

A comparison of the Chinese and Pāli versions of the *Bala Saṃyukta*, a collection of early Buddhist discourses on “Powers” (*Bala*)*

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This article first briefly examines the textual structure of the *Bala Saṃyukta* (力相應 *Li Xiangying*) of the Chinese *Saṃyuktāgama* (Taishō vol. 2, no. 99) in conjunction with its Pāli parallel. Then it compares the main teachings contained in the two versions. These two versions of a collection on the subject of ‘powers’ (*bala*) represent two different early Buddhist schools within the Sthavira branch. This comparative study of them focuses on the composition of the usual set of five powers, on various other sets of powers, and on disagreements in some teachings about powers presented in the two versions. It reveals similarities but also significant differences in both structure and doctrinal content, thus advancing the historical/critical study of early Buddhist doctrine in this area.

Introduction

The *Bala Saṃyukta* (力相應 *Li Xiangying*) of the Chinese *Saṃyuktāgama* (henceforth abbreviated SA; 雜阿含經 *Za Ahan Jing*, Taishō vol. 2, no. 99) corresponds to the *Bala Saṃyutta* of the Pāli *Saṃyutta-nikāya* (abbreviated SN). This *saṃyukta* (相應 *xiangying*) is a collection of discourses on the subject of powers (*bala*, 力 *li*), teachings relating to one aspect of the path of practice, well known as the thirty-seven *bodhipakṣyā dharmāḥ* (P. *bodhipakkhiyā dhammā*, 菩提分法

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putifenfa).¹ In his previous study on this topic, Choong presented only the major shared content of these two versions (Choong 2000, pp. 222-223), which is limited to the usual or standard set of five powers (*pañca balāni*, 五力 *wuli*):

1. Faith-power (*saddhābala* 信力 *xinli*)
2. Effort-power (*viriyabala* 精進力 *jingjinli*)
3. Mindfulness-power (*satibala* 念力 *nianli*)
4. Concentration-power (*samādhībala* 定力 *dingli*)
5. Wisdom-power (*paññābala* 慧力 *huili*)

As Choong stated in that earlier study (p. 222), “The contents of *Bala Saṃyutta* of SN and *Li Xiangying* of SA are vastly different. Of the 110 ‘discourses’ in SN *Bala Saṃyutta* the first presents a list of the *five powers*, while the remainder are devoid of significant content. The forty-two discourses of *Li Xiangying* of SA contain various information about the *five powers*. Twenty of them have Pāli counterparts, but they are located in the *Aṅguttara Nikāya* rather than in SN.” In the present article, therefore, I examine in greater detail these and other issues regarding the SA and Pāli versions of this *samyukta*.

I first briefly examine the textual structure of the two versions. Then I compare the main teachings contained in them, making use of new editions of SA: Yin Shun’s *Za Ahan Jing Lun Huibian* 雜阿含經論會編 [*Combined Edition of Sūtra and Śāstra of the Saṃyuktāgama*] (abbreviated CSA) and the Foguang *Tripiṭaka Ahan Piṭaka Za Ahan Jing* 佛光大藏經 阿含藏 雜阿含經 (abbreviated FSA).² This will reveal both similarities and significant differences in structure and doctrinal content, thus advancing the study of early Buddhist teachings in this area.

1. Textual structure

The Pāli *Bala Saṃyutta* (Connected with Powers) is the sixth of the twelve *samyuttas* comprised in the *Mahā Vagga* (Great Section) of SN. The corresponding Chinese SA version was translated from now lost Indic-language originals.³ In the

¹ Choong (2000), “Chapter 7. The Path”, pp. 206-207.

² These two new editions contain textual corrections, modern Chinese punctuation, comments, and up-to-date information on Pāli and other textual counterparts, including different Chinese versions of the text.

³ Cf. Chung (2008), pp. 163-168.

CSA edition the SA version bears the title 力相應 *Li Xiangying* supplied by the editor, Yin Shun.⁴ In earlier editions of SA, *xiangying* or *samyukta* titles are lacking, and the beginning and end of each *samyukta* have to be inferred from the *sūtra* contents. This Chinese *Bala Samyukta* is located in the *Dao-pin Song* 道品誦 (Path Section) of the reconstructed SA. It is the fifth of the *xiangyings/samyuktas* that are identifiable in this Path Section.⁵

The SN version, preserved in Pāli, belongs to the Vibhajyavāda/Tāmraśāṭṭiya tradition (often called Theravāda). The SA version, preserved in Chinese translation, belongs to the Sarvāstivāda tradition. Thus, these two texts represent two different early Buddhist schools within the Sthavira branch, two different versions of the same collection of discourses on the subject of powers.

The Pāli *Bala Samyutta* comprises 110 discourses (SN 50.1-110), and none of them has a counterpart in the Chinese *Bala Samyukta*. The Chinese version has forty-three discourses, which do have Pāli counterparts; but nearly all of these

⁴CSA i, p. 47 (in ‘Za Ahan Jing Bulei zhi Zhengbian 雜阿含經部類之整編 [Re-edition of the Grouped Structure of SA]’), and vol. ii, p. 303.

