

Dark matter spikes with strongly Self-interacting particles

Alejandro Ibarra

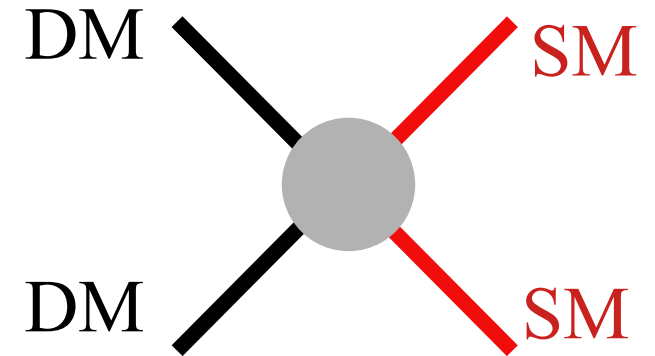
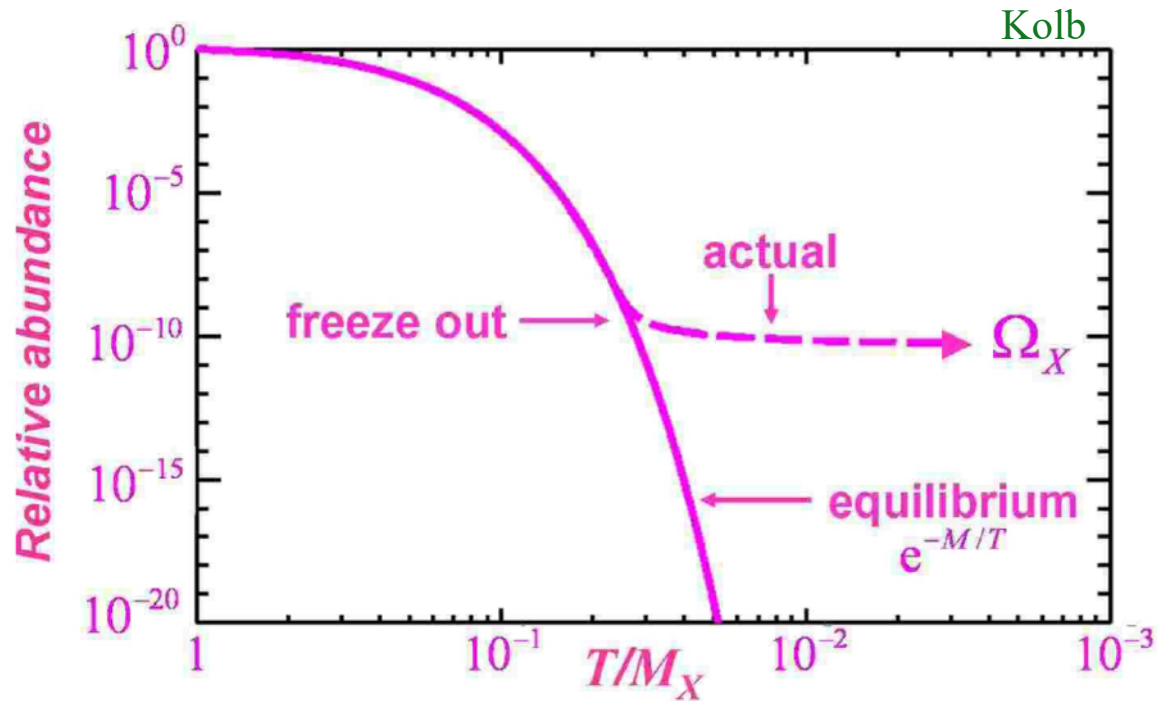


In collaboration with Boris Betancourt, Motoko Fujiwara and Takashi Toma
arXiv:2506.12642

Valencia
June 2025

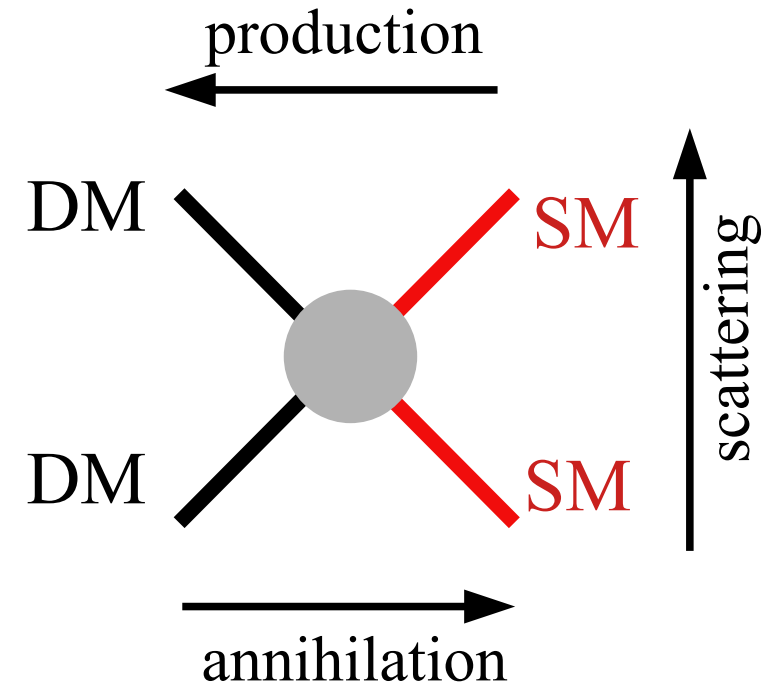
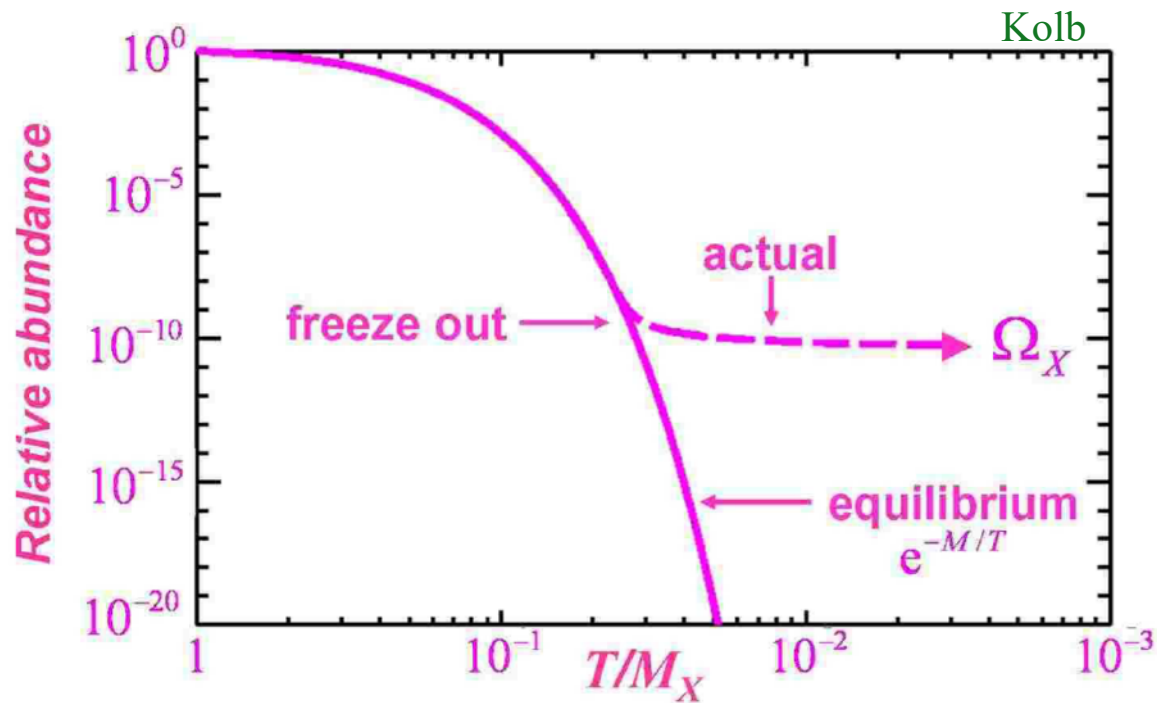
Introduction

Thermal freeze-out stands out as a plausible mechanism to generate the DM in our Universe (analogous to photon decoupling, neutron decoupling)



