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*Vera Nünning, Ansgar Nünning,
Birgit Neumann (Eds.)*

CULTURAL WAYS OF WORLDMAKING

MEDIA AND NARRATIVES

CONCEPTS FOR THE STUDY OF CULTURE

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Cultural Ways of Worldmaking

Concepts for the Study of Culture

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Mirjam Horn

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Preface and Acknowledgements

Taking as its point of departure Nelson Goodman's theory of symbol systems as delineated in his seminal book *Ways of Worldmaking*, this volume gauges the possibilities and perspectives that the worldmaking approach offers as a model for the study of culture. Its main objectives are to explore the usefulness and range of the approach ushered in by Goodman for the study of culture and to supplement Goodman's philosophy of worldmaking with a number of complementary disciplinary perspectives, literary and cultural approaches, and new questions. It focuses on three key issues or concepts for coming to terms with ways of worldmaking and their interdisciplinary relevance and ramifications, viz. (1) theoretical approaches to ways of worldmaking, (2) the impact of media on ways of worldmaking, and (3) narratives as ways of worldmaking. The volume serves to demonstrate how the choice of media and narratives affects the worlds that are created and how these worlds are established as socially relevant. It also illustrates the extent to which worldmaking is imbued with cultural values and is thus inevitably implicated in power relations.

This collection of essays emerged from an international symposium on "Ways of Worldmaking: Narratives, Archives and Media" held by the European Summer School in Cultural Studies (ESSCS) in July 2007 in Giessen and Heidelberg. The symposium gauged the possibilities and perspectives that the worldmaking approach offered for the interdisciplinary study of culture. All the articles were commissioned for this volume and most of them represent substantially revised versions of the keynote lectures and other selected papers given. As hosts of the ESSCS we are particularly grateful to the other members of the steering committee: Steven Connor from the London Consortium, Thomas Elsaesser and Jaap Kooijman from the Amsterdam School for Cultural Analysis, Frederik Tygstrup from the Copenhagen Doctoral School in Cultural Studies, and Knut Stene Johansen from the Norwegian Graduate School of Literary Studies, for the excellent collaboration and the dedicated promotion of a European platform for the development of interdisciplinary approaches to the study of culture. We should also like to thank all the colleagues and doctoral students who have participated in the ESSCS in and since 2007. The support of the European Commission and the wonderful venue of Castle Rauschholzhausen contributed greatly to the success of the conference.

The editors would also like to express their gratitude to all people involved in the process of designing and preparing this volume. Particular thanks are due to our colleague and co-editor Birgit Neumann, who did a splendid job throughout the editing process. We are very grateful to Mirjam Horn for her highly valuable assistance in carefully copy-editing the articles and formatting the manuscript as well as for her unflagging attention to detail; to Simon Cooke and Joanna White for valuable help in linguistic matters; and to our assistants Nele Gerkens, Dominique Lerch, Natalie Krümmelbein, Katharina Schwertfeger, and Anna Weigel for their additional support in checking bibliographical references and formatting. Cooperating with the wonderful team at de Gruyter, especially Dr. Heiko Hartmann and his successor Dr. Manuela Gerlof, has been, and is, a great pleasure. Thanks to their great dedication, interest in the projects, and thoughtful responses, it is a privilege as well as pleasure for any scholar to publish with what is an exemplary academic press.

Giessen/Heidelberg, April 2010
Ansgar Nünning and Vera Nünning

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Ways of Worldmaking as a Model for the Study of Culture: Theoretical Frameworks, Epistemological Underpinnings, New Horizons

ANSGAR NÜNNING and VERA NÜNNING

1. Ways of Worldmaking Shaping Cultures (and vice versa): Theories, Media, Narratives

One might as well begin with the observation that in the age of globalisation and today's media society, more than ever before, people find themselves surrounded by many worlds and many more worldmakers. No matter whether we switch on the television or the radio, use the internet, go to a museum, do research in an archive, listen to a lecture, political speech or a story told by a friend, we are always faced with a variety of worlds made by human beings using language or other symbol systems. Recent years have seen an increasing interest across many disciplines in the question of how exactly worlds are made and how the relation between worldmaking and orders of knowledge can be described. This testifies to the fact that the question of ways of worldmaking is of great importance not only in philosophy, but in the arts, humanities, social sciences, and in society at large. Since a wide array of symbol systems, modes of organisation, media and social practices are involved in making worlds, however, it is anything but easy to come to terms with what Nelson Goodman called "worldmaking." What is needed is a flexible, wide-ranging and interdisciplinary approach that takes into account different kinds of world models, and different processes of producing them.

Nelson Goodman's theory of symbol systems as delineated in his seminal book *Ways of Worldmaking* arguably provides such an approach. When Goodman coined the felicitous term 'ways of worldmaking,' he managed to highlight the fact that we are faced with a multiplicity of conflicting worlds or world-versions and that there are no 'givens.' According to Goodman, it is "by means of multiple symbol functions and systems we create and comprehend the worlds we live in" ("Routes" 132). Goodman's theories and writings are "far-ranging with topics including aesthet-

ics, epistemology, philosophy of science, and philosophy of language” (Carter 251). He provides detailed analyses of different types of symbols and of the symbol systems of the various art forms (see Goodman, *Languages*) as well as philosophy, with which he was primarily concerned, but he was also interested in other ways of worldmaking, e.g. those of the sciences and everyday discourse (see Goodman, *Ways*).

Goodman proceeds from the assumption that the world we experience is always already made from other worlds: “Worldmaking as we know it always starts from worlds already on hand; the making is a remaking” (*Ways* 6). His main aim is to examine “the processes involved in building a world out of others” (7). Though he denies having attempted any comprehensive or systematic survey, he does provide a perspicacious account of some of the most important processes that go into worldmaking, viz. composition and decomposition, weighting (i.e. emphasis or ratings of relevance), ordering (and reordering), deletion and supplementation, and deformation (see Goodman, *Ways* 7–17; for an excellent concise summary, see Herman, “Narrative Ways” 77–79). Goodman also raises a number of questions that are as crucial for anyone interested in the study of culture—or cultures, for that matter—as for the philosopher: “In just what sense are there many worlds? What distinguishes genuine from spurious worlds? What are worlds made of? [...] What role do symbols play in the making? And how is worldmaking related to knowing?” (*Ways* 1).

