

The Principal Teachings of Buddha in the Saundarananda Mahākāvya*

Dr. Samniang Leurmsai**

Introduction

The purpose of this paper is to bring forward the principal teachings of Buddha and the enlightenment of Nanda, written in the Sanskrit poetical work entitled "Saundarananda Mahākāvya." This would be useful for Thai Buddhist people who are familiar with the teachings of Buddha which were taught through Pāli language for a long time. In this paper, I make reference to the cantos and verses of Saundarananda Mahākāvya, for example : (13.25) refers to Canto No. 13 and Verse No. 25.

Among Buddhist Sanskrit texts, the Saundarananda Mahākāvya is one of the beautiful poetical works on a par with the Buddhacarita Mahākāvya. It was composed by the great Buddhist poet named Aśvaghōṣa who was a monk belonging to the Sarvāstivādin school and lived in the same period of King Kaṇiṣka in the northern part of India about 120 AD (Smith 1967:272). The work consists of 1,066 verses (*śloka-s*) and is divided into 18 cantos (*sarga-s*) in which the legend of Buddha leading prince Nanda, his own half-brother, to renounce the world, is contained. In cantos I-V, the author describes a short history of Ikṣvāku dynasty, Kapilavāstu city and king Śuddhodana, love-scene of Nanda and his wife, Sundarī, and the ordination of Nanda. He narrates the topics of Sundarī's despair, Nanda's lamentations, women as obstacle, the denunciation of conceit, the vision of paradise, the drawbacks of paradise and the discernment on Nanda in the cantos VI-XII. Thereafter, the principal teachings of Buddha are described in canto XIII until the end.

In the story, when the Buddha came to propagate his doctrine at the Kapilavāstu city, while most of his relatives and many people were interested in his teaching, there was one prince named *Nanda*, the half-brother of Buddha, who was not interested in it. At that time, Nanda did not want to see anyone else, except his new wife because he just married to a beautiful lady, name *Sundarī*. Therefore, he and his wife still stayed together in the same room, attracted each other mutually, with their eyes engaged solely in gazing at each other, with their mind solely on each other's conversation and with their body-paint off by their mutual embraces. As it says :

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** Assistant Professor, Department of Oriental Languages, Faculty of Archaeology, Silpakorn University, Bangkok, Thailand.

parasparodvīkṣanātatparākṣam parasparavyāhṛtasaktacittam |
parasparāśleṣahr̥tāṅgarāgam parasparam tanmithunam jahāra || (4.9)

At that time, they sported and shone together as if challenging each other with the glory of their beauty, like a Kimpurusa and a Kinnarī standing by a mountain torrent in loving devotion. They brought ecstasy to each other with the increase of their mutual passion and in the intervals of exhaustion they sportively intoxicated each other by way of mutual refreshment. As it says :

bhāvānuraktau girinirjharasthau tau kinnarīkimpuruṣāvivobhau |
cikrīdatuścābhivirejatuśca rūpaśriyānyonyamivākṣipantau || (4.10)

anyonyasamrāgavivardhanena tadvandvamananyonyamarīramacca |
klamāntare'nyonyavinodanena salīlamanyonyamamīmadacca || (4.11)

While Nanda was taking his delight inside his palace, the Buddha, whose time for begging had come, entered his house in search of alms. He stood in his brother's house with downcast gaze and making no request for arms. But none of the young women in that house saw the Buddha because they were busily employed in providing for their master's amusements. Therefore, the Buddha receiving nothing went away from that place. For a while, a woman who was at the top of the house turned her eyes towards the window and saw the Buddha going away like the blazing sun emerging from the heart of a cloud. She, considering the reverence of her master towards the Buddha and her devotion to Him, came to reply Nanda without delay. Hearing that, Nanda joined his hands like a lotus bud, raised them to his head and asked his wife for leave to go. He took off the clothes suited for lovemaking which he was wearing and assumed the appearance proper for offering hospitality. He both hurried to start with a mind drawn by desire to see the Buddha and at the same time he went slowly with backturned gaze, looking at his wife. Reverence for the Buddha drew him forward, love for his wife drew him back again. From irresolution he neither went away nor stood still, but when he had gone out of her sight, he descended quickly from the palace roof.

Nanda, having seen the Buddha on the road, addressed Him humbly for getting alms in the palace again. But, the Buddha put a bowl in his hand and made a sign to show that He felt no need of food. He confounded him by blocking up the entry on the street and compelled to follow. He led Nanda who was writhing with grief and thinking of his wife's face to the monastery. Thereafter, He initiated him into the monk's life as to bring him to tranquility.

