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EXPOSITION OF CATHOLIC THEOLOGY IN HOPKIN'S POETRY

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ABSTRACT

In 1863, Hopkins went to Oxford and while reading Classics began his lifelong friendship with Robert Bridges, who published his poems posthumously in 1918. His earliest diaries are full of sensitive and close observation on nature and poetic imagery. With zest he studied words and the 'Onomatopoetic theory' of the origin of language. Thus early he envinced for combined meaning, sound, and suggesfion which was later turned to an exhaustive account in his poetry. Most of the poems he himself attempted between 1862 and 1868 were either derivative or abortive. As an exception, in the The Habit of Perfection we see with what si^ill and genuine poetic passion he could handle the conventional forms and metres." The Oxford Movement, began in 1833, was a great effort to establish the Authority and Catholicity of the English Church and to refuse into it something of the medieval spirit of intellectual and natural piety. Together with William Addis and the other undergraduates, Hopkins became an ardent Puseyite and Ritualist.

Keywords: Poets, Catholic, Ritualist,

INTRODUCTION

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Regarding the influence of Catholic faith on Hopkins, Henry Cardinal Newman, St. Ignatius Loyola and Duns Scotus played an important role in shaping his mind towards the religious side. Most critics have dismissed Newman's influence on Hopkins as nominal, but it seems unlikely that Hopkins did not receive anything from Newman apart from conversion. The course followed by Hopkins, the junior man, and his almost instinctive request for held of Newman made an indelible impression of Hopkins and throughout his life he had a great affection and respect for Cardinal Newman. It is not a mere coincidence that Hopkins should desire to be received into the Catholic Church by Newman. A poetic temperament, the very nature of religious dilemma and a keen desire for a living authority are some of the traits which powerfully drew Hopkins to Newman. Newman had articulated the spiritual crisis of many earnest minds of his time. He had set the pattern for all conversions to Catholicism which followed after 1864. His arguments in Apologia Pro Vita Sua in 1864 had decided the matter for those who were anxious about the safety of their souls and who frantically and fervently looked for a genuine faith derived directly from the authority and the sanctity of Christ Himself. After "severe mental conflict, and in the face of strong family opposition", he entered the Roman Catholic Church, which was for him the sole authority E. Ruggles, a biographer of Hopkins, has suggested that the first part of The Wreck of Deutschland bears resemblance to the Apologia of Newman. Apologia is an account of Newman's conversion. The Deutschland is also an ode of Hopkin's "conversion to the catholic church". The difference, however, his in his : Apologia is argumentative. The Deutschland is devotional. Apologia was written as a defence against Charles Kingsley's attack on the honesty of Newman and on that of the Church of Rome, whereas The Deutschland is a devotional outpouring of the poet's heart moved by the drowning of five Franciscan nun in a disaster at sea. Hopkins is responding to God's grace by feeling his "finger" and finding Him "over again" in the shipwreck. Hopkins defines grace as that which "lifts the receiver from one cleave of being to another and to a vital act in Christ". He further says. This is truly God's finger touching the very vein of personality which nothing also can reach and man can respond to no play whatever but by bare acknowledgement only. On God's deep presence, Hopkins comments, God is so deeply present that it would be impossible for Him but for His infinity not to be idenfified with them or, from other side, impossible but for His infinity so to be present to them. The idea of Newman, providing lifeblood to Hopkins as a religious soul and as a poet, lends unique strength and vividness to his poetry :

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Thee God, I came from, to Thee go,

All day long I like mountain flow From

thy hand out, swayed about

Mote-like in Thy mighty glow.

Hopkins frequently addressed Christ directly and his lines of direct confrontation were most powerful and moving :

Thou heardst me truer than tongue's confess

Thy terror, O Christ, O God.

(The Deutschland, Stanza II)

He pleads

thou art indeed just, Lord, if I contend

With thee; but sir, so what I plead is just.

Why do simmer's ways prosper? and why must

Disappointment all I endeavour end? (Poem No. 51)

He possessed "a passionate sense of the terror of the nearness of God".

But ah, but O thou terrible, why wouldst thou rude one me

Thy wring world right food rock? lay lion limb against me? scan

With darksome devouring eyes my bruised bones?

(Carrion Comfort)

Hopkins is one of the new poets who could confess, "I greet him the days I meet him and bless when I understand", (The Deutschland, st. 5). Nothing Vacant Creation's lamps appal.

