

The rise and fall of the literary and
audiovisual production by Brazilian
Nikkeijin migrants in Japan – A focus on
the role of ethnic media

Angelo Ishi
Musashi University

Quiz: Guess who was the owner of this Brazilian magazine published in UK in 1990s?



EURO-BRASIL PRESS



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2 a 8 de julho de 1998

NOTÍCIAS DO BRASIL

Reino Unido: £1.40
Periodicidade semanal

Brasil está entre os melhores do mundo

Artilheiros da Copa

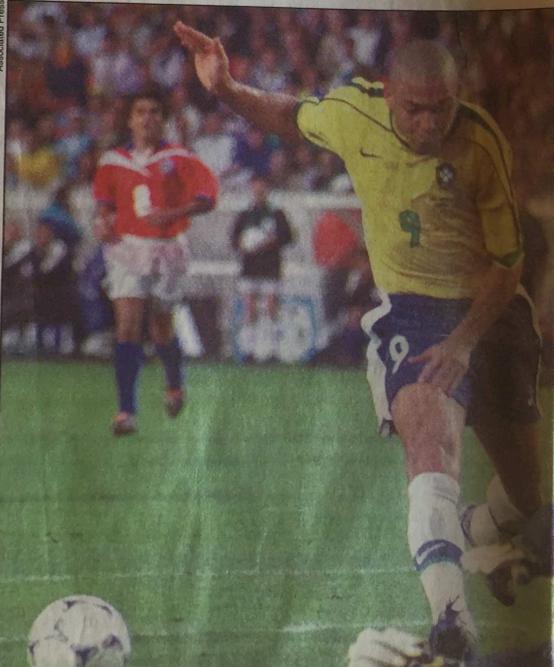
Nome	País	Gols
1- Vieri	Itália	5
2- Batistuta	Argentina	4
Hernandez	México	4
Salas	Chile	4
5- Bierhoff	Alemanha	3
César Sampaio	Brasil	3
Henry	França	3
Klinsmann	Alemanha	3
Ronaldinho	Brasil	3
Bebeto	Brasil	2
Rivaldo	Brasil	1

*30 / 06

ATENÇÃO

Informamos a todos os nossos leitores que o **EURO-BRASIL PRESS** está suspendendo suas atividades na Europa temporariamente. Esta será a última edição do jornal.

Maiores informações




Com a goleada de 4 a 1 no Chile, no dia 27, o Brasil já está entre as oito melhores seleções da Copa da França, ao lado da Itália, França, Dinamarca, Alemanha e Holanda. Os outros dois lugares ainda seriam disputados pela Inglaterra, Argentina, Romênia e Croácia, em jogos disputados no dia 30. O atacante Ronaldinho, que marcou dois gols na partida contra o Chile, realizou sua melhor partida nessa Copa.

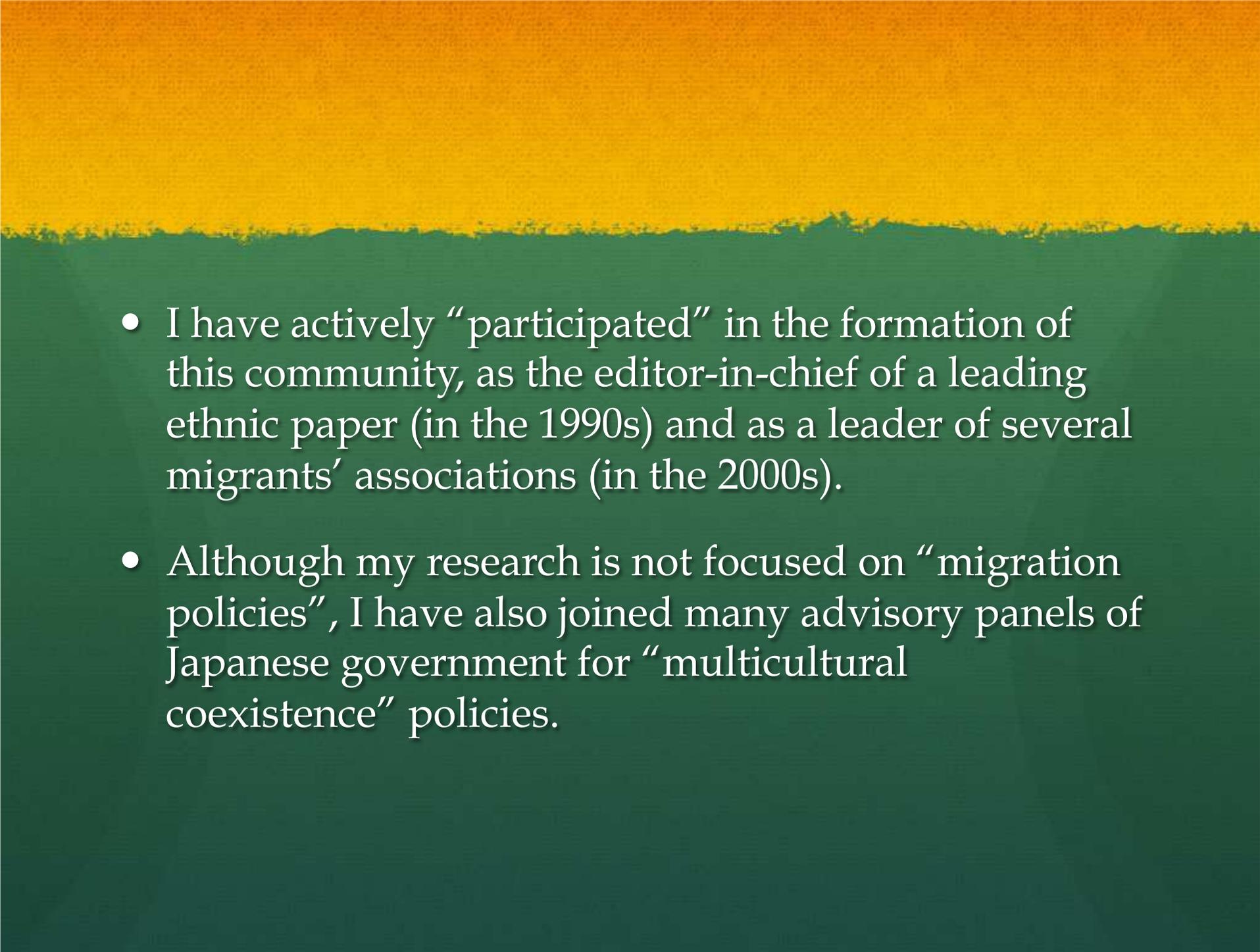
No dia 28, o técnico Zagallo confirmou que o time para o jogo contra a Dinamarca, marcado para o dia 3 de julho, pelas quartas-de-final, será o mesmo que começou contra o Chile. Zagallo disse que gostou do Brasil contra os chilenos, principalmente no segundo tempo. Ele elogiou ainda as atuações de César Sampaio e Rivaldo e afirmou que tirou Bebeto no segundo tempo só porque "ele estava cansado".