Nanda monk bore his body in robe, but not of his will, was dejected through the embarrassment of the thoughts of his mind which kept turning on his wife. Every

minute, he thought to give up the mendicant's robe and go home. Even though some monk came to talk with him and pacify him, he still thought of his wife and did not like to practice the Buddha-dharma.

The Buddha, who wanted to rescue love-lorn Nanda from his sorrow, selected the clever scheming (*kuśalopāya*) by taking him to visit the paradise and the celestial nymphs (*apsaras*) who were more beautiful than his wife. This made Nanda much eager to obtain those celestial nymphs. Then, the Buddha told him to practice Dharma for that result. By doing so Nanda could eventually get rid off his desires and all defilements. This clever scheming of Buddha would be called the technique of "picking a thorn in the foot with a thorn in the hand" as it is said "*pādalagnaṃ karasthena kaṇṭakenaiva kaṇṭakam uddharet*" (Cānakya-śataka.22) and it is like the western proverb that says "taking a hair of the dog that bit you."

Themes of Buddha's teachings that were learned by Nanda step by step, written in the Saundarananda Mahākāvya by Aśvaghōṣa, are as follows:

Discipline and the Conquest of the Senses (*śīlendriyajaya*)

To conquer the senses (*indriya-s*), the Buddha says discipline (*śīla*) is an important basis to govern conduct (13.10) and to reach the state where death is not, discipline is the refuge, the guide as it were in the wilderness, the friend, the kinsman, the protector, wealth and strength (13.28). The Yogin (monk who practices Yoga) should take his stand on it in the other undertakings towards emancipation and sanctify the conduct of livelihood in the purification of his body and speech (13.13) by not giving way to the five faults, hypocrisy etc., and by abandoning the four destroyers of good conducts, astrology and the rest (13.14). He should refuse what is to be avoided, such as living beings, rice, wealth etc., and accept the authorised rules of mendicancy with their definite limits (13.15). Discipline (*śīla*) is so-called from its disciplining, and disciplining comes from habitual repetition (13.27).

A Yogin monk should hold back his senses (*indriya-s*) from their objects by fixing attention since they are by nature restless (13.30). Senses without control are very dangerous because everyone is always harassed by the senses everywhere (13.32). Mankind is dragged to Hell helplessly when beaten down by the restless senses (13.33), and he who is harried by the senses suffers in body and soul alike (13.34). But the strong man, who stands on the battle-ground of self-control and is armed with the bow of steadfastness (*dhṛti*) and the armour of attention (*smṛti*), (13.37) can control the five senses (i.e., eyes, ear, nose, tongue, body) at ease. When the senses are purified, he is free from worry, can sleep or sit anywhere happily as when enemies are suppressed (13.38).

Therefore, when a Yogin monk is looking at any object with his eyes, he should concentrate on the basic elements in it only and not form any conception of it as say, a woman or a man (13.42). If in relation to any object some perception of a woman or a

man does present itself, he must not look on their hair, teeth etc. as beautiful. Nothing should be subtracted from the object, nothing added to it. It is to be seen as it really is according to its nature and kind (13.43-44) Because, man is chained by the false conception of an object, but he is liberated by seeing the same object as it really is (13.51). On seeing a certain form, normally, one man is attracted, another dislikes it and a third is indifferent, while yet another feels compassionate disgust for the same object (13.52). Knowing this, a Yogin monk should strive his hardest effort for the control of the senses, because unguarded senses lead to suffering and the continuance of existence (13.54). In all circumstances, therefore, he should be attentive to restraining these sin-causing enemies, namely, sight, smell, hearing, taste and touch and should not be neglectful even for a moment (13.56).

The First Step of Practicing (*ādiprasthāna*)

Having closed up the dam of the senses (*indriya-s*) with the gate of attention (*smṛti*), a Yogin monk should learn exact measure in the eating of food for the sake of mystic meditation (*dhyāna*) and of freedom from disease (14.1). For taking food in excessive quantities impedes the intake and outflow of the breath, induces lassitude and drowsiness and destroys enterprise (14.2). Deficiency of food drains away the substance of the body with its brilliance, energy, activity and strength (14.4). Therefore, he should eat carefully by considering requirements to enable his life to continue, should not measure out too much or too little under the influence of pride (14.6). A Yogin monk of insight should support his body by the usual means, not out of love for it, but simply to cross the flood of suffering (14.17), like a man who constructs a boat with great labour and even carries it, not because he loves it, but simply in order to cross a great flood (14.16).

