3. Independent Churches

Of the 52 Independent Churches in 1995, we may mention a few. In 1955 upheavals among the Herero people led to the founding of Oruuano (meaning "community"), the Herero Church (with 10,000 people affiliated in 1995). The Protestant Unity Church (29,000) and the Church of Africa (4,000) followed; in 1959 the Independent Rhenish Mission of South Africa was formed (15,000). In 1946 some Nama Hottentots broke off from the Rhenish Mission and became part of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, a denomination from the United States that began work in South Africa in 1892. This church, with 11,000 affiliated, is strong in central Namibia and south of Windhoek, the nation's capital.

As a result of missionary work in Namibia, traditional religions (→ Guinea 2) have outwardly decreased. They are still present, however, surfacing especially in times of crisis.

4. Ecumenical Situation

In 1971 the two Lutheran churches — the ELCIN and the ELOC — united as the United Evangelical Lutheran Church of South-West Africa (later, Namibia). In 1977 the German Evangelical Lutheran Church (10,000 affiliated in 1995) joined the church. It formed several commissions to serve the cause of unity, including those on theology and proclamation, mission and → evangelism, social and diaconal work, and literature and communication.

The Council of Churches in Namibia (→ National Councils of Churches) derives from the Christian Centre, set up in 1975 as an ecumenical meeting place for black workers in Windhoek. The real aim was to found the Namibian Council of Churches, which followed in 1978. Its members include the African Methodist Episcopal Church, Anglican Church, ELCIN, ELOC, Evangelical Reformed Church in Africa (→ Reformed and Presbyterian Churches), German Evangelical Lutheran Church, Methodist Church of Southern Africa, Roman Catholic Church, and United Congregational Church in Southern Africa. The council strives for closer cooperation among its members and is also involved in various humanitarian activities through its departments and committees, such as for → diaconate, theology, local and regional → ecumenism, → development, and alternative education. Help is given to political prisoners and their families; other programs address the problems of → hunger and drought.

5. Church and State

In 1971 the leaders of the United Evangelical Lutheran Church in South-West Africa voiced their opposition to apartheid in a memorandum. In an open letter of the same year the Lutheran bishops came out in support of independence. These actions and others convinced SWAPO that clergy and laity with church responsibilities could be regarded as part of the Namibian → revolution.

Relations between → church and state increasingly worsened, and many church leaders from various denominations suffered imprisonment or expulsion. The churches were trying to promote reconciliation between the people and the colonial rulers, and they thus found it hard to arrive at a definite political position or to speak out clearly against economic exploitation by South Africa. After independence, however, the churches played a unique role as bridges between local Namibians and their former rulers.

As of 2000, all citizens enjoy freedom of religion. Christian denominations, as well as all other religious groups, have access to the media and to participation in schools.

→ African Theology

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Engelhard !Nôabeb

Narcissism

H. Ellis (1859-1939) first coined the term "narcissism" in → psychiatry to denote → homosexuality, then regarded only as sexual perversion (→ Sexuality). The idea was that of people loving their own reflection, like Narcissus in the Greek → myth (→ Love). S. Freud (1856-1939) distinguished between primary narcissism as a general stage in psychological → development (§2), in which subject and object are symbolically united, and secondary narcissism, by which psychological energies (→ Libido) are deflected from the object and possess the self, as is often observed in → psychosis (e.g., in Freud's famous Schreber case). For Freud the power that pathologically involves a loss of reality is, as primary narcissism, the basis of ego development, since the I constitutes itself by repressing object-relations. Only when we learn to break free from external objects and to form an inner image of them can we be alone without being lonely.

At this point we arrive at the further development of → ego psychology, which defines narcissism as a focusing of psychological interests on the → self and which H. Kohut (1913-81) built up into a history of the development of the self independently of impulses. In the process Kohut shattered the negative image of narcissism. He stressed its ability, through the → imagination, to project creative alternatives to the existing world of objects; through means of empathy, to soften the boundaries between subject and object; and through means of wisdom and → humor, to face the limitation of personal life. He thus gave positive shape to narcissism instead of supressing it.

