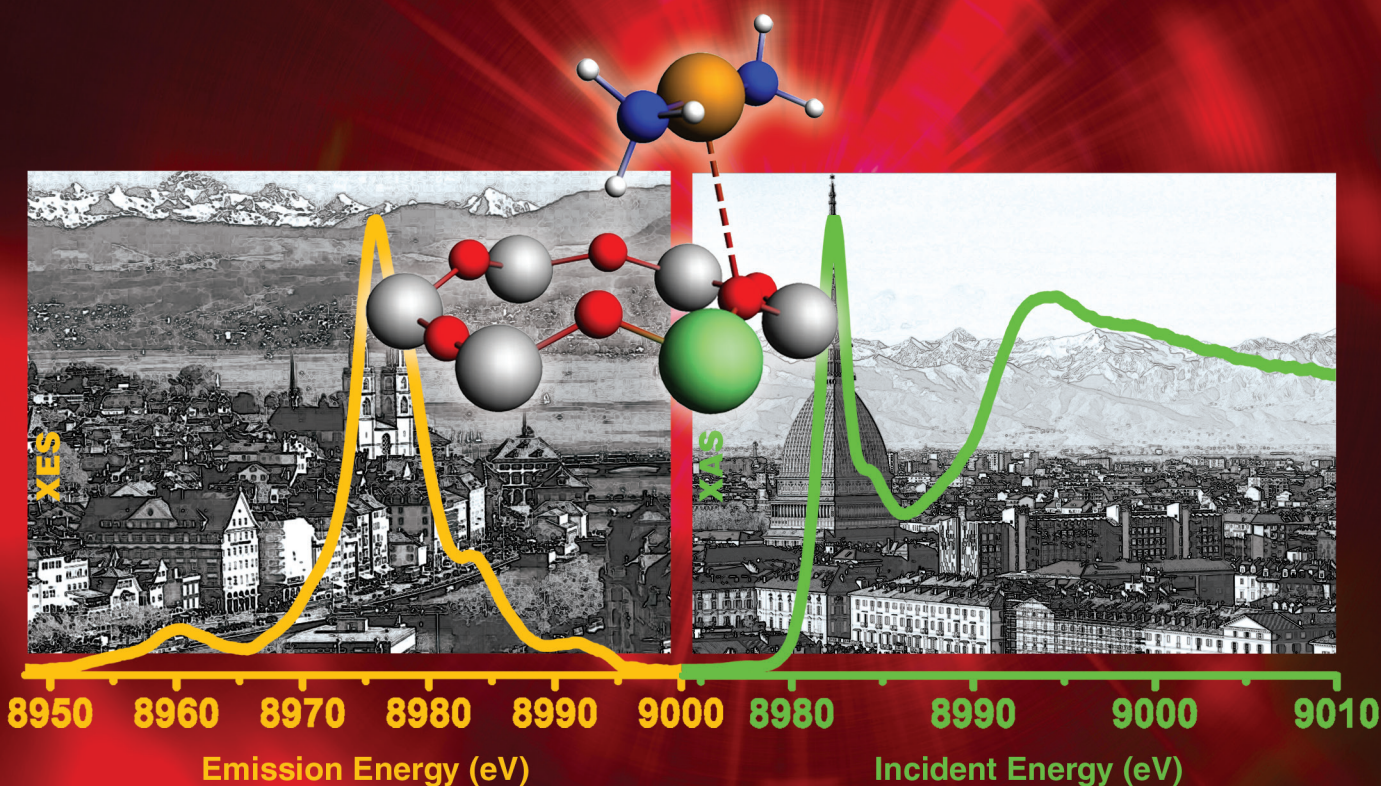


X-Ray Absorption and X-Ray Emission Spectroscopy

Theory and Applications

EDITED BY Jeroen A. van Bokhoven • Carlo Lamberti



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Contents

VOLUME I

List of Contributors	xvii
-----------------------------	-------------

Foreword	xxi
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Diek C. Koningsberger and Roel Prins

I INTRODUCTION: HISTORY, XAS, XES, AND THEIR IMPACT ON SCIENCE

1 Introduction: Historical Perspective on XAS	3
--	----------

Carlo Lamberti and Jeroen A. van Bokhoven

1.1 Historical Overview of 100 Years of X-Ray Absorption: A Focus on the Pioneering 1913–1971 Period	3
1.2 About the Book: A Few Curiosities, Some Statistics, and a Brief Overview	9
Acknowledgement	13
References	14

II EXPERIMENT AND THEORY

2 From Synchrotrons to FELs: How Photons Are Produced; Beamline Optics and Beam Characteristics	25
--	-----------

Giorgio Margaritondo

2.1 Photon Emission by Accelerated Charges: From the Classical Case to the Relativistic Limit	25
2.2 Undulators, Wigglers, and Bending Magnets	29
2.2.1 Undulators	29
2.2.2 Wigglers	32
2.2.3 Bending magnets	33
2.2.4 High flux, high brightness	35
2.3 The Time Structure of Synchrotron Radiation	36
2.4 Elements of Beamline Optics	38
2.4.1 Focusing devices	38
2.4.2 Monochromators	41
2.4.3 Detectors	43
2.5 Free Electron Lasers	44
2.5.1 FEL optical amplification	46
2.5.2 Optical amplification in an X-FEL: Details	46
2.5.3 Saturation	47
2.5.4 X-FEL time structure: New opportunities for spectroscopy	48
2.5.5 Time coherence and seeding	48
References	49

