Finding out new theories by product examples

Over past decades it has become more common for different kinds of products to reappear, be republished, and re-released. These are not remakes I'm discussing about although they can be included. These are, for instance, media products such as movies and TV-series which are first introduced to audience by theatrical release or on TV, and which then reappear on video, dvd, blu-ray and vod formats. The idea of reappearing media products was first introduced by sociologist Fred Davis in 1979. He suggested that media products should first have a short initial life, which would be followed by introduction of new products (planned obsolescence). Then, after some time the products would have their nostalgia-borne half-lives (planned revivification). (Davis) While Davis argued this to be used in media products, my studies have shown that this phenomenon can be applied to different kinds of cultural products. I call the phenomenon *the cultural neo-production process of products* which describes the simultaneous use of planned obsolescence and planned revivification in the product's lifespan. (Sihvonen.)

In cultural neo-production process it is common for the product to become somehow updated (a movie is first published on video and then on dvd). In terms of planned obsolescence, this could be described as the exploitation of technological obsolescence or, in terms of progress, as the adoption of technological innovation. What is notable here, is that the cultural neo-production process serves as a tool for studying the history of media by first studying the history of a chosen media product. As Jentery Sayers has argued about the remakes, the re-versions of products can also tell something about the social expectations of the given time and they can help us understand history.

In terms of media archaeology, the cultural neo-production process can help us track the use of the quirky, uncommon, failed, and dead medias. And, in spite of this, as Jussi Parikka (2012) has emphasized, the future studies of media archaeology should focus on what one can do with media archaeology, not only what it means, and suggests to draw the attention to minor practices such as reusing. What I attempt to study here, is the link between the cultural neo-production process and media archaeology. In which way do they serve one another and how far will the theories stretch? Different kinds of products such as games, consoles and other equipment available will be under scrutiny here.

Works cited

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