

In 2012, May 28, 2:39 pm, I received the following email from Professor Michael Atiyah. It said:

Colleagues,

I had the sad message from Inge Hirzebruch just now that Fritz has died of a brain hemorrhage. He went into hospital on Thursday and never regained consciousness. The end of an era. Michael.

It was sad to learn. Although I knew that the health of Hirzebruch was not in good shape since he fell during a conference in Israel in honor of himself. As Professor Atiyah said, it is the end of an era. But it is an era full of exciting advancement for geometry and topology. The invention of Chern character, Todd classes, and various genus attached to Chern classes, the proof of Riemann-Roch-Hirzebruch formula, the signature formula, the introduction of K theory with Atiyah, and many creative works pioneered by Hirzebruch have revolutionized the whole subject of geometry in the last sixty years. It is difficult to imagine what algebraic geometry would be like without his contribution.

His strong support to younger generation of mathematicians in the whole world had brought fruits to modern development of the relationship between geometry, topology, and physics. He has constantly supported the Journal of Differential Geometry. Today we dedicate this issue of the Journal of Differential Geometry in memory of Professor Hirzebruch.

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Journal of Differential Geometry