This volume, however, is devoted neither to a philosophical discussion of these questions nor to an exegesis of Nelson Goodman’s theory of symbols nor to an illustration of the reception and impact that his influential works have had (see Berka). Its main objectives are rather to explore the usefulness and range of the approach ushered in by Goodman for the study of culture and to supplement Goodman’s analytical philosophy of worldmaking with a number of complementary disciplinary perspectives, approaches, and questions. Although the very terms of the titles of Goodman’s two most famous books—*Languages of Art* (1976) and *Ways of Worldmaking* (1992)—clearly signal that “the limited attempt to produce a comparative theory of symbols has become a global project” (Mitchell 29), his “neutral comparative study” (Goodman and Elgin 31) of symbol systems is arguably not as global as the title *Ways of Worldmaking* may suggest. On the one hand, there are indeed “More Ways of Worldmaking” (Hernardi, “Guest Editorial”) than those scrutinised by Goodman. On the other hand, Goodman himself excluded quite a number of areas and issues that are of great interest for the study of culture. As W.J.T. Mitchell has shown, “[t]here are three basic subject areas that Goodman routinely excludes from his system: values, knowledge, and history” (Mitchell 24).

These three subject areas are, of course, of paramount importance for anyone interested in the study of culture, impinging as they do on our cultural ways of worldmaking, our collective identities, and our scholarly practices.

Therefore this volume not only intends to emphasise and illustrate the great usefulness of Goodman's approach, but also attempts to expand, supplement, and amplify the framework conceived by Goodman in *Ways of Worldmaking* and reconceived by him and Catherine Elgin in *Reconceptions in Philosophy and Other Arts and Sciences* (1988). To this end the present volume seeks to include other ways of worldmaking than those Goodman focussed on and to explore how these are related to questions of contexts, culture(s), history (or histories), functions, and values, i.e. to issues that Goodman excluded, but that cultural ways of worldmaking are inevitably embedded and involved in. While Goodman was mainly concerned with devising "a synchronic, systematic map of the fundamental rules and types that operate in all symbolic behavior, in any language, culture, or moment in history" (Mitchell 24), i.e. in universal aspects of worldmaking as a "universal science" (25), most of the chapters in this volume focus on how ways of worldmaking operate in particular cultural, literary and historical contexts, taking in both synchronic and diachronic issues as well as the question of what functions specific ways of worldmaking fulfil in each case and in varying cultural contexts. In so doing, they expand the worldmaking approach, deliberately focussing on issues that lie beyond the scope of Goodman's project.

Useful concepts for exploring the question of how ways of worldmaking and cultures mutually impinge on each other are the notions of media and narratives, which have come to the forefront of interdisciplinary research, but which have not yet been thoroughly explored as ways of worldmaking (see Bruner, "Self-Making"; Herman, "Narrative Ways"). This volume focuses on three key issues or concepts as a starting point for exploring cultural ways of worldmaking and their interdisciplinary relevance and ramifications, viz. (1) theoretical approaches to ways of worldmaking, (2) media as ways of worldmaking, and (3) narratives as ways of worldmaking.

The articles in Part I of this volume discuss a number of theoretical approaches to ways of worldmaking which not only serve to complement Goodman's constructivist approach (see section 2 below) by contrasting it with other theories but also to illuminate key concepts and the politics of symbolic forms. Steven Connor addresses a number of fundamental issues surrounding the question, 'what is a world?', focussing on the ways in which 'the world' can come into being, while also giving a brief history of the concept of 'the world.' Comparing three theories of literary worldmak-

ing, Herbert Grabes puts Goodman's approach into perspective by looking at the similarities and differences between Goodman's constructivist position, Roman Ingarden's phenomenological theory, and Schank and Abelson's cognitive psychological approach. Ben Dawson's essay explores the ways in which Hegel's early work remains important in responding to the constructivist and pluralist epistemology that underlies Goodman's approach. Frederik Tygstrup focuses on one of the issues that Goodman (and Ernst Cassirer) largely ignore, namely the politics of symbolic forms. The construction and reconstruction of symbolic forms, Tygstrup shows, is a privileged mechanism of worldmaking as it transforms heterogeneous data into a more or less coherent world, a universe centring around the lived experiences of human agents trying to come to terms with their communal environment. What Tygstrup and the other articles of this section illustrate is the extent to which worldmaking is imbued with cultural values and thus inevitably implicated in power relations. The transformation of contingent data and experiences into a meaningful and socially significant world has wider political and ethical implications. What is at stake is the power of processes of worldmaking to turn chaotic data into culturally significant truths, the evidence of 'facts,' and thus to include them in a shared world of ideologies and certainties. It is because any and every constructed world serves particular interests that it is so important to defend the plurality of worlds against the desire of homogenisation. From this perspective, politics, i.e. the struggle for the power to define truth, is essentially a negotiation of the diverse forms of worldmaking.

Another one of the lacunae in Goodman's account concerns the role of media, medialisation and the dynamics of pre- and remediation (see Bolter and Grusin; Grusin; Erll) as important factors that have shaped, and continue to shape, our ways of worldmaking. As Schmidt has convincingly shown, all our ways of constructing or fabricating world-models are thoroughly shaped by the conditions of mediality (see *Systemflirts*). Part II of this volume ("Media as Ways of Worldmaking") is therefore devoted to exploring the impact of media on our ways of worldmaking. Though Goodman's theories can readily be applied to new media, the latter have also generated new ways of worldmaking that deserve to be studied in detail. Goodman does mention some media in passing, while even devoting a whole chapter to "The Sound of Pictures" (see *Languages* ch. II) and two shorter chapters to music and musical quotation respectively (see Goodman, *Languages* ch. V.2; *Ways*, ch. III.3). He did not, however, pay any sustained attention to the role of media as ways of worldmaking. Media not only provide means of communication, but they also shape cultural processes and our understanding, and fabrication, of reality. Given the fundamental impact media have on ways of worldmaking, the question

of how medial forms structure our world-models constitutes a central research area in a variety of disciplines.

