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The Influence of Duns Scotus on Gerard Manley Hopkins

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I. INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The relation of poetry to religion in Hopkins--Summary of the work accomplished on Hopkins and Scotus--Statement of the purpose of the thesis.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. HOPKINS AND SCOTUS; AFFINITIES AND SIMILARITIES</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philosophical similarities to Scotus before 1872--General mentions of Hopkins' interest in Scotus--Biography of Scotus--Personal similarities between Hopkins and Scotus.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. INSCAPE, SELF, AND INTUITIVE KNOWLEDGE</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Various definitions of inscape--The distinction between nature and individuality--Explanation of nature as essence--Individuality as a positive determination--The nature of intuitive knowledge--The distinction of powers in the soul--The common nature and inscape--Christ: the Ideal Inscape, the Ideal Self--The incommunicability of self.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV. STRESS, PITCH, AND INSTRESS</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stress: the characteristic action of a being--Hopkins' sides and Scotus' formalitates--Pitch: the sign of selfhood--The arbitrium and grace--Supernatural stress--Instress in relation to intuitive knowledge--The stressing of instress.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V. CONCLUSION</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The influence of Scotus on Hopkins--Primary reality: the individual--Intuitive cognition of inscape--The divine communication in inscape--Characteristic action--Poem Number 57, &quot;As kingfishers catch fire,&quot; as the expression of the relation between Hopkins and Scotus.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIBLIOGRAPHY</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

iv
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Since the first publication of Gerard Manley Hopkins’ poems in 1918, the interpretative and critical literature on the poet has been increasing. The initial contributions were few and slow in coming. However, when the second edition appeared in 1930, modern critics really discovered Hopkins, and since that time the work of investigation and explanation has reached considerable proportions.¹ Not only has the poetry been analysed, examined, and dissected, but the poet has also been studiously scrutinized. Still, Father Hopkins has remained an enigma to most modern critics. His attitude toward his vocation as a priest and its relation with his talent as a poet is incomprehensible to many.² Some, although overwhelmed by the beauty and intensity


of the poetry, have felt a conflict between the sensuous images of natural beauty and the dedication or moral of such poems as "The Windhover." As W. H. Gardner has remarked:

For most Englishmen, perhaps, Christ stands today for an ideal (or Utopian) code of morals; and to those for whom the supernatural foundation of the Faith has lost much of its reality, any connexion between a code of morals and a mystical vision of Nature must seem arbitrary and suspect. 3

Some critics have attempted to resolve the apparent contradiction by interpreting Hopkins' poetry as an expression of subconscious conflict and lack of balance which religion could neither relieve nor remove. Such criticisms are serious enough if only because they attack, whether consciously or not, the integrity of the man himself and are, to a certain extent, imputations on his sincerity. 4

Hopkins has, of course, had defenders. Not all the critics have found the priest-poet relationship so inexplicable or so incompatible. These critics have approached the problem either by explaining the religious basis and motivation for Hopkins' vocation or by exploring the images in the poems. In the first division are included the chapters in such books as Dr. Pick's and W. H. Gardner's, and articles and a thesis on the specific relationship of the Spiritual Exercises to Hopkins' poetry. The second approach evaluates Hopkins' background through the poems. Stonier has remarked in this connection:


4 Hopkins, in Letter LXXXV, complained to Bridges when his friend seemed to doubt his sincerity. Letters, 148.
Religion hardened him morally and intellectually, provided him with a background infinitely better to his genius than Greek myth, and brought into his poetry the polyphony of style, parti-colour of pattern, and expanding, realistic and passionate force of his great work.\(^5\)

Morton Zabel comments that there is a practical kind of mysticism in his effort to harmonize the ecstasy of sensation and intuition with an absolute rigor of moral submission. He further points out:

His ineluctability diminishes as one defines the sources of his allusions in minute observation, of his comparisons in exact and logical translation of physical or theological ideas, and of his rhythms in modulations of thought and feeling which always derive immediately from the subject-matter and tone of the poem.\(^6\)

Hopkins' poetry is undoubtedly firmly grounded in the Spiritual Exercises, but it is none the less thoroughly impregnated with a philosophical system which essentially influences not only the inner form or thought of the poem but also the external form: the imagery, the language, the meter. Srinivasa Iyengar has stated the case: "Hopkins became, unconsciously it may be, a Scotist philosopher finding in Scotism a justification for his own poetical sensuousness and inescapable awareness of the objective world."\(^7\) Hopkins did not derive his ideas from Scotus as from a source, for there is evidence that he was pursuing a line of thought similar to that followed by Scotus long before he became acquainted with Scotist philosophy. He accepted Scotism not so

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much "as a body of doctrine, but as an attitude to life, a personal dialectic." The effects are far more complete and intimate than if he had merely tried to translate Scotusism into poetry. It is the purpose of this thesis to trace the influence of Scotus on Hopkins in the letters, notebooks, and poems; in the additional impetus, clarity, and amplification which his ideas received, and in the development of the principles implicit in those ideas as Scotus' philosophy is ramified in them.

The work accomplished on the relationship of Scotus to Hopkins is much more scattered than that on the relationship of the Spiritual Exercises to Hopkins and his poetry. Most of the material is to be found in magazine articles and in chapters of larger works. Research on the subject is hampered by a lack of definitive texts on Scotus, as well as by the fact that practically none of his work has been translated into English. Scotus is not a popular philosopher, and his arguments are very long and subtle. Gardner has devoted a chapter to the influence of Scotus on the poetry and on the critical thinking of Hopkins in the two-volume work previously cited. Dr. John Pick in the appendix to his volume on Hopkins has presented what he calls that poet's "artist's epistemology." He, too, sees Hopkins' interest in Scotus as an attempt at philosophical justification for his analysis of beauty, individuation, and knowledge. He comments on the sacramental character of this view and its kinship with the Exercises.


9 Gerard Manley Hopkins, Priest and Poet, 158.
Father Christopher Devlin, S. J., has probably contributed the largest amount of work on the subject of Hopkins and Scotus, mostly in the form of articles for the Jesuit magazine, The Month. In "The Image and the Word," Father Devlin explores the relationship between Scotus' teaching on knowledge and the critical and aesthetic theories of Hopkins, with special attention to Hopkins' problem: how to maintain the mind in dependence on its source of inspiration and at the same time assert its conscious independent creative activity. The voluntarism of both Hopkins and Scotus has an important bearing on the problem. Father Devlin notes that the fundamental scholastic connection between them is Scotus' insistence that the process of being created is the same as the substance of created being and Hopkins' identification of this notion with his stress. In "An Essay on Scotus," he studies the relation between Nature and Self and the possibility of real union between the individual and the object of knowledge as expressed in Hopkins' use of the terms stress and instress. In an article in New Verse, Father Devlin again traces the relationship between Nature and Self in Hopkins and Scotus:

Each man's nature is the Nature of all the world, elemental, vegetative, sensitive, human. But one man differs utterly from another because by his Individuality he possesses the common nature in an especial degree. The individual degree is the degree in which he lacks the Infinite; it knits together in the one man all his natural activities, animal, rational, etc., and gives


them direction Godwards. The effect of this metaphysical lack of
the Infinite when felt physically by sympathy, seems to be the
"stress" of the opening verses of The Wreck of the Deutschland--
the "touch" of God upon the very centre of the being . . . .

In "Time's Eunuch," he explains the natural affinity of Scotus for Hopkins,
the community of ideals and aims which drew the two together:

From the beginning to the end, what bound him to Scotus was his
longing to see unconscious nature redeemed, to make a distinct
and gracious word of that inchoate word of natural mysticism
which is a genuine echo in the Church's liturgy, in which the
nailed seraph, the first-born among creatures, the everlasting
man, whispers to all creation as to a brother. 12

Dom Sebastian Moore in the Downside Review points out that as Scotus
is the philosopher of the particular which finds perfect expression in the
Second Person of the Trinity, so Hopkins is the poet of the particular:

He is . . . the poet of the particular, of the consecrated particu-
lar. He is, above all, the poet of the divinely personalized par-
ticular, of the Word made Flesh. 13

Father Arthur Little, S. J., believes Hopkins chose Scotus because of "his
own instinctive approach to natural beauty and the spiritual problem that it
seemed to propose for solution," but he feels that Hopkins realized that the
solution proposed was not entirely satisfactory: "There emerges the picture
of a tension between, as it were, two personalities in the same conscious-
ness." 14 Marjorie Coogan in PMLA compares the meanings of inscape and of

12 Devlin, "Hopkins and Scotus," New Verse, London, XIV, April,

13 Dom Sebastian Moore, "Gerard Manley Hopkins," Downside Review,
London, LXII, October, 1944, 193.

14 Arthur Little, S. J., "Hopkins and Scotus," The Irish Monthly,
Dublin, LXXI, February, 1943, 48, 58.
instress with Scotus' teaching on individuality:

That inscape is not simply a metaphysical concept, a translation of haecceitas, but that it is rather a poetic approximation of a metaphysical reality is of course evident from Hopkins' attempts to express it in descriptive language . . . . From all of Hopkins' remarks, however, it is clear that inscape is an objectively existing reality, the uniqueness of a being, independent of the observer . . . . inscape is ontological, the never-to-be-repeated "bead of being", the meeting of the One and the Many, of unity and variety in the unique object of the poet's "seeing". 15

While it is certainly not necessary to have an understanding or even a passing acquaintance with Scotism to appreciate and enjoy Hopkins' poetry, a general knowledge of Scotus' thought on individuality, intuitive knowledge, and the will is a great help in getting at the full meaning and significance of the poems. It is at the heart of the conception of the poems, and the moral turns deplored by some critics as breaches of unity are, in the light of Hopkins' philosophical and aesthetic theories, completely justified. It is the purpose of this thesis to integrate the work already accomplished on Hopkins and Scotus and to demonstrate that Scotus' influence permeated Hopkins' mind and work. It is not within the scope of this thesis to consider the undeniable influence of the Spiritual Exercises on Hopkins. In some instances it may be justly claimed that the influence of Ignatius is just as evident as that of Scotus, for "his [Hopkins'] Scotism, grafted on to the Spiritual Exercises, was the stem, as it were, through which this word was to take shape in the various branches of his learning." 16 Scotism was peculiarly


suited to lend itself to such grafting, since in both, Christ is the ultimate ideal and exemplar and the will is the primary tool to be used in realizing the ideal, as it was peculiarly suited to the temperament and personality of Gerard Manley Hopkins.
CHAPTER II

HOPKINS AND SCOTUS: AFFINITIES
AND SIMILARITIES

Scotus' influence on Hopkins was like that of a very good teacher who does not so much induce or inspire original ideas in a student as deepen and enlarge the ideas he already has, reveal the latent implications, and suggest a framework or system for them. Certainly Scotus did not give Hopkins the ideas of inscape and instress or even initiate his tremendous preoccupation with the individual essences of things. Hopkins had already invented and used the terms inscape, stress, and instress to express his acute awareness of the impact of unique being upon himself while he was still at Oxford.

