

## CHAPTER- I

### INTRODUCTION:-

Among all the ancient poet of Sanskrit eloquent, Mahākabi Aśvaghoṣa was one of the famous personality and a renowned Sanskrit poet or creator in the field of such ancient wordy. In the midst of all the learned person of the universe, regarding his erudition, there is not a single discord among them. His pedantry reflects as the rays of morning-sun throughout the world as a whole. At the same time, he was considered as a great philosopher, a scholar of Bio-Science (botany and zoogoly), pious monk or saint, advisor of the systematic religious practice and religion and also a preceptor or spiritual guide of real entity. He has not only the great pedantry about the Sanskrit, but also he has the sound knowledge about the Purāṇas, Vedas, and Upaniṣads. He is the follower of ancient traditional Sanskrit eloquent and at the same time, he is the maker of few or more new words and a typical user of metrical composition.<sup>1</sup>

There are huge number of books which created by the great poet Aśvaghoṣa, these are very relevant for the modern thoughts and ideas and also among the few has been taken for further analysis of research purpose for obtaining some new gist from them inside India and abroad. For this fact, the legend poet Aśvaghoṣa also understanding contemporaneously which is being discussed today itself. Aśvaghoṣa also has considered by

some of his followers as creator of the word and his brilliancy of conception in the field of religious contemplation and the undergoing sensual pleasure in a balanced manner. In the place of different art and culture also maintained by him equally at the same time. The person who is considered as a inward spirit or terminating mental sight, whose intellectuality is expanded and beautified, he is nothing but pre-eminent of world-wide reputed great poet Aśvaghōṣa.

There also several hearsay mostly prevalent regarding the time of Aśvaghōṣa. It may heard a popular talk regarding his birth and race is that he had born in a Brahmin family and also maintaining the law and order of a Brahmin race and had send to the gurukul for his proper education. In his early life or very young hood of his life, he was interested for sensual pleasure but after his initiation into Buddhism he turned into a famous Buddhist religious teacher preceptor or monk;

“अहो बाताश्चोर्यमिदं विमुक्तये करोति रागी यदयं कथामिमाम् ।”

(saun:18/58)

Actually, it is our only imagination about his personality that may be his individuality was based on duality. Because, in one side, he was a successful and renowned poet of soft and melodious poetic creation and on the other side, he was an expert translator of special Buddhist religious ethics. For that reason his life and personality was divided into two sects

or parts. One part is based on a learned poet and the other part is based on a wise religious advisor. But the actual matter is that two purely different entity of his personality always join together reflects the rays through our thoughts and visions.

We can come to know about him that he was born in ‘Sāket’ present name is ‘Ayodhyā or Ajyodhyā’ and the name of his father was ‘Subarnākśhi’ that we come to know by his second excellent creation ‘Saundarānanda’. The last part of eighteen chapter of epic ‘Saundarānanda’ has beautifully and briefly stated that.....

आर्यसुवर्णाक्षीपुत्रस्य साकेतकस्य भिक्षोराचार्यभदन्ताश्वघोषस्य महाकवेर्महावादिनः  
कृतिरियम् । So, only this few evidence we may collect from his work regarding his original place and birth. But It is also true that this statement given by Aśvaghoṣa, gives a border line of his own life story. Though it is not sufficient and a obscurity may arise but a large group of scholars and readers have to satisfied their thirst by knowing this. It may be the cause of searching new evidence in support of his birth, family, working places, and up to his demise. By this we can also imagine about his nature that he was very free from vanity or pride, contentment, self-concentrated, not conscious of one’s self and a simple personality. 2

If we want to talk about the spreading of Buddhism in India, then we have to turn back to the period of emperor Ashok. In his time,

Buddhism became the Royal Religion and spread all over India. After obtaining the position of first religion, it made faster his religious developmental speed when emperor Ashok himself start to follow the footsteps of Lord Buddha in his every moment of life. The second important point of spreading of Buddhism in that period in India was due to affectionate approach towards the common people of poor class, the travesty of justice of religious aristocracy, fight against the classification of class, cast and creed etc. also responsible for it. Actually, these were the major causes of growth and development of Buddhism in our country before the Birth of Christ. After the emperor Ashok, Buddhist religion was obtain the position of royal prerogative power during the reign of the famous kushana king Kanishka in second time. Triumphant king Kanishka captured Patliputra, the capital of Magadha by the victory over the king of Magadha. By this aggression, Kanishka had received Asvaghosa after panegyrist the previous noble king of Magadha. On this event, Dr. Ramnarayan Dwivedi has written in his famous book “Buddha-sanskrit-kavya-samiksha” where in the page no-136-37, described the incident very briefly before us.<sup>3</sup>

## BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY:-

In this present era, it is very much essential to compare the ancient culture, language and literature on the platform of the contemporary socio-cultural condition which reflects its ray into the present modern situation. In this regard, it is also valuable to the upcoming learner and educator for comparing both the modern and ancient circumstances based on the literature, culture and language and also the differences between them. Due to the study about the culture and custom of the past, we need to understand the past situation based on the ancient history, where we can analyze everything very microscopically and this information may also provide some better idea about the present and modified socio-cultural condition. The ancient contemporary literature is also very relevant in this present era. It is also considered and perceived that in the field of language and literature, 'Sanskrit' plays a vital role from the very ancient time. From the ancient time to present era Buddhist literature is also very important and relevant for the society as a whole. It may notice that Buddha philosophy and Buddhism itself contain a unique impression. We have to keep a clear idea regarding the Buddhism and Buddhist philosophy that without the contribution of invaluable property of Buddhism and unique poet and Buddhist monk 'Asvaghosa', because it is

also a fact that if we want to know about something on Buddhism and Buddhist philosophy, we have to know properly the great legend poet 'Buddhacharya Asvaghosa'. By his supreme Excellency the Buddhist idealism may not get a proper shape. The 'Buddhacarita' and 'Saundarānanda' of Asvaghosa are the jewel epics of literary store.

