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**DISTINGUISHED UNIPOTENT ELEMENTS  
AND MULTIPLICITY-FREE SUBGROUPS  
OF SIMPLE ALGEBRAIC GROUPS**

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## DISTINGUISHED UNIPOTENT ELEMENTS AND MULTIPLICITY-FREE SUBGROUPS OF SIMPLE ALGEBRAIC GROUPS

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*In memory of Robert Steinberg, whose elegant mathematics continues to inspire us.*

**For  $G$  a simple algebraic group over an algebraically closed field of characteristic  $0$ , we determine the irreducible representations  $\rho : G \rightarrow I(V)$ , where  $I(V)$  denotes one of the classical groups  $SL(V)$ ,  $Sp(V)$ ,  $SO(V)$ , such that  $\rho$  sends some distinguished unipotent element of  $G$  to a distinguished element of  $I(V)$ . We also settle a base case of the general problem of determining when the restriction of  $\rho$  to a simple subgroup of  $G$  is multiplicity-free.**

### 1. Introduction

Let  $G$  be a simple algebraic group of rank at least 2 defined over an algebraically closed field of characteristic 0 and let  $\rho : G \rightarrow I(V)$  be an irreducible representation, where  $I(V)$  denotes one of the classical groups  $SL(V)$ ,  $Sp(V)$ , or  $SO(V)$ . In this paper we consider two closely related problems. We determine those representations for which some distinguished unipotent element of  $G$  is sent to a distinguished element of  $I(V)$ . Also we settle a base case of the general problem of determining when the restriction of  $\rho$  to a simple subgroup of  $G$  is multiplicity-free.

A unipotent element of a simple algebraic group is said to be *distinguished* if it is not centralized by a nontrivial torus. Let  $u \in G$  be a unipotent element. If  $\rho(u)$  is distinguished in  $I(V)$  then  $u$  must be distinguished in  $G$ . The distinguished unipotent elements of  $I(V)$  can be decomposed into Jordan blocks of distinct sizes. Indeed they are a single Jordan block, the sum of blocks of distinct even sizes, or the sum of blocks of distinct odd sizes, according to whether  $I(V)$  is  $SL(V)$ ,  $Sp(V)$ , or  $SO(V)$ , respectively; see [Liebeck and Seitz 2012, Proposition 3.5].

Now  $u$  can be embedded in a subgroup  $A$  of  $G$  of type  $A_1$  by the Jacobson–Morozov theorem; given  $u$ , the subgroup  $A$  is unique up to conjugacy in  $G$ . If  $\rho(u)$  is distinguished, then  $\rho(A)$  acts on  $V$  with irreducible summands of the same dimensions as the Jordan blocks of  $u$ , and hence the restriction  $V \downarrow \rho(A)$  is

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multiplicity-free — that is, each irreducible summand appears with multiplicity 1. Indeed,  $V \downarrow \rho(A)$  is either irreducible, or the sum of irreducibles of distinct even dimensions or of distinct odd dimensions.

Our main result determines those situations where  $V \downarrow \rho(A)$  is multiplicity-free. In order to state it, we recall that a subgroup of  $G$  is said to be *G-irreducible* if it is contained in no proper parabolic subgroup of  $G$ . It follows directly from the definition that an  $A_1$  subgroup of  $G$  is *G-irreducible* if and only if its nonidentity unipotent elements are distinguished in  $G$ . If these unipotent elements are regular in  $G$ , we call the subgroup a *regular*  $A_1$  in  $G$ .

**Theorem 1.** *Let  $G$  be a simple algebraic group of rank at least 2 over an algebraically closed field  $K$  of characteristic zero, let  $A \cong A_1$  be a  $G$ -irreducible subgroup of  $G$ , let  $u \in A$  be a nonidentity unipotent element, and let  $V$  be an irreducible  $KG$ -module of highest weight  $\lambda$ . Then  $V \downarrow A$  is multiplicity-free if and only if  $\lambda$  and  $u$  are as in Tables 1 or 2, where  $\lambda$  is given up to graph automorphisms of  $G$ . Table 1 lists the examples where  $u$  is regular in  $G$ , and Table 2 lists those where  $u$  is nonregular.*

Theorem 1 is the base case of a general project in progress, which aims to determine all irreducible  $KG$ -modules  $V$  and  $G$ -irreducible subgroups  $X$  of  $G$  for which  $V \downarrow X$  is multiplicity-free.

The answer to the original question on distinguished unipotent elements is as follows.

**Corollary 2.** *Let  $G$  be as in the theorem, and let  $\rho : G \rightarrow I(V)$  be an irreducible representation with highest weight  $\lambda$ , where  $I(V)$  is  $\mathrm{SL}(V)$ ,  $\mathrm{Sp}(V)$ , or  $\mathrm{SO}(V)$ . Let  $u \in G$  be a nonidentity unipotent element, and suppose that  $\rho(u)$  is a distinguished element of  $I(V)$ .*

- (i) *If  $I(V) = \mathrm{SL}(V)$ , then  $G = A_n, B_n, C_n$ , or  $G_2$ , and  $\lambda = \omega_1$  (or  $\omega_n$  if  $G = A_n$ ); moreover,  $u$  is regular in  $G$ .*
- (ii) *If  $I(V) = \mathrm{Sp}(V)$  or  $I(V) = \mathrm{SO}(V)$ , then  $\lambda$  and  $u$  are as in one of the cases in Tables 1 or 2, for which  $V = V_G(\lambda)$  is a self-dual module (equivalently,  $\lambda = -w_0(\lambda)$ , where  $w_0$  is the longest element of the Weyl group of  $G$ ). Conversely, for each such case in the tables,  $\rho(u)$  is distinguished in  $I(V)$ .*

The layout of the paper is as follows. Section 2 consists of notation and preliminary lemmas. This is followed by Sections 3, 4, 5, where we prove Theorem 1 in the special case where  $A$  is a regular  $A_1$  subgroup of  $G$ . Then in Section 6 we consider the remaining cases where  $A$  is nonregular. There are far fewer examples in that situation. Finally, Section 7 contains the proof of the corollary.

|                  |  |
|------------------|--|
| $G$              | $\lambda$  |
| $A_n$            | $\omega_1, \omega_2, 2\omega_1, \omega_1 + \omega_n,$<br>$\omega_3 (5 \leq n \leq 7),$<br>$3\omega_1 (n \leq 5), 4\omega_1 (n \leq 3), 5\omega_1 (n \leq 3)$ |
| $A_3$            | 110  |
| $A_2$            | $c1, c0$   |
| $B_n$            | $\omega_1, \omega_2, 2\omega_1,$<br>$\omega_n (n \leq 8)$  |
| $B_3$            | 101, 002, 300  |
| $B_2$            | $b0, 0b (1 \leq b \leq 5), 11, 12, 21$   |
| $C_n$            | $\omega_1, \omega_2, 2\omega_1,$<br>$\omega_3 (3 \leq n \leq 5),$<br>$\omega_n (n = 4, 5)$   |
| $C_3$            | 300  |
| $C_2$            | $b0, 0b (1 \leq b \leq 5), 11, 12, 21$   |
| $D_n (n \geq 4)$ | $\omega_1, \omega_2 (n = 2k + 1), 2\omega_1 (n = 2k),$<br>$\omega_n (n \leq 9)$  |
| $E_6$            | $\omega_1, \omega_2$   |
| $E_7$            | $\omega_1, \omega_7$   |
| $E_8$            | $\omega_8$   |
| $F_4$            | $\omega_1, \omega_4$   |
| $G_2$            | 10, 01, 11, 20, 02, 30   |

**Table 1.**  $V \downarrow A$  multiplicity-free,  $u \in G$  regular in  $G$ .

| $G$                     | $\lambda$  | class of $u$ in $G$      |
|-------------------------|------------|--------------------------|
| $B_n, C_n, D_n$         | $\omega_1$ | any                      |
| $D_n (5 \leq n \leq 7)$ | $\omega_n$ | regular in $B_{n-2}B_1$  |
| $F_4$                   | $\omega_4$ | $F_4(a_1)$               |
| $E_6$                   | $\omega_1$ | $E_6(a_1)$               |
| $E_7$                   | $\omega_7$ | $E_7(a_1)$ or $E_7(a_2)$ |
| $E_8$                   | $\omega_8$ | $E_8(a_1)$               |

**Table 2.**  $V \downarrow A$  multiplicity-free,  $u \in G$  distinguished but not regular.

For many of the proofs we need to calculate dimensions of weight spaces in various  $G$ -modules. When the rank of  $G$  is small, such dimensions can be computed using Magma [Bosma et al. 1997], and we make occasional use of this facility.

### 2. Preliminary lemmas

Continue to let  $G$  be a simple algebraic group over an algebraically closed field  $K$  of characteristic zero. Let  $A \cong A_1$  be a  $G$ -irreducible subgroup of  $G$ , let  $u$  be a nonidentity unipotent element of  $A$ , and let  $T < A$  be a 1-dimensional torus such that the conjugates of  $u$  under  $T$  form the nonidentity elements of a maximal unipotent group of  $A$ .

We fix some notation that will be used throughout the paper. Let  $T \leq T_G$ , where  $T_G$  is a maximal torus of  $G$  and let  $\Pi_G = \{\alpha_1, \dots, \alpha_n\}$  denote a fundamental system of roots. We label the nodes of the Dynkin diagram of  $G$  with these roots as in [Bourbaki 1968, p. 250]. Write  $s_i$  for the reflection in  $\alpha_i$ , an element of the Weyl group  $W(G)$ . When  $G = D_n$  we assume that  $n \geq 4$  (and regard  $D_3$  as the group  $A_3$ ).

The torus  $T$  determines a labelling of the Dynkin diagram by 0s and 2s (see [Liebeck and Seitz 2012, Theorem 3.18 and Table 13.2]), which gives the weights of  $T$  on fundamental roots. When  $u$  is regular in  $G$  these labels are all 2s.

Denote by  $\omega_1, \dots, \omega_n$  the fundamental dominant weights of  $G$ . For a dominant weight  $\lambda = \sum c_i \omega_i$ , let  $V_G(\lambda)$  be the irreducible  $KG$ -module of highest weight  $\lambda$ . For  $A \cong A_1$  and a nonnegative integer  $r$ , we abbreviate the irreducible module  $V_A(r)$  by  $V_r$  or just  $r$ . More generally we frequently denote the module  $V_G(\lambda)$  by just the weight  $\lambda$ , or the string  $c_1 \cdots c_l$  (where  $l$  is the rank).

Let  $V = V_G(\lambda)$  and let  $\lambda$  afford weight  $r$  when restricted to  $T$ . Since all weights of  $V$  can be obtained by subtracting roots from the highest weight, the restriction of each weight to  $T$  has the form  $r - 2k$  for some nonnegative integer  $k$ . If  $V \downarrow A$  is multiplicity-free, then  $V \downarrow A = V_{r_1} + V_{r_2} + V_{r_3} + \dots$ , where  $r = r_1 > r_2 > r_3 > \dots$ . Then the  $T$ -weights on  $V$  are

$$(r_1, r_1 - 2, \dots, -r_1), \quad (r_2, r_2 - 2, \dots, -r_2), \quad (r_3, r_3 - 2, \dots, -r_3), \quad \dots$$

Note that weight  $r$ , respectively  $r - 2$ , arises as the restriction of  $\lambda - \alpha_i$  for those  $i$  having label 0, resp. 2, and with  $c_i > 0$ . Therefore, if  $c_i > 0$  then  $\alpha_i$  has label 2, and there can be at most two values of  $i$  with  $c_i > 0$ .

We often use the following short hand notation. We simply write  $\lambda - i^x j^y k^z \dots$  rather than  $\lambda - x\alpha_i - y\alpha_j - z\alpha_k - \dots$ .

**Lemma 2.1.** *If  $V \downarrow A$  is multiplicity-free, then  $\dim V \leq \binom{r}{2} + 1$  or  $\binom{r+1}{2} \binom{r+3}{2}$ , according as  $r$  is even or odd, respectively.*

*Proof.* If  $V \downarrow A$  is multiplicity-free, then  $V \downarrow A$  is a direct summand of the module  $r + (r - 2) + (r - 4) + \dots$ . The assertion follows by taking dimensions. □

**Lemma 2.2.** *Assume  $V \downarrow A$  is multiplicity-free.*

- (i) *If  $c \geq 1$  then the  $T$ -weight  $r - 2c$  occurs with multiplicity at most one more than the multiplicity of the  $T$ -weight  $r - 2(c - 1)$ .*

- (ii) For  $c \geq 1$ , the  $T$ -weight  $r - 2c$  occurs with multiplicity at most  $c + 1$ .
- (iii) If the  $T$ -weight  $r - 2$  occurs with multiplicity 1, e.g., if all labels are 2 and  $\lambda = b\omega_i$ , and if  $c \geq 1$ , then the  $T$ -weight  $r - 2c$  occurs with multiplicity at most  $c$ .