At Balliol, Hopkins had written an essay on Parmenides which indicated that he was already developing a philosophy and a vocabulary to fit it. This essay is especially interesting and significant, from the point of view of this thesis, for the many unconscious echoes of Scotist teaching and for the startlingly similar terms in which the problems are posited. The idea of Being presented in the essay is almost a translation of Scotus' univocal idea of being and suggests the utter dependence of creatures for their very existence which is a characteristic development of Scotist thought. Being is and not-being is not: all things are upheld by instress and are meaningless without it, Hopkins wrote:
But indeed I have often felt when I have been in this mood and felt the depth of an instress or how fast the inscape holds a thing that nothing is so pregnant and straightforward to the truth as simple yes and is . . . .

The truth in thought is Being, stress, and each word is one way of acknowledging Being and each sentence by its copula is (or its equivalent) the utterance--assertion of it.

Some kind of knowledge of the individual is necessary because without it, "There would be no bridge, no stem of stress between us and things to bear us out and carry the mind over." Hopkins was drawn to Parmenides because "His feeling for instress, for the flush and foredrawn, and for inscape is most striking." He echoed Scotus' theory that the individual feels his lack of the infinite and that part of his individuality is this degree of distance which is his own particular grade of being when he defined not-being as a want of oneness and inscape as the proportion of mixture of Being and not-being.1

Inscape, instress, and stress appear often in the journal before 1872. There is a discussion of images stalled at eyelids and recalled in sleep which bears a resemblance to Scotus' theory of memory-thought forms.2 Hopkins analyzed the impact of the individual nature on the perceiver and indicated that the stress implies something behind and beneath the inscape of the object:

But neither the weight nor the stress of sorrow, that is to say of


2 Hopkins, Note-books, 127.
the thing which should cause sorrow, by themselves move us or bring the tears as a sharp knife does not cut for being pressed as long as it is pressed without any shaking of the hand but there is always one touch, something striking sideways and unlooked for, which in both cases undoes resistance and pierces and this may be so delicate that the pathos seems to have gone directly to the body and cleared the understanding in its passage.

He wrote of a sunset, "Today I inscaped them together and made the sun the true eye and ace of the whole, as it is"; and of a bluebell, "I know the beauty of our Lord by it. It[in-scape] is[mixed of] strength and grace, like an ash [tree]." The entries in the journal—the raw materials for poetic images—are full of individual descriptions which speak of one thing to Hopkins:

This busy working of nature wholly independent of the earth and seeming to go on in a strain of time not reckoned by our reckoning of days and years but simpler as if correcting the preoccupation of the world by being preoccupied with and appealing to and dated to the day of judgment was like a new witness to God and filled me with a delightful fear.

He realized that change is a part of individuality, a part of the inscape, and his observation of different aspects of natural things and of their connection with the thing's individuality resembles Sootus' theory of the formalitates.

A beautiful instance of inscape sided on the slide, that is/ successive sightings of one inscape, is seen in the behaviour of the flag flower from the shut bud to the full blowing: each term you can distinguish is beautiful in itself and of course if the whole 'behaviour' were gathered up and so stalled it would have a beauty of all the higher degree.3

Gardner4 remarks that the significance of flux to Hopkins lay in the beauty of the sliding inscape and in the apprehension of the unchanging, unsliding One

3 Hopkins, Note-books, 128, 129, 134, 135, 140.
4 Gerard Manley Hopkins, II, 56.
behind the changing Many. Father Little comments:

That intense awareness of beauty sprang from an unusually acute and delicate sensibility stimulating a lively intellectual appreciation of order or rightness (which is beauty) amongst the sensible things thus minutely perceived. The result of these natural gifts was his discovery of inscape . . . . 5

But Hopkins was not content with the "surface" inscape of the thing; he wanted to apprehend the very reality of the thing.

And what is this running instress, so independent of at least the immediate scope of the thing, which unmistakably distinguishes and individualises things? Not imposed outwards from the mind as for instance by melancholy or strong feeling; I easily distinguish that instress. I think it is this same running instress by which we identify or, better, test and refuse to identify with our various suggestions/ a thought which has just slipped from the mind at an interruption. 6

Then, in 1872, just before the annual vacation, he recorded in his journal:

At this time I had first begun to get hold of the copy of Scotus on the Sentences in the Baddely library and was flush with a new stroke of enthusiasm. It may come to nothing or it may be a mercy from God. But just then when I took in any inscape of the sky or sea I thought of Scotus. 6

"It may come to nothing . . . .", but Hopkins recognized at once a sympathetic mind, and the influence of Scotus can be traced in Hopkins' poetry, in his notes, and especially in almost every line of his notes on the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius. 7 Here, more or less complete, was a philosophical

5 "Hopkins and Scotus," The Irish Monthly, LXXI, 55.
6 Note-books, 153, 154, 161.
system which organized and explained reality in a way that seemed to Hopkins compatible with his own experience.

Immediate contact with the myriad distinctive and unique beings of the external world seems to be at the very heart of the aesthetic experience. Hence Hopkins' flash of enthusiasm on finding in Scottus a kindred spirit, full of concern for the unique individual, dealing with metaphysics, true, but in every line enlarging and validating an aesthetic theory already subtle and penetrating.³

Hopkins was not content with things. He wanted reasons also: "I have the passion for explanation."⁹ James Collins points out:

Hopkins is loath to separate the function of artist and philosopher. The former must be prompted to create by the depth and urgency of his vision, whereas the latter must attend to the form under which he wishes to convey his truth to others.¹⁰

Hopkins could not be merely poetic or obscure, and Patmore could say with all truth: "I often find it as hard to follow you as I have found it to follow the darkest parts of Browning--who, however, has not an equal excuse of philosophic system."¹¹ The great virtue of Scottus for Hopkins was that he had a system, and Hopkins was provided with a glorious vista opening from principles to consequences, embracing all reality.

Hopkins might have taken his philosophical principles from others, but by his own testimony, he took them from Scottus, and very gratefully. His

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⁸ Coogan, "Incoape and Instress: Further Analogies with Scottus," PMLA, LXV, 74.


opportunities for enlarging his knowledge and elaborating the system were limited. He noted in the journal that he had talked Scotism with Herbert Lucas for the last time on August 27, 1873; and that in the week of July 9, 1874, he met two Scotists: "I met Mr. David Lewis, a great Scotist, and at the same time old Mr. Brande Morris was making a retreat with us: I got to know him, so that oddly I made the acquaintance of two and I suppose the only two Scotists in England in one week." 12 Scattered references appear throughout the published letters; to Bridges in 1875: "After all I can, at all events a little, read Duns Scotus and I care more for him even than Aristotle and more pace tua than a dozen Hegels"; again in 1883, on artistic creation and the freedom of the artist, "Hereby, I may tell you, hangs a very profound question treated by Duns Scotus, who shows that freedom is compatible with necessity"; and to Patmore in 1884:

And so I used to feel of Duns Scotus when I used to read him with delight: he saw too far, he knew too much; his subtlety overshot his interests; a kind of feud arose between genius and talent, and the ruck of talent in the Schools finding itself, as his age passed by, less and less able to understand him, voted that there was nothing important to understand and so first misquoted and then refuted him.

Scotus' influence penetrated even to Hopkins' theories of poetry in a note on the musical effect of rhythm in Greek and melic poetry: "[T]hese are called \( \bar{\varepsilon}^\lambda_\delta \); they are in specie infima and in fact in specie individua." 13

12 Hopkins, Note-books, 182, 198.

The deep respect and love Hopkins had for Scotus is revealed in his sermon on the Immaculate Conception at St. Joseph's, Bedford, in honor of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the definition of the doctrine:

It is a comfort to think that the greatest of the divines and doctors of the Church who have spoken and written in favour of this truth came from England; between five and six hundred years ago he was sent for to go to Paris to dispute in its favour. The disputation or debate was held in public and someone who was there says that this wise and happy man by his answers broke the objections brought against him as Samson broke the thongs and withies with which his enemies had tried to bind him.

Hopkins had described poetry as speech only employed to carry the inscape of speech for the inscape's sake and insisted, therefore, that the inscape be dwelt on. Characteristically, he pays tribute to the Philosopher in poetry distinctive in form:

Towery city and branchy between towers;
Cuckoo-echoing, bell-swarmed, lark-charmed, rook-racked, river-rounded;
The dapple-eared lily below thee; that country and town did
Once encounter in, here coped and poised powers;

Thou hast a base and brickish skirt there, sours
That neighbour-nature thy grey beauty is grounded
Best in; graceless growth, thou hast confounded
Rural rural-keeping--folk, flocks, and flowers.

Yet ah! this air I gather and release
He lived on; these weeds and waters, these walls are what
He haunted who of all men most sways my spirits to peace;

Of reality the rarest-veined unraveller; a not
Rivalled insight, be rival Italy or Greece;
Who fired France for Mary without spot. 14

Although Scotus' writings, unlike those of Hopkins, enjoyed great

popularity during his age, little is known of his personality. C. R. S.

Harris remarks:

Never perhaps was there a writer in his time so illustrious, of whom we know so little, so elusive is he, so remotely impersonal. Hardly a trace of human emotion is perceptible in the thousands of his pages: scarcely a glimpse of humour peeps through the myriads of his syllogisms.

Where he came from, even the date of his birth (1266? 1274?), cannot be definitely established. Hopkins wrote to the Reverend Mandell Creighton on the subject, much disputed, of Scotus' birthplace and supposed connection with Merton College; he, too, had his theories on the origin of the name Scotus. Like Hopkins, Scotus was a member of a religious order; he joined the Friars Minor but when or where is not known. He, too, attended Oxford and also the University of Paris. Renan summarized Scotus' known history:

Ce qui est plus certain, c'est que, quand Guillaume Warra fut appelé d'Oxford à Paris, où il reçut le nom de Doctor fundatus, Duns Scot, son disciple, fut choisi pour le remplacer dans la chaire de théologie (vers 1300).

En 1307, déjà revêtu des insignes de docteur en théologie, il est créé régent dans l'assemblée (in comitiis) des frères Mineurs qui se tint cette année-là à Toulouse.