The above lines are showing the present real unhappy and hard situation to us. We are going to be selfcenter and making ourselves cruel for that reason. Even we have immersed of our all the traditional hermitage. Dr. Sen has raised some reason before our eyes for that 'Saundarananda' is not relevant in present days. Initially the ancient root of the epic which was found only in manuscript, at present, this is not easily obtain or available. Reason for this unavailability of manuscript of this epic may lost or may be damage from the original ancient manuscript i.e., handwritten copy. Dr. Sen has accepted the fact that the first and best epic of the Asvaghosa was Buddhacarita has not been presented with so much care as that much care has been kept to Saundarananda. Still then this is true that like Buddhacarita there was not ample interpretation of Saundarananda in Tibetan language. So wherever the original draft of any linguistic work found less, at that moment proper translation is not at all possible. This type of problem was present in the works of the famous educationist Hara Prasad Shastri and no solution has been shown in his

works. The great writer E.H. Johnston has regret about the main base of 'Saundarananda' and he said: - "The manuscript has been so badly eaten into by white ants that in the middle of each leaf usually some three lines of writing, occasionally as many as five are missing though the damage at the ends is less and sometimes nil".<sup>3(a)</sup>

But this is the real truth that those who have entered in the home of ancient books, they all have gathered same experience. Inside the books, there was not only the play of destruction done by termite or white ant but also scribe or copyist has also been done such mistake by their unknown inadvertence or by their ignorance and lack of knowledge of handling manuscript. E. H. Johnston has got two of the books and on the basis of those two books 'Saundarananda' has been edited by him. We people have been going after his edited book because of the research work.

The above mentioned opinion, we have got from the edited work of Dr. Sen and Ásvaghoṣa's. Saundarānanda whatever has described by E. H. Johnston in his work. That means after reading all the ancient manuscripts he has written all in sequence way and gradually it has prepared to read before all readers. Dr. Murari Mohan Sen has accepted the truth that in the introductory part of Saundarananda edited by him has been following only the E.H. Johnston's book. It is true that by his several works of Asvaghosa, E.H. Johnston has stated that 'Saundarananda' an unparallel

component of Buddhist religious scripture but in this day it is being extinguished.

In general saying by searching most of the publishers any of the printed copy of this copy has not found. But e-books and internet facilities also reflect the light of hope in front of us. Book reading helps us to examine the ancient incident on the platform of present contemporary period. If such a book or reading materials become unable to study or read due to major damage then it will be simply a foolish activity to entire into it. But the combination of thinking and occurrence deliberation helps us to know little about of that time.

The book helps us to know the language of that time, cultural heritage, rules and regulations, appraisal, civilization, culture and literature, politics, education, economic condition, historical background etc. all together. But in present situation, among all the Buddhist religious people, the gist or the summary of Saundarananda is almost being extinguished. In such a situation the present research work will be fruitful to all those readers who are interested to know about the ancient Buddhist epic Saundarananda. So the present study will meet this requirement to some extent. This is all about the background of my study on this particular topic. 4

**THE LIFE, DATE AND WORKS OF ASVAGHOSA:-**



Asvaghosa was the first outstanding Buddhist author, a poet and a philosopher of classical Sanskrit literature. In the colophons of his well-known three works *Buddhacharita*, *Saundarananda* and *Sariputraprakarana* he describes himself as Saketaka a native of Sackets. As the son of suvarnaksi or he was given the title of Acharya and Bhadanta. Tradition also tells that he was originally a Brahman and that he first adhered to the Sarvastivada school of Buddhism. There are different opinions amongst Indological scholars about his date. We may summarise here below the point of views of some these scholars:-

- Traditional View

According to Indian tradition, Asvaghosa was a Brahmin of Saket or Ajodhya, who was converted to the Buddhism. He first adhered to sarvastivadin school of Buddhist philosophy and later on he was attracted by Mahayana and became one of the main founders of Mahayanists thought. I-T-sang (a Chinese traveller, 6.71-95 AD) refers to Asvaghosa as a greater teacher of the past whose works were still studied in his time. Indian and Chinese traditions also associate him with Kaniska and say that Vibhasa, the great sarvastivadin commentary on the Abhidhamma was composed by him in the general council held in the reign of Kushan King.<sup>5</sup>

Chinese Tradition:-

Asvaghosa (c. first to second centuries A.D.) was a well-known Buddhist poet, philosopher, and Mahayana theorist of India, and is considered as the eleventh patriarch in the line of succession of the Dharma beginning with Mahakasyapa. This concise *life of Asavghosa Bodhisattava* gives only a brief account of how he was converted from Brahmanism to Buddhism by Parsva but, according to the *Record of the Origin of Transmitting the Dharma-pitaka (Fu-fa-zang-yin—yuan-zhuan, Taisho 2058)*, his predecessor was Parsava's successor, Punyayasas.