After passing the day self-controlled in the restraint of mind, a Yogin monk should spend the night in practice of Yoga (14.20). When overcome by drowsiness, he should always apply to his mind the principles of energy and steadfastness, of strength and courage (14.22), should repeat aloud those Scriptures that have been studied (14.23). In order to keep always awake, he should wet his face with water, looks round in all directions and fixes his gaze on the stars (14.24) or walks about or sits down at night, keeping his mind from wandering (14.25). But after passing the first of the three night-watches (*pūrva-yāma*) in activity, he should lie down to rest his body in full control of himself (14.32) by lying with tranquil mind on the right side, keeping present the idea of light (*ālokaśamjñā*) and bearing watchfulness in heart (14.33). He should rise up in the third watch (*trītya-yāma*) and practise Yoga by either walking or sitting again in purifying the mind with senses under guard (14.34). He should also be fully conscious of all actions, fix his attention on sitting, moving, standing, looking, speaking and so on (14.35).

A Yogin monk should betake himself to a seat or couch, suitable for Yoga, solitary and free from noise, because by first making the body solitary it is easy to attain discrimination of mind (14.46). He who rejoices in solitude and avoids contact with

others like a thorn, eating in any place whatever there is and wearing any clothes whatsoever, living anywhere sufficient to himself, is to be considered successful and knows the taste of tranquillity (14.51).

Emptying the Mind (*vitarkaprahāṇa*)

Ready to empty the mind, a Yogin monk should take up the best posture of meditation in some solitary place, keep the body upright and fix his attention in the present, make his wandering mind wholly intent on an object such as the tip of his nose, forehead or the space between the brows (15.2), then, he will destroy the bad thoughts accordingly.

Destruction of the Passions (*kāma-vitarka-prahāṇa*)

If there is the thought of passions (*kāma-s*), a Yogin monk should cast off the passions through insight and destroy them by their opposite, as darkness by light (15.4). By destroying it, passions would cease to exist, just as there are no shoots when the seed is destroyed (15.6). It must be realised that the passions are impermanent, of their nature subject to loss, empty of real value, the causes of calamity and shared by many others (15.8), and anyone who considers satisfaction to lie in great wealth, success to consist in reaching Paradise and pleasure to be born from the passions, is lost (15.10). Knowing this, a Yogin monk should cut off the thought of all passions.

Destruction of the Malevolence (*vyāpāda-vitarka-prahāṇa*)

If the mind is troubled by malevolence (*vyāpāda*) or the desire to hurt, it should be made calm by their counteragents, as muddied water is made clear by a jewel (15.12). The Buddha said that benevolence (*maitrī*) and compassion (*kāruṇya*) are their counteragents (*pratipakṣa*); for there is ever an opposition between them as between light and darkness (15.13). He who has given up evil ways and yet in whom malevolence is active throws dirt over himself. Actually, man in this world may or may not cause hurt to another by his malevolent mind, but in either case the mind of the man of malevolent thoughts is forthwith burned up (15.16). If he abandons evil and thinks only of what is good; this will redound to his advantage in this world and to attainment of the supreme goal (15.19). Therefore, a Yogin monk should cast out his thoughts by their counteragents by cultivating thoughts of benevolence and compassion towards all beings, not malevolence or the desire to hurt, as a wedge is driven out from a cleft in a log by a slender counter-wedge (15.29).

Destruction of Thoughts of Kinsfolk (*jñātijana-vitarka-prahāṇa*)

If a Yogin monk's thoughts turn to the prosperity and adversity of his kinsfolk, he should investigate the nature of the world of living in order to stop such thoughts. In this world, which is by nature separate, no one is really the beloved of anyone else; it is the cause (*kārya*) and effect (*kaṛaṇa*) that hold the world together, like a hand holding a

ball of sand together (15.35). Kinsmen are known to act in unfriendly fashion and strangers in a friendly way, because, men make and break affection according to their interests (15.38). There is no permanent distinction in the cycle of existence between kinsfolk and strangers. Therefore, a Yogin monk should not let his mind be obsessed with thoughts of kinsfolk.