César Sampaio, aliás, foi uma das grandes estrelas do jogo. Para o técnico Zagallo, Sampaio teve uma atuação perfeita e completa diante dos chilenos. "Não foi só pelos gols: foi pelo posicionamento em campo, pela forma como subiu ao ataque", disse o treinador. Líder do grupo religioso da seleção brasileira, César Sampaio disse que comemorou todos os seus gols da mesma

- Euro-Brasil Press, launched in 1997, was one of the earliest media for Brazilian migrants in Europe. It was older than the euro currency, and thus it was priced in 15 currencies (circulated in 15 countries).
- Its last edition circulated on July 1998. What almost nobody knows is that this media enterprise was owned by a Japanese-Brazilian migrant living near Tokyo. The migrant was the founder of *International Press*, one of the first newspapers for Brazilians in Japan. The newspaper's editorial concept, its investment capital, and even part of the staff came from Japan.
- This is just one example of how invisible the dynamics between migrants living in different countries can be if we fail to have a transnational overview of migrants living in Japan, the United Kingdom, and the United States.

Perhaps the “oldest” fieldworker about Brazilian Nikkeijin in Japan?

- Ethnographic studies of Japanese-Brazilians in Brazil and of Brazilian migrants in Japan -- most of them have Japanese descent (*Nikkeijin*).
- Since 1990, I have engaged in long-term interactions (almost 30 years in many cases) and conducted hundreds of semi-structured interviews with individuals, associations, government bodies, and NGOs in cities with a significant presence of Brazilians.
- In early 90s, I interviewed all the “firsts” of this community: the first Brazilian shop, the first Brazilian newspaper etc. I have been particularly interested on “ethnic media” and cultural production of these migrants.

- 
- I have actively “participated” in the formation of this community, as the editor-in-chief of a leading ethnic paper (in the 1990s) and as a leader of several migrants’ associations (in the 2000s).
 - Although my research is not focused on “migration policies”, I have also joined many advisory panels of Japanese government for “multicultural coexistence” policies.

Joined the compilation of policy papers related to Multicultural
Coexistence (Ministry of Administration 2005, Ministry of
Foreign Affairs 2010)

多文化共生の推進に関する研究会
報告書

～地域における多文化共生の推進に向けて～

2006年3月

総務省

「外国人を受け入れる地域社会の意識啓発に関する提言」

2010年2月20日

外務省, 神奈川県, 国際移住機関 (IOM) 主催

「外国人の受入れと社会統合のための国際ワークショップ」

テーマ1分科会

Also studied how migrants perceived the “Voluntary assisted-return program”

Also wrote a paper about how migrants perceived and misread the conditions for the “Voluntary assisted-return program” in 2009. (At the time, more than 300 thousand Brazilians were living and working in Japan. The global financial crisis, known as the “Lehman Shock”, hit Japan and thousands of Brazilian factory workers were laid off. The government, then, instituted an emergency package aimed at supporting *Nikkeijin*, which included a voluntary assisted-return program).

I tried to capture “migration policies” from the point of view of migrants.

A lot of papers in Japanese, but only a few works in English...

- Ishi, A. (2003a). Searching for Home, Wealth, Pride, and “Class”: Japanese-Brazilians in the Land of Yen. Lesser, J. (ed.). *Searching for Home Abroad: Japanese Brazilians and Transnationalism*. Duke: Duke University Press. 75-102.
- Ishi, A. (2003b). Transnational Strategies by Japanese-Brazilian Migrants in the age of IT. Goodman, R., Peach, C. *et al.* (eds) *Global Japan: The experience of Japan's new immigrant and overseas communities*. London: RoutledgeCurzon.
- Ishi, A. (2008). Between Pride and Prejudice: Japanese-Brazilians Migrants in the “land of yen and the ancestors”. Willis, D., Murphy-Shiguematsu, S. (eds). *Transcultural Japan: At the borderlands of race, gender, and identity*. London: Routledge Curzon. 113-134.

