

## Soto Zen in Peru: Present and Future

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How does a religious tradition like Soto Zen find a place amidst the predominantly Christian Peruvian society? This paper analyzes how Soto Zen Buddhism is being transplanted into Peru and what does its future look like.

Contemporary religious landscape in Peru is described in Chart 1, in the Appendixes, where Buddhist practitioners are included under the rubric of “Other Religions.” Barrett, Kurian, and Johnson (2001) state, on their part, that Buddhist adherents in 2000 numbered 57,731, which represented 0.2% of the country’s population, and predict that by 2025 they will number about 100,000, constituting 0.3% of all Peruvians (p. 590). Although there are not other sources with which to compare this statistics, my research on the different Buddhist groups actively operating in the country and on the approximate number of practitioners of each of them makes me think that the figures above are too elevated. Unfortunately, due to the lack of sufficient data, one can only speculate about this.

Chart 2 describes the different Buddhist groups and lineages present today in the country. There are 22 Buddhist groups, which are distributed as follows: 10 are Tibetan, 8 are

Chen/Zen/Son-related, 2 are Vajrayana, 1 Theravada, and 1 Pureland. This means, in short, that Chen/Zen/Son Buddhism includes about half of all Buddhist groups in the country.

Chen/Zen/Son lineages, in turn, have diverse origins. On the one hand, those derived from Chen and Son —“*Triple Corazón*” (Trifold Heart) and “Moving Zen”, respectively— have assumed new Western elements that did not exist previously in their traditions. Their activities in Peru are somewhat recent (2006 and 1998, respectively). On the other hand, although we may currently also find a “Western-shaped” Zen group —“Lima River Zen Group”— the most important Zen presence in Peru is related to the Soto Zen lineage and its two temples.

Soto Zen life in Peru began with the large Japanese immigration of 1899-1936. After some time, most of this population converted to Catholicism. In 2005, a new time began with the move to Lima of Ven. Jisen Oshiro, a Soto Zen nun who started her work reaching out to people interested in Zen regardless of their background, mission which depends administratively from the Busshinji Temple in Sao Paulo, Brazil. The transplantation experience I intend to study is that occurred in this second stage of Soto Zen’s history in the country, with some references to the first stage when necessary.

## **1. Theoretical Framework**

Several studies related to Buddhist transplantation in general can be found in regard to different geographical areas. Among those, some refer to European countries such as Germany (Baumann, 1994) and Spain (Diez de Velasco, 2013). Many others focus on the United States (e.g. Bankston, 1997; Cadge, 2005; Cadge and Sangghanoo, 2005; Numrich, 1996; Smith, 2006). In contrast, there are very few studies of the spread of Buddhism or Zen Buddhism into South America. In relation to the latter, the most important of them is that by C. Rocha (2005, 2006).

There are no studies on Soto Zen in Peru. My research on Soto Zen in Peru is aimed at filling the present void in research.

As mentioned, this paper has a double goal: in the first place, to describe the current situation of Soto Zen in Peru; secondly, to consider its future. For the first purpose, it makes use of Baumann's "processive modes" (1994, pp. 38-50), which describe the ways in which the transplantation of a given religious tradition as embodied by a group occurs amidst a host culture embodied in a particular society. The analysis is formulated in terms of the new coming tradition.

These "processive modes" of transplantation are defined as ways of adaptation and can be applied to any religious tradition that enters into a new socio-cultural context that is different from those where the religious tradition already "lives." What triggers the whole process may or may not be a migration phenomenon. This author distinguishes five "processive modes" of transplantation (which are not necessarily successive, nor must all be present in each concrete experience of transplantation) describing "areas or fields in which certain processes are able to be singled out" (Baumann, 1994, p. 38). The five modes are: Contact, Confrontation and Conflict, Ambiguity and Adaptation, Re-orientation, and Innovative Self-development. In what follows, each mode is defined when appropriate.

For the study's second purpose, that of exploring the future of Soto Zen in Peru, my analysis makes use of the "religious economy" perspective as developed by Stark and Finke (2000). I will use this approach transversally through the different "processive modes" as I see fit. I will specifically use their analysis of religious competition in a "deregulated religious market," and their views on the rise of "new religious movements." In their view, religious change at the organizational level is not explained by changes on the "demand" side (that is, by

religious interest on the part of individual persons) but on the “supply” dimension: religious organizations compete among themselves while trying to cater to their potential “clients.” Their ability to do so depends on the way they target specific profiles of individuals (“niches”) and on what they offer to them, who will decide between the available religious options they see according to a cost/benefit analysis. The religious tradition (if any) in which each person has been raised is considered to be his/her “religious capital.”

## **2. Methodology**

This study draws upon qualitative data gathered through semi-structured interviews and written questionnaires in two waves, the first one between 2007 and 2009, and the second one in 2013. In the first wave I interviewed three of the most important leaders of Soto Zen in Peru. In the second one, I got responses from other 12 persons (out of 35) in the second. Taking into account that the core group of Soto Zen practitioners includes at the present about 30 people, according to convergent accounts by the interviewees, the 15 questionnaires correspond to the 50% of the studied population, which makes it significant for a case study. Besides, the fact that I was able to interview the persons who lead the Soto Zen presence in Peru also strengthens the significance of the results of this research. Furthermore, I have carried on a continuous follow-up of the life of the Sotoshu Community in Peru through their official website, its blog, and its Facebook account, as well as their apparitions in Peruvian media, during all the years the research took place.

The Appendix contains the charts cited in the paper and the semi-structured questionnaire that was part of the field research. It also presents a set of figures and pictures that were obtained during my research and which illustrate the text.

When respondents are cited, their answers have been translated by the author. When appropriate, in order to protect confidentiality, aliases have been given to them and their gender has been changed.

### **3. Findings**

#### **3.1. Soto Zen in Contact**

Simply stated, the Contact mode consists of the arrival of the foreign religious tradition in a host culture. New teachings may be transferred by individuals and groups, or impersonally by texts and scriptures. There is a “missionary drive” to propagate its religious convictions and give evidence for its existence. Translations of important scriptures are undertaken and “missionary activity” begins.

(a) In Peru, the first significant groups of Buddhist adherents were the result of immigration processes from the Far East: Chinese (Rodriguez Pastor, 1989, 2004), Japanese, and Korean (Araki 2004). In the case of Soto Zen Buddhism, we should focus on the immigration of a significant number of Japanese people to Peru (Lausent-Herrera, 1991). This included two phases: the period of 1899 to 1923, when 18,000 people migrated under the sponsorship of Japanese private companies; and the period of 1924 to 1936, when 8,000 more Japanese came to Peru due to *yobiyose*, that is, the call to relatives of the first group (Fukumoto, 1997). The intention of the immigrants was to improve their economic condition through work in the cotton and sugarcane plantations, the sugar factories in the coastal area, and the rubber factories in the Amazon area, and then to return to Japan. The reality proved to be quite different: the immigrants, who came mainly from the Prefectures of Okinawa, Kumamoto and Hiroshima, were subject to harsh exploitation, deficient life conditions, and endemic diseases. However, the lack of financial means and the contracts they had signed before leaving Japan impeded them

from returning. They began to flee from the farms where they had been working, and strikes began. After a while they regrouped themselves in the coastal area from about 100 km to the North of Lima down to about 100 km to the South of such capital city. In the Northern end, they concentrated in Huaral and Chancay; in the Southern end, they built a temple in Cañete, the Jionji Temple, as Figures 1 to 4 show.

In the context of the so-called Peruvian “Aristocratic Republic”<sup>1</sup> (1895-1919), the Japanese immigrants were also the victims of racism and exclusion. Nonetheless, little by little, they were able to move to the urban areas, to begin businesses (Morimoto and Araki, 1994) and to send money to their relatives in Japan. Their community relationships were very strong from the beginning and increased in the following years as the members supported each other in the face of the troubles they encountered in the new cultural milieu. As it has been studied in regard to other processes of religious transplantation, at this stage Soto Zen accomplished the function of keeping the bonds among the immigrants, connecting them with their culture of origin, maintaining their traditions and fostering solidarity among them vis-a-vis the adaptation to the new society and culture they were living in.

