

Late Reheating scenarios

How low can we really go?

A.K. Burns (ICCUB), P. Carles-Llorca (ICCUB), H. Garcia (USC),
J. Salvadó (ICCUB), J. Virto (ICCUB)

Winter Meeting

02/02/2026



Institut de Ciències del Cosmos
UNIVERSITAT DE BARCELONA



Motivation

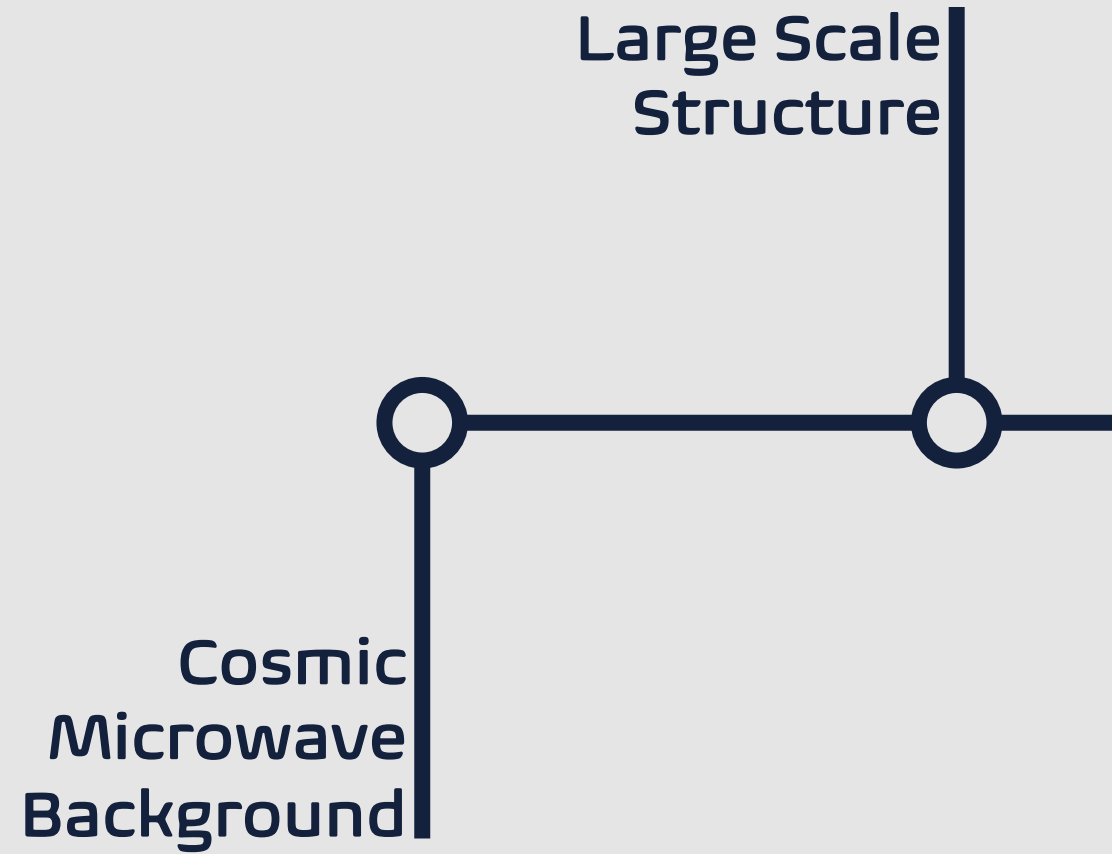
01

Large Scale
Structure



Motivation

01



Motivation

01

Big Bang
Nucleosynthesis

Large Scale
Structure

Cosmic
Microwave
Background



Motivation

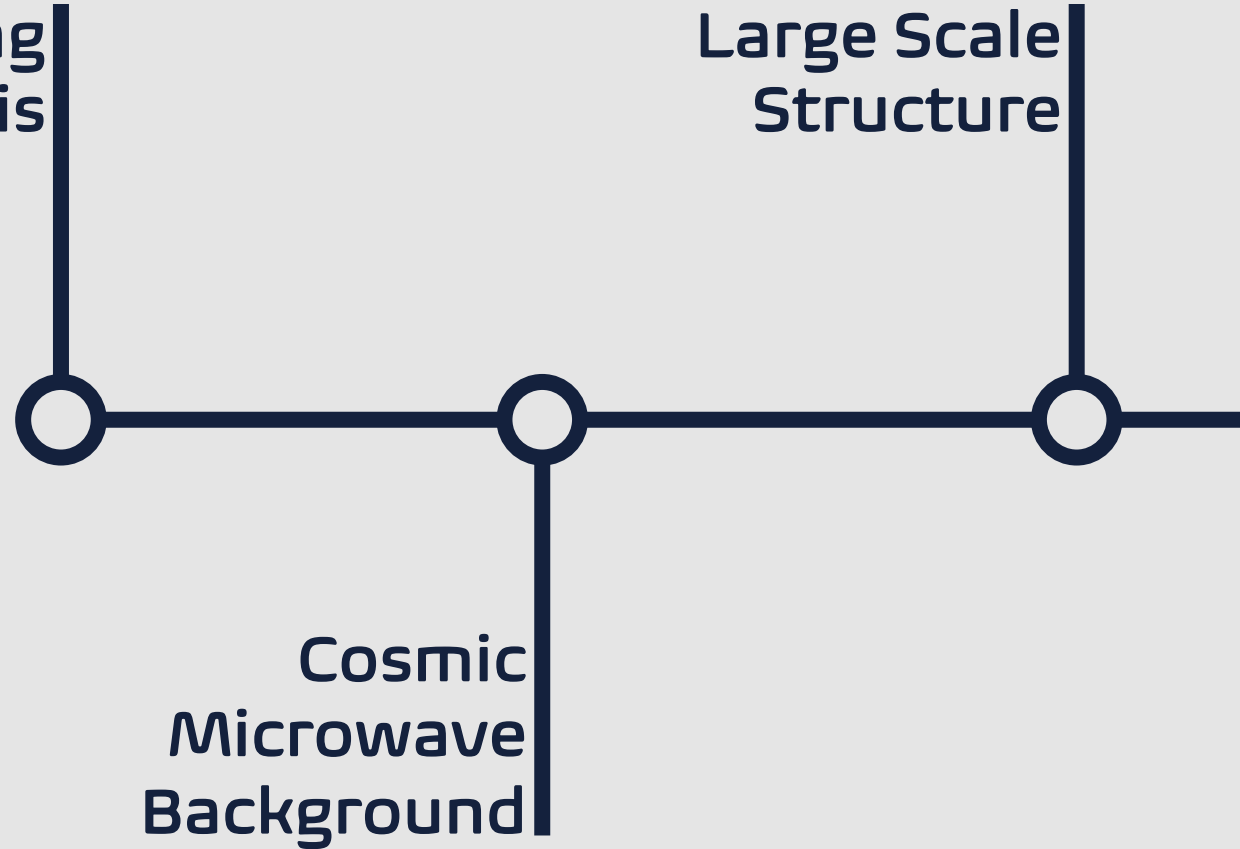
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INFLATION

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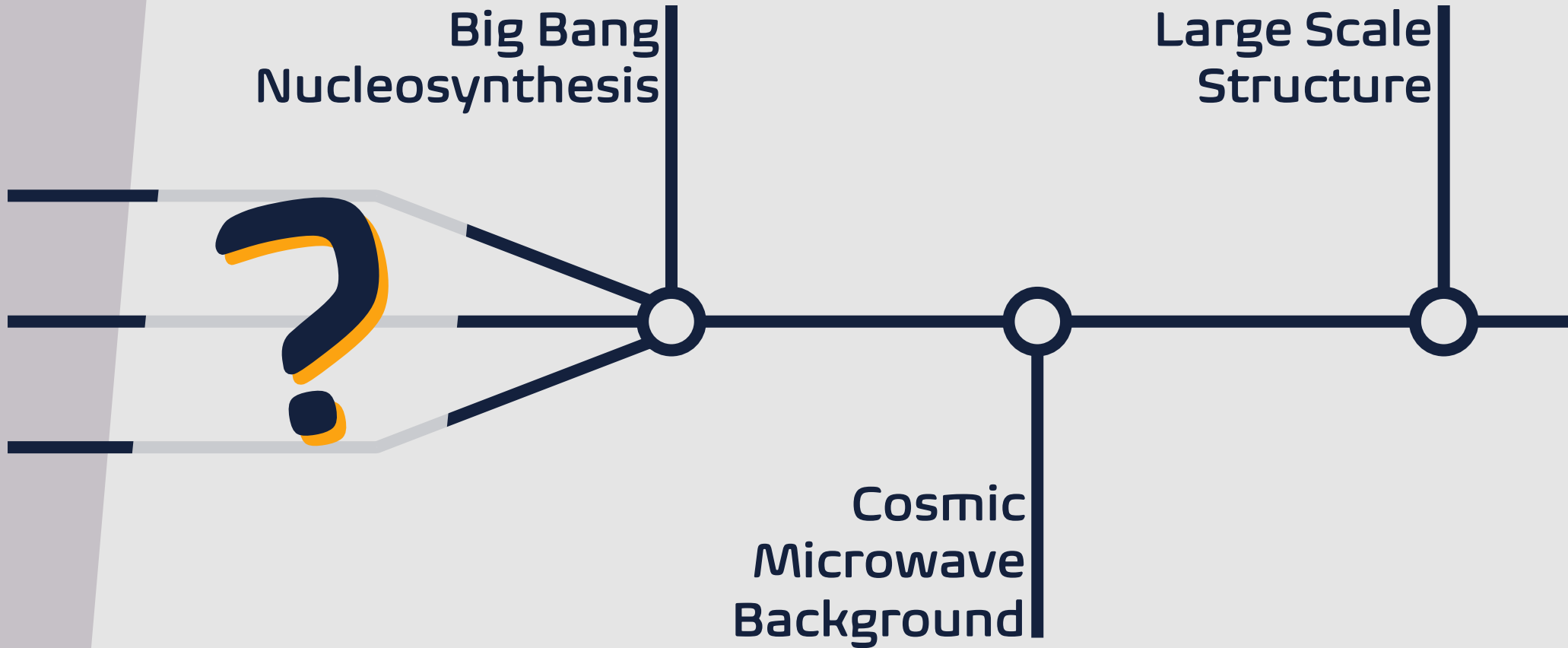
01

