

JAPANESE BRAZILIANS IN HAMAMATSU CITY
An Ethnographic Study on the Second Generation

Master Thesis

Daniele Arantes Nakashima

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Supervisors

Prof. Dr. Dorle Dracklé, University of Bremen
Dr. Margrit E. Kaufmann, University of Bremen

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Submitted by: Daniele Arantes Nakashima
E-Mail: daniele.a.nakashima@uni-bremen.de

Abstract: At the end of the 1980s, the Brazilians of Japanese descent were officially allowed to enter Japan as unskilled workers, solving the country's labor shortages. Since then, as a new ethnic minority group, they are facing many issues in this host society. Despite the vast research on this ethnic return migration, known as the *Dekasegi Movement*, little is known about its young generation. Therefore, the purpose of this ethnographic study is the analysis of the current situation of the Japanese Brazilians in Hamamatsu City with a focus on their second generation. Fieldwork was conducted in order to portray this minority group from different perspectives. The empirical findings demonstrate the way these young people have been perceived and presented in this transnational context, confirming their stigmatization as the children of immigrants. Moreover, such a negative perception has influenced the way they see themselves, thereby limiting their perspectives, and creating many uncertainties and challenges for the future. In conclusion, this study suggests further research on the meaning of "Japaneseness", which still reinforces narratives of pure blood and nationality, dominating public consciousness and influencing not only views and attitudes towards foreigners, but also the formulation, analysis, and review of migration policies in Japan.

Keywords: Japanese Brazilians; Second Generation of Brazilians; Ethnic Minority; Transnational Relation; Ethnic Return Migration

The 'beyond' is neither a new horizon, nor a leaving behind of the past.... Beginnings and endings may be the sustaining myths of the middle years; but in the *fin de siècle*, we find ourselves in the moment of transit where space and time cross to produce complex figures of difference and identity, past and present, inside and outside, inclusion and exclusion. For there is a sense of disorientation, a disturbance of direction, in the 'beyond': ... here and there ... back and forth.

– Homi K. Bhabha, *Locations of Culture*

For the amazing women in my life:

Sônia

Tsumako, in memoriam

Maria Augusta, in memoriam

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Maps



Maps of Japan, Shizuoka Prefecture and Hamamatsu City

Source: http://hamamatsu-daisuki.net/lan/en/img/fig_map.png [Accessed: 15 June 2017]

Prologue

After exactly forty-nine days on board of the passenger ship *Santos-Maru*, Tsumako Misonobu, a 12-year-old Japanese girl, arrived with her aunt and uncle at the Port of Santos in Brazil at the end of July 1926. Her last good memory of spring in Japan was probably the floating white and pink cherry-blossoms' petals that covered the ground in her neighborhood and colored the rivers that cross the countryside of Yamaguchi Prefecture – a fleeting moment, a few months before her departure. This rite of passage was this time not only marked by the natural change of the season, very common and celebrated in Japan, but it was also a painful farewell. Tsumako was obliged to leave her parents and her twin sister behind in an impoverished country suffering from hunger. Actually, she did not decide to leave her country; she was too young and dependent for taking such a decision. As a young girl, she was “lent” to her relatives, a young couple without children, in order to enable them to emigrate, since the strict immigration policy in Brazil considered only families with at least three members for signing contracts with coffee plantations, where they dreamed to make their fortune through their hard work in the fields and later return to their homeland. As part of this family's agreement, she should be sent back home after six years, the moment she turns eighteen – a promise that for many reasons was never fulfilled. At the age of eighteen, she met a Japanese migrant from Fukushima, a former artist who later became her husband. Together they started a family in the countryside of the state of São Paulo. To Japan, she had never returned and her language was the only living memory of home.

Tsumako and Kiyoshi Nakajima had twelve children together, and the youngest one is my father, who was born on Brazilian soil and, despite his ethnic roots, was registered as a Brazilian national. Such a personal story that together with more than a hundred thousand of similar migration accounts represent the beginning of a transnational relation between Japan and Brazil, which started earlier in 1908, when the vessel *Kasato-Maru* reached the Port of Santos for the first time bringing 781 Japanese immigrants¹. For over a century these Japanese immigrants and their offspring saw themselves not only

¹ For detailed accounts, see Roth (2002).

as an important part of the development of a country, far away from home, but also as the originators of a new blended culture: the Japanese Brazilians.

In 1998, after a twenty-four hour flight, I took my first steps in the land of the rising sun. My first impression was not the exotic one. Japan was not the country with *gueixas*, women in *kimono* walking around *Zen* Gardens. A few days after my arrival, I saw myself inside a huge industrial complex, wearing a blue-collar uniform and learning as fast as I could to screw down and assemble small parts on a production line of air conditioning equipment. Working ten hours a day, standing up and doing routine repetitive work, I saw myself as Charlie Chaplin playing his role as a factory worker in *Modern Times* (1936), the film that I watched at school and discussed with classmates mostly about the alienation of people during the Great Depression era. Amazed to see another face of modernity, within industrial production, I had to cope with a new language, as well as with cultural and social rules based on hierarchical relationships. At that time, I was eighteen years old and part of a migration flow that was later called *Dekasegi Movement*². As my parents and sisters, I left my country with the hope for a better future. My destination was neither Yamaguchi, nor Fukushima Prefecture, the birthplaces of my grandparents, but Hamamatsu City, in western Shizuoka Prefecture, where a couple of years of work in factories would provide us a more stable life back in Brazil. As Brazilians with Japanese roots, we were eligible to apply for a special visa and live in the country of our ancestors, in our “ethnic homeland”. Since then, Hamamatsu became our new home, the hometown of thousands of Japanese Brazilians.

My first experience in Japan was shorter than I planned and shorter than the three-year average period for a *dekasegi*, a temporary migrant worker, but it was not the last. Since the economic situation in Brazil had not improved, when I was back, and with a lack of opportunities for young people, after my graduation from the university I decided to emigrate “permanently” to Japan with the purpose of starting a new life, working for the Brazilian community, which had become the biggest foreign community from outside Asia. An interesting aspect: the biggest foreign community as the new ethnic minority group in Japan.

For a consecutive period of six years working as a teacher inside a private Brazilian school in Hamamatsu, I could grasp the struggles of a new generation. Children,

² See Tsuda (2003a), Lesser (2003), and Ishi (2003).

adolescents, and young adults constitute nowadays the second generation of Japanese Brazilians in Japan – people in diaspora³, who became part of a foreign community, trying to find a place in a very conservative country.

³ The term “diaspora” used here follows the idea of “dual diaspora” used by Linger (2003). According to Linger, “whether or not Japanese Brazilians are a diaspora is, ultimately, a political and personal issue for certain actors – among them Japanese politicians and Japanese Brazilians themselves. ... Perhaps we could characterize Japanese Brazilians as a dual diaspora, suspended between two possible homelands” (Linger 2003: 211).

Note on Terminology and Names

As I have promised anonymity, all the names presented in this ethnographic study to identify people whom I formally interviewed are pseudonyms, except for key persons in the public service. Personal names used in the acknowledgments, prologue, and epilogue, as well as in the photo captions, are real names. Although in Japan proper names are customarily written surname first, I have decided to write all the proper names in this study in the Brazilian style, given names followed by surnames. Japanese words and proper names of places are written in their Anglicized form, principally because they are already familiar to Anglophone readers.

In spite of the fact that the Japanese government, as well as the national and international mass media, commonly use the terms *Nikkeijin* referring to the Japanese emigrants and their descendants abroad, and *dekasegi* referring to some of them who temporary work in Japan, the term *Japanese Brazilian* is used throughout this study to identify the minority group in Japan formed by Brazilian nationals of Japanese descent, their spouses and children up to the fourth generation. My intention is neither classifying and labeling this group nor trying to generalize its ethnicity, mainly because this ambiguous ethnic terminology is very complex and based on their shifting identities in Brazil and Japan.

Since most of the interviews were conducted in Portuguese and a few in Japanese, all translations into English are mine, unless otherwise noted. Only one interview was conducted in English and its passages are presented in the original version.

Introduction

Hamamatsu, August 2015.

On the way to the Brazilian school, where I would start the first phase of my fieldwork, walking through narrowed and empty streets in the heart of the Takaoka district, in Hamamatsu City, I stopped and closed my eyes for a while just to hear the singing of the cicadas announcing the heat of summer and making sure that I was back in Japan.

From the moment I arrived again there, I got in contact with many of my acquaintances, most by former students and colleagues at *Escola Alcance*, the Brazilian school where I used to work and where I was allowed to conduct participant-observation and some interviews. The first and biggest challenge I faced there was to (re)locate myself in this context as an ethnographer, focusing my attention on details, statements and features which would otherwise have passed unnoticed in the bustle of everyday life.

In the morning on Tuesdays, before the classes begin, all the students, teachers and employees at school had to gather themselves around a big Brazilian flag that hung on the wall in the recreation room, in order to sing together the Brazilian national anthem⁴, such a nationalist tradition that was probably a way to bring the students closer to a place they learn to belong, a place they learn to call home(land), a place of their national citizenship, but also a place that most of them have never stepped foot in. In the front line, wearing white and blue school uniforms, were the youngest children aged four to eight, mostly the ones who were born in Japan. With their right hands pressed on their chest, they sang the verses they have learned by heart:

“Among a thousand others, / you are, Brazil, / Oh beloved Motherland! / You are the gentle mother of this soil's children, / Beloved Motherland, / Brazil!”⁵



⁴ In 2009, a Brazilian federal law required that all schools, from the first to the ninth grade of the public and private elementary and junior high schools, play the national anthem at least once a week. See Teles (2009).

⁵ “*Terra adorada / Entre outras mil / És tu, Brasil, / Ó Pátria amada! / Dos filhos deste solo / És mãe gentil, / Pátria amada, / Brasil!*”. Verses of the Brazilian National Anthem (1831) were written by Joaquim Osório Duque Estrada, and composed by Francisco Manuel da Silva. The English version was written by Érika Batista.

These students, children and adolescents of Brazilian nationality, are part of the new generation of Brazilians in Japan, the second generation of Japanese Brazilian migrants. Although they have commonly been depicted as part of an “ethnic return migration”⁶ in scholarly literature (Conway & Potter 2009: 1; Tsuda 2009a: 6-7; Tsuda 2009b: 29-30, 37), they seem to have a diverse *sense of self* (Rosenberger 1999), since their experiences are likely to differ in accordance with their parental experiences” (Eckstein 2002: 212). Their blurred identity constructions can be seen as the result of their parents’ assimilation in the host country or their retained transnational ties, but also as the way they feel themselves in the host society: If they have a chance of an upward social mobility and if they are perceived and accepted as the new face of a multicultural Japan. A Brazilian student who was born and raised in Japan described this uncertain feeling of belonging, widely shared among his peers:

I feel myself as a Brazilian, but it is complicated. I can say I am Brazilian, but not a hundred percent ... if you say you are Brazilian, you almost convince yourself, and doing so you feel that you belong to a place ... this is something I will not answer so easily in these years.⁷

Ethnography in Progress

Participating in that kind of ritual at the Brazilian school in Hamamatsu reminded me not only of my childhood and school experiences back in Brazil, but also reinforced the main purpose of my research: to present this distinct minority group in Japan, the Japanese Brazilians, from different perspectives, especially within their community, focusing my ethnographic research primarily on their second generation.

This present ethnographic study is the result of an open-ended writing process based on a set of experiences of persons in liminality, *beyond*⁸ cultures, and direct exchanges in which they tried to share with me personal accounts of their migration trajectories, their thoughts and feelings about their lives and themselves in this context. An ethnography in progress with an exploratory character, full of personal narratives that

⁶ Tsuda argues that, “despite its name, ethnic return migration is not driven by the search for ethnic roots and ancestral heritage but by global economic disparities, which have caused diasporic descendants from poorer countries to return to their richer ethnic homelands.” (2009a: 6-7). The use of this term is also interchangeable with the term “diasporic homecomings” (Tsuda 2009a).

⁷ Interview 1, 25 October 2016.

⁸ See Bhabha (2008).

together are meant to portray the current situation of the second generation of Japanese Brazilians in Hamamatsu, and create an analytical outline of issues that surround their ethnic and sociocultural identity in the transnational context they are located.

In the 'Little Brazil' - Hamamatsu

The industrial city of Hamamatsu has drawn the attention of the Japanese Government, mostly because of its multicultural and intercultural policies and its particular way of coping with foreign residents. Hamamatsu has currently over 807,800 inhabitants, which comprise more than 21,600 foreign residents from 81 countries, including Brazil, China, Philippines, Peru, Korea, Vietnam, Indonesia, among others. Nowadays, Hamamatsu is the hometown of the largest Brazilian community in the country (Ishikawa 2009: 67), with more than 8,500 Brazilians⁹, one of the most expressive *Little Brazil*¹⁰ in Japan. According to official figures of the Ministry of Justice of Japan (2014), nineteen percent of the Japanese Brazilian population in Japan is constituted of young people, between 0-15 years old (Ishikawa 2016: 12). This young generation is struggling with their parents' migration history and a life in between cultures. In order to gain more insight on this generation, Hamamatsu has been chosen as the site of my fieldwork.

Once inside this context and based on empirical approach, I would like to answer the following questions: How is the second generation of Japanese Brazilians in Hamamatsu being perceived and presented by local actors? How do these young people see themselves in this transnational context? And what perspectives do they have for their own future?

⁹ Figures from Hamamatsu Foundation for International Communication and Exchange (HICE) on 1 January 2017. For the number of foreign residents living in Hamamatsu from June 2010 to June 2016, see Appendix A.

¹⁰ According to Takeyuki Tsuda, industrial cities such as Hamamatsu and Oizumi, among others, are the places where Japanese Brazilians have created their extensive and cohesive ethnic communities in order to partially "alleviate their alienation from Brazilian society and their feelings of homesickness" and facilitate their lives in Japan by making themselves at home in the 'Little Brazils' (Tsuda 2003b: 151; Tsuda 2004: 135-136).

Listen and Observe: A Way of Getting Closer

The methodological framework of my research is primarily ethnographic. In two different periods, a month in summer 2015 and two months in fall 2016 in Hamamatsu, I conducted a survey with written questionnaires and a series of ongoing interviews¹¹ with a small group of young Japanese Brazilians, between the ages of ten and twenty-three. With the purpose of getting to know more about them from a different perspective, I also conducted interviews with adults of Brazilian and Japanese nationalities, who have different social and cultural backgrounds, but somehow are closely connected with the Brazilian community and play important roles in the lives of this young generation in the city.

In order to build rapport with informants and gain a closer perspective in the daily life of the second generation of Japanese Brazilians in Hamamatsu, participant observation was conducted: Firstly at the *Escola Alcance*, a private Brazilian school in the Takaoka district, and later at Hamamatsu Foreign Resident Study Support Center – U-ToC, a special department of the Hamamatsu Foundation for International Communication and Exchange – HICE, a Japanese organization that works hand-in-hand with the local government. The collected data were recorded with digital equipment, as visual and sound data, and documented in my field notes and reports. The use of drawings with the Brazilian students helped me to explore and elicit some complex and subjective biographical aspects related to their sense of social and cultural belonging. Group interviews and informal discussions were also organized and carried out as an attempt to provide them a friendly environment for further reflections on their cultural identity and perspectives for the future. Listening closely to what this young generation has to say and observing, while participating in their everyday contexts, were the main methods I used for data gathering.

Furthermore, with the purpose of critically reflecting on the empirical data collected in the field, bibliographical and documentary surveys, as well as data record, such as narrative texts, audiovisual media, newspaper and magazine articles about the Japanese Brazilians, in particular about its young generation living in Hamamatsu, were gathered and analyzed.

¹¹ For the written questionnaire and the interview guidelines, see Appendix B.

Here and There

In order to find a way to say here what I have seen and heard while I was there in the field, I tried to structure the nonlinear data, a host of recollections, in four chapters. Chapter 1 begins with a historical background – a short description of the transnational relations between Japan and Brazil up to the present; then it shows an overview of the presence and influence of Japanese Brazilians in Hamamatsu, as well as some multicultural policies run by the local government and its implications for the Japanese and foreign residents; along with some reflections on the constant negotiation of identities, with its common grounds, boundaries and limitations, I faced during my fieldwork. Chapter 2 provides five stories, based on interviews with adults, key informants, which veer between factual passages and personal reflections, framing in a subtle way how the second generation of Brazilian migrants are being perceived and presented in the local society. As a counterpart, chapter 3 opens with sketches based on the personal narratives of the young interviewees, as a means for demonstrating not simply their “home” feelings, social and cultural identity constructions, accomplishments and achievements made so far in the host society, but also showing their self-perceptions. The findings reported in chapter 4 portray the way the young generation within the Brazilian community in Hamamatsu envisions their own future; it follows with a broader analysis of their current situation. Then, the conclusion suggests, after summarizing the main findings, further research on the meaning of “Japaneseness” in order to better contextualize the Brazilians of Japanese descent, and therefore analyze their contradictory lives in the country of their ancestors. And last, the epilogue, based on accounts from a random encounter during my fieldwork, represents a hope for this young generation’s future in the, already, multiethnic Japan¹².

¹² See Lie (2001) for a historical analysis of modern Japanese attitudes on ethnicity.

CHAPTER 1

Transnational and Generational Ties

This first chapter is meant to frame the *field*, where assumptions, thoughts and information were exchanged, as well as casual encounters and formal meetings took place. In this case, “field” means both: the subject of my research, and the real place where I conducted my empirical work.

‘Trans-’ and its Ambiguities

For a long time, I amused myself delving beneath dictionary definitions of words before I started to read the scholarly debate on key concepts on migration, Japanese Brazilians and transnationalism. Actually, my curiosity was sharpened by the fact that the prefix *trans-* conveys not so many meanings as I thought, although its diverse combination in word formations delimitates the scope of its uses, providing very different ideas and controversial connotations. Words such as *transcultural*, *transmigration*, and *transnational*, very present and used nowadays in cultural, social and political discussions, carry the etymological meanings: “across, beyond and through”¹³, creating the discursive and conceptual background of the present ethnographic study.