Destruction of Thought of Preference for Particular Countries (kṣemajanapada-vitarka-prahāṇa)

If a Yogin monk will have any thought arising in his mind that such and such a country is peaceful, prosperous or happy. It must be abandoned (15.43), for suffering from the return of the circle of the seasons and from hunger, thirst and fatigue is everywhere the rule. In one place cold, in another heat, in one place disease, in another danger afflicts men excessively (15.44-45). Therefore, the world is without refuge. It is said that old age (*jarā*), disease (*vyādhi*) and death (*mṛtyu*) are the great dangers of this world, there is no country where those dangers do not exit (15.46). In which place this body goes, there suffering follows after. Therefore, in this world which is overwhelmed by suffering of body and mind, there is no peaceful country to which one may go and be at ease (15.49), and there is no place in this world, by going along which one can avoid affliction (15.47). Knowing that suffering is the lot of everyone everywhere at all times, a Yogin monk should not hanker after the glittering objects of the world. When the passion of desire is extinct in the mind, he should deem the entire living world to be, as it were, on fire (15.51), and get rid of the preference for particular districts.

Destruction of Thought of the Certainty of Life (jīvita-vitarka-prahāṇa)

If a Yogin monk will have any thought not based on the inevitability of death, he must exert himself to drive it away, (15.52) he does not place reliance on life for even a single moment. Because death, like a tiger lying in wait, strikes down the trustful man (15.53) at all occasions and is no respecter of youth (15.54). A Yogin monk should understand how wonderful it is that man breathes in and immediately after breathes out again (15.57). Another wonder is that having slept he wakes up again or that after getting up he goes to sleep again, whoever has a body has many enemies (15.58), for there is no relying on the continuance of life. Actually, death (*mṛtyu*) follows a man to strike him down from the womb onwards. No one in the world, even strong or learned in religion, conquers or has conquered or will conquer death. Death can not be combated by conciliation, gifts, sowing dissension, force of arms or abstinence (15.60-61). To eradicate this thought, therefore, a Yogin monk must realize the uncertainty of life as mentioned above.

Having cleaned the mind from the vices till it is separate from the sins in this world, a Yogin monk will bring it to tranquillity and concentrate it, as the goldsmith heats the gold in the fire and turns it over repeatedly, after it has been gradually separated from the dirt by washing it with water (15.68). And when his mind is cleansed and has secured control of the supernatural sciences (*abhijñā*), he reduces it to

tranquillity and employs it as he will and where he will, as the goldsmith at his will reduces the gold in many ways so as to be easy to work in the various kinds of ornaments (15.69).

Explanation of the Noble Truths (*āryasatya-vyākhyāna*)

By subtracting something and adding something through immobility of the mind, a Yogin monk will attain the four trances (*dhyāna*) and spontaneously acquires the five supernatural sciences (*abhijnā*), namely, to wit the most excellent magic powers of many kinds (*rddhipraveka*), awareness of the motions of others' thoughts (*cetas' caritāvabodha*), remembrance of past births far back (*atītajanmasmarāṇa*), pure and heavenly sight (*viśuddha-cakṣu*) and hearing (*viśuddha-śruti*) (16.1-2). Thenceforward, by the investigation of reality he applies his mind to the abolition of the infections, will understand rightly the four statements of the Truth (*āryasatya*), namely, *dukkha* : suffering which is continuous and whose essence is affliction; *dukkhahetu* : the cause of suffering whose essence is origination; *dukkhakṣya* : the destruction of suffering whose essence is escape; and *mārga* : the path to tranquillity whose essence is rescuing (16.3-4).

Mankind goes from one existence to another and does not attain tranquillity by failure to understand and penetrate the group of four Noble Truths which constitutes reality. Therefore, a Yogin monk who understands with his intellect the four Noble Truths, penetrates to their core, overcomes all the infections by the cultivation of meditation and arrives at tranquillity, is not born again (16.5).

Now, the explanation of the four Noble Truths is as follows :

1. *Dukkha* : It is said that birth (*janma*) is suffering, for it is the root of afflictions such as old age (*jarā*) etc. The birth of form conjoined with the faculties of sense is identical with the birth of suffering in its many varieties, and that which produces the bodily complex produces death and disease (16.8). All birth in this world, whether among animals or above or below, tends to suffering (*dukkha*), not to pleasure. So long as an active being persists among creatures, calamities of many sorts, old age etc., are produced among them (16.9-10). Suffering has its birth-place in the mind and body, as wind has its birthplace in the air, as water lies inside the earth. So is suffering the specific essence of the body and mind, like liquidity is the specific essence of water, solidity of the earth, movement of the wind, constant heat of fire (16.11-12). The existence of the body involves suffering such as disease, old age etc., and hunger, thirst, rain, heat, and cold etc., and the existence of the mind with its concomitants, when incorporated in matter, involves suffering such as grief, dejection, anger, fear etc. (16.13). Seeing the suffering of present birth, a Yogin monk should understand that there has been similar suffering in the past and there will be similar suffering in the future, (16.14) as the nature of a seed is known by present experience, and its nature was the same in the past and will be the same in the future (16.15). This is the exposition of suffering (*dukkha*).