The religious life of these immigrants, the majority of whom were peasants, was centered in a syncretism of Shinto and Zen Buddhism. This was favored by the “Meiji Restoration”<sup>2</sup> process that had already occurred in Japan. In their minds, religions were not mutually exclusive. Regarding Buddhism, they performed the periodical rites related to the prayer for the ancestors. Also significant were the funerary rites, especially those celebrated in the Jionji Temple in

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<sup>1</sup> This is the name given to the period of time in which Peru was governed by a succession of democratically elected presidents belonging to the Civil Party, which gathered an oligarchy devoted to the export of agricultural goods, mining and finances.

<sup>2</sup> This is the regime which governed Japan between 1868 and 1912, which was characterized by a marked nationalism, the strive for industrialization, and the divinization of the Emperor.

Cañete. Generally speaking, in the farms where they worked, they were authorized to have their own cemeteries and to participate in the usual Buddhist rituals (Fukumoto, 1997; Morimoto, n.d.). All these practices were carried on in a heavily traditional and nationalistic spirit.

J. Tokeshi and M. Fukumoto (1988) cite a report in this regard which says: “Some immigrants confess themselves as Buddhists because they learned that at home, but they really don’t know the elementary principles of Buddhism.” (p. 264; translation by the author). During the first sixty years of the life of the community of Japanese who immigrated to Peru, the constant presence of Soto Zen priests helped them to endure the hardships they faced, which they also shared. This helped the community to share the same religious allegiance during that time, generally speaking. The photos of the first four of these five monks can be found in Figures 5-9: Venerables Taian Ueno, Senpo Saito, Doyu Oshio, and Kenryu Sato. WWII entailed the interruption of the support to Soto Zen from their homeland and its decay, since the fifth monk, Ven. Shodo Nakao, was impeded from returning to Peru by the war. A period of decline in the number of Soto Zen practitioners followed, which occurred even with the presence in Peru of Venerables Jisaku Shinkai and Ryoko Kiyoshiro. After 1992, no Soto Zen monk was active in Peru (Oshiro, 2013, pp. 32-33).

The fact that the official religion in Peru was Roman Catholicism by the time when the Japanese immigration happened, along with the requirement for children education—at the private level and in some public schools—of a Certificate of Baptism, motivated many baptisms (Morimoto, n.d.). With the passage of time, the realization of the impossibility of going back to Japan, fear of discrimination, and also because of the charitable help they received from the Catholic Church during the troubles they faced, especially at the time of WWII, the religious membership of the Peruvian-Japanese community became increasingly Catholic. This was also

facilitated by the fact that more than 80% of its members moved to the cities, where they were more easily outreached (Fukumoto, 1997, p. 495ff.) The “*Nikkei* Census” of 1989 showed that, for a total of 51,593 members of the Peruvian-Japanese community, 92.41% declared themselves Catholics, 2.92% Buddhists—that is, 1,444 persons—, 0.28% Shinto, 0.81% Evangelical, and 0.12% Protestant (Morimoto, 1999, pp. 167-173). This notwithstanding, Soto Zen is still familiar to many *Nikkei* or third-generation Peruvian-Japanese, particularly in some of its rites, and constitutes a kind of “religious capital,” a notion drawn from the religious economy’s analogy (Stark and Finke, 2000, p. 118-125).

(b) At present, the Sotoshu Community (*Comunidad Zen Sotoshu*) lead by Ven. Oshiro is leading the second stage in the contact of Soto Zen with Peru. As mentioned before, she moved into Lima in 2005 to take care of the Soto Zen community in Peru. In 2008 she was appointed as head priest of Jionji Temple and missionary for the country. During the same year, she opened the Nambeizan Zuihoji Temple, in Lima. Ven. Oshiro, an Argentinean and mother of four (Peru Shimpo (2013a), was ordained in 1998 at the Zuihoji Monastery (Ehime, Japan.) In 1999 she carried out the “*dharma* combat” at Keijuji Temple (also in Ehime.) In 2001 she received the “*dharma* transmission” at Mirokuji Temple (Yamaguchi, Japan.) She had been subsequently appointed to several positions within Soto Zen in Brazil, Japan and Argentina. In April 2005 she was named Soto Zen “missionary” for South America (Comunidad Zen Sotoshu, n.d.; Oshiro, 2013, pp. 42-43).

Soto Zen presence in South America responds to a broad outreach strategy officially sponsored by its leaders. The Soto Zen School had been established in Brazil since 1955, with the foundation of a temple in Mogi das Cruzes, in the outskirts of Sao Paulo. Since then, three other three temples, as well as monasteries were created in that country. Bussinji Temple, in Sao



Paulo, is the headquarters of the Regional Office for South America, from where missionary work is coordinated. In South America, besides those in Brazil, there are only two other Soto Zen temples, which are located in Peru. However, apart from Brazil, there are no other monasteries in the area. “Teaching activities are being carried out by teachers in these countries that are a lively expression of the true transmission of the Buddhas and Ancestors and which provide spiritual support in the life of Japanese descendants,” wrote Ven. Koichi Miyoshi, former Director of the Regional Office for South America. And he added, speaking in year 2004: “In recent years, Zen groups have become active not only in Peru and Brazil, but also in Argentina, Venezuela, Colombia, Chile, and so forth. This indicates that many people who are not of Japanese descent have come to know about Zen Buddhism in general (...). It seems that many types of people are seeking peace of mind through *zazen* and that there is a trend for more and more people to practice *zazen*.”

In the case of Peru, the renewed presence of Soto Zen has benefited from the support the monasteries in Brazil and of the interest of local people of non-Japanese background. A group composed by the latter was called *Amigos del Zen* (Zen Friends) and was born in 1997 from the desire to practice *zazen* meditation as the participants were sitting at a park. They wanted to meditate as best as they were able. On October 2002, there was a first meeting with the abovementioned Ven. Miyoshi. “Our first encounter was very emotional —wrote Sengen Castilla. Most of us had never had the experience of practicing *zazen* with a Zen master before. This contact with Soto Zen has encouraged us immensely” (Castilla, 2004). Since then the group has consolidated.

(c) The presence of Ven. Oshiro (Figure 10), first through her periodical visits, and afterwards through her move into the country, gave the group a big impulse. Anji, a member of

the group, reports that they are about 30 members, all Peruvians. Most of the members of the “core group” had a Catholic background, were not of Japanese descent, and were interested in meditation. (Anji, personal communication, May 12, 2008). Other interviewees coincide in this while adding that the majority of practitioners are professionals, belong to the middle- and upper middle- classes, and have graduate and post-graduate degrees. They also report that there are one or two Peruvian practitioners of Japanese background and also a few foreigners. Similar interest in meditation is found in Zully García’s experience (Garcia, 2005). According to Ven. Oshiro’s account, this group (which I will call hereafter the “core group”) gathers the more committed Peruvian Soto Zen Buddhist practitioners at present. The first Peruvian-born Sotoshu novices ever-ordained were from this group: Sengen Castilla (novice since 2007) and Tenkai Sanchez (in 2013). Their commitment has been very encouraging for their fellow practitioners (Oshiro, 2013, p. 42). Besides them, Ven. Oshiro has ordained (*jukai*) about 20 lay persons who expressed a commitment to live either according to the Five Original Precepts for Lay People or the Sixteen Bodhisattva Precepts. (Pedro, personal communication, September 15, 2013).