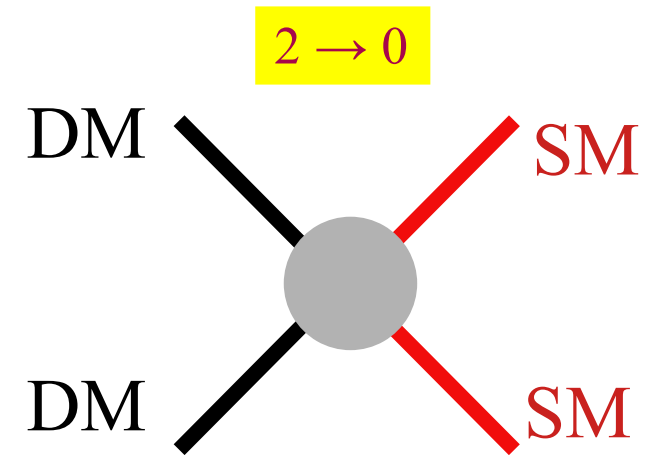
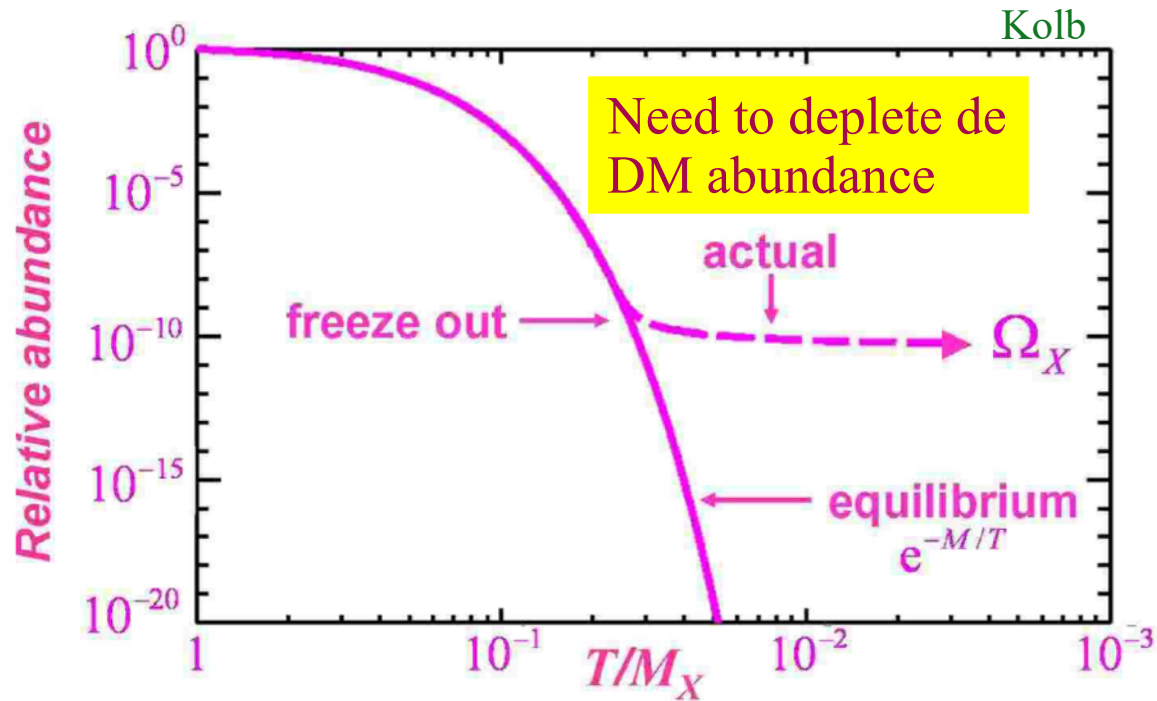
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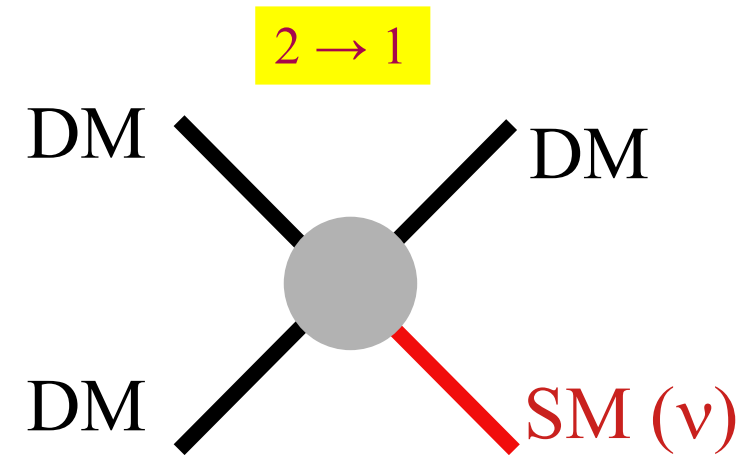
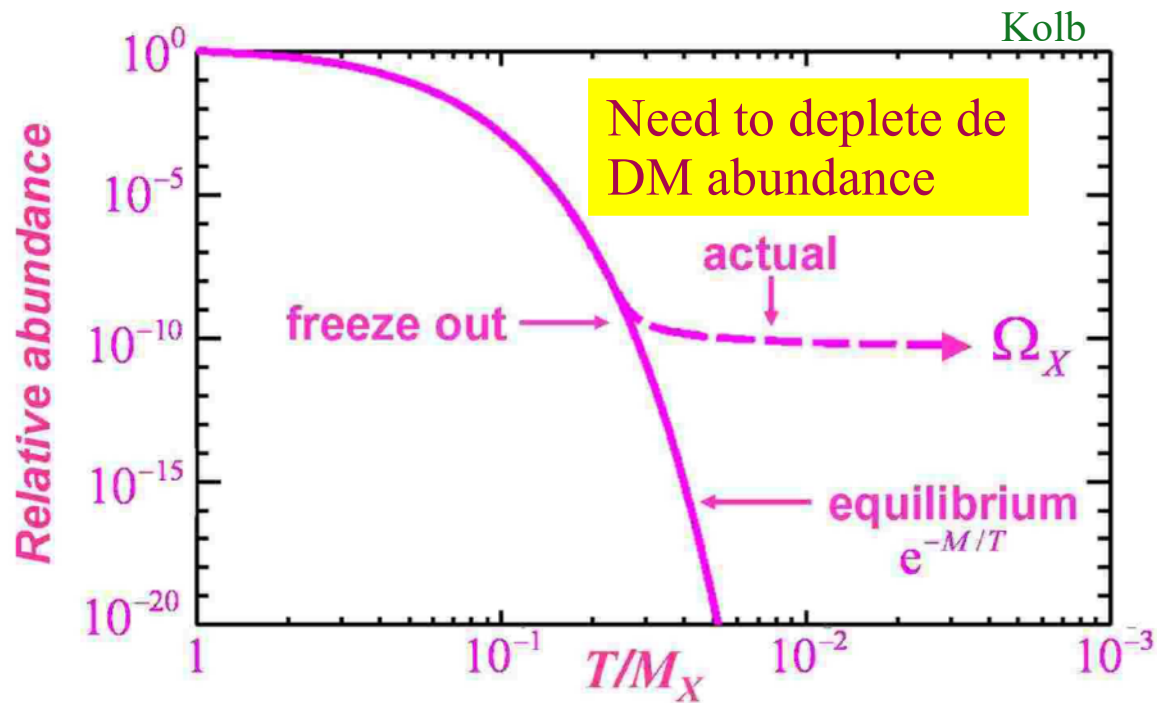
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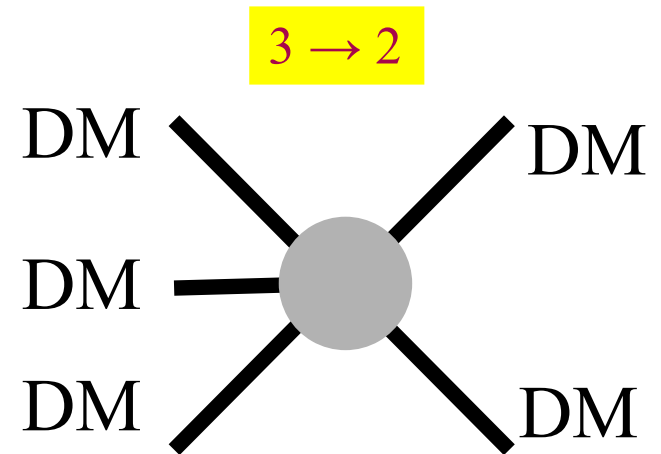
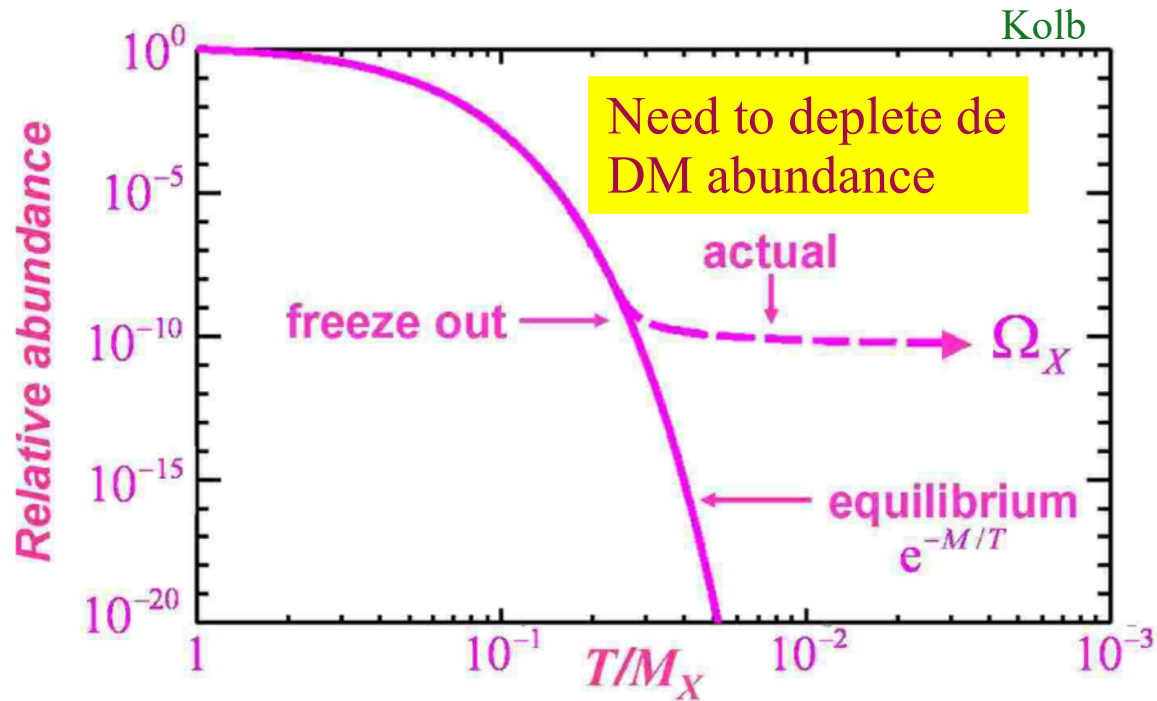
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Hambye et al.
D'Eramo, Thaler