In the past decades, the concept of transnationalism has been crossing disciplinary boundaries, but it has also been followed by its increasing ambiguity. Social scientists, such as Arjun Appadurai (1990), James Clifford (1992), Homi K. Bhabha (1990), Ulf Hannerz (1996), among others, have imprinted the field and positioned themselves in the analytical forefront of transnational practices and processes (Guarnizo and Smith 2002: 4). In this context, Appadurai (2008) notes:

As groups migrate, regroup in new locations, reconstruct their histories, and reconfigure their ethnic ‘projects’, the *ethno* in ethnography takes on a slippery, nonlocalized quality, to which the descriptive practices of anthropology will have to respond. The landscapes of group identity - the *ethnoscapes* - around the world are no longer familiar anthropological objects, insofar as groups are no longer tightly territorialized, spatially bounded, historically unselfconscious, or culturally homogeneous. We have fewer cultures in the world and more ‘cultural debates’. (Appadurai 2008: 50)

¹³ See Merriam-Webster Dictionary (2007).

In that sense, this ethnographic study centers on the “ethnoscapes” of the Japanese Brazilians. Therefore, it moves within a microanalysis of this ethnic minority group, which has arisen out of transnational migration processes¹⁴. The idea of transnationalism as “a multifaceted and multi-local process” behind the discussions here will follow the tendency to conceive this cross-border movement under “power relations, cultural constructions, economic interactions and social organization at the level of the locality” (Guarnizo and Smith 2002: 5-6). Thus, an analysis through the perspective of “transnationalism from below”¹⁵, since these Japanese Brazilians and their family members, including the next generations, are the key components of an ethnic return migration, which is neither motivated by the search for ethnic roots nor by ancestral heritage, but in response to economic disparities and pressures (Tsuda 2009a: 6-7).

Japan and Migration

For a long time, Japan has been regarded as one of the most cultural and ethnically homogeneous societies among industrialized countries, although its cultural diversity has been for many years ignored or denied by many Japanese nationals. The country is, historically, part of the flow of world immigration and was known as an emigrant country until 1960s (Maeda 2007:18), but only in the late 1980s Japan started to rely on unskilled foreign workers, boosting its industrial production and solving its severe labor shortages. Since then, Japan has been coping with an unexpected increasing number of foreign residents, who have decided to remain longer and, in some cases, “permanently” on Japanese soil. Nowadays the number of foreign residents is at record highs, although its ratio to the total population is still very low compared with European countries and the United States.

Migration is probably now one of the main issues discussed around the globe, but immigration is still a delicate subject in Japan, where conservatives are proud of their “cultural homogeneity” and the foreign residents represent less than two percent of the total population. Although the increasing aging population and shrinking workforce represent currently some of the major issues in Japanese society, the national government

¹⁴ On Japanese Brazilians and transnationalism, see Lesser (2003).

¹⁵ See Guarnizo and Smith (2002).

maintains a reluctant attitude towards immigration on a big scale¹⁶. As a reflection of the widespread and dominant view of a modern Japan as a monoethnic country, significant levels of discrimination towards its diverse immigrant population were shown by the findings of a nationwide survey¹⁷ commissioned by the Ministry of Justice (MOJ) in November 2016.

Among the foreign population living and working in Japan¹⁸, the increasing number of Brazilian immigrants, who reside in Japanese industrial regions and cities, created another disadvantaged ethnic minority group, which has been one of the main subjects of public discussions on immigration and one of the main reasons for profound changes in local government policies. Currently, the Japanese Brazilians form the biggest foreign community from outside Asia in Japan.

Ethnic Return Migration

For over twenty-six years, Japan has been coping with some issues that arose during the so-called “return migration” of Latin Americans of Japanese origin, also known as *Nikkeijin*¹⁹, and with the related social and cultural changes in its society. The possibility of working in Japan has become for those immigrants their chance to solve some of their financial and social problems back in their home countries. Since the revision of the immigration law, through the reformation of the Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act, in June 1990, the government had begun to accept the entrance of unskilled foreign workers with a new legal category, the long-term residency²⁰. This act was an effort to solve shortages of labor in low-skills jobs in many small and medium sized industrial companies, most of them in the car manufacturing industry, in the late 1980s (Goto 2006 and Sasaki 2008). This coincided with the critical situation of the Brazilian economy and explains the reason that made Brazil the largest “sending society”, in terms of the number of people who entered the country as temporary guest workers,

¹⁶ See *The Economist* (31 May 2014), and *The Japan Times* (5 July 2017).

¹⁷ See *The Japan Times* (5 March 2017) and Funakoshi, *Thomson Reuters* (31 March 2017).

¹⁸ Nowadays the foreign population in Japan is formed by a large number of migrants from East and Southeast Asia, Latin America and the Middle East.

¹⁹ For more information on the term *Nikkeijin*, see Roth (2008: 79).

²⁰ The status of residence based on the personal status or position are as follows: “Permanent Resident”, “Spouse or Child of Japanese National”, “Spouse or Child of Permanent Resident”, or “Long-Term Resident”. For more details, see Ministry of Justice (31 August 2010).

called “*dekasegi*”²¹. In short, this return-migration cycle consolidated the transnational ethnic ties that not only contextualize the minority group analyzed in this ethnographic study, but also challenge its further generations.

Japanese Brazilians in Japan

The number of Japanese Brazilians in Japan reached its peak with over 300,000 people in 2008, but today around 170,000 Brazilians made them the fifth-largest population of foreigners after the Chinese, Korean²², Filipino, and Vietnamese people (Tobace 2017). According to Tsuda (2003a), the Brazilians have become the country’s newest minority, despite their Japanese descent, and one of their most difficult experiences as transnational migrants is the social alienation they experience in Japanese society as an ethnically segregated, immigrant minority (Tsuda 2003a: 123), suffering similar patterns of discrimination as the other minority groups – the Burakumin, Ainu and Okinawans, among others (Roth 2008: 74).

At the beginning of the century, the migration flow of Japanese Brazilians to Japan has changed and continues to change according to its purposes. It has been mostly motivated by the constant concern and financial difficulties back in Brazil. The temporary aspect of this migration marked by the first *dekasegi* migrants²³ has assumed a new dimension: the Japanese Brazilians have begun to settle in Japan, bringing their families, wives and children. This change was accompanied by the rise of new issues, such as the education of the Brazilian children and their daily life in Japanese society (Goto 2006: 18-19). The emergence of the Brazilian community followed this change and begun with the concentration of Brazilians in Japan’s provincial industrial cities, “clustered cities”, such as Toyota, Hamamatsu, Oizumi and Ohta, where “3K” (*kiken, kitanai, kitsui* – “dangerous, dirty, demanding”) work in car, electronic and food factories has been done mostly by foreigners. These extensive communities are very cohesive and supported by

²¹ The word *dekasegi* means “people who reside in a place for a short period of time to earn money”. *Dekasegi* can be used for foreign workers who temporary live in Japan and it can be also used for Japanese rural workers who come to a bigger city to earn money” (Maeda 2007: 45).

²² The mentioned author makes no distinction between the people of North Korea (officially the "Democratic People's Republic of Korea") and the people of South Korea (officially the "Republic of Korea"). In the mass media and official figures of foreign residents in Japan, this distinction is neither presented.

²³ Most of the first *dekasegi* migrants were male workers, who went to Japan without family and stayed for a few years with the purpose of going back home in a better financial position.

a wide range of ethnic businesses, known in scholarly debate as “ethnic spaces”, such as Brazilian restaurants, bars, food stores, beauty salons, among others, as well as the consumption of Brazilian media products. They provide also a possibility to relieve their feelings of alienation and homesickness in the host society (Tsuda 2003a).

The life and struggles of the first generation of Japanese Brazilian migrants became topics of academic research, in the late 1990s and the early 2000s, when ethnographies and publications²⁴ about the *dekasegi phenomenon* and the Brazilian diaspora in Japan appeared, analyzing contentious issues and topics in a transnational context, most of them related to the meaning of “home”, the identity construction among Brazilian migrants of Japanese descent and their adaptation to and assimilation in Japanese society. On the other hand, the situation of this minority group has been also discussed at central and local government level, in bilateral agreements and public discussions. As a result, various policy measures to assist this specific group have been taken in the past few years in order to achieve a “harmonious coexistence”²⁵ with residents in general.

In recent works, based mostly on quantitative data, the difficulties of Japanese Brazilian children in Japanese schools and the role of the Brazilian schools, considered as ethnic schools in Japan, have been mentioned in order to frame the public concern about the increasing number of crimes committed by foreign youth. As Goto (2006) already pointed out, the problems related with the education of *Nikkeijin* children and the high crime rates committed by some of these young people are two primary concerns which were basically outcomes of the increased number of *Nikkeijin*. In addition, he emphasizes the high non-attendance ratio among *Nikkeijin* children at school and explains that it is caused by their lack of Japanese language skills, and also probably because of the high tuition fees of private Brazilian schools (Goto 2006: 19-20). Sasaki (2008) shares similar opinions about the difficulties of Brazilian children at school with the high dropout rate and reports on the criminality among the Brazilian community, but he mentions also the negative perception of the Japanese schools among the Brazilian children and their parents, because of the school’s strict rules, cultural prejudice, and even

²⁴ See Linger (2001), De Carvalho (2015), Tsuda, (2003b), and Maeda (2007).

²⁵ “Harmonious coexistence” is an expression commonly used in diplomatic activities and statements. In this case, it is used in official policies covering the envisioned relationship between foreign and Japanese residents.

ijime (bullying). He further highlights the importance of greater government measures, in order to support the children of immigrants who are struggling between two communities; he also asserts that Japan would only achieve a peaceful and effective transition to a more open and tolerant country towards foreigners, by listening to the voices of this young generation (Sasaki 2008: 59-63).

Following the factual aspects of the transnational and generational ties presented so far, the next parts of this chapter will move freely within lived stories and experiences in the field, in order to show, from an internal perspective, the social organization and the positioning of the Japanese Brazilians in Hamamatsu.

‘Hamamatsu Welcome Pack’²⁶

This welcome pack is filled with important information for living in Hamamatsu. We hope this pack will be useful as you start your new life in Hamamatsu!

<Pamphlets enclosed>

1. Hamamatsu Map
2. Hamamatsu Official Multilingual Living Information Service: Canal Hamamatsu
3. Register your children to attend school!
4. Notice about the New Residency Management System and Basic Resident Registration System
5. What to do in the case of a sudden earthquake
6. Hamamatsu Disaster Prevention Email
7. Let's Create a Bright, Fun and Beautiful City
8. Be mindful of your Manners
9. Guideline for Rubbish Disposal and Recycling (For Household Waste)
10. Rubbish Reduction and Recycling
11. Outline of Residence Taxes
12. What You Should Know About Traffic Safety
13. Hamamatsu Intercultural Center
14. Hamamatsu Foreign Resident Support Center
15. HICE (Hamamatsu Foundation for International Communication and Exchange)

(All the new residents registered at the City Hall receive an envelope filled with necessary information about life in Hamamatsu. They are available in more than six languages, including the original version in Japanese).

²⁶ For the *Hamamatsu Welcome Pack*, see Appendix C.

Everyone who visits Hamamatsu for the first time would be intrigued walking around the downtown area and some other districts, because most public signs and advertisement are not only written in Japanese, but also in Portuguese and a few times in English and other foreign languages. The first question that comes to mind would be: Why is the Portuguese language being used here in an industrial city? The best way to answer this question is to stop, just for a while, in front of the central railway station on the weekend and observe the people who pass by, then among many Japanese students wearing school uniforms, and elderly people going shopping or gathering around some street musicians. One can easily figure out a considerable presence of foreigners, most of them young people from Brazil, who hang out with friends talking loudly in Portuguese with some Japanese words in between. Sometimes it is hard to distinguish them from the Japanese people, because most of them have Japanese roots and similar physical appearance. For Brazilians, like me, the Portuguese language, read and heard around the city, gives us a real homey feeling, but at the same time it provokes a kind of astonishment and strangeness²⁷.

Hamamatsu, October 2016.

It was lunchtime when I decided spontaneously to visit the City Hall; actually, I was on my way to an interview appointment at the Consulate General of Brazil, which is located just on the opposite side of this main administrative building. Since I was almost an hour earlier in the city center and had to wait, I thought it could be worth using the time for further research, having a look inside this public space. After I took the elevator up to the fifth floor and turned right following the signs for the international division, I saw that many of the civil servants were still sitting on their workplaces, but they were already having lunch, quietly eating their *obento* – “lunchbox” that are brought from home or bought in convenience stores. As I was watching this scene, I just confirmed the experience I had working as an intern and conducting participant observation in a Japanese organization. In the office, one is supposed to spend almost all the time inside the room, working and having lunch together with colleagues, also when outside the weather is fine and the beautiful garden compose an inviting place to breathe some fresh air. This seems to be part of a deeply rooted Japanese tradition and forms of social

²⁷ See Appendix D for the photo collection.

interaction that emphasizes and values “group harmony”²⁸ also in the work environment. At lunchtime in the office, I had the chance to get to know a little more about my colleagues, who were also very curious about my research and life experiences in both countries: Brazil and Germany, where I am living and studying nowadays. After four years living in Germany and learning how to enjoy as much as possible a nice weather “outside”, I had to acclimate myself again, learning to enjoy a more intimate atmosphere, sharing the time with work colleagues mostly “inside”, in an air-conditioned space.



In order to deal with the increasing number of foreign immigrants in the city, pamphlets, brochures, announcements and other kinds of print material, written in different languages, can be found around the city, mainly at strategic places, such as governmental departments and offices. Since part of my fieldwork was to gather written material related to the way the city is coping with its foreign residents, my first visit to the City Hall as an ethnographer could not be more interesting and fruitful as it was. Actually, I have been there many times before, when I was living in Hamamatsu, but I have never paid so much attention to the distributed material, and the way people act and speak to each other in such a formal environment. On the fifth floor, where the “International Affairs Division” is located, new foreign residents are supposed to get more information about the city, local rules and regulations as a means to proceed as an official resident in the city. Since a majority of the new foreign residents cannot speak fluently the language, the communication between them and the Japanese residents still presents a huge barrier. Because of that, in the past few years, dozens of written materials have been produced in different languages in order to facilitate the new life of foreign residents in the city, thus fostering mutual understanding.

At the end of 2009, Hamamatsu has welcomed the Consulate General of Brazil²⁹, which has been performing its duties, under diplomatic and consular arrangements, but it

²⁸ According to Maeda (2007), in Japan the ideology of *uchi* and *soto*, inside and outside, leads the society, making people clearly distinguish themselves. Then, “group oriented work is highly valued” and determinant for people’s sense of belonging. In this regard, “many company employees like to identify themselves with their group and make a sharp distinction between the insiders and outsiders of their company (Maeda 2007: 41).

²⁹ The Consulate General of Brazil in Hamamatsu was established in the end of 2009 as the result of bilateral efforts and a petition with 20,980 signatures aiming to enable and support a larger number of

has also been engaged, since its establishment, in bilateral cooperation and intensive support for the Brazilian community, at the local and regional level. During the interview I conducted with Minister José Antonio Gomes Piras, the Brazilian Consul General in Hamamatsu, in October 2016, he explained some of the consulate's duties and expressed a positive impact of their bilateral relations:

An important focus of the Consulate General of Brazil in Hamamatsu is to act in support of the Brazilian community, thus this consulate was established with this goal. Moreover, Hamamatsu is a city that not only has the largest number of Brazilian people in Japan, but it is also surrounded by many other cities, such as Toyohashi and Iwata, with high concentrations of Brazilians ... a further advantage is to work closer together – also physically (in terms of geographical location) – with the City Hall and other municipal authorities, sharing similar thoughts and ideas, creating activities and initiatives which will benefit the community at large. The consulate has as its key priorities: education, work, culture and entrepreneurship.³⁰

The creation of such a “welcome pack” is just one of many examples of current initiatives developed by the local government with the help of volunteers and the cooperation with non-governmental organizations, particularly in the fields of social integration, education, disaster preparedness mechanisms, civil protection, among other concerns. Although Hamamatsu is not famous for its multicultural society, like such cosmopolitan cities as Tokyo or Nagoya, the city is trying to promote mutual awareness, since its multiethnic population becomes steadily more representative. As a result of its efforts and after a conference held in October 2012 between Hamamatsu and its neighboring cities with high concentrations of immigrants, the *Hamamatsu Declaration*³¹ was made public by the local government and became a significant starting point for further policies and the basis for continuous improvements in their public policies³².

Brazilian migrants living in the Hamamatsu area, extending then the diplomatic and consular authorities of the Consulate General of Brazil in Nagoya and the Brazilian Embassy in Tokyo. See Walter Ihoshi (2008).

³⁰ Interview 2, 17 October 2016.

³¹ See the *Hamamatsu Declaration* (23 October 2012) in the Appendix E.

³² Ongoing policies in the city of Hamamatsu: “The Hamamatsu Intercultural City Vision” (2011), created in 2001 and revised in 2007, was formulated by Hamamatsu as a guide to its internationalization policy and promoted “Coexistence, Exchange and Cooperation” between Japanese and Foreign residents (Hamamatsu City 2011: 1-4); and the “Multicultural Education Facilitator Program” (February 2010) was created to increase multicultural awareness between young people who were born and raised in Hamamatsu and are descendants of immigrants. It comprised lectures and training workshops that should in the future be adapted in various contexts, such as language classes, counseling sessions, social studies or homeroom.

‘Multicultural Me’

Diversity is already an important aspect of the Brazilian people and culture³³, but somehow the Brazilians who are currently living and working in Japan have to reinvent themselves in this new context, where their cultural heterogeneity was neither recognized nor contemplated until recently, except for the Bossa Nova music and the soccer international reputation. Roth (2002) argues that although Latin musical genres swept Japan in the 1970s and since the 1980s the number of samba aficionados has grown steadily in the country, “Japanese enthusiasm for foreign cultures has not been matched by an equivalent embrace for foreign workers” (Roth 2002: 138-139).

