

## Soka Gakkai: Buddhism and Strategies of Recruitment in South Brazil<sup>1</sup>

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### Resumo

A Soka Gakkai Internacional (SGI) é um movimento budista leigo que foi fundado em 1930 pelo educador japonês Tsunessaburo Makiguchi (1871-1944) e que possui hoje mais de doze milhões de membros em mais de 190 países. A Brasil Soka Gakkai Internacional (BSGI), sede da SGI no Brasil, foi fundada em 1960 por seu presidente Daisaku Ikeda e, desde então, tem expandido suas atividades no país. Este artigo visa discutir a situação de recrutamento da BSGI nos dias atuais, bem como suas atividades missionárias. Este trabalho visa contribuir para a discussão do modo como o grupo em questão negocia espaço e legitimidade com outros grupos religiosos brasileiros e como a BSGI utiliza uma ideologia ligada à idéia de paz, cultura e educação para promover suas próprias causas.

**Palavras-chave:** Soka Gakkai, budismo, simcretismo, ONG, recrutamento

### Abstract

Soka Gakkai International ("International Value-Creation Society"; also, SGI) is a lay Buddhist movement that was founded in 1930 by a Japanese educator, Tsuneaburo Makiguchi (1871-1944) and has now over 12 million members in 190 countries. The International Association Brazil Soka Gakkai (port. *Associação Brasil Soka Gakkai Internacional*- BSGI), the Brazilian umbrella organization of SGI was founded in 1960 by its president Daisaku Ikeda and since then has been expanding in the whole country. This article aims to discuss the contemporary situation of BSGI's recruitment in Brazil and also their missionary activities. This paper intends to contribute to the discussion of how they negotiate space and legitimacy with other Brazilian religious institutions and how BSGI uses an ideology related to peace, culture and education to promote its own causes.

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**Keywords:** Soka Gakkai, Buddhism, syncretism, NGO, recruitment

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## 1. Introduction

This article aims to present some aspects of my research (and fieldwork), which was carried out in Porto Alegre, capital of Rio Grande do Sul (southern part of Brazil) about Soka Gakkai International (in Brazil “BSGI - *Brasil Soka Gakkai Internacional*”), a lay Buddhist organization of *Nichiren Shoshu* that has been considered one of the most successful Japanese religious movement, not only in Japan but also in non-Japanese communities overseas.

The history of Buddhism in Brazil is mainly related to Asian, particularly Japanese, immigration. With the beginning of Japanese immigration in 1908, Buddhism came to Brazil. Clarke (2001:197) pointed out that although their presence in Brazil dates back to the 1920s, it was not until the 1960s that the Japanese New Religious Movement began to make an impact beyond the boundaries of the Japanese immigrant communities. Moreover, it was only in 1980s, through the immigration of Chinese and Tibetan groups, that the number of different Buddhist groups increased and Buddhism became widespread in Brazilian society.

Although the Japanese immigrants and descendants comprise 1.5 million people in Brazil - which makes it the largest Japanese expatriate community in the world - and despite the supposed enormous success of Buddhism in Brazil, some scholars have questioned this information, especially when comparing with mass evangelical activity around the country. Usarski (2004) believes that the problem is caused by the media's lack of information concerning the question *Who is truly Buddhist?* The author used information from the national census to show a quantitative decrease in self-attributed Buddhists between 1991 and 2000. Even for traditional Japanese Buddhist groups who represent the numerically most significant sector of Brazilian Buddhism, a stagnation or even decline is apparent. The national branch of Soka Gakkai had a considerable growth but not a dramatic one. According to Usarski (2004), recent accounts have focused on organized Buddhist groups to provide a more realistic assessment of the current situation. The data has shown that Buddhism in Brazil is a movement predominantly urban and relatively strong in those states in which the Japanese influence is successful (like São Paulo and Paraná, for instance).

