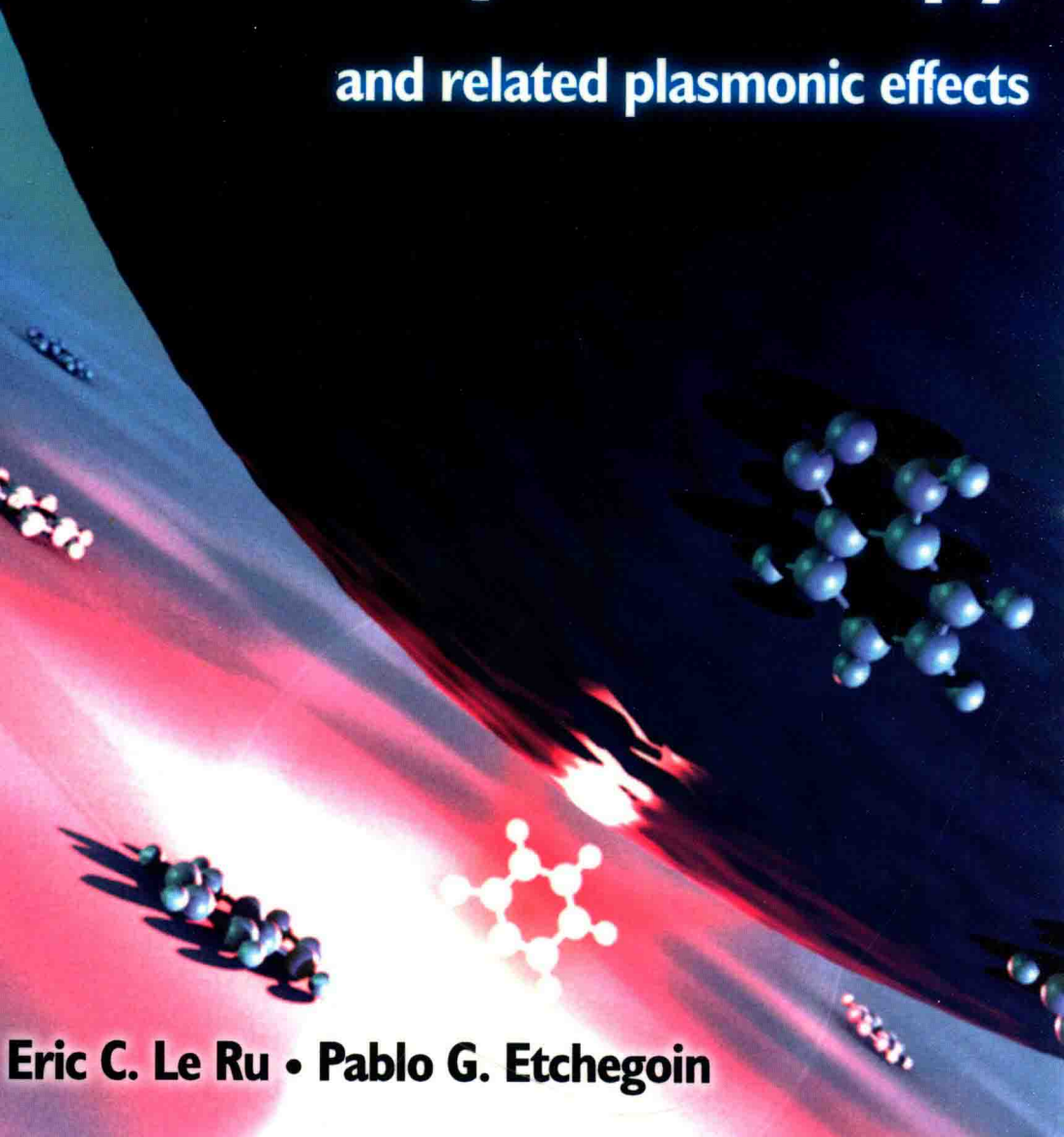


Principles of Surface-Enhanced Raman Spectroscopy

and related plasmonic effects



Eric C. Le Ru • Pablo G. Etchegoin

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Elsevier

Radarweg 29, PO Box 211, 1000 AE Amsterdam, The Netherlands
Linacre House, Jordan Hill, Oxford OX2 8DP, UK

First edition 2009

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British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

