

<<示性类>>

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## 前言

The text which follows is based mostly on lectures at Princeton University in 1957. The senior author wishes to apologize for the delay in publication. The theory of characteristic classes began in the year 1935 with almost simultaneous work by HASSLER WHITNEY in the United States and EDUARD STIEFEL in Switzerland. Stiefel's thesis, written under the direction of Heinz Hopf, introduced and studied certain "characteristic" homology classes determined by the tangent bundle of a smooth manifold. Whitney, then at Harvard University, treated the case of an arbitrary sphere bundle. Somewhat later he invented the language of cohomology theory, hence the concept of a characteristic cohomology class, and proved the basic product theorem. In 1942 LEV PONTRJAGIN of Moscow University began to study the homology of Grassmann manifolds, using a cell subdivision due to Charles Ehresmann. This enabled him to construct important new characteristic classes. ( Pontrjagin's many contributions to mathematics are the more remarkable in that he is totally blind, having lost his eyesight in an accident at the age of fourteen. )

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## 内容概要

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