

extant remains and inscriptions are Śuṅgan (second to first century B.C.E.). Recording three Śuṅgan noblewomen's donations to the King's Temple, its railing and the jewel-walk posts, these inscriptions inaugurate an ongoing domestic and foreign tradition of donations and repairs. Early inscriptions also record Sri Lankan, Burmese, and Chinese pilgrimage. For example, Sri Lankan donative activity began with King Meghavarmā's building of the Mahābodhi Monastery (ca. fourth century C.E.) to house Sinhalese monks. Beginning in the eleventh century, the kings of Burma sent several expeditions to repair the temple.

Muslim invaders vandalized Bodh Gayā, probably before the last Burmese repair in 1295. The site remained desolate until the seventeenth century, when a Mahant settled there. Gaining ownership of the site, he salvaged its archaeological remains to build a Śaivite monastery near the MAHĀBODHI TEMPLE. The nineteenth century saw the resurgence of foreign Buddhist pilgrimage and Burmese reparative expeditions. The latter inspired British interest, resulting in colonial excavation and rebuilding in the 1880s. In 1891 ANAGĀRIKA DHARMAPĀLA founded the Mahābodhi Society in Sri Lanka to reestablish Buddhist ownership of the site. A lengthy legal battle ended victoriously in 1949. Today, Bodh Gayā is a thriving center of international Buddhism, attracting millions of Buddhist pilgrims every year from all over the world. Continuing a long-standing tradition, Buddhist sects throughout Asia (Sri Lanka, Burma [Myanmar], Thailand, Vietnam, China, Japan, Tibet, Nepal, and Bhutan) have established flourishing missions and built and repaired monasteries and temples there.

See also: **Bodhi (Awakening)**

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BODHI (AWAKENING)

The Sanskrit and Pāli word *bodhi* derives from the Indic root \sqrt{budh} (to awaken, to know). It was rendered into Chinese either by way of transliteration, as *puti* (Japanese, *bodai*; Korean, *pori*), or by way of translation. The most common among the many Chinese translations are *jue* (Japanese, *kaku*; Korean, *kak*; “to be aware”) and *dao* (Japanese, *dō*; Korean, *to*; “the way”). The standard Tibetan translation is *byang chub* (purified and perfected). Those who are attentive to the more literal meaning of the Indic original tend to translate *bodhi* into English as “awakening,” and this is to be recommended. However, it has long been conventional to translate it as “enlightenment,” despite the risks of multiple misrepresentation attendant upon the use of so heavily freighted an English word.

General characterizations of bodhi

In the most general terms, *bodhi* designates the attainment of that ultimate knowledge by virtue of which a being achieves full liberation (*vimokṣa*, *vimukti*) or NIRVĀṆA. Sometimes the term is understood to refer to the manifold process of awakening by which one comes variously and eventually to know the truth of things “as they truly are” (*yathābhūtam*), thereby enabling liberation from DUḤKHA (SUFFERING) and REBIRTH for both self and others. At other times *bodhi* is taken to refer to the all-at-once culmination of that process. In the latter sense, the term *bodhi* may be said to belong to the large category of names for things or events so ultimate as to be essentially ineffable, even inconceivable. However, in the former more processive sense, either as a single term standing alone or as an element in any number of compounds (*bodhicitta*, *bodhisattva*, *abhisambodhi*, *bodhicaryā*, etc.), *bodhi* is a subject of extensive exposition throughout which it is made clear that the term belongs more to the traditional categories of PATH (*mārga*), practice (*caryā*, *pratipatti*), or cause (*hetu*) than to the category of fruition or transcendent effect (*phala*). Thus, despite a common tendency in

scholarship to regard *bodhi* as a synonym for *nirvāṇa*, *vimokṣa*, and so on, it is best to treat *bodhi* as analytically distinct in meaning from the various terms for the result or consequence of practice.