In 2013 a milestone in Soto Zen history in Peru took place through the celebration of the 110<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its presence in South America through the foundation of the Jionji Temple, which had just been restored (Figure 11).<sup>3</sup> The activities for this important event included a delegation from Soto Zen headquarters in Japan, led by Ven. Taïdo Kojima, as well as other 16 delegates from several South American countries, the United States and France (Figure 12). An intense set of celebratory events was also planned in cooperation with *Asociacion Peruano-Japonesa* (the Peruvian-Japanese Association), which is the most important organization

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.facebook.com/ZenAmericaDelSur>

representing the Nikkei community.<sup>4</sup> These events were covered by some of the most important media outlets for the Japanese-Peruvian community (Peru Shimpo, 2013a), and for Peruvian society as a whole (El Comercio, 2013). Commemorations also included the publication of a book on Soto Zen in South America (Oshiro, 2013).

At present, the “core group” is looking into the future to disseminate the practice of Zen, ordain monks, create new temples, assist the Japanese-Peruvian community with Buddhist rituals, and rescue the values of the Japanese tradition (Peru Shimpo, 2013a). Also, in a very concrete way, they are working towards having a larger temple in Lima (Sengen, personal communication, September 15, 2013) and a monastery in Peru.

(d) From a systematic standpoint, Soto Zen at present makes use of a variety of contact modes, some of them adapted to the Japanese immigrant community whose members lived Buddhism as part of their family tradition, while others aimed at members of Soto Zen who have at some point somehow acquired the status of practitioner or seeker of Buddhism.

In the first case, the logic was, in the beginning, to keep the homeland religion alive among Japanese immigrants. Since the return home was abandoned due to the insertion of the Japanese immigrants into Peruvian culture, the logic of contact seems to have been one of preservation of the religious heritage (e.g., through the Japanese club, the Japanese school, etc., as well as the usual Soto Zen ritual practices), progressively weakened by the increasing conversions to Catholicism. In this stage, contact took place at first amidst a rural environment, characterized by poverty and exploitation. The main actors of religious activities were the Soto Zen monks, whose focus was circumscribed to the immigrants. With the passing of time, the gradual move of the latter to the big cities and the improvement of their economic condition

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<sup>4</sup> <http://www.zenamericadelsur.org/#!solutions/ch6q>

through trade and commerce, along with the impossibility to return to Japan and the absence of monks, changed the ways of Soto Zen contact in the country.

Since 2005, the above-mentioned contact dynamics are focused in urban settings, and outreach usually targets middle- and upper middle-class people, in a similar fashion to what has happened in Brazil (Rocha, 2005, pp. 145-149; 2006). Main actors in this process are the Soto Zen nun in Lima, the newly-ordained novices, as well as the committed group of lay practitioners who accompany her. In regard to the Peruvian-Japanese community, Soto Zen stresses the need to keep some religious practices as cultural roots and sources of identity, as a way to keep open a window for future progress in the Buddhist way (Jisen Oshiro, personal communication, February 25, 2009). This relationship also ensures support from the well-established organizations of the Peruvian-Japanese community, which has proved manifested during the above-mentioned celebration of the 110<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Soto Zen in South America.

In the second case, Soto Zen contact processes focus on a widely open group of people who express interest in it. This is its main effort at the present time. Through the foundation of the new temple in Lima (Figure 13), and counting with and support of the “core group,” a whole new dynamic of contact has taken place. That is also the logic found in the openness of the Zuihoji Temple and its activities.

There are lectures aimed at introducing the general public to Zen on a weekly basis. *Zazen* sessions for members of the “core group” occur early every morning, with an average of 6 participants, and there are *zazen* sessions open to the public in *Parque Reducto* every weekday. The temple also hosts *ikebana* and *baika* classes. Ven. Oshiro gives *teisho* conferences during the *sesshin* session, as well as formal conferences twice a year. Once a month, there is a Ceremony for the Ancestors at the temple (Figure 14). Similarly, there are Full Moon

Ceremonies (*Ryako Fusatzu*), and the Soto Zen yearly calendar of festivities is observed (*Hanamatsuri* or the Buddhas's birth, *Nehan-e* or the Paranirvana or death of the Buddha, *Joya no Kane* or the 108 Bells Chime for the New Year, *Obon* or the Ancestor's Festival, *Ohisan* or the Celebration of the Equinox). There are also *Oryoki* meetings (Sengen, personal communication, September 13, 2013). Occasionally, celebrations for a newborn, marriages (Figure 15) and funerals also take place.

Besides, Ven. Oshiro goes on a trip to Cuzco once a month for a *sesshin* or meditation retreat with the dojo there (Figure 16); there are also *sesshin* sessions for the practitioners in Lima. At the Jionji Temple, in Cañete, ceremonies for the ancestors take place, and on occasion of the 110th anniversary of Soto Zen's presence in South America, similar celebrations took place in all the old Japanese cemeteries located in the areas where the first immigrants lived: Paramonga, Barranca, Huaral, Huacho to the North of Lima, and Casablanca and San Vicente to the South.

The same missionary logic is found on the work of translation of specific *sutras* for ceremonies and meditation into Spanish, which have been beautifully published recently (Figure 17), and in the commitment to deliver conferences at universities (Jisen Oshiro, personal communication, February 25, 2009). In a similar vein, one should mention diverse means of communication such as a website,<sup>5</sup> a blog,<sup>6</sup> a Facebook account,<sup>7</sup> and a newsletter (Templo Zuihoji, n.d.), as well as the apparition of Ven. Oshiro and other members of the "core group" in the public media (La Mula Reportajes, 2013).

In sum, then, there is a very intense "missionary" effort taking place.

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<sup>5</sup> <http://www.sotozenperu.net/>

<sup>6</sup> <http://comunidadzensotoshu.blogspot.ca/>

<sup>7</sup> Its account name is Comunidad Zen Sotoshu: <https://www.facebook.com/ComunidadZenSotoshu>

(e) There is a confluence in the responses of the interviewees on the fact that Soto Zen does not actively invite people but responds to persons who manifest interest. Julia describes this well as “Zen having a low profile” and “not promoting itself in order to find adepts” (Julia, personal communication, September 10, 2013). However, it is also a shared impression by the respondents that it is important to be visible in order to increase such interest, for which they value very much their social media presence.

### **3.2. Confrontation and Conflict**

The Confrontation and Conflict mode describes, on one hand, the processes by which a foreign religion presents its particularities in contrast to existing religions (pointing out the deficiencies of the latter or the appropriateness of the new tradition). On the other hand, it also expresses the degree to which the host culture rejects or accepts the new religious tradition.

(a) While the “missionary effort” was focused on maintaining the religious tradition of the Japanese immigrants, as in the beginning, peculiarities arose sharply (e.g., the architecture of Jionji Temple in Cañete, the performance of funerary rites as well as other ceremonies, etc.). There was very little effort to adapt what was proper to the Buddhist tradition to the context of a mainly Christian host culture. It is difficult to find, due to the lack of testimonies, the precise way (if any) in which Soto Zen missionaries pointed out the deficiencies of the Catholic religious tradition present in the country. On the other hand, when in recent times the Soto Zen presence shifted into an open mission effort aimed at all Peruvians, these criticisms have begun to appear.

In this regard, Anji highlighted the fact that in the new religious tradition there was no notion of guilt as in Christianity, nor the figure of an “anthropomorphized God” (Anji, personal communication, December 2, 2008). This has also been mentioned by other respondents, who have added the negative effects of a notion of punishment (Carlos, personal communication,

September 27, 2013). Others have also pointed to the fact that there is a concern for the “after life,” which alienates people from the present. (Julia, personal communication, September 10, 2013). Among doctrinal reasons for Soto Zen superiority over the predominant Christian culture in Peru, there were also mentioned the constant questioning of things and the lack of dogmas. (Nathaly, personal communication, September 1, 2013).