Against the monotonous “They are suffering an ethnic identity crisis…”

- Many scholars have addressed the issue of the integration of Brazilians in Japan (there are dozens of Japanese scholars, but in English, Tsuda is the most famous). However, I have pointed out that many scholars have asked “wrong”, biased questions such as “Did you suffer from being considered a Japanese in Brazil and a foreigner in Japan?”
- I have challenged these quite monotonous “Brazilian versus Japanese” identity discussions (“ethnic” identity crisis in a strict sense), as many of my interviewees revealed themselves as much more concerned with a “social class dilemma” and a deep loss of “professional identity”: from middle class in Brazil to the lowest class in Japan, from white-collar jobs in Brazil to blue-collar work in Japan.

Research interests:
Brazilians in Japan
vs.
Brazilians in the world

- Since 2008, and more notably in the 2010s, I observed an increase in the transnational connections between Brazilians in Japan and Brazilians who migrated to other countries. I also found that some events and agents (the term is used in a wide sense to include individuals, companies, and government bodies) were recurrent and overlapping in this process of mutual integration.

Research interests:
Brazilians in Japan
vs.
Brazilians in the world

- These transnational connections become stronger not only in the sphere of political activities but also in virtually all other social sectors: information exchange, business partnerships, cultural events, artistic productions...
- Participant observation at key diasporic events in USA, Spain, Portugal, Japan, Australia and... UK!
The goal was to map the flow of information, influence, and intersection among these events and agents.



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28/031



- One could read some of my findings in the following paper:
- Ishi, Angelo. (2017) Integrating a New Diaspora: Transnational Events by Brazilians in Japan, the United States, and Europe. Contini, R. and Herold, M. (Eds.). *Living in Two Homes: Integration and Education of Transnational Migrants in a Globalized World*. Emerald Books (201-221).
- I tried to show that there are vibrant interactions besides the "home country" versus "host country" dichotomy.

