

Chapter Three

Methodology

Basic Approach

My interest in this study is exploring the implicit psychology of Zen Buddhism as is lived in those who are striving for enlightenment or *satori*. My approach is done in the spirit of Husserl's "watchword 'to the things themselves'" (Spiegelberg, 1982, p. 680). In this study this means "to the *roshis* themselves." I want to understand the lived experience of Japanese Zen masters. This means that my basic approach to this study is to go to the *roshis* and in as many ways as possible try to understand their experience. I would call this an "immersion" approach, one that includes personal experience as well as analytical activities. I want to get as close as possible to the *roshis*' own subjective experience as well as analyze it objectively. Practically this means living in Japan to become familiar with the cultural aspects of the Zen I was studying, actually doing Zen practice with some of the *roshis*, being able to interview the *roshis* on their own turf, and having many Japanese resources to assist my interpretation of the interviews.

This methodology is based on the thesis that this study could only be done properly "within" the Zen tradition. The purpose of this study was not to understand Zen through the lens of a Western psychology, but to allow the psychology of causality, attachment, and no-self in Zen to emerge from the study itself. Thus, it was important for me to use a research methodology that was congruent with the practice of the *roshis* who were participating in this study.

Zen Methodology

There are four Zen principles that I consider to be the basis of the Zen methodology of the *roshis* who participated in this study. The first is that of oneness and the inseparability of all experience. Suzuki Roshi (1970) writes that “when you become one with Buddha, one with everything that exists, you find the true meaning of being” (p. 44). In other words, Zen psychology is a situated psychology, a psychology in which a person is part of a greater whole and participates in this greater whole.

The idea of causality is intimately connected with this understanding of the oneness of experience. A person understood through this idea is always participating and situated in causality. The Zen understanding is that it is impossible to not be subject to the law of cause and effect. Sasaki Roshi (1974) asserts, “If you try to escape from the doctrine of cause and effect, you will be caught by cause and effect” (p. 46). Causality is the field within which a human being participates.

The second Zen methodological principle is *tathata* (Skt., Jap. 眞如 *shinnyo*), which can be translated into English as “suchness” or as “as-it-is-ness.” *Tathata* is used to emphasize the importance for a person to be what they are in reality and to see and meet the world as it is. Zen asserts that the mind has a natural way of functioning and what is necessary is for a person to let this natural functioning be what it is. Harada Roshi (1998) writes, “The path expounded by Buddha is simply to accept birth, old age, sickness, and death as your own reality and not to interfere with that reality by using the thought of the ego-self” (p. 193).

People commonly interfere with the natural functioning and/or don't see things as they are by misusing the conceptual mind. They impose concepts on their condition and judge and value their condition rather than simply letting their condition be what it is.

In Zen practice the method is to use the mind as attention to whatever is. Concepts, values, preferences, pre-understandings, etc., are dropped. The mind simply attends to its object without valuing or judging it and through attention receives the object as it is. This is a continual practice of letting go of one's conceptual mind. This de-emphasis of the conceptual mind means that understanding must have an experiential basis. Frequently in the Zen literature, as in the story of Te-shan Hsuan-chien (Huikai, 1228/1977, case 28), it is emphasized that Zen cannot be understood through only intellectual means, but must have a basis in personal practice. This is an understanding that is rooted in one's personal life and allows for the possibility of "a transmission outside the scriptures," *kyoge-betsuden* (Jap. 教外別傳) in Zen terminology. The *Japanese-English Buddhist Dictionary* defines this Zen expression as: "transmission of doctrines without dependence upon sutras or other writings" (1999, p. 211). This is a very similar idea to the previously referred to *ishin denshin*, transmission from mind to mind without depending on the scriptures.

No-self, described earlier as the basis of the Zen understanding of mind, must be considered for this study. This is the third methodological principle. According to no-self mind has neither an essence nor a self that contains mind. Mind is composed of functions that are integrated in an operational whole. Mind

is thus an activity, a process, not an entity. The functions within it are also phenomena that are essentially activities. The methodological implications of this are that the study must allow for an understanding of mind that is process-oriented, an activity, and situated.

The Zen understanding of awakening is the fourth principle that is important for this study. Methodologically the relevance of awakening is how understanding occurs. Awakening means to become aware of what is already the case, to understand what the truth is. A person is in truth no-self. One awakens to what is already always one's condition. The orientation is not to try to create a self, but to realize what is already one's self.

