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The Real Cohomology of Differentiable Fibre Bundles

Paul Baum¹) and Larry Smith²)

Throughout algebraic topology one very often studies fibre bundles $\xi = (E, p, B, G/H, G)$ where G is a compact connected Lie group and $H \subset G$ is a closed connected subgroup, E and B are differentiable manifolds and $p: E \to B$ is a differentiable map. Typically one tries to compute the cohomology of the total space from a knowledge of the cohomology of the base B, the fibre G/H and some invariant of the bundle. The usual procedure involves calculating with the Serre spectral sequence. However this does not take full advantage of the fact that ξ is a fibre bundle, for we have a classifying diagram

$$G/H = G/H$$

$$\downarrow \qquad \downarrow$$

$$E \rightarrow B_H$$

$$\downarrow^{p} \qquad \downarrow^{q}$$

$$B \xrightarrow{f} B_G$$

where $\xi(G, H) = (B_H, \varrho, B_G, G/H, G)$ is a universal bundle. Using techniques of EILENBERG and Moore [8] we shall show

THEOREM: If B is a Riemannian symmetric space [5] and R is the field of real numbers then $H^*(E; R)$ and $\operatorname{Tor}_{H^*(B_G; R)}(H^*(B; R), H^*(B_H; R))$ are isomorphic as algebras.

This extends results of BOREL [3] and CARTAN [6]. BOREL [3] further shows how the map $\varrho^*: H^*(B_G; R) \to H^*(B_H; R)$ can be computed from information on the Weyl groups of G and H.

It is well known [4], [13], [15] that $H^*(B_G; R)$ is a polynomial algebra (over R) on even dimensional generators. Therefore for the above result to be of use we must have available a fairly simple technique for computing $\operatorname{Tor}_{\Lambda}(B, A)$ when Λ is a polynomial algebra. This is the objective of the first section. The second section gives a proof of the above result. The final section gives an example to show that the technical assumption that B is a Riemannian symmetric space is essential.

We shall assume that the reader is familiar with the material of [1] or [8] or [13] or [16]. Our notation will be that of [12].

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1. The Two Sided Koszul Complex

Throughout this section the ground ring will be a fixed field k. \otimes will always mean \otimes_k .

Suppose that

$$\Lambda = P[x_1, ..., x_n].$$

Of course if the characteristic of k is not 2 then of necessity $deg(x_i)$ will be even. Denote by

$$\mu: \Lambda \otimes \Lambda \to \Lambda$$

the multiplication map of Λ . Note that μ is onto.

LEMMA 1.1: $\ker \mu = (x_1 \otimes 1 - 1 \otimes x_1, ..., x_n \otimes 1 - 1 \otimes x_n).$

Proof: Let

$$I = (x_1 \otimes 1 - 1 \otimes x_1, ..., x_n \otimes 1 - 1 \otimes x_n).$$

Then clearly $I \subset \ker \mu$. Thus there is a natural map of algebras

$$\alpha: \frac{\Lambda \otimes \Lambda}{I} \to \frac{\Lambda \otimes \Lambda}{\ker \mu} = \Lambda.$$

Let $[x_i \otimes 1]$, $[1 \otimes x_j]$ denote $x_i \otimes 1$ and $1 \otimes x_j$ as elements of $\Lambda \otimes \Lambda/I$. Then the monomials in $[x_1 \otimes 1], ..., [x_n \otimes 1], [1 \otimes x_1], ..., [1 \otimes x_n]$ generate $\Lambda \otimes \Lambda/I$ as a k-module. Since $[x_i \otimes 1] = [1 \otimes x_i]$ i = 1, ..., n it follows that the monomials in $[x_1 \otimes 1], ..., [x_n \otimes 1]$ generate $\Lambda \otimes \Lambda/I$ as a k-module.

Next recall that the monomials in $x_1, ..., x_n$ are a k-basis for Λ . Since $\alpha([x_i \otimes 1]) = x_i$, i = 1, ..., n and α is a map of algebras it follows that α maps a k-generating set for $\Lambda \otimes \Lambda/I$ in a one-one-onto fashion to a k-basis for Λ . Hence α must be an isomorphism.

