

# THE HOMOTOPY GROUPS OF $tmf$ AND OF ITS LOCALIZATIONS

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In this survey, I present a compilation of the homotopy groups of  $tmf$  and of its various localizations. This work was an exercise in collecting the diffuse knowledge from my mathematical surroundings.

## 1. THE HOMOTOPY OF $tmf$

The spectrum  $tmf$  is connective, which means that the ring  $\pi_n(tmf)$  is zero for  $n < 0$ . Vaguely speaking, its homotopy ring  $\pi_*(tmf)$  is an amalgam of  $MF_* = \mathbb{Z}[c_4, c_6, \Delta]/(c_4^3 - c_6^2 - (12)^3 \Delta)$ , the ring of classical modular forms, and part of  $\pi_*(\mathbb{S})$ , the ring of stable homotopy groups of spheres. More concretely, there are two ring homomorphisms

$$(1) \quad \pi_*(\mathbb{S}) \longrightarrow \pi_*(tmf) \longrightarrow MF_*$$

The map from  $\pi_*(\mathbb{S})$  captures information about the torsion part of  $\pi_*(tmf)$ , while the second map is almost an isomorphism between the non-torsion part of  $\pi_*(tmf)$  and  $MF_*$ .

The first map in (1) is the Hurewicz homomorphism. Since  $tmf$  is a ring spectrum, it admits a unit map from the sphere spectrum  $\mathbb{S}$ . This induces a map in homotopy  $\pi_*(\mathbb{S}) \rightarrow \pi_*(tmf)$ , which is an isomorphism on  $\pi_0, \pi_1, \dots, \pi_6$ . The only torsion in  $\pi_*(tmf)$  is 2-torsion and 3-torsion; it is at those primes that  $tmf$  resembles the sphere spectrum. The 3-primary part of the Hurewicz image is 72-periodic and is given by

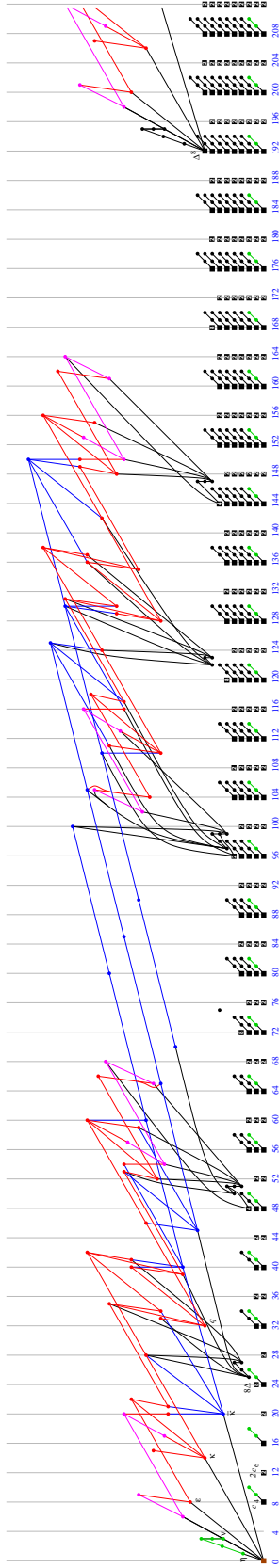
$$(2) \quad \text{im}\left(\pi_*(\mathbb{S}) \rightarrow \pi_*(tmf)\right)_{(3)} = \mathbb{Z}_{(3)} \oplus \alpha \mathbb{Z}/3\mathbb{Z} \oplus \bigoplus_{k \geq 0} \Delta^{3k} \{\beta, \alpha\beta, \beta^2, \beta^3, \beta^4/\alpha, \beta^4\} \mathbb{Z}/3\mathbb{Z},$$

where  $\alpha$  has degree 3, and  $\beta = \langle \alpha, \alpha, \alpha \rangle$  has degree 10. The Hurewicz image contains most but not all the 3-torsion of  $\pi_*(tmf)$ : the classes in dimensions  $27 + 72k$  and  $75 + 72k$  for  $k \geq 0$  are not hit by elements of  $\pi_*(\mathbb{S})$ . The 2-torsion of  $\text{im}(\pi_*(\mathbb{S}) \rightarrow \pi_*(tmf))$  is substantially more complicated. It exhibits very rich patterns including two distinct periodicity phenomena. The first one is a periodicity by  $c_4 \in \pi_8(tmf)$ , which corresponds to  $v_1^4$ ; the second one is a periodicity by  $\Delta^8 \in \pi_{192}(tmf)$ , which corresponds to  $v_2^{32}$ .

The second map in (1) is the boundary homomorphism of the elliptic spectral sequence. Under that map, a class in  $\pi_n(tmf)$  maps to a modular form of weight  $n/2$  (and to zero if  $n$  is odd). That map is an isomorphism after inverting the primes 2 and 3, which means that both its kernel and its cokernel are 2- and 3- torsion. Its cokernel can be described explicitly

$$\text{coker}\left(\pi_n(tmf) \rightarrow MF_{\frac{n}{2}}\right) = \begin{cases} \mathbb{Z} / \frac{24}{\gcd(k, 24)} \mathbb{Z}, & \text{if } n = 24k \\ (\mathbb{Z}/2\mathbb{Z})^{\lceil \frac{n-8}{24} \rceil} & \text{if } n \equiv 4 \pmod{8} \\ 0 & \text{otherwise,} \end{cases}$$

where the first cyclic group is generated by  $\Delta^k$  and the second group is generated by  $\Delta^a c_4^b c_6$  for integers  $a$  and  $b$  satisfying  $24a + 8b + 12 = n$ . Its kernel agrees with the torsion in  $\pi_*(tmf)$  and is much more complicated – it resembles the stable homotopy groups of spheres. The 3-primary component of the kernel is at most  $\mathbb{Z}/3\mathbb{Z}$  in any given degree. The 2-primary component is a direct sum of  $(\mathbb{Z}/2\mathbb{Z})^\ell$  for some  $\ell$  (corresponding to  $v_1$ -periodic elements) with a group isomorphic to  $\mathbb{Z}/2\mathbb{Z}$ ,  $\mathbb{Z}/4\mathbb{Z}$ ,  $\mathbb{Z}/8\mathbb{Z}$ , or  $(\mathbb{Z}/2\mathbb{Z})^2$  (corresponding to  $v_2$ -periodic elements).



The homotopy groups of  $tmf$  at the prime 2

The picture on the left of this page represents the homotopy ring of  $tmf$  at the prime 2. The vertical direction has no meaning. Bullets represent  $\mathbb{Z}/2\mathbb{Z}$ 's while squares represent  $\mathbb{Z}_{(2)}$ 's. A chain of  $n$  bullets connected by vertical lines represent a  $\mathbb{Z}/2^n\mathbb{Z}$ .

The bullets are named by the classes in  $\pi_*(\mathbb{S})$  of which they are the image ( $\eta, \nu, \varepsilon, \bar{\kappa}, \kappa, q$  are standard names), while the squares are named after their images in  $MF_*$ . The slanted lines represent multiplication by  $\eta, \nu, \varepsilon, \kappa$ , and  $\bar{\kappa}$ .

The top part of the diagram is 192-periodic with polynomial generator  $\Delta^8$ . We have colored the image of the Hurewicz homomorphism [conjectured by Mark Mahowald] as follows: the  $v_1$ -periodic classes are in green, and the  $v_2$ -periodic classes are in pink, red, and blue, depending on their periodicity. The green classes are  $v_1^4$ -periodic in the sphere, and, except for  $\nu$ , they remain periodic in  $tmf$  via the identification  $c_4 = v_1^4$ . The  $v_2^8$ -periodic classes are pink, the  $v_2^{16}$ -periodic red, and the  $v_2^{32}$ -periodic blue. They remain periodic in  $tmf$  via the identification  $\Delta^8 = v_2^{32}$ .

