



Prof Joël Bellassen is graduate in Philosophy and Chinese at the Université Paris VIII - Vincennes. He departed for China in 1973, where he studied Philosophy and Chinese at the Beijing Languages Institute of Peking University from 1973 to 1975. Upon his return to France, he set about building the discipline of the teaching of Chinese language. He is particularly known for his pedagogical innovation of the 1980s when he conceived methods to teach Chinese language in primary education which

included colour-coding Chinese characters to assist memorising of the four tones in Standard Mandarin (first tone: blue; second tone: yellow; third tone: black; fourth tone: red).

Prof Bellassen taught at the École alsacienne in Paris, following by teaching posts at Université Paris VII and then at INALCO. In 2003, Bellassen received the Chinese Language and Culture prize from the Chinese Ministry of Education.

In 2006 he was made the first Inspector General in the field of Chinese Language Teaching at the French Ministry of National Education. His reference book in the field of Chinese teaching, *Méthode d'initiation à la langue et à l'écriture chinoises* 1989, co-authored with Zhang Pengpen became one of the main textbooks used to teach Chinese in French secondary schools and which mirrors the international approach of the "zi benwei" (字本位 Character-based constructional approach to Chinese). Several of his texts on teaching have been translated into English. He is one of the vice-presidents of the International Chinese Language Teachers Association.