Since everything in sight is of finite type it follows that in each degree I and $\ker \mu$ have the same dimension (finite) as vector spaces over k. Since $I \subset \ker \mu$ it follows that $I = \ker \mu$. \square

Now note that $x_1 \otimes 1 - 1 \otimes x_1, ..., x_n \otimes 1 - 1 \otimes x_n$ is an ESP-sequence in $\Lambda \otimes \Lambda$ generating the ideal ker μ . (See [16], also called an *E*-sequence in [1], or an *S*-sequence in [10]). Therefore we have the Koszul complex [1], [10], [12], [16], [18]

$$\mathcal{E}^2 = \Lambda \otimes E[u_1, ..., u_n] \otimes \Lambda$$

$$d(a \otimes u_i \otimes b) = a x_i \otimes 1 \otimes b - a \otimes 1 \otimes x_i b, \quad i = 1, ..., n$$

$$d(a \otimes 1 \otimes b) = 0 \quad d \quad \text{a derivation}$$

&2 is given a bigraded structure by requiring that

$$\deg u_i = (-1, \deg x_i), \quad i = 1, ..., n, \deg a = (0, \deg a) \quad \text{all} \quad a \in \Lambda.$$

We then have [10; 7], [16; § 2.1]

$$H^0(\mathscr{E}^2) = \Lambda \otimes \Lambda/\ker \mu = \Lambda$$
, $H^p(\mathscr{E}^2) = 0$, $p \neq 0$.

Thus \mathscr{E}^2 is a $\Lambda \otimes \Lambda$ resolution of Λ . We will refer to \mathscr{E}^2 as the two sided Koszul complex by analogy with the two sided bar construction.

PROPOSITION 1.2: If A is any Λ -module then $\mathscr{E}^2 \otimes_{\Lambda} A$ is a free resolution of A as a Λ -module.

Proof: Since \mathscr{E}^2 is a free Λ -module we have a spectral sequence (see [12; page 400]) $E^r \Rightarrow H(\mathscr{E}^2 \otimes_{\Lambda} A)$, $E^2 = \operatorname{Tor}_{\Lambda}(H(\mathscr{E}^2), A) = \operatorname{Tor}_{\Lambda}(\Lambda, A) = A$ i.e. $E_{p,*}^2 = 0$ $p \neq 0$ which implies

$$H^0(\mathscr{E}^2 \otimes_A A) = A, H^p(\mathscr{E}^2 \otimes_A A) = 0 \quad p \neq 0.$$

Since $\mathscr{E}^2 \otimes_{\Lambda} A$ is obviously a free Λ -module the result follows. \square

COROLLARY 1.3: If (B_A, A) is given then

$$\operatorname{Tor}_{A}(B, A) = H(B \otimes E[u_{1}, ..., u_{n}] \otimes A; d) \quad \text{where}$$

$$d(b \otimes 1 \otimes a) = 0, \quad d(b \otimes u_{i} \otimes a) = b x_{i} \otimes 1 \otimes a - b \otimes 1 \otimes x_{i} a,$$

$$\operatorname{deg}(u_{i}) = (-1, \operatorname{deg} x_{i}). \quad \Box$$

ACKNOWLEDGMENT: The existence of the two sided Koszul complex was suggested to us by Prof. J. P. MAY.

We shall have occasion to consider the case where A is a differential Λ -module. In this case we shall need:

PROPOSITION 1.4: If A is a differential Λ -module then $\mathscr{E}^2 \otimes_{\Lambda} A$ is a proper projective resolution ([12], [16]) of A as a differential Λ -module.

Proof: We must show the following

- (i) $\mathscr{E}^2 \otimes_{\Lambda} A$ is a proper projective Λ -module.
- (ii) $\mathscr{E}^2 \otimes_A A$ is a resolution of A.
- (iii) If d_A denotes the differential in A then

$$Z_A(\mathscr{E}^2 \otimes_A A)$$
 is a resolution of $Z(A)$.

$$H_A(\mathscr{E}^2 \otimes_A A)$$
 is a resolution of $H(A)$.

To see (i) observe that $\mathscr{E}^2 \otimes_{\Lambda} A = \Lambda \otimes E[u_1, ..., u_n] \otimes A$ as a Λ -module. Since k is a field it follows that $E^2 \otimes_{\Lambda} A$ is a proper projective Λ -module [13], [16]. (Moore does not use the adjective proper.)

(ii) is just Proposition 1.2.

