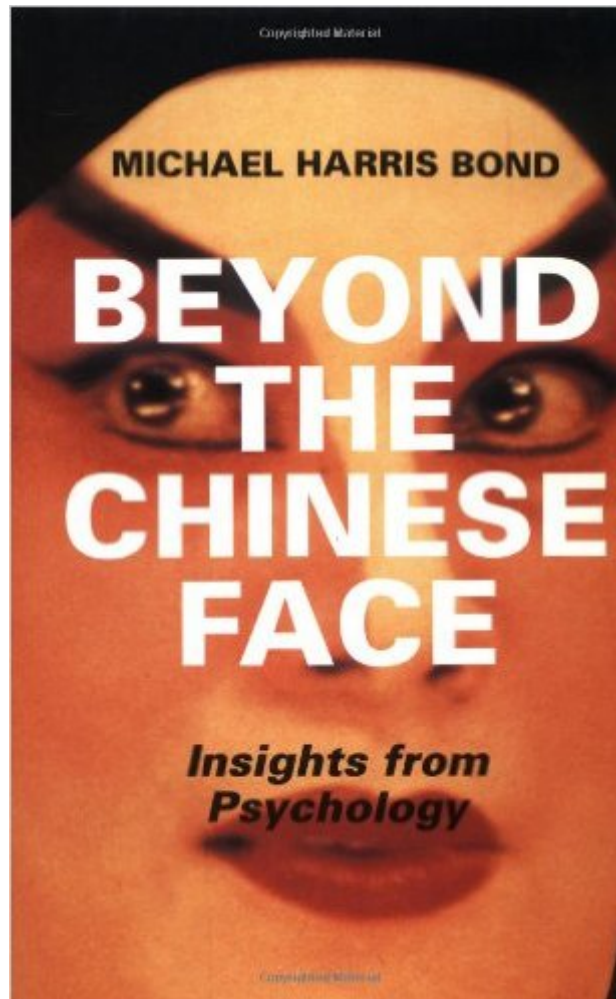


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# Beyond The Chinese Face: Insights From Psychology



## Synopsis

Are the Chinese people unique? How can we compare the Chinese with other groups? Are the Chinese more concerned with "face" than other people? How can we explain the relative academic success of immigrant Chinese students? What is the impact of learning an ideographic script on the Chinese people's way of thinking and perceiving? Are the Chinese more or less family centered than other national groups? How can we understand Chinese negotiating techniques? Questions such as these have long fascinated people with an interest in China. In this book Michael Bond, a western psychologist, draws on nearly twenty years' experience of studying the Chinese people to provide insights which will be valuable to westerners and Chinese alike. Clear, concise, and free from jargon or technical language, this is the book for anyone who wants to understand Chinese people, whether for day-to-day social interaction, teaching, counseling, or for business dealings.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

I think the reader from Victoria, BC, Canada was probably most right here in this forum. You have to know what you can expect and what you cannot. What you cannot expect here, is a guide to the thinking of around 1,5 billion people, because that is the number of people we're talking about. And they are very very different, I would dare to say more different than any other ethnic (can we say so?) group worldwide: you have ABCs (American born Chinese), their parents and certainly CBCs, Aussie BCs and so on. There are Singapore-Chinese and overseas Chinese in other Asian countries. Taiwan Chinese and Hong Kong Chinese. And then there is this huge mainland area with around 1.3 billion Chinese, where the living conditions differ so greatly that it's hard to imagine for

anyone who hasn't been there. All those people are Chinese, but they all have different backgrounds: capitalistic system or planned economy (though even the mainland is shifting very quickly towards capitalism, stronger than outsiders usually see), freedom of speech or getting killed for speaking out the truth, diversity or open hate from other societal groups (e.g. Indonesia) and so on and so on. And then there is the fact that people differ even within a society, with the result that you could very easily meet Chinese people from, say Beijing, who are very open sexual and have more sexual experience than, say, an American 30 year old who never had a girlfriend. Nevertheless it's a fact that most Chinese are not like that but instead having less sexual experience than their western counterparts (I'm not judging this, just stating the fact as the book says it and also as my own experience supports it). Now, one could say (and 3 other readers did so) that this book is therefore useless. I strongly disagree.

I probably should rate this book lower, but I think the author did a good job with his research and the text is actually written reasonably well. I found it fascinating that a Canadian author should mostly use American statistics to compare data with Chinese society, but then... our northern brethren do largely share our culture, history and heritage, whether they are all always all that comfortable with that fact or not. In any case, I think the book was written with very good intentions and may have even arisen out of the same sense of frustration I often felt while interacting with the Chinese in Taiwan for five and half years (and later, the Mainland Chinese of Shanghai for six months). "Why is it," I seemed to constantly be asking myself in those days (and still, to this very day in Korea sometimes, really), "that so many of these people don't ever seem to say what they mean, much less mean what they say?" The book begins well enough by very politely and safely outlining various aspects of this subject, but therein lies the rub. In the end, the author simply doesn't take any chances. He doesn't really satisfactorily answer any of the questions he posits and one is left feeling that he should have asked some tougher questions. In other words, he brings the subject up, but fails to really explain or make any truly challenging suppositions about it. Instead, he comes off as not being bold enough to come out and say what the book is really all about. Which is, "What's behind this whole 'lying to save face' thing?" But then, I think I totally understand how this book ended up feeling so inconclusive and unsatisfyingly, pathetically politically correct.

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