⁵Choong (2000), pp. 19, 245; (2010), pp. 57-60. The Path Section (= the *Mahā Vagga* of SN) pertains to the *sūtra-aṅga* portion of SA/SN. *Sūtra/Sutta* is one of the three *aṅgas* represented in the structure of SA/SN: *Sūtra* (Prose), *Geyā* (Verse mixed with Prose), and *Vyākaraṇa/Veyyākaraṇa* (Exposition). In its explanation of the twelve *aṅgas* (十二分教) the *Bahubhūmika* (本地分) of the *Yogācārābhūmi-śāstra* (瑜伽師地論) explains *sūtra-aṅga* (契經) (T30, no. 1579, 418b-c) thus:

1. discourses connected with the Aggregates (無量蘊相應語)
2. discourses connected with the Sense Spheres (處相應語)
3. discourses connected with Causal Condition (緣起相應語)
4. discourses connected with the Nutriments (食相應語)
5. discourses connected with the Truths (諦相應語)
6. discourses connected with *Dhātus* (界相應語)
7. discourses connected with the *Śrāvaka-yāna*, the *Pratyekabuddha-yāna*, and the *Tathāgata-yāna* (聲聞乘相應語, 獨覺乘相應語, 如來乘相應語) (i.e. the sections spoken by *Śrāvakas* and the *Tathāgata*)
8. discourses connected with the Stations of Mindfulness, Right Efforts, Bases of Supernormal Power, Faculties, Powers, Enlightenment Factors, Path Factors, etc. discourses connected with Impurity, Mindfulness of Breathing, Trainings, and Definite Purity/Faith (念住 正斷 神足 根力 覺支 道支等相應語, 不淨 息念 諸學 證淨等相應語).

A similar content of *sūtra-aṅga* is also found in *Prakaraṇārya-vāca-śāstra* (顯揚聖教論, T31, no. 1602, 508c): “聞十二分教者。謂聞契經 應頌 記別 ... 契經者。謂諸經中 ... 或說蘊所攝法。界所攝法。處所攝法。或說緣起所攝法。或說食所攝法。諦所攝法。或說聲聞獨覺如來所攝法。或說念住正斷神足根力覺支道支所攝法。或說不淨息念學證淨等所攝法。”

counterparts are located in the *Āṅguttara Nikāya* (abbreviated AN) rather than in SN. The full set of Chinese-Pāli counterparts is shown in the following table. (The identification of the Chinese-Pāli counterparts shown is open to discussion.)

Chinese-Pāli correspondences of the *Bala Samyukta* (Li Xiangying)

<i>Bala Samyukta</i> (Chinese SA)	Pāli <i>Sutta Piṭaka</i>
661 (cf. SA-u 16)	AN 2.2.1
662	
663	
664	
665	
666	
667 (cf. SA-u 18)	AN 4.152–153
668	
669	AN 4.32
670	AN 4.153
671 (cf. SA 670)	AN 4.153
672 (cf. SA 670)	AN 4.153
673	AN 5.13
674	
675	AN 5.15
676	
677	AN 5.1 (first part)
678	AN 5.1 (latter part)
679	AN 5.2 (first part)
680 (cf. SA 678)	AN 5.2 (latter part)
681	AN 5.5
682	AN 5.5
683	AN 5.5
684 (cf. SA 75, 701; EA 46.4)	SN 22. <i>Khandha Samyutta</i> 58 = SA 75; AN 10. 21 = SA 701; MN 12.
685	AN 5.7
686	AN 6.64 (first part)
687	AN 6.64 (latter part)
688	AN 7.3-4
689	AN 7.3
690	AN 7.3
691	AN 7.4

Continued on next page

<i>Bala Samyukta</i> (Chinese SA)	<i>Pāli Sutta Piṭaka</i>
692 (cf. EA 38.1)	AN 8.27
693 (cf. EA 38.1)	AN 8.27
694	AN 8.28
695 (cf. SA 694)	AN 8.28
696 (cf. SA 694)	AN 8.28
697	
698	
699	
700	
701 (cf. SA 684; EA 46.4)	AN 10.21
702	
703	

As the table shows, the discourses that make up the *Bala Samyutta* of the Pāli SN have no counterparts in the *Bala Samyukta* of the Chinese SA. Of the 110 ‘discourses’ in the *Bala Samyutta* of SN, the first, SN 50.1, presents a list of the usual five powers; the rest are devoid of significant content; they merely add the stereotyped Gaṅgā repetition series. The list of the usual five powers does appear in the *Bala Samyukta* of SA, e.g., in SA 673 (= AN 5.13).⁶ But although the Pāli SN 50.1 presents the same list, it includes detailed information on how to develop and cultivate the five, none of which is shared with the Chinese SA 673.⁷ Thus, as regards content and presentation, SN 50.1 and SA 673 are not parallel discourses. The list of the usual five powers is present also in other discourses of the *Bala Samyukta* of SA, e.g., SA 675. Other discourses of this SA *samyukta* contain various categories and information about powers other than the usual five; but, as stated above, nearly all of their counterparts are located in AN rather than in SN. The composition of the five powers and other sets of powers will be discussed later in the article. First, however, one issue relating to textual structure needs to be addressed.

In most cases a *samyukta* of SA and its counterpart in SN have a high percentage of their discourses in common; however, not one discourse is common to the

⁶SA 673: “世尊告諸比丘。有五力。何等為五。信力・精進力・念力・定力・慧力。” (T 2, p. 185c; CSA ii, p. 310; FSA 2, p. 1064). AN 5.13: III, p. 10: *Pañc’ imāni bhikkhave balāni. Katamāni pañca? Saddhābalaṃ, viriyabalaṃ, satibalaṃ, samādhibalaṃ, paññābalaṃ.*

⁷SN 50.1: V, p. 249: *Pañc’ imāni bhikkhave balāni. Katamāni pañca. Saddhābalaṃ viriyabalaṃ satibalaṃ samādhibalaṃ paññābalaṃ. Imāni kho bhikkhave pañca balānīti. Seyyathāpi bhikkhave Gaṅgā nadi pācīnaninnā pācīnapoṇā pācīnapabbharā evam eva kho bhikkhave bhikkhu pañca balāni bhāvento pañca balāni bahulīkaronto nibbānaninno hoti nibbānapoṇo nibbānapabbhāro. ... nibbānapabbhāro ti.* (Cf. Woodward 1930, p. 223; Bodhi 2000, p. 1713)

Bala Samyukta of SA and the *Bala Samyutta* of SN. Thus, the situation with the *Bala Samyukta* of SA and its SN counterpart is highly unusual. For this situation, two possible explanations suggest themselves.

