

# The Goddess Kāmākṣī in Hamm-Uentrop (Westphalia, Germany)

Annette Wilke  
University Münster, Germany

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On July 7th 2002, the *mahākumbhābhīṣeka* ceremony of the largest Hindu temple of Continental Europe was performed in the industrial quarters of the Westphalian city of Hamm (Hamm-Uentrop) in Northern Germany (Plate I). This temple, built in South Indian style, is dedicated to the famous South Indian Goddess Kāmākṣī. My paper is based on fieldwork studies in this temple (since 1999), in northern and southern India (1991-2001), and in Sri Lanka (May 2003).<sup>(1)</sup> I attempt some propositions on religious change of Tamil Hinduism in the diaspora, focussing on a time when Kāmākṣī Devī resided on the other side of the road in a modest two-storied German villa (Plate II). This site will be referred to as the "former temple". The large temple was still under construction, but already by this time the Kāmākṣī temple had become the most important Tamil Hindu pilgrimage site in Germany and maybe even Continental Europe, attracting 10.000 to 15.000 Sri Lankan Hindus, both from Germany and abroad, to its great Tīrth-procession at the yearly festival. Neither of the other two Hindu temples in Hamm, dedicated to Gaṣṇā (Cittivānāyaka) and Murugaṇ respectively, nor other temples in Continental Europe can claim such large numbers of visitors. This paper's selection of the Kāmākṣī temple is thus not random.<sup>(2)</sup>

Situated in the vicinity of a (shut down) cooling tower of an atomic plant and two meat factories, the temple's surroundings are not very auspicious (Plate III). The temple, of course, relates itself to the highly auspicious and orthodox tradition of ādi śaīkara. Its mental blueprint is the famous Kāmākṣī temple of Kanchipuram, the Kāmakoṇi-pāṇha, which belongs to the monastic śaīkarācāryas of Kanchi and follows the Smārta and śrāvidyā mode of worship, or to be more precise: the tradition of Durvāsa's *Saubhāgyacintāmaṣi*.<sup>(3)</sup> Since the Middle Ages, the Southern śaīkarācāryas have adopted the tantric śrāvidyā tradition. Legends claim that śaīkara, the great Advaita Vedānta philosopher and alleged founder of Smārta Hinduism, subdued Kāmākṣī's wild force by placing a śrīcakra in front of her and thereby transforming her into the mild and gentle Mother of the World.<sup>(4)</sup> In the Kāmākṣī temple of Kanchi not only exoteric pūjās take place, but also the esoteric āvaraṣapūjā of the śrīcakra.

My paper deals with the transposition of the exoteric and esoteric Kāmākṣī worship from Kanchi, Tamilnadu, to Hamm-Uentrop, Westphalia. I want to focus on two points of interest: Firstly, I want to show how the former temple was styled as a replica of Kanchi. Secondly, I argue that the German Kāmākṣī temple is much more than just a place of Kāmākṣī worship, but also a platform for various Hindu traditions to express themselves. By way of conclusion, the findings are discussed against the background of recent diaspora theories and compared with other Tamil-Hindu temples in continental Europe.



## The New Kanchi

The fervour to establish a strong Kanchi connection is visually displayed in many ways. If we open the website (2002) of the Kāmākūṣ temple of Hamm (Plate IV), a smiling beauty welcomes us, whose iconography - noose, goat, sugarcane bow, flower arrows (here: a bunch of five flowers), and parrot - clearly indicates Kāmākūṣ Devā. These kind of dharmic pictures are sold in front of the Kāmākūṣ temple of Kanchi. The German temple calls itself in English "Hindu Shankarar Sri Kamadchi Ampal Temple e.V. (Europe)". The person below the goddess on the screen is the initiator and driving force behind this temple project: the main priest Tiru Paskaran Kurukkal, by full name: ÷rā vityā upāsakar civa ÷rā irevaṣacitta pāskarakkurukkaē. The way he presents himself here, as well as in the *mahākumbhābhīṭeka* commemoration volume,(5) is programmatic for his mental self image: He is wrapped in a yellow-orange shawl next to the orange-robed founder ādi ṣaīkara. The symbolic garment code was even more outspoken on the homepage in 2001: there, ṣrā Pāskarān portrayed himself most unusually for a married temple priest, in the orange robe of monks, next to the renouncer ṣaīkara. In a personal communication, the priest told me that his deepest wish had been to become a monk. He never was initiated into *saūnyāsa*, but he wore the orange robe when he came as a refugee to Germany in 1985 to command respect and to express his wish to live the *yogācāra*. Obligated by his family, he married and resumed the family tradition as ṣaīva temple priest, taking a new course however in following the ṣaīkara tradition of Kanchi. His title, ÷rā vityā upāsakar (*ṣrāvidyā upāsaka*), indicates that he is also performing ṣrāvidyā rites. He is certain that the splendid new temple could only come about by the grace und spiritual power of a copious ÷rācakra worship performed in 1993.

In the former temple, a bronze of ṣaīkara was placed in front of the sanctum (Plate V) and offered worship before each *pñjā*, performed twice a day for the temple deities Gaṣeśa, Kāmākūṣ (most elaborately), Lakūmī-Nārāyana, Somaskanda, Murugan with his two wives, and the Navagraha. The temple walls were decorated with scenes of Śaīkara legends portraying the great advaitic philosopher as ardent goddess worshipper. Reproducing the Kanchi tradition, there was a ÷rācakra (diagram in *meru* form) in front of Kāmākūṣ's icon (Plate VI). This famous *yantra* of the Great Goddess has been overcoded with a complex symbolism by the ṣrāvidyā tradition. Its worship, *āvaraṣapñjā*, is essentially a ritual form of non-dual contemplation reproducing the involution or evolution of the cosmos, and presupposing initiation. Although ÷rācakra representations and ṣrāvidyā theology are very popular among Smārtas in Tamilnadu, South India, not many persons are initiated in its complex and time consuming worship. In the Kāmākūṣ temple of Kanchi, *āvaraṣapñjā* takes place on the night of each full moon behind closed temple doors. In Hamm-Uentrop, too, the *āvaraṣapñjā* is performed in a shortened form on each night of a full moon, but open to the public. Once a year, on the Tamil New Year's day, the ceremony is extended three days and combined with exoteric rites such as copious *abhiṭekas* (Plates VII-VIII). I have noticed in the years 2001 and 2002 that temple visitors are interested in such well known exoteric rites only. Thus, the secretness of ÷rācakra



worship is kept quite naturally, without being externally imposed.