Besides, practical shortcomings of contemporary Catholicism in Peru —especially regarding insufficient catechesis, and the lack of spirituality insights that may help people to cope with the exigencies of modern urban life— also give space for the rise of new religious movements, Soto Zen among them. Paul, a Peruvian-Japanese, mentions the fact that in his family “in the same way we carried on Buddhist rites and customs, we were also baptized as Catholics; because of this our knowledge about these issues is a mix of either source without good explanations.” (Paul, personal communication, September 11, 2013). Many other respondents characterize their past experience within Christianity as distant from spirituality, from their own efforts to get more deeply in touch with themselves. They also characterized it as centered too much on rituals, external and rational.

On her part, Ven. Oshiro has publicly explained how in Soto Zen there are no differences between men and women in regard to becoming monks and assuming an official role of religious leadership (La Mula Reportajes, 2013; Oshiro, 2013, p. 17). This seems to be aimed at bringing up an intentional contrast with Catholic Christianity, in which the priesthood is strictly reserved for men. To this it should be added that she underscored the stress on living a good life “here and now” as something proper to Soto Zen and, by contrast, superior than Christian eschatology which, in her view, impulses Christians to live a good life for something that comes after this world (La Mula Reportajes, 2013).

(b) On the side of the host culture it should be said that its contemporary setting constitutes a positive environment for Soto Zen's development in the country.

The Peruvian Constitution of 1979 disestablished the Catholic Church as the official religion, although it still recognizes its key role in the moral and cultural shaping of Peruvian identity. This position was maintained in the currently ruling Constitution of 1983. In short, then, Soto Zen Buddhism may receive, legally, the same treatment on the part of the State as any other religion, which places it in a "de-regulated religious market." In the last 10 years, on the other hand, the country, especially in the urban areas, has lived through a steady period of economic growth, the widening of the middle-class and the reduction of the level of poverty, as well as a significant improvement of the basic public services. This has also benefited Soto Zen, particularly because at present its more committed practitioners are people very much interested in *zazen*, something one usually can aspire to practice after having taken care of one's basic living needs.

As a result, the religious landscape has become more dynamic, which has turned more "competitive" inasmuch as religious allegiance has turned more and more into something voluntarily acquired instead of something ascribed by birth. Examples of this more varied religious map are, in the first place, some "revivalist" movements within the Catholic Church, which appeared in the wake of the Second Vatican Council. Besides, the growing number of Evangelical churches present in the country also contributes to religious variety. In this context, given Ven. Oshiro's missionary work, Soto Zen's modest but growing presence mainly based on the existence of the "core group" should not be a surprise.

Respondents, in general, did not report problems with the host culture as such but in specific interpersonal situations. However, some of them mentioned that Zen was perceived as



“exotic and distant” (Julia, personal communication, September 11, 2013), or as something that elicits “surprise and judgments,” although these disappear when explanations are provided (Nathaly, September 14, 2013). Others say it is viewed with indifference (Pedro, personal communication, September 15, 2013) or even with respect (Carlos, personal communication, September 27, 2013).

(c) Lastly, it should be noted that the existence of a well-established Peruvian-Japanese community makes Soto Zen tradition not completely alien to the host culture. At least, within such a community, it is recognized as part of their identity roots, which entails some degree of social acceptance, as well as the possibility of Soto Zen regaining its presence as a religious tradition properly speaking. In terms of the “religious economy” perspective, there is a “religious capital” in Peruvian-Japanese people that would incline them to prefer Soto Zen to other religious traditions since doing so would not demand too high costs.

### **3.3. Ambiguity and Adaptation**

This mode analyzes how the specific socio-cultural contexts belonging to both the foreign religion and the host culture bring up ambiguities. These may be “unavoidable” or “intentional.” In the first case, the ambiguities are those which normally arise due to the very different framework of key concepts through which reality is seen, and may entail the adoption of some forms that belong to the “already established” religions. In the second case, usually driven by the missionary impetus of the new foreign religion, certain adaptations to the host culture are willingly done in order to appear less “unfamiliar” and to avoid excessive tensions and conflicts.

(a) Regarding unavoidable ambiguities, sometimes non-initiated people, using their Catholic mindset and language, tend to refer to Soto Zen rituals as “Buddhist Masses”, or to refer to Ven. Oshiro as “Mother” or “Sister”. Besides this, the translation of sutras into Spanish has

helped both members of the “core group” and the non-initiated curious to understand the meaning of the recitations. The same should be said about the “catechesis” Ven. Oshiro does before performing the rituals that Peruvian-Japanese persons request, mainly because they see them merely as family traditions, devoid of their precise religious meaning. Regarding the annual Soto Zen celebrations and the Catholic annual feasts, there is some coincidence between the two. Particularly significant is the celebration on December 8th of the Buddha’s enlightenment, coinciding with the Feast of the Immaculate Conception (which in Peru is a civic holiday). Another example of this kind of ambiguity is the noticeable closeness existing between the ordained and lay members of Soto Zen in Peru, partly because of the small group of members of the community, but also because of the way they have managed to take care of the Zuihoji Temple. To manage the related expenses entails having some lay members live there as tenants. Since Ven. Oshiro lives there at the same time, the result is this kind of closer interaction (Jisen Oshiro, personal communication, February 25, 2009).

(b) There seems to be a greater variety of the intentional ambiguities. It is worth to mentioning the loose manner in which the “core group” uses the term *sangha* to refer to themselves, even when it more exactly denotes the members of a Zen monastery. Also the performance of rites for newborn children and for marriages can be counted as this type of ambiguity. These are not part of the more ancient Zen tradition, but, on the other hand, they had already been assumed by Soto Zen in Japan and resemble the Christian rites of Baptism and Marriage.

All respondents consistently reject any explicit intention of adapting Soto Zen to the predominantly Christian culture in Peru in order to attract potential practitioners. They explicitly say they do not make parallels between the Catholic/Christian calendar of celebrations and that

of Soto Zen, nor relate Soto Zen doctrine to that of Catholic/Christian origin, nor assume ways of organization from the latter.

(c) There are some cases for which ambiguity is difficult to qualify. For example, in her lectures, Ven. Oshiro uses Spanish translations of works by Jesuits and Benedictine priests who have been in Japan practicing Zen. Her experience of ten years living in Japan in a Soto Zen monastery that delivered retreats for international Zen practitioners, the above-mentioned priests included, has proven very valuable in this regard (Jisen Oshiro, personal communication, February 25, 2009). This makes sense from the standpoint of Soto Zen, since the school sees all religious traditions as expressions of the same Buddhahood. In this logic, to affirm that one could be Buddhist and Christian at the same time is unproblematic (Peru Shimpo, 2012). However, from the perspective of Christianity (Catholic and Pentecostal/Evangelical) this is not so, since in this tradition a notion of progressive historical revelation that finds its apex in Jesus Christ is of paramount importance, as it is the universal and unique redemptive work carried out on the cross. Specifically within the Catholic tradition a debate is still taking place about the appropriateness of including meditation techniques drawn from non-Christian Eastern religions, and even if it is possible to detach given techniques from their entanglement with non-Christian religious worldviews and practices. Official teaching of the Catholic Church has also given a word of caution (Congregation for the Doctrine of Faith, 1989). My research did not yield further information as to affirm if this situation is intentional or not, even taking into account that Ven. Oshiro is conversant in the Catholic tradition due to her family roots and school education (Peru Shimpo, 2012).

It should be said that, in connection with the phenomenon of the Peruvian *dekasegi* (or Japanese-Peruvians who had re-settled in Japan, taking advantage of their legal citizenship in

order to improve economically), there are in fact a significant number who have returned to Peru. Among these “returned *dekasegi*,” there seems to be a number who have gone back to some Buddhist practices, such as the rituals for the ancestors, and who are unwilling or in some way ashamed to keep up with such practices while living again in Peru. Ven. Oshiro usually explains to them that there is no betrayal on their part of the predominant Christian rites in the host culture if one sees such rites as offerings, this is, as a symbol of purification, “just as the Magi offered incense to the new-born Jesus for the same purpose” (Jisen Oshiro, personal communication, February 25, 2009). In this way she encourages people to keep on with their Buddhist practices.