*Proof.* Suppose  $i$  is maximal with  $r - 2c$  in the weight string  $r_i, \dots, -r_i$ . Then  $T$ -weight  $r - 2c$  occurs with the same multiplicity as does  $T$ -weight  $r_i$ . And weight  $r_i$  occurs with multiplicity at most one more than weight  $r_{i-1}$  as otherwise there would be two direct summands of highest weight  $r_i$ . Now (i) follows as does (ii). Part (iii) also follows, since the assumption rules out a summand of highest weight  $r - 2$ .  $\square$

**Lemma 2.3.** *Assume  $V \downarrow A$  is multiplicity-free and that  $\lambda = b\omega_i$  with  $b > 1$ .*

- (i) *Then  $\alpha_i$  is an end-node of the Dynkin diagram.*
- (ii) *If  $G$  has rank at least 3, then the node adjacent to  $\alpha_i$  has label 2.*

*Proof.* (i) Suppose that  $\alpha_j \neq \alpha_k$  both adjoin  $\alpha_i$  in the Dynkin diagram. If both these roots have label 0, then  $T$ -weight  $r - 2$  is afforded by each of  $\lambda - i, \lambda - ij, \lambda - ik, \lambda - ijk$ , contradicting Lemma 2.2(ii). Next assume  $\alpha_j$  has label 2 and  $\alpha_k$  has label 0. Here we consider  $r - 4$  which is afforded by  $\lambda - i^2, \lambda - i^2k, \lambda - i^2k^2, \lambda - ij$ , again contradicting Lemma 2.2(ii). If both labels are 2, then  $r - 4$  is afforded by  $\lambda - i^2, \lambda - ij, \lambda - ik$ . But here  $r - 2$  only occurs from  $\lambda - \alpha_i$ , so this contradicts Lemma 2.2(iii).

(ii) Assume  $G$  has rank at least 3. By (i)  $\alpha_i$  is an end-node. Let  $\alpha_j$  be the adjoining node. We must show  $\alpha_j$  has label 2. Suppose the label is 0 and let  $\alpha_k$  be another node adjoining  $\alpha_j$ . If  $\alpha_k$  has label 0, then  $r - 2$  is afforded by each of  $\lambda - i, \lambda - ij, \lambda - ijk$ , a contradiction. Therefore  $\alpha_k$  has label 2. But then  $r - 4$  is afforded by each of  $\lambda - i^2, \lambda - i^2j, \lambda - i^2j^2, \lambda - ijk$ , a contradiction.  $\square$

The next lemma will be frequently used, often implicitly, in what follows.

**Lemma 2.4.** *If  $c \geq d \geq 0$  are integers, then the tensor product  $c \otimes d$  of  $A_1$ -modules decomposes as  $c \otimes d = (c + d) \oplus (c + d - 2) \oplus \dots \oplus (c - d)$ .*

*Proof.* This follows from a consideration of weights in the tensor product.  $\square$

**Lemma 2.5.** *Suppose that  $\lambda = \omega_i + \omega_j$  with  $j > i$  and that the subdiagram with base  $\{\alpha_i, \dots, \alpha_j\}$  is of type  $A$ , or is of rank at most 3, or is of type  $F_4$ . Then the  $T_G$ -weight  $\lambda - i(i + 1) \dots j$  occurs with multiplicity  $j - i + 1$ .*

*Proof.* Since the weight space lies entirely within the corresponding irreducible for the Levi factor with base  $\{\alpha_i, \dots, \alpha_j\}$ , we may assume that  $G$  is equal to this Levi factor; that is,  $i = 1$  and  $j = n$ . Then the hypothesis of the lemma implies that  $G$  is  $A_n, B_2, B_3, C_2, C_3, G_2$  or  $F_4$ . For all but the first case the conclusion follows by computation using Magma.

Now suppose  $G = A_n$ . Then  $\omega_1 \otimes \omega_n = \lambda \oplus 0$ . In the tensor product we see precisely  $n + 1$  times the weight  $\lambda - \alpha_1 - \dots - \alpha_n$  by taking weights of the form

$(\omega_1 - 1 \cdots j) \otimes (\omega_n - (j + 1) \cdots n)$  for  $1 \leq j \leq n - 1$ , together with the weights  $\omega_1 \otimes (\omega_n - 1 \cdots n)$  and  $(\omega_1 - 1 \cdots n) \otimes \omega_n$ . Each occurs with multiplicity 1, so the conclusion follows, as  $\lambda - \alpha_1 - \cdots - \alpha_n = 0$ .  $\square$

**Lemma 2.6.** *Assume that there exist  $i < j$  with  $c_i \neq 0 \neq c_j$  and that  $V \downarrow A$  is multiplicity-free.*

- (i) *Then  $c_k = 0$  for  $k \neq i, j$ .*
- (ii) *Nodes adjoining  $\alpha_i$  and  $\alpha_j$  have label 2.*
- (iii) *Either  $c_i = 1$  or  $c_j = 1$ . Moreover,  $c_i = c_j = 1$  unless  $\alpha_i$  and  $\alpha_j$  are adjacent.*
- (iv) *Either  $\alpha_i$  or  $\alpha_j$  is an end-node.*
- (v) *If either  $c_i > 1$  or  $c_j > 1$ , then  $G$  has rank 2.*
- (vi) *If  $\alpha_i, \alpha_j$  are nonadjacent and if all nodes have label 2, then both  $\alpha_i$  and  $\alpha_j$  are end-nodes.*

*Proof.* (i) This is immediate, as otherwise  $\lambda - i, \lambda - j, \lambda - k$  all afford  $T$ -weight  $r - 2$ , contradicting Lemma 2.2(ii).

(ii) Suppose (ii) is false. By symmetry we can assume  $\alpha_k$  adjoins  $\alpha_i$  and has label 0. Then  $\lambda - i, \lambda - j, \lambda - ik$  all afford  $r - 2$ , a contradiction.

(iii) By (ii), nodes adjacent to  $\alpha_i$  and  $\alpha_j$  have label 2. Consider  $T$ -weight  $r - 4$  which has multiplicity at most 3 by Lemma 2.2. Suppose  $c_k > 1$  for  $k = i$  or  $j$ . Then  $\lambda - k^2$  and  $\lambda - ij$  both afford weight  $r - 4$ . Assume  $\alpha_i$  and  $\alpha_j$  are not adjacent. We give the argument when the diagram has no triality node. The other cases require only a slight change of notation. With this assumption we also get  $r - 4$  from  $\lambda - i(i + 1)$  and  $\lambda - (j - 1)j$ , a contradiction. So  $c_k > 1$  implies that  $\alpha_i, \alpha_j$  are adjacent. If both  $c_i > 1$  and  $c_j > 1$ , then we again have a contradiction, since  $r - 4$  is afforded by  $\lambda - i^2, \lambda - j^2$ , and  $\lambda - ij$ , and the latter appears with multiplicity 2 by [Testerman 1988, §1.35].

(iv) Suppose neither  $\alpha_i$  nor  $\alpha_j$  is an end-node. We give details assuming there is no triality node. The remaining cases just require a slight change of notation. Consider weight  $r - 4$ . This is afforded by  $\lambda - ij, \lambda - (i - 1)i$ , and  $\lambda - j(j + 1)$ . If  $c_i > 1$  then  $\lambda - i^2$  also affords  $r - 4$ . This forces  $c_i = 1$ , and similarly  $c_j = 1$ . If  $j = i + 1$ , then  $\lambda - ij$  has multiplicity 2 by Lemma 2.5, again a contradiction. And if  $j > i + 1$ , then  $\lambda - i(i + 1)$  and  $\lambda - (j - 1)j$  afford weight  $r - 4$ . In either case  $r - 4$  appears with multiplicity at least 4, contradicting Lemma 2.2.

(v) Suppose  $c_k > 1$  for  $k = i$  or  $j$ . By (iv) we can assume  $\alpha_i$  is an end-node. If  $G$  has rank at least 3, let  $\alpha_l$  adjoin  $\alpha_j$ , where  $l \neq i$ . Then (ii) implies that  $r - 4$  is afforded by  $\lambda - ij, \lambda - k^2, \lambda - jl$ . If  $\alpha_j$  is adjacent to  $\alpha_i$  then the first weight occurs with multiplicity 2 by [loc. cit.]. Otherwise there is another node  $\alpha_m$  adjacent to  $\alpha_i$  and  $\lambda - im$  affords  $r - 4$ . In either case we contradict Lemma 2.2.



(vi) As above we treat the case where the Dynkin diagram has no triality node. By (iv) and symmetry we can assume  $\alpha_i$  is an end-node. Suppose  $j < n$ . Then  $r - 4$  is afforded by each of  $\lambda - i(i + 1)$ ,  $\lambda - (j - 1)j$ ,  $\lambda - j(j + 1)$ ,  $\lambda - ij$ , contradicting Lemma 2.2. Therefore,  $j = n$ .  $\square$

**Lemma 2.7.** *Suppose  $\lambda = \omega_i$  and the Dynkin diagram has a string  $\alpha_{i-3}, \dots, \alpha_{i+3}$  for which each node has  $T$ -label 2. Then  $r - 8$  occurs with multiplicity at least 5. In particular  $V \downarrow A$  is not multiplicity-free.*

*Proof.* The  $T$ -weight  $r - 8$  arises from each of the following weights:

$$\begin{aligned} &\lambda - i(i + 1)(i + 2)(i + 3), \quad \lambda - (i - 1)i(i + 1)(i + 2), \quad \lambda - (i - 2)(i - 1)i(i + 1), \\ &\lambda - (i - 3)(i - 2)(i - 1)i, \quad \lambda - (i - 1)i^2(i + 1); \end{aligned}$$

the last is a weight as it is equal to  $(\lambda - (i - 1)i(i + 1))^{i^2}$ . This proves the first assertion and the second assertion follows from Lemma 2.2(iii).  $\square$

The final lemma is an inductive tool. Let  $L$  be a Levi subgroup of  $G$  in our fixed system of roots, and let  $\mu$  be the corresponding highest weight of  $L'$ , namely,  $\mu = \sum c_j \omega_j$ , where the sum runs just over those fundamental weights corresponding to simple roots in the subsystem determined by  $L$ .

**Lemma 2.8.** *Fix  $c \geq 1$  and let  $s$  denote the sum of the dimensions of all weight spaces of  $V_{L'}(\mu)$  for all weights of form  $\mu - \sum d_j \alpha_j$  such that  $\sum d_j = c$  and each  $\alpha_j$  such that  $d_j \neq 0$  has label 2.*

- (i) *If  $s > c + 1$ , then  $V \downarrow A$  is not multiplicity-free.*
- (ii) *If  $T$ -weight  $r - 2$  occurs with multiplicity 1 (e.g., if all labels are 2 and  $\lambda = b\omega_i$ ) and  $s > c$ , then  $V \downarrow A$  is not multiplicity-free.*

*Proof.* This is immediate from Lemma 2.2, since  $T \leq L$  and the weight  $\mu - \sum d_j \alpha_j$  corresponds to a weight  $\lambda - \sum d_j \alpha_j$  which affords  $T$ -weight  $r - 2c$ .  $\square$

### 3. The case where $A$ is regular and $\lambda \neq c\omega_i$

As in the hypothesis of Theorem 1, let  $G$  be a simple algebraic group of rank at least 2, let  $A \cong A_1$  be a  $G$ -irreducible subgroup, and let  $V = V_G(\lambda)$ , where  $\lambda = \sum c_i \lambda_i$ . This section and the next two concern the case of Theorem 1 where  $A$  is a regular  $A_1$  of  $G$  (recall that this means that unipotent elements of  $A$  are regular in  $G$ ). In this case all the  $T$ -labels of the Dynkin diagram of  $G$  are equal to 2. In this section we handle situations where  $c_i > 0$  for at least two values of  $i$ .

If  $V \downarrow A$  is multiplicity-free,  $\lambda \neq c\omega_i$ , and  $G$  has rank at least 3, then Lemma 2.6 implies that  $\lambda = \omega_i + \omega_j$ , where either  $\alpha_i, \alpha_j$  are both end-nodes, or one is an end-node and the other is adjacent to it.