Table 1 Diasporic events by Brazilians in the world

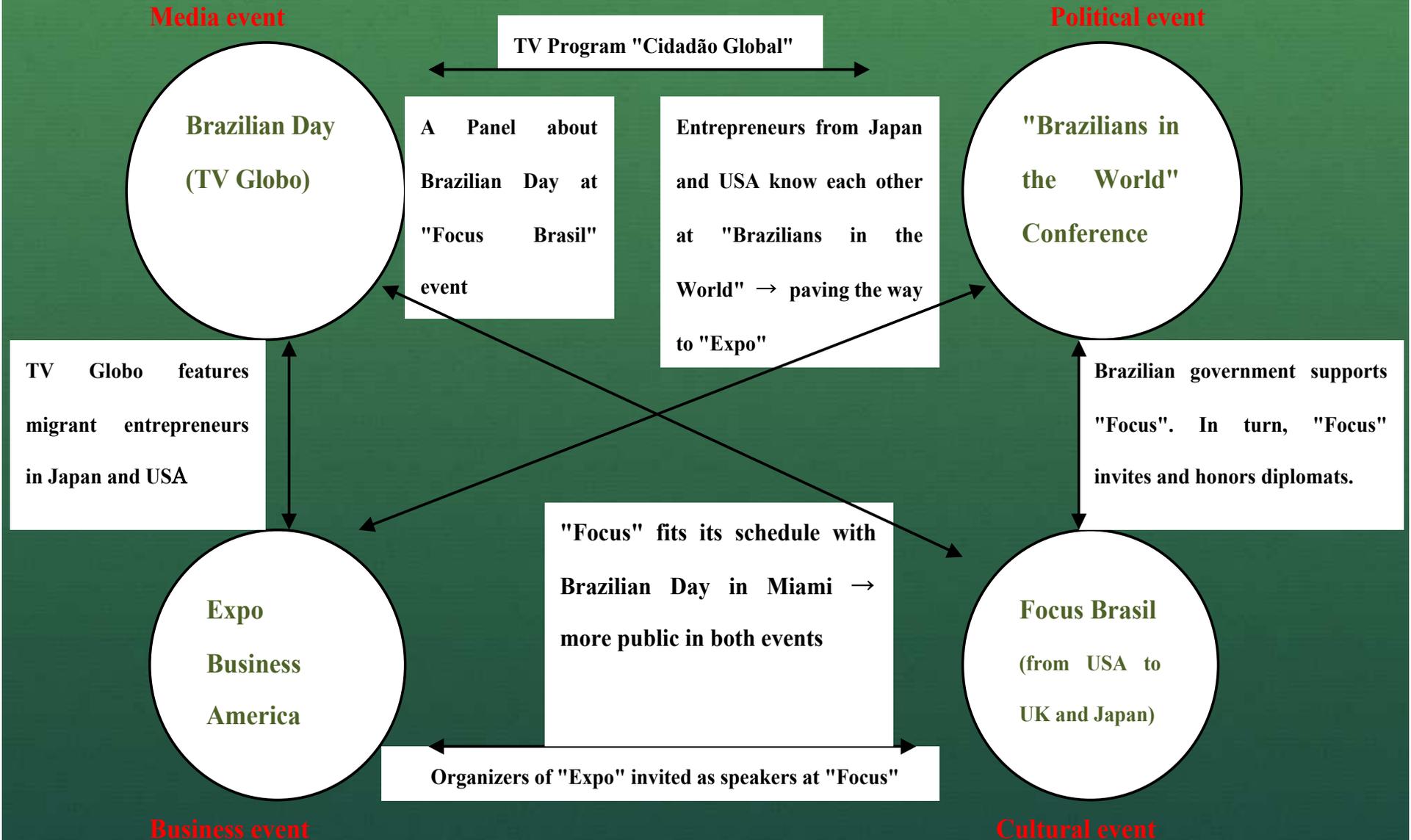
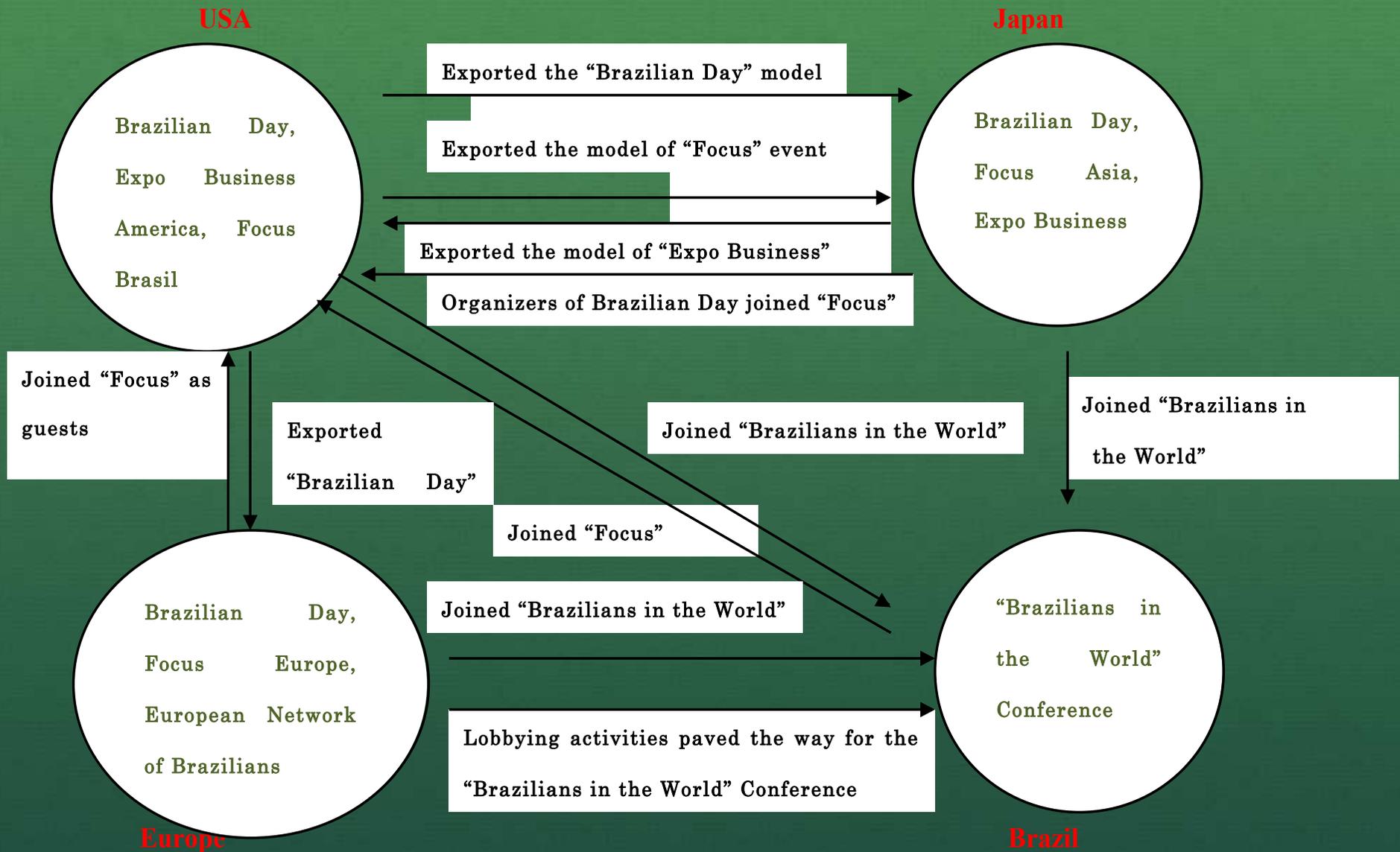


Table 2 Diasporic events by Brazilians in the world – A geographic perspective



Brazilian media in Japan

vs.

Brazilian media in UK

- Two significant differences:
- 1) In Japan, more than in any country including UK, the Brazilian ethnic media had an extraordinary “superdiversity” (please forgive me for using this term out of context···!).
- 2) In UK, Brazilian ethnic papers did not have a role as publishers of literary books by migrants. In Japan, ethnic media has played an important role not only providing space for literary attempts in its pages, but also sponsoring literary books by Brazilians.



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fabricantes já oferecem ou planejam oferecer com essa tecnologia

Circuito Paralelo - Sonho de verão - por Renato Ribeiro

Fórmula 1 - Sorte dá a Nelsinho primeiro pódio na F-1 - por Tatiana Cunha

...A magazine for karaoke fans...

