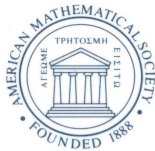


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IN MEMORY OF FENG KANG

**— The founder and pioneer of
China's computational mathematics**

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Preface

Until two to three hundred years ago Chinese mathematics was flourishing, especially in the subject of arithmetic. Examples of its achievements include the calculation of π in the third century and the development of the Chinese Remainder Theorem in the twelfth century. Unfortunately, from this time until the 1950s, Chinese mathematics entered a period of stagnation. A re-awakening came in 1958 when, with the installation of the first Chinese made computer in the Chinese Academy of Sciences, China began to study modern computational mathematics.

Professor Feng Kang played a key role in this development. In the early 1960s his team and he, working in almost complete isolation from the Western World, established the finite element method. In 1965 he wrote a Chinese mathematical paper in which the first rigorous proof of the convergence of the method was given. This was a historically significant contribution to the field of numerical analysis and it was made by a Chinese mathematician. It did not, however, receive timely notice from Western researchers because Professor Feng's paper appeared only in a computational mathematical journal published in China, which ceased publication right after eruption in 1966 of the disastrous 10 year-long Cultural Revolution.

Since 1976, however, the finite element method has regained its momentum in China and impressive progress has been made both in theoretical research of the subject and in its applications. Computational mathematics, too, has rapidly gained a foothold in universities and in government industrial departments all over China. When the great enthusiasm among young students for computational mathematics and the great number of researchers and their abundant results in the subject is compared to the bleak and ignorant situation before 1960, we can proudly say that computational mathematics is one mathematical area that has really taken off in China.

In this collection, twelve key Chinese numerical analysts have presented their important and representative results obtained since the 1960s. The emphasis is on results gained in the last ten years and the topics covered fall into the following fields: finite element method, computational fluid mechanics, numerical

solutions of differential equations, computational methods in dynamical systems, numerical algebra, approximation and optimization. We regret the coverage here may inevitably omit some important works due to the limitations of our energy and time.

We sincerely hope that the publications of this volume will promote further the academic exchange between East and West and allow the Western reader to have a systematic and updated comprehension of the contributions made by Chinese numerical analysts. We believe strongly that through the mutual understanding, common research problems will be identified and further cooperation can be expected. Undoubtedly both East and West will benefit from developments of this kind.

Although the research conducted by Chinese numerical analysts has its own merits, it has also suffered from certain drawbacks. The key problem is that China lags behind in her computing facilities. This has greatly hampered the testing of new algorithms and the implementation of theorems by applying them to practical problems. We are trying to overcome this situation.

When the collection was near to its completion, we were shocked by the news that Professor Feng—the founder and pioneer of China's computational mathematics research passed away suddenly in this August. Before the tragedy, he had been very concerned with the progress of the volume and even contributed an article himself. This is his last article which summarizes his most recent researches and contains many new and stimulating ideas. We regret that he would not witness the publication of this volume.

As the editors of the volume, we want to thank the contributors for their support and cooperation throughout the editing process. We also want to thank American Mathematical Society for its endorsement of the project. Finally, we are grateful to Drs. Wang Dao-Liu and Yu Xi-Jun for their work in preparing the typescript for this volume.

Zhong-Ci Shi 石钟慈
Chung-Chun Yang 杨重骏

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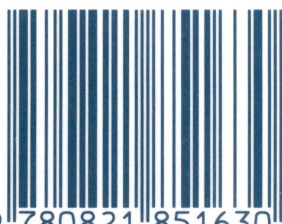
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This volume describes the most significant contributions made by Chinese mathematicians over the past decades in various areas of computational mathematics. Some of the results are quite important and complement Western developments in the field. The contributors to the volume range from noted senior mathematicians to promising young researchers. The topics include finite element methods, computational fluid mechanics, numerical solutions of differential equations, computational methods in dynamical systems, numerical algebra, approximation, and optimization. Containing a number of survey articles, the book provides an excellent way for Western readers to gain an understanding of the status and trends of computational mathematics in China.

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