Jean Duns Scot est mort le 8 novembre, jour de l'octave de la
Toussaints de l'an 1308. 17

Harris quotes from a letter of Gonsalvus, Master General of the Order, to the faculty at Paris which is about the only contemporary statement of Scotus' personality to be found:

I commend to your loving care our beloved brother in Christ, John the Scot, of whose laudable life, admirable knowledge, and most subtle genius, in addition to other qualifications, I have knowledge, partly from personal experience, and partly from his reputation, which has everywhere been noise abroad. 18

It is not absolutely known that the John the Scot mentioned is Duns Scotus. However, Scotus was declared Venerable by a decree of the Bishop of Nola, and the existence of a cult verified in 1710 in accordance with the decree of Pope Urban VIII. The process was confirmed in 1906. The seventeenth century schools had their own rule of thumb biography:

Sootia me genuit;  
Anglia me suscepit;  
Gallia me docuit;  
Colonia me tenet. 19

Personal comparisons are always dangerous, and in this case, where the information about Scotus is so scant, must be made very cautiously, but there seem to be some similarities in personality as well as in thought between Hopkins and Scotus as well as some obvious differences. Certainly Hopkins was like reality's "rarest veined unraveller" in language, for Scotus

18 Duns Scotus, I, 9.
19 Cited in Renan, Jean Duns Scot, from the biography in Wadding.
would invent, too, where accurate expression demanded a new word. Haecceitas was Scotus' own term for that individuating form most dear to him and to Hopkins. Both Hopkins and Scotus are known for subtlety in thought and in expression, and both, because of this, have been accused of obscurity. McKeon, writing of the difficulty of translating Scotus, says: "[D]istinctions must be blunted by approximate translation, or new expressions must be invented as strange and as difficult as the Latin terms of Duns." Hopkins felt forced to defend his apparent obscurity to Bridges:

Plainly if it is possible to express a subtle and recondite thought on a subtle and recondite subject an a subtle and recondite way and with great facility and perfection, in the end something must be sacrificed, with so trying a task, in the process, and this may be the being at once, may perhaps even the being without explanation at all, intelligible.

Furthermore, Hopkins pointed out, the main thing was to be correct: "if I am that, that is the great point gained." The two minds exhibit an extremely logical functioning, and Hopkins, for all his gentleness, could be quite tart and intolerant of political and literary views of which he did not approve. Renan, who is seldom kind to Scotus, says:

Duns Scot s'y montre, en général, avec un naturel violent, avec un génie inculque et négligé. Il n'est pas aussi modéré que saint Thomas. Il a le ton sévère, rude, trenchant; il se laisse entraîner

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jusqu'à l'inventive. Il est généralement très intolérant.22

Harris,23 more favorable, remarks on the diversity of intellectual interests revealed in his writings—frequent references to mechanics and optics and occasional mentions of civil and of canon law. Edwin Dorsweiler continues the list: "He commands a thorough knowledge of the Scriptures and the Fathers, the philosophers and theologians of his time and former times and is fully acquainted with the science of physics, astronomy, and mathematics."24

Anyone examining the letters and notebooks cannot fail to be impressed by the variety of interests and by the versatility of Hopkins—science, mathematics, philology, literary criticism, music, drawing, philosophy, and theology. In A Page of Irish History: Story of University College, the Jesuit Fathers say of Hopkins:

As a convert to the Catholic religion he was filled with enthusiasm, but as a theologian his undoubted brilliance was dimmed by a somewhat obstinate love of Scotist doctrine in which he traced the influence of Platonist philosophy.25

Harris26 points out that Scotus' social philosophy, judged by nineteenth century standards, might be considered quite socialistic, a charge at one time laid upon Hopkins with about as much justice.

Scotus, called the Subtle Doctor, who could "pursue with a safe and

22 Renan, Jean Duns Scot, 21.

23 Duns Scotus, I, 15.


26 Duns Scotus, II, 354.
unfaltering step, a train of thought through a maze of reasons and objections." 27 was a man "impregnated with tradition, a powerful, vigorous and original thinker, a man who really belonged to the closing epoch of 'dogmatic philosophy' but who at the same time heralded the new movement." 28 It is a sketch which, with a few changes, could easily fit Hopkins. Even Renan, generally unfavorable, admits:

Le cadre de sa philosophie n'a aucune nouveauté; mais les solutions qu'il propose en ont su souvent beaucoup . . . . Duns Scot sut créer un vaste système presque entièrement original. 29

Herein lies his greatest similarity to Hopkins: an original and powerful thinker working in the old tradition but producing and heralding something new.

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29 Jean Duns Scot, 45.
CHAPTER III

INSCAPE, SELF, AND INTUITIVE KNOWLEDGE

When Hopkins met Scotus, his first reaction was a rush of enthusiasm. He had discovered a kindred spirit, but more important for Hopkins, he had discovered a systematized philosophy which included the answers or explanations which he had already formed for the world and things and which developed the ramifications of his own ideas. Philosophy was not a fad with Hopkins any more than religion was. He tended naturally or temperamentally to explain, to give reasons for what he felt and, especially, for what he saw. Perhaps because he was a poet and an artist he was most impressed by the distinctiveness, the differentness, the individuality of things, even of non-human things. In a letter to Bridges he says:

But as air, melody, is what strikes me most of all in music and design in painting, so design, pattern or what I am in the habit of calling 'inscape' is what I above all aim at in poetry. Now it is the virtue of design, pattern, or inscape to be distinctive . . . .

Hopkins used the term inscape to describe the impact of external things upon his perception. Exactly what he meant by the term is difficult to arrive at, and the difficulty is complicated because the term apparently

1 Hopkins, Letter LIII, Letters, 66.
developed over the years. Fraunoea variously describes it as the internal aspect of a thing which the eye comprehends in a single point; as relating to something within the natures of things, denoting the internal principle which makes a thing to be what it is; as an essence particularized here and now; and, by derivation, as referring to the external unity of artificial things which expresses the unity of subject and theme in the artist's mind. Father Schoder, in "An Interpretive Glossary of Difficult Words in the Poems," gives four connotations based on the fundamental meaning of scape as pattern prefixed to emphasize the intrinsic and individual aspect, the internal

scaping or design in things:

(1) the intrinsic [form] or activating principle of an object, whether native . . . or intellectually super-imposed by artistic arrangement of parts in an art-work . . . i.e., the philosophers' forma informans, the 'soul' or form activating particular matter and giving it distinct individual existence outside the mind.

In an artifact, . . . the essential unifying form or design worked into the material by the artist to produce a new thing (poema) which will be distinctive and a perfect expression of his thought and mood . . . .

(2) the intrinsic beauty of a thing, the shining forth or effulgence of its form . . . the glory of its translucent being or "self-being." For the true experience of beauty arises only from penetrating, by the mediation of the outer form which is its sensible revelation to the inner form, the in-scape, of the object and drinking in its radiant and abundant reality or truth . . . .

(3) inscape comes to signify primarily the outer form in some passages, the shape or harmonious lines of an object . . . the accidental form, the non-essential structuring . . . .

(4) the word is equivalent to a subjectively imposed Gestalt which random lines assume as one suddenly discovers a pattern in them after close looking . . . . 5

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Inscape has further been described as a complex of often minute features peculiar to a thing, an index of its unique individuality.\textsuperscript{4} It has been defined as that which is perceived by the whole man in an intuitive act.\textsuperscript{5} Inscape seems to be used particularly in reference to non-free, non-rational creatures which are not perfectly or completely individuals because they lack freedom of choice, pitch. Father Devlin, in "The Image and the Word," points out: "Hopkins makes it quite clear that he identifies inscape with nature or essence and haecceitas with arbitrium or moral pitch."\textsuperscript{6} He says further that inscape in Hopkins is what Sootus would call the species specialissima, a glimpse or intuition of a nature which is nearly, but not quite, individual.

From the foregoing definitions or descriptions of inscape, two points of reference concerning the use and meaning of the term can be distinguished: inscape as it refers to an existing object and inscape as it refers to an object of knowledge. Considered in respect to an existing object, inscape is that property in a thing which not only gives it being but also enables it to act. In Sootusist terms, the inscape considered in respect to the object itself is an individualized nature; that is, a nature which exists; considered in respect to the object as known, the inscape is the product of intuitive cognition, the species specialissima.

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{4} Little, "Hopkins and Sootus," The Irish Monthly, LXXI, 48.
\item \textsuperscript{5} Coogan, "Inscape and Instress: Further Analogies with Sootus," PMLA, LXV, 73.
\item \textsuperscript{6} Part II, The Month, New Series III, 201; Part I, 120.
\end{itemize}
Sootus distinguished in each individual two realities which are formally distinct: the universal and the particular. The universal element in a concrete being is the essence or nature, the genus plus the specific difference, common to all individuals of the same species. In a letter to Dixon, Hopkins explained it this way:

So the species in nature are essentially distinct, nevertheless they are grouped into genera: they have one form in common, mounted on that they have the form that differs them. Sootus taught that the concept of the genus does not include in itself that of the difference even potentially; genus and species correspond to different grades of being in the same concrete whole. Although neither can be separated from the other, any more than individuality can be really separated from the nature in an existing thing, still there is a formal distinction between them which is grounded in the being itself.

The essence or nature of itself is indifferent to actual existence as it is to multiplicity: lion-ness can belong to one, two, fifty, or one hundred lions without changing its essential definition. The common nature

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7 John Duns Scotus, Opus Oxoniense, II, d. 3, q. 6, n. 15, XII, 144; references to Scotus are numbered in accordance with Duns Scoti Opera Omnia, ed. Vivès, Paris, 1891-95.

The formal distinction is a mental construct which is rooted in the thing itself. The mind represents the different aspects it distinguishes in existing things by a formal distinction between the concepts: formal and not real because the realities are not separate things but different modes of being in one and the same thing. Although formal distinctions are products of the mind, they are not mere fictions but are grounded in the reality of things.


9 Cited in Harris, Duns Scotus, I, 210, 211.
has no actual existence outside individuals, but it retains a formal reality of its own because it is an idea in God's creative Mind. Essence always is because it has its being first as an object of the Divine Mind. It does not, of course, subsist by itself apart from God. There are not and never will be any actually existing universal ideas—subsisting concepts of the common natures—roaming around. But since essences are objects of the Divine Mind, they must have the being that belongs to objects in a mind, Scotus' being of object. The reality or mode of being which belongs to an essence as an object of the Divine Mind is very small, but it is something, it has some reality. When Scotus called being univocal, he predicated it logically; it is always said in the same sense and means the same thing. Being is opposed to not-being. But being is always determined by the actual condition of its essence. Nature or essence becomes universal when it receives universal predicability in an intellect; united with matter, it receives particularity; and it becomes singular or individual when it receives its ultimate determination, haecceitas, selfhood. Existence is the mode of being which belongs to an essence when it has received the complete series of its determinations.


