

thus increases the risk of rejection. According to Luhmann, communication media such as **money**, truth, and **power**, are outcomes of socio-cultural **evolution** reacting to this problem (Luhmann 1997). While speech has an inherent inclination towards **consensus**, written communication promotes the possibility of disagreement.

An institutionalization of critical faculties follows from the many characteristics of written communication: spatial and temporal distance, the possibility of comparison, the pressure of consistency, and the combination of mass literacy and book printing generating a surplus of uncontrollable information. As one of the long-term effects, literacy potentializes communicative reactions: written communication is released from the burden of immediate response and thus can defer acceptance and rejection; it can also refer to something already rejected. Further, it leads to a *modalizing* of reality: fiction becomes possible. Finally, reality can be observed in terms of its prospective possibilities and conceived as a contingent realization of mere possibility. Consequently, literacy does not introduce permanence and stability into societal communication, but instead promotes an awareness of **contingency**. As one of the fundamental semantic effects of literacy, the notion of sociality itself changes (Bohn 1999, Calhoun 1998). Communication is no longer merely a reciprocal, face-to-face process as suggested by the model of speech. Rather, literacy with all its contingencies becomes a form of sociality itself.

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CORNELIA BOHN

#### LOGICAL POSITIVISM

See: positivism

#### LOGOS AND LOGOCENTRISM

The noun *logos*, from the Greek verb *legein*, has a number of meanings, including account, reason, speech, and rational **discourse**. It was a key term in ancient philosophy, beginning with Heraclitus and especially with Plato. In a variety of ways, *logos* has figured as that which accounts for the unity of thinking and world. The term 'logocentrism' implies criticism of man's dependence upon a certain idea of *logos*. The term first appeared in the work of Ludwig Klages ([1929-32] 1981), where it was opposed to 'biocentrism'. In Klages's account, logocentrism has determined Western culture since Socrates, implying dominance of the mind (*Geist*) and disruption of the primordial unity of **body** and soul. More commonly, however, the term is associated with the work of Jacques **Derrida** and his program of **deconstruction** (1967, 1972a, 1972b). Logocentrism is

Derrida's name for the dominant formation of Western metaphysics from Plato to Hegel and beyond. In Derrida's thesis, logocentric metaphysics is organized around the ideal of a discourse that is absolutely present and proximate to itself, forming a closed, homogeneous and pure sphere of **meaning**. Logocentrism is criticized by Derrida for its reduction of **difference**, alterity, and exteriority. From within the tradition of metaphysics, how Derrida seeks to show how *logos* is in fact constituted by an excluded 'other' and is only an idealized effect of a differential, impure and exterior force which Derrida terms '*différance*'. In **feminist theory**, logocentrism is closely linked with the term **phallogocentrism**.

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THOMAS KHURANA

#### LOVE

'Love' is considered to have three socio-logically relevant aspects. First, it designates an affection that arises out of or generates social relations or ties of different kinds (parental love, attraction based on sexual desire, affection based on admiration, benevolence, or common interests). Second, love is addressed as a historically and culturally variable code of conceiving, organizing and enacting such relationships (e.g. 'companionate love', 'passionate love', 'romantic love'). Third, 'love' is variously considered as a means of either social **integration** or individuation, or as mediating both of these processes.

Historically, social theory has mainly considered 'love' as referring to heterosexual relations (to an extent that it is often used as a synonym for heterosexual '**sexuality**' and '**eroticism**' or is collapsed with 'marriage'). Other conceptions of love, such as 'human kindness' or 'fraternal love' receive less attention. 'Love' is thus understood as constituting, mediating, and/or organizing relations between men and women, and conceptualizations of love go hand in hand with theories of sexual **difference**, femininity and masculinity. Theorizations of love have, especially in classical theories, also served to prescribe women's place and function in society.

Conceptualizations of love can be found in various strands of social theory, although it is often introduced as an ephemeral topic while fulfilling a systematic function in the theoretical argument. This is the case in various classical theories where love is identified as the affective correlate of functional integration in modern society. In the context of arguments on disintegration as an effect of excessive differentiation, love is credited with the compensatory function of constituting a bulwark against the loss of social bond. This function is, very commonly, attributed to women (see e.g. Auguste **Comte**, Ferdinand **Tönnies**). This understanding of love as the indispensable '**other**' of what constitutes modern **society** is continued in classical texts around 1900. Here, love is accredited with a redemptive function *vis-à-vis* **alienation** and excessive rationalization. For Max **Weber** (1920), erotic love is a means of innerworldly salvation, constituting a re-enchanted sphere of experience beyond the ordinary and the rationalized (see **rationality and rationalization**). Georg **Simmel** (1907) understands (modern) love as a feeling that grounds and generates distinctive personalities and creates a social reality that is, in analogy to **art** and **religion**, not imbued with instrumentality. As both Weber and Simmel ascribe instrumentality to masculinity and non-instrumentality

to femininity, their conceptions of love are genuinely gendered. Elements of these arguments were continued in Talcott Parsons's (Parsons and Bales 1955) theory of the benefits to the nuclear family of women's specializing in expressive action and men's specializing in instrumental action. However, in contrast to Simmel and Weber, Parsons considers heterosexual love exclusively with respect to the institutional arrangement of the nuclear family, tying it to marriage, biological reproduction and parenthood.