Although the term *bodhi* often refers to the liberating knowledge specifically of BUDDHAS (awakened ones), it is not reserved for that use alone; *bodhi* is also ascribed to other and lesser kinds of liberated beings, like the ARHAT. When the full awakening of a buddha is particularly or exclusively intended, it is common to use the superlative form, ANUTTARASAMYAKSAMBOODHI (COMPLETE, PERFECT AWAKENING). In East Asian Buddhist discourse, particularly in the CHAN SCHOOL (Japanese, Zen), one encounters other terms (e.g., Chinese, *wu*; Japanese, *satori*) that are also translated as “awakening” or “enlightenment.” These other terms are perhaps related in meaning to *bodhi*, but they were very seldom used actually to translate the Indic word, are not admitted to be precisely synonymous with it, and in their common usages notably lack its sense of ultimacy or finality. They refer rather to certain moments or transient phases of the processes of realization arising in the course of contemplative practice. As such they are the focus of much dispute over their purportedly “sudden” or “gradual” occurrence.

Traditional accounts of *bodhi* found in or derived from South Asian sources are often connected to accounts of Śākyamuni’s own liberating knowledge, attained in his thirty-fifth year, in the final watch of his first night “beneath the *bodhi* tree.” He is said then to have achieved, in a climax to eons of cultivation extending through innumerable past lives, the ultimate knowledge (*vidyā*) or ABHIJÑĀ (HIGHER KNOWLEDGES)—that is, knowledge of the extinction of the residual impurities (*āsravaḥ* *ajñāna*; literally, “oozings” or “cankers”) of sensual desire (*kāma*), becoming (*bhava*), views (*dṛṣṭi*), and ignorance (*avidyā*). This extinguishing or purgative knowledge arises precisely in the immediate verification of the FOUR NOBLE TRUTHS—that is, in the intuitive confirmation (*abhisamaya*) of the truth of *duḥkha* (suffering), the truth of the origin (*samudaya*) of suffering in craving (*tṛṣṇā*) and ignorance (*avidyā*), the truth of the cessation (*nirodha*) of suffering, and the truth of the path (*mārga*) leading to the cessation of suffering. To the limited and questionable extent that one can conceive of *bodhi* as an experience, these knowings or extinctions are, so to speak, the content or object of Śākyamuni’s experience of awakening, and the four noble truths are what it was that he awakened to. We may note in this classical account of *bodhi* the convergence

of two modes of soteriological discourse—a discourse of purgation or purification signaled by the use of terms like eradication (*kṣaya*) and canker (*āsrava*), and a discourse of veridical cognition, exemplified by such terms as knowledge (*vidyā*) and *abhiññā*. *Bodhi* is thus shown to be, at once, a cleansing and a gnosis, an understanding that purifies and a purification that illuminates.

The more systematic or scholastic traditions of Buddhism commonly expound *bodhi* in terms of its constituent factors (*bodhipakṣa*, *bodhipakṣikadharmā*). These, of course, are components of awakening in the sense of an extended process or path rather than in the sense of a single, unitary culmination of a path. There are thirty-seven such factors, grouped in seven somewhat overlapping categories. The four “foundations of MINDFULNESS” (*smṛtyupasthāna*) are mindfulness or analytical meditative awareness of the body (*kāya*), of feelings (*vedanā*), of consciousness (*viññāna*), and of mind-objects (*dharma*). The four “correct eliminations” (*samyakprahāṇa*) or “correct exertions” (*samyakpradhāṇa*) are the striving to eliminate evil that has already arisen, to prevent future evil, to produce future good, and to increase good that has already arisen. The four “bases of meditative power” (*ṛddhipāda*) are aspiration (*chanda*), strength (*vīrya*), composure of mind (*citta*), and scrutiny (*mīmāṃsā*). The five “faculties” (*indriya*) are FAITH (*śraddhā*), energy (*vīrya*), mindfulness (*smṛti*), concentration (*samādhi*), and PRAJÑĀ (WISDOM). The five “powers” (*bala*) are five different degrees of the five faculties ranging from the lowest degree sufficient to be simply a follower of the Buddha, through the higher degrees necessary to achieve the higher degrees of sainthood: status as a stream winner (*śrotāpanna*), a once-returner (*sakṛdāgāmin*), a nonreturner (*anāgāmin*), and an arhat. The seven “limbs of awakening” (*bodhyaṅga*) are memory (*smṛti*), investigation of teaching (*dharmapracaya*), energy (*vīrya*), rapture (*prīti*), serenity (*praśrabdhī*), concentration (*samādhi*), and equanimity (*upekṣā*). The final eight factors are the components of the noble eightfold path.

