Gravitational production of dark matter during reheating

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We consider the direct $s$-channel gravitational production of dark matter during the reheating process. Independent of the identity of the dark matter candidate or its non-gravitational interactions, the gravitational process is always present and provides a minimal production mechanism. During reheating, a thermal bath is quickly generated with a maximum temperature $T_{\text{max}}$, and the temperature decreases as the inflaton continues to decay until the energy densities of radiation and inflaton oscillations are equal, at $T_{\text{RH}}$. During these oscillations, $s$-channel gravitational production of dark matter occurs. We show that the abundance of dark matter (fermionic or scalar) depends primarily on the combination $T_{\text{max}}/T_{\text{RH}}M_p^2$. We find that a sufficient density of dark matter can be produced over a wide range of dark matter masses: from a GeV to a ZeV.

I. INTRODUCTION

While we have considerable certainty in the existence of dark matter (DM), its identity and interactions with the Standard Model are entirely unknown. The lack of a signal in direct detection experiments \cite{1–3} sets strong limits on the DM-proton cross section. Furthermore the lack of detection at the LHC \cite{4} also seems to point towards more massive candidates and perhaps a more massive beyond-the-Standard Model sector than was originally envisioned \cite{5–7}.

The mechanism by which dark matter particles populate the Universe is also unknown. Commonly, GeV-TeV DM candidates are assumed to exist in equilibrium as part of the thermal bath. As the temperature falls below the DM mass, they drop out of equilibrium, and their relic density freezes out \cite{5, 8–11}. However, it is quite possible that DM particles never attain thermal equilibrium. They may either be too massive, or their interactions with the Standard Model may be too weak. For example, particles which interact with the Standard Model primarily through gravity, such as the gravitino never achieve equilibrium, though they are produced by the thermal bath at reheating after inflation \cite{7, 12–14}. Very roughly, their abundance $Y \sim n_{3/2}/n_{\gamma}$ can be estimated from their production rate, $Y \sim \Gamma_p/H \sim T_{\text{RH}}/M_p$, where $H$ is the Hubble parameter, $T_{\text{RH}}$ is the reheating temperature after inflation, and $M_p = 1/\sqrt{8\pi G_N}$ is the (reduced) Planck mass. This mechanism, now generally referred to as freeze-in, applies to a wider class of dark matter candidates known as feebly interacting massive particles or FIMPs \cite{15–19}. Other examples include dark matter particles produced by the exchange of a massive $Z'$ \cite{20} or massive spin-2 \cite{21}.

It is also possible that DM is produced in the decay of the inflaton, either directly \cite{22–25} or radiatively \cite{26}. It has also been observed that annihilation-like processes such as $\phi\phi \rightarrow SS$, where $\phi$ is the inflaton and $S$ is a dark matter scalar, mediated by gravity can produce a sufficient abundance of dark matter \cite{27}. Indeed, the production of dark matter solely mediated by gravity is a minimal contribution which is nearly model independent as we discuss in more detail below. The production of dark matter mediated by gravity from the thermal bath is subdominant \cite{21, 28–31}.

Often, reheating is characterized by a single temperature, $T_{\text{RH}}$, which may be defined when the energy density in the newly produced thermal bath becomes equal to the energy density still stored in inflaton oscillations. However, when one drops the approximation of instantaneous reheating, one finds that initially, the Universe reheats to a potentially much higher temperature, $T_{\text{max}}$, though very little of the total energy density of the Universe is in the form of radiation \cite{23–25, 32–34}. For all models in which dark matter is produced during the reheating process after inflation, the dark matter abundance may be sensitive to the evolution of the temperature between $T_{\text{max}}$ and $T_{\text{RH}}$. The purpose of this paper is to compute the minimal dark matter abundance produced solely through gravity during reheating taking into account the sensitivity of the result to details of the reheating process. We will show that the bulk of the production of dark matter occurs at temperatures higher than the reheating temperature (when radiation begins to dominate the energy density) while the radiation bath begins to form. We stress that this process is always present, though other forms of production, including preheating, may also play a role and affect the final dark matter abundance. Here, we will only consider the universal gravitational production channel.

