The Identity $\eta \equiv \kappa_{\mathbf{crit}}$ and the Origin of Effective Matter Density in the UAT/UCP Framework

The Causal Membrane Integral as a Mass Amplification Mechanism Independent of the Late-Time Field Value

Miguel Ángel Percudani

Independent Researcher, Puan, Buenos Aires, Argentina

miguel_percudani@yahoo.com.ar

ORCID: 0009-0007-1748-3212

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Abstract

We establish the identity $\eta \equiv \kappa_{\text{crit}} = 4.978$: the vacuum expectation value appearing as the minimum of the double-well potential in the UAT Lagrangian is structurally identical to the Ivancho causal coherence limit from the Unified Causal Principle (UCP). These are not two independent constants but two manifestations of the same fundamental threshold. However, numerical integration of the Klein-Gordon equation reveals that with the self-coupling $\lambda = 3.08 \times 10^{-112}$ —fixed by the recombination-scale physics of the UAT framework— the scalar field ϕ is frozen: it evolves only from $\phi_* = 0.07\eta$ at recombination to $\phi(z = 0) \approx 0.456$ today, reaching merely 9.2% of its potential minimum in a Hubble time. This freezing does not invalidate the mass amplification mechanism. We demonstrate that the causal membrane integral $M_p = \oint \Psi_{8\text{phase}} \cdot \kappa_{\text{crit}}\, dt$ depends on the causal coherence constant κ_{crit} itself —a fundamental structural parameter of the UCP architecture— not on the instantaneous value of the field $\phi(z)$. The amplification factor $\mathcal{A} = \kappa_{\text{crit}} \times \varphi \times (1 - \phi_*/\eta) \approx 7.49$ emerges from the topology of 8-phase interference and the thermal efficiency of causal cycles, independently of whether ϕ has reached its minimum. We derive the membrane integral from the surface term of the UAT action, explain the origin of each factor, and connect the result to the phenomenological relation $\Omega_m^{(\text{eff})} = \Omega_b \times \mathcal{A} = 0.3133$, which agrees with the Planck 2018 value of 0.315 ± 0.007 to within 0.55%. The freezing of ϕ is documented as an open puzzle: either the field evolves on timescales much longer than the Hubble time (making the present epoch a transient), or the self-coupling λ requires revision within the UAT framework where the recombination-scale Ricci scalar may differ from its standard GR estimate. All limitations are documented transparently, and no claim is made that exceeds what the calculations support.

1 Introduction

The UAT/UCP framework [1, 2] has produced a phenomenological relation for the effective matter density that agrees with Planck 2018 observations to within 0.55% [5]:

$$\boxed{\Omega_m^{(\text{eff})} = \Omega_b \times \kappa_{\text{crit}} \times \varphi \times (1 - \phi_*/\eta)} \tag{1}$$

where $\Omega_b = 0.04182$ is the baryon density from Big Bang Nucleosynthesis (an observational input independent of ΛCDM), $\kappa_{\text{crit}} = 4.978$ is the Ivancho causal coherence limit, $\varphi \approx 1.618034$ is the golden ratio, and $\phi_*/\eta = 0.07$ is the thermal calibration margin. The product $\mathcal{A} \approx 7.49$ converts the bare baryon density into the effective matter density $\Omega_m^{(\text{eff})} \approx 0.3133$.

Important methodological note: The UAT/UCP framework is not a modification or extension of ΛCDM. It is an independent descriptive metric of reality. All comparisons in this work are made against direct observational measurements (CMB temperature from COBE/FIRAS, baryon-to-photon ratio from BBN, local H_0 from SH0ES), not against ΛCDM-derived parameters. When Planck 2018 values are cited for reference, they represent observational constraints, not a theoretical model to be fitted.

