

## THOM MODULES AND $\text{mod } p$ SPHERICAL FIBRATIONS

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(Communicated by Frederick R. Cohen)

**ABSTRACT.** In this paper we show that every finite Thom module over the ring of invariants of a finite nonmodular group can be realized as  $\text{mod } p$  cohomology of the Thom space of a spherical fibration.

### INTRODUCTION

The concept of Thom module was first defined by D. Handel [3]. We recall here the definition of Thom module in the particular context of unstable algebras over the Hopf algebra of Steenrod reduced  $p$ th-powers  $\mathcal{A}_p^*$  as given in [2]:

**Definition.** Let  $R^*$  be an unstable algebra over  $\mathcal{A}_p^*$ . An  $R^*$ -Thom module,  $M^*$ , is both an  $\mathcal{A}_p^*$ -module and a free  $R^*$ -module of rank one such that for any  $\theta \in \mathcal{A}_p^*$  with  $\Delta(\theta) = \sum_i \theta'_i \otimes \theta''_i$  and  $r \in R^*$ ,  $m \in M^*$ , we have the relation  $\theta(r \cdot m) = \sum_i \theta'_i(r) \cdot \theta''_i(m)$ . A homogeneous generator of  $M^*$ ,  $U \in M^*$ , as an  $R^*$ -module is called a Thom class for  $M^*$ .

The motivating examples are the reduced  $\text{mod } p$  cohomology groups of Thom complexes. In fact, if  $\xi \downarrow X$  is an oriented vector bundle and  $T(\xi \downarrow X)$  its Thom complex,  $\hat{H}^*(T(\xi \downarrow X); \mathbb{F}_p)$  is an  $H^*(X; \mathbb{F}_p)$ -Thom module.

We can generalize this example to the case of spherical fibrations: A  $\text{mod } p$  spherical fibration is an orientable Hurewicz fibration  $E \rightarrow X$  whose fiber has the homotopy type of a  $p$ -complete sphere. The associated Thom space  $T(E \rightarrow X)$  is the homotopy cofiber of  $E \rightarrow X$ . Its reduced  $\text{mod } p$  cohomology is also an example of an  $H^*(X; \mathbb{F}_p)$ -Thom module.

**Definition.** The characteristic classes of an  $R^*$ -Thom module  $M^*$  are  $q(M^*) = 1 + q_1(M^*) + q_2(M^*) + \dots$ ,  $q_i(M^*) \in R^*$  such that  $\mathcal{P}^i(U) = q_i(M^*) \cdot U$ .

The characteristic classes of  $M^*$  determine the  $\mathcal{A}_p^*$ -structure of  $M^*$  and then its isomorphism class. A finite Thom module is a Thom module for which all characteristic classes, except possibly a finite number of them, vanish. The examples above are clearly finite Thom modules.

Let  $V_n$  denote the  $\mathbb{F}_p$  vector space  $H^2(BT^n; \mathbb{F}_p)$ , then the symmetric algebra  $P_n = S(V_n)$  is  $H^*(BT^n; \mathbb{F}_p) \cong \mathbb{F}_p[t_1, \dots, t_n]$ . If  $G \leq GL_n(\mathbb{F}_p)$ ,  $G$  acts on

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Received by the editors May 18, 1990.

1980 *Mathematics Subject Classification* (1985 Revision). Primary 55R05, 55S10.

*Key words and phrases.* Thom modules, spherical fibration, characteristic classes.

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0002-9939/92 \$1.00 + \$.25 per page

$P_n$  by linear transformations and the ring of invariants  $P_n^G$  inherits an unstable  $\mathcal{A}_p^*$ -action. In [2] it is shown that any finite  $P_n^G$ -Thom module is isomorphic to one of the form  $P_n^G \cdot U$ , where  $U \in P_n$  is a product of pre-Euler classes (which are defined below). Recall from [5] that a pre-Euler class of a nontrivial orbit,  $B \subset V_n$ , by the action of  $G$  is the product of any collection of elements of  $B$  which is maximal with respect to the property that its elements be pairwise linearly independent.