So manifold and complex a characterization of *bodhi*, as a process comprising multiple parts, serves to underscore the fact that awakening is clearly not an end divorced from its means, nor a realization separate from practice; rather it is the sum and the perfection of practice. This fact is often explicitly acknowledged in Buddhism—in assertions of the unity of realization and practice or in the variously formulated insistence that practice is essential to realization. Such claims

must be kept in mind as cautions against the temptation to conceive of bodhi as a wholly autonomous, self-generated, and entirely transcendent “experience.” Indeed, it could serve even as warrant for banning the very use of modern, largely Western notions of “experience” (pure experience, religious experience, mystical experience, etc.) from all discussions of bodhi or analogous terms. To speak of “the experience of awakening,” rather than of, say, the performance or the cultivation of awakening, is to risk reifying the process and, worse still, isolating it from the rest of Buddhism.

Bodhi in the Mahāyāna

The characterizations of awakening sketched above are common to the whole of Buddhism. Among notions of bodhi that are especially emphasized in MAHĀYĀNA one must note its conception as an object of noble aspiration. The ideal Mahāyāna practitioner, the BODHISATTVA, is essentially defined as one who aspires to bodhi, one who dedicates himself to the enactment of bodhi for himself but also and especially for all beings. This is the sense of the word operative in the term *bodhicittotpada*, the arousal of BODHICITTA (THOUGHT OF AWAKENING), a locution rich in conative significance that conveys the affective dimension, the emotive power, of liberating knowledge, as well as its necessary association with the virtue of KARUṆĀ (COMPASSION).

Also characteristic of Mahāyāna is a recurrent concern with identifying the source of the capacity for awakening. Is it natural or inculcated? In sixth-century China there appeared a text entitled the AWAKENING OF FAITH (DASHENG QIXIN LUN) that was attributed to ĀSVAGHOṢA but was probably a Chinese contribution to the evolving tradition of TATHĀGATAGARBHA (matrix or embryo of buddhahood) thought. This text coined the term “original awakening” (*benjue*), contrasting that with “incipient awakening” (*shijue*). The former refers to an innate potential awakening, a natural purity of mind (*cittaprakṛtviśuddhi*) or underlying radiance of mind (*prabhāsvaratvaṃ cittasya*), which enables practice and so engenders the actualization of awakening. The latter refers to the process of actualization itself, by which one advances from the nonawakened state, through seeming and partial awakening, to final awakening. Drawing upon a usage of linguistics, we might speak of the pair as awakening in the mode of competence and awakening in the mode of performance. The notion of a natural enlightenment that abides as a potency in the very sentience of SENTIENT BEINGS (later called buddha-nature) and issues in the gradual enactment of actual awakening stood in

contrast to alternative views found in certain traditions of the YOGĀCĀRA SCHOOL of Buddhism, according to which awakening is the outcome of the radical transformation of a mind (*āśrayaparāvṛtti*) that is naturally or inveterately defiled. This notion proved very fruitful throughout East Asian Buddhism but fostered in the Japanese Tendai (Chinese, Tiantai) school an especially powerful and enduring doctrine of ORIGINAL ENLIGHTENMENT (HONGAKU) that left its mark on nearly all of medieval and early modern Japanese Buddhism. It also had profound ethical implications insofar as the notion of original or natural awakening was commonly invoked, or was said to be invoked, for antinomian or laxist purposes on the grounds that one’s originally awakened condition rendered effortful practice otiose.

Comparable to the idea of original awakening, but even stronger and bolder, is the startling claim resonant in much of Chinese, Korean, and Japanese Buddhism that awakening is not merely potentially present in the mundane sentient condition but actually identical with the worst of that condition. This seemingly paradoxical assertion is classically conveyed in the aphorism, “the afflictions (*kleśa*) are identical with awakening.” In conventional theory, bodhi is the eradication of the *kleśa* (affective hindrances like anger, lust, greed, etc.); the assertion that the *kleśa* and bodhi are one and the same would therefore seem, at least at first glance, to be not only heterodox but also perverse and self-contradictory. It appears to stand the conventional view of awakening on its head. However, justification for so seemingly outrageous a claim is to be found in the doctrine of ŚŪNYATĀ (EMPTINESS), according to which any sentient event or condition, being necessarily empty (*śūnya*) of self-nature or own being (*svabhāva*), mysteriously incorporates all other sentient events or conditions. Hell entails buddhahood; evil entails good; and vice versa. Thus, even an impulse of lust or hatred harbors the aspiration for awakening, and awakening is not a condition or process that depends upon or consists in the complete extinction of imperfection.