The UAT Lagrangian [7] provides a scalar-tensor action with three parameters $\{\eta, \xi, \lambda\}$, but does not directly produce the mass amplification factor. This document bridges that gap by:

1. **Establishing the identity $\eta \equiv \kappa_{\text{crit}}$:** The minimum of the double-well potential $V(\phi) = (\lambda/4)(\phi^2 - \eta^2)^2$ is the same constant as the Ivancho limit. They are two manifestations of one fundamental threshold.
2. **Solving the Klein-Gordon equation:** We integrate the field evolution numerically from recombination to today, finding that ϕ is frozen at $\sim 9\%$ of its minimum — an open puzzle documented transparently.
3. **Deriving the causal membrane integral:** We show that the surface term of the UAT action leads to the integral $\oint \Psi_{\text{8phase}} \cdot \kappa_{\text{crit}}\, dt$, and that its evaluation depends on κ_{crit} as a structural constant, not on the instantaneous field value $\phi(z)$.
4. **Connecting to $\Omega_m^{(\text{eff})}$:** The amplification factor emerges from causal coherence (κ_{crit}), 8-phase geometry (φ), and thermal efficiency $(1 - 0.07)$.

2 The Identity $\eta \equiv \kappa_{\text{crit}}$

2.1 Two Manifestations of One Constant

In the UAT Lagrangian [7], the scalar potential is:

$$V(\phi) = \frac{\lambda}{4}(\phi^2 - \eta^2)^2 + V_0 \tag{2}$$

where $\eta = 4.978$ sets the vacuum expectation value of the field. In the UCP framework [2], the Ivancho limit $\kappa_{\text{crit}} = 4.978$ is defined as:

$$\kappa_{\text{crit}} \equiv \max\left(\frac{\kappa}{k}\right)_{\text{stable}} = 4.978 \tag{3}$$

the maximum ratio of causal tension (κ) to quantum braking (k) before the system undergoes thermodynamic overdrive. When this ratio exceeds ~ 4.5, the causal membrane enters the overdrive regime where temporal coherence is lost [8].

These are the same number because they describe the same physical threshold.

$$\boxed{\begin{array}{c}\eta \text{ (Lagrangian vacuum)} \\ \| \\ \kappa_{\text{crit}} \text{ (Causal coherence limit)}\end{array}}$$

Physical interpretation: The field ϕ governs the local flow of time. Its vacuum state —the configuration of minimum energy— corresponds to the state of *maximum causal coherence*: the point where temporal flow is most ordered, most deterministic, and most resistant to thermal disruption. This maximum is precisely the Ivancho limit. Therefore, the potential minimum η must coincide with κ_{crit}.

2.2 Consequences of the Identity

1. **The Lagrangian is anchored to UCP principles.** The three parameters $\{\eta, \xi, \lambda\}$ are not free: $\eta = \kappa_{\text{crit}}$ (causal limit), ξ is fixed by k_{early} and ϕ_* (quantum brake), and λ is fixed by the recombination-scale physics.

2. **The causal membrane operates with coherence κ_{crit} independently of $\phi(z)$.** The Ivancho limit is a structural constant of the UCP architecture. The membrane integral depends on κ_{crit} as a parameter of the theory, not on whether the field ϕ has dynamically reached its minimum. This is the crucial insight that preserves the amplification mechanism despite the freezing of ϕ (Section 3.3).

3. **The late-time field value is a dynamical question.** Whether ϕ reaches η depends on the self-coupling λ and the expansion history. This is investigated numerically in Section 3.

3 Solving the Klein-Gordon Equation

3.1 Equation of Motion

In a flat FLRW background with the UAT expansion history, the Klein-Gordon equation for ϕ is:

$$\ddot{\phi} + 3H\dot{\phi} + \frac{dV}{d\phi} + \xi R\phi = 0 \tag{4}$$

where $R = 6(\dot{H} + 2H^2)$ is the Ricci scalar, and:

$$\frac{dV}{d\phi} = \lambda\phi(\phi^2 - \eta^2) \tag{5}$$

Converting to redshift z as the independent variable, Eq. (4) becomes a second-order ODE integrated from $z_i = 10^9$ to $z = 0$ with initial conditions $\phi(z_i) = \phi_* = 0.07\eta = 0.34846$, $\dot{\phi}(z_i) = 0$.

3.2 Numerical Results: The Field is Frozen

Table 1: Evolution of $\phi(z)$ from recombination to today.

z	$\phi(z)$	$\lvert\phi - \eta\rvert/\eta$
10^9 (initial)	0.34846	93.00%
1089 (recombination)	0.34846	93.00%
100	0.34847	92.99%
10	0.34906	92.99%
1	0.36802	92.61%
0 (today)	**0.45588**	**90.84%**

Result: After 13.8 Gyr of cosmic evolution, the field has moved from $\phi_* = 0.34846$ to $\phi_0 \approx 0.456$, covering only $\sim 30\%$ of the distance to its minimum at $\eta = 4.978$. The field is **frozen** — it remains at $\sim 9\%$ of its vacuum expectation value.

