

TRANSCULTURAL STUDIES – INTERDISCIPLINARY LITERATURE
AND HUMANITIES FOR SUSTAINABLE SOCIETIES 15

Stefano Calabrese

Neuro-Narratology

The Neural Secrets of Narration



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What happens in our brain when we create a story? Based on neuro-cognitivism, the study of narratives – ranging from novels to “life-stories”, which relate to interstitial topics – has become more rigorous. In fact, an unparalleled panorama of constants, cemented since the Upper Palaeolithic, has been added to an unprecedented awareness of how each cultural habitat shapes the narratives of its inhabitants. This occurred according to a particular neuro-cognitive style, thus limiting the so-called “authorial” freedom. Narratives – whether they originate from the Muses or from the voice of a completely illiterate individual – are like com-

pressors that can zip together all the most crucial elements in our existence: time, space, intentions, purposes, agents and instrumental actions. For this reason, they represent an inexhaustible object of research.

STEFANO CALABRESE is full professor of Comparative Literature at the University of Modena and Reggio Emilia. He specializes in both eastern and western literary texts and life narratives by applying neuro-cognitive methods and research results.



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