



Kwan Um School of Zen / Europe

Board of Trustees Meeting 2020

Minutes ETG meeting via Zoom

4 April 2020

Present: Zen Master Bon Shim, Zen Master Ji Kwang, Zen Master Joeng Hye, Zen Master Gu Ja, Chon Mun Sunim JDPS, Alma Potter JDPSN, Arne Schaefer JDPSN, Ja An JDPSN, Koen Vermeulen JDPSN, Igor Piniński JDPSN, Yuval Gill JDPSN, Lizzie Coombs JDPSN, Knud Rosenmayr JDPSN, Tolo Cantarellas JDPSN, Barbara Pardo JDPSN

Excused: Oleg Suk JDPSN, Jiri Hazlbauer JDPSN

FIRST BLOCK

a) Exchange about the situation now and how we and our zen centers cope with it including online practice

- Zen Master Bon Shim has a lot of Dharma activities online, she is very busy with kong-an interviews (Poland & Cambridge) and zoom and skype meetings.
- Zen Master Joeng Hye: in Warsaw Zen Center all outside activities are suspended, they keep the practice but it's optional and they plan to start streaming practice online so more people in Poland can join. In fall Gdańsk Zen Center had an Opening Ceremony for a new place. Zen Master Bon Shim recently led a YMJJ there that was well attended. Kyol Che: Andrzej Stec JDPSN could not come so Zen Master Bon Shim took over. There were many people except the last 2 weeks, when information about Covid-19 started to spread. Kyolche went on until the end.
- Koen Vermeulen JDPSN: In Brussels ZC practice goes on online, he's very happy we can use this technology. Nobody comes to the Zen Center, residents are very careful with distance and hands.
- Alma Potter JDPSN: Vienna Zen Center is doing really well, meets twice a week online. Once a week she practices with Tolo, and once a week with Budapest sangha. She was in Vrazne at Kyolche when Czech Republic closed borders and had to leave. Around 7 people stayed in Kyolche until the end, almost all of them had sat the whole Kyolche.

- Knud Rosenmayr JDPSN: In Vienna ZC they adapted to the situation by shifting to online practice twice a week, and also put their schedule on international streaming platforms, so anybody can join. They are planning to do online retreats.
- Zen Master Ji Kwang: At the moment Arne is leading the online sangha in Germany and he is happy to support Dharma activities eg. give Dharma talks.
- Zen Master Gu Ja: Berlin ZC has been closed for 3 weeks already. There are 6 residents but no teacher or public practice. Residents are doing well, some even take this opportunity to do solo retreat. Sometimes there are online interviews. Arne took over and is leading the sangha online, after a break she will also help. Kyol Che in Vrazne: Namhee shared her good experience of strong practice during Intensive week, when they tried for the first time in Europe the same schedule as in Korea: 6 days of midnight practice and last night without sleep.
- Arne Schaefer JDPSN: online practice works well, the schedule was adapted and at the end of practice they share some teaching and talk about anything that might come up. Not only people from Berlin join, also from Hamburg, Munich, etc. They're looking into how to organize different programs: for beginners, retreats online, etc.
- Chon Mun Sunim JDPS: in Katowice Zen Center they are well organized, communicating by Whatsapp, and practicing through Skype (they find it's better for moktak sound, chanting...), they also organize night practice. He and Il-Am Sunim are trapped in Krakow, and the Zen Center takes care of them. They hope they can go back to Korea before summer Kyolche starts.
- Tolo Cantarellas JDPSN: Situation in Spain is not good, people cannot go out and police stop you if you try. Palma ZC activity is online, practice 6 days a week (Evening chanting –alternating days of Kwanseumbosal and Jijangbosal–, 25 minutes meditation and Zen Circle talk), many people are joining, also from South America and other parts of Spain (Granada ZC). The people from the Sangha who live alone are very grateful at this opportunity.
- Lizzie Coombs JDPSN: after 2 weeks lockdown the city is very quiet. They started online practice and people seem to like that, although the sangha is young (1 year) and not everybody is joining.
- Yuval Gill JDPSN: 3 weeks lockdown by now. Whole sangha moved to online practice, they passed the initial stage of getting used to it. They plan to do a 7 days practice (named "one sangha-one mind-one world"), but it's not a retreat, is more flexible.

