

Name: Hrvoje Salkovic

Module: Politics, Public Life and the Media

Date: 21.05. 2000.

Why has the public service broadcasting model faltered?

Can it be rebuilt?

Introduction

The Public Service Broadcasting Model is a nationally structured model that was formed in the early to mid 20th century with the aim of broadcasting the highest degree of human knowledge that will democratically represent and act as the unifying voice of the nation. Today, in the age of globalisation and increasing commercial domination where state regulation is no longer necessary or desirable, public broadcasting services face an uncertain future. This paper explores the various fundamental yet weak aspects of the PBSM. These include issues of audience representation, legitimacy in broadcasting, the braided relationship of media and politics and most importantly marketing, government funding and global technological competition.

Public Service Broadcasting - True bearer of the 'Public Sphere'

Before discussing the reasons explaining the faltering of public service broadcasting, one must define and discuss its contributions to the development of modern day western society. Public service is 'the broad commitment to provide and to protect mixed and complementary programming schedules. It includes a commitment to certain minority programmes and to covering, as far as possible, different genres of programme making'.¹ Its role is much more than to provide entertainment, instead it is a legitimate structured attempt to make high quality popular programmes. 'It does justice to human experience. It deals in more than stereotypes. It

¹ J, Keane, *The Media and Democracy*, Blackwill Publisher Ltd, p.117.

adds to the quality of people's lives. Its programme genres reflect the complexity of human beings.² Additionally, broadcasting has a responsibility to bring the highest degree of human knowledge, endeavour and achievement into people's homes. Public service broadcasting has an educative role as well where broadcasters have developed contracts with the great educational movements and institutions. 'Broadcasting should give a lead to public taste rather than pander to it'.³ Looking back to the beginnings of its formation, the public broadcasting service was never built with the exclusive intent of profit making. This assumption can be proved by the example of the British Broadcasting Corporation. 'Although established in order to stimulate sales for the wireless manufactures, The BBC was not driven solely by the need to make profit. Indeed the government had approved the licence system precisely in order to cushion the company against this need'.⁴ Through the variety of its programmes, the BBC set out to serve everyone in the community who was prepared to listen.

The 'Public Sphere'

Once institutionalised and established, public service broadcasting became a bulwark of the 'public sphere' leaving one wondering about the limited and dimensionless public life that must have existed before broadcasting. The term 'Public Sphere' used in the context of this paper means a realm of our social life in which something approaching public opinion can be formed. In other words, 'a portion of the public sphere comes into being in every conversation in which

² Keane, *Media*, p.117

³ Scannell, *A Social History of British Broadcasting*, Basil Blackwell Ltd, p.7

⁴ A, Crisell, *An Introductory History of British Broadcasting*, Routledge, p.14

private individuals assemble to form a public body'.⁵ In a large public body 'this kind of communications requires specific means for transmitting information and influencing those who receive it'.⁶ Consequently, the public sphere could be defined as 'a sphere which mediates between society and the state, in which the public organises itself as the bearer of public opinion, accords with the principle of the public sphere - that principle of public information which once had to be fought for against the arcane politics of monarchies and which since that time as made possible the democratic control of state activities.'⁷ As stated, the Public Service Broadcasting Model (PSBM) quickly became the focal point of social evolution and development, leaving one wondering about the limited dimensions of public life before broadcasting. 'In a general sense there were certain kinds of buildings and spaces in which people could meet, outside their homes, for relaxation, pleasure or self-improvement; public parks and libraries and public houses'.⁸ It is difficult to imagine any development of the public sphere without the appearance of broadcasting. Without understating the importance of printed media, it could be said that the broadcasting is the real bearer of the public sphere.

Today however, 'there is today a long-term crisis settling upon the public service model. Public service media in Europe and elsewhere are slipping and sliding into a profound identity crisis - the same identity crisis that from the beginning has dogged American public service media, which have suffered permanent insecurities about their financial basis, legal status, and public role'.⁹ The public service broadcasting model is undeniably faltering, weakened by its inability to maintain fiscally sustainable in the eyes of growing competition and funding cutbacks from

⁵ J, Habermas, *The Public Sphere – An Encyclopedia Article*, p.49

⁶ J, Habermas, *Sphere*, p.49

⁷ J, Habermas, *Sphere*, p.50

⁸ Scannell, Schlesinger, Sparks, *Culture and Power*, Micon Ltd, p.321

governments who are calling for efficient and self-sustaining spending. The aim of this essay is to analyse the reasons explaining the faltering of the PSBM.