The first possibility is that the Pāli *Bala Samyutta* formerly had much the same content as the present Sarvāstivādin version, but almost all of that content was subsequently moved out of SN and into AN. This first possibility seems unlikely, however, because it is hard to suggest a plausible motive for virtually emptying the *Bala Samyutta* in this way.

The second possibility is that both the content and the arrangement of the two versions developed *after* the two schools – the Sarvāstivāda (SA) and Vibhajjavāda/Tāmraśāṭṭiya (SN) – had separated within the Sthavira tradition. In other words, only the list of the usual five powers that is now common to the two versions was present in the earlier *Bala Samyukta* that existed before the split between the two schools. This second possibility is suggested by a striking feature of the entries in the right-hand column of the table. The twenty-seven AN parallels are in increasing numerical order of the AN *nipātas* (i.e., the numbers before the dot in the AN references shown in the table). The sequence is: 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10. This suggests that the content of the SA *Bala Samyukta* was imported from the Sarvāstivādin Numerical Collection (the lost Sarvāstivādin counterpart of AN) at some time after the split from the Vibhajjavādin tradition.⁸ That is, it may be that both traditions felt a need to fill up a nearly empty *Bala Samyukta/Bala Samyutta*. This would mean that the *Bala Samyukta* in both traditions was a largely artificial creation. It may have originally contained just one discourse (on the standard five *balas*) and then later been expanded, independently in the two traditions. The implication is that the Sarvāstivādins selected from their Numerical Collection discourses that dealt with various numbers of *balas* and then moved them into the *Bala Samyukta* of SA, while on the other hand the Vibhajjavādins filled out their SN *Bala Samyutta* by adding the stereotype Gaṅgā repetition series.

⁸For the movement of material from the lost Sarvāstivādin Numerical Collection into the SA *Bala Samyukta*, there are partial parallels elsewhere in SA. One may consider, for example, the following SA *samyuktas*: *Sekha* = *Xue* 學 (SA 816-832), *Assa* = *Ma* 馬 (SA 917-926), *Kammavipāka* = *Yebao* 業報 (SA 1039-1061) (cf. Choong 2000, pp. 19, 21-22, 227-228, 246-247). For these, the Pāli parallels of the component *suttas* are almost all in AN. No intact Sarvāstivādin Numerical Collection is extant. (The Sarvāstivādin SA and MA are preserved intact in Chinese translation, and large portions of the Sarvāstivādin DA survive in Sanskrit.)

2. The contents of the usual five powers in the two versions

SA 675 records the Buddha as saying this:

Regarding the faith-power, one should know that it is the four definite faiths/purities. Regarding the effort-power, one should know that it is the four right efforts. Regarding the mindfulness-power, one should know that it is the four stations of mindfulness. Regarding the concentration-power, one should know that it is the four *dhyānas*. Regarding the wisdom-power, one should know that it is the four noble truths.⁹

Its Pāli counterpart, AN 5.15, has similar explanations, except for the power of faith.¹⁰ The AN discourse equates the faith-power with the “four limbs of stream-entry” (*catūsu sotāpattiyaṅgesu*), whereas the SA discourse equates it with the “four definite faiths/purities” (四不壞淨 *si buhuaijing*; 不壞淨 “definite faiths/purities” = Skt. *avetya-prasāda*, P. *avecca-pasāda*). Although the terms used are different, the contents of the two sets equated with the faith-power are equivalent, according to the *Sotāpatti Saṃyutta* of SN and its counterpart *Buhuaijing Xiangying* (不壞淨相應) of SA.¹¹ The four are: 1. definite faith (*aveccappasāda*) in the Buddha (佛不壞淨), 2. definite faith in the Dharma (法不壞淨), 3. definite faith in the Saṅgha (僧不壞淨), 4. noble morality (*ariyakanta-sīla*, 聖戒). Thus, the use of different terms in explaining the faith-power is the only significant divergence between the two traditions in this teaching on the usual five powers.

These five powers are essentially identical with the five faculties (*pañca indriyāni*), as is explicitly stated in SN 48. *Indriya Saṃyutta* 43 (SN V, pp. 219-220). That is, the five powers are the five faculties; the five items are the same in the two sets, *balas* and *indriyas*. On the other hand, the Pāli discourse in question (SN 48.43) has no SA counterpart; also, its content is totally absent from the *Bala Saṃyukta* of SA.¹²

⁹“彼信力。當知是四不壞淨。精進力者。當知是四正斷。念力者。當知四念處。定力者。當知是四禪。慧力者。當知是四聖諦。” T 2, p. 185c; CSA ii, p. 311; FSA 2, p. 1065. Cf. also SA 666 (T 2, p. 184c; CSA ii, p. 306; FSA 2, p. 1058).