INFLATION

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Motivation

02

INFLATION

Big Bang
Nucleosynthesis



Motivation

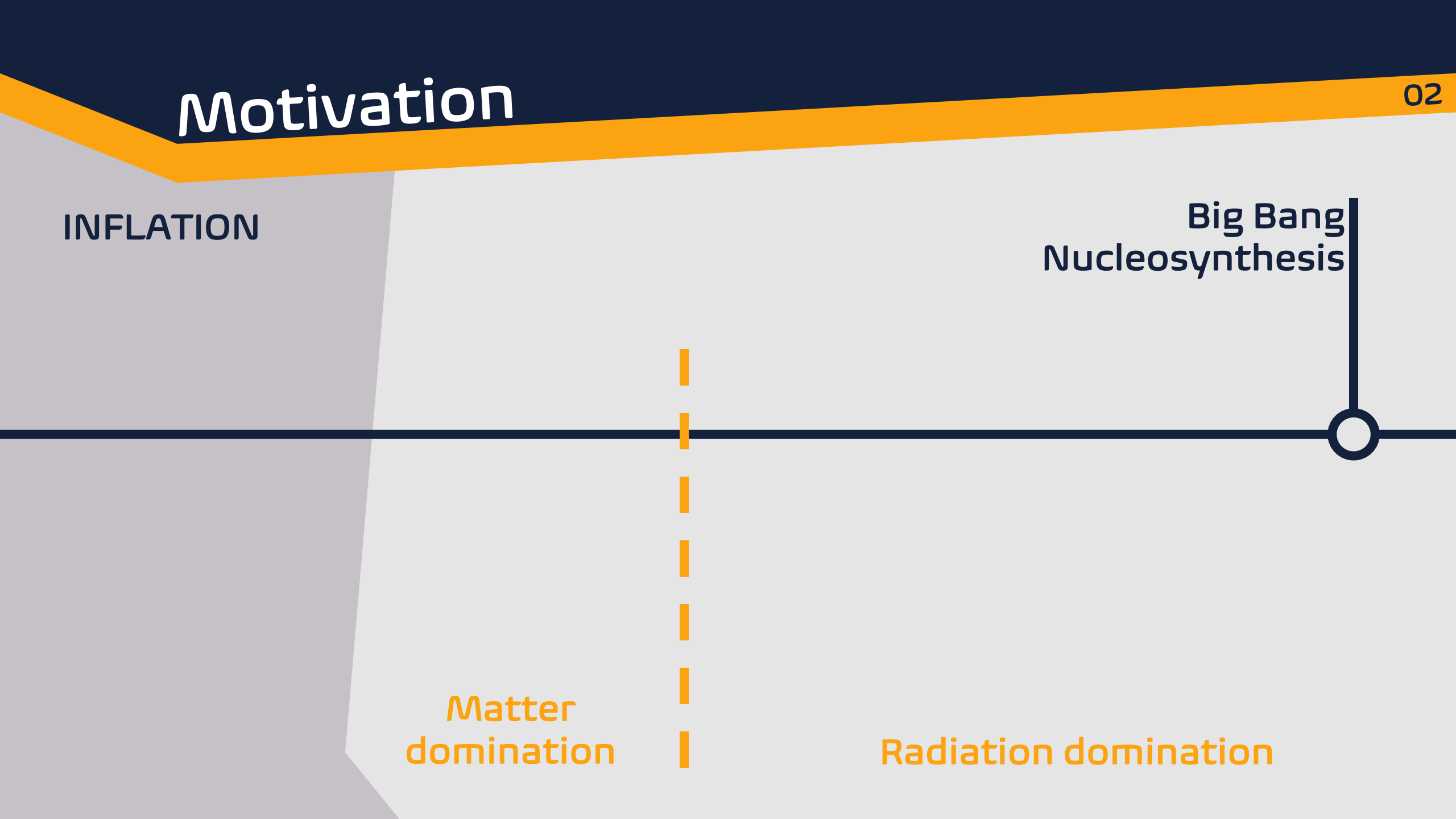
02

INFLATION

Big Bang
Nucleosynthesis

Matter
domination

Radiation domination



Motivation

02

INFLATION

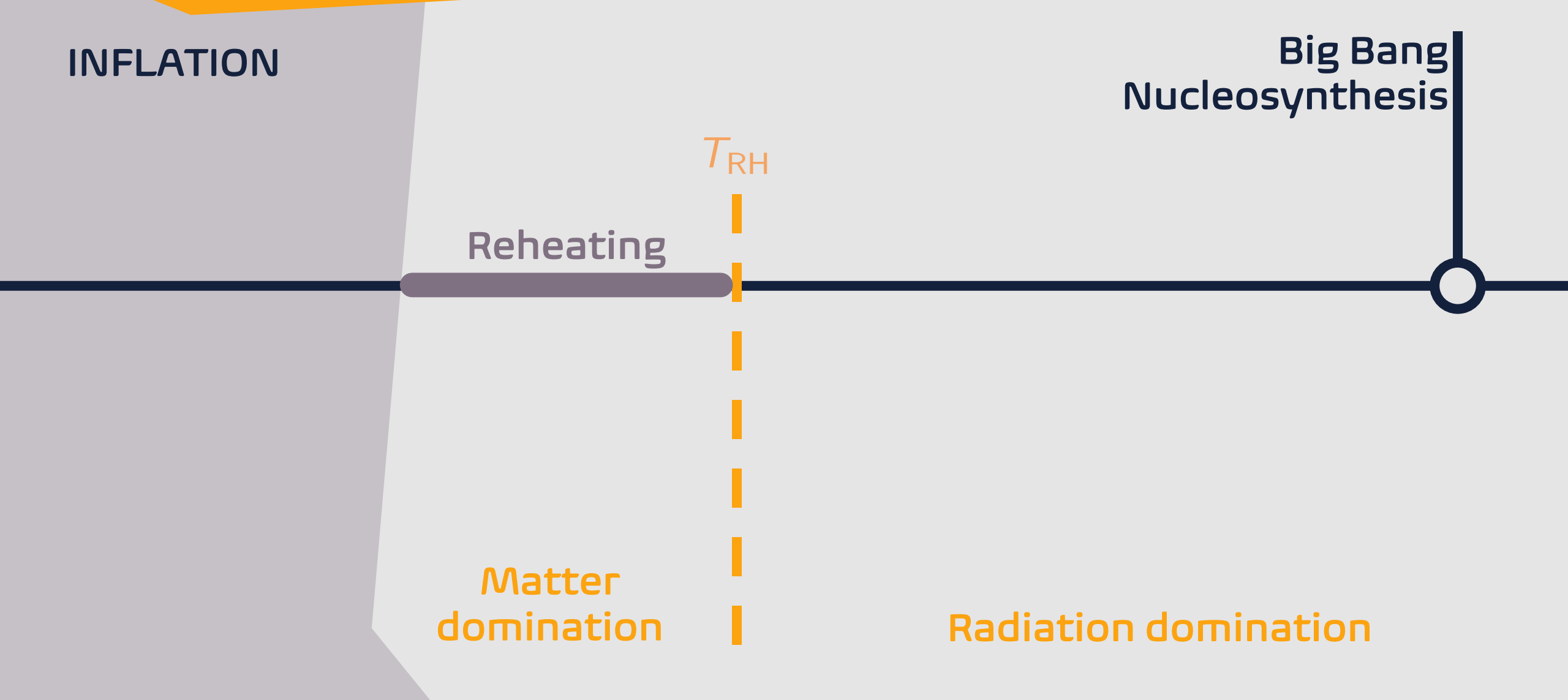
Big Bang
Nucleosynthesis

Reheating

T_{RH}

Matter
domination

Radiation domination



Motivation

03

INFLATION

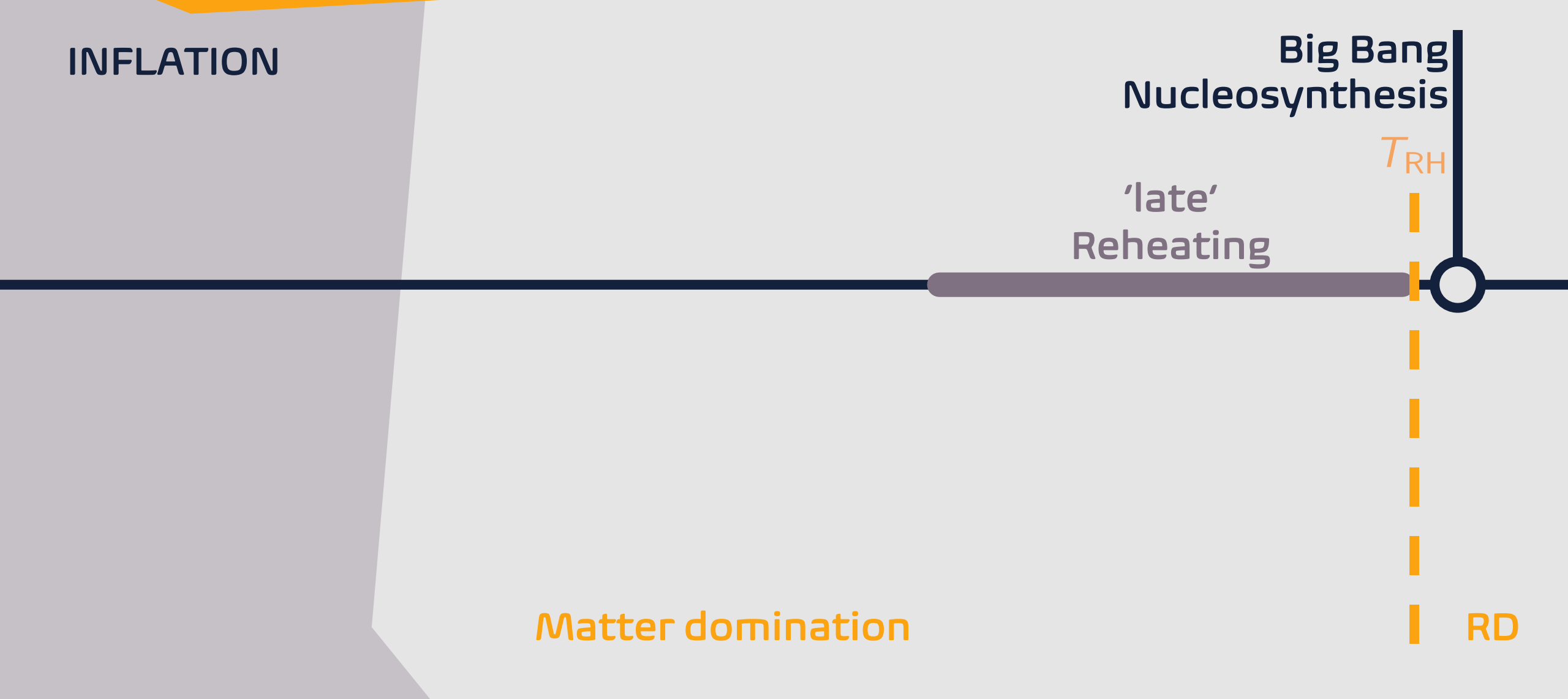
Big Bang
Nucleosynthesis

'late'
Reheating

T_{RH}

Matter domination

RD



Motivation

03

INFLATION

Big Bang
Nucleosynthesis

'late'
Reheating

Neutrinos
decouple

Matter domination

T_{RH}

RD

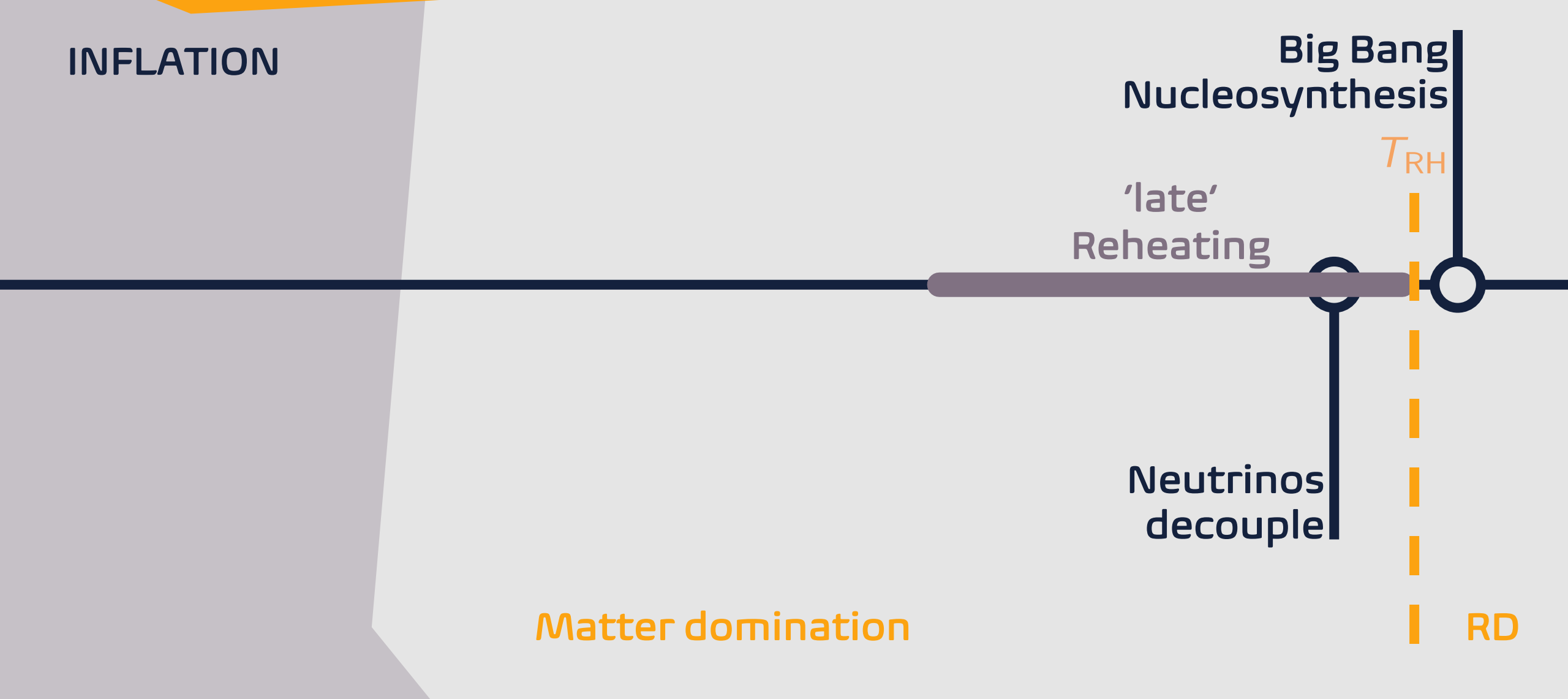


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2. Theory
3. Results
4. Conclusions
5. Future work

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Theory:

X evolution

04

X

Out of Equilibrium

X

Thermal bath

Theory:

X evolution

04

Non-relativistic
(around BBN)



Out of Equilibrium



Thermal bath

Theory:

X evolution

04

Non-relativistic
(around BBN)

Stores some energy
($\rho_{X,0}$) before BBN

X

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04

Non-relativistic
(around BBN)

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Stores some energy
($\rho_{X,0}$) before BBN

Decays around BBN

$$\Gamma_X = 10^0 - 10^3 \text{ s}^{-1}$$

Out of Equilibrium

X

Thermal bath

Theory:

X evolution

04

Non-relativistic
(around BBN)

$$\frac{d\rho_X}{dt} = -(\Gamma_X + 3H)\rho_X$$

Hubble rate

X

Stores some energy
