

## **Song Choices of Swiss Sathya Sai Baba Devotees**

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### **ABSTRACT**

The charismatic and controversial Indian guru Sathya Sai Baba is the centre of attention and devotion for a great number of adherents from various national, religious, and ethnic backgrounds. Due to its global spread, the Sathya Sai Baba movement is an ideal case for examining displaced religious practices. Singing is a vital part of the religious practice of Sai devotees. In this article I will discuss the contents and usage of the songbook that Swiss devotees compiled. We can observe the extent to which Indian contents are carried over and how they are supplemented with Swiss songs, but also with songs perceived as being part of a universal spiritual treasury of songs (e.g. Native American, Hebrew or International Christian songs). I will suggest that the concept of de- and reterritorialization helps us to analyze the practices of this global religious community. Additionally, I will argue that the devotees' choice of songs and their singing practices are indeed a manifestation of their claim to universalism as well as their need to be rooted locally. I will further argue that a globalized religious movement is limited in dealing with the encounter of diverse cultural contents by the strategy of reterritorialization, but beyond that creates a new and supraterritorial cultural context.

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### **The songbook and singing practices of Sai devotees in Switzerland**

Singing is an important part of religious practice of Sathya Sai Baba's devotees. The singing of *bhajans* (Indian devotional songs) is practised twice a day in the main assembly hall in Sathya Sai Baba's ashram in Puttaparthi, and furthermore, various mantras and other songs are sung on various occasions during each day (e.g. before starting a meal, when doing individual puja, etc.). Also far away from the ashram, singing is a significant religious practice for many Sai devotees. Smriti Srinivas describes singing as "the centrepiece of devotional activities" among Sai devotees and notices the "mnemonic plenitude that operates within the register of devotional singing" (Srinivas S., 2008, p.304). Devotional song books and sheet music in different languages are provided for free in Sai centres and on official and non-official Sai-websites<sup>1</sup>, there are thousands of music-clips available on YouTube, and

Radio Sai, part of the official Sathya Sai Organisation, offers a 24-hour music stream online and various music programs for download.<sup>2</sup>

For my current research project<sup>3</sup> I occasionally participate in one of the meetings of local groups of Sathya Sai Baba devotees in Switzerland. Sai devotees in Switzerland sing songs at almost every meeting, be it in their small local group or on national events. There are groups with members of mainly Swiss origin, and there are also groups consisting mainly of people of South Asian origin. At the meetings of devotees of Indian and Sri Lankan origin, the singing of *bhajans* (see below) can go on for an hour or more and is usually accompanied by instrumentalists playing harmonium, Indian drums and cymbals. Most of the participants know the songs by heart, no books or leaflets are used. As opposed to this, at the meetings attended mainly by devotees of Swiss origin songbooks are regularly in use. They customarily also sing some *bhajans*, but also various other songs. The musical accompaniment of both types of songs is realized in different ways, sometimes with an Indian harmonium, sometimes with a guitar, sometimes with a mix of Indian and Western instruments. The members of the predominantly Swiss group sometimes use *bhajan*-songbooks, where the Sanskrit lyrics are transliterated and translated, and musical scores are provided. But the book used most often is the *Sathya Sai Liederbuch* [SSL], a two-section compilation of songs. This songbook is the result of a collaborative work of several Sai-devotees in Switzerland and has been in use for circa 15 years (the exact year of publication is not mentioned). The first section is called *Internationale Lieder* (international songs) and contains 174 songs of various origins and different languages, whereas the second section contains 130 *bhajans*. On the last few pages we find the texts of seven mantras in Sanskrit that are used often at meetings or *satsangs* of the groups, followed by alphabetical indexes to both sections and a vocabulary list with important Sanskrit words and their German translation.

In the first section *Internationale Lieder* five types of songs can be identified: (1) Sathya Sai Baba songs, (2) modern Christian songs, (3) traditional religious songs, (4) universalistic songs, and (5) other songs.

- (1) Songs of the first type are specifically about Sathya Sai Baba, praising him and expressing his singularity, extraordinary qualities, divinity or his status as an avatar. An example for this is the song "The Avatar has come" with the following lyrics in the refrain:

The Avatar has come to save us  
The Avatar has come to guide us  
The Avatar has come and His name is Sai  
Sai Ram Sai Ram Sai Ram Sai Ram. (SSL, 2002, p.107)

Sathya Sai Baba himself also composed a few English songs (e.g. "Love is my form", SSL, 2002 p.73), some of which are also included in the compilation and are very popular among the devotees.

