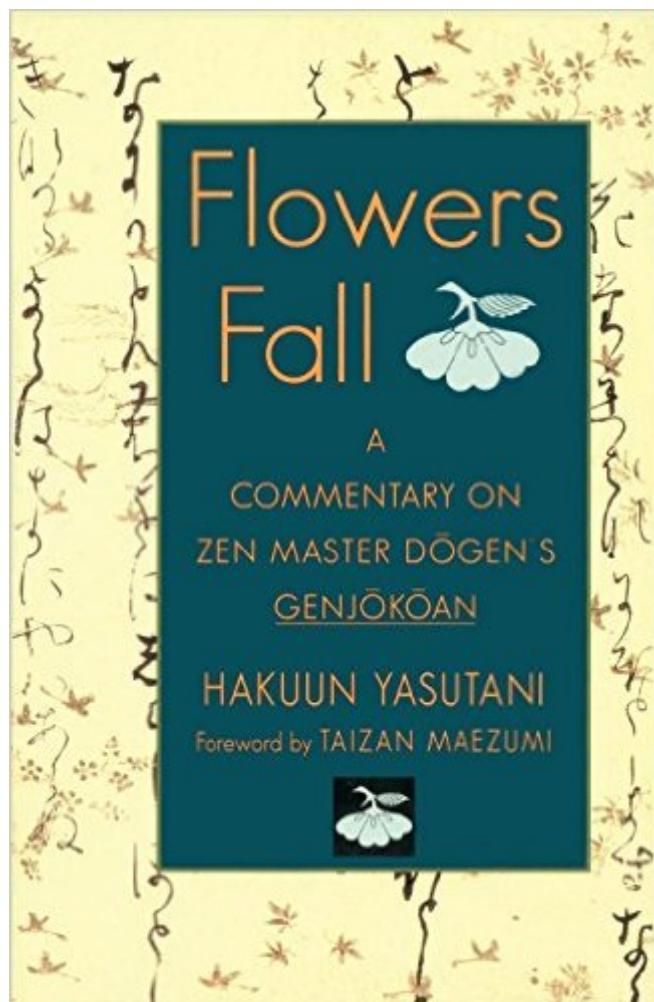


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Flowers Fall: A Commentary On Zen Master Dogen's Genjokoan



Synopsis

Written by the founder of Japanese Zen, Eihei Dogen (1200-1253), the Genjokoan is often considered to be the key text within Dogen's masterwork, Shobogenzo. The Genjokoan addresses in terse and poetic language many of the perennial concerns of Zen, focusing particularly on the relationship between practice and realization.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Very simply, for those interested in Dogen and his "Genjo-Koan", there is no other meaningful commentary available in English. This one is originally written in Japanese and has a Japanese sensibility, but is well translated and delves deeply into the nuances of Dogen's masterpiece. One can quibble with Yasutani's interpretations, but at the end of the day Dogen is just a mirror in which the face of the commentator is reflected -- everyone can and will have their theory about what our favorite Soto Zen Master was actually saying in his cryptic, exuberant, philosophical tour de force. Yasutani has more than one axe to grind but that just adds spice to the mix. All in all, a must-read for the Dogen and Genjo-Koan student.

FLOWERS FALL is an explication of the first fascicle of the Shobogenzo by one of our Diamond Sangha Dharma ancestors. You might remember him as the last "dai-oshō" in our sutra dedication. Yasutani is most well known for his lectures introducing Zen training that are included in The Three Pillars of Zen edited by Philip Kapalau. Yasutani really delivers on his promise to unpack Genjokoan.

As he says, "Dogen Zenji's sentences are brief and to the point, and also the style is elevated, so unless one with a clear dharma eye fleshes them out appropriately, lowers the style and re-phrases them for a spoon-feeding, they won't be understood by beginners. To read and chew on the original texts as they are is best, but as a temporary foothold I'll add a little padding." He makes the tough sledding enjoyable as he brings out Dogen's pointers to Zen practice. Hey, get a clue as to why cushion time (zazen) is needed, in spite of the fact that we have Buddha Nature - are Buddha Nature - already. And then there's the side trips into scolding the Soto folks and ripping the Rinzai. Actually, it's more like Yasutani was taking my own lax and misdirected practice to task. Not exactly grandmotherly, but I didn't lose too much blood. [...]

Excellent text

I love this book for self study. It is in beautiful shape and arrived quickly. There are many different things to ponder and it has been a great book to read.

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