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It was again Newman who was keenly aware of the profound reHgious significance of Ignatian throughout. It was he who had advised Hopkins not to "Call the Jesuit discipline hard".

As a Jesuit, who took his vocation rather seriously, Hopkins made a determined effort to fashion his life according to the teachings and practice. The Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius Loyola. The philosophy of The Spiritual Exercises and the experiences of the exercitant form a constant background of everything that Hopkins wrote. It is hard to improve upon the remark made by John Pick about writing his poetry he was fulfilling his role as a man as concerned in the system of Loyola :

> For twenty one years Hopkins dedicated himself to the society of Jesus; for twenty one years he studied, meditated and practiced The Spiritual Exercises. They became part of his life and attitude. They gave direction to all he experienced, thought and wrote. They influenced his most exuberant and joyous poems; they were part of his suffering and desolation.... Without knowing something of them we can hardly know the poetpriest, (p. 60)

The term "Spiritual Exercises" is defined by St. Ignatuis himself in these words:

> By the term Spiritual Exercises is meant every method of examination of conscience, of mediation, of contemplation, of vocal and mental prayer and of other spiritual activities. For just as taking a walk, so we call Spiritual Exercises every way of preparing and disposing the soul to rid itself of all inordinate attachments, ... and finding the will of God in the disposition of our life for the salvation of our soul. (p. 63)

As John Keane' remarks that, The Spiritual Exercises "moulded and developed whole inner life of Hopkins, (p. 268) Devlin remarks that the Exercises are "not the occasion but the origin of Hopkins's poetic experience. The basis is founded by the section known as Principle and Foundation. This section lays down six principles. Most important is the opening expression by Puhl "Man was created to praise, reverence and serve God our Lord, and by this means to save his soul." (p. 24)

For Him :

The best ideal is the true

And other truth is none,

All glory he ascribed to

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The Holy Three in one.

(Summa)

Another example can be cited from the ninth stanza of The Wreck of Deutschland :

Be adorned among men.

God, three-numbered form.

His desire to serve God finds expression in the line "At your service low lies a heart."

Secondly, St. Ignatius says that God created other things for our help in attaining the end for which we are made. (p. 24) Devlin says that Hopkins also states that all things are made and provided for the creature, (p. 90). Thirdly, the exercitant is shown the way in which he has to use these things. They should be used for praise of God. In "Morning, Midday and Evening Sacrifice" Hopkins warns us to use them as "tools" to hold them "at Christ's employment".

Fourthly, St. Ignatius lays emphasis on the necessity of being indifferent. How rigorously Hopkins obeyed this principle is known from the act of burning his poems written before becoming a Jesuit, and in the resolution not to write any more thereafter except by consent of his superiors. Finally, St. Ignatius advocates the exercitant to live the sort of life that Christ lived by preferring sickness to health, poverty to riches, dishonour to honour and a short life to a long life. The exercitant should try to recreate Christ in himself Hopkins, as we have noted, begs for "Prayer, patience, alms, vows" (The Starlight Night). That Hopkins tried to possess the three virtues of poverty, chastity, and obedience we know from his desire to make poverty his "bride" (The Habit of Perfection) and looking towards chastity as the "breathing bloom" in man sex fine (Bugler's First Communion). Obedience is the distinctive mark of the Society of Jesus.

This section concludes with the declaration that on the whole the exercitant should have only one desire and one choice : to do which helps him in serving God. It is followed by examination of Conscience. It is divided into two parts, known as "Daily particular Examination of Conscience" and "General Examinations Conscience". The former applicable for the purification of heart and the latter, used for purifying conscience, is evidenced in Hopkins's Oxford Notebooks C.II, in which he recorded his sins daily. Purgation of sin is now needed. The exercitant is asked in the first prelude of the first exercise of the first week to imagine that

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soul is imprisoned in his body which, as being corrupt, is thrown on earth to live among wild animals. In "The Caged Skylark" spirit is compared with a "Skylark scanted in a dull cage". McChesney says that this line is a personal allegory of Hopkins life. (p. 70) In the first week the exercitant begins with the contemplation on three stages of sin : sin in the angelic world, sins of Adam and Eve and the sin of one man. The Sin of the angelic world resulted in Angel's fall from the courts of paradise down to the abyss of hell, the Original Sin represents the social dimension, which afflicts the whole human race, and the sin of one man represents the personal dimension.

