A Note on Andrews’ Partitions with Parts Separated by Parity

Dedicated to George Andrews in honor of his 80th birthday

Kathrin Bringmann and Chris Jennings-Shaffer

Abstract. In this note, we give three identities for partitions with parts separated by parity, which were recently introduced by Andrews.

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1. Introduction

Recently, Andrews [1] studied integer partitions in which all parts of a given parity are smaller than those of the opposite parity. Furthermore, he considered eight subcases based on the parity of the smaller parts and parts of a given parity appearing at most once or an unlimited number of times. Following Andrews, we use “ed” for evens distinct, “eu” for evens unlimited, “od” for odds distinct, and “ou” for odds unlimited. With “zw” and “xy” from the four choices above, we let $F_{zw}^{xy}(q)$ denote the generating function of partitions where zw specifies the parity and condition of the larger parts and xy specifies the parity and condition of the smaller parts.

The eight relevant generating functions are:

$$F_{eu}^{ou}(q) := \sum_{n=0}^{\infty} \frac{q^{2n}}{(q^2; q^2)_n (q^{2n+1}; q^2)_\infty},$$

$$F_{eu}^{od}(q) := \sum_{n=0}^{\infty} \frac{q^{2n} (-q^{2n+1}; q^2)_\infty}{(q^2; q^2)_n},$$

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Here, we are using the standard product notation:

\[(a; q)_n := \prod_{j=0}^{n-1} (1 - aq^j)\]

for \(n \in \mathbb{N}_0 \cup \{\infty\}\). We note that with the exception of \(F^{\text{eu}}_\text{ou}(q)\) and \(F^{\text{od}}_\text{eu}(q)\), we do not allow the subpartition consisting of the smaller parts to be empty.

Andrews’ identities (after minor corrections) can be stated as:

\[
F^{\text{od}}_\text{ed}(q) := \sum_{n=0}^{\infty} \frac{(-q^2; q^2)_n q^{2n+2}}{(q^{2n+3}; q^2_\infty)},
\]

\[
F^{\text{od}}_\text{ed}(q) := \sum_{n=0}^{\infty} q^{2n+2} (-q^2; q^2)_n (-q^{2n+3}; q^2_\infty),
\]

\[
F^{\text{ou}}_\text{od}(q) := \sum_{n=0}^{\infty} \frac{q^{2n+1}}{(q; q^2)_n (q^{2n+2}; q^2_\infty)},
\]

\[
F^{\text{ed}}_\text{ou}(q) := \sum_{n=0}^{\infty} \frac{q^{2n+1} (-q^{2n+2}; q^2_\infty)}{(q; q^2)_{n+1}},
\]

\[
F^{\text{ou}}_\text{od}(q) := \sum_{n=0}^{\infty} q^{2n+1} (-q; q^2)_n (q^{2n+2}; q^2_\infty),
\]

\[
F^{\text{ed}}_\text{od}(q) := \sum_{n=0}^{\infty} q^{2n+1} (-q; q^2)_n (-q^{2n+2}; q^2_\infty).
\]

Surprisingly, these identities are derived with little more than the \(q\)-binomial theorem, Heine’s transformation, and the Rogers–Fine identity. In the following theorem, we give new identities for \(F^{\text{od}}_\text{ed}(q)\), \(F^{\text{od}}_\text{ed}(q)\), and \(F^{\text{ou}}_\text{ou}(-q)\).
Theorem 1.1. The following identities hold:

\[ F_{\text{ed}}(q) = \frac{q(-q; q^2)_{\infty}}{1-q} \left(1 + \frac{(-q^2; q^2)_{\infty}}{(-q; q^2)_{\infty}}\right), \]  
\[
F_{\text{od}}(q) = \frac{q(-q^2; q^2)_{\infty}}{1-q} \left(1 - \frac{(-q; q^2)_{\infty}}{(-q^2; q^2)_{\infty}}\right), 
\]
\[ F_{\text{ou}}(-q) = -\frac{(-q^2; q^2)_{\infty}}{2} \left(1 - \frac{1}{(-q; q)_{\infty}}\right) + \frac{2}{(q; q)_{\infty}} \sum_{n \in \mathbb{Z}} \frac{(1)^n q^{3n(n+1)}}{1 + q^n}. \]  

