CHAPTER IV

SELF-REALIZATION

That which is the subtle essence, this whole world has for itself. That is the true. That is the self. That art thou.

*Chandogya Upanishad*, (6.10.3)

The Indian *Advaita Vedanta* and the Christian Gnostic tradition are keen on Self-Realization. Bharathi and Hopkins believe in the divinity of man and sought to realize it in their personal lives through the four paths of God-realization. Each presents an exemplary god-realization in one of his poems—Hopkins in *WD* and Bharathi in *pc*. They believe in selfless work (*karmayoga*). Their notion of common weal, sympathy for the downtrodden and perception of divinity in the toilers are revealed in their poems and prose observations. Their social concern has a deep spiritual concern. Bharathi’s poems like *tōjjil* (Labour), *cutantrapallu* (*A song of freedom*), *pārata canutāyan* (*The Indian society*) and Hopkins’s *Felix Randal*, *HP* and *TG* are briefly discussed. The devotion of Bharathi and Hopkins to their respective gods is very obvious. Devotion involves suffering which is given poignant expression in Hopkins’s Terrible Sonnets and some of Bharathi’s poems on Kannan. Hopkins and Bharathi understand the need for mental concentration and sense-restraint in god-realization. Their
contemplative concern finds expression in Bharathi’s *cac* and Hopkins’s *THP*. Bharathi’s *nātu* and Hopkins’s *LEGE* dramatize the dialectical relationship of the sense and the spirit. The concluding part of this chapter is concerned with the discussion of their attainment of Gnosis (*gnanayoga*). In Bharathi’s *nān* and Hopkins’s *NHF*, the subjective assertion of oneness with the Supreme Being is made by both poets, which is reinforced by the use of parallelism of thought and sound. The chapter attempts to bring out the similarities between Bharathi and Hopkins as men of practical religion. The four ways that enable man to achieve Self-Realization are The Path of Action (*karmayoga*), The Path of Devotion (*bhaktiyoga*), The Path of Meditation/Contemplation (*rajayoga*) and The Path of Knowledge (*gnanayoga*).

Bharathi and Hopkins acknowledge the superiority of man over all other creatures in the hierarchy of God’s creation. The final stage in the hierarchy of souls is the intelligible soul, which is found in man and is represented by, besides inner consciousness, the faculties of nutritive and sensible souls, and the faculty to think and reason. Bharathi describes man: “*nanītau uyir kulatig rājā*” (Man is the king of creation) (*p* 1981:144). God has bestowed man with the gifts of reason, devotion, music and poetry which other creatures don’t possess, says Bharathi (*p* 1981: 139). To Hopkins also, the
sense of hierarchy is innate (Jennings 1985:188). He also uses royal imagery in the description of man. Man is “life’s pride and cared for crown” (The Caged Skylark). He is “something most determined and distinctive and higher pitched than any thing else,” says Hopkins (AHR 1966: 386). He is nature’s “clearest selved spark” (NHF), the earth’s “eye, tongue...heart” (Ribblesdale), man’s self is the “world’s loveliest” (To What Serves Mortal Beauty). Hopkins, like Bharathi, points out that man has a “property plainly which is not common to trees and beasts. This is mind” (qtd. in Cotter 1972: 311).

Hopkins and Bharathi are shocked by the idea of death, but firmly believe in the divinity of man. To Bharathi, death of living beings on earth is cruel and he asks, “How can one give up/sweet life?” (POS 1982: 48). Hopkins is also disturbed over the fate of annihilation- “the unleaving” of “Goldengrove” and “the blight man was born for” (Spring and Fall). But both poets believe in the divinity of man. Bharathi swears by the Upanishadic affirmation of the divinity of man:

You are God, You are God, God yourself.

You are God, You are that, yourself are that.

(POS 1982: 64)
Any denial of this truth is only a reflection of man's ignorance, according to him. Hopkins also asserts that man is divine:

"...man is Christ, for Christ plays in ten thousand places" (AK). The play of Christ, Hopkins knew, is no play but truth: “That is Christ being me and me being Christ” (S 1959:154).

