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Şiir Herkesi Bağlar: "The Scholar Gipsy"deki Liminoid Stratejiler ve Metapoetik Dokunuşlar

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Özet

Bu çalışma Matthew Arnold'un "The Scholar Gipsy" (Oxford'lu Alim-Çingene) şiirini Victor Turner ve Friedrich Max Müller'in aradalık zeminini tartışmaya açan kuramları kapsamında ele almaktadır. Çalışmada şiirsel yaratının iç süreçlerini ifşa eden liminal-liminoid yansımalar arasındaki dönüşüm irdelenmektedir. Yüzyıllar önce Oxford üniversitesini terk ederek çingeneler arasına karışan ve çok daha kapsayıcı bir bilginin peşine düşen alim çingenenin hikâyesi ile bu macerayı çağlar sonra şiirin sesiyle anarak yeniden var eden belirsiz bir ozan arasındaki ilişki dikkat çekicidir. Bu ilişkiye bir de zaman ve mekânın bağlayıcılığına tabi olmayan fakat kendisini dünyada konumlandırabilmek adına şiire ve hikayeye her daim bağımlı bulunan mefhum bir okuyucu boyutu eklendiğinde, kaynak-şair-ozan-okuyucu arasındaki liminal-liminoid dönüşüm biçimleri çok daha belirginleşmektedir. Çalışmanın amacı liminal durumun şiir ve anlatı meselesinde tekrar ve tekrar liminoid durumları doğurduğunu gösterebilmektir. Bu yönüyle Arnold'un eseri şiir-yaratı sanatını liminal ve liminoid arasındaki mecburi ve doğurgan bir devinim şeklinde sunarken, bu sürecin bütün bir insanoğlunu şiir ve hikâye yoluyla birbirine bağladağının da altını çizmektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler

Matthew Arnold ve "The Scholar Gipsy"
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Poetry Binds All: Liminoid Strategies and Metapoetic Visitations of "The Scholar Gipsy"

Abstract

This study considers Matthew Arnold's "The Scholar Gipsy" within the liminal-limioid theoretical grounds touched upon by Victor Turner and Friedrich Max Müller. The body of discussion focuses on the metapoetic aspect of the art of poetry in relation to liminal-liminoid projections featured within Arnold's poem. The main argument is that liminal projections within the poem transform into a liminoid and metapoetic space where the essential core of the art of poetry itself is revealed as the product of a liminoid process. The figure of the scholar-gipsy who left Oxford hundreds of years ago and joined a gipsy tribe in pursuit of greater knowledge is animated by means of the speaker's recalling the now-gipsy-scholar's story in the poem. Such a summons becomes an eternal symbol of the kind of metapoetic relationship between the speaker and his liminoidly inspiring source. Metapoetic and liminoid connections are further layered with the inescepable presence of a timeless reader bound neither by space nor by time. Thus, boundaries between source-material, speaker, poet, the art of poetry, inspiration and the reader are stretched, where Arnold's whole metapoetic-liminoid process binds all humanity together by means of the same poetic and re-creative liminoid play.

Keywords

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Introduction

"*Relicti mergimur et perimus, visitati vero ergimur et vivimas*" is probably the most compact expression Arnold ever used to emphasize the relationship between reading and becoming, or, to put it in another way, between discovery, learning, creation and revitalizing one's being. Giving his own translation of the Latin expression in *Literature and Dogma* as "Left to ourselves, we sink and perish; visited, we lift up our heads and live", Arnold was carefully stressing one human act above all the others, and this act was put into words as visitation (1873, p. 29). Arnold's lifelong project of enriching the human soul with the best of every worthy grain of thought human civilization had to offer finds its poetic expression in no other word but within this simplest of verbs in the English language. What, then, did Arnold mean? Could it be that visitation means the same thing as in pondering over a contemporary text, or a piece of poetry, or some written ancient discourse, thinking about some real or literary personage, idea or event that dates back a thousand years or a hundred or so? If that is the case, could such a visit ever be considered as a one-way visit where the reader would come out the same as before? Perhaps, but it is more likely that this visitor will have an imprint of sorts in his being; some thought or idea will hopefully be wandering through his mind, at least for some time. Assuming that the argument holds, does not every visited source, every thought, written or spoken, lost, preserved, changed or rediscovered, also visit the human mind? And in the end, is it not true that not only the mind of that person but also the thought source itself comes out somewhat visited and transformed? Could it be falsified that during the course of history, visitors of that calibre got visited in return a great many times? This kind of a mutual act of visitation had always been the essential definition of poetic creation for Arnold, which gave life and endurance to earlier and influential civilizations that possessed a poetic sense. Arnold also believed, that the same poetic sensibility further allowed them to establish a lasting connection with their world. The chapters on "*aberglaube*" (supernatural abstractions) in *Literature and Dogma* (1873) stand testimony to Arnold's view that only through poetry and the poetic mode was mankind able to get oriented with the greater realities of a constantly fleeting existence. *God and the Bible* (1875) advances the argument, where two ancient verbs, "*as*" and "*bhu*" (breath, growth) come under Arnold's scrutiny, leading Arnold to conclude that humanity, by way of utilizing poetic language and a poetic sensibility did move from the concrete (natural limits) towards the abstract, where words designating action and involvement gave way to yet more words designating distance, supernatural abstraction and detachment (pp. 76-81).

As Arnold saw it, *aberglaube* was the perfect word that showed how humanity created its own fairy tales and mapped its own visits to the anthropomorphic wonderland that was ever tempting from the beginning. Mankind loved abstraction, and this love never lost its currency. Therefore, humanity came to believe and attach itself to the very fantasies created by this same love of abstraction as the distant, unreachable, but somehow holy facts of existence, where none was actually literal. Nonetheless, humanity needed these creative visits to move forward. "Fairy-tales", as Arnold called them (*LD,* 1873, pp. 77, 303), were necessary, but only if understood properly as unveiling the inner workings of the poetic process which provided a sense of belonging, a way of orientation for humanity, and further allowed the growth of sacred ideas humankind came to depend on. These visitations of the mind served yet another purpose, as they were functional in showing layers of self-conscious involvement with the world, where the world of poetry and thought gave itself away through the same questioning mechanism that produced poetic mental activity in the first place. Dispelling the illusion

behind the mechanism also meant to discover "that the spirit of man should entertain hopes and anticipations, beyond what it actually knows and can verify, is quite natural. Human life could not have the scope, and depth, and progress it has, were this otherwise" (*LD,* 1873, pp. 76-7). As can be inferred from the passage, Arnold celebrated depth and scope in matters, not only of thought and human life, but also in the *aberglaube-ic* act of poeticizing, which is itself a necessarily metapoetic, and inescapably multi-layered play between the concrete and the abstract, or if one prefers a more Saussurean approach, between dancing signifiers and fleeting signifieds. Arnold's preoccupation with the life-giving powers of that primal poetic sensibility becomes even more obvious when, borrowing from Goethe, Arnold revitalizes "the poetry of life" as the very phrase which shows the true nature and function of "aberglaube" (*LD*, 1873, p. 77). In *God and the Bible* (1875), Arnold further concludes, that physical and observable movements within nature not only transform into abstract concepts, but also turn into misleading shadows of abstractions themselves, once the original connection between the naturally observable and eternally present gets lost within misunderstanding what language really means. Such confusion leads in a false understanding of God and the disparagement of the real poetic sense. But in reality, language and a truly understood poetic involvement with the world is absolutely necessary for the discovery of the real and benevolent powers shaping human existence.