- (2) Many songs in the compilation are representative for contemporary worship music,<sup>4</sup> typical for the interdenominational, ecumenically oriented, alternative or progressive Christianity that emerged since the

1960s. We can find at least 10 spiritual songs from Taizé in France, an ecumenical monastic centre and pilgrimage place for many young Christians from around the world. Furthermore there are international classics like “Kumbayah my lord” or “Let there be peace on earth” (SSL, 2002, p.60 and 69), German popular songs like “Danke für diesen guten Morgen” (SSL, 2002, p.19) and various other songs where a Christian origin is evident. The contents of these songs tend to be universalistic, thematizing peace, love and an unmediated intimate relationship with God rather than the figure of Jesus or Christian concepts like resurrection or redemption.

- (3) Besides modern Christian songs, we also find older Christian songs as well as a few songs from Judaism and Islam. There are Latin and Greek sacral songs like “Sanctus Dominus” and “Kyrie Eleison” (SSL, 2002, p.95 and 62), some popular Hebrew songs like “Shalu Shalom Yerushalayim” (SSL, 2002, p.98) and two short Arabic songs to praise God. As opposed to the first two types, these songs refer to a more traditional or “classic” religiosity.
- (4) In contrast to the songs associated with a specific religious tradition, there are several universalistic songs. They address the unity of religions: Different religions are conceptualized as being different manifestations of the same universal principle. Different religious concepts (e.g. names of Gods) are equated, as for example in the following lyrics:

Kali, Radhe, Sita, Parvati, Mary full of grace,  
Hannah, Rachel, Kwan Yin, Fatima, let us see your face,  
Bless us, oh Mother, Sister and Lover, take us to Your heart,  
Teach us Your mercy, strength and compassion, fold us in Your love.  
(SSL, 2002, p.59)

Apart from emphasizing the actual unity of seemingly distinct religious conceptions, these songs also tend to favour monotheistic ideas, for example in the song „Es gibt nur einen Gott“:

Es gibt nur einen Gott, Er ist für alle da.  
Buddha, Jesus, Zoroastra,  
Rama, Krishna, Mahavira, Allah,  
Sathya Sai Baba.  
Es gibt nur einen Gott, und Er hat alle Formen.  
Es gibt nur einen Gott, Er hört auf jeden Namen,  
Ruft Ihn, wie's euch gefällt, so ruf Ihn doch, du Welt.<sup>5</sup> (SSL 2002, 31)

- (5) Besides the mentioned types (1) to (4), we find some particular cases. One song called “Fly like an Eagle” (SSL, 2002, p.33) is attributed to the Hopi Native Americans. There are no references to one of the so called world religions. The text shows no obvious reference to the concept of a God and to the teachings of Sai Baba: “Fly like an eagle, fly so high, / circle in the Universe, on wings of light.” (SSL, 2002, p.33) I assume that this song was chosen for this compilation because of the general tag “spirituality” that is attached to Native American culture and beliefs, especially in New Age movements.

Another singularity is the inclusion of specifically Swiss songs. The two very last songs of the first section are Christian choir songs in Romansh, a language that is only spoken in eastern Switzerland by a small community. That these songs are included is a clear indication that the compilation originated in the Swiss cultural context. No other group of Sai devotees anywhere else in the world would have a reason to learn Romansh songs.

What I find especially interesting about this part of the songbook is something I want to call *Saiification*. There are several songs, where for example the word “God” in the original lyrics is replaced by “Sai” or “Baba”. Examples are “Venez, oh Divin Sai” and “Vater unser”. (SSL, 2002, p.120 and 119)

In the case of “Amazing Grace”, the entire last stanza is replaced by a new text about Sai Baba:

Amazing grace our Sai bestows.  
His love no boundary knows.  
Not one is lost, but all are saved  
From sin, desire and need. (SSL, 2002, p.9)

I found this strategy of altering the texts of songs of various origins in at least 14 songs.