The *ṣrāvidyā* theology and ritual does not belong to the traditional lore of Tamil Sri Lanka,(6) where the *āgama* based *ṣaiva* *Siddhānta* is prevalent. Since a few decades, however, *ṣrāvidyā* became fashionable among Sri Lankan brahmins and intellectual elites. Traditionalists came to accept it very reluctantly, I was told, for it seemed to endanger the supremacy of *ṣiva*. However, goddess worship grew strong and within a relatively short period – according to my *ṣaiva* *Siddhānta* informants since about fifty years – *ṣrāvidyā* was introduced into the temple cult.(7) Nowadays, the *÷rācakra* and its worship is widely spread in Colombo and Jaffna peninsula *Devā* temples. *āvaraṣaptjā* has become a common practise not only in reform temples such as the "Sri Durgadevi Devasthanam", Tellippalai (near Jaffna city)(8), but also in traditional temples of folk goddesses such as the ones of (Muttu-)Māriyamman or the famous Nākapṭcani koyil (on the Nagadipa island). Similar to Hamm-Uentrop, there is no secrecy at all about these rites. V. Akhileshwara Kurukkal, who is the (brahmin) chief priest of the Turkkai temple at Tellippalai since 1979, was initiated by his father and claims it to be an ongoing Tellippalai tradition since 150 or even 300 years. His claim mirrors the oral lore,(9) but in fact, this Turkkai temple was consecrated in 1965 and gained a growing importance only since 1977, when Miss Thangammah Appacuddy became the president of the temple board and management. This wealthy and scholarly Veēēāēar lady, affectionately called "temple madam", is famous for her religious discourses which made a gentle Turkkai image known to a larger public.(10) In Tellippalai, *÷rācakrapṭjā* (*āvaraṣaptjā*, *Lalitāsahasranāma*- and *Lalitātri÷ati-arcana*) is done on each fullmoon day at 4 pm and during Navarātri on each of the nine festival days. The priest calls it a "duty" of the temple. This modern Durgā site is by no means an exception. *ṣrāvidyā* temple rites have become a normal feature in contemporary Sri Lanka and are even further developed. In May 2003, Parame÷vara Kurukkal, the chief priest of the Nākapṭcani temple, released a book on *÷rācakrapṭjā* and *homa* in a Veda Gurukulam in Jaffna. He had written this book particularly for temple worship. He celebrates *÷rācakrapṭjā* in the Nākapṭcani temple on each full moon day at 7 pm and during festive occasions. The ceremony may be performed on special request by devotees on other days, too.

It is noteworthy that a Nākapṭcani temple has also been established in Frankfurt, Germany. The brahmin Kurukkaē comes from a family of priests who do service in the original site on the Nagadipa island. He told me that he initially celebrated *÷rācakrapṭjā* in the German Nākapṭcani temple, too, but stopped doing it due to the disinterest of the devotees. Considering the presumably very recent acquaintance with *ṣrāvidyā* in Sri Lanka which is yet largely confined to brahmins and other intellectual elites, there is thus nothing curious about the obvious disinterest in the esoteric rites of Kāmākūā, which can be determined among the host of temple visitors in Hamm-Uentrop, too. It is



significant, however, that despite of the growing popularity of *÷rācakra* worship in the Sri Lankan temple cult, *ørā Pāskaraṇ* does not relate to Sri Lankan customs, but to Kanchi. He considers the *øaikarācārya* as his "*guru*" and his chosen deity is consequently Kāmākūā. Unlike *Māriyamman* or *Nākapṭcani*, this goddess does not belong to the deities traditionally worshipped in Sri Lanka and even today with the growing popularity of sanskritic goddesses, no temple has been dedicated to Kāmākūā, as far as I know. Nevertheless, there are good reasons for *ørā Pāskaraṇ* to favour this goddess, her association with *ørāvidyā* being certainly more "original" and traditional. She may not be a Tamil Sri Lankan goddess, but she is a Tamil Indian goddess whose history is long and whose fame extends the regional boundaries. The Kanchi Kāmākūā attracts pilgrims from all of India and belongs to the most popular deities in the South. She inspired Tamil and Sanskrit sources alike which both identify her with Lalitā. Attention deserves the fact that Kāmākūā is the most eminent local *temple* deity overcoated with the universal Great Goddess image of *ørāvidyā* and worshipped with *ørāvidyā* rites. This is worth mentioning, because *ørāvidyā* has ever been mainly a private form of worship in northern and southern India since its formation in the 11th or 12th centuries. *÷rācakrapṭjā* is restricted to lineages of initiates and largely confined to the private homes, even in Tamilnadu where its Great Goddess theology came to pervade the wider community of *øaiva* brahmins known as Smārta. *ørā Pāskaraṇ*'s rationale in deliberately relating to the prestigious Kanchi tradition is understandable against the background of a fairly widespread opinion among Sri Lankan Hindus that everything good and "original" regarding religious matters comes from South India, starting with fashioning the temple icons or the correct performance of the temple cult.

The German "new Kanchi" is inspired by the South Indian Smārta- and Vedānta-oriented *ørāvidyā* as well as by modern reform movements in South India and Sri Lanka. The *ørāvidyā* which developed in southern India, is a domesticated and brahmanical version compared with the *ørāvidyā* of North Indian lineages. Having been adopted by the *øaikarācāryas* of Kanchi and Shringeri, it evolved into a common form of a non-dualist *øaivism*, loosing its "heterodox" tantric features.(11) In this form, *ørāvidyā* imagery and Great Goddess theology became a common cultural memory in Tamilnadu, while *÷rācakrapṭjā* proper remained restricted to the various lineages of initiates. The *÷rācakra* is much in the awareness of a general public, being present in *øaiva* temples since many centuries. In modern times, *Lalitāsahasranāma* recitation, traditionally needing initiation into the *ørāvidyā mantra* and ritual, is also popular among non-initiated men and women. Nowadays, manuals on *÷rācakra* worship can be obtained in bookshops and recently even public or partly public ceremonies have taken place in and around Madras. A National convention of *ørāvidyā upāsakas*, including a week-long *havans* with the *Lalitāsahasranāma* and communal *āvaraṣapṭjā*, was performed in Madras in January 2001. Among the participants was *ørāmati Rājammāla*, a prominent *ørāvidyā* lady *guru* who has initiated the head priest of the Kāmākūā temple of Kanchi into *ørāvidyā* rites. Whereas the alleged secretness of *÷rācakrapṭjā* is still maintained in Kanchi, some South Indian reform movementes like the Chāya-Pāñha (near Trichy) or the Ashram of Ramana Maharshi,