The chapters of Part II of this volume explore different aspects of the intricate relationship between media and worldmaking: Birgit Neumann and Martin Zierold focus on media-specific structures and intermedial dynamics, stressing that the power of individual media to create and perpetuate world models relies as much on media-specific forms as on their inter- and transmedial adaptations. In this view, worldmaking is an ongoing, dynamic and open process in which the same messages, contents, forms, and values are represented again and again in diverse media. Knut Ove Eliassen adds an important historical dimension to the study of media as he explores the historicity of media concepts, showing that the semantics of the term 'media' orders and indeed produces the very epistemology of the field 'media studies.' Because the term 'media' does not function independently of the technologies and practices it denotes, nor of the institutions that uphold it, Eliassen raises the fundamental question of whether 'media' is indeed an adequate term to analyse the technologies that formatted and shaped worlds in the period before the term received its present meaning. The historicity of media concepts raises important methodological questions and stresses the necessity of context-sensitive approaches to ways of worldmaking which can cross the border between textual formalism and historical contextualism. Some of these methodological challenges that arise when analysing the medial configurations that support our ways of worldmaking are addressed in Stephen Sale's contribution. Analysing the constitutive role that communications media play in cultural production, Sale explores the potentials of applying Friedrich Kittler's information theory to the humanities. The essays by Matthew Taunton and Ulrik Ekman offer in-depth case studies which further investigate the relation between media and worldmaking, providing concrete examples from architecture and multimedia art respectively. Taunton's paper problematises Goodman's constructivist notion of worldmaking by exploring the construction of the London council estate; and Ekman's contribution discusses how the artistic-architectural project 'Blur Building' uses new media and information technology so extensively that it ultimately challenges any notion of a given sense of 'the world.' Hence, the contributions gathered in Part II share an interest in how the choice of media affects the worlds that are created and in how these worlds are established as socially relevant worlds. Because worlds are always made from other worlds, the articles indicate the necessity of a dynamic turn in media studies. Behind this shift lies, among other things, the idea that individual media are always part of the social circulation of meanings, truths, and ideas: Worlds as such are never fixed once and for all, but are

something that has to be made, processed, and circulated time and again in different media via concomitant processes of inter- and transmedial translation.

Like media, narratives are also of fundamental importance for the ways in which we make sense of the world and our experiences. As the chapters in Part III of this volume (“Narratives as Ways of Worldmaking”) serve to demonstrate, narratives are at work in processes such as identity formation, ordering experiences, remembering and negotiating values, and fabricating storied versions of ‘the world.’ Although narration can be viewed as a universal practice, the way narratives are formed is culturally and historically variable. The articles in Part III explore such issues as the socio-historical dimension of narratives, the interrelation between narrative and personal and cultural identity, and narrative as a means of negotiating, constructing, and deconstructing knowledge, norms, values, and worlds, both in literary texts and in biography and historiography. Ansgar Nünning gauges the complexity of narrative worldmaking, i.e. of the procedures and processes through which happenings, occurrences, or incidents become meaningful events, stories, and storyworlds. He discusses the various procedures which are involved in narrative worldmaking, e.g. selection, deletion, abstraction, hierarchisation and ratings of relevance, configuration, ordering, and emplotment, and the choice of point of view and the arrangement of perspectives. What he stresses is that the worldmaking potential of narratives depends as much on symbolic forms and formal strategies as on their correspondence to the culturally available schemata, metaphors, and plots that contemporary society lives by. The complexity of worldmaking is also at the heart of Vera Nünning’s contribution which focuses on the specific processes that are involved in the construction of narrative and fictional worlds. Vera Nünning explores to what extent the five processes identified by Goodman—namely composition and decomposition, weighting, ordering, deletion and supplementation as well as deformation and reshaping—are involved in the making of fictional worlds. Though these processes indeed inform fiction, Vera Nünning argues that they are not the only principles that should be considered if one wants to understand the specificity of fictional worlds. She therefore discusses eight additional features which are relevant to fictional worldmaking. Inger Østenstad also addresses a number of fundamental issues concerning literary worldmaking, focussing on both the strategies that literature can employ to construe worlds and the social processes in which literary texts are caught up and in which they play a role. The specificities of literature are addressed in Caroline Lusin’s article, in which she analyses the narrative processes involved in the writing of fictional (auto-)biographies and shows that literature opens up a

space in which world- and identity-making are self-consciously laid bare. Because each event and every single life, as also highlighted in the contribution by Elisabeth Wåghäll Nivre and Maren Eckart, is open to different interpretations, narratives always point to what is not told, to an underlying system of alternative stories. Literary texts, then, are essentially ambiguous, indeterminate, and complex, providing a space for experimenting with alternative ways of world- and identity-making, and it is this complexity of literature which can make readers aware of their own strategies of worldmaking as well as the norms that guide these strategies. Literature, as Hanna Bingel shows, can articulate what had been latent in culture. Exploiting the properties of narrative in a way that no longer emphasises continuity and coherence, but depicts a world of disunity and fragmentation, literature can even work at ‘unmaking’ worlds, as René Dietrich’s essay shows. In sum, the contributions of this part of the volume show that literature, while being closely linked to other media and discourses, is a very specific form of worldmaking: It is a practice of worldmaking that allows readers to experience ‘the world’ differently. Literature can couple coherent representations of the world, of objects, moral messages, and human agency with a self-conscious reflection of ways of worldmaking. Through this paradoxical structure it exposes the normativity of the construed worlds and engages us in an open process of negotiation of our own strategies of worldmaking.

By focussing on the reciprocal relationship between cultures and ways of worldmaking, the articles also examine the functions that the ways of worldmaking of media and narratives fulfil within cultures and theories. Goodman’s approach has managed to throw a great deal of light on how symbol systems shape or indeed make worlds. He was mainly concerned with the question of how symbol systems make a world, but he did not dwell on the equally interesting questions of how a world, or a culture, makes or shapes its symbol systems (see Maine 46), and of what functions different kinds of worldmaking fulfil. It is in part this deficit that the articles in this volume seek to address.

What Nelson Goodman said of the modes of organisation and worldmaking can be applied equally well to all of the phenomena and processes that the study of literature, the media and culture at large is concerned with: “they are not ‘found in the world’ but *built into a world*” (Goodman, *Ways* 14). Time and again Goodman emphasises that “myth, art, language, and science are thus symbols not in the sense of mere figures that refer to some reality by means of suggestion and allegory, but in the sense of agents each of which produces and posits a world of its own” (“On Capturing” 8). Worldmaking is thus “not a passive and imitative but a dynamic and productive operation” (9). Like metaphors, ways of

worldmaking should be regarded as “A Mechanism of Creativity” (see Turner and Fauconnier). Let us therefore turn our attention to the constructivist premises that provide the epistemological underpinnings of Goodman’s approach to the questions involved in worldmaking.