The second section of the songbook consists of 130 *bhajans*. A *bhajan* is a Hindu (mainly *Vaisnava*) or Sikh devotional song. Although rhythm and some melodies are generally based on north Indian classical musical tradition, many melodies and lyrics are taken from the devotional popular tradition (*bhakti*). The language of the songs may therefore be simple and with repetition of phrases, musical styles can range from simple chants to highly developed performances. Episodes from the lives of gods and hagiographic stories of saints and devotees are favoured subjects of *bhajans*, since singing *bhajans* for and about one's favourite God is especially important in *bhakti* movements. *Bhajans* are generally performed by a small orchestra of Indian instruments like harmonium, cymbals and drums. Usually, a lead singer and a chorus alternate in singing (see Ferrari, 2009, pp.87-88 and Beck, 2010, pp.585-598). Sathya Sai Baba devotees commonly sing a *bhajan* two times, slow the first time and faster the second time. It ends with everybody together singing the first line again very slowly. The topics of the 130 *bhajans* in the songbook are as follows (18 songs are attributed to two topics): 8 are dedicated to goddess Devi, 13 to god Ganesha, 21 to god Krishna, 3 to god Narayana, 9 to god Rama, 24 to god Shiva and 2 to god Subrahmanyam (also known as Murugan, who is especially worshipped in South India). In 54 songs the *guru* is venerated, in general or by his name Sathya Sai Baba. And 15 songs are *Sarva Dharma* songs celebrating the unity of all religions, equivalent to the universalistic songs in the first section.

The compilation is multilingual, 11 different languages are in use, and we even find several multilingual songs. English is the most frequently used language in the first part of the compilation. English is the common language to use in Sai Baba's Ashram and also the native tongue of many Western

followers, who were active in composing new songs. Taken as a whole, Sanskrit is predominant in the songbook, as all the *bhajans* of the second section are in Sanskrit.

The choice of songs and musical performance on the devotees' meetings depends on the structure of the attending group and the occasion for the reunion. As mentioned above, the musical performance within groups of predominantly South Asian origin is confined to the performance of *bhajans* with Indian instrumentation. At meetings with predominantly Swiss participants, both international songs and *bhajans* are sung. The inclusion of at least a few *bhajans* seems to be relevant for Swiss devotees and the *bhajan*-style of performance with the alternation of lead singer and chorus and a change in tempo is sometimes also employed on suitable Western songs. Instruments like harmonium and cymbals are frequently used to accompany international songs, a piano, a guitar, or a violin can be used to back *bhajans*. At mixed meetings the song of choice is not only determined by the ratio of participating Swiss and South Indian devotees, but also by the occasion for the reunion. Only on rare occasions no or almost no *bhajans* are included in the program, such as Christmas meetings, when almost exclusively Western Christmas carols are sung. The occasion for the meeting can also determine the location used for it, which in turn can affect song and music choices.

### **Globalization of cultural contents: Supraterritoriality, de- and reterritorialization**

The switching and blending of musical forms are not at all exceptional in the history of religious exchange processes between India and the West (see examples provided by Srinivas S., 2008 p.313-316). But contrary to historical examples the Sathya Sai Baba movement is ideal to study displaced religious everyday practices, to examine what it means for the average participants of a religious movement to globalize or to be globalized. I assume that the Swiss *Sathya Sai Liederbuch* is a result of what we call "globalization". Globalization of course is a much debated term: "[...] the only consensus about globalization is that it is contested." (Scholte, 2005, p.46) What does it actually mean to call this cultural artefact an "outcome of globalization"? And how can we understand why phenomena like Saiification emerge?

Much of the scholarly work about the movement was published during its growth and expansion in the 1980s and 1990s. The authors emphasized the role of Sathya Sai Baba's performance of miracles and materializations (Swallow 1982, Babb 1983 and 1986), Sathya Sai Baba's version of the charismatic guru-role and (psychological) characterizations of his Western devotees (Taylor 1987, Exon 1997, Poggendorf-Kakar 1999), or later also the movement's relation to Hindu nationalism and consumerism (Lutgendorf 1994, McKean 1996, Urban 2003). They acknowledged the fact that the movement is a transnational one (and probably only got to know about the movement *because* it developed to be a transnational one), but they were not especially concerned with the dynamics of transnationalism and globalization (e.g. the preconditions that made the movement accessible for non-Indian followers or the impact that globalization had on the teachings of Sathya Sai Baba). But

many of the more recently published papers and books actually look at the Sathya Sai Baba movement as something that has to be correlated with globalization processes (for example Weiss 2005). Several authors produced descriptions and analyses of Sai-groups outside of India (for example Klass 2001 (Trinidad), Kent 2000 and 2004 (Malaysia), Palmer 2005 (USA), and Pereira 2008 (Singapore)), and two very detailed studies based on multi-sited ethnography were published (Srinivas S., 2008 and Srinivas T., 2010). Especially anthropologist Tulasi Srinivas in her book *Winged Faith. Rethinking globalization and religious pluralism through the Sathya Sai Movement* (2010) discusses the movement in relation to theoretical concepts of globalization. She refers to the concepts of *detrterritorialization* and *reterritorialization* to describe the process of globalization of cultural content (Srinivas T., 2010, pp.31-32).