In the history of the development of Buddhism, Asavaghosa is considered as one of the founders of Mahayana Buddhism. The following eight texts, which are extant in Chinese translations in the Taisho edition of the Tripitaka, 6 are attributed to him:

Buddhacaritakavya, translated by Kumarajiva (Taisho 201).

Sutra of the six ways of transmigration-Sadgatarika), one fascicle, translated by Suryakirti (Taisho 726).

Sutra of the ten Evil Deeds (Dasakusalakarmapatha), one fascicle, translated by suryakirti (Taisho 727). Sutra of the Nirgrantha Inquiring into the meaning of Non-ego (Nairatamyaparipraccha), one fascicle, translated by Suryakirti (Taisho 1643).

Mahayanasraddhopada - sastra, two Chinese translations, one by Siksanda, one fascicle, (Taisho 1666), and the other by Paramartha, two fascicles, (Taisho 1667).

Da-zong-di-xuan-wen-ben-lun, twenty fascicles, translated by Paramartha (Taisho 1669). Fifty Stanzas on Serving the Guru (Gurusevadharmapancasagatha), one fascicle translated by Suryakirti (Taisho 1687).

Among these eight texts, the Buddhacharitakavya and the Mahayanasraddhotpada-sastra are perhaps the most popular among Mahayana Buddhists, although the authenticity of the letter text is a subject much debated by Buddhist scholars.<sup>7</sup>

Besides being a Buddhist theorist with significant influence on the development of Mahayana Buddhism, Asvaghosa was also the initiator of Buddhist chanting and hymn singing. In order to propagate Buddhism, he wrote many melodious stanzas and songs, which are said to be so sweet and pleasant to the ear that many people were converted to Buddhism upon hearing them.

It is still the practice of Buddhist monks, in both Theravadin and Mahayana countries, to chant stanzas and hymns in praise of the Triple Gem in their daily ceremonies and at special religious functions.

In the *Biography of Dharma Master Vasubandhu* (Taisho 2049), Asvaghosa is said to be native of Saketa in Sravasti. He was invited to Kashmir by *Katyayaniputra* to take part in the compilation of the *Abhidharmavibhasa-sastra* (Taisho 1546) which consisted of one million stanzas and was completed in twelve years under the auspices of King Kaniska.

Sh. Satish Chandra Vidyabhushana says that Kaniska {AD 320} was the patron of Asvaghosa.<sup>8</sup>

Thomas identifies him with Matreceta, supposedly a contemporary of Kaniska. Tradition also unquestionably confirms these views.

A.B. Keith in his *History of Sanskrit Literature* puts doubts on this and presents a factual argument that the *Sutralamkara* is his. He tells two stories in which Kaniska's reign seems to be referred to as in past; this may be explained either on the theory that Kaniska died before him, which does not accord with tradition, or as regards the name, or that there was an earlier Kaniska. Again an inscription held to belong to the time of Kaniska mentions an Asvaghosaraja who has been temerarily identified with the poet. Accepting the validity of the tradition, Keith decides the date of Asvaghosa to be that of Kaniska, for whom CAD 100 still seems a just estimate.

D.D. Kosambi also shared this stand and places him within the first century AD, on the assumption of a single author of the name.

Prof. Ui says that Nagarjuna lived about 750-850 A.N. "The date of the Nirvana held by Kumarajiva (2) and his disciples in 673 B.C. hence we conclude the following dates: Asvaghosa lived about 13 AD, Nagarjuna about 113-213 AD, Addeva about 163-263 AD, and Harivarman about 260-270 AD. 9

Professor Luder holds that the hand writing of the manuscript fragments which contain all that is left to us of the Sariputra-prakarana must belong to the time of the Kushan kings, probably to the reign of Kaniska or Huviska.

E.H. Johnston says, the evidence then leads to the conclusion that the poet lived not later than the time of Kaniska and may have preceded him, and is thus consonant with what we know of his relation to classical Sanskrit literature. His style proves him to have lived several centuries before Kalidasa. He is imitated by Bhasa, and his vocabulary suggests a date not far removed from that of the *Arthashastra* of Kautilya. The problem would have been much more complicated if the *Kalpanamanditika* was really by Asvaghosa, but it is post Kaniska and alludes also to the *Vaisesikasutras*, a system unknown to the genuine extant works. But as I reject the attribution to him of this collection of

tales, I need not try to reconcile the irreconcilable. The question remains of the date of Kaniska, and if agreement is not yet reached on this thorny point, of variations are no longer large, most scholars accept a date in the last quarter of the first century AD and none places him later than the second quarter of the second century.<sup>10</sup>

### Works of Asvaghosa

Thomas given the extant work of Asvaghosa in Sanskrit and Tibetan as follows: - Kavyas=1. Buddhacharita 2. Saundaranānda. Play or drama: - 3.Sāriputraprakarana {ed. Luders}, Stotra: - 4.Gāndhistotra. {Transliterated back from the Chinese canon} and the 5. Vajrasuci.

A.B. Keith adds following two more to this list: sutralamkara and mahayanasraddhotpada (a famous text book of early Mahayana views).<sup>11</sup>

Prof. Kimura<sup>1</sup> thinks that there were two Asvaghosa because the Bhutatathata Prativityasamutpada doctrine of Asvaghosa II or the doctrine of phenomenon rising from suchness (existence as such) is quite different from the philosophical approach of Asvaghosa I, he describes as it follows:

Sastras which are composed by Asvaghosa I

- Sutralamkara sastra translated in to Chinese by Kumarajiva, about AD 405 of the Tsin-dynasty (AD 384-417).

