

Dr. Peter Schäfer

Doctor of Hebrew Letters, *honoris causa*

Sponsored by
Mr. Alan Klein
Rabbi Burton L. Visotzky

Your scholarly work in ancient religion has deepened the study of early Jewish texts and has enriched it as an academic discipline. Your academic achievements have contributed to scholarship across the world, and you have played an instrumental role in reviving the discipline of Jewish Studies in post-Holocaust Germany.

You are the Perelman Professor of Jewish Studies and Professor of Religion Emeritus at Princeton University, where you worked as a dedicated teacher from 1998–2013. Your contributions to the fields of rabbinic Judaism, early Jewish mysticism, and relationships between rabbis and Christianity have innovated and transformed the disciplines. Your colleagues have not only benefited from your academic wisdom but have enjoyed your abiding friendship. To use the Yiddish term, they consider you a consummate mensch.

From 2005 to 2013, you directed Princeton's Program in Judaic Studies. In 1993, you helped found Princeton's leading peer-reviewed journal *Jewish Studies Quarterly*, where you served as an editor.

Your visiting professorships include University of Oxford, the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, and Yale University. You are also the writer of many celebrated books, including *The Jewish Jesus: How Judaism and Christianity Shaped Each Other* (2012),

Origins of Jewish Mysticism (2011), and *Jesus in the Talmud* (2007).

Your scholarship has shaped the study of Judaism on both sides of the Atlantic, earning distinction in your home country of Germany and the United States alike. You received your doctorate from the University of Freiburg and your habilitation from the University of Frankfurt. In 1994, you were awarded the Leibniz Prize, one of the highest German awards granted to academics. In 2006, you were honored with the Mellon Award, the most prestigious award for American scholars in the humanities.

Following your Princeton retirement, you returned to Germany, advancing your scholarship both within and outside of the university setting. In 2013, you became an Honorary Professor of Jewish Studies at Humboldt University Berlin. From 2014–2019, you served as the director of the Jewish Museum Berlin.

Since 2015, you have been a member of the Board of Trustees of the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe Foundation. In April 2017, you were elected as a foreign honorary member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

Your groundbreaking scholarship has established you as one of the world's most significant scholars—not just in your field but across academia at large.