The fact that the Nambeizan Zuihoji Temple, from the outside, appears to be merely another house in the neighborhood where it is located should also be situated in a somewhat middle place between the two above-mentioned types of ambiguities. There is no sign outside the facility to indicate its nature as a sacred place, perhaps to avoid possible tensions with neighbors or appearing too peculiar, or maybe because the same place is used as a dwelling by members of the “core group.”

(d) Adaptations to the host culture seem to be problematic for Soto Zen in Peru. Their universe of symbols, *sutras*, internal organization, practices and lifestyle seem to be very much Japanese. This would not necessarily be a problem if there were a constant search to inculturate certain Sotoshu religious forms into the host culture, but for several respondents what has occurred so far is not enough. At present, there have been a number of accommodations, one of the most notable of which has been the translation of some *sutras* into Spanish to help with resources for more meaningful chanting. Mario said that Soto Zen “should adapt to its context” (Personal communication, September 16, 2013). Roberto accepted that it should keep faithful to Japanese Soto Zen ways “but with flexibility.” (Personal communication, September 21, 2013).

Pedro goes farther in her comments: Sotoshu “should remain faithful to Soto Zen in Japan in what is referred to its teachings but not its practices. We are in Peru and in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, not in Japan in the 13<sup>th</sup> century. There are several kinds of differences and Sotoshu is resistant to taking them into account. I would like that while we celebrate the 110<sup>th</sup> anniversary some would take advantage and promote a Zen more adapted to South America, although I do not know how this should be” (Personal communication, September 15, 2013). In regard to the use of *sutras* previously mentioned, he says that “the Master [Ven. Oshiro] wants us to learn them by memory and in a very ancient Japanese nobody understands and that is very difficult to memorize. I would like to study the sutras in Spanish, but that is hardly done” Personal communication, September 15, 2013). My research did not collect more testimonies as critical as this; however, it is worth keeping these points in mind for future study. Whatever the case, what is clear is that there is a desire for further adaptation, on which several of the respondents coincide.

### **3.4. Soto Zen Reorientation**

The Re-orientation mode takes place by way of a critical examination of the ambiguities that may have risen. The criteria for this discernment belong to the religious tradition as it is lived in its “country of origin”. There is a search for a reduction of ambiguities and for an increased faithfulness to the “genuine tradition.” The amount of tension this may entail is directly related to the ease with which the so-called “new religion” accepts changes or not. The “new religion” profile is sharpened and stressed. This mode may reflect the logic of “revivalist movements” within a specific religious tradition. Since Ven. Oshiro moved into Peru, some steps seem to have been taken at this level in the Soto Zen transplantation experience.

The first step has to do with the recitation of the *sutras*. Ven. Oshiro tried to use English and Italian translations that have been developed for other places in order to make the practice of

chanting more meaningful for the “core group”, but after some time she returned to the Japanese, since, in her own words, “it sounded very different” (Jisen Oshiro, personal communication, February 25, 2009). In spite of the fact that the translation into Spanish of the *sutras* for meditation and ceremonies has taken place, and that they have been published as mentioned, this has been done primarily in order to provide the meaning of the chants, which are done in ancient Japanese.

The second step taken is related to the phenomenon of “dual memberships,” the case of practitioners who see themselves as Catholic and Soto Zen at the same time. In order to diminish ambiguity, there is a process through which the practitioner who desires a closer involvement in the life of the Soto Zen community in Peru ends up putting aside other convictions related to the sacred in order to focus exclusively on the Soto Zen teachings, practices and ethical standards. Since this approach is freely made, it seems natural. Nevertheless, it seems the standards for a closer practice of Soto Zen are clearly established, which may be seen as focusing on the best way for acquiring Buddhahood rather than trying the means offered by other religious traditions which in the end would not be as good. As Carlos put it, he would not keep both religious traditions, Christianity and Zen, “because they are two completely different worldviews, and it would cause the practitioner a great deal of confusion to keep them both” (Carlos, personal communication, September 27, 2013). Other respondents have similarly pointed out the strong difference between what could be seen as “Christian rationalism” and the Soto Zen approach, for which reason could be a hindrance for enlightenment, therefore being something to overcome.

The fact that at least some of the members of the “core group” have assumed Japanese first names seems to be a sign of maturity in this process and exclusive commitment (for example, Sengen for Néstor, Tenkai for Diego, or Anji for Beatriz).

Moreover, the testimony of Sengen Castilla and Tenkai Sanchez as the first disciples of Ven. Oshiro to be ordained as Soto Zen novices constitutes a powerful thrust for other members of the “core group” to persevere in the *Dharma* way. Since Castilla has committed himself, the same as his Master, to focus, for the time being, on establishing Soto Zen in a way most faithful to the ways it is lived in Japan, this might mean that the rest of the informal *sangha* would be encouraged to reorient themselves in a similar manner. However, as we have seen, this may also be a source of tension.

### **3.5. Innovative Self-Development?**

The main topic upon which this mode focuses is the creation of new forms and the apparition of innovative interpretations of the transplanted religion. Great tension arises between those who condemn “heresy” and those who protest against the “ossified tradition” that has gone astray from the time of the origins, from its source. This mode is usually characterized by the foundation of new religious organizations.

At present, as far as my study has gone, there are no signs of this “processive mode” in the transplantation of Soto Zen in Peru. On the contrary, even when there are contacts on the part of the members of the “core group” with *sanghas* in the United States, there is, as has been mentioned before, a clear willingness to be faithful to the practice of Soto Zen as it occurs in Japan. Tenkai, one of the two novices, has expressed this clearly: “I think is better for Sotoshu in Peru to be faithful to the ways of Soto Zen in Japan in order to get started. Once the practice is assimilated in our context, it will develop its own ways.” (Tenkai, personal communication, September 22, 2013). The opinion of the other novice, Sengen, is similar although richer: “We have a historical and cultural basis. In Peru practice started by Japanese influence and it has remained that way. The formation of the Peruvian novices is also inspired in the Japanese

tradition. If some day it takes its own essence, it would be for motives different than those operative in the United States and Europe.” (Sengen, personal communication, September 13, 2013).

No egalitarian, feminist, or social justice orientations, as they are understood in North America and Western Europe, were found in the surveys. However, the fact that in Soto Zen there is no distinction between men and women for becoming monks or assuming leading positions is seen positively by many respondents. “A female religious leader, a nun, is in itself a great message,” says Sengen. He does not see a democratization process as necessary: “Practice is the same for all who come.” (Sengen, personal communication, September 13, 2013). While Julia says that Sotoshu has less control over Zen in North America and Europe than it does in South America (Personal communication, September 10, 2013), Pedro reports that when he was speaking with the Japanese monks who came for the celebration of Soto Zen in South America, she perceived that “they were reluctant towards any occidentalization of Zen... I know that the Japanese [monks] do not want that influence to occur. I believe that, for Japanese [monks], the fact that Zen had expanded beyond their country’s boundaries is a true problem.” (Pedro, personal communication, September 15, 2013).

At present, the Soto Zen efforts in Peru seem to be focused on setting up a larger temple, a vibrant monastery, preparing more candidates for ordination, and keeping the Soto Zen tradition faithful to its roots, on the one hand, while extending the exposition of the tradition to people in general through what we might want to call “concentric circles” within Peruvian society, on the other. These different circles would differ in the advancement of their practice of meditation or *zazen*, in their practice of all the other aspects (particularly rituals) the tradition



entails, as well as in their exclusive commitment to the Soto Zen lineage (B.A. Wallace, 2002, pp. 41-42).