- Buddhacharita kavyam, translated in to Chinese by dharmaraksha, AD 414-421 of the northern Lian dynasty (AD 397-439).
- Dasadustra – karmamarga Sastra, translated by Zin-kan. (Suryayasa?) AD 1004-1008 of later sun dynasty (AD 960-1127).
- Sadnimnagati – cakra – Pravartana Sastra, translated by zikkan, date is not known.
- Sastra on the meaning of the Anatman in Dharma, translated by zin-khan; date is not known.
- Saundarananda kavyam, printed in Bibliothica Indica Series. (p.30)

Sastras are composed by Asvaghosa II

1. Mahayana–Sraddhotpada-Sastra, a wellknown systematical work of suchness philosophy.<sup>12</sup>

His Thought and Contribution

The evidence of his works makes it clear that he had a considerable mastery over the technical literature which a Sanskrit poet was expected to possess, and a much wider acquaintance than most other Buddhist writers of the various branches of Brahmanical learning. His Sanskrit is not strictly faultless, but his easy command over it is undoubtedly not inferior to that of most Sanskrit writers.

Lastly, Asvaghosa versatility can be clearly seen in his third work, a Prakarna or nine-act drama, entitled *Sariputra-prakarana* (or *Saradvaliputra*), of which only fragments on palm leaf were discovered in Central Asia and a few passages were restored by Luders. Fortunately the colophon exists, and the question of authorship and the name of the work have beyond of doubt. Its theme was, again, the practice of conversion connected with the Buddha, namely, that of Sariputra and Maudgalyayana, but the fragments gives us little idea of the way in which the story, well-known from such older sources as the *Mahāvâgga*.<sup>13</sup>



## A BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE CONTENTS OF SAUNDARANANDA:-

A very brief content of the text Saundarananda has summarized in the following way. Chapter one to chapter eighteen has mentioned continuously as below:-

The name of the first sarga is “कपिलावास्तु वर्णनो”, in this sarga, the description of hermitage of saint Kapila-Gautama has properly mentioned. In this first sarga, there is a description (शाक्य) shakya's, which is included in the beautiful and attractive description of Kapilavâstu. Actually, in these first three sarga, it also described a brief story about the race and culture of shakya's, birth of Siddhartha and his marriage and left out from his kingdom to attain nirvana etc. mentioned very briefly. In the beginning of the first sarga, it can be seen that there was a great pious saint whose name was Kapila-Gautama, was very successful in his penance and finally attained nirvana. This sacred cottage where he used to stay that was situated at the bottom of the great mountain Himālaya. Once the two princes, who were the descendant of Ekshaku arrived in his sacred cottage. Both the brother roamed in that forest for the sake of maintaining the truth of their father. Among them elder was too much sober that much naughty was the younger one of Ekshaku. They two were attracted by the beauty of the Kapil Saints cottage and they have decided to stay there and

they take initiation (दीक्षा) from him and started to stay there being his disciples. Kapila Gautama's cottage was surrounded by (शाकबृक्षोः) shâka trees and for this reason that place was called shâkavan (शाकवॉन). Later it considered as shakya's, as they were disciple of Saint Gautama, so they had taken their gotra as Gautama gotra. After few years Guru Gautama ordered to his disciples to build a नगर or kingdom in that place which will be very much attractive in all aspects. At the time of his journey to the heaven he sprinkles the holy water from a pitcher to through surrounded him and told them wherever the water will fall in the ground that place will be covered by the new town or kingdom. This place is later known as kapilavastu. 14

The name of the second sarga is "राजवर्णनः" has described the old society and culture. Gradually, a prince of शाक्य name सुद्धधन became the first king of kapilâvâstu. By his majesty over the subject and affection to them, he became a famous one. Due to the proper security system all of his subjects were happy and they became wealthy. The wise and learned persons were honoured in his administration. The ministers and other princes were obeyed orders of their beloved king not for fear but for the love and respect towards him. As a person, the king was acquainted with moral rules or precepts, protector of subjects and successfully maintained all kingly duties. He always tried to make an effort to caretaking of every

class of people of his kingdom. The nation was full of wealth and grain. For his good behaviour, people were eagerly ready to sacrifice their lives happily and with great pleasure because of there was not set-up any unfair taxes due to proper tax system. Actually, he was a person who had not only helps the struggler but also helps the person even if he consider as his foe. He used to praise his enemy for his good activities or virtues. He pleased all the people by his prudence. Even people of religious speculations also had honoured his religious principles and deep devotion. He loved all and everybody also loved and respected him for his unique behaviour. Religious persons and saints also showed their reverence due to his unmeasured knowledge of scripture. Heavenly God also wanted to born in his family as an incarnate. One night queen Mayadevi or Mayavati saw a wonderful dream that an elephant of white colour with six teeth entered into her womb. The dream experts or wise persons argued that it's a sign of the birth of a renowned prince. After a certain period, in an auspicious moment Siddhartha the son of king Suddhadana was born, who arrived as the incarnate of Lord Gautama Buddha. All the beneficial symptoms had found at that time. After a short period, the younger queen of king Suddhadhana had born a tremendously beautiful prince name Nanda. Prince Nanda was really very beautiful and attractive. By the reason of his bodily beauty, his name becomes Sundara or Sundara Nanda. Both the princes undergo the different rituals with the initiation

ceremony and all in due time. From the very beginning, prince Siddhartha was stoicism or indifference to worldly interests, but Prince Nanda was attracted to all worldly objects.