Swimming against the tide, Hamamatsu is taking the first steps to a multicultural society, hoping for a more open country. In the past few years, the city started to welcome its new foreign residents, and for over twenty-six years, between coming, leaving and returning, Japanese Brazilians have been influencing many cultural changes in the city. Cultural and educational projects such as *Multicultural Me*, ‘*Juntos*’ (“Together”), ‘*Projeto Evasão Escolar Zero*’ (“School Drop-out Zero Project”), *Intercultural Month*, among others, designed by the local government in cooperation with HICE, and on behalf of its foreign residents, are reaffirming the city’s multicultural purposes and visions. Nowadays the city is not only famous for its traditional ‘*Hamamatsu Matsuri*’ (“Hamamatsu Festival”) that brings lots of visitors to the coast along Nakatajima Dunes for the Kite-Flying Competition, but also for the ‘*Samba Carnaval*’ and ‘*Festa Junina/Julina*’, which are slowly, year after year throughout the summer and into the fall, becoming part of the city’s official calendar. As a consequence of this change in cultural practices, transcultural and transnational ties between the Brazilian community and local entities are being strengthened.

Moving Back and Forth: Identities in the Field

Being myself a Brazilian of Japanese descent, a “*mestiça*”³⁴, as I used to be called in Brazil when I was a child, just confirms my hybrid identity, although hybridity and transculturality are not unusual characteristics in Brazil, since they are part of our

³³ See Darcy Ribeiro (2000).

³⁴ In Brazil, the term *mestiço* refers to Brazilians with mixed ethnic backgrounds, but it is popularly used for people with Japanese descent mixed with other ancestry.

collective identity construction. In Japan, on the other hand, being a Japanese Brazilian means belonging to a minority group, which is ethnically differentiated in isolated communities. Thus, my subjective position conducting fieldwork inside the Brazilian community has challenged my ability to assert complete exteriority, trying to maintain a neutral perspective, moving myself back and forth between Japanese Brazilians and Japanese people.

In that sense, my previous experiences in the field, as well as the personal and professional relationships built up in this context, provided me with the possibility of identifying some gatekeepers, from whom I obtained formal entry permissions into new locations and situations, and also organizing in short time almost all the interviews with familiar and unfamiliar people, which was very useful, since the two different periods of my research in Japan were short; on the other hand, I had to find a way to position myself in the field also as a graduate student of cultural studies conducting ethnographic research in this familiar context. The fact that I am a Brazilian living and studying nowadays in Germany just placed myself as “the other” among Japanese Brazilians, a kind of “outside insider”, awakening the curiosity of both sides, Brazilian and Japanese, but at the same time it also provoked a degree of skepticism among both groups. I must confess that the shifting identities, which helped me to gain understanding and acceptance in the field, was also very hard psychologically to deal with, since I had to change constantly the way I acted according to the situation and to the person I was talking.

Many frustrations became a crucial factor in my research as well, since some planned activities and questions made to young Brazilian people were not so effective or fruitful as intended. Some sudden alterations and critical reflections were also important for taking decisions, sometimes changing the way I approached my informants.

Leaving the field and returning to university culture has challenged me the most, because the lived experiences and the multiple perspectives from which people see the world and explain the happenings around them, must be merged and written up in order to make their voices heard. Therefore, the following chapters are meant to present the results of such intentions: first, through personal narratives, showing the way the second generation of Japanese Brazilians are being perceived and presented in Hamamatsu; and then through important accounts and information given by this young generation on their own awareness of identity and future in this transnational context.

CHAPTER 2

Hamamatsu Stories

The following stories and recollections are accounts of current residents of Hamamatsu. Based on interviews conducted during my fieldwork in fall 2016, these interconnected stories portray, from different perspectives, an intricate process of rapprochement that has been occurring in the city since the first Japanese Brazilians were allowed to enter the country as unskilled workers and started to settle down. For over twenty-six years of coexistence, an old transnational relation has been renewed, changing the way Japanese people see the “other”, the “non-Japanese residents”³⁵. These personal narratives and descriptions of events reconstruct the emergence of the second generation of Japanese Brazilians and show the way this specific group is being perceived and presented by those who work closely with them and are somehow actively involved in their community – local actors and representatives of civil society. Historical facts, anecdotes, impressions and challenges, as well as personal achievements, illustrate many transformations not only in the city, but also in the peoples’ awareness of cultural diversity and their sense of belonging to the same community.

Japanese Classes for the ‘New People’

At first Hamamatsu was a city that had produced sewing threads after the Second World War, “*sen no machi*” ... The city of sewing threads ... Then, slowly started the automobile industry, first the motorcycles, such as Honda and Suzuki. They became slowly bigger and bigger and the textile industry smaller and smaller. It turned into a motorcycle era. Nowadays it became famous for its musical instruments – the City of Music. The motorcycle and car productions were done mostly by *Nikkeijin*, Japanese Brazilians...that is the reason for the large number of Brazilian people in Hamamatsu and Toyohashi. This is history.³⁶

³⁵ Terms like “non-Japanese residents”, “foreign nationals”, and “foreign residents” are used officially in Japan to refer to foreigners in general.

³⁶ Interview 3, 23 November 2016.

When Mieko Horikawa established her Kumon Franchise Center³⁷ in the Takaoka district, in the central area of Hamamatsu, she started to teach mathematics for children and teenagers to support their regular schooling. Horikawa *sensei* (“teacher”), as she is respectfully called, worked for thirty-six years not only for Japanese people, but also for Brazilians who started to live and work in Takaoka. Like many Japanese people in this part of the city, she has never seen a foreigner before the immigration law was changed in Japan in the late 1980s. She watched the way the district of Takaoka, a farming area that lasted until the end of the World War II, turned slowly into a modern industrial quarter with big companies like Honda³⁸ and its suppliers. By chance, she started to deal with the new residents in the early 1990s, firstly with children who, like the Japanese pupils, came to her once or twice a week in order to improve their mathematics skills and later with her new Japanese language course. She realized that they needed to learn the language first and then improve other skills at school. At the beginning, she faced many difficulties, mainly because of their lack of communication and their limited knowledge of Japanese habits and customs. From her vivid memories of the time she was first confronted with Brazilians in her language course, she explained:

First, some children came to Kumon in order to learn mathematics. The parents, mostly mothers, and their children were not able to speak the language and it was a huge problem. When I called them, they were not able to answer and very fast they put down the phone without a word. I just started to be worried about it, and I saw that there was a possibility to have a program from Kumon, to teach Japanese for those new people. ... When the adults started also to come to the classes I was surprised. The volunteers (college students), who were studying for about a year, came to Kumon (to see what was going on) and after two weeks, they were many more, also some friends of mine came to see that, it was unbelievable. Until now there were about a thousand Brazilian students for Japanese in the course. Unbelievable!

Since the number of foreigners in Hamamatsu increased quickly, Mieko had to react faster and started offering the new Kumon program called “Japanese as a Foreign Language” with guidelines in Portuguese to these new residents. That made the difference

³⁷ Kumon is one of the world’s largest after-school mathematics and reading programs created in 1954 by Toru Kumon, a father and gifted mathematics teacher. The Kumon Japanese Language Program for foreign learners was launched in 1984. With guidelines in English, Portuguese and Chinese, it enables learners to develop an advanced level of reading and writing skills.

³⁸ Honda started as a bicycle auxiliary engine manufacturer in a small factory in Hamamatsu. The co-founders Soichiro Honda and Takeo Fujisawa formally established Honda Motor Co., Ltd. in September 1948.

and in a few months she was not only teaching children, but also adults who applied for her classes on Saturday mornings. Very quickly and unexpectedly, she became famous within the Brazilian community in this part of the city. Meanwhile, she started also to learn some Portuguese, as a way to improve her relationship with these “new people”, facilitating then her communication with them. Later on, in 2002, she enrolled in a graduate course at the Shizuoka University of Art and Culture in Hamamatsu. Consequently, taking such subjects as Portuguese Language and Culture, and Intercultural Relations, among others, she improved her teaching and intercultural competences, an apprenticeship she will never forget.

Looking back, Mieko describes her cultural discoveries: “I visited also, with some colleagues, Brazilian restaurants and tried some Brazilian food. There was no way to keep working with Brazilians without learning those things. That is why I did it”. Slowly her Japanese course for foreigners became a field for empirical research, where some college students could observe and analyze the emergence of this minority group, mutually contributing to their learning process. Through some multilingual newsletters about learning methods and experiences at Kumon, as part of a project conducted by those college students, the Brazilians and other foreigners could share their personal accounts of their new life in Japan, especially their acculturation and assimilation processes.

Thinking about the first struggles that this group went through back then, Mieko recounted:

In 2003 there was a conference with members of local government, but also with the cities with similar problems in the region, for example, Oizumi, Toyohashi, among others, in order to discuss issues related to the high number of foreigners in those cities. They thought that these new residents needed counseling. ... At this time, the mayor of Hamamatsu organized that summit, because there were a lot of problems concerning the foreign residents, such as with the trash separation ... traffic misunderstandings, the correct use of bicycles, and the group of young people who gathered in front of the central station and made dance rehearsals and performances (Hip-Hop dance). The residents were worried about the new situation.

Mieko was not the only person who witnessed the struggles of both residents. At schools a sort of despair started to become the biggest issue for the Brazilian community and for the local government: the education of foreign children and teenagers was definitely neither planned nor expected by the national government. At the beginning, the Brazilian parents had no other choice but to enroll their children, as fast they could, at

Japanese schools, since they had to work immediately after their arrival. The first encounters and confrontations between the local population and the new residents were marked by cultural shocks and frustrations on both sides. Some teachers and other civil servants started to learn a little Portuguese in order to get access to the Brazilian residents; many interpreters started to work at schools in special classes created only for foreign children and they helped also to translate important information and announcements into Portuguese around public areas. Actually, the local government worked very quickly in order to organize and facilitate the life of all residents, trying to reduce the cultural misunderstandings.

Over the last three decades, Mieko has played different roles in Japanese society; she worked actively in her district, offering her pedagogical services for Japanese and foreign children, as well as teaching Brazilian adolescents and adults. Now, as a retiree since November 2016, she takes care of her husband and grandchild in the same house she raised her son and received many times the visits from her new acquaintances and friends from Brazil. Mieko, the district and Hamamatsu have changed with the emergence of the Brazilian community.

In Hamamatsu the Second Language is ‘Português’

Born and raised in Hamamatsu, Akemi Honda³⁹ has been watching the changes in her hometown within the Brazilian community. Currently she is working as a Japanese teacher in a Brazilian school, although she majored in English and American Literature. Actually, Akemi started her career as an editor at a weekly newspaper, where she did also some translations and other jobs related to the English language. With a life like a “roller-coaster” and working as a secretary for a company, she experienced a tough time full of personal problems and the terrible experience of a sexual harassment at work. At that time she was young and did not want to end her career with this misfortune, she was really interested in foreign cultures and wanted to know more about life abroad.

At the beginning, the idea of teaching Japanese as a foreign language became Akemi’s opportunity to get in touch with foreigners. After taking a teaching training course for Japanese language, she obtained the qualification needed for a teaching position in language schools. Soon after her first experience teaching Japanese in

³⁹ Interview 4, 15 October 2016.

Hamamatsu, she worked in Australia for six months and later in the Philippines for about a year.

As a turning point in her life, in December 2005, Akemi applied for a teaching position at *Pitágoras*⁴⁰, a Brazilian school in Hamamatsu and in January 2006, she faced without planning and preparations her new work challenge: teaching for the first time the Japanese language to a group of foreigners, Brazilian children and teenagers. This time she was not abroad, but the feeling was almost the same, she saw herself working for a foreign community in her own hometown. From her point of view, this experience was actually a cultural shock, a mixture of fascination and absurdity, since she could barely understand the Portuguese language and the Brazilian culture. Because of the cultural difference and language barrier, she faced again many difficulties, but at a different level.

Every now and then, Akemi thought about quitting the job, as some of her predecessors did, but, fortunately, she overcame this hurdle. She understood that it was not only about the teaching of a language to a young generation, but also a preparation for their future in Japanese society. Through the time she was working at this school, she heard many personal accounts from her students about their migration stories, their conflicting and sometimes traumatic experiences at Japanese schools; and then she finally understood that they had no interest in learning the Japanese language, because for them the life in Japan was temporary and would last “only one more year”, as their parents steadily repeated to them, year after year. For her, a life without plans for the future is hard to understand. Worried about their future, she repeatedly asked them whether they had or not a plan to go back to Brazil. They often answered positively, but they could never precisely say when they would do that. She said that, at that time, “about fifty percent of them ended up staying in Hamamatsu”; to Brazil they have not yet returned.

Akemi reinforces that the lack of Japanese language skills has followed closely this immigration process from its outset, and since then it became the biggest issue for both sides. With a shrinking labor force in Japan in the 1980s, the government made an exception and started to receive unskilled workers for industrial production. A good command of the Japanese language was not a precondition for obtaining a work permit.

⁴⁰ *Pitágoras* was one of the biggest Brazilian schools in Hamamatsu, which like others did not survive the aftermath of the 2008 Global Financial Crisis. The school was closed in 2011, when over three quarters of their pupils dropped out, because their parents could no longer afford to pay the school fees.

On the other hand, the Brazilians who went to Japan had actually at first no need for communication at work in factories, and later they developed a community, which provided all the services they needed in Portuguese. As a reaction against cultural and social misunderstandings and with the intention to facilitate the communal life, the local government started to hire bilingual personnel from the Brazilian community to work as interpreters at schools and at official offices to translate into Portuguese important information and signs around the city. According to Akemi, “the city was panicking” without enough time for preparation.

From Akemi’s point of view, the biggest challenge for the Brazilian community was the aftermath of the 2008 global financial crisis, nationally known as the “Lehman Shock”. Japan was severely hit by this crisis, and the first important measure assumed by the government was to protect its nationals. The foreign workers were the first ones to be fired by many companies and, in most of the cases, without any social insurance. A climate of fear and anxiety among residents were widespread and the government had to react faster, before the security of the population and the public order would be struck by an imminent danger of increased criminality, typically predicted when thousands of people lose their jobs and have no means of subsistence.

While the crisis was affecting the whole country, the city started to solve the problems of social exclusion and financial insecurity related to its unemployed foreign residents by providing a return fee⁴¹ of circa 3,000 US dollars toward air fare plus 2,000 dollars for each dependent, for those who had no means. The ones who got this “financial support” could not apply for a visa or enter Japan within a period of three years. At that time, Brazil’s economic growth improved and that became suddenly a good excuse to return, even if unintended and with no preparation. Thousands of Brazilians, families with children, were suddenly gone.

Working closely with the young generation of the Brazilian community in Hamamatsu for over ten years, Akemi divides this migration history drawing a line between two different periods: “before and after the Lehman Shock”. Firstly, it was like a “boom”, when the Japanese Brazilians were coming to Japan, working hard to save money and returning to Brazil. Then, after the 2008 global financial crisis, the ones, who overcame this difficult time working harder than ever and wishing for a better future,

⁴¹ On this “return-fee” see Tabuchi (2009).

started to settle permanently in the country. Actually, according to Akemi, they followed a Japanese philosophy of life – to endure hardship to see rewards in the future – a kind of thought that is disappearing among younger generations of Japanese people.

In 2010, Akemi *sensei* started to work on a part-time basis at *Escola Alcance*, the Brazilian school located in the same district. Actually, the local government has been paying her salary at school since the beginning of her work as part of a project and financial support for the Japanese language program at international schools around the city. Because of the negative effects of the economic crisis, this private school was also managing to survive. Sadly, she remembers that many international schools succumbed to the pressures of this crisis and *Pitágoras*, where she worked first with Brazilians, was one of them.

Akemi has never worked in Japanese schools, but she keeps meeting Brazilian students, who have been transferred to Brazilian schools after experiencing many difficulties in the Japanese school system, mostly related to discrimination and bullying. She perceives that in most cases these young people have a lack of knowledge in both languages, because their education path is broken and incomplete in both systems. Hearing their stories and complains, she sees herself sometimes not only as an educator, but more like a counselor, trying to give them advice for the future. She is actually worried about this young generation, because their visions for the future are marked by uncertainties and vagueness.

With the following strong statement: “In Hamamatsu the second language is *português*”, Akemi remembers the influence of the Brazilian culture in her hometown and also in her own life. With her daily experiences with the young generation of Brazilians for more than ten years now, she sees herself somehow changed and feels a strong relation with a culture she got to know by chance. She feels herself like the young Brazilians, “standing in between” cultures, and as a result she describes herself proudly as “a Japanese, but a little bit different Japanese” and thus to some extent some people perceive her as a Japanese Brazilian, a *Nikkeijin*.

I am not a ‘Mestiça’, but a Nikkei with Okinawan Roots

Claudia Kodani⁴², a 50 year-old Brazilian woman, defines herself as a *Nikkeijin*, a Japanese Brazilian, and reinforces her Japanese ancestry from both grandparents’ sides, saying that she is not a “*mestiça*” (half-breed or hybrid), as most of the other Japanese Brazilians are. With both grandparents from Okinawa, she grew up under the influence of a traditional culture and language that still remain distinct from the general culture in Japan⁴³. Her grandparents emigrated from Japan to Brazil and never returned to their homeland; her parents, on the other hand, grew up inside a Japanese “*colônia*”⁴⁴ in Brazil being perceived as Japanese, although they have never been to Japan.

After graduating in psychology at a renowned university in São Paulo, Claudia immigrated alone to Japan in 1990 after seeing herself in a very complicated situation: mourning deeply the loss of her mother and seeing her long-held dream of taking part of a master course in the US being shattered by the critical economic, financial and political situation in Brazil. As a means of escaping from this hard reality, she faced with courage and determination a new life in her ancestors’ homeland.

As many other Japanese Brazilians, Claudia arranged her travel to Japan when she was still in Brazil with an employment broker⁴⁵ that recruited workers for the factories in Japan. With a poor knowledge of the Japanese language and without clear information about where she would land, she ended up in Aichi prefecture and started to work on the production lines of Sony⁴⁶. Slowly she started to meet some other Brazilians and after living and working in different cities, she met Pedro who became her husband. Before they got married, they went back to Brazil together, in order to meet their relatives and once again, after a while in Japan, they returned to Brazil with the intention of getting married and start a new life back home.

⁴² Interview 5, 31 October 2016.

⁴³ On Okinawans and their descendants in Brazil, see Mori (2003).

⁴⁴ The term “*colônia japonesa*” (“Japanese colony”) refers to the Japanese community in Brazil.

⁴⁵ Employment brokers – “*empreiteiras*” in Portuguese and *hakengaisha* in Japanese, “operate in a legally gray area and the Brazilian’s official employer - not the factory in which that Brazilian works. The arrangement provides flexibility for the manufacturer in the management of its labor force, and frees the manufacturer from concerns over employee’ housing, health, and documentation.” (See Linger 2001: 50).

