Media landscape questions: Brazil

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1. **What characterizes the difference between national, regional, and local in relation to media in your country?**
   Brazil is a federation inhabited by 206 million people as of 2016. The country is divided into 26 states and a federal district. Each state consists of municipalities (each municipality in Brazil is a city). In this case, national refers to the country, regional refers to the states and local refers to the cities. Media content transmitted on a national level are often produced in Rio de Janeiro and especially São Paulo (the richest and biggest urban centers). Television stations (and some radio stations) often have branches, affiliates and re-transmitters in each capital city as well as in other cities in each state. Branches are offices responding to the national headquarters. They reproduce the national content and produce regional/local content as well. Affiliates are regional/local independent offices which have permission to reproduce national content of a certain network and also produce their own regional/local content. Re-transmitters merely re-broadcast signals of national/regional stations at the local level (ex. more remote cities). Regional newspapers (within a state) are often more independent to produce regional content even if part of a network. Local radio stations and TV stations are often part of a bigger network. Small local independent radio stations are considered "community media" if they have license and "pirate media" if they do not have a license. "Community media" also refers to poor neighborhood stations especially used as tools for cultural and political forms of associations. Local newspapers are often used as political instruments by politicians and local economic elites.

2. **What is the role of newspapers in your society?**
   The history of newspapers as a market in Brazil traces back to the late 1800s. Newspapers have always had low circulation in Brazil: for a long time, the commercial newspapers were considered media for elites. Minority groups, labour unions, religious groups and other kinds of associations have also produced newspapers with very low circulation. The general low circulation of newspapers is related to the historical illiteracy rates in Brazil. National newspapers are often based in Rio and São Paulo. These are the best known quality papers. Regional newspapers can be quality, popular (targeting working class) and tabloid (targeting working class and the poorest). Local newspapers, especially in smaller cities, are often used as political instruments by local elites. Sometimes, national, regional and local newspapers belong to a single media conglomerate. In 2015, Brazilian newspapers have registered a growth in digital versions and decrease in print copies*. The reasons for the growth include the digital versions of the papers.
   * http://www.meioemensagem.com.br/home/midia/2016/01/29/circulacao-digital-de-jornais-cresce-no-brasil.html

3. **What characterizes the magazine sector in your country?**
   The magazine sector in Brazil (like elsewhere?) is highly segmented. Themes include culture, music, fashion, science, comic books, adolescence, etc. But the most influential magazines in the Brazilian public sphere are nationwide publications (with headquarters in Rio and São Paulo) which focus on politics and economy. These magazines are often part of some private

media conglomerate, but there are some exceptional independent and influent ones (also in politics and economy). Their headlines often generate discussions in other media platforms. There is also a significant presence of international magazines in Brazil, especially in bigger urban centers (ex. Cosmopolitan, Marie Claire, Newsweek, Mad, Playboy, etc.). Some of these magazines are published in Portuguese. Between 2000 and 2011, the investments in low-priced magazines and in the high-price publications caused a growth in the sector*.
* http://www.ivcbrasil.org.br/conteudos/pesquisas_estudos/estudo_revistas_set2011.pdf

4. **What characterizes the radio sector in your country? If your country has community radio as phenomena, please include them. If not, please reflect on how minority groups (ex.: migrant/immigrant diasporas, national groups, language-based groups, etc.) use ICTs for articulation, mobilization, cultural resistance, etc.**
Since its early years, radio stations have been mostly private and profit-oriented. Radio is part of the cultural matrix of Brazil. In the first half of the 1900s, radio was used by populist governors to promote a sense of nation in a very diverse, highly illiterate and fast growing country. For most of the population, radio was the main source of information, culture and entertainment. After the 1960s, this role slowly shifted to television. Radio then became segmented: FMs emphasized on music, AM stations on news and varieties. AM stations are still highly popular among poorer people for programs which give advice, prizes, and value local regional cultures and have very charismatic hosts. Community radio started timidly during the military dictatorship period (1960 – 1985) as small forms of local neighborhood articulation and political resistance. After the military dictatorship period was over, community radio stations mushroomed especially in small cities and highly-populated slums (favelas, in Portuguese). In order to control this growth, the federal government created the "Community Radio Law" in the 1990s. Community radio audience does not compare to commercial radio audiences for being localized in a certain geographical community. But they play an important political and cultural role in these local communities. In Brazil, over 83% of the households have at least one radio set. Public radio broadcasts exist, but they are often considered boring and have very low audience rates.

5. **What characterizes the television sector in your country?**
Television was implemented in Brazil in the 1950s by businessmen who had already owned newspapers and radio stations. Since then, the biggest television stations have been part of media conglomerates. In its early years, television was considered the "radio with images." Successful formulas from the radio (ex. News and sports broadcasts, drama productions and musical programs) were adapted to television. The economic stabilization of the 1990s generated a boost in TV set sales. Today, independently of the high social inequality rates, over 96% of the households in the country have at least one TV set. The television market is defined by private ownership concentration. 10 television channels have nationwide transmission through open, unpaid channels. Of these, only two are public. The other channels are part of media conglomerates. For regional transmission outside Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo (where nationwide programs like telenovelas and news broadcasts are produced), the TV channels have networks formed by branches (offices of the companies with regional/local production), affiliates (local partners with a mix of self-produced and retransmitted programs) and re-transmitters (channels that simply retransmit the productions of regional affiliates). Television is by far the most influential media in the Brazilian media landscape.

