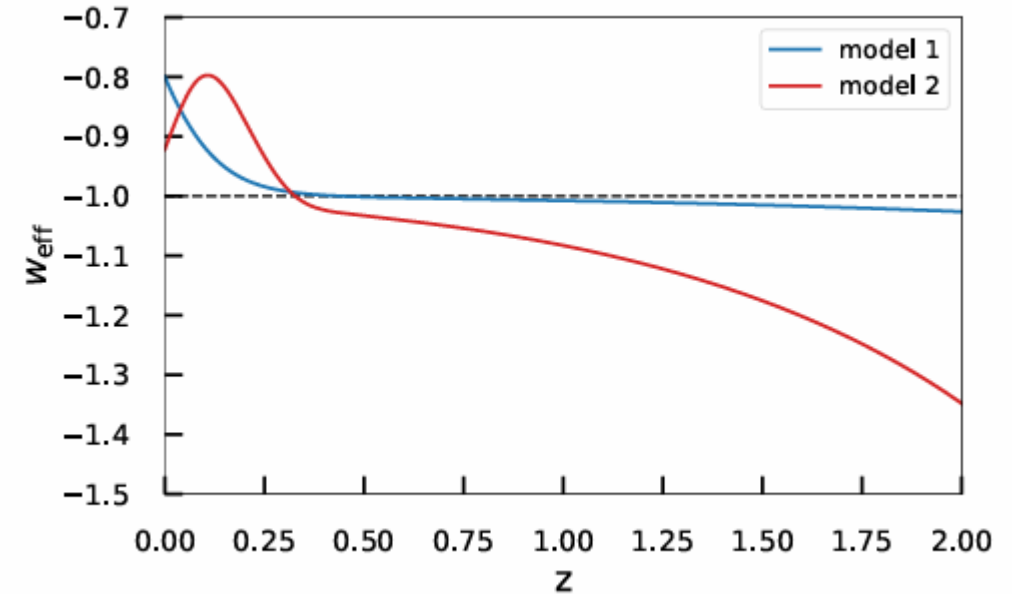
$$V(\phi) = \Lambda^4 \left(1 + v - \sqrt{1 - \xi \sin^2\left(\frac{\phi}{2f}\right)} \right)$$

$$A(\phi) = 1 + \frac{\sigma_N}{m_0} \sqrt{1 - \xi \sin^2\left(\frac{\phi}{2f}\right)}$$



$$F = A^{-2}$$

2503.16415



- Model 1 has $\frac{\sigma_N}{m_0} = 0.01$, $f = 0.25 M_{\text{Pl}}$, and $v = 0$.
- Model 2 has $\frac{\sigma_N}{m_0} = 0.02$, $f = 0.035 M_{\text{Pl}}$, and $v = 4$.

The low energy description



Higher order terms in derivatives are suppressed unless breaking the expansion scheme by terms of order:

$$\partial/H = \mathcal{O}(1)$$

On large scales, GR can be seen as the lowest order effective action involving the metric up to two derivatives:

$$S_{\text{Einstein-Hilbert}} = \frac{m_{\text{Pl}}^2}{2} \int d^4x \sqrt{-g} (R + \dots)$$

Incorporating a single scalar field, the effective action up to second order in derivatives:

$$S = \int d^4x \sqrt{-g} \left(\frac{R}{16\pi G_N} - \frac{(\partial\phi)^2}{2} - V(\phi) + \mathcal{L}_m(\psi_i, \tilde{g}_{\mu\nu}) \right)$$

$$\tilde{g}_{\mu\nu} = A^2(\phi) g_{\mu\nu}$$

In these theories the effective potential takes into account the presence of matter

$$V_{\text{eff}}(\varphi) = V(\varphi) + \left(\frac{A(\varphi)}{A(\varphi_c)} - 1 \right) \rho_m$$

The conserved matter density is related to the Einstein frame density by

$$\rho_E = \frac{A(\varphi)}{A(\varphi_c)} \rho_m$$

The dark energy density becomes:

$$\rho_{\text{eff}} = \frac{1}{2} \dot{\varphi}^2 + V_{\text{eff}}(\varphi)$$

Calibration with the observed matter density is taken when

$$\varphi = \varphi_c$$

Conservation of dark energy reads:

$$\dot{\rho}_{\text{eff}} + 3H(1 + \omega_{\text{eff}})\rho_{\text{eff}} = 0$$

$$\omega_{\text{eff}} = \frac{p_\varphi}{\rho_{\text{eff}}}$$

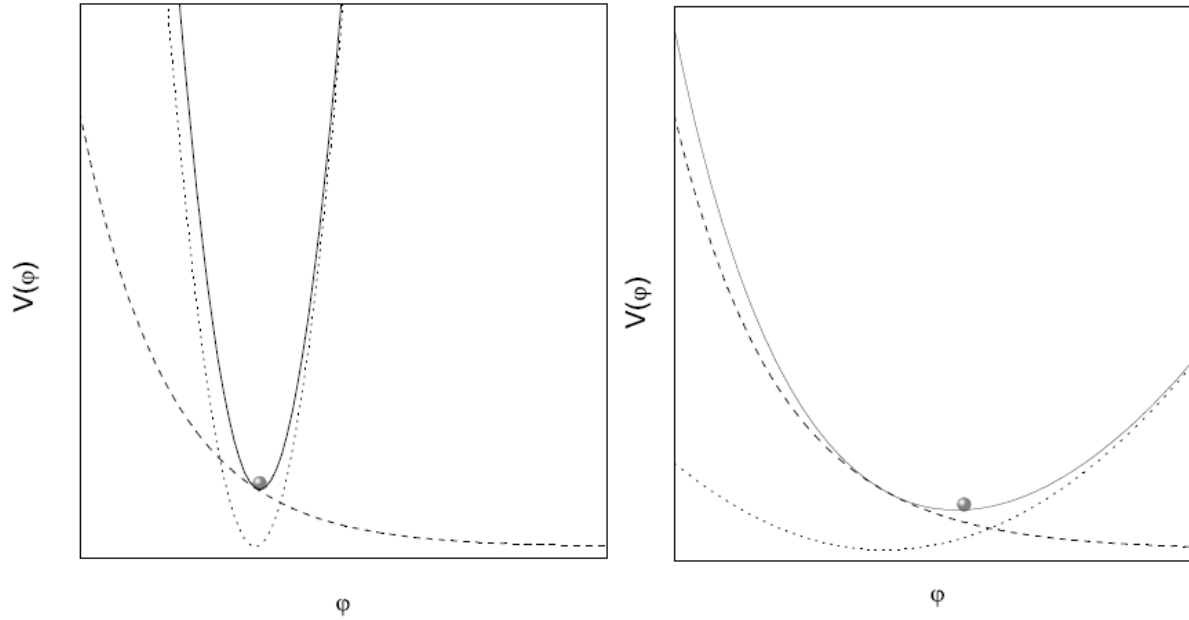
$$p_\varphi = \frac{1}{2} \dot{\varphi}^2 - V(\varphi)$$

Calibration is usually taken to be now but in principle this has to be determined by comparison with data.