⁴⁶ Sony Corporation, also known and referred as just Sony, is a Japanese multinational conglomerate corporation headquartered in Tokyo. The company is one of the leaders manufactures that produce electronic products. In Hamamatsu, the Sony EMCS Corporation is one of the main indirect employers of migrant workers.

In Brazil, Claudia gave birth to their only son and in 2003, when he was only five years old, they decided to return again to Japan. Pedro started to work in a paper mill in Fuji City, where Claudia got a chance to work for the only Brazilian school in the region and where her son was then automatically enrolled. Since their life in Japan was always seen as temporary and they were worried about discrimination towards their son in the Japanese schools, they preferred the Brazilian school system, because doing so their son would be prepared for the school back in Brazil. From teacher to coordinator and later as a school principal, Claudia made her career in Japan in this Brazilian elementary and primary school.

When her son reached the age of fifteen, Claudia and Pedro had to take a difficult but necessary decision: they moved to Hamamatsu trying to offer their son the possibility to keep studying at a high-school level in a Brazilian school. Then, in a city with more opportunities and services for the Brazilian community, Claudia's son graduated from high school and she started a new career as a tutor at a Brazilian office that represents a private college and offers distance higher education for young adults.

Fabio, Claudia's son, was raised in Japan; he has vague memories of Brazil and almost no contact with his relatives back home. He is now eighteen years old and after thirteen years he returned to Brazil for a few months, trying to reestablish family ties and experiencing the daily life in his birthplace. Claudia describes her son as a very quiet and reserved teenager and she thought that this "return to his origins", to his roots, would show him a more vivid and joyful life, something he has never experienced in Japan. Since he does not speak Japanese fluently, she is worried about his future in the country.

As a mother, former teacher and tutor for young adults inside the Brazilian community in Hamamatsu, Claudia witnesses constantly the way young Brazilians try to prepare themselves for a better future. She wants also new challenges in her life. Her transnational life is marked by difficult decisions and uncertainties. The only certainty so far is that her life in Japan is temporary.

Seeds for the Future

For over twenty-five years living in Japan, Mariana Sayuri Shimabuko⁴⁷ remembers as clearly the time she decided to follow one of her sisters and relatives, immigrating to Japan in 1990 with the purpose of saving money for her studies back in Brazil. Her idea was to stay only for two years, but after five years working in factories and saving money, she returned to Brazil and saw her motivation and plans fading away, since she had difficulties to find a job after such a long time abroad and out of the Brazilian labor market. Back “temporarily” in Japan again, she saw her ties to the country and culture becoming stronger, mostly after she met and got married to a Japanese man.

Mariana gave birth to two children in Hamamatsu and now, over nineteen years living there, she feels herself at home. She built not only a family, but also an important network of people through a non-profit organization called ‘*Semente para o Futuro*’ (“Seeds for the Future”)⁴⁸, which provides assistance to Brazilian children and adolescents at Japanese schools around the city. Actually, her work, giving support for Brazilian children at schools, started at the most difficult time for the Brazilian community, during the “Lehman Shock”. After being suddenly fired and experiencing enormous difficulties in getting another job in a factory, she heard from acquaintances that Hamamatsu was hiring people with Japanese and Portuguese language skills to work as interpreters at schools. At that time, many Brazilian children were out of the international schools, because their parents, who became also suddenly unemployed, could not afford anymore the high school fees. For her, it was a kind of blessing in disguise, because she got the job and started a new phase of her life.

From her own experiences and difficulties as a foreign mother of two children in the Japanese school system, Mariana faced the struggles of her children’s generation at home and at her new work. She regretted her decision of not providing a bilingual education for her children when they were young. Under greater pressure by her husband’s family and the influence of her friends’ opinions, she did not provide her children the opportunity to learn her mother tongue. As parents, they saw a better future

⁴⁷ Interview 6, 3 November 2016.

⁴⁸ The Non-profit Organization ‘*Semente para o Futuro*’ (“Seeds for the Future”) started out as a voluntarily initiative created by committed Brazilian mothers of children in the Japanese school system in Hamamatsu, offering nowadays counseling and support for foreign children at schools and institutions around Hamamatsu.

for them in Japan, and for that reason they should be raised and educated properly in Japanese society. Like many other young Brazilians in Japanese schools, her 18-year-old son and her 14-year-old daughter do not speak Portuguese, neither at home nor at school with their peers from Brazil. About her feelings now, she says: “Today I regret, because when I see other children who speak Portuguese at home and Japanese at school, becoming bilingual, I realize that I had failed by not giving them the same opportunity. I could have resisted such an influence”.

Five years ago, Mariana started to teach Portuguese and Brazilian culture for Japanese people who want to work voluntarily for the Brazilian community in Hamamatsu. The free-of-charge course was created in cooperation between NPO and HICE, one of the many intercultural initiatives funded by the local government.

Mariana remains skeptical about the whole assistance and support for the Brazilian community in Hamamatsu, particularly in regard to the provision of Portuguese language services and translations. She remembers that at the beginning of this migration flow, the Brazilians made a huge effort to learn the Japanese language as fast as they could, because they had no other choice. In her own words: “The Brazilians have lost their will to learn the Japanese language, since they do not use it”.

Apart from her critical analysis, Mariana claims to be proud of being Brazilian and that is one of the many positive aspects that she tries to provide her students. In her Portuguese language classes, she tries to portray another image of Brazil, providing her Japanese students some different aspects that they hardly seen on television or get in the news. Then, when she perceives their growing attention and enthusiasm of learning and getting contact with Brazilians, she feels that her goals have been achieved.

In General and in Particular

In 1996 Prof. Shigehiro Ikegami⁴⁹ moved from the northern Japanese island Hokkaido to Hamamatsu in order to do research at the Junior College of Shizuoka University, where nowadays the Hamamatsu Gakuin University is located. Born in Sapporo fifty-four years ago, Prof. Ikegami was at first a specialist for Indonesia Studies at the Department of Cultural Anthropology. Living and working in Hamamatsu, he became interested in

⁴⁹ Real Name. Interview 7, 22 November 2016.

issues related to the foreign residents, principally concerning the struggles of the Japanese Brazilians, and started to also research about this new minority group.

Nowadays, being responsible for the Multicultural Studies and the Cultural Anthropology Department at Shizuoka University of Art and Culture, Prof. Ikegami is known for his work with the foreign community not only in the academic context, but also in the political and public spheres, acting as an expert advisor in meetings and conferences on migration, multicultural relations and social integration of foreign residents in Hamamatsu and its surrounding areas. Although Prof. Ikegami cannot speak Portuguese, he interacts and builds networks with Brazilians and other foreign residents, who speak Japanese, in order to carry out projects to support the foreign community, such as “Medical Help for Foreigners”. The focus of his current work is the education of foreign children, which he sees as a crucial topic, in the light of mounting migratory pressure in Japan. He and his college students participate actively in meetings about education reforms in Hamamatsu. He argues that: “Teaching children is not a job for me, my work is to prepare the college students to support those children ... I can help them more doing that, to understand better the situation”.

About the present situation in Japan, and discussions regarding cultural differences between the Brazilian community and the Japanese society, Prof. Ikegami analyses the sociocultural context at two different levels – “in general” and “in particular”:

In general, this migration flow has been built for over twenty-five years now, one generation, and then obviously the people in Hamamatsu have learned about them. At first when they came, it was not that the Japanese people were surprised, or nervous, we cannot say that...prejudice was not there. One point was the situation of the young generation ... Brazilians like ‘Mario’ or ‘Paula’ in the classroom were easy to recognize ... at the university we have students that can speak fluently Japanese and understand the social life in Japan. But the biggest problem is with the ones who do not understand that. In particular, in Hamamatsu, I think there were two main factors. The first, a case that happened in Kosai City, near its central station, I think, there is a restaurant, where someone was killed. It was the first time that an incident like that happened. So when that incident happened, the person who did it fled abroad, to Brazil. I think that brought to the Japanese society a negative aspect of the Brazilian community. Another fact was the Lehman Shock, at that time there were thirty thousand Brazilian people and there was a decrease to less than twenty thousand people. So the people, who stayed, had a hard and difficult time. Twenty years of life in Japan, but not so much effort inside the society, followed by such huge happenings. There was a survey in Shizuoka Prefecture, Iwata

City and Hamamatsu City. They wanted to build a multicultural society, but how? There is an increasing number of people who are thinking about and working for that, but there are also people, who do not tolerate foreigners – ‘xenophobia’. There are also people with xenophobic attitudes in this society.

Besides some negative attitudes towards foreigners in Japanese society, particularly with regard to foreign residents who are considered unskilled factory workers, Prof. Ikegami sees the increasing number of foreign students at universities in Japanese industrial cities as a positive aspect for the future of foreign communities. He further argues that it seems to be very practical for foreign students in Hamamatsu, getting access to the higher education, when they get, for example, a place at the Shizuoka University of Art and Culture, a public and local university, mostly because they remain near their parents’ home, which facilitates their life by reducing extra costs. He says that around one hundred new students are enrolled every year in the graduate course “International Cultures” and of them about five are foreign students, mainly Brazilians who were born and raised in Japan.

For over twenty years, Prof. Ikegami has been playing an active and important role in enhancing mutual understanding and intercultural dialogue in Hamamatsu. His contacts and connections with governmental, non-governmental and non-profit organizations, institutions, schools and key actors at local level have set up enduring bridges for cultural and educational exchanges between the Japanese civil society and the foreign communities.

Same Same, but Different

Although all the stories presented in this chapter have taken place in the same city, showing us details of the same migration process, they compound a polyphonic narrative: simultaneous, but independent, and with slight differences of images and manners of speech, as well as diverse intonations and perspectives. As a counterpart, the next chapter aims to show the young generation of Japanese Brazilians in this context through their own eyes and voices.

CHAPTER 3

'Andorinhas Solitárias' – Lonely Swallows

.....
There is no sorrow like the murmur of their wings
There is no choir like their song
There is no power like the freedom of their flight
While the swallows roam alone

Do you hear the calling of a hundred thousand voices
Hear the trembling in the stone
Do you hear the angry bells ringing in the night
Do you hear the swallows when they've flown?

.....
– Farina & Baez, *The Swallow Song*⁵⁰

Having analyzed five different stories based on personal accounts and thoughts of adults who are related, directly or indirectly, to the Brazilian community in Hamamatsu, I find it essential to introduce in this chapter some of the young Brazilian voices I have heard in the field during my two periods of research, and their precious collaboration and contributions to my research, sharing with me significant details of their lives. The following sketches are meant to depict the way these young people see themselves in this transnational context. In each section I attempt to explore important details, such as the circumstances of their birth and upbringing, their “home” feelings, their relation to Brazil and to Japan, their sociocultural identity constructions, and their participation in social and cultural activities around the city, as well as their accomplishments and achievements.

‘Gomen, nihongo wakaranai!’ – Sorry, I don’t know Japanese!

I clearly remember as if it were yesterday the sunny day in summer 2015, when I had the chance to bring some secondary school students from the Brazilian school to the park in the central neighborhood of the Takaoka district in Hamamatsu. Actually, after filling out the written questionnaires I handed to them in the classroom, I still had time to propose an extra-curricular activity, encouraging them to share with me, through drawings⁵¹, their

⁵⁰ See Farina (1964).

⁵¹ The drawings in postcard format made by the adolescents can be found in the Appendix F.

feelings about home and identity. Since the Brazilian children and adolescents spend most of their time at school and alone at home in Japan, apart from a few exceptions, the idea of going out together was immediately favorably accepted; “outside” means for them freedom. The families in the Brazilian community are very small in comparison with the families in Brazil, and because of that the young people have their social relations restricted to their parents, siblings (if they have some), classmates and teachers at school.

After we talked a little about the activity, each student received a blank postcard, some colored pencils and permanent markers. They were, first, motivated to walk around, alone or in small groups, trying to find a place where they could draw freely, expressing their thoughts and feelings about “home”, in a general sense. Then, before we could go back to school, they were encouraged to explain to me their drawings. During the activity, which lasted little more than an hour, I realized that Pedro⁵², a fifteen-year-old student, sat down on the nearest bench, reflective and introspective working alone. I heard from some other students that he has arrived with his family in Japan just few months earlier and he was still not properly integrated into the group. I approached him, asking about his first experiences, but unfortunately he showed himself not so comfortable to talk about it, because he was probably still struggling to manage the abrupt social and cultural change he was somehow “forced” to face immigrating to Japan, leaving behind his quieter life, relatives and friends in the countryside of São Paulo.

Like Pedro, many other school-age Brazilians have been starting a new life in Japan, a decision that is not commonly in their hands, at least not at that age. When asked about the meaning of “nationality” and the adjective “Brazilian”, Pedro answered: “For me, ‘nationality’ means having always an available place to return to, a place that welcomes me”; and ‘to be a Brazilian’ means to strive for your rights, but to be also always ready to help people in need”. Pedro’s parents seem to know the meaning of “return”, since they are part of a cyclical migration flow, which also implies a stronger link with their country of origin. They have been in Japan more than three times before Pedro and his sister were born, but now they did not come alone. Except for his family name, Pedro has not had any direct contact to Japan or to his Japanese ancestors before. Now he faces silently and unobtrusively this new situation, while adapting himself firstly to the Brazilian community in Hamamatsu.

⁵² Interview 8, 31 October 2016.

Like lonely swallows⁵³, some young people flew and got away from Brazil when they were still very young. From different regions and cultures in Brazil, some of them happened to meet each other in Japan and built friendships that last as long as their stay, some last only a few months or years, but others last their whole childhood and puberty. Koji⁵⁴, Keiti⁵⁵ and Antonio⁵⁶ represent a group of teenagers that grew up in Japan and have similar migration stories, which differ from Pedro's actual situation. They have already adapted themselves to the Brazilian community, since they immigrated to Japan with their parents when they were still young children. They were one of the first students enrolled at *Escola Alcance* between 2005 and 2006, when this Brazilian school was established in the Takaoka district. In 2016, at the ages of fifteen, sixteen and seventeen, respectively, I have met them again for an interview, in order to see whether or not some answers they gave me through their written questionnaires, a year before, were still in accordance with their current thoughts and feelings.

Koji lives with his parents, who have met in Brazil and decided to emigrate to Japan, searching for a better future for over twenty years now. With his parents' comings and goings, Koji was born in Campinas, São Paulo, and brought to Japan when he was at the age of three. Keiti was born in Curitiba, Paraná, in the south of Brazil, and went to Japan with his parents when he was five years old. He has two older sisters, but both of them are back in Brazil and only one had been to Japan before. Antonio was two years old when he was brought to Japan, leaving his relatives back in Cuiabá, Mato Grosso, in central west Brazil. Now at the age of seventeen, Antonio lives with his father and half-brother, who is also a student at the same school. His mother, whom he contacts through Skype every now and then, is back in Brazil.

The three of them have vague memories of Brazil, since they spent all those years in Japan. They know each other more than they know their relatives back in their country of origin. Literate in Portuguese, they have never been to Japanese schools as a result of their parents' choice and fears, mostly because of their "permanently short stay-status" in

⁵³ *'Andorinhas Solitárias'* ("Lonely Swallows") was a metaphor used in 2011 by Prof. Kimihiro Tsumura and the film director Mayu Nakamura to refer to the young Japanese Brazilians living in Hamamatsu. The documentary "Lonely Swallows – Living as the Children of Migrant Workers" (2011) was produced in collaboration with Hamamatsu Gakuin University and Minority Youth Japan.

⁵⁴ Group Interview 10, 28 November 2016.

⁵⁵ Interview 9, 23 October 2016.

⁵⁶ Group Interview 10, 28 November 2016.

Japan. They barely speak Japanese, although they have taken Japanese classes twice a week at school for years and have visited together, for a while, a language course offered by the government⁵⁷. This is due to a mixture of lack of interest and few contacts with Japanese people. Nevertheless, they affirm they can understand the language more than they can speak it.

Looking back, Koji remembers the time when he was part of a Japanese soccer club:

They thought I was Japanese and came to talk to me, but I could not say anything. Then I always said: ‘Gomen, nihongo wakaranai!’ (‘Sorry, but I don’t know Japanese!’). However, when time passed I started to talk with them and everything became normal.

In the end, after considering hypothetical situations, we talked a lot about how they see both countries, and how they would describe them to a person who has never been to Brazil or to Japan. Their descriptions were full of stereotypes and were clearly based on news that they keep hearing and seeing online or in national and international mass media. Expressing their feelings about home, they answered in unison and without any explanation: “Brazil!”

Saturday Morning Portuguese Classes

Hamamatsu, October 2016.

On my first weekend in Hamamatsu, I decided to wake up earlier in order to visit the Saturday Portuguese classes at *Escola Alcance*. After a long week of hard work, principally because of the permanent shift of languages and new tasks, serving as a trainee in a local Japanese organization, I endeavored to be fit and awake after sleeping on a *futon* mattress on the floor. I am sure that, anyone who has to sleep on it at some time would appreciate a bed back home. It was only the beginning of the next two months in the field.

⁵⁷ The free of charge Japanese language course was part of a program called *Niji no Kakehashi Kyoshitsu*; to support children of migrants, who have lost their jobs during the 2008 global financial crisis. The nationwide project, funded by the Ministry of Education of Japan, lasted about five years and many Brazilian students in Hamamatsu could attend the classes as well.

The school was established in an old two-story house built in a Japanese style, being later adapted and renewed for business purposes. On the side entrance, the sliding door was already opened when I got there and many shoes were on the floor in the entrance hall. It was 9 o'clock and the classes had already begun. I heard greetings in Portuguese, but most of the voices were from the teachers – like me, the students were still a little sleepy. There were about eleven students divided into two classes for children and one class for teenagers. The groups were small and the teachers were supposed to teach them Portuguese, according to their age and knowledge. All the children and adolescents are regular students at Japanese schools, and on Saturdays they go to this Brazilian school in order to improve their Portuguese writing and reading skills. It is almost certain that their parents enrolled them in these private courses, encouraging and supporting the learning of both languages, a gradual change in attitudes towards bilingualism. Although it is already being discussed, bilingualism is still not official in the Japanese school system.