The Japanese community in Rio Grande do Sul is not comprised by a large population of immigrants. Although researches have been conducted on Japanese religions in Brazil (especially in São Paulo and Paraná as mentioned before), little is known about these religions in Rio Grande do Sul. Porto Alegre, the state capital, is an important regional economic and cultural centre in the southern region of Brazil. The capital experienced German and Italian immigration in the 19th and beginning of the 20th centuries. Besides, it is a city with a relatively large black population, who are descendants from slaves of the period prior to the abolition of slavery in 1888. Afro-Brazilian religions in Porto Alegre are very prominent, playing in the same religious market as Protestant denominations (brought by the immigrants), Catholics, Spiritists (Kardecism) etc. The Japanese immigrants that established themselves in Rio Grande do Sul arrived in 1930, from the state of São Paulo, to settle near the big urban nucleus and plant fruits. The official Japanese immigration to Rio Grande do Sul began in 1956, with the arrival of the first twenty three immigrants in Rio Grande, in the south of the state. During the period from 1955 to 1963, twenty seven Japanese immigrants disembarked at the port of Rio Grande. According to Oro (2000 apud FLORES, 1977), most of these immigrants were placed as agricultural partners and leaseholders in the Brazilian and older Japanese rural properties, and they settled in Porto Alegre's metropolitan area and other important cities of the state (2000:114).

## 2. Brasil Soka Gakkai International

Soka Gakkai International (SGI), the largest lay Buddhist organization in Japan, began in 1937 as a lay association of Nichiren Shoshu, one of several denominations tracing its origins to Nichiren (1222-1282). Although Nichiren Buddhism dates from the thirteenth century, Soka Gakkai is a contemporaneous religious group. The organization was founded in 1930 by a Japanese educator, Tsunesaburo Makiguchi (1871-1944), as part of a movement to reform the educational system in Japan. Due to their opposition to the state religion and because of the war, Makiguchi and his colleagues were incarcerated. However, Makiguchi continued his beliefs in prison during the war. He died in prison in 1944, and after the war the renamed Soka Gakkai was reconstituted by Josei Toda, its second president and disciple of Makiguchi. He began an intense effort to spread Nichiren Daishonin's teachings to the lay population through *shakubuku* (literally break and subdue). The actual president, Daisaku

Ikeda (1928 - ) succeeded Josei Toda in 1960, as third president of Soka Gakkai. Under his leadership, the movement continued to expand. He began travelling abroad to bring encouragement to overseas members who were dispersed in small numbers all over the world. In 1960, he visited North and South America, and in 1961, South East Asia, India, as well as countries in Europe (DOBBELAERE, 1998). Indeed, Soka Gakkai had begun to leave Japan and become international.

The first SGI district established outside Japan was inaugurated in São Paulo on October 20, 1960 – the day *Brasil Soka Gakkai Internacional* (BSGI) celebrated its foundation. After some meetings and visits to immigrant groups, Ikeda conducted a meeting with approximately 140 followers. This meeting is considered the first conference in Brazil, where the BSGI was announced as the first branch to be founded outside Japan. According to Clarke (2000:334), Brazil was not entirely unknown territory, for Soka Gakkai already had a small foothold in both the south and north of the country. Few of the families knew each other, and most were to meet for the first time on the occasion of the launch of the Brazil district. The decisions resulting from Ikeda's visit were made known ahead of his arrival by word of mouth and advertisements in the Japanese newspaper in circulation in Brazil. The movement resulted in the inauguration of many bases in different parts of the country, as well as regional branches.

In 1960, the association had less than 150 members, all of them of Japanese origin. However, in the last decades, the Brazilian Soka Gakkai branch has evolved into a Buddhist group with centres in almost every region of Brazil. According to official information from the Soka Gakkai International headquarters, there are 160,000 Brazilian members, and 90 percent of these are of non-Japanese origin. *“However, Soka Gakkai is highly standardized, in terms of both doctrine and organizational structure. In this sense, it is clearly an expression of a 'globalized' movement”* (USARSKI, 2002: 172).

### 3. The Context

Buddhism in Rio Grande do Sul is represented by different Tibetan Buddhist groups (ALVES, 2004), and Soka Gakkai has competed and struggled to conquer and maintain its place in the same religious market, with Buddhist groups but also with Protestants, Catholics, Spiritists and Afro-Brazilian religions. Although Gakkai cannot be considered a numerous religion in

Rio Grande do Sul (and also in Brazil, specially based on Usarski's arguments), this group has called the attention for different reasons. Rio Grande do Sul is a state that did not receive a massive Japanese immigration. Besides, BSGI is inserted in a state that has a specific social-historic context. A very good example is given by Oliven (1996), when he quotes part of a very popular song in Brazil as an example of why Brazil is seen as exotic: *"A popular Brazilian song describes Brazil as 'a tropical country blessed by God and beautiful by nature.' The lyrics picture, in a very familiar way, a well-known manner of representing Brazil – one that places the exotic in a central position"* (OLIVEN, 1996: xi). Although Oliven did not disagree with such poetic metaphor, he was aware that a significant part of the Brazilian territory is outside the tropics. Rio Grande do Sul, the southernmost state in Brazil is one state that cannot be represented as tropical.