The other exercises which the exercitant has to undertake have been discussed at length in while discussing about the Sonnet "I wake and feel....". After being purged of sin, the exercitant looks to Christ as an Earthly King. For him Christ is "Chivalry Lord" (The Wreck of Deutschland, St. 35), who as a living leader, is personified in "The Windhover". The superb strength, agility, mastery to wing and beauty of the hawk symboHze Christ, the master-warrior in action. How Hopkins chose his way of life precisely described in the third stanza of The Wreck of Deutschland : I whirled out wings that spell/And fled with a fling of the heart to the heart of the Host. Downes says that, this "fling of the heart" is the high point of the first part of the poem. (p. 134) Christ is the Host, the center of Hopkins's life. Milward says that, he dedicates The Windhover to Christ his Lord, which emphasizes "the religious significance" of the poem. (p. 24)

The exercitant needs also to meditate on Christ's Passion. This is shown by His sacred Broken Heart and His fine adorable wounds. Hopkins says that he himself has gone through both these ways of Christ Passion. This we come to know from the following lines :

I took a vine a cross-barred rod or rood.

or again in.

For us the wine has fenced with thorn,

Five ways of the precious branches torn;

Terrible frint was on the tree In the acre of Gethsemane;

For us by Cavalry's distress The wine was racked from the press;

Wounds of Christ are represented by the number five :

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Five they were then.

Five like the senses and the members of men;

Five is the number of nature,

(Rosa Mystica)

Hopkins sees Christ

Sheaved in cruel bands, bruised sore

Scourged upon the threshing floor;

Where the upper mill-stone roofd his head.

(Barnfloor and Winepress)

Devlin says that, This was a mystical act, which provoked Hopkins to consider Christ's bodily and mental pains, (p. 254-55). Christ's passion moved Hopkins's heart due to His (Christ's) poor station, laborious life and bitter ending. Hopkins saw : "In his passion all his strength was spent, his lissomness crippled, this beauty wrecked, this majesty beaten down. In a letter, Abbott said, "Christ our Lord was doomed to succeed by failure, his plans were baffled, his hopes dashed and his work was done by being broken off undone", (pp. 137-138). After participating with Christ in passion, the exercitant now proceeds to enjoy Christ's Resurrection. Earth prepares herself to welcome Christ;

Earth thrown winter's robes away,

Decks herself for Easter day

Beauty now for ashes wear,

Perfumes for the garb of woe,

Chaplet s for disheveled hair,

Dances for sad footsteps slow:

Hopkins sees Easter a "Christian hymn of praise"

Flowers do ope their heavenward eyes

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And a spring time joy have found. (Easter)

Perfecting the Self

Hopkins' pursuit of perfection served as a primary source of motivation and inspiration for him. As a workaholic, he was driven to the point of obsession by the need to achieve the highest possible standards in all he did, and this included his spiritual life as well. He knew that mankind was "created to give to God honour and to mean to offer it; to praise God freely, willingly to worship him, and happily to serve him," which was a strong Ignatian lead. He followed this lead because he believed that this was what humanity was supposed to do (Hopkins, 1959a, 239). Hopkins loved Christ because he "annihilated himself, taking the form of servant... he emptied himself," as described in St. Paul's "hymn" in Philippians 2.1-11. Hopkins' love for Christ was deeply affected by this passage (Hopkins, 1959, 108). He vowed to follow in their footsteps, despite the fact that he was well aware that this would put him in direct opposition to the God whom he cherished. Because God is portrayed as having a "lion-limb" and "devouring eyes" in Carrion Comfort, the poet is sometimes described as being "frantic to avoid" and "fleeing." He struggled with the issue, "Can I confront and act on who Christ intends me to become, as He Himself did?" on a regular basis. "Can I face and act on who Christ wishes me to become, as He Himself did?" As a member of the Society of Jesus (Jesuits), he would have participated in the Particular Examen, which is part of the Spiritual Exercises. This exercise involves doing a daily self-examination in order to encourage and maintain the desire to live as Christ did. The author draws a line of demarcation in the spiritual life between "consolation" and "desolation," the former being characterised by joy when attracted to heavenly things and the latter being characterised by a loss of hope, a darkening of the soul and a troubling of the mind, as well as a movement toward base and worldly things. "Consolation" is characterised by joy when attracted to heavenly things, while "desolation" is characterised by these things (Ignatius, 1991). The challenge that Hopkins, along with all other Jesuits, had to face was to align oneself to "consolation" by steadfastly obeying God's directive of service, rather than one's own. There is, however, a more fundamental question, as von Balthasar points out: "What is the human self, the individual, in the light of God's gracious election in Christ?" (1986, 377). It is to this subject that I will now direct your attention.