C. Lasch applied theories about narcissism to social relations (→ Society), in which the general climate is shaped therapeutically rather than religiously and → bureaucracy makes social inconveniences into personal problems that need therapeutic treatment. Increased narcissistic phenomena among young people might thus be regarded as a new type of → socialization (T. Ziehe).

At the same time, a pre-oedipal psychology of religion opened up the possibility of achieving a better understanding of some factors in the tradition, such as → mysticism and → miracle stories, as "cosmic empathy" (K. Hoppe). On this basis a new and more fruitful round of discussion between → theology and → psychoanalysis could be initiated in which → analogies could be shown in basic → anthropological ideas and the focus could be on problems of creative imagination (H. G. Heimbroack) and health as → joy in oneself. Along these lines narcissistic forces need not bifurcate into fantasies of greatness or → aggression.

→ Lifestyle; Partnership; Pastoral Psychology; Psychotherapy

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Joachim Scharfenberg†

Narrative Theology

1. The Nature of Narrative
2. Frei and the Eclipse of Biblical Narrative
3. Ricoeur and the Phenomenology of Human Experience

1. The Nature of Narrative

Narratives are stories. Stories become theological when they involve → God, that is, when one of the characters active in them, implicated in their plots, whose character and nature are revealed by the actions recounted in the story, is God. Stories involving God are of different orders.

The first instance is the stories of the Bible in which God is depicted directly as a character in the persons of God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit. Other stories recount individual lives in their fullness, including the interaction between individuals and God. And there are stories of communities, churches, and nations, collective stories with God as implicit or active participant. The common element in these stories is the narrative form, which organizes incidents and details along a temporal frame, links incidents to form a plot, establishes movement toward a perceptible telos, or ending, and intertwines plot and character in such a fashion that actions reveal character and characters advance plot.

No line of demarcation separates the different orders of narrative. Narrative has the remarkable power to draw together the biblical stories, the life of the individual, and the shared life of communities in a complex and nuanced, yet unified, whole. A rich and profoundly honest article by Renita Weems, "A Mistress, a Maid, and No Mercy," illustrates this ability. Weems weaves together a retelling

of the biblical account of Hagar and Sarah with her own individual story as an upwardly mobile daughter of a domestic worker in order to tell the collective story of African-American women in modern America. Narratives, well illustrated by Weems, represent the thickness of → experience, its multilayered quality, and create coherence without reduction of complexity.

Narrative theology, a broad and disparate movement within the discipline of → theology, is marked by a unifying appreciation for the ability of narrative to represent the relationship between God and human beings and by a sense of the fittingness of that representation. Narrative theology marks the congruence, sometimes only partial, of many lines of interest and development. Weems's article grows out of an unbroken tradition of biblical story-telling within the African-American church (→ Black Churches). James Cone has stressed the importance of that story to the survival of the African-American community and to its resistance to oppression — the interweaving, for instance, of the Exodus story with the story of the African-American struggle for freedom and dignity in America (→ Racism; Civil Rights Movement).

Similarly, → Judaism preserved an unbroken relationship to its ancestral stories alongside its continuous engagement with the nonnarrative forms of the → Torah. Jewish literary scholars such as Robert Alter and Meir Sternberg have continued and enriched that narrative tradition by using the insights of modern literary theory (→ Literary Criticism). It would be wrong to suggest that these unbroken traditions were completely unreflective on their practice. However, the power of the narratives, particularly the biblical narratives, in those religious communities was not dependent on or translated into reflective language. The narratives spoke directly and in their own unaltered form to the circumstances of the communities, shaping their common lives, the lives of individuals within the communities, and their relationship with God.

2. Frei and the Eclipse of Biblical Narrative

2.1. In large sectors of Western Christianity, especially those strongly influenced by European academic institutions, the tradition of direct and unproblematic reading of the biblical narratives as the theological foundation of Christian faith and life has been "eclipsed," in the wording of Yale theologian Hans Frei (1922-88). In a careful and detailed study *(Eclipse),* Frei found that beginning in the 18th century, the meaning of the biblical narratives progressively came to be identified not with the obvious explicative sense of the biblical stories but, rather, with the historical events and incidents to which these stories seemed to refer. The shift from conceiving the meaning of the text as a function of the narrative coherence of the story itself to a matter of the historical reference of the story was largely driven by a concern for → truth.