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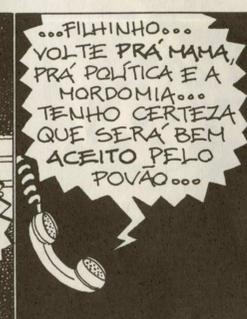
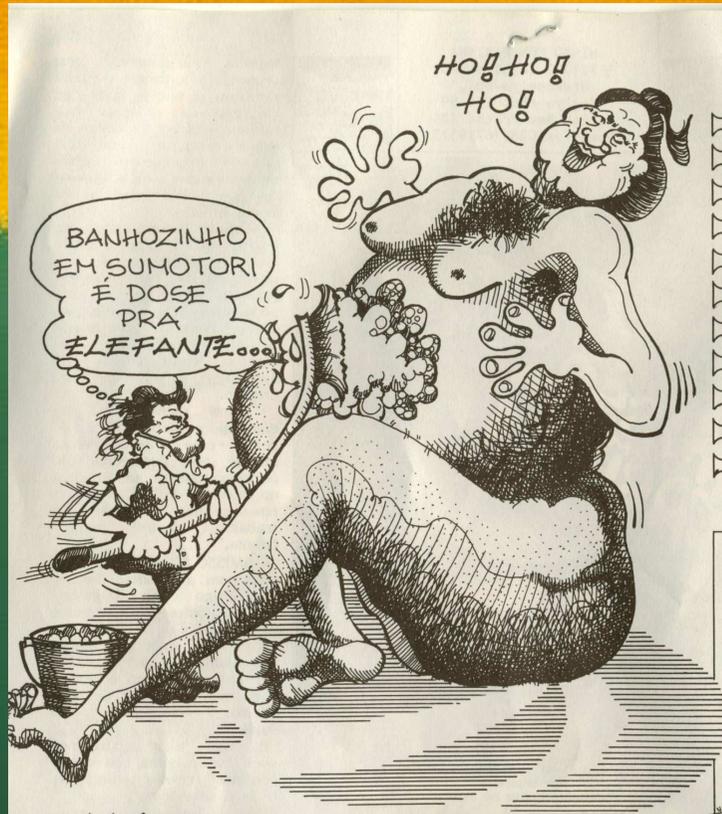
...And a highly specialized magazine,
by/for Brazilians in Japan...





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quadrinhos do
brasileiro
no Japão
Como aprender
japonês de
uma forma
descontraída



Experiências de um Ex-Militante

O Chico, manda-lhe um grande abraço.
Beijos e saudades de sempre sua...
Zelie.



From a Japanese to a Portuguese word

- The term “Dekassegui” (working abroad for money) was known only among Japanese-Brazilians, but then this word was incorporated into the vocabulary of Brazilian mass media, and, finally, in the Portuguese language dictionary Houaiss as “Decasségui”.

Ethnic media as a producer of “migrants’ literature”

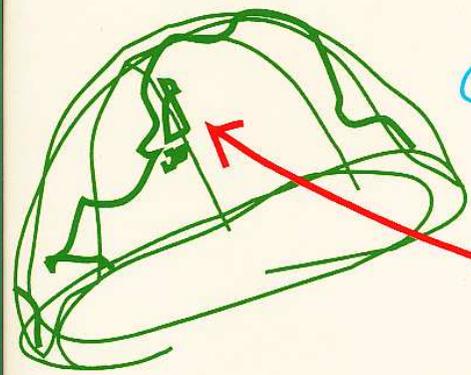
- There is a strong correlation between the Portuguese ethnic media in Japan and the development of the literature by Brazilian migrants. The consolidation of the ethnic media in the early nineties paved the way for literary attempts by Brazilians in Japan.
- It is not a coincidence that almost all authors of fiction as well as non-fiction books based on their experience as migrants in Japan were also regular contributors to ethnic papers, either as columnists or as illustrators and comic designers.

- In 1995, the first Brazilian commercial ethnic paper, "International Press" published a book entitled "A quebra dos mitos" (Breaking myths). It was a compilation of letters sent by its readers. And, significantly, it included many poems, in which migrants described their feelings including *saudade* (a Portuguese term that means "nostalgia") towards the home country, the sense of loneliness they experienced in Japan. As for the letters, they were compiled by 6 themes: Cultural Shock, Prejudice and Discrimination, etc.
- In 1996, it published the Japanese translation of this book, with the title 期待はずれのニッポン, meaning "The disappointing Japan".

- The rival newspaper “Tudo Bem” held a literary competition and published a bilingual book (Japanese and Portuguese): “Dekassegui -- Os exilados econômicos - A realização de um sonho” (“Dekassegui, the economic exiles - Getting a dream”), and in Japanese, “Subarashiki Yume - Dekassegui” (“Dekassegui, the wonderful dream”).
- Here, we can trace an interesting parallel between the two editorial projects (International Press vs. Tudo Bem): “The break of myths” and “The disappointing Japan” reflected the real feelings of the newspaper's readers, who suffered all kinds of disappointments in Japan.
- On the other hand, the Tudo Bem book defines this migration as a positive experience (“a wonderful dream”!), probably because the texts compiled in the *Tudo Bem* book are not letters, but works induced by a “Literary contest”.



