Broadcasting in a Multicultural Society: A Case Study in Hamamatsu

YONEKURA Ritsu and TANI Masana

This article presents the results of an interview survey conducted in the city of Hamamatsu, Shizuoka prefecture, as part of NHK Broadcasting Culture Research Institute’s “Research Project on the Role of Broadcasting in a Multicultural Society.” The Tokai region, of which Shizuoka prefecture is part, has a sizable population of Brazilian residents. Hamamatsu alone is home to 18,000 Brazilian nationals, more than in any other municipality in Japan. The interview survey, which was conducted in two stages (March and June, 2009), was addressed both to the “senders” in various media (broadcasting, print journalism, the Internet, etc.) that regularly report on the Brazilian community and identify it as their main audience (readers, users) and to resident Brazilians, who may be regarded as among the “receivers” of such media.1

CONTEXT AND CONCERNS

As of the end of 2008, some 2.21 million foreign nationals were registered as residents of Japan.2 Because that figure has risen sharply over the past 15 to 20 years, some people regard the prospect of Japan’s becoming a multicultural society like those in the United States and Europe as increasingly real.

In actuality, however, foreign nationals still account for only 1.7 percent of Japan’s total population—not a very high proportion in comparison with Western countries, where foreigners make up around 5 to 10 percent of the populace.3 In 2006, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and

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1 In addition to the present authors, the following members of the research project team took part in the interview survey: Yamamoto Atsuhisa (Sophia University) and Hikichi Yasuhiko (Wako University).

2 Japanese Ministry of Justice Immigration Bureau, *Heisei niju-nen matsu genzai ni okeru gaikokujin torokusha tokei ni tsuite* [On the Statistics for Registered Foreign Nationals as of the End of 2008], July 2009. The Immigration Bureau estimates that in addition to registered aliens there are also around 110,000 “illegal overstayers” (*fuho zanryusha*).

3 According the OECD’s calculations on immigrant statistics for 2005, foreign nationals made up 9 percent of the total population in Germany, 9 percent in Austria, 7 percent in the United States, 7 percent in Belgium, 5 percent in the United Kingdom, and 5 percent in Canada.
Development (OECD) pointed to the closed nature of Japan’s labor market, estimating the share of Japanese employment made up by foreign workers to be around 1 percent, the lowest of all 30 (at that time) OECD member countries. As is often pointed out, this is due to such problems as slow development of policies and systems to nurture multiculturalism, and a socio-economic climate in which foreign nationals tend to be regarded solely as a source of cheap labor.

Nonetheless, the situation surrounding foreign nationals in Japan has been changing dramatically over the past few years. Amid forecasts of further birthrate decline and aging of the population, as well as overall population decrease, debate about the role of foreign nationals in Japan has suddenly intensified. In June 2008, for example, much comment was aroused by the suggestion, put forward in a proposal on immigration policy (Nihon-gata imin seisaku no teigen) by a group of Liberal Democratic Party Diet members, that Japan raise the number of foreign nationals admitted to the country to 10 million over the next 50 years. In October that same year, the Japan Business Federation (Nippon Keidanren), in a vision of the future titled Jinko gensho ni taio shita keizai shakai no arikata (Economic and Social Responses to Population Decline), stressed that, in order to adapt to globalization, birthrate decline, and population aging, Japan can afford no further delay in devising a strategy for proactive acceptance of foreign nationals in the mid- to long-term future.

Arising mainly in the arenas of politics and business, many such debates still regard foreign nationals as “workers” (rodosha) rather than as something approaching “citizens” (shimin), and this reflects problems that must not be overlooked. On the other hand, the fact that people are thus beginning to put forward, as real political and economic options, ideas for immigration policy closely guided by international norms and aimed at developing a multiethnic nation is of no small significance. If Japan does indeed move ahead with policies for a large-scale influx of foreign nationals in the coming years, Japanese society will be forced to adapt toward greater multiculturalism both in various

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6 According to provisional calculations by Japan’s Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (in its White Paper on International Economy and Trade 2005), if Japan wished to maintain a working-age population as large as it has ever had (it peaked in 1995), it would have to have a total of around 18 million foreign nationals by 2030.
areas—labor, education, healthcare, culture, customs, and so on—and at various levels, including national and local government, the nonprofit sector, and everyday community life. In that process, Japan will face the unavoidable challenge of how to reorient its values and culture for coexistence with its growing population of people from other countries, a population that would need to be recognized not as “foreigners” but as important members of the community and as counterparts in relations of mutual respect for identity and political and social rights.

How should the media, and broadcast media in particular, address this situation of growing multiculturalism? What roles or functions should broadcasting serve in a multicultural society? With a few exceptions, Japan’s broadcasting industry has so far maintained a highly domestic-oriented and homogeneous approach in its industrial structure, systems, and services. With the advent of a multicultural society, conventional broadcasting operations and institutions, which until now have been strictly circumscribed within the framework of nationality and national borders, can be expected to undergo considerable changes.

So far, however, public or policy debate about broadcasting in terms of these future prospects has been scarce. Any consideration of this issue requires, first and foremost, collection and analysis of basic data on such topics as the media environment for non-Japanese residents of Japan, the kinds of information and media behavior they engage in, and what role broadcasting plays in their lives. Unfortunately, that field of research remains almost entirely unexplored. The “Research Project on the Role of Broadcasting in a Multicultural Society” is a product of the abovementioned perceptions of the current situation and of the issues involved.

BRAZILIANS IN JAPAN AND THE SITUATION IN HAMAMATSU

Let us begin with an overview of foreign nationals living in Japan, the Brazilian expatriates among them, and the situation in Hamamatsu.

8 Although the current body of Japanese scholarship includes some studies on the current state and functions of “ethnic media” in Japan, no studies have addressed the question of how to reshape broadcasting or the multimedia public sphere that includes broadcasting. Among the leading studies on ethnic media is Shiramizu Shigehiko, Esunikku media kenkyu: Ekkyo, tabunka, aidentiti [Research on Ethnic Media: Border Crossing, Multiple Cultures, and Identity] (Akashi Shoten, 2004).

9 On the lack of research and public debate about how broadcasting should address multiculturalization, see Yonekura Ritsu, “Tabunka shakai ni okeru hoso no yakuwari ni kansuru chosa kenkyu ni mukete” [Toward Research on the Role of Broadcasting in Multicultural Society], Hoso kenkyu to chosa 68:11, November, 2008.
Foreign Nationals in Japan

As mentioned above, Japan had around 2.21 million registered aliens as of December 2008. Having grown by about 150 percent in the last decade, this figure now exceeds the total population of some of the country’s more sizeable prefectures, such as Nagano (approx. 2.18 million) and Gifu (approx. 2.1 million).

In the breakdown by nationality, Chinese (including those from Taiwan and Hong Kong) account for the greatest number of registered resident aliens, at around 650,000 (29.6 percent), followed by North and South Koreans combined (approx. 590,000; 26.6 percent), Brazilians (approx. 310,000; 14 percent), Filipinos (approx. 210,000; 9.5 percent), Peruvians (approx. 60,000; 2.7 percent), and U.S. citizens (approx. 50,000; 2.4 percent), among others. Of all the prefectures, Tokyo has the most registered foreign residents, with around 400,000, or 18.1 percent of the national total. It is followed, in descending order, by Aichi, Osaka, Kanagawa, Saitama, Chiba, Shizuoka, and Hyogo prefectures; and the top 10 prefectures in that list account for 70.7 percent of the national total of registered resident aliens.