The tiny white numbers written in the squares indicate the size of  $\text{coker}(\pi_*(tmf) \rightarrow MF_*)_{(2)}$ . The  $\mathbb{Z}_{(2)}$ -algebra  $\pi_*(tmf)_{(2)}$  is finitely generated, with generators

degree:	1	3	8	8	12	14	20	24	25	27	32	32
name:	$\eta$	$\nu$	$c_4$	$\varepsilon$	$\{2c_6\}$	$\kappa$	$\bar{\kappa}$	$\{8\Delta\}$	$\{\eta\Delta\}$	$\{2\nu\Delta\}$	$q$	$\{c_4\Delta\}$
	36	48	51	56	60	72	80	84				
	$\{2c_6\Delta\}$	$\{4\Delta^2\}$	$\{\nu\Delta^2\}$	$\{c_4\Delta^2\}$	$\{2c_6\Delta^2\}$	$\{8\Delta^3\}$	$\{c_4\Delta^3\}$	$\{2c_6\Delta^3\}$				
	96	97	99	104	104	108	110	120				
	$\{2\Delta^4\}$	$\{\eta\Delta^4\}$	$\{\nu\Delta^4\}$	$\{\varepsilon\Delta^4\}$	$\{c_4\Delta^4\}$	$\{2c_6\Delta^4\}$	$\{\kappa\Delta^4\}$	$\{8\Delta^5\}$				
	123	128	128	132	144	147	152	156				
	$\{\nu\Delta^5\}$	$\{q\Delta^4\}$	$\{c_4\Delta^5\}$	$\{2c_6\Delta^5\}$	$\{4\Delta^6\}$	$\{\nu\Delta^6\}$	$\{c_4\Delta^6\}$	$\{2c_6\Delta^6\}$				
	168	176	180	192								
	$\{8\Delta^7\}$	$\{c_4\Delta^7\}$	$\{2c_6\Delta^7\}$	$\{\Delta^8\}$								

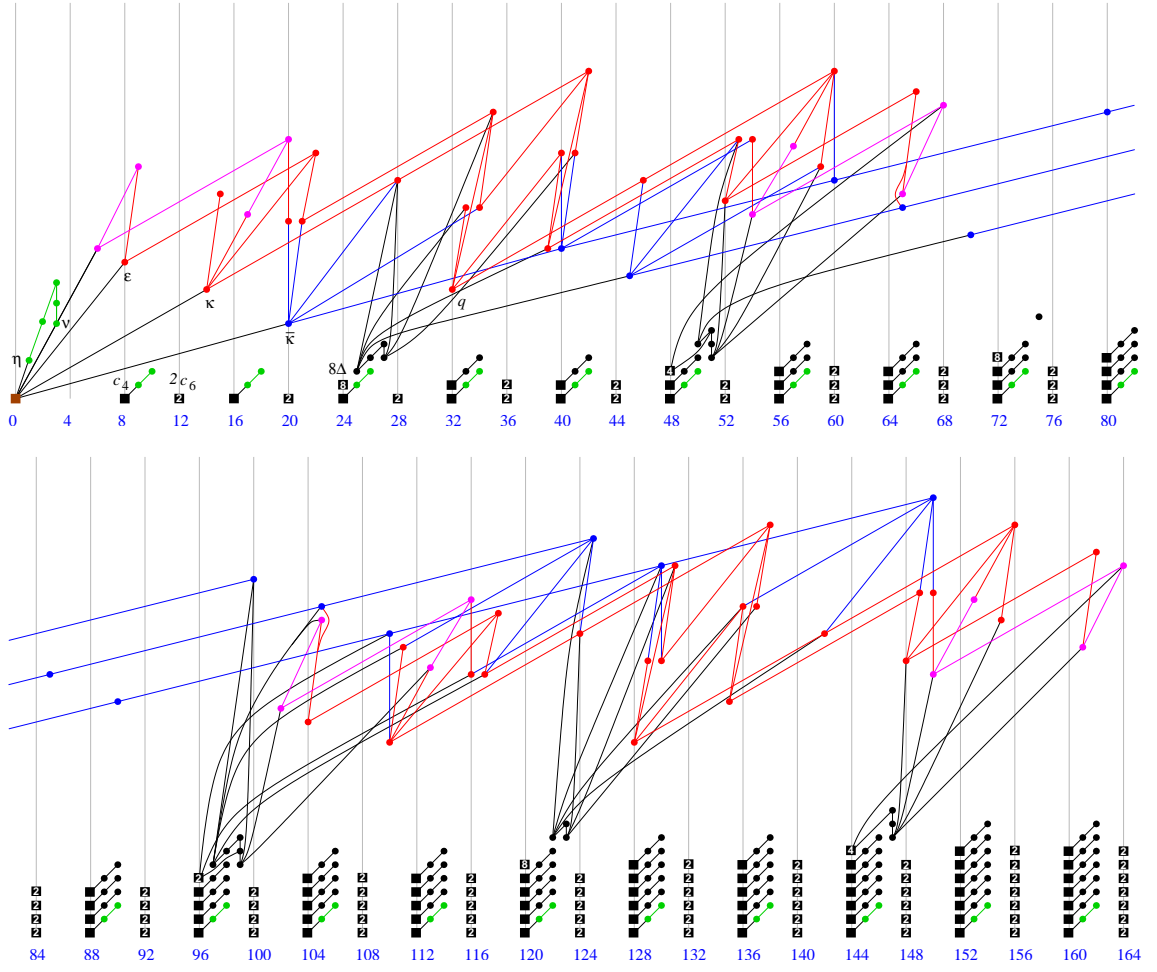
Hereafter, we list the multiplications that are neither indicated in our chart, nor implied by the ring homomorphism  $\pi_*(tmf) \rightarrow MF_*$ . On the top are the generators, and on the bottom the degrees of the classes that support non-trivial multiplications by those generators (the images never involve  $\eta^a c_4^b \Delta^c$  with  $b \geq 1$ , or  $2c_4^a c_6 \Delta^b$ ):

$\varepsilon$	$\kappa$	$\bar{\kappa}$	$q$
1	1, 26.	1, 2, 8, 14, 15, 21, 22, 26, 98, 22, 32, 33, 34, 39, 46, 104, 110, 111, 116, 117, 118, 128, 129, 130, 135, 136, 142.	1, 3, 8, 14, 20, 21, 25, 27, 28, 34, 97, 99, 104, 110, 117, 118, 123, 124, 130.
$\{\eta\Delta\}$			$\{2\nu\Delta\}$
1, 2, 3, 8, 14, 15, 20, 21, 25, 26, 27, 28, 32, 34, 35, 40, 41, 45, 50, 60, 65, 75, 80, 85, 97, 98, 99, 100, 104, 105, 110, 111, 113, 117, 122, 123, 124, 125, 128, 130, 131, 137.			1, 8, 14, 15, 25, 26, 27, 32, 33, 39, 96, 97, 98, 104, 110, 111, 122, 123, 128, 129, 135.
$\{\nu\Delta^2\}$			
1, 2, 3, 6, 8, 9, 14, 15, 17, 51, 54 <sup>†</sup> , 65 <sup>†</sup> , 96, 97, 98, 99, 102, 104, 105, 110, 111, 113, 116.			$\dagger: \nu\{\nu\Delta^2\} \mapsto \nu^2\{\nu\Delta^4\}.$ $\kappa\{\nu\Delta^2\} \mapsto \nu\kappa\{\nu\Delta^4\}.$