南米ブラジル人からのメッセージ
素晴らしき夢・出稼ぎ

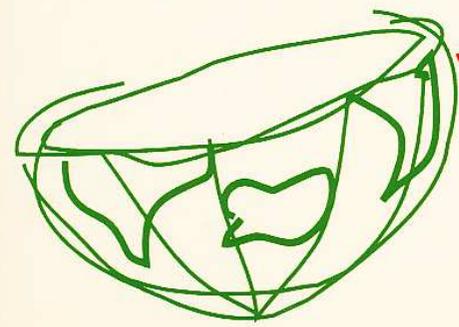


DEKASSEGUI-OS EXILADOS ECONÔMICOS

A REALIZAÇÃO DE UM SONHO

CONCURSO LITERÁRIO JORNAL TUDO BEM

企画 サイ・メディア研究会
パトリモニオトーキョウ



柏書房

1990s

1994 IPC “A quebra dos mitos – O fenômeno de kassegui através de relatos pessoais”

1995 『期待はずれのニッポン – 投書に見る在日ブラジル人の声』(Versão japonesa)

1995 Jornal Tudo Bem “Dekassegui – Os exilados econômicos”

1997 Silvio Sam “Sonhos que de cá segui”

1998 Agenor Kakazu “Crônicas – De um garoto que também amava os Beatles e os Rolling Stones”

1999 Reimei Yoshioka & Silvio Sam “Dekassegui com os pés no chão... No Japão”

2000s

2000 Geraldo Nascimento “Japão: a soma dos resultados”.

2000~ Edweine Loureiro “Sonhador Sim Senhor” e outros

2002 Morimasa Miyazato “More no Japão”

2005 Silvio Sam “Confrontos & Conflitos”

2008 Yoshiro Akiyama “Todo dekassegui é um Urashima Taro”

2011 Evandro Raiz Ribeiro “Não deixe o sol brilhar em mim”

2010s: Without ethnic papers, no books?

- Right after the global financial crisis, both *International Press* and *Jornal Tudo Bem* suspended their publication.
- Very few books published in 2010s, which coincides with the decline of ethnic papers.

- The Web media (cyberspace) was not an appropriate environment for fictional works such as novels and poems.
- And it seems that the "Dekasegi Literature" as a genre has come to an end, as migrants are avoiding the use of the word "Dekasegi".

The Declaration of Yokohama: “The age of decasségui has ended -- We chose staying in Japan”.

conveniência e correios
ipc digital

Conselho de Cidadãos de Tóquio decreta: acabou a era decasségui

Nacional por Marcelo Maio - 03/10/2015



Crédito: Divulgação

YOKOHAMA (IPC Digital) – O Conselho de Cidadãos de Tóquio se reuniu em Yokohama, nesse sábado (3), e aprovou um importante documento intitulado “Declaração de Yokohama”.

A declaração proclama o fim da era decasségui. Agora, a ideia é enviar esse documento para os governos do Brasil e do Japão. Sua íntegra pode ser conferida abaixo:

Declaração de Yokohama

“Acabou a era decasségui – Escolhemos ficar no Japão”

*Acabou a era decasségui - Escolhemos ficar no Japão**

Completaram-se, em junho deste ano, exatos 25 anos desde a implementação da reforma na Lei de Imigração Japonesa, que entrou em vigor em 1990.

Como se sabe, esta Lei permitiu que os estrangeiros “nikkeis” (descendentes de japoneses) entrassem no Japão com vistos que não previam limitações no tipo de atividade exercida. Essas atividades poderiam incluir a visita aos parentes e, eventualmente, exercer trabalhos sem qualificação para custear a estadia no país.

Embora haja controvérsias sobre a intenção ou não do governo japonês em usar esta reforma legal para atrair nikkeis estrangeiros como mão-de-obra dos setores automobilístico e de eletroeletrônicos, entre outros, não há margem para dúvidas de que isso desencadeou uma onda migratória de sul-americanos – especialmente de brasileiros – para o Japão. E este fenômeno – assim como cada pessoa que aderiu a este movimento migratório – passou a ser denominado de “dekassegui” (e mais tarde, grafado como “decasségui” nos dicionários de língua portuguesa)

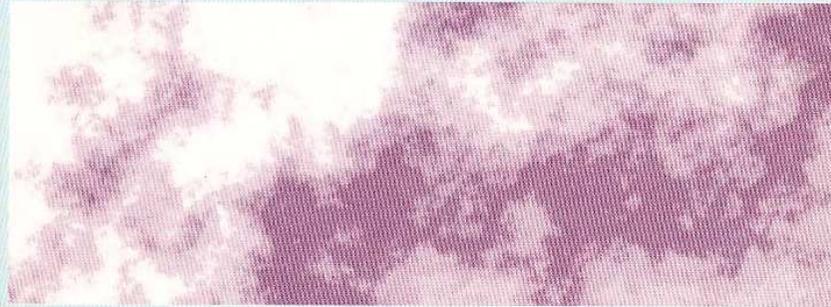
Como se sabe, a palavra “dekassegui” significa literalmente “sair para ganhar dinheiro” e costuma ser usada para denominar os trabalhadores temporários e sazonais, seja no âmbito doméstico ou transnacional. Além disso, este termo carrega uma conotação negativa, associando o indivíduo e/ou grupo a uma imagem de pobreza e falta de compromisso com o local onde foi trabalhar – no caso de migrante transnacional, o seu país de origem.

Decididamente, este não é o caso dos migrantes da rota Brasil-Japão.



silvio sam

**SONHOS
QUE
DE CÁ SEGUI**



YSAYAMA
EDITORA

“Sonhos que de cá segui”, by Silvio Sam

- Silvio Sam was a regular contributor to ethnic papers in Japan and back in Brazil.
- This is a fictional work based mostly on actual events and real people. One might note that the author plays with the word “dekassegui” (“de cá segui” means “I have left his place and gone somewhere”) in the title of the book (which could be translated as “Dreams that I pursued from here”).

The book “Sonhos que de cá segui” includes an escathological lyric...