In practice this means that a person uses attention, intuition, and practicing or deepening what one already knows to realize what is the truth of their condition. One expression of this is the following quote that Dogen, the founder of the Soto Zen sect of Japanese Buddhism, wrote in the *Fukanzazengi*, "If you wish to attain "suchness," practice "suchness" immediately" (1227/1998, p. 116). This can be said to be the basis of Soto Zen practice. Do not try to construct happiness. Rather, awaken to what is priorly your happiness.

Phenomenology and Zen

One Western academic methodology that has been interested in Zen Buddhism is phenomenology. Phenomenology is based on the philosophical orientation to be true to the phenomena itself and to let go of any explanatory hypothesis. As quoted earlier, Husserl's watchword was "To the things

themselves” (Spiegelberg, 1982, p. 680). This is a real reverence for the phenomena itself. This has a similarity to the Zen principle of *tathata*. Spiegelberg (1982) describes “the underlying unity of the phenomenological procedures as the unusually obstinate attempt to look at the phenomena and to remain faithful to them before even thinking about them” (p. 717). This is a description that appears similar to the Zen use of attention, as I understand it. Thus, I believe that in doing a phenomenological analysis mind is used in a similar manner to the way it is used in Zen practice.

The focus of phenomenology has been on the phenomena of consciousness and what are its essential structures. Husserl “argued that experiences were constituted by consciousness and thus could be rigorously and systematically studied on the basis of their appearances to consciousness,--i.e. their phenomenal nature--when an appropriate method of reflection--i.e. phenomenology--had been worked out” (von Ecskartberg, 1986, p.4).

Phenomenology has expanded from the pure phenomenology of Husserl under the influence of the existentialist movement. Consciousness came to be regarded as situated, as always a part of a greater whole. The existentialist movement “emphasized that being in the world involves more than human consciousness and encompasses the total embodied human response to a perceived situation. Such insights led existential-phenomenologists to focus their research on human situated experience” (von Ecskartberg, 1986, p. 11). Understanding a phenomenon as situated has a similarity to the Zen principle of

oneness. Both imply that nothing is separate and that all phenomena exist in relationship to other phenomena.

Phenomenology begins by focusing on the living of a phenomenon in its natural setting and soliciting descriptive accounts of this living. von Eckartsberg (1986) writes that “rather than hastily trying to quantify or abstract from everyday experience in the style of the natural sciences, we begin by more carefully attending to our actual living of it. This is the starting point for existential-phenomenological psychology” (p. 2). Living a phenomenon is an activity. Rather than trying to freeze a phenomenon and treat it as a quantifiable entity both Zen and phenomenology attempt to understand what it is to participate in the involved living of a phenomenon.

Within the greater Buddhist tradition there is precedent for a phenomenological approach to mind. Thera (1965) writes that the *Abhidhamma*, which is part of the Theravada Buddhist tradition, takes an approach of “rigorous phenomenology ... based exclusively on an unprejudiced and subtle introspective observation of mental processes” (p.6). Thera also writes, “the (Buddhist) meditator must adopt a radically phenomenological stance, attending mindfully to each successive occasion of experience exactly as it presents itself in its sheer immediacy” (1965, p. xvii).

Also, within phenomenology there has been an interest in the understanding of Zen. Merleau-Ponty tried to overcome the subject-object dichotomy of traditional thinking (von Ecskartberg, 1986), which can also be said in my opinion to be the purpose of Zen practice. von Ecskartberg (1986)

also states that Heidegger's "attitude and concrete examples of existential-hermeneutic work place him in kinship with the tradition of Zen" (p. 12).

Hermeneutics

Another Western academic discipline that is relevant to the fourth Zen methodological principle, awakening, is hermeneutics. Hermeneutics is the science of interpretation, the study of meaning. It began as the study of religious texts, which is in a sense what the interviews with the roshis are. What is relevant to the Zen idea of awakening is the methodology of the hermeneutical circle. This is a reflective spiral, a dialectic circle of interpretation. A researcher continually cycles between their understanding and examining the text. It begins with a person having a pre-understanding of a text that through the hermeneutical circle they further clarify and articulate. The assumption is that understanding something occurs by comparing it to something we already know. Palmer (1969) writes, "Understanding is circular, then, because within this 'circle' the meaning comes to stand" (p. 45).

