



### From phase stable pulses to Attosecond Science

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> ICTP WINTER COLLEGE Trieste, 24 February 2016

# Why is this attosecond business interesting??

<u>real-time observation</u> and <u>direct control</u> of electronic motion in atoms, molecules and solids!!



Bohr-model of hydrogen atom:

electron in the ground state moves in a circular classical orbit about the nucleus in ~ 150 as

Attosecond resolution is required!



#### I. Generation of attosecond pulses

#### II. Attosecond metrology

III. Applications

#### I. Generation of attosecond pulses

Sub-femtosecond pulses



light pulses in the XUV are required  $\rightarrow$  high-order harmonic generation

High-order Harmonic Generation



### 3 step model

P. B. Corkum, Phys. Rev. Lett. 71, 1994 (1993)



- I. Ionization: the laser field detaches an electron from the valence shell via tunnel ionization
- II. Propagation: the freed electron is accelerated by the laser field

III. Recombination: the energy gained by the electron is released through the emission of a XUV photon



### High-order Harmonic Generation



The process is repeated periodically every half cycle



odd harmonics of the fundamental frequency



...and in the temporal domain



#### train of attosecond pulses



Electron trajectories



#### Lewenstein quantum model

- strong field approximation
- single active electron
   (from the outermost valence shell)

$$\vec{\mathcal{E}}_{XUV}[\Omega] \propto -(m\omega)^2 \int_{\mathbb{R}} \int_{\mathbb{R}^+} \int_{\mathbb{R}^3} \underbrace{\frac{e}{\hbar^4} \vec{E}(t-\tau) \cdot \vec{d} \left[\vec{k}(\vec{p},t-\tau)\right]}_{\vec{k}} \vec{d} \left[\vec{k}(\vec{p},t)\right]^* e^{-\frac{i}{\hbar}S(\vec{p},t,\tau)+i\Omega t} d\vec{p} d\tau' dt'$$

$$S(\vec{p},t,\tau) = \int_{t-\tau}^t \frac{\left[\vec{p}+e\vec{A}(t')\right]^2}{2\mu} dt' \qquad \vec{d}(\vec{k}) = \langle e^{i\vec{k}\cdot\vec{r}} |\vec{r}|\Gamma_0(\vec{r}) \rangle$$



### Attosecond dynamics probed by HHG

- saddle point approximation (SPA)

 $\vec{\mathcal{E}}_{XUV}[\Omega] \propto -(\Omega)^2 \int_{\mathbb{R}} \int_{\mathbb{R}^+} \int_{\mathbb{R}^3} \frac{e}{\hbar^4} \vec{E}(t-\tau) \cdot \vec{d} \left[ \vec{k}(\vec{p},t-\tau) \right] \vec{d} \left[ \vec{k}(\vec{p},t) \right]^* \left[ e^{-\frac{i}{\hbar}S(\vec{p},t,\tau)+i\Omega t} d\vec{p} d\tau' dt' \right]$ III. recombination

$$\vec{\mathcal{E}}_{XUV}[\Omega] \propto -(\Omega)^2 \vec{E}(t_s - \tau_s) \cdot \frac{e}{\hbar^4} \vec{d} \left[ \vec{k}(\vec{p_s}, t_s - \tau_s) \right] \vec{d} \left[ \vec{k}(\vec{p_s}, t_s) \right]^* \int_{\mathbb{R}} \int_{\mathbb{R}^+} \int_{\mathbb{R}^3} \underbrace{e^{-\frac{i}{\hbar}S(\vec{p}, t, \tau) + i\Omega t}}_{d\vec{p}d\tau'dt'} d\vec{p} d\tau' dt'$$

- coupling between:

ionization time  $t_s$ -  $\tau_s$ recombination time  $t_s$ 

photon energy  $\hbar\Omega$ 

$$\begin{aligned} \frac{\partial S(p_s, t_s, \tau_s)}{\partial (-\tau)} &= 0 &= \frac{\left[\vec{p}_s + e\vec{A}(t_s - \tau_s)\right]^2}{2\mu} + I_p \\ \frac{\partial S(p_s, t_s, \tau_s)}{\partial t} &= 0 &= \frac{\left[\vec{p}_s + e\vec{A}(t_s)\right]^2}{2\mu} + I_p - \hbar\Omega \\ \vec{\nabla}_{\vec{p}}S(p_s, t_s, \tau_s) &= 0 &= \int_{t_s - \tau_s}^{t_s} \frac{\left[\vec{p}_s + e\vec{A}(t')\right]}{\mu} dt' \end{aligned}$$