($\rho_{X,0}$) before BBN

Decays around BBN

$$\Gamma_X = 10^0 - 10^3 \text{ s}^{-1}$$

Out of Equilibrium

X

Thermal bath

Theory:

Photon and electron evolution

05

γ

$e^{\pm}$

Out of Equilibrium

X

$e^{\pm}$

γ

Thermal bath

Theory:

Photon and electron evolution

05

γ

Massless vector

$$\rho_\gamma = \frac{\pi^2}{15} T_\gamma^4$$

$$P_\gamma = \frac{\rho_\gamma}{3}$$

Temperature
of the bath

$e^\pm$

Out of Equilibrium

X

$e^\pm$

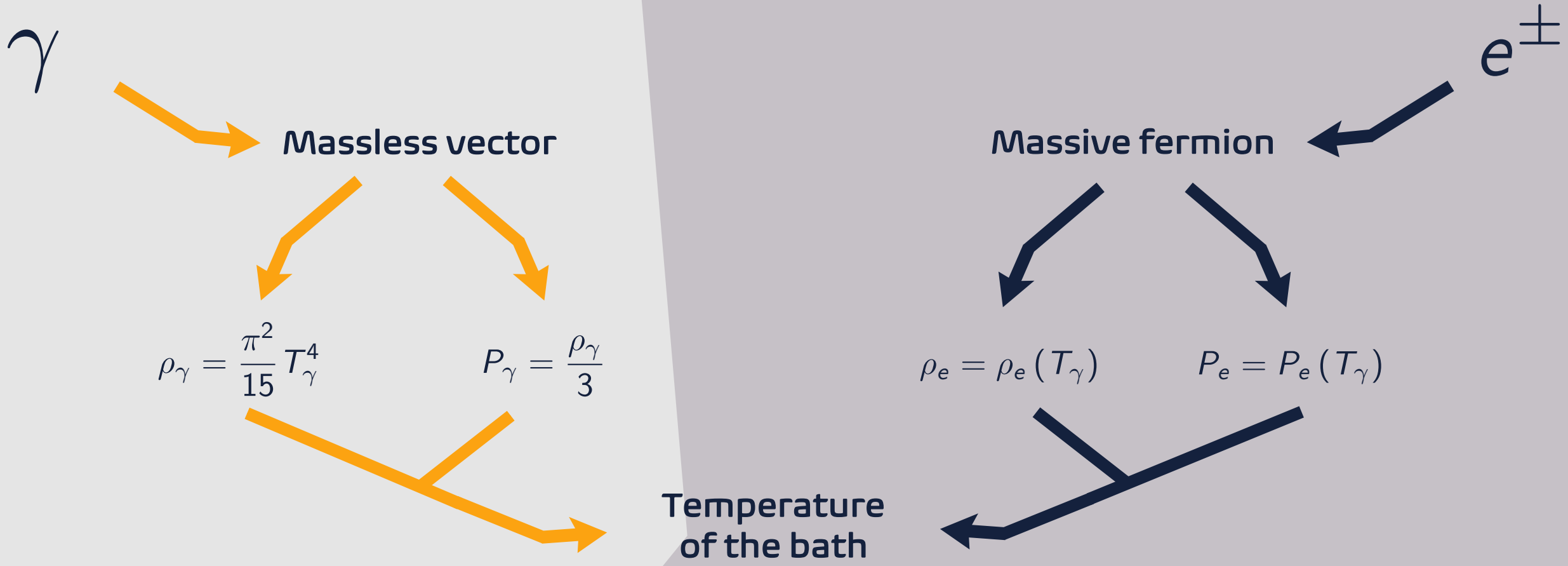
γ

Thermal bath

Theory:

Photon and electron evolution

05



Out of Equilibrium

X

$e^\pm$

γ

Thermal bath

Theory:

Neutrino evolution

06

Neutrinos decouple at $\mathcal{O}(1)$ MeV

Important neutrino dynamics

Out of Equilibrium

X

ν_α

$e^\pm$

γ

Thermal bath

Theory:

Neutrino evolution

06

Neutrinos decouple at $\mathcal{O}(1)$ MeV

Important neutrino dynamics

All charged leptons but electrons are suppressed

$$e^- + e^+ \longrightarrow \nu_\alpha + \bar{\nu}_\alpha$$

Out of Equilibrium

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Thermal bath

Theory:

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06

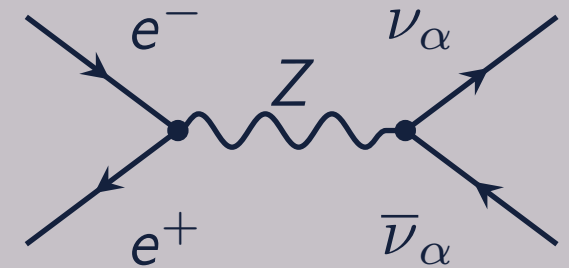
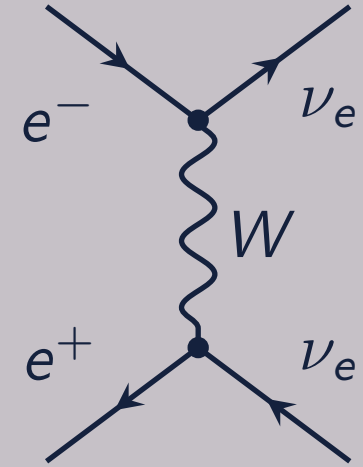
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Favors ν_e



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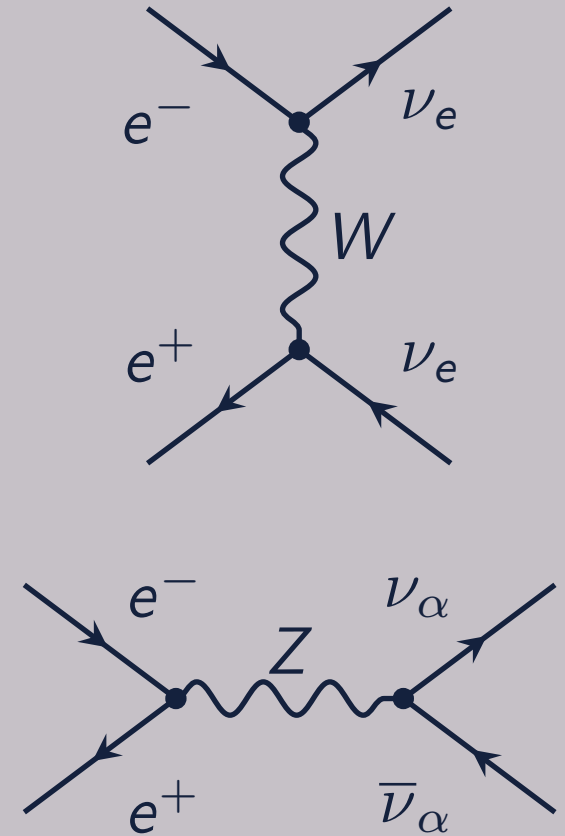
All charged leptons but electrons are suppressed

$$e^- + e^+ \longrightarrow \nu_\alpha + \bar{\nu}_\alpha$$

Favors ν_e

Negligible 3rd gen effects¹

Effective two-flavor mixing



¹Hasegawa et al. [[arXiv:1908.10189](#)]