This state is often seen as the non-exotic part of Brazil, featuring a strong European presence and, at times, having more similarity with areas in Argentina and Uruguay, its bordering countries. All this indicates that there are different ways of belonging to a country the size of Brazil, in which not everything is beach, samba, and carnival" (*Ibid.*: xi).

Second, field research data revealed that BSGI in Rio Grande do Sul had called the attention from the national branch in São Paulo regarding its growth (number of recently converted) in the last years – especially in the north of the state, transforming Soka Gakkai in Rio Grande do Sul one of the five most important branches in the country. Having both these aspects in mind, it is relevant to reflect about the actual situation of Soka Gakkai and try to understand the politics developed and applied by them to attract new members and to be established in the Brazilian religious market. As this article reflects partial results of my research, so far I elected some elements for the debate.

#### **4. Actual Situation: The Meetings**

Although I had the possibility of talking and interviewing different people from different areas - visiting the members at their homes, travelling around the country to get to know key people and places – I had also the chance to attend the local meetings in Porto Alegre and its surroundings (i.e. Greater Porto Alegre and its countryside).

The familiarity of the leaders with Buddhism allowed them to clarify, during the weekly meetings, different aspects and doubts raised by the members. Week after week, they brought different teachings about Buddhism, readings and texts aimed at correcting wrong perceptions among the members.

They always start their activities chanting the mantra *Nam-myoho- renge-kyo*. As soon as they finished chanting, the members immediately started to organize the chairs in a circle. They did this while talking to each other and trying, almost through obligation, to create an informal environment to start the meeting. The perceived necessity of an informal atmosphere is very common: meetings held in circles, invitations to neighbours and friends to attend these meetings, and refreshments served thereafter, are well-adopted procedures by Soka Gakkai in Rio Grande do Sul, and is considered by them as a successful dynamic. According to an informant, this is one way they choose to help members and participants feel more relaxed. This way, they can talk more about their own experiences and, consequently, enrich each others lives.

After the chanting they usually introduce the visitors and then the leader starts the teachings. It is not my intention to literally describe the teachings, which would probably be impossible. In general, to me (and to visitors) the teachings were profound, sometimes confusing and hard to understand. It was nevertheless easy to identify some aspects that they emphasized. One of them, for example, is that Nichiren Daishonin, who inscribed the *Gohonzon* for his followers, wanted to establish an object of fundamental respect, which would enable anyone chanting to it, to awaken the *Buddhahood* in their lives. In doing so, they would live one of the most important recommendations of SGI: daily Buddhism, and an everyday dedication. According to them, it is through the chanting of the *Gohonzon* that they activate all the forces and functions within their lives.

Other aspects discussed in the different meetings were about the necessity of respect and reverence during the chanting. It is very important to choose the correct dress, to be quiet, and act with respect and concentration during the *daimoku*. The leaders, during the teachings, would remind us that in olden times, people used to wear special clothes to chant. It is however different today, and people tend to be more informal. Although the leaders

recognized this tendency, they mentioned on several occasions their preference for more appropriate clothes (smart casual). But this seemed to be more of a personal choice than an obligation or collective decision, as in different meetings I saw men leading the chants wearing very informal clothes and flip-flops, especially during the summer.

During the meetings, it was common for the members to bring visitors. It was easy to notice, as I would not be the only person who did not know what was happening or how to proceed during the rituals. It was easy to identify who was or was not a member. During the chanting, especially, the visitors would show some discomfort, and many of them would look around, trying to translate what was happening, and struggle to understand the reasons for bowing their heads or holding their palms together in front of their chest. These gestures during the meetings caught my attention as they demonstrate a certain degree of familiarity with a specific notion of corporality. This familiarity is shared by all the SGI members in Rio Grande do Sul. This corporal gesture is part of an ethnic notion of Japanese community, although many of them are Brazilians.