Introduction

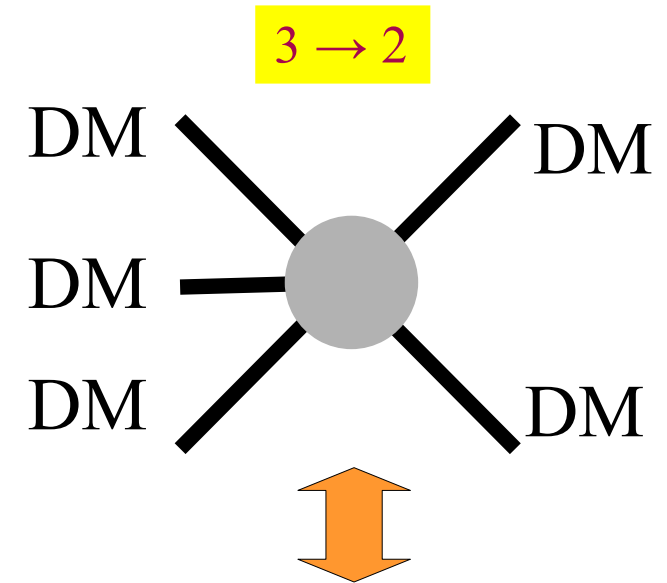
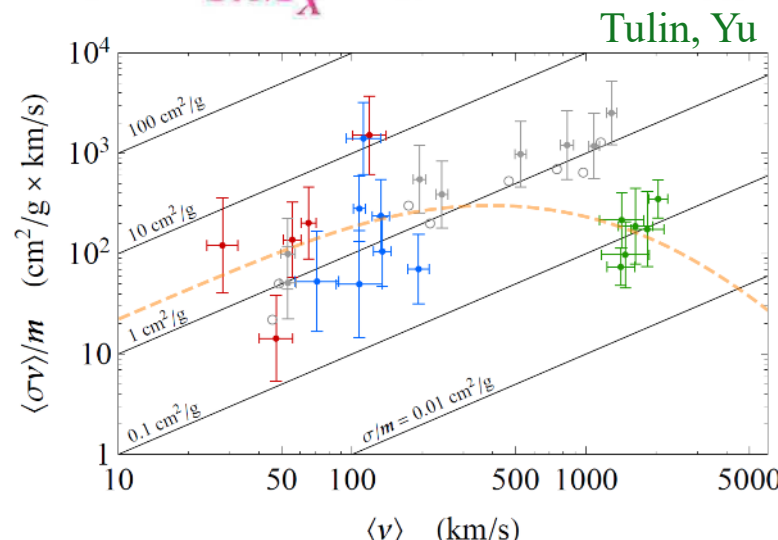
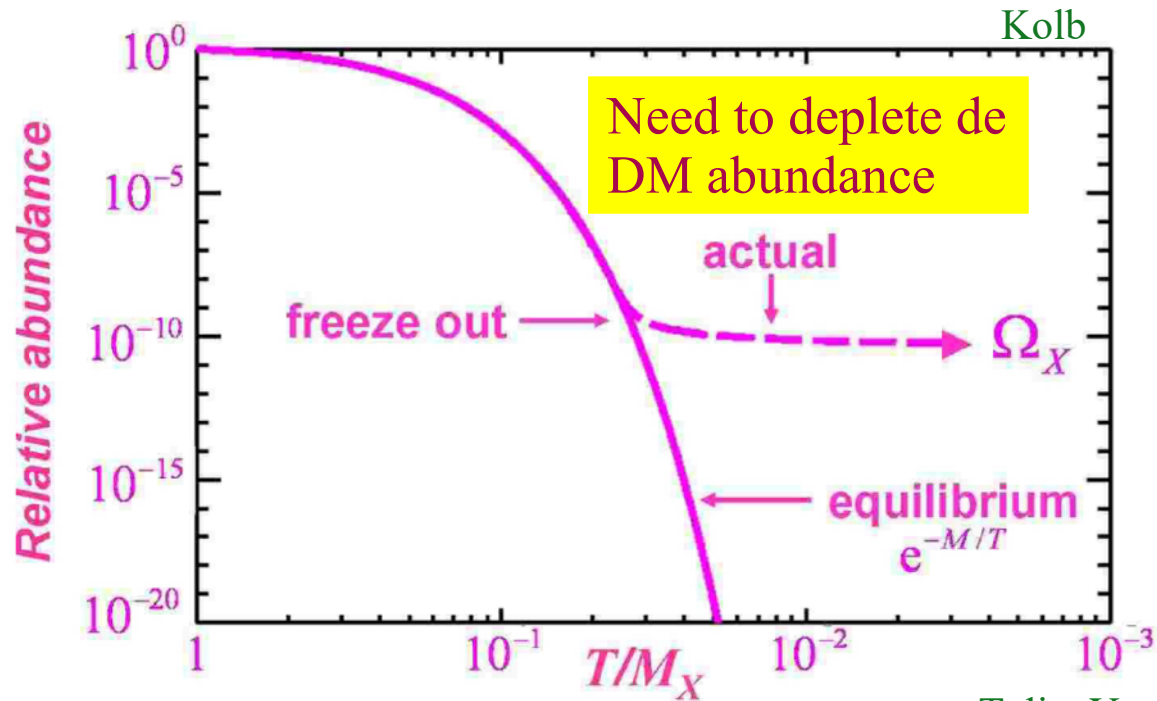
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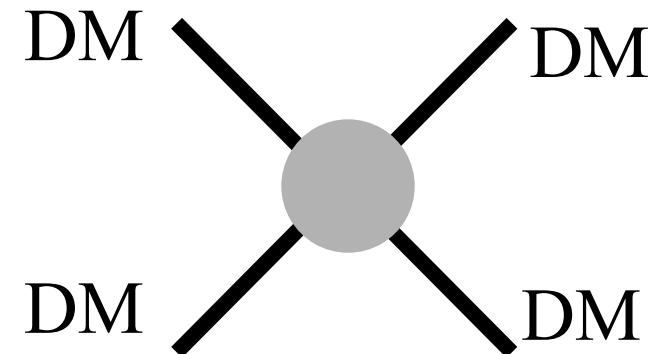
Carlson, Machacek, Hall
Hochberg, Kuflik, Volansky, Wacker

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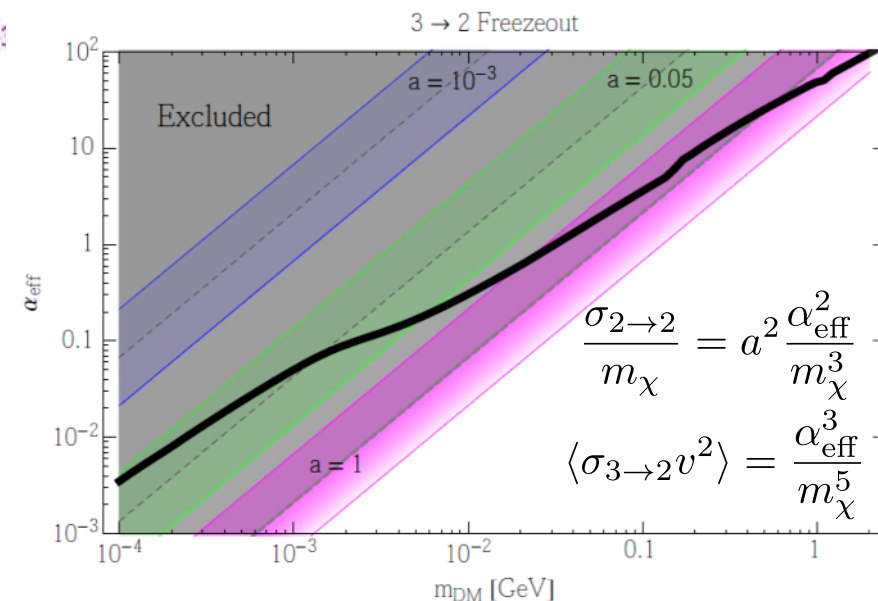
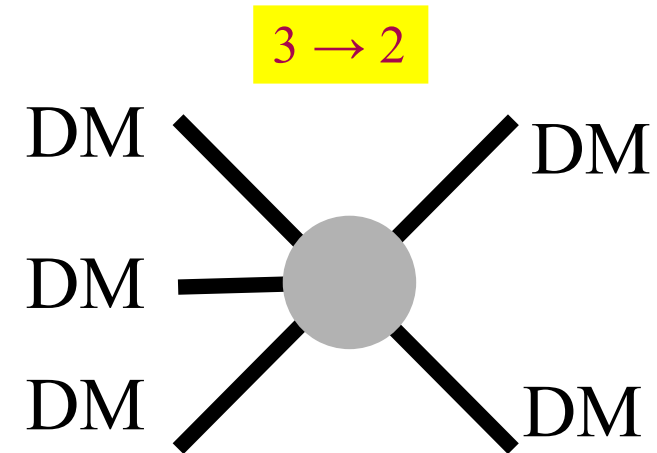
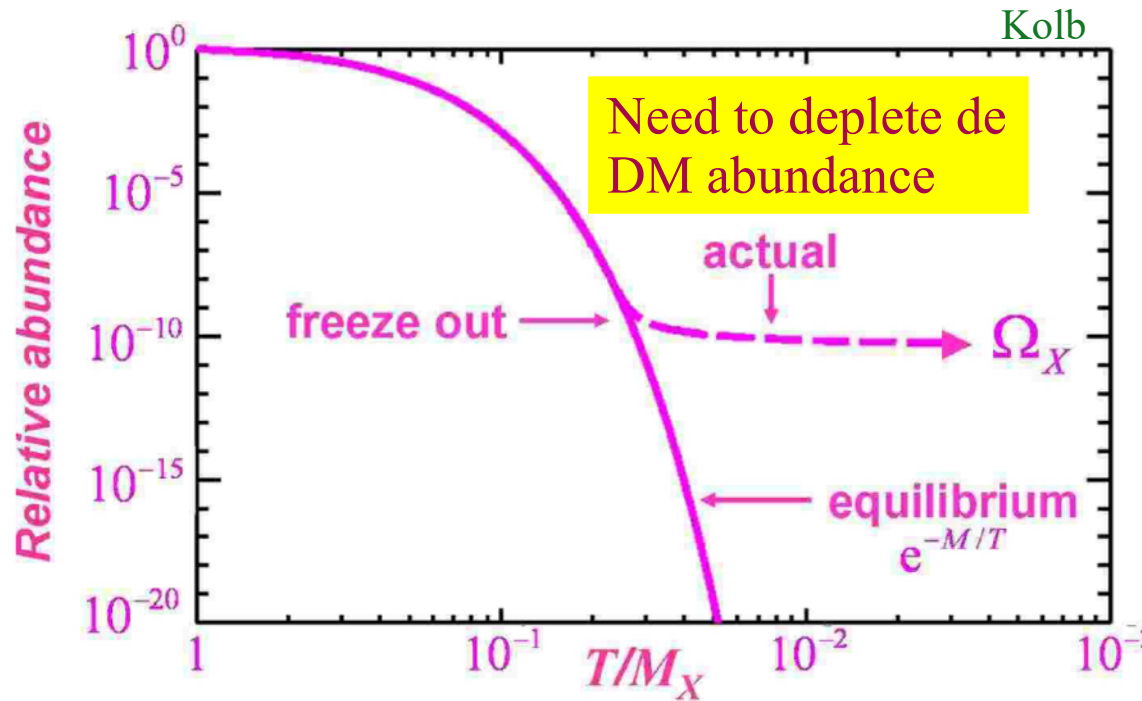


