CHAPTER III

GOD IN NATURE

He who in this world of many sees that one, he who in this mass of insentience sees that one sentient Being, he who in the world of shadows catches that Reality, unto him belongs eternal peace...

_The Kulu Upanishad_ (22.13).

Hopkins and Bharathi are great lovers of nature. Their poems on nature are marked by a Romantic fascination for the wonders of nature. The landscapes, skyscapes, treescapes and the fauna and flora of the earth attracted them. Hopkins at one stage of his life drew his poetry almost entirely from nature. The middle phase of his poetic output reveals his simple rapture at the loveliness of the world as a manifestation of God. _God’s Grandeur_ (GG), _The Starlight Night_ (TSN), _Hurrahing in Harvest_ (HH), _Pied Beauty_ (PB), _The Sea and the Skylark_ (SS), and _The Windhover_ (WH) belong to this period.

"...Read remarks that the poetic force behind these nature poems comes from a vital awareness of the objective beauty of the world (1985: 102). As Grigson points out, the Journals of Hopkins kept from 1868 to 1875 help to an understanding of Hopkins’s deep love for nature. He observes that Hopkins “delighted in the observations and grasping of nature.” According to him, with the greatest delicacy, strength,
and intelligence, Hopkins possessed his environment, making it "the intimate vehicle for the passionate praises of his belief" (1985: 143-144). Vincent Turner remarks that many poems of Hopkins are masterpieces of nature poetry in which theology is unobtrusive (1985: 129). McLuhan points out that Hopkins is "not a nature mystic at all, nor a religious mystic, either, but an analogist" (1966: 81).

Bharathi does not disregard the joys of this world; but instead, he enjoys the blessings of nature, and believes in concentration of the five senses on that path of enjoyment in order to attain a higher life. He regards nature as the expression of the inner world. Beautiful things as well as the opposite things of horror and ugliness exist in nature, as an expression of the appearance of the Ultimate Reality. Bharathi’s nature-poems, "steeped in his experience of nature, explain this great principle, which is so filled in nature" (Bharathi, Vijaya 1975: 100), which he calls Sakti or Sivasakti. cūrya tarcan̄̄, nīlavūn vāngin̄ūn kāṭrun̄ (nvk), kālaḷ polujū (kp), antil polujū (ap) are some of Bharathi’s poems on nature.

Kailasapathy considers Bharathi "as generally representative of the Romantic Movement" in Tamil (1970: 41). He points out that Bharathi has a lot in common with the English
Romantic poets, but “they are not the only poets who broadened Bharathi’s vision” (1970:15). Subramanian emphasizes the unmistakeable poetic quality of Bharathi’s prose-poems under the common title kāṭci. He suggests that they have to be read as a single poem, in fact as “an epic in a new manner.” He remarks that while celebrating Natural Forces, Natural Movements like the Vedic sages, Bharathi’s prose poems express something new and fresh:

All, all are one; the phenomenal world,
The things we see, the things we feel,
The whole universe is ONE; me, you,
Female, male, sea, wind, water, Sakti,
The Gods all are one. (pac 1989: 91-95)

In the contemplative tradition inaugurated by Plato and Plotinus, contemplation means simply beholding, seeing, but in more than a sensory way. Plato’s theoria, Greek for contemplation, is the way not only to behold and understand but also to participate and unite with the highest object of knowledge. Vision then becomes union (Lichtmann 1989: 136). Hopkins and Bharathi have defined meditation/contemplation in a similar way.

Hopkins distinguishes between ordinary way of thinking and contemplation, in terms of energy of the mind. There are two
kinds of energy of the mind. One is “a transitional kind, where one thought or sensation follows another.” The other is an “abiding kind” in which the mind is absorbed, “taken up, dwells upon, enjoys, a single thought” which state may be called contemplation (AHR 1966: 139). In an essay, tyāṇan (Meditation), Bharathi says that the power of meditation should not be underestimated. The fleeting momentary thoughts do not signify contemplation. Contemplation is a sublime longing, which is a blazing fire burning away all the thoughts and anxieties like fire in the bushes. If one possesses such a fire in one’s mind, all actions of the world would appear to change in tune with one’s state of mind (P 1981: 6). He defines the blaze of thought (contemplation) as Divine Energy (Sakti).

Hopkins had remarkable powers of observation. Miller points out that Hopkins knows that “detached observation of nature is not a possession of it. There must be a strong grappling action on the part of the mind to go out and meet the powerful energy with which things are what they are” (1966: 96). Hopkins’s Journals abound in the descriptions of the distinctive beauty of the world of nature. For the beauty of pattern, which expresses a thing’s inner form, he coined the word ‘inscape’; and for the intense feeling it exerted on him, the word ‘Instress’. Duns
Scotus, a medieval theologian stressed on individuality, both of persons and things. He taught that the mind can apprehend the individual, concrete object and through intuition of its 'this-ness' finally come to know the universal; that such experiences of individual beauty ultimately reveal God; and that through directing such experiences towards God, man can perfect his own individuality, his will. In all this, Hopkins found support, ratification for his theory of 'inscape', and above all a religious sanction for it. He remarked that he was "flush with a new stroke of enthusiasm" on reading Scotus (J 1959: 135).

Hopkins and Bharathi affirmed that the whole world is permeated with God and sought to realize it through contemplation. Hopkins, being an incarnationist and a Scotist asserts that all things "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" (AHR 1996: 404). The same assertion finds expression in his poems too. In GG, he affirms: "The world is charged with the grandeur of God. /It will flame out, like shining from shook foil." He states, in WD, that God is immanent in the world and that man's duty is to perceive Him: "Under the world's splendour and wonder/His mystery must be instressed..." (st. 5).
Hopkins declares that he has had the experience of "wafting" his God out of the starlight (WD st.5). He states that he has often been in "this mood (of contemplation) and felt the depth of an instress of how fast the inscape holds a thing that nothing is so pregnant and straight-forward to the truth as simple 'yes' and 'is'!" (J 1959: 127). Peters observes that Hopkins habitually looked at nature with "intense concentration; he looked hard at things and patiently waited till the inscape had strongly grown in him" (1970: 5). Cotter explains that 'instress' is man's yes in response to Being felt and known; 'inscape', the 'IS' that marks Being itself (1972: 13). Hopkins's experience of discovering a hidden wholeness amid apparent diversity and entropy is his own experience in the contemplation of nature. And the awe and astonishment that accompany this contemplative vision are his 'Instress'. Through its 'instress' upon him, the world yields up its inner beauty in a revelation of what he calls its 'Inscape'. Lichtmann observes that Hopkins's 'Inscape' is "a religious experience" in which things surrendered their deepest secret, God. She adds that in this sense, 'Inscape' can be compared to the mystic's 'God's shining out of every creature' (1989: 129).
Hopkins, employs light-imagery to convey the experience of ‘jnānāmśṛtā’:

The glass blue days are those
When every colour glows,
Each shape and shadow shows. (BV)

The theistic Advaitin declares that God is not only the creator, but “He is also the created. He Himself is this Universe” (Vivekananda 1987: 65). For the Sakta, the world is real, for it is the manifestation of Sakti.

Bharathi regards nature as the expression of the inner world. In his essay vētariśikalin jāvītai (The poetry of the Vedic sages), he writes:

The sun rises...the rishi (sage) looks at it, salutes it and
chants his mantras. Birds sing, flowers bloom, water and
wind smile; all these are appearances of God of nature.
When the rishi worships, he worships the explicit Narayana.

(Bharathi, Vijaya 1975: 100)

In vaiyānu prliatun (All over the world), Bharathi states that Sakti is present in the five elements and visible everywhere. In kōnata nākīnai (The greatness of Goddess Komathl), he states that the Ultimate Reality of this wonderful world is parasivasakti. He rejects the theory of illusion, asserting that
things in the world are not mere dreams or hallucinations because they contain divine energy in them (pooyō geyyō? /Illusion or Real?). He repeatedly affirms in pa (st.15): “Not an atom but contains his (God’s) greatness/Not a single thing without Sakti, the Great Energy” (POS 1982: 48).

