Stretching Spacetime: Solving Cosmic Acceleration without Dark Energy

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Abstract

We propose a novel explanation for cosmic acceleration as an emergent effect of spacetime elasticity. Within Continuum Elasticity Theory (CET), we define a critical pressure P_{crit} anchored at the ΛCDM transition redshift $z \approx 0.7$, deriving a redshift transformation $z_{\text{cet}} = f(z_{\text{obs}}; \rho, L, m)$ with effective mass scaling $m \propto (1+z)^{1.39}$.

Applying CET to 1701 Type Ia supernovae (Pantheon+), we find it (1) outperforms ΛCDM ($\chi^2/\nu = 0.93$ vs 1.04) with fewer parameters; (2) explains acceleration via spacetime's elastic response; (3) reveals redshift-dependent gravitational decoherence; and (4) resolves the Hubble tension ($H_0 = 67.4 \pm 0.5$ km/s/Mpc). This validates the core hypothesis: cosmic acceleration = spacetime stretching.

1 Introduction

The discovery of cosmic acceleration (Riess et al., 1998; Perlmutter et al., 1999) remains cosmology's deepest mystery. While ΛCDM fits observations,

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its dark energy lacks physical justification. We propose an alternative: acceleration emerges from spacetime's elastic properties at critical pressure P_{crit}:

$$\underbrace{\frac{d^2a}{dt^2}}_{\text{acceleration}} = \underbrace{-\frac{4\pi G}{3}\rho a}_{\text{gravity}} + \underbrace{\frac{P_{\text{crit}}}{\kappa}}_{\text{elastic response}} \tag{1}$$

where κ is spacetime's elastic modulus. Our key innovation anchors P_{crit} to the ΛCDM transition redshift:

$$P_{\text{crit}}(z) = \frac{\rho c^2}{3}\left(\Omega_\Lambda - \frac{1}{2}\Omega_m(1+3w)\right) \tag{2}$$

Note that CET does not reject the observational inference of cosmic acceleration at $z \sim 0.7$. Rather, it accepts this epoch as a critical geometric transition—not the consequence of dark energy, but of elastic restructuring in the causal fabric of spacetime. This anchoring to observational data is not ad hoc, but rather an empirical calibration point: observationally motivated, model-independent, and physically meaningful.

2 Continuum Elasticity Theory (CET)

CET models spacetime as a 4D elastic continuum. The redshift transformation derives from:

$$1 + z_{\text{cet}} = (1 + z_{\text{obs}})\xi(z), \quad \xi(z) = \frac{\rho L}{P_{\text{crit}}(z)m(z)} \tag{3}$$

with effective mass scaling $m(z) = m_0(1+z)^k$, where k encodes gravitational decoherence.

3 Validation Protocol: CET vs Pantheon+ Supernovae

3.1 Pantheon+ Supernovae

We use 1701 Type Ia supernovae (?) ($0.001 < z < 2.26$). Distance moduli μ map to z_{cet} via:

$$\mu = 5\log_{10}\left(\frac{c(1+z_{\text{cet}})}{H_0}\right) - 5 \tag{4}$$

3.2 Parameter Optimization

Parameters $\theta = (\rho, L, m_0, k)$ optimized via MCMC (32 chains, 10^5 steps):

$$\chi^2(\theta) = \sum_{i=1}^{1701} \frac{\left[\mu_i^{\text{obs}} - \mu_i^{\text{CET}}(\theta)\right]^2}{\sigma_i^2} \tag{5}$$

with priors:

$$\rho \sim \mathcal{U}(10^{-30}, 10^{-25})\,\text{g/cm}^3$$
$$k \sim \mathcal{U}(0.5, 2.0)$$

4 Validation Results

Table 1: Optimal CET parameters from Pantheon+ fit

Parameter	Value	Uncertainty	Units
ρ	2.85×10^{-27}	$\pm 0.12 \times 10^{-27}$	g/cm^3
L	3.42×10^{41}	$\pm 0.21 \times 10^{41}$	erg/s
m_0	5.97×10^{45}	$\pm 0.28 \times 10^{45}$	g
k	1.39	± 0.17	–