DM self-scattering



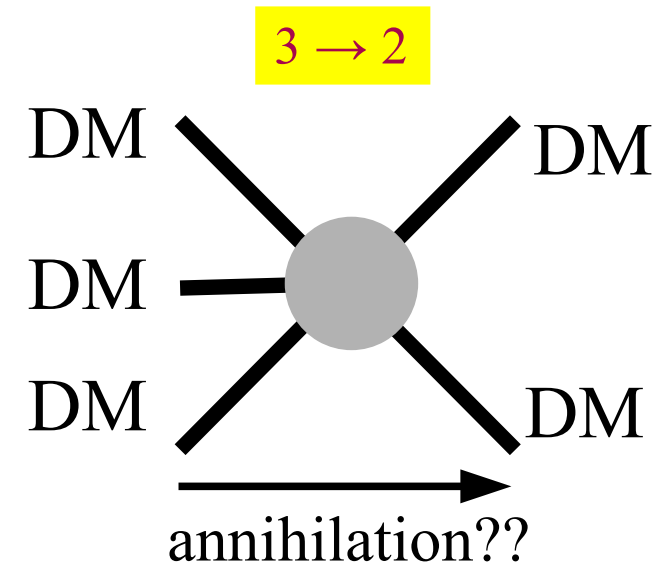
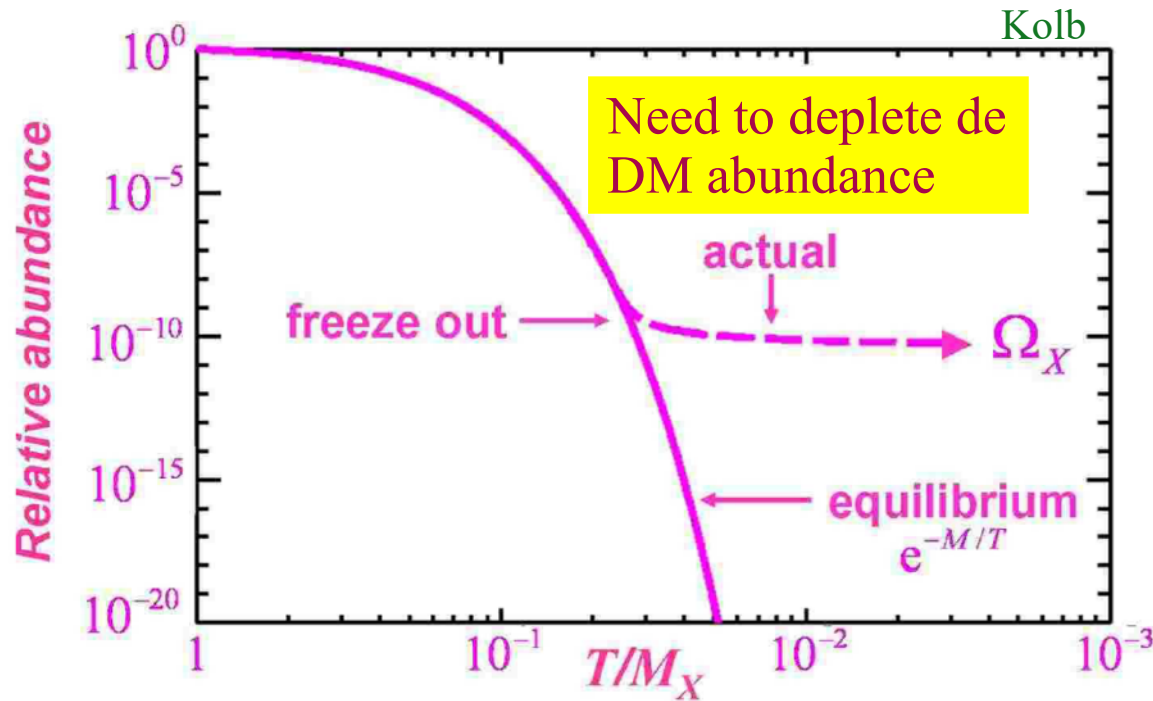
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DM density at freeze-out

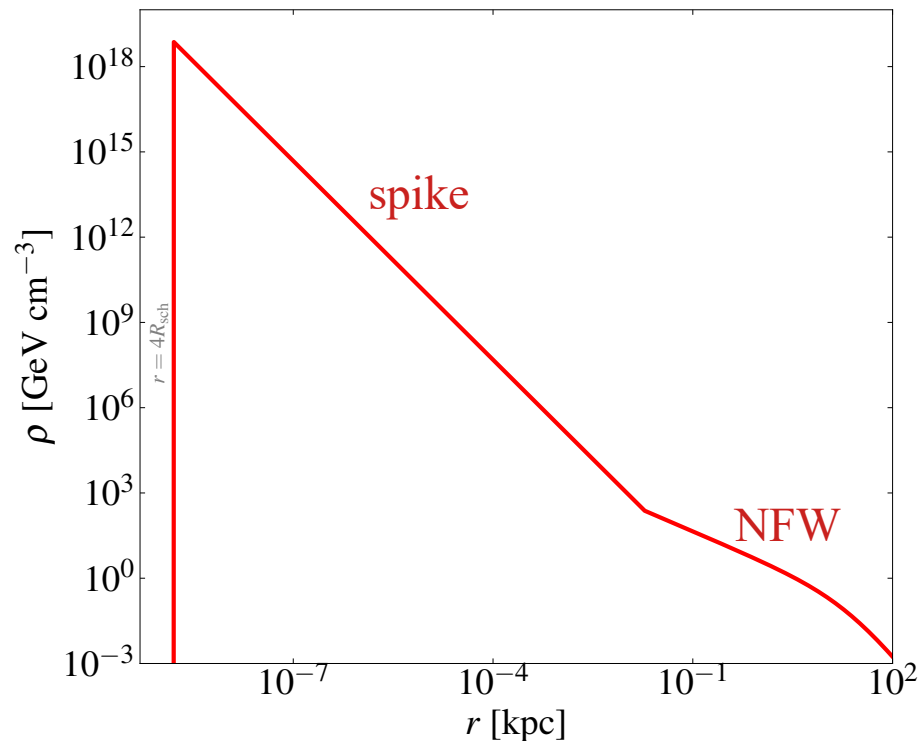
$$\rho_\chi \sim 6 \times 10^{22} \text{ GeV/cm}^3 \left(\frac{m_\chi}{100 \text{ MeV}} \right)^{-3} \left(\frac{\alpha_{\text{eff}}}{0.1} \right)$$

The DM spike around supermassive black holes

In the center of the Milky Way it is located a supermassive black hole, with mass $\sim 4 \times 10^6 M_{\text{sun}}$.

The adiabatic growth of the black hole produces a “spike” in the dark matter distribution [Gondolo, Silk’99](#), [Peebles ‘72](#), [Quinlan, Hernquist, Sigurdsson ‘95](#)

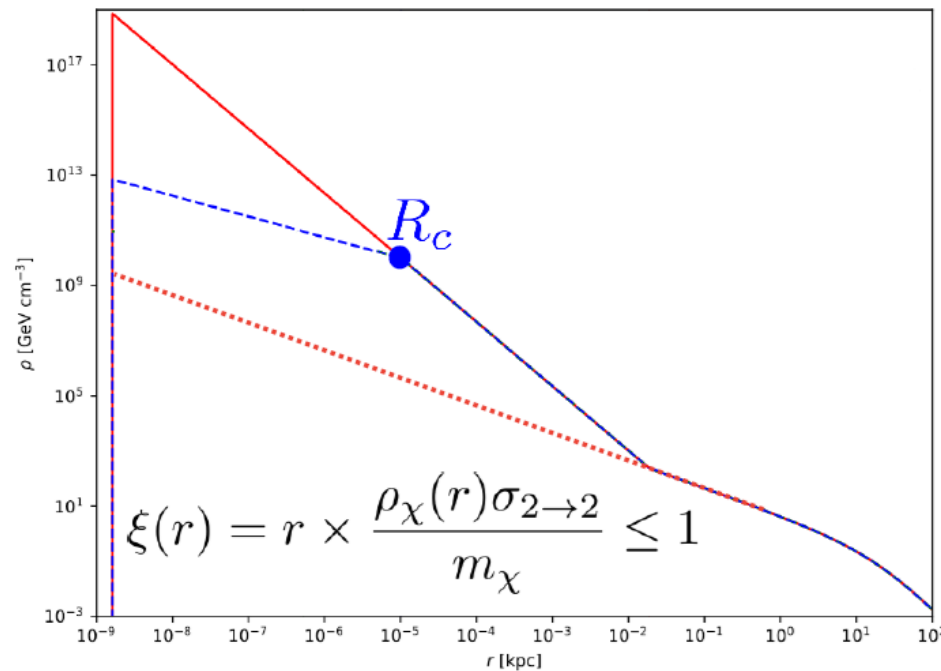
$$\rho(r) = \rho_0 \left(\frac{r_0}{r} \right) \longrightarrow \rho_{\text{sp}} \sim \rho_R \left(\frac{R_{\text{sp}}}{r} \right)^{7/3}$$



The DM spike around supermassive black holes

Different effects can soften the spike:

- Self-interactions: momentum exchange produce a core (depends on $\sigma_{2 \rightarrow 2}$)