11 Op. Ox., I, d. 3, q. 2, n. 5, Commentaria, I, 309; d. 3, q. 3, nn. 8, 9, and d. 8, q. 3, n. 11, IX, 109, 580; III, d. 7, q. 1, n. 5, XIV, 386; Reportata Parisiensia, I, d. 3, q. 1, n. 6, XXII, 94.

12 An idea expressed by Hopkins in an Oxford essay cited in Chapter II, 10, and later in explaining self, cited in this chapter.

13 Etienne Gilson, Being and Some Philosophers, Toronto, 1949, 84-86.
Before a nature or essence can exist, something must be added to make it particular, to seal it as this being.14

What, then, is the nature of this individualizing difference which, as Hopkins says, is "felt to be, to taste more distinctive than the taste of clove or alum, the smell of walnutleaf or hartshorn"?15 Individuals do not result from prime matter, for matter is not a diversifying principle; it is of itself purely undifferentiated and indeterminate. Matter gives the compositum indeterminate being, being which is nothing in particular but potentially everything. Thomas' materia quantitata signata was to Scotus already informed by a quantitative determination. The nature as such cannot account for individuality or singularity, because it is the nature which has to be particularized. Hopkins, in "The Principle or Foundation," treated the problem under a slightly different aspect when he considered from whence came all his being and above all that taste of himself. The individual concrete thing is not made up merely of form and matter, but of this form and this matter which in their substantial unity constitute this individual.16 Moreover, this individuality, this positing of a nature in the actual world, depends solely on the Will of God.

The individual exists in virtue of something positive, a further de-

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16 Scotus, Op. Ox., II, d. 3, q. 6; d. 3, q. 4, n. 10, Commentaria, II, 269, 247; Rep. Par., II, d. 12, q. 8, n. 8, XXIII, 39.
termination which makes it to be this thing and no other. This positive determination Scotus called the haecceitas, thisness, or the entitas singularis, and Hopkins called it the self. The individual, considered in this way, is more perfect than the species because it has an added perfection or determination resulting from an ascension of being, for "to be determined or distinctive is a perfection . . . ."\(^{18}\)

Actually existing beings are necessarily individual and possess an intrinsic degree of perfection which makes them unlike every other member of the species so that no two members of the same species have the specific difference to the same degree.\(^{19}\) In Hopkins' words:

> Self is the intrinsic oneness of a thing, which is prior to its being and does not result from it ipso facto, does not result, I mean, from its having independent being . . . . Now a bare self, to which no nature has yet been added, which is not yet clothed or overlaid with a nature, is indeed a nothing, a zero, in the score or account of existence, but as a possible it is positive like a positive infinitesimal, and intrinsically different from every other self.

The haecceitas or self adds nothing to the qualitative determination of the individual which is completely given in the specific essence; the nature which "functions" and determines, selves and instresses.\(^{20}\) It is in no sense a universal.

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20 Note-books, 322; "The Principle or Foundation," A Hopkins Reader, 299.
In shewing there is no universal a true self which is 'fetched' or 'pitched' or 'selfed' in every other self, I do not deny that there is a universal really, and not only logically, thus fetched in the universals, but either it is selfless and they Selves, as may be the case in Man, or else it may be a true Self and they like its members only and not true Selves, something like which I am inclined to believe the species and individual in the brutes, or at least that the specific form, the form of the whole species is nearer being a true Self than the individual. 21

Selfness is neither form nor matter qua form or matter, but is something which accrues equally to both. The entitas singularis and the entitas naturae, whether matter or form or compositum, are formally distinct but they are not and cannot be distinct things.

The self sums up the other forms--elemental, vegetative, sensitive, intelleotive--and confers the final unity of a being. 22 In the visible universe only man is a complete self because only man has the hall-mark of self-hood, the power of self-determination, pitch: "[T]his is a great proof of self." 23 The being of the whole includes many partial forms, Scotus' formalitates and Hopkins' sides.

For, to speak generally, whatever can with truth be called a self--not merely in logic or grammar, as if one said Nothingness itself--, such as individuals and persons must be, is not a mere centre or point of reference for consciousness attributed to it, everything else, all that it is conscious of or acts on being its object only and outside it. Part of this world of objects, this object world, is also a part of the very self in question, as in man's case his own body, which each man not only feels in and acts

21 Hopkins, "The Principle or Foundation," A Hopkins Reader, 302. The idea of species as nearer the true Self in nature plays an important part in Scotus' theory of intuitive cognition.


with but also feels and acts on. 24

There are as many beings as forms in an existing object because each form has the being proper to it. 25 Since the compositum as well as the matter and the form of an existing thing is stamped with distinctiveness or thisness, these sides or formalitates are indications of the individuality of the thing; keys to its selfhood. "A self then will consist of a centre and a surrounding area or circumference, of a point of reference and a belonging field . . . the inset and the outsetting or display." 26

The mode or degree of being represented by the entitas singularis or self brings to the nature a property of incommunicable being.

When I consider my selfbeing, my consciousness and feeling of myself, 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 walnutleaf or camphor, and is incommunicable by any means to another man (as when I was a child I used to ask myself: What must it be to be someone else?) . . . . Nothing explains it or resembles it, except so far as this, that other men to themselves have the same feeling. 27

Humanity can belong to an indefinite number of individuals, but Gerard-Manley-

24 Ibid., 301

25 This being is not actual existence but only a kind of reality which belongs to a being qua such a being. If it is an object of the mind, an idea, it has the being of object or ideal being; if it is a form, it has the being of form. This being is real, not a mere fiction, but not actual, not having existence of itself. An actually existing thing is not made up of many separate actual existences, but it is composed of many formally distinct essences, each possessing the being proper to it.

26 Hopkins, "The Principle or Foundation," A Hopkins Reader, 301, 302. The relation of the formalitates to Hopkins' thought and work will be treated in more detail in Chapter IV in connection with characteristic action, stress.

27 Ibid., 297.
Hopkins-ness to only one. Self makes the substance a being which exists for itself. Of all the individualized natures, selves, in the world, that which is most intensely known is one's own self; no other thing can help because in this respect any other thing is blankly unlike. Hopkins was keenly aware of this differentness: "The development, refinement, condensation of nothing shews any sign of being able to match this to me or give me another taste of it, a taste even resembling it."28

But if one's self is so distinctive as to be incommunicable to other selves, how then can one have knowledge that there are other selves? If there are, is there any possibility of knowing them or must all knowledge remain at two degrees remove from actually existing beings? Hopkins and Scotus agree that the world is full of individuals, inscapes, selves, and that these individualized natures can be known directly by other individuals. Knowledge of the individual has one end and leads to only one place, but this end can be arrived at in two ways. One way is through the stopping or momentary stalling of the abstractive process so that the inscape, the individualized nature, is grasped in insight or vision, and the result is a glimpse of the Ideal Nature of which all other natures are only pale reflections. The other is through the dwelling upon of the individual aspects of the existing being, the selfhood of the thing, to the exclusion of what is common to it and to other things so that the unique relationship between the thing and the source of its individuality is perceived.

28 Scotus, Op. Ox., I, d. 19, q. 2, nn. 5, 7; d. 23, n. 4; d. 25, n. 2, X, 186, 188, 261, 268-80; II, d. 1, q. 1, n. 17, 45; d. 5, q. 2, n. 4, XIV, 288.
Under either of these aspects, inscape is considered as the object known. A concrete being is known only vaguely and imperfectly, but it is known directly as present and existing. The knowledge obtained assures the mind of a direct contact with reality, a bridge linking the mind with the reality outside it. 29 This knowledge of the individual is by no means exhaustive, nor is it even a knowledge of this person or thing as such: it is rather the apprehension of a nature which actually exists and which is, therefore, necessarily individual. 30 However, it can be said that this being is known, since there is no other existing which is exactly like it and which has its nature in the same degree. This visio existentis is the foundation of all knowledge and provides the raw material from which clear and distinct concepts, universal ideas, are formed. Characteristic actions, the external material aspects (formalitates) or accidental modifications which are distinctive of individuals are indexes to further, more complete knowledge of the "being indoors each one dwells." 31

To Hopkins and Scotus, individuality is a positive determination not knowable in isolation yet knowable directly in conjunction with the universals. The primary object of the mind is being unlimited, and every part of an indi-

29 Scotus, Quodlibetales, q. 6, n. 8, XXV, 243, 244; Op. Ox., IV, d. 49, q. 12, XXI, 442; II, d. 3, q. 9, XII, 212, 213; Rep. Par., IV, d. 46, q. 3, nn. 10, 13, XXIV, 574, 575, 576.
In his essay on Parmenides cited in Chapter II, 10, Hopkins wrote of this need for a "stem of stress" to carry the mind over to things.

30 Scotus, Quaestiones Super Librum II Posteriorum, q. 6, II, 329: "Esse existere non consequitur essentiam primo, sed primo consequitur individuum. Individuum enim per se et primo existit; essentia non nisi per accidens."

31 Hopkins, "As kingfishers catch fire," Number 57, Poems, 95.
individual is being and so knowable. The singular thing is not, however, known by the human intellect in a complete and clear manner. In its present enfeebled state (not essential to it) the human intellect cannot comprehend the full extension of being even though all being is its proper object. It can know only that part of being which is encased in sensible images.32

Sensation is of the soul in its origin. For Scotus, intellect covers the same field as sense, if both are working properly.33 The primary cause of sensation is the presence of the object-nature to the soul in the intellectual memory; the secondary cause, necessary for actual awareness, is the energy or lumen produced by bodily intimation or touch. Every act of distinct knowledge is preceded by a confused intuition of Nature as a living whole. The senses contract this intuition to a partial glimpse, the species specialissima, a direct contact with existing nature. Immediately the abstractive process begins. If, however, the first act is dwelt on to the ex-

32 Scotus, Op. Ox., I, d. 3, q. 3, n. 8, IX, 109; II, d. 3, q. 8, n. 13, XII, 195; III, d. 14, q. 3, n. 6, XIV, 527, 528; IV, d. 49, q. 8, XXI, 306; Rep. Par., III, d. 14, q. 3, n. 7, XXII, 357; IV, d. 49, q. 7, n. 4, XXIV, 655.

The singular thing is intelligible in itself since what is not intelligible in itself could not be known by any intellect; but the singular thing is certainly known by the divine and angelic intellects. The process of induction and the fact that individuals love one another testify that the singular thing is intelligible to human beings as well, since induction proceeds from the particular to the universal, and love presupposes knowledge.

