

The Concept of “Basic Television Broadcasting”: It’s Status and Evolution

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Introduction

In Japan, Digitalization of television broadcasting has been in progress for some time. In 1996, communication satellite (CS) television broadcasting was first digitalized. In 2000, broadcast satellite (BS) television broadcasting was digitalized. Terrestrial television broadcasting is to be digitalized after 2003, and cable television companies are also proceeding with digitalization at their own pace. In such a multi-media, multi-channel environment, it is important to understand how terrestrial and BS satellite broadcasting have changed their role and function.

In the television broadcasting industry, broadcasting media such as terrestrial television, including broadcasters such as NHK¹, has been designated as “Basic Television Broadcasting” (hereafter referred to as ‘BTB’) or “*Kikan Hoso*” in Japanese. The term BTB had appeared repeatedly since the very beginning of television broadcasting. In policy discussions, it was regarded as a landmark when we questioned how we position incumbent media, such as NHK and commercial terrestrial broadcasters, in an environment where drastic social and technological changes are threatening the significance of existing media operators. Within academic circles, the argument has been on the sensitive subject of whether we could or should impose restrictions on the freedom of expression, a constitutional matter, over the broadcasting media. The consensus was that certain regulations imposed on, and only on, BTB were necessary and acceptable. Broadcasters themselves utilized the term as a key word when they tried to set themselves apart as a unique broadcaster or media whose approach was different from that of others.

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Thus different stakeholders have adopted the term BTB repeatedly over the recent decades. However, it has never appeared as a term in the Broadcast Law. The term BTB is therefore a management and political concept but not a legal one. The definition or the status of BTB was taken for granted but in fact they have changed over time as the social and technological background changed as has the role of the stakeholders.

The historical changes affecting BTB can be analyzed using the following two frameworks: time and the function and role of the players. There are three different time frames: 1960s, 1980s and 1990s. We will attempt to shed light on three key players: the regulatory authority, academic circles, and broadcasters. In each section, we will consider the social and technological background relating to BTB. Then we illustrate this by simulating discussions among the players. When summarizing the definition of BTB of each decade, we question whether it is defined in terms of the software, namely, program contents, or hardware, namely, technological availability. Finally in the last section, we envisage the possibility of further change of its definition in the emerging multi-channel, multi-media environment. The figure below summarizes the analysis of this paper.

Figure: Development of Basic Television Broadcasting (BTB)

Player Time	Regulatory Agency	Broadcasters	Academic Circles
1960s	Start of dual system with NHK and commercial TV, increasing viewers		
	<p>NHK: NHK, as BTB has a different mission from commercial TV. Conditions for BTB: Hardware: reaching remote areas Software: provision of programs that commercial TV does not provide Management: product differentiation strategy of NHK</p>		<p>SHIONO: NHK has a mission to serve for the public as broadcaster NOZAKI & TAKAHASHI: Commercial TV also has public mission</p>
1980s	Emergence of New Media, variations in TV broadcasting		
	<p>CBANM: Terrestrial broadcasting including both NHK and commercial TV are BTB media. CPS requirement to be continued. Hardware: regulations on terrestrial TV Software: CPS requirement</p>	<p>HAMADA & HASEBE: CPS requirement should be maintained. Regulation on TV is justified. SUZUKI: Questioned whether regulation on TV should be withdrawn when technical constraints are eliminated.</p>	
1990s	Digitalization of CS satellite broadcasting, followed by BS satellite		
	<p>NHK: NHK, BS and terrestrial, is BTB media. Hardware: terrestrial TV provides local programs, BS provides nationwide program. Software: provision of information essential for daily life Management: product differentiation strategy against commercial TV over terrestrial and satellite Terrestrial Commercial TV: BTB for the time being Hardware: 100% penetration, constant operation Software: provide necessary information BS Commercial TV: New BTB Hardware: wide coverage with lower cost Software: broadcasts according to CPS requirement Management: compete in oligopolistic market where a few broadcasters provide comprehensive programs</p>		<p>INOUE: a peculiar regulation on TV might bestow TV on a unique status. FUNADA: it is more important to see whether it provide basic information than whether it is CPS.</p>
2000 & after	Realization of multi-media, multi channel environment		
	<p>Broadcast Policy Committee: discussions on overall broadcast policy. May review CPR requirement.</p>	<p>Hardware: multi-media, multi-channel environment</p>	<p>TAGAYA: (Software): the end of CPS requirement. Viewers choose a set menu of many channels.</p>
	A group of BTB channels becomes a <i>de facto</i> standard set of channels selected by viewers.		