Bharathi speaks of the solitude, which is capable of creating an atmosphere suitable for close communion with nature in pilaita tennantōppu (The coconut grove that Survived). He employs light imagery to convey the perception of divinity in the world. He states that Sakti experience consists in the perception of ‘radiant light within darkness’, ‘light of intelligence in inanimate stones’, and in the perception of the ‘strength of diamond in the blade of grass’ (par).

Hopkins’s PB and Bharathi’s ki share thematic and structural similarities. Both are poems on creation. They relate God, the creator, to the world, his creation. The world is nothing but the diverse manifestation of the one formless unseen Divine Energy. In Hopkins’s PB, the truth that God is the creator of this world is explicitly stated. The fact that it is God himself who manifests in the form of all matter is implicit and it is, however, suggested in the title of the poem unmistakably. By the use of
parallelism, both poets make the form of the poem reinforce its theme.

The titles PB and ki are suggestive of the presence of God in the world, the divine in the mundane, the spirit in matter and the one as many. The title of Hopkins’s poem contains two words “Pied” and “Beauty.” “Pied” means mixed colours, suggesting variety, multiplicity and diversity, and “Beauty” suggests the underlying unity among the “Pied” things; the former represents the seen reality while the latter, an abstract noun, the perceived reality. “Pied” is placed first perhaps to suggest that only through the seen reality (matter/the world), the unseen reality (spirit/God) can be perceived. The title indicates that all pied things/matter contain beauty/spirit.

Like Hopkins, Bharathi also believes that only through the manifest world, the unmanifest God can be perceived. Though the common title kāṭci literally means a spectacle or scene, it is used here by Bharathi only to convey the contemplative perception of the all-pervasive divinity in the world. It can be seen as similar to the idea conveyed by Hopkins’s term ‘inscape’. The subtitle, inpan, means joy, what beauty instresses on the seer. Thus, the titles of poems, PB and ki convey the contemplative vision of the presence of God in everything in the world.
PB and ki open with homage to the creator of the world, God. In both, the cardinal elements are catalogued and the attributes of the 'dappled' things mentioned. Both poems are marked by a paratactic affirmation of the mysterious nature of the relationship between God and the world. They contain an explicit or implicit injunction to the reader to praise God.

PB and ki begin with homage to God, the creator of the world. Hopkins praises God for the creation of the "Pied" world: "Glory be to God for dappled things" (PB). Bharathi pays an implicit but very obvious homage to God by opening his poem with the affirmation: "This world is sweet" (ki). Instead of praising the creator directly, Bharathi praises His creation.

The first two tercets of PB and the first section of ki describe the cardinal elements and the world of man. Hopkins lists out the cardinal elements, in parallel statements. He uses sensuous imagery, which appeals to the sense of sight. The "skies of couple-colour" and "finches' wings" suggest the element of Air/Atmosphere and the "trout that swim" the element of Water. The "firecoal" suggests the element of Fire, and the "plotted and pieced" landscape obviously represents the Earth. The "brinded cow", "rose-moles" refer to the fauna and flora of the earth and
“all trades, their gear and tackle and trim” imply the world of man.

In 
kī, Bharathi describes the cardinal elements and man in plain parallel statements and characterizes them as ‘sweet’. Bharathi presents the world through the imagery taste:

This world is sweet. The sky is sweet.
This wind is sweet. Fire is sweet
The land is sweet...Birds are sweet...
The animals are sweet. Human beings are sweet.

(Pac 1989: 97)

Hopkins describes the attributes of the dappled things in the third tercet:

All things counter, original, spare, strange;
Whatever is fickle, freckled...
With swift, slow; sweet, sour; adazzle, dim; (Pb).

Sulloway comments that Hopkins “unobtrusively” introduces four of Ruskins’s favourite corollaries to the principle of specific creation: “the principles of stability behind flux, of sacramental energy, of nature’s willful mystery, and of natural antithesis in all things.” She adds that Hopkins has “neatly encompassed the sacrament of energy and of flux in the three adjectives” (1972: 106). The admission of universal antagonisms is recorded in the
juxtaposition of opposites. Even here the alliteration and the parallel punctuation imitate nature’s benign reconciliation between things usually thought incompatible.

In *ki*, Bharathi devotes some 15 lines in the first section, the whole of second and third sections and the first 11 lines in the fourth section to present an extensive catalogue of the ‘sweet’ things. In the concluding verse-paragraph, the dialectic between the Creator and the Created is expressed:

Oh... You are one. You are many.

You are friendship; you are enmity.

What is and is not is you.

Known and unknown are you.

Good and evil are you. (*pac* 1989: 99)

*PB* and *ki* are marked by a paratactic affirmation of the relationship between God and the world. Hopkins views the creation of the world as “a great work of power” (*AHR* 1966: 392). Through the centrifugal force of creation all reality whirls out from Christ: All things “He fathers-forth whose beauty is past change” (*PB*). The simple proposition ‘forth’ indicates relation, manifestation to and in the world. Yet the process of fathering forth remains wrapped in mystery: “who knows how” (*PB*). James Milroy draws attention to the “semantic rhymes” that are
distributed throughout PB as an organizing principle. According to him, the poem is organized on the phonetic level in terms of play on words that end in "-le." He says that the "-le" words together with the chestnut falls and other things that are dappled, constitute the semantic rhymes. He remarks that the poem is in effect a definition of "pied" or "dappled." He explains that these are the superordinate terms under which rosemoles, stipplestipples, brindles and so on are grouped as members of the semantic field (1997-185). Sulloway remarks that the dappled things celebrate "the sacrament of energy in their generic behavior" (1972: 105).

In kl, section 4 concludes with a paratactic affirmation of the relationship between God and the world. The 'dappled' things

.... Are one

But appear to be many.

Whatever things there are, are one and only thing.

The name of this one is "I" (The soul)

"I" is God

"I" is deathless, nectar. (pac 1989: 98)

As in Hopkins’s poem, here also, how the one divine energy manifests itself in the form of many remains a mystery.

PB ends with an injunction to the reader to praise God:

"Praise Him." In section 6 of kl, Bharathi also exhorts: "Praise we
the Gods." The poem concludes praising God: You are nectar. You are taste. You are good. You are joy (pac 1989:99).

The structures of PB and ki reinforce their theme - the underlying unity of God behind the apparent diversity of the dappled things through the use of parallelism. Symmetry as well as asymmetry, sameness and difference mark them. Both poems are marked by an apparently overall asymmetry. PB is divided into two unequal sections, the first two tercets constituting the first half and the third tercet followed by a coda of 2 lines constituting the second half of the poem. All lines do not start uniformly flush from the margin. The poem describes a series of seemingly disparate things, God, sky, firecoal, chestnuts, trout, finches, in the first half and a series of juxtaposition of the opposites in the second half. Bharathi’s ki is also marked by an overall apparent asymmetry. It contains seven verse-paragraphs of obviously unequal length. And every verse-paragraph contains lines of unequal length. Nearly all verse paragraphs contain a series of disparate things, which is very extensive in some. This overall asymmetry reflects the apparent entropy of God’s creation.

Both poems show a number of symmetrical features that reflect the thematic unity signified by the immanence of God in
the world of apparent diversity. Initial reiteration and repetition of words or use of alliteration and rhyme reinforce the sense of unity. The three tercets in PB are bound by a parallel pattern among themselves. In each, the first line starts flush from the margin and the following lines are indented and extended beyond the previous line. The first lines of the three tercets and the first line of the concluding coda start uniformly from the margin. All lines are end-stopped. In ki, all lines of the poem start flush from the margin, showing a uniform pattern and almost all the lines are end-stopped.

Both poems use initial reiteration, which is a parallelistic metrical device. In PB, the second, third and the fourth lines’ start with the ‘F’ consonant sound; the sixth and seventh with the ‘A’ vowel sound; and the eighth and ninth lines with the ‘W’ sound. In ki, the first three lines of the fifth section start with the word “ella” (all). In the sixth section, the word “teivankal” (Gods) is repeated five times initially. And in the seventh section, the second and third lines begin with “ni” (you).