Gradually, by seeing an old man, a sick person and a dead body Siddhartha's mind become full of sorrows and sufferings. One night in the midst of deep sleep of all including his wife Yashodhora with newly born son Rahul at the maternity home, he left the palace and then the kingdom finally for the sake of searching the way to get relief from all the painful sorrows and sufferings.

The name of the third sarga is “तथागत-वर्णना” where inside the forest he met so many saint and monk. He saw that all the monks doing their meditation with stoicism. But his mind not allowed performing penance. After that he started worshiping of Salvationist Oror and Udraka but certain period of time he left due to felt it as untrue or lack of reality. Being doubtful mind, he wants to find out the best way among the entire religious path. At that time he left this opinion and he set-up his mind to get hard penance. Here also he did not find any peace and for that he left it again. One who desires liberation or salvation, he supposed to think that whole world is the place of sensual pleasure. Lord Buddha also thought that after conquering the ‘Mar’, he achieves the eternal peace. For that reason, Lord wanted the victory over all the sensual thirst or desire. He

selected a banyan tree near the Gaya and he absorbed himself in meditation. By the affection of the entire heavenly God, Lord Buddha came to know the actual truth of his entire question and he attains nirvana. He advised people about the truth, patience, knowledge, grave, modesty, and rule or system of life. He advised the people of Kashi, Gaya, and Giribraja (rajgir). The common people also started to follow him and maintained all his advices in detail or particularly, and he returned his paternal town for the sake of spreading the peace and happiness. Like the morning sun, he removed all the blemish substances from the mind of common people. King Suddhadhana went out with his horse when he came to know about the news that Lord Buddha has arrived. To make his father modest Lord Buddha started to wander in the sky like an aerial. Seeing this all the subjects of his state had shown respect to him by folding down their head.

The name of the fourth sarga is “भार्या-याचितक”, where there are various descriptions of a beautiful woman who absorbed with love to her husband deeply. This fourth chapter begins with love story of Nanda and Sundari; there we can see the sexual love scene of Nanda and his wife Saundari who is as beautiful as celestial nymphs. We can see that Nanda and Sundari both deeply attracted each other and the Mahakabi Asvaghosa described it in comparing with love-bird. Their love was so

deep that they never be able to stay in separated manner for the fraction of moment. One day when Nanda was copulated with Sundari, that moment one of his maid arrived in front of them and told them that, Lord Buddha has arrived in front of his palace for getting religious begging being a Buddhist mendicant. But no one responded him and greets him, so he went away with empty hand. By listening this news, Nanda became distressed and wanted to meet the Lord Buddha for expressed his deep sorry for his unwanted fault. Nanda took permission from Sundari to go away to meet the Tothagoto (Lord Buddha) and express his cardinal regret. Sundari also gave approval with the conditions that he must returned only before dried-up her bodily cosmetic, which based on sandalwood juice. By promising this he had started to go by two step forward and one step backward and turned back again and again to see his beloved wife and finally he disappear.

The name of the fifth sarga is “नन्द-प्रराज्जो व नन्द-दीक्षा”. After leaving the Nanda’s palace, when Lord Buddha was moving forwards with the crowd and getting turned over the path, at this moment Nanda has arrived in front of him, and he has seen that all the peoples are greeting Lord Buddha by offering flowers to him with great devotion. Seeing this Nanda also wanted to offer his articles of worship to this venerable person. Lord Buddha refused Nanda by showing his gesture

that he does not need any kind of begging from him, and he raised the bowl of beggars to Nanda's hand. Then Lord Buddha has taken Nanda along with him to his āshrama. By reproaching Nanda, Lord Buddha told him that “before death, you should prepare your mind for liberation, control your mind from flighty sensual pleasure, wealth is false, luxurious enjoyment is false, knowledge, faith and eternal strength is the real wealth of mind”. Now, calling ‘Ananda’ who is known as one of his disciple, Lord Buddha told him:- “Ananda, let Nanda interned to the initiation of religious mendicancy”. Initially Nanda was not agreed for initiation; Lord Buddha made him understand in different way. Later Nanda take initiation into Buddhist religion or Buddhism. At the time of initiation Nanda was crying while his hairs were removed and his tears fall down drop by drop.

“अथो नतं तस्य मुखं सबाष्पं प्रवास्यमानेषु शिरोरुहेषु ।

वक्राग्रनालं नलिनं तडागे वर्षोदकविलम्बमिवाबभासे ॥”

(saun; chap=5 and verse=52)

The name of the sixth canto is “भार्याविलाप”. In the absence of Nanda Sundari became anxious. Being impatient of the feeling of pain first she thought her husband is treacherous, otherwise why he did not come after promising her. Gradually, she received the news from her female

companion that her husband got renunciation, Sundari became disappointed. She started repining in many ways by recalling her memory of loving life which ruminates her by lamentation of herself. By seeing Sundari's condition, all the women were started crying. One old lady among them who tried to remove her sorrows in so many ways. Few of them said that Nanda will certainly come back to her.