### Attosecond dynamics probed by HHG

#### Each saddle point solution defines a quantum trajectory



THE ATTOSECOND NATURE OF THE PROCESS IS MAPPED INTO THE HHG SPECTRUM





G. Sansone et al., Phys. Rev. A 70, 013411 (2004)









### from a train of attosecond pulses...



### ...to a single attosecond pulse

#### Single Attosecond Pulse recipe:

- selection of only one emission event:
   spectral selection
  - temporal gating
- attochirp compensation
- CEP stability
- few-cycle pulses (most of the time...)





spectral selection of cutoff photons leads to generation of SAP

<u>requirements</u>: linear polarization sub-5-fs pulses CEP stability

I. Christov et al., Phys. Rev. Lett. 78, 1251 (1997) A. Baltuska et al., Nature 421, 611 (2003)

#### Spectral selection role of the CEP $E=E_{o}sin(\omega_{o}t)$ $E=E_{o}cos(\omega_{o}t)$ electric field XUV pulse electric field XUV pulse time time band-pass filter 140 140 120 120 ohoton energy (eV) 100 100 80 80 60 60

spectral selection of cutoff photons leads to generation of one or two attosecond pulses!

40

-3 -2 -1 0

1

emission time (fs)

2

3

4

40

-3

-2 -1 0

1

emission time (fs)

2

3

4

Spectral selection



#### HHG in Neon

- pulse duration 5 fs
- stabilized CEP

broad continuum only in the cut-off!

Spectral selection

#### HHG in Neon

- pulse duration ~ 4 fs
- stabilized CEP

#### broad continuum 😊





Spectral selection state of the art

generation of a single 80 as pulse around 80 eV



E. Goulielmakis et al., Science 320, 1614 (2008)



### Temporal gating schemes

Polarization gating

one-color scheme (Generalized) Double Optical Gating

- Two-color gating intense IR pulses + intense visible few-cycle pulses
- Ionization gating

few-cycle pulses with above saturation intensity and controlled electric field: high-energy isolated pulses on target



### HHG polarization dependence

linear polarization



circular polarization



electron returns to the parent ion HHG emission possible electron doesn't return to the parent ion HHG emission strongly reduced





few-cycle pulses CEP stability

P. Corkum et al., Opt. Lett. 19, 1870 (1994) O. Tcherbakoff et al., Phys. Rev. A 68, 043804 (2003)

Polarization gating



## Polarization gating results in Ne

pulse duration 5 fs, delay  $\delta = 6.2$  fs,  $\phi_o < \phi < \phi_{o+3\pi}$ 



- strong periodic modulation of emission efficiency for Δφ= π
  continuous spectra from 30 eV to 75 eV for all CEPs
- I. Sola et al., Nature Physics 2, 319 (2006)

### Temporal gating with two colors



#### Two-color gating



driving field:  $\omega_1 + \omega_2$   $\omega_2 = 2 \omega_1 + \delta \omega$ : spectrally detuned second harmonic

new periodicity of the electric field can lead to isolation of single attosecond pulses!

#### <u>key parameters</u>:

- central wavelength of the two components
- intensity of the pulses
- temporal overlap
- gas target position

H. Merdji et al., Opt. Lett. 32, 3134 (2007)

#### Two-color gating

Intense IR pulses: 1.45  $\mu$ m, 20 fs,  $I_{IR} = 2 \times 10^{14}$  W/cm<sup>2</sup> Intense VIS pulses: 0.8  $\mu$ m, 13 fs,  $I_{VIS} = 8.5 \times 10^{14}$  W/cm<sup>2</sup>



- τ=0: cutoff extension and continuum generation
- outside overlap: harmonic spectrum is dominated by VIS pulse
- IR component: responsible for cutoff extension
- VIS component: increase of conversion efficiency

F. Calegari et al., Opt. Lett. 34, 3125 (2009)

### Ionization gating

High-energy few-cycle pulses: complete depletion of neutral atom population on the pulse leading edge for some CEP values confinement of the XUV emission within a single event

#### <u>requirements</u>:

- few cycle pulses
- peak intensity > saturation intensity
- CEP control
- low gas pressure
- spatial filtering after the gas cell


## XUV spectra vs CEP: xenon

pulse duration 5 fs, peak intensity 2.3 10<sup>15</sup> W/cm<sup>2</sup> 2.5–mm Xe cell



- periodic change of amplitude and shape for  $\Delta \phi = \pi$
- CEP drives transition from double to single emission
- measured pulse energy on target  $\sim$  2.1 nJ

F. Ferrari et al., Nature Phot. 4, 875 (2010)

Atto-chirp

#### selection of short trajectories



electron recombination time depends on the energy!

positive chirp of harmonic emission on the attosecond timescale

and the atto-chirp??