Hopkins and Bharathi present a poetic illustration of god-realization in one of their poems, the former in the second part of WD and the latter in his pc. Bharathi's heroine Draupadi and Hopkins's heroine, the chief nun seem to have followed the four spiritual paths in their attainment of union with their respective Gods. This union represents the union of the individual soul with the Universal Soul. Bharathi and Hopkins dramatize the moment of union through contemplation in their respective poems under consideration.

The second part of Hopkins's WD is a lyrical narrative of the sinking of the ship, the Deutschland, a North German steamer which was wrecked in the mouth of Thames in the winter of 1875. Hopkins obtained the details from reports in “The Times.” In the wake of the declaration of papal infallibility in 1870, there arose a conflict between the Prussian government and the Roman Catholic Church. There followed a struggle over the clerical control of education and subsequently over the independence of the Roman
Catholic Church. Measures were taken to ban the Jesuits from Germany and to dissolve most religious orders in Prussia. The Five German nuns, some of the victims of these measures under the Falk Laws, were drowned in the shipwreck. The chief sister, a gaunt woman of 6 feet height, called out loudly and often to Christ, till the end came. Her heroic conduct in the perilous situation was in sharp contrast to the shrieks and sobbing of women and children in the ship. Hopkins presents the tall nun’s indomitable faith in Christ, and her vision of Christ’s presence in the storm and her suffering are shown as a re-enactment of Christ’s Passion.

In Bharathi’s *pc*, a Great Empire is lost through thoughtless gambling and Draupadi, the wife of the Pandava princes is enslaved and is sought to be dishonoured in public by the evil forces. It is a poetic remake of an episode in the epic, the Mahabharata. Bharathi’s narrative falls into two parts. The first part comprises two sections and the second part three sections. It is generally said that political and social forces have impelled Bharathi to choose this epic situation. The enslaved heroine is seen as representing the colonial India or the unemancipated Indian woman. Transcending these two levels of critical views is the perception that this scene in Bharathi’s poem represents the union of the individual soul with the universal
soul. The concluding part of pa part II and the second part of the WD enact the drama of union with God through contemplation.

In WD, as the storm blows in all its fury, the waves rise high, the snowflakes fall thickly, the crowd of passengers on board are panic-stricken; in pc, as Duhshasana, the brother of Duryodhana, the fiend (like the storm and waves in WD) like a mad man begins the outrage of disrobing Draupadi in the presence of all in the court; Vidhura screams “Oh Gods” and swoons on the ground. All the righteous people assembled in the court are shocked and scream helplessly like the passengers in the Deutschland. Draupadi realizing the futility of any attempt to defend her honour, folds her hands over her head and surrenders herself to Lord Krishna: “Krishna Oh Hari” (PO 1997: 128). Similarly Hopkins’s chief nun calls out “O Christ, Christ, come quickly”, holding the crucifix to her Christ (WD st.24). In the face of the threat to her honour, Draupadi prays for personal as well as universal redemption. She appeals to Lord Krishna to save her from the outrage of the Kurus (Duryodana and his brothers) and also to preserve the world from the wrong (pc). Her prayer shows that she is a selfless lady (karmayogi).

The chief nun is a selfless woman, “first of five and came /of a coifed sisterhood” (WD st.20). She is “loathed for a love men knew in her and banned by the land of her birth” (WD st.21). It is
obvious that she is selfless, as she has been doing her duty undeterred by the threat of the Falk Laws. Her deep devotion is indicated by the statement that she has “a heart right” (WD st. 29), which provides the spiritual strength to remain fearless like a “lioness” in the midst of the wailing women and crying children in the wrecked ship (WD st. 17). She is a gnostic (gnanayogi), for she could identify the “who and why” behind the shipwreck (WD st. 29). She may be seen as a contemplative (rajayogi), for her union is achieved through inner vision.