6. **Describe the telephony sector in your country. What are the roles and penetration rates of the landlines? What is the role of the mobile telephony sector? How do people commonly use mobile phones (including smartphones and tablets)?**

The Brazilian telecommunication sector was state-controlled until the mid-1990s culminating with the establishment of the General Law of Telecommunications (1998), which set the beginning of the privatization of the sector in the country. Until then, people interested in having fixed telephones paid a high fee and waited for years until the installation. In order to regulate the sector, the government created the National Agency for Telecommunication (ANATEL, also in 1998). Since then, the sector has been booming both in fixed and mobile telephony.

The market of fixed telephony is controlled by companies that have the concession to operate (regulated by ANATEL) and companies which are regulated by the market laws with authorization to operate. In 2012, 43.7 million people subscribed to fixed telephone lines (in 2006, there were 38.8 million subscribers). [1]

The mobile telephony market was practically born private. In 1998, only 2% of the population had mobile phones. Today, four companies operate the market: Vivo, Oi, Claro and Tim. In 2015, Brazil had about 258 million mobile phone subscriptions.[2] The population is of 206 million people. One explanation for the high number of subscriptions is the low cost of purchase of sim cards. Many people have multi-slot phones and subscribe to up to four companies at the same time so that they can enjoy the campaigns and sales of each operator. The uses of mobile telephony devices vary. Last year, during my fieldwork, I noticed a significant amount of people using smartphones and tablets on buses. This is a sign of the entrance of lower-income people as consumers of new ICTs. But studies are still needed for understanding the media rituals through mobile technology.

[1][2] http://www.teleco.com.br/estatis.asp

[3] Additional information:
http://www.pwc.com/gx/en/communications/review/features/market-profile-brazil.jhtml

7. **Describe the historical development and current situation of Internet in your country. Also consider: technical infrastructure, digital divide, common uses, influence of Internet content in public debates, etc.**

Debates about digital forms of communication and transmission of information in Brazil date back to the 1970s, but networks similar to Internet as we know today started gained shape throughout 1980s.[1] One of the first models of networked communication was the inter-university system called BITNET. In BITNET, universities would exchange electronic mails initially with the mediation of US-based systems and then with nodes directly connected inside Brazil. Another form of computer networks were formed by civil society actors also in the 1980s. These Bulletin Board Systems (BBS) played an important role for civil society articulation among Brazilian and foreign actors. However, both systems – the academic and the third sector – lost strength as Internet was developed. Interestingly, the first Internet provider in Brazil is considered to be system developed by a non-governmental organization called IBASE. ALTERNEX, created in the 1980s as part of the seminal efforts for the democratization of communication in Brazil. In the early 1990s, it was integrated to the Internet system.

Commercial Internet started as an experiment in 1994. At the time, the state-owned Brazilian Telecommunications Company (EMBRATEL) promoted dialed connections among different sectors in society. But different sectors – namely the private sector – were discontent and

feared for a state monopoly of Internet. In response, the government included Internet into the debates about the privatization of telecommunications. In 1995, the Brazilian Internet Steering Committee (CGI) was create to coordinate and integrate "all Internet service initiatives in Brazil." [2] Since this period, a great number of Internet providers have entered the market and promoted increasingly inexpensive access to Internet in Brazil.

The number of Brazilians online has constantly increased. In 2006, 35 million Brazilians were online. In 2014, the number has increased to 95.4 million. However, digital divide is still an important issue. Access to Internet is higher among higher-income classes than lower-income classes (even though there are much more people in the latter). [3] In order to tackle the problem of digital divide, the Brazilian government has established several programs for digital inclusion after 2000. Market competition among providers and device producers has also boosted the access to Internet in the country.

In relation to journalism and public debates, Internet has also become an important source of information and agenda setter. In addition to the presence of all mainstream media online, several issues that are raised in social networks have also caused impact in society. These impacts have to be further researched. But they are increasingly more visible.

[1] Source about the history of Internet in Brazil:
http://teses.ufrj.br/COPPE_M/MarceloSavioRevoredoMenezesDeCarvalho.pdf
[2] http://cgi.br/english/
[3] http://www.teleco.com.br/internet.asp

8. **About the registered domains: what are the most common kinds of websites registered and what are the most accessed kinds of website?**
   According to the Brazilian Internet Steering Committee (CGI), Brazil has around 3.8 million registered domains as of July 2016 (the Brazilian population consist of about 206 million). The growth in registered domains has particularly increased after 2008. [1] The reason for this boom remains to be investigated.

   In relation to website popularity, Alexa [2] provides interesting information. According to this company, Google.com.br (1st) is the most popular website in Brazil followed by Youtube.com (2nd) and Facebook.com (3rd).

   [1] http://registro.br/estatisticas.html
   [2] http://www.alexa.com/topsites/countries/BR

9. **About social media: what social media platforms are the most common (e.x. blogs, social networks, video-sharing websites, etc)? How influent in public debates are issues raised in social media? Does your country follow international patterns of social media usage (ex.: are global platforms like Facebook the most popular or are there national/regional/local ones)?**
   In what concerns social networks, Facebook is by far the most popular. At the end of 2015, 79 million Brazilians were said to have a Facebook account [1]. Other popular platforms are Twitter, Blogspot (Google), Instagram, Snapchat and Wordpress.

   1. http://www.statista.com/statistics/244936/number-of-facebook-users-in-brazil/