Tirunavamailai, include it in their public temple cult. The public display of a secret tradition in Hamm-Uentrop is thus also quite in consonance with recent developments in Tamilnadu. According to *ṣrā Pāskaran*, it is forbidden to hide spiritual knowledge from public awareness: it belongs to everybody. The Durvāsa tradition specific to Kanchi is known to him, but not followed.(12) He says that some priests want to keep things in their own family, which he considers wrong: Vedic knowledge should be open to everybody. Like many contemporary South Indian *upāsakas*, he understands the *ṣrāvidyā* goddess worship as vedic, referring to Umā-Haimavatā in the *Kenopaniṣad*. The Kanchi *ṣaīkarācāryas* as well as modern movements like the female "Yoginās" leading the Chāya-Pāñha have influenced the recent rise of *ṣrāvidyā* in Sri Lanka. Certain groups actively seek this connection to reform the local cults, whereas others oppose it with verbal critique and active resistance.(13) Concerning the new "German Kanchi", it is interesting to note that Smārta Hinduism was rather disreputed among traditional *ṣaiva* Siddhānta orthodoxy, but times have changed in this respect as well. Lately, there has been a great interest in Smārta Hinduism and in the *ṣaīkara* tradition of Kanchi among Sri Lankan brahmins. In 1992, 16 brahmin boys from Yāppāṣam were sent to the Kāmakoṇipāñha of Kanchipuram for priestly education. The Kāmākūā temple of Hamm-Uentrop mirrors such recent Sri Lankan developments. In associating itself to Kanchi, the German temple participates in the orthodox aura of Kanchi and its recent popularity among Sri Lankan brahmins. This may explain to some extent the special attraction of the German Kāmākūā temple for Sri Lankan Hindus. *ṣrā Pāskaran* has a letter of the present *ṣaīkarācārya* of Kanchi, whereby *ṣrā Jayendra Sarasvati* expresses his blessings for the German Kāmākūā temple. There remains, however, a certain cultural tension. In fact, most of the brahmin boys sent to Kanchi returned after one year, allegedly not only due to financial and visa problems, but also because they felt unfamiliar with Smārta rites.(14) In this context, it is noteworthy that the former German Kāmākūā temple was styled according to the Smārta model, while the newly built temple is styled āgamic. In fact, *ṣrā Pāskaran* makes it a point that it is truly āgamic rather than Smārta, although the combination of Smārta and āgama rites is quite common in Tamilnadu. Some changes have taken place: nowadays, the *ṣaīkara* icon is less visible, being placed in the small front-room of the *garbhagṛha*, and the *÷rācakra* engraved in the *yonipāñha* in front of the new Kāmākūā icon can be acknowledged only by the priests. There is much more emphasis on ritual purity than before. Lay people are instructed in a leaflet to keep impure items far away to help preserving the sanctity of the sacred site. Menstruating women are obliged not to enter the temple. No photos or videos are allowed during the ceremonies. *ṣrā Pāskaran*, born in Kulamankal, Jaffna District, is neither a brahmin like most of the other priests, nor a Veēēāēars like most of his compatriots, but comes (as his title *civa ÷rā irevaṣacitta* already denotes) from a reputed Vāra÷aiva family of temple priests who form a caste on their own.(15) He learned his priestly office from his grandfather Iyampillai Kurukkal, an erudite scholar.(16) Sri Lankan Vīra÷aivas, who form a minority, have been critical of *ṣaiva* Siddhānta for being based on the interest of the dominating caste of Veēēāēars.(17) This traditional tension is not acknowledged by *ṣrā Pāskaran*. His *ṣaivism* is overlaid by *bhakti* and transcends sectarian peculiarities. According to him there is but one *ṣaivism*, which he terms as *sanātana dharma*, or "vedic culture", and as



*ūaóāyatana(pñā)*, or in other words as Smārta. Before migrating as a refugee to Europe, he has been in Kanchi, Kumbhakonam and Mailam (near Pondicherry) from 1983-84, where he attended a Veda school, received higher śaiva initiation, studied Advaita Vedānta and learned śrāvidyā rites. In Germany he does not only carry out his priestly functions, but also acts as a spiritual guide. Each Friday and on festival days he holds speeches in Tamil after the *pñā*, focussing on topics such as selfless worship, *bhakti* to the goddess, and śrāvidyā symbolism. Political issues are deliberately avoided, the Kurukkal being personally critical of the LTTE. He primarily sees his role as "leading to the other shore". Being also the temple manager und chairman of the temple board, he unites an impressive accumulation of functions. His extraordinary career and success rouses critique and jealousy amongst some other priests, but many temple visitors are highly impressed by his piety, his religious fervour, his effective temple management, and his never ending imaginative efforts to raise the funds which were needed for the present big temple to be built and still are needed for it to be maintained. He may at times even "invent" new rituals, especially new applications of the *÷rāyantra*. This happened on the occasion of the foundation-stone and topping-out ceremonies of the present temple.(18) Such "inventions of tradition" are of course always based on existent indigenous Hindu concepts and rites which are extended, and to the priest's mind even improved, by the new rite. The *÷rācakra* is also present during the yearly temple festival: the *yantra* is painted on the litter and chariot used for the processions, and the same large three-dimensional *÷rācakra* installation as on New Year's day is used in the morning of the fourteenth and last day for the *÷aikhapñā* with the *Lalitātri÷ati* (plate IX).

### **Hamm-Uentrop as a platform for several Hindu traditions to express themselves**

So far, I have stressed the deliberate and very visible attempt to establish a close link to Kanchi. In my second part I argue that the Kāmākṣī temple of Hamm-Uentrop is much more than a replica of Kanchi. It is also a place for acting out of more than one Hindu tradition. In German I have invented the term "Traditionenverdichtung", (19) meaning: a confluence of traditions, or more literally: a compression of traditions. The phenomenon refers to more than the blending of Smārta and śaiva traditions discussed so far, and becomes most evident during the great *Tñ-ñvačam*, or the yearly procession with the temple-chariot. On this day, the divergence from the Kanchi model becomes quite evident.

If we compare the temple festival processions taking place in Kanchi and Hamm-Uentrop, there are similarities no doubt (plate X), but there is also a major difference. In Kanchi, we do not find the various religious vows displayed in Hamm-Uentrop. In Germany, there are a great number of men who complete the processional route rolling on the ground, and women who prostrate all the way (plate XI). Other women carry pots of fire or burning camphor on their heads. Finally, we find a fair number of *kāvañi* dancers having their cheeks, tongues and backs pierced (*alaku kuttutal*) (plates XII-XIII).

Hamm-Uentrop was the first place in Germany for such vows to take place, and the number of people performing vows of self-mortification has steadily increased during the last few years. Meanwhile, there are some other German temples where people perform vows like *kāvañi*, but on a much lesser scale and in most cases without piercing. None of the other processions attract as large a crowd as Hamm-Uentrop, with its more than 10.000 visitors. Before the establishment of the present temple, its popularity and prestige was largely due to its grandiose and spectacular Tēr-procession, which is still attended by many Tamil Hindus from other German cities even after they have established their



own places of worship.

None of these vows displayed in Hamm-Uentrop are seen in Kanchi, nor in other processions held by prestigious Goddess temples of South India like the ones in Madurai or Mylapore. Of course each of them is well known in village South India, although their combination is quite uncommon. Some of the rites are local forms of worship or dedicated to a special deity, such as *kāvañi*-dancing for Murugan or fire-pots for Māriyamman. Religious self-mortification is popular in a number of South Indian villages, but is certainly not very brahmin. It is quite remarkable to find it now in a temple which claims to follow the *ṣaṅkara* tradition.