The two terms can be traced back to first having appeared in the year 1972 in the first book of the two-volume *Capitalism and Schizophrenia* by the French philosophers Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari (Deleuze and Guattari, 1992). The terms were adopted by various scholars, for example in geography, political science and social anthropology, and were of course also transformed over time. Since the early 1990s, the term *detrterritorialization* came to be used in the emerging Global Studies to theorize the effects of economic, social and cultural globalization (see Middell 2012). Without elaborating on the refined distinctions of different authors using the term, how can we generally understand detrterritorialization as being the key concept to interpret globalization processes? Jan Aart Scholte, author of the book *Globalization: a critical introduction* (2005) and co-editor of the *Encyclopedia of Globalization* (Robertson/Scholte 2007), conceptualizes globalization mainly as a process (or set of processes) which embodies a transformation in the spatial organization of social relations and transactions and a tendency towards detrterritorialization (see Scholte, 2005, p.17 and Held/Grew, 1999, p.16; also Massey, 1994; Short, 2001; Rosenau, 2003). Deterritorialization means that the social space decreases its relation to territorial places, territorial distances and territorial borders. According to Scholte, contemporary globalization has to be understood as the rise of *supraterterritoriality*.

In regard to cultural globalization, detrterritorialization describes a process that decontextualizes cultural content from particular locations in space and time. Cultural practices or objects “move out from home”, they lose (or at least lessen) their relation to their place of origin. An obvious example for detrterritorialization of cultural content would be that Hindi movies, which originally were only produced for and watched by an Indian audience, also became very popular among non-Indian people from the UK, Morocco, and Nigeria.<sup>6</sup>

Deterritorialization has a more infrequently used counterpart: *Reterritorialization*. Anthropologists especially argue that detrterritorialized cultural contents are always reterritorialized in new contexts and in different forms (Inda and Rosaldo, 2002 p.14). Once disconnected from the original cultural context, cultural contents are not free-floating. Cultural meaning is always context-bound. Deterritorialization only happens, if there actually is

someone performing, maybe someone physically moving the cultural objects, and someone communicating about it. And this “someone” is always embedded in a cultural context. Therefore deterritorialization of culture is invariably the occasion for the reinsertion of culture in new time-space contexts (Inda and Rosaldo, 2002, p.14; Srinivas T., 2010, p.32). This reinsertion in particular cultural milieus is what we can call reterritorialization. Reterritorialization of the same cultural content in different places may hence lead to the construction of meaning in different ways: While the Bollywood-watchers from the UK might see these movies as pure entertainment and expression of the orientalist stereotypes they have of India, watchers from Morocco or Nigeria can probably perceive them as help on how to deal with contested family values.

Anthropologists Jonathan Inda and Renato Rosaldo point out that we are not dealing with two separate processes. Deterritorialization and reterritorialization occur simultaneously, Inda and Rosaldo even created the term *de/territorialization* to express this concurrence (Inda and Rosaldo, 2002, p.15). The idea of de- and reterritorialization implies that there is a dialectical tension between globalizing disembedding forces and localizing reembedding forces, that the tying-down of cultural contents is inevitable. But when we refer to Scholte’s idea of a rise of supraterritoriality, of decreasing spatial relations, how does this match with the idea of reterritorialization, with the emergence of new spatial relations?