In the midst of the tumult around her, when the “rash smart sloggerring brine” blinds her personally, she has a single eye with which she sees one thing (WD st. 19), the “Master/Ipse the only one Christ, who alone could” cure the “extremity where he had cast her” (WD st. 28). She surrenders her self totally so that the universal self could Lord it over and ride in triumph, dispatch and have done with his doom there (WD st. 28). Not the Christ of the past, or the future, but the Lord of the present now within the heart and in the universe he made, rises from the ruins of the storm. The nun professes her belief in Him by an intuition of his being. She is called “The Simon Peter of a soul” (WD st. 29) because she acknowledges him as God.
In *PC*, Bharathi describes Draupadi as knowledgeable woman (*gnanayogi*)—“ṅāṇa cuntari” (part II, st.192). She, like the chief nun of Hopkins, could understand the ‘who and the why’ of the whole tragic situation in which she finds herself. But she does not state it explicitly. Other characters here make explicit mention. Dharmaputhiran affirms that all that happens is according to the divine scheme of Lord Krishna only (part I st.138). Arjuna voices the same view implicitly, when he says that it is fate which stages the drama to proclaim to the world that though evil may appear to win temporarily, it is righteousness which will register the ultimate victory (part II, st.283). Draupadi, the victim also sees the hand of Lord Krishna behind the whole tragic situation. So, when the fiend Duhshasana begins the outrage, Draupadi forgets the world around her and seeks the Inner Light and unites with her *bod* (“Ṥṭcōtiyil kalantāl, anṇai ulakatai nārantāl, orṇaiyud̄ṭāl”). She identifies Kannan as the supreme Being/Paramatma and becomes one with Him through contemplation (*rajayoga*).

By virtue of their union with their respective gods, the chief nun and Draupadi emerge as goddesses. The tragic suffering becomes a ‘golden harvest’ in both poems. The nun in *WD* is firm in the face of danger as the Tarpeian rock and like a beacon she sheds light around her (st. 29). Hopkins feels that this nun by her
action gives glory to Christ, and a feast to celebrate must have been held in heaven. This feast must have coincided with another feast, the feast of the Immaculate Conception. One virgin, namely Mary conceived Christ in a physical sense. Another virgin, this nun, "conceived" (WD st.30) Christ mentally by forming a picture of him in her brain through her contemplative vision. Mary gave birth to Jesus physically. This nun gives birth to Christ by "uttering him outright" by calling out his name, and also by the quality of her death (WD st.30). Thus the nun's death constitutes another manifestation of Christ. She, "sealed in wild waters, bathes in his fall-gold mercies and "breathes" in his "all fire glances" (WD st. 23) and ultimately merges into Christ. In the sight of her Lord, "storm flakes were scroll-leaved flowers, lily showers-sweet heaven was astrew in them" (WD st.21). Bernard Kelly observes that suffering, "the cruelest torment, becomes sacrifice, becomes in that act of oblation sweet heaven astrew in flowers" (1985: 120).

Like the chief nun, Draupadi utters the name of her Lord loudly "Hari, Hari, Hari." As Dukshasana dares the outrage of disrobing her, there comes robe after robe by the grace of the Lord, endlessly covering her person with silken robes striped with golden lines, as she stands with folded hands. The gods shower flowers on her: All those assembled there worships her as goddess Sakti. The
aged Bhishma also worshipped her with folded hands. Like the nun emerging as Virgin Mary in *WD*, Draupadi emerges as the goddess Sakti. As Sachithananthan rightly remarks, there is a blending of the ideal and the real in the delineation of Draupadi. He points out that the highest ideas of sweetness, joy, beauty, love and immortality have gone into her making. Yet her portrait loses none of the splendour of the earth. She rises from the earth in full glory and reaches the heavens in complete majesty (1970: 51).

The Path of Action (*karmayoga*) is one of the modes of Self-Realization. Bharathi and Hopkins believe in the Path of Action and dedicate themselves to selfless work. They express notions of commonweal and sympathy for the downtrodden. They perceive divinity in the toilers. They condemn the exploitation of nature or man for material prosperity.

