

Scalar self-force and QNM excitation for highly eccentric orbits in Kerr spacetime

Jonathan Thornburg

in collaboration with

Barry Wardell

Wardell, Vega, Thornburg, & Diener, PRD 85,104044 = arXiv:1112.6355
Thornburg & Wardell, PRD 95,084043 = arXiv:1610.09319

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Introduction

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- **EMRI self-force** and radiated field at \mathcal{J}^+
- **Kerr**
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[future] this restriction isn't fundamental: methods can handle generic orbits
- [now] **scalar field**, **develop techniques for [future] gravitational field**

Overall Plan of the Computation

Effective-Source (puncture-function) regularization

- allows Kerr, arbitrary orbits
- less numerical cancellation than mode-sum/extended homogeneous solns
(e.g., van de Meent talk)

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- exploit axisymmetry of Kerr background
- separate 2+1-dimensional time-domain (numerical) evolution for each m
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- worldtube scheme
- worldtube moves in (r, θ) to follow the particle around the orbit
- (fixed) mesh refinement; finer grids follow the worldtube/particle
- hyperboloidal slices (reach horizon and \mathcal{I}^+)

[Zenginoğlu, J. Comp. Phys. 230,2286 = arXiv:1008.3809]

Effective source (puncture function) regularization

Assume a δ -function particle with scalar charge q .

The particle's physical (retarded) scalar field φ satisfies $\square\varphi = q\delta(x - x_{\text{particle}}(t))$.
 φ is singular at the particle.

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If we knew the Detweiler-Whiting decomposition $\varphi = \varphi_{\text{singular}} + \varphi_{\text{regular}}$ explicitly, we could compute the self-force via $F_a = (\nabla_a \varphi_{\text{regular}})|_{\text{particle}}$. But it's very hard to explicitly compute the Detweiler-Whiting decomposition.

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Instead we choose $\varphi_{\text{puncture}}$ so that it agrees with $\varphi_{\text{singular}}$ in the first n terms of a Laurent series in $|x - x_{\text{particle}}|$. Then $\varphi_{\text{residual}} := \varphi - \varphi_{\text{puncture}}$ is finite and "differentiable enough" at the particle, and

$$\square\varphi_{\text{residual}} = \left\{ \begin{array}{ll} 0 & \text{at the particle} \\ -\square\varphi_{\text{puncture}} & \text{elsewhere} \end{array} \right\} := S_{\text{effective}} \quad \left[\begin{array}{l} \text{solve this} \\ \text{for } \varphi_{\text{residual}} \end{array} \right]$$

The self-force is given by $F_a = (\nabla_a \varphi_{\text{residual}})|_{\text{particle}}$.

Note this is **exact** even though $\varphi_{\text{puncture}} \neq \varphi_{\text{singular}}$.

Puncture field and effective source

The choice of the puncture order n is a tradeoff:

Higher $n \Rightarrow \varphi_{\text{residual}}$ is smoother at the particle (good),

but $\varphi_{\text{puncture}}$ and $S_{\text{effective}}$ are more complicated (expensive) to compute.

We choose $n = 4 \Rightarrow \varphi_{\text{residual}}$ is C^2 at the particle.

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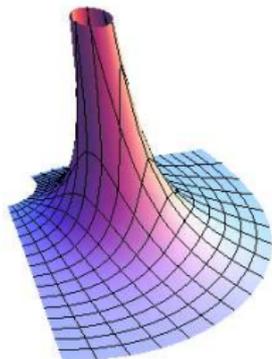
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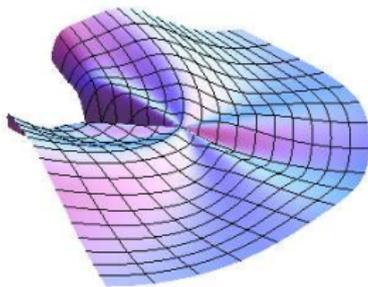
The actual computation of $\varphi_{\text{puncture}}$ and $S_{\text{effective}}$ uses a (lengthly) series expansion of the Sygne world function in Mathematica, then machine-generated C code. [Wardell, Vega, Thornburg, & Diener, PRD 85,104044 = arXiv:1112.6355]