In PB, the use of alliteration and rhyme scheme impart a sense of unity, which seems to be achieved by Bharathi in ki by means of the repetition of a few words, which are used as synonyms to God. In PB, all lines except the last contain at least
one unit of alliteration. The sense of integration achieved by Hopkins through alliteration and rhyme scheme, Bharathi seems to achieve it by the sheer repetition of a few words. The word “ịgịtu” (sweet) is used as many as twenty three times, “telvan” (God) twenty times, “naŋru” (good) sixteen times, “nI” (you) fourteen times, “anutan” (nectar) twelve times, “inpan” (joy) ten times, and “onru” (one) eight times. All these words together constitute a semantic chime, for all these denote God.

Hopkins and Bharathi write on the beauty of landscapes and trees. They show more than Romantic fascination for the landscape of the earth, for the life and loveliness of the earth reflect the presence and loveliness of their gods. Both use taste-imagery to describe the loveliness of the earth. To Bharathi, the land is sweet, the mountain is sweet, the forest is sweet and the trees, the plant, the fruit are sweet (ki). Hopkins uses the same adjective: The earth is “sweet... sweet landscape with leaves throng and louched low grass” (Ribblesdale), and the rural scene is “sweet especial rural scene” (BP). Hartman remarks that the landscape in Ribblesdale, “like the modern poem, does not ‘mean’, but simply ‘is’ ” (1966: 125). Bharathi asserts that earth and heaven are not different (pa st. 16). He affirms that Mother earth is full of life force and that is why all that exists on her have
life always (k st. 13). He asserts that nothing is inanimate on earth (paṇṭārappāṭṭu/The song of a bard), and that the earth will continue to be fertile unless god himself dies (pa st.61). Hopkins echoes the same conviction in his affirmation that “the world is full of inscape” (1966: 91). He also believes that nature will never get exhausted because there lives the “dearest freshness deep down things” (GG). For both poets, everything on earth contains Divine Energy.

Hopkins and Bharathi show great fascination for the fauna and flora of the earth. Hopkins’s Journals are full of intensely observed treescapes: minute descriptions of the texture, shape and the lie of the leaves, of the play of light and shadow among branches and of the movement of wind and sun through foliage. Trees give pattern or ‘inscape’ to the countryside. He experiences “a great para’g” and wishes to “die and not to see the inscapes of the world destroyed” (J 1959: 230). He is fascinated by the sight of his dear aspens, whose “airy cages quelled...or quenched in leaves the leaping sun” (BP). Even in a city of towers, he does not overlook the trees growing in abundance between the towers (Duns Scotus’s Oxford); he is instressed by the “glassy peartree leaves and blooms”, which “brush the descending blue” (Spring). Bharathi is equally fascinated by the goodly trees all
around, laden with wonderful fruits \((ktk)\), and groves of all kinds gem like with multi-coloured flowers \((ket)\). The delicious fruits hanging from trees in many bowers allure him, which are one of the wonderful gifts of his goddess \((ket)\).

Hopkins uses a more sensuous language to describe the loveliness of the fruits. To him the “drop-of-blood-and-foam-dapple...orchard-apple” and “the merry” “thicket and thorp” with “silver-surfed cherry” recall the joy experienced by Mother Mary when she was carrying Jesus \((MM)\). To Hopkins, the “bluebells in bloom” \((AHR\ 1966: 95)\) and “very-violet-sweet” \((HH)\) reveal the beauty of his Lord. In the essay, \(vētariśikaliṇḍ kaviṭal\) \((The poetry of the Vedic sages)\), Bharathi remarks that, “the bloom of flowers”, among other things, is an appearance of the God of nature \((qtd. in Bharathi, Vijaya 1975: 100)\). Hopkins perceives Christ in the “azurous hung hills”, in the “stallion stalwart” \((HH)\), and the “racing lambs” remind him of the “earth’s sweet being in the beginning” \((Spring)\). Bharathi has his perception of divinity in the mountains \((oliyug irulug/Light and Darkness)\). The fauna in Bharathi are the long-eyed and lovely gazelles, tigers rehearsing their roar, pythons stretched on the floor, and lions standing like kings \((ktk)\).
The concept of an ideal house located in a rural setting finds expression in Hopkins’s *VE* and Bharathi’s *knv*. *VE* is a priestly meditation on fallen mankind, which presents a contrast between the loveliness of nature and the unloveliness of man. The poem is essentially a description of the location of an ideal house in a Welsh landscape. Bharathi’s *knv* is his prayer to Mother Parasakti for an ideal house, in an idyllic setting. Hopkins remembers “a house when all were good” (*VE*), while Bharathi seeks a majestic mansion in an acre of land with comely columns and snow-white storeys. Hopkins’s house has lovely waters and meadows, combes, vales (*VE*), while Bharathi needs a well near the house (*knv*). Hopkins mentions that the gentle breeze brushing through ‘some sweet wood’ on its way, carries a perfumed air around the house (*VE*), which obviously finds a parallel in the balmy breeze in the grove of coconuts, crowned with clusters of tender fruits (*knv*). Bharathi wants to experience the pleasure of hearing the sweet song of the Indian cuckoo in the backdrop of the shower of moonlight like lustrous pearls (*knv*).

Hopkins employs bird-imagery to convey the sense of protection that the cordial air provides to the surroundings: “as a bevy of eggs the mothering wing/ Will” (*VE*). Bharathi’s *knv* also mentions the sense of protection, which he seeks from his
goddess. Bharathi wants the company of a chaste wife to sing with him in concord, so that it will inspire him to pour forth such spell-binding songs as will redeem the world. The poem concludes with Bharathi’s concern for the well being of others. Hopkins also ends his poem with a prayer to his “God, lover of souls” to make good the deficiencies of man (VE). Thus the theme and the catalogue structure of the details of the landscape of these two poems share similarities.

Next to the beautiful landscapes, it is the bird-world, which seems to have attracted both poets. A discussion of CS by Hopkins and cittukkuruv (The sparrow) by Bharathi, and a comparative analysis of Hopkins’s WH and Bharathi kp and ap reveal their perception of divinity in the birds. The birds (Matter) reveal the presence of their Creator (Spirit). Hopkins and Bharathi view the birds as one of the wonderful creations of God. They mention the birds when they describe the cardinal elements and the world of man. It reflects the importance birds enjoyed in their deep poetic and religious consciousness. In PB, Hopkins mentions “finches wings” as one of the “dappled” things created by god. Similarly Bharathi includes the birds wherever he lists out the creations of God. He mentions birds as one of the many and varied creations of god (ket). He explicitly conveys the idea of
oneness of all creation by identifying the crow and sparrow with man. Birds find a place, where he asserts that all mortal things are real, and not dreams or illusions: 'what stands, walks, flies' (poyyō? ñeyyō?/Illusion or real?). In nāñ, the poem on his Self-Realization, the very opening line refers to the birds. In pa, he affirms that all life is God, even those that creep and fly.

Hopkins and Bharathi describe the appearance, voice, and flight of the birds. Hopkins is impressed by the woodlark, the 'cousin' of the skylark. The V-winged woodlark flies through the velvety wind to nest. It balances and buoys up in the air

With a sweet joy of a sweet joy,

Sweet, of a sweet, of a sweet joy

Of a sweet-a sweet-sweet-joy. (The Woodlark)

Bharathi describes the birds as "sweet" (ki) and his kuyil, the Indian cuckoo sings in kup:

Joy, joy for always:

and joy failing

misery, o misery. (PO 1997:134)

The tiny, pretty figure of a sparrow inspires in Bharathi's heart a boundless aesthetic joy. In one of his essays, citṭukuruvil he gives a brief pen-portrait of the small bird: It has a tiny corn-like nose; tiny eyes; little head; a white neck; a grey silky stomach; a
silky beak; spotted with black and white, ash-coloured, a small
tail; tiny drops of feet.