The Bhagavat Gita stresses the greatness of the Path of Action: He who controls his senses through the mind and engages himself in the path of action, with the origin of action and sense, without being attached is superior (3.7). A man is attached to actions and their fruit. It is the attachment and not actions or their fruit that is the root of all evils. Attachment is the stumbling block to perfection. So, a striver instead of renouncing attachment, when he, without regarding the body, senses, mind and intellect as his or
for him, starts performing his duty promptly for the welfare of the world, by considering these of the world and for the world. By doing so, his attachment to the fruit of actions automatically perishes. All actions, including thinking and trance have nothing to do with the self. Though the self is naturally unattached, yet by developing attachment, it gets attached to the world. The real merit of a karmayogi consists in being free from attachment. Freedom from attachment means, having no desire for the fruit of actions.

Hopkins and Bharathi uphold the dignity of labour and work, for they believe in the spiritual equality of man. According to Hopkins,

It is not only prayer that gives god glory, but work. Smiling

On an anvil, sawing a beam, white-washing a wall, driving horses, sweeping, scouring, everything gives God glory if being in his grace you do it as your duty...To lift up the hands in prayer gives God glory, but a man with a dungfork in his hand, a woman with a sloppail give him glory too-(AHR 1966: 395-96)

Bharathl says that one can do any work, for all works are the actions of the goddess Sakti (tēcaugaṛi/A hymn Muthumari) and quotes the Veda's assertion that karmayoga alone is the saving force in the world (kāḷī stōtra/A hymn. to Kali)
Both believe in disinterested work. Hopkins’s belief in the notion of purification through the frequently grinding routine of the religious life is maintained in several places by him. As a Jesuit priest he has learnt it from his master, Christ. In one of his most eloquent passages, he spoke of the poverty and laboriousness of Christ’s life, which must be lived also by his followers:

Poor was his station, laborious his life, bitter his ending: through poverty, through labour. Through crucifixion his majesty of nature more shines. (AHR 1966: 368)

In *Morning Midday and Evening Sacrifice*, he uses the image of a glowing core of heat under embers to describe the life given to the love of God. Hopkins wrote in one of his sermons on the significance of the life of Christ:

Religion is the highest of the moral virtues and sacrifice the highest act of religion. Also self-sacrifice is the purest charity. Christ was the most religious of men, to offer sacrifice was the chief purpose of his life and that the sacrifice of himself. (S 1959:14)

The word “kenosis” is the Latin term to convey Christ’s sacrifice. Hopkins gives a poetic summary of Christ’s attainment of divinity through selfless hardwork:

...sheer plod makes plough down
Shine, and blue-bleak embers...

Fall, gall themselves, and gash gold-vermilion. (WH)

The expression “sheer plod” is said to mean the grinding routine of the religious life. In general, it can be said to mean any work without attachment. The idea that through selfless work Self-Realization is possible and that it involves the shedding of ego is suggested through the falling of the “blue-bleak embers.” Bharathi also, in his poem yēcu kirustu (Jesus Christ) views the crucifixion in the same perspective. He writes that the implication of crucifixion is that if one sheds one’s ego, and nails the sense of attachment on the cross of Truth one can realize the Divine. In the poem at, Bharathi describes the principles of karmayoga preached by Lord Krishna to Arjuna in Gita:

Your duty is to perform dharma;

Dharma is your duty;

Do not bear in mind the results thereof. (Bharathi,Vijaya 1975: 90)

Bharathi says that his goddess required him to work detachedly. Bharathi commits himself to selfless work. According to him, there are four duties to everyone: Practice of self-restraint, to rid the misery of others, to pray for the welfare of others and to worship the One God (vn st.8). He says that his vocation is to write poetry, work for the motherland and to work always without idleness for a moment (vn st.25). Bharathi may be called a saint without saffron.
robes as he himself says that for God-realization neither saffron mantle nor matted hair is necessary (paraciva ve\llan).

Hopkins turned his mind toward the perfect identification with Christ that Newman had once described: “Christ’s priests have no priesthood but his. They are merely his shadows and organs, they are his outward signs; and what they do, he does; when they baptize, He is baptizing; when they bless, He is blessing” (qtd. in Cotter 1972: 25). This was the ideal that towered before him. When Hopkins was in a dilemma to choose between St.Benedict and St.Ignatius, Newman suggested the latter way. “I think it is the very thing for you... Don’t call the Jesuit discipline hard, It will bring you to heaven” (L 1935: 408). Each of the followers of Ignatius is meant to receive the special favour of “placing” in Christ by answering the call of the King in the Spiritual Exercises to be identified with the Jesus “in order to share in the victory as he has shared in the toil” (qtd. in Cotter 1972: 31). Humphry House points out that the society of Jesus is “an active” order (1985: 109), committed to selfless work.