To obtain (iii) we note that there is a decomposition of vector spaces,

$$A = R \oplus P \oplus Q$$

with d_A given by $d^n: Q^n \approx R^{n+1}$ (see [12; page 398]) and so we see

$$Z_{A}(\mathscr{E}^{2} \otimes_{\Lambda} A) = Z_{A}(\Lambda \otimes E[u_{1}, ..., u_{n}] \otimes A) = Z_{A}(\Lambda \otimes E[u_{1}, ..., u_{n}] \otimes (R \oplus P \oplus Q))$$
$$= \Lambda \otimes E[u_{1}, ..., u_{n}] \otimes (R \otimes P) = \Lambda \otimes E[u_{1}, ..., u_{n}] \otimes Z(A) = \mathscr{E}^{2} \otimes_{\Lambda} Z(A).$$

which is a resolution of Z(A) by Proposition 1.2.

Finally since k is a field the Kunneth theorem gives

$$H_{A}(\mathscr{E}^{2} \otimes_{\Lambda} A) = H(\Lambda \otimes E[u_{1},...,u_{n}] \otimes A) = \Lambda \otimes E[u_{1},...,u_{n}] \otimes H(A) = \mathscr{E}^{2} \otimes_{\Lambda} H(A)$$

which is a resolution of H(A) by Proposition 1.2. \square

We can now proceed in the obvious fashion to compute $Tor_A(B, A)$ when B, A are differential A-modules.

2. Differentiable Fibre Bundles

Suppose that $\xi = (E, p, B, G/H, G)$ is a differentiable fibre bundle with classifying diagram

$$G/H = G/H$$

$$\downarrow \qquad \downarrow$$

$$E \rightarrow B_H$$

$$\downarrow \qquad \downarrow$$

$$B \rightarrow B_G$$

Let us assume that G is a compact connected Lie group and $H \subset G$ is a closed connected subgroup. In addition assume that B is a compact Riemannian symmetric space. (We recall that a compact Riemannian symmetric space M is an analytic manifold with a fixed Riemannian metric such that each point $x \in M$ is a fixed point of some involutive isometry of M.)

Throughout this section the ground field k will be the field of real numbers R. If X is a topological space we shall write $H^*(X)$ for $H^*(X; R)$. Our goal is to prove

THEOREM 2.1: Under the above conditions there is an isomorphism of algebras

$$H^*(E) \cong \operatorname{Tor}_{H^*(B_G)}(H^*(B), H^*(B_H)).$$

The proof of Theorem 2.1 will be accomplished with the use of deRham cohomology for manifolds modeled on separable Hilbert spaces (see [7], [9], [14]). For the convenience of the reader we will recall some of the important facts that we shall use.

If M is a Riemannian manifold modeled on a separable Hilbert space then $R^{\#}(M)$ denotes the deRham cochain algebra of M. The differential (exterior derivative) is denoted by d. We then have [7] that the algebras $H^{*}(M)$ and $H^{*}(R_{\#}(M), d)$ are naturally isomorphic.

If M is a compact Riemannian manifold then the Riemannian metric g on M induces an inner product in $R^{\#}(M)$ by

$$(\alpha, \beta) = \int_{M} \alpha \wedge \beta^*, \quad \deg \alpha = \deg \beta$$

The adjoint of d relative to this inner product is called the coderivative and is denoted by δ .

DEFINITION: A form $\alpha \in \mathbb{R}^{\#}(M)$ is said to be

closed iff
$$d(\alpha) = 0$$

coclosed iff $\delta(\alpha) = 0$
harmonic iff $d(\alpha) = 0 = \delta(\alpha)$.

THEOREM 2.2 (HODGE): If M is a compact Riemannian manifold then each cohomology class $a \in H^*(M)$ contains a unique harmonic form $\alpha \in R^\#(M)$.

Let M be a Riemannian manifold and denote by I(M) the group of isometries of M. Then I(M) is a Lie group and acts on the algebra $R^{\#}(M)$ of differential forms on M.

THEOREM 2.3 (E. CARTAN [5]): If M is a compact Riemannian symmetric space then the harmonic forms on M are precisely the I(M) invariant forms. Therefore the \land product of two harmonic forms is again harmonic.

