

Stroll down the Buddhist  
aisle of any large book store  
and you'll find it lousy  
with books written by blokes

who have yet to accomplish  
the tenth Bodhisattva Bhumi,  
no less full enlightenment.

What are they going  
to teach you,  
how to NOT become a Buddha?

But of course that sentence  
dates me as profoundly  
as my 1970's  
cultural references,

for Amazon,  
the beast that Bezos made,  
has gobbled up bookstores  
hither and yon.

Oh what a mess Buddhism  
has become.

A deeply pragmatic fellow,  
while the Buddha was alive,  
he spoke out against sexism,  
classism, superstition, ritual,

mythology, philosophy,  
metaphysics, greed,  
as well as hate

and instead contented himself  
to teach  
meditation and contemplation  
simply and effectively.

Yet no sooner  
had he been assassinated

then great fools  
began teaching  
those very things



(in the name of he,  
who taught against them).

Rather like making love  
in the name of virginity,  
if you ask me.

All the while  
neglecting many  
of the Buddha's instructions

these pious fools  
inserted others' teachings  
in his name;

some Hindu,  
some Neo-Taoist,  
and some shamanistic.

And when these  
so-called improved teachings  
failed to generate  
  
the results seen  
while the Buddha yet drew air;

they refused to second guess  
their assumptions and actions,  
blaming instead  
the students and the times,

insisting that these  
were dark days indeed

and the liberation  
that the Buddha's students  
had accomplished  
in merely seven:

years, quarters, months,  
fortnights, weeks, or even days;

now

could only be accomplished  
after heroically striving  
for no less than three great eons.

Instead of using the terms  
yang and yin,  
or patriarchy and matriarchy  
let us contrast the behaviors



of the foolish Devadatta  
with those of his wise cousin  
Gautama,

who became known  
as the Buddha.

A slave to elitism,  
Devadatta hungered  
for prestige, power,  
and authority.

Using personal attacks,  
the guise of piety,  
rigidity, aggression, fear,

and divisive arguments  
for asceticism

he created a schism  
within the Buddha's community  
of nuns, monks, and laity,

for the sole purpose  
of gathering to himself  
patrons, students,  
power, and prestige.

And while that silly fellow  
was quite skilled  
at clawing his way  
into positions of power

he was absolutely dreadful  
at actually sharing  
useful instructions

that truly benefitted  
his acolytes;

who soon abandoned him  
and returned to the Buddha

(who has also  
come to be known  
as Shakyamuni).



To put it succinctly,  
Devadatta taught  
from the domineering duality  
of dread and desire;

whereas the Buddha  
flexibly flowed  
from love and letting go.

A month  
does not seem to pass  
without a good hearted seeker

asking  
one of Facebook's  
online communities

for Buddhist  
reading suggestions  
only to be slathered

(as if they were the star  
of a great literary Bukkake)

with recommendations  
for books  
that seem to have been written  
  
more from that tradition  
of foolish Devadatta  
than from that of wise Gautama.

The only thing greater  
than my laziness  
is the distress I feel at watching

the good hearted  
being lead down  
frustrating paths

that cannot give them  
the peace and love  
for which  
they so desperately hunger.

Perhaps I have a low threshold  
for the suffering of others  
as this book is written  
to solve their frustration



that the good hearted  
might escape  
the habitual momentum

of the domineering duality  
of dread and desire,

and instead master  
the Buddha's flexible flow  
of love and letting-go.

A. Introduction – Why another Buddhist Book?