This has similarities to the methodology of Zen awakening. This was expressed in the quote from Dogen. Practice "suchness" right now. Practice what is already the case, what you already intuit to be the truth. Zen practice begins from this pre-intuition, or, in the hermeneutical sense, pre-knowledge. A practitioner continually returns to this, continually seeks to clarify this, to actually verify it as their true condition. Based on this kind of practice full awakening occurs.

Both hermeneutics and Zen begin with a pre-understanding. Both then seek to clarify and deepen this understanding through continually dialoguing between this and what is being studied. In the Zen situation what is being studied is the self rather than a text. It is particularly important for Zen that this methodology allows for understanding the phenomena being studied as a mystery rather than a problem. Buckley (1971) writes that understanding this way means that the phenomenon reveals itself to the researcher only if they assume an attitude of respectful listening and abiding open presence. Then through dialogical experience understanding can arise. This is conducive with the Zen sense of the mystery as was expressed in the opening quote of this chapter.

Methodological Cautions

Both phenomenology and hermeneutics are Western disciplines. The historical backgrounds of both are very different from Zen Buddhism. In a search for a methodology congruent with the Zen that I am studying it is important not to overlook differences between the traditions.

One example is regarding the pre-understanding of hermeneutics just discussed. While it is true that Zen practice utilizes such a pre-understanding, Zen practice also emphasizes sudden awakening. Zen texts are full of stories of people hearing some sound or seeing some sight and suddenly awakening to the truth of their self. For example, Harada Roshi describes the Buddha's enlightenment this way. He writes about the Buddha:

At dawn on one particular day, he suddenly awakened to the true Self while looking at the morning star. At that instant he was liberated from all suffering and delusion. That is why we say that at that moment he became the Way. Until that time there is no doubt that *Shakyamuni* saw the morning star every day. He often saw it, but until he became the Way, he saw it without really seeing it. (1998, p. 70)

It would be more correct to say that pre-understanding in Zen lays the foundation for awakening and understanding, but the real understanding occurs apart from this pre-understanding. Pre-understanding has continuity to it. Sudden awakening is discontinuous. Thus, while Zen has a methodological commonality with hermeneutics and pre-understanding, it also has a difference in that it emphasizes sudden and non-situated understanding.

In phenomenological circles there has been an enthusiasm for Zen Buddhism and the reverse is true also. The same is true regarding the relationship between Zen and Western psychology. However, in such enthusiasm it is important not to overlook differences, particularly cultural differences, and not to universalize what may be only true in the context of a particular culture.

An example is the work of D.T. Suzuki, a Japanese Zen practitioner who wrote extensively in English about Zen and had a tremendous influence on the acceptance of Zen by many Western people. Bernard Faure (1993) details how much of what Suzuki wrote had a cultural bias to it. He writes about Suzuki, “Although he spent his life promoting a highly culturally bound form of Zen, he always claimed that, as the ‘ultimate fact of all philosophies and religions,’ it is a unique phenomenon in the history of mysticism, ‘whether Eastern or Western,

Christian or Buddhist” (Suzuki, *Essays in Zen Buddhism* (vol. 1), as quoted in Faure, 1993, p. 61).

Role of the Researcher

In phenomenological research the role of the researcher is to be the primary data collection instrument. This means that the informants and the researcher will create the study together. The study will be a process that is co-constituted. Both the informants and the researcher will be involved.

This role means that the researcher’s biases and theoretical pre-suppositions will influence the study. Phenomenological methodology includes making a dedicated effort to return to “the things themselves”. However, von Eckartsberg (1986) writes, “We cannot escape our theoretical pre-suppositions, our “approach”. All we can do is to try to make our approach as explicit as possible” (p. 98). Thus, it is important to identify the researcher’s values, assumptions, and biases.

My personal background includes many years of Zen practice with two Japanese Zen masters. For nine years (over a sixteen year period) I studied in California with Joshu Sasaki Roshi, trained in the Myoshinji (妙心寺) lineage of the Rinzai sect of the Zen tradition, and for twelve years I have studied in Japan with Sekkei Harada Roshi, abbot of Hosshinji Temple (発心寺), a Soto Zen sect monastery. My perspective on Zen Buddhism is that it has a positive influence psychologically, assists people in living their life, and addresses aspects of mind that are not addressed by Western psychology.