Note: See text and references for sources of opinions indicated in the figure. Abbreviations: **BTB:** Basic Television Broadcasting, **NHK:** Nippon Hoso Kyokai, **CBANM:** Committee on the Age of New Media, **CS:** Communication Satellite, **BS:** Broadcast Satellite, **CPS:** Comprehensive Program Schedule requirement.

1960s: NHK Declared as BTB

Discussion on BTB started in 1960s when commercial television broadcasters who provided free television programs but operated with income derived from television commercials started their service. Since NHK was afraid of the fact that commercial broadcasters would soon catch up, it organized a working group from whence the term BTB originated.

Historical Background

Commercial television broadcasting started in July 1952 on an experimental basis when a provisional license was given to NTV, Nippon Television Broadcasting Network Co. Ltd. It was less than a year before the introduction of television licensing. In September 1951, the first commercial radio broadcaster started its service. Prior to that, NHK was the only radio broadcaster. Co-existence of NHK and commercial radio broadcasting began suddenly without any discussion on the role or significance of such a dual system. In fact, the dual system was proposed by Government Headquarters (GHQ), under occupation shortly after World War II., The Ministry of Posts and Telecommunication (MPT) accepted the proposal after it examined the merits and demerits of various overseas systems. It was only after the start of the dual system in radio broadcasting, when broadcasters themselves pondered over their role and significance. The following opinions are examples of how the broadcasters saw themselves.

Arguments among Broadcasters and Academics

NHK stated its role as follows: “NHK, as a public broadcaster, is characterized as an operator who provides programs that commercial broadcasters, who are restrained by profit-making objectives, are unable to provide. Also, NHK can reach remote villages that are not accessible to the networks of commercial broadcasters.” On the other hand, commercial broadcaster argued that, “Although we are commercial broadcasters, we also contribute to the national welfare. While NHK seeks to provide news, general education and cultural programs, we put more stress on entertainment programs. It is a matter of weights and balances.”²

When such discussions were going on among those involved in radio broadcasting, television broadcasting started. We suspect that, in those days, NHK was not as well established as they are today, except for the fact that it was the incumbent in radio broadcasting.³ NHK, therefore, may have had to build up its own status before being accepted by audiences in order to keep collecting viewers fee in an environment where a free commercial television broadcaster

was about to start its service. The fact that the first provisional television broadcasting license was not given to NHK but to NTV, a commercial broadcaster, would count as evidence to support our guess.⁴

Following immediately after NTV and NHK, a television broadcasting license was given to TBS, another commercial broadcaster. But it was not the end of the story. Many other applicants applied for the license. During 1952 to 1957, MPT revised its channel allocation plan repeatedly, and finally in October 1957, it gave provisional license to 34 commercial broadcasters at the same time. Thereafter, television broadcasting industry had expanded unexpectedly: NHK's viewers who signed up with NHK to pay for viewers fee were two million households in 1959 and it became 15 million in 1963 (ARCBRLS, 1964: 41-42). Since NHK's income, solely depending on viewers fee, grew rapidly in four years, it attracted much public attention. At the same time, The National Association of Commercial Broadcasters in Japan petitioned MPT that it should clarify the mission of both NHK and commercial broadcaster in the Broadcast Law. Also, The Administrative Management Agency pointed out that the Broadcast Law does not illustrate the relationship between and the different roles of NHK and commercial broadcasters (SHIMIZU and MURASE, 2000: 74). Therefore, in September 1962, MPT formed the "Ad-Hoc Research Committee for Broadcast and Related Legal System (ARCBRLS)" or "Rinji Hoso Kankei Housei Chosa Kai" in Japanese as a ministerial legal consulting committee. When ARCBLS discussed the position and mission of NHK, NHK decided to examine its own mission in their internal committee and concluded that "NHK is BTB, a Basic Television Broadcasting". Such an assertion is interpreted as a product differentiation strategy where NHK appeals to its audience that its programs are different from those of commercial broadcasters. Naturally, The National Association of Commercial Broadcasters in Japan opposed against it strongly. For example, NOZAKI Shigeru and TAKAHASHI Shigeru, researchers of Research Institute, the National Association of Commercial Broadcasters at that time, refuted this assertion arguing that "then, are commercial broadcasters a mere appendix in contrast to the 'Basic' NHK?" (SHIONO et al., 1990: 74-83).⁵ Academics such as SHIONO Hiroshi, an administration lawyer, supported the definition of NHK as BTB. Since then, intense debates on the missions of NHK and commercial broadcasters continued.

