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## Regulation of Rap1 signaling during Dictyostelium chemotaxis and development

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## Acknowledgements

Finally, I come to this part. This really is the end. Each time reading this part from other thesis, I can't help but thinking what I am gonna to write for this very last part of my thesis. Now it's my turn to express my deep appreciation to all of you who make my way here. Let's get it started!

Looking back the past several years, it was a very long journey. Making the decision to do PhD abroad is a huge step in my life. Before I came, Netherlands is only three words to me: orange, football, and windmill. But now it's a meaningful word, full of love, friendship, smiling faces, and much more. I can still clearly remember the very first day landing here, btw it was my first time on a plane, looking around with curiosities and excitements, and two big luggages, surrounded by countless tall guys. After three hours on the train, I was "warmly" welcomed by the small yet beautiful city of Groningen. Wrongly stepped on a bus, I would have been completely lost in the middle of night without a helping hand from an Italian boy who living in the same building. First day in the lab was just overwhelming, you know I was bad in English at that time, that people had difficulties in understanding me. But slowly things become better. I would firstly express my sincere gratitude to my supervisors. Prof. Peter van Haastert, thanks for providing me the opportunity to come here and work in your lab. Although you were not around for the most time of my PhD due to occupancy of the position in the faculty board, but during the late time of my PhD when you scientifically returned and spent more time in the lab, I was amazed by your rigorous attitude and critical thinking to scientific research. Your enthusiasm for research, patience and nice smile will always encourage and inspire me to my future career! And I enjoyed a lot in your house for the birthday party and Christmas dinner. Arjan, my daily supervisor, we spent most times together on completing my projects and thesis. Without your guidance and help, it is impossible for me to go this far. Thank you very much for your help and patience, especially at beginning when I was knowledgeless in this field. And your passion, optimism, and expertise in science has set up a great example for my future career aiming to achieve. You know I took an extremely long time to get my first project finished. Sometimes I was very frustrated and suspicious that this paper would be published. But

you always had belief that this one is gonna be a big hit. It turned out to be a good result to have it published in a very high quality journal. Apart from science, we also had many other subjects in discussion, particularly football and sports. One thing I will never forget is that when I spent the entire night in the lab doing PCRs, you “kick” me out of the building in the morning for my own safety.

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always can get answers from you. Many thanks to all the help and assistance you've provided. I wish you all the best in future scientific exploration. Btw, will I get the wedding invitation soon? Looking forward to that day. Bernd, you are absolutely an amazing scientist, especially in protein-related field. Although I did not see you a lot in the lab, since you spent most of times in Dortmund, it's been a great fun when you were around. Thank you for all the help in biochemistry. You know each time you were in the lab, I have to be careful not being frightened by the sudden "explosion" of dry-ice in the sealed tubes. And it was super fun on your 30<sup>th</sup> birthday party. It will be one of the remembrances I will never forget. But I would apologize for all the mess I've made. Ankita, thank you for the laughing (flying dog), "stupidity", and the good times we had together. You know it's always not easy to finish PhD. But you have made it, and you will be Dr. Ankita soon. Many wishes for the future life with your husband in Dubai.

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and having a baby. You know it's now harder for you to complete Phd at the same time taking a good care of Lisa. But I am quite confident that you will do both things very well. You are the first Christian I've ever known. Seeing you praying before meals is nice feeling. I wish you and your family all the best in the future. Marjon, the latest PhD candidate in the lab, I would say you are definitely a brilliant baker. I love it a lot the banana cake you've baked. It's super tasty. And I am sure that you are going to do a great job in science as well. I wish you good luck.

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Youtao Liu

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