- The main character sings the song “Dekokossegui”, which could be translated as “Deka-shit-segui”:
- Shit, shit, shit, shit...
- I feel better now, alleviated because I have unloaded
- But one minute ago, I confess I even cried
- The impression I’ve had was the same of our work here in Japan
- Where we work hard, with bad smell and dirty hands
- And we have to eat that cold food
- I’m longing for that food my mother used to prepare
- So I want to go back to Brazil
- And send everything to the la, ra, ra, ra...

CRÔNICAS

*De um garoto que também amava
os Beatles e os Rolling Stones*



日本 ブラジル

AGENOR KAKAZU

Crônicas - De um garoto que também amava os Beatles e os Rolling Stones

- “Chronicles -- By a boy that also loved the Beatles and the Rolling Stones.”
- The author, Agenor Kakazu, was a columnist at the weekly newspaper Jornal Tudo Bem. The book is a compilation of his columns.

MORE NO JAPÃO



MEMÓRIAS & TIRADAS DE EFEITOS

JAPÃO: A SOMA DOS RESULTADOS



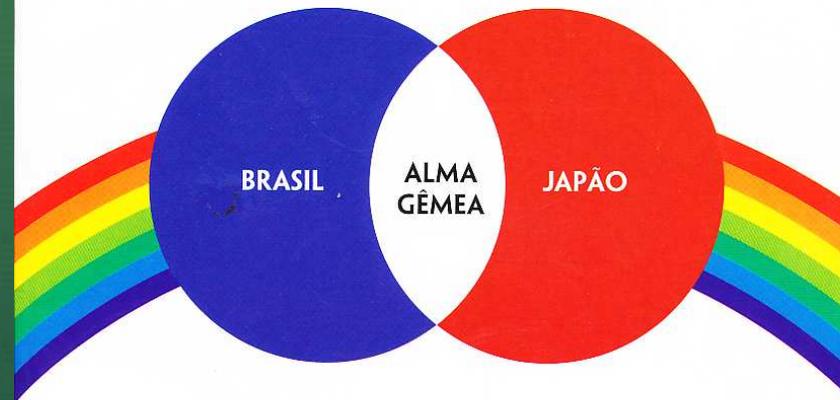
"Antes de voltar ao Brasil não
deixe de ler este livro"

LT MEKA

GERALDO NASCIMENTO

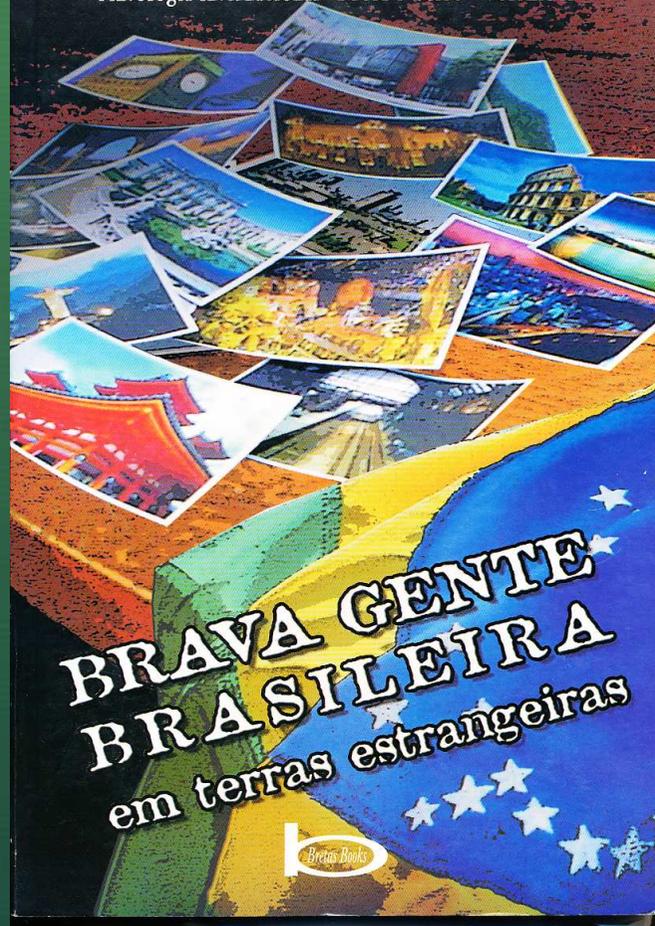
Every Dekassegui is a Urashima Taro
(the famous folk tale of a fisherman who gets lost in a
far place and gets old when goes back