When  $G$  is nonmodular—that is, the order of  $G$  is prime to  $p$ —the invariant algebras  $P_n^G$  are realizable as mod  $p$  cohomology algebras of spaces (we give a model below) so it makes sense to ask whether any finite  $P_n^G$ -Thom module is realizable as the reduced mod  $p$  cohomology of a Thom space. In [2] it is shown that since an orientable vector bundle has Pontrjagin classes, some finite  $P_n^G$ -Thom modules cannot appear as reduced mod  $p$  cohomology of the Thom complex of an orientable vector bundle and the cases in which it is possible are classified.

In this note we want to show that if we consider Thom spaces of mod  $p$  spherical fibrations, then any finite  $P_n^G$ -Thom module, with nonmodular  $G$ , is realizable, more precisely:

**Theorem 1.** *Let  $M^*$  be a  $P_n^G$ -finite Thom module, where  $G$  is a nonmodular subgroup of  $GL_n(\mathbb{F}_p)$ . There exists a space  $X$  with  $H^*(X; \mathbb{F}_p) \cong P_n^G$  and a mod  $p$  spherical fibration  $E \rightarrow X$  such that*

$$\hat{H}^*(T(E \rightarrow X); \mathbb{F}_p) \cong M^*$$

as  $P_n^G$ -Thom modules.

*Remark.* It is a consequence of the nonrealizability of general finite Thom modules as Thom spaces of vector bundles that the fibrations in the theorem do not arise, generally, as spherical fibrations associated to vector bundles.

Next we describe the model of a space with cohomology  $P_n^G$ . Let  $\mathbb{Z}/p^\infty$  be the  $p$ -torsion subgroup of  $S^1$ . The induced map  $B\mathbb{Z}/p^\infty \rightarrow BS^1$  is an isomorphism in mod  $p$  cohomology and we identify  $H^*((B\mathbb{Z}/p^\infty)^n; \mathbb{F}_p) \cong \mathbb{F}_p[t_1, \dots, t_n]$ . Now, a  $p$ -adic number  $a$  represents an endomorphism of  $\mathbb{Z}/p^\infty$ :  $\theta \mapsto \theta^a$ . Therefore, given an  $n \times n$  matrix over  $\hat{\mathbb{Z}}_p$ ,  $M = (a_{ij})$ , we may define the homomorphism

$$\begin{aligned} x &= (\theta_1, \dots, \theta_n) \in (\mathbb{Z}/p^\infty)^n \mapsto xM \\ &= (\theta_1^{a_{11}} \dots \theta_n^{a_{n1}}, \dots, \theta_1^{a_{1n}} \dots \theta_n^{a_{nn}}) \in (\mathbb{Z}/p^\infty)^n \end{aligned}$$

and this one induces a self map of  $(B\mathbb{Z}/p^\infty)^n$ . Thus we obtain a right action of  $GL_n(\hat{\mathbb{Z}}_p)$  on  $(B\mathbb{Z}/p^\infty)^n$ .

Assume  $G$  is a subgroup of  $GL_n(\mathbb{F}_p)$  of order prime to  $p$ . This condition ensures the existence of a lifting  $G \rightarrow GL_n(\hat{\mathbb{Z}}_p)$  and, hence, that  $G$  acts on  $(B\mathbb{Z}/p^\infty)^n$  from the right. We recover the original mod  $p$  representation of  $G$  as the induced left action of  $G$  on mod  $p$  cohomology of  $(B\mathbb{Z}/p^\infty)^n$ . The fact that  $|G| \not\equiv 0 \pmod p$  also implies that the map  $(B\mathbb{Z}/p^\infty)^n \rightarrow (B\mathbb{Z}/p^\infty)^n \times_G EG$  induces an isomorphism of  $H^*((B\mathbb{Z}/p^\infty)^n \times_G EG; \mathbb{F}_p)$  onto the invariant ring of  $\mathbb{F}_p[t_1, \dots, t_n] \cong H^*((B\mathbb{Z}/p^\infty)^n; \mathbb{F}_p)$  by the action of  $G$ .