Computing $S_{\text{effective}}$ at a single event requires $\sim \frac{1}{2} \times 10^6$ arithmetic operations.

sample $\varphi_{\text{puncture}}$



$S_{\text{effective}}$



The worldtube

Problems:

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Solution:

introduce finite **worldtube** containing the particle worldline

- define “numerical field” $\varphi_{\text{numerical}} = \begin{cases} \varphi_{\text{residual}} & \text{inside the worldtube} \\ \varphi & \text{outside the worldtube} \end{cases}$
- compute $\varphi_{\text{numerical}}$ by numerically solving

$$\square \varphi_{\text{numerical}} = \begin{cases} S_{\text{effective}} & \text{inside the worldtube} \\ 0 & \text{outside the worldtube} \end{cases}$$

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- $S_{\text{effective}}$ is only needed inside the worldtube
- $\varphi_{\text{numerical}}$ has a $\pm\varphi_{\text{puncture}}$ jump discontinuity across worldtube boundary
 \Rightarrow finite difference operators that cross the worldtube boundary must compensate for the jump discontinuity

m -mode decomposition

Instead of numerically solving $\square\varphi_{\text{numerical}} = \begin{cases} S_{\text{effective}} & \text{inside the worldtube} \\ 0 & \text{outside the worldtube} \end{cases}$

in 3+1 dimensions, we **Fourier-decompose into $e^{im\phi}$ modes** and solve for each Fourier mode in 2+1 dimensions via

$$\square_m \varphi_{\text{numerical},m} = \begin{cases} S_{\text{effective},m} & \text{inside the worldtube} \\ 0 & \text{outside the worldtube} \end{cases}$$

numerically
solve this
for each m
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The self-force is given (**exactly!**) by $F_a = \sum_{m=0}^{\infty} (\nabla_a \varphi_{\text{numerical},m})|_{\text{particle}}$

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Comparison (vs. direct solution in 3+1 dimensions):

- ✓ can use different numerical parameters for different m
- ✓ each individual m 's evolution is smaller \Rightarrow test/debug code on laptop
- ✓ “free” parallelization (run different m 's evolutions in parallel)
- in practice compute $m \leq 20$ numerically, estimate $\sum_{m=21}^{\infty}$ via large- m tail series fitted to $m \in [12, 20]$ (separate fit & series at each point around the orbit)

Moving the worldtube

We actually do m -mode decomposition *before* introducing worldtube

⇒ worldtube “lives” in (t, r, θ) space, not full spacetime

The worldtube must contain the particle in (r, θ) .

But for a non-circular orbit, the particle moves in (r, θ) during the orbit.

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Large eccentricity (say $e \gtrsim 0.3$):

- must **move the worldtube** in (r, θ) to follow the particle around the orbit
- recall that our numerically-evolved field is

$$\varphi_{\text{numerical}} := \begin{cases} \varphi - \varphi_{\text{puncture}} & \text{inside the worldtube} \\ \varphi & \text{outside the worldtube} \end{cases}$$

this means then if we move the worldtube, we must adjust the evolved $\varphi_{\text{numerical}}$: add $\pm\varphi_{\text{puncture}}$ at spatial points which change from being inside the worldtube to being outside, or vice versa

Code Validation

Comparison with
frequency-domain
mode-sum results
kindly provided by

Niels Warburton

[Warburton & Barack,
PRD 83,124038
= arXiv:1103.0287]

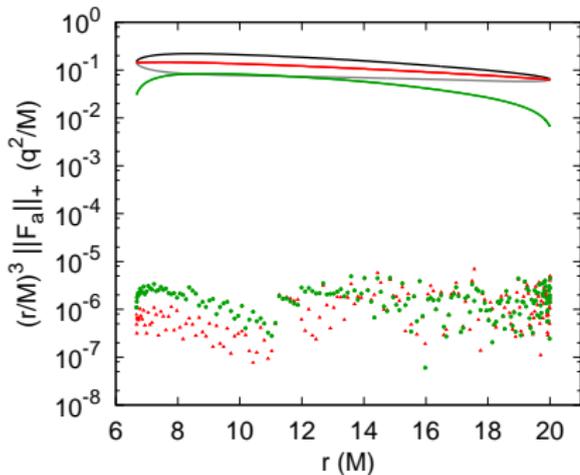
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Typical example:
 $(a, p, e) = (0.9, 10M, 0.5)$
 \Rightarrow results agree to
 $\sim 10^{-5}$ relative error

