

THE LIFE AND WORK OF KUO-TSAI CHEN

Kuo-Tsai Chen was born on July 15, 1923 in Chekiang, China. He earned a Bachelor of Science degree in mathematics from Southwest Associated University in Kungming in 1946. He then moved to Shanghai, where he became an Assistant at the Mathematics Institute of the Academia Sinica in 1946–47. On the recommendation of its director, Shing-Shen Chern, he went to work with Samuel Eilenberg at Indiana University. After one year there, he followed Eilenberg to Columbia University in New York, where he received his doctorate in 1950. During his graduate studies, he was a mathematics instructor at the National Bible Institute in New York from 1948 to 1950, and an Assistant at Columbia University in 1949–50. After being awarded his Ph.D. degree, he went first to Princeton University as an instructor in 1950–51, and then to the University of Illinois as a Research Associate in 1951–52.

His next position was that of a Lecturer at the University of Hong Kong where he stayed from 1952 to 1958. His parents were then living in Taipeh, Taiwan. In the first course he gave in Hong Kong, Chester Chen, as he had become known, met a charming sophomore, Julia Tse-Yee Fong, who became his bride in 1953. His very strict sense of duty did not allow him to give his preferred student special help, which occasionally made her very mad at him. Their happy marriage brought forth three children: Matthew in 1955, who earned a Doctorate in mathematics at the University of California at Berkeley and who is currently an electrical engineer with AT & T; Lydia in 1956, who graduated from Sarah Lawrence College, and is now a painter and editor; Lucia in 1960, who graduated from MIT and is now a graduate student in material science at the University of Illinois.

Chen's next position was at the Instituto Tecnológico de Aeronautica in Sao Jose dos Campos, Brazil, first as an Associate Professor in 1958–59, and then as a Professor in 1959–60. He became a member of the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton in the winter of 1960–61, and again later in the spring of

¹It is in fact the inverse limit of the nilpotent Lie group $\mathfrak{G}(A/I)/\mathfrak{G}(A/I) \cap (1 + J^n)$. These are simply connected as they are diffeomorphic to their Lie algebras $\mathfrak{g}(A/I)/\mathfrak{g}(A/I) \cap J^n$ via the exponential map.