



APPENDIX A

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS
DURING THE WARSAW SANGHA WEEKEND
SEPTEMBER 19, 2010

APPROVED BY THE KUSZE TEACHERS' GROUP



TOPIC 1

THE ROLE OF SUNIMS IN OUR SCHOOL

1. What is the difference between a Sunim in the Kwan Um School of Zen and one in the Jogye Order of Korean Buddhism?

Essentially, there is no difference. We take the same number of precepts, we follow the novice and bhikkhu/ni distinction, the most important aspects of practice and way of life are the same. Besides cultural details, the main difference is the separation of precepts lineage and Dharma lineage in the Jogye Order, which happened during the centuries long evolution of Mahayana Zen. Another difference is that in our School a monk can ordain a nun, in Korea this is not possible. Just like at the time of Shakyamuni Buddha, the precepts lineage and Dharma lineage are not separate in the KUSZ. DSSN established them together, all our fully ordained monastic teachers who are at least 10 year bhikkhu(ni)s can ordain Sunims as well as become lineage holders if they receive transmission.

2. What is the role of a Sunim in our school?

Devote his/her life completely to practicing and helping other people, without getting married and giving birth to children. As such, they can be very mobile and flexible, appear where they are needed and disappear without a trace, like white clouds. There is a calligraphy in Providence Zen Center, which points to this directly: “Without situation--true life”.

3. When, in what situation can Sunims teach and when can they not?

A fully ordained Sunim can take various functions in temples and Zen centers. Teaching is one of them. In our School, Sunims follow the same procedure as lay teachers: they can be invited by the Sanghas with the local Guiding Teacher's approval. Outside of our School they are completely free to teach following their own arrangements.

Not just a Sunim, but any teacher in our School may be suspended from teaching if his/her activity divides the Sangha, causes public disorder, promulgates teachings that are radically different from our School's spiritual lineage, or they do not follow the rules set forth by the European Teachers' Group (ETG) of KUSZ.

**4. Can a Kwan Um Zen center or group invite a Jogye (not Kwan Um) monk?
Do we need to ask for the guiding teacher's permission for this?**

Yes, it is possible, based on the consensus within the Zen center/group. Yes, you have to obtain permission from the GT. Please note that your GT may consult the ETG if s/he does not know the Sunim you intend to invite.

5. Is the Kwan Um School able to "produce" monks, who are not Jogye monks?

Yes, the School is established for this as well by Zen Master Seung Sahn, and his monastic successors keep the ordination lineage alive, independent of the Jogye Order.



TOPIC 2

THE CONTACT WITH THE KOREAN BUDDHIST TRADITION

1. Are we more of a Korean or of an international school of Zen? If we are a Korean Zen School what does it practically mean?

We are an international Zen school based on Korean tradition. We follow that tradition as it was established by ZMSS in the West and evolve over time along our own path.

2. Are we as a school interested in promoting Korean culture--organizing events, exhibitions, etc.? Is it good for the centers to invest time and energy in that sort of activity? If a center wanted to organize such an event can they get some help from the school?

Our School is primarily interested in promoting Zen practice. Zen itself does not depend on culture, but its cultural aspect can be interesting in some countries. If the Sanghas have the intention and unity about organizing such events, it is certainly welcome. The School itself can help with the know-how of organization if necessary. Financial resources are still limited in Europe, and cultural programs are usually short of funding--even more essential projects like supporting Zen centers lack that.



TOPIC 3

"MARKETING" - HOW CAN WE GET MORE MEMBERS, HOW CAN WE RAISE FUNDS AND FINANCE CENTERS AND WHERE DO WE DRAW THE LINE

1. How "missionary" can we go? What are the things we can do and what we shouldn't do in terms of attracting new members?

By its nature, neither Zen nor any other Buddhist traditions try to convert people. If you look deep enough, you see that there is nothing to convert to. Our mission is clearly visible in our teaching activity: We go where we are invited, we speak to those who want to hear us. You should never enforce your views on people who do not want to hear about them. If you ask the right questions, you get the right answers: if you offer practice as the solution to common everyday problems, as well as you embody the practicing mind, people will naturally become attracted to the teaching. As one beginner answered, why he came to the Dharma: "Because it works".

2. What are the things we can do and what we shouldn't do in terms of raising funds for centers?

Depending on the project in question, the fundraising can be local, national, continental or intercontinental. For a local project's local fundraising, you need your Guiding Teacher's approval. For fundraising at a national level, or above, you need the Guiding Teacher's and the European Teachers Group's approval.

Generally, it is important to emphasize the benefit of the project towards practicing and helping all beings. These benefits should be practical and well visible. There can be no comparisons with other traditions, other projects in the same school or any statements that would be competitive, judgmental or otherwise dualistic.



TOPIC 4

COOPERATION & COMMUNICATION BETWEEN CENTERS

1. **Bigger centers often help smaller centers with organizing their first retreats and public meetings with the teachers. Many people are happy to come and participate. But sometimes the leaders of small groups are afraid to run such events, because their groups are too small. Can the guiding teachers encourage the leaders to organize YMJJ? The school office may pass the info to the abbots of bigger centers, that help is needed for a particular group in particular time.**

The GTs can encourage smaller centers to be more active, but the initiative of the group itself is primarily important. The School office does not get directly involved in passing information specifically from one center to another, this is a job between the abbots of these centers and their Guiding Teacher(s).

2. **Can the KUSZ offer a training for leaders - how to organize YMJJ and public meeting, how to run a group, how to use the european website, etc?**

Yes, such training can be organized.



TOPIC 5

WHY PEOPLE QUIT?

1. **There are very few people who practice longer than a few years. Are we well guided in our practice? Aren't we left alone with our practice? (the question came from an experienced Dharma teacher who quit our school many years ago and few years ago came back).**
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If questions are asked, answers are given. If someone needs guidance, there are several teachers who can give that. Our School is built on together action, so we are not alone in our practice, but without our own effort it does not work.

However, despite all the guidance and available help, it may be necessary for some people to take a break and return later. Spiritual maturity does not come easy: it takes time, effort, courage, and most of all, sincerity to oneself and each other.



The end.