A catalog record for this book is available from the Library of Congress

ISBN: 978-0-444-52779-0

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Transferred to Digital Printing in 2009

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Preface

Surface-enhanced Raman scattering (SERS) was discovered in 1974 [1] and correctly interpreted in 1977 [2,3]. Since then, the field has grown enormously in breadth, depth, and understanding. One of the major characteristics of SERS is its *interdisciplinary nature*. SERS exists at the boundaries shared among physics, chemistry, colloid science, plasmonics, technology, engineering, and biology. There are several review articles in the field [4–6] for the advanced researcher together with a recent book dedicated to surface-enhanced vibrational spectroscopy by Ricardo Aroca [7]. Still, we put ourselves in the situation of a graduate student in physics, chemistry, physical chemistry, or chemical physics, undertaking a Ph.D. project in the area of SERS or related subjects and not having an in-depth understanding of Raman spectroscopy itself, the theory of plasmon resonances, or elements of colloid science. By their very nature, it is difficult to find a textbook that will summarize the principles of these rather dissimilar and disconnected topics. It is even less likely that this collection of topics was touched upon as a coherent unit during most undergraduate studies in physics or chemistry. A similar situation can arise for established researchers, either chemists or physicists, who are newcomers to the field but might not have a background in Raman spectroscopy or the physics of plasmons. Yet, a basic understanding of these topics is desirable to start a research project in SERS, and as a stepping stone to tackle the more specialized literature. This book finds its justification in that fact, and will hopefully fill (at least) a fraction of what we feel is an existing gap in the literature.

The content of the book covers most of the topics related to SERS and presents them as a coherent study program that can be tackled at different levels of complexity depending on the individual needs of the reader. For the most important subjects, we have attempted in our presentation to provide a *graded approach*: starting with a simple explanation of the most relevant concepts, which is then developed into a more rigorous exposition, including the more advanced aspects. In this way, we hope that this book will cater to a variety of readers with different skills and scientific backgrounds; an intrinsic characteristic of the general SERS and plasmonics community. To help the reader find his/her way through the various topics and the different

level of complexities, a detailed overview of the content of the book and a few suggested reading plans are provided at the end of the introductory chapter.

This book is about *principles* and therefore does not attempt to replace the many excellent reviews in the field, which are concentrated mainly on the exposition of the latest research results and their interpretations. Review articles tend to be too specialized to spend time on basic aspects of, for example, molecular Raman spectroscopy or the physics of plasmon resonances in metals. This book therefore attempts to make emphasis on these underlying concepts. The selection of topics is *not* intended as a detailed collection of results of the current literature and the accompanying bibliography is far from being exhaustive. Such an extensive review of the older and current literature of SERS is, in fact, largely provided already in Ref. [7]. The most important examples of the current literature are used, of course, to stress concepts or to make the explanation of certain topics clearer, but it is by no means exhaustive. Moreover, we emphasize concepts and principles that *we* judge important as a general background to SERS, but it does not represent a complete (and unbiased) list of topics. Both authors are physicists by training (and at heart...), and there is a natural emphasis on physical aspects of the problem in the presentation. We have in fact deliberately tried to avoid too much overlap in the selection of topics with the recent book by Ricardo Aroca [7]. Not only that Aroca's insight into the field, from a more chemical point of view, is excellent but also, in this manner, we hope that the books will complement each other. One aspect we do particularly emphasize is the intricate link between SERS and the wider research field of *plasmonics*, i.e. the study and applications of the optical properties of metals. SERS can, in fact, be viewed as a subfield of plasmonics. The relation between SERS and related plasmonics effects is, we believe, symbiotic, and we attempt to emphasize this aspect repeatedly.

To conclude this preface, a tradition that we shall not attempt to escape is to thank the many people and institutions that made the book (directly or indirectly) possible. First of all, we would like to thank the continuous support of the MacDiarmid Institute for Advanced Materials and Nanotechnology in New Zealand, and by the same token, Victoria University of Wellington (where part of the Institute is hosted). In particular, we would like to thank its founding director (Prof. Paul T. Callaghan) who has been a continuous source of inspiration and support (economic and personal) during the last few years. Without the financial support of the MacDiarmid Institute and Victoria University of Wellington, this book would not have been possible. The Royal Society of New Zealand is also gratefully acknowledged for financial support during this period. In addition, we would like to thank our direct collaborators (past and present), and our students (in particular Robert C. Maher from Imperial College London, and Matthias Meyer, Evan Blackie, and Chris Galloway from Victoria University of Wellington) who paid (and are still paying) the high price of long hours in the lab studying the SERS

effect. Special thanks are also given to Prof. Lesley F. Cohen of Imperial College London, who, many years ago, proposed for the first time the subject of SERS as a possible research topic to one of the authors (PGE). For the many scientific discussions and the longstanding collaboration we are very grateful.