### **Widening the concept of reterritorialization**

We can use an item like the *Swiss Sathya Sai Liederbuch* to discuss this question more closely. The songbook is a very good example for a claim to universalism. As shown above in section (4), universalism is explicitly promoted in various songs. Different religious traditions are presented as equivalent in significance and as culturally shaped manifestations of an all-encompassing global spirituality that has universal validity. This claim to universalism is reinforced by some features of the compilation: In both parts of the book, authorship or origin of the songs are not mentioned, with only very few exceptions like the Hopi song, where we find limited information about the origins of the songs. As users or readers we are not informed how old the songs are, from which religious tradition they originate, or who composed them.<sup>7</sup> Not even the songs composed by Sathya Sai Baba are marked as such. Furthermore the songs are strung together in alphabetical order. Hence, songs of different origins, new and old ones, the ones specifically about Sathya Sai Baba or even composed by Sai Baba, and more general ones about love or peace are mixed and appear to be of equal importance and value. The figure of Sathya Sai Baba and the songs about him are embedded in a multilingual environment of songs referring to traditional religions as well as modern forms of religion, “classic” monotheistic religions, Hindu bhakti-religiosity as well as “ethnic” and “natural” spirituality. What we can observe is a compilation of songs which Swiss Sai devotees perceived as being part of a universal spiritual treasury of songs. Its cultural contents (i.e. the songs) are used decontextualized from their particular cultural environment of origin. They are compiled in a way that makes them available and meaningful for persons who have no knowledge about the origins of the songs, in fact

rendering the songs' origins irrelevant for the context in which they are sung. The universalizing aspects of this compilation are essential to achieve deterritorialization. It is also possible to notice a reinforcing effect: If we find songs with explicit universalistic content, this reinforces the deterritorialization of all the other songs in the book, even of the Indian *bhajans*. Universalization, i.e. declaring something as not being part of only one culture but being valid for all cultural milieus, is one strategy to allow deterritorialization.

There are also elements generating reterritorialization. Firstly, there is an edition notice on the second page which says: "Auswahl, Zusammenstellung und Übersetzungen durch Devotees aus den schweizerischen Sai-Gruppen und –Zentren."<sup>8</sup> Secondly, we find the two Romansh songs already mentioned. These are the only ways of locating the songbook in its specific Swiss cultural milieu. We can also observe a broader form of reterritorialization through the choice of language. Many of the "international songs" and also the *bhajans* have a German translation. This is a clear sign showing who the book is intended for, and also what background the editors have: The songbook is made by and for German-speaking Sai-devotees. This embeds the book in the territorial context of German-speaking Europe.

But even with these strategies of de- and reterritorialization by universalization and inclusion of local cultural contents, the songbook is neither an entirely universal nor a specifically Swiss cultural asset. Deterritorializing cultural contents, for example a spiritual song, is not an easy task. Even though the songbook contains various spiritual songs from different origins, and even if they are implicitly and explicitly tagged as "universal", they still are connected to their "cultural home". A French Christian song still is a French Christian song used by Christians in France, meaningful in that specific context, whether Sai devotees start to use it or not. The mere declaration of universalism cannot achieve the complete deterritorialization of cultural contents. The possibilities as well as the demands to achieve reterritorialization are also limited in an already globalized world: Sai-devotees know that Sathya Sai Baba has followers from all over the world. The globality of the movement is an outstanding and positive feature for a lot of them; therefore too much localization would probably not make sense. Many of the Western devotees I spoke to are wanderers between different cultural environments, some use to spend several weeks a year in Puttaparthi and call the ashram their spiritual home (see also Srinivas T., 2009, p.312). The diversity of the devotees in Switzerland, consisting of native Swiss persons speaking different languages, permanent immigrants from other European countries, and permanent and temporary immigrants from South Asia, challenges attempts for reterritorialization.

Being neither completely deterritorialized nor completely localized, the song book has nevertheless a strong characteristic: It is very "Sai". Saiification is a strategy to ensure deterritorialization. Changing the text of a song - hence altering the cultural content a little - can ensure it becomes disconnected from its roots. As stated above, deterritorialization is supposed to always create the condition for reterritorialization. Saiification does not only make sure a song is



really deterritorialized, it indeed provides another cultural context for the song. But this new context does not necessarily have to be a territorial one. I suggest that the concept of reterritorialization can be misleading. It implies that the process of globalization always leads to the integration of the detached cultural contents into an already existing “receiving” cultural milieu. I argue that instead of reterritorialization the creation of a new cultural context is also feasible. Declaring something to be “Sai” means to purposefully create a new cultural context. This creation of a new context, a specific “Sai culture” is also noted by Tulasi Srinivas in the conclusion of her book:

In the process of “going global”, the Sathya Sai movement created new or reinvented ways of being and believing – new forms of transnational community, new avenues of sociability, new forms of order, renewed constructions of identity, new forms of devotion, new meanings for ritual, new methods of valorization, [...]. (Srinivas T., 2010, pp.325-326)

This newly created cultural milieu is at the outset a supraterritorial one. Deterritorialization hence acts as a generator for the creation of a new supraterritorial cultural space, rather than for reterritorialization.

