

Elisabeth Rochat de la Vallée

Biography

Born in Paris in 1949, I studied philosophy, literature and classics at the Paris University where I completed my Masters degree in Classics and in Philosophy then in Chinese.

When I was 20, I met Claude Larre s.j. while he was working on his PhD thesis on the Huainanzi and translating the Laozi. As a result of his influence, I began to study Chinese, working with him on Chinese classical texts. I also studied modern Chinese with a native speaker and spent a year in Taiwan (1974) to further my studies.

In the early 1970's, Father Larre met Dr. Jean Schatz, a western physician with an interest in oriental medicine. He was an acupuncturist with a special interest for the classical medical texts. At this time I embarked on a study of Chinese medicine, and together with Dr. Schatz and Father Larre, began the first study group of the classical medical texts in Paris. This led to the founding of the European School of Acupuncture in Paris in 1976. (See [the E.E.A. site](#) and the [presentation page](#) in this site for more details.)

From this common work, Father Larre, Dr. Schatz and myself co-authored A Survey of Chinese Medicine, published in 1979 (English translation published in 1986).

Under the auspices of the Ricci Institute in Paris, Father Larre and I offered lectures, seminars and conferences on Chinese classical thought; this teaching was given not only in Paris and other French cities, but also in several European countries and shortly in America. We also published numerous booklets on the seminal texts of Chinese medicine and philosophy.

In the mid 1980's, I began to accompany Father Larre on his teaching engagements in both the UK and the US. Father Larre's subtle understanding of the background culture and philosophy and my knowledge of the medical texts combined to produce a unique teaching team.

I continue to teach worldwide, working with both medical and philosophical Classics. I was lucky enough to find good friends and partners to work with, such as Sandra Hill for the editing and publication of books in English through Monkey Press, Peter Firebrace for teaching in London with Orientation; Ken and Jessica Rose in the US with whom I co-founded the Three Spring Institute, and many others in different countries and languages. (See [here](#) for details and links).

I do think that a real knowledge of the Chinese vision of life is useful not only to understand Chinese medicine from a scholarly point of view, but also to deepen one's practical approach and clinical skill. It is the reason why I always read, translate and explain texts which present a precise pathology and its diagnosis treatment or a reflexion on the nature and meaning of human life or anything in the between.

I love what I do and wish to continue as long as I can. I like and value the Daoist approach of life, especially Zhuangzi and Laozi, while remaining a Christian. I am sensitive to Chinese calligraphy, poetry and painting. Some of the artworks of my favorite painter, Zhu Da (Bada Shanren) are used on this site.

I also worked closely with Father Larre on the Grand Ricci dictionary, completing the first publication – two volumes of single characters – in 1999. The complete work of seven volumes was finally published, under my direction, just before Father Larre's death in December 2001. This awesome achievement is a testament to an inspiring collaboration which lasted over 30 years. (More details can be found at the [Association Ricci site](#).)

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