Remark 1.2. The functions \( F_{\text{ed}}(q) \) and \( F_{\text{od}}(q) \) are basically modular functions. Also we find that \( F_{\text{ou}}(-q) \) is related to Ramanujan’s third-order mock theta function \( f(q) \), as:

\[ f(q) := \sum_{n=0}^{\infty} \frac{q^n}{(-q; q)_{n}^2} = \frac{2}{(q; q)_{\infty}} \sum_{n \in \mathbb{Z}} \frac{(1)^n q^{3n(n+1)}}{1 + q^n}, \]

where the final equality uses Euler’s pentagonal number theorem.

2. Proof of Theorem 1.1

To prove Eqs. (1.1) and (1.2), we require the following \( q \)-series identity:

\[ \sum_{n=0}^{\infty} \frac{(x; q)_n q^n}{(y; q)_n} = \frac{q(x; q)_{\infty}}{y(y; q)_{\infty}} + \frac{(1 - \frac{q}{y})}{(1 - \frac{q}{y})}. \]  

We note that (2.1) is (4.1) from [3] and was proved with Heine’s transformation [4, p. 241, (III.2)]. To prove Eq. (1.3), we require the concept of a Bailey pair and Bailey’s Lemma, which are described in [2, Chapter 3]. A pair of sequences \((\alpha, \beta)\) is called a Bailey pair relative to \( q \) if:

\[ \beta_n = \sum_{j=0}^{n} \frac{\alpha_j}{(q; q)_{n-j}(q^2; q)_{n+j}}. \]

A limiting form of Bailey’s Lemma states that if \((\alpha_n, \beta_n)\) is a Bailey pair relative to \( q \), then

\[ \sum_{n=0}^{\infty} q^{n^2+n} \beta_n = \frac{1}{(q^2; q)_{\infty}} \sum_{n=0}^{\infty} q^{n^2+n} \alpha_n. \]  

The Bailey pair that we use is given by:

\[ \beta'_n := \frac{1}{(-q; q)_{n}^2(1 + q^{n+1})}, \quad \alpha'_n := \frac{2(-1)^n q^{n(n+1)}}{(1-q)(1+q^n)(1+q^{n+1})}. \]  

which follows from taking the Bailey pair from Theorem 8 of [5] with \(a \to q, b = -1, c = -q\), and \(d = -1\) and dividing both \(\alpha_n\) and \(\beta_n\) by \((1 + q)\).

**Proof of Theorem 1.1.** We find that:

\[
F_{\ell d}^c(q) = (-q; q^2)\infty \sum_{n=1}^{\infty} \frac{(-q^2; q^2)_{n-1} q^{2n}}{(-q; q^2)_n} = \frac{(-q; q^2)\infty}{2} \left(1 + \sum_{n=0}^{\infty} \frac{(-1; q^2; q^2)_{n} q^{2n}}{(-q; q^2)_{n}} \right).
\]

With \(q \mapsto q^2\), \(x = -1\), and \(y = -q\), Eq. (2.1) implies that:

\[
\sum_{n=0}^{\infty} \frac{(-1; q^2; q^2)_{n} q^{2n}}{(-q; q^2)_{n}} = -\frac{q (-1; q^2)\infty}{(-q; q^2)\infty (1 - q)} + \frac{1 + q}{1 - q}.
\]

Equation (1.1) then follows after elementary simplifications.