One of the most important techniques used by BSGI in Rio Grande do Sul is the *relato* (“report”), or members recounting their experiences. The *relato* is a moment where a member shares with the others any kind of difficulty and, essentially, how victory was obtained. The *relato* is a way of reinforcing and sharing truth. If, for instance, someone shares about a disease in the family, the *relato* itself would not focus on the disease, but the cure. “*I was determined to transform my reality,*” one informant said (R.S., interview, april/2006, Porto Alegre). To them, the *relato* is proof that aspects like focus, discipline and persistence are truly helpful in acquiring what they are looking for.

Although the *relato* is one of the most important techniques used by BSGI in Rio Grande do Sul, the speech of the leaders is also an important source of information. Through it, I could understand some points of view of the group and learn about some conflicts with the “outside world”. When they said to the members that Buddhism was inside them (i.e. it was not something external, with the possibility of running to “Someone” for help), they asked the members to be alert of the fact that, if they acted differently, they would be Buddhists within Christianity. In a personal interview, a member told me that BSGI does not disagree with

Jesus Christ and what he did on earth, but with what men did with Christianity. And although they talked all the time about the dichotomy between Buddhism and Christianity, they did not joke nor speak disparagingly about other religions during public meetings. This seems to be more a strategy to keep members within the movement, given the strength and long establishment of other religious groupings, rather than any deep-felt respect for other religions.

## 5. Syncretism and Strategies of Negotiation

Many scholars have applied the notion of “*diversity and plurality*” (SANCHIS, 1997) to the Brazilian religious field, and the discussion about the Brazilian syncretism is almost a consensus among scholars. Soka Gakkai is inserted in the same field, and as a consequence, has been analysed from the same perspective. Although Soka Gakkai has been considered syncretic and acting in the same – syncretic – field with other Brazilian religions, the elements seen during the fieldwork revealed new perspectives for the discussion.

Attending the weekly meetings allowed me to discover the member's doubts, the way they mixed different religions with Buddhism, and the way they inserted Catholic elements in their discourse. When they related some history about their lives during the meetings, it was common to hear typical Brazilian expressions such as “*Thank God!*”, “*Free me God!*” or “*Oh, my God!*”. In the same way it was very common to hear them share information on how to get greater benefits from the *Gohonzon* (the object of worship), such as putting small pieces of paper with their desires, wishes, needs etc. in the oratory. This attitude was very common among the recently converted, and it was easy to identify their previous religious practices by their attitudes, thinking, corporal expressions etc.

The Catholic Church has been considered by the Brazilian scholars the definer element that constitutes the Brazilian religious practice or, more, the Brazilian identity (BRANDÃO, 1988). It was considered as well as a central religion in the Brazilian beliefs system. After a review of the literature, we will see that the Catholic Church today in Brazil is not the centre anymore. The question about what is the centre in the Brazilian religiosity has been discussed and it is not possible to explain the religious reality in the country having the Catholic Church as

reference. The centre must be relativized and discussed, otherwise this kind of analysis would be simplistic.

Although the wide discussion about the power of the Catholic Church in the Brazilian religious field, the Institution has a clear loss of legitimacy in the country. Even considering this loss, the Catholic Church is still seen by Soka Gakkai in Brazil (and especially in Rio Grande do Sul) as the biggest enemy they fight with. A possible explanation that helps us to understand the reason Gakkai choose them as enemies is the heritage left by it in the Brazilians' lives. What we have today in Brazil are people that do not profess and are not involved and committed with a specific group or community, but share a Brazilian symbolical universe marked by the heritage/influence of a past predominantly catholic. A clear way to visualize this reality can be translated through habits like: a) popular expressions strongly rooted in the vocabulary used in the daily life, where people make references to God, Jesus, saints, holy trinity, etc.; b) food habit of not eating meat on good Friday etc.; c) acquire benefits through promises and devotion to saints and d) the option of, even not been professed Catholics, marry and baptise their children in churches preferentially Catholic.

Although all the discussion regarding the supremacy of the Catholic Church in Brazilian lands, the group still exert strong influence – but here, in my point of view, an influence essentially explained by the cultural heritage. The heritage is something we receive and passed on from generation to generation, but it can not be reproduced with fidelity by the simple fact we have been inherited. So, when we think about the Brazilian religious field, it is not possible to reproduce the premise that says the field IS syncretic, but CAN present some inherited elements that are explained historically.