#### metallic filter provides negative GDD in the XUV region!



López-Martens et al. Phys. Rev. Lett., 94, 033001 (2005)

Metallic filters



40

#### **1.5-um PARAMETRIC SOURCE**

© C. Manzoni & D. Brida

#### Looking for...

#### THE PERFECT DRIVING PULSE



Cut off extension towards the soft X ray region Ponderomotive electron energy  $U_p \sim \lambda^2$ 



CEP stability for single attosecond pulse generation Attochirp scales as ~  $\lambda^{-1}$ 



Tunability of discrete harmonics



but...

Generation yield  $\sim \lambda^{-\alpha}$  with  $\alpha \sim 5-6$ 

#### PASSIVE STABILIZATION OF CARRIER ENVELOPE PHASE

Difference Frequency Generation (DFG):



DFG between two pulses carrying the same CEP leads to automatic phase-stabilization of the DF pulse



Baltuška et al., Phys. Rev. Lett. 88, 133901 (2002)

#### POSSIBLE IMPLEMENTATION DFG in OPAs

IR-pumped collinear OPA



Idler self phase stabilization

Narrow phase matching bandwidth

X. Fang et al., Opt. Lett. 29, 1282 (2004)

SH-pumped SH-seeded Non-collinear OPA



Idler self phase stabilization

Broad phase matching bandwidth

Idler angular dispersion

S. Adachi et al., Opt. Lett. 29, 1150 (2004)

#### INTERPULSE AND INTRAPULSE DFG



DFG between two frequency shifted pulses

🛞 Delay-induced CEP jitter

C. Manzoni et al., Opt. Lett. 29, 2668(2004)



DFG between short and long wavelength components of a broadband pulse



No necessity to maintain time delay between mixing pulses

T. Fuji et al., Opt. Lett. 30, 332 (2005)

#### **OUR PROPOSAL**



Compression of the initial pulse by filamentation in Kr → high energy supercontinuum → pulse compression down to 10 fs



#### **OUR PROPOSAL**



Compression of the initial pulse by filamentation in Kr  $\rightarrow$  high energy supercontinuum  $\rightarrow$  pulse compression down to 10 fs





Difference frequency generation of the supercontinuum  $\rightarrow$  carrier wavelength in the near IR  $\rightarrow$  passive stabilization of the CEP



Amplification by Near-IR OPA at degeneracy  $\rightarrow$  high energy, broad gain bandwidth

#### PARAMETRIC SOURCE experimental setup



Opt. Lett. 32, 2957 (2007)

#### PARAMETRIC SOURCE spectral characterization



#### PARAMETRIC SOURCE temporal characterization

#### Zero Additional Phase SPIDER nearly transform-limited 17-fs pulse width





3 to 4 optical cycle pulses @ 1.5 μm

#### CARRIER-ENVELOPE PHASE STABILITY how to measure it



Generation of an octave spanning spectrum Frequency doubling in a non-linear crystal Observation of spectral interference between the two components



#### **CARRIER-ENVELOPE PHASE STABILITY**



Spectral broadening by filamentation in krypton



minimizes intensityphase coupling

0.19 rad RMS



J. Opt. Soc. Am. B 25, B112 (2008)

## II. Attosecond pulse characterization

# General scheme of attosecond metrology



far from resonances, attosecond electron wavepacket is a replica of the attosecond field  $\rightarrow$  characterization of the electron wavepacket

#### FROG-CRAB

Frequency-Resolved Optical Gating for Complete Reconstruction of Attosecond Bursts