Assume that the effective potential has a minimum

$$\frac{dV}{d\phi} = -\frac{\beta(\phi)}{m_{\text{Pl}}} \frac{A(\phi)}{A(\phi_c)} \rho_m$$

$$\beta(\phi) = m_{\text{Pl}} \frac{d \ln A(\phi)}{d\phi}$$



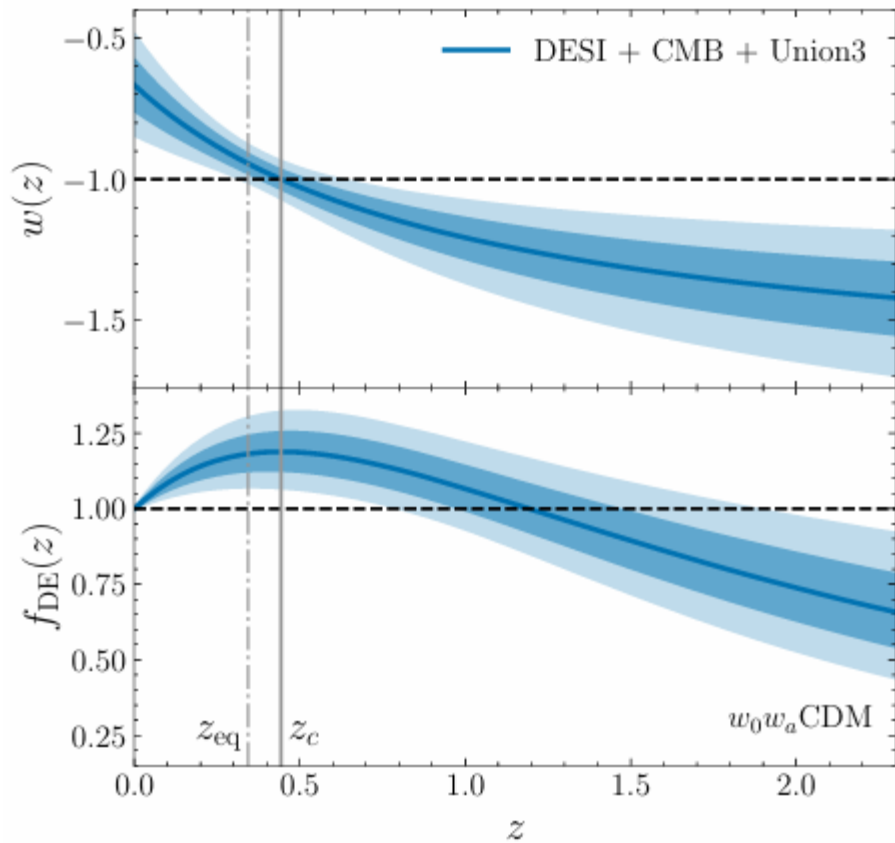
Concentrate on the evolution of the minimum close to calibration taken to be at low redshift:

$$\phi - \phi_c = -\frac{\beta(\phi_c)}{m_{\text{eff}}^2 m_{\text{Pl}}} (\rho_m - \rho_c)$$

$$m_{\text{eff}}^2 = \left. \frac{d^2 V_{\text{eff}}}{d\phi^2} \right|_{\phi=\phi_c}$$

$$\omega_{\text{eff}} = -\frac{1}{1 - \beta^2(\phi_c) \frac{\rho_m}{V_{\text{DE}}} \frac{(\rho_m - \rho_c)}{m_{\text{Pl}}^2 m_{\text{eff}}^2}}$$

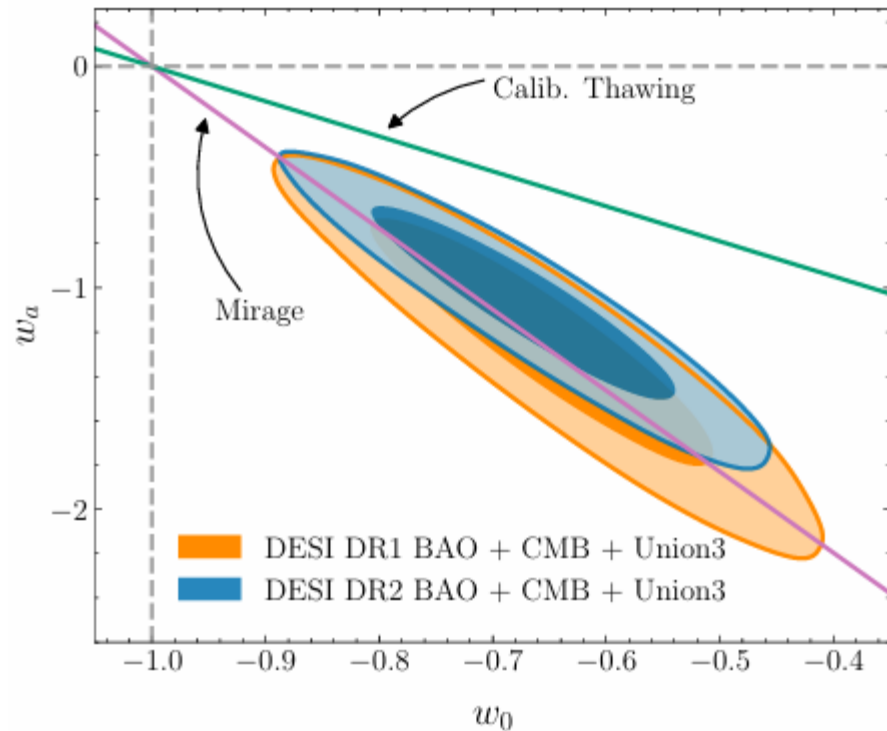
$$V_{\text{DE}} = V(\phi_c)$$



$$\omega_0 = -1 + \frac{z_c}{z_c+1} \omega_a \Rightarrow z_c \sim 0.37$$

1/3.66

$$\frac{\beta^2(\phi_c)H_0^2}{m_{\text{eff}}^2} = -\frac{\Omega_{\Lambda 0}}{9\Omega_{m0}^2(1+z_c)^5}\omega_a$$



$$-1.6 \leq \omega_a \leq -0.8$$

$$0.047 \leq \frac{\beta^2(\phi_c)H_0^2}{m_{\text{eff}}^2} \leq 0.093$$

$$\omega_{\text{eff}} = -\frac{1}{1 - \beta^2(\phi_c) \frac{\rho_m}{V_{\text{DE}}} \frac{(\rho_m - \rho_c)}{m_{\text{Pl}}^2 m_{\text{eff}}^2}}$$

- Crosses the phantom divide when: $\rho_m < \rho_c$
- Negligible variation unless: $m_{\text{eff}} \simeq H_0, \beta(\phi_c) \sim 0.1$

Two major issues!

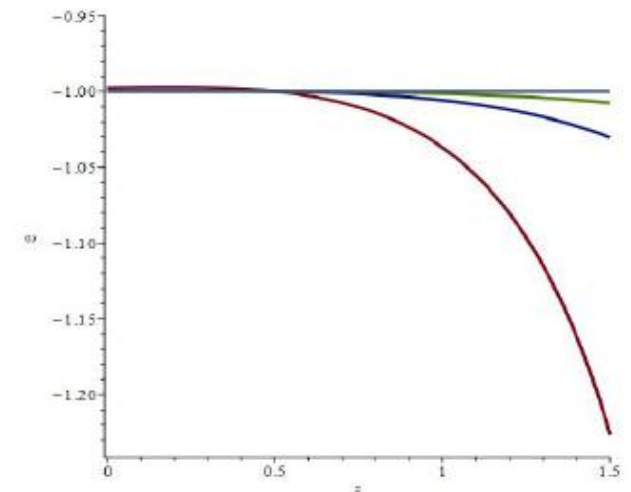
❑ For such a low mass, the minimum is not an attractor so undamped oscillations. Need to make comparison in Jordan frame.