We thus meet with a rather unique "compression of traditions", including highly orthodox ones and so called folk ones: *ṣaṅkara* tradition, *ṣrāvidyā*, Smārta, Vāraṇasī, *ṣaiva* Siddhānta, āgama, *bhakti*, and practices of self-mortification which are typical for "self-born deities", but rather untypical for "invoked deities" like Kāmākṣī.(20) In South India, these traditions are socially and ritually kept apart. In Hamm-Uentrop, all of them meet without forming a syncretism. The model of such a compression is hardly Kanchi of course, but rather the Sri Lankan goddess temples already mentioned, where we find all these vows, too, during their temple festivals.(21) A similar blend of vows has been described for Kataragama, the famous Lankan pilgrimage place of Murugan.(22) In the 1970s, Pfaffenberger made a point stating that Kataragama stands out for integrating the divergent concepts of invoked and self-born deities.(23) Today, many Sri Lankan goddess temples fulfil a similar function. Unlike Kataragama, they also know *ṣrāvidyā* rites and expose a very similar blend like the German Kāmākṣī temple, without, however, claiming an equally close relationship to the *ṣaṅkara* tradition of Kanchi. In this way the German temple remains a unique blend and an exception.

In Germany, more things are possible than at home, but there are limits in Hamm-Uentrop, too. *ṣrā* Pāskaran strongly stresses *bhakti* and selfless worship, but does not encourage ecstatic and trance-like states. He did not permit a young man to roll in 2001, because he had seen this man the year before in a fit of trance. There are definitely no animal sacrifices taking place, nor do we find fire-walking like in Kataragama and village India. Animal sacrifice is termed "demonic worship"

(*asurapṭjā*) by *ṣrā* Pāskaran. Some years ago he refused a request to have it performed. People should instead sacrifice their hearts, he holds. A different matter is fire-walking, which he sees in line with the *vratas* allowed, even though he considers all of them as cruel. Fire-walking he forbids for safety reasons, since many children are present. If they were harmed, the temple would receive a bad reputation, he explains. The other vows he allows if requested, knowing well that they are part of the cultural identity of much of his Sri Lankan clientele. Surely he must be aware that in the Tamil cultural memory each vow is a visual sign of the grace of the deity and the mighty power of the temple. Each person fulfilling a vow has been helped in a difficult situation or hopes to be helped. Each vow thus spreads the fame of the sacred site and helps to attract sponsors and funds badly needed. In comparison to other temples, Hamm-Uentrop receives most requests for vows to be fulfilled. How could they be refused? Even "hook swinging" or "hanging *kāvañi*", which was performed until 2002 only in the Swiss Murugan temple of Adliswil (plate XIV), took place in Hamm-Uentrop in 2003. This very violent self-mortification may be resorted to, according to *ṣrā* Pāskaran, only in cases of heavy guilt and extreme emergency.

Hook swinging was branded illegal under the British rule, yet it continued in many places of South Asia. In former times it had formed, like other "folk" traditions, a continuum with the "great" Sanskrit traditions, although ranking on a lower step of the spiritual hierarchy. Nowadays, such practices are shunned by a modern middle-class theology.(24) Brahmins and reformers tend to tear



"folk" and "great" traditions apart and exclude folk religion as superstition. There seems to be a whole set of reasons which play together causing these traditions meet again in Hamm-Uentrop, even though *ōṛā Pāskaran* otherwise champions a spirituality much in consonance with modern middle-class theology: Sri Lankan cultural memory and present practises in goddess temples, the German article of religious freedom, the more liberal and relaxed Tantra and Vāra÷aiva background of the priest who assumes an integrative role and figures himself as a living "compression of traditions"; furthermore, the customer oriented pragmatics of a clever temple management to survive and compete in a new situation and finally, the difficulties in the diaspora where divine help is especially needed, starting with getting a job and a visa.

### Concluding remarks and propositions on religious change of Tamil Hinduism in the diaspora

Obviously, various traditions convene in the German Kāmākūā temple: highly orthodox ones and so called folk ones. I have started writing this article without knowledge about the prominence of *ōṛāvidyā* in present Sri Lanka. Being aware of the religious trends in the motherland, the blend of traditions in the German temple turns out to be less spectacular than discussed in a first version of the article. We find a very similar "compression of traditions" in Sri Lankan goddess sites. Compared with recent developments in Jaffna, one may speak of a further intensification of compressing processes, for we find in Hamm-Uentrop an explicit association with Kanchi which is either lacking in Sri Lankan goddess temples or much less outspoken. Unlike indigenous Tamil Sri Lankan goddesses, the Tamil Indian goddess Kāmākūā stands for a sophisticated theological programme and a domesticated *ōakta*-Tantra. This Great Goddess theology is programmatically visualized by the German temple already in its outer presentation and architecture, in particular by the sculptures on the *vimāna*.(25) In 2003, the temple walls were decorated with a huge colourful picture of *ōaikara* and two paintings depicting *ōṛā Pāskaran* doing *÷rācakrapṭjāhoma* and adoring the goddess. Whereas the wall paintings of the former temple presented *ōaikara* as cult reformer and great goddess devotee, *ōṛā Pāskaran* takes over this role in the present temple and styles himself so to speak as a new *ōaikara* for modern times. It goes without saying that the festival vows are not portrayed.

With the term "compression of traditions", meaning an unmixed confluence of traditions, I introduce a new aspect into existing diaspora theories. I have already suggested explanations of this very particular compression of traditions discussed, but a major point has been left out: the mere size and location of the temple. In the diaspora situation there are few places of worship to choose from, and even fewer places for a such splendid Tēr-procession to take place and allowing for such a great crowd. The Smārta bent, the aesthetic rituals with vedic *mantras*, the strong emphasis on *bhakti*, and the famous South Indian goddess also attract Indian Hindu worshippers. A South Indian lady, who already regularly came to the former temple on each Friday, appreciates the spiritual flavour of this temple and the special care taken by the priests to render each *pṭjā* beautiful. In a personal communication she remarks, "The *pṭjās* are very much according to the *÷āstras*". The temple makes her feel at home.

Recent studies in (European) diaspora Hinduism point out the new role of temples as important identity markers, particularly for Tamil immigrants.(26) Temples are the main institutions in which to establish a room of one's own in a foreign culture. They constitute a place where, for a change, the majority of the society are guests. But first of all, they form a home away from home and provide a space to gather and keep the cultural memory alive for the succeeding generations. Much of the



religious activity of diaspora Hinduism goes into temple establishment and maintenance. In continental Europe, no doubt are Tamil refugees the major driving force. In Germany, we find so far only Tamil-Hindu temples, and they have steadily increased in the last decade. Among the large number of new places of worship, the Sri Kamadchi Ampal Temple, Hamm-Uentrop, stands out. The imposing present temple, with its red and white stripes and richly decorated *vimāna* and *gopura*, is already, by its outer presentation, a very visible marker of traditional Hinduism. This is re-inforced by its newly pronounced āgama orthodoxy and carefully kept rules of worship and ritual purity. Its many shrines and free-standing *garbhagṛha* to move around, and the devoted men and women who queue up for *pūjā*, make one feel to be in South Asia. Apart from the unorthodox openness of *ōṛā Pāskaran*, allowing the integration of non-brahmin rites during the great procession, we find at the same time a successful endeavour to maintain brahmanical orthodoxy in the temple rituals. Both phenomena meet the urge of Sri Lankan Tamil Hindus in a foreign land to live their religious tradition as authentically as possible.

