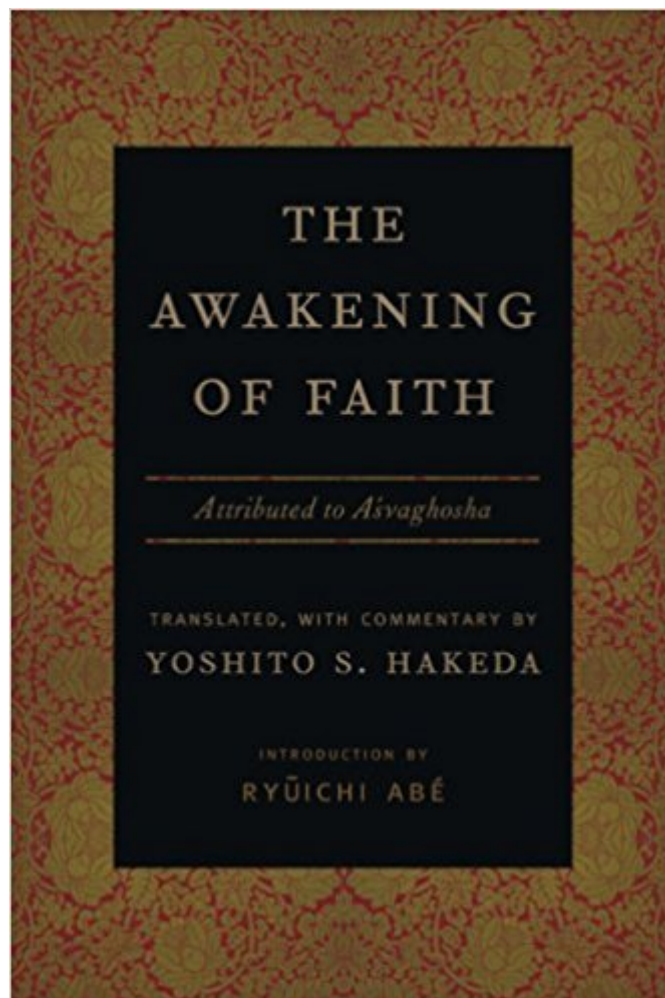




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# The Awakening Of Faith: Attributed To Asvaghosha (Translations From The Asian Classics (Paperback))



## Synopsis

Whenever I have questions on Mahayana Buddhist doctrine, I return to this text and Professor Hakeda's interpretation of it. I wonder if I will ever encounter a work that is at once more profound, attractive, and mysterious than the *Awakening of Faith*. -- Ryuichi Abi, from the introduction

First published in 1967, Yoshito S. Hakeda's critical interpretation of the *Awakening of Faith* has become a classic. This edition, which includes a new introduction by Ryuichi Abi, presents a beautiful and accessible translation of one of the most influential works in Mahayana Buddhism.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"At last, a critical English translation of one of the most influential documents of Mahayana Buddhism faithful to the earliest extant Chinese text." -- "Choice"

"The most reliable version of the text available to English-speaking readers." -- Andrew May, "Journal of The Buddhist Society"

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Hakeda was Associate Professor of Japanese in the Department of East Asian Languages and Cultures and Associate Professor of Religion at Columbia University. Ryuichi Abe is the Reischauer Institute Professor of Japanese Religions in the Department of East Asian Languages and Cultures at Harvard University.

A must for any zen practice. It will be read more than once.

For me, the highlight of this text is its depiction of faith, not as a blind grasping towards the truth, but as trust with conviction. The difference is important in today's world where the meaning of faith has been eviscerated of its positive affirmation of a path - conviction arising from a sure understanding, rather than just an adopted belief - to become more a label of anti-experiential assertion. Thus in today's world to have faith is to believe in the absence of evidence, while in this context to have faith is to have become permeated with the enlightened aspect of Suchness. The value of a text such as this is not the programmatic ideas that it presents, but the underlying understanding that these ideas point to. If one merely forms an attachment to the conceptual ideas, one is not developing faith. The translator's introduction and commentary, much of which is taken from a few Chinese and Korean scholars, but especially that of Fazang, is generally excellent. One caveat is that there are a few places within the text where the typographic style of setting off the commentary from the base text is not adhered to (ex. top of pg 65 of reprint edition), potentially confusing the reader. The introduction to the reprint edition by Abbot is suspect. He starts with a whopper of a misunderstanding when he states: "... the Awakening of Faith boldly posits as the ultimate reality the minds of sentient beings in their everyday existence." The "minds" (plural and individuated) are presented as the permeation of ignorance and not the "ultimate reality". So I recommend caution in reading these remarks. James Corrigan

An Introduction to Awareness

This book was a great read, and I think an important one for anyone interested in looking into Mahayana Buddhism, or Buddhism in general. The major concepts of Buddhist thinking are presented here along with the author's help in deciphering meaning from the more difficult or unclear paragraphs. This is invaluable as a lot of Buddhist concepts and style of writing can be difficult to grasp. I take refuge in this book :)

This text is a systematical rendering of Mahayana. It's almost like a logico-philosophical system (Hegel's or Kant's). The ideas are ordered in a hierarchical fashion and developed one after

another. What's amazing about this text is that it manages to present ALL Mahayana teachings and unite them in a single whole. Reconciling all seeming contradictions. This is the best translation.

There are three chapters in this document plus a bunch of historical add-ons and whatnot, interesting enough in suggesting that the author is truly unknown. The first Chapter on interpretation of the "Principle of Mahayana" contains the meat of the matter. The second two chapters are not-so-good. Here is a small summary of the 4 stages of enlightenment (suchness) posited in the first chapter. The first three are collected as "nonfinal enlightenment" covering states said "not to be enlightened to the fountainhead of the mind". These states of comprehension are: 1) the ability to prevent incorrect (wrong) thought from arising 2) enlightenment in appearance: aware of the changing nature of thought but free from thoughts subject to change (ie those having foresaken rudimentary attachments thereto). 3) approximate enlightenment: those aware of the temporary abiding state of thoughts, who are not arrested by them and therefore are free from thought suggesting that the components of the world (their experience) is "real" 4) final enlightenment: to be fully enlightened to have reached the fountainhead of the mind - ie those free from deluded thought, able to perceive that which is beyond thought, and to have thus awakened to the perception that ALL THOUGHT can be likened to "dream only". There is a concise discussion on emptiness therein including enlightenment and non-enlightenment. Excellent!! Highly recommended though subject to much padding... The Journey To Enlightenment

Excellent, essential text in Mahayana Buddhism. Well worth repeated reading and study.

A worthwhile book to have for anyone serious about learning the Buddhist Dharma; especially appreciate the commentaries which are helpful to comprehend the very terse text.

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