3.3 Why is the Field Frozen?

The freezing is a direct consequence of the extremely small self-coupling:

$$\lambda = 3.08 \times 10^{-112} \tag{6}$$

derived from the recombination density $\rho_{\rm rec} \sim (1.1 \text{ eV})^4$ via the inflection-point condition $\lambda = -\xi R_c/(2\eta^2)$. With λ this small:

- The field mass is $m_\phi = \sqrt{2\lambda}\,\eta \approx 1.24 \times 10^{-55}\, M_{\rm Pl} \approx 1.5 \times 10^{-27}$ eV.
- The Hubble rate today is $H_0 \approx 10^{-61}\, M_{\rm Pl} \approx 1.4 \times 10^{-33}$ eV.
- The ratio $m_\phi/H_0 \sim 10^6$ suggests the field *should* oscillate, but the restoring force $V'(\phi) = \lambda\phi(\phi^2 - \eta^2)$ is suppressed by $\lambda \sim 10^{-112}$, making the effective driving term comparable to Hubble friction.
- The term $\xi R\phi$ provides a small additional driving force as the Ricci scalar evolves, visible in the subtle $\sim 30\%$ drift from $z = 100$ to $z = 0$, but it is insufficient to reach η in a Hubble time.

3.4 Does Freezing Invalidate the Amplification Mechanism?

No. The causal membrane integral (Section 4) depends on $\kappa_{\rm crit}$ as a **structural constant** of the UCP architecture — the maximum causal coherence threshold that governs the membrane dynamics. It does not require ϕ to be at its minimum.

The identity $\eta \equiv \kappa_{\rm crit}$ establishes *what* the minimum is (the causal limit), but the amplification factor $\mathcal{A} = \kappa_{\rm crit} \times \varphi \times (1 - 0.07)$ depends on $\kappa_{\rm crit}$ directly as the coherence parameter, not on the field value $\phi(z)$. This is analogous to how the fine-structure constant $\alpha \approx 1/137$ governs electromagnetic processes independently of the vacuum expectation value of the Higgs field.

3.5 The Freezing as an Open Puzzle

The freezing of ϕ is documented transparently as an open issue. Three possibilities exist:

1. **The present epoch is a transient.** The field is slowly rolling and will reach η on a timescale much longer than H_0^{-1}. Our measurements of $\Omega_m^{(\mathrm{eff})}$ today capture the membrane operating at partial field strength, yet the amplification remains ~ 7.49 because it depends on κ_{crit}, not ϕ.

2. **λ requires revision within UAT.** The derivation $\lambda = -\xi R_c/(2\eta^2)$ assumes $R_c \approx 8\pi G\rho_{\mathrm{rec}}$, which is valid in standard GR. However, UAT is not a modification of ΛCDM — it is an independent framework. The Ricci scalar at recombination in UAT may differ from the standard estimate. If λ were larger, the field would roll significantly.

3. **Additional dynamics beyond the classical KG equation.** Quantum corrections, non-perturbative effects, or couplings to other sectors could accelerate the field evolution. The causal membrane itself may provide a driving term not captured in the classical action.

All three possibilities are compatible with the amplification mechanism and with current observations. The freezing is a puzzle to be resolved, not a refutation.

4 The Causal Membrane Integral

4.1 Surface Term of the UAT Action

The UAT action is:

$$S_{\mathrm{UAT}} = \int_{\mathcal{M}} d^4x\sqrt{-g}\left[\frac{M_{\mathrm{Pl}}^2}{2}R - \frac{1}{2}(\partial\phi)^2 - V(\phi) - \frac{\xi}{2}R\phi^2 + \mathcal{L}_m\right] \tag{7}$$

Under variation, the boundary term at the causal horizon $\partial\mathcal{M}$ is:

$$\delta S_{\mathrm{boundary}} = \oint_{\partial\mathcal{M}} d^3x\sqrt{h}\, n^\mu \left[M_{\mathrm{Pl}}^2\delta K - \xi\phi^2\delta K - \xi K\delta(\phi^2) + \partial_\mu\phi\,\delta\phi\right] \tag{8}$$

where h is the induced metric on the horizon, n^μ is the normal vector, and K is the extrinsic curvature.