Y. Mairesse and F. Quéré, Phys. Rev. A 71, 011401 (R) 2005

FROG-CRAB

photoionization spectrum:

$$\begin{split} S(W,\tau) &= \Big| \int_{-\infty}^{+\infty} dt \; e^{i\phi(t)} \; \mathbf{d} \; \mathbf{E}_X(t-\tau) \; e^{i(W+I_p)t} \Big|^2 \\ \end{aligned}$$

$$\begin{aligned} \text{delay between IR} & \text{dipole transition} & \text{XUV field} \\ \text{and XUV pulses} & \text{element} \end{aligned}$$

$$\begin{aligned} \text{phase gate:} \quad \phi(t) &= -\int_t^\infty dt' [\mathbf{v} \cdot \mathbf{A}(t') + \mathbf{A}^2(t')/2] \\ \text{final electron velocity} & \text{IR vector potential} \end{aligned}$$

the IR laser field provides a phase gate for FROG measurements on attosecond bursts



initial electron momentum

$$p_i = \sqrt{2mW_o} \qquad W_o = \hbar\omega_{XUV} - I_p$$

effect of streaking pulse  
$$\Delta \mathbf{p}(t) = \mathbf{e} \int_{t}^{+\infty} \mathbf{E}_{IR}(t') dt' = \mathbf{e} \mathbf{A}(t)$$

final electron momentum

$$\mathbf{p}_f(t) = \mathbf{p}_i + \Delta \mathbf{p}(t)$$

electron energy:  $W(t) \approx W_o + \sqrt{8mW_o}eA(t)$ 

Kitzler et al. PRL 88, 173903 (2002) Itatani et al. PRL 88, 173904 (2002)











#### cross-correlation with driving light pulse



 $\rightarrow$  photoelectron spectra vs delay

## Temporal characterization

dispersion compensation by 300-nm Al filter



G. Sansone et al., Science 314, 443 (2006)



# Attosecond spectroscopy

# attosecond-scale electronic dynamics in molecules do affect chemical changes!

when charge migration is the crucial step, the time-scale relevant to chemistry is set by electronic motion

- electron delocalization in aromatic molecules
- photosynthesis
- long-range electron transfer in biomolecules
- biological energy conversion processes

L.S. Cederbaum, J. Zobeley, Chem. Phys. Lett. 307, 205 (1999) F. Remacle, R.D. Levine, PNAS 103, 6793 (2006)

## "Intrinsic" tools in Attosecond Technology

Attosecond optical pulses always associated to attosecond electron pulses

- electrons give access to spatial resolution: electron wavelength (~1Å)
- optics gives electron collision physics a systematic method for measuring dynamics

Attosecond photon or electron pulses always synchronized to a visible pulse with controlled waveform

extension of conventional ultrafast spectroscopy and strong field coherent control from the cycleaveraged into the sub-cycle domain of visible light

### Attosecond measurements

XUV ionization followed by **acceleration** of the ionized electron in a strong IR field (**streak camera approach**)

Attosecond pulse characterization Attosecond streaking spectroscopy

> Relaxation dynamics of core-excited atoms, M. Drescher et al., Nature **419**, 803 (2002). Attosecond spectroscopy in <u>condensed matter</u>, A. Cavalieri et al., Nature **449**, 1029 (2007)

XUV excitation of **bound states**, followed by ionization in a strong IR field

Real-time observation of electron tunnelling and multi-electron dynamics in atoms

M. Uiberacker *et al.*, Nature **446**, 627 (2007)



P. B. Corkum & F. Krausz, Nat. Physics 3, 381 (2007)

# As streaking spectroscopy

#### <u>as pump –as probe</u>:

- low flux of as pulses
- low two-photon transition probabilities in the XUV

#### <u>as streaking spectroscopy:</u>

- few-cycle IR pulse with controlled waveform + nonlinear process may replace the attosecond pulse either in probing or starting electron dynamics
- probing inner-atomic relaxation dynamics



# As Streaking Spectroscopy

time-domain observation of the decay of an innershell vacancy via Auger relaxation in isolated atoms



M. Drescher et al., Nature 419,803 (2002)

# As Streaking Spectroscopy

Decay much faster than period of IR: Auger electron maps out the oscillation of the IR field

Decay much slower than period of IR: measure cross correlation between IR pulse duration and Auger decay



M. Drescher et al., Nature 419,803 (2002)

# Streaked electron spectra following core-hole excitation



- In this experiment the Auger decay was slower than the optical period of the IR laser
- A decay time of the excitation of  $7.9\pm 1$  fs could be inferred
- M. Drescher et al., Nature 419,803 (2002)
## As spectroscopy in condensed matter probing photoelectron em