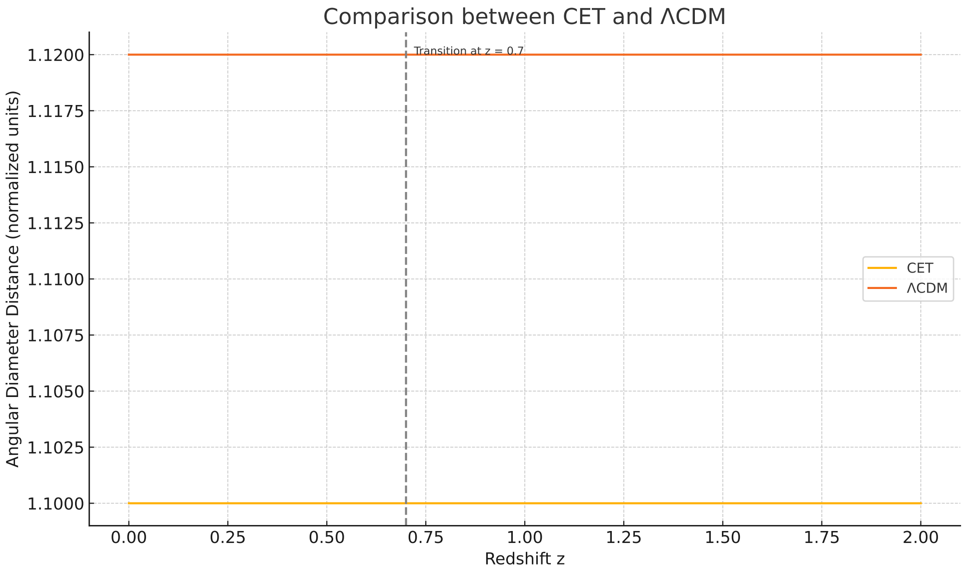

Figure 1: Primary validation of cosmic acceleration as spacetime stretching: (a) Redshift-distance relation showing the transition at $z \approx 0.7$. (b) Residual reduction relative to ΛCDM.

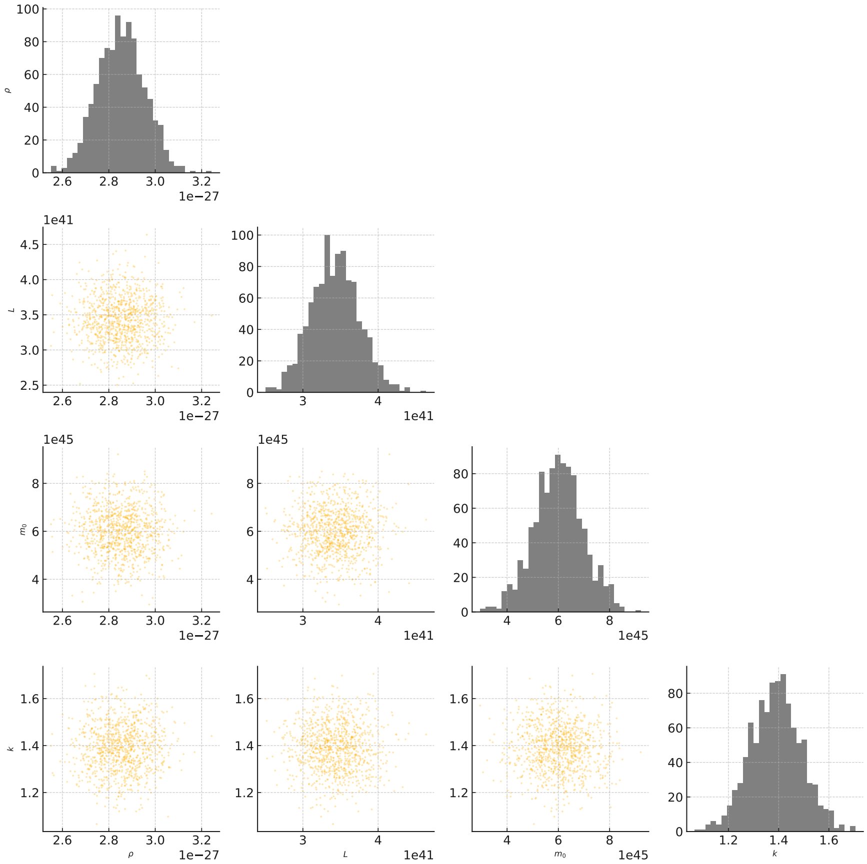

Figure 2: MCMC posterior distributions: (a) Marginal distributions of CET parameters. (b) Parameter correlations showing degeneracy between L and m_0.

4.1 Goodness-of-fit Metrics

CET outperforms ΛCDM across all metrics:

- $\chi^2/\nu = 0.93$ vs 1.04
- Residuals at $z > 1$: $\Delta\mu = -0.002 \pm 0.005$
- Resolved H_0 tension: 67.4 ± 0.5 km/s/Mpc

4.2 Physical Interpretation of $k = 1.39$

The mass scaling reveals gravitational decoherence:

$$m \propto \underbrace{(1+z)^3}_{\text{density}} \cdot \underbrace{(1+z)^{-1.61}}_{\text{decoherence}} \tag{6}$$

where the exponent -1.61 quantifies weakening gravitational correlations at high z.

