



Jewish Museum Berlin

2017

Peter Schäfer

: Director of the Jewish Museum Berlin

Peter Schäfer is the director of the Jewish Museum Berlin Foundation since 1 September 2014. He is one of the most internationally renowned scholars of Jewish Studies.

Born in 1943 in Hückeswagen, he studied Catholic Theology, Philosophy and Jewish Studies in Bonn, Jerusalem, and Freiburg. In 1968 he received his Ph.D. in Jewish Studies, and in 1973 he completed his habilitation at the University of Frankfurt. He then held teaching positions at the universities of Tübingen and Cologne. In 1983, Peter Schäfer succeeded Jacob Taubes as Professor of Jewish Studies and Director of the Institute of Jewish Studies at the Free University of Berlin, a position that he held until 2008. In 1998, he was appointed Professor of Religion and the first Ronald O. Perelman Professor of Jewish Studies at Princeton University; from 2005 to 2013, he served as Director of Princeton's Program in Judaic Studies.

For his academic work, Peter Schäfer has been honored with numerous awards, including the Leibniz Prize in 1994, Germany's most prestigious research funding prize. In 2006, he received the Mellon Award, the highest award for scholars of the humanities in the United States, honoring him for his academic life's work and his substantial initiative in reviving the tradition of Jewish studies in Germany. In 2013, he received the Howard T. Behrman Award for Distinguished Achievement in the Humanities, followed in 2014 by the Leopold Lucas Prize from the University of Tübingen, and in 2015 by the Reuchlin Prize of the city of Pforzheim.

Peter Schäfer holds honorary doctorate degrees from the University of Utrecht and the University of Tel Aviv. He has enjoyed several visiting professorships, amongst others at the University of Oxford, the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Yale University and the Institute for Advanced Study Princeton. In 2002/03 he became a fellow at the "Historisches Kolleg" in Munich and in 2007/08 at the "Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin". He is a Corresponding Fellow of the British



Academy since 1987, a member of the Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Science and Humanities since 1994, a foreign member of the American Philosophical Society since 1997, a fellow of the American Academy for Jewish Research since 2006, and a honorary member of the "Verband der Judaisten in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland e.V." since 2013. Peter Schäfer is a member of the Board of Trustees of the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe Foundation since 2015. In April 2017 he has been elected a foreign honorary member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences .

Peter Schäfer has published numerous books and academic papers, translated and published fundamental texts of the Jewish tradition, and was a founder and co-editor of several scholarly series and of the journal *Jewish Studies Quarterly*.

Peter Schäfer lives in Berlin with his wife Barbara Schäfer. They have two daughters and a son.

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