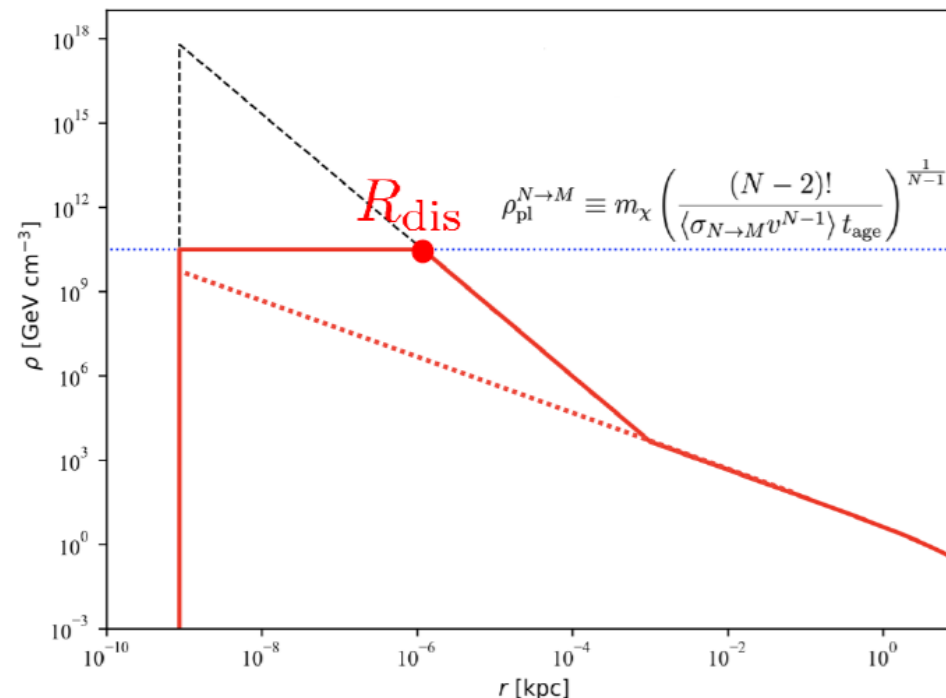


The DM spike around supermassive black holes

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- $n \rightarrow m$ processes ($n > m$): deplete the number of DM particles in the spike (depends on $\sigma_{n \rightarrow m}$)

$$\dot{n}_\chi(r, t) = - \langle \sigma_{2 \rightarrow 0} v \rangle (n_\chi(r, t))^2 - \frac{n}{n!} \langle \sigma_{n \rightarrow m} v^{n-1} \rangle (n_\chi(r, t))^n$$



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- $n \rightarrow m$ processes ($n > m$) produce energetic DM particles. If they scatter, they heat-up the spike and produce a core (depends on $\sigma_{n \rightarrow m}$ and $\sigma_{2 \rightarrow 2}$)

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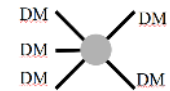
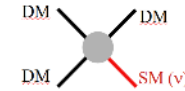
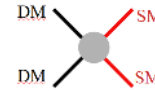
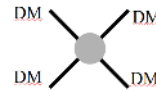


The $n\rightarrow m$ process produces a highly boosted DM particle.

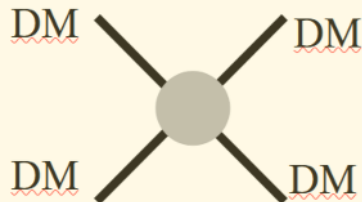
Implications for direct DM searches?

The DM spike around supermassive black holes

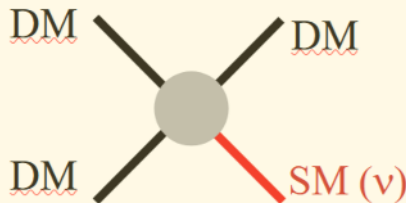
Large parameter space: $\{m_\chi, \sigma_{2 \rightarrow 2}/m_\chi, \langle \sigma_{2 \rightarrow 0} v \rangle, \langle \sigma_{2 \rightarrow 1} v \rangle, \langle \sigma_{3 \rightarrow 2} v^2 \rangle, \dots\}$



• Example 1: Only $2 \rightarrow 2$ and $2 \rightarrow 1$

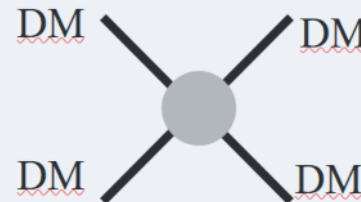


$$\sigma_{2 \rightarrow 2}/m_\chi = \frac{\alpha_{2 \rightarrow 2}^2}{m_\chi^3}$$

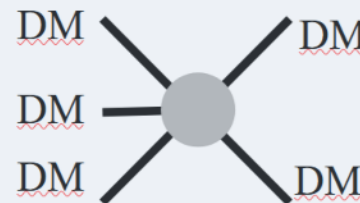


$$\langle \sigma_{2 \rightarrow 1} v \rangle = \frac{\alpha_{2 \rightarrow 1}^2}{m_\chi^2}$$

• Example 2: Only $2 \rightarrow 2$ and $3 \rightarrow 2$



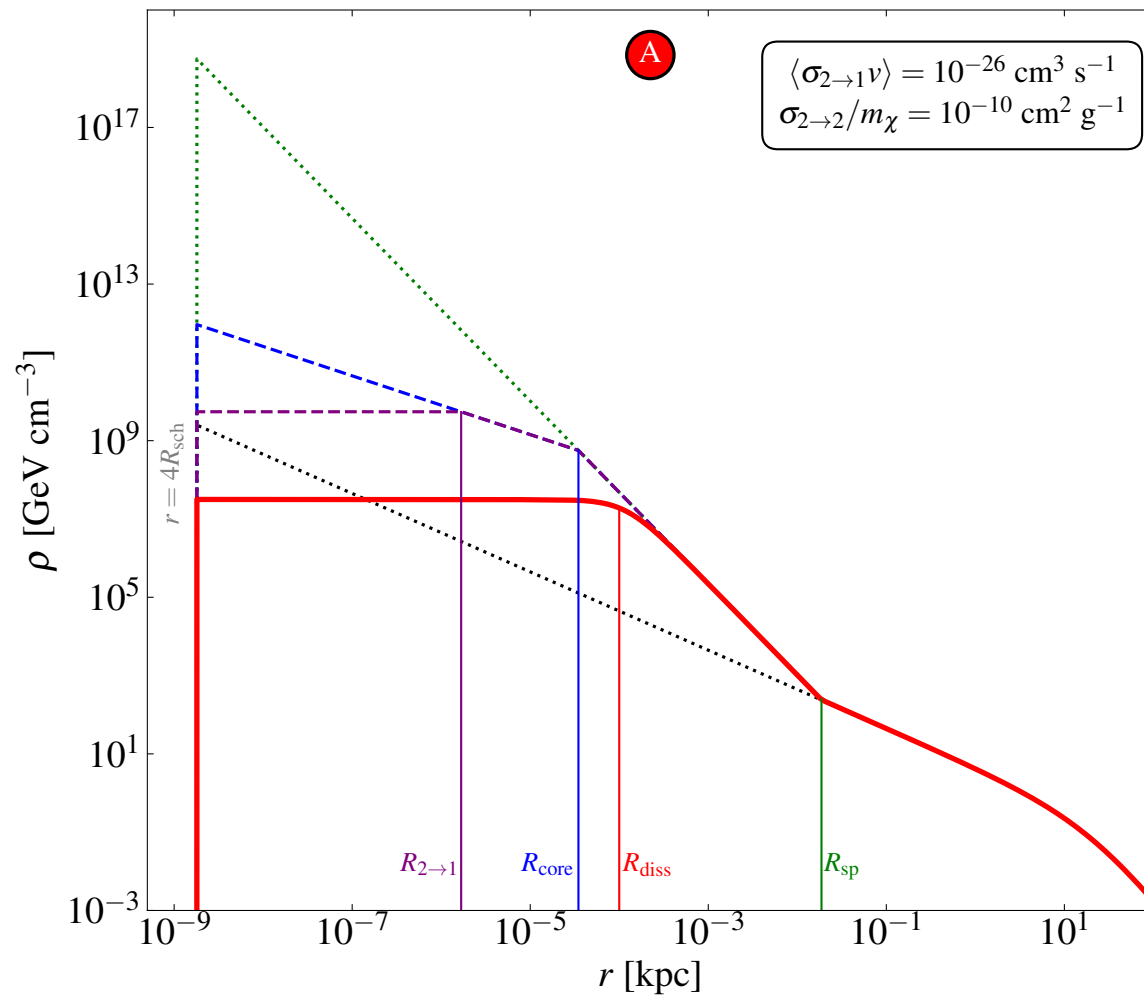
$$\sigma_{2 \rightarrow 2}/m_\chi = \frac{\alpha_{2 \rightarrow 2}^2}{m_\chi^3}$$



$$\langle \sigma_{3 \rightarrow 2} v^2 \rangle = \frac{\alpha_{3 \rightarrow 2}^3}{m_\chi^5}$$