❑ Long range forces with gravitational strength!

- Interactions between DE-DM

$$\beta \leq 10^{-2} \quad \text{CMB}$$

$$\beta(\phi_c) = 0.1, \frac{m_{\text{eff}}}{H_0} = 2, 5, 10, 10^3$$



$z_c = 0.5$

$$\omega_{\text{eff}} = -\frac{1}{1 - \beta^2(\phi_c) \frac{\rho_m}{V_{\text{DE}}} \frac{(\rho_m - \rho_c)}{m_{\text{Pl}}^2 m_{\text{eff}}^2}}$$

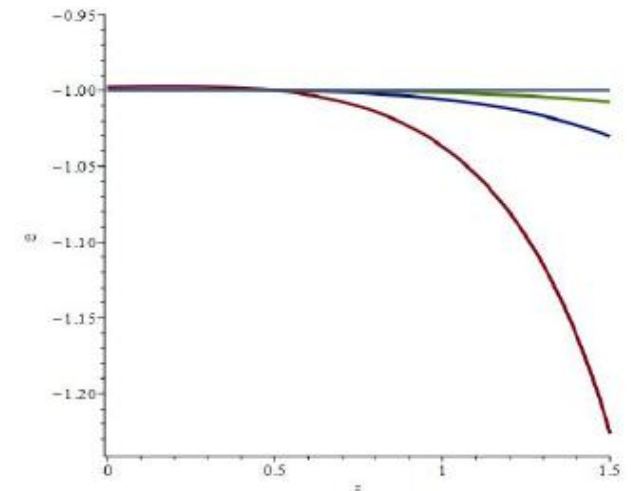
- Crosses the phantom divide when: $\rho_m < \rho_c$
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Two major issues!

- ❑ For such a low mass, the minimum is not an attractor so undamped oscillations.
- ❑ Long range forces with gravitational strength!

- Interactions between DE-DM
- Interaction between DE-baryons

$$\beta \leq 10^{-2}$$



$z_c = 0.5$

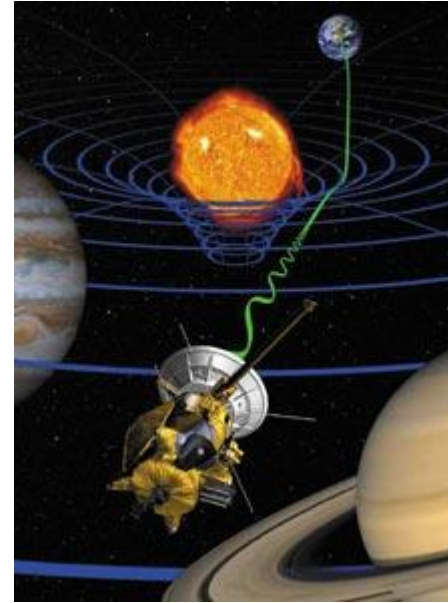
$$\beta(\phi_c) = 0.1, \frac{m_{\text{eff}}}{H_0} = 2, 5, 10, 10^3$$

Interactions with baryons induce a change in Newton's law:

$$\Phi = -\frac{G_N M}{r} (1 + 2\beta^2 e^{-r/\lambda})$$

For long range forces with large λ , the tightest constraint on the coupling β comes from the Cassini probe measuring the Shapiro effect (time delay around a big object: the Sun):

$$\beta^2 \leq 2 \cdot 10^{-5}$$



Bertotti et al. (2004)

Fifth force:

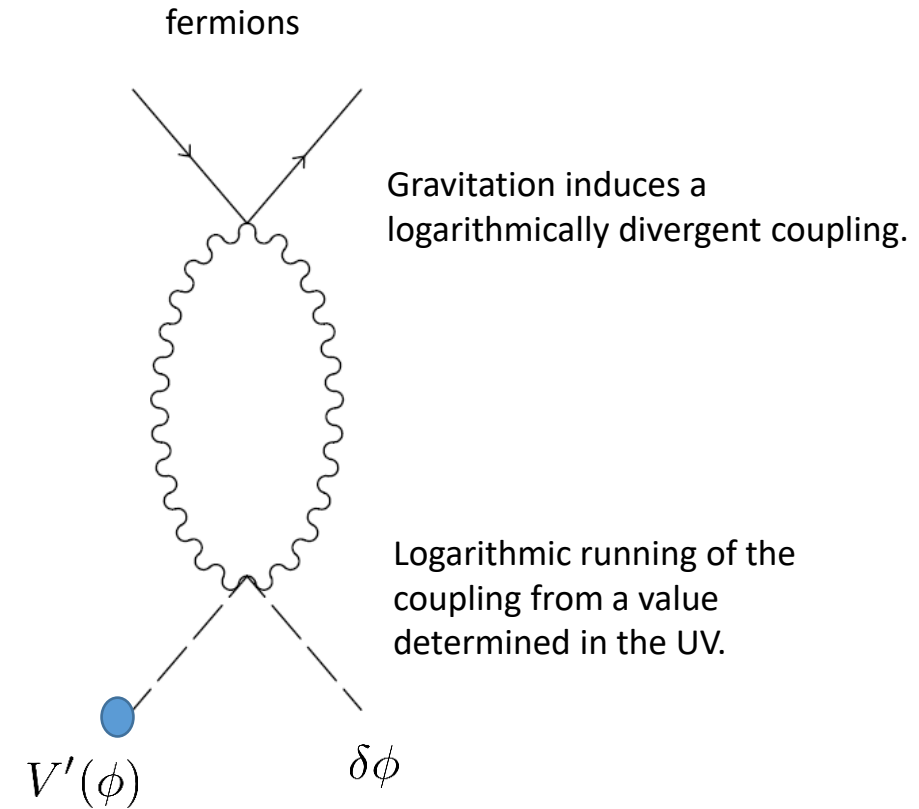
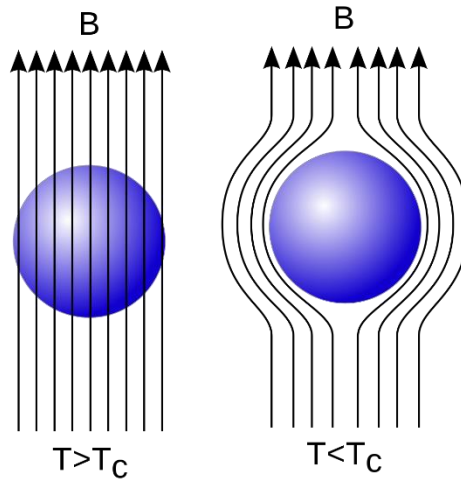
$$\vec{a}_\phi = -\vec{\nabla}\phi$$

- Interaction between DE-baryon

Could be postulated to vanish...