The paper is organized as follows. In the next section, we lay out the framework of our calculation. Starting with the universal coupling of gravity to the stress-energy tensor for either scalars or fermions, we compute

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the annihilation-like rate for $\phi \rightarrow SS$ (for scalar dark matter) and $\phi \rightarrow \chi\chi$ in the case of fermionic dark matter. In section III, we compute the dark matter abundance based on the detailed process of reheating between $T_{\text{max}}$ and $T_{\text{RH}}$. Then in section IV, we relate these results to possible inflaton couplings to the Standard Model (which are responsible for reheating), and we draw our conclusions in V.

II. THE FRAMEWORK

The universal interaction that surely exists between the inflaton and any dark sector is gravity. In particular, the s-channel exchange of a graviton shown in Fig. 1 can be obtained from the Lagrangian (see e.g., [35])

$$\mathcal{L} = \frac{1}{2M_P} h_{\mu\nu} T_{\phi}^{\mu\nu} + \frac{1}{2M_P} h_{\mu\nu} T_{S/\chi}^{\mu\nu}$$

(1)

where $h_{\mu\nu}$ is the metric perturbation corresponding to the graviton and we consider either a scalar $S$ or a fermion $\chi$ as dark matter, whose stress-energy tensors are given by

$$T_{\chi=\phi=S}^{\mu\nu} = \partial^\mu X \partial^\nu X - g^{\mu\nu} \left[ \frac{1}{2} \partial^\alpha X \partial_\alpha X - V(X) \right]$$

(2)

$$T_{\chi}^{\mu\nu} = \frac{i}{4} \left[ \tilde{\chi} \gamma^\mu \partial^\nu \chi + \tilde{\chi} \gamma^\nu \partial^\mu \chi \right] - g^{\mu\nu} \left[ \frac{i}{2} \tilde{\chi} \gamma^\alpha \partial_\alpha \chi - m_\chi \tilde{\chi} \chi \right],$$

(3)

where $V(X)$ is the scalar potential for either the inflaton or dark matter.

![Diagram](image)

**FIG. 1:** Illustration of the production of dark matter through the gravitational scattering of the inflaton.

The amplitudes relevant for the computation of the processes $\phi(p_1) + \phi(p_2) \rightarrow DM^J(p_3) + DM^J(p_4)$ can be parametrized by

$$M^\phi_j \propto M_{\mu\nu}^\phi \Pi^{\mu\nu\rho\sigma} M_{\rho\sigma}^j,$$

(4)

where $j$ denotes the spin of the DM involved in the process and $j = 0, 1/2$. $\Pi^{\mu\nu\rho\sigma}$ denotes the propagator of the graviton with momentum $k = p_1 + p_2$,

$$\Pi^{\mu\nu\rho\sigma}(k) = \frac{1}{2} \eta^{\rho\sigma\eta_{\mu\nu} + \frac{1}{2} \eta^{\rho\eta_{\mu\nu}}}{k^2}$$

(5)

The partial amplitudes, $M_{\mu\nu}^j$, can be expressed as

$$M_{\mu\nu}^0 = \frac{1}{2} (p_1 \cdot p_2 - g_{\mu\nu} p_1 \cdot p_2 - g_{\mu\nu} m_\phi^2),$$

$$M^{1/2}_{\mu\nu} = \frac{1}{4} \left[ \gamma_{\mu}(p_3 - p_4) \cdot \gamma_{\nu}(p_3 - p_4) u(p_3) u(p_4) \right]$$

(6)

with a similar expression for scalar dark matter in terms of the dark matter momenta, $p_3, p_4,$ and mass $m_\chi^2$.