FINITE THOM MODULES OVER  $\mathbf{F}_p[t^{p-1}]$

Assume  $\mathbf{Z}/p-1$  acts on  $\mathbf{F}_p[t]$  in the obvious way. Any finite Thom module over  $\mathbf{F}_p[t]^{\mathbf{Z}/p-1} = \mathbf{F}_p[t^{p-1}]$  is isomorphic to one of the form  $t^k \mathbf{F}_p[t^{p-1}]$ ,  $k \geq 0$ , whose characteristic classes are  $q = (1 + t^{p-1})^k$ . According to [2] these Thom modules can only appear as the cohomology of the Thom complex of a vector bundle whenever  $(p-1)/2$  divides  $k$ .

Suppose  $X = B\mathbf{Z}/p^\infty \times_{\mathbf{Z}/p-1} E\mathbf{Z}/p-1$ , so that  $H^*(X; \mathbf{F}_p) \cong \mathbf{F}_p[t^{p-1}]$ .

**Proposition 2.** *There are mod  $p$  spherical fibrations  $\hat{S}_p^{2k+1} \rightarrow E_k \rightarrow X$  with characteristic classes  $q = (1 + t^{p-1})^k$ , so that the corresponding Thom spaces realize the Thom modules  $t^k \mathbf{F}_p[t^{p-1}]$ .*

*Proof.* It is enough to show these fibrations exist for  $k < p-1$  as we know that there is a complex bundle of dimension  $(p-1)$  with  $q$ -classes  $(1 + t^{p-1})^{p-1}$  over  $B\mathbf{Z}/p^\infty \times_{\mathbf{Z}/p-1} E\mathbf{Z}/p-1$  [2].

Assume  $A_n = (\mathbf{F}_p^*)^n$  and  $SA_n = \{(\theta_1, \dots, \theta_n) \in A_n \mid \theta_1 \theta_2 \cdots \theta_n = 1\}$  and define  $G_n$  and  $SG_n$  to be the extensions  $A_n \tilde{\times} \Sigma_n$  and  $SA_n \tilde{\times} \Sigma_n$ , where the symmetric group  $\Sigma_n$  acts on  $A_n$  and  $SA_n$  permuting the components. We now consider the spaces

$$X_n = (B\mathbf{Z}/p^\infty)^n \times_{G_n} EG_n, \quad Y_n = (B\mathbf{Z}/p^\infty)^n \times_{SG_n} ESG_n,$$

where we let  $G_n$  and  $SG_n$  act on  $(B\mathbf{Z}/p^\infty)^n$  by representing  $\mathbf{F}_p^*$  as  $(p-1)$  roots of unit in  $\hat{\mathbf{Z}}_p$ . Provided  $n < p$ , the mod  $p$  cohomology rings of  $X_n$  and  $Y_n$  should be identified with the rings of invariants of  $H^*((B\mathbf{Z}/p^\infty)^n; \mathbf{F}_p) \cong \mathbf{F}_p[t_1, \dots, t_n]$  by the action of  $G_n$  and  $SG_n$  respectively; that is, for  $n < p$

$$\begin{aligned} H^*(X_n; \mathbf{F}_p) &\cong \mathbf{F}_p[q_1, \dots, q_n], \\ H^*(Y_n; \mathbf{F}_p) &\cong \mathbf{F}_p[q_1, \dots, q_{n-1}, E_n], \end{aligned}$$

where  $1 + q_1 + \dots + q_n = \prod_{i=1}^n (1 + t_i^{p-1})$  and  $E_n = t_1 \cdots t_n$ .