I saw some familiar faces in these classes, most of them were brothers and sisters of former students, but I have also met many new students, mainly children born in Hamamatsu and between the ages of seven and ten. Denise⁵⁸, a fourteen-year-old, and Cayla⁵⁹, a thirteen-year-old girl with long curly hair and almost no Japanese characteristics, were one of the children I have already seen. After completing the elementary school at *Aoi Nishi Shogakko* in the neighborhood, they are currently attending the secondary school *Kaisei Chugakko*. I was lucky to have the opportunity to interview both of them together with Marcelo⁶⁰, a twelve-year-old student at *Escola Alcance*, who happened to be at school on Saturday and joined our informal discussion.

Denise, Cayla and Marcelo have a lot in common: they were all born in Hamamatsu in the same maternity, known among Brazilians as the '*Clinica Rosa*' ("The Pink Clinic" – because of the color of its façade); they live in the same district; and were literate in Portuguese at *Escola Alcance* with the same teacher, although Marcelo has

⁵⁸ Group Interview 11, 14 October 2016.

⁵⁹ Group Interview 11, 14 October 2016.

⁶⁰ Group Interview 11, 14 October 2016.

always been a regular student at this school since kindergarten. On the other hand, their daily lives differ completely. While Denise and Cayla speak fluent Japanese, are fully integrated in the Japanese school system, and knew the habits, customs and social rules that shape the society they live in, Marcelo has almost no contact with Japanese children and adults, and lives surrounded by Brazilians in the ethnic spaces inside the community.

During the interview, Marcelo was the only one who mentioned prejudice in Japan. He said, “Japan is a very conservative country, very respectful, and there is, sometimes, the problem involving prejudice ... there are some Japanese people who do not like Brazilians, but the majority of them are very respectful, much more reserved”. He told me that this prejudice does not bother him, something I still can barely believe. When asked about which country they would choose to live, Cayla and Denise answered straight away and clearly “Japan”. Denise justified, “I would choose Japan, because we have already lived here for so long, and I think I would not be able to get used to Brasil”. In addition, Cayla said, “I would choose Japan because there are no robbers and because I have many friends here”. Marcelo, on the contrary, affirmed:

I think I would choose Brazil, because it is my homeland. I think I would go, I had never been there, but I think it is more about being someone – getting a job, for example. If I want to become a successful person, I doubt whether or not I could succeed here. I want to study in order to go to Brazil.

Although all of my three informants were too young for giving me objective and clear opinions about their current situation, I was very touched to see that some silent moments were worthier than a thousand words. Their feelings seem to be mostly contradictory. Despite their diverse daily experiences, they all gave me the same “hyphenated” answer about their homeland: *‘minha patria é Brasil-Japão’* (“my homeland is Brazil-Japan”). Then, I considered immediately the answer in that order.

The Road Less Traveled By

During the time that I spent in Japan, I experienced only a few times life outside the Brazilian community in such a way that I could redirect my attention to part of the young generation of Brazilians, who somehow managed to move freely in the city, almost without being noticed. Their physical appearances and their fluency in Japanese allowed them, to be seen and treated almost as Japanese. Actually, they took “the road less traveled

by”⁶¹. They belong to a tiny minority within the minority that got access to higher education in Japan.

Through some acquaintances I managed to contact three Brazilian college students from two universities, who were raised in Japan and currently live in Hamamatsu. They followed an unconventional and expensive pathway, aspiring to an upward social mobility in Japanese society through higher education, though being sometimes still regarded as foreigners. I was introduced to Milena⁶² and Eduardo⁶³, regular students of international cultures at the Shizuoka University of Art and Culture, and to Wellington who studies English at the Tokoha University in Shizuoka City. I met them separately and under different circumstances.

At the end of October 2016, I was invited to participate in the Forum on Intercultural Children’s Education at Shizuoka University of Art and Culture, promoted by the Japan Foundation. On that occasion, a colleague introduced me to Milena who agreed to be interviewed for my research purposes. After the presentation and discussion we went upstairs to a cozy place, where we could sit down and also enjoy the sunset while we got to know each other. We were in an open air space, a modern and beautiful courtyard at the university. Milena started to talk with me in Portuguese, and sometimes when she could not find the right words she used some Japanese words in between. At first she introduced herself:

My name is Yuko Minami, and I have a Brazilian name, which is Milena. In Brazil I use Milena Yuko Minami, but here it is Yuko Minami. I am nineteen years old and this is my first year at the university. I was born in São Paulo, and arrived in Japan when I was eight, and since then I am living here for about twelve years. At the beginning, I did not speak Japanese, but as time passed I started to forget the Portuguese language, and my culture. That is the reason I am at the university now, I am interested about different cultures, about Brazil. Here in Hamamatsu there are a lot of Brazilians, I am also interested to know more about them.

Milena is one of the many young Brazilians, who were enrolled at Japanese schools since their arrival in Japan. Beside the fact that she has a dual citizenship, something very unusual in this context, she had only contact with the Japanese culture

⁶¹ See Frost (1916).

⁶² Interview 12, 21 October 2016.

⁶³ Interview 1, 25 October 2016.

and language when she took her first steps in Hamamatsu with her parents and two sisters. Her father was born in Japan, but emigrated to Brazil with his parents when he was only two years old. Her mother was born and raised in Brazil, but had also Japanese parents. About her family's migration story and her feelings about that, Milena argued, "our culture is Brazilian, but our blood is Japanese".

Some days after talking to Milena at the university, I met Eduardo, a twenty-three-year-old senior student, who was writing, at the time of our interview, his bachelor thesis on the role of Brazilian schools in Japan. We managed to meet in a famous café in downtown area on a weekday evening. At first we were both a little anxious and apprehensive, but later after I explained to him the purpose of my research, we started to relax and enjoy the conversation. Around us there were many young people still in school uniforms and some well-dressed people standing or sitting and chatting after work, but others were reading or studying alone. The atmosphere was warm and welcoming, mostly because of the coffee's aroma and the background Bossa Nova music.

Contrary to Milena, Eduardo was born in Japan and has been to many Brazilian primary and secondary schools, first in Gunma where he was born, and later in Hamamatsu, before he had the chance to go to a Japanese high school – a very complicated pathway towards his higher education. His first experiences as a small child in a Japanese kindergarten have influenced him the most, in such a way that he had many difficulties later to adapt himself to the Brazilian environment. At home he spoke firstly in Japanese and Spanish, the language of his mother, a Peruvian of Japanese descent. His Portuguese language skills were only later improved through the guidance of his teachers at school and thanks to his mother's efforts. Then, Portuguese and Spanish became the "official" languages spoken at home.

When Eduardo was nine, he went to Brazil with his family for the first time. There they started a new life running a business in the countryside of São Paulo, in his father's hometown. At that time, he had no clue about what was life in Brazil. He faced then his first huge challenge when he was enrolled at school in the third grade: "I was the only Japanese; there were no other Japanese at school. Then, I had many conflicts with classmates, because the school children like to bully others. So I had some fights and arguments ... I did not like the school, I hated it ... I had no friends".

Eduardo experienced his biggest cultural shock in Brazil, where he thought he was Japanese. After almost two years he was back in Japan and the family decided to try the life and opportunities in Hamamatsu. While the global crisis was hitting Japan, Eduardo was already done with the junior high school and his parents managed somehow to enroll him in different courses around the city, which were part of local measures⁶⁴ for helping foreign children and adolescents, whose parents were struggling to find jobs.

In his winding path towards higher education, full of sociocultural and emotional turmoil, Eduardo explained his feelings about Japan:

It is a place, where you cannot express much your opinion, because of the people. It is a closed society, in my opinion, because I saw my parents working in the factories and cursing it, you know, I do not think they have such a freedom to express themselves to the Japanese, and so taking actions. I think Japan is closed for the new, but they say here the opposite. It is only a kind of discourse ... But in the end, you do not suffer from poverty, if you work, you can buy anything you want, you can travel, it is safe; it is not a bad country, but it is neither a good country for me.

At the end of our conversation, Eduardo expressed himself about his home feelings, saying “homeland...I do not think I have one, because I lived and I am still living as a Brazilian in Japan, I lived as a Japanese in Brazil; so, I do not think I have a homeland”. He is a Peruvian-Brazilian citizen that means he could live in Brazil or in Peru, if he wants; he has a permanent status in Japan, but nowadays he is thinking about a possible process of naturalization. He speaks fluently three languages and he is learning English on his own. When asked about a place he would choose to live, he gave me immediately a puzzled answer: “Brazil”.

I met Wellington⁶⁵ in November 2016 and on that occasion we had a long conversation about his personal experiences in Japan. On another edge of the city, I planned our meeting in the evening, since he is always late back home after his lectures at the university in Shizuoka City, circa one and a half hours by train from Hamamatsu. Inside a huge shopping mall we succeeded in finding a quieter place to talk. I expected a young man who probably could not speak properly Portuguese, as I had already heard a

⁶⁴ The Project ‘*Juntos*’ (“Together”) run by the Hamamatsu Gakuin University and language classes offered by the Roman Catholic community in Hamamatsu were the places, where Eduardo could prepare himself for the Japanese Proficiency Language Test and for the entrance test of Ohiradai High School.

⁶⁵ Interview 13, 1 November 2016.

little about his education path from the coordinator of the organization I was working, the person who actually helped me to get in touch with him. I was completely wrong in my expectations – from his Portuguese accent, I would never think that he has been in Japanese schools before and has built his life far away from the Brazilian community.

Wellington was born twenty years ago in Hamamatsu. Thanks to his mother's stubborn attitudes, he can fluently speak Portuguese without any accent. After completing the pre-school years up to the second grade at a Brazilian school, he started his third grade at a Japanese elementary school in the district where he is still living. At home, the use of Japanese is forbidden and strongly opposed, mainly because his parents cannot speak properly the language. About that he explained:

Actually, I was never opposed to my mother's decision. I always understood her thoughts ... I have always learned Portuguese and I think it is important, it opens minds. I can say I am bilingual! Bilingual, Portuguese and Japanese, neither of them is gone; they are together; I can use both.

Like Eduardo, Wellington graduated from high school *Ohiradai*, a school in Hamamatsu very popular for its number of foreign students, but also well known for its bad reputation as a high school for “*furyou* teenagers”⁶⁶, mostly the ones who failed entrance examinations at better or renowned schools in the region, but also the ones who do not have aspirations for attending universities. Apart from this school reputation, Wellington has only positive memories. He was constantly encouraged by the teachers and counselors to learn more, preparing himself to take the entrance examination at different universities, and he had also the financial support from his parents who are making efforts to provide their children's education, working hard on the assembly lines of factories.

If Wellington has to choose today a country to spend his whole life, he would opt for Japan. In his own words:

My thoughts now, at this exact moment, are in Japan, staying here, because I am studying here, I will graduate at university here, and I intend to work in a Japanese company. Brazil, I have never been there, and I do not have courage yet. Then, I plan to stay here

⁶⁶ The word *furyou* in Japanese means literally “inferiority, failure, defect, blemish, badness”. The term is used in different contexts, but it is also used for young people, who did not get high enough grades in the previous schools, who dropped out of schools, or the ones who are involved with mafia groups.

and visit Brazil in order to get to know the country, to learn new things, but this is another story.

While he explained to me his thoughts and concerns about nationality, Wellington confirmed something I have already read about and heard from Milena before. Actually, a very popular idea that is not properly true. He said, “A difficult thing here in Japan is that people do not accept much the idea of dual citizenship; here they accept only one nationality, so now I am Brazilian! If I want to become Japanese I have to lose my Brazilian citizenship. I think in Brazil it is different”.

Fact is that Brazilian citizens cannot easily lose or give up their nationality by voluntarily acquiring another one through naturalization, but since it is a very complicated process, they are encouraged by the Brazilian government to apply for its reacquisition, any time. Therefore, the issue pointed out by Wellington is related to intrinsic social and cultural values, as well as civil and political rights, which differ from country to country.

Although Wellington plans his life in Japan, feeling himself very comfortable and active in the society, in which he is living, he affirms proudly his cultural identity as being Brazilian.

It is never too late

Renan⁶⁷, a 21-year-old man, was the first person I met in Hamamatsu, who made me think seriously about the young generation of Japanese Brazilians. His story just called my attention, not because of the thickness of his words, but because of his simplicity and modesty. Through my very personal interest in his accounts, I became confident in conducting my research, trying to know more about the issues around this young generation, mainly because I saw in his personal narrative a kind of “vicious circle” that has been repeating over and over again, through the last two decades. Many children of immigrants are still following a life path similar to their parents, the former *dekasegi(s)*, starting to work in factories at the very early age of sixteen, and many of them, unfortunately, dropping out of schools. That was actually my first concern about this generation.

⁶⁷ Interview 14, 30 August 2015.

Renan's parents went together to Japan before he and his brother were born, but changes in their life split up the family. Renan lives with his mother and brother in the city of Fukuroi, about 20 km from Hamamatsu, and his father has been back in Brazil alone for a long time. At home, Renan speaks only in Portuguese, but his first written words were learned at a Japanese elementary school. After some difficulties he faced during his first three years at a regular school, his mother decided to send him to a Brazilian school. About this time he remembered,

(At this school) I did not stay longer, because of the fights, and the prejudice ... the Brazilians called a lot of negative attention and we were always guilty, then my mom was fed up with this and decided to change for the Brazilian school ... My mom made a good choice, changing the Japanese for the Brazilian school, because if I had stayed there, I think I would not had a future, because I am not Japanese. The prejudice was also a crucial factor.

Assuming that he was talking to a person who has never been to Japan before, Renan described the life there saying that, "Japan is a good place to make money, but 'we do not live', you know, as Brazilian or foreigner, 'we do not live', we only work in factories, hour after hour. We end up wasting our valuable time of life here, working".

Because of his physical appearance, Renan said that people mistakenly assume that he is Japanese, and it seems to happen all the time, but he does not feel himself as Japanese. He affirms, "I was born in Japan, but I am Brazilian and I will go on being a Brazilian".

Renan dropped out of school after completing junior high school studies, but later, while working in an automobile factory, he managed to graduate from a high school, taking a Brazilian distance-learning program and passing official tests. Nowadays, he is taking a distance education course, a bachelor degree in foreign trade offered by a Brazilian college, through its center in Nagoya City. He thinks that this bachelor degree would open the door for a better and brighter future in Brazil.

Many young Brazilians who were born in Japan have never been to Brazil, even though they are Brazilian citizens and are brought up in their parents' culture inside the community. Some of them have been to Brazil, but when they were very young, or for a very short period of time. They have fuzzy or no memories of their parents' home country and relatives. Apart from the stereotyped image of Brazil, widespread in the mass media, they only know a little more about Brazil from hearing their parents' stories and seeing

family pictures. Their homeland is an imaginary place and probably has two faces, but *saudades*⁶⁸ is a latent state, an important part of their cultural inheritance; the longing for a place that got stuck in their parents' minds; the nostalgia of a country they barely know.

The future, we cannot predict, but education has been always seen as an investment in the future; it is certainly never too late to learn and to carry on learning. In order to provide deeper insights into the perspectives for the future of this young generation, I will provide, in the next chapter, some more recollections of conversations and encounters with young Brazilians in the field.

⁶⁸ *Saudades* is "a term used frequently in Brazil that includes notions of homesickness, nostalgia, and longing" (Lesser 2003: xi). See Ishi (2003), for an analysis of "the ideology of *saudade*" in the context of the *Dekasegi* migration movement.

CHAPTER 4

Neither Here Nor There: An Uncertain Future

‘No dream for the future in Japan. But in Brazil, we are treated as foreigners’. There are many Japanese-Brazilian kids like that living in Hamamatsu City ... Although, most of these kids were either born or grew up in Japan, compulsory education does not apply to them, and many of them start working in factory after graduating or dropping out of junior high schools. They have dreams, but don't have (the) means to realize them or have steady jobs. But they always stay positive, and never give up their dreams...⁶⁹

– Tsumura and Nakamura, *Lonely Swallows – Living as the Children of Migrant Workers*

The fact that the compulsory education in Japan does not apply to the foreign children in general, probably indicates one of the main reasons for the lack of their integration in Japanese society, but it also reinforces their official status as foreigners, children of immigrants, according to the Japanese immigration law. Despite of the fact that these young people were born or raised in Japan since early age and are in most cases culturally and linguistically brought up as Japanese, they are still being treated as the “other”, or as “a problem that must be solved”, not as the new face of a country and the future of a nation in process of a growing internationalization.

In the previous chapter, some young Brazilians were already presented, in order to show their diverse sociocultural backgrounds and the distinct ways they recognize themselves in this host society, at the same time, being constantly perceived, identified and labeled as the children of immigrants, as shown in the stories in chapter 2. The following section reveals some of their aspirations and perceptions about their own future. The accounts and further analysis presented herein are based on formal interviews and informal discussions with four Brazilian youths, who were in a transitional phase of their lives when they were first interviewed in 2015 and whose life experiences, aspirations, plans, choices that have been made so far, as well as their sorrows and misfortunes, I was allowed to follow up to the present. In the second and last section of this chapter, I address

⁶⁹ See Hamamatsu Gakuin University (2011).

concerns over current issues and future challenges facing the second generation of Brazilians.

Forking Paths

In summer 2015, Mayara, Juliana, Melissa and Ana Julia were still wearing school uniforms, laughing and making jokes during their intervals between classes and lunch breaks, sometimes thinking and talking about their plans for the future in Japan or in Brazil. They were almost done with their high school studies at *Escola Alcance*, where I conducted the first phase of my fieldwork. All of them were between seventeen and eighteen years old. They have known each other for quite a long time, principally because they live in the same district and are engaged in some activities inside the Brazilian community, but, nevertheless, they have gathered very different experiences, similar to the other young Brazilians mentioned in the previous chapter. Mayara, Juliana and Ana Julia were born in Japan, and Melissa went to Japan with her parents when she was a little baby. Only Mayara and Juliana have experienced a transnational life, going to Brazil and returning to Japan more than two times, and they were the ones who had already been enrolled in Japanese schools.

The future of these four senior high school students is now in their own hands, but the choices and paths they took until now are the results of their parents' decisions, which will henceforth be decisive for their next steps. The external pressure is immense and the opportunities for those young people who graduate from Brazilian high schools in Japan and have low or no Japanese language skills are restricted.