In summary, we define BTB as a product of NHK. NHK defined itself as a unique BTB among terrestrial television media including both public and commercial ones where no other television media exists. Some academics support and others oppose that exclusive definition. The regulatory authority has not ruled on this view. As to the mission of BTB, it will be sufficient to apply the statement of NHK in the context of radio broadcasting, ie. the provision of programs that commercial broadcasters cannot provide, and reaching to remote

area. Therefore, BTB is defined both from the point of view of its software aspect, television program, and hardware aspect, nationwide network.

1980s: Regulating “BTB Media”

In 1980's, discussion on BTB appeared again. In the terrestrial television, aural multiplex broadcasting, a service with which a bilingual broadcasting became possible, and character multiplex broadcasting, a sub-channel where a text based information were provided, were started. Following this, television broadcasting over broadcasting satellite (BS) began its service. The regulatory authority anticipated that regulations so far imposed on the terrestrial broadcasting might not be applicable to these so-called New Media. The authority started to consider how they should revise broadcast regulations. In April 1987, the “Committee on the Broadcasting in the Age of New Media (CBANM)” or “New Media Jidai ni Okeru Hoso ni Kansuru Kondankai” in Japanese issued a report where it defined terrestrial television broadcasters as BTB media and suggested that it continues to apply the regulation of “Comprehensive Program Schedule” requirements to BTB media. Comprehensive Program Schedule requirement or “Sogo (Hensei) Hoso” in Japanese is a requirement stated in Broadcast Law where a broadcaster in question is required to allocate a set of programs harmoniously in one channel by combining various programs from the following genre; lifetime education, culture, news and entertainment. Such requirement is also named as “Program Coordination Principle” or “Bangumi Chowa Gensoku” in Japanese.

Historical Background

Looking at the social background of the 1980's, the so-called New Media armed with new technologies appeared. Aural multiplex broadcasting was started in December 1982 and character multiplex broadcasting came on in October 1983. The possibility of BS satellite broadcasting was also discussed widely, not as a future dream but as a reality. Although BS-2a satellite, launched in January 1984, did not work because of technical problems, BS-2b satellite, launched in February 1986, worked successfully. NHK immediately started BS satellite broadcasting with two channels experimentally that eventually became fully functional in July 1989.

In addition to these events, other experiments started as well. Large-scale multi-channel cable television systems were about to emerge, new services such as High Definition Television (HDTV), pulse code modulation music (PCM) broadcasting, still picture broadcasting, teletext broadcasting, facsimile broadcasting and data broadcasting were either in various stages of development

or about to be realized. Moreover, technical requirements of Communication Satellites (CS) were approaching to that of BS satellites so that the advantages of BS broadcasting diminished (CBANM, 1987:28-29).⁶ New media was thus flourishing. In May 1985, CBANM was established as a committee under the Minister of Posts and Telecommunications. Its mission was “To exchange opinion mainly on how the regulatory authority should incorporate the various emerging new media into their regulatory framework” (CBANM, 1987: 6).

In the report of CBANM published in April 1987, the term “Basic Information” appeared repeatedly. The terms “Basic Broadcasting Media” and “Basic Media” were also used. The definitions of these words in the report are summarized as follows: (1) Television broadcasting is BTB media since it provides basic information essential to the nation’s life, (2) the authority imposed new regulations based on the “program coordination” principle, in other words, “comprehensive program schedule” requirement becomes a necessary condition for the operation of BTB media.