**TODO DEKASSEGUI É
UM URASHIMA TARO**



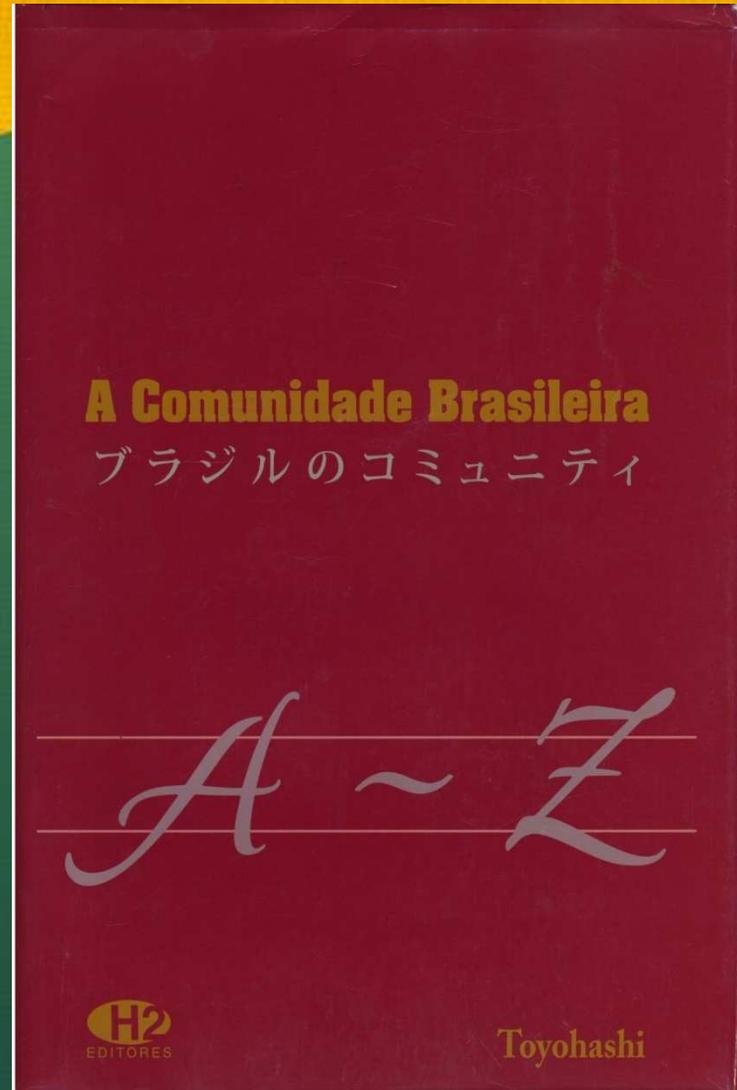
YOSHIRO AKIYAMA

Antologia Internacional - Prosa e Verso - Volume II



Bretas Books

An instigating book edited by
a Brazilian migrant in Aichi Prefecture



The Akimura family



The Hokama family (three-generation family)



The Hamada family (a couple and... A pet!)



... and The Hotoshi family (the editor of this book)



A provocative, perverting TV drama produced by Brazilians in Japan

- A one episode original drama produced by IPC TV, the first Brazilian TV channel in Japan, featured an improbable plot: a Japanese white-collar, high-skilled worker lost his job due to the recession, and was deeply depressed, but he was saved by a group of Brazilian blue-collar workers that helped him being hired as a factory worker! (Wow!).
- Watching this program might have been quite cathartic and enjoyable for many Brazilians. As I stated before, “class” is a key word for these migrants. Clearly, this TV fiction drama perverts/inverts the power relationship between Japanese and Brazilians: who is the hero and who is the victim, who is the supporter and who is being assisted, who is in need of any kind of job and who hires this job.
- Instead of *reporting* the reality, it is reordering it.

The web media and the rise of a new way of audiovisual production

The rise of the ethnic web media enabled a new kind of audiovisual production and circulation.

“O Outro Lado do Mundo”, directed by Roberto Maxwell, was produced by *Alternativa*, a biweekly free magazine that has also the website *Alternativa Online*.

It is a retrospective of the 25 years of history of Brazilian migrants in Japan, in 9 episodes. It was launched on their website, but now it is available for free on YouTube.

Again, the ethnic media is being a platform for a consistent self-representation of migrants, which helps them to voice a counter-discourse against the stereotypical portraying by the Japanese mass media.

Other audiovisual productions

- There are other interesting audiovisual productions, such as:
- → A documentary series (5 episodes) about Brazilian migrants that aim to be professional martial arts athletes in Japan. It was also aired at Alternativa Online, and is now on Youtube.
- → A high school student (Luma Matsubara) that produced the self-documentary “Hyojon-E”. She is a Japanese-Brazilian, but the documentary is all in Korean language, as it takes the form of a video letter for a Korean school girl.

Concluding remarks

- In Japan, more than in other countries of destination of Brazilians, the ethnic papers have played an active role in the fostering of literary production by these migrants.
- The lack of the printed media (ethnic papers) weakened the literature by Brazilians in Japan.
- There are so few books written by *dekasegi* that one could cast doubt on the existence of a "dekassegui literature" as a genre. The most consistent work is "Sonhos que de cá segui". The lyrics of the songs written by "dekassegui" musicians are also worth of attention, as they reveal how migrants have (re)interpreted their experience in Japan.
- On the other hand, the rise of digital press opened a new wave of documentary film production and circulation.
- Regardless of the device and the platform, ethnic media remains a powerful supporter for the self-expression of migrants, not only a source of news and information.

“Kaishão”

lyrics by Rodolpho “Bilu” Marques

- Imported car, illusion of a miserable man
- He buys a used cellular phone
- And his fashion is like a playboy...
- Just wait for the day I'll go back to Brazil
- And then send all those guys
- To their “fucking mother”
- (Excerpt from the song “Kaishão”)



Jornal Tudo Bem

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THANK YOU!

- Contact:

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Brazilians in Japan : “Nikkeijin”

- Brazilians used to be the third largest ethnic community in Japan. Now they are the 5th (they were surpassed by Philippine and Vietnamese migrants). Brazilians in Japan are a distinct group among Brazilian migrants, as most of them are of Japanese descent.
- This is due to the migration policy of Japanese government, which allowed a long-term visa only for people who can prove Japanese roots.
- In this presentation, I call them Nikkeijin (ethnic Japanese).