Brazilians in Japan

The number of Brazilians entering Japan increased sharply after 1990, when a revised immigration law went into force allowing foreign nationals of Japanese descent (up to the third generation among Japanese-Brazilians, Japanese-Peruvians, etc.) to acquire resident status without the usual restrictions regarding employment and other activities. The strain placed on the labor market by the “bubble” economy around that time spurred the influx of Brazilian migrant workers to fill labor shortages, particularly in the secondary sector. More than 100,000 Brazilians entered Japan in the three years from 1989 to 1991, making Brazilians the second-largest group of “newcomers” (foreign nationals who have come and settled in Japan since the 1980s), after those from China.

Initially, this growing population of Brazilians was concentrated in the industrial zones of the Kanto region centering on Kanagawa prefecture. Later, after the “bubble” burst, their numbers continued to swell mainly in prefectures.

10 For a discussion of the process of Brazilian migration to Japan, see Kajita Takamichi, Tanno Kiyoto, and Higuchi Naoto, Kao no miyai teijuka: Nikkei Burajirujin to kokka, shijo, imin nettowaku [Invisible Residents: Japanese Brazilians vis-à-vis the State, the Market and the Immigrant Network] (Nagoya Daigaku Shuppankai, 2005). As pointed out in that book, the notion of a “Japanese-Brazilian” is largely a legal and policy-related construct. In the present article, therefore, the term “Brazilian” will be used unless there is a specific reason to use a different term.
tures with high levels of automotive, electrical, and machinery-related manufacturing, notably Aichi (to approx. 80,000), Shizuoka (to approx. 52,000), Mie (to approx. 21,000), Gifu (to approx. 20,000), and Gunma (to approx. 17,000). Although most of these Brazilians worked in non-regular employment—usually factory jobs arranged through employment contractors (temp-staff agencies)—many were nonetheless able to stay in Japan for extended periods, and as their stays evolved into long-term settlement, they came to form their own distinctive Brazilian communities. This trend was matched by a corresponding expansion of business activity—shops, restaurants, agencies, specialty stores, and so on—specifically targeting the burgeoning market generated by such expatriate communities.

**Brazilians and Other Foreign Nationals in Hamamatsu**

With a total population of about 820,000, Shizuoka prefecture’s Hamamatsu is a seirei shitei toshi, that is, a city officially classed as large enough to be delegated certain administrative functions normally fulfilled by prefectural governments. It is the home of some 18,000 Brazilians (as of 2009), more than any other municipality in Japan. In all, Hamamatsu has roughly 32,000 resident aliens, who make up 3.9 percent of the city’s total population—well over the national average (1.7 percent). As in other parts of Japan, the number of Brazilians in the city rose sharply from 1990 through 1991—from 1,457 in 1990 to 6,132 in 1992. Since then, those numbers have continued to grow at a rate of between 1,000 and 2,000 persons per year (see Figure 1).

Hamamatsu’s chief industry being manufacturing—of products such as automobiles, motorcycles, musical instruments, and textiles—there are many factories in and around the city. Registered aliens are relatively numerous in adjacent areas as well, including in the cities of Iwata (with approx. 9,800), Kakegawa (approx. 5,600), and Kikugawa (approx. 4,200); and in several nearby municipalities foreign nationals make up an even higher ratio of the total population than they do in Hamamatsu—8.9 percent in Kikugawa, 8.6 percent in Kosai, 5.7 percent in Iwata, and 4.9 percent in Fukuroi. Thus, the western part of Shizuoka prefecture, of which all of these cities and towns are part, has become one of the areas of Japan most densely populated with non-Japanese residents.

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12 Shizuoka-ken Tabunka-kyosei-shitsu, *Gaikokujin toroku*. 
Living and Employment Conditions of Brazilians in Hamamatsu

In 2006 the International Affairs Division of the Hamamatsu municipal government conducted a survey of some 1,200 South Americans (mainly Brazilians and Peruvians) residing in the city. The survey findings provide an overall picture of those residents’ living and working conditions.13

Brazilians are said to tend to stay in Japan for longer periods than other foreign residents and even to settle here, and this trend is evident in Hamamatsu as well. Figure 2 shows a breakdown of the 2006 survey respondents by cumulative length of stay (number of years) in Japan. The respondents who had stayed for 6 to 8 years and for 9 to 11 years make up the largest shares, at 16.5 percent for each bracket, followed by those in the “3–5 years” (15.1 percent), “12–14 years” (12.9 percent), “1–2 years” (11.7 percent), and “15 years or more” (11.6 percent) brackets. Overall, some 40 percent of the respondents had been in Japan for 9 years or more.

Figure 3 summarizes the respondents’ levels of Japanese-language proficiency by language skill. Most respondents claimed at least a certain degree of proficiency in everyday conversation and reading kana, but only a small proportion of them said they could read kanji and write Japanese. Level of Japanese-language proficiency is presumably a major factor determining how foreign residents engage with media (both Japanese-language media and media in their own languages). The general rule among foreign residents is that the longer they stay in Japan, the better their Japanese-language skills become. In the case of Brazilians in Japan, however, the larger their expatriate communities grow, the greater the haven provided for Brazilians to live and work even with little or no ability in the Japanese language. It is therefore supposed that, in their case, level of Japanese-language proficiency is no longer as proportional to length of stay as it was in the past.

The survey’s employment-related findings show that 76.4 percent of respondents were engaged in agency-contracted work, 8.9 percent were
directly employed as regular, full-time staff, and 3 percent were directly employed as part-time or casual staff. In the breakdown by industry type, 60 percent worked in automotive manufacturing, 15.7 percent in general manufacturing, 6.3 percent in electronics manufacturing, and 4.1 percent in the service sector. We can surmise from these findings that most Brazilians in Hamamatsu work in the manufacturing sector, especially auto manufacturing, and mainly through temp-staff agencies.

The timing of the interview survey conducted by the present authors coincided with a prolonged global business downturn triggered by the financial crisis of September 2008, amid which worsening employment conditions, particularly in the manufacturing sector, became a serious social issue in Japan as elsewhere. For this reason, many of the survey questions were framed with that socioeconomic climate in mind. Indeed, Brazilians in the Hamamatsu area were among those facing an increasingly grim employment situation, and many related developments were reported in the news, including the establishment of special employment consulting services by local-government bodies, the holding of special gatherings (hakenmura) to aid and advise resident foreigners struggling to make a living, and the implementation of programs to provide travel-cost assistance to foreign nationals wishing to return to their home countries.

Let us turn now to presenting and considering the results of our interview survey, looking first at the “sender” interviews and then at the “receiver” interviews.

INTERVIEWS OF “SENDERS”

In the “sender” interviews, we spoke with people engaged in news-gathering and production activities in two types of media organizations: ethnic media directly addressed to Brazilians as their main readership or audience; and domestic (Japanese) media organizations that are comparatively proactive in interviewing and reporting on Brazilians and carrying news stories of relevance to the Brazilian community.

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14 According to an emergency questionnaire survey conducted by a citizens group and other collaborators from January to March 2009, of a total sample of some 2,700 Brazilians living in Hamamatsu, a total of around 60 percent had either already lost their jobs at the time (47 percent) or been told they would be laid off in the near future (14 percent)—clearly a dire situation for the Brazilian community. See Ganbare Burajirujin Kaigi et al., *Hamamatsu-shi keizai jokyo no akka ni okeru Burajirujin jittai chosa* [Survey of Brazilians in Hamamatsu amid the Economic Downturn] (March, 2009).
Ethnic Media

The category of “ethnic media” has been defined as “media of, by, and/or for an ethnic minority” (Angelo Ishi) and also as “print, broadcast, online, and other information carriers used by an ethnic minority living in the country concerned and by reason of their ethnicity” (Shiramizu Shigehiko). Thus it is media whose principal “receivers” (readership, audience, or users) are foreign nationals living in the country. In step with the rise in resident-alien population, the number of such media organizations in Japan has also grown rapidly since 1990, creating a “rush” of ethnic media of considerable diversity in terms of language, form of publication, scale, and marketing method.