It is then straightforward to compute the production rate of the dark matter. Given the inflaton number density, $n_\phi = \rho_\phi/m_\phi$, the rate for the process depicted in Fig. 1 is

$$\Gamma_{\phi\rightarrow SS} = \frac{\rho_\phi m_\phi}{1024\pi M_P^4} \left[ 1 + \frac{m_\chi^2}{2m_\phi^2} \right] \frac{2}{\sqrt{1 - \frac{m_\chi^2}{m_\phi^2}}}$$

(7)

$$\Gamma_{\phi\rightarrow \chi\chi} = \frac{\rho_\phi m_\phi^2}{4096\pi M_P^4} \left[ 1 - \frac{m_\chi^2}{m_\phi^2} \right]^{3/2}$$

(8)

Note the difference in behavior in the expressions for fermionic and scalar dark matter, especially in the mass dependence. On dimensional grounds, both are proportional to $n_\phi m_\phi^2/M_P^4 = \rho_\phi m_\phi/M_P^4$. However, our rates in Eqs. (7) and (8) correspond to s-wave scattering within the condensate. As a result, in the case of a Dirac fermion-antifermion pair in the final state, we require a spin flip leading to a suppression by a factor of $(m_\chi/m_\phi)^2$, making the rate proportional to $\rho_\phi m_\chi^2/m_\phi M_P^4$. A similar expression for the rate producing scalars was found in [27].

III. DARK MATTER PRODUCTION

In many models of inflation, after the period of exponential expansion, the inflaton begins a series of oscillations about a minimum. During the initial stages of oscillations, the Universe expands as if it were dominated by non-relativistic matter. Inflaton decays begin the process of reheating [12, 36]. While we assume that decay products thermalize rapidly [37], we do not assume that the decay is instantaneous. Instead, we include the effects due to the evolution of the temperature of the radiation bath from its initial creation to a temperature $T_{\text{max}}$ until it begins to dominate the expansion at $T_{\text{RH}}$.

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1 We will consider a real scalar or Dirac fermionic as dark matter. Generalization to a complex scalar or vectorial dark matter is straightforward.
Let us start by considering the evolution of the radiation bath using the conservation equation for radiation (produced by the decay of the inflaton),

\[
\frac{d\rho_R}{dt} + 4H\rho_R = \Gamma_\phi \rho_\phi ,
\]

where \(\Gamma_\phi\) is the inflaton decay rate, and \(\rho_R\) and \(\rho_\phi\) are the energy densities of radiation and the inflaton respectively. This equation can be rewritten as

\[
\frac{dX}{da} = \frac{\Gamma_\phi \rho_\phi}{H} a^3 ,
\]

where \(X = \rho_R a^4\), \(a\) is the cosmological scale factor and \(H \equiv \dot{a}/a \approx \sqrt{\rho_\phi/3M_P}\) up to the epoch of radiation domination. Assuming inflaton oscillations about a quadratic potential\(^2\), \(\rho_\phi \propto (\alpha c/a)^3\), where \(\rho_\phi\) is the energy density stored by the inflaton at the end of the inflationary phase, and \(\Gamma_\phi\) is the inflaton decay rate, \(\Gamma_\phi \propto a/a\approx \sqrt{\rho_\phi/H}\), and therefore, \(\rho_\phi \propto (\alpha c/a)^3\). Combining \(\rho_\phi\) and \(\Gamma_\phi\), \(\rho_\phi \propto (\alpha c/a)^3\) implies that \(\rho_R \propto (\alpha c/a)^3\) as energy is injected into the bath from inflaton decay \([24, 26, 32]\).

For a \(a \gg a_e\), with the help of Eq. (11) we can then write

\[
H(T) \approx \frac{\sqrt{\rho_\phi}}{\sqrt{3}M_P} = \frac{5}{6} \frac{\alpha}{\Gamma_\phi M_P} T^4 .
\]