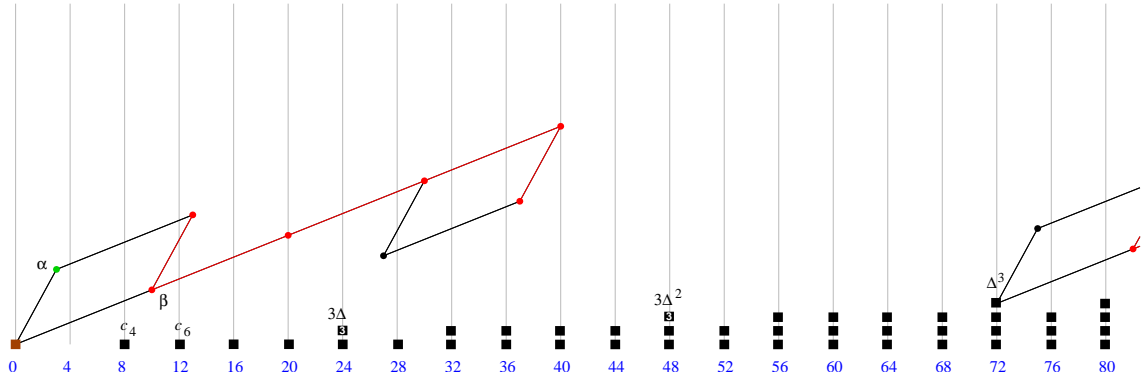
Acting with  $\varepsilon, \kappa, \bar{\kappa}, q, \{\eta\Delta\}, \{2\nu\Delta\}, \{\nu\Delta^2\}$  on  $\eta^a c_4^b \Delta^c$  with  $b \geq 1$ , or  $2c_4^a c_6 \Delta^b$  always gives zero, except  $\{\eta\Delta\}\eta^a c_4^b \Delta^c = \eta^{a+1} c_4^b \Delta^{c+1}$ .

To finish, we emphasize the two relations that cannot be deduced by simply looking at our chart:  $\{\eta\Delta\}^4 = \bar{\kappa}^5$ ,  $\{2\nu\Delta\}^2 = \kappa\bar{\kappa}^2$ .

The picture of  $\pi_*(tmf)_{(2)}$  from the previous page being rather small, we include here a larger version:



The homotopy groups of  $tmf$  at the prime 3 exhibit similar phenomena as at the prime 2. The picture on the bottom of this page is an illustration of  $\pi_*(tmf)_{(3)}$ . The bullets represent  $\mathbb{Z}/3\mathbb{Z}$ 's and are named after the corresponding elements of  $\pi_*(\mathbb{S})$ . The squares represent  $\mathbb{Z}_{(3)}$ 's and are named after their image in  $MF_*$ . The slanted lines indicate multiplication by  $\alpha$  and  $\beta$ . The top part of the



The homotopy groups of  $tmf$  at the prime 3

diagram is 72-periodic, with polynomial generator  $\Delta^3$ . We have drawn the image of the Hurewicz in color: in green is the unique  $v_1$ -periodic class  $\alpha$ , and in red are the  $v_2$ -periodic classes. The latter remain periodic in  $tmf$  through the identification  $v_2^9 = \Delta^6$  (or maybe  $v_2^{9/2} = \Delta^3$ ?). Once again, the white numbers in the squares indicate the size of  $\text{coker}(\pi_*(tmf) \rightarrow MF_*)_{(3)}$ . The algebra  $\pi_*(tmf)_{(3)}$  is finitely generated, with generators

degree:	3	8	10	12	24	27	32	36	48	56	60	72
name:	$\alpha$	$c_4$	$\beta$	$c_6$	$\{3\Delta\}$	$\{\alpha\Delta\}$	$\{c_4\Delta\}$	$\{c_6\Delta\}$	$\{3\Delta^2\}$	$\{c_4\Delta^2\}$	$\{c_6\Delta^2\}$	$\{\Delta^3\}$

and many relations.

It is also worthwhile noting that the classes in dimensions 3, 13, 20, 30 (mod 72) support non-trivial  $\langle \alpha, \alpha, - \rangle$  Massey products.

When localized at a prime  $p \geq 5$ , the homotopy ring of  $tmf$  becomes isomorphic to  $MF_*$ . Since  $\Delta \in MF_{12}$  is a  $\mathbb{Z}_{(p)}$ -linear combination of  $c_4^3$  and  $c_6^2$ , this ring then simplifies to  $\pi_*(tmf)_{(p)} = \mathbb{Z}_{(p)}[c_4, c_6]$ .

## 2. LOCALIZATIONS OF $tmf$

The periodic version of  $tmf$  goes by the name  $TMF$ . Its homotopy groups are given by

$$\pi_*(TMF) = \pi_*(tmf)[\{\Delta^{24}\}^{-1}].$$

The groups  $\pi_n(TMf)$  are finitely generated abelian groups, except for  $n \equiv 0, 1, 2, 4 \pmod{8}$  in which case they contain summands isomorphic to  $\mathbb{Z}[x]$ ,  $(\mathbb{Z}/2\mathbb{Z})[x]$ ,  $(\mathbb{Z}/2\mathbb{Z})[x]$ , and  $\mathbb{Z}[x]$ , respectively.

Fix a prime  $p$ , and let  $K(n)$  denote the  $n$ th Morava  $K$ -theory at that prime ( $p$  is omitted from the notation). We can then consider the  $K(n)$ -localization  $L_{K(n)}tmf$  of the spectrum  $tmf$ . The spectrum  $L_{K(0)}tmf$  is simply the rationalisation of  $tmf$  (and does not depend on  $p$ ). Its homotopy ring is therefore given by

$$\pi_*(L_{K(0)}tmf) = \pi_*(tmf) \otimes_{\mathbb{Z}} \mathbb{Q}.$$

The homotopy groups of  $L_{K(1)}tmf$  are easiest to describe at the primes 2 and 3. In those cases, they are given by

$$(3) \quad \begin{aligned} \pi_*(L_{K(1)}tmf) &= \left( \pi_*(KO)[j^{-1}] \right)_p^\wedge \\ &= \pi_*(KO)_p^\wedge \langle j^{-1} \rangle \end{aligned} \quad p = 2 \text{ or } 3.$$

Here, the notation  $R\langle x \rangle$  refers to powers series  $\sum_{k=0}^{\infty} a_k x^k$  whose coefficients  $a_k \in R$  tend to zero  $p$ -adically as  $k \rightarrow \infty$ . The variable is called  $j^{-1}$  because its inverse corresponds to the  $j$ -invariant of elliptic curves. The reason why (3) is simpler at  $p = 2$  and 3 is that, at those primes, there exists only one supersingular elliptic curve and its  $j$ -invariant is equal to zero. For general prime  $p \geq 3$ , let  $\alpha_1, \dots, \alpha_n$  denote the supersingular  $j$ -values. Each element  $\alpha_i$  is a priori only an element of  $\mathbb{F}_{p^n}$  (actually in  $\mathbb{F}_{p^2}$ ), however, their union  $S := \{\alpha_1, \dots, \alpha_n\}$  is always a scheme over  $\mathbb{F}_p$ . Let  $\tilde{S}$  denote any scheme over  $\mathbb{Z}$  whose reduction mod  $p$  is  $S$ . The homotopy groups of  $L_{K(1)}tmf$  are then given by

$$\pi_*(L_{K(1)}tmf) = \left( \text{functions on } \mathbb{P}_{\mathbb{Z}}^1 \setminus \tilde{S} \right)_p^\wedge [b^{\pm 1}], \quad p \geq 3,$$

where  $b$  is a class in degree 4.