Homo creatus est (1880), On Creation and Redemption: The Great Sacrifice (November, 1881) and On Personality, Grace and Free Will (December, 1881) are the primary pieces of prose in

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which Hopkins attempts to address this conundrum. The latter two pieces were written during Hopkins' nine-month tertianship (also known as his Long Retreat) at Roehampton. The first one is his account of what he thinks to be the core ideas of the Spiritual Exercises. It was written on August 20th in Liverpool when he was 36 years old. His comprehension of personhood and vocation are brought into focus by the following quote: "I feel myself both as a man and as myself something most determined and distinctive, at pitch, more distinctive and higher pitched than everything else I perceive" (Hopkins, 1958, 122). He is aware that his life is precisely pointed at something, like an arrow that hits the bull's-eye; it has been put on its course; it has been mapped out; it has been harmonised; it has been elected. The source of this pitch is the One who is Himself "of finer and higher pitch" and who is able to "push ahead the commencing and stubborn elements to the one pitch required" (note the motif of "moving" here, as well as any possible opposition to this). This determination is experienced in one's sensuousness, or the feeling that one has of themselves: "that taste of myself, of I and me, above and in all things, which is more distinctive than the taste of ale or alum, more distinctive than the smell of walnut leaf or camphor, and is uncommunicable by any means to another man... " To me, there is no comparison: in my trek across nature, I can only find myself in one tankard: the one that contains my own being (Hopkins, 1959a, 123). Nevertheless, it is very obvious that Hopkins attempted, in his poetry, to communicate this inherent 'taste' of self and individuality that exists in both humans and nature. A person has the ability to select from his "freedom of field" what it is that they want to accomplish in their lifetime. This is something that can be developed over time, as the individual fuses himself with the specific flavour and sound of his own being, which was foreseen and intended by God from the beginning of time. St. Ignatius gives an explanation of how God works to shape the human will so that it would choose what God has always intended for that person from the beginning of time (St. Ignatius, 1991, 135). The question "in what sort of life or in what state his Divine Majesty desires to make use of us?" needs to be asked since it is necessary.

This calls for the mind to be trained in self-control so that it can make decisions that are in line with the way Christ thinks (de Mello, 2010). It is quite improbable that an individual will make the right choice if they do not have an internalised personal philosophy that is congruent with Christ's way of seeing things. Hopkins took the concepts of videre personas and videre locum, which are central to Ignatian contemplation, very seriously. "As all places are at some point of the compass and we may face to them: so every real person living or dead or to come has his

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quarter in the round of being, is lodged somewhere and not anywhere, and the mind has a real direction toward him," Hopkins wrote (Hopkins, 1959a, 186). However, as a result of sin, there is a selfish reluctance to choose this direction. As a consequence of this, it can become a refusal to opt for the archetype of the self, which was conceived and chosen by God. Logically, this can lead to it developing into the murder of God, which is where sin "receives its meaning and structure, and to which it is in fact related to the Cross of Christ." Because of this, a person is able to determine himself in connection to the supernatural plan, and Hopkins' view of grace is essential to this evaluation of personal choice (arbitrium). Grace that comes before (or in advance) pulls us naturally in the direction of doing good; as the saying goes, "it rehearses in us our agreement beforehand" (Hopkins, 1959a, 150). As it continues to enter, movement begins to take place; a new'strain' for the exercise of freedom, as well as a new 'cleave' linked with a'shift,' are both brought about by it. Then, an emerging consenting self begins to take place, and at this level, the personal arbitrium begins to go along the road to a higher self, accompanied by grace, "in a decision that man can achieve only inchoately, only in a "sighing of assent"" (Balthasar, 1986, 379). According to what Hopkins has written, this decision is "discovered to be no more than the sheer hope, discernible by God's sight, that it might do as he wishes, would correspond, might say Yes to him... and this last sigh of desire, this one ambition is the life and spirit of a man..." (Hopkins, 1959a, page 155). [Hopkins]