In Arnold's view, as "*breathing*, *growing*, *standing forth*" and similar expressions came to define "*all* activities" which are more intellectual than sensual, "the primitive sense [...] faded away [,] the figure was forgotten" (*GB,* 1875, pp. 78-9). In the end, the genuine relationship between reality and abstraction came to be misunderstood, misused and misquoted. The results were the equivalent of a fire-breathing God or a miraculously burning bush, or something of that ilk, which were ridiculous (*GB*, 1875, p. 80). Nevertheless, as long as the perceiver knew that the bond was misunderstood, God or "*the eternal not ourselves"* could still manifest itself within this kind of a practical understanding, where virtue still stood forth in life, and love kept spreading its wings (*LD,* 1873, pp. 320-23, 338, 384-5). And when it came to poetry, poetic creations did not have to be real to be practical and have real powers. Arnold hated metaphysical entanglements which referred only to abstraction without any real ground. But poetry, although seemingly abstract, was never unreal or useless for Arnold. Just the opposite; it was the only way to make sense of the world. It was the only way that allowed for any kind of mind-visit to take place. Being visited by powers which have been shaping human experience meant comprehending the self-revelatory relationship between visits, visitors and visitations, as there was no other tool available but poetry, especially for the stimulation of thought and the discovery of fact. It was not, as some believed, an encounter with the real ghosts of the past or a supernatural visitation from the beyond, but a communication with the poetic act itself, as it was the poetic mode that produced the *beyond-ness* of the beyond, giving it depth and meaning. This truth was and had been binding for all humanity, summoning the visiting ideas of the past and the hosts of the present within a middle common ground of mutual communion.

In line with Arnold's insistence that poetic sensibility is the creative force bringing people and ideas together by means of the very life of poetry, the present study is also concerned with the inner life of the poetic process. For Arnold, the act of poetic creation was a major tool of production, communication and discovery that opened itself up to all its visitors if these guests possessed the means to visit the poetic process, and poetic powers visited its guests in return. Taking its departure from the similar poetic grounds already set by Arnold, the following

work tries to expand matters into a discussion of liminal-liminoid projections, where it will be argued that, just as truth never stops growing, never stops showing itself, never stops visiting mankind in terms of poetry, the metapoetic process embodied by the relationship between the poem's speaker and his source material in "The Scholar Gipsy" never stops whispering into the ears of its readers how the art of poetry and human imagination whispers into all willing minds and all capable ears incessantly. With this proposal at hand, a theoretical frame regarding the formation of liminal and liminoid projections will be established towards revealing how the metapoetic mode in Arnold's "The Scholar Gipsy" operates within the threshold of the poetic act by way of transforming liminal literary projections into a liminoid spectacle brimming with poetic interaction. Arnold's own-but-borrowed poetic figure, the gipsy-scholar will be examined in relation to the speaker of the poem, opening up the necessary space for the questioning and affirmation of the liminoid dimensions of poetic involvement, and its primal function for the creation and sustenance of human thought. To this end, ideas put forward by Victor Turner and Friedrich Max Müller will be structured around a dichotomy between action and abstraction, since all their findings point towards the same liminal-liminoid playground Arnold's "The Scholar Gipsy" also inhabits and makes use of.

Turner and Müller: Liminoid Grounds of the Infinite for Liminal Beings

Discussions on liminality often cite Van Gennep's influential work, where the matter of liminality is brought to the forefront for examination regarding its social functions and its effects on the individual members of particular societies, tribes or groups. As Van Gennep argues, alienating thoughts emerge within the "limen" (margin or threshold), easily observable throughout the liminal phase of transition / initiation rituals, such as "social puberty" ceremonies, or "betrothal and marriage" rites (1960, pp. 65, 116). A kind of state-less-ness and uncertainty takes over in such occasions, and rules the minds of the ritual participants. For instance, a child about to enter or leave puberty would no longer be considered as a child, but also, would not be granted the full privileges of a fledgling youth before certain transition rituals are observed; or the youth would not be acknowledged as a grown member of society before further ritual obligations are met in the future, so that he or she can get married and have children. In such a model, it is clearly observable that once a transition is complete, another *limen* would be lying in wait, not only for the same participants, but for everyone else, ritual participant or observer, all the way to death and the beyond, as in continued hopes for an afterlife. As the idea of an afterlife suggests, the liminal phase is seldom thought to be devoid of accompanying narratives, which provide a poetic orientation. Thus, literary projections, both towards the past, the present and/or towards the future become employed and get entangled within the psychological dimensions of both participants and observers. After all, it is the human mind which actually governs the threshold between the inside and the outside worlds. Following Van Gennep's tracks, Victor Turner's critical focus turns on two key elements of the liminal condition in *The Ritual Process* as involvement and detachment, further classifying liminality in terms of ritual as a mechanism that encompasses both "structure and anti-structure" (1969, pp. 94-96). Turner argues for the centrality of Van Gennep's theory regarding the study of liminality within human ritualization and human culture, both of which form the primary ways of getting oriented in the world and interacting with abstractions surrounding and/or allowing human existence within boundaries already set by nature. For Turner, Van Gennep's outlook becomes illuminating because it underlines acts of participation, detachment and relocation as inherent in the tripartite *structure / anti-*

structure / and *structure* (once more) model, where "transition [is] marked by three phases: separation, margin (or *limen*), and aggregation" (*TRP,* 1969, p. 94). In this respect, liminality in human ritualization, as embodying and further enabling the maintenance of meaning-making mechanisms, becomes both the structure and the paradoxically structuring *anti-structure*, able to create, sustain, demolish and rebuild systems of meaning and signification. For Turner, "separation phase comprises symbolic behaviour signifying the detachment of the individual or the group from an earlier fixed point in the social structure [.] During the intervening *liminal* period, the characteristics of the ritual subject (the *passenger*) are ambiguous; he passes through a cultural realm that has few or none of the attributes of the past or coming state" (1969, pp. 94-95). Turner's metaphor of the passenger is quite interesting, as it can neatly be used to address one of Arnold's unforgettable and problematic poetic figures, the scholar-gipsy of "The Scholar Gipsy", because, unlike the final phase of Turner's model, Arnold's once-a-scholar-candidate but never-a-total-gipsy presence grabs the attention of its reader (speaker)/readers especially because of the liminal perpetuity the scholar-gipsy is involved with. In Turner's "third phase (re-aggregation or reincorporation), the passage is consummated. The ritual subject [re-enters] a relatively stable state [with] rights and obligations [...] of a clearly defined *structural* type (1969, pp. 94-95), but in Arnold, neither the speaker of the poem, nor his source material the scholar-gipsy are allowed to complete their journey. In fact, they turn into defamiliarizing tools that reveal the poetic in-between at work, involving their own readers with the poem, yet denying them any real participation with any sense of final *authenticity* or *closure* synchronously and continuously.

Liminality in successful human rituals, as Turner considers it, perpetuates continuity and participation in a social and sanctified order by reintegrating "threshold people", or the "liminal *personae*" into the continuous phase of "cultural space" (1969, p. 95). However, the threshold between the person and the impending cultural realm can also induce an inquisitive state of mind for the ritual participant, especially when left incomplete, which allows a questioning of structural, emotional, or narrative bonds with the past and the present. In Turner's view, such a state causes anxiety, division or separation to be used as an analytical tool, where these "entities" of the margin are made to question the structure of the social and temporal matrix they are in, since they "are neither here nor there; they are betwixt and between" incomplete social and personal states of being, which are commonly symbolized by transition metaphors around the world: "Thus, liminality is frequently likened to death, to being in the womb, to invisibility, to darkness, to bisexuality, to the wilderness, and to an eclipse of the sun or moon" (1969, p. 95). As Turner sees it, the symbolism of culturally constructed human rituals as rites of passage utilizes the concept of liminality as a tool for the analysis of the same cultural structure which produces the sense of the liminal in the first place. Accordingly, Turner states that, "[w]e are presented, in such rites, with a *moment in and out of time*, and in and out of secular and social structure, which reveals, however fleetingly, some recognition (in symbol if not in language) of a generalized social bond that has ceased to be and has simultaneously yet to be fragmented into a multiplicity of structural ties" (1969, p. 96). What Turner calls multiplicity and fragmentation are intrinsic to human ritualization. More thoughts give way to more rituals, and more rituals evolve into yet more thoughts, poetic orientations and more questions, which continuously emerge out of the liminal space, enabling the examination of the very sense and mother structure that was able to produce such offspring in the first place. But what really comes first; practice or thought, ritual or poetry, or is it the

poetic sense that opens up that very sense and space of the liminal for the questioning and furthering of human thought by transforming into the liminoid?