**Proposition 3.1.** *Assume  $V \downarrow A$  is multiplicity-free. Then there exist at least two values of  $i$  for which  $c_i > 0$  if and only if  $G$  and  $\lambda$  are in the following table, up to graph automorphisms.*

| $G$        | $\lambda$      |
|------------|----------------|
| $A_2$      | $c1$           |
| $A_3$      | $110$          |
| $B_2, C_2$ | $11, 12, 21$   |
| $G_2$      | $11$           |
| $B_3$      | $101$          |
| $A_n$      | $10 \cdots 01$ |

The proof will be in a series of lemmas.

**Lemma 3.2.** *Suppose  $G = A_2$  and  $\lambda = c1$  for  $c \geq 1$ . Then  $V \downarrow A$  is multiplicity-free.*

*Proof.* Assume  $G = A_2$ . The weight  $c1 - \alpha_1 - \alpha_2 = (c-1)0$  occurs with multiplicity 2 in the module  $c1$  and multiplicity 3 in  $c0 \otimes 01$ . A dimension comparison shows that  $c0 \otimes 01 = c1 + (c-1)0$ .

Now  $c0 = S^c(10)$ , so weight considerations show that for  $c$  even,  $S^c(10) \downarrow A = 2c \oplus (2c-4) \oplus (2c-8) \oplus \cdots \oplus 0$  and  $S^{c-1}(10) = (2c-2) \oplus (2c-6) \oplus \cdots \oplus 2$ . Therefore, Lemma 2.4 implies that

$$(c0 \otimes 01) \downarrow A = ((2c+2) + 2c + (2c-2)) + ((2c-2) + (2c-4) + (2c-6)) + \cdots + (6+4+2) + 2,$$

and it follows from the first paragraph that  $V \downarrow A$  is multiplicity free. A similar argument applies for  $c$  odd. □

**Lemma 3.3.** *(i) If  $G = C_2$  and  $V = V_G(\lambda)$  with  $\lambda = c1$  or  $1c$  for  $c \geq 1$ , then  $V \downarrow A$  is multiplicity-free if and only if  $\lambda = 11, 21$ , or  $12$ .*

*(ii) If  $G = G_2$  and  $V = V_G(\lambda)$  with  $\lambda = c1$  or  $1c$  for  $c \geq 1$ , then  $V \downarrow A$  is multiplicity-free if and only if  $\lambda = 11$ .*

*Proof.* (i) Let  $G = C_2$ . We first settle the cases which are multiplicity-free. A Magma computation shows that  $10 \otimes 01 = 11 + 10$ , and hence  $11 \downarrow A = 7 + 5 + 1$ , which is multiplicity-free. Next consider  $\lambda = 12$ . First note that  $10 \otimes 02 = 12 + 11$  and  $02 = S^2(01) - 00$ . It follows that

$$\begin{aligned} 12 \downarrow A &= 3 \otimes (S^2(4) - 0) - (7 + 5 + 1) = 3 \otimes (8 + 4) - (7 + 5 + 1) \\ &= (11 + 9 + 7 + 5) + (7 + 5 + 3 + 1) - (7 + 5 + 1) = 11 + 9 + 7 + 5 + 3 \end{aligned}$$

and  $V \downarrow A$  is multiplicity-free. Finally, consider  $\lambda = 21$ . In this case  $20 \otimes 01 = 21 + 20 + 01$ . Now  $20 \downarrow A = S^2(3) = 6 + 2$ , so that  $(20 \otimes 01) \downarrow A = (6 + 2) \otimes 4 =$

$(10 + 8 + 6 + 4 + 2) + (6 + 4 + 2)$ . It follows that  $21 \downarrow A = 10 + 8 + 6 + 4 + 2$  and  $V \downarrow A$  is multiplicity-free.

If  $\lambda = 1b$  for  $b \geq 3$ , then  $r = 3 + 4b$  and  $\dim V = \frac{1}{3}(b + 1)(b + 3)(2b + 4)$ . Similarly, if  $\lambda = b1$  for  $b \geq 3$ , then  $r = 3b + 4$  and  $\dim V = \frac{1}{3}(b + 1)(b + 3)(b + 5)$ . Now Lemma 2.1 shows that  $V \downarrow A$  cannot be multiplicity-free.

(ii) Let  $G = G_2$ . First consider  $\lambda = 11$ . A Magma computation yields  $10 \otimes 01 = 11 + 20 + 10$ . Also,  $10 \downarrow A = 6$  and  $01 \downarrow A = 10 + 2$ . Using the fact that  $S^2(10) = 20 + 00$ , we find that  $V \downarrow A = 16 + 14 + 10 + 8 + 6 + 4$ , which is multiplicity-free.

If  $\lambda = c1$  with  $c > 1$ , then  $\dim V = \frac{1}{60}(c + 1)(c + 3)(c + 5)(c + 7)(2c + 8)$  and  $r = 6c + 10$ . Similarly, if  $\lambda = 1c$  with  $c > 1$ , then  $r = 10c + 6$  and  $\dim V = \frac{1}{60}(c + 1)(c + 3)(2c + 4)(3c + 5)(3c + 7)$ . In either case, Lemma 2.1 shows that  $V \downarrow A$  is not multiplicity-free.  $\square$

**Lemma 3.4.** *Suppose  $G$  has rank at least 3 and  $\lambda = \omega_i + \omega_j$ , where  $\alpha_i, \alpha_j$  are adjacent and one of them is an end-node. Then  $V \downarrow A$  is multiplicity-free if and only if  $G = A_3$ .*

*Proof.* First assume that  $G = A_n, B_n, C_n$  or  $D_n$  and  $\lambda = \omega_1 + \omega_2$ . If  $n \geq 4$ , then the weights  $\lambda - 123 = (\lambda - 12)^{s_3}$ ,  $\lambda - 234$ ,  $\lambda - 1^22 = (\lambda - 2)^{s_1}$ ,  $\lambda - 12^2 = (\lambda - 1)^{s_2}$  occur with multiplicities 2, 1, 1, 1 and all afford  $T$  weight  $r - 6$ . Hence this weight occurs with multiplicity at least 5, and Lemma 2.2 shows that  $V \downarrow A$  is not multiplicity-free. If  $G = B_3$  or  $C_3$ , then of the above weights only  $\lambda - 234$  does not occur; however the weight  $\lambda - 23^2 = (\lambda - 2)^{s_3}$  or  $\lambda - 2^23 = (\lambda - 23)^{s_2}$  occurs, respectively, affording  $T$  weight  $r - 6$ , which again gives the conclusion by Lemma 2.2. And if  $G = A_3$ , then  $100 \otimes 010 = 110 + 001$ , and restricting to  $A$  we have  $3 \otimes (4 + 0) = (7 + 5 + 3 + 1) + 3$ . Therefore,  $110 \downarrow A = 7 + 5 + 3 + 1$  which is multiplicity-free, as in the conclusion.

Next consider  $G = B_n$  or  $C_n$  with  $\lambda = \omega_{n-1} + \omega_n$ . For  $B_n$ , the weight  $r - 6$  is afforded by  $\lambda - (n - 2)(n - 1)n$ ,  $\lambda - (n - 1)n^2 = (\lambda - (n - 1)n)^{s_n}$ , and  $(\lambda - (n - 1)^2n) = (\lambda - n)^{s_{n-1}}$ . Moreover the first two weights occur with multiplicity 2, and so  $r - 6$  appears with multiplicity 5, so that  $V \downarrow A$  is not multiplicity-free. A similar argument applies for  $C_n$ .

For  $G = F_4$ , the conclusion follows by using Lemma 2.8, applied to a Levi subgroup  $B_3$  or  $C_3$ . Likewise, for  $D_n$  ( $n \geq 5$ ) with  $\lambda = \omega_n + \omega_{n-2}$  or  $\omega_{n-1} + \omega_{n-2}$ , or for  $G = E_n$ , we use a Levi subgroup  $A_r$  with  $r \geq 4$ . Finally, for  $D_4$  the result follows from the first paragraph using a triality automorphism.  $\square$

**Lemma 3.5.** *Assume  $n \geq 3$  and  $G = A_n, B_n, C_n$ , or  $D_n$  and  $\lambda = \omega_i + \omega_j$ , where  $\alpha_i, \alpha_j$  are end-nodes. Then  $V \downarrow A$  is multiplicity-free if and only if  $\lambda = \omega_1 + \omega_n$  and  $G = A_n$  or  $B_3$ .*

*Proof.* First consider  $G = A_n, B_n, C_n$ . By Lemma 2.6(vi) we have  $\lambda = \omega_1 + \omega_n$ . If  $G = B_n$  with  $n \geq 4$ , then  $\lambda - 123$ ,  $\lambda - (n - 2)(n - 1)n$ ,  $\lambda - 1(n - 1)n$ ,  $\lambda - 12n$ ,

and  $\lambda - (n - 1)n^2 = (\lambda - (n - 1)n)^{s_n}$  all restrict to  $r - 6$  on  $T$ , so  $V \downarrow A$  is not multiplicity-free by Lemma 2.2. We argue similarly for  $G = C_n$  with  $n \geq 4$ , replacing the last weight by  $\lambda - (n - 1)^2n = (\lambda - (n - 1)n)^{s_{n-1}}$ . And if  $G = A_n$ , then  $V \downarrow A$  is just  $(n \otimes n) - 0$  and hence is multiplicity-free.

Now suppose  $n = 3$  and  $\lambda = 101$ . If  $G = B_3$ , then Magma gives  $100 \otimes 001 = 101 + 001$ . Restricting to  $A$ , the left side is  $6 \otimes (6 + 0)$  and we find that  $101 \downarrow A = 12 + 10 + 8 + 6 + 4 + 2$ , which is multiplicity-free. For  $G = C_3$ , Magma yields  $100 \otimes 001 = 101 + 010$ ,  $\wedge^2(100) = 010 + 000$ , and  $\wedge^3(100) = 001 + 100$ . Restricting to  $A$  and considering weights we have  $101 \downarrow A = 14 + 12 + 10 + 8 + 6^2 + 4 + 2$ , which is not multiplicity-free.

Finally, consider  $G = D_n$  with  $n \geq 4$ . First consider  $\lambda = \omega_1 + \omega_{n-1}$ . The  $T$ -weight  $r - 2(n - 1)$  is afforded by  $\lambda - 1 \cdots (n - 1)$ ,  $\lambda - 2 \cdots n$ ,  $\lambda - 1 \cdots (n - 2)n$ , which, using Lemma 2.5, occur with multiplicities  $n - 1$ ,  $1$ ,  $1$  respectively, giving the conclusion by Lemma 2.2. A similar argument applies if  $\lambda = \omega_1 + \omega_n$ . Finally assume  $\lambda = \omega_{n-1} + \omega_n$ . Here,  $T$ -weight  $r - 6$  is afforded by  $\lambda - (n - 2)(n - 1)n$ ,  $\lambda - (n - 3)(n - 2)(n - 1)$ ,  $\lambda - (n - 3)(n - 2)n$ , with multiplicities  $3$ ,  $1$ ,  $1$ , so again Lemma 2.2 applies.  $\square$

**Lemma 3.6.** *Assume  $G = E_6, E_7, E_8$ , or  $F_4$  and  $\lambda = \omega_i + \omega_j$ , where  $\alpha_i, \alpha_j$  are end-nodes. Then  $V \downarrow A$  is not multiplicity-free.*

*Proof.* First assume  $G = F_4$ . Then  $\lambda = 1001$  and we consider  $T$ -weight  $r - 8$  which is afforded by weights  $\lambda - 1234$ ,  $\lambda - 123^2 = (\lambda - 12)^{s_3}$ ,  $\lambda - 23^24 = (\lambda - 234)^{s_3}$ , occurring with multiplicities  $4$ ,  $1$ ,  $1$ , respectively, giving the result by Lemma 2.2.

So now assume  $G = E_n$ . If  $\lambda = \omega_1 + \omega_n$  then the weights  $\lambda - 134 \cdots n$ ,  $\lambda - 1234 \cdots (n - 1)$ ,  $\lambda - 23 \cdots n$  all afford  $T$ -weight  $r - 2(n - 1)$  and, by Lemma 2.5, occur with multiplicities  $n - 1$ ,  $1$ ,  $1$  respectively, and now we apply Lemma 2.2. If  $\lambda = \omega_1 + \omega_2$ , we argue similarly using weights  $\lambda - 1234$ ,  $\lambda - 1345$ ,  $\lambda - 2345$ . And if  $\lambda = \omega_2 + \omega_n$ , we use weights  $\lambda - 245 \cdots n$ ,  $\lambda - 345 \cdots n$ ,  $\lambda - 23 \cdots (n - 1)$ .  $\square$

This completes the proof of Proposition 3.1.