Last but not least, we would like to thank our respective family members (Nancy and little Noah!, Sofía, and Julián) for their understanding and support during the long period while the writing was under way.

Eric C. Le Ru, Pablo G. Etchegoin

Wellington, New Zealand

Notations, units and other conventions

We have made our best efforts to use notations, conventions, and units that are consistent throughout the book. We summarize here (for reference) our specific choices.

Units:

We use S.I. units throughout in all our expressions (except when discussing other units that are commonly used in the literature). These are, in our opinion, the more versatile choice for a subject spanning through such diverse areas of physics and chemistry. They are also more rigorous in many respects compared, for example, to Gaussian units.

We have also endeavored when possible to specify the units of the variables we define. This should help, we hope, in understanding the physical meaning of each variable. These are given in between brackets [...], using either:

- The basic S.I. units: kilogram [kg] for mass, meter [m] for length, second [s] for time, Ampere [A] for electric current, Kelvin [K] for temperature, and mole [mol] for amount of substance,
- Or commonly used *derived* S.I. units, such as Joule [J] = [m² kg s⁻²] for energy, Watt [W] = [m² kg s⁻³] = [J s⁻¹] for power, Coulomb [C] = [s A] for electric charge, or Volt [V] = [m² kg s⁻³ A⁻¹] for voltage.
- Or sometimes for simplicity in units of common physical constants, such as ϵ_0 [kg⁻¹ m⁻³ s⁴ A²], the permittivity of vacuum. For example, polarizability is given in [ϵ_0 m³] rather than the equivalent (but more cumbersome) S.I. expression [kg⁻¹ s⁴ A²].
- Or common adimensional units to further clarify the meaning of the physical quantity. These include radians [rad] for angles or [rad s⁻¹] for angular frequency, and steradians [sr] for solid angles.

When relevant, we may also use “less rigorous”, but “more conventional” units, such as electron-volt [eV] for energy, liter [L] for volume, or molar [M] = [mol L⁻¹] for concentration.

Mathematical notations:

Most mathematical notations we use are fairly standard. Variables are Greek or Roman letters in italics, such as a , A , or α . Vectors are represented by bold letters, such as \mathbf{A} . The unit vectors for a given coordinate frame are written as \mathbf{e}_i , where the subscript i refers to the corresponding axis. In Cartesian coordinates, where the vector position is $\mathbf{r} = (x, y, z)$, they are therefore \mathbf{e}_x , \mathbf{e}_y , \mathbf{e}_z . Spherical coordinates are denoted $\mathbf{r} = (r, \theta, \phi)$ and defined in Appendix H. The unit vectors are then \mathbf{e}_r , \mathbf{e}_θ , \mathbf{e}_ϕ (and depend on position \mathbf{r}). Tensors are represented with a hat, such as $\hat{\alpha}$, or may be explicitly given as the tensorial product of two vectors, such as $\mathbf{e}_x \otimes \mathbf{e}_y$.

Variable names:

We have attempted to follow standard practices in terms of variable names, especially for common physical constants or quantities. All of them will be obvious within the context and in agreement with standard conventions in the literature.

Conventions:

We use a number of conventions that may differ from other treatments of the subject:

- A time dependence as $\exp(-i\omega t)$ is assumed for complex notations, which results in positive imaginary parts for response functions, such as the dielectric function ϵ or the polarizability α . This convention is commonly used in the *physics* literature, but is different from the convention normally used in *engineering*.
- Dielectric constants and dielectric functions are always *relative*. They are therefore adimensional quantities and should be multiplied by ϵ_0 , the permittivity of vacuum, to obtain the absolute dielectric constant.

Moreover, as in many scientific publications, we make use of numerous acronyms, starting with SERS, the main subject of the book! These will be defined in the text as they are introduced, but in case of doubt, we have attempted to include them all in the index at the end of the book.