Let  $i_k: (B\mathbf{Z}/p^\infty)^k \hookrightarrow (B\mathbf{Z}/p^\infty)^{k+1}$  be the inclusion of the first  $k$  factors. The monomorphism  $j_k: (\theta_1, \dots, \theta_k) \in G_k \mapsto (\theta_1, \dots, \theta_k, (\theta_1 \cdots \theta_k)^{-1}) \in SG_{k+1}$  makes  $i_k$  equivariant and so this induces

$$f_k: X_k \rightarrow Y_{k+1}.$$

It follows easily that under the above identifications the induced map in mod  $p$  cohomology is

$$\begin{aligned} f_k^*: H^*(Y_{k-1}; \mathbf{F}_p) &\rightarrow H^*(X_k; \mathbf{F}_p), \\ q_i &\mapsto q_i \quad \text{for } i \leq k, \\ E_{k+1} &\mapsto 0 \end{aligned}$$

provided  $k < p-1$ .

Let  $F_k$  be the homotopy fiber of the induced map between the respective  $p$ -completions of  $X_k$  and  $Y_{k+1}$ :  $F_k \rightarrow (X_k)_p^\wedge \rightarrow (Y_{k+1})_p^\wedge$ .

**Lemma 3.** *If  $k < p-1$ ,  $F_k$  has the same homotopy type as  $\hat{S}_p^{2k+1}$ .*

*Proof.* Since fundamental groups of  $X_k$  and  $Y_{k-1}$  are  $p$ -perfect the respective  $p$ -completions are simply connected spaces (see [1]).

So, we may use the Eilenberg-Moore spectral sequence to calculate the mod  $p$  cohomology of  $F_k$ . It follows that  $H^*(F_k; \mathbf{F}_p) = E(x_{2k+1})$ , that is,  $F_k$  has the same mod  $p$  cohomology as  $S^{2k+1}$ . Now, since  $H_1(F_p; \mathbf{F}_p) = 0$ ,  $F_k$  is a  $\mathbf{Z}/p$ -good space. Moreover, the  $p$ -completion functor preserves orientable fibrations, so  $F_k$  is  $p$ -complete. It follows that  $F_k$  has actually the homotopy type of  $\hat{S}_p^{2k+1}$ .

Next, we calculate the characteristic classes of the  $\hat{S}_p^{2k+1}$ -fibrations we have just found. Assume a fixed  $k < p - 1$ . The Thom space of the constructed  $\hat{S}_p^{2k+1}$ -fibration is the cofiber of  $\hat{f}_k$ :

$$(X_k)_p^\wedge \xrightarrow{\hat{f}_k} (Y_{k+1})_p^\wedge \xrightarrow{j} T.$$

By the Thom isomorphism theorem  $\tilde{H}^*(T; \mathbf{F}_p) \cong U \cdot H^*((Y_{k+1})_p^\wedge; \mathbf{F}_p) \cong U \cdot \mathbf{F}_p[q_1, \dots, q_k, E_{k+1}]$  with  $\deg U = 2k + 2$ . Since  $\hat{f}_k^*$  is onto, the cohomology exact sequence of the cofibration becomes the short exact sequence:

$$0 \rightarrow U \cdot \mathbf{F}_p[q_1, \dots, q_k, E_{k+1}] \xrightarrow{j^*} \mathbf{F}_p[q_1, \dots, q_k, E_{k+1}] \xrightarrow{\hat{f}_k^*} \mathbf{F}_p[q_1, \dots, q_k] \rightarrow 0.$$

It follows that the mod  $p$  Euler class is  $j^*(U) = E_{k+1}$ . If  $\mathcal{P} = 1 + \mathcal{P}^1 + \mathcal{P}^2 + \dots$  denotes the total Steenrod power operation,

$$\mathcal{P}(E_{k+1}) = \left( \prod_{i=1}^{k+1} (1 + t_i^{p-1}) \right) E_{k+1} = (1 + q_1 + q_2 + \dots + q_{k+1}) E_{k+1}$$

and then we also have  $\mathcal{P}(U) = (1 + q_1 + q_2 + \dots + q_{k+1})U$ ; that is,  $1 + q_1 + q_2 + \dots + q_{k+1} \in H^*((Y_{k+1})_p^\wedge; \mathbf{F}_p)$  are just the characteristic classes of our fibration.