#### 4. The case where $A$ is regular and $\lambda = b\omega_i, b \geq 2$

Continue to assume that  $G$  is a simple algebraic group,  $A$  is a regular  $A_1$  in  $G$ , and  $V = V_G(\lambda)$ . In this section we prove Theorem 1 in the case where  $\lambda = b\omega_i$  for some  $i$  and some  $b \geq 2$ . In this case, the  $T$ -weight  $r - 2$  appears in  $V$  with multiplicity  $1$  and Lemma 2.2(iii) applies. Also Lemma 2.3 implies that if  $V \downarrow A$  is multiplicity-free then  $\alpha_i$  is an end-node.

**Proposition 4.1.** *Assume  $\lambda = b\omega_i$  with  $b > 1$ . Then  $V \downarrow A$  is multiplicity-free if and only if  $G$  and  $\lambda$  are as in the following table, up to graph automorphisms of  $A_n$  or  $D_4$ .*

| $\lambda$              | $G$   |
|------------------------|---|
| $2\omega_1$            | $A_n, B_n, C_n, D_n (n = 2k), G_2$                    |
| $3\omega_1$            | $A_n (n \leq 5), B_n (n = 2, 3), C_n (n = 2, 3), G_2$ |
| $4\omega_1, 5\omega_1$ | $A_n (n = 2, 3), B_2, C_2$                            |
| $b\omega_1 (b \geq 6)$ | $A_2$   |
| $b\omega_1 (b \leq 5)$ | $C_2$   |
| $2\omega_3$            | $B_3$   |
| $2\omega_2$            | $G_2$   |

The proof is carried out in a series of lemmas.

**Lemma 4.2.** *Assume that  $\lambda = 2\omega_1$ . If  $G = A_n, B_n,$  or  $C_n$ , then  $V \downarrow A$  is multiplicity-free. If  $G = D_n$ , then  $V \downarrow A$  is multiplicity-free if and only if  $n$  is even.*

*Proof.* If  $G = A_n$ , then  $V \downarrow A$  is just  $S^2(n)$  and a consideration of weights shows that this is  $2n + (2n - 4) + (2n - 8) + \dots$ , hence is multiplicity-free. If  $G = B_n$  or  $C_n$  we can embed  $G$  in  $A_{2n}$  or  $A_{2n-1}$ , respectively. In each case  $A$  acts irreducibly on the natural module with highest weight  $2n$  or  $2n - 1$ , respectively, and the conclusion follows from the first sentence.

Now consider  $G = D_n$ . In this case  $A$  acts on the natural module  $\omega_1$  for  $G$ , as  $(2n - 2) + 0$ . Now  $S^2(\omega_1) = V + 0$  and hence  $V \downarrow A = S^2(2n - 2) + (2n - 2) = ((4n - 4) + (4n - 8) + \dots) + (2n - 2)$ . If  $n$  is odd, we find that  $2n - 2$  appears with multiplicity 2, while if  $n$  is even,  $V \downarrow A$  is multiplicity-free. □

**Lemma 4.3.** *Assume that  $G = B_n (n \geq 3), C_n (n \geq 3),$  or  $D_n (n \geq 4)$  and that  $\lambda = b\omega_i$  with  $b > 1$  and  $i > 1$ . Then  $V \downarrow A$  is multiplicity-free if and only if  $G = B_3$  and  $\lambda = 2\omega_3$  or  $G = D_4$  and  $\lambda = 2\omega_i$  for  $i = 3$  or  $4$ .*

*Proof.* By Lemma 2.3 we can assume that  $\alpha_i$  is an end-node, so we may take  $i = n$ . First consider  $C_n$ . If  $b \geq 3$ , then the weight  $r - 6$  occurs with multiplicity at least 4 (from  $\lambda - (n - 2)(n - 1)n, \lambda - (n - 1)n^2, \lambda - n^3, \lambda - (n - 1)^2n = (\lambda - n)^{s_{n-1}}$ ) and so  $V \downarrow A$  is not multiplicity-free. For  $b = 2$  first consider  $G = C_3$ . We have  $S^2(001) = V + 200$ . As  $001 \downarrow A = 9 + 3$ , it follows that  $V \downarrow A$  contains  $6^2$ . Next suppose that  $G = C_n$  with  $n \geq 4$  and  $b = 2$ . This case essentially follows from the  $C_3$  result. We need only show that there are at least two more weights  $r - 12$  than weights  $r - 10$ . For  $n = 4$  the only weights  $r - 10$  that do not arise from the  $C_3$  Levi are  $\lambda - 123^24, \lambda - 1234^2$ . Correspondingly, there are new  $r - 12$  weights,  $\lambda - 12^23^24, \lambda - 123^24^2$ . Similar reasoning applies for  $C_5$ , where  $\lambda - 12345$  is the only weight  $r - 10$  not appearing for  $C_4$  and we conjugate by  $s_4$  to get a new weight  $r - 12$ . And for  $n \geq 6$  there are no  $r - 10$  weights that were not present in a  $C_5$  Levi factor.

Now let  $G = B_n$ . If  $b \geq 3$  we find that  $T$  weight  $r - 6$  appears with multiplicity at least 4. Indeed, for the  $B_2$  Levi the module  $0b = S^b(01)$  and this yields weights

$\lambda - n^3, \lambda - (n - 1)n^2$ , the latter with multiplicity 2. Also  $\lambda - (n - 2)(n - 1)n$  affords  $T$ -weight  $r - 6$ , which yields the assertion.

Now assume  $b = 2$ . First consider  $G = B_3$ , so that  $\lambda = 002$ . The module 001 for  $B_3$  is the spin module where  $A$  acts as  $6 + 0$ . We have  $S^2(001) = 002 + 000$ , and it follows that  $V \downarrow A = 12 + 8 + 6 + 4 + 0$ , which is multiplicity-free. Now assume  $n > 3$ . Here we show that  $T$ -weight  $r - 8$  occurs with multiplicity 5. The above shows that  $r - 8$  occurs with multiplicity 4 just working in the  $B_3$  Levi. As  $\lambda - (n - 3)(n - 2)(n - 1)n$  affords  $r - 8$  the assertion follows.

Finally, consider  $G = D_n$ . If  $b \geq 3$  then  $T$ -weight  $r - 6$  occurs with multiplicity 4 (from  $\lambda - n^3, \lambda - (n - 2)n^2, \lambda - (n - 1)(n - 2)n, \lambda - (n - 3)(n - 2)(n)$ ), and so  $V \downarrow A$  is not multiplicity-free by Lemma 2.2(iii). Now assume  $b = 2$ . Applying a graph automorphism if necessary, we can assume  $n \geq 5$  (the conclusion allows for  $D_4$  using Lemma 4.2). Then  $T$ -weight  $r - 8$  occurs with multiplicity at least 5 (from  $\lambda - (n - 4)(n - 3)(n - 2)n, \lambda - (n - 3)(n - 2)(n - 1)n, \lambda - (n - 3)(n - 2)n^2, \lambda - (n - 1)(n - 2)n^2, \lambda - (n - 2)^2n^2$ ). Therefore,  $V \downarrow A$  is not multiplicity-free.  $\square$

**Lemma 4.4.** *Assume that  $G = A_n, B_n (n \geq 3), C_n (n \geq 3)$  or  $D_n (n \geq 4)$ , and that  $\lambda = b\omega_1$  with  $b \geq 3$ . Then  $V \downarrow A$  is multiplicity-free only for the cases listed in rows 2 to 4 of the table in Proposition 4.1.*

*Proof.* First let  $G = A_n$ , so  $V = V_G(b\omega_1) = S^b(\omega_1)$ . First consider  $b = 3$ , so that  $r = 3n$ . If  $n \geq 6$ , then  $T$ -weight  $3n - 12$  occurs with multiplicity at least 7 and  $V \downarrow A$  cannot be multiplicity-free. Indeed, independent vectors of weight  $3n - 12$  occur as tensor symmetric powers of vectors of weights  $(i, j, k)$ , where  $(i, j, k)$  is one of  $(n, n, n - 12), (n, n - 2, n - 10), (n, n - 4, n - 8), (n, n - 6, n - 6), (n - 2, n - 2, n - 8), (n - 2, n - 4, n - 6)$ , or  $(n - 4, n - 4, n - 4)$ . On the other hand, for  $n \leq 5$  the restriction is multiplicity-free.

Next consider  $b = 4$ , so that  $r = 4n$ . If  $n \geq 4$ , then  $4n - 8$  appears with multiplicity at least 5 and hence  $V \downarrow A$  is not multiplicity-free. Indeed, independent vectors arise from symmetric powers of vectors of weights  $(n, n, n, n - 8), (n, n, n - 2, n - 6), (n, n, n - 4, n - 4), (n, n - 2, n - 2, n - 4), (n - 2, n - 2, n - 2, n - 2)$ . And for  $n \leq 3$  a direct check shows that  $S^b(\omega_1) \downarrow A$  is multiplicity-free. If  $b \geq 5, n \geq 3$ , and  $(b, n) \neq (5, 3)$  then a similar argument shows that the weight  $bn - 12$  occurs with multiplicity at least two more than does  $bn - 10$ ; hence  $V \downarrow A$  is not multiplicity-free in these cases. And if  $(b, n) = (5, 3)$  one checks that  $V \downarrow A = S^5(3) = 15 + 11 + 9 + 7 + 5 + 3$ , which is multiplicity-free.

The final case for  $G = A_n$  is when  $n = 2$ . We first note that the multiplicity of weight  $2j$  in  $S^b(2)$  is precisely the multiplicity of weight 0 in  $S^{b-j}(2)$ . Indeed, if we write  $2^c 0^d (-2)^e$  to denote a symmetric tensor of  $c$  vectors of weight 2,  $d$  vectors of weight 0 and  $e$  vectors of weight  $-2$ , then a basis for the  $2j$ -weight space is given by vectors  $2^j 0^{b-j} (-2)^0, 2^{j+1} 0^{b-j-2} (-2)^1, 2^{j+2} 0^{b-j-4} (-2)^2, \dots$  and ignoring the

first  $j$  terms in each tensor we obtain the assertion. The multiplicity of weight 0 in  $S^{b-j}(2)$  is easily seen to be  $(b-j+1)/2$  if  $b-j$  is odd and  $(b-j+2)/2$  if  $b-j$  is even. From this information we see that  $S^b(2) = 2b + (2b-4) + (2b-8) + \dots$  and hence  $V \downarrow A$  is multiplicity-free.

Now consider  $G = B_n, C_n,$  or  $D_n$ . The  $C_n$  case follows from the  $A_{2n-1}$  case since  $V = S^b(\omega_1)$ ; see [Seitz 1987]. If  $G = D_n$  with  $n \geq 4$ , then  $A \leq B_{n-1} < G$ . If the corresponding module for this subgroup is not multiplicity-free, then the same holds for  $G$  since it appears as a direct summand of  $V$ .

So assume  $G = B_n$ . If  $b \geq 4$ , then  $T$ -weight  $r-8$  occurs with multiplicity at least 5. Indeed, if  $n \geq 4$  this weight arises from  $\lambda - 1234, \lambda - 1^223, \lambda - 1^22^2, \lambda - 1^32, \lambda - 1^4$ ; whereas, if  $n = 3$  replace the first of these weights by  $\lambda - 123^2 = (\lambda - 12)^{s_3}$ . Now consider  $b = 3$ . If  $n = 4$ , then  $S^3(\lambda_1) = 3000 + 1000$  and one checks that  $T$ -weight  $r-12 = 12$  occurs with multiplicity 7, and so  $V \downarrow A$  is not multiplicity-free. And for  $n > 4$  we apply Lemma 2.8 to get the same conclusion. Finally, if  $n = 3$  then  $S^3(\lambda_1) = V + 100$ , and a direct check of weights shows that  $S^3(\lambda_1) \downarrow A = 18 + 14 + 12 + 10 + 8 + 6^2 + 2$ , which implies that  $V \downarrow A$  is multiplicity-free.

The only remaining case is when  $G = D_4$  and  $b = 3$ , since here the module  $300 \downarrow A$  for  $B_3$  is multiplicity-free. As a module for  $G$  we have  $S^3(\omega_1) = 3\omega_1 \oplus \omega_1$ , so that  $V \downarrow A = S^3(6+0) - (6+0)$ , which one easily checks is not multiplicity-free. □

**Lemma 4.5.** *Assume that  $G = B_2, C_2,$  or  $G_2$  and  $\lambda = b\omega_i$  (with  $b \geq 2$ ). Then  $V \downarrow A$  is multiplicity-free if and only if one of the following holds:*

- (i)  $G = B_2$  or  $C_2$  and  $\lambda = b0, 0b$  ( $b \leq 5$ ).
- (ii)  $G = G_2$  and  $\lambda = 20, 30,$  or  $02$ .