Regarding the scope of media or broadcasters that were included in television broadcasting defined in (1) above, it was apparent from the report that both NHK and commercial terrestrial broadcasters were included. As to the satellite television broadcasting, it was initially regarded as BTB when NHK was the only satellite broadcaster who carried the same programs as its terrestrial ones on BS satellite. Since broadcasters, such as WowWow who provide a specialized genre of programs to those who subscribed on a pay-per-channel basis, started their services over BS satellite, the authority withdrew the comprehensive program schedule requirement from BS satellite broadcasting in 1994 (OTSUKA, 1996: 38).⁷

Thereafter, broadcasters over satellites were not obliged to schedule their programs according to the comprehensive program schedule requirement. In exchange, they were not regarded as BTB media even if their programs were scheduled in accordance with the requirement.

Arguments among Academics

Some scholars in academic circle, particularly constitutional lawyers, stressed the necessity of BTB media in society. HAMADA Junichi (1997: 54) was a representative of the supporters. He, supporting the decision of CBANM, assumed that the concept of “BTB Media” is upheld because of the following reasons; (1) it is still essential to reserve a broadcasting service that provides basic information to society as a whole at affordable price, (2) it is rational to reserve a set of programs that is comprehensively scheduled from a wider scope and be ready to be received by everyone in order to avoid people shutting themselves out from outer world and live with limited information, (3) it is significant to reserve a last resort where the public nature of broadcasting, kept

relatively independent from the future competitive environment of broadcasting industry, is guaranteed⁸. HAMADA, therefore, insists that it is meaningful to maintain the comprehensive program schedule as a requirement for BTB media.

HASEBE Yasuo (1992: 93-96, 113, 117, and 1995: 6-9), another constitutional lawyer, also admitted the significance of the continuation of television regulation in order to maintain “Basic Information”. He defines “Basic Information” as “information that is essential for daily life and should be kept in common by society as a whole in the ongoing information flood”. He continued that it was necessary to organize the information service in such a way that “Basic Information” was provided immediately, simultaneously and inexpensively to the whole society, because it was such information that supports the individual’s autonomous life. He stated that since the television is capable of taking on such a role, and the role became more important than ever in the multi-channel environment, the comprehensive program schedule requirement should be continued (also see SUZUKI, 1995: 145-156). Thus he supported the decision of CBANM as well as the rationale for comprehensive program schedule requirement.

Summarizing the mission and position of BTB in 1980s, BTB media is defined by the regulatory authority through the committee, CBANM, where it is clarified that terrestrial television broadcasting is BTB media. Also, BTB media is regulated since it is compulsory to schedule their program in accordance with the comprehensive program schedule requirement. BTB media refers to both NHK and commercial broadcasters. BTB is defined as terrestrial broadcasting media, a hardware aspect, as well as the comprehensive program schedule requirement, represents a software aspect. Academics stressed on the maintenance of BTB and related regulations since it provides essential information to the nation. They so justify limiting the freedom of expression as long as BTB media is concerned.

SUZUKI Hidemi (1995: 153), also a constitutional lawyer, questioned herself saying that “In the future, broadcasting will be free from technical restriction such as scarcity of radio wavelength, simultaneous one-way transmission and transmission to anonymous audiences. Should we then leave the broadcasting service to the hand of market competition?” As we find in the next section, broadcasters themselves try to bind themselves by a adopting self-regulation of Comprehensive Program Schedule in a new stage where they are free from technical restriction. They try to build up their identity as BTB media.

1990s: Claiming themselves as BTB Radio Waves

As we have seen, in 1994, Ministry of Posts and Telecommunications abolished the Comprehensive Program Schedule requirement that was imposed on satellite broadcasters. It was an important policy change that constituted a deregulation, where the regulatory authority decided to consider broadcasting over satellite not as BTB media. In any case, by end of 1990's, BS satellite broadcasters as well as terrestrial broadcasters declared themselves as BTB radio waves.