Within the same limit we can parametrize the reheating temperature by

\[
T_{RH} = \left(\frac{4}{3\alpha c^2}\right)^{1/4} (\Gamma_\phi M_P)^{1/2}.
\]

where \(c = 1\) if we define the reheat temperature by \(t_{RH}^{-1} = \frac{3}{4} H = \Gamma_\phi\), and \(c = 5/3\) if we define \(T_{RH}\) by \(\rho_\phi(T_{RH}) = \rho_R(T_{RH})\). Here, we have chosen the latter which can easily be derived by rewriting Eq. (11) in the limit \(a \gg a_e\)

\[
\rho_R \approx \frac{2\sqrt{3}}{5} \Gamma_\phi M_P \sqrt{\rho_\phi(T_{RH})} \left(\frac{\alpha_{RH}}{a}\right)^{3/2} ,
\]

so that \(\rho_\phi(T_{RH}) = \rho_R(T_{RH})\) implies that

\[
\rho_R(T_{RH}) = \alpha T_{RH}^4 \approx \frac{12}{25} \Gamma_\phi^2 M_P^2 .
\]

Then the expression for \(H(T)\) in a Universe dominated by the inflaton is given by \([26, 38]\)

\[
H(T) = \sqrt{\frac{\alpha}{3}} \frac{T^4}{T_{RH}^2 M_P} ,
\]

and

\[
\rho_\phi = \rho_R(T_{RH}) \left(\frac{\alpha_{RH}}{a}\right)^3 = \alpha T_{RH}^4 .
\]

When the limit \(a \gg a_e\) cannot be applied, the reheating temperature is the solution of the equation

\[
\sqrt{\rho_{RH}} = \frac{a^1/2 T_{RH}}{2} = \frac{2\sqrt{3}}{5} \Gamma_\phi M_P \left[1 - \left(\frac{\rho_{RH}}{\rho_e}\right)^{5/6}\right] ,
\]

where \(\rho_{RH} = \rho_\phi(T_{RH}) = \rho_R(T_{RH})\). Note that the maximum temperature attained, \(T_{max}\), can be found from the extremum of Eq. (11) with respect to \(a\). We obtain

\[
\frac{a_{max}}{a_e} = \left(\frac{8}{3}\right)^{2/5} ,
\]

implying

\[
\rho_R(a_{max}) = \frac{\sqrt{3}}{4} \Gamma_\phi M_P \sqrt{\rho_e} \left(\frac{3}{8}\right)^{3/5} \approx \alpha T_{max}^4 .
\]

Combining Eqs. (18) and (20) gives

\[
\left(\frac{T_{max}}{T_{RH}}\right)^4 = \frac{25 \sqrt{\rho_e}}{16 \sqrt{3} \Gamma_\phi M_P} \left(\frac{3}{8}\right)^{3/5} \left[1 - \left(\frac{\alpha_e}{\alpha_{RH}}\right)^{5/2}\right]^{-2} .
\]

The relic abundance of dark matter is obtained by solving the Boltzmann equation for the number density of dark matter particles

\[
\frac{dn_j}{dt} + 3Hn_j = R_j(T) .
\]

Writing \(Y_j = n_j a^3\), Eq. (22) can be simplified to

\[
\frac{dY_j}{da} = \frac{R_j(T) a^2}{H} .
\]

where \(R_j(T) = \frac{\rho_{j}}{\rho_e} \Gamma_{\phi \to jj}\) is the production rate (per unit volume and unit time) and the yield, \(Y_j\) is proportional to the number of dark matter quanta produced in the comoving frame. It is important to note that because \(R_j \propto \rho_\phi^2 \propto T^{16}\), there is a very strong temperature dependence in Eq. (23), making the result sensitive to the maximum temperature attained.