Reasons for faltering - the marketing dimension

'After more than sixty years of operation, public service broadcasting institutions in Europe are undeniably in crisis. The very basis of their legitimacy is being eroded in societies that are increasingly caught by an entrepreneurial, commercial spirit'.¹⁰ The campaigners for commercial TV however took the democratic or populist viewing in which: 'competition would force up quality'.¹¹ In their opinion, commercial television would produce programming 'whose excellence would be declared in the fact that it is preferred by the majority of people'.¹² In addition, they pointed on the case of the press, where competition produced diversity and prevented the concentration of power into a single organisation. Instead of supporting the idea of the audience as a single entity, they rather bring idea of separate audiences with specialist or minority interests. According to the 'campaigners of commercials', this 'new concept would be less coloured by values and hierarchical beliefs where one set of interests was 'better' or more worthwhile than another and should therefore be imposed on the majority'.¹³ Furthermore, pro-marketers accuse the public service model of being 'confused and patronising'¹⁴ labelling PSBM devoties 'as snobs who arrogantly assume their freedom of expression to be the guarantee of

⁹ John Keane, *Public Service Broadcasting*, essay published by CSD, 1999, p.4

¹⁰ I, Ang, *Desperately Seeking the Audience*, Routledge, p.104

¹¹ Crisell, *History*, p.79

¹² Crisell, *History*, p.79

¹³ Crisell, *History*, p.80

equality, and who thereby deny the public of what they often like best: a wide choice'.¹⁵ On the contrary, the defenders of the public service model refuse to see civil society as a synonym for 'market competition'. Instead, they try 'to adopt measures which protect civil society from the self-paralysing effects of market-based media. It implies the development of a publicly funded self-organising and cosmopolitan civil society which is genuinely pluralist precisely because it is not dominated by commodity production and exchange'.¹⁶ Accordingly, 'public service media require a post-capitalist society guaranteed by democratic state institutions'.¹⁷ Now, in presenting the arguments stated both by the entrepreneurial and public service broadcasting media, we establish a picture of the perfect marketing environment of the current faltering public service status. The focus of attention now is on the role of the audience.

The Audience: Market Place or Public Viewers?

'Audience as the market and audience as the public are two alternative configurations, each connected with one of the two major institutional arrangements - commercial and public service - of broadcast television'.¹⁸ Each of these configurations is applicable for each one of two most distinguished broadcasting models - the American commercial model, which brings forth the idea that the audience is a market to be won, and the European public service model, which develops the idea that the audience is a public to be served with enlightened responsibility. As

¹⁴ Keane, *Media*, p.121

¹⁵ Keane, *Media*, p.121

¹⁶ Keane, *Media*, p.152

¹⁷ Keane, *Media*, p.152

¹⁸ Ang, *Audience*, p.2

Scannell and Cardiff have pointed out, 'the classes and informal nature of American culture that the BBC tried to resist expressed the developing spirit of American democracy much better than the BBC did. The BBC sought to educate the masses: the American media catered to them on their own terms, giving them what they wanted'.¹⁹

Established as an institution which did not have financial responsibilities as their primary objective, the PSBM looked to licensing fees as an additional source of funding. In its initial stages, financing and fiscal sustainability were not an issue of great concern. This however drastically changed with the increase in program production costs and government spending cuts. Combined, these two factors depreciated the value of license fee generated income in real terms. This institutionally and theoretically unexpected fiscal squeeze of the PSBM had many negative implications that sequentially destroyed the credibility of the service. The climax of this sequential system deterioration occurred in 1985 when the BBC, a globally respected symbol of successful, credible PSB, took a step down and agreed to adopt advertising and sponsorship. A PSBM committee, led by Professor Sir Alan Peacock, expressed the new philosophy. They argued that 'consumers were the best judges of their own welfare and that they, and not the producers, should determine the character of broadcasting'.²⁰ That new politics deplored two monopolies, one enjoyed by each of the main broadcasters: 'ITV could charge what it liked for advertising, and the BBC collected the licence fee irrespective of what the audience thought of its programmes'.²¹ 'It is now difficult to understand the nervous excitement that the first TV advertisements created in a nation largely unused to commercials, even on the radio. The public felt deeply ambivalent about them. Adverts were associated with the glamour and prestige of