The seventh sarga describes the sadness of Nanda. Therefore name of the chapter is “नन्दवितापणं”. Nanda was also very upset being sited under the mango grove he started to thinking about his beloved wife Sundari. Beyond of his wish he was bound to take the bowl of beggars from his holy preceptor Buddha. He could not control himself from the natural desires, so he never forgot his wife. By seeing the creepers climbed the mango tree, Nanda seems that both have a deep love like them and started recalling the moment of embracing by his wife Sundari. Nanda stated to cry of distress. Then he settled that he will go back to his home. He was not able to self restrained, so, religious mendicancy is not for him.

The eighth sargas name is “श्रीविघातो” deals with grief of the beautiful prince Nanda. Someone had come and try to make understand Nanda. His decision was illusory. When forest is burning and bird come out from that forest, does bird went back to his nest? The disciple tried to make him faithful about that decision taken by Nanda was how much



illogical or irrelevant from his point of view. Attraction towards female is how much predicament that had understood by this disciple to Nanda. The disciples also told this fact that after taking penance if anybody broken the rules then how much sin he may earn that he does not know.

The name of the ninth sarga is describes as“मदापवादो”. There was no reaction created in Nanda’s mind after listening to all these words, disciple understood. This illusion has been generating to Nanda’s mind by the strength and bodily attraction. He also elaborated about the momentary attraction of bodily beauty and strength. Sensual pleasure can’t give permanent happiness to life that also explains by the holy disciple ‘Anand’ to Nanda. But who make understand the obstinate like Nanda. Restless Nanda was firm in his decision. Disciple Anand has sent this message to the preceptor Lord Buddha.

“स्वर्गनिदर्शनो” is the name of the tenth sarga which means the visit of Swarga”स्वर्ग”.When Lord Buddha came to know that restless Nanda has broken the rules and regulations of religious mendicancy and he went to go back to the palace to see his wife then he called him to come in front of him. When Nanda arrived in front of him, Lord Buddha has taken him to Himalaya. Where there was a one eyed female monkey. By showing him that monkey, Lord Buddha asked him is your Sundari more beautiful than this? Stupid and senseless Nanda smiled and replied who is comparing

with whom! Tothagoto understood and brought him (Nanda) to the heaven and in the “NandanKānan” the beautiful garden of ‘Debharāj Indra’, where there was the fair of beautiful celestial nymphs. Among them some were singing, some of them dancing too. By seeing their unearthly unique beauty Nanda has forgotten everything even his beloved wife Sundarī too. He asked to Tathagata “how these celestial nymphs can be achieved?” Buddha said, if you want to achieved them, you have to do hard penance in your life. Living on heaven, achieving celestial nymphs, good companion can be acquired only by the result of perpetual virtuous acts. Nanda became calm and cool. With a quiet mood, he was agreed with preceptor’s proposal. After listening to this, Nanda peacefully return back to the earth with Lord Buddha.

The eleventh sarga is entitled with “स्वर्गापवादो” where the prince Nanda starts a hard penance with all his devotion. He wants all the charming or fascinating nymphs of Eden Garden (Nandan Kanan) of heaven. Disciple Anand came and asked him, ‘achieving celestial nymphs is only your goal? Is your worshiping of self restrained due to that only for the few of unrestrained inclination? If thirst of sensual pleasure is existing in your mind then what is the use of practising austerities? Love is for transitory or momentary, living on heaven is also lasting for a moment. When time of enjoyment in heaven will be over the fellow being

oozed out from paradise, one must get back on earth, so to get rid from the rotation of all the birth, old age, diseases and death. So, be engaged in the path of penance to get liberation from all the rotation of birth, old age, disease and death. So, Nanda must have taken the target of muksha or nirvana’.

The twelveth sarga is entitled with the name of “प्रत्यवमर्शो”. Agitation raised in the mind of Nanda. He has forgotten his wife Sundari by seeing celestial nymphs. But the experiencing sensual pleasure with nymphs is also momentary. So he came to Buddha with his tearful eyes and started praying to him by saying that—“I don’t want any celestial nymphs, you give me the needful suggestions that through which your advice I can get permanent pleasure in life”. Lord Buddha had welcome him and started to show him about the real path of salvation.

The name of the thirteenth sarga is “शीलेन्द्रियजयो”. Here Buddha has given some advice on the real fact or the truth of life. He explain to self restrained Nanda by seeing his devotion towards liberation that firstly Nanda has to limited or fixed the duration of practising meditation. By the means of devotional liberation how he has to maintain himself from bodily desires and worldly pleasures. The knowledge of freedom from passion is philosophical fundamental truth. The person who has experience on divine truth is considered as an authority of interment. The

relation of the authority of interment with mental and physical pleasure enriched with the eternal peace. From supreme felicity tranquillity, the feeling of the love towards each and every animal has produce. By the total love towards all remove all the negative mental feeling and this comes under consideration of inclination. Therefore, oh! Nanda be the fellow of good conduct. People who died by weapons may get relief and might not go to hell by consideration of God but people who died by unfair sexual relations, surely will go to hell. Therefore it is common to the people that if they are think about the worldly peace always, they may not attain their goal. On the contrary, we have to see and feel all those desires in a proper way, and then only we can relief from all existing bondage of life.