As one city reflecting this trend, Hamamatsu has several different kinds of media available to and used by Brazilian residents, including newspapers, magazines, free newspapers, communications-satellite (CS) broadcasting, and the Internet. Let us focus on two that are particularly well known and widely used: the Internet radio station Radio Phoenix and the Tokyo-based, Portuguese-language weekly newspaper International Press.

Radio Phoenix

Transmitting Portuguese-language programs and content from a studio in Hamamatsu, Radio Phoenix is one of the most popular ethnic-media organs among Brazilians in the local area. In addition to Brazilian music, the station delivers talk shows, programs on public affairs, useful information for daily life, and so on. Production and transmission are carried out by a staff of seven Brazilians and four Japanese (including both full-time and other employees).

Carlos Zaha (Figure 4), president of the radio station, is a second-generation Japanese-Brazilian who was born in São Paulo. After moving to Japan in 1990, he worked as a welder and temp-staff agency operator, among other jobs, before setting up an Internet radio station in Gunma prefecture in 2003.

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17 In a survey conducted in February 2008 by the Shizuoka prefectural government, 69.9 percent of Brazilian respondents cited the Internet (personal computers) as a medium they frequently utilized, a higher ratio than those that cited Portuguese-language newspapers and magazines. See Shizuoka-ken Tabunka-kyosei-shitsu, Shizuoka-ken gaikokujin rodo jittai chosa hokokusho [Report on Survey of Working Conditions of Foreign Nationals in Shizuoka Prefecture] (March, 2008).
as a way to promote his company. He later relocated to Hamamatsu and has since made running the station his main occupation.

In addition to airing regularly scheduled lifestyle-information programs provided by the municipal and prefectural governments, regarding Hamamatsu specifically, Radio Phoenix initially focused on gathering and disseminating information about local events, including dance clubs where Brazilians would get together on weekends. But the kind of information and enquiries coming in to the station changed considerably after the financial crisis of September 2008: with live broadcasts lasting several hours every day, the station is now devoted to providing job-search information as well as housing information, advice, and encouragement for out-of-work Brazilians.

In December 2008, Zaha established Burajiru Fureai Kai, a voluntary organization that provides Brazilians with livelihood and job-search assistance. With Zaha serving as the body’s chairman and the Radio Phoenix offices doubling as its headquarters, the staff of Burajiru Fureai Kai handles telephone and over-the-counter inquiries from members of the Brazilian community.

Radio Phoenix, which enjoys an access rate of around 5,000 hits per day (Figure 5), is currently aiming to expand into the role of an information center providing vital information to both the Brazilian community and the local-government authorities. “If we inform the municipal and prefectural
governments properly about the current circumstances and problems that local Brazilians face,” says Zaha, “they will respond appropriately and promptly.” He believes that providing local authorities with accurate information and serving as an information conduit between them and the Brazilian community are important ways to elicit the information and assistance that the latter requires.

**International Press**

*International Press* is one of the most widely read print media among Brazilians in Japan. Established in 1991 and based in Tokyo, it is a weekly newspaper published in separate Portuguese- and Spanish-language editions. The Portuguese edition has a circulation of over 60,000, the largest of all Portuguese-language print media in the country. Extending to around 60 pages on average, each issue consists mainly of international and domestic news, sports coverage, and information relating specifically to the Brazilian community.

For this survey, we spoke with Nelson Ozney, a reporter at the *International Press* Hamamatsu bureau (Figure 6). The bureau is staffed by Ozney and one salesperson. Ozney writes one or two articles a day, mostly covering incidents and accidents in the Hamamatsu area but also providing information specifically relating to the local Brazilian community. Born in 1958, Ozney came to Japan in 1995 and worked in Tokyo as a sportswriter (mainly covering soccer).
for a number of media organizations before taking up his current position at International Press in 2006. Having reported in the Hamamatsu area since then, Ozney tells us that the content of his articles also changed significantly following the financial crisis of September 2008, most of them now being about unemployment among Brazilians, efforts to provide them with welfare assistance, the government’s response to the economic slump, and related problems in areas such as education.

Ozney says he is currently focusing on two tasks in his news-gathering activities. The first is to provide as much news and information relevant to the Brazilian community in Japan as possible. International Press devotes about 10 pages per issue to such community-related news and information, and those pages attract a lot of interest among Brazilian readers (see Figure 7). “By writing as many articles as I can for those pages,” Ozney says, “I aim to help Brazilians to encourage one another and strengthen their sense of solidarity.”

Second, Ozney believes that the current economic turmoil has made it more crucial than ever to break down, as far as possible, the barriers between Japanese and Brazilians in Japan. The Brazilian community feels considerable dissatisfaction with the response of companies and government bodies to their problems, not to mention a sense of being discriminated against by Japanese
people in the area, and if such one-sided perceptions of victimization are left to smolder and spread, the result will be an even wider gulf separating Japanese and Brazilian residents. Ozney hopes that by raising such topics as the support efforts being made by local-government bodies and citizens’ groups he can help to change Brazilian residents’ perceptions as well.

**Domestic Media**

Domestic media (including newspapers, magazines, and broadcasting) are generally targeted at a Japanese audience (readers, users, etc.). Because their articles, programs, and other content are in the Japanese language, their main “receivers” are Japanese people and foreign nationals with a high level of Japanese-language proficiency. In the Hamamatsu area, however, where there is a comparatively high concentration of Brazilian residents, some domestic media actively incorporate Brazilian-community affairs in their news coverage.
and include local Brazilians among their intended “receivers.” Let’s look at the newspaper *Shizuoka shimbun* and the community radio station FM Haro! as two examples of such media.

*Shizuoka Shimbun (Hamamatsu Bureau)*

Based in the city of Shizuoka, *Shizuoka shimbun* is a typical prefectural daily newspaper, enjoying the largest market share in Shizuoka prefecture with a circulation of around 700,000. In 2008, the centennial of the start of Japanese emigration to Brazil, the newspaper ran a major series titled *Tokai no tabi ji (Burajiru–Nippon)* [Journeys Across the Ocean (Brazil to Japan)] and extending to 44 installments (April to October). The paper’s Hamamatsu bureau (11 reporters) played the central role in producing the series.

Nakamura Ayako of the Hamamatsu bureau (Figure 8) was one of the journalists who carried out some of the most important news-gathering for that series. While presenting the diverse history and circumstances of Japanese emigrants to Brazil and of their descendents, the series—particularly in parts 3 (“ Scenes of Anguish”) and 6 (“A Turning Point in Japan’s Process of Opening Up”)—also examined from various angles how the growing population of Brazilians and various other resident aliens is driving the multiculturalization of Japanese society, and the challenges that process is posing (see Figure 9).
While there is much of interest in the content of the series itself, the notable point for our present purposes is that some of the articles in the series were translated into Portuguese and posted on the Radio Phoenix website. In response to the fact that the original articles, being in Japanese, had not been read by most members of the local Brazilian community, this cross-media tie-up was aimed at gauging how those Brazilians, who normally have little contact with Japanese people in their daily lives, would respond to the articles and what they thought about the topics addressed in them.

The translation and posting on the Radio Phoenix website of five articles from part 3 of the series was followed by a two-part program on Radio Phoenix in which Nakamura and a fellow journalist read out chat posts that had been sent in and, in direct exchanges with the audience, answered questions posted by Brazilian listeners and in turn asked questions of listeners. The first part of the program focused on the themes “Japanese-language
education” and “Discrimination,” the second part on “Difficulties experienced in Japan” and “Brazilians in Japan a decade from now and a century from now.” The program received 35 listener posts during the first broadcast and 49 during the second, plus 114 posts about the series articles. “The fact that we had such a lively exchange of opinion and could find out what people in the Brazilian community really thought was significant,” said Nakamura. “At the same time, though, their apprehensions and sense of crisis were more intense than we had expected, and we even sensed a mood of resignation, a feeling that sooner or later they were only going to be forced to leave Japan anyway.”