- Barbara Pardo JDPSN: she and Tonda came back the same day from abroad (Providence and French Alps) the day the lockdown started in Spain, so had to go straight from airport to Borisa, without seeing family or sangha. 3 weeks lockdown now. Because Borisa is deep in the mountains internet is too weak to livestream practice, and the only resident in Barcelona ZC don't want this responsibility, so the sangha keeps in touch through their Whatsapp group: many people keep the same daily practice schedule as before and encourage others. The group shares short teachings as well and Dharma talks frequently. She hopes in a couple of months we can sit retreats together again (at least locally).
- Igor Piniński JDPSN: in Łódź Zen Center there's still practice, 3 people go, you can have up to 5 people meetings for religious purposes and they have no internet in the ZC. In Kraków Zen Center Bon Shim SSN is still the Guiding Teacher but maybe soon he will take over. There's a new group in Minsk (Belarus), where there's no lockdown. They are an amazing sangha, they started with no experience at all and only online contact with the School (they'll try to get visa to travel) but they are already creating cushions and mats, etc, and are very serious practitioners.
- Ja An JDPSN: In London people cannot meet, but they support each other, have a lot of contact with neighbours. They practice online from London ZC, daily practice, beginner introductions, and she talks on the phone with people who cannot benefit from that because has no internet or other reasons. It seems sangha is more connected, because people that usually don't come physically to the ZC now join online. She recommends Microsoft Team as another good platform to use, and has somebody from her old group in Poland helping her with the internet projects.

SECOND BLOCK

a) Online practice, interviews and retreats

Knud JDPSN explains some points about International Online Sangha (IOS):

- Regular members of KUSZ now can join the IOS for 3 months for free (showing some receipt of their regular membership).
- Knud offers to set up one meeting to explain more about the zoom breakout sessions to create a virtual interview room, people interested can write an email to him.
- Because of growing numbers of people going online, Kathy Park JDPSN asks all teachers if they can help with kong-an interviews and Check-in (Q&A), 1 hour, once a month. If interested contact Kathy, Jason or Gil.
- Knud gives an overview on what works well in online practice, based on his experience with Online retreats in IOS

- Teacher's compensation for online teaching should be clear; council will bring a proposal to the ETG

b) Summer Retreat Program (SRP)

In Korea Kyolche is one month later than usual. In USA they have planned their summer retreat.

Two options:

1) Do it on site:

- Probably attendance will have to be limited, because risk of infection.
- Difficult for travel, maybe not borders open same time, difficult transportation, etc
- Many people lost jobs, difficulty paying for ticket, retreat, etc (and it's risky to buy in advance, apply for Visa, etc).
- Many people really need to practice together.
- Not everybody has good situation to practice online at home: sit for hours, have silence, etc
- At least try to do a 3 weeks retreat in September.

2) Do it online:

- Less stress (not to worry about the uncertain future)
- Most of sangha will be already used to practicing online.
- Can be flexible (people can commit for shorter periods of practice, depending on their situation).
- We still can have a 3 weeks physical retreat in September, if possible.
- Questions:
 - Is it necessary to divide it in regions if it's online?
 - All the jobs (HDT, moktak master, etc) has to be done by the same region?
 - How much to charge for this retreat online?

Council and European Office will talk about it and present an idea to ETG.

c) New Guiding Teachers:

1. Prague: Jiri Hazlbauer JDPSN (vote: approved)
2. Kraków: Igor Piniński JDPSN (vote: approved)
3. Minsk (new group): Igor Piniński JDPSN (preliminary guiding teacher until ETG meets and votes next time)

d) Original Buddha Temple Project (OBT)

Igor Piniński JDPSN presents the OBT Project (explained in detail in the proposal sent previously).

- A committee is formed to look into questions and concerns (Koen, Roland + they will invite other members depending on expertise) that will present results in 2 months' time.
- ETG wants the project to continue, but committee has to work on specifics for making it possible in Europe.

e) Ethics committee

f) Closing words of Zen Master Bon Shim

Minutes written by Barbara Pardo

Edited by Knud Rosenmayr

Corrected by Lizzie Coombs

10th April, 2020