3	Real-Space Multiple-Scattering Theory of X-Ray Spectra	51
	<i>Joshua J. Kas, Kevin Jorisson and John J. Rehr</i>	
3.1	Introduction	51
3.2	Theory	53
3.2.1	Independent-particle approximation	53
3.2.2	Real-space multiple-scattering theory	54
3.2.3	Many body effects in x-ray spectra	57
3.3	Applications	60
3.3.1	XAS, EXAFS, XANES	61
3.3.2	EELS	62
3.3.3	XES	63
3.3.4	XMCD	64
3.3.5	NRIXS	64
3.3.6	RIXS	65
3.3.7	Compton scattering	66
3.3.8	Optical constants	66
3.4	Conclusion	66
	References	68
4	Theory of X-Ray Absorption Near Edge Structure	73
	<i>Yves Joly and Stéphane Grenier</i>	
4.1	Introduction	73
4.2	The X-Ray Absorption Phenomena	74
4.2.1	Probing material	74
4.2.2	The different spectroscopies	76
4.3	X-Ray Matter Interaction	78
4.3.1	Interaction Hamiltonian	78
4.3.2	Absorption cross-section for the transition between two states	78
4.3.3	State description	80
4.3.4	The transition matrix	81
4.4	XANES General Formulation	83
4.4.1	Interaction times and the multi-electronic problem	83
4.4.2	Absorption cross-section main equation	84
4.5	XANES Simulations in the Mono-Electronic Scheme	85
4.5.1	From multi- to mono-electronic	85
4.5.2	The different methods	87
4.5.3	The multiple scattering theory	89
4.6	Multiplet Ligand Field Theory	91
4.6.1	Atomic multiplets	91
4.6.2	The crystal field	92
4.7	Current Theoretical Developments	92
4.8	Tensorial Approaches	93
4.9	Conclusion	94
	References	95
5	How to Start an XAS Experiment	99
	<i>Diego Gianolio</i>	
5.1	Introduction	99
5.2	Plan the Experiment	100

5.2.1	Identify the scientific question	101
5.2.2	Can XAS solve the problem?	103
5.2.3	Select the best beamline and measurement mode	104
5.2.4	Writing the proposal	111
5.3	Preparing the Experiment	112
5.3.1	Experimental design	112
5.3.2	Best sample conditions for data acquisition	113
5.3.3	Sample preparation	116
5.4	Performing the Experiment	118
5.4.1	Initial set-up and optimization of signal	118
5.4.2	Data acquisition	119
	References	122
6	Hard X-Ray Photon-in/Photon-out Spectroscopy: Instrumentation, Theory and Applications	125
	<i>Pieter Glatzel, Roberto Alonso-Mori, and Dimosthenis Sokaras</i>	
6.1	Introduction	125
6.2	History	126
6.3	Basic Theory of XES	126
6.3.1	One- and multi-electron description	128
6.3.2	X-ray Raman scattering spectroscopy	132
6.4	Chemical Sensitivity of X-Ray Emission	133
6.4.1	Core-to-core transitions	133
6.4.2	Valence-to-core transitions	134
6.5	HERFD and RIXS	135
6.6	Experimental X-Ray Emission Spectroscopy	137
6.6.1	Sources for x-ray emission spectroscopy	137
6.6.2	X-ray emission spectrometers	140
6.6.3	Detectors	147
6.7	Conclusion	149
	References	149
7	QEXAFS: Techniques and Scientific Applications for Time-Resolved XAS	155
	<i>Maarten Nachtegaal, Oliver Müller, Christian König and Ronald Frahm</i>	
7.1	Introduction	155
7.2	History and Basics of QEXAFS	156
7.3	Monochromators and Beamlines for QEXAFS	158
7.3.1	QEXAFS with conventional monochromators	158
7.3.2	Piezo-QEXAFS for the millisecond time range	161
7.3.3	Dedicated oscillating monochromators for QEXAFS	162
7.4	Detectors and Readout Systems	166
7.4.1	Requirements for detectors	167
7.4.2	Gridded ionization chambers	167
7.4.3	Data acquisition	169
7.4.4	Angular encoder	171
7.5	Applications of QEXAFS in Chemistry	172
7.5.1	Following the fate of metal contaminants at the mineral–water interface	173
7.5.2	Identifying the catalytic active sites in gas phase reactions	174
7.5.3	Identifying the catalytic active site in liquid phase reactions	175

7.5.4	Synthesis of nanoparticles	176
7.5.5	Identification of reaction intermediates: Modulation excitation XAS	177
7.6	Conclusion and Future Perspectives	179
	Acknowledgements	180
	References	180
8	Time-Resolved XAS Using an Energy Dispersive Spectrometer: Techniques and Applications	185
	<i>Olivier Mathon, Innokenty Kantor and Sakura Pascarelli</i>	
8.1	Introduction	185
8.2	Energy Dispersive X-Ray Absorption Spectroscopy	186
8.2.1	Historical development of EDXAS and overview of existing facilities	186
8.2.2	Principles: Source, optics, detection	186
8.2.3	Dispersive versus scanning spectrometer for time-resolved experiments	188
8.2.4	Description of the EDXAS beamline at ESRF	189
8.3	From the Minute Down to the Ms: Filming a Chemical Reaction <i>in situ</i>	191
8.3.1	Technical aspects	191
8.3.2	First stages of nanoparticle formation	191
8.3.3	Working for cleaner cars: Automotive exhaust catalyst	194
8.3.4	Reaction mechanisms and intermediates	196
8.3.5	High temperature oxidation of metallic iron	199
8.4	Down to the μ s Regime: Matter under Extreme Conditions	200
8.4.1	Technical aspects	200
8.4.2	Melts at extreme pressure and temperature	202
8.4.3	Spin transitions at high magnetic field	204
8.4.4	Fast ohmic ramp excitation towards the warm dense matter regime	205
8.5	Playing with a 100 ps Single Bunch	206
8.5.1	Technical aspects	206
8.5.2	Detection and characterization of photo-excited states in Cu^+ complexes	206
8.5.3	Opportunities for investigating laser-shocked matter	207
8.5.4	Non-synchrotron EDXAS	208
8.6	Conclusion	209
	References	209
9	X-Ray Transient Absorption Spectroscopy	213
	<i>Lin X. Chen</i>	
9.1	Introduction	213
9.2	Pump-Probe Spectroscopy	214
9.2.1	Background	214
9.2.2	The basic set-up	218
9.3	Experimental Considerations	220
9.3.1	XTA at a synchrotron source	220
9.3.2	XTA at x-ray free electron laser sources	224
9.4	Transient Structural Information Investigated by XTA	225
9.4.1	Metal center oxidation state	225
9.4.2	Electron configuration and orbital energies of x-ray absorbing atoms	226
9.4.3	Transient coordination geometry of the metal center	227