Historical Background

Let us survey social background surrounding media broadcasting. After the New Media Boom in 1980's and the Multi Media Boom in the middle of 1990's, the information and communication industry in the late 1990's grew rapidly with digitalization, the introduction of Internet and the so-called Information Technology (IT) revolution. These technological progresses affected the development of the broadcasting industry. In 1996, a CS satellite broadcaster, PerfecTV, digitalized its service. Soon it renamed its service as SkyPerfecTV when it merged with J Sky B. In 2000, another broadcaster over CS satellite, DirecTV Japan, merged with SkyPerfecTV. BS satellite broadcasting accepted new entries in the era of digitalization towards the end of 2000. New entrants were affiliates of exiting terrestrial broadcasters. Existing BS analog satellite broadcasters, NHK and WowWow, also remained in the BS digital broadcasting. Therefore, the number of channels over BS satellite broadcasting exceeded that of terrestrial broadcasting. Digitalization of terrestrial broadcasting has yet to begin but has been planned to start in 2003. BS satellite broadcasters intend to take advantage of their earlier digitalization utilizing their know-how gained in terrestrial broadcasting. They try to win over the huge audiences away from terrestrial broadcasters within three years. Both new and old broadcasters and media, of BS and terrestrial, are projecting their role as "BTB radio wave".

Arguments among Broadcasters

Let us classify the positions and prospects of different broadcasters by their opinions expressed in a series of symposia⁹. The stance of NHK was the most clear. SHIINA Hajime, Director of Digital Broadcasting Promotion Division, NHK, said, "It is natural for NHK, a unique public broadcaster, to bring up all media as BTB regardless of the media, terrestrial or BS. We intend to be viewed by everyone" (NMRBR, 1999: 14). "We will allocate different roles to different media. BS satellite broadcasting utilizes its advantage as an instant nationwide network, and responds to widespread viewers' values and lifestyles, which cannot

be achieved in the framework of terrestrial broadcasting. On the other hand, the advantage of terrestrial broadcasting is in the local programs. We provide information essential for daily life of viewers. By putting BS and terrestrial broadcasting together, we provide our broadcasting service as BTB media” (NMRBR, 1999: 14). The position of NHK may be regarded as a product differentiation strategy. We recall that NHK took a very similar position in 1960s, though the rivals they were dealing with were not the same.

What were the stances of commercial broadcasters, namely, BS, CS and terrestrial broadcasters? As to that of BS satellite broadcasting, URUSHIDO Seiji, President of BS Nippon, an affiliation of NTV, took a new position to BS satellite broadcasting at the symposium of 2000, “We are not Semi-BTB. We regard ourselves as New-BTB that acts as an alternative to terrestrial broadcasting services”. All the BS satellite broadcasters who are affiliated with commercial terrestrial broadcasters have decided to provide one HDTV channel that requires larger bandwidth, instead of providing three to four SDTV, standard television channels with the same bandwidth they were allocated. URUSHIDO explained the reason as follows, “Though it costs a lot to provide HDTV service... it is less expensive to concentrate in one channel rather than preparing programs for four different channels” (NMRBR 1999: 9). Once a broadcaster decided to broadcast only one channel, it was natural to provide programs within a comprehensive schedule. Once the channel fulfilled the requirement of a comprehensive program schedule, then promoted it to compete in an oligopolistic market. The competitors comprised several terrestrial and BS broadcasters who also provided programs comprehensively. If, instead, it had provided programs of a specialized nature, for example, education, it would have had to compete with hundreds of CS satellite channels.

The logic of these BS satellite broadcasters can be summarized as follows: Since it is expected that viewers will choose HDTV, it is inevitable the broadcasters will need to develop comprehensive program schedules. And since its programs were scheduled comprehensively, they claim that they are New-BTB media. Such reversed logic forced them to take the position of either BTB or New-BTB media.