2. The Epistemology of Worldmaking: Constructivist Premises of the Worldmaking Approach

In order to outline the epistemological issues involved in the notion of ‘ways of worldmaking,’ it is useful to introduce some of the theoretical insights of constructivism, which constitute the epistemological premises that lie behind the worldmaking approach. Goodman’s comprehensive theories of symbol systems and ways of worldmaking proceed from constructivist (or constructionist) assumptions (see Spree). Bruner, for instance, refers to “Goodman’s constructivism” (“Self-Making” 77), Carter observes that “Goodman’s philosophical theories embrace nominalism, constructivism, and a form of radical relativism” (251), and Goodman himself speaks of his “skeptical, analytic, constructionalist orientation” (*Ways* 1). Therefore it might be useful to provide a brief summary of what has been labelled ‘constructivism,’ or ‘radical constructivism,’ which is still an open and interdisciplinary discourse rather than a rigid or fully developed theory (see Schmidt, *Der Diskurs*), in order to outline the epistemological underpinnings of the notion of ways of worldmaking.

Challenging any positivist or realist conception of reality, the roots of constructivist thinking go back to a tradition in which reality is held to be constructed, not given—i.e. to the epistemological arguments of Vico, Berkeley, Hume, Kant, Wilhelm von Humboldt, Ernst Cassirer, Gregory Bateson, and Jean Piaget, to name but a few of the thinkers in the history of philosophy who would deserve a place in a genealogy of constructivism. Relying on empirical research in neurophysiology, the biology of cognition, and cognitive psychology, what has come to be called ‘radical constructivism’ (see Glasersfeld, “Introduction”) proceeds from the assumption that human beings do not have access to an objective reality and that they cannot know anything that lies outside their subjective cognitive domain. Their processes of cognition therefore do not merely copy features of the external reality; individuals rather generate subject-dependent constructs or versions of their world through their verbal descriptions. Worldmaking is thus conceived of as an activity or process that actively constructs patterns and versions rather than merely representing them: “Recognizing patterns is very much a matter of inventing and imposing them,” Goodman (*Ways* 22) observes. Goodman’s constructivist approach

to languages of art and ways of worldmaking is based on, and entails, a “demolition of the copy-theory of representation” (Mitchell 29).

A constructivist theory of cognition thus relinquishes what can be called ‘metaphysical or ontological realism’ and develops an epistemology “in which knowledge does not reflect an ‘objective’ ontological reality, but exclusively an ordering and organisation of the world constructed by our experience” (Glaserfeld, “Introduction” 24). In the processes of perception and cognition that make up his or her construal of world-models, the individual does not acquire knowledge of the ‘objective’ properties of the world but projects a construction of the world that ‘fits’ the data received by the senses. Constructivism is radical in that it no longer conceives of knowledge as reflecting or being concerned with an objective ontological reality. Rejecting the notion “that representations are or could be pictures, replicas, copies of an experiencer-independent ontic world” (Glaserfeld, “Facts and Self” 437), constructivism emphasises the central role the human observer plays in all cognitive processes (see Schmidt, *Systemflirts* 21–35).

In the constructivist framework underlying the theory of ways of worldmaking, therefore, facts neither have ‘real’ or ‘natural’ existence nor do they constitute objective properties of an observer-independent world (for a discussion of the cultural history of the fact see Poovey). Instead, facts and world-versions are conceptualised as intellectual constructs that result from an observer’s cognitive processes and that are constituted by the human observer himself rather than given. Emphasising that theories and models of culture are not isomorphic representations of reality, but that they are the only reality that is accessible to human beings, constructivism thus echoes Cassirer’s and Goodman’s view that facts and structures are not inherent in reality but shaped by symbolic forms of the mind, as the title of the respective chapter of Goodman’s *Ways of Worldmaking*—“The Fabrication of Facts” (91–107)—serves to emphasise. Elgin summarises Goodman’s, and her own, view on that matter:

What facts there are is a function of the symbol systems we develop. That is, we participate in the creation of the facts by creating symbol systems with the capacity to represent those facts. In Goodman’s terminology, we create worlds by creating, refining, and manipulating symbols. (Elgin, “Sign” 20)

Rather than essentialising facts as something that is ontologically given or pitting facts against theories, Goodman emphasises that they are mutually interdependent:

Facts [...] are theory-laden; they are theory-laden as we hope our theories are fact-laden. Or in other words, facts are small theories, and true theories are big facts.

This does not mean, I must repeat, that right versions can be arrived at casually, or that worlds are built from scratch. We start, on any occasion, with some old version or world that we have on hand and that we are stuck with until we have the determination and skill to remake it into a new one. Some of the felt stubbornness of fact is the grip of habit: our firm foundation is indeed stolid. World-making begins with one version and ends with another. (*Ways* 96–97)

Like later proponents of radical constructivism, Goodman conceptualises ‘worlds’ or world-versions as a human contrivance, as heuristic and abstract models constructed by the philosopher, ordinary human being, or theorist for understanding cultural or historical phenomena. In other words, there is no such thing as a given world—the only thing we can ever have access to are culturally shaped world models or versions. Time and again Goodman reminds his readers that we “cannot test a version by comparing it with a world undescribed, undepicted, unperceived” (*Ways* 4), that “truth cannot be defined or tested by agreement with ‘the world’” (17), and “that truth must be otherwise conceived than as correspondence with a ready-made world” (94). Hilary Putnam, too, emphasises “that there is no such thing as *comparing* any version with an ‘unconceptualised reality.’ [...] All we have is comparison of versions with versions” (Putnam 611).

It is because of this ‘man-made’ character of world versions and of the inaccessibility of an ‘unconceptualised reality’ that it seems appropriate to shift our attention from the correspondence theory of truth to the activity of model building, to the modes of organisation that go into worldmaking, and to the exploration of the role that symbolic ways of worldmaking and frames of reference play in trying to come to terms with cultural phenomena. According to Goodman and other constructivists, the correspondence theory of truth does not offer any clear conception of the relationship between discourses or descriptions and a world beyond discourse, let alone of truth conceived of as a correspondence between the two (see Ullian). “The faults of *truth* are many and grave,” Goodman and Elgin observe:

Construed as correspondence between discourse and the readymade world beyond discourse, it runs into double trouble: there is no such world independent of description; and correspondence between description and the undescribed is incomprehensible. (154)

Therefore Goodman turns the reader’s attention to the frames of reference, emphasising that the latter “belong less to what is described than to systems of description” (*Ways* 2). For Goodman, ‘truth’ is always relative to such frames of reference, systems of description and to versions: “so

truths can conflict, by belonging to conflicting right versions” (Ullian 57). ‘Truth’ is therefore not absolute, but relative, in that “‘true’ marks some trait of observation sentences” (59). In Goodman’s constructivist framework, truth, like knowledge and certainty, “must forever be excluded as absolute error,” as Mitchell (25) rightly observes.