Computer codes:

Many of the most complicated equations given in this book are not given with the expectation that the reader will carry out further analytical studies

from them. Rather, they are provided to be used for numerical calculations, thanks to which the reader may experiment at will, to understand the underlying physics or model problems adapted to his/her own specific needs.

To make this easier, we therefore also provide in some places a brief description of the actual numerical implementation (as Matlab scripts or functions). All the corresponding codes are available for download from the book's website: <http://www.victoria.ac.nz/raman/book>, and will be updated as required in the future. We have also included there (as examples) a number of Matlab scripts that can be used to reproduce (and adapt if necessary) many figures of the book. We hope that they will be easily usable by someone not familiar with the underlying mathematics or computer coding. A minimum knowledge of Matlab is, however, necessary and can be acquired quickly by browsing the Matlab help menu.

Book's website:

The book's website can be found at:

<http://www.victoria.ac.nz/raman/book>.

It contains an extensive section dedicated to Matlab computer codes relevant to SERS and plasmonics, many of which are based on the theory presented in the book and – in particular – on the material presented in the appendices. We will also attempt to update it regularly with various other information related to the book itself, and to SERS and plasmonics in general.

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Preface	xvii
Notations, units and other conventions	xxi
1 A quick overview of surface-enhanced Raman spectroscopy	1
1.1 What is SERS? – Basic principles	1
1.2 SERS probes and SERS substrates	3
1.2.1 SERS substrates	3
1.2.2 SERS probes	6
1.2.3 Example	8
1.3 Other important aspects of SERS	9
1.3.1 SERS enhancements	9
1.3.2 Sample preparation and metal/probe interaction	10
1.3.3 Main characteristics of the SERS signals	11
1.3.4 Related techniques	13
1.3.5 Related areas	14
1.4 Applications of SERS	14
1.4.1 Raman with improved sensitivity	15
1.4.2 SERS vs fluorescence spectroscopy	15
1.4.3 Applications specific to SERS	17

1.5	The current status of SERS	17
1.5.1	Brief history of SERS	17
1.5.2	Where is SERS now?	20
1.5.3	Current ‘hot topics’	21
1.6	Overview of the book content	23
1.6.1	General outline of the book	23
1.6.2	General ‘spirit’ of the book	24
1.6.3	Different reading plans	25
2	Raman spectroscopy and related optical techniques	29
2.1	A brief introduction	30
2.1.1	The discovery of the Raman effect	30
2.1.2	Some applications of Raman spectroscopy	31
2.1.3	Raman spectroscopy instrumentation	32
2.2	Optical spectroscopy of molecules	33
2.2.1	The energy levels of molecules	33
2.2.2	Spectroscopic units and conversions	36
2.2.3	Optical absorption	38
2.2.4	Emission and luminescence	39
2.2.5	Scattering processes	42
2.2.6	The concept of cross-section	46
2.2.7	The Raman cross-sections	50
2.2.8	Examples of Raman cross-sections	53
2.2.9	Mechanical analogs	57
2.3	Absorption and fluorescence spectroscopy	59
2.3.1	Optical absorption and UV/Vis spectroscopy	59
2.3.2	Fluorescence spectroscopy	63
2.3.3	Photo-bleaching	67
2.4	Phenomenological approach to Raman scattering	70
2.4.1	Dipolar emission in vacuum	71
2.4.2	The concepts of polarizability and induced dipole	73
2.4.3	The linear optical polarizability	75
2.4.4	The Raman polarizability	77
2.4.5	The local field correction	78
2.4.6	Polarizabilities and scattering cross-sections	80
2.4.7	Final remarks on the phenomenological description	87
2.5	Vibrations and the Raman tensor	88
2.5.1	General considerations	88