Other aspects of my background are also pertinent to my role in this study. This includes my academic background (B.A., major: religious thought; M.A., counseling psychology; Ph.D. candidate, East West Psychology), my experience as a Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist in Japan and in California (license # MFC 35774), and my familiarity with Japanese culture from living in Japan at this point for over four years.

I consider myself to be both a Zen Buddhist and a psychotherapist. As a Zen Buddhist practitioner I consider myself “within” Zen Buddhism. As a psychotherapist I bring Western psychological understandings to the study. Every psychological theory employs fundamental theoretical categories in its theory. Nancy Chodorow (1989, p. 4) writes, as an example of this, that psychoanalysis uses universal theoretical categories, which are consciousness, the unconscious, defenses, the ego, self, and object relations. The psychological terminology that is used in the formulation of the study results emerged through the process of the research. I did not want to pre-dictate the theoretical categories that would be used, but rather wanted these to emerge through the research in the dialogue of the researcher, the informants, and the study process.

Interview Procedures

This study was conducted in Japan during the time that I was living in Japan. The primary informants were the six Japanese Zen *roshis* that I interviewed. Before I interviewed the *roshis*, it was necessary for me to have a full understanding of the research focus, causality, attachment, and no-self.

Living first in Kyoto and then in Osaka allowed me to have ongoing consultations with my Japanese mentor, Dr. Shoji Muramoto, and to consult with other people who could assist my understanding of my research focus. In particular I was able to consult with American Zen practitioners who have had many years of Japanese Zen monastic experience. Living in Japan has also given me the opportunity to participate in many more *zazen* groups at Japanese temples for periods from part of a day (*zazenkai*, Jap. 座禅会) to as long as a week (*sesshin*, Jap. 接心). These have been primarily at Hosshinji Temple (発心寺) in Obama (小浜市) and Nanyoin (南陽院寺) and Tofukuji (東福寺) Temples in Kyoto (京都市).

Using the qualitative research methodology as described, the focus of this study was the lived experience of the Zen *roshis* who agreed to participate in this study, and their expressed perceptions and meaning attached to these experiences. Particular attention was paid to what causality, attachment, and no-self essentially were as a lived human meaning and how they were lived psychologically by the *roshis* in their everyday lived contexts.

Ethical considerations, while always being important in a research study, because of cultural considerations took a different significance than is usual for research studies of this type done in the United States. The informants were not familiar with how a phenomenological study is conducted or what it is used for. They also were not familiar with the written permission forms used by my American school. In fact the written forms alienated many potential interviewees and made it much more difficult for me to proceed with the study.

Thus, I had to adjust my procedures. I only used the written forms with the one *roshi*, Sekkei Harada, with whom I had a prior relationship as a student. I had to discontinue the use of written forms with the other *roshis* and convey all of the following information verbally either at a preliminary meeting with some of the *roshis* or at the beginning of the first interview. My purpose was to make sure they understand both their role and my role and the purpose of the study. I did this by: (1) articulating in the study objectives and procedures, (2) discussing the possibility that the study results may be published, (3) informing the informants of all data collection devices and activities, (4) making available to the informants all verbatim transcriptions, written interpretations, and reports, (5) considering the informants' rights, interests, and wishes first whenever choices are made regarding reporting the data, and (6) giving the informants final decision regarding informant anonymity.

Data was collected through interviews with the six *roshis* that were tape recorded, transcribed verbatim, and then edited by the researcher for English grammar and for translation of the parts of the interviews that took place in Japanese. Interviews with four of the *roshis* were conducted with the aid of a Japanese-English translator, while interviews with two of the *roshis* were done directly in English. The three translators were all people who have had experience in Japanese Zen practice. The transcription of each *roshi's* interview, when they were translated, was reviewed by their respective translator and edited according to their comments. Dr. Muramoto also reviewed the transcriptions for factual accuracy, such as place names, Japanese words, and Zen references, and

they were edited accordingly. The parts of the interviews that took place in Japanese are transcribed in Japanese and then directly following translated in English in parenthesis.

The interviews varied in length from thirty minutes to over two hours. There was a second, and sometimes a third or fourth, follow-up interview to discuss the researcher's understanding of the first interview. The follow-up interviews were in part determined by the *roshi's* availability and in part by the need of the researcher to better understand the experience and perspective of the *roshi*. The sequencing was entirely dependent on circumstances and schedule availability. The interviews were extremely difficult to arrange. The first contacts with the *rosHis* occurred during the summer of 2000, the first interview was in November 2000, and the last interview was in January 2002.

