

Frank Rexroth

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Dear Guests, colleagues and friends,

it is a great privilege for me as Dean of the Göttingen Faculty of the Humanities to greet you and welcome you – well, exactly where? Not in Göttingen, unfortunately, which, disregarding certain epidemiological issues, would have been a splendid place to visit in autumn. Rather, I welcome you to some virtual place somehow connected with Göttingen.

Virtual meetings of this kind are currently strongly debated in our faculty, because politicians and administrators started telling us that we should consider not to abandon ‘all the good things’ we developed during the pandemic. This makes us suspicious because we do not consider giving lectures to students in virtual rooms as a ‘good thing’ and we definitely want to get over with it.

But meetings and conferences are a somewhat different thing. Of all topics, organizing a virtual conference on Ignaz Goldziher seems to mean that you act congenially to this great scholar and passionate letter writer who brought together erudites of such different upbringings, religious and ethnic denominations. The topic you will be dealing with today seems to me to be as specific as it is wide at the same time – multidisciplinary and multifaceted, bringing together Islamic and Jewish Studies, Christian Theology (I guess it is no pleonasm to say Christian Theology, considering the recent foundation of some Faculties of Islamic Theology here in Germany), History, Library studies, Digital Humanities, Poetry and possibly others I did not notice.

There is a full and highly attractive program lying ahead of you and I bet you are eager to stick to your time schedule, so let me just wish you stimulating talks and discussions for today. On behalf of my faculty I congratulate my colleague Sebastian Günther on this event. Now The floor should be Reinhard Müller’s.