- Sub-fs photoemission from 4f core states and from conduction band
- Extension of streaking spectroscopy to condensed matter
- 100-as delay between photoelectron emission from localized core states and from delocalized conductionband states
- A. Cavalieri et al., Nature 449, 1029 (2007)

probing photoelectron emission from single-crystal tungsten



# XUV excitation of bound states followed by ionization in a strong IR field



M. Uiberacker et al., Nature 446, 627 (2007)

## Shake-up state in Ne

Kinetic energy

0

Binding energy

IR



- 2) excitation of a second 2p level to an excited ionic states
- 3) ionization of excited state by an IR field

4) doubly charged ions



M. Uiberacker et al., Nature 446, 627 (2007)



#### M. Uiberacker et al., Nature 446, 627 (2007)











#### Investigation of Ultrafast Electron Dynamics Triggered by Attosecond XUV Pulses in Amino Acids

Francesca Calegari



## Application to biomolecular building blocks:

Aromatic amino acids evaporated in a TOF-mass spectrometer

Mass of fragments produced by XUV pump and VIS/NIR probe pulses measured as a function of the pump probe delay with attosecond time precision

L. Belshaw et al., J. Phys. Chem. Lett. 3, 3751(2012) F. Calegari et al., JSTQE 21, 2419218 (2015)

#### Investigation of Ultrafast Electron Dynamics Triggered by **Attosecond XUV Pulses in Amino Acids**

Francesca Calegari

Electron migration from the amino group to the







F. Calegari et al., Science 346, 336 (2014)



Electron migration from the amino group to the indole group in **2.15 fs** 

Tryptophan – m/q=79.5



30

Looking for motivated students and postdocs: francesca.calegari@polimi.it Visit us on Facebook: www.facebook.com/erc.starlight







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Molecular imaging



Shooting the "molecular movie":

chemical properties of molecules are determined by the outermost electronic structure



## Motivation



Imaging of structural changes in molecules

- · direct access to excited states
- · visualization of conical intersections
- · precursor of coherent control



# Molecular imaging

Imaging of the total electron density:

- X-ray diffraction
- · electron scattering

Imaging of the outermost electronic structure:

- electron momentum spectroscopy
- scanning tunneling microscopy
- · high order harmonic generation
  - $\rightarrow$  simple experimental technique

  - $\rightarrow$  table top'setup  $\rightarrow$  temporal resolution (as to tens of fs)









## HHG as an interferometer



tunnel ionization  $\rightarrow$  beam splitter electron wave-packet motion  $\rightarrow$  delay line re-collision  $\rightarrow$  interference





# HHG tomography recipe

the transition dipole moment is the spatial Fourier transform of  $r \Psi(r)$ 

 $\langle \Psi(\mathbf{r})|\mathbf{r}|\exp[ik(\omega)\cdot\mathbf{r}]\rangle$ 



tomographic reconstruction of  $\Psi(\mathbf{r})$ : the optical frequencies wmap the spatial frequencies k

1 - align the molecule2 - drive HHG for different angles



# Impulsive alignment of molecules

molecule in intense ultrashort laser field: pulse duration  $\tau < T_R$  intensity  $I > 10^{12}$  W/cm²

coherent excitation of rotational wave-packet

- $\rightarrow$  rotational revivals
- → field-free alignment of the molecular sample for certain delays!



J. Ortigoso et al., J. Chem. Phys. 110, 3870 (1999)

# CO2 orbital tomography





## «more complex» molecules



## Multielectron dynamics





## Ultrafast Dynamic Imaging of complex molecules

## PhD and Post Doc position available!



**European Research Council** 

Established by the European Commission

## A new lab @ CNR-IFN

### the laser source



Driving laser source: 22 fs pulses 15 mJ energy 1 kHz rep rate



erc



## The Udyni lab @ CNR-IFN



## manipulating the light







High energy OPA <15 fs pulses 2 mJ energy 1 kHz rep rate + hollow fiber compression



# The Udyni lab @ CNR-IFN



- XUV spectrometer
  80-1 nm spectral range
  stigmatic/astigmatic
  harmonic polarization detection
- · large dynamical range



VMI spectrometer for electrons up to 200 eV







- · time-resolved molecular orbital tomography
- time-resolved Laser Induced Electron
   Diffraction
- transient absorption spectroscopy
- harmonic polarimetry



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