The interviews generated a wealth of material. The total pages transcribed in single space were 210 pages. Much of what was discussed was not relevant to the subject of this dissertation. What is reported in these findings is only a part of what was discussed.

I began the initial interviews with an eliciting question of: Could you describe in as much detail as possible a situation in which you experienced *en* and what it was to live this situation in a non-attached or attached way? I encouraged them to describe their experience as thoroughly as possible, with emphasis on how *en* and attachment showed themselves to the informant, what were the context and circumstances, and what the informants experienced and

did. My intention was that the interviews would be a co-exploration of the lived phenomena of *en* and attachment.

This procedure was not as effective as I would have liked. The *roshis* did not respond to this approach. Initially I thought that this was because they were not accustomed to talking about their experience this way. I discovered many cultural reasons for this. One important reason is that both Japanese society and the Zen sect in Japan are organized hierarchically. A *roshi*, who is near the top of the hierarchy within Zen, will not talk so personally in such a public way. I realized eventually, however, that to a large degree part of the problem was my way of talking and thinking. I found that I needed to talk to them in their manner, using idioms with which they were familiar, and not use my California Zen psychological way of expression. I needed in particular to simplify my language. I also discovered as I conducted the interviews that part of the problem was the subject matter I had chosen. *Engi* and to a lesser extent attachment are not talked about often during the practice of Zen. One *roshi*, Tanaka Kanjyu, pointedly told me these were obscure topics. The *roshis* did not relate much of their experience with these two topics.

One of my responses to this was to expand my focus to include no-self. This is the basis of Zen practice and was very easy for the *roshis* to talk about. Then, within the context of no-self, I was able to approach *engi* and attachment. As I progressed through the interviews I eventually realized that in the beginning I needed not to focus on my three themes. What finally worked the best was to begin by saying that I could read in many books and *sutras* about Zen, but in this

interview I wanted to hear about the *roshi's* experience of Zen. This distinction was crucial. Then, after hearing the *roshi's* general story, I could pick out my themes and ask questions about them. This became my most successful methodology.

One of my translators, Jeff Shore, told me there were cultural reasons why this final methodology worked. He said that Japanese Zen *roshis* tend not to talk directly about a topic, but instead talk around the subject and let the listener make their own inferences. Thus, perhaps this final methodology was more congruent with the *roshis'* way of describing experience.

Interview Participants

I chose Japanese Zen *roshis* as my primary informants because of my stated purpose to work “within” the Zen tradition. The *roshis* that I interviewed are all *roshis* who had participated in Zen practice (Jap. 修行 *shugyo*), of which Zen meditation (Jap. 座禪 *zazen*) was an integral part, with the purpose of realizing the truth of the teachings of the Buddha. Two of the *roshis* had received *inkashomei* (Jap. 印可証明 = the certification of enlightenment given by a Rinzai Zen master to their disciple when the master judges that the disciple has completed their practice), one *roshi* had completed the *koan* study prior to *inkashomei*, one *roshi* had received both *inkashomei* and *shiho* (Jap. 嗣法 = the certificate of transmission of the dharma in the Soto sect), one *roshi* had received *shiho*, and one *roshi* had engaged in years of practice and had served as a Zen educator of monks, but was qualified for neither *inkashomei* or *shiho*.

It is stated often in the teachings of Zen that a person only fully understands the teachings upon enlightenment. It is this enlightened perspective that is the true Zen perspective and is the perspective that I want to articulate in this project. However, the verification and certification of enlightenment is controversial matter, is done in different ways, and when done by itself does not guarantee the completion of practice or full understanding of the Zen teachings. For example, one of the *roshis* interviewed, Sekkei Harada Roshi, is in the unusual situation of having received both *inkashomei* and *shiho*. A longtime student of his, Daigaku Rumme, told me that Harada Roshi “received *shiho* from Sessui Harada Roshi, his ordination master. However, the lineage he took through Gien Inoue Roshi places emphasis on *kensho* (Jap. 見性 = to see into one’s original or own nature, that is, to attain enlightenment). He received *inkashomei* from Inoue Roshi as the way to acknowledge that *kensho* really had happened for Harada Roshi. Inoue Roshi only gave *inkashomei* to two people. Harada Roshi has given *shiho* to several people, but has given *inkashomei* to no one yet” (personal communication). Nevertheless, while allowing for its limitations and complications traditionally certification has been used as a way to gauge a person’s aspiration and determine the authenticity of their realization. I believe that aspiration to as well as receiving certification is a good indication of deep involvement in Zen practice. Thus, I used such aspiration as a guide to choosing my informants without making any claims as to its veracity in the case of the Zen masters who had received certification.