If Saiification is the strategy allowing the creation of a new cultural milieu, it is not surprising, that it is not at all a unique feature of the Swiss Sai songbook. We also find Saiification for example in the Christmas programs at Puttaparthi, where usually an international choir sings various songs of Christian origin. Some of them have altered texts, as for example the contemporary Christian worship song “More Precious Than Silver” (written by Lynn DeShazo) with the original line “Lord you are more precious than silver” being changed to “Sai you are more precious than silver”.<sup>9</sup> Saiification is to be found in various publications of Sai-devotees, in lectures of authorities within the Sathya Sai Baba Organization that are held daily in the ashram and also in Sathya Sai Babas own discourses.<sup>10</sup>

Once this new cultural context is established, it is certainly possible that Sai-devotees might then also use the tag “Sai” to achieve reterritorialization in a physical-geographical sense. A good example is the back cover of a recent publication of the Swiss Sathya Sai Organization, where we find a photo of an idyllic landscape in the Swiss Alps: A field of flowers and a wooden hut in the front, snow-covered mountains in the back, and a very blue sky on top. In the center there is the lettering “Swit zer land – Sweet Sai Land”.

The concepts of de- and reterritorialization and supraterritoriality help to comprehend the practices of a global religious community. By using these concepts for analysis, we avoid labeling religious contents merely as “being displaced” or “being transformed”, and focus on the members of a religious community as active choicemakers: With every practice and every item that they include into or exclude from their belief system, they make various choices about how to deal with the fact that their community is a global one. Regarding the songbook of the Swiss Sai devotees, this means that we do not just rate it as an eclectic mix of songs with odd textual adaptations, but instead understand that the attempt of Sai devotees who unite *bhajans* and

non-Indian forms of devotional singing is to create an emergent supraterritorial cultural space.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> See for example (Anonymous) (April 2013) Devotional Music, available at: <http://bababooks.org/content3-other.html> (accessed 18 May 2014); Sathya Sai Organisation Deutschland (date unknown) Lieder in Notenform (sheet music), available at: <http://www.sathya-sai.info/Medien/Lieder/tabid/69/Default.aspx> (accessed 18 May 2014); International Sai Organization (June 2008) Devotional Songbooks, available at: <http://www.sathyasai.org/songs/sheetmusic/Default.htm> (accessed 18 May 2014)

<sup>2</sup> Sri Sathya Sai Media Foundation (May 2014) radiosai, available at: <http://media.radiosai.org/www/> (accessed 18 May 2014)

<sup>3</sup> "Global Gurus: Individual Relations, Local Structures and Global Networks of Swiss Devotees of Sathya Sai Baba and Amma", research project no.140520, funded by the Swiss National Science Foundation.

<sup>4</sup> This musical genre is also called "Contemporary Christian Music" (CCM) in the anglophone world or "Neues Geistliches Lied" in the German speaking areas. References for the situation in the USA can be found in: Sharp and Floyd 2005: 199-211, for the situation in Germany see Feist 2005 and Hahnen 1998.

<sup>5</sup> Transl.: "There is only one god, he is there for everybody./Buddha, Jesus, Zoroastra,/Rama, Krishna, Mahavira, Allah,/Sathya Sai Baba./There is only one god, and he has all the forms./There is only one god. He listens to every name./Call him how it pleases you, but call him, you world."

<sup>6</sup> Regarding Nigeria see Larkin, 1997 and Larkin, 2002, regarding Morocco see Singh, 2012, regarding the UK see Hastings and Jones, 2006. About the global impact of Bollywood in general see Schaefer and Karan, 2013 and Punathambekar, 2013.

<sup>7</sup> This is very different in the Sathya Sai Song Book compiled by German devotees. There authorship and origins of the songs are noted, and for a great number of songs even more additional background information is given.

<sup>8</sup> Transl.: "Selection, compilation and translations by devotees from the Swiss Sai-groups and -centres."

<sup>9</sup> See for example the YouTube-video of the Christmas program from 24th December 2013 (Christmas Eve Celebrations in Prasanthi 2013).

<sup>10</sup> As an example for Sathya Sai Baba equating the Arabic name for Jesus Isa with the name Sai, see Sathya Sai Baba 1978 (Chapter 16).

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