This "sigh" is "in actuality prayer," a "aspiration or stirring of the spirit toward God is a hint of the thing to be done," and once this is acted upon, the decision made becomes "the bridge across the abyss between humanity and God." [Creative Commons] It has been said that "the sigh of correspondence binds the present... to the future... it begins to link it, it is the first microscopic link in the chain or step of the road," which means that the future is susceptible to change right now (Hopkins, 1959a, 158). At the pinnacle of this free and positive response to God's calling, one feels what has been described as "God's finger touching the very vein of personality... and man can reply to... by mere acknowledgement simply, the counter stress which God alone can feel..." (Hopkins, 1959a, pp. 158-163) Humanity is still free to reject this potential future, just as Hopkins was free to do during his entire life; he might also give up his vocation as a priest and go back to being a poet or pursue some other line of work as his major calling.

Hopkins investigates the possibility that the new self can be compared to previous versions of the self in various contexts. He does not believe in random events, but he does suggest that perhaps some universal spirit of nature or the world (in the sense of Hegelianism) is 'enselfed

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in my self.' This does not appear to be the case, however, given that he claims that "self tastes different to him than it does to me" (Hopkins, 1959a, 129). In his explanation of Hopkins' position, von Balthasar writes that God is the one who "as the ultimate self may indwell all created individuals in virtue of his uniqueness and transcendence, but only because he has chosen out these selves... and placed them in being" (1986, 376). Hopkins takes up Bonaventure's theology of 'utterance,' which was carried forth by Scotus, in one of his sermons delivered in the year 1882. Hopkins says that "God's utterance of himself in himself is God the Word, outside of himself in this world." Therefore, the world itself is the speech, the expression, and the news of God. Therefore, its goal, its purpose, and its meaning are God, and the purpose of its life and labour is to glorify and extol him (Hopkins, 1959a, 129). His laudatory poem Pied Beauty, which is about the natural world, begins with the words "Glory be to God for dappled things," and it concludes with the command "Praise him." And Harry Ploughman writes of the dignity of physical labour out of a sense of "selving" and service to others by saying, "And features, in flesh, what deed he each must perform -/ His sinew-service where do." During the Long Retreat that Hopkins participated in during the month of December 1881, he established his thoughts on the person, and the core of those ideas revolves around the 'great sacrifice' of Christ. In light of Philippians 2:5-11, he says that Christ "destroyed himself" by "assuming the form of servant; that is, he could not but see what he was, God, but he would see it as if he did not perceive it..." (Christ annihilated himself). It is this holding back of himself that seems to me to be the source of all his holiness, and the imitation of this seems to be the root of all moral good in other men's lives. he emptied or exhausted himself to the greatest extent that was possible (Hopkins, 1959a, 108). The emptying of himself and the sacrifice that he made for the sake of the created order are examples of the eternal, universal, temporal, and spatial instantiation of God that we see in Christ. Hopkins came to the realisation that this topic was the means by which the Christological history of the universe as well as his own life could be uncovered. He did not believe that Christ became human because of the wickedness of humanity, but rather he viewed creation as being dependent upon the incarnation of Christ. He thought of it as a demonstration of love that would have taken place in some shape or another regardless of whether or not there had been any transgression. Again, Scotus was a major impact on him as he came to realise that the realm of angels and the world of humanity were both fields for Christ where He was allowed to express his joyous devotion to the Father. Not only did he become increasingly interested in how Christ is the "inscape" of creation, but also in how mankind may work out God's purpose for themselves and the world

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by their own self-sacrificing choices and acts. This piqued his attention more than anything else.

In 1878, after having read the work of Marie Lataste, he started to develop his theory that there were two'strains,' or purposes, by which God acts on the universe. The creative strain causes objects to move in accordance with their inherent characteristics, whereas the sacrificial strain is determined by the individual decisions of free actors. The latter is based on the sacrifice that Christ made, and it "is a consequence and shadow of the procession of the Trinity," which is where the mystery sacrifice originates from.... It is as if the blissful anguish or tension of delving into God caused drops of sweat or blood to be forced out of a person, and those drops were the world's (Hopkins, 1959a, 110). He believed that Lucifer's sin was an excessive, narcissistic dwelling on his own nature as likeness to God, to the extent that when newer images of God presented themselves, he averted his will from them. He wished to imitate the "Great Sacrifice" in both his role as a priest and as a poet. He believed that Lucifer's sin led to his fall from heaven. Christ's example in the Garden of Gethsemane, in which he managed to maintain a healthy balance between his own free will and the will of God, should serve as a model to be emulated. St. Ignatius is the source from which Hopkins obtains the distinction between the elective will (voluntas ut arbitrium) and the "affective will" (voluntas ut natura). Hopkins tried to live out the non-separation of desire and choice, which is exemplified in the union of marriage. In the piece titled "As Kingfishers Catch Fire," he pens the following: "Each mortal thing performs one thing... Crying, "What I do is me: for that I came," illustrating how doing and being are interwoven and, like in the words of Saint Augustine of Hippo, demonstrating how mankind is free to choose the objects of their love, which, in turn, may lead to a flight to the divine. As he embarks on his journey through love, he begins to make preparations for flight: "He played his wings as though for flight... He moved through the wind's currents and eventually reached the top of the blue element.

