

**The Department of Germanic and Romance Studies  
University of Delhi**

invites you to a talk on

**"The stars in the circus tent, they mean the world to us" – India from/for German eyes in Veit Harlan's post-war films**

By Dr Harald Pittel, University of Potsdam, Germany

Abstract

What happens when a former director of Nazi propaganda goes on an Indian adventure? This talk will be about an 'exotic' two-part film melodrama that is set in Sri Lanka and India, directed by Veit Harlan who is notorious for having made one of the most detrimental propaganda films of all times (*The Jew Sues*, 1940).

It is important to see that Harlan's India-themed films *Stars over Colombo* (1953) and *The Prisoner of the Maharaja* (1954) respond to certain repressed wishes of a post-war West-German audience, presenting a carefully assembled world of dreams as compensation for the wide-spread feeling of humiliation after the downfall of the "Third Reich". While today several scholars attempt to reinscribe Harlan into the history of German cinema, arguing that only a part of his oeuvre is contaminated with Nazi ideology, it rather seems that Harlan's later work – far from offering 'harmless' entertainment – shows problematic continuities with the strategies employed in his propaganda films.

Date: Thursday, 11 October, 2019

Time: 3 pm

Venue: Room on 32, Department of GRS, Arts Faculty Building, North Campus, Delhi

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Dr. Harald Pittel studied English and German Literature, Philosophy and History at RWTH Aachen University, Newcastle University and the University of Potsdam. He was a teaching assistant at Potsdam's Department for English and American Studies from 2011-17. His doctoral thesis was titled "Romance and Irony - Oscar Wilde and the Political". His research interests include propaganda, genre theories and materialist theories of culture. He has an ongoing project focusing on the comparative analysis of film musical forms.