Finally, if

$$g_k: X = B\mathbf{Z}/p^\infty \times_{\mathbf{Z}/p-1} E\mathbf{Z}/p-1 \rightarrow (Y_{k+1})_p^\wedge = ((B\mathbf{Z}/p^\infty)^{k+1} \times_{SG_{k+1}} ESG_{k+1})_p^\wedge$$

is the map induced by  $x \in B\mathbf{Z}/p^\infty \mapsto (x, \dots, x, e) \in (B\mathbf{Z}/p^\infty)^{k+1}$ , where  $e$  is the base point of  $B\mathbf{Z}/p^\infty$ , and the group monomorphism  $\theta \in \mathbf{Z}/p-1 \mapsto (\theta, \dots, \theta, \theta^{-k}) \in SG_{k+1}$ , then, the pull-back along  $g_k$  of our  $\hat{S}_p^{2k+1}$ -fibration is an orientable  $\hat{S}_p^{2k+1}$ -fibration,  $E_k \rightarrow X$ , with characteristic classes:

$$\begin{aligned} q(E_k \rightarrow X) &= g_k^*(1 + q_1, \dots, q_{k+1}) \\ &= g_k^* \left( \prod_{i=1}^{k+1} (1 + t_i^{p-1}) \right) = (1 + t^{p-1})^k. \quad \square \end{aligned}$$

PROOF OF THEOREM 1

Assume  $M^*$  is a finite  $P_n^G$ -Thom module,  $G$  a nonmodular subgroup of  $GL_n(\mathbf{F}_p)$ . From [2] we know that this module is isomorphic, as  $P_n^G$ -Thom module, to one of the form  $P_n^G \cdot f$  with  $f = \prod_{i=1}^k E_i^{m_i}$ , a product of pre-Euler elements. If, for each  $i$ ,  $\zeta_i \downarrow X$  is a mod  $p$  spherical fibration such that  $\tilde{H}^*(T(\zeta_i \downarrow X); \mathbf{F}_p) \cong P_n^G \cdot E_i$ , then it is clear that a fiberwise join procedure will give us a fibration  $\zeta \downarrow X$  with  $\tilde{H}^*(T(E \rightarrow X); \mathbf{F}_p) \cong M^*$ .

It is then enough to prove the theorem in the case  $M^* \cong P_n^G \cdot E[w]$ , where  $E[w]$  is the pre-Euler class associated to an orbit:  $[w]$ ,  $w \in V_n$ ,  $w \neq 0$ .

Suppose  $E[w] = \prod_{i=1}^m w_i$  so that characteristic classes of the finite  $P_n^G$ -Thom module  $P_n^G \cdot E[w]$  are  $q = \prod_{i=1}^m (1 + w_i^{p-1})$ . The theorem then follows from the next proposition:

**Proposition 4.** *There is a mod  $p$  spherical fibration  $\zeta \downarrow (BZ/p^\infty)^n \times_G EG$  with characteristic classes  $q(\zeta) = \prod_{i=1}^m (1 + w_i^{p-1})$ .*

*Proof.* Define

$$H = \{g \in G \mid gw = w\}$$

$$\bar{H} = \{g \in G \mid gw = \chi(g)w, \text{ for some } \chi(g) \in \mathbb{F}_p^*\}.$$

Then,  $H$  is a normal subgroup of  $\bar{H}$  and  $\bar{H}/H$  is a subgroup of  $\text{Aut}\langle w \rangle \cong \mathbb{F}_p^*$  which is in a one-to-one correspondence with  $[w] \cap \langle w \rangle$ . Moreover, if  $G/\bar{H} = \{\tau_1\bar{H}, \tau_2\bar{H}, \dots, \tau_m\bar{H}\}$ , each  $\tau_i w$  belongs to a different line and we may assume that  $w_i = \tau_i w$ .

