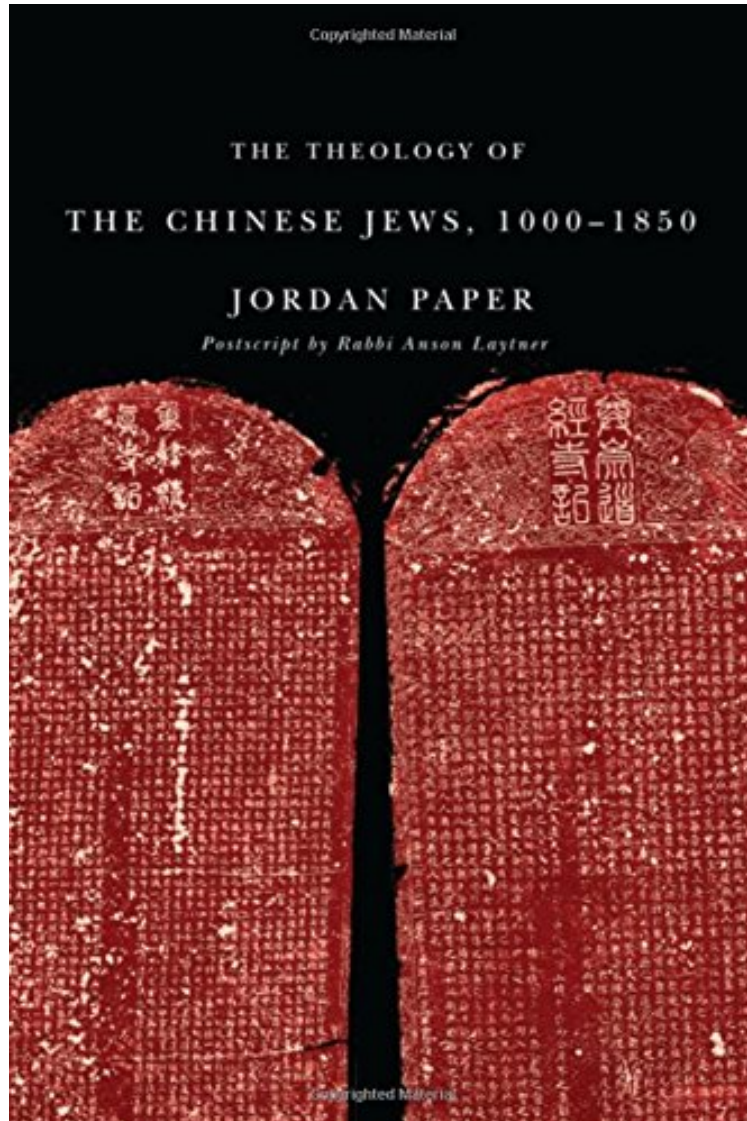


(Read download) The Theology of the Chinese Jews, 10001850

## The Theology of the Chinese Jews, 10001850

*Jordan Paper*

*DOC | \*audiobook | ebooks | Download PDF | ePub*



[Download](#)

[Read Online](#)

#6309260 in Books Jordan Paper 2012-02-21Original language:EnglishPDF # 1 9.00 x 1.00 x 6.00l, .79  
#File Name: 1554583721175 pagesThe Theology of the Chinese Jews 1000 1850 | File size: 71.Mb

**Jordan Paper : The Theology of the Chinese Jews, 10001850** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Theology of the Chinese Jews, 10001850:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. A Speculative TheologyBy Eric MaroneyJordan Paper book The Theology of the Chinese Jews, 1000-1850, explores the Jews of Kaifeng, for the most part, through a Chinese lens. Most of the scholarly work tackles the Jewish community at Kaifeng through from the vantage of Jewish, diaspora history.Professor Paper, however, is trained as a scholar in Chinese literature and history, and brings to the study of the Kaifeng Jews a distinctly Sinitic angle. He knows the history of Chinese religious and philosophical language, and

shows how the Chinese Jews may have used these terms to understand Judaism as they practiced it in the unique environment of Kaifeng, China. Since we do not have any theological works from the Jews of Kaifeng (they may have never written them, or two works, written by important Chinese Jews which may have theological content, may be lost) Professor Paper primarily uses Chinese inscriptions from inside the Kaifeng synagogue (and transcribed by visiting Jesuit priests in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries). His thinking is these documents are the true theological view of the Kaifeng Jews. Unlike the commemorative stones displayed outside and dedicated to the rebuilding of their synagogue, or the Hebrew and Judeo-Persian books inherited from their tradition, these sayings are an active remolding of their tradition; and most importantly, meant to be read by Jews practicing in the synagogue. This is a unique and most interesting book; that it is based on a great deal of speculation is not Professor Paper's fault, since the historical record has so little to say. But in the end, it is difficult to reach firm conclusions about Paper's take on the Jews of Kaifeng.

A thousand years ago, the Chinese government invited merchants from one of the Chinese port synagogue communities to the capital, Kaifeng. The merchants settled there and the community prospered. Over centuries, with government support, the Kaifeng Jews built and rebuilt their synagogue, which became perhaps the world's largest. Some studied for the rabbinate; others prepared for civil service examinations, leading to a disproportionate number of Jewish government officials. While continuing orthodox Jewish practices they added rituals honouring their parents and the patriarchs, in keeping with Chinese custom. However, by the mid-eighteenth century cut off from Judaism elsewhere for two centuries, their synagogue destroyed by a flood, their community impoverished and dispersed by a civil war that devastated Kaifeng their Judaism became defunct. The *Theology of the Chinese Jews* traces the history of Jews in China and explores how their theology's focus on love, rather than on the fear of a non-anthropomorphic God, may speak to contemporary liberal Jews. Equally relevant to contemporary Jews is that the Chinese Jews remained fully Jewish while harmonizing with the family-centred religion of China. In an illuminating postscript, Rabbi Anson Laytner underscores the point that Jewish culture can thrive in an open society, without hostility, by absorbing the best of the dominant culture and making it one's own.

“In this fascinating work, Jordan Paper not only explores the intricacies of Chinese Jewish theology, but also the meaning of being a Jew. Long a student of comparative theology and the phenomenon of the Chinese Jews, Paper details the development of Chinese Jewish theology and considers how this theology was impacted by the surrounding culture.... Paper comes to the conclusion that these were indeed Jews from whom western Jews can learn a great deal.” (Randall C. Belinfante *AJL* s (Association of Jewish Libraries), Vol. 111 #1, February/March 2013) “This fascinating book offers a history of Chinese Jewry based on existing sources and articles, and places this in the context of a broad overview of Chinese religious life. It is a wonderful, somewhat popular, but also very sophisticated achievement. Paper helps one see the complex ways that religions emerge and attain stability, even within a mighty tradition like Judaism.” (Michael Fishbane) About the Author Jordan Paper is a professor emeritus at York University (East Asian and Religious Studies) and a fellow at the Centre for Studies in Religion and Society at the University of Victoria. He studied Buddhist Chinese at and received his doctorate in Chinese Language and Literature from the University of Wisconsin (Madison). His many books on religion and Chinese philosophy include *The Fu-Tzu: A Post-Han Confucian Text*, *The Spirits Are Drunk: Comparative Approaches to Chinese Religion*, *The Chinese Way in Religion* (2nd edition), and *The Mystic Experience: A Descriptive and Comparative Approach*.