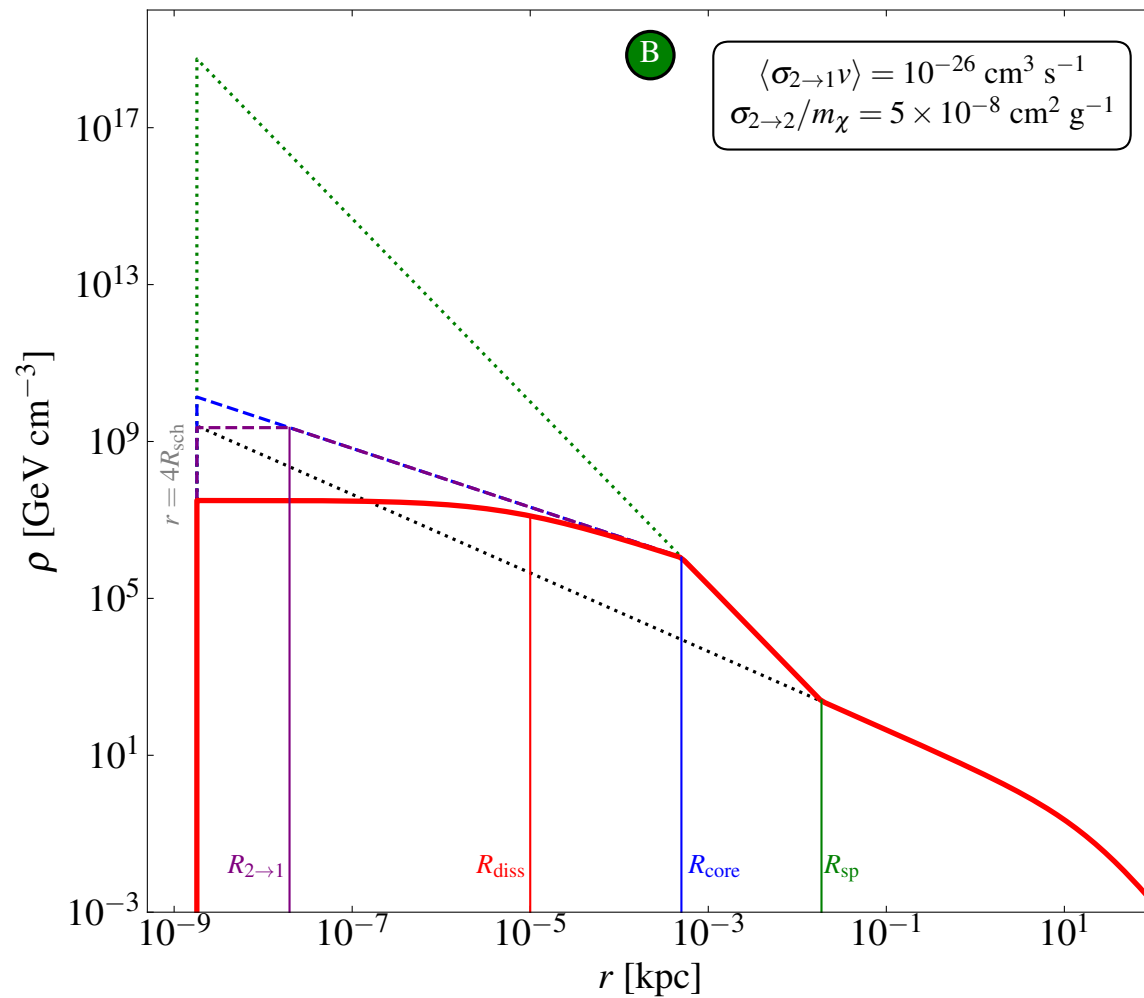
The fate of the DM spike

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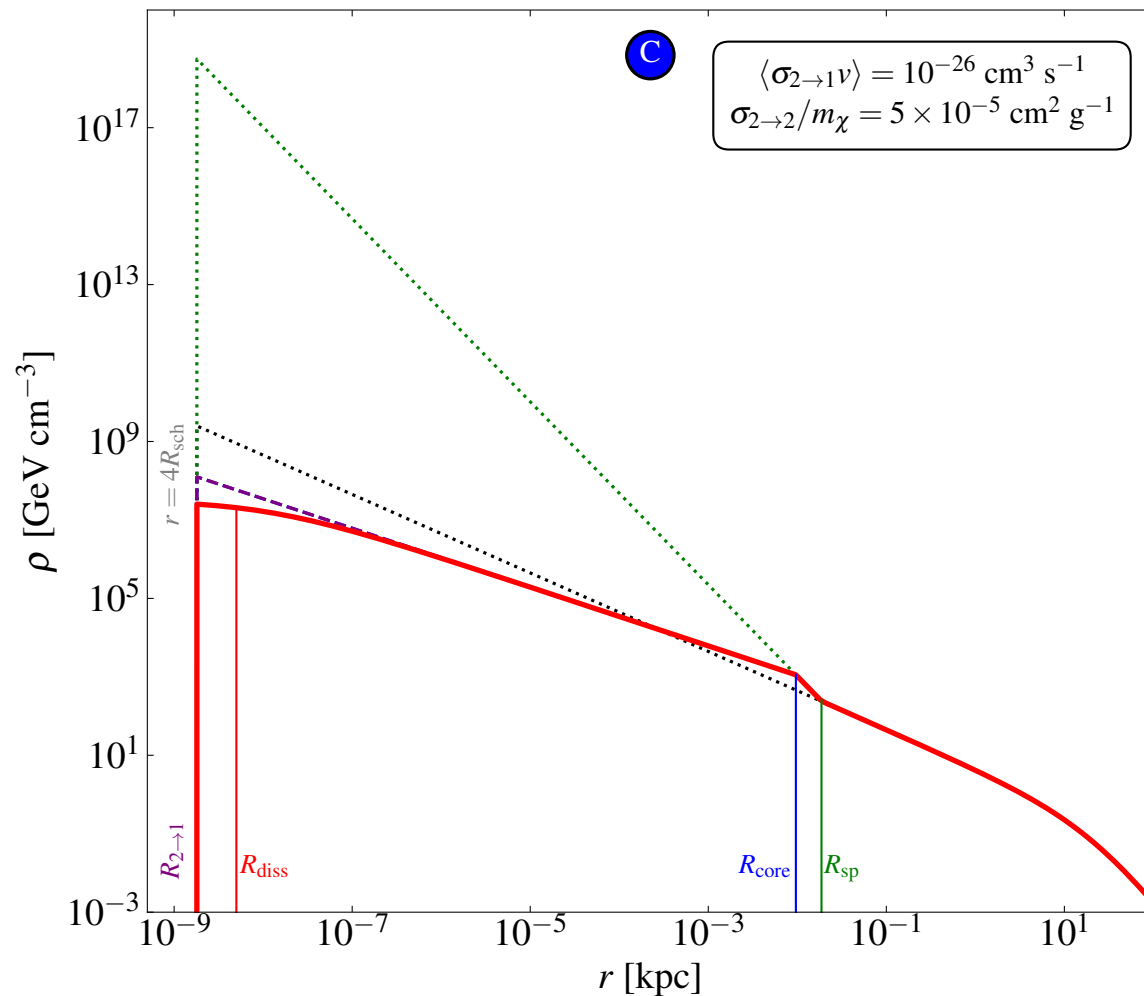
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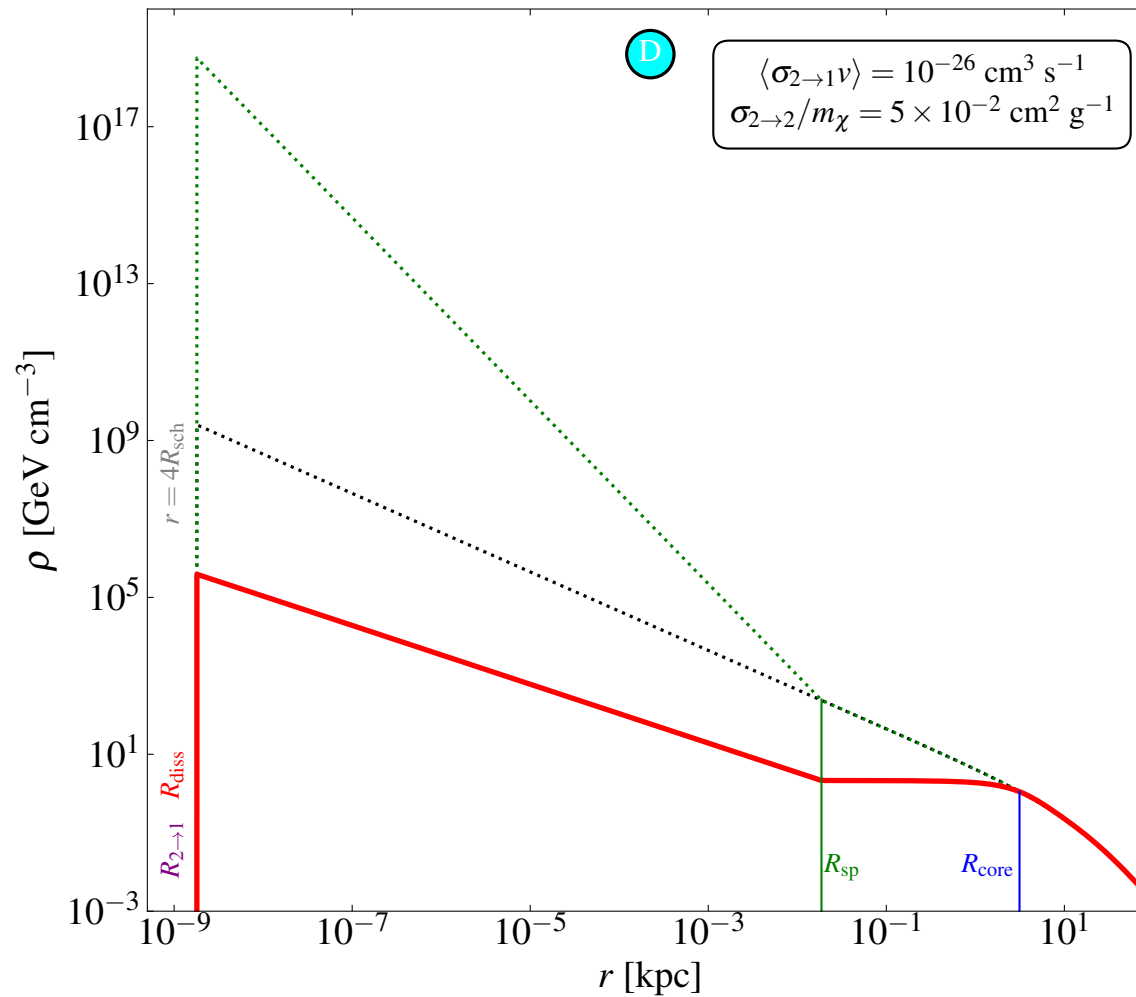
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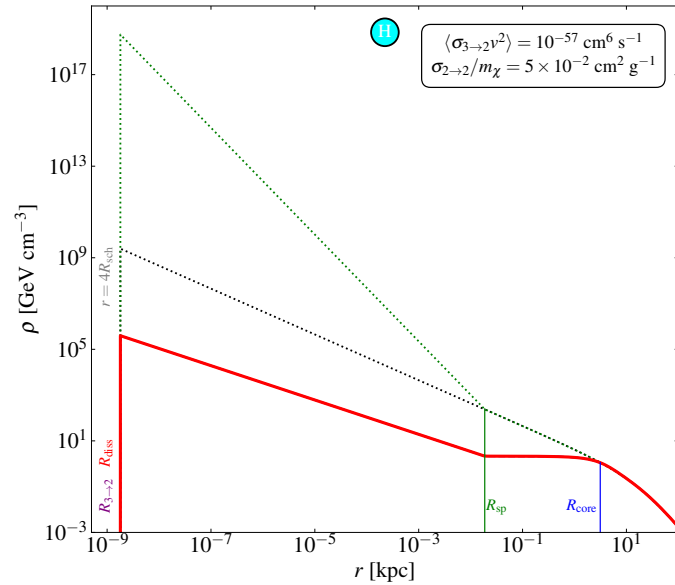
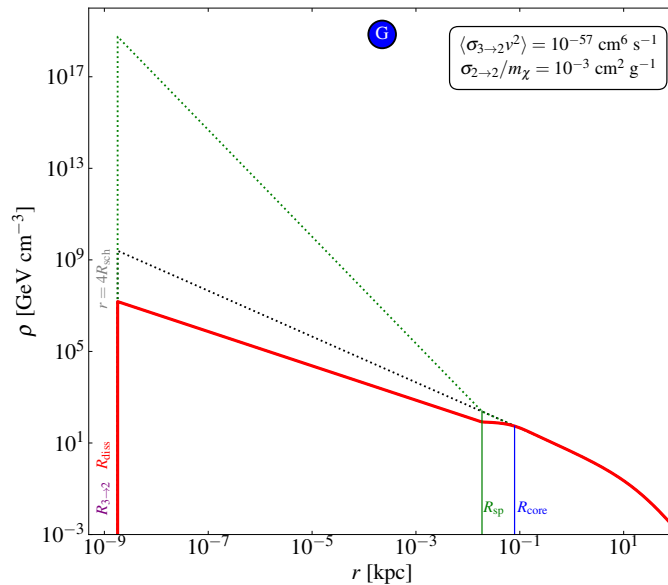
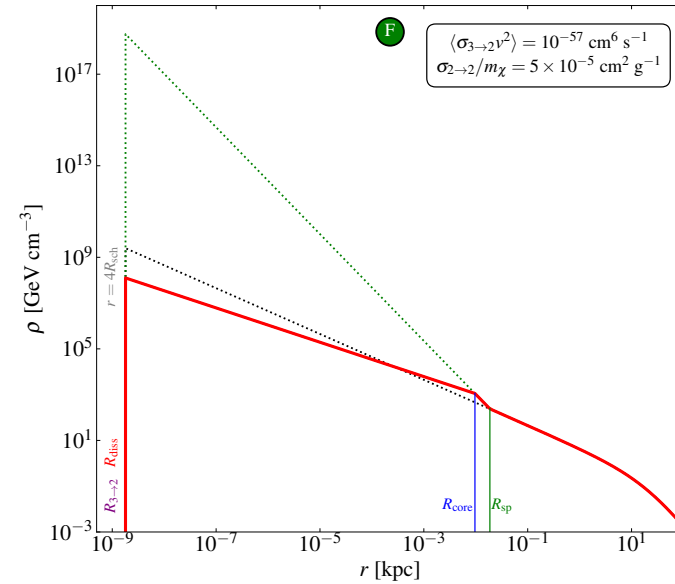
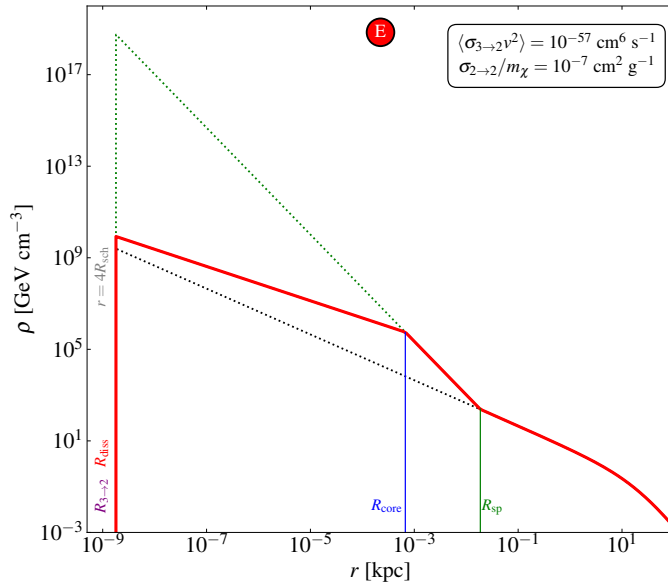
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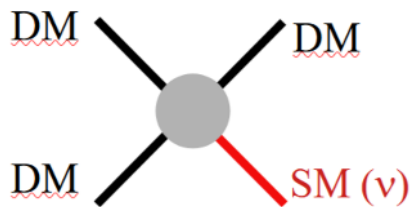