The homotopy ring of  $L_{K(2)}tmf$  is the completion of  $\pi_*TMF$  at the ideal generated by  $p$  and by the Hasse invariant  $E_{p-1}$ :

$$\pi_*(L_{K(2)}tmf) = \pi_*(TMF)_{(p, E_{p-1})}^\wedge, \quad p \text{ arbitrary},$$

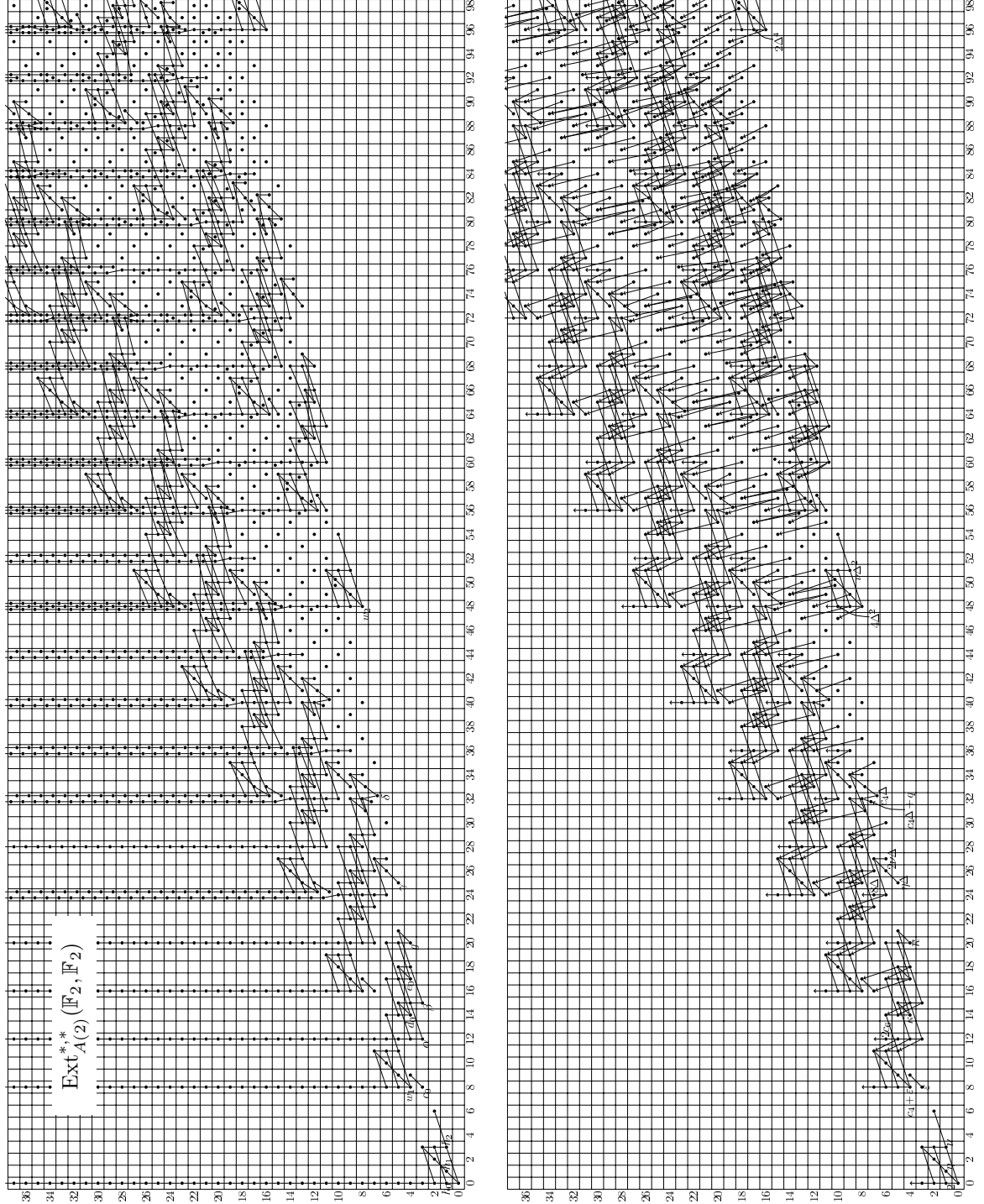
where the Hasse invariant is a polynomial in  $c_4$  and  $c_6$  whose zeroes correspond to the supersingular elliptic curves. Once again, given the fact that there is a unique supersingular elliptic curve at  $p = 2$  and 3, the above formula simplifies to

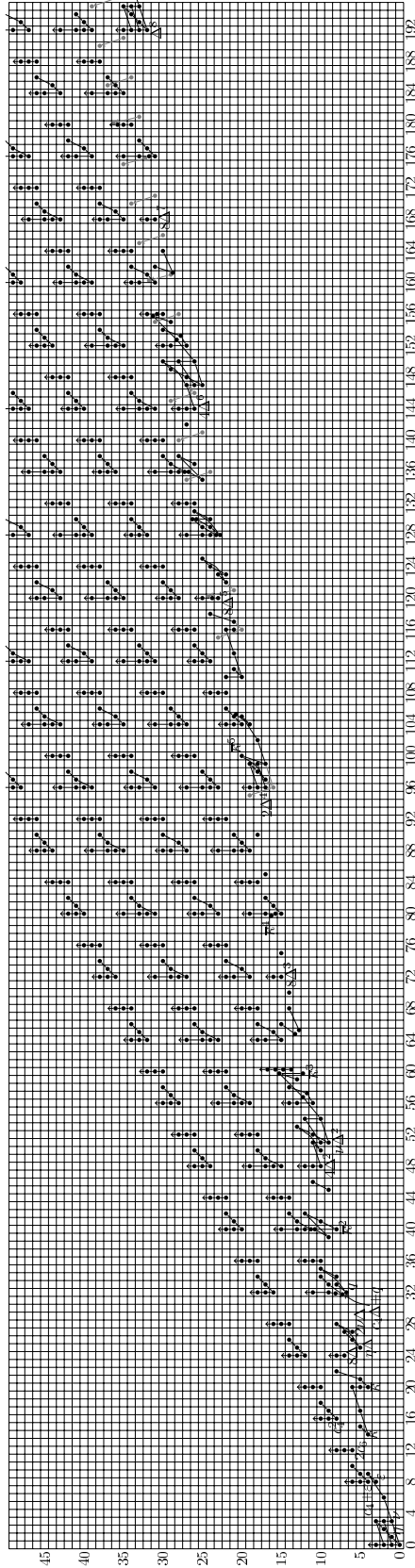
$$\pi_*(L_{K(2)}tmf) = \pi_*(TMF)_{(p, c_4)}^\wedge \quad p = 2, 3.$$

For  $n > 2$ , the localization  $L_{K(n)}tmf$  is trivial, and therefore satisfies  $\pi_*(L_{K(n)}tmf) = 0$ .