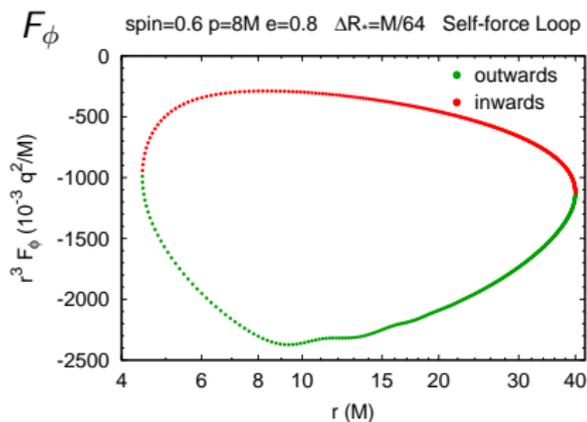
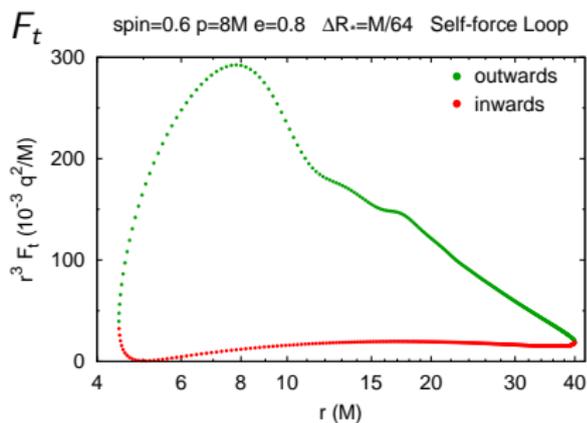
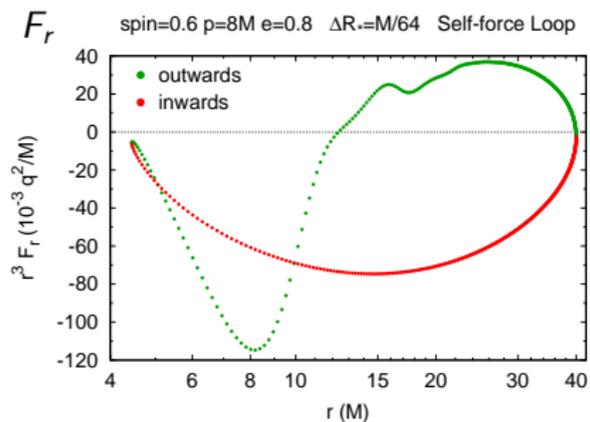
We have also compared
a variety of other
configurations, with
fairly similar results



- $\Rightarrow (r/M)^3 \|F_a\|_+$
- $(r/M)^3 \|F_a \text{ dissipative part}\|_+$
- $(r/M)^3 \|F_a \text{ conservative part}\|_+$
- $(r/M)^3 \|\text{difference in } F_a \text{ dissipative part}\|_+$
- $(r/M)^3 \|\text{difference in } F_a \text{ conservative part}\|_+$