Turner reveals this problematic and fragmented continuity further in *Dramas, Fields, and Metaphors*, pointing towards the liminal period in rites of passage, where "the passengers and crew are free, under ritual exigency, to contemplate for a while the mysteries that confront all men, [like] their personal problems, and the ways in which their own wisest predecessors have sought order", and these initiates are free to "explain away", or deeply question their relation to the past and the present, only to return from it and be part of the community structure once again, as successful ritualization demands. For Turner, this is, and has been very crucial for the development of critical approaches to the human sciences, because "[i]n liminality resides the germ not only of religious *askesis*, discipline, and mysticism, but also of philosophy and pure science", as was the case with "such Greek philosophers as Plato and Pythagoras" and their relation to "the mystery cults" (1974, p. 242). In Turner's evaluation, a broken or dissected sense of ritualization is as crucial for humanity as a complete and integrative sense of a fulfilled ritualization, because a broken sense employing liminality as a mechanism of self-questioning would often lead to further discovery and progress by setting in motion an unsettling, defamiliarizing and inquisitive perspective. In this respect, a broken sense of ritualization highlights the liminal not only as a necessary space for self-questioning and self-reflexivity, but also for the questioning of the very nature of narratives themselves and the very act of poeticizing. A very similar liminal projection is also observed in Arnold's "The Scholar Gipsy" through the structuring of a fleeting and in-between wilderness setting, a moonlit and hazy mood, and the speculatively mnemonic association of the speaker with the eternally non-present scholar-gipsy, where the speaker tries to establish a personal relationship with a poetic and almost mythological past, questioning the nature of real poetic powers while demonstrating them seemingly unawares, and in a sense, succeeding and failing at the same time.

Turner defines the "liminoid" as separate from the "liminal" in the sense that the *liminal* is the integral part of the traditional structure of ritual which seeks completion, whereas the *liminoid* can only be experienced in "post-industrial", revolutionary, and voluntary modern modes of adaptation, in which there is a continuous tendency to escape from closure, where, "to be either [the] agents or [the] audience [of ritual] is an *optional* activity" for the modern participant / observer. As a result, "liminoid [...] symbolic activity" becomes a crucial mechanism, of both association and dissociation, a continuous familiarization and defamiliarization, a point of questionable origin and uncertain destination for post-industrial liminal beings, where "yesterday's liminal becomes today's stabilized, today's peripheral becomes tomorrow's centred" (1974, pp. 15-16). Turner also recognizes the fundamental logic of the liminal, as being formed within a "consciousness, which should lead anthropologists into extended study of complex literate cultures where the most articulate conscious voices of values are the 'liminoid' poets, philosophers, dramatists, novelists, painters, and the like" (1974, p. 17). Here, Turner's emphasis on consciousness and self-awareness is crucial, in the sense that the self-aware and questioning voices of the post-industrial world can also be made to include, if not Arnold the critic, but certainly Arnold the poet. Since Victorian Poetry is almost always defined in terms of the liminal space it occupies between the Romantic world and Modernity proper, Arnold, being the distinct poetic voice of the characteristic Victorian *ebb and flow*, certainly deserves consideration in the liminoid analogy that Turner defines. The question is this: what to make of Arnold's speaker in the poem, who plays around with Glanvill's poetic figure in his head

all day, and breathes new life into the scholar-gipsy experience, both for himself and for future undefined readers/poets?

Signifying the importance of "liminoid analogues" residing in the subtle ways of how the poetic, dramatic, or plastic arts work, Turner gives priority to "modern arts and sciences", as opposed to more "serious genres of symbolic action" such as "ritual, myth, tragedy, and comedy" that are "deeply implicated in the cyclical repetitive views of social process". In Turner's view, because of the lack of "obligation" and "constraint from external norms" in *liminoid* rituals, "a pleasurable quality [...] enables" agents of ritualization "to be absorbed more readily into a consciousness of individuality, where "pleasure, thus becomes a serious matter", as forming and enabling a questioning and meaning-making mechanism of its own (1974, p. 16). In the process, a traditionally grounded sense of individuality where responsibilities rule the mind gets transformed into a post-industrial hunger for new meanings and a more self-consciously understood concept of what Turner refers to as *serious* pleasure. The concept of pleasure becomes a serious cultural matter and tool, which must be weighed and utilized accordingly in comprehending or producing fresh, previously undiscovered meanings residing in the sphere of cultural production. The threshold between the mythic-narrative and the temporal-experiential dimension is there, but the intentions of those who use the poetic mode, and thus the liminal space, have changed. A distanced, fragmented but a more self-conscious and liminoid agenda moves into the picture. Borders between the abstract and concrete facts of existence become incessantly crossed and re-crossed within what Turner has baptized as *liminoid* thinking, moving backwards and forwards within the interplay of changing social ideologies, challenged limits and counter attitudes towards legitimized means of literary expression. In such a context, a quest for self-awareness and an appetite for cultural discovery are motivated. As Storey observes, "*film noir*" or "Shakespeare" or any other literary creation can be given as examples of such a becoming. As both intellectual commodities and tools for human discovery which are apt to transgress "the border" between serious discussion and trivial pleasure, a literary process wishing to break free of closure becomes the preferred mode in making intelligible the inner workings of how humanity is made to play many roles through Shakespeare. Plays once consumed by Elizabethan Groundlings become the darling of highbrow literary circles and critics. The roles are switched and pleasure becomes serious, noteworthy and painstakingly complicated, as in the example of "*film noir* start[ing] as despised [but desired] popular cinema and within thirty years [,] becom[ing] art cinema" (2010, p. 9). What better way to map the post-industrial liminoid play Turner was underlining, since what was once on the periphery comes to sit at the center as an almost imposing and serious way of traversing the depths of the human soul, and tries to discover, comprehend or produce, amongst other things, the secrets of the modern male or female psyche, post-war values, existential philosophy, or new ways of voicing-over more liminoid yet serious pleasures. Cannot, then, Arnold's "The Scholar Gipsy" be considered within the same liminoid play where Glanvill's periphery becomes Arnold's centred, and Arnold's centred becomes the reader's exclusively peripheral, where new secrets will surely be discovered?