### **3.6. Looking into the Future**

Borrowing again from a “religious economy” approach, one could say that in the Peruvian “deregulated religious market” it is up to religious organizations to cater to potential “clients.” In the case of “outsider” religious movements such as Soto Zen in a strongly Catholic host culture (if not in individual practice, certainly in its values and symbolic universe), differentiation from “mainstream,” traditional ascribed Catholicism is essential to attract new members among those who are not happy with what they usually get as “religious goods.” This is because Sotoshu would more likely attract a “niche” of persons in “higher tension” with the surrounding culture (Stark, 2000, pp. 193-203). What has been said sets Soto Zen in competition with Pentecostals/Evangelicals, as well as with groups within the Catholic Church that understand themselves as challenging the *statu quo*, as sources of spiritual renewal and as outlets for stronger lay involvement—both individually and in small communities—among them the Catechumenal Way, Catholic Renewal in Spirit, Christian Life Movement, John XXIII Retreats Movements (*Movimiento de Retiros Juan XXIII*) and Catholic Outpost (*Avanzada Catolica*) (Marzal, 2000).

(a) As per what we have seen, Soto Zen peculiarities, and particularly its meditational practices, clearly differentiate it from Christianity, and are part of its strengths. Particularly, the way in which it may attract people undergoing spiritual quests is important. However, Soto Zen’s reluctance to actively invite people to its activities and events reduces its capacity for outreach. This, though, could be somewhat balanced by a greater exposure to the public, in order to foster greater interest and curiosity for knowing it more as religious tradition. Soto Zen is at present

using a number of venues in order to become visible, and it appears to be necessary to expand such efforts even more for it to grow.

Latinobarometro surveys show that the number of defecting Catholics and of those with no allegiance to organized religion is rising in Peru. Between years 2000 and 2010, Catholics passed from 85.5 to 77.9% of the population, whereas people without a commitment to a given organization rose from 3.6 to 5.2% (including atheists, agnostics, deists, and those who did not answer the question of religious allegiance). In the same span of time, membership in non-Catholic Christian groups increased from 10.9% to 16.9% (including Evangelical, Pentecostals, Adventists, Protestants in general, even including Jehovah Witnesses and Mormons, whose Christian character might be doubted). These factors show a decrease in the number of Catholics, most probably among those who see themselves as non-practicing, and a shift into non-Catholic Christian groups or into the so-called “nones.” Such statistical trends, however roughly presented here, speak of a favorable scenario for the expansion of an “outsider” movement such as Soto Zen (Latinobarometro, 2013).

(b) Another source of strength is the geographical location of Soto Zen strongholds in the country. The Zuihoji temple and the dojo of Zen San Jose are both located in Miraflores district, in Lima, a traditionally middle- and upper-middle class area in the city. This particular universe of people is the most likely one to provide the temple with practitioners with a similar profile to those who are part of the “core group,” who are very much interested in *zazen* meditation and spiritual growth in general. Moreover, this district is directly connected with a series of similar districts in the city, which enlarges the universe mentioned before. In this whole area, also called “Central Lima,” 67% work professionally, are retired or lives off of revenues; 18% are students; 20% are women at home; 17.7% know English. The vast majority of households in the area have

good public services and have their basic human needs adequately covered (Arellano and Burgos, 2010). As a consequence, they have time, means and energy to consistently carry on spiritual quests. These population is 86% Catholic, 8% Pentecostal/Evangelical, 4% belongs to other religions, and 2% has none. Without considering the distinction between practicing and non-practicing Catholics, this gives an extremely conservative group of 43,800 persons without any religious allegiance, a “market” to immediately cater to (Arellano and Burgos, 2010, pp. 105, 209).

In the case of the Jionji temple, it is located in Cañete, a small coastal city that, like other similar cities, has significantly enlarged the size of its middle class. This has taken place mainly in the urban areas. Something similar can be said of Cuzco, where there is a Soto Zen dojo. To better assess the situation in general for Soto Zen, it is worth noting that in Peru, between 2005 and 2011 the middle class has expanded, speaking in conservative terms, from 26 to 49% of the whole population (Jaramillo and Zambrano, 2013).

(c) Another important strength is the capacity Soto Zen has to outreach the Peruvian-Japanese community, which generally speaking still counts Buddhism as part of its “religious capital.” This means they would prefer to choose between religious options that may keep their current Catholic/Buddhist background as opposed to any other (e.g. Pentecostal/Evangelical) (Stark, 2000, pp. 118-125). As a consequence, regardless of its current small number of affiliates, Soto Zen has greater potential for attracting *Nikkei* people than non-Catholic Christian groups. This is especially important in Lima and Cañete, where there is a significant number of Japanese-Peruvian population, with which links have already been established through the temples located there. Each of them has a number of tablets with the names of the deceased or *ihai*, which *de facto* generates a relationship in time with their families, which in the case of the Zuihoji

Temple, in Lima, are about 50 (Pedro, personal communication, September 15, 2013). To this should be added the good relationship Sotoshu keeps with the Peruvian-Japanese Association, by far the most important and respected *Nikkei* organization in the country, with which most Japanese-Peruvians identify.

All these elements allow affirming that Sotoshu could steadily grow in the future. However, in order for this to occur, it would need to deal with the calls for greater adaptation of forms of practice to Peruvian culture. It is true that religious groups that offer higher rewards for their membership (as Soto Zen does with *zazen* and the opportunity of becoming enlightened) elicit higher levels of commitment from their members, whose lives become more and more oriented by it (Stark, 2000, p. 145). However, if Sotoshu just keeps itself in higher tension with the surrounding culture and does not communicate properly and meaningfully with its current and potential practitioners, it will not grow but remain small (Stark, 2000, pp. 207-208). This may also be the case if it presses on to involve practitioners too soon in its rituals (which are not the main point of attraction), promoting this over meditation. This might explain why, as Rev. Oshiro and other respondents say, “lots of people come and go” (La Mula Reportajes, 2013).

#### **4. Conclusions**

The preceding analysis leads us to conclude that the process of transplantation of Soto Zen in Peru is characterized at present by the “processive modes” of confrontation and conflict, ambiguity and adaptation, and reorientation. Contact has already taken place and has found both formal and informal ways to occur. Innovative Self-development is absent and, in contrast, a drive towards keeping the purity of Soto Zen as lived in Japan is operative.

The context for the Soto Zen presence in Peru is positive. It is characterized by an emerging widespread urban setting in the country, with an enlarged middle class and better

access to education. Transplantation looks more likely to succeed and expand when one considers the existence of a religious “free market,” which is the case, and the existence of a large audience of middle- and high- class people big enough to produce a “critical mass” of persons interested in meditation. Expansion also seems to be possible, although at a moderate level, among Peruvian-Japanese persons who may still keep Soto Zen as part of their “religious capital,” and among *dekasegi* who have returned to the country.

However, since the specific way in which Soto Zen is establishing itself in Peru stresses fidelity to the tradition from which it stemmed in Japan, it might be the case that this factor would cause a lower future expansion than if its identity admitted a more fluid approach. In this regard, it is critical for Soto Zen leaders to wisely handle the tensions already operative among members of the “core group.”

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## Appendix

## Charts

Chart 1: Religious Membership in Peru (% of Total Population)

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	Census			
	1972	1981	1993	2007
Catholics	96.4	94.6	89	81.3
Evangelical Christians	2.5	5	6.8	12.5
Other Religions	0.7	0.2	2.8	3.3
Without Religion	0.4	0.2	1.4	2.9
Total	100	100	100	100
Population (Millions)	13.5	17	22	28

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Sources: Marzal (2000), pp. 23-24; Instituto Nacional de Estadística e Informática (2008), p. 17.