Theory:

Effective two-flavor mixing

07

Spectator flavor

ν_{sp}



Active flavors

Out of Equilibrium

X

ν_α

$e^\pm$

γ

Thermal bath

Theory:

Effective two-flavor mixing

07

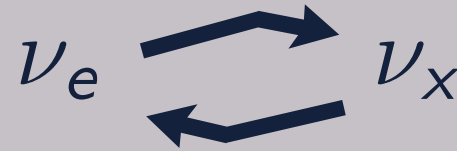
Spectator flavor

ν_{sp}

Boltzmann
equation

$$\frac{df_{\nu_{\text{sp}}}}{dt} = C(f_{\nu_{\text{sp}}})$$

Collision term



Active flavors

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07

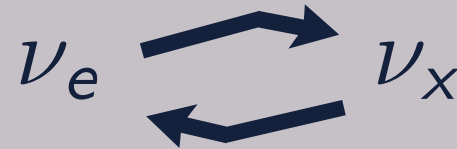
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Collision term



Active flavors

Quantum Kinetic Equation

$$\frac{d\varrho_p}{dt} = -i[\mathcal{H}_p, \varrho_p] + C(\varrho_p)$$

Hamiltonian

$$\varrho_p = \begin{pmatrix} f_{\nu_e} & \rho_{ex} \\ \rho_{ex}^* & f_{\nu_x} \end{pmatrix}$$

Out of Equilibrium

X

ν_α

$e^\pm$

γ

Thermal bath

Theory:

Neutrino Hamiltonian

QKE

$$\frac{d\rho_p}{dt} = -i[\mathcal{H}_p, \rho_p] + C(\rho_p)$$

08

$$\mathcal{H}_p = \frac{M^2}{2p} - \frac{8\sqrt{2}}{3} G_F p \left[\frac{\mathbf{E}_I}{m_W^2} + \frac{\mathbf{E}_\nu}{m_Z^2} \right] + \sqrt{2} G_F \int \frac{d^3 \mathbf{p}'}{(2\pi)^3} (\rho_{\mathbf{p}'} - \bar{\rho}_{\mathbf{p}'})$$

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← ν_α

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Neutrino Hamiltonian

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$$\mathcal{H}_p = \underbrace{\frac{M^2}{2p}}_{\mathcal{H}_{p,\text{vac}}} - \frac{8\sqrt{2}}{3} G_F p \left[\frac{\mathbf{E}_I}{m_W^2} + \frac{\mathbf{E}_\nu}{m_Z^2} \right] + \sqrt{2} G_F \int \frac{d^3 \mathbf{p}'}{(2\pi)^3} (\varrho_{\mathbf{p}'} - \bar{\varrho}_{\mathbf{p}'})$$

Mass matrix

Flavor oscillations

Out of Equilibrium

X

ν_α

$e^\pm$

γ

Thermal bath

Theory:

Neutrino Hamiltonian

QKE

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$$\mathcal{H}_p = \underbrace{\frac{M^2}{2p}}_{\mathcal{H}_{p,\text{vac}}} + \underbrace{\left[-\frac{8\sqrt{2}}{3} G_F p \left[\frac{\mathbf{E}_l}{m_W^2} + \frac{\mathbf{E}_\nu}{m_Z^2} \right] + \sqrt{2} G_F \int \frac{d^3 \mathbf{p}'}{(2\pi)^3} (\rho_{\mathbf{p}'} - \bar{\rho}_{\mathbf{p}'}) \right]}_{\mathcal{H}_{p,\text{mat}}}$$

Mass matrix

Flavor oscillations

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Thermal bath

Theory:

Polarization basis

$$\text{QKE} \quad \frac{d\rho_p}{dt} = -i [\mathcal{H}_p, \rho_p] + C(\rho_p)$$

09

Polarization basis = Pauli matrix decomposition


$$\rho_p \equiv \frac{1}{2} (P_0 \sigma^0 + \mathbf{P} \cdot \boldsymbol{\sigma})$$

Theory:

Polarization basis

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Polarization basis = Pauli matrix decomposition

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2x2 complex matrix

4 real values

Theory:

Polarization basis

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Polarization basis = Pauli matrix decomposition

2x2 complex matrix

$$\rho_p \equiv \frac{1}{2} (P_0 \sigma^0 + \mathbf{P} \cdot \boldsymbol{\sigma})$$

4 real values

In this basis, the QKE becomes

$$\begin{aligned} \dot{\mathbf{P}} &= \mathbf{H} \times \mathbf{P} + \mathbf{C} \\ \dot{P}_0 &= C_0 \end{aligned}$$

Theory:

Polarization basis

QKE $\frac{d\rho_p}{dt} = -i [\mathcal{H}_p, \rho_p] + C(\rho_p)$

09

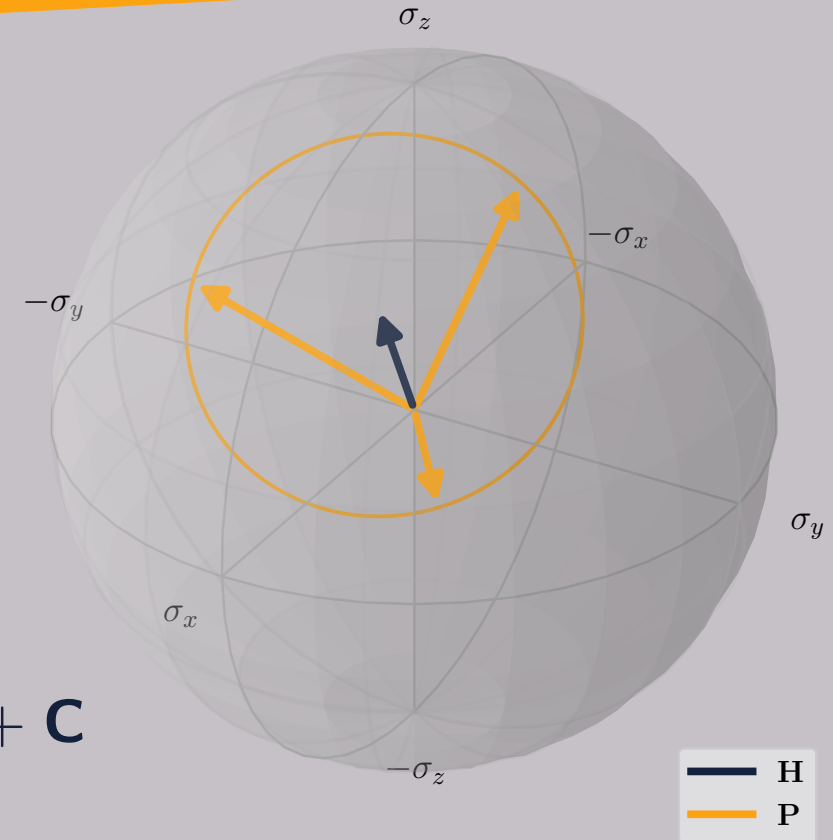
Polarization basis = Pauli matrix decomposition

2x2 complex matrix $\rho_p \equiv \frac{1}{2} (P_0 \sigma^0 + \mathbf{P} \cdot \boldsymbol{\sigma})$ 4 real values

In this basis, the QKE becomes

$$\dot{\mathbf{P}} = \mathbf{H} \times \mathbf{P} + \mathbf{C}$$

$$\dot{P}_0 = C_0$$



Theory:

Polarization basis

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Polarization basis = Pauli matrix decomposition

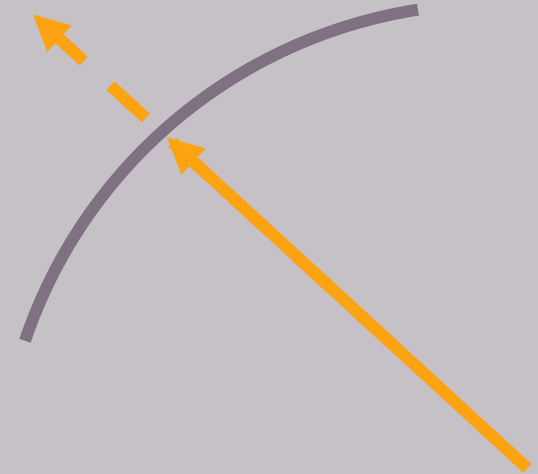
$$\rho_p \equiv \frac{1}{2} (P_0 \sigma^0 + \mathbf{P} \cdot \boldsymbol{\sigma})$$

2x2 complex matrix

4 real values

In this basis, the QKE becomes

$$\begin{aligned} \dot{\mathbf{P}} &= \mathbf{H} \times \mathbf{P} + \mathbf{C} \\ \dot{P}_0 &= C_0 \end{aligned}$$



Theory:

Temperature evolution

10

$$\frac{d\rho}{dt} = -3H(\rho + P)$$

Total energy
conservation

Out of Equilibrium

X

← ν_α

$e^\pm$

γ

Thermal bath

Theory:

Temperature evolution

10

$$\frac{d\rho}{dt} = -3H(\rho + P)$$

Total energy
conservation

$$\frac{dT_\gamma}{dt} = \frac{\Gamma_X \rho_X - 4H(\rho_\gamma + \rho_\nu) - 3H(\rho_e + P_e) - \frac{d\rho_\nu}{dt}}{\left. \frac{\partial \rho_e}{\partial T_\gamma} \right|_{a(t)} + \left. \frac{\partial \rho_\gamma}{\partial T_\gamma} \right|_{a(t)}}$$

Out of Equilibrium

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Theory:

Temperature evolution

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$$\frac{d\rho}{dt} = -3H(\rho + P)$$

Total energy
conservation



$$\frac{dT_\gamma}{dt} = \frac{\overset{\text{Decay}}{\Gamma_X \rho_X} - 4H(\rho_\gamma + \rho_\nu) - 3H(\rho_e + P_e) - \frac{d\rho_\nu}{dt}}{\frac{\partial \rho_e}{\partial T_\gamma} \Big|_{a(t)} + \frac{\partial \rho_\gamma}{\partial T_\gamma} \Big|_{a(t)}}$$

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$$\frac{d\rho}{dt} = -3H(\rho + P)$$

Total energy
conservation

$$\frac{dT_\gamma}{dt} = \frac{\overbrace{\Gamma_X \rho_X}^{\text{Decay}} - \overbrace{4H(\rho_\gamma + \rho_\nu) - 3H(\rho_e + P_e)}^{\text{Universe expansion}} - \frac{d\rho_\nu}{dt}}{\left. \frac{\partial \rho_e}{\partial T_\gamma} \right|_{a(t)} + \left. \frac{\partial \rho_\gamma}{\partial T_\gamma} \right|_{a(t)}}$$