*Melissa*⁷⁰: As the only child of Japanese Brazilian parents, Melissa told me that she was born in Brazil fulfilling her mother's desire to give birth to "a Brazilian baby", being brought to Japan when she was just one year old. She is passionate about *anime*⁷¹, a worldwide famous Japanese animation, which has highly motivated her to learn the Japanese language as fast as she could. In order to achieve her goal, mastering the art of animation in Japan, she was taking extra language courses, apart from her few Japanese classes at school. Helping her parents to be prepared financially for her future art studies,

⁷⁰ Interview 15, 1 September 2015; Interview 16, 20 October 2016.

⁷¹ *Anime* is a style of animation originating in Japan that is characterized by stark colorful graphics depicting vibrant characters in action-filled plots often with fantastic or futuristic themes (Merriam-Webster dictionary definition).

and thanks to her efforts of learning the language, she started a part-time work at a convenience store, near her school. There she could also improve her communicative skills in Japanese with her boss and colleagues. It was, actually, the first time that she had direct contact with Japanese people.

*Mayara*⁷²: Born the fifth of five children and growing up in a family atmosphere of faith and Christian charity inside the Brazilian community in Hamamatsu, Mayara is the only member of the family who was born in Japan. Transnational ties and movements shaped her life experiences, since she has already been back and forth between Japan and Brazil many times and, different than the other Brazilian youths in Japan, she has also lived and studied for a while in Brazil. Although she stayed there only for a limited period of time, she strengthened family ties and could also experience the daily life at a primary school in her parents' hometown. On the other hand, her life in Japan was marked by uncertainties and abrupt changes of family's future plans, which made her face a lot of adaptation difficulties in schools where she was enrolled. Confusingly, though, at the time of our first interview, Mayara had two plans for her future: in the near term future, she was planning to take a Brazilian distance education course in Japan, but she was not sure in which area; and in the long term future she wanted to study psychology in Brazil. In order to fulfill both plans, in her last year of high school she started to work part-time at the same convenience store, where her classmate Melissa was already working.

*Ana Julia*⁷³: Ana Julia was born in Japan and has never been to Brazil, although she is a Brazilian national. She has a younger brother, who was also born in Japan, and an older sister in Brazil, who has never been to Japan. Her family ties, then, are restricted to her relationship with a father, who lives separately in Hamamatsu, and her mother and brother with whom she has shared her whole life in Japan. She has learned Japanese at school, but she concentrates more of her efforts on learning the English language, since she has plans to study abroad, if possible in the US. Being brought up inside the Brazilian community has reinforced her Brazilian identity, but it has, at the same time, isolated her from the social life in Japan.

⁷² Interview 17, 27 August 2015.

⁷³ Interview 18, 27 August 2015; Interview 19, 29 October 2016; Interview 20, 15 May 2017.

*Juliana*⁷⁴: Like her classmate Mayara, Juliana had already spent short periods of time in Brazil, since she was born in Japan seventeen years ago, accompanying her parents' back and forth. The route between Japan and Brazil not only marked her transnational life experiences, but also built a sort of permanent uncertainty for her future. With an unstable life in both countries, her parents were still seeking a better life and future for the family. Back in Japan again, after starting her high school studies in Brazil, Juliana graduated and she is already planning her future studies. At the time of our first interview, she could only see her future back in Brazil; she was then already preparing herself for the return, which would be her last. In her parents' hometown, in the state of Paraná, she found a place where her dreams could probably come true: a school that offers courses for pilots and flight attendants. Making use of her Japanese and English language skills, she wanted to follow her dreams, becoming a flight attendant.

Between differences and similarities, one becomes puzzled with such uncertainty and so many back and forth movements, which are intrinsic parts of the Brazilian lives in Japan – lives in liminality, betwixt countries, cultures and different social contexts.

In October 2015, the senior school students participated on a school trip to Okinawa, the southernmost prefecture of Japan, where they spent a week together before their high school graduation ceremony, which was held in December of the same year⁷⁵. Since I was back in Germany, I could only follow such events in Japan, keeping constant contact with my informants online.

One year later, in October 2016, I was back in Japan again for the second phase of my fieldwork. I already had in mind to meet my previous informants, in order to know what they have been doing. If they were following their dreams and plans, or even if they had to change their paths. I was astonished to find out that all the four senior students, were doing unskilled work in factories around Hamamatsu.

Melissa managed to meet me in a weekday evening after finishing her afternoon shift at the convenience store. Sadly, she told me, that after almost two years it was her last part time working day, and that she has made the difficult decision to work in a factory, saving money for an exchange program abroad, in an Anglophone country,

⁷⁴ Interview 21, 1 September 2015; Interview 22, 20 February 2017.

⁷⁵ In Brazil, the school year is officially from February to December; and in Japan it starts at the beginning of April and ends in March of next calendar year. Brazilian schools in Japan follow not only the Brazilian school curriculum, but also its official calendar.

before she could decide for a place to start her higher education. About her previous experiences at the convenience store, she told me many positive aspects, and said that being a foreigner, a Brazilian, did not affect her relationship with the Japanese colleagues, because she does not have “a Brazilian face”, like some other Brazilian colleagues there, who were sometimes ignored by some old Japanese customers. Talking about her plans for a short and long term future, she said:

A certain part (of my future) is already planned, and it will be in accordance with the situation. I will start working in a factory, but I will not stay there for years, I want to save “good” money, because for taking part in an exchange program, it is not only about the language school fees, but I have also to cover the living expenses. Principally if you do not choose homestay, the costs can be more than two or three times higher. Then, if I could find an interesting course at a local university, and after improving my English skills, I would go back (to Japan) to save more money (for the under graduate course), and maybe I would try also to apply for a fellowship, if possible.

The love for *anime* is still there, but Melissa had realized that she is also very interested in languages. Apart from her Japanese and English skills, she would love to learn French. She gave up her idea to study art in Japan, because she realized that in Brazil it would be not so profitable, working as a cartoonist, and she thinks now about her aging parents and her future duty, being their only child. About her family’s plans for the future, she explained: “Well, if nothing goes wrong, some crisis, or something like that, we are planning to stay here (in Japan) for the rest of our lives, and if we go to Brazil, it would be only for visiting relatives, because the situation in Brazil is not good”.

On another day, I was on my way home by bus from the central station to the Takaoka district, when I encountered Mayara by chance on the same bus. She told me that she was coming back from a meeting with the church youth group she was part of, and that the day after she would wake up early in order to study for her next examinations. Surprised and happy to see her again, I embraced her while congratulating on her decision to keep studying. Mayara was not only taking a bachelor degree in Portuguese language and literature with teacher specialization, a long distance course run by a Brazilian private college in Japan, but she was also working a night shift in a factory close to her home, in order to pay her college fees. At that time, she did not know much about the fate of her former classmates, she knew only that Juliana was back in Brazil, studying to become a

flight attendant, and that Ana Julia was also working a night shift in a factory in the neighborhood.

Fortunately, after hearing from Mayara about Ana Julia's fate, I managed to contact her online, arranging our meeting on a Saturday in the city center. Together we spent some time watching the "Hamamatsu *Festa Samba*"⁷⁶, before we sat down on a quieter and cozy place for our second interview. After looking for information about exchange programs abroad, Ana Julia realized that the money she saved before was not enough, and immediately she decided to work in a factory right after her graduation ceremony, and on Saturdays she was doing a part-time job, in order to save more money for her future plans. She saw that a social upward mobility in Japanese society without the language skills would be almost impossible; that is the reason she kept studying the Japanese language in courses offered by the Japan International Cooperation Center – JICE⁷⁷. On her thoughts about the future, she argued:

I think, I am an undecided person. In fact, I am wondering: 'I am only nineteen years old, how can I decide something that I will do for the rest of my life?' I think, sometimes, I do not know anymore what I want do; on the other hand, I want so many things at the same time. Actually, I was thinking about starting to travel, but people around me started to say: 'You are Brazilian, but you do not know your own country!' The people in the factory said that to me; so, I have decided to go to Brazil in December. First I need to know my country! I am already excited.

After I concluded the second phase of my fieldwork, I was very curious about Ana Julia's plans for her short term future, her first visit to Brazil, and her first encounter with her sister, grandmother and other relatives. People she had never seen before, but somehow are part of her story; people who connect her to her parents' homeland, providing then a solid ground where she could move freely without probably being pointed out as an outsider. The first visit to her "imaginary homeland"⁷⁸ intrigued me the most.

In May 2017, I had a chance to organize another informal interview with Ana Julia, a video call via Skype. After a long conversation, I could grasp a little her thoughts

⁷⁶ "The *Festa Samba*" was held on 29 October 2016 in the city center of Hamamatsu.

⁷⁷ JICE, in cooperation with the Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare, offers, nationwide, language and training courses for the promotion of a more stable employment of foreign residents.

⁷⁸ See Rushdie (1992).

about Brazil. After staying at her grandmother's house in the countryside of São Paulo for twenty-one days, between Christmas and New Year's Eve, she could meet many relatives. She described also their surprise, seeing her for the first time there. Fleeting moments she will never forget. But, on the other hand, she told me about her feelings of uprootedness:

(There) I felt myself without homeland ... Sometimes I felt I had no home, as if I did not belong to that place. Maybe, it was because of (this community here). Brazilian people have created this community in Japan, but it is different, because sometimes we ended up also getting some influences from the culture here (in Japan), and we mixed that.

Ana Julia has still dreams, but somehow no means to fulfill them immediately. After her first experience in Brazil, she went back to Japan with a suitcase filled with memories and souvenirs, and a mind with far more questions than answers.

Since February 2017, Juliana is back in Japan after completing her vocational training course in Brazil. She could try to start her career as a flight attendant in Brazil, but she and her parents decided to go back to Japan again, in order to renew her long-term visa. Since she is the fourth generation of Japanese, she could lose her right to live in Japan, if she stayed in Brazil after her eighteenth birthday. Working in a factory and planning to stay in Japan for about three years, became Juliana's new plan for the immediate future.

Currently, the Japanese parliament discusses the possibility to offer visa to the fourth generation of Japanese Brazilians⁷⁹, trying to solve the country's labor shortages as the result of its shrinking population. In the following part of this chapter I will provide an overview of the current situation of the Japanese Brazilians based on significant issues and concerns that arose during the two phases of fieldwork in Hamamatsu.

The Current Situation

Whether enrolled in Brazilian or Japanese schools, studying at Japanese universities or taking bachelor degree courses in distance programs offered by private Brazilian universities, or even working at production lines of factories around industrial areas, thousands of young Brazilians are shaping the new face of the largest immigrant group

⁷⁹ See Tobace (2017).

from outside Asia in Japan, but their future in this society remains unclear. The confluence of both cultures, political and social contexts, as well as their contradictions, in terms of immigration laws and local policies, may give to this young generation, or even take from them, their aspirations for the future. Some of them were already assimilated into the host society, since they were born and raised in Japan following local habits and customs; others have been through a process of acculturation over the last years; but, on the other hand, among them, there are many young people who are still struggling in liminality, not between countries like their parents, but between the Brazilian community and the Japanese society. The second generation of Japanese Brazilians is emerging within Japan, but outside its cultural and social patterns in marginalized communities. Many Japanese nationals are still looking down upon them, first because of their eternal legal status as “foreign residents”, and then, in regard of their stigma as the children of immigrants, who entered Japan to work in unskilled labor market, doing such degrading and demeaning jobs, being still shunned by a better educated populace – a heavy cultural and social stigma.

Japan’s notion of *uchi – soto* (inside – outside) still determines Japanese life, social organization and identity, undermining as well the sociocultural integration of non-Japanese residents in society. Despite their Japanese ancestry, Brazilian immigrants share in Japan similar experiences of discrimination and stigmatization like other minorities that have coexisted for many generations – the Ainu, Burakumin, Okinawan and Korean people – which still do not fit in the cultural framework of the majority Japanese. In this case, Japanese Brazilians, as the “newcomers”, are prolonging their period of stay and giving to their offspring the opportunity of a more economically stable life in Japan. Their permanent status leads to significant levels of uncertainty and insecurity from both sides, and it threatens the myth of a homogenous Japan, as “*tanitsu minzoku*” (“a people of one ethnic group”). On the emergent Japanese discourses on minorities and immigration, Millie Creighton states:

Japan values its culture and tradition, and fears of greater diversity are linked to fears of losing them. However, contemporary anthropological theory recognizes culture and tradition as ‘emergent’ – constantly being shaped, and re-shaped, negotiated and re-negotiated. In considering Japan’s future, it is pertinent to look at underlying patterns of culture that affect attitudes towards others, along with newly emergent social discourses on diversity and inclusion, as Japan struggles with loosening its insistence on

homogeneity towards a new social vision of suggesting a Japanese version of multiculturalism, with the newly espoused concept of *tabunka kyosei* ‘diverse cultures living symbiotically’ or ‘multiple cultures living together’ (Creighton 2014).

Apart from Japan’s traditional behaviors and attitudes, the latest revision of the Japanese Basic Plan for Immigration Control envisions, in diplomatic terms, the realization of “a vibrant, prosperous, safe and secure, as well as harmonious society coexisting with foreign nationals”. Actually, the future of Japan is in the hands of its young people, although conservatives are still directly preparing, regulating and implementing current policies. The young Brazilians, who were born and brought up in Japan, may also play an important role in that regard, whether consciously aware of this or not. Currently, their education is a key issue in the immigration control administration and future policies nationwide:

In order to ensure the healthy development of the children of foreign nationals of Japanese descent and to give them an opportunity to enhance their social status, it is important to at least ensure that school-age children receive primary and lower secondary education, and in cases where it is found in the examination for the renewal of the period of stay that school-age children are not attending school, we will be implementing measures to promote school attendance in coordination with other relevant organizations (Basic Plan for Immigration Control 2010: 24).

Although there are such concerns about the education of foreign children and future measures to promote their school attendance, Japan resists changes, keeping education compulsory only to Japanese nationals⁸⁰. Municipalities in Japan are responsible for education policies. The Hamamatsu government, for example, manages 112 primary educational establishments (*shogakko*) and 51 secondary schools (*chugakko*) (Maxwell 2008: 4). Local governments are also in charge of developing projects to promote education for non-Japanese children, trying to reduce school dropout rates⁸¹. At

⁸⁰ In Japan the compulsory education system consists of nine years of schooling, beginning at the age of six, with six years of elementary school and three years of junior high school. According to article 26 in the National Constitution, all citizens have an obligation to send their children to school, and compulsory education is free of charge. On the other hand, the education of foreign children is not mandatory, but highly recommended. The Educational Board of City Hall is required to inform the foreign residents, sending them *school entrance information* (Maeda 2007: 33-34).

⁸¹ Among other projects to promote education for foreign children, the Hamamatsu government, in cooperation with the Consulate General of Brazil in Hamamatsu, has implemented the project called ‘*Evasão Escolar Zero*’ (“School Drop-out Zero”), in March 2011, which revealed 96 foreign children out of school and repositioned most of them back in public schools or international schools around the city. See Brazilian Ministry of Foreign Affairs [No date].

the beginning of this immigration process, international or ethnic schools, such as the Brazilian schools around industrial areas were mostly established by frustrated parents. In order to provide education to Brazilian children, whose parents are planning to return to Brazil after a few years of intensive work, these schools follow the Brazilian curriculum and are taught in Portuguese⁸². At present there are three Brazilian schools registered under the title “schools for foreigners” in Hamamatsu – *Escola Alcance*, *Escola Alegria do Saber* and *Escola Mundo de Alegria*.

The Brazilian schools, in turn, have their own challenges, principally because not all of them have the official “miscellaneous status”⁸³, which makes their curriculum and certificates nationally recognized by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, giving the young students the opportunity of proceeding to their studies at higher education institutions in the country.

Some of the reasons for the high rates of school evasion and the constant change of school systems, from the regular education in Japanese schools to the Brazilian education system at ethnic schools, which undermine the young generation’s future, were already mentioned. In recent times, the main issues that have emerged as the core of the debate on the education of the Brazilian children in Japan are: the lack of parents’ financial stability and the constant changes in family’s plans, such as changes of job, address, city or even state and, consequently, abrupt school systems’ changes; the lack of parental awareness concerning their rights, duties and necessary procedures in order to enroll their children in Japanese schools; the high costs of the Brazilian school fees; the lack of parental supervision; the language barrier for those children who arrive in Japan at more advanced school age; and, last but not least, the fear of prejudice, discrimination and bullying towards foreign children.

Japan’s rigid education system still works under century-old traditions and values of “restraint”, called in Japanese *enryo*, like the Japanese culture itself. The famous

⁸² The education system in Brazil consists of an optional pre-school education, nine years of mandatory elementary education, three years of secondary education and higher education.

⁸³ Since 2009, the Japanese government is supporting the promotion of upgrading the Brazilian schools to “miscellaneous schools” or “quasi-school corporations”, along with some bilateral agreements with the Brazilian government as part of the “Action Plan on Measures for Foreign Residents of Japanese Descent” held on 31 March 2011 by the Council for the Promotion of Measures for Foreign Residents of Japanese Descent.

Japanese proverb, “the nail that sticks out gets hammered down”⁸⁴, reinforces the importance of “fitting-in”, belonging to a group and putting aside strong personal and peculiar characteristics and qualities (See Kato 1992: 312 in Maeda 2007:41). In Japan this maxim works as an unspoken rule of conformity and it is combined with a strict hierarchical social structure, becoming almost a tolerated phenomenon deeply ingrained in the Japanese education system, in such a way that it goes against the foreign children’s diverse social and cultural backgrounds. All ongoing efforts currently being made by local governments, providing language support, as well as counseling services for foreign students, parents, teachers and new staff at schools, cannot control discrimination and some acts of bullying – or *ijime*⁸⁵ – against people who do not fit into the traditional social sphere of Japanese schools, like some Brazilian youths. *Ijime* at school is still an extremely difficult issue in Japan that clearly reproduces the inherent “inside-outside” social division.

Many Brazilian migrants are seeing more and more their future in Japan, since they have been living there for over ten, fifteen or even twenty years, like most of the Brazilian people I got to know during my fieldwork. Consequently, an unpredictable problem that emerged in this context was the future of those immigrants’ children who completed high school at ethnic schools and had no means, neither financially nor linguistically, of entering higher education in Japanese institutions or getting jobs outside the manufacturing industry.