I interviewed six Japanese Zen *roshis* for this study. There are two main sects of Zen Buddhism in Japan, the Soto sect and the Rinzai sect. Two of the *roshis* interviewed are members of the Soto sect and four of the interviewees are members of the Rinzai sect.

The *roshis* interviewed were: Sekkei Harada Roshi (原田雪溪老師), translator Daigaku Rumme; Gikan Nakajima Roshi (中島義觀老師), translator Hiroko Shimamoto (嶋本浩子); Ryohin Nagashima Roshi (永島亮品老師), translator Hiroko Shimamoto; Keido Fukushima Roshi (福島慶道老師), translator Jeff Shore; Sodo Yasunaga Roshi (安永祖堂老師) in English, and Kanju Tanaka Roshi (田中寛洲老師) in English.

Harada Roshi is the abbot of Hosshinji Temple (発心寺) in Obama (小浜市), Fukui prefecture. He is a member of the Soto sect of Zen Buddhism. He received *shiho* from Sessui Harada (原田雪水) Roshi and *inkashomei* from Gien Inoue (義衍井上) Roshi. Harada Roshi is also currently Seido (西堂) Roshi of Sojiji Monastery (總持寺), one of the two head temples of the Soto sect. Seido Roshi is a position just under that of abbot of Sojiji and the holder of this position is the person most responsible for the education and training of Soto Zen Buddhist monks nationwide in Japan. He was born on December 22, 1926.

Nakajima Roshi is currently the head priest of Tadaoji Temple (多田幸寺) in Nagahama (長浜市), Shiga prefecture. He was trained in the Myoshinji lineage of the Rinzai sect and has retired from his position of Kyogakubucho (教学部長), the person in charge of the education of the monks in the Myoshinji

sect. He did *koan* study with Dokuzan Hashimoto (橋本独山) Roshi, but said that his *koan* study was interrupted by his entry into the Japanese army during World War II (personal communication). He was born on January 3, 1920.

Nagashima Roshi is now the head priest of Shyuseiji Temple (宗清寺) in Otsu (大津市), Shiga prefecture. He received his training at Eiheiiji Temple (永平寺), a temple founded by Dogen Zenji in 1243 and one of the two head temples of the Soto sect. He received *shiho* from Ryodo Kitano (北野良道) Roshi, who was vice-secretary (副監院=*fuku-kan-in*) of Eiheiiji. He was born on May 21, 1944.

Fukushima Roshi is the Zen master (東福寺僧堂師家) for the Tofukuji Monastery (東福寺) in Kyoto (京都市). He is also the head abbot of the Tofukuji branch (東福寺派管長) of the Rinzai sect. Tofukuji is one of the Kyoto-Gozan (京都五山), the five Zen temples that were selected in the fourteenth century as the most esteemed temples in Kyoto. He trained with Zenkei Shibayama (柴山全慶) Roshi, but received *inkashomei* from Taigen Takayama (高山泰巖) Roshi. He was born on March 1, 1933.

Yasunaga Roshi is the head priest of Shounji Temple (松雲寺) in Ikeda (池田市), Osaka prefecture. He received his Zen training from Seiko Hirata (平田精耕) Roshi at Tenryuji Temple (天龍寺), which is part of the Rinzai sect. Tenryuji is also one of the Kyoto-Gozan. Regarding *inkashomei*, Yasunaga

Roshi said, “I as a Zen practitioner went through all koans in my own Tenryuji School” (November 21, 2001, p. 4). He was born on March 30, 1956.

Tanaka Roshi is the resident priest of Nanyoin Temple (南陽院) in Kyoto (京都市). He received his Zen training in the Shokokuji (相國寺) School of the Rinzai sect, one of the Kyoto-Gozan. He received *inkashomei* from Sounin Kajitani (梶谷宗忍) Roshi, whose enlightened and most formal name (Jap. = *shitsugo* 屋号) was Shishian Rotaishi (止々庵老大師). Tanaka Roshi’s *shitsugo* is Denpoan Rotaishi (傳芳庵老大師). He was born on January 9, 1948.