Turner has been emphasizing the centrality of the relationship between the liminal and the liminoid, where "the liminoid poets [and] philosophers" (*Dramas*, 1974, p. 17) of post-industrial human societies have been playing a crucial role for contemporary culture, because it was only through the kind of self-reflexivity their perspective offered, that modern humanity was able to perceive the essential role ritualization and liminality have been playing in the construction of modern human culture and its products. Apparently for Turner, "[t]he

liminoid is more like a commodity—indeed, often *is* a commodity, which one selects and pays for—than the liminal, which elicits loyalty and membership [.] One *works at* the liminal, one *plays with* the liminoid" ("Liminal to Liminoid", 1974, p. 86). In consequence of Turner's view, a curious dichotomy between the liminal and the liminoid arises, and further imposes a more bizarre question. If human life is the predestined liminal state which demands continuous and mandatory work regarding participation with the liminal, and offers no escape other than an awareness of the liminal, can the dynamics underlying the liminal be considered as providing or necessitating an analytical perspective, where the question leans more towards examining the role of the liminal within the liminoid? Turner considers the issue as arising from the idea of a natural flow humanity came to identify and associate with historically. As Turner sees it, "ritual (including its liminal phase) in archaic *theocratico-charismatic* […] societies" fulfilled this role through "religious drama" because the idea of the sacred and the enactment or animation of sanctified poetic action coming together "provided the main cultural flow-mechanisms and patterns. But in those ages in which the sphere of religious ritual has contracted […] a multiplicity of (theoretically) non-serious […] genres, such as art and sport (though these may be more serious than the Protestant ethic has defined them to be), have largely taken over the flow-function in culture ("Liminal to Liminoid", 1974, p. 90). Therefore, it must be argued that the kind of poetry which counter-poses these two modes of the liminal and the liminoid against each other would be more implemental towards revealing the contradictory, divisive, yet necessarily ritualistic orientation, and the essentially flowing nature of the human condition regardless of the historical epoch it belongs to. In Scott's view, "Turner is most eager to remark […] the wrongheadedness of regarding liminality as a merely negative state of privation: on the contrary, as he argues, it can be and often is an enormously fruitful seedbed of spiritual creativity", because the crisis produced by acts of attachment and detachment within the liminal phase, in a sense, motivates the participant. As Scott further notes, it is due to "the troubling ambiguities […] the liminar [faces,] that there is born in him a profound hunger for *communitas*" (1985, p. 5). The idea of the liminal, then, points towards the importance of crisis. Although fragmented, the liminal still necessitates a sense of belonging and participation, bringing not only people, but also ideas, people and more ideas together. The idea of the liminoid, on the other hand, makes use of that very same uncertain interval by keeping things in flow, opening the possibility for new liminal spaces and more liminoid reflection that is inevitably nursed by poetic association, attachment, and again, dislocation. Visitation, or the comings and the goings of the liminoid within the liminal seems quite unlikely to ever stop within contesting or self-accommodating spheres of cultural production.

Friedrich Max Müller's theories focusing on the centrality of the perception of limits for human existence and orientation also point towards the same *structuring anti-structure* Turner finds to be the playful yet self-revealing interaction between the liminoid and the liminal. Müller takes the presence of *the limit* as the most definitive fact of human existence that both the human eye and the human mind is able to perceive without any difficulty. For Müller, the limit, or rather, the *limited-ness of the limit*, is the very reason why humanity ever felt the need to produce thoughts and ideas about how to get oriented, both with a physical and a mental existence. Very similar to Arnold's way of thinking, Müller prefers to deal with the verifiable part of human culture, where concrete facts of existence give way to necessary abstractions and ideas, feeding human thought and furthering civilization. Müller shared Arnold's views regarding the primacy of physical involvement with the world over baseless abstraction. As Marjorie Wheeler-Barclay observes, Müller and Arnold corresponded with each other, exchanging

parallel views regarding the importance of a scientific and historical approach to the problems of language and religion, the roots of poetic expression, and the necessity of discovering the true nature of the phenomenon known as religiousness "to enlarge the intellectual horizons of [...] English readers and to stimulate their imaginative sympathies", because Arnold and Müller believed this to be "the only way to remedy the bitter divisiveness of religious debate" surrounding Victorian society (2010, p. 67). The poetic mode and how it operated in the real world was of equal importance to both.

Simply put, "Müller argued that what we know as myths were originally poetic statements about nature, especially the sun, made by the ancient Indo-Europeans [.] However, their poetry was subsequently misunderstood" as the participatory sense within the original bond eroded into abstraction. (Bell, 2009, pp. 3-4). In Jerome Bump's view, Müller recognized religious discourse as a "palimpsest, [where] [t]he basic assumption was that the fundamental truths of the human life experience […] had been discovered thousands of years ago" (2004, p. 28), and it was language that made it so. Müller saw that "conscious perception [was] impossible without language" (*Growth of Religion*, 1878, p. 38), and that the palimpsest quality of humanity's religious involvement with the world would only be discovered and deciphered through understanding how language worked. The *beyond* and *the limit* in this regard, had to be understood both within nature and within the original bond human language established with nature. To this purpose, Müller developed his theories on the perception and naming of "*tangible*, *semi-tangible*, *intangible objects*" as primal processes responsible for sense perception. In Müller's view, *tangible* objects were complete in themselves, containing no mystery, and accordingly requiring no explanation, like stones, shells, or wooden logs, which were immediately perceived by the senses to their full extent. These possessed no theogonic capacity at all, because they only pointed to their own fullness of being. What he called the *semi-tangibles*, and *intangibles* however, were not perceived thoroughly, as in rivers, trees, the earth, and mountains, because these contained the element of the beyond within them. A tree was both visible and invisible, with its roots going deep into the earth, and it contained a hidden essence inside the bark "which, for want of a better name, we call its life [...] A tree, therefore, has something intangible, something unknowable, something infinite in it [as] it presents to us something infinite under a finite appearance" (*Natural Religion*, 1889, pp. 150-51). Mountains, the earth, and rivers also belonged to this class, because they marked boundaries, and shrouded things that were beyond immediate perception. For Müller, this class along with the intangibles such as the sky, the stars, the moon, or the sun exclusively contained a "theogonic capacity, because they [had] in themselves from the beginning something going beyond the limits of sensuous perception" (*NR*, 1889, p. 148).

Müller argued that "the first class lent itself to no religious development—for fetishism or the worship of stones and bones is a retrogressive, not a progressive religious development—the second class has supplied ample material for what we call *demi-gods*, [river nymphs or dryads] while the third class contains the germs of most of the *great gods* of the ancient world [like the sun, or the dawn]" (*NR*, 1889, p. 154). In Müller's classifications, the beyond, or the perception of the beyond as something overwhelmingly noticeable and awful laid the foundations for religious idealizations and worship, and it presented itself under a certain condition, which was the realization of boundaries. In other words, a recognition of being surrounded by constant limits has been definitive for a sense of liminality, as flow and transience gave way to a consciousness of the seen limit operating synonymously with the unseen. This perception of the limit went both ways and manifested itself first by the perception of space, and later by

the perception of time, and finally by the perception of cause. Müller explained the limit in relation to the horizon, which was a common enough concept for all humanity to observe regardless of time: "If we perceive the horizon", he wrote, we necessarily perceive what is "beyond the horizon", because the limit always has "two sides, one turned towards us, the other turned towards what is beyond". In Müller's view, poetic creations also had to take part in the limit, as "from the earliest days" of human civilization, "the only real foundation of all that we call transcendental in our perceptual as well as in our conceptual knowledge", had to be "peopled with the manifold creations of our poetic imagination" (*NR*, 1889, pp. 123-124). As human beings are temporal creatures, Müller concluded that, "what applies to space [also] applies to time. As we cannot perceive and therefore conceive anything in space without something beyond", humanity also needed "a before and an after" to maintain a temporal orientation. According to Müller, "here, too, imagination has stretched its view as far as language will carry it". The seen limit operating within the unseen, manifested itself yet in a third manner, where cause and causality joined in the spatial and the temporal dimensions of the infinite: "Closely connected with the infinite, as it is postulated in space and time, is a third infinite", argued Müller, yet, "strong-minded philosophers who hold that a world is possible in which there is no cause and no effect" were looking for an "*Erehwon"*. Wherever this fairyland was, "in our sublunary world", matters stood between the root and the seed infinitely; "as we can never shake off the chain of causality, we shall always be forced to admit not only a beyond, beyond all beyonds, but also a cause beyond all causes", wrote Müller (*NR,* 1889, 123-124). Perception meant nothing without cause, space, and time, all of which necessarily made use of the concept of the liminal. Since the perceiver was perpetually situated in-between limits and the acknowledgement of a continuous and always present sense of the beyond, continuity and discontinuity stretched in both directions. In a sense, the physical and the abstract kept participating with the limit inside the human mind. Consequently came the formation of language as the inevitable product of the perception of these actual limits within nature, which Müller believed, was later adapted through a participatory model by the users of language to associate themselves with the kind of participatory reality the sense of the beyond made available. This knowledge was encoded in poetic statements which were ritualized into various mythologies to preserve the cord between nature and mankind. As this organic chain was broken and the original associations of language with the physical world were cut loose, the real meaning and function of participation also grew obscure. Real activity, in this regard, tended to evolve more and more into an orphaned sense of figuration within the historical flow (NR, 1889, p. 366).