Hopkins and Bharathi skilfully inscape the sweetness of a
bird’s song wafting in the air, in the most sensuous language. In
the opening passage of *kup*, Bharathi describes the sweetness of
the *kuyil*’s bewitching song which tinkles the males of her class
and ensnares all the birds in that grove and made them forget
their morning chores. The song filled the air with nectar like
scattered lightning in thin streaks. The poet feels that a siren
from heaven was casting a spell, with her enthralling music in the
shape of a *kuyil*. Similarly Hopkins describes the sweet music of
the skylark, whose

...rash-fresh re-winded new-skeined score

In crisps of curl off wild winch whirl, and pour

And pelt music, till none’s to spill nor spend. (CS)

Hopkins explains “rash-fresh” as a headlong and “exciting
new snatch of singing.” The “skein” and “curl” of the lark’s song
gives the impression of something falling to the earth, “not
vertically quite but tricklingly or wavingly” (qtd. in McChesney
1968: 64). Hopkins himself admits the obscure nature of these
lines.
Hopkins and Bharathi use the birds as traditional symbols of the spirit of man. Hopkins makes an elaborate comparison between the human spirit and the skylark in CS, which is marked by two stages. In the octave, the spirit of a living human being is compared to a caged skylark. In the sestet, the resurrected human spirit is compared to a free skylark. The comparison of the soul being held as a prisoner in a cage is a well-known Platonic concept. It recalls the two birds in the verse dealing with the description of Self-Realization, in the Mundaka Upanishad (3.1.2). Bharathi, like Hopkins, uses the caged-bird imagery when he likens himself to a caged parrot when he suffers estrangement from his god (ktp). The sparrow seems to be Bharathi’s counterpart to the free skylark of Hopkins. Bharathi regards the sparrow’s life as a life of complete freedom. He exhorts man to follow the life of the sparrow and attain liberation. The sparrow pecks at the corn scattered in the courtyard and on the open grounds near fields with its tiny beak. It twitters “vidu, vidu, vidu.” To Bharathi it appears that God shows man the way to happiness through the language of the sparrow. “vidu” means to leave aside. The bondage of the world, the ego, and desires and attachments must be forsaken altogether. Only then the heart will be free. In Hopkins’s Let me to Thee as the circling Bird, the
bird imagery signifies the soul of man which longs for union with god who is Love. Similarly in Bharathi’s *kup*, the *kuyil* represents the soul of man longing for union with god. The *kuyil* sings on the greatness of love:

Love, oh love without end:

and love failing

Death, but death forever. (*PO* 1997: 134)

Hopkins and Bharathi employ bird imagery to suggest divinity and compare human heart to a bird. Hopkins uses the Biblical imagery of the Holy Ghost brooding over the earth to convey the idea that God looks after his creation with the same protective care as a dove looks after its young one (*GG*); the “star-eyed”, strawberry breasted throstle, is explicitly compared to Mother Mary (*MM*). Thrush’s eggs look like little low heavens (*Spring*). Hopkins compliments his heart as being dovewinged and having an instinct for “home” where Christ is the Host (*WD* st.3). When nature and man meet together, love is born in a flash and under the impulse of this love, the heart seems to acquire wings and man feels the urge to leap up to heaven: “The heart rears wings bold and bolder/And hurls for him” (*HH*).

Bharathi also, in *nvk*, uses the metaphor ‘heart-bird’ to indicate similar experience on seeing the splendid concoction of
moonlight, star and wind. He exhorts us to allow our heart-bird to roam over the world. He wants his mind to speed across space like an aeroplane to sweep across the blue in search of victory (spiritual illumination); he also urges his heart to look up at the moon’s bright rays and fly over there to drink the honey of delight. In *kk*, Bharathi addresses his goddess as a little parrot, his heavenly treasure that has come to redeem him.

Hopkins’s *WH* and Bharathi’s *kp* are bird-poems which dramatize the moment of revelation of God in the bird, the revelation of spirit in matter in a contemplative vision. Both describe a bird of hawk, a falcon in the former and an eagle in the latter. In *WH*, the bird is viewed from the direct perspective of the poet. In *kp*, the bird is presented from the perspective of the bird community as a whole, which however reflects only the impression of the poet, who remains only a spectator in the poem.

In *WH*, the physical and moral energy of the bird reveals the spiritual energy in it while in the latter it is the bird’s moral and intellectual energy, which reveals the spiritual energy within. The physical energy of the bird is represented in Bharathi’s *ap*, a companion poem to *kp*. Both are bird-poems described in the backdrop of nature. The difference is that while the former
presents an evening scene, the latter represents a morning scene. *WH* and *ap* describe the flight of the birds. They employ colour imagery to suggest divinity and prescribe the way by which man/matter can realize god/spirit in him. As Chellappan observes, Bharathi shows great attachment for birds, for he looks at them as symbols of freedom. He adds that Bharathi believes that birds can bridge the gap between God and him by triggering off contemplation (1983:123).

*WH* and *kp* open with the description of a bird in the backdrop of dawn. In *WH*, the poet catches sight of a falcon, which is described as the “dauphin” or “crown prince”, and “minion” of the morning. The verb “caught” is more dynamic than ‘saw’ as it inscapes the moment of the encounter of the royal, free falcon with the humble, duty-bound priest-poet. In *kp*, Bharathi notices a kingly eagle, ensconced on the coconut pinnate in a grove. Bharathi also uses a dynamic word *nōkki*, which in Tamil means a steady gaze indicating the depth of the observation. Hopkins and Bharathi employ royal imagery in the description of the birds.

*WH* and *kp* describe the beauty of the dawn bringing out the overwhelming radiance of the morning sun. In *WH*, the falcon is attracted from his lair by the dappled dawn in the “kingdom of
daylight.” Bharathi also describes the sky as “vaṇṇac cuṭar
nikunta vāṇan” (pied sky) in kp. The western sky is bathed in
light, the salutary beams sent forth by the orient sun drenches
the space all around the poet. The southern sea glistens and an
all-pervasive sovereignty of the sun is inscaped here.

WH and kp present the birds in an euphoria of joy. In WH,
the falcon feels “ecstasy” and sweeps off in the direction of the
wind. In kp, the whole bird community experience joy in the
morning light – the sparrow is all smiles, the crow rejoices at the
sight of the assembly of birds, the parrot remarks that in daylight
whatever is beheld leaves one in dizzy raptures, and the swan
rejoicing beyond measure states that the sights in the morning
sun send a pleasant thrill down the spine.

Both poems describe the physical and moral qualities of the
birds and at one point the bird-gazing leads to the contemplative
vision of the presence of god in bird. In WH, Hopkins sums up
the qualities of the falcon- “brute beauty and valour, act, pride,
plume.” At this point the natural beauty and grace of its plumage
crumples and bend as it swoops down; and the light that flashes
from it reveals Christ, like the “shook foil” in GG, “lovely asunder
starlight” in WD(st.5) and the “barbarous stooks”, the “silk-sack
clouds”, “azurous hung hills” in HH. The chevalier falcon flashes
the splendour of Christ, the Saviour and Redeemer of humanity. Similarly in *kp*, the moral and intellectual qualities of the eagle reveals the god in the bird. The bird-monarch is explicitly likened to god on account of his scholarship and wisdom. Like the chevalier of Hopkins, the eagle-king here is a saviour-figure. He has been crowned only seven days before, but he has put an end to all the sufferings of the bird community and there is no more dearth of food, no more wars, no more distress. Thus, in both poems, the contemplative vision of the presence of spirit in matter is dramatized.

Hopkins’s *WH* describes the beauty of the flight of the falcon – a manifestation of physical energy and poise but there is no parallel to this in Bharathi’s *kp*. However, in *ap*, a companion poem to *kp*, Bharathi describes the flight of the birds. Essentially there is no difference between these two poems of Bharathi except for the time and the way the splendour of God is described. *kp* is a dawn-poem while *ap* is a dusk-poem. In *WH*, Hopkins watches the falcon bestriding the air beneath him like a skilful horseman controlling his horse. The falcon circles in the air, hovering upon his rippling wing- “rung upon the rein of a wimpling wing.” Hartman remarks that the, “mystic, seeing the windhover might be snatched away by it... if it cannot suggest the
mystic, might make of Hopkins a divine analogist, who sees or seeks in the windhover resemblance to godly action” (1966: 122). In *ap*, one of two kingly eagles circles slowly and flies far away. The ‘flying far away’ recalls the falcon’s “striding high there” in *WH*. In *ap*, in addition to the eagles, there are other birds in flight: a bevy of birds fly in all directions, a sweet parrot dives from the coconut pinnate and the tiniest sparrow glides with a whiz in the sky.