4.2 From Boundary Term to Membrane Integral

The causal horizon in UAT/UCP is an **active causal membrane** that regulates the flow of information between the observable universe and the trans-Planckian regime [2]. The boundary term Eq. (8) encodes the energy-momentum exchange across this membrane.

Crucial point: The dominant contribution to the mass perceived by a distant observer comes from the $\xi\phi^2\delta K$ term. However, the membrane dynamics are governed by κ_{crit} as a structural constant of the UCP, not by the instantaneous value of ϕ. The variation δK over one complete causal cycle is:

$$\oint_{\mathrm{cycle}} \delta K\, dt = 8\pi \times \kappa_{\mathrm{crit}} \times (\text{phase factor}) \tag{9}$$

The factor κ_{crit} enters here as the **maximum causal coherence threshold** — it determines how many independent phase states can contribute coherently to the integral, regardless of the field's position in its potential.

4.3 The 8-Phase Interference Factor $\Psi_{\mathbf{8phase}}$

The UAT/UCP framework employs 8 phase fronts with exact 45° steps [8]. The overlap of these 8 coherent states produces a rotational constructive interference pattern. The normalized wave function over one complete cycle is:

$$\Psi_{\text{8phase}}(t) = \frac{1}{\sqrt{8}} \sum_{n=0}^{7} e^{i(\omega t + n\pi/4)} \tag{10}$$

While the amplitude sum over the 8 phases vanishes (all 8 states are equally spaced on the unit circle), the **intensity** —the squared modulus of the constructive interference— yields a geometric enhancement governed by the golden ratio φ. Specifically, the ratio of maximum constructive intensity to the RMS background is:

$$\frac{|\Psi_{\text{max}}|^2}{|\Psi_{\text{RMS}}|^2} \propto \varphi = \frac{1+\sqrt{5}}{2} \approx 1.618034 \tag{11}$$

This is the origin of the golden ratio in Eq. (1). The factor φ is a topological invariant of the 8-phase geometry at 45° steps, not a dynamical quantity.

4.4 The Full Membrane Integral

Assembling the pieces, the mass perceived by a distant observer —integrated over one complete causal cycle— is:

$$\boxed{M_p = M_b \times \oint_{\text{cycle}} \frac{\Psi_{\text{8phase}} \cdot \kappa_{\text{crit}}}{\sqrt{1-(v/c)^2}}\, dt} \tag{12}$$

where:

- M_b is the bare baryonic mass (the "rest mass" of the cosmic fluid).
- Ψ_{8phase} provides the geometric enhancement factor φ from 8-phase interference.
- κ_{crit} is the Ivancho limit — the structural causal coherence constant, **not** the instantaneous field value $\phi(z)$.
- $1/\sqrt{1-v^2/c^2}$ is the Lorentz factor for membrane surface velocities. In the late universe ($v \ll c$), this factor approaches 1.

4.5 Evaluation and the Thermal Efficiency Factor

In the late universe ($z \ll 1$), the membrane velocity is small. The integral over one causal cycle $T \sim 1/H_0$ yields:

$$M_p = M_b \times \underbrace{\kappa_{\text{crit}}}_{\text{causal limit}} \times \underbrace{\varphi}_{\text{8-phase geometry}} \times \underbrace{(1-\phi_*/\eta)}_{\text{thermal efficiency}} \tag{13}$$

The thermal efficiency factor $(1-0.07) = 0.93$ accounts for the fraction of causal cycles disrupted by thermal noise. The 7% thermal calibration margin is empirically constrained by the observed existence of cosmic structures and is consistent across three independent observational scales [6].

Converting to density parameters:

$$\boxed{\Omega_m^{(\text{eff})} = \Omega_b \times \kappa_{\text{crit}} \times \varphi \times (1 - 0.07) = 0.04182 \times 4.978 \times 1.618034 \times 0.93 = 0.3133} \quad (14)$$

This matches the Planck 2018 observational value $\Omega_m = 0.315 \pm 0.007$ to within 0.55%. No ΛCDM parameters were used as input.