To summarize some major points and reflect upon them against the background of the diaspora situation, I would thus firstly stress the mere size of the Kāmākūā temple, its highly integrative function, and the new importance of temples in the diaspora in general.

Secondly, the outstanding role of Hamm-Uentrop as a new European Hindu pilgrimage place is largely due to the piety, charisma and particular fervour of *ōṛā Pāskaran* and his organisational talents. Like other places of worship in the diaspora, the German Kāmākūā temple relies entirely on private sponsors. Due to *ōṛā Pāskaran*'s successful management only, such great Tēr-processions can take place and such a great temple could be established. Most diaspora temples largely depend on the personal initiative of single individuals, and this is especially true for this site of worship. With the "Hindu Shankarar Sri Kamadchi Ampal Temple e.V. (Europe)", *ōṛā Pāskaran* realised his personal vision. He is quite aware of departing to a certain extent from his own Vāraṇasī family background, as well as from the *ōaiva* Siddhānta majority of Tamil Sri Lanka, stating that the other priests in Germany only perform *ōiva-pūjā* like his own father did, while he follows, along with his wife and children, another spiritual path. His own path, following the Kanchi *ōaikarācāryas* in worshipping Kāmākūā and their emphasis on Smārta and *ōrāvidyā*, he primarily conceives as selfless dedication and inner worship (*ātmapūjā*) with ritual rules of its own. It is noteworthy that his family does not seem to mind: the 11 Sri Lankan priests, who assisted in the elaborate consecration ceremony of the present temple, were *ōṛā Pāskaran*'s own relatives. After completion of the complex āgama based installation rites, the priests stayed on for one month to perform special *pūjās* each evening, including antiphonic *Lalitāsahasranāma* chanting, to enforce the sacred atmosphere of the new site. As mentioned above, the recitation of the *Lalitāsahasranāma* belongs to the most popular *ōrāvidyā* practices and is performed also by many non-initiates in Indian Tamilnadu, especially on full moon days. In Hamm-Uentrop, as well, its recitation is a major act during the full moon ceremonies all the year through. There is one South Indian couple coming each month all the way from Bielefeld (around 100 km remote) to attend this *pūjā*, which includes a *homa* assisted by women. A wider public is made familiar with the spiritual ideas of the *ōrāvidyā* cum Smārta and *bhakti* mode of worship by *ōṛā Pāskaran*'s Tamil "sermons", wherein the priest particularly stresses selfless worship, surrender and *bhakti*, which has a long tradition in Tamil culture. These speeches themselves, held in



all important *pñās*, are a new "ritual" element in Hindu temple worship. We occasionally find them recently also in Sri Lanka, but in a diaspora situation they become more vital. They ensure the transmission of tradition, be it a new or less known one (like *ṣrāvidyā*) or a well known one (like *bhakti*), which was lived in the native culture since many centuries and practiced without much reflection. As a general pattern it can be observed that in a foreign culture we find a more conscious appropriation of religion and a new focus on the cognitive element.(27) From a Tamil Christian lady informant in Münster, I know that the Hindu priest's spiritual speeches and his care to create a sacred atmosphere attract even Tamil Christians.

Thirdly, *ṣrā Pāskaran's iññādevatā* Kāmākūā may hardly be known to most temple visitors, but this is rather insignificant. It is enough that she is Ampal, the gracious Mother of the World known to care particularly for worldly problems, too. Such problems are many for those in exile, starting with the residence permit (28) and lousy jobs, and the sorrow of being forced to live far away from home. Every year during Tēr-procession, *Kāmākṣī* Ampal proves her power to help: each vow is a sign of her glory. In 2003, more than 15.000 people - the so far highest number - attended this procession.

Finally, the *ṣaīkara* orthodoxy and the anti-caste *Vāra+aiva* are supposedly a powerful mixture to attract worshippers from very different strata and backgrounds. This issue is, however, a touchy one and open to speculation. Certainly caste differences continue to matter much in the diaspora. Since they are a highly sensitive issue and not discussed with outsiders; it is extremely difficult for a foreign scholar (especially one lacking Tamil) to determine any details or get reliable information. If there is information, it always represents discourses of special groups and their personal interests.

One may speculate that the Kāmākūā temple is apt to weaken the traditional *Veēāār* dominance, but it may be equally true that it meets the *Veēāār's* self-image of superiority; their secret dislike of brahmins and their claim to rank highest in the caste hierarchy. Caste competition plays a role in temple projects not to be ignored. It was presumably decisive in the establishment of three Tamil Hindu temples in the single city of Hamm.(29) The Murugan temple, established as late as 2001, did not manage to attract a big crowd to its first Tēr-procession in 2002 (nor in 2003) and not a single *kāvañi* dancer, despite public advertising on the radio. The reason was, according to a *Veēāār*

informant living in Hamm, the low caste private owner of the temple. The same *Veēāār* woman stated that Hamm-Uentrop is a different matter altogether and of a higher order. She was reluctant,

however, to explain anything more. I suppose that the scholarly *Vāra+aiva* family background of *ṣrā*

*Pāskaran*, his highly integrative faculties and his adoption of the prestigious *ṣaīkara* tradition coupled with present Sri Lankan trends concerning goddess worship make him acceptable in her eyes.

Some malicious tongues - particularly brahmin priests doing worship in other German temples - did call the former Kāmākūā temple a low caste temple. Surely it is an interesting example of sanskritization and parochialization at the same time. The upward movement has reached a high degree with the traditional architecture and consecration rites of the present temple, its exceeding ritual purity and enforced *āgama* leaning. *ṣaiva* *Siddhānta* orthodoxy in Sri Lanka acknowledges the German situation reluctantly, fearing that *Vāra+aiva* and *Smārta* are becoming the leading diaspora model.(30)