Before the shift, the truth of the biblical narratives was a self-evident implication of the meaningfulness of the narratives themselves. Few sources of outside information about such matters as creation and ancient history were available to challenge that coherence. The rise of the age of exploration, however, increasingly produced independent sources of information by which to reconstruct the ancient world. The truth of the biblical narratives thus came to be identified with their correspondence to reconstructions of history grounded in extrabiblical data and articulated by rational argument (→ Enlightenment; Rationalism). The meaning of the texts depended on that truth. The result, Frei argued, was the displacement, or eclipse, of the most obvious sense of the biblical narratives and its replacement by increasingly tentative and fragmentary reconstructions of actual history. Alternately, the truth of the biblical narratives was defended by translating biblical stories into the terms of broad philosophical or anthropological systems. Again, the result was the eclipse of the biblical narrative in which Christian faith had been traditionally grounded.

2.2. Frei's image of the eclipse of biblical narrative suggested that narrative might again emerge to illumine the theological landscape. A number of forces, most of them apparent in the work of Frei himself, converged to bring narrative out of eclipse. First to mention is the influence of neoorthodox theology, particularly the exegetical method of Karl → Barth (1886-1968). Although Barth took some account, often negative, of the results of historical-critical study of the Bible, his theological method most frequently began with → exegesis of the narrative form of the biblical accounts, as David Ford has documented. If Barth's theological program was essentially that given him by → Anselm (1033-1109), namely *fides quaerens intellectum* (faith seeking understanding), then the *fides* was the witness of the biblical narratives to Jesus Christ and the *intellectum* was inner-Christian reflection on the coherence of that witness. Reflection never displaced the primacy of the narratives themselves, nor could the witness of the narratives be considered dependent on any nonbiblical foundation for either truth or coherence. In America Barth's emphasis on the biblical narrative was taken up by H. Richard Niebuhr (1894-1962), who located → revelation in the biblical stories.

Developments within the fields of literary theory, together with the practice of interpreting literary texts, also influenced narrative theology. In America so-called New Criticism insisted that the text itself rather than anything outside the text (i.e., author or readers) was the proper object of literary → interpretation. New Criticism's model for the practice of interpretation, close reading, paid attention to such matters as plot and character and their mutual implication. Character was immediately read from the narrative as a natural implication of the actions of prominent actors, and simultaneously character determined the course of events as the narrative unfolded the characters' intentions. The interaction of characters and actions in the plot revealed the concrete identity of the characters, not as abstract essences that could be borne by a number of interchangeable individuals, but as embodied, or "emplotted," intentions within a specific narrative.

2.3. For Frei (see his *Identity*) this dialectic between character and plot made narrative the fit form of literature to reveal the unique identity of → Jesus Christ as truly incarnate God and to display the unity between Jesus' intentions and those of God. For other theologians such as the ethicist Stanley Hauerwas, the mutual implication in narratives of action and character is simply the basic mode of human life, drawing together the individual's and the community's life stories with the normative story of the Bible and other formative stories to form individual character or a community of character.

Still more specifically, Frei supported his understanding of the nature of biblical narrative by drawing on *Mimesis* (1969), the classic work in literary theory by Erich Auerbach (1892-1957). Using the biblical story of the sacrifice of Isaac, Auerbach describes a genre he calls realistic narrative, which organizes events along a chronological line, locates events in realistic settings, follows recognizable canons of human causality, and, in Auerbach's famous phrase, is "fraught with background" — that is, conveys a sense of depth and complexity commensurate with the human experience of reality. Frei renamed the genre, as applied to the biblical narratives, "history-like narrative" in order to draw attention to the nature of Christian claims about the → incarnation of Jesus Christ in human history. In designating the genre history-*like,* Frei seemed to beg the question of the relationship of this narrative genre to history as reconstructed by independent historians. That question may in fact have been begged, but for Frei himself in the *fides quaerens intellectum* tradition of Anselm and Barth, the biblical narratives constitute the normative witness to the nature of the world and to God's actions in the world's history, to which "independent" history must be adjusted. Adjusting the narrated world of the Bible to the autonomous world of history or nature had led to the eclipse of biblical narrative as normative witness. Frei and the narrative theologians who followed him have sought to reverse this adjustment.