The fourteenth sarga is entitled with the name of “आदिप्रस्थाने”. For getting meditation being cure one can should take food with a limited quantity. Intelligent being can’t fulfil their stomach with thirst, devotion and affection only they take limited food for maintaining the energy for their body. Same as a person who has desire for sensual pleasure they thought that this world is full of enjoyment of sensual activity, they never thought about the life which beyond of life. So, they never perform meditation for divine peace and enjoyment. Until we get defeat or kill the demons which is present in the inner part or inside of a human being.

After that Buddha gave his precious advice about recollection. The people who have little memory, they stayed in wandering always in the midst of the darkness of desires. The people whose memory became lost his every good thing will just go in vain. Therefore, we all must be kept our proper reflection on commemoration. As fuel less fire cannot burn more, same as sensual feeling less heart became quiet automatically.

The name of the fifteenth sarga is “वितर्कप्रहाणो”. In this sarga to maintain inclination, deep meditation is needed by sitting straight and with the help of memory to make the fickle heart in a static position, one should practised deep meditation. To avoid illogical debate is only possible by consistency. Desire to achieve heaven, desire to earn money, thirst of sexual desire all these can help to make open the door of hell. So to quit malice and jealous, to renounce sexual desires to destruct all illogical debates and by adopting the practicing meditation, the path of the goal of ‘nirvāna’ or liberation will be spread. If the attraction of the earthly desires removes, then the life will be splendour or lighten. However, a goldsmith can give the variety shape of golden ornament same as a person having peaceful mind can get the credit of all good things created on earth.

The name of the sixteenth sarga is “आर्यसत्यव्याख्यानो”. With the mental consistency conjurer become metaphysician. Being metaphysician

he has accepted some gist and driving out some. Then he became the owner of four kinds of divine contemplation and five kinds of token of recognition. Then again he became the examiner of those matter or gist. By analysing those matters he became the master of the Four Noble Truth. At that time his mind became clean and clear by refining all worldly dust. The knowledge of four noble truths is considered as self realization of the ascetic. By the knowledge of this Four Noble Truth, he became free from all sorrows and sufferings. The nature of seeds never changed, the fire can't change its nature or originality from the blemish or imperfection world become originated. We should gain audience of the peaceful and beneficial religion. 'Thirst' brings destruction. For getting or achieving peace human being should try to do all those possible things whatever a farmer yields to make rice field productive.

The name of the seventeenth sarga is entitled "सौन्दर्यनंदेऽमृताधिगमो". In this seventeenth sarga there is a description about the situation where Nanda engaged for the penance for achieving absolute peace and the past attraction of worldly desires. In this sarga, obedient Nanda has got the advice of spiritual matter. He went to the forest after obeisance (as a token of respect) to his 'Guru' Lord Buddha. After reaching to the forest he had analyzed the path of liberation or Nirvana, in the point of view on nature and fault or guilt about the matter and religion

and he examine according to law. He has explained the desire to see the body on the basis of the gist of beauty and non-beauty. After the examination, Nanda has got these in irregular and spiritless statues. He got the earth having cause. This obedient has reached the toughest goal by his own effort, where the entrance of a normal monk or sage is not possible. By taking the support of forth meditation he had spoiled all the obstacles from his path by applying the sword of knowledge. At last, he respected 'Tothagoto' (Buddha) within himself he said that, "I am free now, I am very happy, many time I do respect to this great path shower.

The name of the eighteenth sarga is "आज्ञाव्याकरणे". Buddha philosophy is famous for pessimism. Life is nothing but the changing of sensation is due to the sorrows and sufferings. Destruction is just like liberation. By knowing all these facts grateful Nanda reached to Lord Buddha and thought that "labour has been done for me become successful". He wanted to see the monk and respected to the monk by folded his hands and said "the king of monk, whatever the worldly desires and sexual pleasures tighten me that all removed by your medicinal words. Although, I am still alive in this earth but I am not interested in the worldly or sensual pleasure. So, I can say that I am fully free from all the bindings of the earth", being satisfied by listening the words of Nanda, monk said, "you are a good man, now you are free from the cycle of birth,

sufferings and death. Now you are untroubled in spirit and you are leaving your own works get ready for service to others. You let the light of knowledge to the ignorant darken people”. In the last two points poet has given the hints of writings those reasons. 14



## SAUNDARANANDA: A MAHAKAVYA:-

The epic Saundarananda is a historical one which is the prime condition of a Mahakavya. This epic is based on the life of Sakhya dynasty, where king Suddhadana was the ruler of Kapilavastu. The hero of this epic was prince Siddhartha who has later known as Gautama Buddha was the centre character of this epic Saundarananda. It comes across the various classifications of Kavya (काव्य) in Sanskrit poetics. Dandin has divided poetry into Gadya (गद्य), Padya (पद्य) and Misra (मिश्र). Further he divided Padya (पद्य) into Mahakavya (महाकाव्य), Mukataka (मुक्तक), Kulaka (कुलक), Kosa (कुश) and Samghata (संघात). Rudrata divided Kavya into Sanskrit (संस्कृत), Prakrt (प्राकृत), Magadha (मगधी), Pisaca (पिसक), Surasena (सौरसेनी) and Apabhramsa (अपभ्रंश). Viswanatha Kaviraja divided poetry into Drsya Kavya (दृश्य) and Sravya Kavya (श्रव्य). The Sravya Kavya has been further divided into Gadya (गद्य) and Padya (पद्य). Again Padya (पद्य) has been divided into Muktakam (मुक्तकम्), Yugmakam (युग्मकम्), Sandanitikam (संधानितकम्), Kalapakam (कल्पकम्) and Kulakam (कुलकम्).

