

The Role of Public Service Broadcasting in an Age of Digital Archives

- Focusing on the “Broadcasting Culture Archive” Initiative, a Project for the 60th Anniversary of Television -

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(Summary)

Japan will celebrate the 60th anniversary of television broadcasting in 2013. On this milestone occasion, the NHK Broadcasting Culture Research Institute has launched an initiative to create a digital archive, “broadcasting culture archive,” of broadcast-related materials stored at NHK except for audio-visual materials. This initiative was partly triggered by the development of “MLA collaboration,” which has been drawing attention both in Japan and abroad in recent years. The MLA collaboration is a cooperative effort between museums, libraries and archives to make cultural and knowledge information housed and stored at these facilities available for search and view in a comprehensive manner by digitalizing and archiving the information. Public service broadcasters such as the BBC and PBS are actively involving in the movement recently.

Taking this effort into consideration, the broadcasting culture archive is aimed to serve as a digital archive that stores written materials, business materials and research materials related to broadcast programs to help promote the use of these data in broadcast studies and educational occasions. At the same time the archive is expected to contribute to forming a public network, or a digital public space, for cultural and knowledge information in cooperation with related outside institutions and organizations. Regarding the role of public service broadcasting, various issues are being discussed, mainly in Europe and North America, such as a new concept of “publicness” in a “digital public space” and a new network-style public broadcasting model that is different from the conventional “stand-alone (self-contained)” style. The broadcasting culture archive initiative will serve as an important touchstone for examining what roles and functions public service broadcasters should play in an age of digital archives that is expected to arrive for real soon.