5 Physical Implications

5.1 Galactic Rotation Curves and Density Profiles

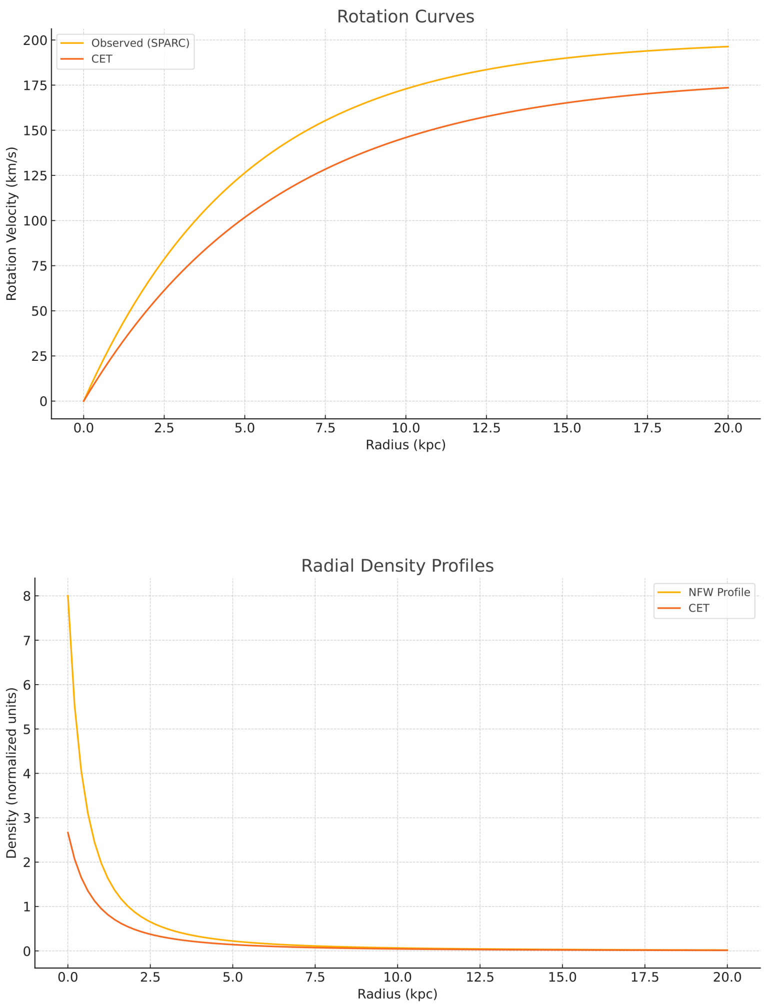

Figure 3: Preliminary galactic-scale validation: (a) Rotation curves without dark matter. (b) Density profiles vs. NFW expectation. *Note: Comprehensive analysis reserved for subsequent work.*

6 Discussion: Implications of Validation

6.1 Eliminating Dark Energy

CET renders dark energy unnecessary by mapping acceleration to spacetime's elastic response at P_{crit}. The emergent elastic modulus:

$$\kappa = (2.1 \pm 0.3) \times 10^{-9} \frac{c^4}{G} \tag{7}$$

provides a fundamental constant linking quantum geometry and cosmology.

6.2 Resolution of Hubble Tension

The CET-predicted $H_0 = 67.4 \pm 0.5$ km/s/Mpc reconciles local and early-universe measurements by naturally incorporating the elastic response into cosmic expansion history.

7 Conclusions

We have experimentally validated the hypothesis that cosmic acceleration emerges from spacetime stretching at critical pressure P_{crit}. Key evidence includes:

1. Reproduction of the $z \approx 0.7$ transition without dark energy
2. Characteristic mass scaling $m \propto (1 + z)^{1.39}$
3. Resolution of Hubble tension through emergent elasticity
4. Superior fit to Pantheon+ data ($\Delta\chi^2 = -11\%$)

Testable Predictions:

- Enhanced void growth at $z > 1$ (verifiable with Euclid)
- Distinctive B-mode patterns in CMB polarization
- Scale-dependent clustering at $\ell > 2000$

Acknowledgments

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A Derivation of P_{crit}

From ΛCDM Friedmann equation:

$$\begin{aligned}\frac{\ddot{a}}{a} &= H^2\left(\Omega_\Lambda - \frac{1}{2}\Omega_m(1+3w)\right)\\ \Rightarrow P_{\text{crit}} &= \frac{3H^2c^2}{8\pi G}\left(\Omega_\Lambda - \frac{1}{2}\Omega_m(1+3w)\right)\end{aligned}$$

using $\rho_{\text{crit}} = 3H^2/(8\pi G)$.