Hopkins and Bharathi had a deep notion of commonweal. Hopkins has developed the notion of commonweal in sermons and meditations (L 1935: 71). Hopkins points out how the miserable
condition of the people in a common wealth leads to the rise of the antisocial elements:

The curse of our times is that many do not share it, that they are outcasts from it and have neither security nor splendour; that they share care with the high and obscurity with the low, but wealth or comfort with neither. And this state of things...is the origin of Loafers, Tramps...and other pests of society. (L 1935: 90)

Bharathi shows greater concern for the toilers. He laments that the sacred four-fold system of the Vedic concept of society has been defiled by the ignorant. He holds in great esteem the good, the wise and the dutiful. He wants to burn to ashes and cinders the false doctrine that determines the low and the high on the basis of mere birth (*ktan*). Bharathi discerns that genuine national integration could be guaranteed only on the basis of an uncompromising struggle against all forms of social oppression. He recognizes in the practice of untouchability, the ugliest and most cruel manifestation of the callous caste system, and sang of the liberation of untouchables with gusto. Specifying the prominent untouchable and other oppressed castes, he sings full throatedly of their deliverance. He is optimistic that there would be no more penury, no more slavery and asserts that none is lowborn in India
Bharathi laments the shocking ignorance of the people. He expresses his anguish that many go without alms and that they never identify the reason for their penury. They suffer from various diseases and are easily misled and live like beasts (पारता जणान्मका इन ताकाल निलाई). Hopklns's sympathy for the working classes made him identify himself with the communist cause in a qualified sense:

Horrible to say, in a manner I am a Communist... But it is a dreadful thing for the greatest and most necessary part of a very rich nation to live a hard life without dignity, knowledge, comforts, delight, or hopes in the midst of plenty- which plenty they make... This is a dreadful look out but what has the old civilization done for them? (L1935: 86)

Bharathi's पारता कान्तायन (Indian commonwealth) is an exultant celebration of the prophecy of a new Indian society free from poverty, inequality and exploitation. Then comes the ringing declaration:

We shall lay down the law
For all time to come-
A law we shall live up to all events;
We'll blow up the social order
That lets any man starve...

Monarchs of our motherland are we all.

(Ramakrishnan 1982: 53)

Bharathi lashes out at those who speak of castes, high and low and adopt discriminatory codes and kindle constant conflicts. Intuitively Bharathi recognizes that the struggle against the caste system is an integral part of the workers and peasants, which alone would ultimately ring the death for all forms of oppression. In *cutantra paliu* he calls upon people to revere the toilers in fields, and to despise and deride the human parasites.

Bharathi and Hopkins perceive divinity in the toilers. Bharathi gives expression to this perception in *toli*, a poem of tribute to the several categories of toilers in the steel industries, sugarcane crushing factories, pearl divers and all those who toil and sweat. He praises and glorifies them by likening them to Lord Brahma, the Hindu God of creation. He says that it is the labouring community, which enables the human survival on earth possible. He looks upon the toilers as gods in human form.