*Proof.* (i) Let  $G = B_2$ . Then  $0b = S^b(01)$ , which restricts to  $A$  as  $S^b(3)$ . Therefore, the assertion follows from the  $A_3$  result which has already been established.

Now assume  $\lambda = b0$ . Here  $\dim(b0) = (b+1)(b+2)(2b+3)/6$  and the highest weight of  $V \downarrow A$  is  $4b$ . If the restriction were multiplicity-free, then weight  $4b-2$  would only occur with multiplicity 1, and the restriction with largest possible dimension would have composition factors  $4b + (4b-4) + (4b-6) + \dots + 2 + 0$  which totals  $4b^2 + 2$ . For  $b \geq 7$ , this is less than the above dimension of  $b0$  and so the restriction cannot be multiplicity-free. And for  $b \leq 3$ ,  $V$  is a summand of  $S^b(4)$  which we have already seen to be multiplicity-free. This leaves the cases  $b = 4, 5, 6$ .

A computation gives the following decompositions of symmetric powers of the  $G$ -module 10:

$$S^6(10) = 60 + 40 + 20 + 00,$$

$$S^5(10) = 50 + 30 + 10,$$

$$S^4(10) = 40 + 20 + 00,$$

$$S^3(10) = 30 + 10,$$

$$S^2(10) = 20 + 00.$$

It follows that  $40 \downarrow A = 16 + 12 + 10 + 8 + 4$  and  $50 \downarrow A = 20 + 16 + 14 + 12 + 10 + 8 + 4$ , so these are both multiplicity-free. Also  $S^6(4) = 24 + 20 + 18 + 16^2 + 14 + 12^3 + \dots$ . This and the above imply that  $60 \downarrow A$  is not multiplicity-free. This completes the proof of (i).

(ii) It follows from [Seitz 1987] that  $V_{B_3}(b00)$  is irreducible upon restriction to  $G_2$ , with highest weight  $b0$ , and also a regular  $A$  in  $B_3$  lies in a subgroup  $G_2$ . So for  $i = 1$  the assertion follows from our results for  $B_3$ . Now assume  $i = 2$ . Then

$$\dim(0b) = \frac{1}{120}(b+1)(b+2)(2b+3)(3b+4)(3b+5),$$

and the highest  $T$ -weight is  $10b$ . First let  $b = 2$ . Then  $V \downarrow A$  is a direct summand of  $S^2(01) \downarrow A = 20 + 16 + 12^2 + 10 + 8^2 + 4^2 + 0^2$ . We have  $S^2(01) = V \oplus 20 \oplus 00$  and hence  $V \downarrow A = 20 + 16 + 12 + 10 + 8 + 4 + 0$ , which is multiplicity-free. On the other hand if  $b \geq 3$ , then Lemma 2.1 implies that  $V \downarrow A$  is not multiplicity-free.  $\square$

**Lemma 4.6.** *If  $G = E_n$  and  $\lambda = b\omega_i$  with  $b > 1$ , then  $V \downarrow A$  is not multiplicity-free.*

*Proof.* By Lemma 2.3, we can take  $\alpha_i$  to be an end-node. First assume  $i = 1$ . If  $b = 2$  one checks that  $r - 6$  is only afforded by  $\lambda - 134$ ,  $\lambda - 1^23$ , while  $r - 8$  is afforded by  $\lambda - 1234$ ,  $\lambda - 1345$ ,  $\lambda - 1^234$ ,  $\lambda - 1^23^2$ , so that  $V \downarrow A$  is not multiplicity-free by Lemma 2.2(ii). Similarly for  $b \geq 3$  as  $T$ -weight  $r - 6$  appears with multiplicity 3 (from  $\lambda - 134$ ,  $\lambda - 1^23$ ,  $\lambda - 1^3$ ), but  $r - 8$  appears with multiplicity at least 5 (from  $\lambda - 1345$ ,  $\lambda - 1234$ ,  $\lambda - 1^234$ ,  $\lambda - 1^22^2$ ,  $\lambda - 1^33$ ).

If  $i = 2$ , we see that weight  $r - 8$  appears with multiplicity at least 5, since it is afforded by each of  $\lambda - 2345$ ,  $\lambda - 1234$ ,  $\lambda - 2456$ ,  $\lambda - 2^234$ ,  $\lambda - 2^245$ . So  $V \downarrow A$  is not multiplicity-free by Lemma 2.2(iii).

Finally, assume that  $i = n$ . For  $n = 6$ ,  $V$  is just the dual of  $V_G(\lambda_1)$ , so suppose  $G = E_7$  or  $E_8$ . If  $b \geq 4$  it is easy to list weights and verify that  $T$ -weight  $r - 8$  appears with multiplicity at least 5, so Lemma 2.2(iii) shows that  $V \downarrow A$  is not multiplicity-free. And if  $b = 2$  or  $3$ , we see that  $T$ -weight  $r - 12$  appears with multiplicity at least 2 more than  $T$ -weight  $r - 10$ .  $\square$



**Lemma 4.7.** *If  $G = F_4$  and  $\lambda = b\omega_i$  with  $b > 1$ , then  $V \downarrow A$  is not multiplicity-free.*

*Proof.* As usual we can take  $\alpha_i$  to be an end-node. First assume  $i = 1$ . If  $b = 2$ , then  $T$  weight  $r - 6$  occurs with multiplicity 2 (from  $\lambda - 123, \lambda - 1^22$ ); whereas,  $r - 8$  occurs with multiplicity 4 (from  $\lambda - 1234, \lambda - 123^2 = (\lambda - 12)^{s_3}, \lambda - 1^223, \lambda - 1^22^2$ ). If  $b \geq 3$ , then the weight  $r - 6$  appears with multiplicity 3 due to the additional weight  $\lambda - 1^3$ . But we also get an additional weight  $r - 8$  from  $\lambda - 1^32$ . In either case, Lemma 2.2 implies that  $V \downarrow A$  is not multiplicity-free.

Now assume  $i = 4$ . First assume  $b = 2$ . Then  $S^2(0001) = V + 0001 + 0000$ . Moreover, a consideration of weights shows that  $0001 \downarrow A = 16 + 8$ , and we conclude that  $V \downarrow A$  is not multiplicity-free as there is a summand  $20^2$ .

Finally, assume  $b \geq 3$ . The  $T$ -weight  $r - 6$  occurs with multiplicity 3 (from  $\lambda - 234, \lambda - 34^2, \lambda - 4^3$ ), whereas  $T$ -weight  $r - 8$  occurs with multiplicity at least 5 (from  $\lambda - 1234, \lambda - 23^24 = (l - 234)^{s_3}, \lambda - 234^2, \lambda - 3^24^2, \lambda - 34^3$ ). □

This completes the proof of Proposition 4.1.

### 5. The case where $A$ is regular and $\lambda = \omega_i$

Continue to assume that  $G$  is a simple algebraic group,  $A$  is a regular  $A_1$  in  $G$ , and  $V = V_G(\lambda)$ . In this section we prove Theorem 1 in the case where  $\lambda = \omega_i$  for some  $i$ .

**Proposition 5.1.** *Assume that  $\lambda = \omega_i$  for some  $i$ . Then  $V \downarrow A$  is multiplicity-free if and only if  $G$  and  $\lambda$  are as in the following table, up to graph automorphisms.*

| $\lambda$            | $G$                                    |
|----------------------|--|
| $\omega_1, \omega_2$ | $A_n, B_n, C_n, D_n (n = 2k + 1), G_2$ |
| $\omega_3$           | $A_n (n \leq 7), C_n (n \leq 5)$       |
| $\omega_n$           | $C_4, C_5$                             |
| $\omega_n$           | $B_n (n \leq 8), D_n (n \leq 9)$       |
| $\omega_1, \omega_2$ | $E_6$                                  |
| $\omega_1, \omega_7$ | $E_7$                                  |
| $\omega_8$           | $E_8$                                  |
| $\omega_1, \omega_4$ | $F_4$                                  |

The proof is carried out in a series of lemmas.

**Lemma 5.2.** *Assume that  $\lambda = \omega_i$ .*

- (i) *Then  $V \downarrow A$  is not multiplicity-free if  $G = A_n, B_n, C_n$  or  $D_n$  and  $4 \leq i \leq n - 3$ .*
- (ii) *If  $G = A_n, i = 3$ , and  $n \geq 5$ , then  $V \downarrow A$  is multiplicity-free if and only if  $n \leq 7$ .*
- (iii) *If  $G = A_n, B_n, C_n, D_n$ , or  $G_2$  and  $i = 1$  or  $2$ , then  $V \downarrow A$  is multiplicity-free except when  $G = D_n, i = 2$ , and  $n$  even.*

*Proof.* (i) This follows from Lemma 2.7.

(ii) Assume  $G = A_n$  and  $i = 3$  with  $n \geq 5$ . Then  $V = \wedge^3(\omega_1)$  and a computation using Magma shows that  $V \downarrow A$  is multiplicity-free for  $n = 5, 6, 7$ . If  $n \geq 8$  one checks that  $T$ -weight  $r - 12$  occurs with multiplicity at least 7. Indeed, here  $r = 3n - 6$ , and  $r - 12 = 3n - 18$  is afforded by the wedge of tensors of weight vectors for each of the following weights:

$$\begin{aligned} & n(n-2)(n-16), \quad n(n-4)(n-14), \\ & n(n-6)(n-12), \quad n(n-8)(n-10), \quad (n-2)(n-4)(n-12), \\ & (n-2)(n-6)(n-10), \quad (n-4)(n-6)(n-8). \end{aligned}$$

Hence  $V \downarrow A$  is not multiplicity-free for  $n \geq 8$  by Lemma 2.2(iii).

(iii) If  $G = A_n$  then  $A$  is irreducible on the natural module (i.e.,  $\omega_1$ ) for  $G$  with highest weight  $n$ . And if  $i = 2$ , then  $V \downarrow A = \wedge^2(n)$  is a direct summand of  $n \otimes n = 2n + (2n - 2) + (2n - 4) + \cdots + 0$ , and hence  $V \downarrow A$  is multiplicity-free. Now consider  $G = B_n, C_n, D_n$  embedded in  $X = A_{2n}, A_{2n-1}, A_{2n-1}$ . In the first two cases  $A$  acts irreducibly on the natural module,  $V_X(\omega_1)$ , and in the third case  $A$  acts as  $(2n - 2) + 0$ . So  $V \downarrow A$  is obviously multiplicity-free for  $i = 1$ . Now consider  $i = 2$ . Then  $V_X(\omega_2) \downarrow G = V$  if  $G = B_n$  or  $D_n$  [Seitz 1987] and equals  $V + 0$  if  $G = C_n$  (the fixed space corresponds to a fixed alternating form). Therefore,  $V \downarrow A = \wedge^2(2n)$ ,  $\wedge^2((2n - 2) + 0)$ , or  $\wedge^2(2n - 1) - 0$ , respectively. So  $V \downarrow A$  is multiplicity-free if  $G = B_n$  or  $C_n$ . But if  $G = D_n$ , then

$$V \downarrow A = \wedge^2((2n - 2) + 0) = (2n - 2) + (4n - 6) + (4n - 10) + \cdots$$

and this is multiplicity-free only if  $n$  is odd. Finally consider  $G = G_2$  viewed as a subgroup of  $A_6$ . Then  $A$  is irreducible on the natural 7-dimensional module  $V_G(\omega_1)$ . Also  $V_G(\omega_2)$  is a direct summand of  $\wedge^2(V_G(\omega_1))$ . So  $V \downarrow A$  is multiplicity-free in both cases.  $\square$

**Lemma 5.3.** *Suppose that  $G = B_n, C_n$  or  $D_n$ , that  $\lambda = \omega_i$  for  $i \geq 3$  and that  $V$  is not a spin module for  $B_n$  or  $D_n$ . Then  $V \downarrow A$  is multiplicity-free if and only if one of the following holds:*

- (i)  $i = n$  and  $G = C_4$  or  $C_5$ .
- (ii)  $i = 3$  and  $G = C_n$  for  $n = 3, 4, 5$ .