The fate of the DM spike

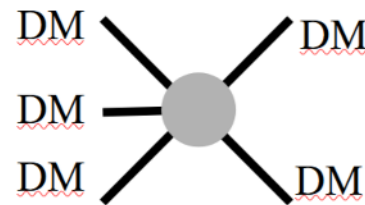
- Example 2: Only $2 \rightarrow 2$ and $3 \rightarrow 2$



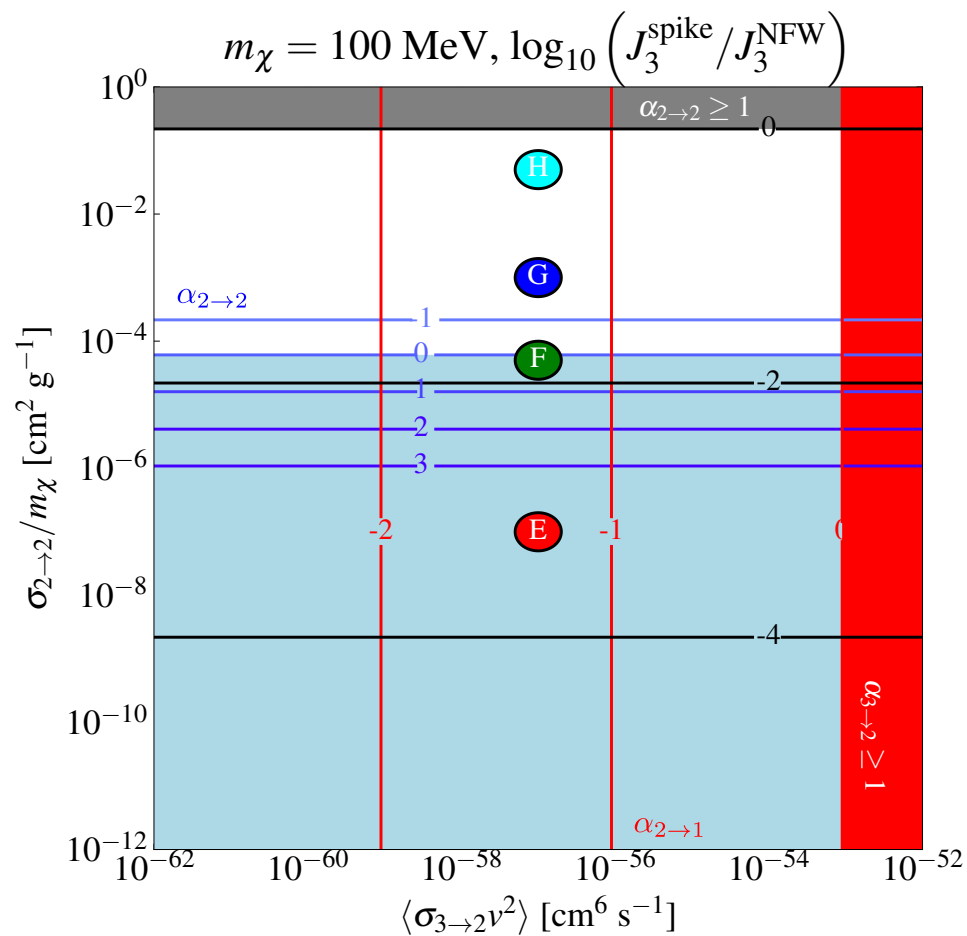
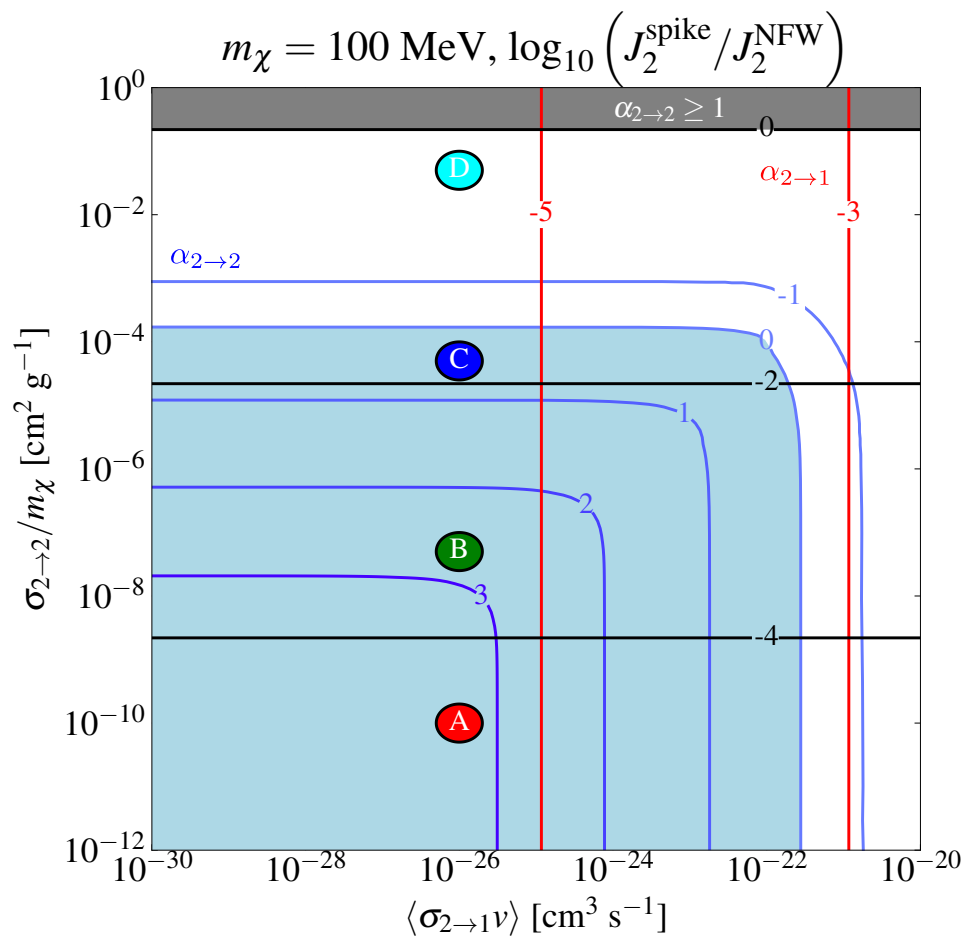
Implications for J-factors