Because natural orientation of humanity with the physical world is still full of encounters with the limit, it seems admissible that the *beyond-ness of the beyond* becomes not only a creative and sustaining thought for humanity, but also transforms into a critical tool to discover other associations of the liminal. Whatever it is that humanity chooses to get busy with, the limit undeniably enters and intervenes. A river, a mountain, a tree, an Ent, a person, a thought, a film, a play, a piece of poetry, a musical utterance, the sky, or a literary character like Sherlock Holmes or Gandalf, therefore, still presents the infinite within the finite, perpetually situating human thought in-between these limits, but also providing mankind with the idea or curiosity to cross-over those limits, or at least figure out ways of transcending the beyond. Whether metaphorically or physically, Müller's central argument still seems to stand, that "[i]n all these precepts the infinite preponderates over the finite, and the mind of man is driven, whether he likes it or not, to admit something beyond the finite. [W]e see and feel it. In feeling the limit,

we cannot help feeling also what is beyond the limit, we are in the actual presence of a visible infinite" (*NR*, 1889, pp. 153-154). When compared with Müller's standpoint, Victor Turner's assessment of the relationship between the liminal-liminoid dimensions of human action and human thought gain yet more scope. The inner paradox of the limit at work, which Müller finds to be going both ways, from the perceiver towards the perceived, from the source to yet another source, certainly becomes reminiscent of the creative power and process Arnold saw within *aberglaube-ing* that still makes it possible to reconcile both the world of action and the realm of thought. Structure and anti-structure, the finite and the infinite, the liminal and the liminoid, all such visits with all the possible destinations and arrivals reveal the liminal-liminoid grounds to be the infinite human core. Since poetry, language, culture—all these make infinity not only visible but more importantly *visitable*, it is only through the metapoetic mode that any kind of visitation becomes possible, intelligible, and reusable in so many ways for further generations, who are and will be the pilgrims of language as their predecessors were.

"The Scholar Gipsy" and *homo poeticus*: Metapoetic Visitations, Binding Thoughts

Mathew Arnold, it is true, was very much interested in the practical workings of the world, where the physical world and the state of humanity really mattered, but this world was not only the world of *homo economicus*, or *homo sapiens*, or *homo liberal*, but also the home of *homo religiosus* and the domain of *homo poeticus*. Arnold was quite fond of this fact, as his fascination with 'aberglaube' easily shows. Therefore, Arnold's "The Scholar-Gipsy" must first be considered as the playground of a very particular and encompassing idea of the *homo poeticus*. Although the expression sounds somewhat pretentious, the intention behind employing such a poeticized usage should, by now, have become apparent, that human beings, perhaps before everything else, were and still are poetical animals who like to make up stories, words, and phrases as they go along, and most importantly, believe in them, as such narratives provide an otherwise unattainable sense of connectivity with the larger and obscure truths of existence. The mix and fix of language many know to be literary creations and abstractions, in this regard, possess the capacity for revealing many truths, otherwise bound to remain out of reach for the limited human experience. The poetic act of using language, then, not only becomes an act of establishing connections, but also a critical tool for the questioning of previously established ones, and in the process yielding new networks for yet more connections. In Drew's view, Arnold's poetry generally presents the reader with a sophisticated vital argument of the origins of that very connective nature humanity has been changing and enjoying for a long time. Drew focuses on the relationship between humanity's need for connections and Arnold's portrayal of nature, where nature is "what man is not", or does not have, "imply[ing] the incompleteness of man". Arnold's memorable imageries like the sea, the countryside, or melancholy use of landscape, do not join hands with mankind, as "[n]ature is unified, especially the sea, but man is isolated, at which Arnold grieves", Drew writes (1969, p. 205). Perhaps, but there is more to observe in this broken relationship with nature that Arnold's poetic voices usually lament, as isolation breathes life into the poetic realm which Turner calls "the asocial world". Regarding the liminal phase, probing of the irrational in-between allows participants to gaze into the past, the present and the future, where they become "dead to the social world, but alive to the asocial world" ("Liminal to Liminoid", 1974, p. 59). Therefore, the irrational stands out just as real as the rational part of every existence,

every orientation, where the human mind gets awakened into the poetic sense, the poetic connections, the poetic meta-network that produces the rational and the irrational alike. In such a death and a reawakening, disconnection allows yet another connection to another world, revealing the liminoid change Turner has been emphasizing regarding post-industrial intentions.

If Turner is right in claiming that "yesterday's liminal becomes today's stabilized, today's peripheral becomes tomorrow's centred" (*Dramas*, 1974, p. 16), then "The Scholar Gipsy" is the perfect locus for exposing willing or unwilling structures that give away the necessarily irrational and liminoid nature of the art of poetic creation, where Glanvil's liminal becomes the liminoid figure of the scholar-gipsy in Arnold, and turns yet again, into the liminal-liminoid presence Arnold's speaker summons for his own purposes in the poem. And, does not the speaker's liminal also become the liminoid of others, whether as Arnold's cathartic or identifying readers, or as Arnold's celebrating, disapproving, involved or detached fellow poets and critics? If poetry is, but "the recognition" of the self through the other, an intention, as Stewart argues, where "the poet *intends* toward another, even if the other is the poet apprehending the work in a later time and other space", does not distance, disconnection, and irrationality become necessary, not only for the creation but also for the recognition and further continuation of the poetic act itself? Since "intention proceeds in time, the objectification of the other is also subject to transformation" (2002, pp. 1-2, 12). Does not connectivity also become the central issue for poetry, here? It is for this reason that Stewart defines the poetic process as "the *repetition* of an ontological moment and the *ongoing process or work* of enunciation by which that moment is recursively known and carried forward" (2002, p. 15). That is to say, *being* (ontology/origins) is examined and further gets transformed by means of an incessant process of *becoming*. In that regard, the desire for a recognition of, and a participation with that other poetic voice reveals itself in the process of taking part within the mutual sense of visitation the act of reanimating language requires. A will to establish a connection with otherness itself turns into a longing for a legitimate destination within the infinite grounds of poetic animation and reanimation. Escape and closure, connections, failures, and fleeing thoughts become the definitive ingredient, both in the poetic involvement of the animator and in the liminal-liminoid hunger that transforms Glanvill's condemned figure of human fancy into Arnold's subtly celebrated hero of the poetic imagination.