3. Ricoeur and the Phenomenology of Human Experience

3.1. Not all narrative theology is rooted in the neoorthodox assumptions characteristic of Hans Frei's work. An equally prominent starting point for many narrative theologians has been a → phenomenology of human experience that stresses the parallels between the structure of human experience and the structure of narrative. For Paul Ricoeur (b. 1913), who offers the fullest articulation of this approach, narratives, whether historical or fictional, possess a unique ability to reveal possible forms of human existence, possibilities that can be grasped by individuals in order to guide the project that is an actual human life. The power of narrative to present genuine possibilities of existence is grounded in the correspondence between narrative and the human experience of existence.

Of particular importance is the identity between the representation of → time in narratives and our experience of time. Ricoeur begins his magnum opus, *Time and Narrative* (3 vols., 1984-88), with an extended consideration of → Augustine's meditation on time in books 10 and 11 of the *Confessions.* Augustine was confounded by time and its → paradoxes. The past no longer exists, the future does not yet exist, and the present is a mere ephemeral point in time. For Ricoeur, narrative shares with experience the same movement from that which is no longer, into that which is not yet, through the present; narrative gives form to the unity of the human experience of time by recording in the present moment memory of things past and anticipations of things to come. In rendering time, narrative organizes the welter of human experiences into meaningful patterns and orients them toward a telos, a sense of a fit ending or goal. Narratives have the power to influence and indeed shape the course of human experience because of a perfect coincidence between narrative and lived experience. Other literary forms do not share this congruence with human experience, which is a powerful argument for resisting all attempts to convert sacred stories into any other form.

Ricoeur's interpretive program is strongly oriented toward actual texts. Close, disciplined study of the structure of narrative texts reveals the world of the text in all its concreteness. The textual world in turn reveals genuine possibilities for human existence, whether the narratives are historical or fictional in character. Ricoeur's direct predecessor in phenomenological analysis, Martin Heidegger (1889-1976), had held that authentic human possibilities are bounded by human mortality. Ricoeur, however, held that narratives point beyond death, so that human life could be lived with → hope. In looking beyond death and seeing the possibility of hope, Ricoeur became a theologian of narrative.

3.2. The often controversial relationship between theologians of narrative rooted in the neoorthodox tradition and those whose starting point is a phenomenological analysis of human existence can indicate some of the continuing lines of discussion within the broad movement of narrative theology.

Theologians of the Frei school have offered a number of challenges to Ricoeur's work. First, they charge Ricoeur with foundationalism, grounding the truth of Christian claims — the possibilities of existence embodied in the narratives — in an antecedent philosophical tradition. In turn, the Ricoeur school has suspected Frei's approach of fideism, a displacement of truth claims by the demands of → faith. The issue joined is how to conceive of the truth of the narratives.

Frei's school has also charged Ricoeur with denying the uniqueness of the Christian stories and, as a result, of undermining traditional Christian claims for the one-time incarnational character of the story of Jesus Christ. Many narratives could reveal genuine possibilities of human existence. Indeed, in principle nothing is unique about the narrative account of the life and death of Jesus — other narratives might be substituted. But the substitutability of other stories denies the heart of the central Christian claim, that God became incarnate in one particular individual, whose life and death uniquely embodied the presence of God among people.

3.3. David Tracy, Ricoeur's colleague at the University of Chicago, responds by in part granting the point. Many narratives could reveal genuine possibilities of existence. A → pluralistic age requires us to acknowledge this fact if we are not to disvalue or even dismiss the stories of religions other than our own. Tracy then introduces a qualitative difference among narratives. Although no single story can make a unique claim for revealing the only possibilities of existence, some narratives — ones Tracey calls classics — "so disclose a compelling truth about our lives that we cannot deny them some kind of normative status" (p. 108). That truth is not the contingent truth of narrated or historical events (the problematic claims of Frei's approach) but universal, permanent truths of human possibility. *Christian* classics reveal determinate possibilities of existence that are characterized by trust in the graciousness and love of God. These possibilities are not unique — other religious classics offer different possible forms of existence — but neither are they indeterminate or infinitely substitutable.