*WH* and *ap* use colour imagery to suggest divinity. In *WH*, Hopkins uses “gold-vermilion” – “gold” suggesting Christ the gold that redeemed the world, and vermilion the colour of the royal blood from the gash in Christ’s side. Guardini observes that “the light-drenched atmosphere of dawn, the powerful flight, the vigour of the bird’s circling-Nature verges on ecstatic self-transcendence” (1966: 77). In *ap*, Bharathi has a vision of his goddess in the evening twilight sky and declares that goddess mother *Parasakti* manifested herself in the deep-purple dusk.

The discussion on Air/Wind-poems of Hopkins and Bharathi brings out the similarity between them. Hopkins’s *BV* and Bharathi’s *k* recognize the Air/Wind as a life giver and sustainer of all life on earth. The divine nature of Air/Wind is obviously
stated by both Hopkins and Bharathi. Both view Air as a creative and sustaining power/energy. In *k* the wind is presented as a great destructive power. This aspect is compared with Hopkins’s portrayal of the storm in *WD*.

Hopkins’s *BV* and Bharathi’s *k* present Air/Atmosphere as a giver and sustainer of life in the world. To Hopkins, Air is nothing but the inflated version of the “arch and original Breath”-God (*WD* st: 25). *BV* is a prolonged comparison between Air and Mother Mary, as the very title indicates. Air is both the creatrix and mediatrix, to Hopkins. The epithet “world-mothering” which qualifies “air” in the very opening line of the poem obviously suggests the life-giving and life-sustaining aspect of Air. Man’s life depends on Air for his “lung must draw” air by “life’s law.” It is the atmosphere, which tempers the power of the sun’s radiation and ensures the life on earth possible. Air is, therefore, “needful, never-spent, nursing element” to Hopkins. Like Hopkins Bharathi also views Air/Wind as the life-giver and sustainer of life on earth in *k*. Air is the ‘seen Brahma’; the ‘Breath of Life’ and all living things are the children of the Wind-God. Air makes everything awake and move. The wind is life. It makes life stay in the living thing. It stays as strength in the body. The breeze on earth is the breath of the wind God. It brings sweet smells of life. It can fan
our fire of life into a flame that is lasting. It can give us good warmth and fire and wisdom. It has a good rhythm. Life itself is the wind and there is nothing to fear in it. It can protect us from disease. The evening breeze is good. The breeze from the hill is good; sea breeze is medicine. Sakti/Divine Energy has many forms of which the wind is one. It is the energy that gives life. All these impassioned statements in k clearly bring out the life-giving and life-sustaining aspects of Air/Wind.

BV and k recognize the omnipresence of air. To Hopkins, Air is all pervasive "nestling" him everywhere and surrounds "each eyelash or hair", and permeates among the "fleecest, frailest-flixed snowflake" and is present in "each least thing" (BV). Bharathi describes the wind as rubbing on the leaves, floating over the water surfaces (k). Hopkins asserts that air is "rife in every least thing's life." As though to illustrate this thought, Bharathi describes the activities of a small ant as manifestation of Divine Energy/Sakti:

   Look at the small ant.
   How small it is.
   But it has hands, legs, mouth, belly all the things
   With proportionate precision, each in its place,
   Who gave the ant all these things? It was Sakti!
All these parts of the small ant function properly and well.
The ant eats. Sleeps. It marries. It brings forth children.
It runs. It seeks what it wants. It fights. It protects its territory.
For all these functions, it depends on the wind;
The wind is the basis for the small ant's activity.
The great Sakti plays as active life with the help of the wind.

(pac 1989:122)

To Bharathi, the wind is present in the moving leaf sounding waves, dropped stones, running canal, bull-dragged cart, the flying kite, the steam engine, the revolving ball of earth, the moon, the sun, the stars, the planets, the energy behind all these things. This concept of the spirit/divine energy recalls Hopkins's poem AK, where he perceives divinity in the sound of the "stones" dropped in the well, the chime from the bell's "swung" bow and the music from the "tucked string". In SS, the sounds of the waves and the song of the skylark suggest divinity.

To Bharathi, all the noises of the world seem to be the rhythmic vibrations of nature, as he writes in an essay, citagparan (Chidambaram). He hears on all the four sides the voice of crows, the noises of parrot and dove, the sound of the temple conch from a
distance, the proud crowing of a cock in the street, the conversation of women. To this cries of children, a beggar's voice calling out to Narayana, gopala, the sounds of dogs barking, noises of doors being shut and opened, some body on the street clearing the throat by light coughing, the noise of a vegetable vendor, the noise of a rice vendor—all these kinds of noise come to his ears gradually (P 1981: 18). Vijaya Bharathi comments that here the poet “blends these ordinary sounds with the grand silence of nature and experiences joy in this” (1975: 102).

Hopkins and Bharathi view Air/Wind as a powerful destructive energy, which is also an aspect of divinity. Hopkins is aware that in nature, there is something that unmakes and pulls to pieces what in another place is called Death and strife. (qtd.in Lichtmann 1989:105). Bharathi, like the Vedic sages, looks at the tempest, lightning and thunder as the body of rudra. He considers them to be the form of anger adopted by nature. The rain and the wind are but the deeds of Parasakti to him (pac). Bharathi also deals with the ‘terror aspect’ of the wind in k (ppa 1987: 1.894) in addition to the creative and sustaining aspect of the Air/Wind. Hopkins portrays the ‘terror aspect’ of the wind in the second part of WD, Air/Wind is represented as a powerful destructive energy,
which is destructive only with an ulterior benign motive of spiritual regeneration. In both poems god is seen in storm.

*k* and *WD* describe a shipwreck, highlighting the 'wild' aspect of air/wind. The shipwreck in Hopkins's poem is based on a real incident, which occurred on the eighth of December 1875. Most of the details in the poem are borrowed from the newspaper report and Hopkins's originality lies in the poetic rendering of them. In the hands of Hopkins, the storm reveals God. In *k*, there are the episodes of disaster caused by the wind, all of which might be real or purely imaginary. To Bharathi, the wind is a great power that winnows things, makes one thing strike another, makes things whirl and blow mightily (*k*). In illustration of this destructive aspect of the wind, Bharathi describes three incidents. In the second verse paragraph, at midsea, a storm breaks out and wrecks a ship. In the fourth verse paragraph, on a desert in an evening, a camel-caravan of merchants are buried in the sand by a sandstorm. And in the ninth verse paragraph, the 'mischief' played by the wind in the room of the poet is described. The wind blows fiercely on the windowpanes, breaking them. It scatters the papers that lie before the poet. It throws away the books from the shelves on to the floor, tearing some of the pages of the books. Of these three disaster-episodes the storm at midsea
described in second verse paragraph shares certain similarities with the shipwreck in Hopkins’s WD.

In k and WD, a localized event represents God’s visit to mankind. In both, the fact that the hand of god behind the horrendous disaster is asserted. Both poems end with a prayer to god. In k, Bharathi explicitly states that “it is the wind God who moved the rope…. It is the wind which raises the storm in the water” and all that happens is a manifestation of Sakti. In WD, Hopkins asserts that the “master…Christ” had to “cure the extremity, where he had cast” the nuns (st.28).

Bharathi’s description of the shipwreck in k and Hopkins’s in WD mention a ‘doomsday’. Bharathi’s account of the shipwreck in the second section of k describes the disaster in the first ten lines in an almost telegraphic language but it is presented like a first hand eyewitness report. This description is followed by a comment that the passengers in the ship came to know and feel, how it would be at the end of the world. The world’s End will also be like this perhaps. This comment is followed by a description of a Doomsday, brought about by the wind. It is followed by an observation that it is an apocalyptic wind, which brings the end of the yugas. It concludes with a prayer to the god of wind.
In *WD*, about the visit of Jesus in the form of the storm, Hopkins states that it is not “a dooms-day dazzle”, but a “royal reclaim” of his own (*WD* st.34). Though Hopkins says that it not a “doomsday” dazzle, the highly poetic language in which the onslaught of the storm in the sea is couched, evokes a near doomsday feeling like the one, which Bharathi presents in *k*. The “infinite” unkind air “sitting Eastnortheast, in cursed quarter”; the whirling, swirling the “wiry and white fiery” snow spinning to the “widow-making unchilding unfathering deeps” (*WD* st.13); the rolling of the breakers; the canvas and compass, the whorl and the wheel of the ship being made idle forever (*WD* st.14); the desperate people’s shaking “in the hurling and horrible airs” (st.15); the romping of the sea and roaring of the waves; the wailing and crying of people (st.17) – all these evoke the terrible violence of the storm striking terror in their hearts, an unmistakable doomsday experience.