Many studies of Arnold's poetry revolve around the disturbed gap between the epistemological and the ontological, as Arnold's poetry makes use of the relationship between landscape imageries of the threshold and those who perceive them. Culler identifies "the Forest Glade, the Burning or Darkling Plain, and the Wide-Glimmering Sea", as regions, both of the mind and the world, which are "separated from one another by some kind of 'gorge'" (1966, p. 4). For Culler, Arnold's use of the threshold metaphors involve a "still point", as "the moment of stasis, far above and yet plumbing far below the world's surface". This liminal position is functional in making it known to the human psyche that there is "a subterranean river", a "silent and strong [...] buried life" of the universe, where the greater reality of being can be felt only through proper communion with the limit, a disorienting yet revealing exchange between both the self and the world (1966, p. 15). As Collini also notes, it is hard to reconcile feelings of unity with what actually happens in Arnold's poetry; since nothing much happens, and only references of fragility to broken symbols as vessels for an emotion or feeling of perpetual in-betweenness float about, where there are only distant echoes represented through "a set of symbols on to which man's travails and hopes are transposed", which are

"never immediately at one with man, nor [...] infused with a deeper life of [their] own", turning Arnold's poetry into "that of emotion recollected indoors" (1988, p. 30). Thus, the reader is only illuminated in a secondary way, by "the light" which is "a little too clinical", where "the yearned-for transforming emotion [...] can only be reflected upon and not experienced" (Collini, 1988, p. 28). "The Scholar-Gipsy" presents the reader with the perfect venue to examine the same light Collini finds to be too cold, detached, and uninvolved, yet it is the same poetic involvement that is being questioned, as Collini also acknowledges, within the secondary but illuminating nature of Arnold's trademark of a dislocate-ed/ing poetics.

Arnold's readily recognizable poetic figure, the transcendent and spectrally wandering scholar-gipsy can be seen as the definitive liminal figure in Arnold's poetry. As Scott also observes, despite new positivist approaches, "the fact of the matter remains that we are creatures who seem destined to be *liminars*" (1985, p. 4), and it is in the figure of the scholar-gipsy that the reader will be able to see how this liminal projection gets used within the liminoid frame of the poem's speaker. In Scott's exposition, the human condition itself as involving a continuous passage from birth to death is defined to be the ultimate liminal reality. And in Arnold's "The Scholar-Gipsy", not only the evoked figure of the solitary scholar becomes the ultimate representation of the kind of perpetual human liminality Scott underlines, but the mnemonic summoning of the mythic figure also opens up a metapoetic space, where the poetic voice starts musing about poetry. Emphasizing the relationship between liminality and the liminoid invocation of a distant mythic personality who goes in search of the greatest power of all, the reader soon suspects that this great power may very well be the poetic act itself, which involves people learning the "arts to rule as they desir'd / The workings of men's brains; / And they can bind them to what thoughts they will:" (ll. 45-47). The speaker keeps musing on about the scholar's quest to acquire such power, but the reader is ironically experiencing that very power, where Arnold bends his speaker's will, and the speaker, in turn, is binding the reader's thoughts into that characteristic liminal state where poetry is let loose to make sense of one's surroundings, both as real life situations and as interior reflections. A visitation takes place between the poem's speaker and its reader, and God forbid, if that reader happens to be someone who has similar thoughts of quitting the academy like the scholar-gipsy once did, does not "The story of that Oxford scholar poor / Of pregnant parts and quick inventive brain, / Who, tir'd of knocking at Preferment's door, / One summer morn forsook / His friends, and went to learn the Gipsy lore," make sense more? Do not these very lines, being full of "*pregnant parts*", betray the inner workings of one "quick" and "inventive" brain changing Glanvill's suspect into the post-industrial and post-romantic hero? Such a poetic pregnancy is to be expected of the threshold between actual human involvement and the thoughts fleeing from it. Between the social and the asocial worlds sits the human mind, contemplating where to sit next and how. This ever fleeting space is neither here nor there, but poetic association, binding thoughts and unbinding visitations come to sit at the very center of it.

Even unsympathetic commentators of Arnold's poetry, such as Gabriel Pearson, come to acknowledge the multi-levelled and distanced structure of "The Scholar Gipsy", or rather, its *pregnant* parts crammed with metapoetic reference and self-conscious irrationality, where the distance thus introduced allows Arnold to "insert" into the mind of his reader "a third kind of poetry. He urges the Gipsy to 'fly our paths' and […] puts distance between dream and reality" (1969, p. 238). In Pearson's view, Arnold operates through "the perpetual, extra-historical vantage-point", where one is able to recognize "an attitude [or] a disposition to watch yourself

being watched as one who watches while pretending unawares of being watched" (1969, p. 228). Such a view strikingly corresponds to the liminal phase discussed earlier in Turner's tripartite structure, where the ritual subject observes his own being, watches himself and his own doubts as they unfold, and thinks about the possibilities. It is also true that he is watched by others in the process. Books are written, people talk. A successfully ritualized gaze might meet the gaze of the ritualizing masters who judge the participant and allow integration to take place on a social bases, but a liminoid gaze is also capable of escaping into other things, as in Mircea Eliade's discussion of the profane. Since "highly evolved societies" produce "intellectual elites", human thought, in such situations, tends to detach itself from "the patterns of the traditional religion", where "cosmic rhythms" of a "sanctified time […] prove useless and without meaning." Once this sense of participation gets lost, the sense of authentic belonging also gets lost with it, and since the participatory nature of existence can no longer act as a "vehicle for reintegrating a primordial situation, and hence for recovering the mysterious presence of the gods, [existence becomes] *desacralized*, cyclic time bec[omes] terrifying; [perceived as] a circle forever turning on itself, repeating itself to infinity" (*Sacred*, 1959, p. 107). Certainly, it is impossible to discuss Eliade's approach in a few lines, but it should suffice to say that Eliade also makes note of the crucial space between participation as in being actively involved with the world, and detachment as in merely watching the sacred go by, and also watching others form distanced and distancing bonds with a cosmic wholeness.

The metaphor of watching, or the act of watching, in this sense, becomes another central concern for the "The Scholar Gipsy". Especially when examined through a dichotomy between thinking and doing, the verb, '*to watch*', lays bare the liminal condition itself, since it is neither participation in the moment, nor exclusion from it. Compared to the verb 'to *pass by*', as Turner's model of the ritual passenger discussed earlier suggests, *watching something by* implies, and thus becomes the clear-cut expression of stasis, non-involvement, and the epitome of a distanced poetic stance in Arnold's poem. The speaker is the watcher-by, but also the passer-by, whereas the mythic-folkloric figure from Glanvill is evoked within the poem as the perpetual passer-by who pensively and passively watches humanity go by. But does this poetic figure really leave a passive impression in the mind of its reader, or in the mind of the speaker who animates him, or, does the figure of the scholar-gipsy, once evoked from the past, perpetuate movement and continuity, poetic possibility and a meta-pregnancy, rather than closure and finality? Is not the infinite concealed within the finite here? In this regard, the grounds for a "third kind of poetry" Pearson notices also illuminate the speaker's own combined experience of both self-consciously watching himself evoking the scholar-gipsy-by, and also trying to watch or imagine the scholar-gipsy-ness of it all, like so many other figures used by so many other poets who keep indifferently and incessantly passing by. Being the "Vague half-believers of our casual creeds", unless "the spark from Heaven" hits us somewhere directly in the face, or will it be the mind—no one knows—humanity has no other option but to take comfort in the writings of its own half-believers, its own flawed poets, its own flawed and *aberglaube-d* narratives (ll. 171-191). But the scholar-gipsy knows. The poet knows. They know that there is no such knowing possible, as the scholar-gipsy is still looking for that "spark from Heaven" to fall. And if it is ever found, will not the speaker also be waiting for some scholar-gipsy to find him and give him the power needed to bend and bind other thoughts to his own? Alas, that has already happened in Arnold's poem, and the spark already hit the ground where the reader, the speaker, the poet and the humble writer of this study keep huddling around the figure of the scholar-gipsy after all this time.

