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Inhalt:

Ingo Lehmann / Hans J. Wulff: Kultivierungshypothese (*cultivation hypothesis*)

Im Rahmen der Medienwirkungsforschung von dem Kommunikationswissenschaftler George S. Gerbner und der Annenberg School of Communication, Philadelphia, seit Ende der 1960er Jahre entwickelte Theorie, nach welcher eine nachhaltige Einflussnahme durch das Fernsehen und die in den Programmen vermittelten Inhalte auf das Weltbild des Rezipienten angenommen wird. Dem Fernsehen kommt nach Gerbner und seinen Kollegen neben der Familie und dem Freundeskreis die Rolle des Sozialisationsagenten unseres Zeitalters zu. Es ist demnach das entscheidende Massenmedium der modernen (US-amerikanischen) Industriegesellschaft, welches aufgrund seiner allgegenwärtigen Verfügbarkeit, seiner scheinbaren Realitätsnähe sowie der Kohärenz der transportierten Botschaften zur Formung eines kollektiven Bewusstseins in der Kultur beiträgt. Als ein schichten- und altersübergreifendes Ritual dient der Fernsehkonsum Gerbner zufolge in der heutigen säkularisierten Gesellschaft geradezu als Religionsersatz. Entsprechend interessiert sich die Kultivierungsforschung nicht für Effekte einzelner Sendungen oder Gattungen, für stilistische Eigenheiten oder ästhetische Qualitäten, sondern für langfristige Effekte, die das Gesamtprogramm im Verhalten und in Einstellungen von Zuschauern entfaltet.

Grundsätzlich grenzt sich dieser Ansatz bewusst von herkömmlichen, bis *dato* in der Medienwirkungsforschung üblichen Kategorien wie „Effekt" bzw. „Einfluß" (*impact*) ab, mittels derer eine unmittelbare, also kurzfristige Wirkung des Mediums angedeutet worden war. Ausgehend von einer Studie über die Präsenz und den Einfluss medialer Gewaltdarstellun-gen der „Cultural Indicators Research Group" wurde eine eigene Methodik etabliert: (1) In einem zweistufigen Verfahren erfolgte zunächst die möglichst umfangreiche Untersuchung der im Fernsehen dargebotenen Realität (*message system analysis*) hinsichtlich geographischer, demographischer und thematischer Strukturen, unter Berücksichtigung räumlicher und zeitlicher Dimensionen. Diese Daten wurden auf die Persönlichkeitsmerkmale, den Beruf, das Schicksal sowie die Handlungen und Haltungen der Akteure bezogen. (2) Den zweiten Schritt stellt die eigentliche „Kultivierungsanalyse" (*cultivation analysis*) dar – die erfassten markanten Merkmale der „Fernsehwelt" werden mit den Einstellungen von Rezipienten verglichen, um so den Grad eines möglichen „Kultivierungs-Effekts" zu ermitteln. Gerbner ging hier von der Prämisse aus, dass sich mit steigendem Fernsehkonsum die Wahrnehmung und die Grundhaltung der Rezipienten gemäß dem verzerrten Bild von der Wirklichkeit, wie es das Fernsehen zeichnet, verändern. Ein dritter Schritt der Analyse, der den beiden genannten vorgeschaltet ist, ist die Untersuchung der Selektionsprozesse, an deren Ende die Nachrichten und Inhalte stehen, die tatsächlich von Fernsehveranstaltern distribuiert werden (*institutional process analysis*).

Im Zuge der bis in die frühen 1980er Jahre erstellten „violence profiles" konnte die Gerbner-Gruppe mittels der Inhaltsanalyse (inklusive der Errechnung des „Gewaltindexes" und der „Risikoquote") einerseits einen – im Verhältnis zu dem in der Realität tatsächlich existenten – übermäßig hohen Anteil gezeigter und thematisierter Gewalt in Fernsehprogrammen nachweisen; andererseits ergaben Fragebogen-Erhebungen sowie die Auswertung anderer Untersuchungen (des „National Opinion Research Center" bzw. des „Center for Political Studies" an der University of Michigan), dass Vielseher im Gegensatz zu We-

