Introduction to the 2017 Conference Issue

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This is a guest issue of *Anthropoetics* guest-edited by Marina Ludwigs and Elisabet Dellming, both of Stockholm University. This installment is dedicated to the 11th Annual Generative Anthropology Conference that took place on June 8-10, 2017 at Stockholm University, Sweden. We would like to thank Eric Gans and Stacey Meeker for their assistance in preparing this issue and editing the articles. We would also like to thank the English Department of Stockholm University for their support. In addition, we would like to thank The Swedish Forum for Humanities and Social Sciences as well as The Swedish Research Council for the grants they have generously provided to support our conference.

The topic of GASC 2017 conference was "Pre-human, Human, Post-human: Generative Anthropology and Mimetic Theory in Conversation with Cognitive Studies," which aimed to re-examine the origin of the human scene from humanistic and evolutionary angles. In reflecting this focus, the six authors featured in this issue return to the scene and illuminate it from the perspectives of Generative Anthropology, mimetic theory, phenomenology, anthropology, and film theory, writing on the subjects of myth, film, literature, and song.

Magdalena Złocka-Dąbrowska examines the Hindu mythological narrative of Mahabharata and demonstrates that it could be identified as a primary form of narration that reflects the emergence of representation. Złocka-Dąbrowska shows that GA's analysis of the origin of language and culture is fully applicable to mythological systems and can be used to illuminate them further.

Bjorn Beijnon's paper demonstrates that cinema goers are not passive consumers of ideologies propagated by individual films but are active shapers of their cinematic experience. Using theories of Jean-Louis Baudry, Beijnon argues for the *enactive* approach to cinematic perception, which constructs the cinematic experience as a two-way street: while the cinema trains the viewers' way of exploring the world and influences them ideologically, it also makes them aware of and teaches them to reflect on the ideological presuppositions that the films hold.

Joakim Wrethed reads Tom McCarthy's novel *Remainder* through the lens of Generative Anthropology and interprets the protagonist's actions as a ritualistic reenactment of the originary scene. Wrethed shows how, by intensifying the successive reenactments and pushing the limits of representation, the protagonist aims to make the ritual "real," but his

attempts fail and lead to a collapse of representation and reification of the sacred. In the end, however, the sacred rebounds as an indestructible feature of the scene of representation.

Elisabet Dellming conceives of the literary scene of representation as an imaginary stage on which the issues of epistemic justice and injustice can be adjudicated. Dellming analyses Penelope Fitzgerald's novel *The Blue Flower* with the help of the existential phenomenology of Maurice Natanson and Paul Ricoeur's philosophy of the possible. Her analysis develops the idea of the fictive "irreal" as an alternative space where new forms of imagination-based knowledge can be constructed and lost possibilities recovered. Ultimately, the ethical aspects of literary meaning can be more fully appreciated as a result of literature's capacity of invoking possible worlds that render justice to different kinds of knowing and knowers.

Giles Whiteley does two things in his article. Firstly, he traces the provenance of René Girard's familiarity with Walter Pater's idea of "inverted rights" in relation to Shakespeare's *Richard II,* demonstrating that Girard likely did not have extensive first-hand knowledge of Pater's essay "Shakespeare's English Kings," but learned about it from Ernst Kantorowicz's book *The King's Two Bodies*. In the second part of his paper, Whiteley argues that Girard does not give proper credit to Pater's astute anthropological insight regarding the inherent doubleness of the originary rite of coronation, which carries within itself the shadow of the "inverted rite" of deposition.

Continuing his earlier line of investigation on the distinction between the tragic and melodramatic or high vs. popular art, **Ian Dennis** turns to the lyrics of Leonard Cohen and reads them through the lens of GA. In his paper, Dennis reflects on the growing centrality of the victimary in contemporary culture and the accompanying rise of resentment, which has been absorbed into popular culture by strategies of both imaginary appropriation of the center as well as the abolishment of sacred differences from public space. Cohen's poetry, which comes closer to high art on the popular-high art continuum, according to Dennis, reinstates the difference between the sacred center and periphery and sustains this distance (which is a mark of high art) by means of irony and self-consciously Romantic posturing.