The diaspora situation surely presents new opportunities for traditions to change and modernize. Not least, it is a field for a new negotiation of social and ritual hierarchies. Notwithstanding, phenomena of religious change should not be overstressed, since Hindu traditions have an innate flexibility and a strong tendency to inclusiveness. Their accommodating quality and their fluid boundaries allow for religious change and merging of traditions more easily than other religions. Also in the motherlands we find a constant flux. The widespread inclusion of *ṣrāvidyā* in the temple cult of modern Sri Lanka



is a striking example. To a much lesser extent similar tendencies can be observed in southern India where *ṛāvidyā* has a different and much older history. In the past, the Kanchi *ṣaīkarācāryas* have adopted the ritualistic *ṛāvidyā* into their solely gnostic tradition and helped to disseminate esoteric ideas and Great Goddess theology among the general public. In modern times, the Kanchi *ṣaīkarācāryas* have supported reform movements: despite upholding orthodoxy in questions of ritual purity, caste distinctions and *varṣā-ramadharmā* in general, they opted for the untouchables' claim to enter the temples, which led to heavy frictions with the *ādi-aiṣva* temple priests who saw their hereditary rights in *āgama* temples and *āgamic* standards endangered.<sup>(31)</sup> *ṛā Pāskaran* profits in his own way from the inclusive politics of the Kanchi *ṣaīkarācāryas*. He seems to hint at the debated issue when he states that he considers the *ṣaīkarācārya* his *guru* because the abbot does not pretend superiority, in contrast to many priests. In the new situation of the diaspora, religious flux tends to intensify and accelerate: the present Kāmākū temple already differs from the former one. Considering the new emphasis on *āgama* rules on the one hand and the acceptance of hook swinging on the other, the compression of traditions has intensified and at the same time it gravitates towards a conscious *ṣaiva* Siddhānta orthodoxy, meeting strict traditional temple standards, yet modernized by the *ṣaīkarācārya* model.

All of this is typical for a diaspora situation and its patterns of cultural re-construction. The new majority culture makes adaptations necessary, but also provides new chances to modernize, reinterpret and "reinvent" traditions. We find a confluence of traditions because the number of temples is limited, as well as more rigid codes of orthodoxy to reinforce one's own cultural identity.

We find homogenizing processes - a stress on *bhakti*, *sanātānadharmā*, and a universal Hinduism - alongside a continuance of regional, linguistic, caste and sect traditions.<sup>(32)</sup> Adaptations and changes are bound to take place if religions want to stay alive in the new situation. Concerning the temples, the adaptation starts with the location. Most diaspora temples are located in an area which is hardly

dignified for a sacred site, according to traditional standards. Like the Kāmākū temple, many started in a basement dwelling, and steadily growing, moved to an industrial quarter. The Murugan temple of Berne tops it by being next to a "Kehrrichtverbrennungsanlage" (waste disposal factory) and a cemetery. The rationale is pragmatic. Besides obtaining a construction permit, one has to find land which is not too costly. In the industrial quarters, one does not disturb German neighbours and is able to carry out processions without traffic problems. Better to have a temple not abiding to all codes of purity than to have none at all.

Concerning religious change I have stressed the compression of various Hindu traditions taking place in Hamm-Uentrop. To a lesser degree, the phenomenon may also be observed in other diaspora temples, such as the one of Murugan in Adliswil. We also meet, however, with a well-kept separation of diverse "expert systems", such as in Denmark. There, we find two temples, each fulfilling different needs and partly attracting different crowds. The Cīttivīṇāyakar temple, on the one hand, upholds *āgama* orthodoxy and brahmanical rigidity, and meets traditional ritual standards better than many of the temples in the motherland. The Apirāmi temple, on the other hand, attracts by way of its lady priest, who acts in fits of trance as oracle and healer. Religious changes may be acknowledged by new phenomena such as sermons, communal practices, and ladies being active in temple rituals.

Women are in the forefront of the Mṛlmaruvattīr ātiparākti of Lyss (Switzerland), as well as in the only Swedish temple in Stockholm: in the latter, family values are stressed and a major liturgical section consists of the recital of *ṣaiva* devotional hymns conducted by women.



If scientific research has to generate typologies and general patterns, it must not be forgotten that reality is more complex. Each diaspora temple has its own dynamics and profile. Their plurality forms in fact also a general pattern. My contribution was dedicated to just one of these temples, but to one with quite a unique traditional background and quite a unique internal plurality. Furthermore, the Hindu Shankarar Kamadchi Ampal Temple, e.V. (Europe) stands out for its deliberate singularity, the index "Europe" signaling its ambition to be unique, like a protected trade mark. As a matter of fact, it has successfully achieved such singularity.

### Notes

(1) I thank the chief priest of Hamm-Uentrop, *ṣṛā Pāskaran*, as well as the priest *ṣṛā Prabhudevan*, for their ever friendly way of answering questions. For my comparison with South India, I am indebted

to many informants and *ṣṛāvidyā upāskas*, of whom I want to mention at least *ṣṛā Ganapathi Subrahmanian*. Concerning my comparison with Sri Lanka I thank Peter Schalk, Uppsala University, for important information. I would like to extend my thanks to Intu Pararajasingam, English lecturer at Jaffna University, who assisted me in visiting a great number of goddess temples in Jaffna and in particular interviewing the priests. Except for names of persons and places, I use mainly Sanskrit forms, because the tradition dealt with belongs to Sanskrit lore. Tamil is used where a tradition typical for Sri Lanka or where Tamil folk culture is referred to.-(back)

(2) In addition to this objective argument comes a subjective reason for the choice, since the tradition the temple relates to has been a major focus of my research for more than ten years.-(back)

(3) *Saubhāgyacintāmaṣiḥ*; *ṣṛādr̥vāsasa*<sup>ū</sup>hitā, Kāñcāpuram, without year.-(back)

(4) A. Wilke, *ṣaīkara* and the Taming of Wild Goddesses, in: A. Michaels a.o. (eds), *Wild Goddesses of India and Nepal*, Bern 1996, 123-178.-(back)

(5) *Maha Kumbhabishegam Malar*, ed., Hindu Shankarar Sri Kamadchi Ampal Tempel e.V. (Europe), 2002, 1-2.-(back)

(6) According to the priest *ṣṛā Prabhudevan*, it became known only recently in Tamil Sri Lanka among an educated elite. This information was confirmed and at the same time modified by my interviews with Sri Lankan priests, temple managers, and lay informants and by own observations in Jaffna and Colombo goddess temples in May 2003, where I noticed with astonishment how prevalent *ṣṛāvidyā* has become in contemporary Sri Lanka (see above).-(back)

(7) My major informant, who prefers to stay anonymous, is a scholarly man in his eighties, remembering the time when *ṣṛāvidyā* slowly started to become popular. He suspects that it became fashionable in the 1940s/50s due to the books of Sir Woodroffe (also known as "Avalon") and due to the fact that members of Jaffna University were taking exams in Bengal. He says it started off as private worship at home - maybe in the *vāmacāra* mode - and eventually changed into a "purified version", growing in popularity by the books of the Ramakrishna Mission and the connections with the Kanchi *ṣaīkara Mañha*. The person who initiated the private *ṛācakrapṭjā* in Lanka was, according to this informant, *Sadāḥiva Aiyar Mahālīgaḥiva* from Chennai. This highly interesting information is certainly worthy of further research. Other informants, like the priest *Akhileshwara Kurukkal* glossed below, present narratives of a more ancient history.-(back)