Meanwhile, Radio Phoenix is planning to approach other newspapers and media organizations with proposals for similar tie-ups aimed at giving Brazilians more access to information sources other than ethnic media.

**FM Haro! (Hamamatsu FM Hoso)**

One media organization in the Hamamatsu area expressly targets its information at both Japanese and Brazilian “receivers”: the community radio station FM Haro! Launched in 1994, the station has a broadcast range that, covering Hamamatsu and surrounding areas, is available to a total population of around 1.2 million. Transmitting 24 hours a day, it offers news and music programs as well as community-oriented programs about local J. League activities, lifestyle information, and so on. In April 2008, the station launched *Amizade em Hama* [Hamamatsu Friendship], a program broadcast in both Japanese and Portuguese from 6 to 7 P.M. every Sunday.

With its considerable population of Brazilians, the Tokai region has quite a few community FM radio stations that broadcast Portuguese-language programs. Virtually all of those programs, however, are in Portuguese only and consist mainly of music. According to Kawashima Keisuke, a producer in the FM Haro! production department, the main concept behind *Amizade em Hama* is to reach both Japanese and Brazilian listeners in such a way as to promote mutual understanding and cultural exchange between them. Accordingly, the program is presented bilingually as far as possible, with Japanese-Brazilian announcers reading out scripts alternately in Japanese and Portuguese.

In content, the program focuses as much as possible on topical information such as current affairs and lifestyle information (see Figure 10). Each hourly broadcast includes a roughly nine-minute “main segment” produced in collaboration with staff of the International Affairs Division of the Hamamatsu municipal government and presenting topics of current interest in the city, information about local events, and so on. Among other segments is one in
which the announcer presents major news selected from media sources in Brazil, and a guest spot with profiles on and discussions with Brazilians working in various fields in the Hamamatsu area. As with the other media content touched on above, the focus of the program’s “main segment” has shifted to such issues as unemployment and education since the financial crisis of September 2008. DJ Ayla Wendy (Figure 11) says: “We still need to devise ways to attract more people to the program, but we do have listeners among both Japanese and Brazilians. It’s precisely in times like these that we most want to present topics that encourage our listeners to feel cheerful and positive.”

Figure 10. Basic Format of *Amizade em Hama*

1. Intro and intro talk (3 mins.)
2. Main segment (9 mins.)
3. Minor segment 1: Current affairs, seasonal topics, etc. (3 mins.)
4. Portuguese and Japanese language tips (5–7 mins.)
5. Guest spot (10 mins.)
6. Government notices (5 mins.)
7. Ending (3 mins.)

Figure 11. *Amizade em Hama* DJ Ayla Wendy
The interview survey of “receivers” was conducted over two days, May 30 and 31, 2009. Matsui Kazunori, who operates a Japanese language school in the local area, was engaged as survey coordinator. Using the snowball sampling method,\(^\text{18}\) he compiled a sample consisting of six households—five in Hamamatsu and one in the neighboring city of Iwata. Given the likelihood of disparities in media use among the respondents due to differences in their Japanese-language abilities, the sample was selected so as to include both respondents with beginner-level proficiency and those with more advanced-level proficiency in Japanese.\(^\text{19}\) As far as possible, the interviews were conducted at the respondents’ homes and with all adult members of the household present, and the questions on media use were asked of all household members, including children. Matsui took part in the interviews as interpreter, providing on-the-spot verbatim translations of the responses by respondents with beginner-level Japanese and language assistance to those with more advanced skills, thereby enabling the interviewer to conduct the interviews directly in Japanese. Each of the six households interviewed was located in an area with a high concentration of Brazilian residents. First, let us sketch a brief profile of each household. (All details are as of the time the survey was conducted.)

**Household A**

This family has lived for the past 10 years in a four-room (including a kitchen/dining room) apartment in a municipal housing complex with one of the highest concentrations of Brazilian residents even in Hamamatsu (see Figure 12). The family consists of a man (Japanese-Brazilian) in his 40s, his wife (Brazilian), and their two children, a son in the second year of junior high school and a daughter in the first year of elementary school. Although the parents have been living in Japan for about 20 years, they are almost completely unable to read and write Japanese and can understand very little spoken Japanese. The wife works as a child care worker at a school for Brazilian children. The husband worked for years as a turner, but after losing his job in

\(^{18}\) A method whereby survey respondents are sampled through referral by an intermediary (recruiter).

\(^{19}\) In a survey conducted by the Hamamatsu municipal government’s International Affairs Division, whereas the respondents who answered that they could speak Japanese and read kana to some degree accounted for over half the total sample in both cases, those who said they could read kanji or write Japanese to some degree made up quite small shares, at 22 percent and 32 percent, respectively. See City of Hamamatsu International Affairs Division, *Hamamatsu-shi ni okeru Nanbeikei*. 
May 2009 he is currently receiving unemployment benefits while searching for work. The husband therefore takes care of the household chores on weekday afternoons and is the one who spends most time at home.

Household B
This family lives in the same residential complex as Household A and likewise consists of four people: a man (Japanese-Brazilian) in his 20s, his wife (Brazilian), and their nine-year-old son and seven-year-old daughter. The parents have lived in Japan for about two-and-a-half years. The wife previously worked in an auto parts factory but is currently unemployed. The husband found a job at a recycling firm just before the present survey was conducted. Both parents have very little Japanese-language ability, whether in reading, writing, or listening comprehension. The wife currently attends Japanese-language classes to improve her chances of securing a job.

Household C
Living in the same complex as Households A and B, Household C is a family of five: a man (Japanese-Brazilian) who appears to be in his 30s, his wife
(Brazilian), their two children (aged three and one) and the wife’s mother. The couple have been living in Japan for 12 years. The husband previously worked on a factory production line but is currently unemployed. The wife has so far devoted her time to caring for the children but plans to return to her old job soon as a teacher at a school for Brazilian children. The wife’s mother came to Japan three months ago and now teaches at a school for Brazilian children. The husband understands some Japanese, but the rest of the family have almost no proficiency in either written or spoken Japanese.

*Household D*
This household consists of a Brazilian man in his 40s and his Japanese-Brazilian wife who have lived since March 2009 in a public housing apartment in Iwata that has many Brazilian residents. Husband and wife have each moved back and forth between Japan and Brazil a number of times, and altogether the husband has spent about seven years in Japan and the wife about 10. The husband previously worked in a factory but lost his job in November 2008. The wife works as a translator and interpreter for an outsourcing company. She speaks Japanese with native-level fluency and reads and writes kanji without any difficulty. Her husband has almost no Japanese-language proficiency and is currently attending Japanese-language classes while looking for work.

*Household E*
This family of three—a Japanese-Brazilian man in his 50s, his Brazilian wife, and their son, who attends a regular Japanese junior high school (second year)—lives in a house in a residential area of Hamamatsu. The husband and wife have lived in Japan for nine years and four years, respectively. Four years ago, thinking they would stay in Japan long-term, they acquired a loan and bought their present house. However, the husband lost his job in March 2009 and is currently unemployed. His wife previously worked in a factory but is also now jobless. Having thus lost the ability to make payments on their loan, they now face tough negotiations with the finance company. The husband understands Japanese to a fairly high level but struggles when it comes to more difficult vocabulary. His wife has beginner-level Japanese-language skills. Their son is proficient enough in Japanese to be able to follow his school lessons moderately well.

*Household F*
This family lives in a fine, newly built, three-story house in Hamamatsu and consists of a Japanese-Brazilian man in his 30s, his Japanese wife, and their
two-year-old daughter. The husband’s Brazilian mother and older sister live in a house nearby. The man has been living in Japan for 17 years and currently holds an executive position in a food-processing company under Japanese management. He can read, write, and converse in Japanese more or less without any difficulty. Upon coming to Japan in his teens, he got part-time employment and gradually learned Japanese through his work, without undertaking any formal study. His wife also has an office job, so at the moment the family is not under any particular economic distress.