The informing principle of a constructivist view of the world, therefore, is the “substitution of the concept of fit (and its dynamic corollary, ‘viability’) for the traditional concept of ‘truth’ as a matching, isomorphic, or iconic representation of ‘reality’” (Glaserfeld, “Interpretation” 209). In the last chapter of *Ways of Worldmaking*, tellingly entitled “On Rightness of Rendering,” Goodman discusses the question of what “standards of rightness” can be applied when one compares competing versions or “Worlds in Conflict” (*Ways* 109–10). He discusses a number of such standards and criteria that can be adduced. In the case of theories and models, these include e.g. “the cogency and compactness and comprehensiveness, the informativeness and organizing power of the whole system” (19). Other criteria that might be considered as ‘standards of rightness’ or yardsticks that allow us to compare conflicting versions are utility, credibility, probability, coherence, deductive and inductive validity, i.e. conformity with rules of inference or with principles that codify practice, respectively, rightness of categorisation (see *Ways* 122–27), and, last, but certainly not least, “efficacy in worldmaking and understanding” (129). Following Goodman, most constructivists would agree that it *is* important to distinguish between better and less good world versions, “‘better’ not in the sense of objectively *truer* (a criterion discredited by the constructivist approach), but in terms of such criteria as rightness of fit, validity of inference, internal consistency, appropriateness of scope, and above all *productivity*” (McHale, *Constructing* 9).

These constructivist conceptualisations of cognition, facts, truth(s), and world-models as observer- and subject-dependent constructs can offer theoretically consistent and empirically well-founded solutions to many of the epistemological and methodological problems that have come to the forefront in recent discussions in philosophy, historiography, and literary and cultural studies. Within the framework of a constructivist theory of cognition and culture, subjectivity, perspectivity, relativity, selectivity, and constructivity should be accepted as methodological principles of any enterprise in the study of culture since they are ineluctable features of every act of perceiving and interpreting the data received by the senses. According to a constructivist point of view, cultural and scientific knowledge can never ‘objectively’ represent real events or cultural changes; knowledge rather pertains to methodological means historians and cultural theorists have evolved in order to select, interpret, and organise relevant

data on the basis of their sources and their conceptual and discursive tools. The real events of the past and the facts of history are separated by an unbridgeable gulf which historiography, as the word itself implies, unsuccessfully tries to overcome through narrative (see White, “The Value”; *The Content of the Form*). A constructivist conceptualisation of historiography, reality, and worldmaking unequivocally emphasises that facts, history, and the world(s) are (wo)manmade and that our concepts and theories, too, are fabricated. This already serves to show that the world-making approach is indeed a global project, though it is arguably of particular relevance for a number of domains.

3. Domains and Functions of Worldmaking: Self-Making, Community-Making, Literary Worldmaking

These constructivist notions, which provide the epistemological underpinnings of Goodman’s theories, pertain to a wide range of different domains of worldmaking. They range all the way from *Making Selves*, to borrow the subtitle of a seminal book by Paul John Eakin, to worldmaking at large. As we will try to show below, the question of ways of worldmaking is particularly important in the case of narrative fiction, other literary genres, and other artistic media in that they function as world-building institutions, projecting alternatives to the world models that we generally regard as ‘reality.’ In addition, they often self-reflexively foreground and explore many of the epistemological questions involved in worldmaking.

Narratives in general are not only one of the most powerful ways of worldmaking, but also of ‘self-making.’ The main reason for this is that storytelling can generate real and possible worlds; narratives also exert performative power, i.e. they do not merely represent life, but they constitute and indeed ‘form’ life. Life itself, like reality, is pretty amorphous, chaotic, and contingent. When it is turned into a story, however, it is given form, structure, and meaning. Though most people would probably agree that narratives are of fundamental importance for the ways in which we make sense of our experiences and of our lives at large, the worldmaking capacity of stories and storytelling has not received the degree of attention that it arguably deserves (see Herman, “Narrative Ways”). In his pioneering account of the creation of an autobiographical self, felicitously entitled *How Our Lives Become Stories: Making Selves*, Paul John Eakin has shown that narratives are at work in processes like identity formation, ordering experiences, remembering and negotiating values.

However, although we frequently speak of ‘self narratives,’ ‘life narratives,’ ‘storied selves,’ ‘narrative self-making,’ or even ‘narrating the self into existence,’ the relation between the individual’s experience, life or identity and its representation in narrative implied by these phrases is far from self-evident. Life, of course, is not a mere narrative and people exist regardless of whether they tell their story (see Eakin 99). Nonetheless, as narrative psychologists have demonstrated, narrative and identity seem to be so closely intertwined that they constantly feed into and mutually constitute each other. Indeed, the very possibility of identity is intimately tied to the notion of narrative and narrativity—not only as descriptive of the self but, more importantly, as fundamental to the constitution or construction of the subject (for a detailed account see Neumann and Nünning). We not only “organize our experience and our memory of human happenings mainly in the form of narrative” (Bruner, “Narrative Construction” 4); in fact, we also use narrative so ubiquitously as a way of self-making that we might come to the conclusion that the self is generated mainly through narrative. The potential of narratives to suggest and project a coherent identity does not, however, imply that the process of self-narration could ever be completed. Because every narrative self-account is itself part of a life, embedded in a lived context of interaction, intention, and ambiguity, there is always a next and different story to tell.

Moreover, when individuals try to make sense of their personal experience they tend to order it along the lines of literary genres or other text types. Genres themselves can thus be conceived of as important ways of self-making and worldmaking in that they provide the necessary and salient frames, scripts, and schemata for narrating coherent selves and building worlds. As Jerome Bruner and others have convincingly shown, the constructions of autobiographical selves are neither random nor merely personal but rely heavily on conventions and patterns that can be traced back to “fairly easily recognizable literary genres” (Bruner, “Self-Making” 68). Genres, just like metaphors, fulfil an important “forming function” (69) in that they shape the process of constructing selves. The stories we tell when we make our selves are obviously related to the events of our lives, but they “must also fit the requirements of narrative as a form of organizing experience” (70). Genre conventions thus exert a forming influence on life stories, which are embedded in the culturally available plots and values of the respective society. Serving as repositories of narrative models and schemata, genres provide a foundation for our sense of identity, while at the same time making us members of the community that generated the cultural models in the first place.