Using Eq. (17), it is straightforward to integrate Eq. (23) between \(a_e\) and \(a_{RH}\). We find

\[
Y_j(T_{RH}) = \frac{2gamma M_P}{\sqrt{3} m_\phi} \rho_e^{3/2} a_e^3 \left[1 - \left(\frac{\alpha_e}{\alpha_{RH}}\right)^{3/2}\right] ,
\]

\(^2\) For similar results about a more general potential see \([38]\).
where $\gamma_j = \Gamma_{\phi \rightarrow j}/\rho_\phi$. The yield can also be written in terms of $\rho_R$, and the number density becomes

$$n_j(T_{RH}) = \frac{2\gamma_j M_P}{\sqrt{3} m_\phi} \rho_\phi^{3/2} T_{RH}^2 \left[ \left( \frac{a_{RH}}{\alpha_{\epsilon}} \right)^{3/2} - 1 \right].$$  \hspace{1cm} (25)

Noting that we can write $(a_\epsilon/a_{RH}) = (a_\epsilon/a_{max})(a_{max}/a_{RH}) = (3/8)^{2/5}(T_{max}/T_{RH})^{4/3}$, the density can be expressed as

$$n_j(T_{RH}) = \frac{2\gamma_j M_P}{\sqrt{3} m_\phi} a_{max}^{3/2} T_{RH}^2 \left[ \left( \frac{\sqrt{\rho_e}}{\alpha_{\epsilon}^{3/5} T_{RH}^{2/5}} \right)^{3/4} - 1 \right].$$  \hspace{1cm} (26)

Equation (26) is valid so long as $a_{RH} > a_{max}$. For sufficiently large $\Gamma_{\phi}$, the radiation energy density will equal the inflaton oscillation energy density when $T = T_{max}$, and thus $T_{RH} = T_{max}$. At larger $\Gamma_{\phi}$, we can write

$$n_j(T_{RH}) = \frac{2\gamma_j M_P}{\sqrt{3} m_\phi} a_{max}^{3/2} T_{RH}^2 \left[ \left( \frac{\sqrt{\rho_e}}{\alpha_{\epsilon}^{3/5} T_{RH}^{2/5}} \right)^{3/4} - 1 \right],$$  \hspace{1cm} (27)

as the temperature $T_{max}$ is never attained.

The fraction of critical density in dark matter can be written as

$$\Omega_{\chi} h^2 = 1.6 \times 10^3 \left( \frac{g_0}{g_{RH}} \right) \left( \frac{n_j(T_{RH})}{T_{RH}} \right) \left( \frac{m_\chi}{1 \text{ GeV}} \right),$$  \hspace{1cm} (28)

where the numerical factor is $\pi^2 n_\chi(T_0)/2\zeta (3)\rho_c$. $g_0 = 43/11, g_{RH} = 427/4, \text{ and } n_j(T_{RH})$ is obtained from either Eq. (26) or Eq. (27) for $a_{RH} > a_{max}$ or $a_{RH} < a_{max}$, respectively. We finally obtain

$$\frac{\Omega_{\chi} h^2}{0.1} \approx \left( \frac{T_{RH}}{10^{16}} \right)^3 \left( \frac{T_{max}/T_{RH}}{100} \right)^4 \left( \frac{m_\chi}{1.75 \times 10^{10}} \right)^3 \times \left( 1 + \frac{m_\chi^2}{2m_\phi^2} \right)^2 \sqrt{1 - \frac{m_\chi^2}{m_\phi^2}}; \quad a_{RH} > a_{max},$$  \hspace{1cm} (29)

$$\frac{\Omega_{\chi} h^2}{0.1} \approx \left( \frac{T_{RH}}{10^{16}} \right) \sqrt{\rho_e} \left( \frac{m_\chi}{10^{60}} \right) \left( \frac{m_\chi}{1.9 \times 10^9} \right)^3 \times \left( 1 + \frac{m_\chi^2}{2m_\phi^2} \right)^2 \sqrt{1 - \frac{m_\chi^2}{m_\phi^2}}; \quad a_{RH} < a_{max},$$  \hspace{1cm} (30)

for scalar dark matter and

$$\frac{\Omega_{\chi} h^2}{0.1} \approx \left( \frac{T_{RH}}{10^{16}} \right)^3 \left( \frac{T_{max}/T_{RH}}{100} \right)^4 \left( \frac{m_\chi}{4.0 \times 10^{12}} \right)^3 \times \left( 3 \times 10^{13} \right)^{3/2} \left( 1 - \frac{m_\chi^2}{m_\phi^2} \right); \quad a_{RH} > a_{max},$$  \hspace{1cm} (31)