Generically non-vanishing coupling becomes unobservable thanks to:

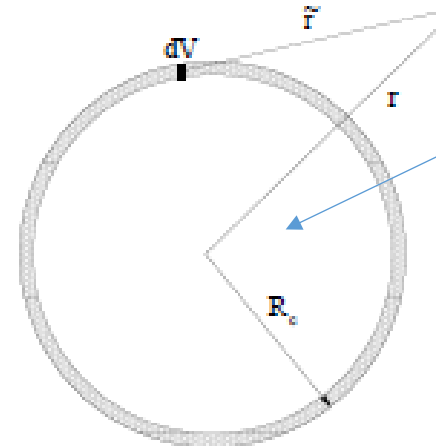
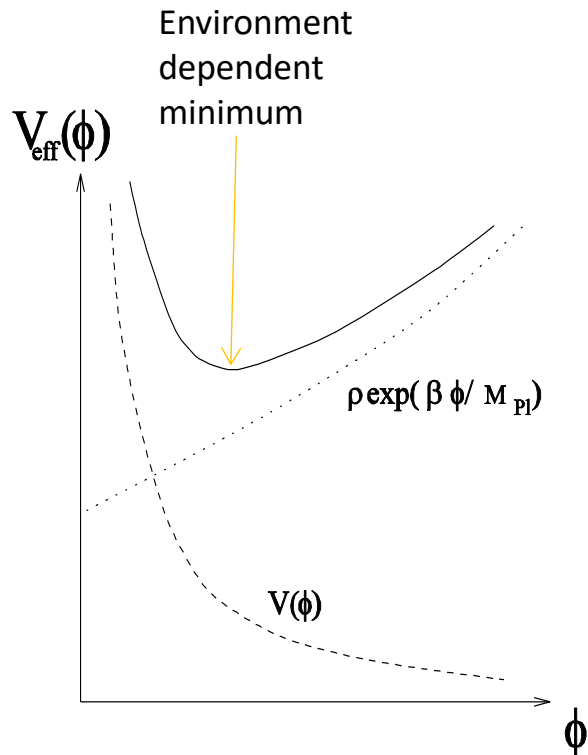
Screening



Chameleon Screening

When coupled to matter, scalar fields have a *matter dependent effective potential*

$$V_{\text{eff}}(\phi) = V(\phi) + \rho_m \left(\frac{A(\phi)}{A(\phi_c)} - 1 \right)$$



Large mass inside object

$$m_{\text{in}} R \gg 1$$

The field generated from deep inside is Yukawa suppressed. Only a *thin shell* radiates outside the body. Hence suppressed scalar contribution to the fifth force.

In single field case, screening implies:

$$m_{\text{eff}} / H_0 \gtrsim 10^3 \Rightarrow \omega_{\text{eff}} \simeq -1$$

Multi-field dark energy sector

$$\mathcal{L} = -\frac{1}{2}g_{ij}(\phi^k)\partial_\mu\phi^i\partial^\mu\phi^j - V(\phi^i)$$

For light dark energy fields, screening and phantom crossing can happen with more than one field and a **non-trivial σ -model metric**.

$$\mathcal{L} \supset -\frac{1}{2}((\partial\phi)^2 + W^2(\phi)(\partial a)^2)$$

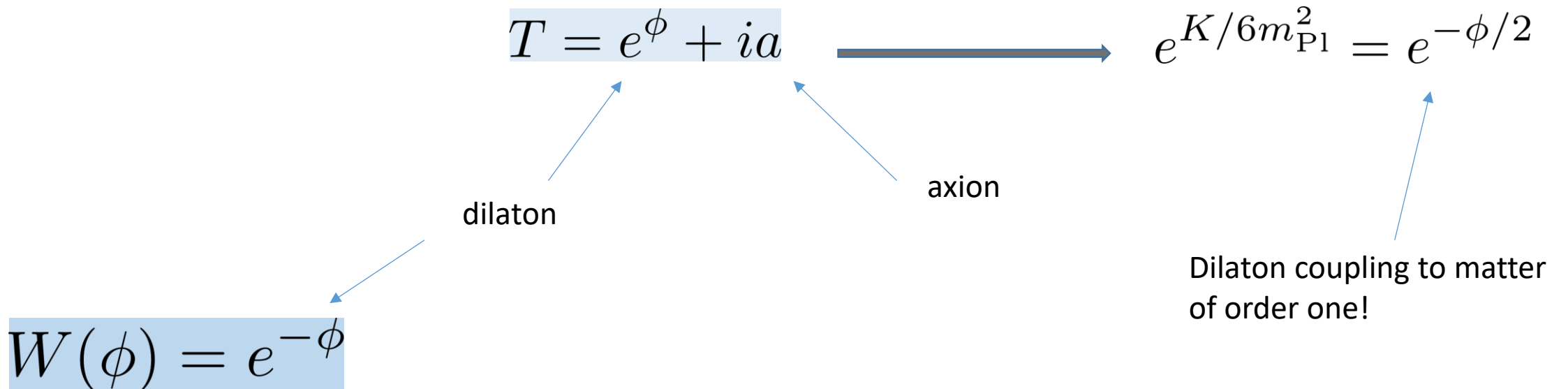
Dilaton

Axion

The axio-dilaton case corresponding to the volume modulus of compactifications from 10d to 4d:

$$K = -3m_{\text{Pl}}^2 \ln(T + \bar{T}) \longrightarrow \beta = \frac{1}{\sqrt{6}}$$

The volume modulus can be decomposed in:



Screening depends on the large mass of the axion inside the object:

$$m_{\text{in}} R \gg 1$$

It also requires a sharp jump of the axion between vacuum and matter:

$$V(a) = \frac{1}{2} m_a^2 (a - a_+)^2 + \rho_m \frac{(a - a_-)^2}{2\Lambda_a^2}$$

The Klein-Gordon for the dilaton is:

$$\square\phi = WW'(\partial a)^2 + \frac{\beta}{m_{\text{Pl}}^2}\rho$$

Coupling constant to matter.

Axion driven "potential"

Far away from the body we expect:

$$\phi = \phi_\infty - \frac{Lm_{\text{Pl}}}{r}$$

$$L = 2\beta G_N M$$

Local value of the field in the environment

In the absence of screening.

The delta function as a source term implies a jump of the derivative of the dilaton:

$$\phi'_{\text{out}}(R) - \phi'_{\text{in}}(R) = \left(\frac{WW'}{2\ell}\right)_{r=R}(a_+ - a_-)^2$$

$$Lm_{\text{Pl}} = R^2 \phi'_{\text{out}}(R)$$

Needs to be negative to reduce the scalar charge of the object

The scalar charge L is determined by the competition between the different energy sources for the scalar field profile. This competition will select the **local value of the field** and determine the scalar charge.

In the axio-dilaton case, the “solar” system is small enough that the local energy is dominated by the local dynamics which differ from the cosmological one.

$$E_{\text{kin}} = 2\pi \int_0^\infty dr r^2 (W^2 (a')^2 + (\phi')^2)$$

Gives a surface contribution

$$E_{\text{kin,a}} = \frac{\pi}{\ell} R^2 W^2(r=R) (a_+^2 - a_-^2)$$

Dependent on the local value

$$E_{\text{kin}} = E_0 + \frac{L^2}{4G_N R}$$

$$L = 2\beta G_N M + R^2 \left(\frac{W W'}{2\ell} \right)_{r=R} \frac{(a_+ - a_-)^2}{m_{\text{Pl}}}$$

Exponential Screening:

Screening takes place when:

$$W^2(\phi) = e^{-\xi\phi/m_{\text{Pl}}}$$

The coupling to matter becomes:

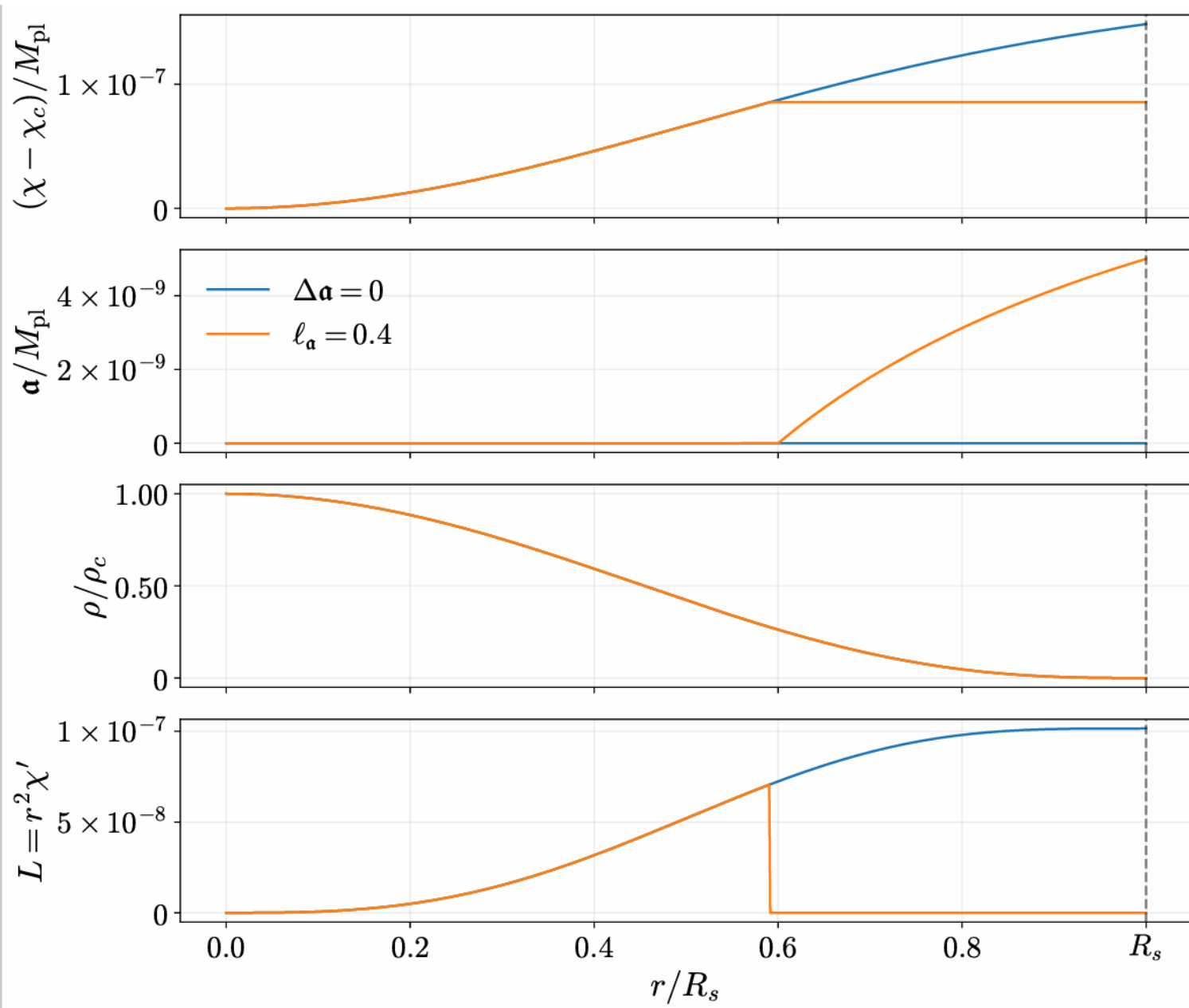
$$\beta_{\text{eff}} = \beta \frac{R}{2\xi G_N M}$$

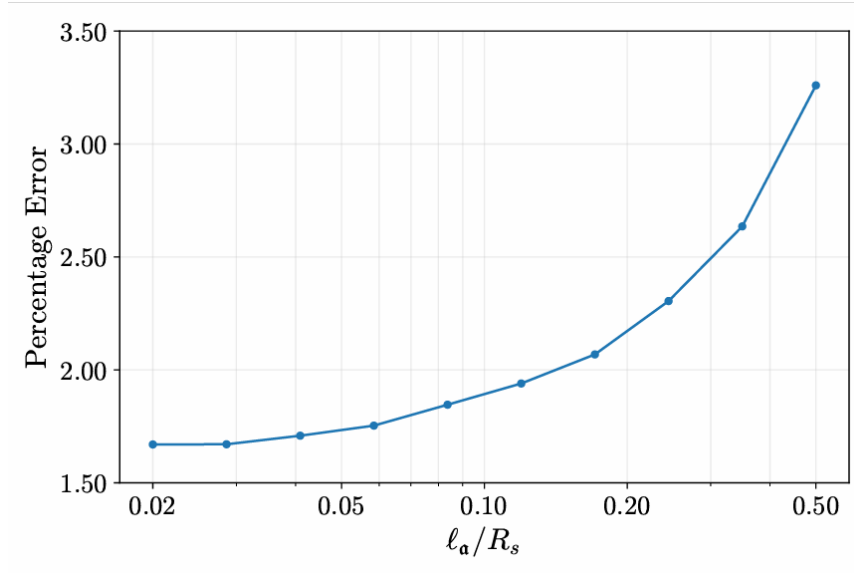
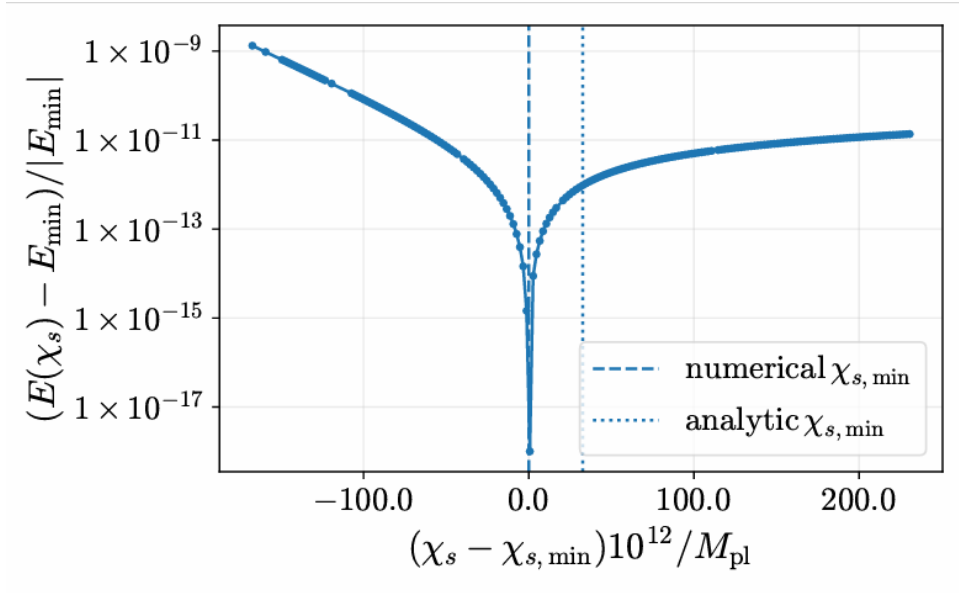
$$\xi = \sqrt{\frac{2}{3}}$$

Screening in solar system:

$$\xi \gtrsim 10^9 \Rightarrow \frac{m_{\text{Pl}}}{\xi} \lesssim 10^9 \text{ GeV}$$

$$\Lambda_\phi = \frac{m_{\text{Pl}}}{\xi}$$



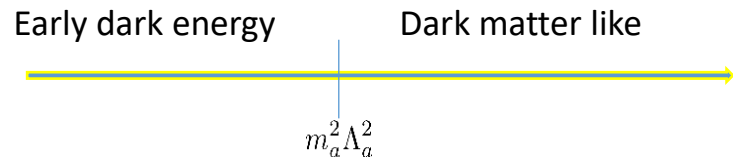


Early dark energy for free!