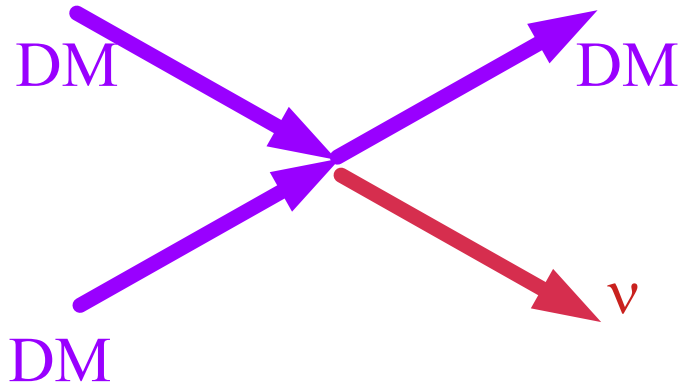
$$J_2^{\text{spike}} \equiv 4\pi \int_0^{R_{\text{sp}}} dr r^2 (\rho_\chi(r)/m_\chi)^2.$$



$$J_3^{\text{spike}} \equiv 4\pi \int_0^{R_{\text{sp}}} dr r^2 (\rho_\chi(r)/m_\chi)^3$$

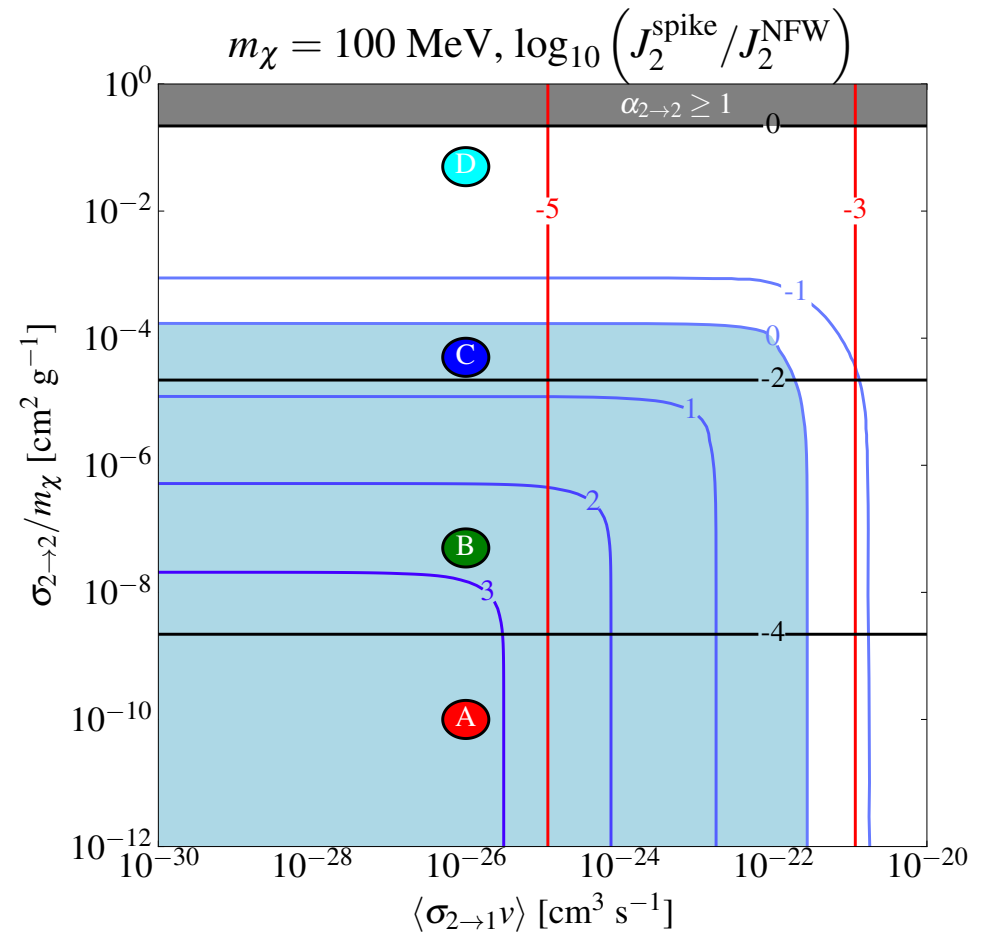
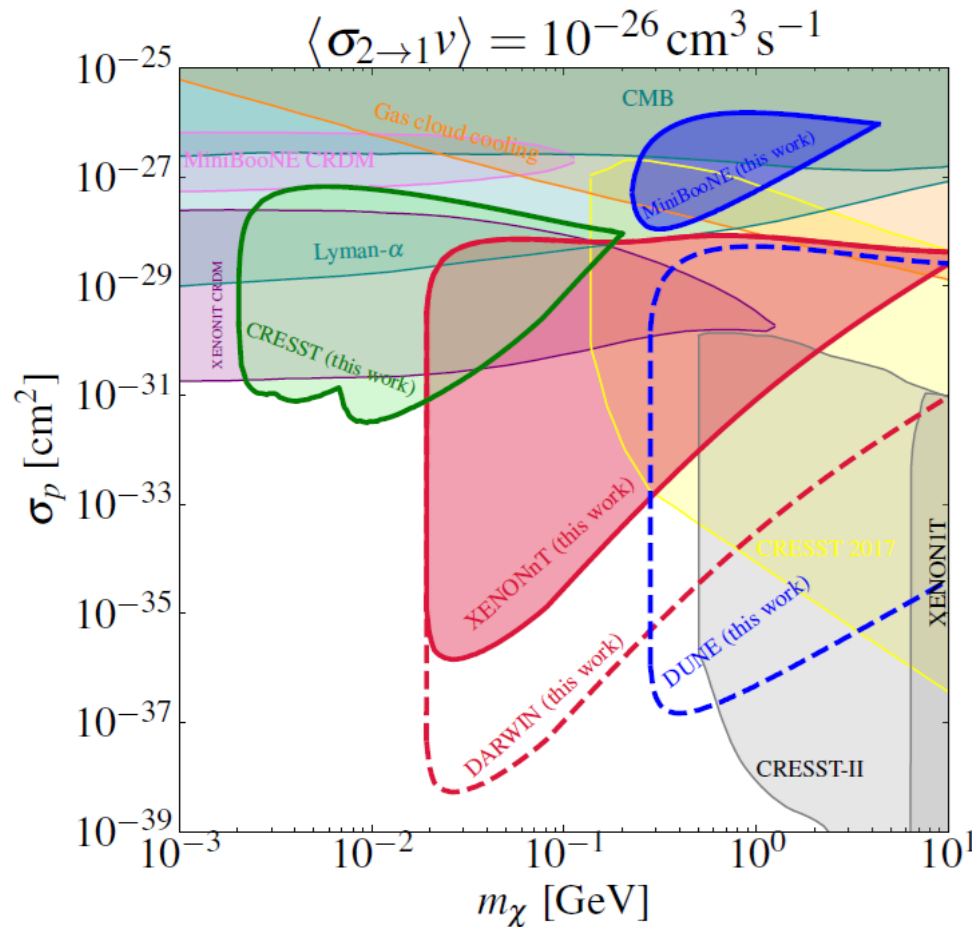


Implications for direct detection experiments



Flux of boosted DM particles, with $T_\chi = m_\chi/4$

$$\Phi_{\text{BDM}} \simeq 3.2 \times 10^{-3} \text{ cm}^{-2} \text{ s}^{-1} \left(\frac{m_\chi}{100 \text{ MeV}} \right)^{-2} \left(\frac{\langle \sigma_{2 \rightarrow 1} v \rangle}{10^{-26} \text{ cm}^3 \text{ s}^{-1}} \right)$$



Conclusions

- The structure of the dark matter spike surrounding a black hole can be significantly affected by dark matter processes (scatterings, annihilations, semi-annihilations, $3 \rightarrow 2$ processes, etc.)
- The rate for annihilations and semi-annihilations in the spike can be significantly modified by the existence of self-interactions.
Implications for indirect searches.
- The rate for semi-annihilations and $3 \rightarrow 2$ processes in the spike can be significantly modified by the existence of self-interactions.
Implications for direct searches.

Back-up

Benchmark	$\langle\sigma v\rangle_{2\rightarrow 1} \left[\frac{\text{cm}^3}{\text{s}}\right]$	$\frac{\sigma_{2\rightarrow 2}}{m_\chi} \left[\frac{\text{cm}^2}{\text{g}}\right]$	$\langle\sigma v^2\rangle_{3\rightarrow 2} \left[\frac{\text{cm}^6}{\text{s}}\right]$	$\alpha_{2\rightarrow 2}$	$\alpha_{2\rightarrow 1}$	$\alpha_{3\rightarrow 2}$
A	10^{-26}	10^{-10}	0	2.14×10^{-5}	2.93×10^{-6}	0
B	10^{-26}	5×10^{-8}	0	4.78×10^{-4}	2.93×10^{-6}	0
C	10^{-26}	5×10^{-5}	0	1.51×10^{-2}	2.93×10^{-6}	0
D	10^{-26}	5×10^{-2}	0	4.78×10^{-1}	2.93×10^{-6}	0
E	0	10^{-7}	10^{-57}	6.77×10^{-4}	0	4.81×10^{-2}
F	0	5×10^{-5}	10^{-57}	1.51×10^{-2}	0	4.81×10^{-2}
G	0	10^{-3}	10^{-57}	6.77×10^{-2}	0	4.81×10^{-2}
H	0	5×10^{-2}	10^{-57}	4.78×10^{-1}	0	4.81×10^{-2}