Proof of Theorem 2.1: Let

$$G/H = G/H$$

$$\downarrow \qquad \downarrow$$

$$E \to B_H$$

$$\downarrow^{p} \qquad \downarrow^{q}$$

$$B \xrightarrow{f} B_G$$

be the classifying diagram for ξ . Following EELLS in [7] we may assume that B_H and B_G are differentiable manifolds modeled on separable Hilbert space. By differentiable approximation we may then assume that all the maps are differentiable.

Following [8] (see also [1], [16]) we then have a natural isomorphism of algebras $H^*(E) \cong \operatorname{Tor}_{R^\#(B_G)}(R^\#(B), R^\#(B_H))$.

Now we know [3]
$$H^*(B_G) = P[x_1, ..., x_n]$$
 $n = \text{rank } G$,

$$H^*(B_H) = P[y_1, ..., y_m] \quad m = \text{rank } H.$$

Choose representative cocycles $\alpha_1, ..., \alpha_n \in R^\#(B_G)$ for $x_1, ..., x_n$. Since the multiplication in $R^\#(B_G)$ is commutative the map $x_i \to \alpha_i$ i = 1, ..., n extends to a unique map of algebras $\alpha: H^*(B_G) \to R_\#(B_G)$. If we think of $H^*(B_G)$ as a differential algebra with zero differential then α is a map of differential algebras inducing an isomorphism in homology.

In a similar manner we construct a map $\beta: H^*(B_H) \to R^\#(B_H)$. Consider the diagram

$$R^{\#}(B_{H}) \stackrel{\varrho^{\#}}{\leftarrow} R_{\#}(B_{G}) \stackrel{f^{\#}}{\rightarrow} R^{\#}(B)$$

$$f \uparrow \qquad \uparrow_{\alpha} \qquad \text{Figure } A$$

$$H^{\#}(B_{H}) \stackrel{\varrho^{\#}}{\leftarrow} H^{\#}(B_{G}) \stackrel{f^{\#}}{\rightarrow} H^{\#}(B)$$

We do not claim that the left hand square commutes. However using this diagram we can make $R^{\#}(B_H)$ into an $H^{*}(B_G)$ module in two different ways, i.e. by means of the maps $\beta \varrho^{*}$ and $\varrho^{\#}\alpha$. We can also make $R^{\#}(B)$ into an $H^{*}(B_G)$ module by means of the map $f^{\#}\alpha$.

Hence there are two different torsion products which we shall denote by

$$_{\beta \, \varrho^*} \operatorname{Tor}_{H^*(B_{\mathbf{G}})} (R^*(B), R^*(B_H))$$
 $_{\varrho^* \alpha} \operatorname{Tor}_{H^*(B_{\mathbf{G}})} (R^*(B), R^*(B_H))$

We claim that these two torsion products are isomorphic. To see this set $\beta \varrho^*(x_i) = \eta_i$ $\varrho^* \alpha(x_i) = \eta_i' f^* \alpha(x_i) = \zeta_i$. Let d_B denote the boundary in $R^*(B)$ and d_H the boundary in $R^*(B_H)$. Then using the two sided Koszul complex of the previous section we see

$${}_{\beta \, \varrho^*} \mathrm{Tor}_{H^*(B_G)} \left(R^\#(B), \, R^\#(B_H) \right) = H \left(R^\#(B) \otimes E \left[u_1, \ldots, u_n \right] \otimes R^\#(B_H) \right)$$
 where

$$d(\alpha \otimes 1 \otimes \beta) = d_{B}\alpha \otimes 1 \otimes \beta + \alpha \otimes 1 \otimes d_{H}\beta$$
$$d(1 \otimes u_{i} \otimes 1) = \zeta_{i} \otimes 1 \otimes 1 + 1 \otimes 1 \otimes \eta_{i}$$

and similarly

where
$$d(\alpha \otimes 1 \otimes \beta) = d_B \alpha \otimes 1 \otimes \beta + \alpha \otimes 1 \otimes d_H \beta$$
$$d(1 \otimes v_i \otimes 1) = \zeta_i \otimes 1 \otimes 1 + 1 \otimes 1 \otimes \eta_i'$$

Now since Figure A certainly commutes when we pass to homology it follows that for each i we can choose $\lambda_i \in R^\#(B_H)$ so that $\eta_i' = \eta_i + d_H \lambda_i$.