9.5	X-Ray Pump-Probe Absorption Spectroscopy: Examples	228
9.5.1	Excited state dynamics of transition metal complexes (TMCs)	228
9.5.2	Interfacial charge transfer in hybrid systems	232
9.5.3	XTA studies of metal center active site structures in metalloproteins	235
9.5.4	XTA using the x-ray free electron lasers	237
9.5.5	Other XTA application examples	239
9.6	Perspective of Pump-Probe X-Ray Spectroscopy	239
	Acknowledgments	240
	References	241
10	Space-Resolved XAFS, Instrumentation and Applications	251
	<i>Yoshio Suzuki and Yasuko Terada</i>	
10.1	Space-Resolving Techniques for XAFS	251
10.2	Beam-Focusing Instrumentation for Microbeam Production	253
10.2.1	Total reflection mirror systems	253
10.2.2	Fresnel zone plate optics for x-ray microbeam	257
10.2.3	General issues of beam-focusing optics	260
10.2.4	Requirements on beam stability in microbeam XAFS experiments	265
10.3	Examples of Beam-Focusing Instrumentation	266
10.3.1	The total-reflection mirror system	266
10.3.2	Fresnel zone plate system	267
10.4	Examples of Applications of the Microbeam-XAFS Technique to Biology and Environmental Science	268
10.4.1	Speciation of heavy metals in willow	268
10.4.2	Characterization of arsenic-accumulating mineral in a sedimentary iron deposit	270
10.4.3	Feasibility study for microbeam XAFS analysis using FZP optics	272
10.4.4	Micro-XAFS studies of plutonium sorbed on tuff	274
10.4.5	Micro-XANES analysis of vanadium accumulation in an ascidian blood cell	274
10.5	Conclusion and Outlook	275
	References	278
11	Quantitative EXAFS Analysis	281
	<i>Bruce Ravel</i>	
11.1	A brief history of EXAFS theory	282
11.1.1	The n-body decomposition in GNXAS	286
11.1.2	The exact curved wave theory in EXCURVE	286
11.1.3	The path expansion in FEFF	287
11.2	Theoretical calculation of EXAFS scattering factors	287
11.2.1	The pathfinder	288
11.2.2	The fitting metric	289
11.2.3	Constraints on parameters of the fit	290
11.2.4	Fitting statistics	291
11.2.5	Extending the evaluation of χ^2	294
11.2.6	Other analytic methods	295
11.3	Practical examples of EXAFS analysis	296
11.3.1	Geometric constraints on bond lengths	296

11.3.2 Constraints on the coordination environment	297
11.3.3 Constraints and multiple data set analysis	298
11.4 Conclusion	299
References	299

12 XAS Spectroscopy: Related Techniques and Combination with Other Spectroscopic and Scattering Methods 303

Carlo Lamberti, Elisa Borfecchia, Jeroen A. van Bokhoven and Marcos Fernández-García

12.1 Introduction	303
12.2 Atomic Pair Distribution Analysis of Total Scattering Data	304
12.2.1 Theoretical description	307
12.2.2 Examples of PDF analysis	311
12.3 Diffraction Anomalous Fine Structure (DAFS)	316
12.3.1 Theoretical description	316
12.3.2 Examples of DAFS	318
12.4 Inelastic Scattering Techniques	323
12.4.1 Extended energy-loss fine structure (EXELFS)	323
12.4.2 X-ray Raman scattering (XRS)	323
12.5 β -Environmental Fine Structure (BEFS)	324
12.6 Combined Techniques	330
12.6.1 General considerations	330
12.6.2 Selected examples	332
12.7 Conclusion	337
Acknowledgments	337
References	337

VOLUME II

List of Contributors xvii

Foreword xxi

Diek C. Koningsberger and Roel Prins

III APPLICATIONS: FROM CATALYSIS VIA SEMICONDUCTORS TO INDUSTRIAL APPLICATIONS

13 X-Ray Absorption and Emission Spectroscopy for Catalysis 353

Carlo Lamberti and Jeroen A. van Bokhoven

13.1 Introduction	353
13.2 The Catalytic Process	354
13.2.1 From vacuum and single crystals to realistic pressure and relevant samples	355
13.2.2 From chemisorption to conversion and reaction kinetics	356
13.2.3 Structural differences within a single catalytic reactor	358
13.2.4 Determining the structure of the active site	360
13.3 Reaction Kinetics from Time-Resolved XAS	361
13.3.1 Oxygen storage materials	361
13.3.2 Selective propene oxidation over α -MoO ₃	362
13.3.3 Active sites of the dream reaction, the direct conversion of benzene to phenol	365

13.4	Sub-Micrometer Space Resolved Measurements	368
13.5	Emerging Methods	369
13.5.1	X-ray emission spectroscopy	369
13.5.2	Pump probe methods	374
13.6	Conclusion and Outlook	374
	Acknowledgement	375
	References	375
14	High Pressure XAS, XMCD and IXS	385
	<i>Jean-Paul Itié, François Baudelet and Jean-Pascal Rueff</i>	
14.1	Introduction	385
14.1.1	Why pressure matters	385
14.1.2	High-pressure generation and measurements	385
14.1.3	Specific drawbacks of a high-pressure set-up	386
14.2	High Pressure EXAFS and XANES	386
14.2.1	Introduction	386
14.2.2	Local equation of state	386
14.2.3	Pressure-induced phase transitions	387
14.2.4	Glasses, amorphous materials, amorphization	390
14.2.5	Extension to low and high energy edges	392
14.3	High-Pressure Magnetism and XMCD	393
14.3.1	Introduction	393
14.3.2	Transition metal	394
14.3.3	Magnetic insulator	396
14.3.4	The rare earth system	396
14.4	High Pressure Inelastic X-Ray Scattering	397
14.4.1	Electronic structure	397
14.4.2	Magnetic transitions in 3d and 4f electron systems	397
14.4.3	Metal insulator transitions in correlated systems	398
14.4.4	Valence transition in mixed valent rare-earth compounds	399
14.4.5	Low-energy absorption edges: chemical bonding and orbital configuration	400
14.5	Conclusion	401
	References	402
15	X-Ray Absorption and RIXS on Coordination Complexes	407
	<i>Thomas Kroll, Marcus Lundberg and Edward I. Solomon</i>	
15.1	Introduction	407
15.1.1	Geometric and electronic structure of coordination complexes	407
15.1.2	X-ray probes of coordination complexes	409
15.1.3	Extracting electronic structure from x-ray spectra	411
15.2	Metal K-Edges	413
15.2.1	The case of a single 3d hole: Cu(II)	414
15.2.2	Multiple 3d holes: Fe(III) and Fe(II)	418
15.3	Metal L-Edges	420
15.3.1	The case of a single 3d hole: Cu(II)	421
15.3.2	Multiple 3d holes: Fe(III) and Fe(II)	423
15.4	Resonant Inelastic X-Ray Scattering	427
15.4.1	Ferrous systems	429
15.4.2	Ferric systems	431