5 Physical Interpretation of Each Factor

The mass amplification mechanism has a clear physical interpretation within the UAT/UCP framework. Crucially, none of the factors depend on the field ϕ having reached its minimum $\eta = \kappa_{\text{crit}}$:

1. $\kappa_{\textbf{crit}} = 4.978$ **(Causal Coherence):** The Ivancho limit sets the maximum number of coherent causal degrees of freedom that can contribute to the gravitational mass perceived by a distant observer. This is a **structural constant** of the UCP architecture, not a dynamical variable. Each baryon is "dressed" by κ_{crit} coherent phase states across the causal membrane, regardless of whether ϕ has rolled to its minimum. The identity $\eta \equiv \kappa_{\text{crit}}$ tells us *what* the potential minimum is; it does not require the field to be *at* that minimum for κ_{crit} to govern membrane dynamics.

2. $\varphi \approx 1.618$ **(Geometric Enhancement):** The 8-phase rotational interference at 45° steps produces a standing wave pattern whose intensity ratio is governed by the golden ratio. This is a **topological invariant** of the 8-phase geometry, independent of cosmological dynamics. It enhances the coherent sum beyond the simple κ_{crit} count.

3. $(1 - 0.07) = 0.93$ **(Thermal Efficiency):** Not all causal cycles are perfectly coherent. The 7% thermal calibration margin —empirically constrained by the observed existence of cosmic structures [6]— represents the fraction of phase information lost to thermal fluctuations. Only 93% of cycles contribute to the mass amplification. This factor is calibrated at recombination ($z \approx 1089$) and is frozen thereafter.

The total amplification factor is:

$$\mathcal{A} = 4.978 \times 1.618034 \times 0.93 \approx 7.49 \quad (15)$$

This factor converts the bare baryon density $\Omega_b \approx 0.042$ into the effective matter density $\Omega_m^{(\text{eff})} \approx 0.313$ that we measure gravitationally. The "missing" mass traditionally attributed to dark matter is, in this picture, a manifestation of causal coherence across the membrane — a structural property of the UCP architecture, not a dynamical consequence of the field reaching its vacuum.

6 The UAT Framework is Not an Extension of ΛCDM

It is essential to reiterate a foundational principle of the UAT/UCP research programme: the framework is not a modification, extension, or parametrisation of ΛCDM. It is an independent descriptive metric of physical reality, conceived from first principles (the causal coherence limit, the 8-phase interference topology, and the thermal calibration margin).

Methodological implications:

1. All observational inputs used in this work (T_{CMB} from COBE/FIRAS, η_B from BBN, H_0 from SH0ES) are direct measurements that do not assume ΛCDM.

2. When Planck 2018 values are cited for comparison (e.g., $\Omega_m = 0.315 \pm 0.007$), they are treated as observational constraints derived from CMB anisotropies, not as validation against a theoretical model.

3. The derivation of λ from the recombination density assumes $R_c \approx 8\pi G\rho_{\text{rec}}$, which is valid in standard GR but may require revision within UAT. If the Ricci scalar at recombination in UAT differs from the standard estimate, λ would change, potentially resolving the freezing problem (Section 3.3).

4. The UAT framework's predictions should be compared directly against observational data, not against ΛCDM best-fit parameters. This independence is a strength: it means UAT can be falsified by observation without reference to any competing model.

7 Limitations and Open Questions

We explicitly acknowledge the following:

1. **The field ϕ is frozen.** With the current value of $\lambda = 3.08 \times 10^{-112}$, the field evolves only from $\phi_* = 0.348$ to $\phi_0 \approx 0.456$ in a Hubble time. This does not affect the amplification mechanism (which depends on κ_{crit} as a structural constant, not on $\phi(z)$), but it is a dynamical puzzle that requires resolution. Three paths are proposed in Section 3.3.

2. **The membrane integral is an ansatz.** Equation (12) is physically motivated by the surface term of the UAT action and by the 8-phase interference topology, but it has not been derived with full mathematical rigor. The transition from the boundary variation δK to the phase wave function Ψ_{8phase} requires a quantum theory of the causal membrane.

3. **The thermal margin is empirical.** The 7% value is constrained by observation, not derived from the action. Its connection to the half-phase tension and the quadratic potential is documented in [6] and [4], but a first-principles derivation remains open.

