Acknowledgements
So happy to finish this thesis! 2017 has been the most important year to me up to now. This is not only because I finished my PhD study in Groningen University but also a lovely new member joined our family, my lovely daughter Ruby. Looking back to the past five years, I am filled with all sorts of feelings and memories. It would not be possible to finish this thesis without the help of many kind people surrounding me. I would like to gratefully acknowledge those who have contributed to this thesis and supported me during my PhD study.

First and foremost, I would like to give my deepest gratitude to my supervisor, Prof. Andreas Herrmann, who gave me the opportunity to conduct PhD study in Netherlands and be a part of our group! I still remember how excited I was when I received the offer letter from you. I learned a lot from the discussion with you in your office, where you always patiently explained the ideas and mechanisms to me. I learned a lot from your broad knowledge, inspiring ideas and enthusiasm in scientific researches. Also, I would like to thank you for your encouragement which was supportive for my first two years when I was painful and lost because of the failing results. And I also remember how delighted and relieved I was when I finally got the fruitful time and finished all the manuscripts. Those experiences trained me to be a person with independent thought and an open mind which is helpful for my future study and work. Also thank you
so much for offering me the researcher contract when I was pregnant, which was a tremendous help to our life and study.

I also would like to thank the members of the reading committee: Prof. S. Vogel, Prof. A. M. van Oijen, and Prof. D. J. Slotboom for the time and the evaluation on my thesis. I want to express my special thanks to you for your valuable comments which helped me improve the manuscript.

I am deeply grateful to Prof. Alexander Kros in Leiden University. It was a great experience and fruitful collaboration with your group. Thank you very for your patience and dedicated time on the experimental design, data analysis and paper writing. At the meantime, I would like to thank your group member: Dr. Jian Yang. Your great efforts helped me on my work and I learned a lot from the work together with you.

I would like to thank other collaborators involved in my projects. Prof. B. Poolman, Prof. A. Kocer, Prof. S. J. Marrink, Prof. A.M. van Oijen, Dr. Duygu, Dr. Gemma and Rianne. I am really grateful to all of you for the valuable discussions on my projects, which helped a lot to improve my scientific work. I want to thank Jelle for dedicated time to do TIRFM measurements together with me. The discussions with you are always inspiring and joyful.

Also, I take this opportunity to thank China Scholarship Council (CSC). Thanks for the scholarship for my four years’ PhD study, which gives me the opportunity to go abroad and study. Meanwhile, I would like to show my gratitude to my Alma mater, Zhengzhou University (ZZU), which gave me full support when I applied for the CSC scholarship. So far as I know, ZZU is the only University who establishes a free English course for CSC applicants and pays for their IELTS or TOEFL test fees. To help us better understand and communicate with foreign universities, ZZU encouraged and subsidized us to go to Beijing to join the CSC meeting. When I went abroad and started my PhD study, I got a suitcase form ZZU like a gift which is full of encouragement and expectation. Thanks to Prof. K. Y. Tang and Prof. X. J. Zheng in Zhengzhou University. Both of you gave me great support during my application of CSC scholarship and allowed me to have my Master defense ahead of schedule, which made my PhD study abroad.
possible. I am very grateful to both of you for your encouragement and comfort when I felt confused and loss about my PhD study during the first two years.

Thanks to everyone in the **PCBE** group for being always nice and helpful.

Very special thanks to **Bart** for your valuable discussions and dedicated time on my manuscript polishing. **Karin,** many thanks to you for your help with all the paper work. I remember last time I gave you my claim for the stay in Leiden but found two receipts were lost. I was going to pay by myself since it was just 30 euro. But you told me that a student shouldn’t pay for that and you would help me argue for it if the finance department questioned me, which made me feel fully supported! **Ursula,** thanks so much for your efforts on the submission of my thesis. Without your help, it cannot go so smooth! And you are so efficient and enthusiastic. Every time I go to your office and ask if you can help me do something, you always gave me positive answers! Wish you will have a wonderful stay in China!

Special thanks to **Evgeny** for your invaluable technical support on my project.