¹⁰AN III, pp. 11-12: ... *Catūsu sotāpattiyaṅgesu* ... *Catūsu sammappadhānesu* ... *Catūsu satipatthānesu* ... *Catūsu jhānesu* ... *Catūsu ariyasaccesu* Cf. AN 5.14: III, pp. 10-11.

¹¹Choong (2000), pp. 220, 228-229.

¹²For a discussion of this issue regarding *bala* and *indriya*, see also Gethin (1992), “9. The balas”, pp. 140-145.

Nevertheless, these usual five powers are content common to the two versions and are therefore likely to date from before the two corresponding schools split.

3. The other sets of powers

While the usual set of five powers, just discussed, is the only set shared by the *Bala Samyukta* of SA and its counterpart in SN, there are, as mentioned above, other sets of *bala* recorded in the *Bala Samyukta* of SA that do have Pāli counterparts, though these are located not in SN but in AN. They are the following:

- Two *balas* “powers”:
Calculation-power, Cultivation-power.¹³
- Three *balas*:
Faith-power, Effort-power, Wisdom-power.¹⁴
- Four *balas*:
(1) Faith-power, Effort-power, Mindfulness-power, Wisdom-power.¹⁵
(2) Faith-power, Mindfulness-power, Concentration-power, Wisdom-power.¹⁶
(3) Faith-power, Effort-power, Mindfulness-power, Concentration-power¹⁷
(4) Enlightenment/Wisdom-power, Effort-power, Innocence-power, Sympathy-power¹⁸
- Five *balas*:
(Training powers:) Faith-power, Effort-power, Shame-power, Guilt-power, Wisdom-power.¹⁹
- Six *balas*:
The six powers of a Tathāgata (SA 686–687 = AN 6.64: III, 417–420)
- Seven *balas*:

¹³數力, 修力 (in SA 661) = *paṭisaṅkhānabala*, *bhāvanābala* (in AN 2.2.1: I, 52).

¹⁴信力, 精進力, 慧力 (SA 664–666, no Pāli counterparts).

¹⁵信力, 精進力, 念力, 慧力 (SA 667).

¹⁶信力, 念力, 定力, 慧力 (also in SA 667).

¹⁷*saddhābala* (= 信力), *viriyabala* (= 精進力), *satibala* (= 念力), *samādhībala* (= 定力) (AN 4.152: II, 141) = (1) and (2), above.

¹⁸覺力, 精進力, 無罪力, 攝力 (SA 667, 670–672) = *paññābala*, *viriyabala*, *anavajjabala*, *saṅgāhabala* (AN 4.153: II, 142).

¹⁹(學力:) 信力, 精進力, 慚力, 愧力, 慧力 (SA 677–680) = (*sekhābalāni*): *saddhābala*, *hiribala* (= 慚力), *ottappabala* (= 愧力), *viriyabala*, *paññābala* (AN 5.1–2: III, 1–2).

Faith-power, Effort-power, Shame-power, Guilt-power, Mindfulness-power, Concentration-power, Wisdom-power.²⁰

- Eight *balas*:

- (1) 自在王者力, 斷事大臣力, 結恨女人力, 啼泣嬰兒力, 毀咎愚人力, 審諦黠慧力, 忍辱出家力, 計數多聞力 (SA 692-693) = *Roṇṇabalā dāraka, kodhabalā mātugāmā, āvudhabalā corā, issariyabalā rājāno, ujhattibalā bālā, nijhattibalā paṇḍitā, paṭisaṅkhānabalā bahussutā, khantibalā samaṇabrāhmaṇā* (AN 8.27: IV, 223)
- (2) The “eight powers of an influx-extinguished *bhikṣu*” (SA 694 = AN 8.28: IV, 223-225)²¹

- Nine *balas*:

Faith-power, Effort-power, Shame-power, Guilt-power, Mindfulness-power, Concentration-power, Wisdom-power, Calculation-power, Cultivation-power.²²

- Ten *balas*:

- (1) The ten powers of a *Tathāgata* (SA 684, 701 = AN 10.21: V, 32-36; MN 12: I, 68-83; SA 685 = AN 5.7: III, 5-6; SA 702, 703)
- (2) 自在王者力, 斷事大臣力, 機關工巧力, 刀劍賊盜力, 怨恨女人力, 啼泣嬰兒力, 毀咎愚人力, 審諦黠慧力, 忍辱出家力, 計數多聞力 (SA 699-700, no Pāli counterparts)

²⁰ 信力, 精進力, 慚力, 愧力, 念力, 定力, 慧力 = *saddhābala, viriyabala, hiribala, ottappabala, satibala, samādhībala, paññābala* (SA 688-691 = AN 7. 3-4: IV, 3-4).

²¹ The “eight powers of an influx-extinguished *bhikṣu*” (漏盡比丘有八力, *aṭṭha khīṇāsavassa bhikkhuno balāni*) in the two versions have minor differences in content, as follows. SA 694 (T 2, p. 188b; CSA ii, p. 322; FSA 2, p. 1084): (1) Power of inclining towards seclusion (離), (2) Power of seeing the five sensualities as fire-pits (若見五欲, 猶見火坑), (3)-(8) Power of practising (修) the four stations of mindfulness (四念處), the four right efforts (四正斷), the four bases of supernormal power (四如意足), the five faculties-and-powers (五根 · 五力), the seven factors of enlightenment (七覺分), and the noble eightfold way (八聖道分). AN 8.27: IV, 223-225: (1) Power of fully seeing (*suditṭhā*) by right wisdom (*sammappaññāya*) all compounded things (*sabbe saṅkhārā*) as they really are (*yathābhūtam*) as impermanent (*aniccato*), (2) Power of seeing the sensualities (*kāma*) as fire-pits (*aṅgarakāsūpamā*), (3) Power of inclining towards seclusion (*viveka*), (4)-(8) Power of practicing (*bhāvitā*) the four stations of mindfulness (*cattāro satipaṭṭhānā*), the four bases of supernormal power (*cattāro iddhipādā*), the five faculties (*pañc’ indriyāni*), the seven factors of enlightenment (*satta bojjhaṅgā*), and the noble eightfold way (*ariyo aṭṭhaṅgiko maggo*) (Cf. Hare 1935, pp. 151-152).