Similarly, we have that:

\[
F_{\ell d}^c(q) = (-q^2; q^2)\infty \sum_{n=0}^{\infty} \frac{(-q; q^2)_{n} q^{2n+1}}{(-q^2; q^2)_{n}}.
\]

By applying (2.1) with \(q \mapsto q^2\), \(x = -q\), and \(y = -q^2\), we find that

\[
\sum_{n=0}^{\infty} \frac{(-q; q^2)_{n} q^{2n}}{(-q^2; q^2)_{n}} = -\frac{(-q; q^2)\infty}{(-q^2; q^2)\infty (1 - q)} + \frac{2}{1 - q},
\]

and (1.2) follows.

For \(F_{ou}^c(q)\), we begin with Andrews' identity [1]:

\[
F_{ou}^c(-q) = -\frac{(-q^2; q^2)\infty}{2} \left(2 - \frac{1}{(-q; q)\infty} - \sum_{n=0}^{\infty} \frac{q^{n^2+n}}{(-q; q^2)_{n} (1 + q^{n+1})} \right).
\]

By applying (2.2) to the Bailey pair \((\alpha', \beta')\) in (2.3), we have that:

\[
\sum_{n=0}^{\infty} \frac{q^{n^2+n}}{(-q; q^2^2)_{n} (1 + q^{n+1})} = \frac{2}{(q; q)\infty} \sum_{n=0}^{\infty} \frac{(-1)^n q^{3n(n+1)/2} (1 - q^{2n+1})}{(1 + q^n) (1 + q^{n+1})}.
\]

We use the partial fraction decomposition:

\[
\frac{1 - q^{2n+1}}{(1 + q^n) (1 + q^{n+1})} = \frac{1}{1 + q^n} - \frac{q^{n+1}}{1 + q^{n+1}},
\]

to deduce that

\[
\sum_{n=0}^{\infty} \frac{(-1)^n q^{3n(n+1)/2} (1 - q^{2n+1})}{(1 + q^n) (1 + q^{n+1})} = \sum_{n=0}^{\infty} (-1)^n q^{3n(n+1)/2} \left(\frac{1}{1 + q^n} - \frac{q^{n+1}}{1 + q^{n+1}}\right) = \sum_{n \in \mathbb{Z}} (-1)^n q^{3(n(n+1)/2)} / (1 + q^n).
\]

Altogether, this implies Eq. (1.3). \(\square\)
By applying Theorem 1.1 part 3 of [6] to the Bailey pair $E(3)$ of [7], we find that:

$$F_{od}^\text{ed}(-q) = -\frac{q(q; q)_\infty (-q^2; q^2)_\infty}{(q^2; q^2)_\infty^2} \times \sum_{n=0}^{\infty} \sum_{m=0}^{\infty} (-1)^m q^{\frac{n(n+3)}{2} + 2nm + 2m^2 + 2m} (1 + q^{2m+1}).$$

As such, we have that

$$\left( \sum_{n,m \geq 0} - \sum_{n,m < 0} \right) (-1)^m q^{\frac{n(n+3)}{2} + 2nm + 2m(m+1)}$$

$$= \frac{2 (q^2; q^2)_\infty}{(1+q)(q;q^2)_\infty} - \frac{(q^2; q^2)_\infty}{(1+q)(-q^2; q^2)_\infty}.$$

We note that the corresponding quadratic form is degenerate, and so a priori, the modularity properties of this theta function are unclear. More generally, one can prove directly that, for $c \in \mathbb{N}$:

$$\sum_{n,m \geq 0} z^n w^m q^{n^2 + 2cnm + c^2m^2} = \frac{1}{1 - \frac{w}{z^c}} \sum_{k=0}^{c-1} \sum_{n=0}^{\infty} z^{cn+k} q^{(cn+k)^2} \left( 1 - \frac{w^{n+1}}{z^{cn+c}} \right).$$

The above is a sum of partial theta functions, which sometimes combine to give a modular form.

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Kathrin Bringmann and Chris Jennings-Shaffer
Mathematical Institute
University of Cologne
Weyertal 86-90
50931 Cologne
Germany
e-mail: cjenning@math.uni-koeln.de

Kathrin Bringmann
e-mail: kbringma@math.uni-koeln.de

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