Acknowledgements

I would like to thank this way Prof. Dr. I. V. Hertel, the Head of the Department and my supervisor, for giving me the opportunity to work at Max-Born Institute in Berlin on this very interesting theme. I constantly benefited from his continuous support and guidance all along my work. My whole stay at MBI has been a rewarding and most agreeable experience, and, also, Berlin is one of the most enjoyable cities I have lived in.

Very special thanks go to Prof. Dr. E.E.B. Campbell for her consistent support and encouragement throughout all my time at MBI. I am deeply grateful to her for the confidence, for being a constant source of inspiration and for always sustaining me in pursuing my own ideas, and I am most indebted to the extremely friendly atmosphere on a professional and personal level.

I am also grateful to Prof. Dr. Paul Fumagalli, my second supervisor, for the interesting and stimulating discussions while visiting his group at the Free University Berlin. Likewise, I would like to thank the professors from the FU Doctoral Committee who have been of great help in assisting me throughout the Ph.D. formalities. In addition I am very appreciative to Prof. Dr. W. Raith for his optimism and very interesting “Doktoranden Tee” sessions.

I am furthermore appreciative to Prof. Dr. R. Kelly for the fruitful discussions during his visit to MBI while trying to elucidate the “mysterious” origin of the thermal mechanisms.

I would like to thank Dr. Arkadi Rosenfeld and Dr. David Ashkenasi, for their constant help, from designing experiments to interpreting results. As my direct overseers they always closely guided me all through my work. Their friendly comportment, their confidence and encouragement have been constant support during my Ph.D. work. I am particularly indebted to David and Arkadi for their intuition in the pump-probe experiments and for the very stimulating discussions.

I would also like to acknowledge the support I received from my former colleagues from the Institute of Atomic Physics and Bucharest University, especially from Dr. Ileana Apostol and Prof. Iancu Iova. I thank them all.

A particular “Thank you!” goes to Dr. H. Varel, my more advanced contemporary and, for a while, co-worker on this project, and his wife Kathryn. From the first interaction in the Berlin Bus station he was my closest collaborator throughout his stay at MBI and after. Our friendship made me very fortunate from working together to our common visits in Kreuzberg district, and I am very grateful for receiving a “ready to work” experimental setup. I am very
much indebted to my other very close collaborator and friend, Markus Lorenz, for the funny and uplifting mood, and for our interesting lunchtime conversations.

I must say that I owe a lot to Roman Peslin, the experimental constructions could not have proceeded without his expert opinion. Actually I am also thankful to him for the enjoyable German lessons we have made together.

For the SEM analyses I have benefited from Mrs. Tischer assistance for which I am grateful.

In the same time I was fortunate to experience the company of Kathrein Baurich, her constant good mood and eagerness to cheer you up. For this I am also indebted to Rainer Schumann, Mrs. Bayr, Mrs. Winter and Mr. Kinski for their support in solving the administrative problems.

This is the time to thank to all sub-department A1 and department A for the professional advises and assistance with the laser systems. Especially, Mrs. Gromilovitch, Mrs. Muggle, Dr. R. Ehlich, Dr. Frank Noak, Dr. Michael Witmann, Dr. Manfred Witt, Dr. Georg Korn, Prof. W. Radloff, and Dr. C. P. Schultz were of invaluable help.

I also take this opportunity to thank to my other Ph.D. student fellows, Mark, Kay, Christiana, Parviz, Torsten, Oliver, Catrinel, Fabian, Sebastian and all the others for the friendly atmosphere and good discussions, as well as to my office colleagues, Ramona and Bernd.

I would also like to thank my friends. I always felt them close in spite of the many hundreds kilometers.

I would especially like to thank my family for their love and understanding over the years and especially for unconditionally supporting me in my scientific enterprise.

A very special chapter is dedicated to my life partner, Diana. Last, but certainly not least, I want to thank her for always standing by me in the office and at home. It is hard to imagine having made it to this point without her.