$$V(a) = \frac{1}{2}m_a^2(a - a_+)^2 + \rho_m \frac{(a - a_-)^2}{2\Lambda_a^2}$$

$$V(a_-) = \frac{1}{2}m_a^2(a_+ - a_-)^2$$

Early dark energy



A fraction of added matter

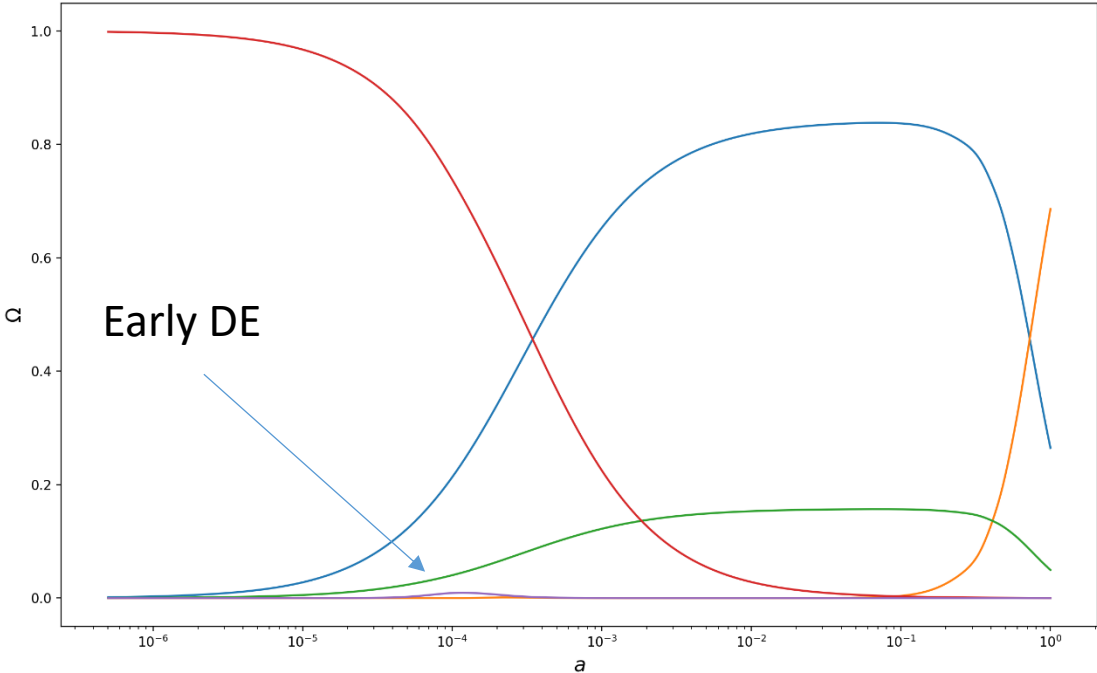
$$V(a_+) = \rho_m \frac{(a_+^2 - a_-)^2}{2\Lambda_a^2}$$

For specific applications, we take an Albrecht-Skordis potential (also called Yoga for idiosyncratic reason) :

$$V(\phi) = U(\phi)e^{-\lambda\phi/m_{\text{Pl}}}$$

Quadratic with non-trivial minimum. Only purpose is to reproduce the amount of dark energy.

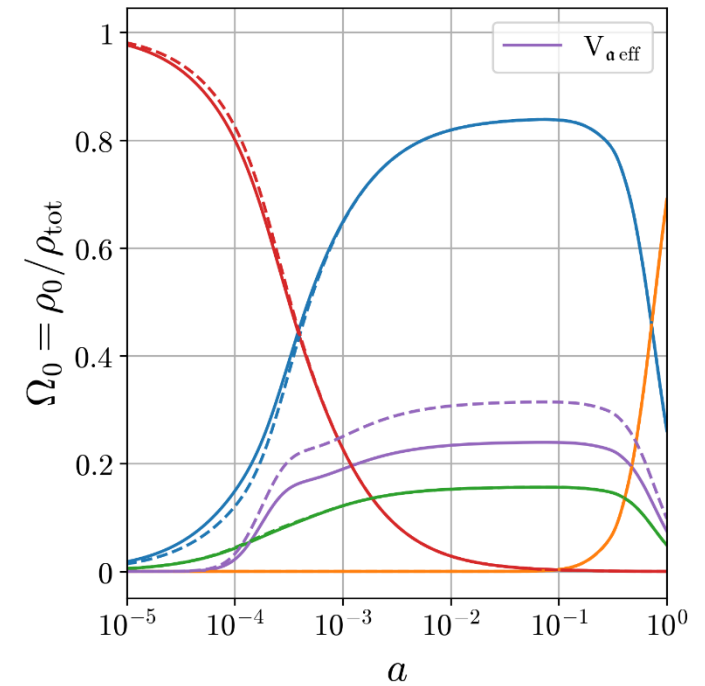
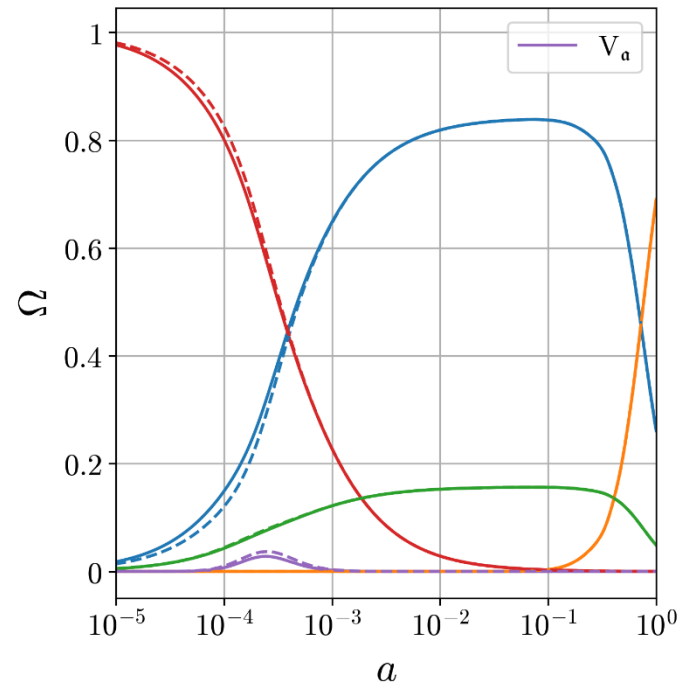
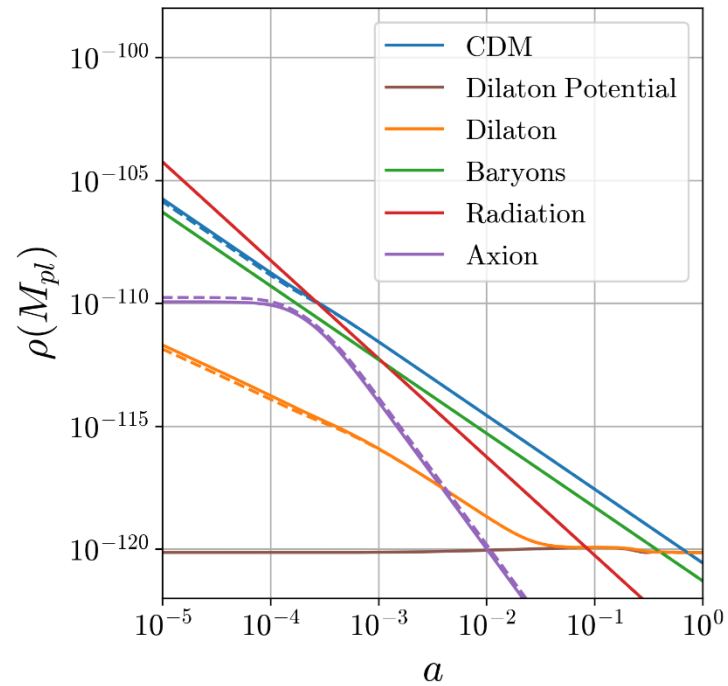
$$A(\phi) = e^{-\beta\frac{\phi}{m_{\text{Pl}}}}$$