Data Analysis

My analytical methodology was a combination of the phenomenological, hermeneutical, and sociological concerns that I have discussed. This was done in the spirit of Husserl’s watchword, “To the things themselves” (Spiegelberg, 1982, p. 680). In addition to interviewing the six Japanese *roshis*, I have immersed myself in their environment through living in Japan for four years, experiencing Japanese temple life, practicing Zen in Japan, and learning the Japanese language and customs. Much of the basis for my analysis arose intuitively out of this experience. What I have learned has come not only from the interviews, but also from my own experience of Japanese culture and Zen Buddhism. This greatly enhanced my ability to comprehend what the *roshis* were describing as their experience.

I consider this part of my methodology crucial, as the interviews were often a frustrating experience. As I wrote before, the *roshis* did not respond to

my questions as I would have liked. In many cases I only understood something by being able to put it in a cultural context.

My analysis of the interview data occurred during the interview period as well as after it. It was done through studying the transcripts, consultations with Dr. Muramoto and with the translators, and follow-up interviews with the *roshis* to clarify my understanding.

This analysis focused on trying to understand the *roshis*' subjective experience in the context of their cultural environment. It was a combination of the phenomenological "reflective attitude," which von Eckartsberg (1986) writes is "openness and listening to Being in all its particular manifestations" (p. 19); the hermeneutical circle, that of continually cycling between one's understanding and examining the text; and the sociological considerations of being an American doing research in Japan. This involved taking a description of experience and think further about it in order to fully understand and conceptualize it. This is a process of repeatedly asking: what is its meaning, what is it saying, what is concealed within it, what becomes revealed through staying with it patiently, what are its cultural and sociological aspects, what are its secrets?

This analytical method is a cross-disciplinary and cross-cultural method. My analysis is inspired by phenomenology, but my approach is more that of a sociologist or an anthropologist. Cultural and social considerations are an integral part of this method, which includes immersion in the culture of the *roshis*. Rather than trying to impose a particular Western analysis onto the

experience of the *roshis*, I wanted to do an analysis according to the spirit of the use of the intellect by the practitioners of the Zen that I studied. This is the practice staying with something through attention and openness of being, receiving what comes to conscious awareness, and reflecting on this in the way as described. This was a continual process of returning to attending to something and continually reflecting on what came to awareness. It was engaged whenever there was an event that was relevant to my research. For example, on occasions my understanding of a phenomenon arose while seated on a cushion in a Zen meditation hall. Thus, an accurate term for the approach of my analysis would be “attention-reflection.”

The form of my analysis was done according to the following procedure. After the *roshis* gave their accounts of their experience, I began attention-reflective study of these descriptions. I searched for themes and focused on trying to grasp the psychological significance of what I found. I asked what were the activities of mind that were implicit in the *roshis*' description of their experience of the three Zen ideas being discussed. I wanted to know what could be deduced from their descriptions.

The particular steps that I followed were as follows: After the first interview with each *roshi* I read through the protocol to get a general sense of it. Because there was a huge amount of text, much that was not relevant to my research and much that was not discussed in psychological or experiential language, I had to search for psychological meanings in what was said. What I found I organized in a list according to the three ideas that I was investigating. I

then formulated questions based on this list to ask the *roshi* in the follow-up interview. In cases when I did additional follow-up interviews I followed this same procedure.

After I completed the interviews I read through the protocols again to deepen my sense of what was being discussed and paying attention to what I might have missed before. Again I made lists of the psychological meaning-constituents that I discovered. I reflected on these meaning-constituents and eliminated any redundancies that I found. I then reflected on the constituents that I had discovered in the language of the *roshis*. This language was then transformed into psychological language in a way that revealed what was implicit in the *roshis*' descriptions. Finally I synthesized and integrated this understanding into the narrative report that is the following chapters of this dissertation.

This narrative report is a descriptive narrative, a synthesis of knowledge about the phenomena under study. It makes use of the theoretical categories that have emerged during the process of the study. The final narrative is a construction of the psychological functioning of causality, attachment, and no-self according to the informants' experiences and the meanings they attached to these experiences.