In the field or cycle of traditional Sanskrit epic Mahārshi Vālmikī was consider as a prime poet and his works 'Rāmāyana' was consider as first epic. In this traditional belt of epics Aśvaghoṣa was not considered as

the best poet, because in his time there was a famous humorous poet Kālidāsa in one side and on the other side well versed classical writer Magha and Harsha was famous for their writings and they also known as a best poet of that time. But, Aśvaghoṣa has some speciality in the form of his great creation that hints we have got earlier which made him important as like Shriharśha and Kalidasa, who has already applied in their works of traditional poetry. In his artistical writings, it has seen the similarity whatever was present in Vālmikī's creation. It may mention here, the western poet Milton said that, "poetry should be simple, sensuous and passionate". In the writings of Aśvaghoṣa, these three virtual qualities also present. In his poems some speciality has been found like mildness of sweet entry, softness of composure, simplicity of the placing of words, indifference of the coldness, philosophy of the apathy on indifference to the worldly affairs, philosophy of excellence and frequently use of alaṃkāra in suitable place and the perfect use of meters give his works a different importance. The presence of these unique qualities bound us to consider him as a representative of Sanskrit epic.

The culture and civilization of India has been nicely presented in Asvaghosa's two works i.e. Saundarananda and Buddhacarita. So, these two epic is considered as the successful picturesque of Indian culture and civilization. It is also visible in his two epics about the sensitivity and

experience of his own life regarding the matter of worldly callous, acute ascent of his raised heart, and the difference between the reality of the world and the actual price of the life made him or turned him Buddhist mendicant. His poem is very much affective to get rid of the sorrows and sufferings of human life and it is working as medicine to those people who are suffering from hardly disturbance. So, the feelings of benevolence and the heart rending opinion made his epic popular.

Asvaghosa has used few ancient traditional words in his two epic which has been imitated by the later poet Kalidasa to Shreeharsa. In the third sarga of Buddhacarita, verse number twelve to twenty four where he has described about the women who were eagerly curious and full of desire to see the Buddhadarshan ' बुद्ध-दर्शन' and they went to vanbihar 'वनविहार' being anxious or agitated just to see the real image of Lord Buddha. It may not be the fundamental excogitation of Asvaghosa, but before all the readers it must be considered as his first image. This traditionalism of writing has been seen in the thirteenth sarga of Magha and in the sixteenth sarga of Naishada, the work of Shreeharsa.<sup>15</sup>

In the second traditionalism of Asvaghosa was the ancient meaning of the words used in his works, which explained about the living entity of natural beauty where the trees and plants of the forest behaved like living animals.

“हाराण् मणिनुतमकुंडलानि केयूरवर्षाण्यथ नूपुराणि ।

एवंविधान्याभरणानि यत्र स्वर्गानुरूपाणि फलन्ति वृक्षाः ॥”

(saun; chap=10 and verse=23)

तथा,

“नानाविरागाण्यथ पाण्डराणि सुवर्णभक्तिव्यवभासितानि ।

अतान्तवान्येकघनानि यत्र सूक्ष्माणि वासांसि फलन्ति वृक्षाः ॥”

(saun; chap=10 and verse=22)

However, all plants and trees of the forest gives such fruits which is as like as the necklace, pearls, jewelleries and best heavenly ornaments which usually made of valuable metals, same as all trees of that forest gives all the ornamental fruits in this sarga.

In that forest, trees and plants bearing many colours. Among them, few are looking white, some are brighter than white line, and some are looking like the thread having leaves which can spread the clothes wide. The meaning of saying so is however the trees and plants giving us covering dress, like clothes, ornaments etc. same as Aśvaghoṣa has set in motion of the traditional word in his works. That is cleansed or purified and full-blooded expanded the reality has been observed in the fourth sarga of Kālidāsa’s ‘Abhijñanashakuntalaṃ’, where all those trees and

plants of the forest had gifted to 'shakuntalā' at the time of departing occasion of her by giving all those natural ornaments. By establish the traditional relation between human being and nature, Aśvaghoṣa has realized the inner full-blown expanded quality of natural heart. Aśvaghoṣa not only has established the human life with principles by his pictorial works, but also he has found the path of Nīrvāna or gets rid of all sorrows and sufferings from life cycle. The importance of Aśvaghoṣa is not only for all those readers regarding the epics of Sanskrit literature but he also considered as one of the best poet and it is also very important to understand the other poet of later period of Aśvaghoṣa, if only we study him to know the importance of Aśvaghoṣa. It means, if a reader does not understand about Aśvaghoṣa, then he or she does not understand about the other poet who belongs to the later period of him.

The only message of the epics of Asva are sacrifice, penance, birth and death, searching the path of nirvana, being the celibacy and by sacrificing all the worldly desires one can achieved the life of steadily engaged in religious austerities. Only by the help of sacrificing one can get liberation from his small selfish life. Again by applying self control and rules of the actual upliftment of human beings is possible. The gratification of life is not that by taking birth one can passed his life being a doll of worldly thirst and desires, but only by the self realization one can

make his life fruitful or successful. By this a man can get actual pleasure of life. For this important message of human life in traditional Sanskrit epic, the great poet Asva remain ever memorable.16

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