

100 years of Waldorf education – 15 years of Waldorf education in China

Li Zhang & Yujie Yang



In late autumn Chengdu, the leaves were fluttering, the weather was slightly cold. This autumn was particularly special, marking the celebration of the 70th Anniversary of the founding of the Peoples' Republic of China. In the mood of celebration all over the country, on the beautiful campus of Chengdu Waldorf School, we hosted two major events:

On October 25-26, the China Waldorf School Forum, China Waldorf Early Childhood Education Forum, Chengdu Waldorf School, Guangdong Shanhaiyuan Charity Foundation organized the celebration of the World Waldorf 100 and the 15th Anniversary of the Waldorf Movement in China, attracting thousands of guests. The theme of the celebration focused on "Insight and Practice, Inheritance and Creation".

At the opening ceremony on the afternoon of October 25th, politicians, academics, educators from home and abroad who care about children's development and education gathered together. All the teachers and students of Chengdu Waldorf School presented the welcoming ceremony with a series of special performances. The five founders of the school: Ben Cherry, Thanh Cherry, Xiaoxing Huang, Li Zhang and Zewu Li offered their best wishes for the future of Waldorf education in China.



Friends from the government and the field of education gave great affirmation and encouragement to Waldorf education, which strengthened the determination of Chinese Waldorf educators to excel in expanding Waldorf education in China and take on the responsibility and mission of cultivating talent in the future. The leaders of the Chinese Waldorf movement emphasized their will to integrate

elements of regional and national Chinese culture into the educational practice of Waldorf Education and ultimately reinvent a new future for Chinese education.

Many lectures and panel discussions met with lively interest. Especially popular were some cultural events and student performances, for example an oratorio of the Chinese creation myth "The Legend of Darkness", recitations from the teachings on ancient cultural epochs, and a folk music orchestra.

Outside the main venue, an exhibition gallery featured more than 40 Waldorf kindergartens and schools across the China. The displays interested and attracted many people's attention.

Nearly a hundred students from Waldorf high schools all over the country gathered together to share their ideals, arts, and ideas. Their presence was filled with vitality and passion, offering a sense of hope to the whole celebration.





Yu Jie is from Chengdu and learned about Waldorf education in 2010. She had her kindergarten teacher training in the Chengdu WECC course and taught in kindergarten from 2011 to 2017. Currently, she is a member of China Waldorf Early Childhood Education Forum (CECEF) working group and is responsible for publicity and the public WeChat platform. She also is a member of the Chengdu WECC Training Course Working Group.

Li Zhang was introduced to Waldorf Education in 1994 and later completed her Waldorf early childhood master's degree at Sunridge College in Spring Valley NY. In 2004, she and her husband Huang Xiaoxing (Harry) and children returned to Chengdu. As pioneers, they co-founded the first Waldorf School in mainland China and she became the first Waldorf kindergarten teacher in mainland China. Currently, she is responsible for the training center at the Chengdu Waldorf School and is the chairperson of the college of teachers for the whole school, as well as the chairperson of the China Waldorf Early Childhood Education Forum (CECEF).