nigsehern die Alltagsrealität für gewalttätiger halten, als sie in Wirklichkeit ist. Gleichzeitig zeichneten sich erstere laut den Umfrageergebnissen durch eine größere Angst vor Gewalt und durch Misstrauen gegenüber den Mitmenschen aus. Die Gruppe der Vielseher reagierte also eher mit „Fernsehantworten", wohingegen die Wenigseher sich in ihrem Antwortverhalten mehr an der Realität orientierten. Aus der Differenz der Prozentanteile der Vielseher und der Wenigseher, die eine „Fernsehantwort" gaben, wurde das „cultivation differential" errechnet – als Indikator für das Ausmaß der Verzerrung des Weltbildes durch den Fernsehkonsum. Aus diesen Ergebnissen leiteten Gerbner et al. eine direkte Beziehung zwischen Sehdauer und Beeinflussungsintensität ab, die sich v.a. in der bei Vielsehern häufig auftretenden „erbärmliche Welt" – Einstellung, einer generell pessimistisch-misanthropen Haltung äußere.

In den Folgejahren erweiterte und differenzierte sich das Forschungsgebiet, und es wurden in zahlreichen Studien im Umfeld der Annenberg School auch andere Themenfelder und Zusammenhänge Gegenstand von Untersuchungen, wie z. B. der Umgang mit dem Alter, politische Inhalte, Täter-Opfer-Konstellationen, Drogen-Konsum oder Sexualität. Auch wurde das Modell in zahlreichen nicht-amerikanischen Mediensystemen mit weitestgehend übereinstimmenden Befunden angewendet. Im Anschluss an die zunächst dominante Inhalts- und Einstellungsanalyse wurde die entsprechende Kultivierung der präsentierten Werte und Normen auf Seiten des Rezipienten erforscht. Diese Öffnung im Ansatz der „Vielseherforschung" ging mit der Weiterentwicklung der methodischen Praxis und des theoretischen Konzepts einher. Es wurden erstmalig die schon gefestigte Haltungen und die Realitätserfahrung der Zuschauer mit in die Überlegungen einbezogen. Eine Beeinflussung der Einstellung des Zuschauers durch die „Fernsehwelt" bereits voraussetzend, differenzierten einige Zusatzhypothesen zum *Mainstreaming* und zur *Resonanz* (*resonance*) besondere Tendenzen und Ausrichtungen der medialen Einflussnahme. Das Konzept des *Mainstreaming* beschreibt einen konvergierenden Effekt des Fernsehens, der dafür sorgt, dass divergierende, extreme Standpunkte grundverschiedener Gruppen einem „Hauptstrom" angepasst werden, Unterschiede in der Weltanschauung sozusagen zugunsten einer vorherrschenden, ge-

mäßigten öffentlichen Meinung eine Nivellierung erfahren. Zur Ermittlung dieses Effekts wurden bspw. Wenigseher- bzw. Vielseherantworten aus unterschiedlichen politischen Lagern untereinander verglichen. Bei der Auswertung ergaben sich bei den Wenigsehern viel größere Einstellungsdivergenzen als bei den Vielsehern. Die Resonanz-Annahme dagegen besagt, dass eine Botschaft des Fernsehens, die mit einer durch die Alltagserfahrung geprägten Einstellung des Rezipienten übereinstimmt, die Kultivierungseffekte zusätzlich verstärkt; stimmen sie nicht überein, schwächen sich auch die Effekte ab. Allerdings werden oft konvergierende (also: verstärkende) Programme selektiert.

All diese Ergänzungen zur K. verweisen gemäß Gerbner deutlich auf die machterhaltende und -stabilisierende Funktion des kommerziellen amerikanischen Fernsehens, welches, auch aus ökonomischen Beweggründen, im Sinne einer politisch-weltanschaulichen Sozialisation die konservative Haltung des Durchschnittsbürgers propagiere, um so die breite Basis der Bevölkerung zu erreichen.

Seit Beginn der 1980er Jahre erfuhren die K. sowie die Forschung der Annenberg School insgesamt eine vehemente Kritik durch andere Wissenschaftler, und das Gerbnersche Konzept ist bis heute Gegenstand einer lebendigen Diskussion. Für besondere Aufmerksamkeit sorgte die Kontoverse zwischen dem Gerbner-Team und Paul M. Hirsch, der, obwohl er den Ansatz prinzipiell für wichtig befand, insbesondere die methodische Vorgehensweise in Frage stellte. Darüber hinaus zweifelte er die Grundannahmen und Ergebnisse der Annenberg School an und suchte deren Hauptargumente systematisch zu entkräften. Ein Hauptvorwurf richtete sich gegen Gerbners vereinfachende und somit die Ergebnisse verfälschende Aufteilung der Rezipienten in Viel- und Wenigseher – Kategorien, die gleichfalls definitorisch unscharf verwendet würden. Nach Einführung der zusätzlichen Gruppen der Nicht- und Extremseher sowie unter Berücksichtigung entscheidender personenspezifischer Drittvariablen (Bildungsgrad, soziales Umfeld, Geschlecht usw.), unterzog Hirsch die von Gerbner et al. verwendeten Daten einer erneuten Prüfung im Sinne einer multivariaten Analyse. Das Einbeziehen weiterer abhängiger Variablen wurde in der Folge zur gängigen Praxis in der Medienwir-