Chart 2: Buddhist Groups & Lineages by Location in Peru

Location	Group*	Tradition & Lineage	
Arequipa	Budismo Zen	Zen	**
Cañete	Taijeizan Jioji Temple	Soto Zen	
Cuzco	Grupo Drugpa	Tibetan: XII Gyalwang Drukpa	
Cuzco	Grupo Drikung Kagyu	Tibetan: Drikung Kagyu	
Cuzco	Grupo Sakya Tashi Ling	Vajrayana, Sakya School: Lama Dorje Dondrub	
Cuzco	Dojo Pachatusan	Soto Zen	
Lima	Templo Honpa Hongwanji	Pureland	
Lima	Grupo Vipassana	Theravada: Goenka	
Lima	Diamond Way Buddhist Group	Tibetan: Lama Ole Nydal	
Lima	Centro de Meditación Dharma Ling	Tibetan: Drikung Kagyu	
Lima	Centro de Estudios de B. Tibetano	Tibetan: Rime (non-sectarian)	
Lima	Instituto Peruano de Estudios Budistas	Tibetan: Rime (non-sectarian)	
Lima	Tibetan Kagyu Thubten Choling	Tibetan: XVII Karmapa / XII Tai Situ Rinpoche	
Lima	Grupo Drugpa	Tibetan: XII Gyalwang Drukpa	
Lima	Grupo Dzogchen	Tibetan: Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche	
Lima	Grupo Sakya Tashi Ling	Vajrayana, Sakya School: Lama Dorje Dondrub	
Lima	Moving Zen	Son: Vipassana Meditation: SN Goenkaji	**
Lima	Lima River Zen Group	Zen: White Plum (Rinzai Zen & Soto Zen)	**
Lima	Triple Corazón	Chen: Heng Yu's Dharma, non sectarian	**
Lima	Nambeizan Zuihoji Temple	Soto Zen	
Lima	Grupo Zen San Jose	Soto Zen	***
Piura	Diamond Way Buddhist Group	Tibetan: Lama Ole Nydal	
31 cities Around the Country	Nueva Acrópolis	None	****

\* Soka Gakkai is not considered in this list.

\*\* Western-shaped.

\*\*\* Related to the Soto Zen monks

\*\*\*\* Offers a general course on Buddhism

Sources: *Budismo en Chile. Directorio Mundial* (n.d.). Retrieved from <http://www.budismo.cl/dir/peru.html>; Juan José Bustamante, personal communication, December 4, 2008; Andrés Cordero, personal communication, November 29, 2008; *Diamond Way Buddhism Worldwide* (n.d.). Retrieved from <http://www.diamondway-buddhism.org/default.asp?col=05&t=centerlist.htm&CountryID=241>; Luis Eduardo Gómez, personal communication; January 12, 2009; *Nueva Acrópolis. Asociación Cultural Internacional* (n.d.). Retrieved from <http://www.acropolisperu.org>; Jisen Oshiro (2013); Jimmy Pool, personal communication, February 18, 2009; *Pitaka Pureland Directories* (n.d.). Retrieved from <http://www.pitaka.ch>; *PUCP Centro de Estudios Orientales* (n.d.). Retrieved from <http://www.pucp.edu.pe/ceo/>; *San José. Comunidad Católica de Habla Alemana* (n.d.). Retrieved from <http://www.sanjoselima.org/71.html>; Carlos Vega, personal communication, November 26, 2008; *World Buddhist Directory* (n.d.). Retrieved from <http://www.buddhanet.info>

## Figures

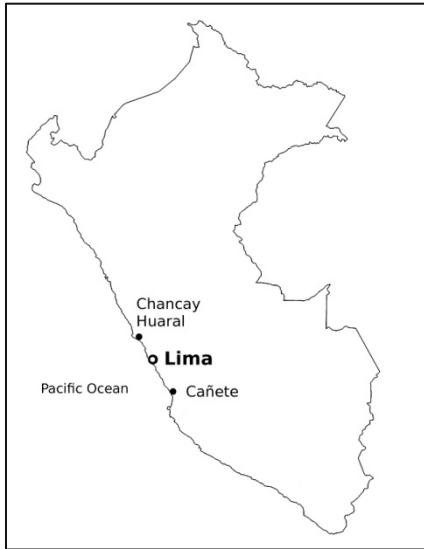


Figure 1. Japanese Immigration Centers. Map by the author.



Figure 2. Funerary rites at Jionji Temple (Cañete) for an immigrant who died from malaria. By permission of the Congress of the Peruvian Republic Press.



Figure 3. Jionji Temple (Cañete) and its Directors. By permission of Ven. Hirohito Ota.



Figure 4. Memorial tablets at Jionji Temple (Cañete). By permission of Ven. Hirohito Ota.



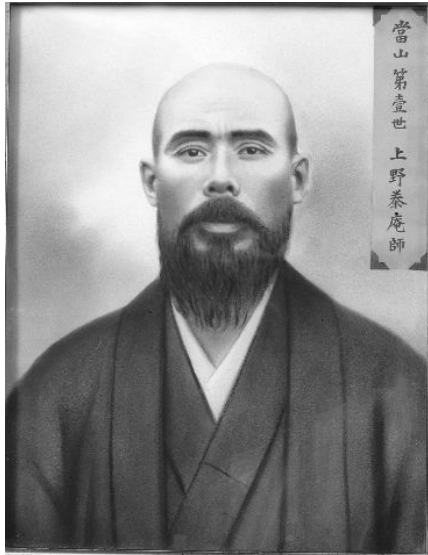


Figure 5. Ven. Taian Ueno (Hyogo 1871-1950). By permission of Ven. Hirohito Ota.



Figure 6. Ven. Senpo Saito (Yamagata 1888-Cañete 1919). By permission of Ven. Hirohito Ota.



Figure 7. Ven. Doyu Oshio (Hiroshima 1894-1950). By permission of Ven. Hirohito Ota.



Figure 8. Ven. Kenryu Sato (Akita 1894-Cañete 1935). By permission of Ven. Hirohito Ota.



Figure 9. Ven. Sato with students at Jionji's School (Cañete). By permission of Ven. Hirohito Ota.



Figure 10. Ven. Jisen Oshiro. By permission of herself.



Figure 11. Renewed Jionji Temple (Cañete). By permission of Ven. Jisen Oshiro.



Figure 12. Sotoshu delegations and friends celebrating the 110th anniversary of its presence in South America, in Lima. By permission of Ven. Jisen Oshiro.



Figure 13. Nambeizan Zuihoji Temple (Miraflores, Lima). Photo by the author.

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Figure 14. Celebration for the ancestors at Zuihoji Temple (Lima). By permission of Ven. Jisen Oshiro.

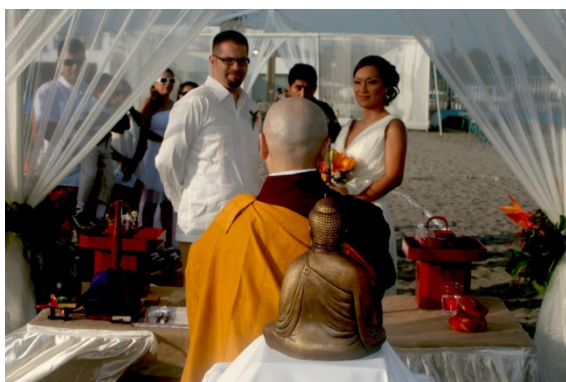


Figure 15. "Marriage" celebration. By permission of Ven. Jisen Oshiro.



Figure 16. Sesshin in Cusco. By permission of Ven. Jisen Oshiro.



Figure 17. Publication with sutras for ceremonies and meditation in Spanish. By permission of Ven. Jisen Oshiro.

## Questionnaires

### For "Monks/Nuns"

Date of the interview/phone call:

Name of the Person Interviewed:

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#### I. About the Person

1. What is the story of your monastic life?
2. Who was (were) your master(s)?
3. How long have you lived in your current monastery?
4. What is your position in the monastery, if any?

#### II. About the Monastery

5. What is its contact information?
6. Where is it located?
7. What is its history? How did it start?
8. What is the number of monks there?
9. Who is in charge?
10. Where are the monks there from?
  - a. How many are locals?
  - b. How many are foreigners?
11. What is the monastery's international affiliation? Upon whom does it depend?
12. How many temples depend on the monastery, if any?
13. What activities take place in the monastery on a regular basis?
  - a. What happens on a weekly basis?
  - b. What happens on a monthly basis?
  - c. What happens on a yearly basis?
14. What kind of meditation (*zazen*) do you do:
  - a. Preparatory?
  - b. *Koan*?
  - c. *Sesshin*?
15. How often do you have personal dialogues with the Master (*dokusan*)?
16. How often does the Master give lectures (*teisho*)?
17. Would you be willing to share photos of the monastery with me?