As the foregoing profiles show, the respondents comprised a relatively varied sample in terms of time spent in Japan, Japanese-language proficiency, and household circumstances. On the other hand, a feature of the sample as a whole was that, with the exception of Household F, most of the families were financially insecure as a direct result of the economic crisis continuing since the autumn of 2008. Indeed, with the unemployment rate among Brazilians in Hamamatsu at the time of the survey estimated to be as high as over 60 percent,20 the tough economic conditions common among the survey respondents were true of the local Brazilian community as a whole.

Let us turn now to presenting and considering the results of the “receivers” survey from three angles, namely, the current state of the media and information environment surrounding the Brazilian community; the circumstances of their access to specific “layers” of media and information; and the correlation of media representations with cultural identity.

The Current Media Environment Surrounding Brazilians
There are two main types of television broadcasting that the Brazilian community receives on a daily basis: free-to-air terrestrial TV broadcasting, with content primarily in the Japanese language; and a Portuguese-language channel (IPC TV) available through the fee-charging CS broadcasting service Sky PerfecTV!21 Other available TV services include fee-charging satellite and cable services broadcast mainly in Japanese and English, but of the households interviewed in the present survey, only Household F subscribed to and

20 Ganbare Burajirujin Kaigi et al., Hamamatsu-shi keizai jokyo.
21 Under the channel name TV Globo Internacional, CS broadcaster Sky PerfecTV! delivers Portuguese-language programs produced by leading Brazilian broadcaster TV Globo’s international service and IPC, a production company in Japan. Among Brazilians in Japan, the service is commonly referred to as “IPC TV.” A subscription to Sky PerfecTV! is required for receiving the service, and because TV Globo Internacional is not part of any set-fee package of channels, subscribers must pay a monthly reception fee of ¥4,200 for it in addition to a basic charge (¥420/month).
watched any such fee-charging service. Accordingly, the following account focuses mainly on the former two types.

**Language Barrier Hinders Terrestrial-TV Viewing**
The most salient feature of the present survey was the finding that the Brazilians interviewed did not watch as much Japanese-language terrestrial TV as was expected. This trend was evident across program genres, from news to entertainment. Terrestrial broadcasting was found to play a particularly small role in the lives of Brazilians with little Japanese-language ability.

The members of Household B, who had spent the least time in Japan and had the poorest grasp of Japanese among all the respondents, told us that they hardly watched any TV at all, let alone Japanese-language terrestrial TV.

_**Interviewer:** Don’t you watch any Japanese TV?*

_**Household B Wife:** Very rarely.*

_**Interviewer:** On what kind of rare occasions do you watch it?*

_**Household B Wife:** Like, when my husband appears on TV we’ll switch it on—I mean, when he’s been part of some Japanese TV station’s report and we think he might appear on the show.*

_**Interviewer:** Would you say the language problem is the main reason for your not watching TV?*

_**Household B Wife:** We can understand some words but not enough, so yes, I suppose the language problem is the main reason.*

The members of Households A and C, who had been in Japan longer than those of Household B but also rather struggled with the Japanese language, likewise reported that they watched almost no Japanese terrestrial TV.

Household A said that, although they turned the TV on to a Japanese-language channel as soon as they got up in the morning, this was simply because the station displayed the correct time on the screen; they did not watch with any real depth of understanding of the content. From the late afternoon into the evening, when the family was all together, they watched the Portuguese-language service IPC TV, switching to Japanese-language terrestrial broadcasts only during earthquake or other emergencies or, as with Household B, when a member of their family had been the subject of some kind of TV coverage.

The respondents from Household C said that, whereas they used to watch terrestrial broadcasts of programs even without understanding Japanese—mainly sports programs but also entertainment-type programs, documentaries, and so on—their viewing of DVDs and online video content had since
increased so much that they now watched almost no Japanese-language TV. In explaining why they watched less Japanese TV than they used to, the husband and wife in Household C cited the difficulty of overcoming the language barrier and pointed out that, in the past decade or so that they had spent in Japan, more and more video-software products (videotapes, DVDs, etc.) viewable in Portuguese had become available from Brazilian-goods stores (Figure 13), among other sources, and it had also become easier to get Portuguese-language information, including video, via the Internet.

In contrast, Households E and F, where the level of Japanese-language proficiency was comparatively high, were found to watch a limited amount of terrestrial TV in addition to other kinds of viewing. In those households, however, only the people who understood Japanese watched terrestrial TV. In Household E, the terrestrial-TV viewers were the husband, who watched news in the morning, and the son, who occasionally watched anime programs that he liked; the wife hardly watched any terrestrial TV at all due to her inability to understand the Japanese-language content. In the evenings, when the family
spent time together, the TV set would usually be used for playing video games or viewing Internet content, leaving little time for watching terrestrial TV. (See below for more on Household E’s Internet viewing via their TV set.) In Household F, meanwhile, the wife, who is Japanese, and the daughter generally controlled channel selection, so the (Japanese-Brazilian) husband, deferring to them, mostly watched Japanese-language programs and spent very little time watching terrestrial programs that he himself had specifically chosen to watch. The husbands in Households E and F reported that, even when they did watch Japanese-language broadcasts, of the total language content they more or less understood about 50 percent and 70 percent, respectively.

For most Brazilians in Japan, the fact that terrestrial broadcasting is primarily in Japanese constitutes a formidable barrier to their viewing of it. Comments from this survey’s respondents indicate that this is true not only of news programs, which are naturally language-intensive, but also of drama, variety, and other entertainment-type programs with more nonverbal elements.

*Household A Wife:* Everyone [on the TV screen] is laughing but I can’t join in the laughter because I don’t understand. It’s a problem of language.

*Interviewer:* Roughly what percentage of the language content do you understand?

*Household A Wife:* Only a little.

*Interviewer:* Apart from when you’re watching the news, presumably you’d like to just relax and watch TV without having to make any effort, right?

*Household A Wife:* Yes, I suppose so.

*Drift Away from Fee-charging Services*

We noted above that most of the survey respondents had been directly and quite seriously affected by the economic crisis triggered in late 2008. One result of that has been greater discrimination and concentration in their media- and information-related spending. In the case of television, this is evident in a trend toward canceling subscriptions to the fee-charging service IPC TV.

IPC TV has played a prominent role in the lives of Brazilians in Japan as a source of domestic and world news/information presented in their native language and as a means of access to drama shows, soccer coverage, and other entertainment from Brazil. This was evident in the aforementioned survey conducted by the Hamamatsu municipal authorities in the autumn of 2006, before the economic crisis of 2008: on the question of which media or information sources they used the most, the ratio of respondents in that survey who
answered “Native-language radio/TV” was a high 52.5 percent, on a par with those for “Native-language newspapers” (61.7 percent) and “Native-language magazines” (54.2 percent) (“Japanese radio/TV” and “Japanese newspapers” scoring 40.4 percent and 8.6 percent, respectively).22

Among the respondents in the present survey, Household A still subscribed to and watched IPC TV, and the service remained a vital source of information and entertainment for the parents, who understood very little Japanese. Nonetheless, we found that three of the households in the present sample—Households B, C, and E—had given up their subscriptions to IPC TV after the economic situation turned grim in 2008.

*Household B Wife:* IPC is expensive, really expensive, so we disconnected it . . . We can get all the information we need on the computer, so we leave the TV off.

*Household C Wife:* We used to watch IPC a lot, but now we tend to watch things on the computer using things like YouTube.

The IPC TV service costs around ¥5,000 a month. Households B and C presumably weighed this cost against the benefits of such a service and decided it was more realistic to do without it.