*Proof.* If  $G = B_n$  or  $D_n$ , then  $V = \wedge^i(\omega_1)$  and the result follows from the  $A_{2n}$  or  $A_{2n-1}$  part of Lemma 5.2. Indeed, if  $G = B_n$ , then  $A$  is regular in  $A_{2n}$  while if  $G = D_n$ ,  $A < B_{n-1} < D_n$ . Therefore, we may assume that  $G = C_n$ . If  $4 \leq i \leq n - 3$  then  $V \downarrow A$  is not multiplicity-free by Lemma 5.2.

Suppose  $i \geq 4$ . By the previous paragraph we can assume that  $i > n - 3$ . If  $i = n - 2$ , then  $T$ -weight  $r - 8$  occurs with multiplicity at least 5 as it is afforded by

$$\begin{aligned} \lambda - (i-3)(i-2)(i-1)i, \quad \lambda - (i-2)(i-1)i(i+1), \\ \lambda - (i-1)i(i+1)(i+2), \quad \lambda - (i-1)i^2(i+1), \\ \lambda - i(i+1)^2(i+2) = (\lambda - i(i+1)(i+2))^{s_{i+1}}, \end{aligned}$$

so  $V \downarrow A$  is not multiplicity-free by Lemma 2.2(iii).

Next assume  $i = n - 1$ . First consider  $n = 5$ , where  $\wedge^4(\omega_1) = \omega_4 + \omega_2 + 0$ . Here  $r = 24$  and a computation shows that  $r - 12 = 12$  occurs with multiplicity 9 in  $\wedge^4(\omega_1)$  but it only occurs twice in  $\wedge^2(\omega_1) = \omega_2 + 0$ . Therefore, this weight occurs with multiplicity 7 in  $V$  and hence  $V \downarrow A$  is not multiplicity-free by Lemma 2.2(iii). Now return to the general case with  $i = n - 1$ . Then an application of Lemma 2.8(ii) to a  $C_5$  Levi subgroup shows that  $T$ -weight  $r - 12$  appears with multiplicity at least 7, against Lemma 2.2.

A similar argument settles the case where  $n = i$ . If  $n = 4$  or 5, then a Magma computation shows that  $V \downarrow A$  is multiplicity-free. If  $n = 6$ , weights  $24 = r - 12$  and  $26 = r - 10$  occur with multiplicities 6 and 4 respectively, and so Lemma 2.2(i) implies that  $V \downarrow A$  is not multiplicity-free. For  $n > 6$  we also compare weights  $r - 10$  and  $r - 12$ . These must already be weights of the  $C_6$  Levi subgroups, so again this contradicts Lemma 2.2(i).

Now assume  $i = 3$  with  $G = C_n$ . Then  $\wedge^3(\omega_1) = V + \omega_1$ . Also  $A$  is irreducible on the natural module for  $A_{2n-1}$ . In the proof of Lemma 5.2(ii) we saw that for  $n \geq 5$  the weight  $r - 12 = 6n - 21$  occurs in  $\wedge^3(\omega_1)$  with multiplicity at least 7. If  $n \geq 6$ , then all these weights occur within  $V$ , so  $V \downarrow A$  is not multiplicity-free. This leaves  $n = 3, 4, 5$ . In these cases, a simple check of weights shows that  $V \downarrow A$  is multiplicity-free.  $\square$

**Lemma 5.4.** *Assume  $V$  is a spin module for  $B_n$  or  $D_n$ . Then  $V \downarrow A$  is multiplicity-free if and only if  $n \leq 8$  for  $B_n$  and  $n \leq 9$  for  $D_n$ .*

*Proof.* If  $G = D_n$ , then  $A \leq B_{n-1} < G$  and  $B_{n-1}$  is irreducible on  $V$ , so it will suffice to settle the  $G = B_n$  case. In terms of roots,  $\omega_n = \sum(i\alpha_i)/2$ , so that  $r = n(n+1)/2$ . As  $\dim V = 2^n$ , Lemma 2.1 shows that  $V \downarrow A$  is not multiplicity-free if  $n \geq 10$ . If  $n = 9$  then  $\dim V = 2^9 = 512$ , while the sum in Lemma 2.1 is 552. However,  $V \downarrow A$  does not contain a summand of highest weight  $r - 2 = 43$ , so  $\dim V \leq 552 - 44 = 508$ . So here too,  $V \downarrow A$  fails to be multiplicity-free. This leaves the case  $n \leq 8$ .

Consider the restriction  $V \downarrow L$ , where  $L = \mathrm{GL}_n$  is a Levi subgroup. One checks (see [Liebeck and Seitz 2012, Lemma 11.15]) that the restriction to  $\mathrm{SL}_n$  consists of the natural module and all its wedge powers together with two trivial modules. For example, when  $n = 8$  the restriction to  $A$  of the weights  $\lambda, \lambda - 8, \lambda - 78^2 = (\lambda - 8)^{s_7 s_8}, \lambda - 67^2 8^3 = (\lambda - 78^2)^{s_6 s_7 s_8}, \dots$  afford the modules  $0, \omega_7, \omega_6, \omega_5, \dots$  for the  $A_7$

factor. However, the  $T$ -weights are shifted in accordance with the number of fundamental roots subtracted. In the above example, the  $T$ -weight of 0 is just that of  $\lambda$ , namely 36 and the  $T$ -weights of  $\omega_7$  are 34, 32,  $\dots$ , 20, etc.

Here we indicate some of the decompositions for  $V \downarrow A$  for later use.

| $n$ | decomposition  |
|-----|--|
| 8   | $36 + 30 + 26 + 24 + 22 + 20 + 18 + 16 + 14 + 12 + 10 + 8 + 6 + 0$ |
| 7   | $28 + 22 + 18 + 16 + 14 + 10 + 8 + 4$                              |
| 6   | $21 + 15 + 11 + 9 + 3$   |
| 5   | $15 + 9 + 5$   |
| 4   | $10 + 4$   |
| 3   | $6 + 0$  |

Carrying out the above we obtain the conclusion. □

**Lemma 5.5.** *Assume that  $G = E_n$  or  $F_4$ . Then  $V \downarrow A$  is multiplicity-free if and only if  $\lambda$  is as in the following table.*

| $G$   | $\lambda$                      |
|-------|--------------------------------|
| $E_6$ | $\omega_1, \omega_2, \omega_6$ |
| $E_7$ | $\omega_1, \omega_7$           |
| $E_8$ | $\omega_8$                     |
| $F_4$ | $\omega_1, \omega_4$           |

*Proof.* First assume  $G = F_4$  and  $\lambda = \omega_4$ . It is straightforward to list the first few weights and see that  $V \downarrow A = 16 + 8$ . [Liebeck and Seitz 1996, Propositions 2.4 and 2.5] show that  $V \downarrow A$  is multiplicity-free for each of the remaining cases listed in the table.

It remains to show that all other possibilities fail to be multiplicity-free. To do this, we use Lemma 2.1 along with the dimensions of  $V = V(\omega_i)$ , which can be found using Magma; the values of  $r$  can be calculated using the expressions for  $\omega_i$  in terms of roots, given in [Bourbaki 1968, p. 250]. □

This completes the proof of Proposition 5.1

### 6. The case where $A$ is nonregular

Assume that  $G$  is a simple algebraic group, and  $A \cong A_1$  is a  $G$ -irreducible subgroup of  $G$ . Recall from the introduction that this means that a nonidentity unipotent element  $u$  of  $A$  is distinguished in  $G$ . In this section we prove Theorem 1, classifying  $G$ -modules  $V = V_G(\lambda)$  such that  $V \downarrow A$  is multiplicity-free, in the case where  $u$  is distinguished, but not a regular element of  $G$ . Such elements exist for  $G$  of type

$B_n$ , ( $n \geq 4$ ),  $C_n$ , ( $n \geq 3$ ),  $D_n$ , ( $n \geq 4$ ),  $E_6$ ,  $E_7$ ,  $E_8$ ,  $F_4$  or  $G_2$ . We shall see that there are relatively few examples; they are listed in Table 2 of Theorem 1.

We begin with the analysis of the classical groups.

**Proposition 6.1.** *Assume that  $G = B_n, C_n$  or  $D_n$  and  $u$  is distinguished but not regular. Then up to graph automorphisms of  $D_n$ ,  $V_G(\lambda) \downarrow A$  is multiplicity-free if and only if one of the following holds:*

- (i)  $\lambda = \omega_1$ .
- (ii)  $G = D_n$  with  $5 \leq n \leq 7$ ,  $\lambda = \omega_n$ , and  $A < B_{n-2}B_1$ , projecting to a regular  $A_1$  in each factor.

For the next four lemmas assume the hypotheses of Proposition 6.1. The natural  $G$ -module, when restricted to  $A$ , is a direct sum of irreducible modules of distinct highest weights, and we first discuss the corresponding  $T$ -labelling of the Dynkin diagram of  $G$ . A full description can be found in [Liebeck and Seitz 2012, Theorem 3.18]. As an example, consider  $G = C_{15}$  with  $A$  acting as  $15 + 9 + 3$ . The  $T$ -weights are  $15, 13, 11, 9^2, 7^2, 5^2, 3^3, 1^3$  plus negatives. The corresponding labelling of the Dynkin diagram is 222020202002002. So the labelling begins with an *initial string* of 2s, then a number of terms 20, several of type 200, and so on. For  $C_n$ , the end-node  $\alpha_n$  has label 2, and for  $B_n$  it has label 0. For  $D_n$  both of  $\alpha_{n-1}, \alpha_n$  have the same label; it is 2 or 0, according to whether there are just two summands for  $A$  or more than two, respectively.

As in previous sections, let  $V = V_G(\lambda)$ , of highest weight  $\lambda = \sum c_i \omega_i$  affording  $T$ -weight  $r$ .

**Lemma 6.2.** *Assume  $V \downarrow A$  is multiplicity-free. Then the following hold:*

- (i)  $c_i = 0$  if  $\alpha_i$  has label 0.
- (ii)  $c_i = 0$  if  $\alpha_i$  has label 2 and  $\alpha_i$  is adjacent to two nodes having label 0.
- (iii)  $\lambda = b\omega_i$  for some  $i$ .
- (iv) If  $\lambda = b\omega_i$  with  $b > 1$ , then  $i = 1$ .
- (v)  $\lambda \neq \omega_n$  if  $G = B_n$  or  $C_n$ .

*Proof.* (i) Assume  $\alpha_i$  has label 0 but  $c_i \neq 0$ . Then  $\lambda - \alpha_i$  is a weight affording  $T$ -weight  $r$ , which implies that  $r^2$  is a summand of  $V \downarrow A$ , a contradiction.

(ii) Next suppose that  $\alpha_i$  has label 2 but nodes on either side have label 0. If we label these nodes  $\alpha_i, \alpha_j, \alpha_k$ , then  $\lambda - i, \lambda - ij, \lambda - ik$  all afford  $T$ -weight  $r - 2$ , contradicting Lemma 2.2.

(iii) Assume  $c_i \neq 0 \neq c_j$ . Then  $\lambda - i$  and  $\lambda - j$  afford the only  $T$ -weights  $r - 2$ . This implies that neither  $\alpha_i$  nor  $\alpha_j$  can be adjacent to a node with 0 label, as otherwise  $r - 2$  would occur with multiplicity at least 3. Therefore, both occur in the initial

string of 2s, and within this string we can argue exactly as in the regular case. Indeed, the argument of parts (iv), (v), and (vi) of Lemma 2.6 implies that  $i = 1$ ,  $j = 2$ , and  $c_i = c_j = 1$ . Then the first paragraph of the proof of Lemma 3.4 implies that the initial string of 2s has length 3. But then  $T$ -weight  $r - 4$  is afforded by  $\lambda - 12$  (multiplicity 2),  $\lambda - 23$ , and  $\lambda - 234$ , contradicting Lemma 2.2.

(iv) Assume  $\lambda = b\omega_i$  with  $b > 1$ . By Lemma 2.3(i),  $\alpha_i$  is an end-node. Suppose  $i = n$ . Then  $G \neq B_n$ , as otherwise  $\alpha_n$  has label 0, against (i). If  $G = C_n$ , then  $\lambda - n$ ,  $\lambda - n(n - 1)$ ,  $\lambda - n(n - 1)^2 = (\lambda - n(n - 1))^{s_{n-1}}$  all afford  $r - 2$ . And for  $D_n$ ,  $r - 4$  is afforded by  $\lambda - n^2$ ,  $\lambda - n^2(n - 2)$ ,  $\lambda - n^2(n - 2)^2$ ,  $\lambda - n(n - 2)(n - 1)$ . This is a contradiction. A similar argument applies if  $G = D_n$  and  $i = n - 1$ .