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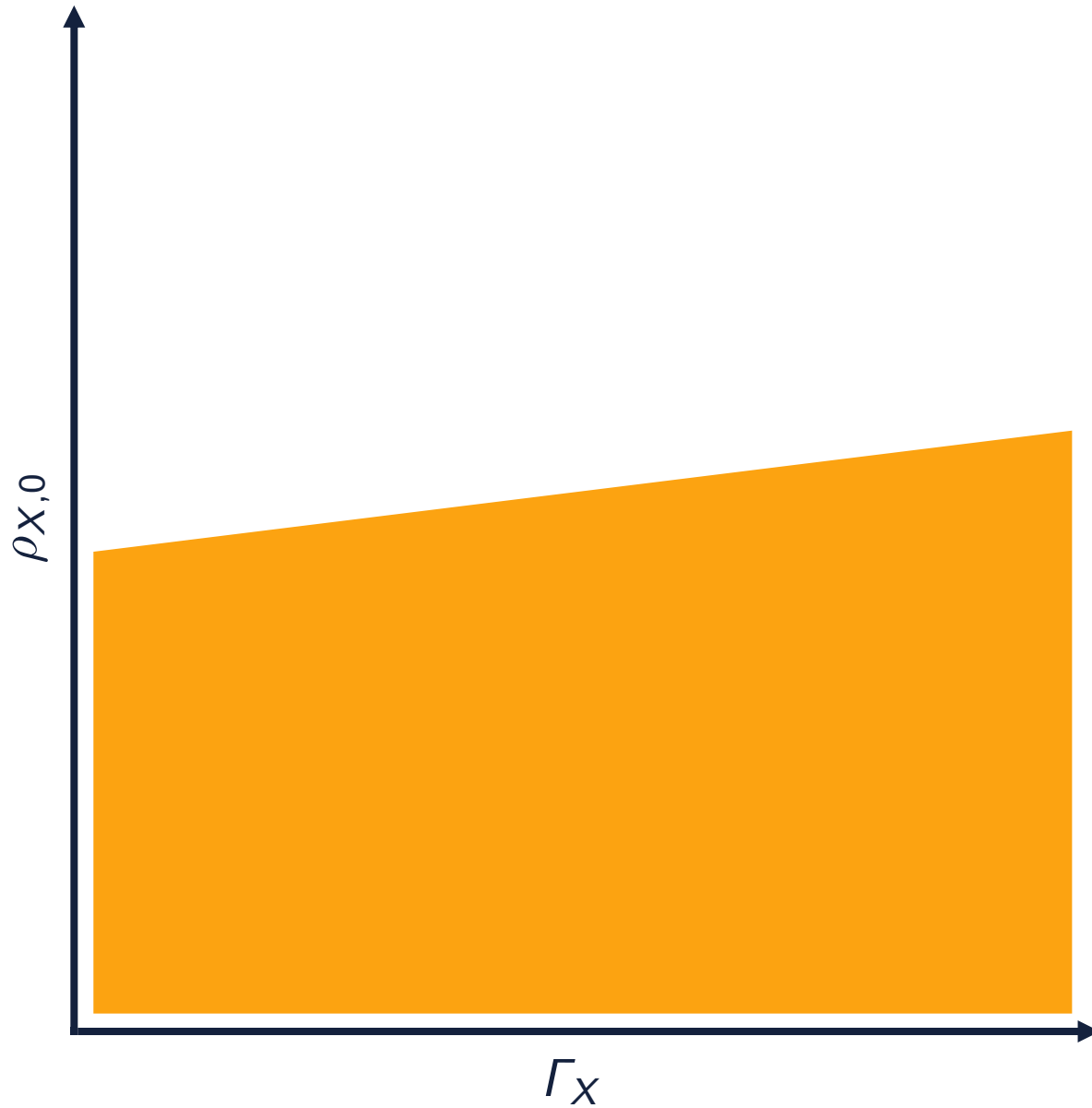
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Results:

Expectation

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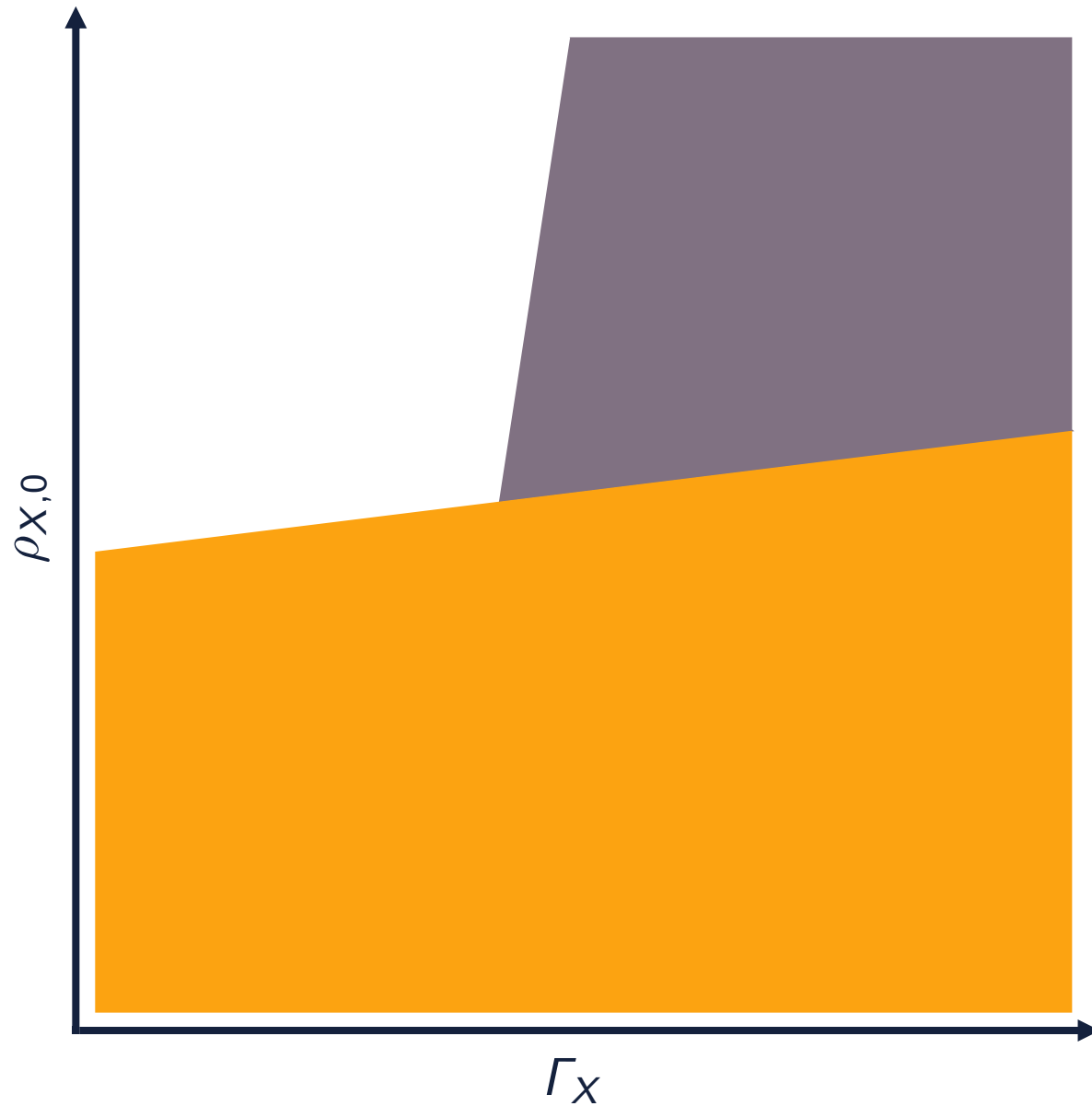


Recover Standard
cosmology

Results:

11

Expectation



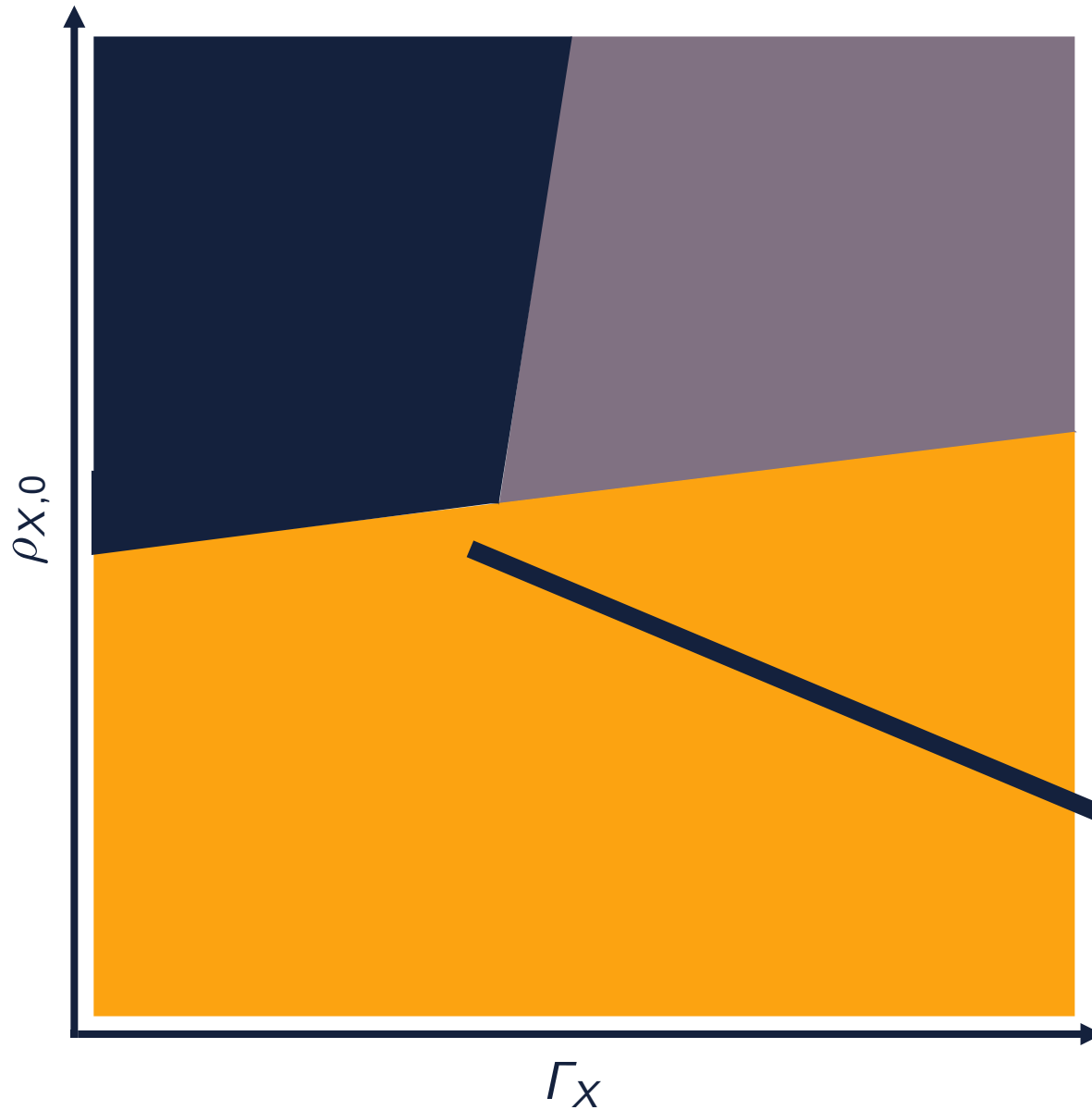
Small deviation from
Standard Cosmology

Recover Standard
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Results:

11

Expectation



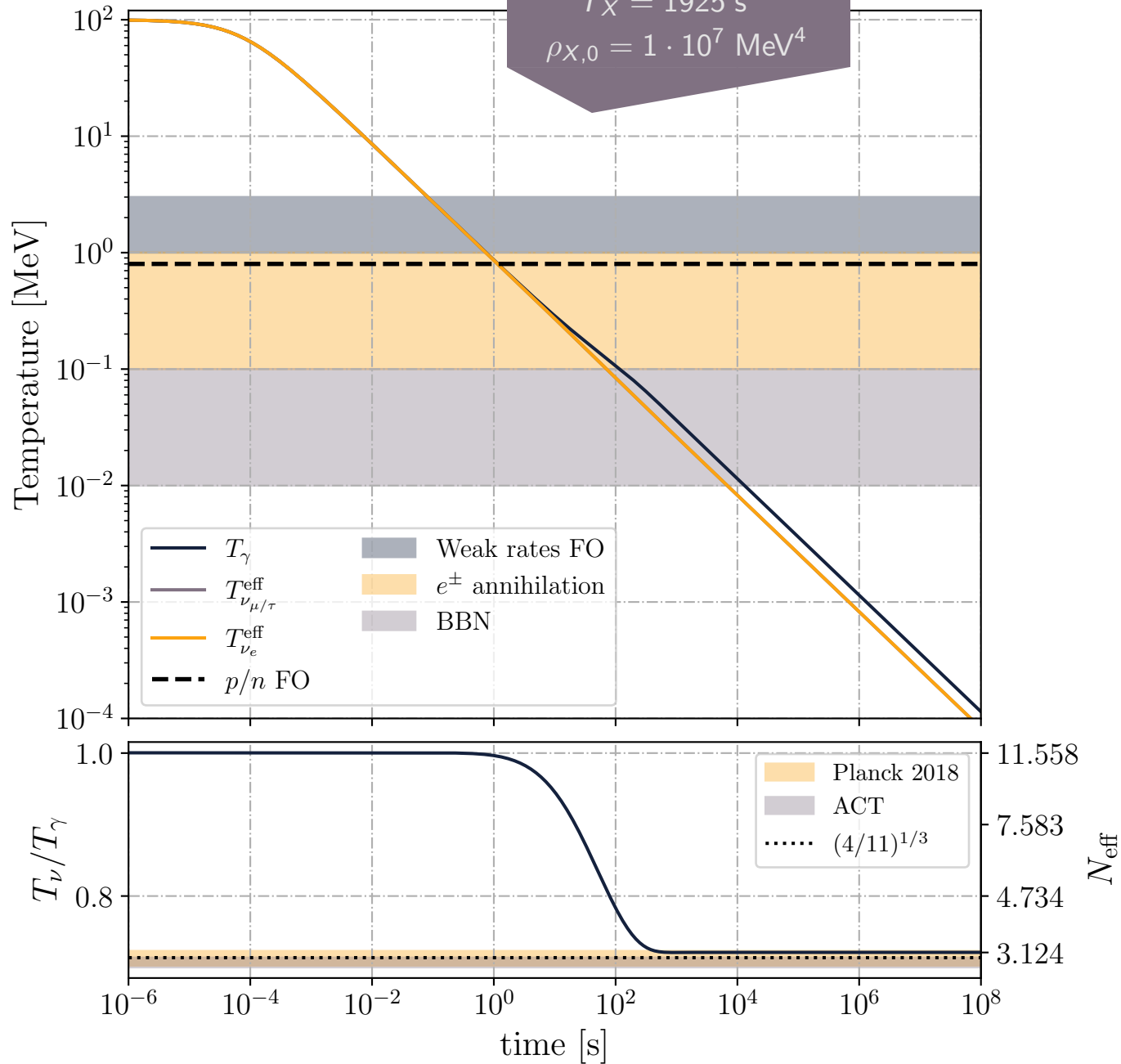
Small deviation from
Standard Cosmology

Recover Standard
cosmology

Big deviation from
Standard cosmology

$$\Gamma_X = 1925 \text{ s}^{-1}$$

$$\rho_{X,0} = 1 \cdot 10^7 \text{ MeV}^4$$



Results:

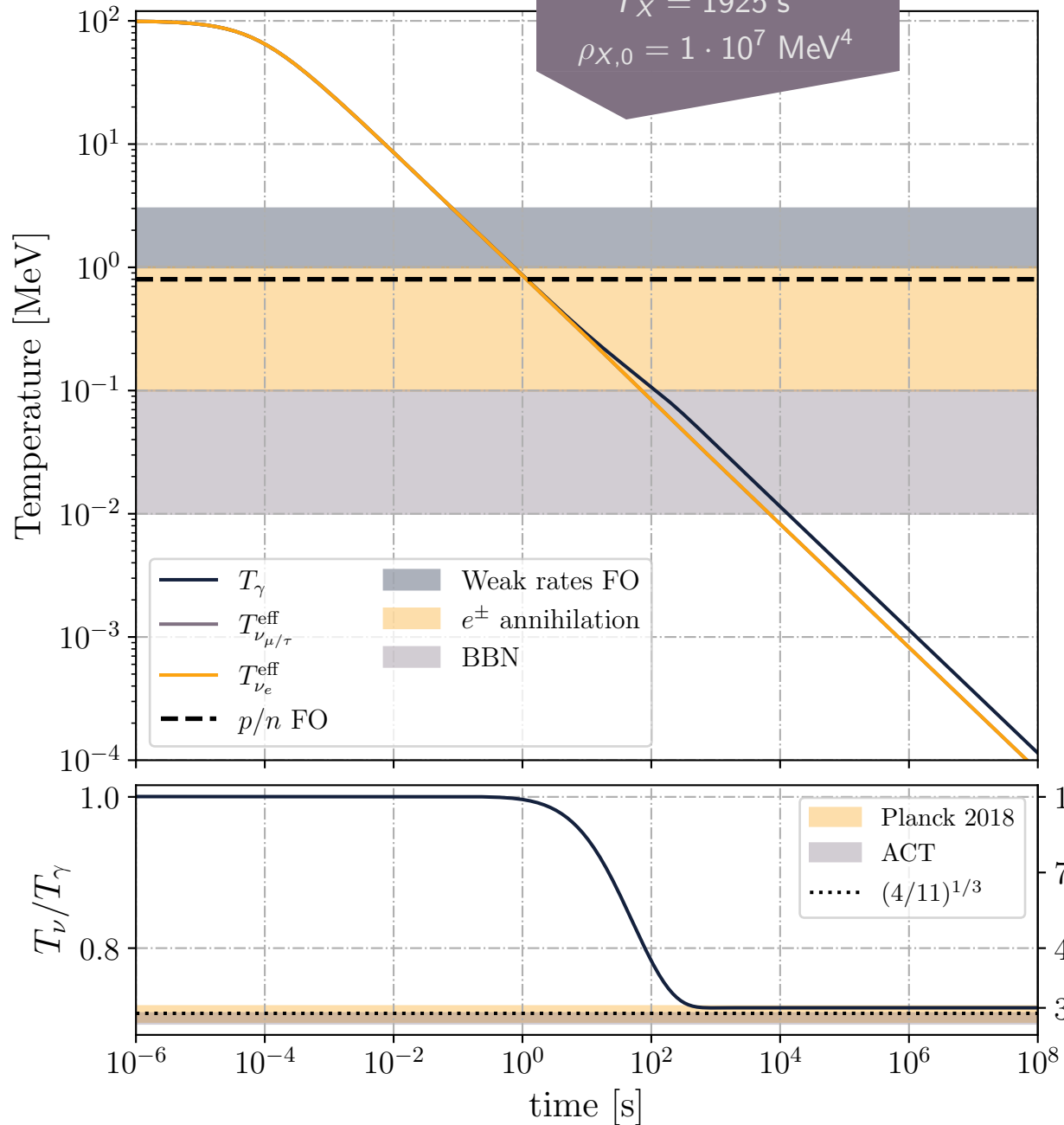
Temperature evolution
(Standard-ish case)

12



$$\Gamma_X = 1925 \text{ s}^{-1}$$

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Results:

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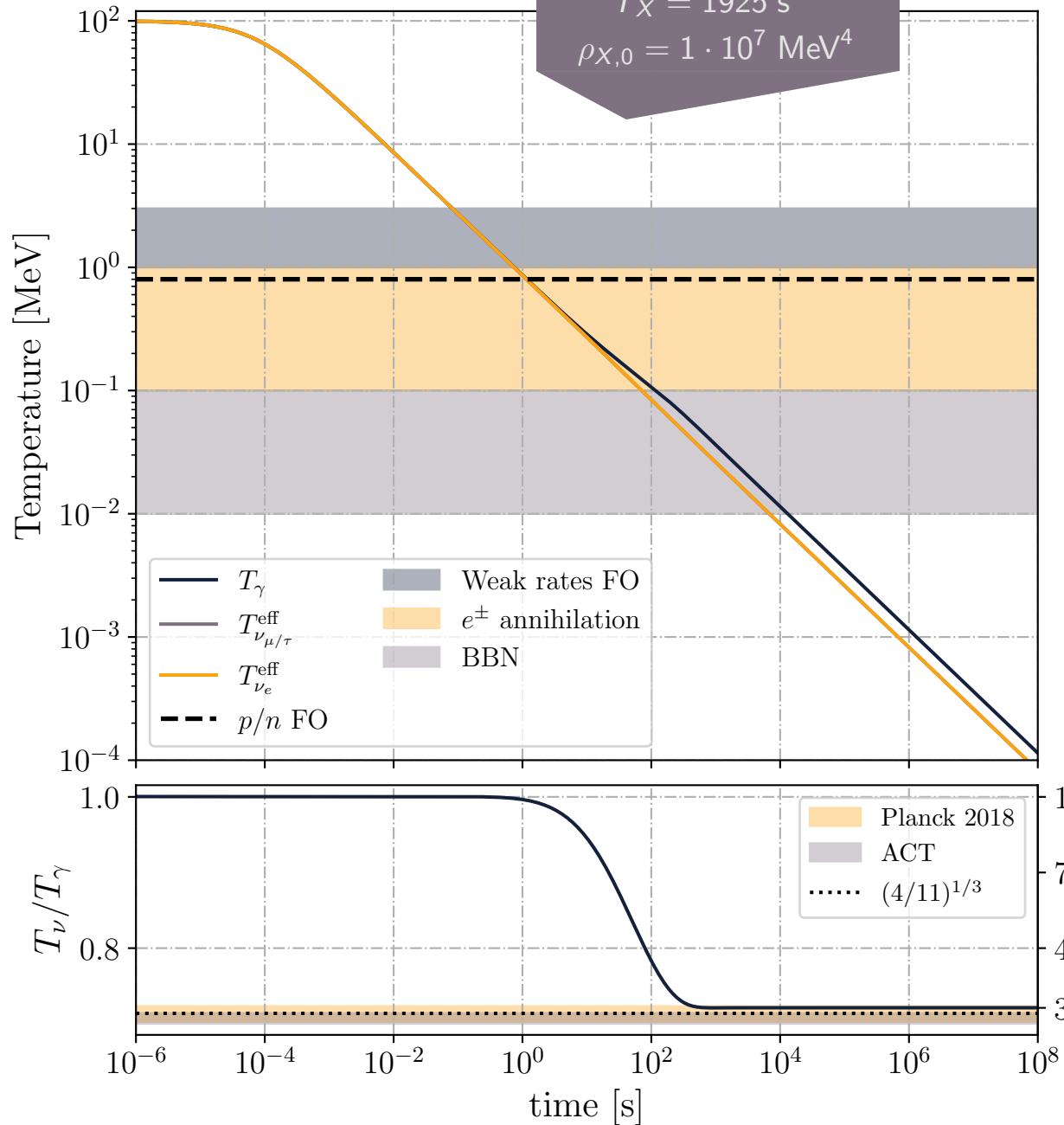
12