The issue joined is absolutely fundamental and concerns the true referent of the biblical narratives. For Frei, the narrative refers to the characters and events that are recounted in it, events that continue to shape our lives. For Ricoeur and Tracy, the reference of the text is finally to a world of existential possibilities that only the narrative can reveal.

3.4. The controversy between the Frei and Ricoeur schools reveals deep issues that continue to occupy narrative theologians. The informal practice of narrative theology in the churches, the simple reading of biblical stories and correlation of those stories with the life stories of individuals and the community, has recently been strengthened. Despite Frei's concern for the eclipse of biblical narrative in much of the Western church, it must be said that even within those churches most affected by the identification of the meaning of the biblical texts with its historical referent, the tradition of straightforward narrative never died out. Support for that tradition of reading has recently also come from within historical-critical study of the Bible. Increasingly, Bible scholars are concerned with the final form of the text. In the case of narratives this focus leads to a holistic reading of blocks of narrative material that bears some relationship to traditional readings. The influence of the canonical criticism of Brevard Childs on this holistic reading is immense.

Furthermore, and from a less historical side, the impact of reading strategies drawn from the study of secular literature has been enormous in recent years. The influence of New Criticism has been mentioned, but more recent trends such as reader-response → criticism and, to a lesser extent, → structuralism have supported attention to the narrative form of the text itself and its interaction with the community of interpretation, precisely the concerns that characterize narrative theology. From all indications, it seems that this practical base of narrative theology will continue to develop and define the movement.

→ Canon; Hermeneutics; Language and Theology; Linguistics; Meaning

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Robert B. Robinson

Nation, Nationalism

1. Concept and Development
   1.1. Concept
   1.2. Social and Historical Development
2. Nation and Nationalism
   2.1. Before 1989
   2.2. After 1989
3. Nationalism and Theology

1. Concept and Development

1.1. *Concept*

Underlying the concept of the nation is the idea of differences. Various notions are presupposed that confirm the existence and solidarity of a given human → group in distinction from all that is alien to it (→ Foreigners, Aliens). Consent thus arises as to what a nation is. It carries with it the thought of a → future, the guarantee for which seems to be power. In other words, it is a component of social reproduction as a continuation of the past, as well as a form of common life in harmony with laws that defined the existence of earlier generations (→ Society 2.3; Tradition).

1.2. *Social and Historical Development*

Serious differences of opinion exist as to how the nation arose in → society and history. The *patria* of antiquity was the land of one's ancestors, one's birthplace, a view that prevailed up to the → Middle Ages. The *patria* constituted a territorial society. It was the *pagus* (village, country district; Fr. *pays*), the area containing the property of the feudal lords (→ Feudalism) or the city where one lived. The inhabitants of the *patria*, subject to its territorial law (the *consuetudo patriae*, "custom of the *patria*"), defined themselves in opposition to foreigners *(extranei)*. The *patria propria* (one's own *patria*), which as such was precisely defined, remained cohesive in the Middle Ages, despite the universal sense of belonging to the *patria communis*, the Christian world.

In Europe the Peace of Westphalia (1648) instituted the nation as the subject of international law, and through the breakup of the Holy Roman Empire, the balance between nations became the explicit framework of the European political game. On this occasion the first modern definition of the nation as the union of a prince or a state or a religious framework was posed (→ Cuius regio eius religio).

During this whole period the term "nation" had a narrow sense, in keeping with its etymology (from *nasci*, "be born"). It denoted a human group that has a common origin or to which such an origin is ascribed. Gradually, however, the accent shifted back to place. In 1694 the French Academy defined the nation as the sum of those inhabiting the same → state or land, living under the same laws, and speaking the same → language. In the 18th century the middle class came to have an increasing share in a government (→ Enlightenment 1-2; Modern Period), which led to a sense of national dynamic. Soon the rights of the nation came to be proclaimed in opposition to the supreme and unshared power of the king. The 1789 French Revolution sanctified the nation as the one subject of law, the only valid power, since → authority rested on it alone. Attempts were then made in the 19th century to explain the rise of nations, for example, by B. Disraeli (1804-81) in England and J.-E. Renan (1823-92) in France.

The French and American revolutions mitigated,