15.5 Conclusion	432
Acknowledgments	433
References	433
16 Semiconductors	437
<i>Federico Boscherini</i>	
16.1 Introduction	437
16.2 XAS Instrumental Aspects	437
16.3 Applications	439
16.3.1 Dopants and defects	439
16.3.2 Thin films and heterostructures	447
16.3.3 Nanostructures	448
16.3.4 Dilute magnetic semiconductors	451
16.4 Conclusion	455
References	455
17 XAS Studies on Mixed Valence Oxides	459
<i>Joaquín García, Gloria Subías and Javier Blasco</i>	
17.1 Introduction	459
17.1.1 X-ray absorption spectroscopy (XAS)	461
17.1.2 XES and XAS	463
17.1.3 Resonant x-ray scattering	464
17.2 Solid State Applications (Mixed Valence Oxides)	464
17.2.1 High T _c superconductors	464
17.2.2 Manganites	470
17.2.3 Perovskite cobaltites	479
17.3 Conclusion	480
References	481
18 Novel XAS Techniques for Probing Fuel Cells and Batteries	485
<i>David E. Ramaker</i>	
18.1 Introduction	485
18.2 XANES Techniques	487
18.2.1 Data analysis	489
18.2.2 Data collection	490
18.2.3 Comparison of techniques by examination of O(H)/Pt and CO/Pt	493
18.3 <i>Operando</i> Measurements	500
18.3.1 Fuel cells	500
18.3.2 Batteries	505
18.4 Future Trends	511
18.5 Appendix	511
18.5.1 Details of the $\Delta\mu$ XANES analysis technique	511
18.5.2 FEFF8 theoretical calculations	513
References	515
19 X-Ray Spectroscopy in Studies of the Nuclear Fuel Cycle	523
<i>Melissa A. Denecke</i>	
19.1 Background	523
19.1.1 Introduction	523
19.1.2 Radioactive materials at synchrotron sources	527

19.2 Application Examples	530
19.2.1 Studies related to uranium mining	530
19.2.2 Studies related to fuel	532
19.2.3 Investigations of reactor components	538
19.2.4 Studies related to recycle and lanthanide/actinide separations	540
19.2.5 Studies concerning legacy remediation and waste disposal (waste forms, near-field and far-field)	544
19.3 Conclusion and Outlook	551
References	555
20 Planetary, Geological and Environmental Sciences	561
<i>François Farges and Max Wilke</i>	
20.1 Introduction	561
20.2 Planetary and Endogenous Earth Sciences	563
20.2.1 Planetary materials and meteorites	563
20.2.2 Crystalline deep earth materials	566
20.2.3 Magmatic and volcanic processes	571
20.2.4 Element complexation in aqueous fluids at P and T	579
20.3 Environmental Geosciences	581
20.3.1 General trends	581
20.3.2 Environmentally relevant minerals and phases	583
20.3.3 Mechanisms and reactivity at the mineral-water interfaces	584
20.3.4 Some environmental applications of x-ray absorption spectroscopy	591
20.4 Conclusion	599
Acknowledgments	600
References	600
21 X-Ray Absorption Spectroscopy and Cultural Heritage: Highlights and Perspectives	609
<i>François Farges and Marine Cotte</i>	
21.1 Introduction	609
21.2 Instrumentation: Standard and Recently Developed Approaches	610
21.2.1 From centimetric objects to micrometric cross-sections	610
21.2.2 Improving the spectral resolution of XRF detectors	612
21.2.3 From hard x-rays to soft x-rays	612
21.2.4 Spectro-imaging in the hard x-ray domain	613
21.3 Some Applications	614
21.3.1 Glasses	614
21.3.2 Ceramics	621
21.3.3 Pigments and paintings	623
21.3.4 Inks	626
21.3.5 Woods: From historical to fossils	627
21.3.6 Bones and ivory	628
21.3.7 Metals	629
21.3.8 Rock-formed monuments	632
21.4 Conclusion	632
Acknowledgments	633
References	633

22	X-Ray Spectroscopy at Free Electron Lasers	637
	<i>Wojciech Gawelda, Jakub Szlachetko and Christopher J. Milne</i>	
22.1	Introduction to X-Ray Free Electron Lasers in Comparison to Synchrotrons	637
22.1.1	Overview of facilities	637
22.1.2	X-ray properties from an XFEL	638
22.1.3	Scanning the x-ray energy	641
22.1.4	Comparison with existing time-resolved techniques at synchrotrons	641
22.2	Current Implementations of X-Ray Spectroscopy Techniques at XFELs	642
22.2.1	X-ray absorption spectroscopy	642
22.2.2	X-ray emission spectroscopy	645
22.3	Examples of Time-Resolved X-Ray Spectroscopy at XFELs	646
22.3.1	Ultrafast spin-crossover excitation probed with x-ray absorption spectroscopy	647
22.3.2	Femtosecond spin and charge state dynamics probed with x-ray emission spectroscopy	649
22.3.3	Simultaneous measurement of the structural and electronic changes in Photosystem II after photoexcitation	652
22.3.4	Investigating surface photochemistry	653
22.3.5	Soft x-ray emission spectroscopy measurements of dilute systems	654
22.4	Examples of Nonlinear X-Ray Spectroscopy at XFELs	656
22.4.1	X-ray-induced transparency	656
22.4.2	Sequential ionization and core-to-core resonances	656
22.4.3	Hollow atoms	658
22.4.4	Solid-density plasma	659
22.4.5	Two-photon absorption	660
22.5	Conclusion and Outlook	660
	Acknowledgement	662
	References	662
23	X-Ray Magnetic Circular Dichroism	671
	<i>Andrei Rogalev, Katharina Ollefs and Fabrice Wilhelm</i>	
23.1	Historical Introduction	671
23.2	Physical Content of XMCD and the Sum Rules	673
23.3	Experimental Aspects and Data Analysis	677
23.3.1	Sources of circularly polarized x-rays	677
23.3.2	Sample environment	680
23.3.3	Detection modes	682
23.3.4	Standard analysis	683
23.4	Examples of Recent Research	684
23.4.1	Paramagnetism of pure metallic clusters	684
23.4.2	Magnetism in diluted magnetic semiconductors	686
23.4.3	Photomagnetic molecular magnets	688
23.5	Conclusion and Outlook	689
	Acknowledgments	690
	References	690
24	Industrial Applications	695
	<i>Simon R. Bare and Jeffrey Cutler</i>	
24.1	Introduction	695
24.2	The Patent Literature	696

