



## GELPKE, RUDOLF

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**GELPKE, RUDOLF**, Swiss scholar, writer, and translator of Persian literature (b. Waldenburg, Switzerland, 24 December, 1928; d. 19 January 1972; [Figure 1](#)). He was educated at the universities of Basel, Zürich, and Berlin. He became a noted writer in his early twenties, and his novel *Holger und Mirjam* was published in Zürich in 1951. His interests in the Islamic world began after a visit to Tunisia in 1952. As a result, he chose Islamic Studies as his main academic field in 1953, and completed his university education in 1957 under Fritz Meier at Basel with a Ph.D. dissertation on the life of the Ghaznavid Sultan Mas'ūd (published as *Sultān Mas'ūd I. von Gazna: die drei ersten Jahre seiner Herrschaft*, Munich, 1957). After a six months stay at the University of Tehran in 1958, and another trip to Persia in 1960, he submitted his *habilitationsschrift* on Persian prose literature in the 20th century to the University of Berne in 1961 under the direction of Georges Redard (first part published as *Die iranische Prosaliteratur im 20. Jahrhundert*, Wiesbaden, 1962). He taught in 1962-63 as an associate professor at the University of California at Los Angeles. From 1963 to 1971 he lived in Tehran as a freelance writer and translator.

Gelpke's works include numerous essays on Persian culture and German translations of Persian literature, both classical and modern, notably: *Nezāmī, Haft paykar (Die sieben Geschichten der sieben Prinzessinnen*, Zürich, 1959); *Laylī o Majnūn (Leila und Madschnun*, Zürich, 1963); *Sa'dī, Golestān (Hundertundeine Geschichte aus dem Rosengarten*, Zürich, 1967); *Naqīb-al-Mamālek, Amīr Arsalān (Liebe und Abenteuer des Amir Arsalan* ; Zürich, 1965);



*Persische Meistererzähler der Gegenwart* (Zürich, 1961); and *Neue Liebesgeschichten aus Tausendundeine Nacht* (Zürich, 1969).