33 Scotus, Quodlibetales, q. 6, n. 8, XXV, 243, 244; Op. Ox., I, d. 19, q. 2, n. 10, X, 191; II, d. 16, nn. 15, 18, Commentaria, II, 579; IV, d. 44, q. 1, n. 4, XXV, 163.

There is only a formal distinction between the powers of the soul based on the different ends of the faculties so that the soul may operate on different levels, but it is always the one soul operating, or the one power considered under different aspects.
clusion of the succeeding abstractions, the nature which is common to all creation is somehow experienced as inscape. 34

The distinction of powers in the soul is a reflection at infinite remove of the threefold distinction in God, and as memoria in God is the ground of the generation of the Word, the Second Person of the Trinity, so in the human being the intellectual memory is the ground of the uttering of the human word, knowledge of created things. Moreover, the ground which is the memoria of God is the same, and the word uttered in actual knowledge bears the same relation to the uttering of the Word in God though obviously the utterance for men is very imperfect and inadequate. 35

The soul receives knowing power from the creative Mind of God, for the divine understanding produces objects in intelligible being, and by its own actuality it gives to this object such being, and to that object such, and consequently it gives them such a reason of object, by which reason they first move the understanding to such certain knowledge. 36

This innate power of knowing, used to know particular objects, is a sort of underlying illumination from God. The intellectual memory, the innate power of knowing, depends on its cause, the First Mover, and is informed by the


36 Scotus, "The Oxford Commentary on the Four Books of the Master of the Sentences, Book I, Dist. iii, q. 4-7," Selections from Medieval Philosophers, II, 342.
reflection of created nature or of nature being created. 37 Devlin 38 describes the intellectual memory as the mirror surface of the almost bottomless pool of nature from which we all draw. Sensation is the response to a real object outside the mind, but it must be the expression of something already present to the mind, a sort of innate image preceding all actual knowledge and helping cause it. The memory is both a likeness and a tendency toward the object; it reflects the working of nature and contains all nature virtually; it inhabits the mind permanently, disposing it to actual knowledge.

The common nature of all mankind, including the created forms lower than man, has a unity which is less than numerical but none the less real. This indeterminate unity of the common nature is what seems to be reflected in the innate memory, and this common nature is the object of all knowledge in man. "Man is, as it were, every creature, because of his natural kinship with them all." 39 The common nature is the ground of the real union between the knowing subject and the object known and is sufficient within its own limits to insure the validity of knowledge. Nature is the middle term through which the object-self can be present to the subject-self by its species spe-


cialissima; the object-self exercises a special "stress" on the subject's mind to which the subject-self answers with an "instress," the inscape. This flash of "intellectual sensation" reveals the invisible world by linking memory to will, origin to destiny. 40 Hopkins, describing St. Winefred's Well, expressed it this way:

[F]he sensible thing so naturally and gracefully uttering the spiritual reason of its being . . . and the spring in place leading back the thoughts by its spring in time to its spring in eternity; even now the stress and buoyancy and abundance of the water is before my eyes. 41

All created things mirror the Trinity. Non-intellectual beings are merely vestigial representations. Memory reflects the striving of nature to achieve its own individuality as opposed to the particular individuality which it has in any given subject. 42 Since the striving seems limitless, it cannot find fulfillment in a further nature but only in the real presence of its motive. Its consciousness is generic and confused, not self-consciousness of this or that. The human soul is an image, reflected at infinite distance, of the eternal Generation and Procession of the Blessed Trinity. Men's selves are most precious, most lovable, best, because in them is found the "clearest selved" spark, the image, not merely the vestige. 43


41 Hopkins, Note-books, 214.


43 Scotus, Op. Ox., I, d. 3, q. 5, nn. 5, 15; d. 5, q. 2, n. 15, IX, 210, 222, 490; II, d. 16, m. 20, xiii, 48.
The visio existentis, whether of non-human creation or of men, gives certainty and meaning to the pattern of sensation and leads in the end to being which shows no signs of being finite, the "Stanching, quenching ocean of a motionable mind;/ Ground of being and granite of it . . . ." The habitual species specialissima is the background of all the species specialissimae of material objects that come and go. It is the innate image of the ideal to which the acquired images of actual objects can be only approximations.

Hopkins echoed Scotus when he said: "As we drove home the stars came out thick: I leant back to look at them and my heart opening more than usual praised our Lord to and in whom all that beauty comes home."

Individuals are more or less perfect and there exists an Individual Who is their Model as there is a Model for essences. Christ is the archetype of individuals as God is of essences. The intelligence capable of penetrating the intimate nature of self or haecceity would know why individuals are necessarily so unlike one another and so far from the individual type which is Christ.

While the Person of Christ is God the Son, the individuality of Christ is precisely this ideal oneness which is the completion of human nature

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47 Hopkins, Note-books, 205.
48 Landry, Duns Scot, 103.
and which is the image of the Ideal Nature in the memory. "The Incarnation—the creation, assumption, and hypostatic union of created nature with the Word, was God's first intention ad extra." 49

Dieu...veut être aimé par Celui qui peut l'aimer suprêmement, je parle de l'amour d'un être extrinsèque à Lui ou créé; finalement il prévoit l'union hypostatique de cette nature humaine qui doit l'aimer souverainement, même si aucun homme n'était tombé. 50

Christ is the reason of the universe; everything else is propter Christum: "man himself was created for Christ as Christ's created nature for God . . . ." 51

The inscape in this sense represents the Ideal Person to Whom universal nature tends. When the abstractive process is delayed, the momentary contact between the Creative Agent causing habitual knowledge and the created individual intuiting the object terminates in actual insight through the medium of the species specialissima: an insight into what is going on behind secondary images and ideas; what is going on is the act of creation; the reason for the creation is Christ's Humanity. 52

For whatever form the clay took, Christ, the future man, was in mind . . . and so that clay, already bearing the image of the future Christ in the flesh was not only God's work, but

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51 Hopkins, Note-books, 344.

also a pledge. 53

When Hopkins said, "The world is charged with the grandeur of God," he meant it in a very special, immediate way, and the line, "There lives the dearest freshness deep down things" and the "ah!" 54 in the last phrase take on a deeper meaning. Not only do they express the surprised delight which accompanies the manifestation of natural beauty and the immanence of God, as Gardner 55 has pointed out, but they also signify a kind of direct, if very brief, glimpse of nature being created. Hopkins spoke more than figuratively when he said, "I walk, I lift up heart, eyes,/ Down all that glory in the heavens to glean our Saviour." 56

The second way in which the visio existentis leads to the end is by consideration of the incommunicability of the individual. Although such consideration seems paradoxical, the self, in so far as it is different from every other self, still can be regarded in relation to its source:

Insofar as a thing is absolutely unique, and no longer regarded as sharing a form with similar things, that thing is an immediate relation to God . . . . what is unique is not to be named by comparison with anything else, so there remains nothing by which to name it but relation to its source. 57

Hopkins was delighted with the unique self, "It is the forged feature finds


54 "God's Grandeur," Poems, 70.


56 "Hurrahing in Harvest," Poems, 74.

it is the rehearsal/ Of own, of abrupt self there so thrusts on . . . ." He felt the significance of the uniqueness of things, selves: "For a self is an absolute which stands to the absolute of God as the infinitesimal to the infinite. It is an infinitesimal in the scale of stress." 58

There is in each individual an ineradicable contingency: it is possible that it might not have been; it does not, it cannot, supply its own existence. Hopkins discussed the origin of himself and all his being, his taste of self, his selfbeing, at length in "The Principle or Foundation," and, in the end, concluded that he and all other things were due to an extrinsic power and that this extrinsic power could not be solved or identified with other things but had to be self-determining, exercising choice. The individual is a fact which cannot be explained a priori. Genus does not include the concept of the specific difference; neither does the species include the concept of the individual. An individual results from a free act of God. The combination of selves and essences are arbitrary facts not depending on any essential relation between the terms but on the Will of the Creator. 59

The formal distinction between the nature and the self is ultimately grounded in the creative act of God, an act of Mind and of Will, for the divine will is the immediate principle of any action directed outward; . . . the divine understanding in so far as it is prior in any manner produces these objects in intelligible being . . . . 60

58 "Henry Purcell," Poems, 84; Note-books, 331.
59 Hopkins, Note-books, 322.
God's Mind presents the essences, but His Will places them in existence. There is no direct contact between the Mind of God and the created mind, although the created mind derives its knowing power from God. The Will of God is the principle of creation and the plan of His Mind is contained in what He wills.61 "All the world is full of inoscope and chance left free to act falls into an order as well as a purpose." Nothing results from chance, i. e., "an event come about by its own intrinsic possibility."62

Since the individual cannot be accounted for solely by himself, the cause must be sought outside. It is precisely his character as an individual who receives his whole being, his very individuality, from another which places him in a kind of direct personal relationship to God: "Thou hast bound bones and veins in me, fastened me flesh . . . ." There is a special bond between an individual and the source of his distinctiveness; in respect to his individuality considered as excluding him from whatever is common to himself and others, the only middle term between him and others is the source of their respective selfhoods, God:

All things counter, original, spare, strange; Whatever is fickle, freckled (who knows how?)

He fathers-forth whose beauty is past change . . . .63

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Individuality and intuitive cognition are keynotes of Scotus' philosophy and have theological consequences. Both the philosophical and the theological aspects were admirably suited to Hopkins. He was impressed with the distinctive pattern in non-rational creation; he was profoundly aware of his own individuality and was struck by the intensity of pitch of other humans as well; and, as a member of a religious order which proposed Christ as the ideal in a special way, he must have been delighted to find a theory of knowledge which had as its base, its beginning, and its end, the Image of Christ.
CHAPTER IV

STRESS, PITCH, AND INSTRESS

Individuality, the self, and its logical development, the theory of intuitive cognition, the perception of inscape, are characteristic elements of Scotus' philosophy and of Hopkins' poetry, but they depend on an even more fundamental tenet, the primacy of the will. The three-fold division in this chapter roughly parallels that in the third chapter: stress is the inscape or nature considered as the principle of action; pitch bears the same relation to stress as self or haecceitas does to inscape; and instress is related to intuitive cognition as the completion or fulfillment of the knowing process. In each case the relationship hinges on activity of some kind.

An existing being is an individualized nature, the sum of all the little forms which combine to give it a material appearance, the various aspects or sides of its appearance, and its actions and reactions--the relation of the insetting to the outsetting\(^1\)--throughout its existence. If all the secondary acts which a given thing performs are taken together, they constitute the very reality of the thing.\(^2\) "A thing is all that it does to itself as well

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1 Hopkins, "The Principle or Foundation," A Hopkins Reader, 301.