24.2.1	Catalysts	696
24.2.2	Batteries	698
24.2.3	Other applications	699
24.3	The Open Literature	699
24.3.1	Semiconductors, thin films, and electronic materials	700
24.3.2	Fuel cells, batteries, and electrocatalysts	703
24.3.3	Metallurgy and tribology	708
24.3.4	Homogeneous and heterogeneous catalysts	710
24.3.5	Miscellaneous applications: from sludge to thermographic films	715
24.4	Examples of Applications from Light Sources	716
24.4.1	Introduction	716
24.4.2	Industrial science at the Canadian Light Source	716
24.4.3	Use of SOLEIL beamlines by industry	719
24.4.4	Industrial research enhancement program at NSLS	721
24.4.5	The Swiss Light Source: cutting-edge research facilities for industry	721
24.5	Examples of Applications from Companies	724
24.5.1	Introduction	724
24.5.2	Haldor Topsøe A/S	724
24.5.3	UOP LLC, a Honeywell Company	726
24.5.4	General Electric Company	729
24.5.5	IBM Research Center	733
24.6	Conducting Industrial Research at Light Sources	735
24.7	Conclusion and Outlook	736
	Acknowledgements	737
	References	737
25	XAS in Liquid Systems	745
	<i>Adriano Filipponi and Paola D'Angelo</i>	
25.1	The Liquid State of Matter	745
25.1.1	Thermodynamic considerations	745
25.1.2	Pair and higher order distribution functions	747
25.2	Computer Modelling of Liquid Structures	749
25.2.1	Molecular dynamics simulations	749
25.2.2	Classical molecular dynamics	750
25.2.3	Born-Oppenheimer molecular dynamics	752
25.2.4	Car-Parrinello molecular dynamics	752
25.2.5	Monte Carlo simulation approaches	753
25.3	XAFS Calculations in Liquids/Disordered Systems	754
25.3.1	XAFS sensitivity and its specific role	754
25.3.2	XAFS signal decomposition	755
25.3.3	XAFS signal from the pair distribution	757
25.3.4	The triplet distribution case in elemental systems	758
25.4	Experimental and Data-Analysis Approaches	759
25.4.1	Sample confinement strategies and detection techniques	759
25.4.2	High pressure, temperature control, and XAS sensitivity to phase transitions	761
25.4.3	Traditional versus atomistic data-analysis approaches	761
25.5	Examples of Data Analysis Applications	763
25.5.1	Elemental systems: Icosahedral order in metals	763

25.5.2	Aqueous solutions: Structure of the hydration shells	763
25.5.3	Transition metal aqua ions	765
25.5.4	Lanthanide aqua ions	766
25.5.5	Halide aqua ions: The bromide case	767
	References	768
26	Surface Metal Complexes and Their Applications	773
	<i>Joseph D. Kistler, Pedro Serna, Kiyotaka Asakura and Bruce C. Gates</i>	
26.1	Introduction	773
26.1.1	Ligands other than supports	774
26.1.2	Supports	774
26.1.3	Techniques complementing x-ray absorption spectroscopy	775
26.1.4	Data-fitting techniques	775
26.2	Aim of the Chapter	776
26.3	Mononuclear Iridium Complexes Supported on Zeolite HSSZ-53: Illustration of EXAFS Data Fitting and Model Discrimination	776
26.4	Iridium Complexes Supported on MgO and on Zeolites: Precisely Synthesized Isostructural Metal Complexes on Supports with Contrasting Properties as Ligands	782
26.5	Supported Chromium Complex Catalysts for Ethylene Polymerization: Characterization of Samples Resembling Industrial Catalysts	785
26.6	Copper Complexes on Titania: Insights Gained from Samples Incorporating Single-Crystal Supports	787
26.7	Gold Complexes Supported on Zeolite NaY: Determining Crystallographic Locations of Metal Complexes on a Support by Combining EXAFS Spectroscopy and STEM	790
26.8	Gold Supported on CeO ₂ : Conversion of Gold Complexes into Clusters in a CO Oxidation Catalyst Characterized by Transient XAFS Spectroscopy	792
26.9	Mononuclear Rhodium Complexes and Dimers on MgO: Discovery of a Catalyst for Selective Hydrogenation of 1,3-Butadiene	797
26.10	Osmium Complexes Supported on MgO: Determining Structure of the Metal–Support Interface, and the Importance of Support Surface Defect Sites	800
26.11	Conclusion	805
	Acknowledgments	805
	References	805
27	Nanostructured Materials	809
	<i>Alexander V. Soldatov and Kirill A. Lomachenko</i>	
27.1	Introduction	809
27.2	Small Nanoclusters	811
27.3	Nanoparticles	814
27.4	Nanostructures and Defects in Solids	819
27.5	Conclusion and Outlook	824
	Acknowledgments	824
	References	824
	Index	829

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Foreword

With pleasure we accepted the invitation of the editors to write a Foreword for the book *XAS and XES: Theory and Applications*. This book is a follow-up to *X-Ray Absorption: Principles, Applications and Techniques of EXAFS, SEXAFS and XANES*, Wiley, 1987, which we edited.

