

Seyda Aysel: 14 Years of Activity in and for Bulgaria

Welitschka Jordanova



In April 2018 it has been exactly 14 years since my first meeting with Mrs. Seyda Aysel. That meeting took place at the World Teachers Conference in Dornach in 2004, when I was desperately looking for an experienced Waldorf educator who would accompany a few early childhood educators and teachers gripped by enthusiasm as they took first steps to implement their very rudimentary understanding of the art of education. I found myself in a workshop of Romanian colleagues working with Michael Zech to articulate the essential characteristics of Waldorf Education. Seyda Aysel was also there, as someone who - I would later learn - had been accompanying the training and development of the Waldorf movement in Romania. In this circle I expressed the hope of the friends in Bulgaria that they might help us find someone who would be willing to come to Sofia in the summer of 2004 to accompany the Dutch early childhood educator Marian Rust in preparing to open a Waldorf child care as the basis for what could become a Waldorf kindergarten. Michael Zech directed my question to Seyda Aysel. She did not answer right away. After the workshop she spoke with me briefly and when we looked into one another's eyes, we knew that something special had just happened. Later I came to recognize this as a destiny meeting. On the following day, Seyda declared her acceptance of our offer and I was able to return to Bulgaria filled with hope and relief.

This was the beginning of a challenging but also very joyful and fruitful collaboration that was possible through all the years afterward, thanks to the sense of responsibility, loyalty to the task and perseverance of Seyda Aysel and a few Bulgarian friends.

In the fall of 2004, the first systematic Waldorf teacher training and early childhood training began, which took place three times a year for three years. Seyda always came once or twice a year for these courses. At the same time, preparations were made for the founding of the first Waldorf kindergarten in Bulgaria, for which Seyda was an enormous source of support and advice.

Shortly after completion of the training course, the „Zlatno Zratse“ (Golden Grain) kindergarten opened, and Seyda continued to accompany the kindergarten in the following years. From this kindergarten the Waldorf School was founded, which today goes to the 9th Class, and three more kindergarten groups.

Jordanova, Bulgaria



From 2007 to 2016, Seyda Aysel, supported by IASWECE, held one to three introductory or intermediate courses in Bulgaria each year. She also offered valuable public outreach work, as well as advising parents and acting as a consultant. As a very serious anthroposophist who lives anthroposophy in every word she speaks and every gesture she makes, she has contributed a great deal to overcoming many difficulties and conflicts. With her equilibrium, experience and depth of understanding for each human being and every situation, she has been and continues to be a very high example for us.

In all these years, Seyda Aysel has supported the development of Waldorf education in Bulgaria through selfless activity. She mostly invested her own free time on weekends, holidays and during vacations from her own kindergarten in Germany to offer courses in our country, without receiving any honorarium for these courses.

Since there are only a few people in Bulgaria from other countries - and in recent decades, even fewer and fewer Bulgarians - who have managed to stay here for a long time, I have often asked myself why Seyda Aysel is one of the few human beings who, despite everything, continues to be active and wants to continue here. I know why: it is love, loyalty arising from a self-aware sense of freely taken duty, and the connection to the spirit that make this possible.

For this reason, my deepest respect and most heartfelt thanks to Seyda Aysel!

Her activity in and for Bulgaria continues. Since 2016 there is now a new three-year early childhood and teacher education course, supported by the IAO and IASWECE. Among other lecturers and tutors, Seyda Aysel is there. In addition to the training courses, she also continues to support the Waldorf kindergarten in Sofia. We hope that this loyal collaboration, as well as the support of all those human beings and organizations involved, will soon bear new fruit.

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We would like to express our deep gratitude to all these people and organizations!

Welitschka Jordanova has worked for some years for the development of Waldorf Education in Sofia. Since 2003 she has organized training and further education courses for Waldorf teachers and early childhood educators. She currently works as a high school teacher and interpreter.



Seyda Aysel