Narratives not only serve as the most important means of self-making, but they also contribute to what may be called ‘community-making,’ with

genres serving as one of the interfaces between the making of selves and the making of communities. The main reason for this is that the narratives of our lives usually draw on the historically and culturally transmitted repertoire or archive of stories and plots, which serve as idealised models for the elaboration of our own experiences. Hinchman and Hinchman have pointed out that the “stories that individuals create often strike variations upon a repertoire of socially available narratives that, in turn, legitimise the community and guarantee its continued existence” (xvii).

Another important function of narratives and media is therefore their potential to generate or forge communities. As Bruner observes, “one important way of characterizing a culture is by the narrative models it makes available for describing the course of a life” (“Life as Narrative” 15). Narratives serve to make, and reinforce, communities; and arguably cultures can in turn be described as ‘communities of stories’ or ‘narrative communities’ in that they are characterised by a repertoire of stories, culturally available plots, and “culturally canonical accounts” (Bruner, “Self-Making” 70; “Self-Making” *passim*):

Without doubt it is narratives that form the basis of collective, national memories and that constitute politics of identity and difference. Cultures should always also be conceived of as narrative communities which are distinguished from each other by their reservoir of narratives. (Müller-Funk 14; our translation)

Narrative genres in particular are central to the formation of collective identities and ‘imagined communities’ *sensu* Anderson for the simple reason that not only a nation but “any imagined community, is held together in part by the stories it generates about itself” (Arata 1). Media in turn serve to reinforce these narrative communities by disseminating culturally prevalent stories and plots as well as the values and norms the latter serve to reinforce and inculcate.

Though Goodman’s approach is so wide-ranging that it lends itself to investigating the world-making practices of just about any of the systems that one finds in a functionally differentiated society (i.e. the domains of politics, the economy, and law, as well as the arts, the humanities, and the sciences), it is arguably particularly important for what may for convenience sake be called ‘literary worldmaking,’ and thus for the study of literature and culture, for at least two reasons: first, as S.J. Schmidt already pointed out twenty-five years ago, literature is “the only place where the construction of world-models as such becomes thematic, and where this thematisation can bear upon all positions from ortho-models to remote fantasy worlds” (Schmidt, “The Fiction Is” 265). The same holds true for other art forms and media, which also self-consciously explore ways of worldmaking, while also enhancing our readiness to imagine and recognise

alternative world-models or world-versions (see Hernardi, “Why Is Literature?”).

Some literary genres in particular, e.g. science-fiction and revisionist historical novels, are world-building genres in that they project alternatives to the world-models that we know as ‘reality’ and that they conduct “extended, elaborate thought experiments” (Elgin, “Laboratory” 48): “A thought experiment is an imaginative exercise designed to determine what would happen if certain conditions were met” (47). In doing so, such literary genres often recirculate, recycle and reconfigure world-models already on hand, thus illustrating Goodman’s claim that worldmaking “is a remaking” (*Ways* 6). Moreover, though their production and projection of new alternative world-models, they often foreground and flaunt their worldmaking practices, bringing the processes of worldmaking themselves to the fore (see McHale, “Science-Fiction”).

The second reason why the worldmaking approach is particularly relevant for the study of literature and culture has to do with the fact that the ‘objects’ that literary and cultural studies investigate are not merely given or found in the real world, but are themselves constructed. Academic disciplines themselves can be conceived of as particular ways of worldmaking, as activities that construct the phenomena they, more often than not, purport merely to investigate. In his seminal book *Constructing Postmodernism*, Brian McHale makes an observation that is of crucial importance for anyone interested in coming to terms with the plurality of worlds and modes of worldmaking: “If literary-historical ‘objects’ [...] are constructed, not given or found, then the issue of *how* such objects are constructed, in particular the genre of discourse *in which* they are constructed, becomes crucial” (McHale, *Constructing* 3). This observation holds not only true for such literary-historical ‘objects’ as genres, periods, or artistic movements, but also for any cultural phenomenon we choose to investigate as scholars working in literary and cultural studies.

In sum, media, narratives, and other ways of worldmaking are important “cognitive tools, instruments of understanding” (Goodman, “On Capturing” 7–8). They not only play a key role in our daily efforts at self-making, but they also serve to forge communities. Literature and other art forms are of particular interest for studying culture(s) in the context of such an approach in that they serve to stage, thematise, and foreground the complex processes and ways of worldmaking, while at the same time conducting self-reflexive thought experiments in self- and worldmaking. That is one of the many reasons for the fact that the study of literature and other art forms can provide a great deal of insight into both ways of worldmaking and the study of culture.

The interrelationship between self-making and worldmaking on the one hand, and narratives, genres, and media on the other again underscores the point made above, viz. that ways of worldmaking do not just shape cultures and worlds, but that they are also shaped by them in that they inevitably use the respective culture's theories, concepts, genres, schemata, and stories to make selves, communities, and worlds. Since "autobiography (like the novel) involves not only the construction of self, but also a construction of one's culture" (Bruner, "Self-Making" 77), the study of genres like autobiographies, biographies and many others can afford valuable insights into the culture from which they originate. Just as the "requirements of a genre-linked narrative" (76) as a form of organising experience impinge upon the stories people tell about their lives, so do the conventions of particular ways of worldmaking shape the worlds that are projected by the media.

Particular media, genres, narratives, and other ways of worldmaking are as much an "expression of the culture" (74) as they are a means of shaping the respective cultures, and making the worlds, that we live in. It is the media genres, their conventions and formats, that determine what we regard as newsworthy or interest-worthy, and that provide the forms of organising e.g. 'the news' or the 'media events' (see Dayan and Katz), which we should never take for granted as 'givens' or take to be 'natural,' let alone mistake for a mere copy or neutral mimetic representation of events or of reality. Being inextricably intertwined with the cultures in which they are embedded, investigations of the multiple ways of worldmaking that we encounter in our contemporary media culture arguably provide a paradigm approach for the study of culture, as we will try to show in the final section.