Hamamatsu, which houses the largest concentration of Brazilians of any city in Japan, has already taken the first steps to provide a more culturally diverse and cohesive society. On the importance of the Japanese language education for the integration of foreign residents into society, the former chief of the National Police Agency, Takaji Kunimatsu, argues that, “the city of Hamamatsu ... have succeeded in integrating Brazilians of Japanese descent. But such municipalities now face new challenges, such as the ‘double limited’ problem, where the descendants of these Brazilians cannot speak

⁸⁴ ‘*Deru kugi wa utareru*’ – This Japanese proverb literally means, “The nail that sticks out gets hammered down” (if you stand out, you will be subject to criticism).

⁸⁵ According to the *Kyodo News*, “‘bullying’, *ijime* generally connotes the aggressive behavior of a group, directed at an individual or bullying from a superior, often performed in front of a group to make the victim feel even more inferior. In 2009, the Education Ministry recorded a record 61,000 cases of *ijime* in Japan ... While some commentators worry this reflects an increasing trend of bullying at school, many believe that students and teachers are now more aware of what constitutes an inappropriate behavior and are more willing to report it” (Watanabe 2012).

either Japanese or Portuguese fluently”⁸⁶. Over the years, Hamamatsu has been very receptive, providing many services, including national health insurance, Japanese language classes, information, assistance and counseling in Portuguese, among other services. The city is slowly turning into a more multicultural place, a little Brazilianized, and their residents are becoming a little more tolerant and welcoming to foreigners – with exceptions, of course.

The Brazilians and their children have been “coexisting” with Japanese nationals for over twenty-six years now, but their voices have not been clearly heard yet. Therefore, the debate on the future of Japan could also include the immediate concern about the way the sociocultural integration of immigrants and their children might be promoted. Worldwide, integration of immigrants has become a central and burning issue. In Japan, it is not different, the discussions and debates on integration are now starting, but with great skepticism.

⁸⁶ See the article "Japan's ex-top cop spearheads campaign to boost immigration" (*The Japan Times*, 3 March 2017).

Conclusion

The transnational relations between Japan and Brazil, which started in the first half of the twentieth century with the migration of a large number of Japanese to Brazil, followed by the so-called ethnic return migration of Brazilians of Japanese descent to Japan in the last decades of the same century, has many facets; it is “a rare but extraordinary case of transnational homemaking, braking, and transforming” (Lesser 2003: 1). Transnational ties are constantly reconfiguring borders and boundaries, reshaping political, economic and sociocultural scenarios, and strongly affecting identity constructions, mainly of those of immigrant descent who are born and raised in an environment foreign to themselves and to their parents. The second generation of Japanese Brazilians in Japan is now facing the positive and negative effects of this century-old history, and bringing, consequently, new and greater challenges for the future.

This ethnographic study has an exploratory character. It seeks to portray a local and current situation by providing a closer look at an ethnic group in Japan that over twenty-six years has found home abroad and nowadays struggles to provide a better future for its next generations. In addition, this study collected in the field particular aspects of this new generation from different perspectives. The personal stories, recollections, and reflections presented herein are my attempts to approach the answers to my research questions, which awakened and drove my curiosity back to Japan.

The five stories presented in chapter 2, supported by the analysis of official documents and data gathered during my research, reveal some of the ways this second generation has been perceived and presented in the host society and in its own community. The young Brazilians are often mentioned as the children of immigrants, returnees, newcomers, a minority inside the ethnic minority group, or officially as foreign children of Japanese descent, but sometimes they have also been seeing as foreign youths, who may be involved in criminality, principally if they abandon their studies at school before completion, and keep struggling to integrate, as it already happened on a larger scale during the 2008 global financial crisis. All of these classifications or categorizations permit me to conclude that these young people are still being culturally and socially stigmatized, just like their migrant parents. The fact that they were born on Japanese soil,

does not exclude them from such discriminatory perceptions, principally because they are often associated with their parents, who are placed in the lower class of society: first regarding their lack of “Japaneseness”⁸⁷, and then strongly marked by their social status as unskilled factory workers. The Japanese people, principally the older generations, are looking down upon Brazilian people and foreign residents in general; they are still shunning immigrant workers and their children.

On the other hand, the young people I contacted in the field affirmed that they are Brazilians, sometimes strongly and other times with less enthusiasm, but since they have lived in Japan their whole lives and some have not been to Brazil yet, they perceive themselves in between cultures, as usual among second generations of immigrants worldwide. Apart from their place of birth and length of stay in the host society, they are tending to feel themselves more Brazilianized or Japanized according to their life stories, upbringing, interests, affinities and personalities, as well as their transnational and family ties in Brazil or in Japan. Research findings indicate that the way the young Japanese Brazilians see and feel themselves are strongly influenced by the way they have been perceived and presented in this context. Nowadays, they are officially mentioned as a “new issue”, a problem that must be solved.

In this case, the second generation’s perspectives for the future are usually shaped by the opportunities and financial conditions they have or do not have in both societies. Neither of their choices seems to provide them a stable ground for their further decisions, because they always feel themselves in liminality, unrooted and ungrounded. It is not only about their dreams and plans for the future, it is also about the pathways they are allowed to take, and this is based on their social and cultural abilities, as well as their social and political rights and duties. They have talked, at least, about three choices they have for their own future: stay in Japan and behave like Japanese, wishing to be accepted and trying to become socially upward mobile through higher education; go “back” and start a new life in Brazil, in their parents’ homeland and in their country of citizenship; or go abroad trying to find a place where they could start a new life from the very beginning. Uncertainties that they keep in mind while prolonging their final decisions, working temporarily in factories as unskilled workers, like their parents, and others (still part of a minority) studying at Japanese universities.

⁸⁷ On the “concept of Japaneseness”, see Fukuoka (2000).

In sum, the present ethnographic study analyzed a topic not yet fully explored: the emergence of a young generation of Brazilians in Japan that does not seem to know the meaning of belonging, since it still struggles for social rights, cultural identity and visibility, being marginalized from the rest of society. These Brazilian youths carry with them new challenges to a country that still avoids greater discussions on immigration, seeking to maintain the image of an ethnic homogeneous country. It seems very contradictory, principally because the immigrants are already playing active roles in Japanese society. In addition, the findings suggest further research on the meaning of “Japaneseness”, which seem to regulate and determine social and cultural practices, consequently, influencing political dialogue and cooperation on migration and related issues. Finally, the way Japan will cope with the permanent settling of Japanese Brazilians and, in particular with their offspring in its society, is still an open question. The fact is, however, that the multiculturalization of Japan cannot be undone.

Epilogue

Hamamatsu Song

Someone talk to the seashore. The powerful waves are hitting it
The bright green hills are lined side by side
I should go further to fulfill my dreams / I should set a goal
Fly away up to the fruitful future
In the middle of this bright green field there are fruit
The white flowers bloom, they are fragrantly blooming
Soon the fruit will mature
Oh, feelings return home
Ah, feelings return to the serene Hamana Lake
Oh, the emotions return to the beautiful town, to its clear water and sky
From the wind through Hamamatsu, voices can still be heard
Eternal cycle of life / Beyond hardships / Dream further
Forth and far away / Endless / Henceforth⁸⁸

When I found the lyrics of the *Hamamatsu Song* by chance, in between some written material about the Takaoka district and Hamamatsu, I was deeply touched with these lines and many images came immediately in my mind; again and again the word “return” appeared in front of me. Unfortunately, this song has not yet been translated into Portuguese, but I am almost sure that it would touch also many Brazilians, who have strong personal ties to the city.

Not only Brazilians have to remake themselves in Japan; the Japanese who were migrants in Brazil and who had the chance to go back to their homeland are also in a liminal state. They wish to return to a place they learned to call home, a place they belonged to for a certain period of time, if not forever, as my grandparents did.

Fortunately, in the field, I have met not only young people who are part of the second generation of Brazilians, but also some elderly people who lived in Brazil as the second generation of Japanese – *nikkeijin* who built the first transnational ties between

⁸⁸ The “Hamamatsu Song” (Text: Nozomu Hayashi/ Music: Yasuhide Ito) was first recorded in May 2007 and became the official song of Hamamatsu in July of the same year. This translation into English is unofficial and was written under a supervision of Kana Kuriyama on 29 July 2017.

Japan and Brazil. Shiratori *san* (Mr. Toshio Shiratori)⁸⁹ was one of them. Born in Shizuoka prefecture, he emigrated to Brazil in 1959 with his parents and four brothers some years after his father returned from the war. At that time, he was already a seventeen-year-old teenager. He lived there for over fifteen years, and after graduating in engineering in São Paulo, he got a position in Hamamatsu, which brought him back to Japan. His parents, brothers and other relatives remained in Brazil.

Shiratori is now seventy-five years old. With a life deeply marked by transnational ties, he is probably one of the Japanese residents who envision the future of Japan with the integration of immigrants. Until now, Shiratori *san* has *saudades* of the country that hosted him and his family – a Brazilian feeling of longing that appears often in his writings:

My dream is to return home...⁹⁰

I live in the north part of Hamamatsu, where the pathways, exclusively for the agriculture and forestry, are very steep and located in some areas similar to those on the seashore, by the waves. Cars and trucks that pass, coming and going on route 362, can be seen through the tree branches, and among houses in the village, my house looks like an oyster shell. While watching this scene in front of my eyes, memories of the time I lived in São Paulo awaken involuntarily.

Leafing through the pages of my field diary and reading some passages and personal accounts, I clearly remember the time I was in Japan – most memorable moments and encounters with people, like Mr. Shiratori, who accompanied me and motivated me, consciously or unconsciously, to keep on searching for answers that could help me to understand such a complex migration process, something that I have already started through my ethnographic study, and something that keeps on pushing me towards the challenge of writing an ethnography on this transnational dislocation.

⁸⁹ I met Mr. Shiratori (real name) in the Portuguese speech contest held in Hamamatsu on 6 November 2016. Interview 23, 15 November 2016.

⁹⁰ '*Meu sonho é o retorno a Terra...*' ("My dream is to return home...") is the title of Mr. Shiratori speech presented in 2014; and the speech '*Vantagem de conhecer duas culturas do Brasil e do Japão*' ("The advantage of knowing two cultures: Brazilian and Japanese") was presented in November 2016. He cordially gave me a copy of both texts during our interview on 15 November 2016.

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Interviews:

- Interview 1: 25 October 2016
- Interview 2: 17 October 2016
- Interview 3: 21 November 2016
- Interview 4: 15 October 2016
- Interview 5: 31 October 2016
- Interview 6: 3 November 2016
- Interview 7: 22 November 2016
- Interview 8: 31 October 2016
- Interview 9: 23 October 2016
- Interview 10: 28 November 2016
- Interview 11: 14 October 2016
- Interview 12: 21 October 2016
- Interview 13: 1 November 2016

Interview 14: 30 August 2015
Interview 15: 1 September 2015
Interview 16: 20 October 2016
Interview 17: 27 August 2015
Interview 18: 27 August 2015
Interview 19: 29 October 2016
Interview 20: 15 May 2017
Interview 21: 1 September 2015
Interview 22: 20 February 2017
Interview 23: 15 November 2016

Appendices

Foreign Residents in Hamamatsu

- Foreign Residents in Hamamatsu (June 2010 – June 2016)

| | Country | June 2010 | July 2011 | June 2012 | June 2013 | June 2014 | June 2015 | June 2016 | |
|-------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|---------|
| Foreign Residents | Brazil | 14,388 | 12,895 | 12,107 | 9,692 | 8,925 | 8,672 | 8,427 | |
| | China | 3,243 | 3,097 | 3,034 | 2,810 | 2,634 | 2,495 | 2,453 | |
| | Philippines | 3,028 | 2,932 | 3,036 | 2,985 | 3,142 | 3,188 | 3,317 | |
| | Peru | 2,183 | 2,111 | 3,034 | 1,791 | 1,725 | 1,675 | 1,670 | |
| | Korea | 1,449 | 1,396 | 1,372 | 1,326 | 1,296 | 1,249 | 1,190 | |
| | Vietnam | 1,077 | 1,049 | 1,084 | 1,135 | 1,238 | 1,363 | 1,582 | |
| | Indonesia | 803 | 692 | 692 | 603 | 653 | 645 | 705 | |
| | others | 1,722 | 1,700 | 1,665 | 1,512 | 1,536 | 1,661 | 1,747 | |
| | Total | | 27,893 | 25,872 | 25,01 | 21,854 | 21,149 | 20,948 | 21,091 |
| | Hamamatsu's Total Population | | 820,19 | 817,895 | 816,875 | 812,869 | 810,997 | 809,115 | 807,739 |

Figure 1: Foreign residents living in Hamamatsu City (June 2010 – June 2016).
 Source: Hamamatsu Foundation for International Communication and Exchange/HICE (2016)
 Online: <http://www.hi-hice.jp/HICEeng/index.php> [Accessed 17 December 2016]

- Foreign Residents in Hamamatsu (January 2017)

| | Country | January 2017 |
|-------------------------------------|--------------|--------------|
| Foreign Residents | Brazil | 8,516 |
| | China | 2,482 |
| | Philippines | 3,433 |
| | Peru | 1,666 |
| | Korea | 1,200 |
| | Vietnam | 1,722 |
| | Indonesia | 755 |
| | others | 1,836 |
| | Total | 21,660 |
| Hamamatsu's Total Population | | 807,893 |

Figure 2: Foreign residents living in Hamamatsu – 1 January 2017
 Source: Hamamatsu Foundation for International Communication and Exchange/HICE (2017)
 Online: <http://www.hi-hice.jp/HICEeng/index.php> [Accessed 5 March 2017]

Written Questionnaire and Interview Guidelines

Written Questionnaire (Japanese Brazilian Youths)

(Original version in Portuguese)

Local: *Escola Alcance*

Date: 4 September 2015

Participants: 22 students

Age: 10-17 yrs. old

Outline

- 1- Personal information:
 - Name / Age / School grade
 - Date and place of birth
- 2- Family background:
 - Family members
 - Relationship with grandparents
- 3- Personal history:
 - Length of stay in Japan
 - Parents' place of birth in Brazil
 - Experience in Brazil (place, length of stay, frequency)
 - Migration history
- 4- Education path:
 - School(s) attended (Brazil/Japan)
 - Language of literacy
 - First language
 - Second language
 - Portuguese and Japanese: use and needs
- 5- Living in Japan:
 - Experiences (positive and negative aspects)
 - Relationship with Japanese
 - Relationship with other Brazilians
- 6- Feelings and thoughts:
 - Image of Brazil – Image of Japan
 - Memory of Brazil
 - Feelings of home/homeland
 - Meaning of nationality (personal view)
 - Meaning of “being Brazilian” (personal view)
 - Possibility of becoming “Brazilian”/ Possibility of becoming “Japanese”
 - Self-identity

Interview Guideline (Japanese Brazilian Youths)

(Original version in Portuguese)

Local: *Escola Alcance* / U-ToC / Diverse public spaces of the city

Date: September 2015 / October and November 2016

Interviewees: 22 people

Age: 13-22 yrs. old

- 1- Personal information:
 - Name / Age / School grade
 - Date and place of birth
- 2- Family background:
 - Family members
 - Relationship with grandparents
- 3- Personal history:
 - Length of stay in Japan
 - Parents' place of birth in Brazil
 - Experience in Brazil (place, length of stay, frequency of visits)
 - Migration history
- 4- Education path:
 - School(s)/University attended (Brazil/Japan)
 - Language of literacy
 - First language
 - Second language
 - Portuguese and Japanese: use and needs
- 5- Living in Japan:
 - Experiences (positive and negative aspects)
 - Relationship with Japanese
 - Relationship with other Brazilians
- 6- Feelings and thoughts:
 - Image of Brazil – Image of Japan
 - Memory of Brazil
 - Feelings of home/homeland
 - Meaning of nationality (personal view)
 - Meaning of “being Brazilian” (personal view)
 - Possibility of becoming “Brazilian”/ Possibility of becoming “Japanese”
 - Self-identity
- 7- Future:
 - Future Plans, issues, and concerns
 - Possibilities (Brazil/Japan/another country)

Interview Guideline (Japanese Brazilians and Japanese adults)

(Original version in Portuguese)

Local: U-ToC / Diverse public spaces of the city

Date: October and November 2016

Interviewees: 12 people

Age: 28-75 yrs. old

- 1- Personal information:
 - Name / Occupation
 - Place of birth

- 2- Life in Japan:
 - Length of stay in Japan
 - Hometown in Japan
 - Language used in Japan for daily activities
 - Importance of the Japanese language for the social and cultural integration of foreigners in Japanese society

- 3- Migration History:
 - Reasons for the immigration
 - Immigration experience: alone or with family
 - Reason(s) for choosing the city of Hamamatsu
 - Previous image of Japan
 - Description of the first period in Japan
 - Description of the current situation

- 4- Social Integration:
 - Opinions about the relationship between Brazilian and Japanese people
 - Opinions about the best way to promote better understanding and interaction between foreign residents and Japanese nationals
 - Opinions about Hamamatsu and the Brazilian community

- 5- Future:
 - Future of the city and the Brazilian community in Japan
 - Issues and concerns
 - Future plans for the future

Interview Guideline (Consulate General of Brazil in Hamamatsu)

(Original version in Portuguese)

Local: Consulate General of Brazil in Hamamatsu

Date: 17 October 2016

Interviewees: 3 people

- 1- Personal information:
 - Name / Occupation

- 2- The Consulate General of Brazil
 - Diplomatic career
 - Information about the establishment of the Brazilian consulate in Hamamatsu
 - Information about consular services and the role of the Consulate in Hamamatsu
 - Information about bilateral cooperation (local and regional)
 - Current projects and initiatives promoted by the consulate
 - Importance of cultural activities in Hamamatsu
 - Comments about the worldwide drawing contest “*Brasileirinhos no Mundo*” (“Little Brazilians around the world”) promoted by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and aimed at Brazilian children of 6 to 11 years old

- 3- The Brazilian community in Hamamatsu
 - The current situation of the Brazilian community in Hamamatsu
 - Comments about the second generation of Brazilians living in Hamamatsu
 - Cultural and identity issues
 - The current situation of Brazilians in Japan
 - Perspectives, plans, and challenges for the future
 - Opportunities to study and work for the young generation of Brazilians in Japan and in Brazil
 - New demographic situation of Brazilians in Hamamatsu

Hamamatsu Welcome Pack

浜松ウェルカムパック
Hamamatsu Welcome Pack

この“ウェルカムパック”には、浜松での生活に必要な情報が詰まっています。
このパックが、浜松市に転入されてきた皆さんにとって少しでもお役に立てば幸いです。

This welcome pack is filled with important information for living in Hamamatsu.
We hope this pack will be useful as you start your new life in Hamamatsu!