The 'heart right'

The way in which the reader's heart is lifted in awe and appreciation for the wonder and beauty of Being is a defining characteristic of Hopkins' poetry. In the poem titled "The Windhover," which is dedicated "To Christ our Lord," the poet reveals: "My heart in hiding/Stirred for a bird..." as he becomes captivated by its "Brute beauty," "the mastery of the thing," the kestrel's soaring flight and speed of movement, its individuality, its self-

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confident "pride," and its one-of-a-kind quality. This kind of language indicates an intimate reciprocity between the person doing the looking and the object being looked at: "When you look intently at a thing, it seems to gaze hard at you," he observed in the year 1863. (Hopkins, 1989, 140). Hopkins, like a great painter, had the ability to see things that other people's eyes couldn't, and his admiration for Van Gogh's work influenced his own contemplative ability to see the unique beauty of things, such as "skies of couple-color as a brinded cow" or "Fresh-firecoal chestnut-falls." Other examples of Hopkins's ability to see things that other people couldn't include "brined cows" and "sky (Pied Beauty). During his time at Stonyhurst College in Lancashire, a gardener was taken aback when he noticed that Hopkins continued staring carefully at stones, and in May of 1870, Hopkins is quoted as saying, "I do not think I have ever seen anything more lovely than the bluebell I have been looking at." Because of it, I am able to see the glory of our Lord (Hopkins, 1989, 134). This attentiveness to the natural world is a result of his capacity to understand, much like Whistler (one of his favourite paintings), "what I call inscape (the very spirit of art...)." He believed that everyone had the ability to experience the same kind of joyous interaction with the uniqueness that exists in nature. But in the year 1872, he has this to say about the situation: "I thought how tragically beauty of inscape was unknown and buried away from ordinary people and yet how close at hand it was if they had eyes to perceive it and it could be called out everywhere again." (Hopkins, 1959a, 221) and (Hopkins, 1989, 161) Reading Scotus gave Hopkins the self-assurance he needed to recognise the glory of Christ in all things, which was a skill he gained from Scotus. Regarding the occasion in which they crossed paths in the Baddeley library on the Isle of Man in 1872, he remarked as follows: "At this time I had first began to gain hold of the copy of Scotus on the Sentences... and was flush with anew stroke of enthusiasm." It is possible that nothing will come of it or that it will be a kindness from God. But even at that moment, whether I looked up at the sky or the water, I recalled Scotus' words. (Hopkins, 1989, 161). Scotus' use of the word haecceitas, which can be translated as "thisness," is frequently related to Hopkins' use of the word "inscape," despite the fact that Hopkins' usage of the word is debatable. Ward, too, is sceptical and suggests that Scotus' concept of formalitates is a far better way to describe Hopkins' use of the word 'inscape,' since it involves how the imagination is able to be shaped and moulded by the senses, organising these by a method of formaltates, a strategy for separating out the particularities of a thing, without despising the whole. Sobolev, however, rejects this association persuasively because he believes (Ward, 2002, 187-191; 194-197). As Baker

