

The Ricci Association

The Ricci Association was created in 1987 to assist the editing team of the large French dictionary of Chinese language published in 2001:

The *Grand dictionnaire Ricci de la langue chinoise* comprises 6 volumes of 1 216 pages each and one volume of annexes of 1 377 pages, in the A4 size (210 × 297 mm or 8.3 × 11.7 in.), ISBN 220408266X. It has been co-edited by the Ricci Institutes of Paris and Taipei with the Desclée de Brouwer publishing company in 2001.



By adopting its new statute in 2002, the Ricci Association inherited the Society of Jesus' Chinese lexical tradition and pledged to pursue the linguistic and cross cultural intermediation with China started four centuries ago by Matteo Ricci. As early as 2005, it published a new important piece of work:

The Ricci Dictionary of Plants from China (Chinese, French, English, Latin),
by Francine Fèvre & Georges Métaillé
1 volume of 902 pages in the A4 size (210 × 297 mm or 8.3 × 11.7 in.),
ISBN 2204078921, co-edited by the Ricci Association & CERF, Paris, 2005.



From 2005 till 2008, the Association spent most of its energy on creating the *Ricci Perpetual Dictionary*, a permanently evolving encyclopaedic database (XML, UNICODE, pinyin) of the Grand Ricci dictionary data, which, thanks to dedicated interfaces, allows for the editions and re-editions of hard copies, on website or DVDs.

The first outcome has been the publication in April 2010 of the *Digital Grand Ricci* (DVD), unveiled in Shanghai on the 11th of May 2010, on the exact 400th anniversary of Matteo Ricci's death in Beijing, and presented in France on the 21st of September 2010 at Musée Guimet.

The *Digital Grand Ricci*, ISBN 978- 2- 204- 09239- 5, is an updated computer product of the *Grand Ricci Dictionary*, rendered in pinyin and now available in simplified and traditional characters. The interface allows for easy search queries, even on complex issues, amongst the corpus' 13 500 single character entries and 278 000 Chinese fixed expressions.



In parallel with these arduous accomplishments, the Association has entrusted the production of other dictionaries to professional specialists. The following dictionaries will in turn enrich the database and diversify the *Ricci Perpetual Dictionary*:

The Ricci Dictionary of Traditional Chinese Medicine will be one of the most important opus of its kind in Western language with 10 000 entries, the choice of the latter being not limited only to technical terms but aiming also to provide a better insight into medical doctrine as well as the Chinese vision of life and disease.

The Ricci Dictionary of Bronze Inscriptions in three languages (Chinese, English and French) will provide an invaluable source of historical and cultural information. Inscriptions are archaeological witnesses of the evolution of a feudal culture, essential for the understanding of Chinese classical culture and language.

The Ricci Dictionary of Chinese Law will comprise 20 000 entries: translation of legal expressions collected from Sino-Chinese dictionaries, updates of Grand Ricci database's legal terms, addition of legal terms to complete the existing entries and analysis of Chinese supreme laws and regulations.

The Ricci Dictionary of Chinese Seals will be in two parts. The English and French Dictionary of Chinese seals and seal carving art will comprise 1 200 Chinese technical terms translated into English and French, including a number of specific characters, the etymology of which, archaic representation and meanings are studied in depth. The Chinese dictionary of Western Sigillography will translate sigillography technical terms from English and French into Chinese.

The Ricci Dictionary of Wine and Vine aims at establishing a reverse dictionary on vine, vine-culture and wines; its main topics will be grape varieties, cultivation of vines, vinification, appellations, oenology, tools, techniques, vine diseases, institutions....

This trilingual dictionary (Chinese, English, French) will propose entries and explanations wherever needed in the language needed.

Based on the Grand Ricci's contents, *the Ricci Commercial Press Dictionary* in one large single-volume will be dedicated to Contemporary Chinese and is prepared in partnership with Shangwu/Commercial Press. This centenary Printer, funded in Beijing in 1897, will publish the dictionary which will offer some 60 000 entries and as such, will become the largest single-volume Chinese-French dictionary since the Petit Ricci, the first Ricci dictionary released in 1976.



How are editing services getting funded?

Due to time consuming scholarly researches and the great difficulty of rendering Chinese into digitized format, the Ricci production costs are high. Nonetheless, retail prices have been kept low to remain accessible to scholars and students. Commercial income is therefore modest ... and broadly insufficient. As a result, 90% of the Ricci Association operating costs rely on public and private sponsorship.

The Association operating costs are fairly small (no secretariat, no rental fees or office charges, a volunteer directorate) and remain well within 5% of the annual budget. The latter (about 80 000 € on average per year for the past eight years) is mainly spent to provide a half-time salary to the Head of the computer project and buy a few external computer programming services.

Public sponsorship having practically disappeared and collection of private donations being problematical, the financial future of the Association is becoming uncertain, forcing it to discharge its unique part-time employee and envisage hiring consultants instead, which is more expensive on the one hand, but can be staggered in time on the other, and made to adapt to largely unpredictable earnings.