



## FALĀṬŪRĪ, 'ABD-AL-JAWĀD

**FALĀṬŪRĪ, 'ABD-AL-JAWĀD** (b. Isfahan, 29 Dey 1304 Š./19 January 1926 ; d. Berlin 10 Dey 1375 Š./30 December 1996), professor of Islamic studies at Cologne University (1974-96). Falāṭūrī studied Arabic literature and the Islamic sciences with private tutors in his hometown of Isfahan while attending a German-Persian high school. He continued his studies in Tehran and Mašhad with Moḥammad-Taqī Āmolī, Ayatollah Sayyed Aḥmad K̄vānsārī and Mīrzā Mahdī Āštīānī, specializing in the philosophies of Ḥājī Mollā Hādī Sabzavārī and Mollā Ṣadrā (qq.v.). Following a series of conversations with the Shi'ite authority Shaikh Moḥammad Reżā Kalbāsī, Falāṭūrī was granted a license (*ejāza*; q.v.) to practice *ejteḥād* (q.v.) in 1329 Š. /1950.

With the encouragement of Mīrzā Mahdī Āštīānī, who issued Falāṭūrī an *ejāza* to teach Islamic philosophy (*ḥekmat*, q.v.) and theosophy (*erfān*, q.v.), he later studied at the Faculty of Theology of the University of Tehran where he received a bachelor of arts degree in philosophy in 1333 Š./1954. In the same year, Falāṭūrī went to Germany where he studied a wide range of subjects, including philosophy, psychology, and comparative religion as well as Greek and Latin; he received his Ph.D. at the University of Bonn in 1962 after completing a dissertation on Immanuel Kant's *Critique of Practical Reason* (pub. as *Zur Interpretation der Kantischen Ethik im Lichte der Achtung*, Bonn, 1965). Falāṭūrī taught Persian and Islamic studies at the universities of Hamburg (1961-64) and Cologne (1964-73) while working on his habilitation on the impact of Greek philosophy on Islamic philosophical thought (*Umgestaltung der griechischen Philosophie durch die islamische Denkweise*,



Cologne, 1973). He taught Islamic philosophy, theology, and jurisprudence at Cologne University from 1974 until 1996. From 1965 on, he was instrumental in building the Shi'ite collection in the Oriental Department of the University of Cologne (cf. *Katalog der Bibliothek des schiitischen Schrifttums im Orientalischen Seminar der Universität zu Köln*, ed. A. Falaturi, 2nd ed., 6 vols. Munich, 1996).

Falāṭūrī was a founding member of the Central Council of Muslims in Germany (in 1986) and the co-founder of the Islamische Wissenschaftliche Akademie zur Erforschung der Wechselbeziehungen zur abendländischen Geistesgeschichte und Kultur in Cologne (ISWA; founded in 1978). After the Islamic Revolution of 1979, Falāṭūrī was one of the few Persian religious scholars in close contact with the authorities of the Azhar University in Cairo, who made him a member of their Islamic council, the Majles al-a'lā le-æo'ün al-ālam al-eslāmī.

As evidenced in his academic work and publications, as well as through his engagement in public life and the media, Falāṭūrī was interested above all in promoting dialogue between philosophy and theology, Islam and Christianity, East and West, and among the *madhabs* of Islam. This was exemplified in his editorship of *Der Islam in den Schulbüchern der Bundesrepublik Deutschland* (7 vols., Cologne, 1986-88), a series of studies on the depiction of Islam and Muslims in German textbooks used for primary education.

After his retirement in 1991, Falāṭūrī planned to transfer ISWA to Hamburg. Meanwhile, he continued to teach at Cologne and Hamburg Universities; participated in radio and television broadcasts; and traveled constantly between Cairo, Tehran, Hamburg, and Cologne. He died three months after suffering a heart attack while attending a conference in Berlin.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

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(Judith Pfeiffer)