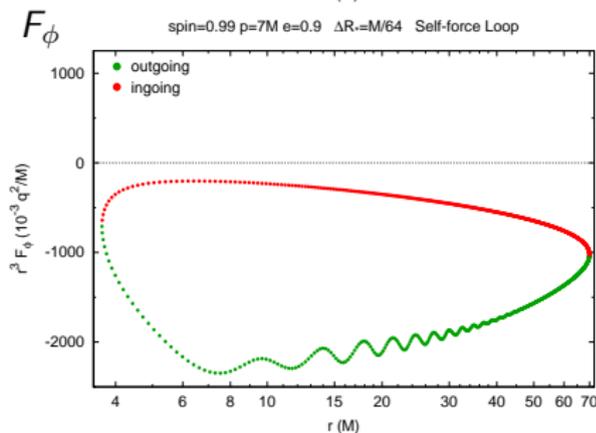
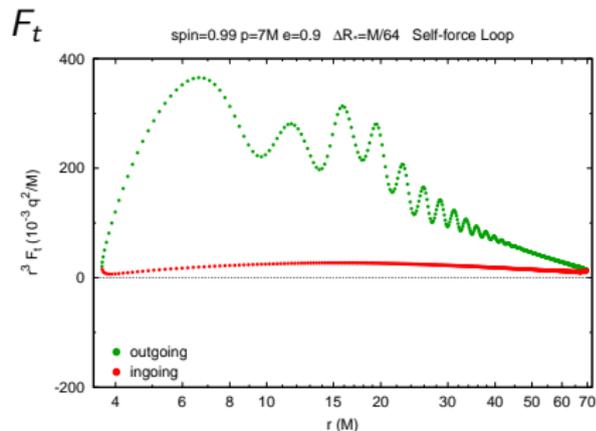
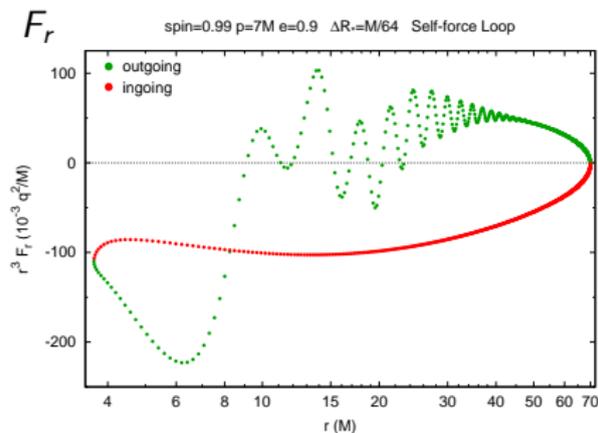
$e = 0.8$ orbit

$$(a, p, e) = (0.6, 8M, 0.8)$$



Wiggles!

Higher-eccentricity orbit:
(a, p, e) = (0.99, 7M, 0.9)



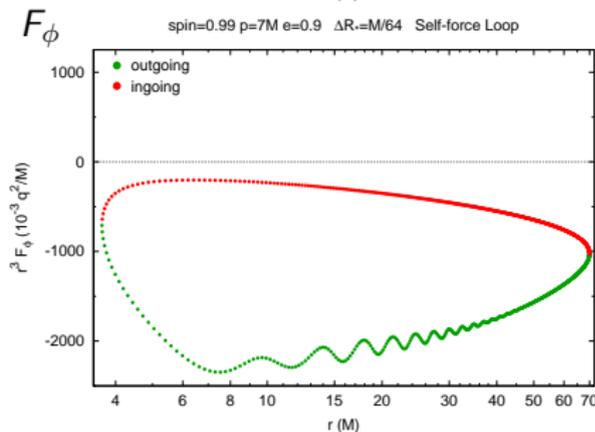
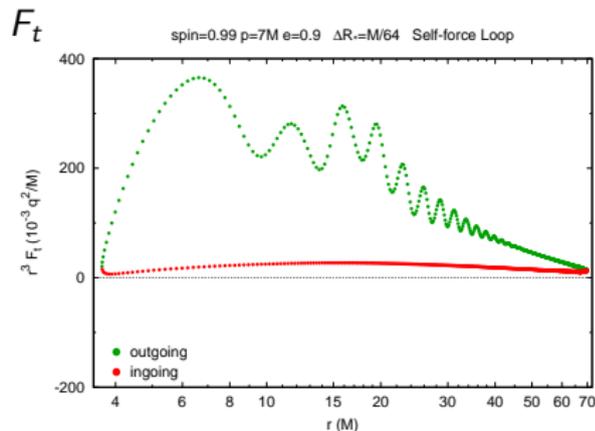
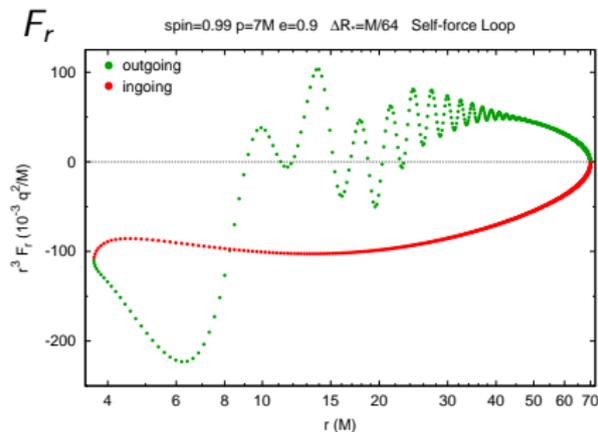
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Key property:

- wiggles on **outgoing** leg of orbit
- wiggles **not** seen on **ingoing** leg



Wiggles as Kerr Quasinormal Modes: Mode Fit

Test hypothesis that wiggles are quasinormal modes of the (background) Kerr spacetime, excited by the particle's close flyby:

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$$F_a(x^i) = \frac{\text{spline background}(\log(r))}{r^3} + \frac{A_a}{r} e^{-u/\tau} \sin \left[2\pi \frac{u}{T} + m\phi + \phi_a^{(0)} \right]$$

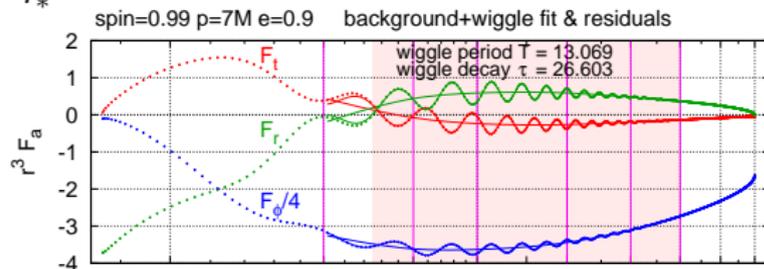
where $u := t - r_*$

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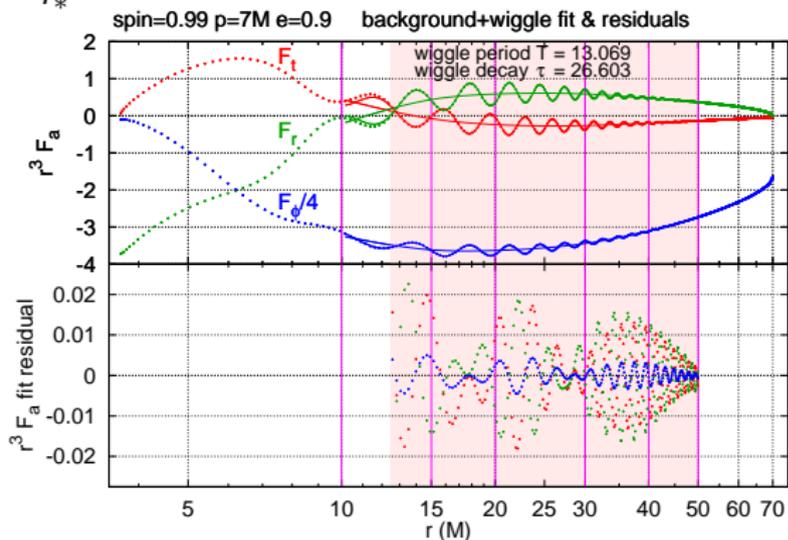