$$\frac{\Omega_{\chi} h^2}{0.1} \approx \left( \frac{T_{RH}}{10^{16}} \right) \sqrt{\rho_e} \left( \frac{m_\chi}{10^{60}} \right) \left( \frac{m_\chi}{1.9 \times 10^9} \right)^3 \times \left( 3 \times 10^{13} \right)^{3/2} \left( 1 - \frac{m_\chi^2}{m_\phi^2} \right); \quad a_{RH} < a_{max},$$  \hspace{1cm} (32)

for fermionic dark matter. Units of energy are given in GeV (and GeV$^4$ for $\rho_e$). Note that these expressions are approximations which are valid so long as $a_{RH}$ is not very close to either $a_{max}$ or $a_{\epsilon}$. More generally, the relic density is obtained from Eq. (28) with either Eq. (26) or Eq. (27). As expected, there is a stronger dependence of the relic abundance on the mass of the dark matter in the fermionic case due to its production rate.

We show in Fig. 2 the allowed parameter space in the $(m_\chi, T_{RH})$ plane for scalar (blue, dashed) and fermionic (red, solid) dark matter for several values of $T_{max}/T_{RH}$. The lines correspond to values of $\Omega_{\chi} h^2 = 0.12$ [39] for each choice of $T_{max}/T_{RH}$. In each case, $a_{RH} > a_{max}$. All points above the lines are excluded because they lead to an overabundance. We see, for example, that GeV-ZeV dark matter can be obtained with reasonable values of $T_{RH}$ and $T_{max}$ by pure gravitational production through inflaton scattering. We also see that due to the additional mass suppression ($m_\chi/m_\phi$), for fermionic DM, it is necessary to consider higher fermion masses ($\gtrsim 100$ PeV for $T_{max}/T_{RH} < 1000$) to achieve $\Omega_{\chi} h^2 = 0.12$. Note that we have assumed $m_\phi = 3 \times 10^{13}$ GeV in Fig. 2 and the kinematic suppression when $m_\chi < m_\phi$ would appear to the right of the region plotted.

**FIG. 2**: Points yielding the Planck relic density $\Omega_{\chi} h^2 = 0.12$ for scalar (blue, dashed) and fermionic (red, solid) dark matter, in the $(m_\chi, T_{RH})$ plane for several values of $T_{max}/T_{RH}$ as labeled.

**IV. COUPLING TO THE STANDARD MODEL**

In the previous section, we concentrated on results for a given reheating and maximum temperature reached by the thermal bath during the reheating process. In any concrete model of inflation, these temperatures can be
traced to two quantities: the coupling of the inflaton to
the Standard Model, which ultimately determines the re-
heating temperature, and the initial energy density of the
inflaton at the end of the inflationary phase, which allows
one to determine the amount of energy available for the
thermal bath, and hence the maximum temperature. If
one supposes a simple effective coupling of the inflaton
to the Standard Model fermions of the type
\[ \mathcal{L}_{\phi-SM}^y = y \phi \bar{f} f, \]
leading to
\[ \Gamma_{\phi} = \frac{y^2}{8\pi} m_{\phi}, \]
and using Eq. (21) we can write the ratio
\[ \left( \frac{T_{\text{max}}}{T_{\text{RH}}} \right)^4 = \frac{25\pi\sqrt{\rho_c}}{2\sqrt{3} y^2 m_{\phi} M_P} \left[ \frac{3}{8} \left( 1 - \left( \frac{a_{\text{RH}}}{a_{\text{max}}} \right)^{5/2} \right)^2 \right]. \]

In models which are dominated by a quadratic term
after inflation, we expect \( \rho_c \sim m_{\phi}^2 M_P^2 \) and for
example, in the Starobinsky model of inflation \[40], \( \rho_c^{1/4} \sim 0.65 m_{\phi}^{1/2} M_P^{1/2} = 5.5 \times 10^{15} \text{ GeV} \[41]. \] For sufficiently
large coupling, \( y \simeq 0.67 \rho_c^{1/4}/10^{15} \text{GeV} \), \( T_{\text{max}}/T_{\text{RH}} = 1 \), and
reheating is nearly instantaneous. If reheating is
primarily due to a coupling of the inflaton to bosons,
\( \mathcal{L}_{\phi-SM}^y = \mu \phi \bar{b} b \), equivalent results are obtained by
substituting \( y \rightarrow \mu/m_{\phi} \).