### 3. THE ADAMS SPECTRAL SEQUENCE

Given a fixed prime  $p$ , the Adams spectral sequence for  $tmf$  is a spectral sequence that converges to  $\pi_*(tmf)_p^\wedge$ , see [1]. Its  $E_2$  page is given by  $\text{Ext}_{A_p^{tmf}}(\mathbb{F}_p, \mathbb{F}_p)$ , where  $A_p^{tmf}$  is a finite dimensional  $\mathbb{F}_p$ -





Above: The  $E_\infty$  page of the Adams spectral sequence for  $tmf$  at the prime 2.  
Previous Page: The  $E_2$  page with classes named as in (4); The differentials.

algebra that is a  $tmf$ -analog of the Steenrod algebra:

$$A_p^{tmf} := \text{hom}_{tmf\text{-modules}}(H\mathbb{F}_p, H\mathbb{F}_p).$$

At the prime 2, the natural map  $A_2^{tmf} \rightarrow A \equiv A_2$  to the Steenrod algebra is injective. Its image is the subalgebra  $A(2) \subset A$  generated by  $Sq^1$ ,  $Sq^2$  and  $Sq^4$ . That algebra is of dimension 64 over  $\mathbb{F}_2$ , and defined by the relations

$$\begin{aligned} Sq^1 Sq^1 &= 0, & Sq^2 Sq^2 &= Sq^1 Sq^2 Sq^1, \\ Sq^1 Sq^4 + Sq^4 Sq^1 + Sq^2 Sq^1 Sq^2 &= 0, & \text{and} \\ Sq^4 Sq^4 + Sq^2 Sq^2 Sq^4 + Sq^2 Sq^4 Sq^2 &= 0. \end{aligned}$$

By the change of rings theorem, the Adams spectral sequence for  $tmf$  can then be identified with the classical Adams spectral sequence (see [5])

$$\begin{aligned} E_2 &= \text{Ext}_A(H^*(tmf), \mathbb{F}_2) \\ &= \text{Ext}_A(A//A(2), \mathbb{F}_2) \Rightarrow \pi_*(tmf)_2. \end{aligned}$$

The bigraded ring  $\text{Ext}_{A(2)}(\mathbb{F}_2, \mathbb{F}_2)$  is generated by the classes:

bidegree:	(0,1)	(1,1)	(3,1)	(8,4)	(8,3)	(12,3)	(14,4)
name:	$h_0$	$h_1$	$h_2$	$w_1$	$c_0$	$\alpha$	$d_0$
(4)	(15,3)	(17,4)	(20,4)	(25,5)	(32,7)	(48,8)	
	$\beta$	$e_0$	$g$	$\gamma$	$\delta$	$w_2$	

subject to the following complete set of relations:

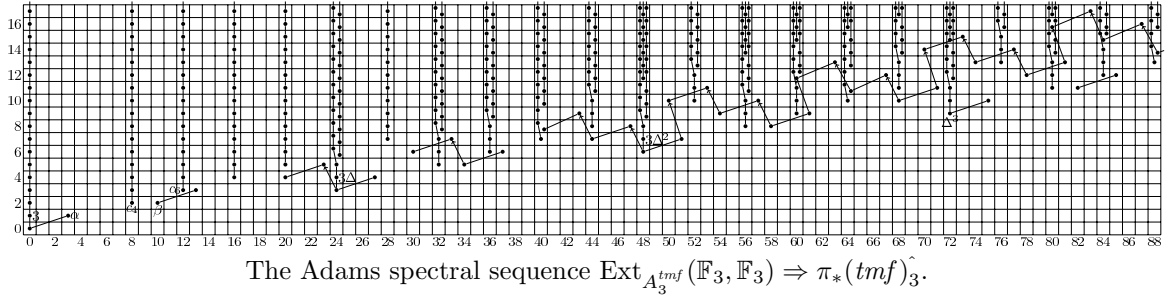
$$\begin{aligned} h_0 h_1 &= 0, h_1 h_2 = 0, h_0^2 h_2 = h_1^3, h_0 h_2^2 = 0, h_2^3 = 0, \\ h_0 c_0 &= 0, h_1^2 c_0 = 0, h_2 c_0 = 0, c_0^2 = 0, c_0 d_0 = 0, \\ c_0 e_0 &= 0, c_0 g = 0, c_0 \alpha = h_0^2 g, c_0 \beta = 0, h_0^2 d_0 = h_2^2 w_1, \\ h_1 d_0 &= h_0^2 \beta, h_2 d_0 = h_0 e_0, d_0^2 = w_1 g, d_0 g = e_0^2, \\ h_0 \alpha d_0 &= h_2 \beta w_1, \alpha^2 d_0 = \beta^2 w_1, \beta d_0 = \alpha e_0, h_1 e_0 = \\ h_2^2 \alpha, h_2 e_0 &= h_0 g, \beta e_0 = \alpha g, h_1 g = h_2^2 \beta, h_2 g = 0, \\ e_0 g &= \alpha \gamma, g^2 = \beta \gamma, h_1 \alpha = 0, h_1 \beta = 0, h_2 \alpha = h_0 \beta, \\ h_0 \beta^2 &= 0, h_2 \beta^2 = 0, \alpha^4 = h_0^4 w_2 + g^2 w_1, h_0 \gamma = \\ 0, h_1^2 \gamma &= h_2 \alpha^2, h_2 \gamma = 0, c_0 \gamma = h_1 \delta, d_0 \gamma = \alpha^2 \beta, \\ e_0 \gamma &= \alpha \beta^2, g \gamma = \beta^3, \gamma^2 = h_1^2 w_2 + \beta^2 g, h_0 \delta = h_0 \alpha g, \\ h_1^2 \delta &= h_0 d_0 g, h_2 \delta = 0, c_0 \delta = 0, d_0 \delta = 0, e_0 \delta = 0, \\ g \delta &= 0, \alpha \delta = 0, \beta \delta = 0, \gamma \delta = h_1 c_0 w_2, \delta^2 = 0. \end{aligned}$$

The charts on the previous page only go until half the periodicity. Therefore, we have also included in the picture of the  $E_\infty$  page the most important differential in dimensions  $\geq 96$ .

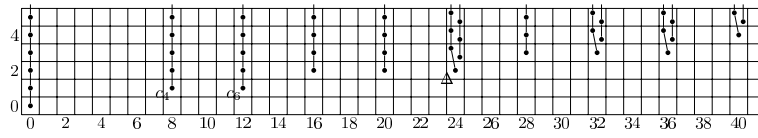
At the prime 3, the map from  $A_3^{tmf}$  to the Steenrod algebra not injective. Indeed, the algebra  $A_3^{tmf}$  is 24 dimensional, while its image in the Steenrod algebra is the 12 dimensional subalgebra generated by  $\beta$  and  $\mathcal{P}^1$ . Naming the generators by their images in  $A_3$ , the following relations define  $A_3^{tmf}$  (see [3]):

$$\begin{aligned} \beta^2 &= 0, & (\mathcal{P}^1)^3 &= 0, \\ \beta \mathcal{P}^1 \beta \mathcal{P}^1 + \mathcal{P}^1 \beta \mathcal{P}^1 \beta &= \beta (\mathcal{P}^1)^2 \beta. \end{aligned}$$

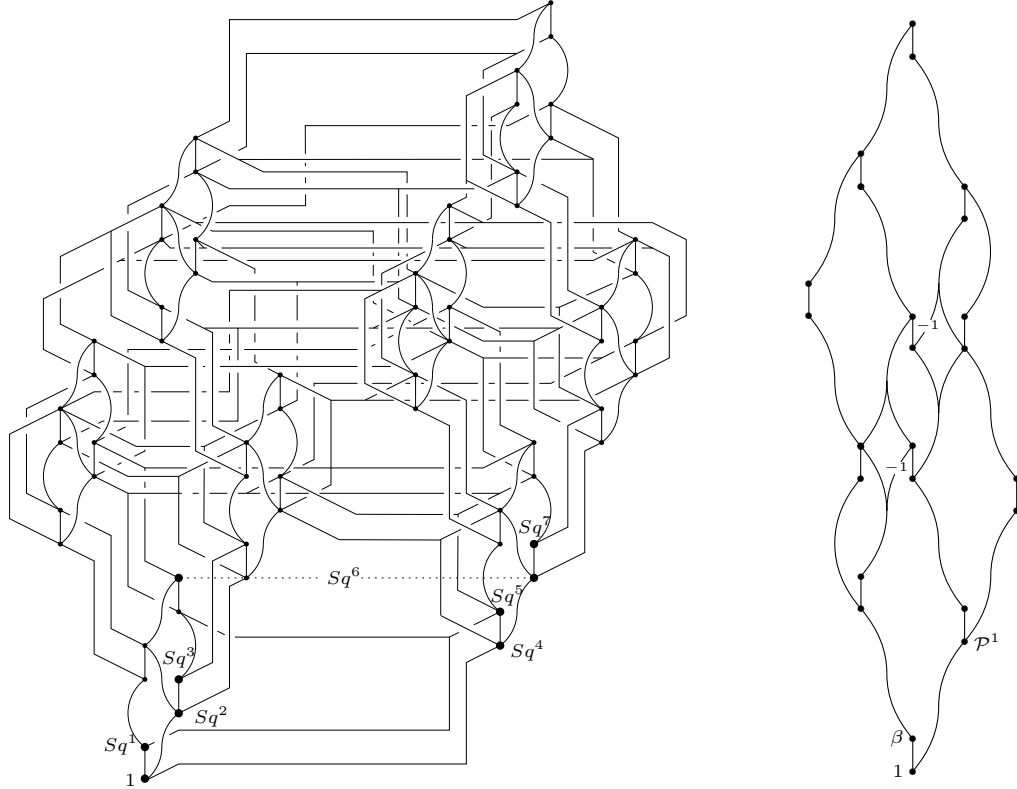
Note that the relation  $\beta(\mathcal{P}^1)^2 + \mathcal{P}^1\beta\mathcal{P}^1 + (\mathcal{P}^1)^2\beta = 0$  holds in  $A_3$ , but not in  $A_3^{tmf}$ .