### III. About the Temple(s) Activities (applicable to each of them, if more than one)

18. How often is the temple open to the public?
19. Does the temple offer any of these activities to the public...
- a. Religious services of chanting or meditation?
    - If yes:
      - i. What days and times?
      - ii. What chants or meditations?
      - iii. How many persons assist on average?
      - iv. What language is used?
  - b. Religious services on Sundays?
    - If yes:
      - i. At what time?
      - ii. What do they consist of?
      - iii. How many persons assist on average?
      - iv. What language is used?
  - c. Religious services on Saturdays?
    - If yes:
      - i. At what time?
      - ii. What do they consist of?
      - iii. How many persons assist on average?
      - iv. What language is used?
  - d. Classes of Japanese? Of other languages?
    - If yes:
      - i. When and at what time?
      - ii. What do they consist of?
      - iii. How many persons assist on average?
  - e. Classes of Japanese music or dance?
    - If yes:
      - i. When and at what time?
      - ii. What do they consist of?
      - iii. How many persons assist on average?
  - f. Classes of:
    - i. Noh Theatre?
      - If yes:
        1. When and at what time?
        2. What do they consist of?
        3. How many persons assist on average?
    - ii. Calligraphy?
      - If yes:
        1. When and at what time?
        2. What do they consist of?
        3. How many persons assist on average?
    - iii. Painting?
      - If yes:
        1. When and at what time?

2. What do they consist of?
3. How many persons assist on average?
- iv. Gardening?  
If yes:
  1. When and at what time?
  2. What do they consist of?
  3. How many persons assist on average?
- v. Other kinds?  
If yes:
  1. What kind?
  2. When and at what time?
  3. What do they consist of?
  4. How many persons assist on average?
- g. Sunday School for children?  
If yes:
  1. At what time?
  2. What does it consist of?
  3. How many persons assist on average?

If no, do you have them on a different day?

If yes:

  1. At what time?
  2. What does it consist of?
  3. How many persons assist on average?
- h. Formation Programs on Zen for Adults?  
If yes:
  1. When and at what time?
  2. What do they consist of?
  3. How many persons assist on average?
- i. Teaching of Meditation in the Temple?  
If yes:
  1. When and at what time?
  2. What kind of meditation is taught?
  3. How many persons assist on average?
- j. Community Services?  
If yes:
  1. When and at what time?
  2. What do they consist of?
  3. How many persons assist on average?
- k. Funerals (*hoojo/hooji*)?  
If yes:
  1. When and at what time?
  2. What do they consist of?
  3. How many persons assist on average?
- l. Rites for Newborns?  
If yes:

1. When and at what time?
  2. What do they consist of?
  3. How many persons assist on average?
- m. "Marriages"?
- If yes:
1. When and at what time?
  2. What do they consist of?
  3. How many persons assist on average?
- n. Festivals?
- If yes:
1. When and at what time?
  2. What do they consist of?
  3. How many persons assist on average?

#### **IV. About the Participants**

20. Are there participants of non-Japanese Asian background?
- If yes:
- i. From which Asian countries?
  - ii. What proportion of the whole belongs to this group (as a percentage)?
  - iii. What is their socio-economic level, on average?
  - iv. What is their educational level, on average?
21. Are there participants of non-Asian background?
- If yes:
- i. From which non-Asian countries?
  - ii. What proportion of the whole belongs to this group (as a percentage)?
  - iii. What is their socio-economic level, on average?
  - iv. What is their educational level, on average?
22. Are there people from non-Asian background who participate who are mainly interested in doing meditation and not in the whole of Soto Zen practices?
- If yes:
- i. What proportion of the whole belongs to this group (as a percentage)?
  - ii. What is their socio-economic level, on average?
  - iii. What is their educational level, on average?

#### **V. About Publishing Activities and Academic Networking**

23. Do you publish your own materials?
- If yes:
- i. What kinds?
24. Do you keep a webpage?
- If yes:
- i. How do you do this?
25. Do you use social media?

If yes:

- i. How do you do this?

26. Do you distribute publications you receive?

If yes:

- i. How do you do this?

27. Do you keep contact with scholars or institutions of higher education that are interested in Buddhism in general and Soto Zen in particular?

If yes:

- i. How do you do this?
- ii. Why do you do this?

#### **VI. About Future Plans**

28. What are the plans for the temple in the future?

29. Have you ever thought of linking it with a cultural center, an ecologic center, a retreat house or an acupuncture shop?

If yes:

- i. How do you plan to do this?

#### **VII. About the Relationships with Other Zen Schools in Peru**

30. Do other Zen schools exist in Peru: Rinzai, Ubaku?

If yes:

- i. How is your relationship with them?

31. Do other schools on non-Japanese origin exist: Chinese, Korean, Vietnamese?

If yes:

- i. How is your relationship with them?

#### **VIII. On the Processive Modes**

32. Do you translate texts (*sutras*, recitatives, "catechesis" on what *zazen*, *kinhin*, or ordination are, etc.) into Spanish?

If yes:

- i. What is your experience with this?

33. How do you introduce Zen to potential practitioners who come from a religious background as different as a Catholic or Christian one?

34. What are the particularities in Zen that contrast more markedly with the Christian/Catholic cultural context?

35. Have you found difficulties between Zen practitioners of Japanese background, on the one hand, and those of non-Japanese background on the other?

If yes:



- i. How have you dealt with this?
- 36. Have you found difficulties between Zen practitioners belonging to different generations?
  - If yes:
    - i. How have you dealt with this?
  
- 37. Is there any confusion when using religious terms: e. g. calling funerals “masses,” the abbot of the monastery “bishop” and so on?
  - If yes:
    - i. How have you dealt with this?
- 38. Have there been any conflicts in regard to prayers among Zen practitioners?
  - If yes:
    - i. How have you dealt with this?
- 39. Have you paralleled the Zen calendar of annual celebrations with those of the Catholic/Christian calendar?
  - If yes:
    - i. What was the result of doing this?
- 40. Have you adapted the precise dates of some celebrations in order to give a relevant Zen interpretation to a previously existing feast?
  - If yes:
    - i. What was the result of doing this?
- 41. Have you intended to attract people to Zen by presenting it as an ecological-friendly practice? Or as something good for your physical health? Or in another way?
  - If yes:
    - i. What was the result of doing any of this?
- 42. Have you intended to attract people to Zen by linking its doctrinal dimensions with aspects from Western thought, e. g. paralleling Zen teachings with Greek thought, the Buda with Jesus Christ, “enlightening” with Christian mystic?
  - If yes:
    - i. What was the result of doing any of this?
- 43. Have you assumed organizational structures similar to those of the Catholic/Christian tradition?
  - If yes:
    - i. What was the result of doing this?
  
- 44. Have you clarified the above mentioned examples in order to make explicit the differences between each pair?
  - If yes:
    - i. What was the result of doing this?
- 45. Have you insisted on adequate preparation so practitioners may properly understand the meaning of the ceremonies in which they partake?
  - If yes:
    - i. How did you do this?
- 46. Do you have courses prior to ordinations?
  - If yes:

i. How did you do this?

47. Have you assimilated any feminist proposals into the practice of Zen? Any democratic practices? Any other Western practices?

If yes:

i. How did you do this?

48. Do you have or expect to have influence from Zen as it is practiced in the United States, Canada or Western Europe?

If yes:

i. How do you see this happening?

#### For “Lay Practitioners”

I used a similar questionnaire, adapting the first three sections (I, II, and III) in terms of the Director of the Group, the Group, and the Group Meeting Place, respectively.