X-ray absorption spectroscopy has changed considerably since the 1980s when EXAFS and XANES were relatively new techniques, synchrotrons were not dedicated and almost no user facilities were available. Night-time collection of data during a parasitic mode at the Stanford synchrotron was an adventure, to say the least. We survived it by listening to Bach's cantatas, as rendered by one of our PhD students.

When we began working with EXAFS spectroscopy in the 1980s, adsorbate-induced structural changes and metal-support interactions were hot topics in catalytic research. At that time we were interested in the change in morphology that CO adsorption induced on a γ -Al₂O₃-supported Rh catalyst and in the structure of the interface between rhodium metal particles and the catalyst support. To study the morphology change and metal-support interface *in situ*, we applied EXAFS, but at that time it was necessary to make the long trip to the Stanford Synchrotron in the USA where we were grateful for the measuring time allotted to us by our American colleagues Dale Sayers and Jim Katzer. Our first results were published in 1983 [1] and 1985 [2]. These studies demonstrated the exciting potential of EXAFS. We were, of course, not the only scientists interested in EXAFS. There was a need in the scientific community for a basic tutorial on X-Ray Absorption Fine structure present in the near edge region (XANES) and beyond (EXAFS). Inspired by stimulating contacts with scientific colleagues from around the world and the constant but positive pressure of the publisher (Wiley), we decided to edit a book that would provide information to students and scientists as a reference book to conduct XAS studies and, more advanced, to measure and interpret data. Information about a visit to a synchrotron was even more important in those days of parasitic measuring than today, so the physics of a synchrotron was included. We were fortunate enough to receive contributions from the most qualified and renowned scientists. Since then, the book has been used by many researchers, and more than 1,400 copies have been sold.

The field of x-ray absorption has developed considerably since 1987. On average, about 2000 papers on XAS are published yearly in scientific journals. More sophisticated instrumentation with extremely high resolution has enabled the development of new tools and techniques, such as x-ray emission spectroscopy. Promising applications of this technique have been developed in the past 20 years, making this book an essential reference work in this field.

It is a great pleasure that our student and collaborator, Jeroen A. van Bokhoven, and his colleague, Carlo Lamberti, have taken the initiative to edit a new volume, with Wiley as the enthusiastic publisher. Twenty-eight years after the appearance of our book, we are pleased that highly qualified scientists have made contributions to *XAS and XES: Theory and Applications*, which also includes x-ray emission spectroscopy. These contributions and the work of the enthusiastic and well-known editors have resulted in a book, which not only provides an essential introduction to the field of XAS and XES, but also demonstrates the enormous potential of these techniques for the study of structural and electronic properties of many types of matter.

The book has 27 chapters, divided into two volumes. The 12 chapters in Volume I describe the experimental and theoretical aspects of XAS and XES. The 15 chapters in Volume II focus on the enormous potential of both spectroscopic techniques with many important applications. The first volume contains an introduction by the editors. They start with a detailed historical overview of the past 100 years of x-ray absorption, mentioning

many important scientific contributions. At this point we would like to refer to the monumental papers in 1971 [3] and in 1974 [4] by our friends Dale Sayers, Ed Stern and Farrel Lytle. Their contributions were crucial in developing EXAFS from a scientific curiosity to an extremely important analytical tool. Both Ed Stern and Dale Sayers made important contributions to our book, published in 1987.

Jeroen A. van Bokhoven and Carlo Lamberti have performed a heroic task in completing the new book in such a short time. Experts in the various subfields reviewed the chapters. The book will be of great importance for beginners in the fields of XAS and XES. They will find all the information necessary to become experts. Also experienced users active in particular subfields of both spectroscopies will learn in this book about the enormous potential of both XAS and XES for other applications. This will lead to more and better experiments and thus to better science. We are confident that the new book will find at least as great a readership as our book.

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Part I

Introduction: History, XAS, XES, and Their Impact on Science

1

Introduction: Historical Perspective on XAS

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1.1 Historical Overview of 100 Years of X-Ray Absorption: A Focus on the Pioneering 1913–1971 Period

The x-ray absorption spectroscopy (XAS) adventure started about one hundred years ago and has come a long way since. The technique remained a curiosity for much of this time, representing a minor branch of science, developed by only a few highly motivated and enthusiastic scientists. without any apparent possibility of practical application and without a solid and comprehensive theory able to describe and predict the experimental observations done, on gases, liquids and solid (crystalline and amorphous) systems. In 1971, Sayers, Stern and Lytle made ground-breaking progress when they applied Fourier analysis to the point-scattering theory of x-ray absorption fine structure, so as to formally invert the experimental data (primarily collected in the photoelectron wave-vector space) into a radial distribution function. For the first time, they were able to quantitatively determine structural parameters, such as the bond distance, coordination number, as well as the thermal and disorder parameters [1]. In the 44 years following that key publication, the field developed exponentially. Nowadays it is impossible to imagine frontier research in materials science, solid state physics and chemistry, catalysis, chemistry, biology, medicine, earth science, environmental science, cultural heritage, nanoscience, etc. without the contribution of XAS and related techniques. In this introductory chapter we provide a brief sketch of the main events that have established XAS and related techniques as leading scientific characterization tools.

After the discovery of x-rays in 1895 by Röntgen [2, 3], it took a while before the first x-ray absorption spectrum was observed by de Broglie in 1913 [4]. De Broglie mounted a single crystal on the cylinder of a recording barometer, using a clockwork mechanism to rotate the crystal around its vertical axis at a constant

angular speed. As the crystal rotated, the x-rays scattered at all angles between the incident beam and the diffraction planes hence, according to the Bragg law ($2d_{hkl} \sin \theta = \lambda = hc/E$, with c being the speed of light, $c = 2.9979 \cdot 10^8$ m/s, and h being the Planck constant, $h = 6.626 \times 10^{-34}$ J s [5], so that $hc = 12.3984$ Å keV) [6–8], changing the x-ray energy E . X-rays of varying intensities were recorded on a photographic plate. Two distinct discontinuities were observed on the film, which were found to be independent of the setting of the x-ray tube. These proved to be the K-edge absorption spectra of silver and bromine atoms contained in the photographic emulsion. As the spectrographic dispersion was poor at these short wavelengths, the spectra were of low energy resolution and the fine structure was not resolved. Successive work by de Broglie in this field proved remarkable [9, 10]. *A posteriori*, it is curious to note that de Broglie’s famous intuition concerning the association of a wavelength (λ) to any massive particle with momentum (p): $\lambda = h/p$ [11], is actually the key to understanding the phenomenon related to the fine structure of the x-ray absorption spectra.