Household D presents a more extreme case in that, at the time of the survey, they did not even possess a TV set. Upon moving to their present apartment at the end of February, they got rid of their TV and replaced it with a computer and a broadband Internet connection.

*Household D Wife:* There were only Japanese-language programs on anyway, so although I might sometimes watch them, he [her husband] would get kind of tired of seeing that all day long. So I suggested we get an Internet connection instead—we hadn’t had Internet service where we lived before—and so we bought a computer and got the Internet put on.

According to the couple in Household D, the abundance of Portuguese-language websites, many with video content, means that they can generally get the same kind of audiovisual content as is provided on TV. Another major factor in their decision to get rid of their TV, they said, was the requirement to

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22 See City of Hamamatsu International Affairs Division, *Hamamatsu-shi ni okeru Nanbeikei*. 
pay the NHK reception fee simply for having a TV set. Thus, in their case too, the issue of cost was a factor in their drift away from watching TV. This option makes sense given their disinclination to pay the reception fee for a TV service offering them nothing in the way of Portuguese-language broadcasts. Such cases give us pause, making us consider once again how public broadcasting and the reception-fee system should best be designed in a multicultural society.

The respondents were also asked whether or not they availed themselves of fee-charging media other than TV, such as newspapers and magazines. All said they did not. The only newspapers that some reported reading at all were publications distributed free of charge.

Central Role of the Internet

In contrast to their use of TV and other conventional media, the respondents were unanimous in describing the central importance of the Internet as an alternative to those media—an importance evident in the fact that most of the households surveyed had multiple computers.

Regarding the duration and frequency of their media use, furthermore, our impression was that they used the Internet significantly more than TV. People in a number of households told us, for example, that their computer was usually the first media device they switched on upon getting up in the morning. Most also said that they tended to use computers rather than watch TV when the whole family was at home in the evening. At such times, we learned, they would often use their computers not individually but as a group, gathering around a single computer to view online content, particularly video content.

Interviewer: What media device do you switch on first?
Household B Wife: The computer. In the mornings it’s the computer.
Interviewer: What do you do on the computer?
Household B Wife: It’s a—what do we call it?—a service like SNS. And we use the computer to watch the IPC site.
Interviewer: Don’t you turn on the regular TV?
Household B Wife: No—we can get all we need through the computer.
Interviewer: What kinds of things do you watch online on the IPC channel?
Household B Wife: News. TV dramas as well.

23 The Broadcast Law stipulates that “Any person who is equipped with a receiving equipment capable of receiving the broadcasting provided by NHK shall conclude a contract with NHK with regard to the reception of its broadcasting” (Article 32), and makes no distinction as to the person’s nationality.
Interviewer: Do you use the computer more than the TV even for entertainment-type programs?

Household B Wife: We do, yes. We watch things like dramas while we’re eating, and my husband and I watch the news together.

The “online IPC” used in Household B is a service whereby users purchase a special prepaid card with a code that, once entered on the website, gives them access to various online video content for 11 days. At around ¥1,000 per card, the system is cheaper than a subscription to the CS-based IPC service.

The survey found that, as in Household E, a number of families in the sample viewed the Internet not on a computer but mainly on a TV set in the living room, displaying the signal via a video-game console.

Household E Husband: After breakfast we watch programs from Brazil via the Internet. My wife likes to watch the news and dramas—TV dramas from Brazil.

Interviewer: But the computer’s in your son’s room. Do you go to his room to watch those programs?

Household E Husband: We watch them downstairs here using the Wii.24

The couple in Household E made no real distinction as to the sources of the images on their TV screen—that is, whether they came from broadcasting or from online video sites. Whereas among Japanese people it is still far from commonplace to view online video content on a TV set, the fact that such seamless integration of the TV and Internet environments is already under way in some Brazilian households in Japan is worthy of attention.

Needless to say, the survey respondents use the Internet for more than just watching video content; they also make frequent use of it for such purposes as getting news and information in text form and staying in contact with relatives and friends in Brazil via e-mail, chat, and IP telephone. In these activities, the language both of the media content they receive and of their own communicative output is primarily their native Portuguese.

Household C Wife: The Internet is by far our most important source of information... With the Internet we can watch news from various places—Japan, the world at large, different regions—so it’s an important

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24 A video-game console produced by Nintendo. In addition to playing game software, a Wii console can be used to access the Internet, thereby allowing users to send and receive e-mail and view online video content using a TV set as a monitor.
source of information. And whereas we can use the Internet in our own language, unfortunately we can’t do that with TV.

The overall response thus strongly indicates that, when faced with the need to limit their use of fee-charging media due to economics constraints, Brazilians in Japan now tend to opt for the Internet over television as their final preference. All of the households in the present survey had broadband (ADSL, fiber-optic, etc.) Internet connections and all said they regarded the cost thereof as a “necessary” one. Even in times of unemployment and other economic hardship, they are reluctant to give up the “lifelines” of high-speed Internet access and mobile telephones. Another way to put this is to say that as long as it fails to provide them with content in a language they can fully understand, broadcasting in its current form—even free-to-air terrestrial broadcasting—cannot be part of that information lifeline. There is already a multifaceted debate about how the increasingly borderless information environment generated by the Internet’s spread is forcing us to redefine the scope and substance of the “public” role that broadcasting has so far played.25 Our findings strongly suggest that such debate takes on an even sharper immediacy in light of the realities of media use among non-Japanese-speaking users, particularly non-English-speakers such as the respondents in the present survey.

**Types and Sources of Information**

Let’s look now at what kinds of information Brazilians in Japan actually get—and would like in future to get—from the various media mentioned so far.

**Layers of Media and Information**

The media and media content that foreign nationals in Japan use or access can be classified into the following four types or “layers”:26

1. lifestyle- and community-related information, primarily about essentials such as food, clothing, shelter, medicine, and employment;

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25 See, for example, Iwabuchi Koichi, *Bunka no taiwaryoku: Sofuto pawa to burando nashonarizumu o koete* [Capacity for Cultural Dialogue: Beyond Soft Power and Brand Nationalism] (Nihon Keizai Shimbunsha, 2007); Abe Kiyoshi, “Toransunashonaru na kokyoken no kanosei” [The Potential for a Transnational Public Sphere], *Hoso media kenkyu* 6 (2009); and *Kokyo hoso NHK ni nani o nozomu ka: Saiisei to jidai e no tenbo* [What We Want from Public Broadcaster NHK: Revival and Prospects for a New Era], the final report of the Dejitaru Jidai no NHK Kondankai [NHK Roundtable on the Digital Age]: [PDF].

26 Yonekura, “Tabunka shakai ni okeru hoso no yakuwari.”
2. information disseminated mainly by local-government authorities and related primarily to political and social citizenship;
3. content of domestic media in the host country (Japan); and
4. content of media from the foreign nationals’ home country.

Respondents in the present survey were asked about the types of media through which they obtained information in each of these layers. The word-of-mouth network operating in the Brazilian community via such media as mobile phones was seen to play a major part in the respondents’ acquisition of information of types 1 and 2. As indicated in our introductory remarks, there is a strong tendency among the Brazilians in the sample area to live close to one another in specific locales, often in the same public-housing complexes or other apartment buildings. This results in small, localized communities of expat Brazilians within which considerable information of types 1 and 2 is readily shared and exchanged in everyday oral communication. Mobile phones play a crucial role in reinforcing the communicative networks among members of such communities, not to mention being essential as a way to stay readily contactable when looking for work, as many Brazilians are. Mobile phones thus serve as an important medium of communication both within the Brazilian community and between it and the host society.