²² 信力, 精進力, 慚力, 愧力, 念力, 定力, 慧力, 數力, 修力 (SA 697-698, no Pāli counterparts). Note: This set is a combination of the seven and the two *balas*.

(details discussed below, Section 4.(3))

Some sets of *bala* in the *Bala Samyukta* of SA have no Pāli parallels. The SA tradition therefore appears to have preserved or developed more sets of *bala* than the Pāli tradition.

4. Disagreements in some teachings on *balas*

In the following I discuss only the principal disagreements on some *bala*-related teachings presented in the *Bala Samyukta* of SA and its Pāli counterparts, under three headings: (1) Four powers, (2) Ten powers: the *Tathāgata* and the Wisdom-liberated one, and (3) Eight powers and ten powers.

(1) Four powers

(SA 667, 670-672 = AN 4.153; SA 667 = SA-u 18;

SA 668, no Pāli counterpart; SA 669 = AN 4.32)

The SA discourses numbered 667, 670-672 and their Pāli counterpart AN 4.153 list, among other sets, this set of four powers:

1. Enlightenment/ Wisdom-power (覺力 *jueli*, *paññābala*)²³
2. Effort-power (精進力 *jingjinli*, *viriyabala*)
3. Innocence-power (無罪力 *wuzuili*, *anavajjabala*)
4. Sympathy-power (攝力 *sheli*, *saṅgāhabala*)

SA 667 provides an explanation of this set, particularly the sympathy-power. This explanation is also found in another Chinese version, SA-u 18 (T2, no. 101: p. 497b), which is the counterpart of SA 667. The following discusses some issues raised by these explanations.

(a) SA 667 reports the Buddha as saying this:²⁴

There are four powers. ...

²³Note: “The power of faith” in Woodward (1933), p. 145 is mistranslated (or misprinted?) for the term *paññābalaṃ* (AN 4.153: II, p. 142).

²⁴“有四力。何等為覺力。於善·不善法如實知。有罪·無罪。習近·不習近。卑法·勝法。黑法·白法。有分別法·無分別法。緣起法·非緣起法如實知。是名覺力。何等為精進力。謂四正斷。如前廣說。何等為無罪力。謂無罪身·口·意。是名無罪力。何等為攝力。謂四攝事。惠施·愛語·行利·同利。” T 2, p. 184c; CSA ii, p. 307; FSA 2, p. 1059.

What is enlightenment-power? One knows, as they really are, good and bad *dharma*s; guilt and innocence; acceptable and unacceptable; inferior and superior *dharma*s; black and white *dharma*s; distinguishing and undistinguishing *dharma*s; conditioned arising *dharma*s and unconditioned arising *dharma*s (非緣起法 *feiyuan-qifa*). This is what is called enlightenment-power.

What is effort-power? This is the four right efforts, as explained above in detail.

What is innocence-power? This is to be guiltless in body, speech and mind. This is what is called innocence-power.

What is sympathy-power? This is the four bases of sympathy (“holding together”): charitable giving, kind speech, beneficial conduct, and treating equally.

Another Chinese version, SA-u 18 (the counterpart of SA 667), reports the Buddha as explaining the four powers thus:²⁵

There are four powers. What are the four powers? The first is mind-power (意力 *yili*); the second is effort-power (精進力 *jingjinli*); the third is non-violating power (不犯力 *bufanli*); the fourth is guarding power (守力 *shouli*).

What is mind-power? A monk knows good and bad conditions (善惡濁 *shan'ezhuo*) as they really are; he knows violating/offensive and non-violating; he knows approaching and non-approaching; he knows lesser and outstanding; he knows black and white; and he also knows arising conditions/states (從得濁 *congdezhuo*) as they really are. This is what is called mind-power.

²⁵“有四力。何等為四力。一者意力。二者精進力。三者不犯力。四者守力。意力為何等。若有比丘知善惡濁如至誠知。亦知犯亦知不犯。亦知可行亦知不可行。亦知非亦知增。亦知白亦知黑。亦知從得濁如諦知。是名為意力。精進力為何等。在有比丘在有濁所惡說。所犯說。所不可說。所黑說。不用進人說。如是輩為棄之。若所為濁好說。不犯說。可習說。可說。白說。所道說。如是輩濁。為行為貪欲。為行為精進。為受意。為制意。是名為精進力。不犯力為何等。在有比丘為不犯身受行止。為不犯口。為不犯心受行止。是名為不犯力。守力為何等。謂四輩。何等為四輩。一為攝。二為布施。三為相哀。四為相助善行。是名為守力。” T2, no. 101: p. 497b.

What is effort-power? Whatever states (濁 *zhuo*) are regarded (說 *shuo*) as evil, offensive, unacceptable, black, [and] not useful – these a monk discards (為棄之 *weiqizhi*); but whatever states are regarded as good, inoffensive, acceptable, welcome, white, [and] virtuous – for such states (如是輩濁 *rushibeizhuo*) he acts with zeal, acts with effort, exerts his mind, directs his mind. This is what is called effort-power.