2 See page 11, Chapter II, Hopkins' quotation on the unfolding inscape of the flag flower.
as to others. In such a philosophy, 'to be' becomes an active word, which before anything else, signifies the exercising of an act." This characteristic action of a being Hopkins called stress.

Stress appears so elementary an idea as does not need and scarcely admits of definition; still this may be said of it, that it is the making a thing more, or making it more markedly, what it already is; it is the bringing out its nature.

But stress, like inscape, has more than one meaning or function. Considered in respect to non-rational beings it is the principle of activity in them, that through and in which the inscape acts, and is that by means of which inscape is impressed or instressed on another. Considered in respect to human beings or free agents, stress, carried to a higher degree in pitch, can be considered either as man's natural fulfillment, "the bringing out his nature," or as his supernatural fulfillment through cooperation with God's grace. In the latter case, properly speaking, the stress is not so much man's as it is the Holy Ghost's.

The material universe, Nature, is limited in showing stress since it is in a sense incomplete. The slidings, changing sides, the characteristic acts of the thing, animate or inanimate, indicate its inscape, its imperfect selfhood. Hopkins' sidings, Scotus' formalitates—all the material modifications of individual being—are the bridge between essential individuality and the mind perceiving it. Hopkins, therefore, is even more concerned, or

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3 Gilson, Being and Some Philosophers, 44. He is speaking of Scotus' philosophy.

4 Hopkins, Letter LXXXIII, Further Letters, 179.

5 Coogan, "Inscape and Instress," FMLA, LXV, 71.
at least concerned in a different way, than most poets with the individual
and even minute details of natural phenomena, the "sakes" of things, because
they are the doors and windows to the inscape of the thing: "the dappled-with-
damson west"; "skies of couple-colour as a brindled cow"; "fresh firecoal
chestnut falls"; "rose-moles all in stipple upon trout that swim"; "Whatever
is fickle, freckled . . . With swift, slow; sweet, sour; adazzle, dim." 6 But
the outward appearances of things in a more or less static condition are not
as clear or as significant indications of inscape as the actions of things,
and so Hopkins is even more interested in the different aspects of things in
action—of rivers, pools and streams: "Penmaen Pool." "The Loss of the Eury-
dice," "Inversnaid"; of all growing things: "Spring." "May Magnificat," "Binsey
Poplars"; of birds: "The Windhover." "The Sea and the Skylark." "Henry Purcell,
"As kingfishers catch fire"—at different times, in different seasons, in all
weathers, for "meaning motion fans fresh our wit with wonder." 7

Although the inscapes of nature are fascinating, always fresh and
inexhaustible, still they are not the most highly determined, most perfect of
naturally knowable objects in the universe. The most perfect examples of
selves are men because they have the power of choice, self-determination,
pitch. "I find myself both as man and as myself something most determined and
distinctive at pitch, more distinctive and higher pitched than anything else
I see." Pitch belongs to self: "Is not this pitch or whatever we call it then

7 Ibid., 66, 79, 94; 71, 82, 83; 73, 72, 85, 95; "Henry Purcell," 85.
the same as Soutus' secitas? It is a refinement of stress, as selfhood is
a refinement of inscape, for it makes the being more complete and determined,
gives it an added perfection. But, like selfhood, pitch cannot exist separate-
ly; it needs a nature, a stress, through and in which to work: "It is the self
then that supplies the determination, the difference, but the nature that sup-
plies the exercise, and in these two things freedom consists." 8

The will is the highest sphere of consciousness, the noblest of the
soul's powers, 9 because it is free not only to choose between alternatives, but
to choose freely even when there is no alternative. The will has freedom of
pitch and of play, but not of field, 10 i.e., the affective will, affectio
commodi, is always drawn toward the good and chooses what attracts it, but the
arbitrium, the verdict one way or the other, is free toward all alternatives,
even an absolutely evil one. The desires of the affective will are natural

8 Hopkins, "The Principle or Foundation," Note-books, 309, 325, 328,

9 Copleston summarizes Soutus' arguments for the primacy of the will
in this way:

The will is more perfect than the intellect since the corruption of the will is worse than the corruption of the intellect; to hate
God is worse than not to know God or not to think of God. Again sin
means willing something evil, whereas to think of something evil is
not necessarily a sin; it is only a sin when the will gives some con-
sent to or takes some pleasure in the evil thought of. Again, love
is a greater good than knowledge, and love resides in the will, while
it is the will which plays the principal part in final beatitude,
uniting the soul with God, possessing and enjoying God. (History,
II, 540)

Soutus, Rep. Par., IV, d. 49, q. 3, n. 7, XXIV, 633; Op. Ox., IV,
d. 6, q. 11, n. 4, XVI, 651.

10 Hopkins, Note-books, 326, 317.
and good but neither right nor wrong; they arise without volition when the intellect presents some natural good. The affectio justitiae, the arbitrium, or elective will, has liberty, the power to refuse or to choose moral rectitude for its own sake. The elective or "free" will can reject or accept a natural good toward which the affective or naturally constrained and determined will tends.\[11\] Hopkins himself provided an example:

During his long retreat in the tertianship he had seen what was best for him, and now he held on to it with vigor, not allowing anything else to be heard pleading to the contrary. If at that time the mind rather than the heart embraced renunciation of poetry for a higher good, his choice was made "with the elective will, not the affective essentially; but the affective will will follow."\[12\]

Men's actions may be similar to those of non-rational creatures doing whatever happens to be their lot--"Felix Randal," "Brothers," "Tom's Garland," "Harry Ploughman"\[13\]--but that activity is not truly characteristic because man has, so to speak, an added dimension not given to non-free objects.

Man's characteristic action is the same as theirs--giving glory to God--but men, being what they are, must glorify God in a special way. A windhover glorifies God merely by exercising its own powers, by acting like a bird. Man, being free, glorifies God by recognizing and assenting to his dependence on God, by consecrating his whole being--everything that is the sign and seal


\[12\] Cited by Carroll, "Hopkins and the Society of Jesus," Immortal Diamond, 44.

\[13\] Hopkins, Poems, 92, 93, 107, 108.
of his individuality, above all his will—to God. In "Morning, Midday and Evening Sacrifice," Hopkins expressed this idea. He enumerated all the different aspects of each stage of development in minute detail:

The dappled-die-away
Cheek and wimpled lip,
The gold-wisp, the airy-grey
Eye . . . .

Both thought and thew now bolder
And told by nature: Tower;
Head, heart, hand, heel, and shoulder
That beat and breathe in power

The vault and scope and schooling
And mastery of the mind
In silk-aah kept from cooling . . . .

Each detail in the development is a necessary key to the total individuality of the person, "What life half lifts the latch of."14 The same theme is repeated with emphasis on the various changing sides of individual appearances in "The Leaden Echo and the Golden Echo":

the wimpled-water-dimpled, not-by-morning-matched face,
The flower of beauty, fleece of beauty, too apt to, ah! to fleet,

Winning ways, airs innocent, maiden-manners, sweet looks, loose locks, long locks, lovelocks, gaygear, going gallant, girligrace—

Resign them, sign them, seal them, send them, motion them with breath,

14 Ibid., 88.
Give beauty back, beauty, beauty, beauty, back to God, beauty’s self, and beauty’s giver.  

In this connection, it is interesting to note Scotus’ theory that even had there been no sin, man should still have had to face a trial to vindicate his supernatural destiny. He would have had to choose between grasping the natural perfection of beauty and wisdom seen in his own image on the one hand, and on the other, the dry, abstract word of God representing the supernatural. “Such an isolation of the will would be the mystical passage from the night of the senses through the night of the understanding.”  

The most characteristic act which a man can perform is touched in “To What Serves Mortal Beauty?”:

Love what are love’s worthiest, were all known;
World’s loveliest—men’s selves. Self flashes off frame and face.
What do then? how meet beauty? Merely meet it; own,
Home at heart, heaven’s sweet gift; then leave, let that alone,
Yea, wish that though, wish all, God’s better beauty, grace.

When a man acts perfectly in accordance with right reason, he fulfills his nature, wills himself to be what he was meant to be, stresses himself. A man may do this naturally, led by a kind of natural prudence:

It is even seen, time’s something server,
In mankind’s medley a duty-swerver,
    At downright ‘No or yes!’
Doffs all, drives full for righteousness.  

15 Ibid., 98.
But even if an action is completely moral, completely in accordance with right reason, it has further possibilities for goodness. It can be meritorious if it proceeds from the movement of God's grace in a man: "For grace is any action, activity on God's part by which, in creating or after creating, he carries the creature to or towards the end of its being, which is its self-sacrifice to God and its salvation." For Sootus, praxis means self-achievement by correspondence with God's creative grace. Hopkins expressed the same idea poetically in "The Bugler's First Communion" and "The Handsome Heart":

What the heart is! which like carriers let fly--
Doff darkness, homing nature knows the rest--
To its own fine function, wild and self-instressed,
Falls light as ten years long taught how to and why.

Mannerly-hearted! more than handsome face--
Beauty's bearing or muse of mounting vein,
All, in this case, bathed in high hallowing grace.

Grace comes unbidden, like inspiration, in the spontaneous will, but it must be ratified by the arbitrary will: "for there must be something which shall be truly the creature's in the work of corresponding with grace; this is the arbitrium, the verdict on God's side." This assent is the mere wish to correspond; beyond this, all the work is on God's part.

The power of going from worse to better depends on the outward grace of God's ordinary providence. A man has freedom to change over long periods

19 Hopkins, Note-books, 332.
20 Poems, 66, 90.
21 Hopkins, Note-books, 330.
of time through a change in attitude, but practically no freedom within short spells of time unless God intervenes. God can determine the creature to choose freely according to His Will but not without extra change of circumstances: either by giving His grace to nature (the affectio commodi) or by giving more grace--instressing the affective will towards the good which He proposes. "So far this is a necessary and constrained affection on the creature's part, to which the arbitrium of the creature may give its avowal and consent." 22 God's mastery is exercised over His creature's will in two ways: over the affective will by simply determining it to so or so; over the arbitrium or power of pitch by shifting the creature from one pitch contrary to His Will to another which is according to It, or from the less to the more so, giving him the grace of correspondence. The action of this grace elevates or lifts the receiver from one cleave of being to another and to a vital act in Christ: "This is truly God's finger touching the very vein of personality, which nothing else can reach and man can respond to by no play whatever, by bare acknowledgement only, the counterstress which God alone can feel." 23

I did say yes
O at lightning and lashed rod;
Thou heardst me truer than tongue confess
Thy terror, O Christ, O God;
Thou knowest the walls, altar and hour and night
The swoon of a heart that the sweep and the hurl of thee trud
Hard down with a horror of height:
And the midriff astrain with leaning of, laced with fire of stress. 24

23 Hopkins, Note-books, 325, 329, 337.
"Ordinarily, when grace is given we feel first the necessary or constrained act and after that the free act on our own part, of consent or refusal as the case may be."25 The motive for refusal is still present after God has touched the being with His grace, and it is physically possible for him to refuse, but it is morally impossible.26

But in spite of God's grace, the arbitrary will, pitch, remains free. It may be strongly influenced by the motives provided by the intellect, but it alone chooses to obey or disobey:

Not, I'll not, carrion comfort, Despair, not feast on thee; Not untwist--slack they may be--these last strands of man In me, or, most weary, cry I can no more. I can; Can something, hope, wish day come, not choose not to be.