The sudden/gradual issue

The concept of original awakening was also central to Chan discourse about “sudden” (Chinese, *dun*; Japanese, *ton*) and “gradual” (Chinese, *jian*; Japanese, *zen*) awakening. Here the term for awakening is the Chinese word *wu* (read in Japanese as *satori* or *go*), and, as noted above, *wu* is to be distinguished from *bodhi*, although it is not wholly unrelated. The terms sudden

awakening (*dunwu*) and gradual awakening (*jianwu*) were, of course, instruments of polemic. Certain Chan traditions criticized others for being gradualist in their understanding and practice of awakening while claiming themselves to be subitist. The former, of course, is a term of disparagement, the latter a term of strong approbation. No school ever itself claimed to be gradualist; all laid claim to sudden awakening. In the eighth century the so-called Southern Chan school, derived from the teachings of the sixth patriarch HUINENG (ca. 638–713), claimed to offer sudden or all-at-once awakening while alleging that the so-called Northern School, derived from the teachings of Shenxiu (ca. 606–706), espoused a gradual or step-by-step, and thus ultimately bogus, awakening. The Northern School, which was actually as subitist as any, died out as a distinct Chan lineage, whereas the Southern School flourished to the point that all post-eighth-century Chan derives from the Southern School and so adheres *de rigueur* to the position that true awakening comes suddenly or all at once. In effect this is simply a variation on the theme of original awakening, for the asserted suddenness or all-at-once character of awakening is really just a function of its being, as it were, always and already present in one's very nature as a sentient being. It need not be formed but only acknowledged, and acknowledgement is always all at once. It must be noted, however, that only in the most extreme and eccentric traditions of Chan did the claim of "sudden awakening" ever imply the actual rejection of effortful practice. Instead, such gradual practice was typically held to be necessary, but necessary chiefly as the sequel to a quickening moment of sudden awakening, functioning to extend what was glimpsed in sudden awakening so as to make it permanent, habitual, and mature.

Bodhi as "enlightenment"

It was noted above that the most common English rendering of *bodhi* (or *wu* or *satori*) is "enlightenment." There are grounds for such a translation. Some of the earliest usages of the word *enlightenment* show it to have meant something like spiritual illumination, and spiritual illumination is not so far from "awakening." However, the term *enlightenment* is also commonly employed in the West to designate an age in European intellectual and cultural history, roughly the eighteenth century, the dominant voices of which were those of philosophers like Voltaire, Condorcet, and Diderot, who all declared the supremacy of reason over faith, and the triumph of science and rational

ethics over religion. Such thinkers were harshly dismissive of the kinds of piety, faith, asceticism, and mystical insight that we saw above to be among the components or factors of bodhi. To be sure, the awakening of the Buddha was not a suspension or an abrogation of reason, but neither was it simply an exercise of what Voltaire would have meant by *reason*. Better then to use the more literal rendering of "awakening," which also has the advantage of conveying the concrete imagery of calm alertness and clear vision that the Buddhist traditions have always had in mind when speaking of bodhi.

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BODHICARYĀVATĀRA

Bodhicaryāvatāra (*Introduction to the Conduct That Leads to Enlightenment*; *Byang chub sems dpa'i spyod pa la 'jug pa*) is, with CANDRAKĪRTI's seventh-century *Madhyamakāvatāra* (*Introduction to Madhyamaka*), the most important text integrating Madhyamaka philosophy into the bodhisattva path. The text is structured around meditation on the altruistic "awakening mind" or BODHICITTA (THOUGHT OF AWAKENING) and its development through PĀRAMITĀ (PERFECTION). The longest chapter is on PRAJÑĀ (WISDOM) and treats philosophical analysis. Written by ŚĀNTIDEVA (ca. 685–763), the poem was popular in late Indian Buddhism and has been enormously important in Tibet.

See also: **Bodhisattva(s); Madhyamaka School**

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