There are other players who give a different definition to BTB from that of CBANM. For example, MAEKAWA Hideo, Board of Director of TBS, a commercial terrestrial broadcaster, stated his stance on terrestrial broadcasting as “Terrestrial broadcasting is a basic information media for the time being”, because its penetration rate was 100 per cent, it provided necessary information, and it functioned continuously (NMRBR, 1999: 12). SHIGEMURA Hajime, Vice President of SkyPerfecTV, a CS satellite broadcaster, said, “BS digital broadcasting is eligible to become BTB judging from its functional characteristics [low cost and wide coverage], and it really will become one. However, terrestrial broadcasting will remain as BTB media until BS satellite overcame the problem

of radio wave deterioration at the time of rain and snow” (NMRBR, 1999:10-11). Both URUSHIDO and SHIGEMURA said that the penetration rate and technical stability in transmission should be necessary conditions for BTB, though this was not clarified in the CBANM 1987 report.

Arguments among Academics

SHIGEMURA stated, “The distinction among BS, CS and terrestrial broadcasting may disappear in the future” (NMRBR, 1999: 11). He assumed that in future satellite broadcasting would overcome the technical problem of stability. In that event, will BTB concept become meaningless? The following statements expressed by academics will give us some idea of future developments. INOUE Tatsuo (1994: 94-96), a philosopher, brought attention on the regulation on television broadcasting saying that “There is a possibility of misleading people that what television tells us are the ‘Basic Information’ necessary to our public life, since the peculiar regulation on and only on television [but not the newspaper] bestows on the television a unique status” (also see HASEBE, 1995: 9 and SUZUKI, 1995: 164). As we have seen, some BS satellite broadcasters, affiliated by terrestrial broadcasters, dared to provide their program in accordance with Comprehensive Program Schedule requirement. They imposed the restriction on themselves. By so doing, they hoped to be bestowed a special status as BTB. While INOUE alerted the behavior of regulatory authority as well as some constitutional lawyers, saying that such regulation might adversely affected those who receive the information, it was in fact the BS satellite broadcasters, the information providers, who took the advantage of their power to influence the public.

Other academics are of the opinion that the comprehensive program schedule requirement should not be considered a required condition even if it was necessary to provide “Basic Information” to the public. FUNADA Masayuki (1997: 48), an antitrust lawyer, said that both comprehensively scheduled television programs and daily newspapers are “Expected by society to take on public roles by providing basic information...for the time being”. He added that “it is important to give a special status to these media.... Although what it meant by “comprehensive” is simply to provide a set of programs, we cannot deny that specialized news channels also provide ‘Basic information’. Therefore, news channels are regarded as fulfilling the requirement of comprehensive program schedules.... It might be more desirable to classify comprehensive program schedule requirement by its contents rather than the means of scheduling the programs”. If we classified various channels by its contents according to FUNADA’s suggestion, and if the classification were carried on by regulatory authority, then another serious problem would arise. In that case, the authority’s participation in the broadcasting industry will become stronger than current

participation, a mere requirement of program scheduling but does not touch on the contents. The public does not accept the regulatory authority to enter into the sphere of freedom of expression. The more we try to be precise, the more confusion is generated. Therefore, we can at best define BTB as those who claim themselves as BTB for the time being.

To summarize the developments of the 1990s, both the mission and position of BTB are found to be in turmoil. NHK declares itself as BTB together with their BS and terrestrial radio waves. As to the commercial broadcasters, terrestrial and BS satellite broadcasters labeled themselves as BTB and New-BTB, respectively. Therefore, we are unable to determine BTB in terms of the media, a hardware aspect. Similarly, from the software viewpoint, i.e., on the basis of program contents, BS satellite broadcasters are reversing the logic by expressing that they want to be admitted as BTB since they are willing to obey the comprehensive program schedule requirement. In reality, however, the significance of providing carefully scheduled various genre of programs within one channel is disappearing. Comprehensive program schedule requirement may not be sustainable as a necessary condition for qualification as BTB.

2000s: BTB in the Future

Will the concept of BTB remain in the coming decades? What would be the condition of BTB apart from the comprehensive program schedule requirement? ¹⁰

TAGAYA Kazuteru (1993), an administrative lawyer, states on the prospect of the requirement as follows. “The comprehensive program schedule requirement will terminate at some point in the 21st Century when we can freely choose a set menu of multiple channels [among many channels of different genre and media]”. If BTB should exist in such a future environment, it would be a *de facto* BTB channel or program, regardless of whether or not it is a free service, that the majority of viewers will perceive them as being necessary. For, even if a broadcaster nominates it as a BTB, a special status cannot be bestowed on them nor are there sufficient number of secured viewers.

