

Research note

Brasilianische Migranten in Hamamatsu – Zugang zu einem multikulturellen Feld

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Summary

Drawing on fieldwork among Brazilian migrants in the Japanese city of Hamamatsu, and examining the role of mediating institutions for their integration, this paper reflects on the key aspects in gaining access to a multicultural field site in anthropological research: 1) the diversity of the research subject; 2) multilingualism; 3) social and other media; 4) reciprocity; and, 5) the researcher's personality and identity. I argue that the latter plays the biggest role in successfully accessing the field, as it directly affects informants' acceptance and trust of the researcher. The diverse nature of the research subject demands as many access points as possible. In order to achieve this, knowledge of the languages and cultures of all ethnic groups studied is necessary. Specific cultural and social contexts also affect the exact choice of media channel(s) for making contact, as well as practices of reciprocity. Based on my own fieldwork experience, I will show how it is flexibility and the ability to put oneself in the position of all groups concerned that are most crucial for gaining access to multicultural field sites.

Keywords: multicultural fieldwork, migration, integration,
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