Since  $\text{card } \bar{H}$  is invertible in  $\mathbb{F}_p$ , the representation  $\chi: \bar{H} \rightarrow \text{Aut}\langle w \rangle \cong \mathbb{F}_p^*$  is a direct summand of the representation  $\bar{H} \leq G \leq GL_n(\mathbb{F}_p)$ . It is then clear that the  $p$ -adic lifting of the representation  $\bar{H} \leq G \leq GL_n(\hat{\mathbb{Z}}_p)$  has an invariant line generated by a vector  $\hat{w} \in (\hat{\mathbb{Z}}_p)^n$  that reduces to  $w \pmod p$ .

Let  $k: (BZ/p^\infty)^n \rightarrow BZ/p^\infty$  be the map induced by the group homomorphism  $x \in (\mathbb{Z}/p^\infty)^n \mapsto x\hat{w} \in \mathbb{Z}/p^\infty$ . Now,  $\bar{H}$  acts on  $(BZ/p^\infty)^n$  while  $\mathbb{F}_p^*$  acts on  $BZ/p^\infty$  and since for any  $h \in \bar{H}$ ,  $h\hat{w} = \hat{w} \cdot \chi(h)$ ,  $k$  becomes an equivariant map, so it induces

$$\check{k}: (BZ/p^\infty)^n \times_{\bar{H}} E\bar{H} \rightarrow BZ/p^\infty \times_{\mathbb{Z}/p-1} EZ/p-1.$$

If  $t$  is the generator of the mod  $p$  cohomology of  $BZ/p^\infty$ , then  $k^*(t) = w$  and the map induced by  $\check{k}$  in mod  $p$  cohomology is determined by  $\check{k}^*(t^{p-1}) = w^{p-1} \in P(V^*)^{\bar{H}} \cong H^*((BZ/p^\infty)^n \times_{\bar{H}} E\bar{H}; \mathbb{F}_p)$ .

Now we pick the  $\hat{S}_p^3$ -fibration over  $BZ/p^\infty \times_{\mathbb{Z}/p-1} EZ/p-1$  of Proposition 2. Then, the fibration over  $(BZ/p^\infty)^n \times_{\bar{H}} E\bar{H}$  obtained as a pull-back of that one has characteristic classes  $q = 1 + w^{p-1}$ .

The fibration we wish over  $(BZ/p^\infty)^n \times_G EG$  is obtained as a transfer of the previous one.

Let  $\bar{X}$  denote  $(BZ/p^\infty)^n \times EG$  and

$$\Phi: \bar{X}/G \rightarrow (\bar{X}/\bar{H})^m \times_{\Sigma_m} E\Sigma_m$$

the pretransfer defined by Kahn-Priddy [4]: a representation  $\rho: G \rightarrow \Sigma_m$  is defined by  $g\tau_i = \tau_{\rho(g)(i)}h_i$ ,  $h_i \in \bar{H}$ , so that

$$\bar{X} \times EG \rightarrow (\bar{X}/\bar{H})^m \times E\Sigma_m,$$

$$(x, k) \mapsto (\overline{x\tau_1}, \dots, \overline{x\tau_m}; \rho_*(k))$$

is equivariant.  $\Phi$  is the induced map between the quotient spaces.

The structural map of the transfer is defined as follows. First of all we decompose  $\hat{S}_p^{4m-1}$  as

$$\hat{S}_p^{4m-1} \simeq \left( \hat{S}_p^3 * \dots * \hat{S}_p^3 \right)_p^\wedge \simeq \left( \hat{S}_p^3 \times \dots \times \hat{S}_p^3 \times \Delta_{m-1} / \sim \right)_p^\wedge$$

where  $\Delta_{m-1} = \{(t_1, \dots, t_m) \mid 0 \leq t_i, \sum_{i=1}^m t_i = 1\}$  is the standard  $(m - 1)$ -simplex, and the identifications are

$$(x_1, \dots, x_i, \dots, x_m; t_1, \dots, \overset{i}{\hat{0}}, \dots, t_m) \sim (x_1, \dots, x'_i, \dots, x_m; t_1, \dots, \overset{i}{\hat{0}}, \dots, t_m).$$