In this paper, we clarified that the term BTB is initially created by NHK in order to distinguish itself from commercial broadcasters. Then the term is utilized to distinguish terrestrial broadcasting from other so-called New Media. Recently, BS satellite broadcasters use the term to catch up and move ahead of terrestrial broadcasters. Such alteration of definition over time is triggered by various factors. From the software aspect based on contents, it was a product differentiation strategy taken by broadcasters, and the reason for the justification of regulation by regulatory authority. From the hardware aspect based on media

revolution, it was triggered initially by the construction of nationwide networks, then subsequently, by the emergence of broadcasting media other than television broadcasting. Recently, it was triggered by the multi-channel, multi-media environment. The comprehensive program schedule requirement, once a necessary condition for BTB, will disappear sooner or later when technological progress brings about a true multi-media, multi-channel environment. It will then be the time when the program content, the software aspect, takes on an ever-important role. Broadcasters will not be regarded as BTB nor are they bestowed any stable position. Rather, a group of BTB channels will naturally form a *de facto* standard set of channels selected by viewers.¹¹

NOTES

1. NHK: Nippon Hoso Kyokai: A unique public broadcaster who provides broadcasting services with two terrestrial television channels, two BS satellite digital channels (simultaneously broadcasting over BS analog channels for the time being) in addition to four radio channels. It does not accept commercial funds nor funds from the government but operates by semi-compulsory viewers fee. The organization is independent from the government but its budget is carried on subject to the recognition by Diet.
2. NHK opened at Diet in December 1952. A commercial broadcaster did in July 1953. SHIMIZU (1997b: 22-35).
3. From the first place, it is difficult to originate a character without having a rival broadcaster. It can at most characterize itself in contrast with newspapers. We imagine that NHK could not have the public convince that they were better off because of the existence of NHK.
4. A provisional license was soon given to NHK, and NHK preceded in television broadcasting as it started on February 1, 1953 while NTV did on August 28, 1953. As to the reason why provisional license was given to NTV earlier than NHK, it is suspected from the statement in OTSUKA (1996: 26) that SHORIKI Matsutaro, an owner of NTV, utilized its political power over Radio Wave Supervising Commission, an radio wave allocation authority, that abolished on the day when it gave a provisional license only to NTV. Provisional license to NHK was withheld until Diet recognized NHK's budget (SHIMIZU, 1997a: 16).
5. The direct translation of original statement was as follows, "Then are commercial broadcasters a mere branches and leaves in contrast to the 'Trunk' NHK?" It is a metaphor of a tree where "Kikan" in Japanese that author translates as "Basic" also means "Trunk".
6. In order to receive radio waves from communication satellite, a receiver needed to prepare a parabola antenna as large as 120 cm of diameter at that

time. Technical progress reduced the size of the antenna, and it became less than 30 cm today. It is the same size as the one for broadcasting satellite. It enabled individual households to receive broadcast programs over CS satellite directly without having to be relayed by cable television.

7. Since CS satellite broadcasting was already started at this point, the authority also withdrew the regulation from CS.
8. Although the discussion in this context was cited from HAMADA (1997: 54), he originally expressed it as one of his principle on “opened broadcasting order” in HAMADA (1990). Therefore, we treat his discussion as one taking place in the 1980s.
9. The series of symposia refers to the ones held in March 1999 and March 2000 organized by the Research Institute of Broadcast and Culture, NHK. As to the opinions expressed in the symposium in March 1999, we cite from NHK Monthly Report on Broadcast Research (NMRBR) (1999: 2-31). As to the opinions expressed in the symposium on March 6, 2000 at Nihon Seinen Kan, we cited directly from the symposium since the report was not published yet.
10. MPT set up the “Broadcast Policy Committee” in March 2000 as a committee for the Director of Broadcast Administration Bureau. The committee discussed overall broadcast policies for two years.
11. YAMASHITA (2000) refers to the possibility of the emergence of a set of *de facto* standard channels through the competition among various channels irrespective of broadcast media, satellite or terrestrial, and types of contract, pay or free.

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