In 1913, Moseley published his empirical law describing the frequencies (energies, $E = h\nu$) of certain characteristic x-rays emitted from pure elements, named K_α and L_α lines according to the successive Siegbahn notation. Emission energies were found to be approximately proportional to the square of the element atomic number Z [12]. This finding supported Bohr’s model of the atom [13–15] in which the atomic number corresponds to the positive charge of the nucleus of the atom measured in $1e$ units: $1e = 1.602 \cdot 10^{-19}$ C. Almost 50 years after Mendeleev’s milestone work, Moseley’s findings suggested that the atomic weight A was not a deciding player in the periodicity of physical and chemical properties of the elements within the periodic table. In contrast, the properties of the elements varied periodically with the atomic number Z . This x-ray emission study is historically important because it quantitatively justifies the nuclear model of the atom, where the atom’s positive charge is located in the nucleus and associated on an integer basis with the atomic number. Until Moseley’s work, the term “atomic number” was merely a label to identify the place of each element in the periodic table, and it was not known to be associated with any measurable physical quantity.

In 1916, in Lund in Sweden, Siegbahn and Stenström [16–18] developed the first vacuum x-ray spectrometer [19, 20] (Figure 1.1(a)), thereby taking a fundamental technological step in the progress of x-ray spectroscopy. With this kind of innovative technology, the fine structure beyond the absorption edges of selected atoms was – for the first time – experimentally observed by Fricke in 1920 [21] and by Hertz in 1921 [22]. Fricke detected the K-edges for the elements from magnesium ($Z = 12$, $E_0 = 1.3$ keV) up to chromium ($Z = 24$, $E_0 = 6.0$ keV) [21], whereas Hertz canvassed the L-edges of cesium ($Z = 55$, $E_0 = 5.0$ keV) up to neodymium ($Z = 60$, $E_0 = 6.2$ keV) [22]. In the period before World War II, other authors reported analogous behavior on several different absorption edges [20, 23–37].

Hanawalt made remarkable observations in 1931 [20], observing that the chemical and physical state of the sample affects the fine structure of the corresponding XAS spectra. Using the experimental set-up reported in Figure 1.1(a), consisting of a quartz cell allowing the XAFS spectra of different molecules sublimated in the vapor phase to be acquired, and collecting XAFS spectra on a photographic plate (Figure 1.1(b)), he was able to make two empirical observations of fundamental importance. First, he proved that substances sublimating in the molecular form, such as arsenic ($4As_{\text{solid}} \rightarrow (As_4)_{\text{gas}}$) and $AsCl_3$ (Figure 1.1(c)), are characterized by XAFS spectra exhibiting different fine structures above the edge when measured in the solid or in the vapor phase. Second, he observed that the monatomic vapors of zinc (Figure 1.1(d)), mercury, xenon and krypton elements exhibit no secondary structure. These incredibly advanced experiments already at this stage captured the main messages of EXAFS spectroscopy, but it took several years for the correct interpretation and decades before quantitative data could be extracted and the full potential of EXAFS exploited [1].

The first theoretical attempt to explain the fine structure in the XAS spectra was proposed in 1931 and 1932 by Kronig [39, 40], who developed a model based on the presence of long-range order in the probed system. The Kronig long-range order theory can be summarized in the following equation:

$$W_n = h^2(\alpha^2 + \beta^2 + \gamma^2)/[8md^2 \cos^2(\theta)] \quad (1.1)$$

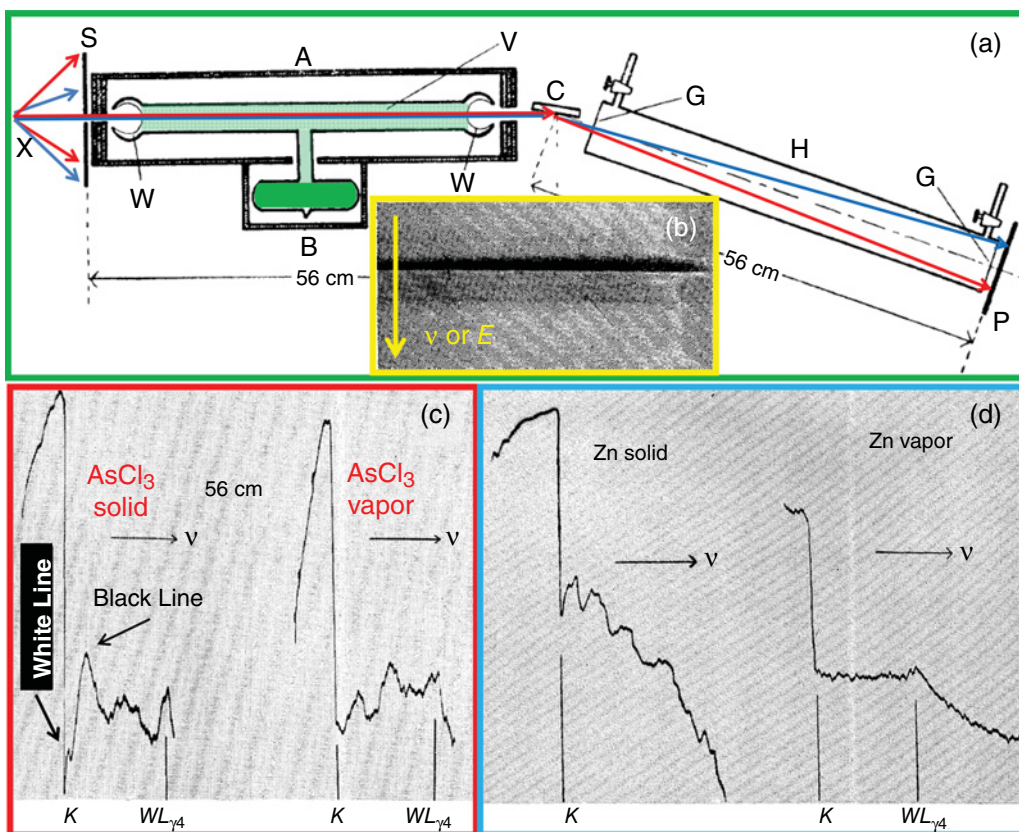


Figure 1.1 See colour plate section.