¹⁹ Crisell, *History*, p.51

²⁰ Crisell, *History*, p.213

America, whose way of life seemed a triumphant vindication of business enterprise and sales promotion.²² The long-term fiscal restraints limited the PSBM in its ability to compete with the dynamics and technological advancements evolving on the commercial and entrepreneurial side of the market. This squeeze ruled out any sustained involvement of PSBs in the current technological revolution. They were too weak to be competitive player in the technology race. Technological revolution was mostly left to national and international private entrepreneurs.

Technology: The straw that broke the camel's back

'The long term fiscal squeeze on public service broadcasters has forced the Public Broadcasting Service (PSB) to intensify co-production deals, to privatise or subcontract parts of their programming and production facilities, to engage in international marketing ventures, and in general to speak the language of profit-conscious business executives'.²³ As a consequence, such trends towards 'self commercialisation' arguably 'weaken the legitimacy of the public service model by diluting its programming distinctiveness and heartening deregulators in their crusade to marginalise public media'.²⁴ The technological revolution along with the appearance of hundreds of new channels, delivered by free-market cables and satellite companies, are considered to be a great danger for the PSBM. This trend can be justified by using the BBC as an example. 'As its share of audience shrinks the BBC will thus find it harder and harder to make

²¹ Crisell, *History*, p.213

²² Crisell, *History*, p.99

²³ Keane, *Broadcasting*, p.5

²⁴ Keane, *Broadcasting*, p.6

the case for universal licence fees'.²⁵ In addition, 'even in the United States, with a multitude of channels to choose from, viewers watch only six with any regularity. The classic over-air 'generalist' networks still capture 60 per cent of the audience.'²⁶ Garnham on the other hand argues in the favour of BBC licensing stating that 'even if the BBC were to fall to a 30 per cent audience share, there would still be a strong case for its continuation. This of course provided that most households avail themselves for BBC output at some time or another, they would continue to get a good bargain for the licence fee.'²⁷ The issue of fiscal sustainability is the underlying issue that will determine the future existence of the BBC. With the apparent and future diminishing income generated from license fees, the BBC as a corporation must find alternative sources of revenue, 'revenue not from direct advertising, but from pay per view and subscription services, and also from the sale of programmes to other broadcasters.'²⁸ The BBC must 'slim down as an organisation and thus cut costs; yet it must also 'go global' - maximising its earnings by reaching a vast international audience.'²⁹

'Contemporary technological change however, is not simply encircling public service broadcasting and forcing it to compete with privately owned firms within a multichannel environment. Less obviously, it is exposing the spatial metaphor deeply encoded within the public sector model, according to which citizens, acting within an integrated public sphere, properly belong to a carefully defined territory guarded by the sovereign nation-state, itself positioned within a wider, englobing system of territorially defined states'.³⁰ Historically

²⁵ Crisell, *History*, p.235

²⁶ Crisell, *History*, p.235

²⁷ Crisell, *History*, p.235

²⁸ Crisell, *History*, p.235

²⁹ Crisell, *History*, p.235

³⁰ Keane, *Broadcasting*, p.7

speaking, media has been the means of domination and manipulation. Public service was established to be democratic, parliamentary controlled, unifying voice of the nation, a nation within the territorially defined state. Today modern technological advancements such as internet, email, satellite television and radio challenge the boundaries of the territorially defined nation state. Whether globalisation is a cause or effect of this broad global exchange of information is an issue for itself. What is however undeniably recognisable is the destabilising impact that globalisation is having on the PBS in its ability to manipulate, control and broadcast unified and 'truthful' images of the nationally correct perception of public sphere issues. 'The old dominance of state-structured and territorially bounded public life mediated by radio, television, newspapers, and books is coming to an end. Its hegemony is rapidly being eroded by the development of a multiplicity of networked spaces of communication which are not tied immediately to territory, and which therefore irreversibly outflank and fragment anything formerly resembling a single, spatially integrated public sphere within a nation state framework'.³¹