Define a map

$$T: R^{\#}(B) \otimes E[u_{1}, ..., u_{n}] \otimes R^{\#}(B_{H}) \to R^{\#}(B) \otimes E[v_{1}, ..., v_{n}] \otimes R^{\#}(B_{H})$$
 by
$$T(\alpha \otimes 1 \otimes \beta) = \alpha \otimes 1 \otimes \beta$$

$$T(1 \otimes u_i \otimes 1) = 1 \otimes v_i \otimes 1 - 1 \otimes 1 \otimes \lambda_i$$

and requiring that T be a map of algebras. A direct computation shows that T is a map of complexes. As T^{-1} is readily defined we see that T gives an isomorphism of algebras

$$T^*:_{\beta \varrho^*} \operatorname{Tor}_{H^*(B_G)} (R^*(B), R^*(B_H)) \to_{\varrho^* \alpha} \operatorname{Tor}_{H^*(B_G)} (R^*(B), R^*(B_H)).$$

We then have algebra isomorphisms

$$\operatorname{Tor}_{R^{\#}(B_{G})}\left(R^{\#}(B), R^{\#}(B_{H})\right)_{\substack{\alpha \uparrow \\ \operatorname{Tor}_{\alpha}(1, 1)}}$$
 $e^{\#_{\alpha}}\operatorname{Tor}_{H^{\#}(B_{G})}\left(R^{\#}(B), R^{\#}(B_{H})\right)_{\substack{\alpha \uparrow \\ T}}$
 $for_{H^{\#}(B_{G})}\left(R^{\#}(B), R^{\#}(B_{H})\right)_{\substack{\alpha \uparrow \\ \operatorname{Tor}_{1}(1, \beta)}}$
 $\operatorname{Tor}_{H^{\#}(B_{G})}\left(R^{\#}(B), H^{\#}(B_{H})\right)_{\substack{\alpha \uparrow \\ \operatorname{Tor}_{1}(1, \beta)}}$

Recall now that we assumed B to be a compact Riemannian symmetric space. Define a map $\theta: H^*(B) \to R^*(B)$ by $a \to$ the unique harmonic form contained in a. It follows from the results of Hodge and Cartan stated above that θ is a map of algebras inducing an isomorphism in homology. Consider now the diagram

$$R^{\#}(B_G) \xrightarrow{f} R^{\#}(B)$$

$$\stackrel{\alpha}{\downarrow} \qquad \qquad \downarrow^{\theta}$$

$$H^{*}(B_G) \to H^{*}(B)$$

As above this leads to two torsion products

$$f^{*}_{\alpha} \operatorname{Tor}_{H^{*}(B_{G})} (R^{\#}(B), H^{*}(B_{H}))$$
 $\theta f^{*} \operatorname{Tor}_{H^{*}(B_{G})} (R^{\#}(B), H^{*}(B_{H}))$

which are seen to be isomorphic by an argument analogous to the one above. This gives us a string of algebra isomorphisms

$$H^{*}(E) \cong \operatorname{Tor}_{R^{\#}(B_{G})} \left(R^{\#}(B), R^{\#}(B_{H}) \right) \uparrow \operatorname{Tor}_{\alpha}(1, 1) \\ \ell^{\#}_{\alpha} \operatorname{Tor}_{H^{*}(B_{G})} \left(R^{\#}(B), R^{\#}(B_{H}) \right) \uparrow T \\ \ell^{\#}_{\beta} \operatorname{Tor}_{H^{*}(B_{G})} \left(R^{\#}(B), R^{\#}(B_{H}) \right) \uparrow \operatorname{Tor}_{1}(1, \beta) \\ \ell^{\#}_{\alpha} \operatorname{Tor}_{H^{*}(B_{G})} \left(R^{\#}(B), H^{*}(B_{H}) \right) \uparrow T' \\ \ell^{\#}_{\beta} \operatorname{Tor}_{H^{*}(B_{B})} \left(R^{\#}(B), H^{*}(B_{H}) \right) \uparrow \operatorname{Tor}_{1}(\ell, 1) \\ \operatorname{Tor}_{H^{*}(B_{G})} \left(H^{*}(B), H^{*}(B_{H}) \right) \right)$$

which completes the proof. \square

If in Theorem 2.1 we set B = point then we obtain a result of Cartan [6] as restated by Baum in [2]. If we set H = 1 in Theorem 2.1 then we obtain a result of Borel and Hirsch [4].