In this way, becomes clear the reason why Soka Gakkai feels confronted by the Catholic Church and elects it as their biggest enemy to be combated. The fact they do not believe in God and do not have any divine Brazilian element in their repertoire stresses the fact that members have many elements left by their old filiation in their daily actions and vocabulary. The way Soka Gakkai justify these mistakes is recognizing the strong influence of the Catholic church over the members' lives and fighting against God, against the divine personification and against certain elements found in the Brazilian symbolical universe.

Other element that reveals the difficulty of Soka Gakkai before the Catholic heritage in the members' lives is the challenge of breaking the idea of claiming something to someone through divine intermediation (in this case, to God). Soka Gakkai tries to communicate to their members the idea of the Law of Cause and Effect, where the members can get anything they want as a result of their own good causes, and not as a result of hours of petition to Someone. The necessity of acquirement of the member continues (this-worldly benefits), but the alternative method of access suggested by Gakkai is translated by the breakage of the idea of intermediation.

From the moment the members start to use alternative methods of access (from divine petition to the law of cause and effect by themselves) it becomes clearer the way these members see and translate what they believe to be Buddhism in comparison to Christianity (specially considering the fact most of them do not practice the old Christian affiliation but still believe in god, saints, etc.) This aspect is useful as a methodological resource to understand how these members see the new religious affiliation.

The new religious affiliation – generally result of a migration from a Christian religion to a religion that is, in their perception, Buddhist – is given through the process of conversion. This process of conversion implies a big change in the set of values, beliefs and practices of the members. When the person decides to abandon the old sets and join these new practices, this new member always brings to inside the group (already established) elements from his/her old religious affiliation and/or belief, mixing elements and trying to find references that can make sense when compared with his/her old sacred repertoire.

The fact is, even if the recently converted had not migrated from a specific religious group (previously participating actively in a community and sharing the same beliefs) this new member brings with him/her elements of the catholic heritage that are indubitably present in the Brazilian social-religious system and that can be considered a cultural much more than a religious heritage. And it is during the process of conversion that is possible to understand why Soka Gakkai can not be considered syncretic. The members pass through a process of internalization and socialization of specific set of values that are reinforced by the wider group of sociability that serves as a reinforcer of all these set of values shared by the group.

Consequently, the classic notion of syncretism can not be applied to this reality because once they are inserted in a process of familiarization with the new values, they abandon the values of the old filiation. BSGI is trying to insert themselves in a religious field that is seen by them as syncretic, and their strategy knowledges this fact. What seem to be syncretic here are their own strategies to enter the Brazilian field.

## 6. NGO and Social Action

Since the beginning – and especially under Ikeda's leadership - Soka Gakkai has struggled to relate its image to an idea of an International Organization committed with social causes. In 1963, the movement was legally recognized in the United States as a non-profit organization – the first ever to receive such recognition outside Japan. In 1975, Soka Gakkai International (SGI) was created in Guam, Hawaii, and Ikeda became its president.

In 1978, he submitted to the first Special Session of the United Nations Organization for Disarmament, a 10-point proposal for disarmament and the abolition of nuclear weapons. In 1983, he published his “New Proposals for Peace and Disarmament”. Since then, each year on SGI Day, he publishes new proposals on the topic. (DOBBELAERE, 1998: 8).

SGI was registered as a non-governmental organization with the United Nations High Commission for Refugees and the Department of Public Information in 1981; additionally, in 1983, it was registered with the UN's Economic and Social Council.

Ikeda regularly meets with world leaders, including politicians, scientists, and artists, with whom he discusses solutions to world problems. They discuss peace, demilitarization, human rights, the promotion of culture, education and related issues. (*Idem*).

