

The Yoga System in Aśvaghōṣa's *Saundarananda*

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In the latter part of the *Saundarananda*, more precisely from Canto 12 to 17, Aśvaghōṣa skillfully depicts the Buddha's teaching of yoga and Nanda's actual practice in the beautiful form of *kāvya*. This part, therefore, has been considered as one of the most useful sources for understanding the school affiliation of Aśvaghōṣa, which seems to have been an issue of ongoing controversy up until now. The purpose of this presentation, however, is not about taking part of any of the previous assertions, but rather about analyzing Aśvaghōṣa's yoga system from a different aspect, focusing on its unique doctrinal elements which does not seem to fit in the category of any specific sects or schools, such as Sarvāstivāda, Sautrāntika, Yogācāra and Dārṣṭāntika. Hinted by Tilmann Vetter's remarks on the unusual way of explaining the noble eightfold path in *Majjima Nikāya* 44 (Vol. I, p. 301), I detected the traces of followers of the means "discriminating insight" (*prajñā*) in the *Saundarananda* which appears to have no other counterparts other than the *MN* 44 mentioned above regarding the interpretation of eightfold path. In the course of certifying my assumption, I utilized the methodology of Lambert Schmithausen analyzing the yoga system described in early Buddhism, which had also influenced Vetter's research I referred to.