Considering the role of the technological revolution, one has to wonder what broadcasting will be like in the future,? According to Crisell, there are two main options. The first is that 'the merging of certain media, which at the institutional level could lead to the BBC delivering programmes down telephone lines or BT becoming a conventional broadcaster, might culminate in a single piece of consumer hardware which would act as TV set, radio, computer, telephone, etc.'.³² But another possibility is that 'social and professional pressures could counter technological ones and that the media remain separated into those which mainly serve the sphere

³¹ Keane, *Broadcasting*, p.8

³² Crisell, *History*, p.259

of entertainment, and those, such as computers, phones and fax machines, that have important roles in the world of work. Radio and TV would fall into the first category because they are instruments of broadcasting'.³³ To some extent both options are becoming reality if looking at the British examples of the BBC and BT. Email and internet are now available from BT via television; BBC learning and interactive educational programs are available on their web pages as complimentary sources of information to their programming topics; and audience-focused programming at selected times of the day are targeting specific age and interest group-audiences being impacted by public-sphere globalisation. Examples include programs about the Internet, e-commerce, computer and technological developments, as well as youth focused weekly programs reviewing the newest web pages and their contents.

Legitimacy: Political Correctness verses Public Representation

'Like trade unions, political parties and legislatures, public service media have become deeply uncertain about the scope and nature of their contemporary role in representing their constituents in the state and civil society'.³⁴ Public service broadcasters are often accused of being undemocratic and elitist in their programming policy. An explanation of this lies in the shifting and paradoxical notions of the term 'democratic'. One notion, to which the public services are broadly subscribed, is that 'democracy consists of giving all the people what they want; but this is undemocratic in the sense that within a limited resource such as broadcasting, people have

³³ Crisell, *History*, p.259

³⁴ Keane, *Media*, p.116

differing tastes, nobody gets enough of what they want'.³⁵ The second notion, to which many of the public services' critics subscribed, is that 'democracy consist of giving the majority of the people what they want - which is also undemocratic, positively despotic, in the sense that the majority gets nothing at all'.³⁶

Before developing this problem of majority - minority representation, the concept of 'audience' and their expectations must be discussed. 'The private citizen today has come to feel rather like a deaf spectator in the back row, who ought to keep his mind on the mystery out there, but cannot quite manage to keep awake. He knows he is somehow affected by what is going on. Rules and regulations continually, taxes annually and wars occasionally remind him that he is being swept along by great drifts of circumstance'.³⁷ Broadcasting however cannot undermine the issues being stated in context of ethnic, gender, age and economic status of the viewing audience. Again, the issue of 'democracy' and undemocratic programming is raised. A balance must be found between the audience as an individual and the audience as a classified viewing audience - minority or majority. could not treat these private citizens as a crowd. 'It has to learn to speak to them as individuals'.³⁸ The problem of representation lies in the democratic principles upon which the PBSM are built.

In order to thoroughly explain the relationship between the broadcasters and audience, the BBC will once again be used as a case study PSBM. The BBC has built its historically credible reputation as the 'voice of the nation' by continually assessing the roles and dynamics of the BBC