Feminists have criticized this assumption of women's specialization in love for its underlying ontology of sexual difference and its resulting normative prescriptions for women. It has been criticized as an ideology camouflaging female subjection and patriarchal power (see e.g. Simone de Beauvoir). Psychoanalytic feminists approach the 'femininity' of love as explained not in ontological terms but as an outcome of early gender-specific socialization (see object relations theory). This approach has been criticized for reifying the distinction between feminine expressiveness and masculine instrumentality. Various feminist engagements with love since the nineteenth century imply a rehabilitation of love as a means of female emancipation when understood as constituting reciprocal recognition of two individual and equal personalities.

A focus on the connection between love and individuality or individuation (see individualism and individualization) has been continued in different theoretical contexts. Niklas Luhmann ([1982] 1986) conceives of love as a symbolically generalized media of communication which makes relatively improbable personalized communication possible. Within the transition from a primarily stratified form of differentiation of the social system to one which is primarily functional, love takes over the function of addressing one's whole personality. In approaches that synthesize theories of

intersubjectivity, psychoanalysis, and critical theory, love is conceptualized as a relation of reciprocal recognition that takes the form of a symbiotic relation cross-cut by individuation that is propelled by this very relation (see e.g. Benjamin 1986). Since the late 1980s, there has been an intensified theoretical interest in the topic of love, nourished by the observation of changing codes, institutional arrangements, normative models and practices of couple and familial relationships (Giddens 1992; Beck and Beck-Gernsheim [1990] 1995) as well as by a growing sociological interest in emotion and intimacy.

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CAROLINE ARNI

#### LUHMANN, NIKLAS (1927–1998)

German theorist

Luhmann's social theory began in the late 1960s in the form of a critique of the work of Talcott Parsons. Modifying Parsons's understanding of the relationship between structure and function (see functionalism), Luhmann developed a more dynamic and

process-oriented type of systems theory. In his second period Luhmann defined social systems as consisting of autopoietic communication networks, rather than of individuals or actions. Referring both to analogies with the biological concept of 'autopoiesis' and to Edmund Husserl's phenomenology, Luhmann defined a social system as a system composed of communicative events, which emerge over time with the effect of enabling the system to manage contingencies in its environment (see communication).

Modern society for Luhmann has to be described as functionally differentiated, consisting of systems for politics, economy, law, science, religion, art, education, and the mass media. All these functional systems are conceptualized as 'autopoietic' systems, or functionally self-generating systems. Modern society in this regard reproduces itself without a single organizing centre. Luhmann emphasizes a theory of society which eschews societal self-descriptions of normative integration, collective goals, or self-sufficiency.

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ARMIN NASSEHI

#### LUKÁCS, GEORG (1885–1971)

Hungarian theorist

A major exponent of Western Marxism and influence on critical theory, Lukács

held political positions in the governments of Béla Kun 1919, as Commissar for Education and of Imre Nagy 1956, as Minister of Culture, in Hungary. Lukács's early work on literature and art and aesthetics was influenced by neo-Kantian philosophy and by the work of Dilthey, Simmel, and Weber. During the First World War, he became engaged in studies of Marx and Hegelianism and neo-Hegelianism. An outcome of these 'years of apprenticeship in Marxism', as he later wrote, was *History and Class Consciousness* ([1923] 1991). This collection of studies in Marxist dialectic became Lukács's most influential book. With reference to Marx's analysis of the fetish character of capitalist commodity production, he developed the concept of reification. With his numerous essays as a literary theorist he is acknowledged as the founder of the sociology of literature. The theme of reconstructing the prehistory of ideologies of the twentieth century out of the history of literature and literary forms is taken up in *Destruction of Reason* ([1954] 1980) with respect to philosophy and sociology (see form and forms). Included in this portrayal of the development of irrationalism are his early teachers Simmel and Weber.

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HELMUT STAUBMANN

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edited by  
**austin harrington**  
**barbara I. marshall**  
**hans-peter müller**



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