kungsforschung und resultierte aus der allseitigen Kritik an monokausalen Erklärungsmodellen wie sie Gerbner und seine Kollegen zu Grunde gelegt hatten. Die mit dem Fernsehen in Verbindung stehenden Phänomene wurden daraufhin auf das komplexe Zusammenspiel verschiedenster Faktoren zurückgeführt, von denen das Fernsehen nur als ein Einflusskriterium unter vielen galt.

Die Resultate aus Hirschs Revision standen in einem signifikanten Widerspruch zur K., so dass die so plakativ unterstellte lineare Beziehung zwischen „Vielsehen" und Angst/Misstrauen fragwürdig erschien. Vielmehr legten die Ergebnisse den Verdacht nahe, es handele sich bei dem von der Annenberg-School ermittelten Zusammenhang um ein statistisches Artefakt; sie führten zu dem Kehrschluss, dass gerade im Vorfeld schon der Gesellschaft entfremdete, ängstliche oder alltäglicher Gefahr ausgesetzte Personen das Fernsehen als Medium der Angstreduktion und der Ersatzbefriedigung nutzen („Eskapismus-These"). Mehrere Kritiker plädierten dafür, dem Rezipienten generell eine aktivere Rolle im Mediengebrauch zuzutrauen und eher von einem selektiven Sehverhalten auszugehen, was eine nähere Untersuchung der Dauer und Spezifität der tatsächlich rezipierten Programme notwendig werden ließ. In diesem Kontext entstand der ebenfalls bis heute relevante „Uses-and-Gratifications"- Ansatz, welcher von einer individuellen und funktionalen Mediennutzung ausgeht und somit dem Gerbnerschen Postulat eines non-selektiven Vielsehens diametral gegenübersteht.

Hirsch kritisierte neben der Ungenauigkeit der empirischen Datenerhebung und -analyse außerdem die Selbstverständlichkeit, mit der Gerbner und seine Kollegen von den sich aus der „message system analysis" ergebenden Kategorien auf die gleichartige Interpretation der Fernsehinhalte durch den Zuschauer schlossen. Den Erkenntnisgewinn der „mainstreaming"- bzw. „resonance"-Konzepte tat er wegen mangelnder Präzision sowie inkohärenter methodischer Praxis als „post-hoc-Spekulation" oder „Allzweck-Interpretation" ab. Weiter problematisiert wurde die K. durch Vertreter verwandter Disziplinen, wie der Wahrnehmungspsychologie, aus deren Forschungsfeld die wichtigen Faktoren der Habituation, Adaptation und des Kontrasteffekts in die Dis-

kussion um das Vielseher-Phänomen einflossen. Obwohl die kritische Sekundäranalyse Hirschs im Kern allgemeine Zustimmung fand, von vielen Seiten berechtigte Kritik an der K. geübt wurde und wird, zudem andere Konzepte (z.B. *heuristic-recall-model*, das Modell der „wahrgenommenen Realität" / *perceived reality*, Theorien der Involviertheit des Rezipienten) neue Perspektiven auf die Wirkungsmechanismen des Fernsehens eröffneten, wurde das Gerbnersche Modell durch zahlreiche Studien gestützt und konnte bis heute nicht *in toto* widerlegt werden. Winfried Schulz hat Gerbners Methode 1986 auf Deutschland übertragen und vergleichbare Ergebnisse erhalten, so dass auch hier eine Korrelation zwischen TV-Konsum und Angst bzw. Depression plausibel erschien, wenn auch nicht als monokausal erklärbar anzusehen war. Neben genaueren Longitudinal-Untersuchungen oder experimentellen Studien gibt es auch aktuelle Arbeiten der Medienforschung (z. B. zur Wirkung von Online-Video-Games), die sich bewusst auf den Kultivierungs-Ansatz beziehen.

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