³⁵ Crisell, *History*, p.27

³⁶ Crisell, *History*, p.27

³⁷ W, Lippmann, *The Phantom Public*, p.3

³⁸ Scanell, Schlesinger, Sparks, *Culture*, p.331

as a service provider and the audience. It might be helpful at this stage to summarise these assessments through the history of the BBC. First, there was 'original, Reithian notion of serving 'the whole person'. Minority interests were created for, but not directly. The focus of public service lay in range of interests catered for both the majority and the minority, expressed and exposed as 'the best of everything'.³⁹ The second notion attempts to give the majority people what they want. This notion could be grasped as the 'greatest number rules'. 'For instance a great majority of people like soap operas, game shows, action movies and rock concerts, and on this basis the operators of populist TV channels sometimes claim that they are offering a public service'.⁴⁰ 'The third notion is that which targets a minority interests, largely on the basis that they would otherwise be neglected'.⁴¹ That is what most people today understand by the term 'public service broadcasting'. Within the context of minority and majority audience representation, it is important to return to the issue fiscal limitations. In order to understand the ever growing socio-cultural dynamic of the viewing public, with the aim of identifying the minority from the majority, public service broadcasters face a new problem: a lack of available finances with which to undertake effective market research and sociological studies. Although this issue seems as a stating of the obvious, it presents a legitimate obstacle in view of current future financial restraints facing broadcasting systems and institutions which already show serious signs of weakened legitimacy and public representation.

The PSM is unrepresentative of current diverse views within society. It has sold an image of universal neutrality and representation. 'Both audiences and broadcasters sense that the public

³⁹ Crisell, *History*, p.109

⁴⁰ Crisell, *History*, p.109

⁴¹ Crisell, *History*, p.110

service claim to representatives is in fact a defense of virtual representation of a fictive whole, a resort to programming which simulates the actual opinions and tastes of some of those at whom it is directed'.⁴² What then is the greatest public service's legitimacy problem? 'The public service media here are no different from their commercial competitor - unevenly distribute entitlements to speak and to be heard and seen'.⁴³ In addition, 'they too develop a cast of regulars - presenters, reporters, academic experts, professionals, politicians, businesspeople, showbiz figures- whose regular appearance in the media enables them to function as accredited representatives of public experience. The combined effect of these corseting effects is to decrease the legitimacy of public service media'.⁴⁴ An underlying problem remains in the fact that broadcasting impacts and increasingly moulds the social spheres. Here the role of PSM as unifying 'voices of the nation' comes into play. On one hand they influence they legitimise the social sphere by broadcasting trends, issues and views. To some extent media and broadcasting have taken over the role of institutionalised religion. Although the ability to manipulate and carve the social sphere falls into the laps of both commercial and public sector broadcasting, the national shape of a nation's view on many issues has to do with the national PBS. This brings forth the notion of 'the blind leading the blind'. If religion historically painted and carved the social sphere into categories of right and wrong, good and bad, today, that power of manipulation is in the hands of media. The difference today is that media, unlike religion, does not paint issues black and white but multi-coloured with underlying messages of commercialism and materialism. This power then underlines the importance of maintaining some form of a PSM, if in no other context then to maintain an element that is slightly less tainted with the influence of sponsors.

⁴² Keane, *Broadcasting*, p.6

⁴³ Keane, *Broadcasting*, p.6

Media and Politics: Masters of Manipulation

Upon discussing the issues and implications of legitimacy, marketing, technology and the role of audience, the focus now turns to politics and government involvement in PSBMs, which will at the end of the day, sink or save public broadcasting services. 'You cannot have independent broadcasting in a slave state. It is not even completely axiomatic that you can have independent broadcasting in a reasonably democratic state. One only has to look around the world to see that restrictions on the independence of broadcasters are not wholly confined to the communist countries, or even to the one party Third World countries'.⁴⁵ The key question to ask is what role of importance does media play in the monitoring and control of institutions of power? 'They ensure that criticism of administration by moonlight, corruption scandals, and objections to state secrets and cryptogovernment are nowadays commonplace in all of the old democracies, as demonstrated by the 'classic' recent public controversies generated by Watergate in the United States, the Benegas affair in Spain, governmental corruption in Japan, the Rainbow Warrior bombing in New Zealand, the Piazza Fontana massacre and the Gladio affair in Italy'.⁴⁶ It must be noted that although media cannot be labelled as the exclusive players in destroying political agendas and regimes, their power to expose truth and fabricate lies is a powerful weapon igniting public reaction and political change. Indicative of this role are the recent changes in Croatian politics where the autocratic right wing Tudman government began to collapse only after several large scandals involving and exposing high ranking members of parliament and presidential family members. On the whole however, broadcasting institutions are still required to be

⁴⁴ Keane, *Broadcasting*, p.6

⁴⁵ I, Trethowan, *Broadcasting and Society*, a speech given at the University of East Anglia, p.10