(v) Suppose  $\lambda = \omega_n$ . The last argument of the previous paragraph also shows that  $V \downarrow A$  is not multiplicity-free if  $G = C_n$ . And if  $G = B_n$  then  $\alpha_n$  has label 0, contradicting (i). □

**Lemma 6.3.** *Suppose  $G = D_n$  with  $n \geq 5$ , and  $\lambda = \omega_n$ . Then  $V \downarrow A$  is multiplicity-free if and only if  $n \leq 7$  and  $A < B_{n-2}B_1$ , projecting to a regular  $A_1$  in each factor.*

*Proof.* Assume  $G = D_n$  and  $\lambda = \omega_n$ . Then the labels of  $\alpha_{n-1}$  and  $\alpha_n$  are both 2, and  $A$  has two irreducible summands on the natural  $G$ -module. The label of  $\alpha_{n-2}$  is 0.

Suppose that  $V \downarrow A$  is multiplicity-free. If  $\alpha_{n-3}$  also has label 0, then  $\lambda - n$ ,  $\lambda - (n - 2)n$ ,  $\lambda - (n - 3)(n - 2)n$  all afford  $r - 2$ , a contradiction. Therefore,  $\alpha_{n-3}$  has label 2. Next consider  $\alpha_{n-4}$ . If  $\alpha_{n-4}$  has label 0, then  $n \geq 6$  and  $\alpha_{n-5}$  must have label 2. Hence  $r - 6$  is afforded by each of

$$\begin{aligned} &\lambda - (n - 3)(n - 2)(n - 1)n, & \lambda - (n - 4)(n - 3)(n - 2)(n - 1)n, \\ &\lambda - (n - 3)(n - 2)^2(n - 1)n, & \lambda - (n - 4)(n - 3)(n - 2)^2(n - 1)n, \\ & & \lambda - (n - 5)(n - 4)(n - 3)(n - 2)n, \end{aligned}$$

again a contradiction. Therefore,  $\alpha_{n-4}$  has label 2. This forces the full labelling to be  $22 \cdots 22022$ .

Hence  $A$  acts on the natural  $G$ -module as  $(2n - 4) + 2$  and so lies in a subgroup  $B_{n-2}B_1$ , which acts on  $V$  as the tensor product of spin modules for the factors. That is,  $V \downarrow A = X \otimes 1$  where  $X$  is the restriction of the spin module of  $B_{n-2}$  to a regular  $A_1$ . As we are assuming  $V \downarrow A$  to be multiplicity-free, this forces  $X$  to be multiplicity-free. Applying Lemma 5.4 we see that this implies  $n - 2 \leq 8$ . Moreover, at the end of the proof of Lemma 5.4 we listed the decompositions of  $X$  when this occurs. Tensoring these with 1 it is immediate from Lemma 2.4 that the  $V$  is multiplicity-free if and only if  $n \leq 7$ . □

**Lemma 6.4.** (i) *Assume  $\lambda = b\omega_1$  with  $b > 1$ . Then  $V \downarrow A$  is not multiplicity-free.*

(ii) *Assume  $\lambda = \omega_2$ . Then  $V \downarrow A$  is not multiplicity-free.*

*Proof.* (i) First suppose  $b = 2$ . Note that  $S^2(\omega_1) = V$  if  $G = C_n$ , while  $S^2(\omega_1) = V + 0$  if  $G = B_n$  or  $D_n$ . Let  $A$  act on the natural module for  $G$  as  $c + d + \dots$ , where  $c > d > \dots$ . Note that if  $d = 0$ , then  $u$  is a regular element of  $B_{n-1}$  and is hence regular in  $G = D_n$ , which we are assuming is not the case. Hence  $d > 0$ .

Now  $S^2(\omega_1) \downarrow A$  contains direct summands  $S^2(c) = 2c + (2c - 4) + \dots$  and  $c \otimes d = (c + d) + (c + d - 2) + \dots$ . If  $c - d = 4k$ , then  $2c - 4k = c + d$  is common to both summands. And if  $c - d = 4k - 2$ , then  $2c - 4k = c + d - 2$  is common to both summands. In either case we see that  $V \downarrow A$  is not multiplicity-free.

Now assume that  $b \geq 3$  and that  $V \downarrow A$  is multiplicity-free. We first settle some special cases. If the  $T$ -labelling is  $202\dots$ , then  $r - 4$  is afforded by  $\lambda - 1^2, \lambda - 1^2 2, \lambda - 1^2 2^2, \lambda - 123$ , a contradiction. Similarly, if the labelling is  $2202\dots$ , then  $r - 4$  is afforded by  $\lambda - 12, \lambda - 123, \lambda - 1^2$ , which contradicts Lemma 2.2(iii). And if the labelling is  $22202\dots$ , then  $r - 8$  is afforded by  $\lambda - 12345, \lambda - 1^2 23, \lambda - 1^2 234, \lambda - 1^2 2^2, \lambda - 1^3 2$ , again contradicting Lemma 2.2(iii).

Now suppose that the initial string of 2s has length at least 4. If  $b \geq 4$ , the weights  $\lambda - 1234, \lambda - 1^2 23, \lambda - 1^2 2^2, \lambda - 1^3 2, \lambda - 1^4$  all afford  $r - 8$ , against Lemma 2.2(iii). So assume  $b = 3$ . Then  $S^3(\omega_1) = V$  or  $V + \omega_1$  according to whether or not  $G = C_n$ . One checks  $S^3(\omega_1)$  to see that  $r - 12$  occurs with multiplicity at least 7 in  $V \downarrow A$ , and hence  $V \downarrow A$  is not multiplicity-free.

(ii) The argument is similar to the  $b = 2$  case in (i). Assume  $A$  acts on the natural module as  $c + d + \dots$ , where  $c > d > \dots$ . Note that  $d > 0$ , as otherwise  $u$  would be a regular element of  $G = D_n$ . Then  $\wedge^2(\omega_1) = V$  or  $V + 0$  according to whether or not  $G$  is an orthogonal group. So  $\wedge^2(\omega_1) \downarrow A$  contains  $\wedge^2(c) = (2c - 2) + (2c - 6) + \dots$ , as well as  $c \otimes d = (c + d) + (c + d - 2) + \dots$ , as direct summands. If  $c - d = 4k + 2$ , then  $2c - 2 - 4k = c + d$  and if  $c - d = 4k$ , then  $2c - 2 - 4k = c + d - 2$ . In either case  $V \downarrow A$  is not multiplicity-free. □

**Lemma 6.5.** *Assume  $\lambda = \omega_i$  for  $3 \leq i < n$  and  $V$  is not a spin module for  $D_n$ . Then  $V \downarrow A$  is not multiplicity-free.*

*Proof.* Assume  $V \downarrow A$  is multiplicity-free. By Lemma 6.2(ii) we know that  $\alpha_i$  is in the initial string of 2s. Suppose the end of this string is at  $\alpha_j$ . First assume  $i \geq 4$ . If in addition,  $i \leq j - 3$ , then the result follows from Lemma 2.7. So we now consider situations where  $i > j - 3$  (still with  $i \geq 4$ ).

Suppose  $i = j$ . Then  $\alpha_{i+1}$  has label 0. If  $n = i + 1$ , then  $G = B_n$  and each of  $\lambda - i, \lambda - i(i + 1), \lambda - i(i + 1)^2 = (\lambda - i(i + 1))^{s_{i+1}}$  afford  $r - 2$ , a contradiction. Therefore  $n > i + 1$ . If  $\alpha_{i+2}$  has label 0 we obtain the same contradiction from  $\lambda - i, \lambda - i(i + 1), \lambda - i(i + 1)(i + 2)$ . So suppose  $\alpha_{i+2}$  has label 2. Then  $r - 4$  is afforded by each of  $\lambda - (i - 1)i, \lambda - (i - 1)i(i + 1), \lambda - i(i + 1)(i + 2)$ , which is not yet a contradiction. If  $n = i + 2$ , then  $G = C_n$  and we also get  $r - 4$  from  $\lambda - i(i + 1)^2(i + 2) = (\lambda - i(i + 1)(i + 2))^{s_{i+2}}$ . And if  $n > i + 2$ , either  $\alpha_{i+3}$  has

label 0 or else  $G = D_{i+3}$ . In either case we get an extra weight affording  $r - 4$ , which does contradict Lemma 2.2.

Therefore  $i < j$ . Then  $r - 2$  appears with multiplicity 1 and Lemma 2.2(iii) applies. By assumption,  $\alpha_{j+1}$  has label 0. Suppose  $i = j - 1$ . Then  $r - 4$  is afforded by each of  $\lambda - (i - 1)i, \lambda - ij, \lambda - ij(j + 1)$  a contradiction. And if  $i = j - 2$ , then  $r - 8$  is afforded by each of

$$\begin{aligned} &\lambda - (i - 3)(i - 2)(i - 1)i, \quad \lambda - (i - 2)(i - 1)i(i + 1), \\ &\lambda - (i - 1)i(i + 1)(i + 2), \quad \lambda - (i - 1)i(i + 1)(i + 2)(i + 3), \\ &\lambda - (i - 1)i^2(i + 1), \end{aligned}$$

contradicting Lemma 2.2(iii).

Now assume  $i = 3$ . Then  $\wedge^3(\omega_1)$  equals  $V$  or  $V + \omega_1$  depending on whether or not  $G$  is an orthogonal group. Write  $\omega_1 \downarrow A = a + b + \dots$  with  $a > b > \dots$ . We know that  $\alpha_3$  is in the initial string of 2s, and this forces  $a - b \geq 6$  so that  $r = 3a - 6$ . If  $G$  is an orthogonal group, then  $a, b, \dots$  are even and so  $a \geq 8$  (note that  $b > 0$  as  $A$  is not regular). Then  $V \downarrow A$  contains  $\wedge^3(a)$  as a direct summand which is not multiplicity-free by Lemma 5.2(ii). Indeed, there is a direct summand of highest weight  $r - 12 = 3a - 18$  appearing with multiplicity 2. Now consider  $G = C_n$ . The same argument applies provided  $3a - 18 > a$ . So it remains to consider  $a \leq 9$ . The cases are  $(a, b) = (7, 1), (9, 3), (9, 1)$ . Then  $\wedge^3(\omega_1) \downarrow A$  contains  $\wedge^3(a)$  and  $\wedge^2(a) \otimes b$  as direct summands. As  $\wedge^3(a) = (3a - 6) + (3a - 10) + \dots$  and  $\wedge^2(a) \otimes b = (2a - 2 + b) + (2a - 4 + b) + \dots$ , it follows that in each case,  $3a - 10$  occurs with multiplicity at least 2 and is not present in  $\omega_1$ .  $\square$

This completes the proof of Proposition 6.1.

It remains to consider the exceptional groups. Here we label the distinguished nonregular classes as in [Liebeck and Seitz 2012]. For convenience we reproduce the list in Table 3.

**Proposition 6.6.** *Assume  $G$  is an exceptional group and  $u$  is distinguished but not regular. Then up to graph automorphisms of  $E_6$ ,  $V_G(\lambda) \downarrow A$  is multiplicity-free if and only if  $\lambda$  and  $u$  are as in the following table.*

| $G$   | $u$                      | $\lambda$  |
|-------|--------------------------|------------|
| $F_4$ | $F_4(a_1)$               | $\omega_4$ |
| $E_6$ | $E_6(a_1)$               | $\omega_1$ |
| $E_7$ | $E_7(a_1)$ or $E_7(a_2)$ | $\omega_7$ |
| $E_8$ | $E_8(a_1)$               | $\omega_8$ |



| $G$   | classes   | labellings  |
|-------|---|---|
| $G_2$ | $G_2(a_1)$  | 02  |
| $F_4$ | $F_4(a_1), F_4(a_2), F_4(a_3)$  | 2202, 0202, 0200  |
| $E_6$ | $E_6(a_1), E_6(a_3)$  | 222022, 200202  |
| $E_7$ | $E_7(a_1), E_7(a_2), E_7(a_3),$<br>$E_7(a_4), E_7(a_5)$   | 2220222, 2220202, 2002022,<br>2002002, 0002002  |
| $E_8$ | $E_8(a_1), E_8(a_2), E_8(a_3),$<br>$E_8(a_4), E_8(a_5), E_8(a_6),$<br>$E_8(a_7), E_8(b_4), E_8(b_5),$<br>$E_8(b_6)$ | 22202222, 22202022, 20020222,<br>20020202, 20020020, 00020020,<br>00002000, 20020022, 00020022,<br>00020002 |

**Table 3.** Distinguished nonregular classes in exceptional groups.

**Lemma 6.7.** *Proposition 6.6 holds if  $G = G_2$  or  $F_4$ .*

*Proof.* First consider  $G = F_4$ . Suppose  $V \downarrow A$  is multiplicity-free. If there exist  $i \neq j$  with  $c_i \neq 0 \neq c_j$ , then either  $\alpha_i$  or  $\alpha_j$  is adjacent to a node with label 0, contradicting Lemma 2.6(ii). Therefore  $\lambda = b\omega_i$  for some  $i$ . From the diagrams in Table 3, and considering the multiplicity of  $r - 2$  using Lemma 6.2(ii), we see that  $u$  cannot be in the class  $F_4(a_3)$ , and that if  $u = F_4(a_2)$  then  $i = 4$ . But then  $\lambda - 234, \lambda - 1234, \lambda - 23^24, \lambda - 123^24$  all afford  $r - 4$ , contradicting Lemma 2.2.