More, man can choose not merely to acquiesce barely; he can cooperate actively, and in cooperating be most perfectly what he was meant to be:

Men here draw like breath
More Christ and baffle death
Who, born so, comes to be
New self and nobler me
In each one and each one
More makes, when all is done,
Both God's and Mary's son.27

If he chooses to disobey, however, the consequences are correspondingly dreadful:

25 Hopkins, Note-books, 325, 326.

26 Scotus, Op. Ox., I, d. 17, q. 3, n. 23; q. 6, nn. 1, 3, X, 82, 123; II, d. 37, q. 2, n. 4, XIII, 370; Rep. Par., II, d. 29, q. 1, nn. 8, 10; d. 37, q. 2, n. 3, XXIII, 145, 146, 192.

"I am gall, I am heartburn. God's most deep decree
Bitter would have me taste: my taste was me;
Bones built in me, flesh filled, blood brimmed the curse.
Selfyeast of spirit a dull dough sours. I see
The lost are like this and their scourge to be
As I am mine, their sweating selves; but worse.28

Since both Hopkins and Scotus equate pitch or free will in a special way with selfhood or haeceitas, one would expect that even, or rather especially, here in the creature's most intimate relation with God, his distinctiveness, his differentness would manifest itself. Hopkins remarked that one man differs so much from another in the way he responds to grace, that "in one God finds only the constrained correspondence with his forestall . . . . in another he finds after this an act of choice properly so called." He congratulated his heart when it rushed to ratify God's stress:

My heart, but you were dove-winged, I can tell,
Carrier-witted, I am bold to boast,
To flash from the flame to the flame then, tower from the grace to the grace.

Later, in the second part of "The Wreck of the Deutschland," he praised the nun for expressing an act of choice properly so called:

Ah! there was a heart right
There was a single eye!
Read the unshapable shock night
And knew the who and the why;
Wording it how but by him that present and past,
Heaven and earth are word of, worded by?--
The Simon Peter of a soul! to the blast
Tarpeian-fast, but a blown beacon of light.29

Robert Boyle, S. J., remarks in this connection: "The action of grace which Hopkins treats in the poem is that which causes the recipients to be 'raised to the state when their deeds should be the doing of God in them'." 30

Taken this way, pitch refers to the supernatural stress of the soul: the instressing of the will to so-and-so with the help of God's grace or the feeling of God's stress in oneself. The divine stress is the Holy Spirit, and, since it comes through Christ, Christ's spirit: "That is Christ being me and me being Christ." 31 There can, however, be a purely natural instress, not a product of grace, from the act of the stress, either one's own or another's toward the self.

As inscape can mean either the nature of the existing object or the product of intuitive knowing, so stress can mean either the principle of activity, the bead of being, or that power in the individual which enables it to impress its inscape on another. Hopkins called the knowledge or perception or impression of other inscapes or selves the instress, that which conveys the individual object to the perceiver as present and existing. Father Schoder elaborates on the meaning of Hopkins' coinage:

Instressed: to feel a vivid impact of something with concentration and many associations, to dwell, realize, emphasize . . .; often akin to Einfuehlung, empathy; the forceful impression made on a beholder by the inner energies of a thing's being. 32

30 "The Thought Structure of 'The Wreck of the Deutschland'," Immortal Diamond, 343.
Instress is not wholly objective but is in some way related to the perceiver, the subject, with the implication of something inherent in the object which is brought to its full being only in the effect upon the peripient subject.\textsuperscript{33}

The instress is the act of the will fixing and completing the inscape.

Not only does the inscape give intuitive knowledge of the individual as present and existing, but, properly attended, it leads the mind back almost instantaneously to the Most Distinctive Self of Whom all other selves are only pale reflections. The inscape or Ideal Nature in the intellectual memory cannot be transmitted to the understanding, the distinctly knowing mind, unless it is presented under the widest possible terms, i.e., being without any limitations. But unlimited being is the only intelligible object which the will as a spiritual power spontaneously pursues. Being, not truth, is the mind's object and this object can be attained perfectly only by union with it, not merely by a representation of it. Knowing is content with nature but desire has "heaved" for its goal. The will of its nature can rest only in the infinite and it must, of its nature, have an object that is a real individual other than itself.\textsuperscript{34}

Cognitive practice is experimental knowledge of spiritual reality; it is always followed by spontaneous will activity so that it is really knowledge through the will of that to which the will is tending and is closely related to praxis. Its intelligible content is being uncontracted by any known

\textsuperscript{33} Coogan, "Instress and Inscape: Further Analogies with Scotus," \textit{PMLA}, LXV, 69.

\textsuperscript{34} Devlin, "The Image and the Word," Parts I and II, \textit{The Month}, New Series III, 125, 126, 195, 196.
limits, becoming, under the influence of the will, the knowledge of one's desire for the infinite.35

The interaction or instress of the three powers—memory transmitting inscape to the understanding as unlimited being and the will then directing the understanding toward the infinite—is the total response of the individual to its Creator. Truth is the conformation of the mind to its object. But the rational soul is perfectly conformed with its object only when it operates in the image of the Trinity. It only operates in the image of the Trinity when the Presence of God is its original object.36 "It is this way that Scotus says God revealed the mystery of the Trinity that His servants might direct their thoughts in worship towards, determine them, pit them, upon the real terms which are the Persons of His being the object of that worship."37

The mechanism of the process may be set in motion by any object. Under certain conditions, an imperfect image of the Trinity can be achieved when some sensible object causes the soul to pursue not God Himself but the likeness of God in the soul's own triple activity. The conditions are that bodily sensation be caught up in spiritual insight (the expression of the innate memory's striving towards the infinite discussed in Chapter III); that the phantasm of imagination and the particular inquiry of the speculative intellect intervening be dominated by a single intellectual intuition of being; that the

37 Hopkins, Note-books, 342.
whole of nature in the act of being created breathe through the mind and find its mouthpiece in the personal will. 38

This instress is not easy to achieve. The power is given to everyone, but not everyone uses it. Hopkins mentions throughout the journal that instress does not come at all or only with difficulty when he is not alone.

First act, the perception of inscape, is a spontaneous expression of Nature, good but neither wrong nor right; to make it right the individual must direct it to God by an act of love. 39

I kiss my hand
To the stars, lovely-asunder
Starlight, wafting him out of it; and
Glow, glory in thunder;
Kiss my hand to the dappled-with-damson west;
Since tho' he is under the world's splendour and wonder,
His mystery must be instressed, stressed;
For I greet him the days I meet him, and bless when I understand. 40

The act of recognizing the infinite behind and in the inscape is not full-circle, and the instress is not complete, until the self, using free will, offers all other selves to God, for

any day, any minute we bless God for our being or for anything, for food, for sunlight, we do and are what we were meant for, made for--things that give and mean to give God glory. 41

When an individual uses the knowledge of other individuals or of the Inscape of the Ideal Nature to perform the action which makes him more himself--giving


41 Hopkins, Note-books, 304.
glory to God, He is stressing the instress. Poetically, Hopkins in "The Candle
Indoors" invites Jack and Jack to perform this characteristic action and in
"The Soldier" he describes its true meaning:

Now, and seeing somewhere some man do all that man can do,
For love he leans forth, needs his neck must fall on, kiss,
And cry 'O Christ-done deed! So God-made-flesh does too:
Were I come o'er again' cries Christ 'it should be this.' 42

In nature, in which pitch is absent or indifferent, the human individual must perform the act, super-add it:

Remark also how after the benefits of Creation and Redemption he does not add, he means us to add, that of sanctification.

. . . All things therefore are charged with love, are charged with God and if we know how to touch them give off sparks and take fire, yield drops and flow, ring and tell of him.

In "Ribblesdale," Hopkins calls man "Earth's eye, tongue, or heart." 43 In one of his most joyous poems, Hopkins instressed his delight in the inscapes of nature by superadding what is lacking to them:

Glory be to God for dappled things---
For skies of couple-colour as a brinded cow;
For rose-moles all in stipple upon trout that swim;
Fresh-firecoal chestnut-falls; finches' wings;
Landscape plotted and pieced--fold, fallow, and plough;
And all trades, their gear and tackle and trim.

All things counter, original, spare, strange;
Whatever is fickle, freckled (who knows how?)
With swift, slow; sweet, sour; adazle, dim;
He fathers-forth whose beauty is past change;
Praise him. 44

42 Hopkins, Poems, 39, 105.

43 Hopkins, "Contemplation to Obtain Love," Note-books, 342; Poems, 96.

Hopkins had already formed the ideas of inescapable and of stress before encountering Scotus. He did not need the Subtle Doctor to awaken him to the beauties of nature or even to the distinctive attributes of every created thing. He was quite aware of nature's endless variety, and even the earliest entries in his journal attest to his observation of, and interest in, all the distinctive individualities of things during his travels on the continent. From childhood he had trained himself, disciplined his will, so that the importance of the will was not a new idea to him. His devotion to Christ and to Mary was obvious from the fact of his conversion and his choice of the Society of Jesus in which to work out his vocation. The idea of creation as a reflection of God and of human beings as images of God is not a Scotist monopoly, and Hopkins was certainly alive to the divine communication in visible creation. In what way, then, did Scotus influence Hopkins?

Hopkins was like a man with an intricate and fascinating puzzle to which he has some of the pieces but not all. Scotus was the man with the other pieces. When Hopkins encountered Scotus, he came prepared not only with questions but also with some tentative answers. He had already read Aristotle in his Oxford days and admired him, but he did not have that feeling of joy or of arrival that he later experienced in reading Scotus and experienced so intense-
ly that he felt the meeting to be a mercy from God. He feared then that it might come to nothing, but his fears were groundless.