Being part of the characteristically distanced Victorian poetics, Arnold's poetry, as Stacey Johnson notes, tends to pose as "a poetry that seems to be overheard […] without destroying the poet's intense self-consciousness (1961, p. 8). And as such, a distancing and defamiliarizing self-consciousness gets transferred to Arnold's audience, because many a reader keeps overhearing their own minds as fellow readers of their own times, struggling with a real sense of involvement with the world. If it is permissible that all poetic voice is dependent upon hearing in the metaphorical sense of the word, then is not that poetic voices of the past visit the ear just as the ear receives them and turns those echoes into yet new utterances? So the ear and the mouth, the mind and the voice, the reader and the poet are bound to consider themselves, at one point or the other, as their own voiced condition, as their own visitors. In Scott's view, Arnold's speakers, by bearing witness to this multi-levelled poetic distancing, become aware that "the poet" is not only "the professional versifier but anybody who, finding himself required to express an *o altitudo!*", goes in search of ways to deal with personal experience as opposed to narrative figuration, as they would also realize that the poetic mode is the only means "[b]efore the surplusages of meaning thronged within the familiar realities of nature and history", where a "reckoning with that mysterious fecundity and plenitude of the world" is continuously needed and thus sought (1985, p. 51). Arnold makes this threefold distancing and interiorized act of watching known by presenting the poem's speaker in the very liminal position of sitting down in observation and inward contemplation, not moving but musing. As the speaker declares that "Here, where the reaper was at work of late […] Here will I sit and wait" (ll. 11-16), a sense of suspended stop-motion emerges where movements of the mind take over the movements of real life. The speaker moves in his head towards his preferred "Screen'd […] nook" (l. 21), which is in itself another image of the threshold-within-the threshold of the poem's actual setting of the Cumnor wilderness, where landscape and representation, movement and reflection blend into each other within the speaker's borderline utterances. Between the speaker's meditative and seemingly passive musings and the continuous actual flow of nature and time around him, stasis within the pastoral setting of the poem is never observed. Thus, the perception of the mind's own infinite powers only becomes possible when compared with actual movement, bodily involvement, mortality, transience, and the recognition of natural existence itself as the limit. When the speaker, certainly in his mind, calls out to the shepherd as "Go, for they call you […]" and "Come Shepherd, and again begin the quest" (ll. 1-10), does not the speaker also realize that he is shepherding his own thoughts, answering a summons from the past, and himself, again, beginning a very old quest? Will not the speaker get visited in return, once he summons, in his thoughts, the scholar-gipsy-ish existence that the reader understands to be the longed for but unattainable state the speaker seems to be so fond of? When the speaker finally settles down, declaring that his "[…] eye travels down to Oxford's towers: / And near me on the grass lies Glanvil's book— / Come, let me read the oft-read tale again:" (ll. 30-32), does not the reader's eye also travel down to the world of the speaker, who is already about to be lost in Glanvil's pages? In such a setting, a liminal-liminoid involvement is already present with the speaker's choice of sitting down and opening the pages of an ancient book, but what of the reader? The reader would have to open, at least two more books. And why not take up the real quest of actively pursuing the leads, starting with roaming the rumoured settings where the scholar-gipsy had been seen, and join literally the gipsy tribe with all the mysterious powers, or why not directly pursue that same power, just as the scholar-gipsy once did? Because such power does not dwell in nature, but

only inside the human mind, acquired by means of language, poetic dislocation and relocation that the poem's speaker knows so well.

What is more significant than the suspension of physical exterior movement, lies in the inward relationship between the speaker and Glanvil's book. The gaze is both interior and exterior. Where Oxford with its towers and the Cumnor countryside is concerned, the reference is at once real and unreal. Whose Oxford will this become? Whose own hills will Cumnor morph into? Geographical limits and feelings of temporality thus motivate the gaze of the speaker towards Glanvil's book. There is, however, a third gaze, which stems from the speaker's own liminal condition, and further creates new liminal-liminoid projections regarding the physical and the referential within the reader's own mind, within the reader's own (?) exclusive gaze. Whose gaze will this really become, anyway? And would it matter if the bones of the real scholar-gipsy were to be scientifically discovered, some day? Curiously enough, there never was an enviable scholar-gypsy in Glanvill to begin with, since, as Moldstad suggests, Glanvill's figure was the "suspect", representing the imaginative faculty with a potential to "deceive" (1987, p. 159), and not the representative of eternal poetic (imaginative) glorified truth Arnold would use him for. However, Arnold, by engaging in the kind of Turneresque liminoid playfulness, invents "the dim romantic figure" (S. Johnson, 1961, p. 60), or rather gives the task to the speaker of his poem to fashion the image of "a lasting personification of the alienated artist" from Glanvil, which would also act as presenting "lines of conflict between the individual and society" (E.D.H. Johnson, 1952, p. 200), or between the anonymous reader who is yet to come, and the *time-less* and dispossessed conditions that produce such a reader, post-industrial and whatnot. As H. Johnson further states, by creating distance between temporal-physical experience and narrative-literary experience, Arnold "achieves a complete disassociation between the two halves of the divided awareness […] in peripheral relationship to the workaday world" (1952, p. 200). But what is at the center, and what is at the periphery here? Is it the real world that the poem takes as its center, or is it the many worlds within many minds, the exclusive peripheries of many a lost *post*-post-industrial soul? Is the speaker really interested in the gipsy-lore, or is it the scholar-gipsy lore that the speaker finds more comforting, as there is a tremendous difference between them. As the poem unfolds, it will become clear that the speaker's imagination is busy with the scholar-gipsy-ness of a metapoetic, defamiliarizing and questioning nature, and not some mysterious gipsy-lore, or the pastoral landscape of Cumnor Hills, or Oxford.

Considering the *betwixt and between*, Farrell's reading further complements the kind of continuous but altered flow probed in Turner's liminal-liminoid phraseology, as the pervading sense of synchronic attachment and detachment becomes more obvious. Once "a complicated meditative process overwhelms a simple narrative one" writes Farrell, "the reader in the poem loses all contact with the scholar-gipsy while the reader of the poem becomes increasingly confused [...] and nearly dispossessed" (1988, pp. 128-129). However, the self-conscious and defamiliarizing quality of the "The Scholar Gipsy" only deepens due to that very confusing state of poetic affairs. Once Arnold's speaker is heard announcing, "But what—I dream! Two hundred years are flown / Since first thy story ran through Oxford halls" (ll.131-132), the speaker's own alienated voice, which is both produced and heard within the ever fleeting liminal-liminoid play, becomes yet another signification of its own poeticity. As the intertextual animation keeps pointing both towards the scholar gipsy and inescapably to its own dream-voicing, the nature of figuration gets stripped and turns naked; the viewing distance grows, but the disturbing poetical object in the rear-view mirror comes closer and

becomes more apparent. In Antony Harrison's words, Arnold's intertextual gypsy represents "an ideal Other" (1991, p. 105), and for J. Bristow, the image "is a version of the Arnoldian poet who wishes to be a part of society and yet wants to survey its scene from a cautious distance" (1995, p. 352). In both considerations, a liminal stance is underlined towards an idealized quality of otherness. As poetic scrutiny takes conflicting modes of human existence (poetic versus actual) and turns them into competing liminoid projections arising from the liminal grounds of existence, success and failure, escape and closure grow into the very tools needed for a critical approach towards the metapoetic process in Arnold's poem. Here, Madden observes that there becomes established "[an] implicit […] dual sense of longing and frustration. One feels both in the Scholar-Gipsy and in the poet-narrator a frustrated desire to penetrate the ultimate and unattainable meaning of life, and to discover the means of expressing it" (1967, p. 68). But only by the distance he keeps that the scholar-gipsy is able to remain as a symbol of hope, as H. Johnson also suggests, that "[i]n his wanderings about the countryside, he is most often to be found where some rural activity is afoot. Yet his role remains that of keenly observant, but uncommitted spectator" (1952, p. 201). In Madden's view, "his life must remain a perpetual quest […] to continue his wanderings 'pensive and tongue-tied'" (1967, p. 68). Be that as it may, the tongue-tied and uninvolved silence of the scholar-gipsy does not necessarily point towards an uninvolved negativity, but a pregnant possibility and more liminoid voices invoking the many not-yet completed quests of many more wayward scholar-gipsies. It is as if the *phantom* scholar-gipsy inhabits a continuous and expectant dream-voice/dream-time of his own, intersecting with the world by constantly traversing the threshold, and "in the meantime, remain[ing] elusive: in and out of the public eye and the social world, glimpsed on occasion by maidens, farmers, housewives, and possibly even by [the] 'dreaming' speaker" himself (Harrison, 1991, p. 109).