where W_n are the energy positions corresponding to the zone boundaries (i.e., not the absorption maxima or minima, but the first rise in each fine structure maximum); h is the Planck's constant; m is the electron mass ($m = 9.1094 \times 10^{-31}$ kg); α , β , γ are the Miller indices; d is the lattice parameter and θ is the angle between the electron direction and the reciprocal lattice direction. The Kronig long-range order equation (1.1) was fundamentally simple to apply and interpret, and experimental spectra presented an approximate agreement with the theory. For any observed absorption features, there was always some (α, β, γ) triplet able to match the experiment with the prediction of the Kronig's model. However, the stronger Bragg reflections of the lattice did not always correlate with the most intense absorption features of the EXAFS spectra, as intuitively expected. However, agreement was tantalizingly close and the equation was uniformly implemented as a check for measured data to obtain a "Kronig structure."

As we now know, this theory is intrinsically incorrect owing to its baseline assumptions, which do not accurately explain the EXAFS signals observed in gases, liquids, solutions and amorphous solids. Stimulated by the experiments of Hanawalt [20] (see Figure 1.1), Kronig himself presented a new theory in 1932 based on the fundamental role of short-range order to explain the fine structure observed in the spectra of diatomic molecules in the gas phase [41]. The new approach explained the XAFS features in terms of modulation of the wave function of the final state of a photoelectron upon its scattering from the potentials of neighboring atoms. Implemented successively by Petersen [42–44] and by many other authors in the 1930s through to the 1960s [45–61], this approach represents the basis of the modern concept of XAFS, though it was still unable to provide quantitative information on the local structure of the absorbing atom in the investigated

samples. At that stage, XAFS was still just a spectroscopic curiosity and not yet a powerful characterization tool. In most reported cases [20, 21, 25, 30, 34, 50, 60, 62], the discussion was limited to a table containing a list of the observed maxima and minima of the fine structure of a given material, and a comparison of these values alongside those predicted by the other theories of the time, *vide supra*. No quantitative information was extracted and only qualitative conclusions could be reached: (1) several authors observed that the amplitude of the XAFS oscillations decreases with increasing temperature [31, 57, 59, 61]; (2) it was observed that metals with the same crystal structure had similar fine structures [24, 30, 33, 34]; and (3) in 1957, Shiraiwa *et al.* [54] measured the x-ray absorption spectra of crystalline and amorphous germanium, observing that the shape of the fine structure was the same on the two materials though oscillations were less intense and disappeared at lower energies in the amorphous phase than in the crystalline phase. Similar conclusions were reached in 1962 by Nelson *et al.* [58] who measured germanium (IV) oxide in the amorphous state and in both hexagonal and tetragonal crystalline forms.

From an experimental point of view, a fundamental improvement in the instrumentation was achieved in the 1960s when commercial diffractometers were modified so that absorption spectra of much better quality could be obtained, though still using conventional x-ray tubes as a source [62–64]. A silicon crystal, acting as a single-crystal monochromator, was positioned on a goniometer configured to allow step scaling. Diffraction experiments carried out using this assembly allowed scientists to scan the energy through the desired absorption edge. By mounting and dismounting the sample in the beam path, both I_1 and I_0 could be detected, thereby allowing a precise determination of the absorption coefficient $\mu(E) = (1/x) \ln[I_0(E)/I_1(E)]$, being x the sample thickness. With this experimental set-up, Van Nordstrand [63, 64] performed a systematic study on many transition metal compounds and classified their XANES spectra according to the atomic structure and valence of the metal element in the compound, also noting the chemical shift with valence. This fingerprint classification was used to identify the structural/valence form of elements of interest in catalysts, which are usually so highly dispersed that their diffraction patterns cannot be measured. This work by Van Nordstrand was the first example of the application of XANES in catalysis.

The crucial advance in the interpretation of the post-edge oscillations (now referred to as EXAFS) occurred in 1971 [1], when it was shown by Sayers, Stern and Lytle that a Fourier transform of the background-subtracted oscillations (Figure 1.2(a)) gives a pattern in R-space close to the function of radial distribution of atomic density (Figure 1.2(b)). From the EXAFS spectra collected on crystalline and amorphous germanium, they were able to extract the following quantitative structural information: (1) the crystalline distance to first and second neighbors in amorphous germanium within 1% accuracy; and (2) by comparing the relative second-shell-peak intensities of the crystalline and amorphous samples, the authors were able to conclude that the Debye-Waller factor is six times larger in the amorphous phase; from this they deduced that the tetrahedral bonds are distorted by about 5° in the amorphous phase [1]. To achieve these insights must have been extremely exciting. It is remarkable that such accurate conclusions were obtained while working with experimental spectra collected using an x-ray tube as a source.

This work represented the milestone for EXAFS spectroscopy and was supported and further implemented in more formal derivations based on Green's function and generalization to muffin-tin scattering potentials. This development was performed through successive works by Sayers, Stern and Lytle and their co-authors [65–69] and by other independent groups [70–74].

Starting in the 1970s, the cumulative availability of several and progressively more brilliant and broadband synchrotron radiation sources [75–79] established EXAFS and XANES spectroscopies (and successively XES) as a reliable tool to determine and understand the structural and electronic configuration of unknown systems. During the 1980s and 1990s in particular, the development and the distribution of codes for data analysis saw a rapid expansion of EXAFS and XANES spectroscopies into the broader scientific community for the purposes of structural characterization of materials. Among the many data processing packages available, we only mention: GNXAS [80–84], developed by Natoli, Filipponi, and Di Cicco; EXCURVE [85–88] by Binsted *et al.*, and FEFF [89–101] developed by Rehr *et al.* A plethora of codes developed in