Other media in layers 1 and 2 that the respondents used include promotional literature issued by the municipal government, and Internet content. Prominent was the website of the local community association Burajiru Fureai Kai. As mentioned earlier, Burajiru Fureai Kai was launched in December 2008 as a voluntary association to help Brazilians find jobs and get by in Japan. Through its website, and in collaboration with the online radio station Radio Phoenix (whose president, Carlos Zaha, also serves as the association’s chairman), Burajiru Fureai Kai disseminates information mainly in layers 1 and 2 and occasionally in layer 3, all of it provided in Portuguese. Responding as needs arise, the group advises Brazilians, either by telephone or at its service counter, on job-search and livelihood issues and liaises on the Brazilian community’s behalf with government authorities. Through the robust network of contacts generated by such activities, Burajiru Fureai Kai accumulates extensive information relating to Brazilians in and around Hamamatsu. That information is made available free of charge on the association’s website, which, having made its reputation initially by word of mouth, is now a household name in the Brazilian community. The Burajiru Fureai Kai site’s strength lies in what sets it somewhat apart from so-called one-way mass media, namely, its function as a two-way hub for information flow between the Brazilian community and the Japanese authorities and wider society. This feature has
enhanced both the quantity and quality of the information provided, which has in turn firmly secured the site’s credibility among local Brazilians.

**Dearth of Information from the Host Society**

In regard to layer 4 (media content from Brazil), a prominent feature of the survey response was the practice of obtaining such information via the Internet. In addition to regularly visiting websites of media sources aimed specifically at Brazilians in Japan (e.g., IPC), the respondents also got layer 4-type information by frequently accessing the websites of major Brazilian media organizations as well as general Portuguese-language portal sites. Their responses on this topic indicated that, although they could not expect such websites to provide the same degree of information immediacy that they would get from TV in Brazil itself, they found the sites to provide sufficient levels of information quality and quantity to meet their needs as expatriates, and they showed no particular dissatisfaction about such information sources.

In contrast to their use of and attitudes toward the information available to them in layers 1, 2, and 4, the respondents expressed a certain dissatisfaction with information in layer 3 (information about Japan). Amid the relative abundance of media and information in the other layers, content from the national, prefectural, and other broad regional levels was conspicuously absent from their lives.

Websites such as those of the Burajiru Fureai Kai and IPC do sometimes cover national or prefectural affairs in Portuguese when the issues are sufficiently important, but such coverage tends to lack immediacy and to be rather fragmented. This leaves the Brazilian community only three options regarding such information: to get it in Portuguese but only in bits and pieces and quite a while after the events themselves; to rely on word of mouth to get it; or to get it from Japanese-language media but with a higher degree of uncertainty (due to their lack of Japanese-language proficiency).

The situation during the spread of the H1N1 influenza virus in Japan in early 2009 is a case in point. Even on such a rapidly evolving and important health issue, there was a marked gap between the level of information obtained by the survey respondents and that obtained by the Japanese general public. This was particularly true of Brazilians with limited Japanese-language proficiency.

**Household A Wife:** At first we saw something on Japanese TV about some sort of “swine flu” and people wearing masks. We could catch words like infuruenza [influenza] and buta [swine], but we couldn’t really understand what was going on. Then, some time later, we saw some reports on
IPC and finally grasped the whole story. But without understanding the language, we wouldn’t have been able to tell what had happened or exactly what the situation was.

*Household B Wife:* There’s a TV program in Brazil that covers international news. After seeing that program in Brazil, my mother called me by IP phone and told me what it had said about the situation in Japan.

Against this backdrop, we asked the respondents how they would like layer 3-type information to be provided via, for instance, television. Not surprisingly, many said they wished such information were disseminated promptly in Portuguese—specifically in such forms as subtitles or news-digest programs. Some respondents suggested such a news program could even be in Japanese as long as the level of language difficulty was kept to a minimum.

NHK in fact already provides Portuguese-language news as part of its Radio 2 service.27 Unfortunately, however, this was largely unknown in the Brazilian community. This can be attributed to the fact that radio itself is not a widely used medium among Brazilians in Japan (most households in the present sample did not own radios except for car radios) and perhaps partly to a lack of effective publicity about the service.

**Ethnic Identity and Discriminatory Media Representations**

The respondents were also asked what they thought about the way Brazil and Brazilians were depicted by Japanese mass media. Given that the respondents spent little time exposed to Japanese broadcasting, their responses on this question are no more than general impressions, but they are nonetheless worth noting in the present context.

What they sensed most of all was a negative tendency in the way the media, especially news programs, portrayed Brazilians. Specifically, their impression was that Japanese media present content about Brazilians only when a Brazilian has committed a crime or done something wrong, virtually never showing the good things that Brazilians do. The respondents also shared the sense that this bias in the media feeds into what in their daily lives they feel to be discriminatory behavior toward them by Japanese people.

*Household D Husband:* [One thing that bothers me is] I get the feeling from various TV shows and from talking a little with Japanese people

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27 NHK’s Radio 2 service broadcasts a Portuguese-language news program lasting for 15 minutes each weekday (6:30–6:45 p.m.) and 10 minutes on weekends (6:20–6:30 p.m.).
that they tend to think all Japanese-Brazilians are bad just because some have come over here and done bad things. I feel like that’s hardly the whole story.

Household D Wife: There seems to be a lot of news about the Latin Americans of Japanese descent who unfortunately do bad things or commit crimes, but surely there’s more to the Brazilian community than just that. I’d like to see local programs occasionally show something of the positive side of Brazilians.

Interviewer: Do you mean there’s no balance in the way Brazilians are portrayed?

Household D Wife: Right, there’s not a proper balance . . . In this past decade since I first arrived in Japan, Latin Americans of Japanese descent committing crime have really given us all a bad name, I feel. People didn’t used to say such [discriminatory] things about us. It makes me wonder why they do now.

In the previously mentioned survey conducted by the Hamamatsu municipal government, when asked how much they felt discriminated against by Japanese people, the respondents who answered either “a little,” “quite a bit,” or “very much” together accounted for 61.4 percent of the sample—or in other words, roughly six in ten felt discriminated against in some form or other.28 It seems fair to say that the above comments by the couple in Household D point to the possibility that media representations are also closely bound up with Brazilians’ day-to-day sense of being victims of discrimination.

The respondents in the present survey also stressed what they saw as stereotyping in media representations of Brazil, many noting that the country was too frequently characterized and understood in connection with soccer, the Amazon, and other ready-made images. Some respondents also wondered why news coverage about Brazil tended to be limited to topics like major disasters.

Household E Husband: There isn’t much news about Brazil in Japanese media. Occasionally there’s some when something big happens (but not much). I think even Japanese people would like to get a bit more news about Brazil.

Household E Wife: To put it simply, Japanese people just don’t know much about Brazilian culture.

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28 See City of Hamamatsu International Affairs Division, *Hamamatsu-shi ni okeru Nanbeikei*. 
In the autumn of 2007, the Shizuoka prefectural government section promoting multicultural harmony conducted a survey among resident Brazilians in which the respondents were asked about their feelings of attachment to their home country and to where they lived in Japan. Of the total sample, 76 percent felt either “very” or “rather” attached to Brazil, 67 percent to Japan, and 69 percent to the region of Japan where they lived. It would seem, in other words, that they felt almost the same degree of fondness for Japan and for their local area as they did for their own country. That being the case, it is hardly surprising that they strongly wished Japanese people knew and understood more about them and about Brazil. More in-depth study is required on the connections between media and this multifaceted sense of identity among Brazilians in Japan.

CONCLUSION

From the foregoing account, it is fair to say that in Hamamatsu, a city with a large population of resident Brazilians, a distinctive media and information environment has taken shape through the activities of a number of media that provide services for or cover topics of particular relevance to Brazilians. That information environment, furthermore, has been subject to significant change amid the effects of the global economic slump triggered in late 2008. Against that backdrop, we would like to conclude with remarks from a number of perspectives on the significance and potentials of the city’s media and information arena.