It is important to make clear that Soka Gakkai uses different strategies in different countries, and its work of spread and legitimization present different characteristics depending on emphasis given to specific aspects of its activities. In France, for example, they established in 1991 the Victor Hugo Museum. In the United States, the Soka University inaugurated in 1987 a branch in Los Angeles, and in 1993 the Boston Research Center for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century was

founded. In Brazil, as in other branches around the world, Soka Gakkai tries to create the image of an institution engaged in activities to promote peace, culture and education based on Buddhism. The country that includes the greater part of Amazonian rainforest and that hosted the worldwide conference about environmental issues Rio 92 founded in 1992 the *Centro de Projetos e Estudos Ambientais do Amazonas, CEPEAM* (Amazon Ecological Research Centre – AERC - in Manaus) considered by BSGI as a sector of the Education Department known as “Environmental Education” (PEREIRA, 2001). Another successful achievement by SGI in Brazil which constitutes an important action in this country is related to education. Brazil is one of the few countries in which the Tsunesaburo Makiguchi pedagogy is applied in a large scale. The Educational Department developed a 40-hour literacy programme for teenagers and adults, the Makiguchi Project in Action (a volunteer effort to revitalize education in public schools using Makiguchi's value-creating educational theories) and the Research Department for the education of science. Both projects, the AERC and the Education Department, may be considered the most important marketing strategies of SGI in Brazil today.

But although Soka Gakkai make big efforts to divulge their social actions around the country, I had some difficulty to understand how this face is applied to the Brazilian context (especially because I was concentrating my analysis in Rio Grande do Sul but I had the chance to make trips and visits around the country, including the national branch in São Paulo and AERC in Manaus). The local branch of Soka Gakkai in Rio Grande do Sul, as well as in other Brazilian states, does not have any social programme nor is public recognized as an Institution engaged with it. Although the exaggerated efforts to collect homages to President Ikeda (topic that it will not be possible to expand here) and to tie his image to the Institution, Soka Gakkai does not have a massive actuation in the Brazilian social field. What I saw was a localized engagement – specifically in São Paulo, because of the high number of members committed to the Organization and also living in the state. During the eleven months of my research I did not see at any moment a debate or conversation related to peace, culture, education, ecology or any other movement that corresponds to the ideas raised by the Organization. In the same way, although the huge repercussion of AERC (specially

internationally), the practical results are lowermost. The big and modern structure raised in the border of the Amazon river works to attend few projects.

The fact is that although Soka Gakkai struggle to publicize an image of engagement in social causes, and with activities in the whole of Brazil (and passing this image also on the Internet), the reality is that in Rio Grande do Sul BSGI does not have any agenda for social change. São Paulo seems to have an interesting place in the BSGI, because all the grandiosity, all the success, and all the well-succeeded practice they have in Brazil is concentrated there. They are not especially dynamic in Rio Grande do Sul (as well in other Brazilian states) and the image of a NGO does not correspond to the reality seen in field.

## 7. Conclusion

The fact that Soka Gakkai founded in Brazil its first district outside Japan is still used today as fundamental to justify a speech centred in the notion of mission. Pereira (2001) shows us that they started to face Brazil as the spring of the *kosen-rufu* (literally declare and propagate widely). Later, while the focus was still on the Japanese community, the immigrants were considerate as *bodhisattvas* from the earth that came to save Brazil. With the focus changed to the national society, the members of BSGI (independently of ethnic or social origin) are now responsible for helping the improvement of the country and they take upon them the model to the worldwide *kosen-rufu*.

The discourse of mission is still related to other important aspect: the emphasis on contributing to Brazil. This attitude is similar in almost every country that SGI was established, and its attitude looks for making good use of each opportunity in the sense of guaranteeing a public and respectful image. Herewith, in Brazil and in other countries there is a deliberate politic of conquering public spaces and an emphasis on particof members and SGI itself in all levels of society. But while in other countries its main practice is centred on a movement of world wide peace, in Brazil the priorities are environmental and educational activities, the later one of the most successful projects of SGI in Brazil especially because of the public approval and recognition.

Although they have worked to create an image of an NGO, the militancy does not guarantee their massive reproduction, considering the high growth and competition of new NGOs in

Brazil. The challenge of Soka Gakkai in Rio Grande do Sul nowadays seems to go further into the history and the religious tradition brought by the immigrants. To act as an NGO demands from them something that they still do not have. They aim to subdue the the Catholic Church. Moreover, they aim to deal with the remaining legacy left by the Catholic Church in members lives. There is a declared battle in the sense of constraining the members to pursue the path of SGI and not to return to their old beliefs. They fight and try to construct structures of plausibility to reinforce the beliefs and to construct something that is efficient and attractive to the Brazilian Religious Market. The NGO identity reveals, in many senses, the complexities and ambiguities of a group that answers to the necessities of a country laid in immense social inequalities but, at the same time, uses this process as a marketing strategy and as a plan to action to recruit new members.

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