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(undated) argues in her phenomenological reading of Hopkins, Hopkins's enthusiasm for Scotus was likely due to the fact that he saw in him an avenue for epistemology, a basis for knowledge through feeling and sensing the divine within nature and humanity which all people could experience. Baker bases her argument on the fact that Hopkins's reading of Scotus was phenomenological. This explanation is consistent with the poet's reading of and communication with John Henry Newman, in particular the latter's concept of the illative sense, which supports a confidence in the 'felt sense' of truth. In 1873, three years after its initial publication, Hopkins read Grammar of Assent for the first time. He described the text as "hard reading," but he noted that "the justice and candour and gravity and rightness of thought is what is so wonderful in all he writes..." (Hopkins, 1970, 58). In a few of Hopkin's poems, a sense of beauty and inscape is linked to the motion and extension of the human body as it goes about its business. This theme is prevalent throughout the collection. Harry Ploughman makes a recording in which he describes how he "bends to it, leans to it, and looks." Back, elbow, and liquid waist/In him, all quail to the wallowing o' the plough' suggests a moldable aspect to his form, looked at from a distance by the poet, who shares a common, if different corporeality. Back, elbow, and liquid waist/In him, all quail to the wallowing o' the plough' suggests a moldable aspect to his form. When thus.../Didst fettle for the great grey horse his bright and hammering sandal!, there is once again a stress on physicality, movement, and employment in Felix Randall. However, because he is the priest, he is physically close to him during the last sacramental ceremonies, and this creates an intimacy between the two of them. As Felix's illness and eventual demise lead him closer to death, he finds himself sitting next to the poet, who laments the deterioration of his once-powerful body. In the poem Epithalamion, which he wrote in 1888, he paints a vivid picture of the idyllic beauty of a rural setting, in which fit young men with "bellbright bodies" swim "waterworld through flung" in a river, while a "listless stranger" does the same thing in a pool not far away. Nevertheless, the figure of Christ is, without a shadow of a doubt, the most important factor in Hopkins' evaluation of beauty. Christ's own gift to people and nature is beauty, and what is made possible as a result of this is the possibility of a mutual act of exchange. "Give beauty back, beauty, beautiful, beauty, back to God, beauty's self and beauty's provider," he exhorts readers of The Leaden Echo and the Golden Echo to do. And in what capacity does mortal beauty serve? Hopkins is eager to acknowledge the Source of beauty, as well as a caution against the ability of beauty's sensual power to ensnare. [Case in point:] Keeping 'warm' and alive'men's wits' to 'the things that are' is not the whole tale;

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it has the potential to lead to passion, which is why it is considered to be potentially "hazardous." Because of this 'risk,' the priest decided to spend the next six months of his life not looking intently at anything. Hopkins does, however, want to underline that beauty may frequently lead to Christian action. He does this by referring to a story about Pope Gregory who saw several lovely English boys at a slave auction in Rome, which inspired him to take action and send missionaries to that area. Due it protects us from worshipping a "block or barren stone" and has the potential to lead to a higher spiritual beauty, known as "God's better beauty, grace," human beauty should also be appreciated. This is because of the two reasons listed above. Hopkins emphasises a significant distinction between a "look" that causes ascesis and a "gaze" that causes lust. A "glance" causes ascesis, while a "gaze" causes lust. 'if we are to love the "selves" of men, their pitch, haecceitas, or thisness, and if stalling on the inscape or patterns of physical form leads us to appreciate that haecceitas, are we not justified in gazing on the body of the beautiful... through which we may glimpse the beauty of the soul?' Saville suggests that the sestet presents the most difficult conundrum that Hopkins faced throughout his entire life. (2000, 180). "Merely meet it; own/Home at heart, heaven's sweet gift; then leave, allow it alone," as Hopkins writes in his response, is crystal plain. One need only look for a short period of time in order to comprehend the divine sublimity of such beauty. Therefore, it is helpful to keep in mind that the experience of longer-lasting spiritual grace is gained through periods of sacrifice as well as fleeting moments of pleasure that are followed by the former. The beauty that can be seen, for instance, in the fleeting flight of a bird is also capable of being, at the same time, an experience of the beauty that Christ possesses. Through the years that he spent working as a clergyman, Hopkins eventually came to view human beings as sacramental representations of God. It was said of him that he 'could not tolerate the contamination of innocent souls.... and on the other, men and women, in their homecoming, as sinners, to God...' (1989, 398) proposes von Balthasar. It is one adorable point of the incredible condescension of the Incarnation (the greatness of which no saint can ever have hoped to realise) that our Lord submitted not only to the pains of life...but also to the mean and trivial accidents of humanity...it is not surprising that our reception or non-reception of its benefits shd. be also amidst trivialities,' he writes in a letter to E. H. Coleridge on January 22, 1866. (1970, 19). "Hopkins' vision is to have seen in the daily shoeing of horses by a common blacksmith, without "forethought of" its special significance, the enduring presence of Christ," Mariani comments in his analysis of Felix Randall, and "Hopkins' vision is to have seen in the daily