Social Functions of Media

First, let us consider what social functions the various media fulfill. In addition to purposely Brazilian-oriented media like Radio Phoenix and International Press, Shizuoka shimbun and FM Haro! likewise provide services and conduct activities designed for an audience that includes not only Japanese people but Brazilians as well, and in that sense they can be said to have aspects of “ethnic media.”

Sociologist Shiramizu Shigehiko classifies ethnic media by function into three categories: (1) intragroup functions (promoting adaptation to the host society, providing information on daily necessities); (2) intergroup functions (bridge building between the ethnic group concerned and other groups within the host society); and (3) functions for social stability (conveying official

29 See Shizuoka-ken Tabunka-kyosei-shitsu, Shizuoka-ken gaikokujin rodo.
information, eliminating antagonism and friction). These categories can be applied to identify what social functions the Hamamatsu media fulfill.

In the case of Radio Phoenix, for example, while many of its diverse programs perform intragroup functions, those delivering information on behalf of local-government bodies have elements more of the intergroup and social stability roles. *International Press* is also multifunctional, serving not only intragroup but also intergroup purposes, such as informing its Brazilian readers about Japan and about Japanese people’s impressions of Brazilians. The long-running feature serialized in the *Shizuoka shimbun* likewise helped to deepen Japanese readers’ understanding of Brazil and Brazilians (intergroup function), and the Japanese-Portuguese bilingual programs on FM Haro! were also created around the core concept of fostering mutual understanding and exchange between Japanese and Brazilians (intergroup function).

In addition to the publications spotlighted in this article, other Portuguese-language newspapers and magazines available in Hamamatsu are well known to and widely read within the Brazilian community there, as are newsletters and magazines issued regularly by the city’s International Affairs Division and other local associations for international exchange. Furthermore, amid the marked spread of its use in recent years, the Internet is also now extensively utilized among Brazilians living in Hamamatsu, and indeed has become for them a vital means of access to news and information from Brazil.

The very existence of such numerous media fulfilling diverse social functions is an important prerequisite for society’s progress toward multiculturalism. Even among Brazilians, however, their media/information environments are bound to vary depending on whether they live in areas with a high concentration of their countrymen (like Hamamatsu) or not. Furthermore, other foreign nationals in Japan may be engendering quite different media/information environments under different sets of circumstances. To deepen our understanding of the role of broadcasting in society’s shift toward multiculturalism, further elucidation and analysis is needed to determine how media are utilized and received among and what functions they serve for foreign nationals in Japan, taking into account the structural details, informational content, reception trends, and so on not only of Brazilians in Hamamatsu but of various ethnic groups in various regions.

**Cross-media Tie-ups and Multicultural Public Media**

Another noteworthy finding from the survey was that, while all the media organizations played their own respective roles in the Hamamatsu media/information environment, some were involved in cross-media collaboration as well.
A classic example was seen in the tie-up between *Shizuoka shimbun* and Radio Phoenix whereby articles from the newspaper were translated into Portuguese, posted on the station’s website, and discussed in a follow-up radio program. The municipal and prefectural governments are also “senders” of various kinds of information, and their provision of information to media organizations such as Radio Phoenix and FM Haro!—in one case with government personnel being directly involved in program production—can also be regarded as a kind of cross-media tie-up. Furthermore, although not described in detail in the present article, practical collaboration is also evident among journalists; those working for Japanese newspapers such as *Shizuoka shimbun* and *Asahi shimbun* are in daily communication with counterparts at *International Press* and other Portuguese-language newspapers, and they all often deal with the same topics in their news stories. Within that milieu are various kinds of cooperative efforts at the ground level, such as when Japanese journalists arrange to open their press club to Brazilian journalists who normally would not be allowed entry.

In some respects, such collaborative activities have emerged as responses to the specific circumstances of the current global recession, as was evident in the present interview survey. Nonetheless, those efforts point intriguingly to the potential for creating a new sphere of public media in which information, language, and culture transcend existing media boundaries—or in other words, for creating a domain of multicultural public media.

Such a multicultural media domain could also help to resolve a problem peculiar to ethnic media. A situation in which media content is circulated in a closed, exclusive way for each ethnic minority and in which Brazilians and other foreign residents in Japan rely entirely on ethnic media as their daily information sources might only further isolate foreign nationals as social minorities within the host society. Collaboration between host-society media and ethnic media, and the creation thereby of a sphere of multicultural public media are also important in order to avoid “fostering bigoted nationalism on both sides of the ethnic divide and inhibiting the formation of public discourse”\(^\text{30}\) and to encourage foreign nationals’ “participation in and identification with the society through the media.”\(^\text{31}\) In that respect, it will be interesting

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to see whether or not the nascent cross-media collaborations in Hamamatsu take root in sustained and more fully developed form.

**Information Disparity**

The third point raised by the Hamamatsu case is the question of the kinds and quality of information that broadcasting—especially public broadcasting—should provide for foreign residents. The present survey indicated that the media and information environment surrounding the target Brazilian community had gaps at the level of information from the host society (the broad regional community and Japan as a whole), and the potential for such blanks to lead to serious “information disparity” between the Japanese and non-Japanese communities must not be overlooked.

In this context, the category of information from the host society includes important daily news stories and emergency and disaster-related information at times of earthquakes, typhoons, and so on. NHK, for example, broadcasts 10 to 15 minutes of Portuguese-language news every day on its Radio 2 service. In that case, however, the stories are chosen from news produced for overseas audiences. As Angelo Ishi of Musashi University points out, the selection of content should be based rather on whether or not it meets the needs of foreign nationals living in Japan. And in addition to radio services, it is also necessary to ascertain what kinds of TV services are needed.

**Reflecting Foreign Residents’ Views**

Finally, the relationship between media and foreign residents must be considered not only from the angle of simply providing them with information and services but also in terms of the journalistic question of how the mass media should reflect the circumstances and opinions of foreign residents in programs and newsprint. With resident aliens expected to continue to increase in number and settle for longer in Japan, the question of how they participate in and identify with Japanese society will be a social issue of increasing importance in the coming years. This will test the society’s “capacity for cultural dialogue” (*bunka no taiwaryoku*) that facilitates and encourages mutual under-

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33 See Angelo Ishi, “Kotoba no kabe o norikoete: Gaikokuseki jumin to joho teikyo o meguru tayo na mosaku no hitsuyosei to kanosei” [Overcoming the Language Barrier: The Need and Potential for Varied Trials in Information Exchange with Foreign Residents], *Toshi mondai kenkyu* 59:11 (2007).

34 Iwabuchi, “Gurobaruka to media bunka saiko.”
standing through the media. And if the media fails to fulfill that role, the result will be merely a continued increase in “invisible residents,” not the advent of a truly multicultural society.

The results of the present survey show that broadcasting, especially terrestrial broadcasting, is not playing a very significant role in the relationship between Japanese society and the Hamamatsu-area Brazilian community. Nonetheless, Brazilian residents are far from silent in their demands and expectations regarding broadcasting. Many of those interviewed for the survey expressed their wish that Japanese people would gain through broadcasting a better understanding of the circumstances and concerns of Brazilians in Japan and lamented the fact that too little news about day-to-day developments within Japan reached their ears.

One hardly need refer to the provisions of the Broadcast Law to make the point that, by reflecting the diverse perspectives and values of all sectors of society, broadcasting has a highly public role to play in creating a pluralistic arena of information and contributing to the healthy development of democracy. The emergence of multicultural social conditions like those in Hamamatsu underscores the need for broadcasting to include the views and values of non-Japanese residents of Japan among the diversity of perspectives that it strives to reflect, and also points to ways in which collaboration between broadcasting and other media could contribute to the formation of a more pluralistic and multicultural public sphere.

(Translated by Dean Robson)

35 See Kajita et al., Kao no mienai teijuka.