'neutral'. 'Since radio and TV have differed from newspaper in being limited by the shortage of frequencies, it has always seemed proper that each broadcasting institution should reflect the widest range of opinions and attitudes rather than one narrow and partisan point of view.'⁴⁷ The issue of the fast tracking, high paced technological revolution becomes an issue of concern. 'Since digital broadcasting will shortly provide an almost limitless number of channels the obligations of PBS to be balanced or neutral could conceivably be ended.'⁴⁸ However, in a democracy we believe 'it should be both free to tell truth and report the news as much as it can, yet carefully restrained so that it does not exert too much power or influence over people'.⁴⁹ It also underlines the role of PBS stated earlier in which they help to mould the views of the social sphere. Obviously, in balancing the discussion of media and politics, the coin has two sides. If media is the instrument that filters political issues, the politics has the ability to dictate and influence the media. This argument is best explained using British media and government relations in recent decades. 'During the 1970s the mood which had characterised the 1960s seemed to darken. There remained that scepticism of authority and of traditional values and institutions which television had almost certainly helped to create. But it was now less genial and relaxed, more serious and militant - a change which was doubtless both as a cause and a consequence of the economic and political crises that were developing in many parts of the world'.⁵⁰

Fully functional and theoretically resembling public broadcasting models have existed only in countries of stable democracies. Democracy however does not guarantee the need for or the

⁴⁶ Keane, *Broadcasting*, p.3

⁴⁷ Crisell, *History*, p.168

⁴⁸ Crisell, *History*, p.168

⁴⁹ Crisell, *History*, p.172

success of the Public Broadcasting Service. The USA is an excellent example of this. America prides itself on democracy and freedom, never seeing the need to invest in or foster a PBS, although one can argue that Hollywood films have shaped the perceived image of many issues. Within the social sphere, a PSBM was never established. This weakens the PSBM supporters argument that states a PSBM is needed to foster democracy. The upshot however is that PBS in many countries are the centre of democracy and of the social sphere. This gives post-communist countries from Central and Eastern Europe hope with a theoretical framework of the PSBM to work toward. The irony and danger stands in the fact that institutions such as the BBC, which are working and 'successful' models of the PBS are seriously faltering, with economics and representation as it's largest faults. If PSBMs are faltering in countries of long standing democracies, one has to wonder how they will ever survive in countries of new found democracy and economic freedom.

Conclusion

The PSBM is a broadcasting model faced with fundamental issues that threaten its future existence. This paper has discussed the various aspects of these weaknesses including issues of audience representation, legitimacy in broadcasting, the braided relationship of media and politics and most importantly marketing, government funding and global technological competition. 'Today it seems that an epoch in the history of broadcasting is coming to a close.

For most of this century nationally networked radio and television services, subject to some degree of state regulation, have supplied a wide and varied range of programmers on a small number of channels to whole populations. Now it seems we are on the threshold of a new era in which channel scarcity is a thing of past, in which state regulation is no longer necessary or desirable, and in which individuals have access not merely to an indefinite number of television channels but to a wide range of interactive video services'.⁵¹

Despite their weakened state, Public Broadcasting Services continue to be well respected by the viewing public. They are generally perceived as national services that provide equal access to a wide range of balanced and quality programming. 'Equal access for all...carried on channels that can be received throughout the country, should be thought of as an important citizenship right in mass democratic societies. It is a crucial means – perhaps the only means at present – whereby common knowledge and pleasures in a shared public life are maintained as a social good for the whole population.'⁵² Hence, it would seem that there is a national need and expectation for such services to exist within democratic societies. This puts forth an obvious yet complex question: Can the PBS be restructured and adapted to meet the needs of today's competitive and global environment?