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shoeing of horses by a common blacksmith." (1970, 172). The transition of the "big grey drayhores" into a light, supple, Pegasean steed with "brilliant and battering sandal" is an exact counterpart to the spiritual transformation that Felix Randall through. (1970, 171). Hopkins sees himself as an agent of change that is secured by the dying man's receiving of the viaticum, supporting his soul's final journey to death, in the same way that the horse on its continued life's journey is made powerful by the'sandal' (Mariani, 1970, 171- 40). Hopkins' imagination and spiritual aspirations have the potential to be "captured" by the beauty of Christ because of this. Despite the fact that in one of his letters to Bridges in February 1879, he laments the fact that his love for Christ is only occasionally felt and writes, "the only person that I am in love with seldom, especially now, stirs my heart sensibly," (1935, 66), some of his finest poems illustrate his ardent love for Christ. The poet in Plato's The Windhover soars skyward like the bird in the same way as the soul in love, in Plato's The Pheadrus, regrows its wings and travels back to its original dwelling. We read in The Wreck of the Deutschland that the "heart in flight embodies the heart of the one who has fallen in love with Christ." This is in reference to the description of eros in Plato and the dove in the Song of Songs, both of which were very familiar to Hopkins. Both of these texts can be found in the Bible (Duc, 2013, 65; Saville, 2000, 3). Nevertheless, this movement of expansiveness and the freeing of the heart in a sudden outburst of emotion is frequently in tension with Hopkins' Jesuitical ascetic training, which encouraged self-denial and obscurity; the phrase "my heart in hiding" reflects this disciplined ideal. Hopkins' writings are characterised by a lyrical style that is characterised by a lyrical style. According to what Dubois indicates, "The Windhover" struggles across its volta with the question of how much respect for the vigour of nature can be reconciled with the isolation that is required by religious vocation. (2017, 104). And Saville points out that Hopkins "draws from a longstanding religious discourse that uses sensual imagery to convey spiritual thoughts." [Citation needed] (2000, 22). In spite of the fact that he is saddened by the fact that much of God's creation has been "wrecked," he yearns, as a form of recompense, for the day when he will "behold with eager yearning the incomparable beauty of Christ's body bathed in the heavenly light" (Hopkins, 1959, 36). He is also comforted by the knowledge that God is aware of the profoundly felt tension that exists in humanity between the transient and the eternal. Indeed, God beholds the splendour of His own creation and listens to its pleadings; or, to paraphrase von Balthasar, "He hears "man's inchoate sigh of assent..."" (1989, 386). God recognises the challenges that lie under the surface of a person's problems and provides

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him with the grace he needs to begin again after he has fallen: "Complete thy creature beloved O where it fails,/ Being mighty a master, being a father and fond" (In the Valley of the Elwy). Christ is the "instress" that is felt within all things that have been made, and grace functions as "mouthed to flesh-burst/Gush! – flush the man, the being with it, sour or sweet/Brim, in a flash, full!" –. (st. 8, The Wreck of the Deutschland). Hopkins was able to say the following during a sermon he delivered to his working-class congregation in Leigh on December 14, 1879: "We must put a stress on ourselves and make ourselves find comfort where we know the comfort is to be found." This is possible because of the beautiful and consoling cross that is imprinted on humanity in all of their endeavours. It is a source of consolation to know that despite everything, God loves us... It is just necessary for us to make an effort to perceive it, to think about it, and, ultimately, to feel that it is true (Hopkins, 1959a, 47-48). It was such a source of comfort, which made it possible.

CONCLUSION

Hopkins has uniquely contributed to the reUgious poetry through his novel experience of his religious sensibility and the joys of Godliness and goodliness of human life. The religious conflicts and controversies of the Victorian age affected to a large extent not only his conversion to Catholicism but also brought about a transformation in his poetic powers. Undoubtedly, his mature poetry reflected full faults in the Roman Catholic Church which was free from doubt and dogma. it is true that Hopkins wrote poetry for certain personal factors, governed and guided by his own individual spiritual urge to merge his own soul with the beauty of God's grandeur. And it can be rightly and reasonably concluded that Hopkins exploded into poetry out of sheer of what he found in his commanding Christian faith.

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