4. New Horizons: Ways of Worldmaking as a Paradigm for the Study of Culture

Nelson Goodman's theory of symbols and the constructivist approach to ways of worldmaking he and his followers ushered in have opened up new horizons and fertile avenues of research for the study of culture in many ways. The notion of ways of worldmaking as briefly delineated above offers a highly flexible and productive framework that can fruitfully be adopted, expanded, and supplemented for the study of culture. Goodman's ambitious theory can arguably even serve as a paradigm model for the study of culture in that it is not only germane to his own main research domain, but is also relevant to a number of important recent approaches to the study of culture such as those outlined above. "Nelson

Goodman's constructivism arms one well to appreciate the complexities of self- and life-making," Bruner ("Self-Making" 77) observes. In the same vein, one might add that it also arms one well to explore the complexities of worldmaking that are involved in the wide array of symbol systems and social practices that are dubbed 'culture.'

First of all, Goodman's ardent defence of pluralism (see Goodman, *Ways* 4–5; Putnam), his constructionist (or constructivist) epistemology (see section 2 above) and his observation that there are many equally valid descriptions for any aspect of the phenomenal all tally well with recent developments in many fields of the humanities, especially with the prevailing spirit of anti-essentialism and constructivism (see McHale, *Constructing*; Schmidt, *Der Diskurs*). Like Goodman, the study of culture is mainly interested in processes rather than static products, in the diversity of conflicting descriptions and the multiplicity of cultural worlds, and in the question of what goes into worldmaking: "The movement is from unique truth and a world fixed and found to a diversity of right and even conflicting versions or worlds in the making" (Goodman, *Ways* x). Since the study of culture is concerned with such issues as different possible ways of reporting events in the media, conflicting versions of the past in contemporary memorial cultures, and the performative power of narratives and other symbol systems, the constructivist and pluralist character of Goodman's worldmaking approach is very much germane to it. An analysis of composition and decomposition, deletion and supplementation, deformation, ordering, weighting (see Goodman, *Ways* 7–17), and other formal devices for making worlds can all shed lots of light on both the question of what goes into making the cultural worlds that we live in, and the ideological implications and functions that particular ways of worldmaking serve to fulfil. Acknowledging that "worlds themselves may be built in many ways" (*Ways* 5), Goodman encourages us to explore how different ways of worldmaking impose structures, ascribe properties, and disseminate particular versions, views, and values that should never be taken for granted but rather analysed and critiqued for what they are: conflicting versions of reality rather than 'the reality' (see Steven Connor's article in this volume).

Second, while the two other universal sciences, structuralism and semiotics, have used language as their basic model, Goodman's theories of symbol systems have the added value for the study of culture that they pertain equally well to non-verbal and performative ways of worldmaking (see Mitchell 25). What Goodman's theories reflect is "the concern of a philosophical theory of representation" rather than that "of a linguistically based semiology" (Culler 17). A quotation from *Ways of Worldmaking* might serve to show just how wide-ranging Goodman's approach actually is: "Worlds are made by making such versions with words, numerals,

pictures, sounds, or other symbols of any kind in any medium; and the comparative study of these versions and visions and of their making is what I call a critique of worldmaking” (94). The fact that his approach does not focus on language or verbal worldmaking alone, but is equally applicable to “pictures, sounds, or other symbols of any kind in any medium” makes it particularly useful for studying intermedial, multimodal, and performative manifestations of contemporary media culture. Instead of conceiving of ‘culture as text,’ Goodman’s approach allows the study of culture to include the wide array of signifying systems and practices that confront us in the domain we designate as ‘culture.’

Thirdly, Goodman’s approach has the great advantage of offering a “neutral comparative study” (Goodman and Elgin 31) of a wide range of symbol systems. Though it may be open to debate just how neutral any theory can ever be, his formal theory of symbol systems makes no ideological or normative stipulations, focussing instead on the ways symbols are organised and used. Moreover, it provides a flexible framework for comparative inquiry that is potentially applicable to a broad range of cultural activities, processes, and products, a “framework for the study of how worlds are constructed both in and outside of philosophy and other arts and sciences” (Hernardi, “Guest Editorial” 1). Goodman’s detailed analysis of the symbol systems of “the various art forms according to their symbolic features affords the possibility of greater discrimination among the art forms of painting, music, literature, dance, architecture, and the other arts” (Carter 252). Though it is certainly true that “the symbol systems we devise are apt to differ greatly in structure and representational resources” (Elgin, “Sign” 15), both the questions raised by Goodman and the approach he developed for finding answers to them work equally well for a wide array of cultural ways of worldmaking, including literary genres and media, performative arts and rituals, and cultural institutions like museums or archives.

A fourth reason why the ways of worldmaking approach could serve as a model for the study of culture is thus its broad scope which opens up a wide range of possible applications to diverse fields of inquiry. Though Goodman has been taken to task for what critics have called the “totalizing ambition” (Mitchell 29) that is already highlighted in the very terms of the title of his book *Ways of Worldmaking*, the fact that “the limited attempt to produce a comparative theory of symbols has become a global project” (ibid.) enhances the range and applicability of his project. In their again tellingly entitled book *Reconceptions in Philosophy and Other Arts and Sciences*, Nelson Goodman and Catherine Elgin emphasise the broad range of disciplines and perspectives that their approach encompasses: “We work *from* a perspective that takes in the arts, the sciences, philosophy, percep-

tion, and our everyday worlds, and *toward* better understanding of each through significant comparison with the others” (Goodman and Elgin 164). Instead of pitting the arts, the humanities, and the sciences against each other, such an approach provides a useful framework for comparatively exploring similarities and differences with regard to their respective forms of worldmaking, which always serve as cognitive tools: “Underlying this approach is Goodman’s belief in the cognitive nature of art, which invites consideration of the arts as partners with the sciences in the pursuit of understanding” (Carter 252). For anyone interested in the study of culture, this not only has an obvious appeal, but also serves a useful function in that it alerts us to the ubiquity of symbol systems and their performative power in generating worlds. Since “the use—that is, the fabrication, application, and interpretation—of symbols is centrally involved in all these fields” (Goodman and Elgin 164), a general theory of symbols and their functions has the added value of providing a common frame of reference, while at the same time serving as a rough yardstick for exploring commonalities and differences between the respective modes and ways of worldmaking involved in these different domains.

A fifth reason for the paradigmatic quality of Goodman’s approach for the study of culture is that it shifts attention from ‘culture’ or ‘cultural objects,’ assumed to exist, ready to be examined, to the level of the concepts that we deploy to construct the objects of inquiry in the first place. If we cannot have access to an ‘unconceptualised reality’ (see Putnam 611), as Goodman and a host of other constructivists maintain, then the question of how such objects are conceptualised or constructed becomes the key issue. This question pertains both to the level of first-order observations by participants in the cultural field, and to the level of second-order observation by those engaged in the study of culture. On all levels of observation, human beings draw distinctions, name the phenomena that they distinguish, and deploy all the ways of worldmaking that Goodman himself distinguishes.