As Ruth ApRoberts sees it, "the Scholar-Gipsy's withdrawal may be taken as a withdrawal into poetry itself" (1983, p. 13). And since this main concern is evident within the metapoetic frame, which ApRoberts singles out as "vocation" (1983, p. 2), the invocation of the scholar-gipsy develops into a disguise for the pursuit of that 'spark from Heaven'. But, what really lurks within the moonlit nights the wandering and dreamy figure of the scholar-gipsy is supposedly seen? Why the "lone alehouse" and why the flight from the scene between the "clatter" and "the drink" (ll. 58-61). It is most probably conversation that the eternal wanderer is fleeing from, but why? How does one converse with the world? How does one converse with the scholar-gipsy? How does one converse with the symbol of the poetic act itself, how does one talk with the liminal-liminoid symbol of the perpetual shy visitor, especially about things within the "class of poetry-about-poetry"? Since "Arnold's sense of levels of consciousness [is] so often a theme in the poetry" (ApRoberts, 1983, pp. 2, 207), it should not be surprising, that not only the poetic consciousness but especially how such a consciousness operates within the world permeates the poem's focal point of departure and destination. In ApRobert's words, Arnold's "expressionist perspective, which by resting weight on symbol, myth, and fable rests on metaphor (subsuming all three) the distinctively human response to the world. *Poesis* in this context replaces *mimesis*" (1983, p. 221). Homo *poeticus*? The poetic act does not merely reflect reality but it creates the necessary and very real space which is needed for any other kind of creation out of the very thin air of poetic language, and human beings love to create poetry. But who creates who? Perhaps, for a similar reason, Riede also evaluates Arnold's stylistically intertextual poetics correspondingly, where, before the trained eye, appears a picture of "a literary never-never land" (*Betrayal of Language* 142), most often twice-

removed, and at times, like "The Scholar-Gipsy", thrice-removed from the real world. In Stacey Johnson's view, "The Scholar-Gipsy" "is included among Arnold's elegiac poems because it celebrates an ideal which can live only in poetic moments, only in the imagination as it is stirred by longing" (1961, p. 61). And what a central preoccupation for humanity the simple word *longing* seems to be, if one considers the many visitors of language longing for a visit in return. What is poetry but a visitation filled with longing? As Agamben asks, "what is poetry if not inoperation in language and on language that deactivates and renders inoperative the usual communication and information functions of language in order to open it to a new possible use" ("Resistance in Art, 2015, 39':40''- 41':50''). In Agamben's view, "[p]oetic language takes place in such a way that its advent always already escapes both toward the future and toward the past. The place of poetry is therefore always a place of memory and repetition", which is bound to turn upon itself (*Language and Death*, p. 76). Hence, is it really so confusing, that both "The Scholar Gipsy" and the scholar-gipsy return and re-turn upon their own points of origin, the scholar-gipsy-ness of the human condition, which, in reality, is an eternal longing for the *whole* visit?

Conclusion

Going back to Turner's distinction between *work* and *play* regarding the difference between liminal and liminoid ways of producing / comprehending the world, one final distinction between work and work-less-ness noted by Agamben will have to be mentioned here to conclude this metapoetic visitation to, and most certainly of, "The Scholar Gipsy". Because "man was born […] without the work", it was, from the start that a "poetics of inoperativity" set forth the conditions of human orientation within the world. For instance, as the carpenter is defined by carpentry, or the shoe craftsman with the craft of making shoes, "man as such" does not have this predetermined craft and biological code from birth, but only the potentiality of endless possibility, thus impotentiality, which is by nature and definition unrealizable acts of potentiality ("Resistance in Art", 2015, 33':34'' - 35':44''). As "compared to animals, man remains forever in a potential condition, so that he can adapt himself to all environments" and all activities, "but no *one* activity can define him" (2015, 37':50''- 38':17''). Because "poetry is the suspension and exposition of language", where the poetic act "is suspended and exposed in the poem" (32':40'' - 33':20'') for all eyes to see and all ears to hear, the poetic act also becomes the only point of departure for all mouths to murmur and keep murmuring. That is why "to be a poet means to be fully and helplessly delivered to one's own impotentiality", where the artist is "completely abandoned" to poetry's own indecisive, yet highly pregnant stasis, its own "impotentiality" (18':02'' – 18':25''). A poet has to play, play along the liminal-liminoid lines that diverge and meet again between work and play, between the concrete and the abstract, between the limit and what lies beyond. The liminal has to give way to the liminoid within the limits of the poetic act, within the restructuring anti-structure of the liminal, within the potential that has no biological, concrete closure, but continuous escape and flow within the human mind, within the cultural confines of human existence.

In this regard, it must be argued that the speaker of "The Scholar Gipsy", and certainly, the speaker for the scholar-gipsy both take pleasure in the serious matter of poetry. Or do they take poetic pleasure seriously, turning poetic pleasure into the serious matter of a metapoetic discussion of poetry? That is for the reader to decide. Nevertheless, they relay to many readers a clear enough but multi-layered message: human existence is fragile, and bound within constant sufferings of beginnings anew and failings anew, as if in a Beckettian play, and the

best of our poets or playwrights can do nothing but pass on this "sad store of experience" (ll. 185-191). Be that as it may, on the metapoetic level, attention is inevitably directed to the liminoid process of the accumulation of such, if not all, kinds of 'stores of experience', because language encompasses, and the poetic act virtually changes all kinds of experience. And therein lies the inner paradox of the limit, which is another representation of the continuous play between the liminal and the liminoid ways of accepting or denying the world. If the threshold did not exist, then, there would also be no such longing possible towards the knowledge or pursuit of that spark; hence no quest, no symbol, and no meaning. Hence no acceptance and denial. It is only through the existence of the concept of *beyond-ness*, the concept of *the limit* or limited-ness, or the experience of the liminal that poets and/or readers are able to come up with scholar-gipsies, or any other wandering and wondering poetic figures. Arnold's speaker, although seemingly distressed, certainly seems to be aware of this pre-requisite situation, since at the end of the poem, after urging the scholar-gipsy to always keep to the shadows, the speaker's own mind lets go of the scholar, and abruptly starts sailing with the Tyrian trader. After the lines "Then fly our greetings, fly our speech and smiles!" (ll.231-232), for exactly eighteen lines to the end of the poem, the Tyrian trader, and thus the speaker's imagination both take their time drifting in the "Aegean isles", until the speaker decides to land the Tyrian where "Shy traffickers, the dark Iberians come;", and allows the Tyrian to undo "his corded bales" (ll.. 249-250). Within his own digression, the speaker seems to forget about the scholar-gipsy. It is not the scholar-gipsy that relocates to the Iberian fantasy, but it is the speaker's drifting mind along with his unfinished new symbol, the Tyrian, that the reader starts travelling. Therefore, the ending of "The Scholar-Gipsy" should not be puzzling at all, because, due to the very metapoetic and liminoid visitations witnessed within the poem, the scholar-gipsy, it is known, cannot and will not relocate physically, but is bound to sail into new territory, binding every other reader's thoughts with his own.

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