3. An Example

Of all the hypotheses of Theorem 2.1 probably the least satisfying is the assumption that B be a Riemannian symmetric space. However this is an essential assumption as the following example will show.

Let $Y = S^2 \vee S^2 \vee S^2$. Let $f, g, h \in \Pi_2(Y)$ represent the homotopy classes of the inclusions

$$S^{2} \xrightarrow{f} S^{2} \lor * \lor * \subset Y$$

$$S^{2} \xrightarrow{g} * \lor S^{2} \lor * \subset Y$$

$$S^{2} \xrightarrow{h} * \lor * \lor S^{2} \subset Y$$

Let $t: S^4 \to Y$ represent the Whitehead product $[f, [g, h]] \in \Pi_4(Y)$ and let $X = Y U_t e^5$ where e^5 is a five cell. Massey and Uehara [11] have shown that there are indecomposable elements $z_1, z_2, z_3 \in H^2(X; Z)$ and $w \in H^5(X; Z)$ with the triple product $\langle z_1, z_2, z_3 \rangle$ defined and

$$\langle z_1, z_2, z_3 \rangle = w \neq 0 \in H^*(X, Z)/H^*(X, Z) z_1 + z_3 H^*(X; Z)$$

Also from [11] we shall need

LEMMA 3.1: Suppose that $f: A \rightarrow B$ is a continuous map. Let $u, v, w \in H^*(B; Z)$ such that

(i)
$$uv = 0 = vw$$
, (ii) $f^*(u) = 0 = f^*(w)$ then $\langle u, v, w \rangle \in \ker(f^* : H^*(B; Z) \to H^*(A, Z))$.

Proof: See [11] Lemma 5 on page 369. □

Now X is a 5-dimensional simplicial complex and so we can imbed X in R^{11} . Let B be the double of a regular neighborhood of X in R^{11} . Then B is a smooth manifold, but not a Riemannian symmetric space. X is a retract of B. Thus there are classes $x_1, x_2, x_3 \in H^2(B; Z)$ and $y \in H^5(B; Z)$ with $\langle x_1, x_2, x_3 \rangle$ defined and

$$\langle x_1, x_2, x_3 \rangle = y \neq 0 \in H^*(B, Z)/H^*(B, Z) x_1 + x_3 H^*(B, Z).$$

We now construct an $S^1 \times S^1$ bundle over B as follows. Choose maps

$$f_i: B \to K(Z, 2) = CP^{\infty} = B_{S^1} \quad i = 1, 3$$

representing the classes x_1 , x_3 . Form the diagram

which is the classifying diagram of a principal $S^1 \times S^1$ bundle ξ over B.

PROPOSITION 3.2: $H^*(E; k)$ and $\operatorname{Tor}_{H^*(B_{S_1 \times S_1}; k)} (H^*(B; k), k)$ are not isomorphic as vector spaces for any field k.

Proof: Consider the Eilenberg-Moore spectral sequence [1], [8], [16] $\{E_r, d_r\}$ of the above diagram with k as coefficients. It has

$$E_r \Rightarrow H^*(E; k)$$

$$E_2 = \operatorname{Tor}_{H^*(B_{S^1} \times S^1: k)} (H^*(B: k), k).$$

Clearly it suffices to show that $E_2 \neq E_{\infty}$.

By direct computation we have

$$E_2^{0,*} = H^*(B;k)/H^*(B;k)x_1 + x_3H^*(B;k).$$

Now the map $p^*: H^*(B; k) \to H^*(E; k)$ is given by the composition

$$H^*(B; k) \to H^*(B; k)/(x_1, x_3) = E_2^{0, *} \stackrel{\varepsilon}{\to} E_{\infty}^{0, *} \subset H^*(E; k).$$

Now we claim that $p^*(y)=0$. For we know that $y=\langle x_1, x_2, x_3 \rangle$ and $p^*(x_1)=0=p^*(x_3)$ and so by Lemma 3.1 $p^*(y)=0$.

But $y \neq 0 \in H^*(B; k)/(x_1, x_3)$ and hence the map $\in :E_2^{0,*} \to E_\infty^{0,*}$ is not a monomorphism. Therefore $E_2 \neq E_\infty$. \square

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