

The values of Waldorf education find their way into the hearts of Mongolian parents



The first introductory course to Waldorf Education in Mongolia took place in Ulaanbaatar City, capital of Mongolia, between 4th - 17th of April 2018 with the guidance of the experienced and heartfelt Waldorf teacher, Mrs. Stefanie Allon from Israel. The program of the course was planned and conducted by Stefanie Allon, and the number of participant was between 22 to 12, varying according to the possibilities of taking leave from the jobs of the people who were interested in taking the course. The professional background of the participants was varied: teachers, artists, students, bank officials, etc., but most of them were parents with little children. The course was very successful and made a great impact on the participants, among whom some who already had basic knowledge of Waldorf education. Therefore, we are enthusiastic to put into practice everything that our teacher Stefanie taught us during the course.

According to the experiences of the Mongolian participants that we shared with each other after the course had finished, the philosophy of Waldorf education is almost identical with the natural philosophy of Mongolian family education, in which the adult generation of our present day were raised some 10-20 years ago. As a brief summary of the social background, let me describe a few cultural features of Mongolia in relation to education.

Mongolian society has been going through enormous changes during the last three decades, and these changes are in many ways similar to those of the European societies in the time of Rudolf Steiner. In Mongolia, just 20 years ago the greatest part of the population lived in rural areas, in nomadic conditions; therefore their children were educated to be faithful and respectful toward nature, the gods and the elderly, to be patient,



brave and tough when facing physical or emotional difficulties, and to be selfless and cooperative, because these values were essential for the survival of the individual and the community as well. These values, however, have been fading very quickly with the processes of modernization, industrialization, the introduction of new technology, computer games, TV, mobile phones and materialistic pseudo-scientific education. Therefore, the philosophy and values of Waldorf education – adjusted to the Mongolian social-cultural environment as well as to the specific socio-psychological features of the Mongols – find its way to the hearts of Mongolian parents and educators. The traditional values of the education of the child in Mongolia are essentially spiritual and free of intellectualism. Parents do not give extensive explanations to the children and do not put high expectations and requirements related to their personality development; instead, they let Nature and the Spirit work on the child and try to be a good example to be followed by the child. That is why we are convinced that Waldorf education can be very successfully planted and united with the traditional way of family education in Mongolia.

Plans for the near future

As soon as the introductory course concluded, the team of 10 core people started to work on the establishment our first day-care home for pre-school-aged children. We are searching for an available space and are working on finding the necessary facilities as well as the official permissions of the authorities. The team contains 6 female and 4 male teachers and parents who are ready to set up the small home kindergarten and to develop a curriculum based on Waldorf philosophy using traditional Mongolian folk tales, songs, children games, nursery rhymes and handicrafts.

We all are very-very thankful to our lovely teacher and trainer, Stefanie Allon, as well as to IASWECE and all its

colleagues for making it possible for us to realize this course and gain an insight to the world of Waldorf education!