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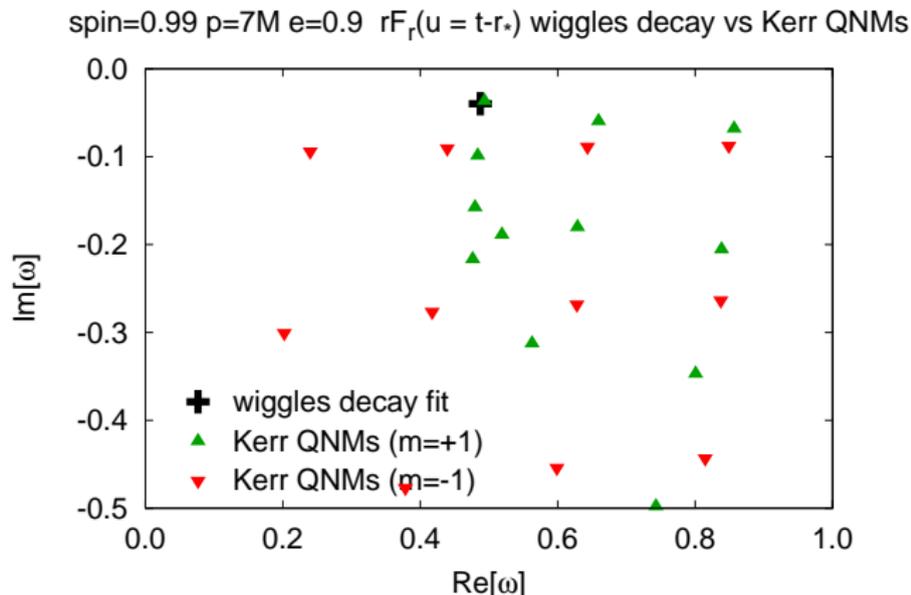
Wiggles as Kerr Quasinormal Modes: Mode Frequencies

Now compare wiggle-fit complex frequency $\omega := 2\pi/T - i/\tau$
vs. known Kerr quasinormal mode frequencies computed by Emanuele Berti.

Wiggles as Kerr Quasinormal Modes: Mode Frequencies

Now compare wobble-fit complex frequency $\omega := 2\pi/T - i/\tau$
vs. known Kerr quasinormal mode frequencies computed by [Emanuele Berti](#).

⇒ Nice agreement with least-damped corotating QNM!

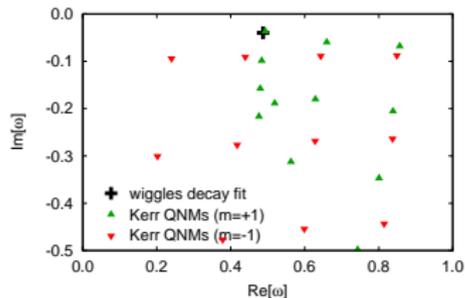


Wiggles as Kerr Quasinormal Modes: Varying BH Spin

Repeat wiggle-fit procedure for other Kerr spins (0.99, 0.95, 0.9, and 0.8)
⇒ Nice agreement with least-damped corotating QNM for all BH spins!

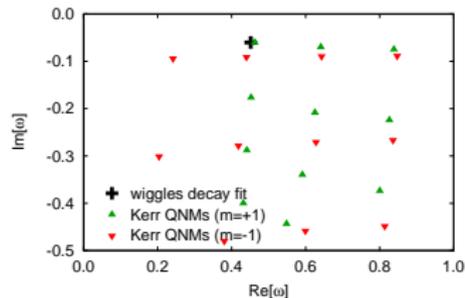
$a = 0.99$

spin=0.99 p=7M e=0.9 $rF_r(u = t-r_-)$ wiggles decay vs Kerr QNMs



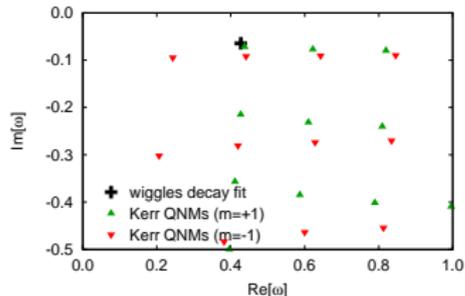
$a = 0.95$

spin=0.95 p=7M e=0.9 $rF_r(u = t-r_-)$ wiggles decay vs Kerr QNMs



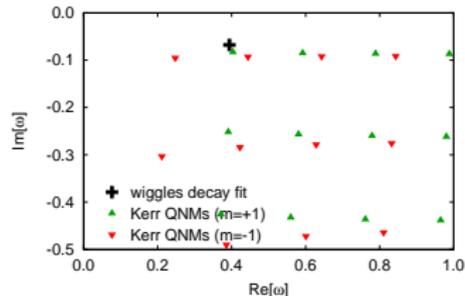
$a = 0.9$

spin=0.9 p=7M e=0.9 $rF_r(u = t-r_-)$ wiggles decay vs Kerr QNMs



$a = 0.8$

spin=0.8 p=7M e=0.9 $rF_r(u = t-r_-)$ wiggles decay vs Kerr QNMs



For what orbits do wiggles occur?