Similarly, we can also compute \( T_{\text{RH}} \) by combining
Eqs. (18) and (33):
\[ T_{\text{RH}}^4 = \left( \frac{3y^4}{400\pi^2} \right) m_{\phi}^2 M_P^2 \left[ 1 - \left( \frac{a_{\text{RH}}}{a_{\text{max}}} \right)^{5/2} \right]^2. \]

For sufficiently large \( \rho_c \), the second term in the bracket
can be neglected, otherwise, \( T_{\text{RH}} \) can be solved for iteratively.
We can now express the relic density in terms of the
coupling \( y \) using Eqs. (35) and (36) in Eqs. (26) and
(27). When \( a_{\text{RH}} \gg a_{\text{max}} \), we can write relatively compact
expressions by combining Eqs. (29), (31), (35) and
(36) and one obtains for \( m_{S,X} \ll m_{\phi} \)
\[ \frac{\Omega_{S h^2}}{0.1} = \frac{y^{-7}}{10^6} \sqrt{\rho_c} \left( \frac{3 \times 10^{13}}{m_{\phi}} \right) \left( \frac{5.2 \times 10^9}{m_S} \right), \]
\[ \frac{\Omega_{X h^2}}{0.1} = \frac{y^{-7}}{10^6} \sqrt{\rho_c} \left( \frac{m_X}{2.6 \times 10^{12}} \right) \left( \frac{3 \times 10^{13}}{m_{\phi}} \right)^{3/2}, \]
where as before dimensions for mass are in GeV, with
GeV\(^4\) for \( \rho_c \). We see that for a given Standard Model
coupling \( y = 10^{-7} \) for example), the dark matter mass
needed to reach a reasonable relic abundance is much
higher in the fermionic case than in the scalar case, bearing
in mind the minimality of the model being considered.

We plot in Fig. 3 the required relation between \( m_{S,X} \)
and \( y \) to obtain \( \Omega_{S,X} h^2 = 0.12 \).

Values of \( \Omega_{S} h^2 > 0.12 \) are obtained for points to the
right of the negatively sloped lines and below the horizontal
lines for \( \rho_c^{1/4} = 10^{14} \text{ GeV} \). Note that for \( \rho_c^{1/4} = 10^{14} \text{ GeV} \), the curves begin to bend when the second term
in the bracket in Eq. (35) approaches 1. For small val-
ues of \( y, T_{\text{max}} \gg T_{\text{RH}}, \) and the relic density in Eq. (29)
increases as \( T_{\text{RH}}^4 (T_{\text{max}}/T_{\text{RH}})^4 m_\phi \). Since \( (T_{\text{RH}})^4 \sim y^{-3}, (T_{\text{max}}/T_{\text{RH}})^4 \sim y^{-2}, \) we see that \( y \sim m_{\phi}^{-1} \) for fixed relic
density. At larger values of \( y, \) when \( a_{\text{RH}} < a_{\text{max}}, \) the density in Eq. (30) scales as \( T_{\text{RH}}^4 \). However, we can
see from Eq. (36), that \( T_{\text{RH}} \) reaches its maximal value
when \( a_{\text{RH}} \approx a_{\text{max}}, \) at these values of \( y \) which are not
much larger than \( .67 \rho_c^{1/4}/10^{15} \text{GeV} \) - the value needed to make \( T_{\text{RH}} = T_{\text{max}} \), the number density obtained from
Eq. (27) begins to decrease. Thus a fixed energy density
which is proportional to \( n_j m_j, \) requires a rapidly larger
value of the dark matter mass. This accounts for the
curve bending to the horizontal at large values of \( m_j, \)
Physically, at these values of \( y, \) the rate of inflaton decay
exceeds the rate of dark matter production from scat-
tering, and production through the gravitational process
ceases. For \( \rho_c^{1/4} > 1.5 \times 10^{15} \text{ GeV}, \) this behavior occurs
only at \( y > 1. \) Once again, the region with kinematic
suppression lies to the right of the region shown in the
figure.