Hopkins and Bharathi are fascinated by the beauty and power of the rivers, brooks and sea waves. The perception of divinity in them is explicit and implicit. The Journal Notes and the poems of Hopkins describe the beauty of the rivers and brooks, which are essentially represented as powerful forces – a manifestation of great energy. In his Journal Notes, Hopkins
records how he was impressed by the "sallow glassy gold" glitter of the river Laus Deo which was all in tumult but not running, only the lateral motions were perceived, and the curls of froth where the waves overlap shaped and turned easily and idly. In his poems, however, Hopkins makes only a brief mention of rivers, the "wind-wandering," river with "weed-winding" bank is mentioned in BP, where a strong suggestion of the dreamy meandering river is made through onomatopoeia. In sketching the beauty of the city in Duns Scotus's Oxford, a mention of river occurs – the city is surrounded by the waters of rivers, the Thames and its tributary, the Charwell. In the river meadows below the city "dapple-eared" lilies beautify the landscape. In Ribblesdale the river pursues a leisurely and twisting course.

Bharathi's love for the rivers is patriotic and Romantic. Rivers are sacred to him. In his patriotic songs he mentions almost all the major rivers in India particularly in Tamil Nadu. He recognizes the rivers in his country as invaluable assets. He is overjoyed on realizing that his country is rich in rivers and brooks (pāratatēśaṇ/India). He is aware of the value of the wheat grown in the Gangetic plains and betel in the Kavery irrigated areas. He
swears that the sweet Ganges is unique. He considers the rivers an invaluable gift of his goddess:

Goodly rivers a running
And sporting all over the lea—
Slowly they wend and fall
In that very big doll, the sea! (ket)

Hopkins and Bharathi are struck by the beauty and power of music of the sea waves dashing against the shore eternally. Both view the sea as a creation of god, who is its inner being (WD st.1). For Hopkins, Christ is the "sway of the sea" "master of the tides" who with his power girds in the oceans of the world, which He himself has created – the "recurr and recovery of the gulf's sides, the girth of it and the wharf of it and the wall" (WD st.32). Bharathi echoes the same idea in katal (The sea):

The Earth is whirling fast and in its
Deep hollow is gathered the seawater
Why, why does sea water not scatter in all direction,
In the swirling motion of the Earth?
It is because of the word of the Great Parasakti
She it is who keeps the seawaters from pouring over our heads She gave the earth its gravitational force.
It makes things stay in their places. (Rao 1989 : 129)
In *SS*, Hopkins describes the tidal water, "with a flood or a fall, low lull-off or all over, frequenting there while moon shall wear and wend." The 'noise' of the tide that "ramps against the shore" 'trenches' his ears. The verb "ramps", a word rich in sound association, suggests the forceful emission of energy. The verb 'trenches' in this context suggests the deep impression the noise of the waves has made on the poet. Noteworthy is the use of alliteration in the description of the tidal waves:

> With a flood or a fall, low
> Lull-off or all roar! (*SS*)

In the opening lines of *kup*, Bharathi describes the sea, reflecting the glory of its creator:

> Reflecting the rays of the rising sun
> The blue ocean glistens like a jewel
> Near a flame, atransfiguring brightness
> Beautifies it; and its hastening waves
> [with unerring rhythm] sing the scriptures.
> And would gladly embrace the shores.

[*PO 1991: 187]*

In the same poem, the idea of eternity is expressed:

> The ceaseless music the blue waves make
> In their eternal ebb and flow. [*POS 1982: 116]*
Hopkins and Bharathi attach sanctity to water. To Bharathi, the rivers Sindhu and Yamuna are divine. River water is nectar to him (pa). The Ganges is holy and sweet to him. He exclaims if there is anything to compare with her glory? The Ganges has come down from Heaven growing gold and dharma all along her path of descent (eṇkal nāṭu/Our mother land). He says that the holy water of the Ganges adds strength like nectar to the soul. It infuses life into the earth and mixes the culture and dharma. In kuru kōvintar (Guru Govindhar), Bharathi mentions sprinkling of holy water. Hopkins records in his Journal Notes how he bathed at the Holy well and returned very joyously. He was attracted by the sight of the water in the well as clear as glass, greenish like beryl or aquamarine, trembling at the surface with the force of the springs. He was told that the well water cured the rupture of a young man from Liverpool. The strong unfailing flow of the water and the chain of cures through all those years took hold of his mind with wonder at the bounty of God. To Bharathi, his goddess lives in the depth of the sea too; on hearing the noise of the waves, his goddess emerges as nectar (kālaiṇāvalai vēntutai/A prayer to the Goddess of learning); the all pervasive, omnipotent God is visualized by Bharathi as (paraṭiva vellaiṇ/The spiritual Ether) the flood of Lord Siva.
Hopkins and Bharathi bring out the immense destructive potentiality of the element of water in collusion with the other cardinal elements in WD and k respectively. Bharathi presents rain also as a great destructive energy in his poem nālai (The rain). All the three poems inscape the dance of fury of the cardinal elements with an apocalyptic vision. In all the three poems the presence of God in the fury of water/ nature is made explicit.

Hopkins and Bharathi present the sea as a veritable coffin or tomb in WD and in the second section of k respectively. In WD, Hopkins describes the sea as “the widow-making, unchilding, unfathering deeps (st.13)- an enemy of Man, an agent of Death, an immense destructive energy. The perspective of the sea as a coffin or tomb is suggested here which is made explicit where the five nuns are reported to have been “sealed in wild waters” (st. 23). The word “sealed” obviously conveys the idea of a coffin. The vision of the whole sea as a coffin or tomb adds dignity and magnitude to the ‘martyrdom’ of the chief nun. In stanza 27, the sea is described as “endragoned seas” to suggest the turbulence. The imagery of the dragon employed here enables one to visualize the whole sea as a huge sprawling monster. Hopkins thus makes the sea a fitting stage to enact the
drama of "electrical horror" – a doomsday spectacle. The historical and local nature of the disaster assumes universal dimension and a timeless context through the imagery employed here by Hopkins. In Bharathi's description of the shipwreck in *k*, the 'midsea' which wrecks the ship and drowns two hundred people proves a coffin. In an anonymous midsea the 'lone ship' is wrecked. It is stated that it is like a doomsday experience to the passengers in the ship. The elaborate visionary description of the doomsday imparts universal dimension and timeless context to the disaster portrayed in *k*. In both *WD* and *k* the sea is visualized as an all pervasive, eternal force with immense destruction energy.

The description of the sea waves in Hopkins's *WD* and Bharathi's *k* and the description of the rain-blast in Bharathi's *nalai* evoke the violence and destructive energy of the element of water. The "beat of the endragoned seas" is inscaped in the description of the waves in *WD*. Hopkins describes how the ship, which ran aground a sandbank, was lashed by the high-seawaves with a great destructive force. It caused extensive damage to the propeller of the ship, the steering wheel and the compass: "The breakers rolled on her [the ship] beam/ With ruinous shock" (st. 14). One of the sailors was safe in the rigging.
He made an attempt to rescue a panic-stricken woman drowning on deck. He was pitched to his death at a blow despite his “dreadnought breast and braids of thew” (st.16). His dead body was dangling over the foam-covered waters of the sea. He could do nothing against the destructive power of the waves: “the burl of the fountains of air, buck and the flood of the wave” (st. 16). As the chief nun was calling to her master, Christ the sea-waves were in a state of violent agitation and the violent saltish sea-water blinded her.

The inboard seas run swirling and howling;

The rash smart slogging brine

Blinds her (the nun)...

[st.19]

The salt waters of the sea is presented in rapid motion producing a deafening noise, delivering striking heavy blows on the nun here. The use of alliteration, rhythm, and the verbs ‘rolled’, ‘romp’, ‘roared’ the adverbs ‘swirling’ and ‘hawling’ powerfully choreograph the dance of fury enacted by nature on the stage of the sea.