Whether or not one generally accepts Suctus' philosophy, one cannot--having read Hopkins' poems, notebooks, journals and letters--help but feel the astonishing suitability of Suctus to Hopkins and especially to Hopkins the Jesuit priest. They fit like mortised corners. Both the Spiritual Exercises and the philosophy of Suctus deepened Hopkins' appreciation of nature as the channel of divine communication and sharpened his interest in the particular, individualised aspects of nature through which that communication is realized.¹

Although it can be validly maintained that some of the things Suctus held are not peculiar to him but could be also claimed for other philosophers, it can hardly be claimed that all of the points on which he and Hopkins coincide and which are essential to his system can be found in the same way in any other philosopher. Even if Hopkins could have found these ideas elsewhere, in fact, by his own admission, he found them in Suctus. Suctus' philosophy in very broad outline will and necessarily does resemble that of any Scholastic philosopher because they all worked within a definite framework which allowed individual differences. Within the framework, speculation was unlimited, and the things which distinguish Suctus' philosophy from that of other philosophers are those things precisely which attracted Hopkins. Some of the differences are differences in emphasis, but even behind these there lies a real difference in attitude.

For Scotus and for Hopkins, the primary reality is the individual, and because it is primary it must be in some way directly knowable. Here the poet Hopkins found a valuable ally in the philosopher. Hopkins was naturally impressed with detail. Early entries in the journal reveal his striving to capture that distinctiveness which struck him so forcibly in an equally distinctive expression, taking infinite pains to find the exact word and the perfect comparison to convey the impression of the precise tinge of color of a cloud or of the sea at sunset, or the very feel and texture of a bluebell or a primrose. Scotus taught that appearances and above all actions are the keys to knowing the individual. But he went further, and the priest in Hopkins was delighted. Not only are these things lovely in themselves because they are themselves, but even more important they are news of God, news in two ways: their very actuality, their existence at all is absolutely dependent on God's Will and so they stand in a sense in a direct relationship to Him and their distinctiveness is a perfection which increases as the grade of being ascends to the Most Distinctive of all selves. Knowledge of individuals and selves leads to God in still another way.

Scotus' formal distinction among the powers—Memory, Mind, and Will—in God is reflected in the human soul in the intellectual memory, the understanding, and the will. The intellectual memory is informed with a habitual species specialissima which is both the motive and the power of knowing. It is not yet actual knowledge; it is the ability to know and the tendency to know. The senses are one level of consciousness in the soul and sensation is of the

2 Ibid., 227.
soul in its origin. When sensation occurs, the tendency to know or the primitive intuition of being in the intellectual memory is actualized into a particular *species specialissima* of the individual as present and existing. Scotus' *species specialissima*, Hopkins' *inscape*, is an imperfect approximation of the *species specialissima* in the intellectual memory. It is not clear and distinct knowledge of the individual as such but a vague intuition of an individualized nature. Ordinarily the process of abstraction begins immediately, but under certain conditions, if the process is held at first act, there is a momentary glimpse of the common nature, of nature being created, of inscape. This insight into what is going on behind secondary images and sensations grasps being and presents it to the intellect, not as the essence of some particular kind of being, but as the idea of being without any limitations. The third level or power of the soul, the will, can pursue this idea of infinite being, can instress the *inscape*, since infinite being is its end. The innate image of the common nature or the power of knowing in the intellectual memory is Christ, for and by and in Whom all things are created.

It is part of a poet's or writer's craft to seek the exact word, to convey the precise feeling. With Hopkins this artistic demand was reinforced philosophically; to produce the thing exactly was the only way to present the thing to the reader. A proper apprehension of the thing is necessary for the apprehension of the divine communication behind and in the thing. Philosophically, the changing aspects, the accidental qualities, Scotus' *formalitates* and Hopkins' *sides*, must be minutely observed because they give a clearer, more nearly distinct conception of the being whose essential individuality in its completeness is incommunicable. This feeling for the external pattern express-
ive of the internal form of things came to be a pivotal point in Hopkins' thought to which he turned again and again in his writings.\(^3\) It was important for him to know and to transmit his perception of the individuals in nature because, properly apprehended, they led the mind and the will to Christ and to God.

Hopkins was struck by the two facets of things: their unity and at the same time, paradoxically, their radical difference. Scotus explained the difference as a refraction in time of the separation of two powers inseparable but distinct in God in eternity. The Mind of God is expressed through nature: that which is common and unchanging. The Will of God is expressed in individuals, for they are contingent and their existence depends upon His Will. When Hopkins examined things and his own ideas of things, he formulated this difference by calling the common element in creatures the inscape and the distinctive action of the individual the stress. Of course, since the natures to which the term inscape applied were existent, the term actually refers not to the universal idea of the essence but rather to an existing nature as perceived. When he considered himself in relation to other human beings, he became increasingly concerned with the isolation of things from one another, in the incommunicable core of individual beings. This radical difference, the stress in irrational creatures, was in human beings bound up inextricably with free will, self-determination, Hopkins' pitch. Natural drives are common to all members of the same species, but the way in which these drives are satisfied, the way in which the nature is manifested to other natures, differs from thing

\(^3\) Ibid., 227.
to thing and from person to person. This manifestation through external activity, since it differed from person to person and from thing to thing, Hopkins reasoned, must be an indication at least of that radical individuality which is attainable by no other means. In living things especially, every act of the thing is an index to its distinctiveness. Scotus' philosophy with its emphasis on the will and on the freedom of the will is a philosophy of action in which to be is primarily to act.

Hopkins felt with Scotus that accidental material modifications under different aspects give a deeper insight into individuals, but that the real key to the individual is in its characteristic action. Actions which stem from a thing's nature make the thing more itself. Men provide the most fruitful study because their actions are self-determined. They are the most perfect examples of selves in the visible universe because they are free and because, unlike the lower grades of being, they do not find their fulfillment in the species. They speak of Christ more strongly because they are truly images of the World-made-Flesh. Scotus taught that the Incarnation was intended even if man had not sinned. Hopkins agreed, for

redeem may be said not only of the recovering from sin to grace or perdition to salvation but also of the raising from worthlessness before God... to worthiness of him, the meriting of God himself...

Christ is the end toward which individuals tend as well as their model, the perfect Individual. As men sum up all the lower orders of being because they have a common kinship with all creation, so Christ sums up all created things

4 Hopkins, Note-books, 344.
and is the reason why they were made as well as the Model from which they were made.

The characteristic action of all things is to glorify God. The lower grades of being do this merely by being themselves whether animal, vegetable, or mineral, performing those functions which are natural to them. Since human beings are free agents, however, their natural function involves willing God's glory. All creation gives glory necessarily simply by existing, but human beings, in order to fulfill their natures properly, must perform right actions or actions in accordance with right reason not from force but from choice. Since their end is not simply natural but is rather supernatural, they must perform right actions which will be meritorious. Hopkins shows the very strong influence of Scotus in treating the action of grace in men's souls, carefully preserving the essential liberty of the will. Not only does man fulfill his own nature by freely cooperating with God's grace and by giving Him glory—by instressing God's stress—but he also raises and sanctifies all creation by offering it with himself to God. Irrational creatures glorify God through the mediation of man; man glorifies God through Christ; and Christ gives the greatest possible glory to God.5

Perhaps the poem which most completely illustrates Scotus' influence on Hopkins is "As kingfishers catch fire." It is a poetic statement of Scotus' thesis that the Word of God, the Grace of Christ, working in nature is the bridge of reestablishment of the primordial harmony between the two powers--

5 Father George, "The Incarnation Is the Complement of Creation: The Duns Scotus View," The Ecclesiastical Review, LXXXVIII, 525.
the Mind of God which projects the Divine Idea of Nature and the Will of God working through matter, through life, and, finally and properly, through the operations of free selves—which are separated and refracted in created things in time or duration but which are inseparable in eternity.6

The first stanza concentrates on the lower orders of nature, treating inscape and its act, the stress. The inscape, the individualized nature, is brought out by an enumeration of accidental qualities, but particularly qualities of activity, the stress of the thing:

As kingfishers catch fire, dragonflies draw flame;
As tumbled over rim in roundy wells
Stones ring; like each tucked string tells, each hung bell's
Bow swung finds tongue to fling out broad its name . . . .

This stress, this characteristic activity, which makes the thing to be more itself, at the same time makes this thing known to others, instresses itself upon them:

Each mortal thing does one thing and the same:
Deals out that being indoors each one dwells;
Selves--goes itself; myself it speaks and spells;
Crying What I do is me; for that I came.7

But the selfhood expressed in non-rational, non-free creatures is incomplete. There are creatures higher than they in the scale of being. Men are more lovely and more precious than irrational creatures because they have more complete selfhood; they are self-determining. When a man is just--when he fulfills his nature by cooperating with grace--not only does he sanctify

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7 Hopkins, "As kingfishers catch fire," Number 57, Poems, 95.
himself, justify himself, but he also fulfills the purpose of all created beings, justifies them, in a way that at least the lower orders are incapable of doing for themselves.

I say more: the just man justifies;
Keeps grace: that keeps all his goings graces.

This justification is possible only through Christ. Christ's grace is the bridge. When the just man instresses himself--makes himself to be more what he was intended to be--he

Acts, in God's eyes what in God's eyes he is--
Christ--for Christ plays in ten thousand places,
Lovely in limbs, and lovely in eyes not his
To the Father through the features of men's faces. 8

Men are images of Christ in two ways: as approximations at various removes of Christ the Model for all individuals and as reflections of the Word-made-Flesh. They are what Christ is, first, through His grace, sharing the life that is His, and then, because they are what He was through His Humanity, sharing the nature that was His.

Hopkins had something to say and what he had to say dictated how he said it. "Imagery will, if carefully and correctly analyzed, indicate both a poet's method and his philosophy." 9 Gardner says of Hopkins' method: "When he gave a peculiar twist to his syntax it was always to bring about some precise rhythmical or rhetorical effect to integrate object, experience, and language in the individually distinctive beauty of inscape." 10 If literature is lan-

8 Ibid.


10 Gerard Manley Hopkins, II, 131.
language deeply penetrated by idea, and the language is taken to be not simply words but the life principle animating the words, then Scotus' philosophy and the Spiritual Exercises combined and Hopkinsized are the breath of life to the poems; they are the stress of the poetic incape which is instressed in the mind of the reader.

11 Hopkins, Note-Books, 95.
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B. ARTICLES


C. UNPUBLISHED MATERIALS


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APPROVAL SHEET

The thesis submitted by Lenore Moe Fleming has been read and approved by three members of the Department of English.

The final copies have been examined by the director of the thesis and the signature which appears below verifies the fact that any necessary changes have been incorporated, and that the thesis is now given final approval with reference to content, form, and mechanical accuracy.

The thesis is therefore accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts.

May 1, 1954

Date

Signature of Adviser