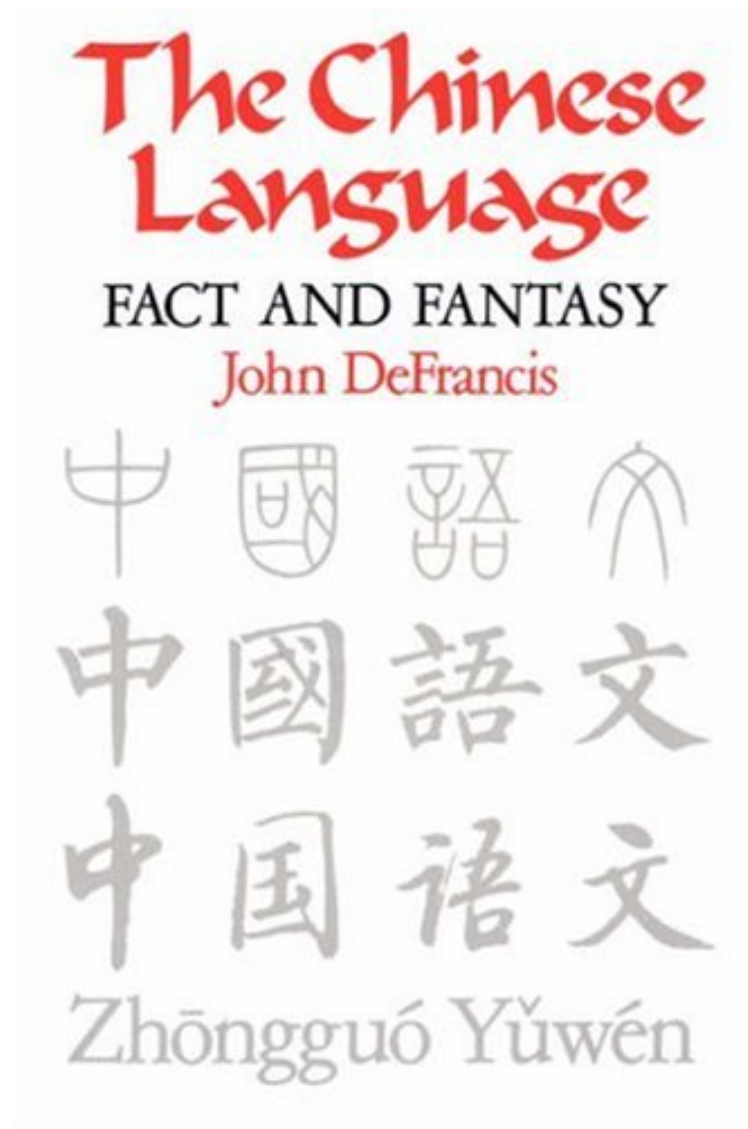


The Chinese Language: Fact and Fantasy

John DeFrancis

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John DeFrancis : The Chinese Language: Fact and Fantasy before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Chinese Language: Fact and Fantasy:

1 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Five Stars By Richard 'S' Lee Excellent book. A great reference for those interested in China and or language. 8 of 14 people found the following review helpful. An excellent book that is bound to be controversial By Sukit Chawalitaku! This is an excellent overview of the Chinese language and written scripts. I found the book to be highly enjoyable and actually read it while on vacation. The book, however, is bound to

be controversial for two reasons: 1) It debunks the myth that the Chinese written scripts (characters) are based on pictographs and ideographs. The majority of the characters are actually phonetics-based. 2) DeFrancis actively promotes the transformation of the Chinese writing language from characters to alphabets. He argues that the character-based system makes the written language much more difficult and underpins the high level of illiteracy within rural China. These points are bound to be controversial, as some people--both native Chinese and educated Westerners--are very passionate about the Chinese characters. I am sure DeFrancis's arguments and thesis are not flawless, but simply attacking his book as Western-centric is just unprofessional and unproductive. 2 of 17 people found the following review helpful. Unforgettable! By Laerte Agnelli What can one say about another masterpiece of Mr. DeFrancis? That it is a must for those interested in the Chinese language? That he really goes deep in his appreciation of the origins (and future) of that language? The book is really fantastic, incredible !!!

Book by John DeFrancis

"Delightfully engaging. . . this book contains a wealth of hard facts about Chinese." "Delightfully engaging ... this book contains a wealth of hard facts about Chinese.-- "Canadian Journal of Linguistics" "Delightfully engaging ... this book contains a wealth of hard facts about Chinese. (Canadian Journal of Linguistics) DeFrancis's book is first rate. It entertains. It teaches. It demystifies. It counteracts popular ignorance as well as sophisticated (cocktail party) ignorance. Who could ask for anything more? There is no other book like it. ... It is one of a kind, a first, and I would not only buy it but I would recommend it to friends and colleagues, many of whom are visiting China now and are adding 'two-week-expert' ignorance to the two kinds that existed before. This is a book for everyone. (Joshua A. Fishman, research professor of social sciences, Yeshiva University, New York) Professor DeFrancis has produced a work of great effectiveness that should appeal to a wide-ranging audience. It is at once instructive and entertaining. While being delighted by the flair of his novel approach, the reader will also be led to ponder on some of the most fundamental problems concerning the relations between written languages and spoken languages. Specifically, he will be served a variety of information on the languages of East Asia, not as dry pedantic facts, but as appealing tidbits that whet the intellectual appetite. The expert will find much to reflect on in this book, for Professor DeFrancis takes nothing for granted. (William S.Y. Wang, professor of linguistics, University of California at Berkeley)