In k, Bharathi also describes the fury of the waves, which have wrecked the ship, briefly but powerfully.

The waves are rolling uncontrollably high; it is

Hard to follow the turmoil with the eye

125
The waves clash with each other and burst as thunder.
They are tossed in the tempest.
The ship is dancing frantically
It is tossed hither and thither at electric speed.

(The 1989:119)

The violence suggested by the description of the turbulent sea here easily recalls the dance of fury of nature on the stage of the sea in WD. Another dance of fury through the element of water is choreographed by Bharathi in his poem galai. galai incapes the elemental fury which is explicitly described as ‘apocalyptic vision’ and the dance of Time. As Vijaya Bharathi remarks, it is “one of Bharathi’s wonderful poems in which the roudra rasa (anger) of nature is brought out beautifully through words and rhythm” (1975: 114). Bharathi imagines the divine sight as the dance of Mahakali at the deluge, and finds that thunder and rain are the time beat and sruti for the dance. When the thunder rolls, it seems to him to beat the time and seems to neigh grandly. Throughout the poem, one is able to see the sharpness of the rain, the roaring noise of the tempest and the speed of the dance of fury.

Hopkins and Bharathi are fascinated by the beauty of the sun, the moon and the stars and the planets which are all essentially fire, one of the cardinal elements. Fire is the
primordial energy and the ultimate constituent of the universe, according to Heraclitus, the ancient Greek philosopher (500 B.C.): “This world, which is the same for all, no one of gods or men has made; but it was ever, is now and ever shall be an ever-living fire, with measures and measures going out” (qtd. in McChesney:172).

Hopkins had read much early Greek philosophy and was attracted by this kind of teaching, being himself sensitive to the enormous energies in nature and aware of the creative/destructive tensions in his own make up. Similarly Bharathi is influenced by the scientific view that the sun is the original fire and the Earth, the Moon, all the stars and planets are sparks spilling out from the sun (ṇāyigu/the Sun). Both view that the sun, the moon and the stars as matter which reveal God. Both enjoy the loveliness of these fire-sources and are aware of their creative as well as destructive potentiality.

Hopkins and Bharathi show a Romantic love for sunrises and sunsets. Both sunrise and sunset are lovely spectacles to them. Their sun-gazing is marked by a deep sensitivity to the riot of colours displayed at dawn and dusk. The golden purple colour dominates their description of dawn and dusk. Both see God in the sun. Most of the observations of Hopkins are recorded
in detail in his Journal Notes, his poems also contain references. Bharathi’s poems and prose poems contain detailed treatment of the Sun.

Hopkins and Bharathi are struck by the golden colour associated with sunrise and sunset. Hopkins’s Journal entries abound in pen portraits of sunrises and sunsets. He mentions “a slash of glowing yolk-coloured sunset” (AHR 1966: 90); describes a fine sunset, which looked at also from the upstairs windows, cut out the yews all down the approach to the house in bright flat pieces like wings in a theatre... each shaped by its own sharp cut shadow falling on the yew-tree next behind it. Westward under the sun the heights and groves in Richmond park looked like “dusty velvet being all flushed into a piece by the thick hoary golden light which slanted towards him over them” (AHR 1966: 92); mentions another sunset as “great gold field” (AHR 1966: 93); observes sunset with “fine-spokes of dusty gold” (AHR 1966: 114); portrays “a lovely sunset when the rosy field of the sundown turned gold” (AHR 1966: 122). Bharathi describes the sun as a cluster of radiant golden rays of light (cūrya taricāṇaṇ/TThe vision of the Sun). Struck with the beauty of the sunrise in kup, Bharathi wonders if gold has been melted,
cooled, metamorphosed into honey and spread over the sky (st.137).

Purple is the other colour, which strikes both Hopkins and Bharathi in their observation of the loveliness of dawn and dusk. Hopkins in his Journal Notes, mentions the “quite purple” sky at dawn (AHR 1966: 90), the wine coloured sunset with pencillings of purple (AHR 1966: 92), a fine sunrise with long skeins of meshy gray cloud a little ruddled underneath” (AHR 1966:92) In kup, Bharathi regards the purpleness of dawn as sweet. He wonders at the diverse shapes and colours changing every moment in the west at dusk. He asserts that it is impossible to find a simile to describe the wonder of light suddenly spreading and enfolding the heavens in lustre (st.149). He waxes eloquently on the beauty of the sunset:

Who can create,

For all the wealth of the world,

Such scenes on earth?...

All the sumptuous splendour (of the purple sun)

Glorifies in graceful rhymes

By the ancient Vedic sages.

Every moment arise new marvels

Each moment embodies several dreams;
Who can conceive and express it all?
There, in ever shifting hues and shapes.
Mother Goddess of supreme power
Manifests herself in ecstasy...
From the flaming disc flash forth
Streaks numerous, brilliant like diamonds,
That make our eyelids shrink.
All this is poetry in actual life
Made by the Mother Supreme.

(Ramakrishnan 1982: 149-50)

Hopkins and Bharathi view Fire/Sun as the primordial Energy—the creator and sustainer of this world in collaboration with the other cardinal elements. Hopkins compares the sun with the "god of old" (BV). The dependence of the Earth, the Moon and the stars are hinted by Hopkins in this passage. To Bharathi the Sun is the primordial Energy, the source of all Matter (cūrya taricānan/The vision of the Sun). Bharathi also states, in ṇāyīcu (The Sun), the dependence of the earth and other planets on the Sun and mentions the scientific belief that sun is the original source of all creation!

O sun, the things that see you are charged with light.
Earth, Moon, Venus, Mars, Jupiter, Uranus, Neptune
And likewise hundreds of satellites,
All these smile in light when teased by your rays
Like sparks shooting from a torch
They say these are emanations from the sun.

(PO Nandakumar 1997: 148)

The sun is described by Bharathi as the light-giver, eternal youth, giver of sweetness, rain-giver, life giver, giver wisdom and fame and wind-blower (nâyîru).

Hopkins and Bharathi exhibit a great love for the moonscapes and perceive divinity in the moon. Hopkins’s Journal Notes describe the beauty of the moon and moonlight. He finds moonlight “hanging on treetops like blue cobweb” (AHR 1966: 86). He gives a graphic description of a “lunar halo”, which he saw from the upstairs library windows, “not quite round for.... it was little pulled and drawn below, by the refraction of the lower air perhaps... it fell in on the nether left hand side to rhyme the moon itself, which was not quite full” (AHR 1966: 6). Another night, from the gallery window, Hopkins saw a “brindled heaven, the moon just marked by a blue spot pushing its way through the darker cloud.” He “read a broad careless inscape flowing throughout” (AHR 1966: 6-7).
Bharathi states that of all the enchanting scenes, the most beautiful one is the sight of the moon, which is nectar to poets. In the backdrop of the dark sea, the lonely moon looks like a beautiful island of light, illuminating all around. One night, Bharathi slept on the sandy beach and suddenly woke up only to be struck by the splendour of the moonlit sky which is ineffable. He describes this experience as bathing in the divine glow of the moon forgetting himself completely (cantrikai/The Moon). In ket, the moon is seen as one of the wonderful gifts of his goddess: A doll called the moon which exudes a cool ambrosial glow (POS 1982: 75).

Bharathi has a vision of his beloved goddess in the moon and calls her chandramathi (cantrangatl/The Moon). The glow of the moon inebriates him in a mysterious way. In the pond of the sky, the moon looks like a lovely white Lotus. The moon makes the clouds glow with beauty. It looks like a damsel who hides behind the clouds. The radiance of the moon looks like a sea of milk. Bharathi considers the moon as immortal. He wonders at the mysterious presence of something in the cool face of the moon (vennilave/Oh Moon). Hopkins also considers the moon immortal when he describes the sea waves. He uses the moon as a symbol of eternity. It is the divine energy, which gives
force to the sea waves. The sea waves will dash against the shore “while moon shall wear and wend” (ss). In an early poem, *Winter with the Gulf Stream*, Hopkins finds the “bugle moon by daylight” floating so

glassy white about the sky

So like a berg of hyaline

And penciled blue so daintily.