Although complicated, this issue is worth discussing. Ian Trethowan, 1981 states, 'In considering how broadcasters should relate to the society within which they live and which they seek to serve, I do not believe there is any single easy solution, indeed, I distrust those who seek to offer one. What is needed is a system of check and balances, beginning with the sort of supervision

⁵⁰ Crisell, *History*, p.184

⁵¹ Scannell, *History*, p.3

provided by a public authority, bringing in all the direct means by which we know what the public is thinking'.⁵³ A system of 'checks and balances' is needed in every national PBS to tackle issues of representation, legitimacy and even politics. These can exist in several forms including formal committees of public representatives that have a strong influence on PBS programming, live round table discussions of an issue following a program's broadcasting, direct channels (addresses, email, telephone numbers) through which the public can voice their immediate opinions and formal audience research. This combination of self-regulating methods will allow a PBS to broadcast cultural, political, social, scientific, economic and spiritual knowledge that serves minority and majority views within the public sphere while at the same time keeping in tune with issues that will 'touch the raw nerve of the audience the moment anything appears...'.⁵⁴ Trethowan, 1981 holistically summarises this self regulating approach by stating 'Broadcasting organisations consist of human beings with the human failings. But I believe that the system of check and balances will ensure that those day-to-day decisions will not go very wrong'.⁵⁵

Public Broadcasting Services however were not formed to co-exist and compete with other broadcasting services under global and technologically advancing conditions. Their ability to become profit making competitive institutions is the determining issue that will leave the service sinking or swimming. Checks and balances can be inserted to allow public broadcasters to embrace the global and diverse audience expectations however 'the very basis of their legitimacy is being eroded in societies that are increasingly caught by an entrepreneurial commercial spirit.

⁵² Scannell, Schlesinger, Sparks, *Culture*, p.364

⁵³ Trethowan, *Broadcasting*, p.8

⁵⁴ Trethowan, *Broadcasting*, p.15

⁵⁵ Trethowan, *Broadcasting*, p.16

Hence, the future of public broadcasting services then lies in the hands of their nation and the government in power. Despite globalisation, nationally-based audiences still exist and people still want something to call their own. The BBC is an example of this. The British media have been flooded with American and other independent programming in recent years. Although the national audience has taken well to these new broadcasters, the BBC still represents the voice of the nation. Although downscaling, restructuring and disintegration from its current powerful institutionalised form are inevitable in order to survive today's market based competition, the size of the service is perhaps not as important as its maintained existence. If governments are willing to continue funding a public broadcasting service, it will exist, but only as a skeleton of its initial PBSM-structure, in a new era amongst a wide variety and selection of television channels. The underlying difference being its citizen-focused attempt to democratically rather than commercially circulate and stimulate knowledge, information and issues.

Bibliography:

- John Keane, *The Media and Democracy*, Blackwill Publishers Ltd, Cambridge, 1991.
- Scannell – Schlesinger – Sparks, *Culture and Power*, Micon Ltd, London, 1994.
- Scannell, *A Social History of British Broadcasting*, Basil Blackwell Ltd, Cambridge, 1991.
- Ien Ang, *Desperately Seeking the Audience*, Routledge, London, 1991.
- Ian Trethowan, *Broadcasting and Society*, a speech given at the University of East Anglia, 12th of March 1981.
- John Keane, *Public Life in the Era of Communicative Abundance*, Centre for the Study of Democracy, University of Westminster, London, 1998.
- Walter Lippmann, *The Phantom Public*, Transaction Publishers, New Jersey, 1993
- Jurgen Habermas, *The Public Sphere – An Encyclopedia Article*, 1964, originally appeared in Fischer Lexicon, Frankfurt am Main, 1964, pp. 220-226.
- Jurgen Habermas, *Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*, Polity Press, Oxford, 1990.
- Andrew Crisell, *An Introductory History of British Broadcasting*, Routledge, London, 1997.
- Nicholas Abercrombie, *Television and Society*, Blackwell Publishers Ltd, USA, 1996.
- Robin Anderson, *Consumer Culture and TV Programming*, Westview Press Inc, USA, 1996

- Chris Barker, *Global Television*, Blackwell Publishers Ltd, 1997.
- Anthony Bates, *Broadcasting in Education*, London, 1984.
- John Corner – Sylvia Harvey, *Television Times*, Arnold, London, 1996.
- <http://www.aps.org/funding/index.cfm>
- <http://www.vaxxine.com/master-ctrl/BBC/chapters/Bbcconst.html>