Last, but certainly not least, a sixth reason for why Goodman’s theory of worldmaking arguably constitutes a model for the study of culture is that it has an important self-reflexive dimension that also applies in the arts, humanities, and sciences themselves. The different academic disciplines and cultures of research can also fruitfully be conceptualised as particular ways of worldmaking. Since all cultural domains and kinds of culture are conditioned by knowledge and shaped by ways of worldmaking, the concepts we generate and the methods we develop to construct our cultures of knowledge and research can also be regarded as ways of worldmaking. Since the specificity of different cultures of knowledge is not only grounded in the content of knowledge but also in the modality of

its creation and transmission, it is imperative to extend the concepts of cultural knowledge and ways of worldmaking to include cultures of research and education. We should thus like to emphasise the very practical importance that the insights into cultural ways of worldmaking should have for any scholar, especially for those engaged in the study of culture. If it is indeed true that “we create and comprehend the worlds we live in” (Goodman, “Routes” 132) by creating symbol systems, then we should pay much more attention to the concepts, metaphors, narratives, theories and other ways of worldmaking that we devise, carefully refining and reconceiving them. Goodman’s approach thus not only provides a productive framework for the study of media and narratives as particular ways, institutions or modes of worldmaking, but it also opens up innovative and rewarding avenues for the self-reflexive exploration of the generation of, and the differences between, academic cultures of knowledge and research. The same holds true for culture-specific signifying practices and conceptualisations, which are also mediated and even constituted by particular ways of worldmaking, which, more often than not, remain unacknowledged.

Goodman’s approach is not only extremely fruitful for exploring the worldmaking power of the media and of narratives, but also for a wide array of diverse cultural practices, genres, and institutions. Although it might go without saying, we should like to emphasise that focussing on the worldmaking power of media and narratives does not, of course, pretend to exhaust the broad topic of ways of worldmaking. Though the worldmaking potential of such narrative genres as autobiographies, biographies, historiography, and travelogues may be particularly palpable, this performative power is by no means restricted to narratives. There is a wide range of other symbolic kinds and genres that play an important role as ways of worldmaking. These include, for instance, concepts, metaphors and other rhetorical devices as well as drama, performances, and rituals.

As far as other institutions besides media that are deeply involved in worldmaking are concerned, what immediately springs to mind are, for instance, archives and museums. The concept of the archive has been productively used in the past to describe and analyse how knowledge is stored and organised within a culture. Archives are constantly drawn upon to negotiate meaning in everyday lives as well as in the media. Both the concept itself and the question of how archives are organised and function as cultural ways of worldmaking, of preserving and generating order of cultural knowledge, deserve to be explored. As Anne Hawley has shown, museums are also extremely interesting ways of institutional worldmaking, reflecting as they often do both the world of their founders and the conceptual ideas of the current directors and curators.

What has also received comparatively scant attention is the prominent role that metaphors play in the ways in which we construe our various worlds, both our everyday world and the worlds and ‘truths’ that the sciences make (see Brown). Metaphors not only serve to shape prevailing views of culture and theory, metaphors are also at the same time shaped by the cultures and theories from which they originate (see Nünning, Grabes, and Baumbach). On the one hand, metaphors project structures onto cultural phenomena which defy direct observation, serving to make sense of them. They thus play a central role in shaping both culture and theory. On the other hand, metaphors are also moulded by both everyday cultural notions and by theories. As Zoltán Kövecses has convincingly shown, metaphors not only reflect prevailing cultural models, but they also fashion or even constitute cultural models. Like media, narratives and other ways of worldmaking, metaphors, too, play a constitutive rather than just reflective role in determining the perception of culture and theories, making worlds rather than just representing them. Far from being mere poetical or rhetorical embellishments, narratives, metaphors and other kind of symbolic forms arguably play an essential and constitutive role in cultural worldmaking. One might even go so far as to argue that they create the very realities they purport merely to describe: “changes in our conceptual system do change what is real for us and affect how we perceive the world and act upon those perceptions” (Lakoff and Johnson 145–46). Offering ways of organising complex experiences and historical changes into structured wholes (see Lakoff and Johnson 81), metaphorical concepts like evolution, improvement, or progress not only “provide coherent structure, highlighting some things and hiding others” (139), they are also capable of giving people a new understanding of the respective target domain, playing “a very significant role in determining what is real for us” (146).

In sum: Goodman’s approach not only opens up a wide range of new avenues of exploration for the study of culture, it could arguably even be a (though not ‘the’) model for the study of culture, for the reasons outlined above. It alerts us to the multiplicity of worlds and the great diversity of competing versions that we are daily confronted with in our contemporary media society, while at the same time providing us with a set of useful cognitive and conceptual tools for coming to terms with the instruments, modes, and processes involved in cultural ways of worldmaking. Moreover, what Goodman has called “a critique of worldmaking” (*Ways* 94), i.e. “the comparative study of these versions and visions and of their making” (ibid.), can fruitfully be amplified and expanded by exploring the ideological and political implications, as well as the functions, of cultural ways of worldmaking.

We should like to conclude by observing that while the principles of human worldmaking identified and systematised by Goodman continue to prevail in many areas, new ways of worldmaking appear in e.g. the new media, which also subtly change older ways of making worlds. The best way to come to terms with what Bruner has called “The Narrative Construction of Reality” or what, following Goodman, we might call the ‘symbolic construction, or making, of worlds’ is arguably through an analysis of the wide range of combinable yet distinct ways of worldmaking that the arts and the media, as well as the humanities and the sciences, have developed. If the ‘objects’ that we explore when we study cultural phenomena are indeed constructed, not given or found, then—to quote Brian McHale once more—“the issue of how such objects are constructed, in particular the genre of discourse in which they are constructed, becomes crucial” (*Constructing* 3). And it is through a careful examination of the key concepts, metaphors, narratives, and other symbolic forms that we can gain an insight into the mechanisms of construction that are involved in our cultural ways of worldmaking. That, arguably, is the main reason why Goodman’s constructivist approach is such a useful model for the study of culture, though his flexible framework can also benefit from some amplifications, applications, expansions, and reconceptions, as the chapters that follow attempt to demonstrate.

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I. THEORETICAL APPROACHES TO WAYS OF
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