What is non-violating power? A monk does not violate the moral discipline (受行止 *shouxingzhi*) with regard to body, speech, and mind. This is what is called non-violating power.

What is guarding power? This is the four bases. What are the four bases? The first is holding together, the second is charitable giving, the third is treating with kindness, and the fourth is helpful good conduct. That is what is called guarding power.

Thus, the expressions and contents of these two Chinese versions (SA 667 and SA-u 18) of the four powers are clearly not the same, although to some extent they are similar in meaning. Also, some Chinese terms, such as 善惡濁 *shan'ezhuo*, 從得濁 *congdezhuo*, used in the SA-u 18 version are not easily understood without comparing with SA 667.

(b) The items listed above for the four bases of sympathy/guarding are also listed in SA 669 = AN 4.32.²⁶ The corresponding Pāli terms in AN 4.32 are, *cattāri saṅgahavatthūni* (four bases of sympathy), *dāna* (charitable giving), *peyyavajja* (kind speech), *atthacariyā* (useful conduct), and *samānattatā* (treating equally). Thus, the notion of four bases of sympathy is shared by the two traditions.

(c) Regarding the four bases of sympathy, SA 668 reports the Buddha as saying:²⁷

What is the highest charitable giving? It is giving the Dharma. What is the highest kind speech? It is when a good man, who is happy to

²⁶T 2, p. 185a; CSA ii, p. 308; FSA 2, pp. 1060–1061. AN II, p. 32 (cf. Woodward 1933, p. 36).

²⁷“若最勝施者。謂法施。最勝愛語者。謂善男子樂聞。應時說法。行利最勝者。諸不信者能令入信。建立於信。立戒者以淨戒。慳者以施。惡智者以正智令入建立。同利最勝者。謂阿羅漢以阿羅漢。阿那含以阿那含。斯陀含以斯陀含。須陀洹以須陀洹。淨戒者以淨而授於彼。” T 2, p. 185a; CSA ii, p. 307; FSA 2, p. 1060.

learn, is given a Dharma talk at an appropriate time. What is the highest useful conduct? It is being able to help those who are unbelievers to have faith, to establish faith; being able to help those who would like to establish morality to have pure morality; being able to help those who are stingy to delight in charitable giving; being able to help those who have wrong knowledge to establish right knowledge. What is the highest equal treatment? It is treating those (而授於彼 *ershōuyubi*) who are *Arhats* as *Arhats*, those who are *Anāgāmins* as *Anāgāmins*, those who are *Sakṛdāgāmins* as *Sakṛdāgāmins*, those who are *Srotāpannas* as *Srotāpannas*; and those who have established pure morality as pure.

This discourse does not, however, have a Pāli counterpart. Also, the explanation of the item, equal treatment (同利 *tongli*) seems unclear, both in meaning and in the practical sense. The antiquity of these pieces of doctrine is therefore in question.

Accordingly, the explanations of the four powers provided in SA 667 and SA-u 18 not only are different in phrasing, but also are not found in the Pāli version. Only the items on the four powers and on the four bases of sympathy are included in the Pāli version (AN 4.153, and AN 4.32). Also, the teachings in SA 668 on what is the highest in each of the four bases of sympathy are totally lacking in the Pāli version. Therefore, this set of four powers is likely to be a later doctrinal development, one that is particularly developed in the SA tradition.

(2) The *Tathāgata* and the Wisdom-liberated one: Ten powers

(SA 684 = SN 22.58 (= SA 75) + AN 10.21 (= SA 701))

In content and in structure SA 684 presents two parts.²⁸ The first part is about the distinction, the specific feature, the difference between the *Tathāgata*, who is fully enlightened, and a wisdom-liberated one. The second part is about the ten powers of a *Tathāgata*. The first part corresponds to one Pāli discourse, SN 22.58 (= SA 75);²⁹ the second part corresponds to another Pāli discourse, AN 10.21 (= SA 701).³⁰ Thus, the Chinese SA 684 amounts to a combination of these two Pāli

²⁸T 2, pp. 186b-187c; CSA ii, pp. 314-317; FSA 2, pp. 1071-1076.

²⁹SN III, pp. 65-66; cf. Woodward (1925), pp. 57-58; Bodhi (2000), pp. 900-901. T 2, p. 19b-c; CSA i, pp. 122-123; FSA 1, pp. 122-123.

³⁰AN V, pp. 32-36; Woodward (1936), pp. 23-26. T 2, p. 189a; CSA ii, p. 325; FSA 2, p. 1088.

texts, SN 22.58 and AN 10.21. Some issues, between the Chinese SA and Pāli versions in each of these two parts, need to be addressed here.