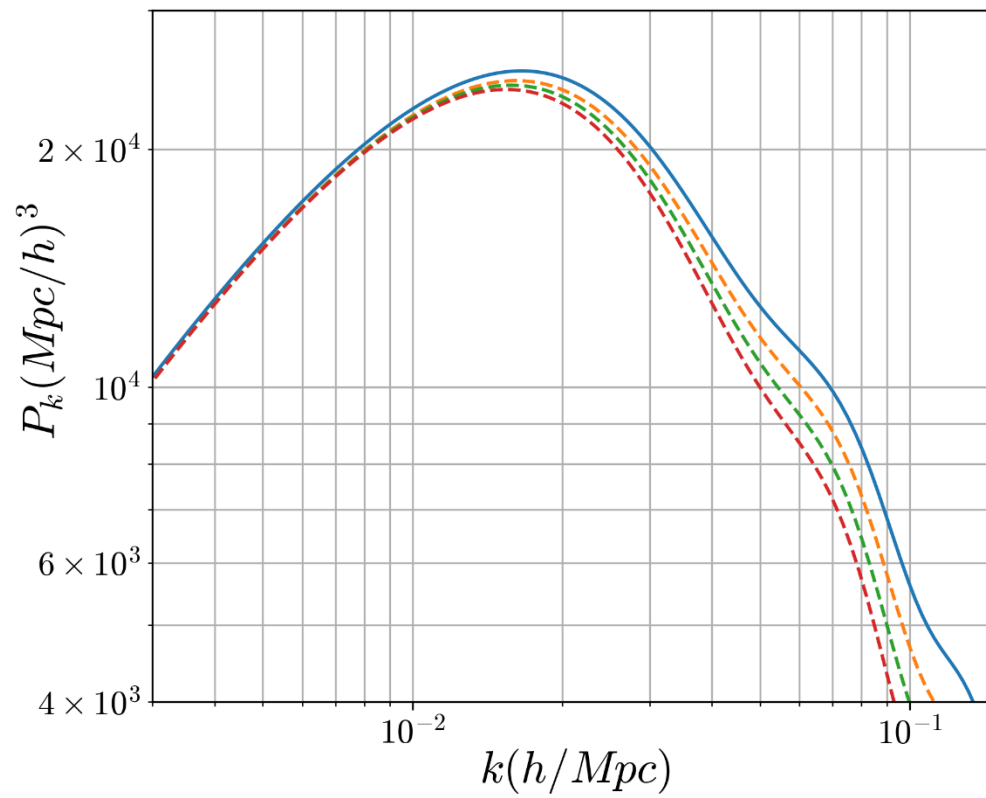
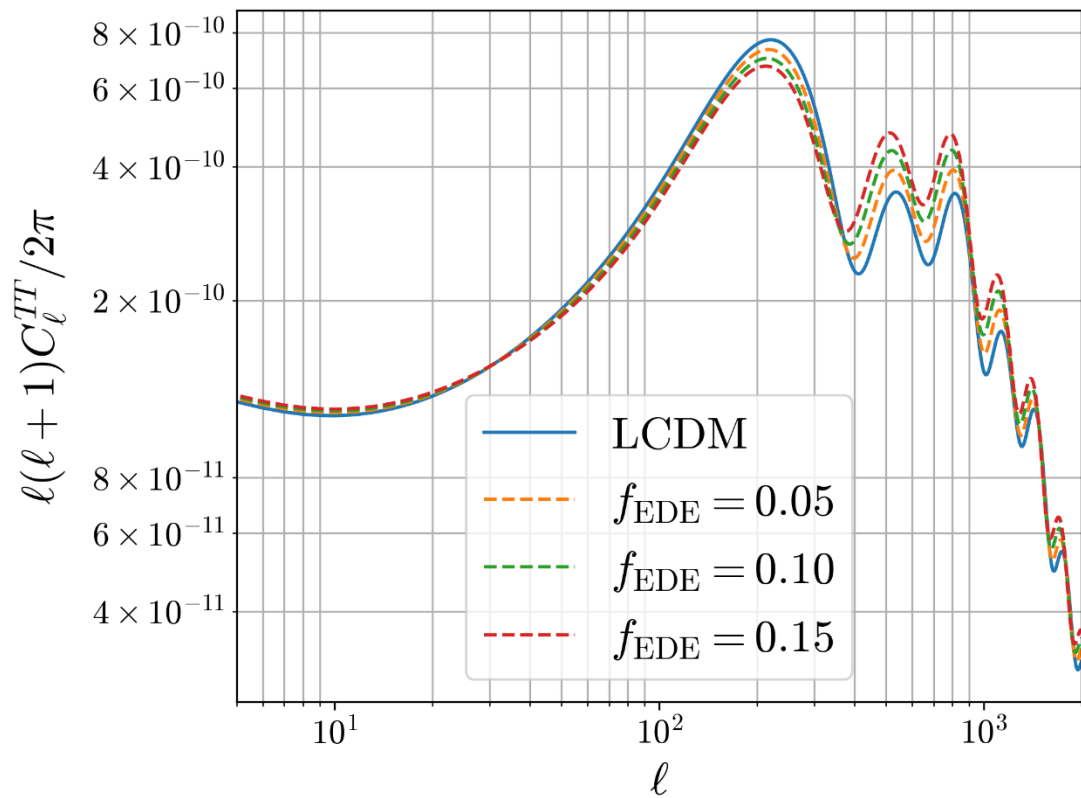
$$\lambda = 4\beta$$

Conformal rescaling can violate the swampland bound.

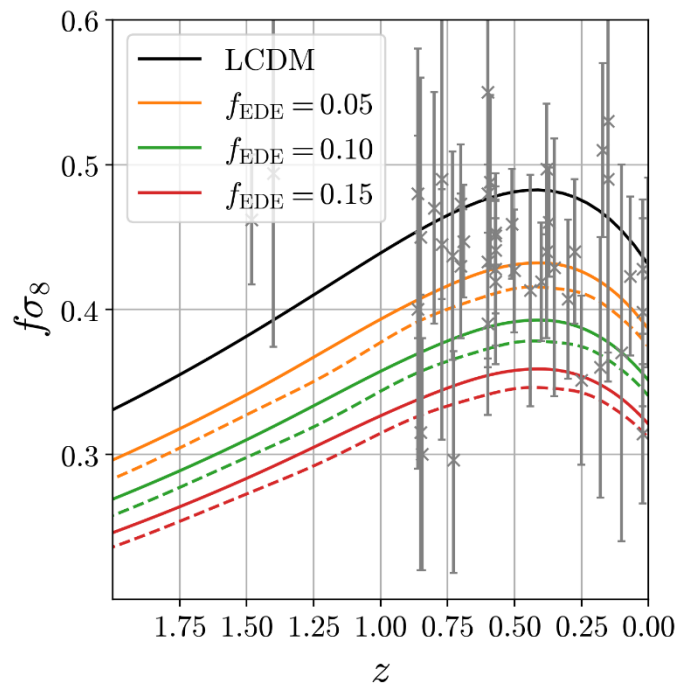
$$m_a = 2.10^{-15} \text{eV}, \quad \Lambda_\phi = 2.10^8 \text{GeV}, \quad \Lambda_a = 5.10^5 \text{GeV}$$