At primes  $p > 3$ , the algebra  $A_p^{tmf}$  is an exterior algebra on generators in degrees 1, 9, and 13. The ring  $\text{Ext}_{A_p^{tmf}}(\mathbb{F}_p, \mathbb{F}_p)$  is a polynomial algebra on classes in bidegrees  $(0, 1)$ ,  $(8, 1)$ , and  $(12, 1)$  and the Adams spectral sequence for  $tmf$  collapses.



It is interesting to note that regardless of the prime, the algebra  $A_p^{tmf}$  has its top dimensional class in degree 23. Below, we picture the algebras  $A_p^{tmf}$  for the primes 2 and 3:



#### 4. THE ELLIPTIC SPECTRAL SEQUENCE

The spectrum  $TMF$  is the global sections of a sheaf of  $E_\infty$  ring spectra over the moduli space of elliptic curves  $\mathcal{M}_{ell}$ . As far as we know, there is no moduli space yielding  $tmf$  that way. To construct  $tmf$ , one first considers the sheaf  $\mathcal{O}^{\text{top}}$  of  $E_\infty$  ring spectra over the Deligne-Mumford compactification  $\overline{\mathcal{M}}_{ell}$ . The spectrum of global sections

$$Tmf := \Gamma(\overline{\mathcal{M}}_{ell}; \mathcal{O}^{\text{top}})$$

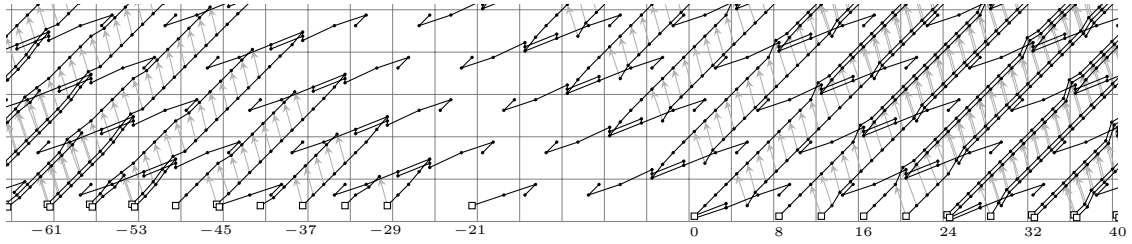
is not connective, and its connective cover is  $tmf$ . One can also recover  $\pi_*(Tmf)$  from  $\pi_*(tmf)$  by the following ‘‘Serre duality’’ short exact sequence:

$$0 \rightarrow \text{Ext}^1(\pi_{n-22}(tmf), \mathbb{Z}) \rightarrow \pi_{-n}(Tmf) \rightarrow \text{Hom}(\pi_{n-21}(tmf), \mathbb{Z}) \rightarrow 0, \quad n > 0.$$

The ‘‘elliptic spectral sequence’’ is the descent spectral sequence

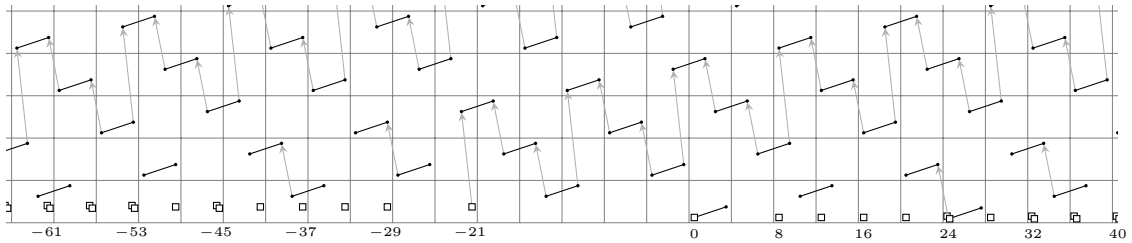
$$H^s(\overline{\mathcal{M}}_{ell}; \pi_t \mathcal{O}^{\text{top}}) = H^s\left(\overline{\mathcal{M}}_{ell}; \begin{cases} \omega^{t/2} & \text{if } t \text{ is even} \\ 0 & \text{if } t \text{ is odd} \end{cases}\right) \Rightarrow \pi_{t-s}(Tmf).$$

Its  $E_2$  page at  $p = 2$  is as follows (see [2, 4]):



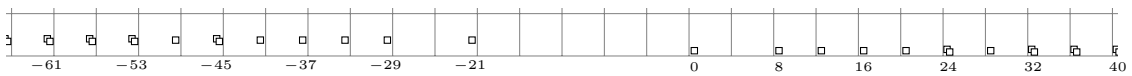
In the above chart, squares indicate copies of  $\mathbb{Z}_{(2)}$  and bullets indicate copies of  $\mathbb{Z}/2\mathbb{Z}$ . Two (three) bullets stacked vertically onto each other indicate a copy of  $\mathbb{Z}/4\mathbb{Z}$  ( $\mathbb{Z}/8\mathbb{Z}$ ). The  $d_3$  differentials are drawn in gray; the remaining differentials  $d_5, d_7, d_9, \dots, d_{25}$  are drawn on the charts on pages 9 – 12. The colors on those charts indicate the periodicity by which the various sub-patterns of differentials repeat.