2. *Duhkha* : The cause of suffering from active being in the world is to be found in the category of the vices such as desire and the rest, not in a creator or Time or Nature or Things of Fate or Chance (16.17). It is to be known that the active being of the world proceeds from the vices, so that those who are subject to passion (*rāga*) and to mental darkness (*moha*) are subject to death, but he who is devoid of them is not born again. Since a man moves, sits etc., according to his particular volitions to do this or that, similarly, therefore, the birth of creatures is to be recognized as due to the compulsion of desire (*taṛṣa-vaśa*) (16.18-19). In the new birth of one addicted to malevolence (*doṣa*), extreme malevolence is developed, of one possessed by passion (*rāga*) excessive passion, of one in whom delusion (*moho*) predominates excessive store of delusion, and of one whose vices are less than this a lesser vice only (16.22). When a man has extirpated the vices with respect to any type of disposition, he is not reborn in that variety owing to passionlessness. When a tendency to the vices subsists in any disposition, he is reborn in that type whether he would or not (16.24). A Yogin monk, therefore, should understand that the causes of birth in its many forms are desire (*trṣṇā*) etc., if he can eradicate them, he would be free from suffering, because an effect is abolished by abolishing the cause (16.25).

3. *Duhkha* : The abolition of suffering proceeds from exhaustion of the cause (16.26). The stage, in which there is neither birth, old age, death, disease, nor contact with what is disagreeable, neither failure of wishes nor separation from the agreeable, is peaceful, final and imperishable (16.27). From the exhaustion of the vices, a Yogin monk who has reached *Nirvāna* does not depart to earth or the sky or any of the quarters or intermediate quarters, he merely goes to peace. As a lamp, which has reached the stage of extinction, does not depart to anywhere, but from its extinction of the oil merely goes out (16.28-29). This is the explanation for the end of suffering.

4. *Mārga* : The means to attain the end of suffering or *Nirvāna* is the Eightfold Path with its threefold discipline, twofold tranquillity and threefold wisdom. It should be duly cultivated by the prudent man for the exhaustion of suffering (16.30).

4.1 These three disciplines (*śīla-s*), i.e., - right action of body (*samyak-kāyakarma*), right action of speech (*samyak-vākkarma*) and right livelihood (*suddhā-jīvanaya*), should be practised in the department of conduct for the mastery of actions (16.31).

4.2 These two tranquillities (*samādhi-s*), i.e., - right attention used in accordance with the plan in order to approach the Truths (*samyak-smṛti*) and right concentration of thought (*samyak-samādhi*), should be practised in the department of Yoga for the mastery of the mind (16.33).

4.3 These three wisdoms (*prajñā-s*), i.e., - right view (*samyak-dṛṣṭi*) with respect to the Truths regarding suffering etc., right thought (*samyak-vitarka*) and right exertion (*samyak-parākkama*), resting on intuitive wisdom should be practised in the department of knowledge for the abolition of the vices (16.32).

[Note : In the Pāli Tripiṭaka, i.e., Vin.I.9, S.V.421, D.II.312, D.III.220, A.I.229, M.I.61, M.III.251, right exertion or effort (Skt. *samyak-parāṅkama*, Pāli. *Sammāvayāma*) is said to be a member of tranquillity's group.]

Of those three divisions, discipline (*śīla*) will no more develop the shoots of the vices, for the faults attack but halfheartedly the mind of a man, when his discipline is pure. Concentration of mind (*samādhi*) repels the vices, for the faults are unable to attack the man who abides in concentration of mind. But, intuitive wisdom (*prajñā*) completely cuts away the faults like a river cuts the trees on its banks in the rains. The faults burnt up by wisdom cease to grow, like trees burnt by the fire of the thunderbolt which strikes them cease to grow again (16.34-36). By entering on this straight Noble Path with its three divisions and eight members, a Yogin monk eliminates the unwholesome faults which are the causes of suffering and eventually reaches the supremely blessed stage (*śiva-pada*).