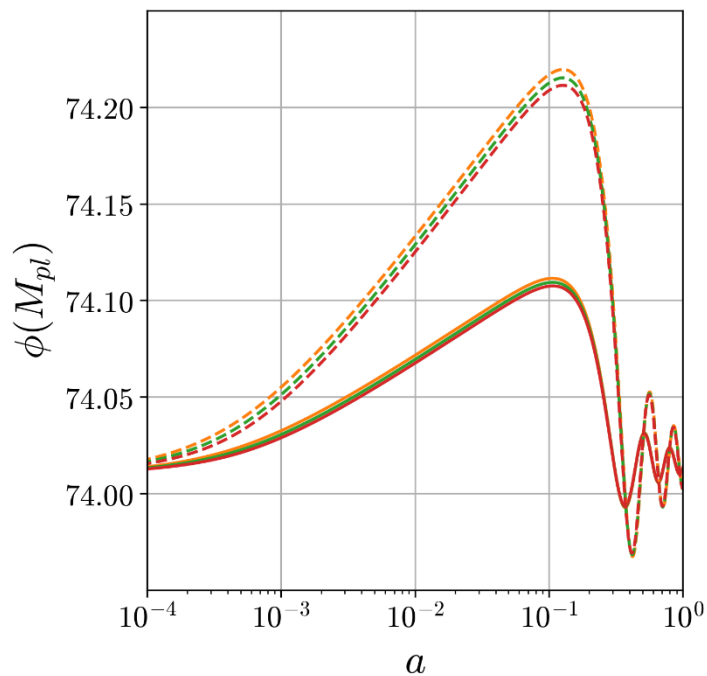
Early dark energy shows its face in the form of the axion potential.



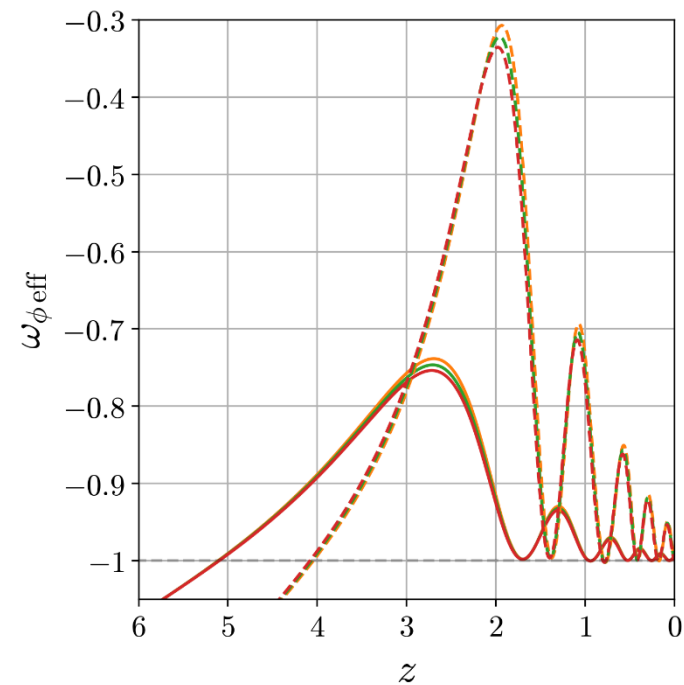
Increasing the early dark energy fraction increases the deviation from Λ CDM.



Dotted lines: the coupling to matter increases and growth reduces



The dilaton is light and oscillates



The effective equation states oscillates and crosses the phantom divide.

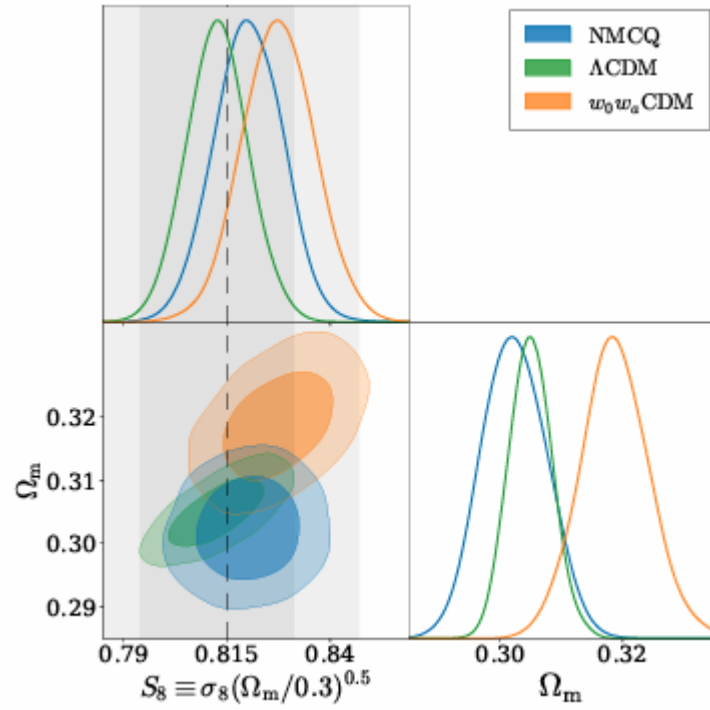
Summary

Multi-field dark energy models coupled to matter can have a number of interesting features:

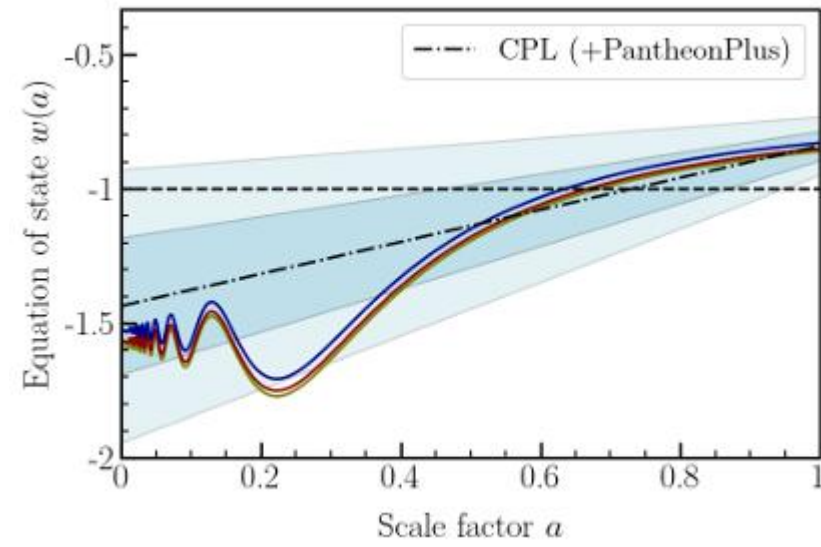
- ✓ Can accommodate a fraction of early dark energy whilst screening.
- ✓ Varying equation of state crossing phantom divide and oscillations.
- ✓ Have less growth than Λ CDM despite long range fifth forces.

Model Building?

Prospects



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