

## UNIVERSAL COVERING SPACES OF CERTAIN QUASI-PROJECTIVE ALGEBRAIC SURFACES

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**Introduction.** In this paper we investigate some function-theoretic properties of universal covering spaces of certain quasi-projective algebraic surfaces.

Let  $\hat{X}$  be a two-dimensional complex manifold and let  $C$  be a one-dimensional analytic subset of  $\hat{X}$  or an empty set. Let  $R$  be a Riemann surface. We assume that a proper holomorphic mapping  $\hat{\pi}: \hat{X} \rightarrow R$  satisfies the following two conditions: (i)  $\hat{\pi}$  is of maximal rank at every point of  $\hat{X}$ , and (ii) by setting  $X = \hat{X} - C$  and  $\pi = \hat{\pi}|_X$ , the fiber  $S_p = \pi^{-1}(p)$  over each point  $p$  of  $R$  is a non-singular irreducible analytic subset of  $X$  and is of fixed finite type  $(g, n)$  with  $2g - 2 + n > 0$  as a Riemann surface, where  $g$  is the genus of  $S_p$  and  $n$  is the number of punctures of  $S_p$ . We call such a triple  $(X, \pi, R)$  a holomorphic family of Riemann surfaces of type  $(g, n)$  over  $R$ . We also say that  $X$  has a holomorphic fibration  $(X, \pi, R)$  of type  $(g, n)$ .

We assume throughout this paper  $R$  is a non-compact Riemann surface of finite type and its universal covering space is the unit disc  $D = \{|t| < 1\}$  in the complex  $t$ -plane.

P.A. Griffiths [2] got the following uniformization theorem of quasi-projective algebraic surfaces. Let  $\hat{X}$  be a two-dimensional, irreducible, smooth, quasi-projective algebraic variety over the complex numbers. Then for every point  $x$  in  $\hat{X}$ , there exists a Zariski neighborhood  $X$  of  $x$  in  $\hat{X}$  such that  $X$  has a holomorphic fibration  $(X, \pi, R)$  as above. Then the universal covering space  $\tilde{X}$  of  $X$  is topologically a cell. Griffiths proved that  $\tilde{X}$  is biholomorphically equivalent to a bounded domain of holomorphy in  $\mathbb{C}^2$  using the theory of simultaneous uniformization of Riemann surfaces due to Bers. (cf. Bers [1].) The function-theoretic properties of such interesting domains  $\tilde{X}$  are little studied. (cf. Shabat [10].)

At the beginning, in § 1, we recall some notations and results of [3], [4] and [5] which will be used later. Let  $\mathcal{M}$  be the homotopic monodromy group of  $(X, \pi, R)$ , which will be defined in § 1. Then we get the following theorems in § 2, § 3, § 4 and § 5.