Wiggles are quite generic: they occur whenever the configuration combines

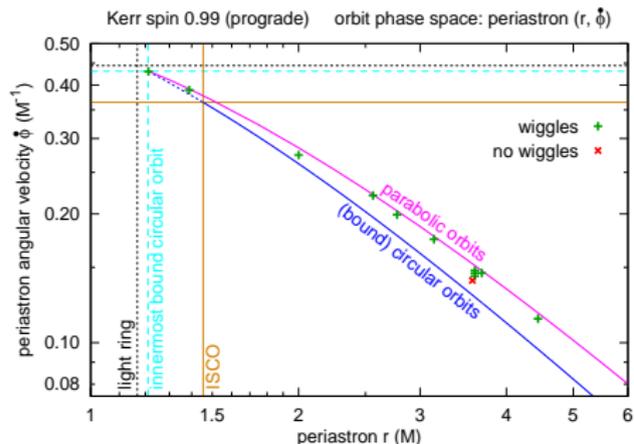
- a sufficiently high Kerr spin $a \gtrsim 0.6$
- a sufficiently close periastron passage $r \lesssim 5M$
- a sufficiently high orbital eccentricity $e \gtrsim 0.6$

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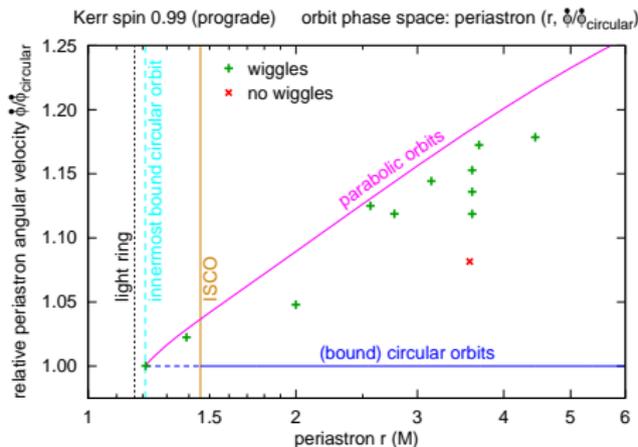
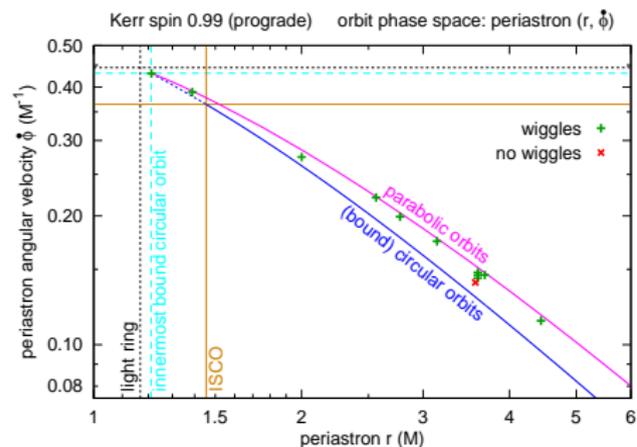


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Phase space of Kerr orbits ($a = 0.99$):



Conclusions

Methods:

- ✓ effective source/puncture function regularization works very well
- ✓ m -mode ($e^{im\phi}$) decomposition works very well
- ✓ Zenginoğlu's hyperboloidal slices work very well

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- ✓ m -mode ($e^{im\phi}$) decomposition works very well
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- moving worldtube is essential for $e \gtrsim 0.3$
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- gravitation: Maarten van de Meent finds wiggles in Ψ_4 at \mathcal{J}^+
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details (QNMs, phase space, gravitation): paper coming soon