The final narrative is written in English. Because this dissertation is also being presented to the International Research Institute for Zen Buddhism at Hanazono University (花園大学国際禅学研究所), Kyoto, Japan, for purposes of accuracy and/or information, Japanese in parenthesis follows certain English

words or phrases. Occasionally also, in order to identify historical roots, Sanskrit terms are included with the Japanese. When non-English words are used in the report, they are italicized. The first time that non-English words are used in the report, their language is identified and a definition is given immediately after the word in parenthesis. (Skt.) indicates Sanskrit, (Jap.) indicates Japanese. If it is a Sanskrit word, the Japanese translation of this word is also included in the parenthesis. A glossary is included at the end of this report that includes all italicized words. Quotes from the interviews are identified before the quote with the name of the *roshi* being quoted and after the quote with the date of the interview and the page number of the protocol.

Validity

To ensure internal validity the following steps were employed: The researcher was educated before beginning the study in both the Zen and Japanese cultural understandings of the phenomena under study. After each interview there was a follow-up meeting with the translators to check the researcher's understanding of the content of the interview. Each interview was discussed with Dr. Shoji Muramoto. There were follow-up interviews with each *roshi* to discuss the researcher's understanding of the first interview and to give the researcher feedback.

There is no attempt made from this study to generalize to a specific population. Instead, the findings are relevant according to the perspective of the user. The criteria are the trustworthiness of the study design and process. The

conclusions of this study rest on the collected data. When interview data is quoted, the dates and page numbers of the interview transcripts are referenced. These transcripts will be fully disclosed upon request. The researcher is also providing a detailed account of the actual study procedure and data analysis methods and throughout the study the researcher has collaborated with Dr. Muramoto, the translators, and the informants.

Delimitations

This study was restricted to a specific population, Japanese Zen *roshis*. Only six such *roshis* were interviewed. The purpose of this was to get an in-depth, rich understanding of the experience of the *roshis*. The findings of this study are based on the reports of these *roshis*. They are not generalizable to the Zen sect as a whole in Japan, other sects of Buddhism in Japan, of which there are many, or to Buddhist groups in other countries.

While interpreting the data, the researcher attended to the three Zen ideas that are the focus of this study. There are many other factors within Buddhist psychology and within Western psychology that could be explored through these interviews that are not part of this study.

This study was not intended to be an academic study of the three Zen ideas that are the focus of this study. It is not a study of what is written in the sutras or other Zen writings about these ideas. It is a study of the lived experience of Japanese Zen *roshis* by an American psychotherapist who is a Zen

practitioner. While ability in Japanese is helpful, fluency was not considered necessary for this study.

Limitations

There are many limits that are part of this phenomenological study that are important to note. These will help clarify the value and the context of this study.

1. Six *roshis* only were interviewed for this study.

2. The interviews of the *roshis* were all arranged through personal connections of the researcher. Many *roshis* were contacted by letter, email, and/or telephone, but only those with whom the researcher had some kind of personal introduction were willing to be interviewed.

3. The *roshis* interviewed were all people who have a positive view of the participation of non-Japanese people in Zen Buddhist practices. It should be noted that because there are many Japanese Zen practitioners who do not approve of including foreigners in Japanese Zen practices, the *roshis* interviewed only express the views of those who have a positive orientation to non-Japanese Zen practitioners.

4. The *roshis* interviewed were all monks. There certainly are Japanese Zen nuns, but the researcher was not able to contact successfully any of these women.

5. The interviews were often restricted by practical considerations, such as availability of the *roshi* and arranging the meeting of three people when a

translator was required. The *roshis* interviewed are all head priests of temples and all have very busy schedules.

6. The researcher being American presented many limitations to this study. As the researcher's level of Japanese ability is about a medium level, translators were necessary when the *roshi* did not speak adequate English. Thus, with four *roshis* the interviews were filtered through a third person. The translator's understanding thus influences the reports of the *roshis*. One of the three translators was Japanese, so English is her second language. This is also true for the two *roshis* who were interviewed in English. In these cases the quality of the reports was subject to the quality of their English as a second language. The parts of the transcripts that are quoted in the findings are quoted verbatim. When reading these quotes, it is important to remember that these people are not native English speakers. The researcher greatly appreciates the *roshis*' willingness to participate in a study in which they do not speak the native language of the researcher.

7. The researcher also as an American did not understand many aspects of Japanese culture and Zen customs that formed the context for the *roshis*' reports. This was a learning experience for the researcher. The quality of the results of this study is limited by the quality of the researcher's understanding of these aspects.