In the first part of SA 684 and also in SN 22.58 the Buddha explains what is the distinction, the specific feature, the difference between the *Tathāgata*, who is fully enlightened, and the wisdom-liberated one (*paññāvimutto*, 慧解脱 *hui-jietuo*). However, these two texts use different expressions when referring to the *Tathāgata* and the wisdom-liberated one, as follows:

SA 684 (also SA 75)	SN 22.58
如來·應·等正覺 <i>rulai ying dengzhengjue</i> (the <i>Tathāgata</i> , worthy one, fully enlightened)	<i>Tathāgato araham̐ sammāsambuddho</i> (the <i>Tathāgata</i> , Arhant, fully enlightened)
阿羅漢慧解脱 <i>aluohan huijietuo</i> (an Arhant liberated by wisdom)	<i>paññāvimuttena bhikkhunā</i> (a <i>bhikṣu</i> liberated by wisdom)

The SA version indicates the difference between the *Tathāgata* and an Arhant liberated by wisdom, whereas the SN version distinguishes between the *Tathāgata* who is Arhant and a *bhikṣu* liberated by wisdom. In SA the Chinese term, 應 *ying* (“worthy one”) is translated according to the meaning from the Sanskrit term arhant, but the term 阿羅漢 *aluohan* is transcribed according to the sound from the same Sanskrit term arhant. The SA version applies the transcribed term 阿羅漢 *aluohan* to the person who is liberated by wisdom but not to the *Tathāgata*. The SN version applies the term Arhant (P. *Araham̐*) to the *Tathāgata* but not to the person who is liberated by wisdom. Thus, in SA an Arhant is portrayed as being at a lower level than a *Tathāgata*, while in SN an Arhant is at the same level as a *Tathāgata* (cf. Choong 2000, p. 69).

A similar situation is found in the second part of SA 684 and in AN 10.21. Both record that the Buddha explains the ten powers³¹ of a *Tathāgata*. However,

³¹ MN 12 *Mahāsīhanāda Sutta* (I, pp. 68-83. Cf. Horner 1954, pp. 91-110; Ñāṇamoli and Bodhi 1995, pp. 164-178) provides an explanation, listing the ten powers (*dasa balāni*) of a *Tathāgata*, similar to SA 684 and AN 10.21, as follows:

- (1) knowing, as it really is, the possible as possible and the impossible as impossible
- (2) knowing, as it really is, the result of past, present and future actions
- (3) knowing, as it really is, the path leading to all destinations
- (4) knowing, as it really is, the world with its many different elements
- (5) knowing, as it really is, the different inclinations of beings
- (6) knowing, as it really is, the lower and higher faculties of beings

at the end the two versions use different expressions when referring to the result of attaining the ten powers of a *Tathāgata*, as follows:

SA 684 (also SA 701)	AN 10.21
Possessed of such powers, the <i>Tathāgata</i> , worth one, fully enlightened, attains the highest wisdom of the past Buddhas, is able to set rolling the Brahma-wheel, roars his lion's roar in the assemblies. ³²	These then, <i>bhikkhus</i> , are the <i>Tathāgata</i> 's powers of a <i>Tathāgata</i> , possessed of which the <i>Tathāgata</i> claims leadership, roars his lion's roar in the assemblies and sets rolling the Brahma-wheel. ³³
These ten powers are possessed only by a <i>Tathāgata</i> . This is what is called the various differences between the <i>Tathāgata</i> and a <i>Śrāvaka</i> . ³⁴	

The term *śrāvaka* (P. *sāvaka*), meaning “a hearer”, here refers to a disciple who could be a *bhikkhu* or an *Arhant* liberated by wisdom. The SA version of the notion of the ten powers of a *Tathāgata* distinguishes between the *Tathāgata* and a disciple of the Buddha, whereas the SN version does not clearly do this.

This feature of the SA version may, to some extent, reflect later Mahāyāna developments. In Mahāyāna Buddhist tradition the *Śrāvaka* and the *Arhant* are rated less highly than the follower of the Bodhisattva path, whose aim is to become a Buddha. The stage of Buddha in Mahāyāna Buddhism is achieved only by practitioners following the Bodhisattva path.

(3) Eight powers and ten powers

(SA 692-693 = AN 8.27; SA 699-700, no Pāli counterpart)

SA 692-693 and their Pāli counterpart AN 8.27 present a set of eight powers thus:

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- (7) knowing, as it really is, the defilement, purity and arising with regard to the jhānas, liberations, concentrations and attainments
 - (8) knowing, as it really is, recollection of many former births
 - (9) knowing, as it really is, perceiving with the divine eye how beings pass away and reappear according to their actions
 - (10) knowing, as it really is, entering on and abiding in, through extinction of all influxes, the liberation of mind and liberation through wisdom

However, SA 686-687 (T 2, p. 187b-c; CSA ii, pp. 318-319; FSA 2, pp. 1077-1079) = AN 6.64: III, pp. 417-420, mention in common only the six powers. They are (1)-(3), (8)-(10) of the above ten powers.

SA 692-693: The power of kings is ruling, **the power of ministers is judging**, the power of women-folk is hatred/scolding, the power of children is crying, the power of fools is slander, the power of wise men is carefulness, the power of recluses is patience, the power of the learned is scrutiny.³⁵

AN 8.27: The power of children is crying, the power of women-folk is scolding, **the power of thieves is weapons/fighting**, the power of kings is ruling, the power of fools is contention, the power of wise men is cleverness/suavity, the power of the learned is analysis/scrutiny, the power of recluses and brahmins is patience.³⁶

Only one power in each version is not shared: SA has “the power of ministers is judging”, whereas AN has “the power of thieves is weapons”. The sequence in this set of eight powers is also different in the two versions.

A similar set, but with ten powers rather than eight, is found in SA 699-700, which have no Pāli counterpart:

The power of kings is ruling, the power of ministers is judging, **the power of skilled workers is tools**, **the power of thieves is weapons**, the power of women-folk is hatred/scolding, the power of children is crying, the power of fools is contention, the power of wise men is suavity, the power of recluses is patience, the power of the learned is scrutiny.³⁷

Compared with the list of eight powers in SA 692-693 (quoted above), this adds “the power of thieves is weapons”, which is also found in AN 8.2 (quoted above); and it adds one further power, “the power of skilled workers is tools”.