2.5.2	A primer on vibrational analysis	89
2.5.3	The Raman tensor	91
2.5.4	Link to the Raman polarizability	93
2.5.5	Limitations of the classical approach	97
2.5.6	A brief overview of related Raman scattering processes	98
2.6	Quantum (or semi-classical) approach to Raman scattering	99
2.6.1	Justification of the classical approach	100
2.6.2	The quantization of vibrations	101
2.6.3	The full expressions for the Raman cross-section	102
2.6.4	The anti-Stokes to Stokes ratio	105
2.7	Advanced aspects of vibrations in molecules	106
2.7.1	More on vibrational analysis	107
2.7.2	More on symmetries and Raman selection rules	114
2.7.3	Modeling of molecular structure and vibrations	117
2.8	Summary	119
3	Introduction to plasmons and plasmonics	121
3.1	Plasmonics and SERS	122
3.2	The optical properties of noble metals	123
3.2.1	The Drude model of the optical response	124
3.2.2	The optical properties of real metals	125
3.2.3	Non-local optical properties	127
3.2.4	What makes the metal–light interaction so special?	127
3.3	What are plasmons?	131
3.3.1	The plasmon confusion	131
3.3.2	Definition and history	132
3.3.3	The relation between plasmons and the dielectric function	135
3.3.4	Electromagnetic modes in infinite systems	136
3.3.5	Electromagnetic modes of a system of material bodies	141
3.3.6	Classification of electromagnetic modes	143
3.3.7	Other properties of electromagnetic modes	144
3.3.8	Summary and discussion	146
3.4	Surface plasmon–polaritons on planar interfaces	149
3.4.1	Electromagnetic modes for a planar dielectric/metal interface	149
3.4.2	Properties of the SPP modes at planar metal/dielectric interfaces	155
3.4.3	Coupling of PSPP modes with light	159
3.4.4	PSPP resonances at planar interfaces	164

3.4.5	Local field enhancements and SPPs at planar interfaces	167
3.4.6	SPP modes on planar interfaces: A brief summary	173
3.5	Localized surface plasmon-polaritons	174
3.5.1	Introduction to localized SPPs	174
3.5.2	LSP on planar structures	175
3.5.3	LSP modes of a metallic sphere	175
3.5.4	LSP modes of nano-particles	177
3.5.5	LSP resonances	177
3.5.6	Local field enhancements and LSP	178
3.5.7	Interaction of SPPs – gap SPPs	179
3.6	Brief survey of plasmonics applications	181
3.6.1	Applications of surface plasmon resonances	181
3.6.2	SPP propagation and SPP optics	182
3.6.3	Local field enhancements	182
4	SERS enhancement factors and related topics	185
4.1	Definition of the SERS enhancement factors	186
4.1.1	General considerations	187
4.1.2	The analytical point of view	190
4.1.3	The SERS substrate enhancement factor – Experimental approach	191
4.1.4	The SERS cross-section and single-molecule EF	192
4.1.5	The SERS substrate enhancement factor – Formal definition	197
4.1.6	Discussion and merits of the various definitions	198
4.2	Experimental measurement of SERS enhancement factors	200
4.2.1	The importance of the non-SERS cross-section	202
4.2.2	Example of AEF measurements	203
4.2.3	Link between SSEF definition and experiments	205
4.3	Overview of the main EM effects in SERS	209
4.3.1	Analysis of the EM problem of SERS	209
4.3.2	Local field enhancement	212
4.3.3	Radiation enhancement	214
4.3.4	Other EM effects	216
4.3.5	The common $ E ^4$ -approximation to SERS enhancements	217
4.4	Modified spontaneous emission	219
4.4.1	Introduction	219
4.4.2	The link between spontaneous emission and dipolar emission	220
4.4.3	Modification of dipole emission: definitions of enhancement factors	224

4.4.4	Spontaneous emission and self-reaction	229
4.4.5	The Poynting vector approach	231
4.4.6	Spontaneous emission and the optical reciprocity theorem	233
4.5	Formal derivation of SERS EM enhancements	237
4.5.1	Definitions, notations, and assumptions	237
4.5.2	The SERS EM enhancement: general case	240
4.5.3	SERS EM enhancements in the back-scattering configuration	245
4.6	Surface-enhanced fluorescence (SEF)	248
4.6.1	Similarities and differences between SEF and SERS	248
4.6.2	Modified (enhanced) absorption	249
4.6.3	Modified fluorescence quantum yield	250
4.6.4	Fluorescence quenching and enhancement	252
4.7	Other EM effects in SERS	254
4.7.1	Fluorescence quenching in SERS	254
4.7.2	Photo-bleaching under SERS conditions	255
4.7.3	Non-radiative effects in SERS	257
4.8	The chemical enhancement	258
4.8.1	Introduction	258
4.8.2	The charge-transfer mechanism	259
4.8.3	Electromagnetic contribution to the chemical enhancement	261
4.8.4	The chemical vs electromagnetic enhancement debate	263
4.9	Summary	263
5	Calculations of electromagnetic enhancements	265
5.1	Definition of the problem and approximations	266
5.1.1	The EM problem	266
5.1.2	Far field and local/near field	269
5.1.3	Some key EM indicators	273
5.1.4	The electrostatic approximation (ESA)	279
5.1.5	Other approximations	285
5.2	Analytical tools and solutions	286
5.2.1	Plane surfaces	287
5.2.2	The perfect sphere	287
5.2.3	Ellipsoids	289
5.2.4	Other approaches	289
5.3	Numerical tools	290
5.3.1	A brief overview of the EM numerical tools	290