出世大名
家康くん

©浜松市


 **HAMAMATSU CITY**

浜松市国際課
International Affairs Div., Hamamatsu City
TEL: 053-457-2359 FAX: 050-3730-1867
E-mail: kokusai@city.hamamatsu.shizuoka.jp

※浜松ウェルカムパックは、自治体国際化協会 (CLAIR) の助成金を活用し作成しました。
The Hamamatsu Welcome Pack was creating with funding from the Council of Local Authorities for International Relations (CLAIR)


Source: Hamamatsu City – International Affairs Division (November 2016)

ウエルカムパック【英語版】



浜松市
HAMAMATSU CITY

Welcome to Hamamatsu!




家族
健康くん

In this welcome pack, you will find essential information for life in Hamamatsu.
We hope this pack will be of use to you in your move to Hamamatsu!

■ Canal Hamamatsu


The Hamamatsu City multilingual information site, Canal Hamamatsu, has lots of detailed information on everyday life. Be sure to take a look!



■ Hamamatsu Intercultural Center (Tel.053-458-2170)


The Hamamatsu Intercultural Center offers various consultations about daily life in different languages. Please don't hesitate to get in touch!

※ Please note that the days on which consultations are offered differ by language. (Portuguese (Tue–Sun), English (Mon–Fri), Chinese (Fri), Spanish (Sun), Tagalog (Thu))




■ Hamamatsu Foreign Resident Study Support Center
(U-Toc: Tel.053-592-1117)

At the Hamamatsu Foreign Resident Study Support Center (U-Toc), you can take various classes, including free Japanese language classes and cultural experience classes. Come and join us!



■ Hamamatsu Foundation for International Communication and Exchange (HICE) Facebook

The Hamamatsu Foundation for International Communication and Exchange (HICE) Facebook page provides information on intercultural events and lectures. Also, it provides essential information in multiple languages in the case of a large-scale disaster.






<Pamphlets enclosed>

| | | | |
|---|---|----|--|
| 1 | Hamamatsu Map | 9 | Guideline for Rubbish Disposal and Recycling (For Household Waste) |
| 2 | Hamamatsu Official Multilingual Living Information Service: Canal Hamamatsu | 10 | Rubbish Reduction and Recycling |
| 3 | Register your children to attend school! | 11 | Outline of Residence Taxes |
| 4 | Notice about the New Residency Management System and Basic Resident Registration System | 12 | What You Should Know About Traffic Safety |
| 5 | What to do in the case of a sudden earthquake | 13 | Hamamatsu Intercultural Center |
| 6 | Hamamatsu Disaster Prevention Email | 14 | Hamamatsu Foreign Resident Study Support Center |
| 7 | Let's Create a Bright, Fun and Beautiful City | 15 | HICE (Hamamatsu Foundation for International Communication and Exchange) |
| 8 | Be Mindful of Your Manners | | |

Source: Hamamatsu City – International Affairs Division (November 2016)

Photo Collection

▪ Hamamatsu City and the Takaoka District



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|---|---|--|
|  |  |  |
| <p>Hamamatsu City Hall</p> | <p><i>Guia do Centro da Cidade</i> City Center Guide</p> | <p>“Seu João”, Chikayo and a friend of them at Servitu, the oldest Brazilian market and restaurant in the city</p> |
|  |  |  |
| <p>Consulate General of Brazil in Hamamatsu</p> | <p>Brazilian Culture and Portuguese Language Course at Shizuoka University of Art and Culture</p> | <p>Public Sign translated into Portuguese</p> |
|  |  |  |
| <p>Window display of a Japanese restaurant in Takaoka</p> | <p>Leticia, a Japanese Brazilian youth, on the way to school in Takaoka</p> | <p>A local children festival</p> |

▪ *Escola Alcance* – a Brazilian School in the Takaoka District

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| <p><i>Escola Alcance</i> in Takaoka</p> | <p>Saturday morning Portuguese class at <i>Escola Alcance</i></p> | <p>Primary school children at <i>Escola Alcance</i></p> |

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| <p>Saturday morning Portuguese class at <i>Escola Alcance</i>: Leticia (right), Carolina and Camila (left)</p> | <p>Self-Portrait Activity</p> | <p>Junior high school students practicing <i>capoeira</i></p> |

▪ Hamamatsu Foreign Study Support Center (U-ToC)

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| <p>Hamamatsu Foreign Study Support Center (U-ToC)</p> | <p>Meeting with the coordinator, colleagues and volunteers after an event at U-ToC</p> |



Office at U-ToC



My obento (“lunch box”)



Portuguese Class for volunteers, who want to work with/for the Brazilian community



U-ToC Facilities (on the table: the name tags of the foreign students, who learn Japanese)





Volunteers at the U-ToC Cultural Festival (November 2016)



The entire group of volunteers at U-ToC Cultural Festival 2016

▪ Seminars and Events

| | |
|--|--|
|  |  |
| <p>6th Speech Contest in Portuguese: Minister José Antonio Gomes Piras, the Consul of Brazil in Hamamatsu, with some of the winners of the contest</p> | <p>“Seminário do Trabalhador Brasileiro” promoted by the Espaço do Trabalhador Brasileiro (ETB), the Consulate General of Brazil, and the Hamamatsu Foundation for International Communication and Exchange – HICE</p> |

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|  |  |
| <p>Seminar on Vocational Qualification for Foreign Youths at Ohiradai High School</p> | <p>A Japanese Brazilian high school student was interviewed after the first rounds of talks</p> |

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|  |  |
| <p>Hamamatsu Cup Festa Samba 2016 and the winner group formed by Japanese Peruvians</p> | <p>The World Music Festival Hamamatsu (November 2016): international musicians and Japanese and Brazilian school students playing samba</p> |

Hamamatsu Declaration (2012)

Hamamatsu Declaration

26 October, 2012

We gathered here today in the city of Hamamatsu to address our common challenges in managing intercultural cities and to explore ways in which we can build upon diversity to foster dynamism, innovation, and creativity.

Having acknowledged the importance of embracing and promulgating the concept of interculturalism, we hereby declare

That we will work in partnership with multiple stakeholders, including governments, nonprofits, enterprises and universities, each with their unique strength, and that we **promote dialogue and active participation among all residents in our cities, in order to promote a cohesive and pluralistic community.**

That we regard the cultural diversity as a source of city's dynamism, we will bring together people of different cultural backgrounds to foster innovation and creativity, and that we will explore a new urban vision in the age of globalization based on the realization of the diversity advantage.

That we share the concept of intercultural city with the residents, establish and implement concrete policies, and review the outcomes for more effective practices.

To that end, we will promote global partnership among intercultural cities to learn from each other's knowledge and experience to develop more effective policies.

日韓欧多文化共生都市サミット 2012 浜松 「浜松宣言」

2012年10月26日

私たちは、浜松において一堂に会し、多文化共生都市が抱える課題を認識し、その解決を図るとともに、多様性を都市の活力として生かしていくため活発に意見交換を行った。

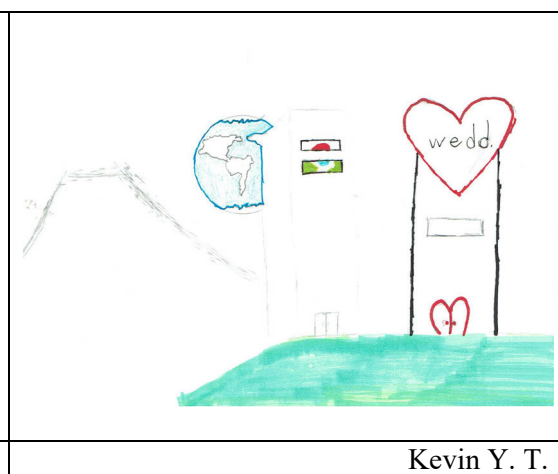
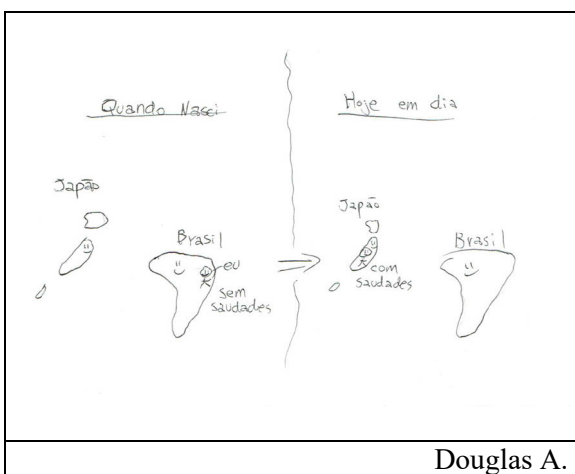
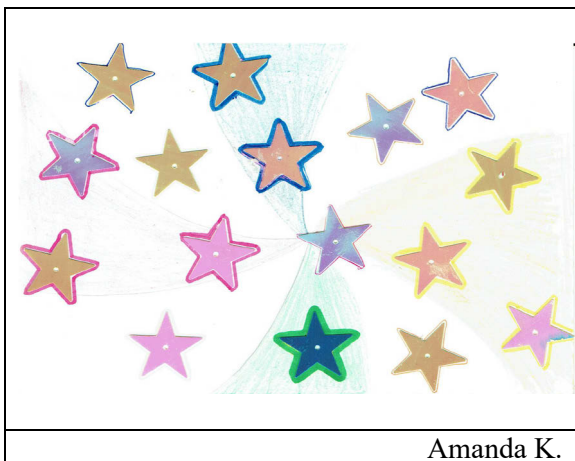
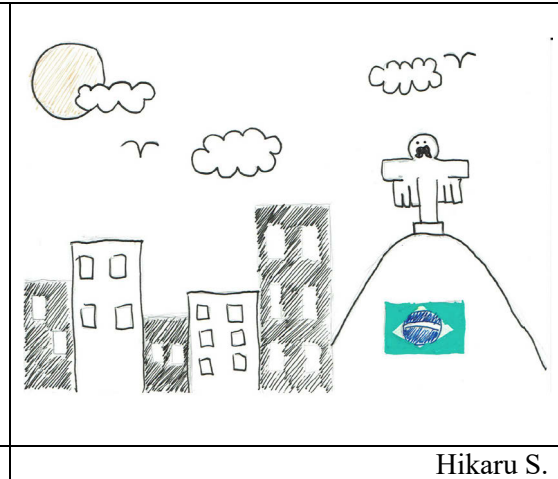
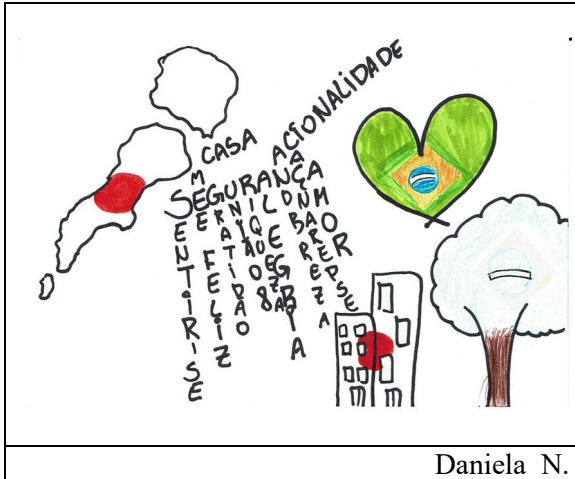
私たちは、サミットでの議論を共有するとともに、多文化共生の重要性を広く発信するため、以下のとおり宣言する。

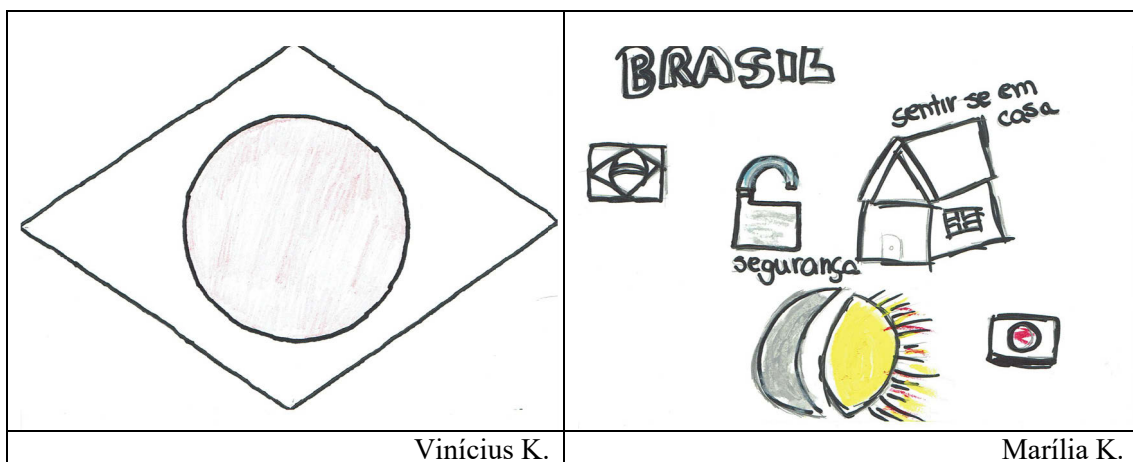
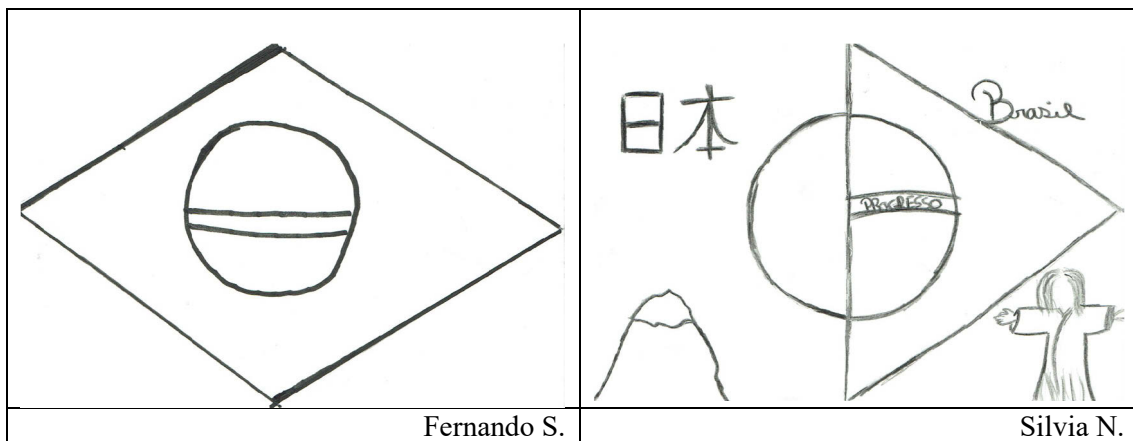
1. 行政、NPO、企業、大学等多様な主体がそれぞれの強みを発揮し、互いに連携して多文化共生のまちづくりを推進していく。また、地域社会における住民相互の対話を促進し、同じ地域の構成員として共にまちづくりを推進する。
2. 文化的多様性を都市の活力の源泉と捉えるとともに、文化背景の異なる住民間の交流を創造や革新の好機として積極的に促進し、グローバル時代にふさわしい都市づくりを目指す。
3. 多文化共生都市（インターカルチュラルシティ）の理念を市民と共有するとともに、具体的なプランを策定し、政策を実施していく。あわせて、その取り組みを検証し、より効果的な実践に繋げていく。

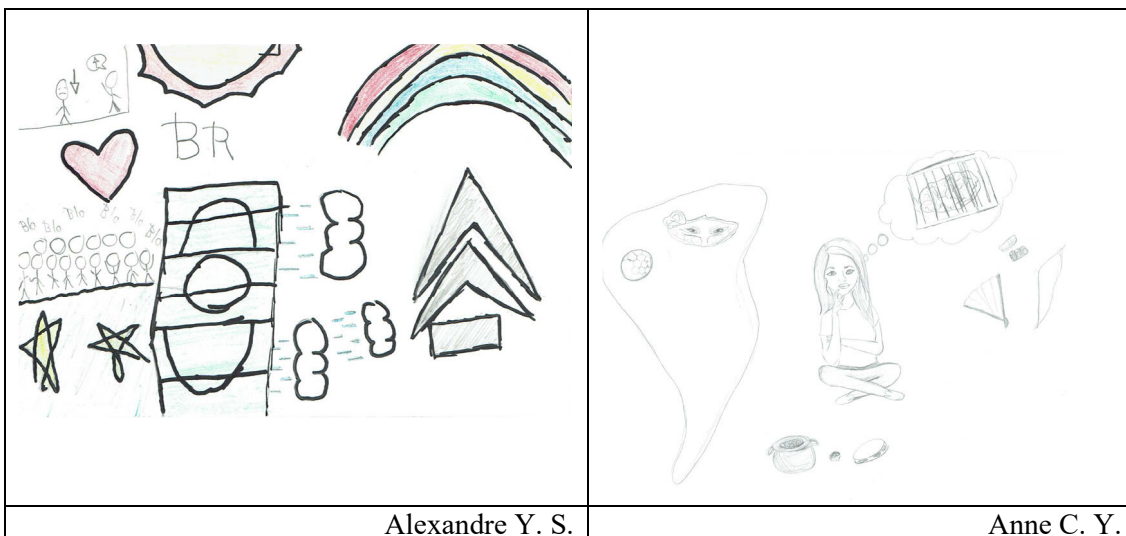
結びに、私たちは、国際的な枠組みで知見や経験を共有し、各都市においてより良い政策を実施するため国内外の多文化共生都市の連携を一層推進する。

Source: https://www.jpff.go.jp/e/project/intel/archive/information/1309/pdf/hamamatsu_declaration.pdf
[Accessed: 15 August 2015]

Home(land) Drawings
in Postcard Format (4 September 2015)







Alexandre Y. S.

Anne C. Y.