As regards its contents this set of ten powers seems largely irrelevant to the life of *bhikkhus*. It is therefore unclear why the Buddha should have taught it to them.

³⁵“自在王者力，斷事大臣力，結恨女人力，啼泣嬰兒力，毀咎愚人力，審諦黠慧力，忍辱出家力，計數多聞力。” T 2, p. 188b; CSA ii, pp. 321-322; FSA 2, pp. 1082-1083.

³⁶*Roṇṇabala dāraka, kodhabāla mātugāmā, āvudhabalā corā, issariyabalā rājāno, ujjhattibalā bālā, nijjhattibalā paṇḍitā, paṭisaṅkhānabalā bahussutā, khantibalā samaṇabrāhmaṇā.* AN IV, p. 223; cf. Hare (1935), p. 150.

³⁷“自在王者力，斷事大臣力，機關工巧力，刀劍賊盜力，怨恨女人力，啼泣嬰兒力，毀咎愚人力，審諦黠慧力，忍辱出家力，計數多聞力。” T 2, pp. 188c-189a; CSA ii, p. 324; FSA 2, pp. 1086-1088.

Also, there are more such discourses on powers in the SA tradition that have no Pāli parallels. Thus, although many of the discourses on powers are common to the two traditions, questions must be raised regarding the antiquity of the pieces of doctrine that are not shared.

Conclusion

The discourses that make up the *Bala Samyutta* of the Pāli SN have no counterparts in the *Bala Samyukta* of the Chinese SA. The discourses in the *Bala Samyukta* of the Chinese SA have Pāli counterparts located not in SN but rather in AN. No discourse is common to the *Bala Samyukta* of SA and the *Bala Samyutta* of SN. For this situation, two possible explanations are suggested. The first is that the two versions formerly matched up well, but the Pāli tradition subsequently removed most of the contents of this earlier *Bala Samyutta* into AN. The second possibility is that the textual structure and arrangement of SA and SN may have developed after the two traditions had separated; only the usual list of five powers, which is common to the two versions of the *Bala Samyukta* is original. The *Bala Samyukta* in both traditions was a largely artificial creation; because the standard five powers (*bala*) belonged to the well-known thirty-seven *bodhipakṣyā dharmāḥ*, each of the two traditions independently filled up the *Bala Samyukta*, which originally may have contained just one discourse on this standard set of five *balas*.

As to contents, this comparative study has focused on the usual set of five powers in the Chinese and Pāli versions, on a variety of other sets of powers, and on disagreements on some teachings about powers. The comparison has revealed the following main points:

1. The SA version of *Bala Samyukta* has more sets of powers than the Pāli.
2. The only difference between the Chinese SA and the Pāli *nikāyas* regarding the usual five powers is in the terminology used in explaining the faith-power (the first of the five). The relevant Pāli AN discourse associates the faith-power with the “four limbs of stream-entry” (*catūsu sotāpattiyaṅgesu*), while the SA discourse associates it with the “four definite faiths/purities” (四不壞淨 *si buhuaijing*). But despite this difference in terminology, the contents of the faith-power are the same in the two cases.
3. The five powers are identical with the five faculties (*pañca indriyāni*) as is explicitly indicated in SN 48. *Indriya Samyutta* 43. However, this discourse has no

SA counterpart; indeed, its content is entirely absent from the *Bala Samyukta* of SA.

4. The contents of one set of four powers – 1. Enlightenment, 覺力 *jueli*, 2. Effort-power 精進力 *jingjinli*, 3. Innocence-power 無罪力 *wuzuili*, 4. Sympathy-power 攝力 *sheli*, *saṅgāhabala* – are particularly developed in the SA tradition.

5. In the teaching on ten powers, the SA version indicates an *Arhant* is at a lower level than a *Tathāgata*, while the SN version indicates they are at the same level. The SA version also distinguishes between the *Tathāgata* and a disciple of the Buddha, whereas the SN version does not clearly state this.

6. As regards content, the set of eight or ten powers – the power of kings is ruling, etc. – appears largely unrelated to the life of *bhikṣus*. Also, there are more discourses devoted to this in SA than in AN. Thus, even though many of these pieces of doctrine are common to SA and AN, their antiquity is in question.

Overall, this study has revealed some substantial disagreements in the major teachings on *bala* “powers” between the Chinese and Pāli versions of the *Bala Samyukta*.

Abbreviations

AN	<i>Aṅguttara-nikāya</i>
CSA	Yin Shun's <i>Za Ahan Jing Lun Huibian</i> [Combined Edition of <i>Sūtra</i> and <i>Śāstra</i> of the <i>Samyuktāgama</i>] (3 vols, 1983)
DA	<i>Dīrghāgama</i> (T 2, no. 1)
EA	<i>Ekottarikāgama</i> (T 2, no. 125)
FSA	Foguang <i>Tripitaka Ahan Piṭaka Za Ahan Jing (Samyuktāgama)</i> (4 vols, 1983)
MA	<i>Madhyamāgama</i> (T 1, no. 26)
MN	<i>Majjhima-nikāya</i>
PTS	Pali Text Society
SA	<i>Samyuktāgama</i> (T 2, no. 99)
SA-u	Unattributed SA (T 2, no. 101) (The author and school of this collection are unidentified. An Shigao (fl. 148-170) is considered the translator by some. Harrison 2002, p. 2.)
SN	<i>Samyutta-nikāya</i>
T	Taishō Chinese <i>Tripitaka</i> (the standard edition for most scholarly purposes)

AN, MN and SN references are to PTS editions.

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