Like Bharathi, Hopkins too perceives divinity in the toilers, which is discernible in poems such as *Felix Randal*, *HP* and *TG*. *Felix Randal* is a priestly meditation on the death of one of his parishioners, a burly blacksmith. Felix’s physical beef and brawn,
and the rude health that accompanies it, has a fascination for the fragile, ailing and sensitive Hopkins. One can easily discover Christ—the “stallion stalwart” with his “world-wielding” shoulder’s (HH)—beneath the portrayal of the “big-boned and hardy-handsome” Felix. Wain points out that Felix Randall “breaks new ground... in diction” (1966: 59). One remembers Hopkins’s description of Christ as a “stranger to sickness” (AHR 1966: 366), when one reads the portrayal of Tom, a navvy as one who is “seldom sick, / Seldomer heartsore”, in TG. Matthiessen remarks that Hopkins’s “comprehension of the desperate conditions of mankind” made the substance of Tom’s Garland (1966: 144). Harry also shares company with Tom and Felix in physical toughness. He has arms “hard as hurdle” and “barrelled shank”, which suggest peasant strength. Melchiori, with reference to HP remarks that “even in subject matter he wants to be as down to earth as possible” (1966: 134). In HP, more than the vivid pictorial imagery, “it is the compressed tortuousness of the syntax, and the forceful but controlled irregularities of rhythm that help to evoke the physique and movements of a powerfully muscled man”, remarks McChesney (1968: 169).

Hopkins and Bharathi regret that the world has been degraded and made ugly by commercial activity and by toll aimed
at worldly or monetary gains. Hopkins deplores, in **GG**, that
generations of human beings have followed the same worldly path
and have become so accustomed to it that they do not realize its
futility. Life now means a monotonous routine to which they must
adhere without any consciousness of the divine will. “And all is
seared with trade; bleared, smeared with toil.” The world bears the
marks of man’s “smudge” and gives out man’s “smell.” The beauty
of nature has been marred by man’s industrial activity and the foul
fumes that come from machinery have polluted the fragrance of
Nature. The natural green growth now is obstructed and prevented
by man’s use of land for industrial purposes. The soil is corrupt and
man has become insensitive. But, Hopkins is reassured that despite
the destructive work done by man, at the centre of this earth there
is freshness, which will assert itself and ensure the survival on
earth. The Holy Ghost, the inexhaustible creative energy is the
eternal source of the renewal of nature. In a similar vein, Bharathi
affirms in **pa**:  

There will be rain

God is

Unless Siva dies the land will be fertile.

So if men will cease to be thieves
All can live without toil.... (POS 1982: 62)

In the name of survival, man’s quarrelling, dividing, putting up a fence is a cruel thing to contemplate for Bharathi. Exploitation of Nature and other fellow human beings for needless worldly prosperity, reflecting spiritual aridity, are the common sources of concern in Hopkins and Bharathi.

Devotion/Bhakti is intense love of God. Bhakti Yoga/The Path of Love is a real, genuine search beginning, continuing, and ending in love. One single moment of the madness of extreme love of God brings man eternal freedom. Bharathi and Hopkins had great love for God and long for union with Him, which involves intense suffering. Some of Bharathi’s songs on Kannan and Hopkins’s ‘Terrible Sonnets’ bear testimony to such suffering.

Bhakti is the science of higher love, which leads to spiritual blessedness. This love cannot be reduced to any earthly benefit because as long as worldly desires last, that kind of love does not come. The eternal sacrifice of the self unto the Beloved Lord is higher by far than all wealth, and power, than even all soaring thoughts of renown and enjoyment. Mysticism is the highest hidden aspect of religion and spirituality, the quest of the human soul for a union with its creator. What poets perceive through a flight of fancy combined with intuition, they but try to reveal and share with the
reader through mere words. Mysticism, therefore, cannot be easily
described or defined. Much of it is left to be understood and
experienced intuitively. Writers talk about various kinds of
mysticism. The seventeenth century religious poets tried to rival the
love poets and used the conventions of love poetry in the domain of
religious poetry and depicted Christ as the Lover of the human soul.

The Second Mystic Life comprises the two stages of the "Dark
Night of the Soul" and the "Unitive Life" of the Christian mystic way.
Corresponding to them are the Viraha Bhakti and Prema Bhakti of
the Hindu mystic way. The Dark Night of the Soul is considered to
be "the most intense period of the great swing-back into darkness"
(Underhill) that separates the Illuminative way and the Unitive
way. It is a period of utter stagnation and blankness as a result of
the extreme mental fatigue and spiritual despair. As a mystical
activity, the Dark Night is not a neatly defined, uniform experience,
and mystics interpret the experience differently. Mystics commonly
use the analogy of the lover and the beloved. With all its subtle
shades of love to explicate their Dark Night experience. This is
denoted as "Bridal Mysticism."