\[ \mathcal{L}_{\phi-SM}^y = \sigma \phi^2 b^2 \]
where $b$ represents a Standard Model boson. In this case, one still requires the Yukawa coupling (33) to complete the reheating process (so that the energy density in radiation comes to dominate over the energy density in $\phi$) [38]. The interaction generated by (39) can alter the maximum temperature $T_{\text{max}}$ for sufficiently large values of $\sigma$. In this case,

\[
\left(\frac{T_{\text{max}}}{T_{\text{RH}}}\right)^4 = \frac{6400\pi^4\sigma^2\rho_e}{\sqrt{3}y^2m_\phi^2M_P} \left(\frac{2}{3}\right)^{18}
\]

(40)
giving

\[
\frac{\Omega_{S}h^2}{0.1} = \frac{10^{-6}}{y} \left(\frac{\sigma}{10^{-9}}\right)^2 \left(\frac{\rho_e}{(10^{16})^4}\right)^{3/2} \left(\frac{3 \times 10^{13}}{m_\phi}\right)^{7/2} \times \left(\frac{m_S}{1.2 \times 10^9}\right)
\]

(41)

and

\[
\frac{\Omega_{\chi}h^2}{0.1} = \frac{10^{-6}}{y} \left(\frac{\sigma}{10^{-9}}\right)^2 \left(\frac{\rho_e}{(10^{16})^4}\right)^{3/2} \left(\frac{m_\chi}{7.6 \times 10^{10}}\right)^{3} \times \left(\frac{3 \times 10^{13}}{m_\phi}\right)^{11/2}
\]

(42)

Note that for a given value of $\sigma$, the relic density increases with decreasing $y$. This is valid only so long as $T_{\text{max}} > T_{\text{RH}}$. The limiting value of $y$ is found by setting Eq. (40) equal to one.

We show in Fig. (4) the parameter space allowed in the plane $(y, \sigma)$ in the case of scalar dark matter for different values of its mass $m_\chi$. Note that it is possible to have quite low values of $y$ (and thus $T_{\text{RH}}$) while still being able to produce dark matter in sufficient amounts due to the value of $\sigma$ generating a high maximum temperature $T_{\text{max}}$, and thus a large production rate. The maximum value for $y$ occurs when $T_{\text{max}} = T_{\text{RH}}$ in Eq. (40) where the relic abundance depends only on $T_{\text{RH}}$ (and is thus independent of $\sigma$) as we can see in the plot. The same curves for fermionic dark matter are obtained for $m_\chi = 1.5 \times 10^9 (m_S/\text{GeV})^{1/3}$.

\[\text{FIG. 4: Points respecting Planck constraint } \Omega_{S}h^2 = 0.12 \text{ in the case of scalar dark matter, in the plane } (y, \sigma) \text{ for different values of } m_S.\]

V. CONCLUSIONS

We have derived the conditions for producing sufficient dark matter from inflaton scattering during reheating by $s$-channel graviton exchange. This process is always present independent of the model of inflation. We have shown that the final abundance of dark matter depends not only on the reheating temperature, but also on the maximum temperature and hence on the detailed evolution of the reheating process. During the exit from exponential expansion, many models of inflation begin a period of oscillations leading to reheating. At the onset of these oscillations, the inflaton density is high and the leading contribution to dark matter production occurs at the start of reheating at $T_{\text{max}}$. This represents an absolute minimal amount of dark matter production and it contributes independent of any interactions the dark matter may have with the Standard Model (or another dark sector if present).

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