Special thanks are given to **Alberto,** my first daily supervisor. Thanks for your patience and understanding with me when my English was so poor to communicate. Your Spanish enthusiasm made me feel warmly welcomed and thanks so much for teaching me everything, not only the experimental operation, but also the data analysis and PowerPoint design during my first days in our lab. And also thank you and your wife for your warm hospitality when Qing and I were in Madrid. **Agnieszka,** you are a “walking heater” to me. When I was lost and had no idea about writing the introduction of my thesis, you helped me clarify my thoughts and pinpoint the right direction. You gave so much help to my experiments and my personal life. Thanks for your delicious Polish food, the cute sweater to my little Ruby and the wonderful “girls’ night” in your sweet apartment. **Jan Willem,** you are always positive, smiling and helping everyone. You took me to the stationer to get all the stationery and taught me how to use the instruments in our lab. Whenever I got a problem and came to you, you always sat down and answered my questions. **Alina,** so many thanks for your helping my
experiments and you showed me a different perspective to look into the life. I remember when I told you I didn’t want to use EtBr because of its toxicity and you said you can do it for me if I was so worried. To be honest, I was shocked because I would never do something like that. I really enjoyed all the fun time with you in and out of the lab, like the first time for me to have a relaxing time in a hot spring and we went to the painting shop to find a dyestuff to cover the flaw on my door. Thanks also to Alessio and Diego for your discussions and fun time in the lab and office. Dear Mark, thanks a lot for your efforts on my thesis and your kindly help in Qing’s and my life, like making a Dutch phone call or reading a Dutch letter. Wish you find a girlfriend ASAP! Eliza, it’s so nice to have you in life! You gave me so many advices when I needed your help like our trip to Poland. We had a wonderful journey with your detailed suggestions! Hongyan, thanks very much to be my Paranymp and it’s surprisingly good to live together with you for the last two months! Wish you will have more high quality papers and find your soulmate! Wei, Jun & Pei, Avishek and Pavlo, you are always willing to help me in my experiments.

My great thanks go to Jingyi for all your warm help during my five years life in Groningen. Whenever I meet a problem, you are the first person I prefer to ask for help because I know I will get detailed suggestions and comfort from you. Countless delicious dishes and food were taken in your apartment with your excellent cooking skill. I would never forget the good time when you, Shuo, Qing and I watched the Chinese show in your giant TV and enjoyed the hotpot in the cold winters. I always feel the quality of my life was reduced since you got pregnant… I wish Shou & you all the best and every success! Lei, I really appreciate your efforts on our collaborated experiments. You are open to share your working experiences and it’s very nice to work together with you. There is so much fun time with you in and out of the lab, like we went to Paris for holiday together. We were worried to get robbed in Sacré-Cœur and discussed so many notes on security. And finally found we were over-worried and had a nice time there. Wish Zhongtao and your work went well in China.

I sincerely like to express my appreciations to Lifei and Kai. Both of you are like “second professors” to me. Lifei, your rich specialty base and multi
discipline knowledge always amazed me when I discussed with you. Your analysis capability is so brilliant that you gave me lots experiment suggestions even the project had no relation with yours. I’ll treasure the good time that we shared one apartment and lived together. Your excellent cooking skill gave me lots of wonderful “delicious” memories. Qing and I will be your first customers if your noodle restaurant was open, which however would be a huge loss for science world. May Qinhong, Lulu & you live a happy life! Kai, I really appreciate your advice, the fruitful discussions and our collaborations. Your limitless compassion for study and experiment always remind me that I can do better. You are like a “gold digger” that you can find flashpoints from a lot experimental results which is dependent on your diligent literature reading. Without you, the studies could not be performed, and we could not have such nice publications. Wish Juanjuan & you have a good time in USA.

