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Sommario/riassunto

Culture studies try to understand how people assume identities and how they perceive reality. In this perspective narration, as a basic form of cognitive processing, is a fundamental cultural technique. Narrations provide the coherence, temporal organization and semantic integration that are essential for the development and communication of identity, knowledge and orientation in a socio-cultural context. In essence, Anderson's "Imagined Communities" need to be thought of as "Narrated Communities" from the beginning. Narration is made up by what people think; and vice versa, narration makes up people's thoughts. What is considered 'fictitious' or 'real' no longer separates narratives from an 'outside' they refer to, but rather represents different narratives. Narration not only constructs notions of what was "real" in retrospect, but also prospectively creates possible worlds, even in the (supposedly hard) sciences, as in e.g. the imaginative simulation of physical processes. The book's unique interdisciplinary approach shows how the implications of this fundamental insight go far beyond the sphere of literature and carry weight for both scholarly and scientific disciplines.