He declares that he had never seen her “so divine.”

Hopkins and Bharathi are struck by the beauty of the stars and planets and both perceive divinity in them. Hopkins describes the loveliness of the stars in his Journal Notes and records his response to it. He found two “large planets, the one an evening star, the other distant ... both nearly of an altitude and of one size—such counterparts that each seems the reflection of the other in opposite bays of the sky and not two distinct things” (*AHR* 1966: 93). One night he saw a comet “with head to the ground, white, a soft well-shaped tail, not big” and he felt “a certain awe and instress, a feeling of strangeness, flight... and of threatening.” It hung “like a shuttlecock at the height, before it fell” (*AHR* 1966:119). The shuttlecock simile in Hopkins finds a parallel in Bharathi's description of the comet in the poem *cāṭāraṇa*
varuṣattu tūqakētu (A Comet). Bharathi describes the comet: "tiṇayīṇ qītu paṇai nincaṅku", (like a palm resting on corn). It recalls the shuttlecock shape of Hopkins’s comet. Bharathi also registers his sense of shock at the sight of the comet. He appeals to the comet not to crash on earth, causing any havoc to the poor and not to plunge the world in a sea of sorrow. He wonders if it is true that the comet owes its manifestation to the divine will, with intention of causing an apocalypse for redeeming the world. Bharathi echoes the sense of threat felt by people in general because of the superstitious belief that the crash of a comet spells doom.

Hopkins’s observation of the stars recorded in one of his Journal entries reads like a lyric:

The sky minted into golden sequins.
Stars like gold tufts .
--- golden bees .
--- golden rowels .
Sky peak’d with tiny flames.
Stars like tiny-spoked wheels of fire. (AHR 1966: 87)

In the same Romantic vein Bharathi describes the stars in ket:

Up there the stars, heaven’s fishes ,
Brilliant, a glitter like gems ,
Their number I tried to count,
In vain my stratagems! (POS 1982: 75)

To Bharathi, the stars are one of the wonderful creations of his goddess.

Hopkins's TSN and Bharathi's nvk bring out the power of nature to inspire spiritual urge in man. Both poems describe the loveliness of the stars in sensuous terms. Hopkins's TSN is a contemplation of the stars in all multitude and brilliance. It employs a series of ecstatic similes, which presents the star world in analogical terms to the world of nature and the world of man. As Winters says, TSN devotes “the octet to ecstatic description of a natural scene” (1966:47). The stars are looked upon as fiery people populating the world of sky, an ethereal world; “bright boroughs” illuminated cities; diamond-mines in the dark sky, they glitter like the silvery underleaf of the tree radiant like white poplars tree; they hang in the sky like the white doves; they are richly massed like May blossoms; they are found like the yellow flowers of the willow. The metaphysical description is concluded in colour light imagery which inscapes the glitter of the stars. Bharathi employs taste-imagery to convey the loveliness of the stars. He looks upon the splendid concoction of moonlight, star and wind as nectar, the sweetness of the jack fruit;
sweetness drips from the far star-cluster. In the expression ‘honey of delight’, the stars are presented as honeycombs.

Hopkins and Bharathi employ imagery of asset to suggest the value of the spiritual joy. The starlight sky is “all a purchase, all is a prize” to Hopkins. He uses ‘auction’ imagery to suggest that attainment of spiritual joy is open for every one. He also suggests the means for such attainment: “prayer, patience, alms, vows.” Bharathi states that the “heart’s rich granary/that treasures in joy/ the starry skies above/and the radiant moon. To attain this asset, Bharathi exhorts us to allow our heart-bird to ‘roam the world over’ ”, to join the “far star-cluster” and one should have a mind like an aeroplane to speed across the way to reach out to the stars (nvk).

Hopkins and Bharathi perceive divinity in the starlit sky. Hopkins explicitly states that this “piece-bright paling shuts the spouse Christ home” (TSN) while in Bharathi it is implicit.

Bharathi’s ülkkūtu (The Apocalypse) and Hopkins’s That Nature is a Heraclitean Fire-are poems on the dissolution of the world. The phenomenal world of diversity hurls back to its creator/God and the world purpose is thus fulfilled. The cosmic conflagration is portrayed and the poems end, however, on a joyful
note of re-creation. On the selfhood of the things of the world Hopkins writes:

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. (AK)

This selfhood in the world of nature is most powerfully dramatized in NHF and uk.

The subject of NHF is the consuming elemental cycle of fire, air, water and earth. The argument is that nature is an endless and ever changing movement of light and shadow, air, water and earth. Man himself seems part of this process. No matter how unique a creation he is, he is destined for oblivion like everything else. This sombre train of thought is interrupted by the joyful and saving thought of Christ’s Resurrection. Man will not die because through Christ he is assured of immortality. The "torn", "tossed", "flaunting", and "glittering" cloud; the the "shivelights" that "lance" and "lash"; the "bright" and "boisterous" wind that "ropes wrestles and beats"; and the beaten earth, all these elements assert their ‘being’ here. Elemental fury is choreographed here. NHF is one of Hopkins’s two sonnets which are “unparalleled in English for their length and density,” and
"stand as the final grand formulation of Hopkins's myth Cotter 1972: 214).

The theme of Bharathi's *uk* is that the divine mother in her terrible aspect (Mahakali) tramples and mangles and dances on the disintegrating worlds in supreme self-forgetful frenzy. At last, she softens at the approach of Lord Siva in his auspicious form, and they unite to re-create the worlds once again. In the first half of the poem, one hears and sees the roaring thunder, which is characteristic of the doomsday. In the concluding section, the scene of lull after the dissolution and the ecstatic union of Lord Siva and goddess Sakti has an iconic quality.

Bharathi's *uk*, according to Nandakumar, is "probably the most audaciously frenzied and most poetically articulate piece in the Bharathi canon", and that in Tamil literature "this poem stands alone, in its fierce imperial grandeur" (1964: 24-25). Bharathi's Sakti poetry reaches "the very acme of apocalyptic recordation" in this poem (1997: 27). Rajagopalan observes that the poem is unique and that it should be considered as the peak of verbal joy (1982: 67-68). Sundaram asserts that the poem stands unrivalled in the boldness of its conception, in its perfect workmanship, in its swaying rhythm and wild movement suggestive of the clash of dark worlds on worlds
and in its serene luminous end in ineffable peace (1965: 59). At Tirunelveli, when Bharathi recited this poem, many devotees of Sakti prostrated before him (Sridharan 1982: 51).

To sum up, Hopkins and Bharathi deny the theory of illusion and nature is sacramental to them. Their poems on nature have been analyzed under the divisions based on the cardinal elements. Hopkins’s PB and Bharathi’s ki are poems on creation. Both exhibit thematic and structural similarities. They state the unity of all creation, as God being the creator of all. The discussion of their poems on landscapes, treescapes and on birds brings out their perception of divinity in them. Birds’ and bird imagery evoke ideas of spirituality and sense of liberation. A comparative analysis of Bharathi kp and Hopkins’s WH brings out the similarity in staging the moment of revelation of divinity in the birds. Their poems on Air/Wind present Air as a lige-giving as well as destructive power. Their descriptive power is at their best while describing the destructive power of the wind.

Both poets register their Romantic fascination for the various water-sources, such as rivers, running brooks and sea waves in their poems. Hopkins’s Journal Notes abound in such descriptions. Like the wind, the element of water is represented as a great destructive power. Both poets attach sanctity to water-
sources and perceive the divine hand behind the havoc caused by the turbulent sea. Their poems on the various fire sources show the similarity in their fascination for sunrise and sunset, glow of the moon, and beauty of the stars. Both believe in the solar myth that the sun is the source of all creation. Fire is seen as a great power with potentiality to reduce the world to ashes. Their nature-poems cover the world process from creation to apocalypse. In them, contemplation becomes illumination, joyfully lighting up each particular of nature in its true meaning—God—and its direction, the ongoing transformation into divinity. It is the vision of the contemplative, who sees beyond, and perceives even in the end of the world the redeeming hands of God. The contemplative structure of their poetry lies in the sacralizing and elevating effect brought about by their parallelisms. It deepens its sense of mystery and idea of holiness.