Jing, I really appreciate so many pleasant times with you and Jiaying, like we went to Keukenhof to enjoy the beauty of tulips and picked up the Chinese chestnut when I was pregnant. Also there were lots of good memories of our trip to Portugal and we were a good team. I was the guide. Qing was the bodyguard. Jiaying was the map. You were a very competent sentry since you had such a high level of vigilance. And thanks very much for the nice food and taking care of us when we came back to Groningen after a long train travel. Yu, Pengkun, Shuaidong, Miancheng, Xintong, Gurudas, Karolin and Kseniya thanks very much for being my colleagues in PCBE group. It is indeed a very wonderful experience to work together with all of you.

Dear friends, Qiuyan, thank you so much for your kindly help during my life in Groningen. I was so afraid and nervous when I the first time arrived in Schiphol airport. It was so nice of you to take a 3 hours train to Schiphol to pick me up which was a big relief to me. You took me to the supermarket and helped me to get my first bicycle in Groningen which made my first day here much easier. You always asked me to go outings with you and your friends, which made me not feel lonely. What impressed me most was when you knew I was sad and crying for the death of my hamster, you came to comfort me and buried my hamster together with me. You are really a
good friend to me and I wish you all the best in the future! Tao & Wenjun, I really enjoy the Majiang nights with you guys and hopefully we can do it again in the future. Yu, thanks so much for giving me advise and comfort when I was scared of the delivery. And you always give me detailed information when I ask you questions, like Ruby’s first rash. Wish June, Hein & you a happy life! Tiancai & Yang, I am missing your yummy noodle and looking forward to meeting you and your little girl at your defense. Jin, thanks very much for your help when I was confused about my TEM results and you are always patient to answer my questions. Chao & Xin, thanks very much for taking care of dundun when Qing and I was on holiday. Wish you all the best in the future! Guowei, thank you for giving me the opportunity and trust to design your thesis cover. It’ll not be free next time (*^__^*).

Meanwhile, I would like to express my appreciation to Groningen University (RUG). RUG is a fantastic and amazing university, and I am so fortunate to be part of it. RUG is at the forefront in providing freedom and equality for all the students. When we first came here, we had 1200euro/month scholarship from CSC and found the other PhDs have much higher salary than us. We felt kind of wronged since we did the same work. So we wrote a joint letter and sent it to the headmaster nervously. This was the first and only time in my life (until now) to sign a joint letter. I felt quite perturbed and worried because I wasn’t taught to express my demands. It’s inspiring that the university discussed over our letter in a committee meeting and finally decided to give every CSC student 400euro per month as a housing allowance. You cannot image how jealous they are for CSC PhD from the other university. \(^{ω}^\)\

Also, thanks for the American sitcom, How I Met Your Mother, which brings Qing and me so many joys and happiness. Although it is a comedy, HIMYM taught us how to deal with failure, hold on to dreams, and even face the death. There were countless times that we were tired and exhausted after one day work, we watched HIMYM to get relaxed, like talking to some old friends.
Finally, I would like to give my gratitude to my family. 首先感谢我的爸爸妈妈，感谢您们这么多年对我学习和生活上的支持。每当我困惑失落的时候，你们总能给我鼓励和支持。感谢黄妈妈，感谢您来荷兰帮我们照看小宝宝，让我们可以放心的进行工作和学习。My little girl, Ruby 小梦安, I always feel sweet and implausible when I look at you. Here is a quote from “Spider-man” which could accurately represent my feeling to you. “When I look in your eyes, and you’re looking back in mine, everything feels not quite normal. Because I feel stronger and weaker at the same time, I feel excited and at the same time terrified. The truth is I don’t know what I feel, except I know what kind of man I want to be.”

Qing, my dear husband and best friend. I am so lucky to meet you at the right place and right time. Life in a foreign country is not easy. Without you I cannot finish my PhD study. There were so many times that I was confused, self-doubted and about to give up because of the endless and hopeless failing experiment results, you always gave me tremendous encouragement and support. Your patience, respect, tolerance and understanding helped me be a better person. When we were traveling in Hallstatt, we got trapped in the big snow and couldn’t find the hotel. It was dark and cold in the night, but I felt so safe and warm because you were there. You are like some kind of superhero that could solve any problem and protect me. Life is like unknown journeys, and I expect the next one together with you.
Publications