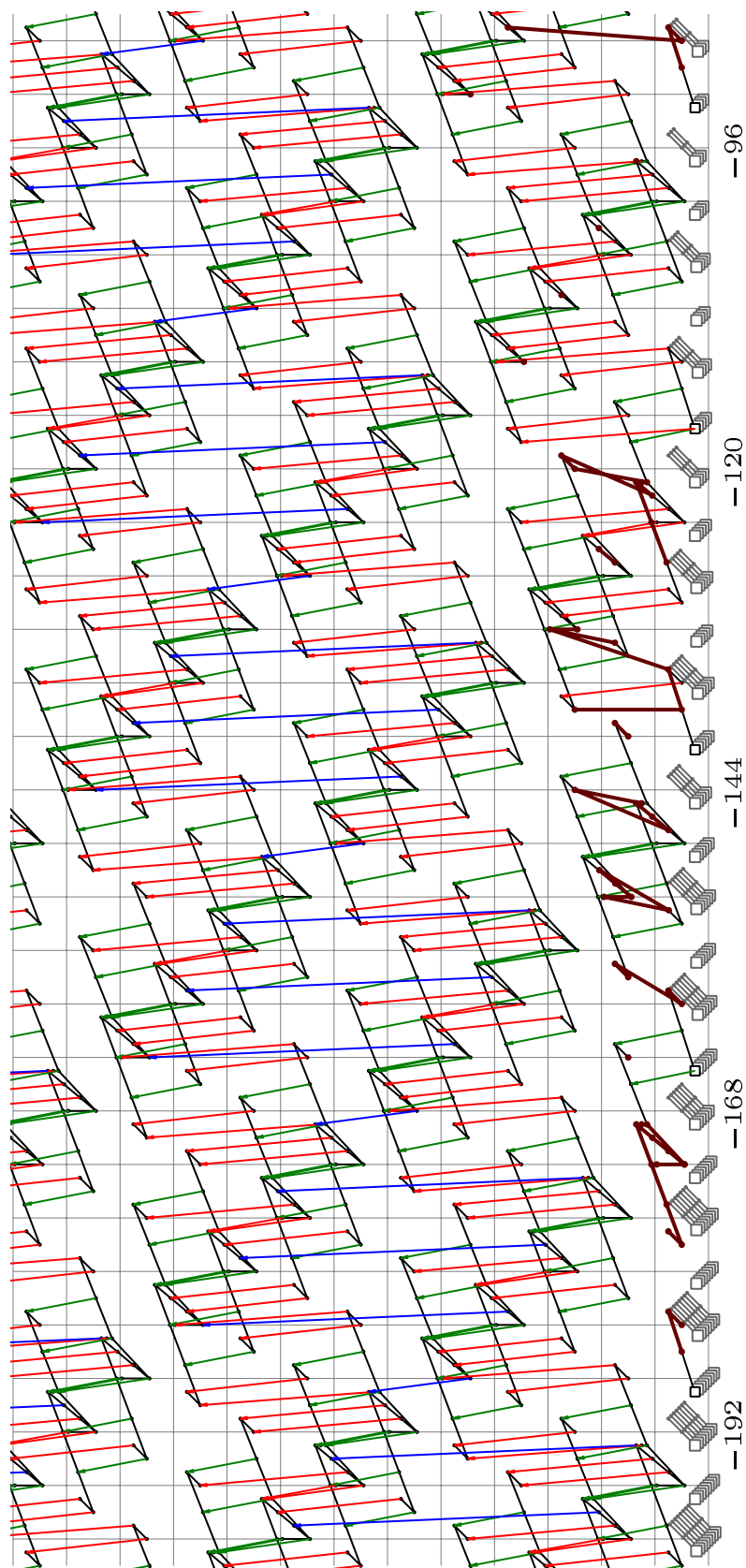
At  $p = 3$ , the elliptic spectral sequence looks as follows:



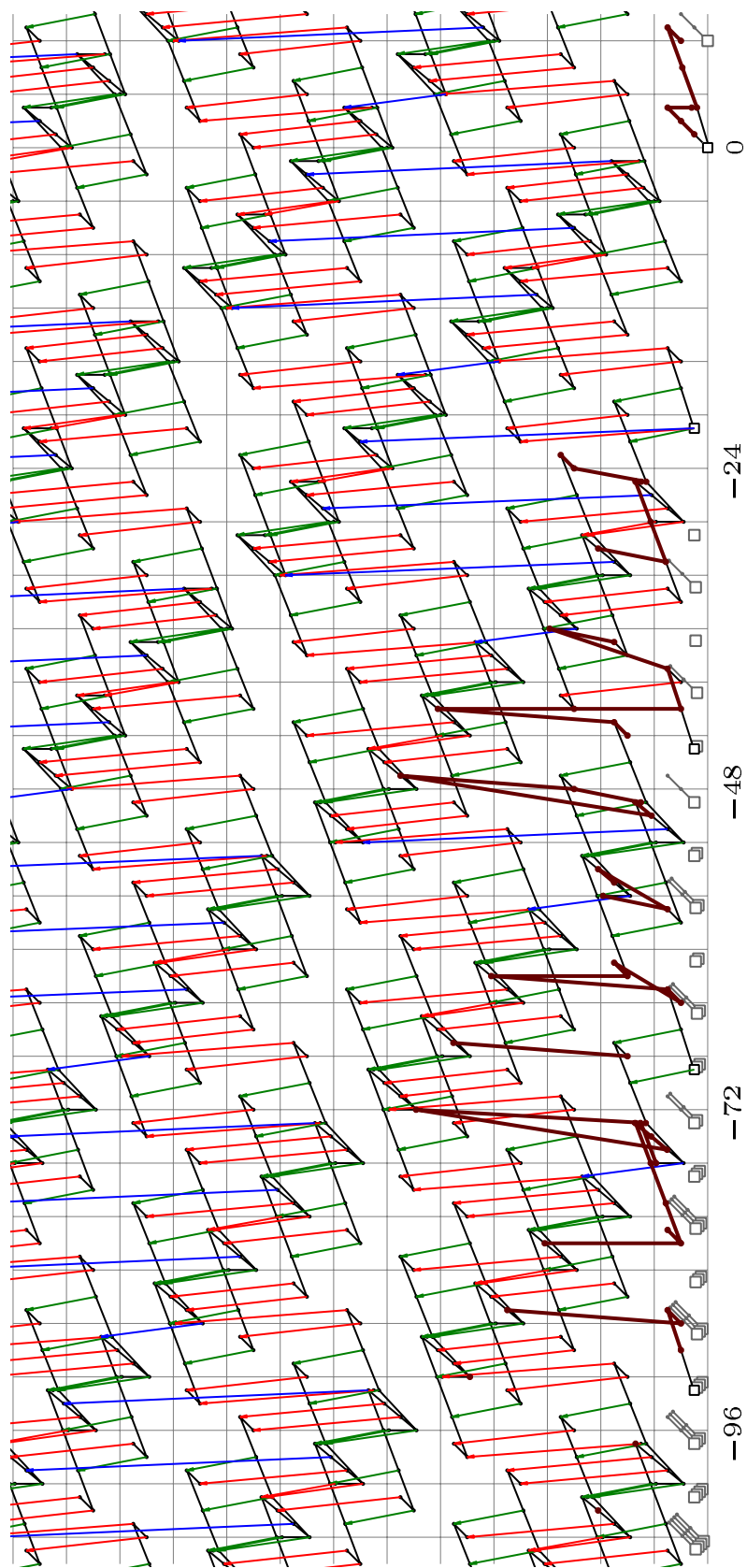
The squares indicate copies of  $\mathbb{Z}_{(3)}$ , and the bullets indicate copies of  $\mathbb{Z}/3\mathbb{Z}$ .