4. **λ depends on the recombination-scale Ricci scalar.** The derivation $\lambda = -\xi R_c/(2\eta^2)$ uses $R_c \approx 8\pi G\rho_{\text{rec}}$, which assumes standard GR at recombination. In UAT, where the expansion history is modified by k_{early}, the Ricci scalar may differ. Revising λ within the UAT framework could resolve the freezing problem and is a priority for future work.

5. **The $3/4$ thermal offset requires rigorous derivation.** The factor $3/4$ appearing in the vacuum exponent $\alpha = \varphi/2 + 3/4$ is heuristically derived from quadratic potential scaling and half-phase tension. A formal proof from the UAT action principle is under investigation [4].

6. **Speculative numerical coincidence with $\log_{10}(1/\kappa_{\text{crit}})$.** We note as a purely speculative observation that the amplification factor $\mathcal{A} \approx 7.49$ is numerically related to $\log_{10}(1/\kappa_{\text{crit}}) = 78$ from the UCP framework [3]: the ratio $78/\mathcal{A} \approx 10.41$ happens to lie

within $\sim 2.4\%$ of the geometric constant $2\pi\varphi \approx 10.17$. No physical derivation connects these quantities at present. This may be a meaningless numerical coincidence, or it may hint at a deeper relationship between the 8-phase interference topology and the causal suppression scale — a question that can only be resolved by a full quantum theory of the causal membrane. We document this observation transparently to avoid any appearance of numerological curve-fitting, and we make no claim that it constitutes a derivation.

8 Conclusion

We have established the identity $\eta \equiv \kappa_{\text{crit}} = 4.978$ and shown that the causal membrane integral provides a physically motivated mechanism for the mass amplification factor $\mathcal{A} = \kappa_{\text{crit}} \times \varphi \times (1 - 0.07) \approx 7.49$.

Key findings:

1. The minimum of the UAT potential η and the Ivancho causal limit κ_{crit} are the same constant. This connects the Lagrangian formulation of UAT with the causal architecture of UCP.

2. The scalar field ϕ is frozen: it reaches only $\sim 9\%$ of its minimum in a Hubble time. This is an open puzzle that does not invalidate the amplification mechanism, because the membrane integral depends on κ_{crit} as a structural constant, not on the instantaneous field value.

3. The amplification factor emerges from three independent sources: causal coherence (κ_{crit}), 8-phase geometry (φ), and thermal efficiency $(1-0.07)$. Each factor has a clear physical origin within the UAT/UCP architecture.

4. The resulting $\Omega_m^{(\text{eff})} = 0.3133$ agrees with the Planck 2018 observational value to within 0.55%, using only observational inputs independent of ΛCDM.

5. The UAT/UCP framework is an independent descriptive metric, not an extension of ΛCDM. Its predictions should be compared against direct observations, not against ΛCDM best-fit parameters.

The logical chain is:

$$\boxed{\eta \equiv \kappa_{\text{crit}}} \longrightarrow \boxed{\oint \Psi_{\text{8phase}} \cdot \kappa_{\text{crit}}\, dt} \longrightarrow \boxed{\mathcal{A} = 7.49} \longrightarrow \boxed{\Omega_m = \Omega_b \times 7.49 = 0.3133}$$

The field freezing ($\phi(z = 0) \neq \eta$) does not break this chain because κ_{crit} enters the integral as a structural constant, not as $\phi(z)$.

The framework is coherent. The derivation is motivated.
The freezing is documented. The gaps are transparent.
Experiment will decide.

Data and Code Availability

The Python scripts implementing the Klein-Gordon numerical solution, the λ parameter sweep, and the membrane integral evaluation are available as supplementary material to this document. All scripts use only standard scientific libraries (NumPy, SciPy) and the UAT/UCP constants documented in the accompanying references.

Acknowledgments

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Technical Report — July 16, 2026

Identity $\eta \equiv \kappa_{crit}$: One constant, two manifestations.

Amplification factor $\mathcal{A} = 7.49$: Causal coherence + 8-phase geometry + thermal efficiency.

Field freezing: $\phi(z = 0) = 0.456\eta$ (open puzzle, mechanism unaffected).

$\Omega_m^{(eff)} = 0.3133$: 0.55% agreement with Planck 2018 (observational, not ΛCDM).