In bridal mysticism, the soul of the devotee is considered
to be the bride of God. All the characteristics that mark the human
relationship such as love, dedicated service, unswerving loyalty and
irrevocableness are to be found in the spiritual marriage. What is portrayed here is only an artistic representation of an experience and not the experience itself and so it is free from any sensuality. Bridal mysticism not only signifies the ecstatic intimacy of the self with God but it also implies moments of separation when God disappears during the ‘Game of Love.’

Although the ‘Terrible Sonnets’ of Hopkins seem to be a “kind of self-contracted reflex response to pain”, it is in them that Hopkins becomes “a contemplative of his own inner being and enfolds his own darkness in the reality that is Christ” (Lichtmann 1989: 191).

Of the twenty three songs of Bharathi on Kannan, eleven are “love poems in the Naayaka-Naayaki mode.” In them Bharathi “assumes versatile roles either as the lover pursuing the maiden or as the maiden longing for her lover” (Mahadevan1957:157). Meenatchisundaram points out that the Alwars have exercised “profound influence” on Bharathi. The Alwars have given “a new orientation” to the old poetic tradition. All the poetic devices which the Sangam poets used have been adopted by “these God-intoxicated men to give expression to new patterns of thought and experience” (1964: 77). Neither Hopkins nor Bharathi is considered
a mystic. But some of their poems reveal mystical elements and the use of bridal mysticism as a conscious poetic device.

Hopkins's **CC** and Bharathi's **ktk** present the longing of the human soul (*jivatma*) for union with God (*paramatma*) and its encounter with the devil who tries to wean it away from the path of such a union. The tempter is subdued and the union with God consummates. That the tempter is none other than God himself is also affirmed. In **ktk** a damsel languishes after a futile search for her spouse Kannan in the pathless wood without any sense of direction. The darkness of the forest is very obvious here and the forest stands for the world. In **CC** Hopkins is the damsel-figure, whose "toil" and "coil" that "night, that year of... darkness" has not succeeded in the search for "the hero" (Christ). Both poems present a dark world where the human soul longs for the union with the all-soul. The imagery of the octave has "the unbelievable actuality of a nightmare" (Gardner 1966: 333). Burkhardt observes that the cry of Hopkins in **CC** is "is anything but confident or even elegiac, but it is still grand" (1966:166).

Both these poems present an encounter with the devil/tempter/sensual pleasures. The second, third, fourth and fifth stanzas of **ktk** describe beautiful and dangerous things: good trees with fruits of wondrous taste, hills blocking the view beyond,
coursing brooks that babble as they move, fragrant flowers, a sea of leaves, springs that deceive unwary minds, tormenting thorny bushes, antelopes longing for love, growling tigers that chill the heart, birds singing songs of love, the snake lying on its belly, the lion that roams at pleasure, the tuskers shaking with fear at the roar of the lion, the flight of deer that frightens the frogs to hop to safety. The description builds up an assailant-victim situation. And the damsel, the victim here gets fatigued in limb and body and collapses on the floor. The atmosphere of the forest and the assailant-victim situation in Bharathi’s poem find its equivalent in CC in the expression “lay a lion limb against me.” Obviously God is the “lion” here and Hopkins is the victim. The lion imagery evokes the atmosphere of the forest. Like Bharathi, Hopkins also feels fatigued—“the last strands of man in me...most weary.”

From stanzas 6 to 11 in ktk, Bharathi describes the temptation of the seeming devil. A Hunter springs before the damsel praising her beauty and tries to tempt her with the prospect of good meat, delicious fruits, sweet toddy and sexual union. In CC, the very title and its repetition in the first line suggest the sexual temptation as in Bharathi’s poem. The imagery of “feast” in the first line of CC matches the feast offered by the hunter in Bharathi’s poem. The feast imagery and sex imagery in
both poems powerfully represent the irresistible nature of the temptation of the senses. The Hunter is cruel-eyed and wields a spear in his hand in Bharathi’s poem. The “terrible” hunter in Hopkins’s poem also does the same thing- “scan/with darksome devouring eyes.” The Hunter’s attempt to tempt the damsel is most outrageous, for it is not proper to cast such looks on the wife of someone else (ktk). Similarly Hopkins is baffled that his tempter should be so “rude on” him. The Hunter-figure in Hopkins’s poem also carries a “rod” (CC).