At  $p \geq 5$ , there is no  $p$ -torsion and the elliptic spectral sequence collapses:

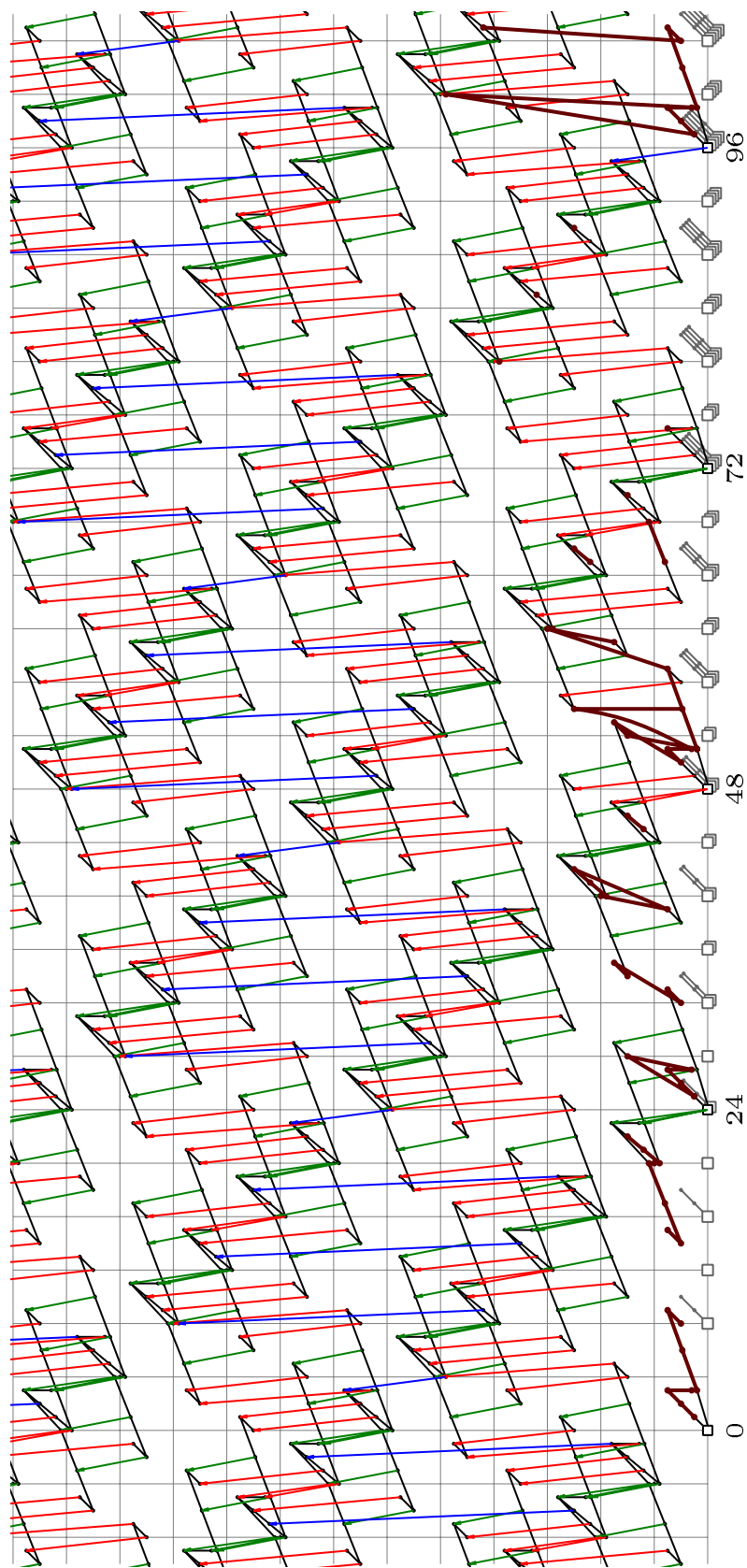




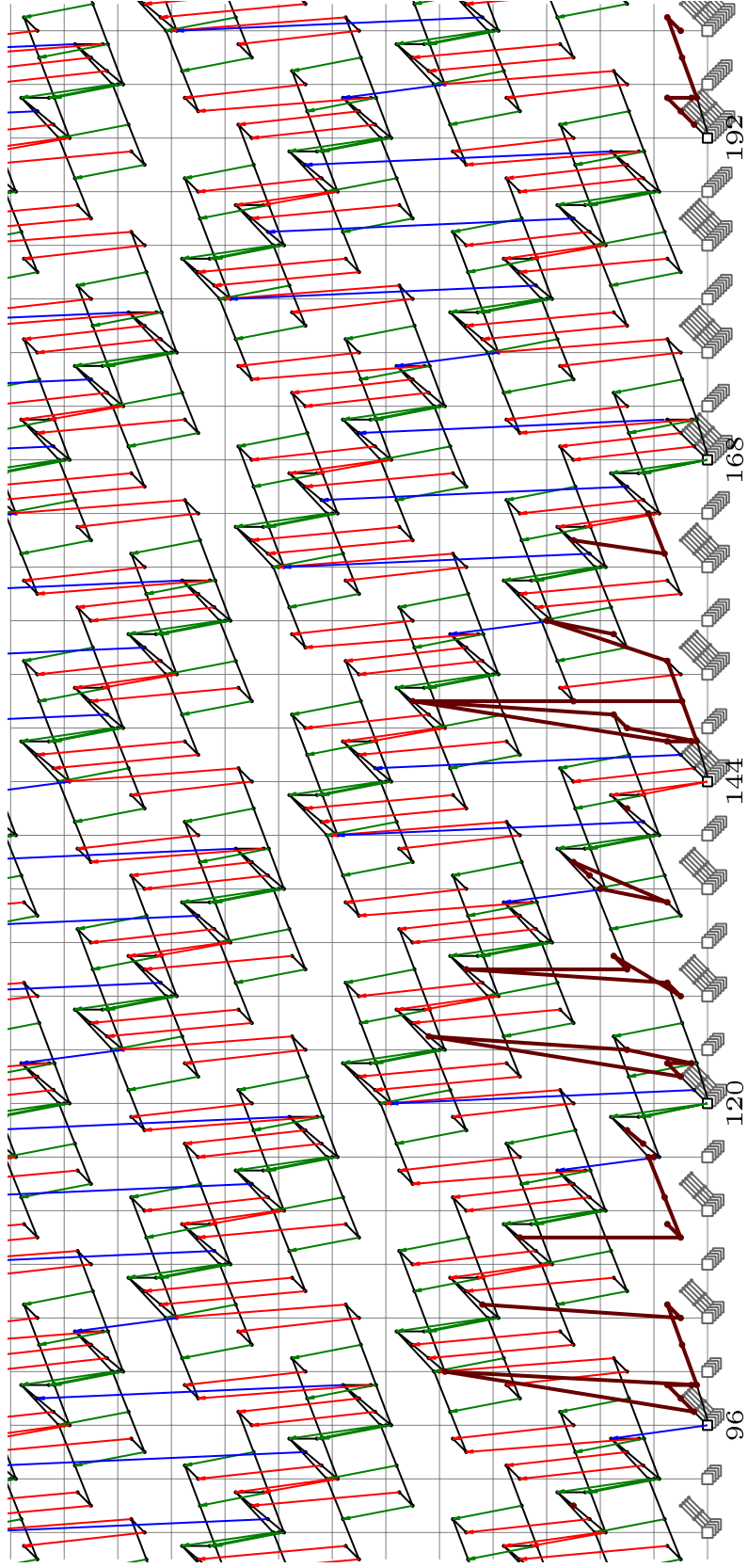
The elliptic spectral sequence  $H^q(\overline{\mathcal{M}}_{Ell}; \omega^{\otimes p}) \Rightarrow \pi_{2p-q}(Tmf)$  for  $2p - q$  between  $-202$  and  $-86$ .



The elliptic spectral sequence  $H^q(\overline{\mathcal{M}}_{Eu}; \omega^{\otimes p}) \Rightarrow \pi_{2p-q}(Tmf)$  for  $2p - q$  between  $-106$  and  $10$ .



The elliptic spectral sequence  $H^q(\overline{\mathcal{M}}_{Ell}; \omega^{\otimes p}) \Rightarrow \pi_{2p-q}(Tmf)$  for  $2p - q$  between  $-10$  and  $106$ .



The elliptic spectral sequence  $H^q(\overline{\mathcal{M}}_{Eu}; \omega^{\otimes p}) \Rightarrow \pi_{2p-q}(Tmf)$  for  $2p - q$  between 86 and 202.

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**Conjecture** (Mark Mahowald). *The image of the Hurewicz homomorphism  $\pi_*(\mathbb{S}) \rightarrow \pi_*(tmf)$  is given by the classes drawn in color in the pictures on page 3.*

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