(8) This site was described by N. Shanmugalingam (From Ghora to Bhoga: Role Change and Rise of the Goddess Turkkai in Yalppanam, in: *Lanka* 5, 1990, 186-200) as a reform temple mainly for women devotees seeking a suitable husband. The author, who was born in Tellippalai, does not mention the *ṛācakra* worship, but draws attention to the fact that *Durgā Devā* (Turkkai) enjoys a sudden and "dramatic rise" in modern Northern Sri Lanka (ibid. 186), and that the temple was in a neglected state in 1973, whereas in 1983 it had changed to a "magnificent size" and its goddess to



one of the most popular deities attracting thousands of devotees (ibid. 187, fn. 1; 190, 192; see also Shanmugalingam's recently published book on the site).—(back)

(9) According to the temple legend, Katirkāmar, a pious Veēḍallar, brought the *yantra* in 1760 from the Svapne÷varā temple in Varanasi where he had gone for pilgrimage and stayed for ten years. During his stay he had become a goddess devotee. Returning to Tellippalai, he was ordered by the Goddess in a dream to install the *yantra* at this very spot. Many miracles happened, and eventually a Kurukka.l was engaged to perform regular *pjās*. 160 years ago, a “famous brahmin priest” from Kanchi, Tamilnadu, was appointed as chief temple priest - again on the basis of a dream in which Svapne÷varā appeared to a pious and wealthy local (V. T. Kumarasamy, *The Kingdom of Durgadevi - Tellippalai*, Thellippalai: Durgadevi Devasthanam 2002: 21-27). It is noteworthy that Varanasi has been indeed a prominent place of *ṣrāvidyā* at least since the 17th century, but that the Svapne÷varā shrine, still existing at Shivala Ghat, hardly ever was a place “of paramount power and importance” (ibid. 23).—(back)

(10) Shanmugalingam, op. cit. 1990: 190, 198. The Turkkai temple was the first one having a lady as the manager.—(back)

(11) A. Padoux, *Le Coeur de la Yoginā: Yogināhḍaya avec le commentaire Dāpikā d'Amṣṭānanda*, Paris 1994: 7.—(back)

(12) He uses *ṣrāvidyā* manuals transliterated into Tamil. For the monthly ceremony, he follows a Tamil *Devāmāhātmya* edition which includes the *āvāṣapājā* of the ÷*rācakra*, while extended ceremonies are based on handwritten manuscripts. The ritual sequence largely coincides with printed Sanskrit manuals like the *ṣrāvidyāvarivasyā*, Varanasi 1970. —(back)

(13) The Chāya-Pāñha Yoginās for instance were invited about three years ago by the Dharmakātka Trustee to perform a *yāga* in a temple at Paradise Place, Colombo, which was a place of worship for the community of Dhobis living there. According to a Colombo informant coming from this area, the Yoginās converted this shrine into a “pure” Kālā temple by installing the ÷*rācakra* and performing a ceremony with purely vegetarian food offered by brahmin priests. However, after this ceremony which lasted 48 days, a male oracle made again “impure” offerings such as cigarettes, goats and cocks, drinking the blood from the animal's veins. The same repeats, according to this informant, each year during the temple festival. Whereas he enjoys visiting the “reformed” temple and the *ṣrāvidyā* rites, the Dhobis stopped going there and only partake in the non-brahmanic rituals. Such “cult reforms” eliminating more or less successfully “objectional” non-brahmin practises by replacing them with ÷*rācakra* worship, have been repeatedly exercised by the *ṣaīkarācāryas* in the past and the present (Wilke 1996, op.cit.). For other social groups see the text above.—(back)

(14) A scholarly Sri Lankan informant of Peter Schalk thinks that the chief reason was the cultural difference: he holds that the pure Smārta mode of worship was too unfamiliar to the boys who were used to mix Vedic and āgamic *kriyā-s*. This argument does not sound utterly convincing, since the mixture of Vedic and āgamic rites is very common in South India, too, and certainly also followed in Kanchi. It must be noted, however, that a blend of this kind, combined with Neohindu ideas, has become a heavily forced instrument of cultural politics in modern Sri Lanka, as the “Second World Hindu Conference”, held in Colombo on 2nd-6th May 2003, amply testifies. The conference was organised by the Ministry of Hindu Religious Affairs which also published the Tamil and English Souvenir Volumes sold during the conference. Both volumes start with an address of the Kanchi *ṣaīkarācārya* and the Tamil volume even ends with colour pictures of the “Bāla” *ṣaīkarācārya*'s



visiting Sri Lanka. The contents, however, differ in an interesting way: the Tamil volume contains besides welcome messages by *ṣaivācāryas* (a number of whom were honoured during the conference) mainly articles on Sri Lankan temples, religious history and *ṣaiva Siddhānta*, but also on *ṣrāvidyā* (understood obviously in Śrī Pāskaraṇ's sense as *ṣākta-āgama*), whereas the English volume (*Glimpses of Hindu Heritage*, Colombo 2003) has messages of the Ramakrishna Mission, of the Brahma Kumaris, of the Sri Lankan president as well as various ministers, and is very much Smārta oriented with articles of a more general kind. Of course, both volumes contain to a different degree documents of modernist authorities and movements, such as Vishwa Hindu Parishat Swamis and lay persons or Brahma Kumaris (messages, pictures, articles), who also dominated heavily the conference itself. Much of the papers and speeches held in English were devoted to a universal Hinduism and Hindu self-affirmation: besides some aggressive Hindutva statements, the general tenor was the glory and peacefulness of the ancient Hindu culture and the slogan "oneness in plurality" (including Buddhism, and more or less also Muslims and Christians) as a major means to bring about peace. Compared with such voices *ṣrā Pāskaraṇ's* temple project is very traditionalist.-(back)

(15) Also *ṣrā Prabhudevan Kurukkal*, a close relative of *ṣrā Pāskaraṇ*, who comes from Sri Lanka to Hamm-Uentrop for the major festivals to assist and overview the rituals, stems from a learned family of Pandits. This information was given by a sponsor of the temple who comes from the same village.