5.3.2	A semi-analytical approach: the discrete dipole approximation	292
5.3.3	Direct numerical solutions	294
5.3.4	Other approaches	297
6	EM enhancements and plasmon resonances: examples and discussion	299
6.1	Quenching and enhancement at planar surfaces	300
6.1.1	The image dipole approximation for the self-reaction field	300
6.1.2	Enhancement and quenching at plane metal surfaces	303
6.2	A simple example in detail: The metallic sphere	307
6.2.1	Metallic sphere in the ES approximation	308
6.2.2	Localized surface plasmon resonances and far-field properties	314
6.2.3	Local field effects	324
6.2.4	Distance dependence	335
6.2.5	Non-radiative effects – surface-enhanced fluorescence	337
6.3	The effect of shape on the EM enhancements	342
6.3.1	Shape effects on localized surface plasmon resonances	343
6.3.2	Shape effects on local fields	346
6.3.3	Summary of shape effects	353
6.4	Gap effects – junctions between particles	354
6.4.1	Coupled localized surface plasmon resonances and SERS	354
6.4.2	EF distribution and hot-spot localization	359
6.5	Additional effects	361
6.5.1	Nano-particles on a supporting substrate	362
6.5.2	Surface roughness	364
6.6	Factors affecting the EM enhancements: Summary	364
7	Metallic colloids and other SERS substrates	367
7.1	Metallic colloids for SERS	368
7.1.1	Silver vs gold	368
7.1.2	Citrate-reduced colloids	369
7.1.3	Other types of colloids	371
7.1.4	Remarks on colloid fabrication methods	373
7.1.5	Dry colloids and other ‘2D planar’ SERS substrates	373
7.2	Characterization of SERS substrates	375
7.2.1	Microscopy	376

7.2.2	Extinction or UV/Vis spectroscopy of SERS substrates	377
7.2.3	Other techniques: dynamic light scattering (DLS) for colloidal solutions	381
7.3	The stability of colloidal solutions	385
7.3.1	Introduction	385
7.3.2	The van der Waals interaction between metallic particles	387
7.3.3	The screened Coulomb potential	389
7.3.4	The DLVO interaction potential	394
7.3.5	Colloid aggregation within the DLVO theory	396
7.4	SERS with metallic colloids	399
7.4.1	Molecular (analyte) adsorption and SERS activity	399
7.4.2	Colloid aggregation for SERS	403
7.4.3	Focus on the 'chloride activation' of SERS signals	406
7.4.4	SERS from 'dried' colloidal solutions	408
7.4.5	SERS signal fluctuations	410
8	Recent developments	415
8.1	Single-molecule SERS	415
8.1.1	Introduction	415
8.1.2	Early evidence for single-molecule detection	417
8.1.3	Langmuir–Blodgett monolayers	423
8.1.4	Bi-analyte techniques	425
8.1.5	Single-molecule SERS enhancement factors	433
8.1.6	Single-molecule SERS: Discussion and outlook	435
8.2	Tip-enhanced Raman spectroscopy (TERS)	436
8.2.1	Introduction to TERS	436
8.2.2	TERS with an atomic force microscope (AFM)	437
8.2.3	TERS with a scanning tunneling microscope (STM)	438
8.2.4	Theoretical calculations on tips	440
8.2.5	Discussion and outlook	442
8.3	New substrates from nano-technology	443
8.3.1	Chemical synthesis of metallic nano-particles	444
8.3.2	Self-organization	447
8.3.3	Nano-lithography	448
8.3.4	Adaptable/Tunable SERS substrates	451
8.3.5	Micro-fluidics and SERS	454
8.4	Optical forces	455
8.4.1	A simple theory of optical forces	455