This allows us to describe a morphism of topological monoids:

$$\text{Aut}(\hat{S}_p^3) \wr_{\Sigma_m} \xrightarrow{\theta} \text{Aut}(\hat{S}_p^{4m-1}),$$

where  $\text{Aut}(X)$  means the topological monoid of self-homotopy equivalences of  $X$  and  $\wr$  stands for wreath product.  $\theta(f_1, \dots, f_m; 1)$  is induced by

$$(x_1, \dots, x_m; t_1, \dots, t_m) \mapsto (f_1(x_1), \dots, f_m(x_m); t_1, \dots, t_m)$$

and  $\theta(1, \dots, 1; \sigma)$  is induced by

$$(x_1, \dots, x_m; t_1, \dots, t_m) = (x_{\sigma^{-1}(1)}, \dots, x_{\sigma^{-1}(m)}; t_{\sigma^{-1}(1)}, \dots, t_{\sigma^{-1}(m)}).$$

So, we may define

$$s: (B \text{Aut}(\hat{S}_p^3))^m \times_{\Sigma_m} E\Sigma_m \simeq B(\text{Aut}(\hat{S}_p^3) \wr_{\Sigma_m}) \xrightarrow{B\theta} B \text{Aut}(\hat{S}_p^{4m-1}).$$

Finally, if the mod  $p$  spherical fibration that we have over  $(B\mathbf{Z}/p^\infty)^n \times_{\overline{H}} E\overline{H}$  is classified by a map

$$h: (B\mathbf{Z}/p^\infty)^n \times_{\overline{H}} E\overline{H} \simeq \overline{X}/\overline{H} \rightarrow B \text{Aut}(\hat{S}_p^3),$$

we obtain its transfer fibration  $\zeta \downarrow \overline{X}/G$  as the one classified by

$$f_\zeta: X = \overline{X}/G \xrightarrow{\Phi} (\overline{X}/\overline{H})^m \times_{\Sigma_m} E\Sigma_m \xrightarrow{h^m \times 1} (B \text{Aut}(\hat{S}_p^3))^m \times_{\Sigma_m} E\Sigma_m \xrightarrow{s} B \text{Aut}(\hat{S}_p^{4m-1}).$$

But we want to know something about orientability. Since the fibration over  $\overline{X}/\overline{H}$  is orientable,  $h$  lifts to  $(BGL_4)_p^\wedge$ , the universal covering of  $B \text{Aut}(\hat{S}_p^3)$  [6]. Now the composition

$$(BGL_4)_p^\wedge \times_{\Sigma_m} E\Sigma_m \rightarrow (B \text{Aut}(\hat{S}_p^3))^m \times_{\Sigma_m} E\Sigma_m \rightarrow B \text{Aut}(\hat{S}_p^{4m-1})$$

maps the fundamental group of the space on the left,  $\Sigma_m$ , trivially to the fundamental group of  $B \text{Aut}(\hat{S}_p^{4m-1})$ . In fact, we may as well think of  $\theta(1, \dots, 1; \sigma)$  as the map induced by the orthogonal transformation  $(v_1, \dots, v_m) \in (\mathbf{R}^4)^m \mapsto (v_{\sigma^{-1}(1)}, \dots, v_{\sigma^{-1}(m)}) \in (\mathbf{R}^4)^m$ , and this is an orientation preserving map. As a consequence we have a lifting:

$$\begin{array}{ccc} (BGL_4)_p^\wedge \times_{\Sigma_m} E\Sigma_m & \longrightarrow & (BGL_{4m})_p^\wedge \\ \downarrow & & \downarrow \\ (B \text{Aut}(\hat{S}_p^3))^m \times_{\Sigma_m} E\Sigma_m & \longrightarrow & B \text{Aut}(\hat{S}_p^{4m-1}) \end{array}$$

and then  $\zeta \downarrow \overline{X}/G$  is actually orientable.

By construction of  $\Phi$  the characteristic classes of  $\zeta$  are calculated as

$$q(\zeta) = \prod_{i=1}^m (1 + \tau_i w^{p-1}) = \prod_{i=1}^m (1 + w_i^{p-1}). \quad \square$$

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