Neutrinos decouple



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Results:

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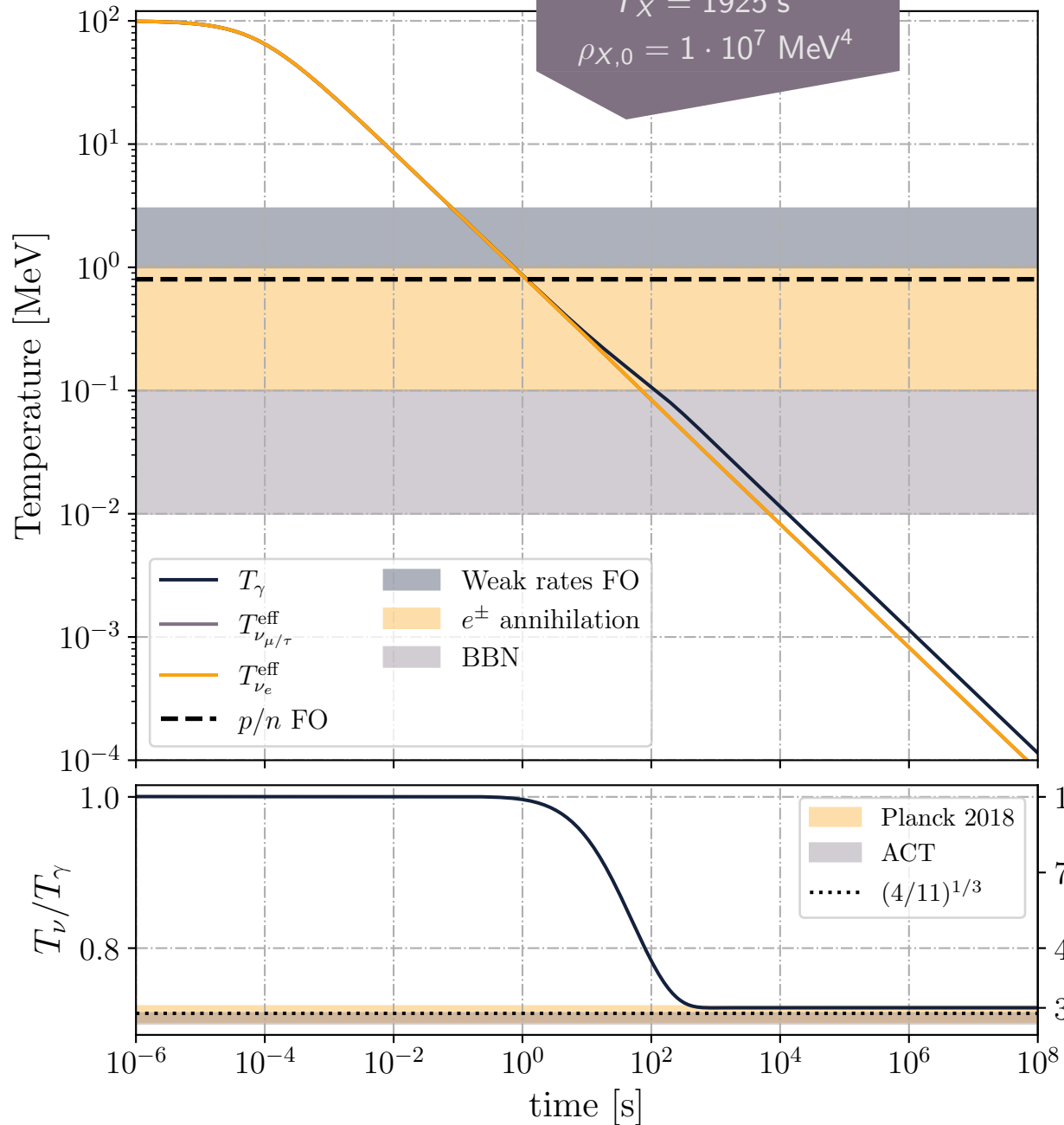
12

Neutrinos decouple

Energy from annihilation
goes mostly to the bath

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Results:

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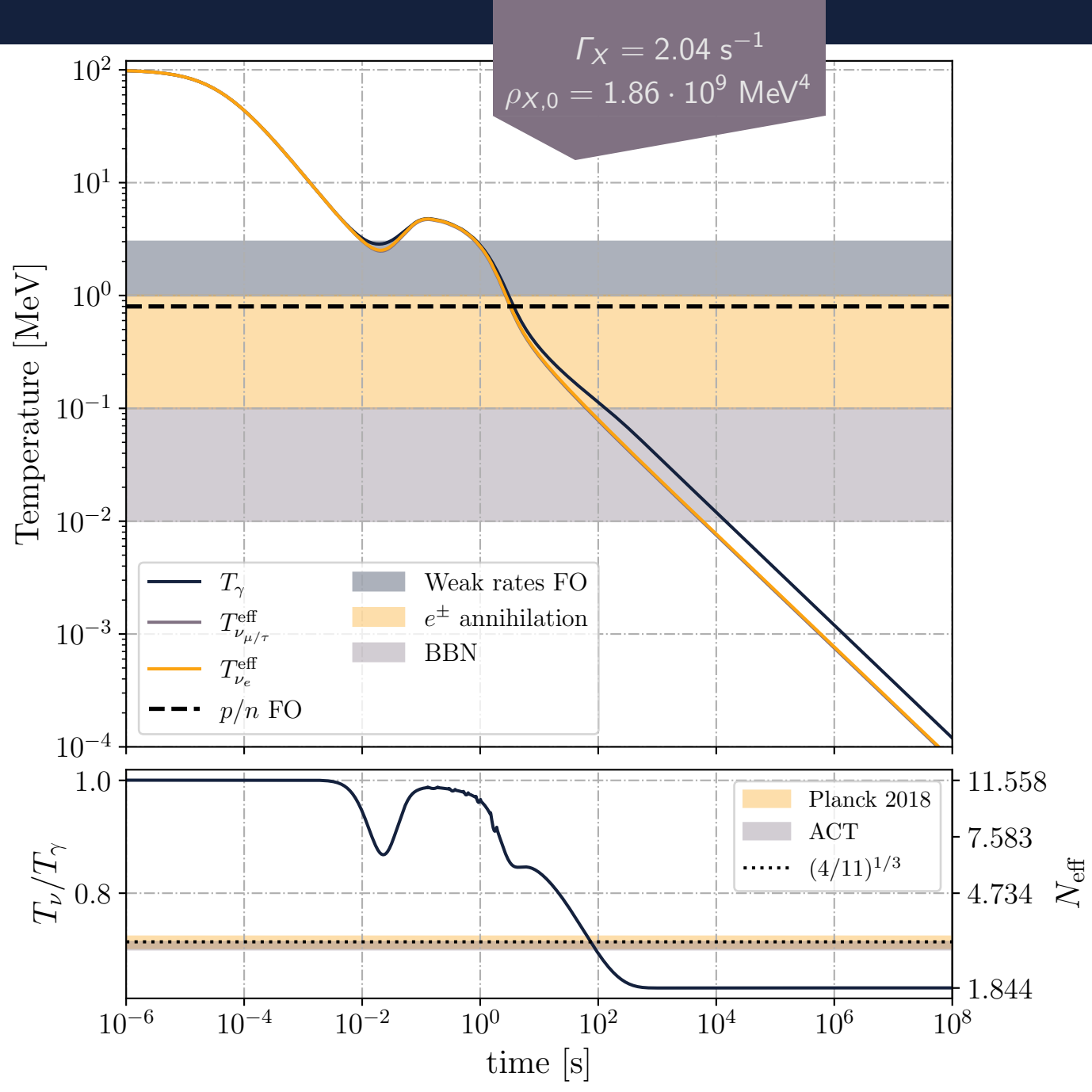
Temperature evolution
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Neutrinos decouple

Energy from annihilation
goes mostly to the bath

$$N_{\text{eff}} = 3 \left(\frac{11}{4} \right)^{4/3} \left(\frac{T_\nu}{T_\gamma} \right)^4$$

Relativistic degrees
of freedom



Results:

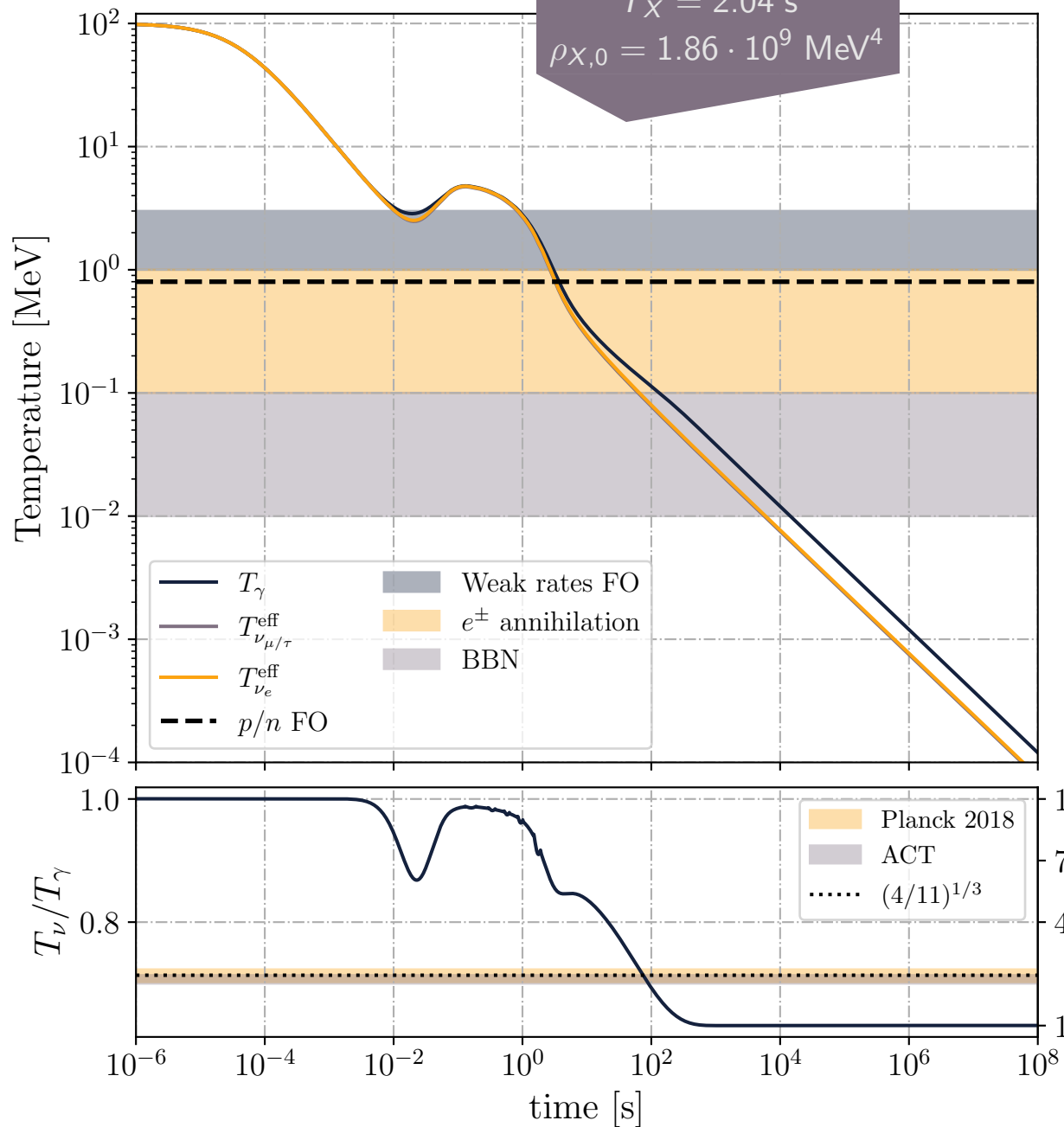
Temperature evolution (Extreme case)

13



$$\Gamma_X = 2.04 \text{ s}^{-1}$$

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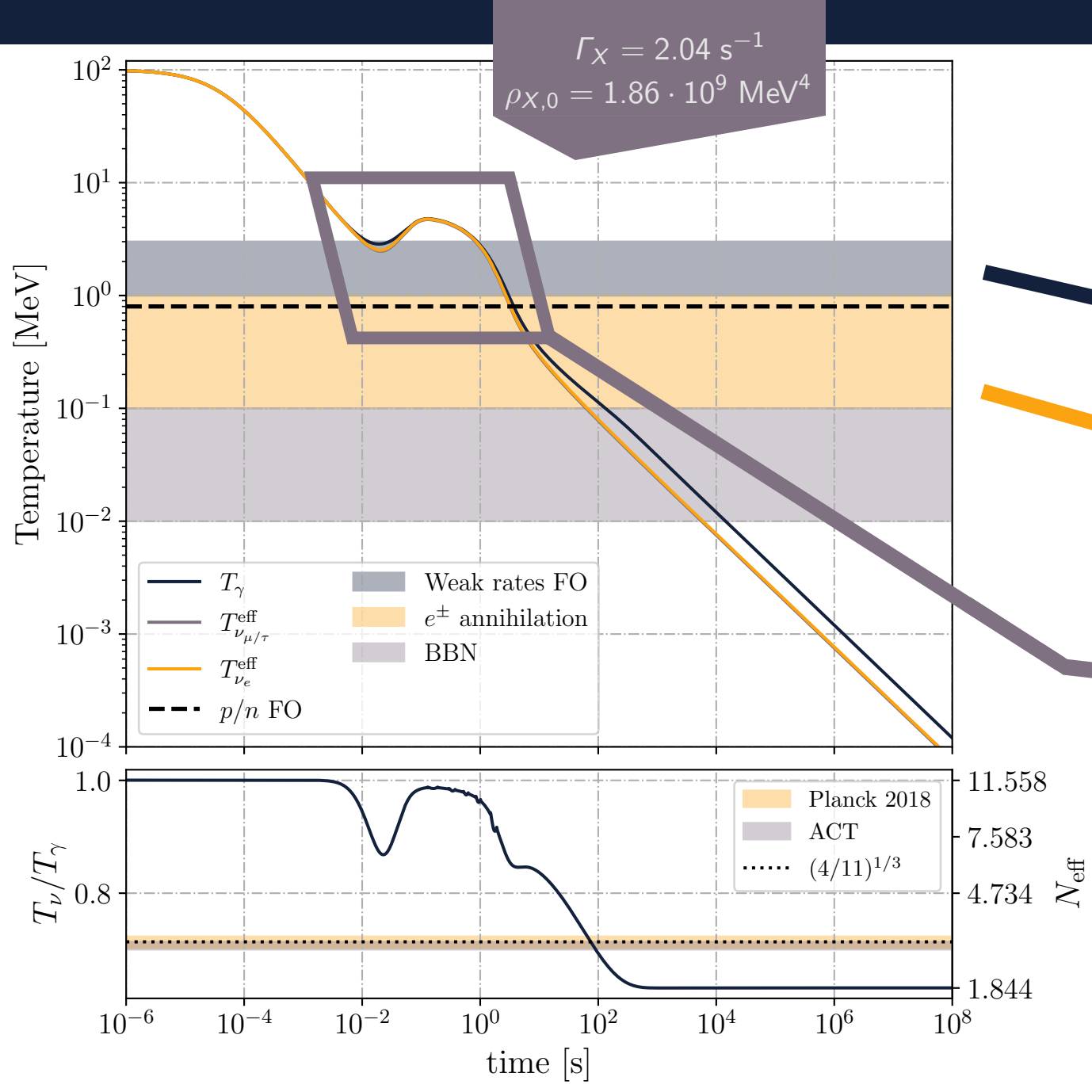
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Temperature evolution

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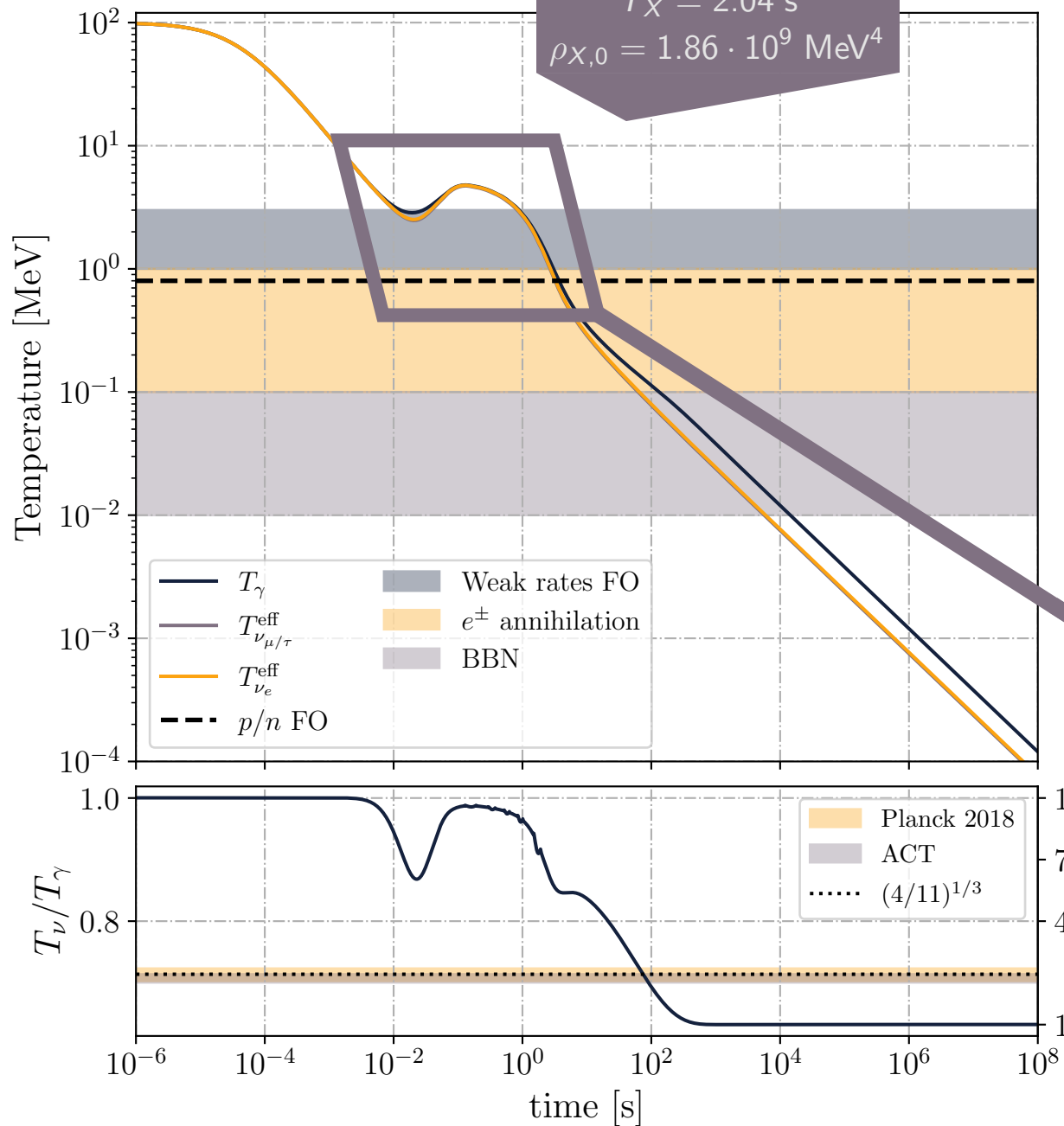
Neutrinos decouple

Energy from annihilation goes mostly to the bath

Incomplete thermalization

$$\Gamma_X = 2.04 \text{ s}^{-1}$$

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Results:

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Reheating close to BBN can have an impact on observables

Conclusions

1

We are able to solve
the whole neutrino
distribution, w/o
assuming Fermi-
Dirac

Reheating close
to BBN can have
an impact on
observables

2

Conclusions

1

Reheating close to BBN can have an impact on observables

We are able to solve the whole neutrino distribution, w/o assuming Fermi-Dirac

2

To find real constraints, it is important to consider all decay channels

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1

Adding hadronic
decays of the X
particle

Future work

1

Adding neutrino
decays of the X
particle

Adding hadronic
decays of the X
particle

2

Future work

1

Adding hadronic
decays of the X
particle

Adding neutrino
decays of the X
particle

3

Merge the code
with CLASS to
obtain CMB
observables

2



Thank you for your attention

Happy to answer any questions