Now consider  $u$  in class  $F_4(a_1)$ . If  $i = 2$ , then  $\lambda - 2, \lambda - 23, \lambda - 23^2$  all afford  $r - 2$ , a contradiction. If  $i = 1$ , then  $r - 2$  appears with multiplicity 1, but  $\lambda - 12, \lambda - 123, \lambda - 123^2$  all afford  $r - 4$ , contradicting Lemma 2.2(i). Therefore  $i = 4$ . If  $b > 1$ ,  $r - 4$  appears with multiplicity 4, which is impossible. And if  $\lambda = \omega_4$  it follows from [Seitz 1991, Table A, p. 65] and the tables at the end of [Liebeck and Seitz 1996] that  $A < B_4$ , and  $\omega_4 \downarrow B_4 = 1000 + 0001 + 0000$ . Using the information at the end of the proof of Lemma 5.4, we find that  $V \downarrow A = 8 + (10 + 4) + 0$  and hence  $V \downarrow A$  is multiplicity-free.

Finally consider  $G_2$  where the only labelling is 02. Hence  $\lambda = b\omega_2$ . Then  $\lambda - 2, \lambda - 12, \lambda - 1^32$  all afford  $r - 2$ , a contradiction.  $\square$

**Lemma 6.8.** *Proposition 6.6 holds if  $G = E_n$ .*

*Proof.* Assume  $G = E_n$  and  $V \downarrow A$  is multiplicity-free. First suppose that there exist  $i > j$  with  $c_i \neq 0 \neq c_j$ . Lemma 2.6 shows these are the only two such nodes, that neither can adjoin a node with label 0, that at least one must be an end-node, and that  $c_i = c_j = 1$ . Suppose  $j = 1$ . Then  $\alpha_3$  must be labelled 2 and from the list of possible labellings in Table 3 we see that  $\alpha_4$  has label 0. This forces  $i \geq 6$ . But then  $r - 4$  is afforded by  $\lambda - 13, \lambda - 134, \lambda - 1i, \lambda - (i - 1)i$ , a contradiction.

Therefore,  $j \neq 1$  and hence  $i = n$ . If  $j \neq n - 1$ , then we must have  $G = E_8$ ,  $j = 6$ , and  $u = E_8(a_1)$ . But here we see that  $r - 4$  occurs with multiplicity at least 5, a contradiction.

Suppose  $i = n$ ,  $j = n - 1$ . If  $\alpha_{n-3}$  has label 2, then  $r - 6$  occurs with multiplicity at least 5 from  $\lambda - (n - 2)(n - 1)n$  (multiplicity 2),  $\lambda - (n - 1)^2n = (\lambda - n)^{s_{n-1}}$ ,  $\lambda - (n - 1)n^2 = (\lambda - (n - 1))^{s_n}$ ,  $\lambda - (n - 3)(n - 2)(n - 1)$ . We get the same contradiction if  $\alpha_{n-3}$  has label 0, by replacing the last weight with  $\lambda - (n - 3)(n - 2)(n - 1)n$ , (it even appears with multiplicity 2).

Hence  $\lambda = b\omega_i$  for some  $i$ . Suppose  $b > 1$ . Then Lemma 2.3 implies that  $\alpha_i$  is an end-node with label 2 and that the adjacent node has label 2. Therefore  $i = 1$  or  $i = n$ . If  $i = 1$ , then  $r - 6$  is afforded by  $\lambda - 1234$ ,  $\lambda - 1345$ ,  $\lambda - 1^23$ ,  $\lambda - 1^234$ , contradicting Lemma 2.2(iii).

Next consider  $i = n$  where we can assume  $n = 7$  or  $8$  since the  $E_6$  case follows from the above via a graph automorphism. If  $\alpha_{n-2}$  has label 0, then  $r - 4$  is afforded by  $\lambda - (n - 1)n$ ,  $\lambda - (n - 2)(n - 1)n$ ,  $\lambda - n^2$ , contradicting Lemma 2.2(iii). Therefore,  $\alpha_{n-2}$  has label 2. The only possibilities satisfying these conditions are  $u = E_7(a_1)$ ,  $E_8(a_1)$ ,  $E_8(a_3)$ . If  $u = E_8(a_1)$ , then  $r - 12$  arises from

$$\begin{aligned} &\lambda - 1345678, \\ &\lambda - 2345678, \\ &\lambda - 234^25678, \\ &\lambda - 345678^2, \\ &\lambda - 245678^2, \\ &\lambda - 567^28^2, \\ &\lambda - 6^27^28^2, \end{aligned}$$

a contradiction. A similar argument applies to  $E_7(a_1)$  and  $E_8(a_3)$ , using the weight  $r - 8$ .

At this point we have  $\lambda = \omega_i$ . As in the proof of Lemma 5.5, we use Lemma 2.1 to reduce to the cases  $(G; i) = (E_6; 1, 2, 6)$ ,  $(E_7; 1, 7)$ , and  $(E_8; 8)$ . The action of  $A$  on  $L(G)$  is given in [Seitz 1991, Table A, p. 65 and Table 1, p. 193]. This settles all but the 27 dimensional modules  $\omega_1, \omega_6$  for  $E_6$  and the 56 dimensional module  $\omega_7$  for  $E_7$ .

Suppose  $G = E_6$ . From p. 65 of that reference we see that  $u$  is a regular element in  $C_4$  or  $A_1A_5$  according to whether  $u = E_6(a_1)$  or  $E_6(a_3)$ . Then [Liebeck and Seitz 1996, Propositions 2.3 and 2.5] show that only the first case is multiplicity-free.

Finally assume that  $G = E_7$  and  $\lambda = \omega_7$ . [loc. cit., Proposition 2.5] shows that  $V \downarrow A$  is multiplicity-free if  $u = E_7(a_1)$ . But if  $u = E_7(a_2)$ , then  $A \leq A_1F_4$  by [Seitz 1991, p. 65], and [Liebeck and Seitz 1996, Proposition 2.5] shows that  $V \downarrow A = (1 \otimes (16 + 8)) + 3$ , which is multiplicity-free. If  $u = E_7(a_4)$  or  $E_7(a_5)$ , then

both  $\alpha_5$  and  $\alpha_6$  have label 0 so that  $r - 2$  occurs with multiplicity 3, a contradiction. This leaves  $u = E_7(a_3)$ , in which case [Seitz 1991, p. 65] shows that  $A < A_1 B_5 < A_1 D_6$ . Then [Liebeck and Seitz 1996, Proposition 2.3] shows that  $V \downarrow A_1 D_6 = 1 \otimes \omega_1 + 0 \otimes \omega_5$ . Applying the decomposition at the end of the proof of Lemma 5.4, we see that this is not multiplicity-free.  $\square$

This completes the proof of Theorem 1.

## 7. Proof of Corollary 2

Now we prove Corollary 2. Let  $G$  be a simple algebraic group of rank at least 2, let  $u \in G$  be a distinguished unipotent element, and let  $A$  be an  $A_1$  subgroup of  $G$  containing  $u$ . Let  $\rho : G \rightarrow I(V)$  be an irreducible representation with highest weight  $\lambda$ .

If  $I(V) = \mathrm{SL}(V)$ , then  $\rho(u)$  is distinguished in  $I(V)$  if and only if  $V \downarrow \rho(A)$  is irreducible, so the conclusion goes back to Dynkin [1957], but see also [Seitz 1987, Theorem 7.1] where the result is given explicitly. Alternatively it is easy to check in Tables 1 and 2 of Theorem 1, that except for  $\omega_1$  for  $A_n$ ,  $B_n$ ,  $C_n$ , and 10 for  $G_2$ , the subgroup acts reducibly on  $V_G(\lambda)$ .

Now suppose  $I(V) = \mathrm{Sp}(V)$  or  $\mathrm{SO}(V)$ . If  $\rho(u)$  is distinguished in  $I(V)$ , then  $V \downarrow \rho(A)$  is multiplicity-free, and so  $\lambda$  is as in Tables 1 or 2 of Theorem 1. Moreover  $V$  is self-dual, so that  $\lambda = -w_0(\lambda)$ . Conversely, for all such  $\lambda$  in the tables,  $V \downarrow \rho(A)$  is multiplicity-free, and so  $\rho(u)$  has Jordan blocks on  $V$  of distinct sizes, hence is distinguished. This completes the proof.

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
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## In memoriam: Robert Steinberg

|  |     |
|--|-----|
| Robert Steinberg (1922–2014): In memoriam<br>V. S. VARADARAJAN   | 1   |
| Cellularity of certain quantum endomorphism algebras<br>HENNING H. ANDERSEN, GUSTAV I. LEHRER and RUIBIN ZHANG   | 11  |
| Lower bounds for essential dimensions in characteristic 2 via orthogonal representations<br>ANTONIO BABIC and VLADIMIR CHERNOUSOV                      | 37  |
| Cocharacter-closure and spherical buildings<br>MICHAEL BATE, SEBASTIAN HERPEL, BENJAMIN MARTIN and GERHARD RÖHRLE                                      | 65  |
| Embedding functor for classical groups and Brauer–Manin obstruction<br>EVA BAYER-FLUCKIGER, TING-YU LEE and RAMAN PARIMALA                             | 87  |
| On maximal tori of algebraic groups of type $G_2$<br>CONSTANTIN BELI, PHILIPPE GILLE and TING-YU LEE   | 101 |
| On extensions of algebraic groups with finite quotient<br>MICHEL BRION   | 135 |
| Essential dimension and error-correcting codes<br>SHANE CERNELE and ZINOVY REICHSTEIN  | 155 |
| Notes on the structure constants of Hecke algebras of induced representations of finite Chevalley groups<br>CHARLES W. CURTIS                          | 181 |
| Complements on disconnected reductive groups<br>FRANÇOIS DIGNE and JEAN MICHEL   | 203 |
| Extending Hecke endomorphism algebras<br>JIE DU, BRIAN J. PARSHALL and LEONARD L. SCOTT  | 229 |
| Products of partial normal subgroups<br>ELLEN HENKE  | 255 |
| Lusztig induction and $\ell$ -blocks of finite reductive groups<br>RADHA KESSAR and GUNTER MALLE   | 269 |
| Free resolutions of some Schubert singularities<br>MANOJ KUMMINI, VENKATRAMANI LAKSHMIBAI, PRAMATHANATH SASTRY and C. S. SESHADRI                      | 299 |
| Free resolutions of some Schubert singularities in the Lagrangian Grassmannian<br>VENKATRAMANI LAKSHMIBAI and REUVEN HODGES                            | 329 |
| Distinguished unipotent elements and multiplicity-free subgroups of simple algebraic groups<br>MARTIN W. LIEBECK, GARY M. SEITZ and DONNA M. TESTERMAN | 357 |
| Action of longest element on a Hecke algebra cell module<br>GEORGE LUSZTIG   | 383 |
| Generic stabilisers for actions of reductive groups<br>BENJAMIN MARTIN   | 397 |
| On the equations defining affine algebraic groups<br>VLADIMIR L. POPOV   | 423 |
| Smooth representations and Hecke modules in characteristic $p$<br>PETER SCHNEIDER  | 447 |
| On CRDAHA and finite general linear and unitary groups<br>BHAMA SRINIVASAN   | 465 |
| Weil representations of finite general linear groups and finite special linear groups<br>PHAM HUU TIEP   | 481 |
| The pro- $p$ Iwahori Hecke algebra of a reductive $p$ -adic group, $V$ (parabolic induction)<br>MARIE-FRANCE VIGNÉRAS                                  | 499 |
| Acknowledgement  | 531 |



0030-8730(2015)279:1;1-1