Realization of the Truths

To realize the Truths, a Yogin monk should think of suffering (*dukkha*) in the first Truths as disease, in the second of the faults as the cause of diseases, in the third of the destruction of suffering as good health and in the fourth of the Path as the medicine. He should recognise suffering to be identical with active being and understand that the faults are the causes of active being; inactivity is the suppression of active being; and there is the Path which leads to inactivity (16.41-42).

When a Yogin monk perceives suffering as it really is, its origin and its destruction, he will attain peace by the noble Path accordingly (16.40) and his mind is directed to the comprehension of the Truths (16.43), he will see that corporeality (*nāma-rūpa*) is impermanent, and seeing correctly he attains complete detachment and by the abolition of complaisance (*nandi*) in the things of this world, his passion (*rāga*) is abolished (16.44). So that, his mind is rightly liberated and he has nothing further to accomplish. For him, who recognises and understands the nature of corporeality (*nāma-rūpa-svabhāva*), its cause (*tat-hetu*) and its disappearance (*tat-kṣya*), his infections are abolished. (16.45-46)

The Entry into Immortality (*amṛtādhigama*)

In the Saundarananda Mahākāvya (17.1-4), when Nanda monk was instructed in the Path to reality and the Path of Salvation (*mokṣa*), he made reverence to the Buddha with all his hearth and departed to the forest to eliminate the vices. There, he selected a quiet glade in a group of trees with soft *dūrvā* grass, and surrounded by a stream running noiselessly with water blue as beryl, after bathing his feet and putting on the girdle of resolution for Salvation, he took up the Yogin's posture, bent over his lap, nearby the clean, auspicious and splendid root of a tree. Straightening all his body, he directed his attention (*smṛti*) on his body and collecting all his sense-faculties (*sarva-*

indriya) in himself, he entered earnestly into the practice of Yoga. He strictly practised under the instruction of the Buddha and (17.25) in a moment destroyed his foes, the perversions of knowledge, the causes of suffering, with the arrows of the application of attention (*smṛtyupasthāna*). By shaking off entirely the theory of existence of self (*ātma-dṛṣṭi*), by becoming free from doubt in the four Truths, he accordingly reached the stage of the first fruit, intermediate fruit and supreme fruit of the Law or Arahatsip (17.27). He, who reached the peace of *Nirvāṇa* in the annihilation of all phenomena, had fulfilled his task under the teaching of the Buddha and had become tranquil in mind like a man descending into a cool pool in the hot weather, spoke thus, to himself:-

“When I was given over to love and plunged in the sin of passion for young women, it was the compassionate Buddha who took me to the golden-peaked mountain and to Paradise and rescued me by the example of the she-monkey and through the women who frequent heaven.” (17.71)

“And dragged me up from out of that slough of calamity, the lowest of passions. Now I am saved in the good Law (*saddharma*), the ultimate beatitude, which is peaceful and free from passion, fret, grief and ignorance.” (17.72)

“I bow the head to Him, the Supreme Seer, the compassionate One. Again, I do Him obeisance.” (17.73)

The declaration of Insight (*ājñāvyākaraṇa*)

When Nanda came to visit the Buddha, he prostrated himself with his entire body on the ground out of respect for Him, appearing like a mighty fallen column of gold smeared with red sandalwood. The Buddha, listening to his declaration and hearing of the steadfastness of him who had previously emerged from heedlessness and of his faith in following the Law, spoke to him with a voice like a thundercloud:- (18.20-21)

“By following the highest Path, you have reached the goal and there is not the slightest thing further for you to do; henceforward, my friend, practise compassion, bringing liberation to those in difficulties even when they are your enemies.” (18.54)

Nanda, thereafter, grasped with his head the words and simultaneously prostrated the feet of the Compassionate Buddha. He who is cheerful with heart at rest and his aims accomplished, left the Buddha being freed from conceit like an elephant from must.

Conclusion

It can be concluded that the explanation of Buddha’s teachings in the Saundarananda Mahākāvya is quite clear to those who are interested to learn Buddhism through the Buddhist Sanskrit texts. Even though this Mahākāvya itself was composed in the poetical form, the principal teachings of Buddha and their explanation are

described clearly. As mentioned above, all teachings of the Buddha are useful and beneficial for all. To understand Buddhism deeply, therefore, everyone who wants to solve their problems, should open their eyes and learn more and more not only in the Pāli, but also in the Sanskrit texts, because the important teachings of Buddha are included in them.

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