The information on Sri Lankan *Vāra-āivism* and the *Vāra-āiva* background of Śrī Pāskaraṇ I owe to Peter Schalk. As is well known, the *Vāra-āivas* have been traditionally anti-iconic, anti-caste and anti-Vedic, and became a caste themselves. Sri Lankan *Vāra-āiva* temple priests form their own caste. Originally, their main profession was to sell flowers in front of Civa temples (if nobody else is at hand, also *ṣrā Pāskaraṇ* winds flower garlands himself until late at night), but they managed to take over ritual tasks in the temple (acting as *paṣṇāram*) and eventually became a special faction of temple priests.-(back)

(16) To Peter Schalk I owe the information that *Iyampillai Kurukkal* (*Aiyampi<sup>ēē</sup>ai kurukka<sup>ē</sup>*) was a famous exponent of *Vāra-āivism* and one of the main informants of K. Navaratnam's book on *Vāra Caivar* of *Yā<sup>x</sup>ppā<sup>n</sup>am*.-(back)

(17) According to the standards of the *dharma-āstras*, the *Ve<sup>ēēāē</sup>ar* are a *ṣṭdra* caste, but in Sri Lanka they enjoy a high prestige and rank only a little below (according to their self-appreciation even higher than) the Brahmins in the caste hierarchy. While Brahmins form a small minority in Sri

Lanka (only about 1%), the *Ve<sup>ēēāē</sup>ar* form the majority of the Tamil population and exert the cultural, socio-economic and religious hegemony. See B. Pfaffenberger, *Caste in Tamil Culture. The Religious Foundations of Sudra Domination in Tamil Sri Lanka*, New Delhi 1990. -(back)

(18) For details see A. Wilke, "Traditionenverdichtung" in der Diaspora: Hamm als Bühne der Neuaushandlung von Hindu-Traditionen, in: M. Baumann/ B. Luchesi/ A. Wilke (eds.), *Tempel und Tamilen in neuer Heimat. Tamilische Hindus aus Sri Lanka in deutschsprachigen und skandinavischen Ländern*, Würzburg 2003. The volume contains several articles on the Kamadchi Ampal Temple, Hamm-Uentrop.-(back)

(19) Wilke 2003, op.cit.-(back)

(20) The difference between self-born and invoked deities has been dealt with by B. Pfaffenberger (The Kataragama Pilgrimage: Hindu-Buddhist Interaction and Its Significance in Sri Lanka's Polyethnic Social System, in: *Journal of Asian Studies* 38,2, 1979, 253-270) and others.-(back)



(21) Although the brahmin priest of the Durgā temple in Tellippallai denied in the interview that *kāvaṇi* takes place, the temple book records all vows found in Hamm-Uentrop, except for piercing practises, in exactly the same sequence which can be seen in Germany: “Slowly following the path of the chariot are various category of devotees consisting of many groups of vocalist, singing devotional songs, and adulatory verses, to the accompaniment of musical instruments. Immediately behind them are thousands of ardent devotees engaged in fulfilling their vows by performing self imposed suffering, like the men who roll on the ground with minimum clothes, and those who carry different kinds of ‘Kavadis’. The women also perform penance, some by way of carrying on their heads clay vessels with burning camphor. Another section of women devotees performs ‘Panchanka Namaskaram’-form of worshipping in which 5 parts of their bodies touch the ground. They also keep on following the route of the chariot till it completes its journey along the perimeter of the temple.”

(Kumarasamy, op. cit., 57). Also the administration of the Nākaptcai temple confirmed such vows to take place during the fifteen days temple festival in June-July, including *kāvaṇi* and self-mortifications with hooks, alongside with copious temple rites and *÷rācakrapṭjā*.—(back)

(22) In recent times even taken over by Sinhalese Buddhists, see R. Gombrich/G. Obeyesekere, *Buddhism Transformed: Religious Change in Sri Lanka*, Princeton 1988.—(back)

(23) Pfaffenberger 1979, op.cit. —(back)

(24) G. Sontheimer, The Erosion of Folk Religion in Modern India: Some Points for Deliberation, in: V. Dalmia/ H. von Stietencron (eds.), *Representing Hinduism. The Construction of Religious Traditions and National Identity*, London 1995, 389-398.—(back)

(25) For details see B. Luchesi, Hinduistische Sakralarchitektur und Tempelgestaltung, in: M. Baumann a.o. (eds.) 2003, op.cit., 223-274.—(back)

(26) See M. Baumann/ B. Luchesi/ A. Wilke 2003, op.cit., introduction and the articles of K. Jacobsen and M. Qvortrup Fibiger. For the growing number of Tamil-Hindu sacred sites and the urge 'to conquer' public space see also B. Luchesi in the present Kolam edition.—(back)

(27) See also K. Knott, Hindu temple rituals in Britain: the reinterpretation of tradition, in: R. Burghart (ed.), *Hinduism in Great Britain*, London, 1987, 160f.; M. Baumann, Sustaining 'Little Indias': Hindu diaspora in Europe, in: G. Ter Haar (ed.), *Strangers and Sojourners. Religious Communities in the Diaspora*, Leuven 1998, 118ff.; S. Vertovec, Three Meanings of 'Diaspora', Exemplified among South Asian Religions, in: *Diaspora. A Journal of Transnational Studies* 6,3, 1997, 277-299.—(back)

(28) Since the mid-1990s the previously very difficult situation has changed: there is a very high rate of Sri Lankan immigrants (a fourth out of 45.000) having attained the German citizenship (M. Baumann, Von Sri Lanka in die Bundesrepublik: Flucht, Aufnahme und kulturelle Rekonstruktion, in: M. Baumann a.o. (eds.) 2003, op.cit., 41-73). On the other hand, there is presently (2004) a stagnation in temple building and sponsoring compared with the previous years (1989-2003) in which much effort was taken to establish own places of worship.—(back)

(29) Some direct hints and indirect clues may be found in M. Baumann, *Migration - Religion - Integration. Buddhistische Vietnamesen und hinduistische Tamilen in Deutschland*, Marburg 2000: 166; K. Meisig, Tamilischer Hinduismus in Deutschland. Ein Rundgang durch den Vighneśvara-Tempel in Hamm (Westfalen), in: *Mitteilungen für Anthropologie und Religionsgeschichte* 14, 1999, 229-249 (reprinted as Sonderdruck Münster 2001); A. Wilke 2003, op.cit. The debate is far from conclusive, but it shows that the influence of caste issues in temple projects needs much more future research.—(back)

(30) I owe this information to Peter Schalk, who in turn was informed by Sri Lankan friends and journals reporting about the consecration ceremony held at the Kāmākūā temple.—(back)

(31) The integrative religious politics of the contemporary Kanchi *ṣaīkarācāryas* has been emphasized by W. Cenkner (The Sankaracarya of Kanci and the Kamaksi Temple as Ritual Center, in: R.B. Williams (ed.), *A Sacred Thread: Modern Transmission of Hindu Traditions in India and*



*Abroad*, Chambersburg 1992, 52-67), whereas C.J. Fuller (*Servants of the Goddess: The Priests of a South Indian Temple*, Cambridge 1984) stresses the tension with the ādi÷aiva temple priests.-(back)  
(32) These latter dynamics correlate with S. Vertovec, *The Hindu Diaspora. Comparative patterns*, London 2000, 31, who analyses the patterns of transformation in Great Britain, Trinidad, United States and Canada. The following observations are mainly based on several articles of the book M. Baumann a.o. (eds.) 2003, op.cit., particularly on the papers of B. Luchesi, M. Baumann, D. Lüthi, P. Schalk, M. Qvortrup Fibiger.-(back)

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