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Autor: Hilton, Peter

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The gain in conceptual simplicity achieved by this geometric viewpoint is substantial; of course, the hard calculations remain to be done to compute the Whitehead group. One may compare the achievement of this paper with that of [34; 1953], in which Eckmann and Schopf produce a very significant simplification and clarification of the concept of injective hull of a module and a very easy, natural proof of its existence (first proved by Reinhold Baer); or with a very recent paper [81; 1976], in which Eckmann gave a remarkably simple proof of the Dyer-Vasquez theorem that the complement of a higher-dimensional knot $S^{n-2} \subseteq S^n$, $n \geqslant 4$, is never aspherical unless the knot group is infinite cyclic (thus, if $n \geqslant 5$, unless the knot is unknotted).

The story goes on. I have on my desk the latest manuscript, a joint paper by Eckmann and Bieri, completed in the spring of 1977, entitled "Relative Homology and Poincaré duality for group pairs". As I have said, Beno Eckmann remains active and effective—but more is true. The Eckmann touch remains as sure as ever!

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Peter Hilton

Battelle Seattle Research Center
Seattle
Washington 98105

Case Western Reserve University
Cleveland
Ohio 44106

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