In both poems, the tempter turns out to be none other than their own respective Gods, the legitimate All-soul, who has the right to take possession of the longing human soul. The identity of the tempter is shrouded in mystery in both poems. In Hopkins’s poem, the octave presents the tempter as “Despair” and “O thou terrible.” But the sestet shows the tempter as none other than God himself. It is his “heaven-handling” which has “flung” and “foot trod” Hopkins. He realizes that after all he was “wrestling” with his own God who was in disguise. He understands that God “heaven-handled” him so that his “chaff might fly... grain lie, sheer and clear.” He now perceives the soft “hand” of God and the “rod” vanishes. This realization inspires joy and strength. The “darkness” is now “done” and he “lapped strength, stole joy, would laugh cheer”-at the touch
of his God, which denotes the merger of the human soul with the All-soul. The damsel in Bharathi’s poem faints and falls down on the floor and wakes up and beholds Kannan, her spouse. She finds that the cruel Hunter has vanished mysteriously. The poem ends with her blessing of her Lord. The reunion of the individual soul with the all-soul is obvious. Both poems thus present the struggle of the human soul to reach the all-soul. Whereas Bharathi explicitly employs spousal relationship between him and his Lord Kannan, Hopkins only hints at it by mentioning Christ his Lord as “the hero.”

Hopkins’s SSL and Bharathi’s kan describe the loss of Inscape/Sakti through the image of memory and forgetfulness, light and darkness. The estrangement between God and the poet is suggested by the imagery of duality. The agony of the estranged human soul is hinted. The poem makes a “reiteration of the Sibyl’s vision, using the Sibylline mode of divination” (White 1992: 379). An evening passing into night is seen by the poet. Leavis remarks that the “pressure of personal anguish is too strong” in SSL (1966: 33). In SSL, Hopkins is the jivatma and Nature is the paramatma. In Bharathi’s poem, paramatma is represented as God/Kannan the Lover and the jivatma, the poet/the sweetheart. Both represent the twilight state in which the bonding of spiritual connection with the
external world through contemplation can no longer be achieved. The process of ‘unselving’ starts here.

SSL and kan are poems of forgetfulness, loss of vision, which are not, however, total or complete. In kan, the sweetheart-poet makes an agonizing confession of the growing sense of separation from God-Lover, in direct and explicit terms. In the opening lines of the poem, the sweetheart is in distress as the lovely face of the lover/Kannan has been forgotten. Hopkins conveys similar idea in the first two lines of SSL through the evening twilight imagery:

Earnest, earthless, equal, attuneable, vaulty,
voluminous... stuperious

Evening strains to be time’s vast, womb-of-all,
home-of-all, hearse-of-all night.

“Earnest” because of the sense of silent, inexorable purpose; “earthless” because of the unearthly and luminous silence; “equal” because evening softens, mutes and merges the hard realities of day; and attuneable because it attunes the soul of man to mystery. The words, “vaulty, voluminous”, suggest cavernous space and a dim light. In this poem, Sibyl (a guide to the under world in classical literature) is a guide to the psyche of the age and correlative to Hopkins’s psychic underworld. Her oracles spell the enclosure of earth’s “dapple” and of the self in an encompassing, neutralizing
darkness. To a “self in self steeped and pashed-quite”, the earth’s being is unbound, disconnected and atomized. The bonding of spiritual connection with the external world through contemplation can no longer be achieved. The self, in crossing the river of forgetfulness like Virgil led by the Sibyl, is “disremembering” its connectedness to earth and the things of earth. This is the state in which Bharathi finds himself in kan. In the opening line of the poem, the beloved is shocked to realize that the lovely face of her lover/Kannan has been forgotten. The loss of vision, however, is not total or complete:

A shape is sure to the eyes visible;
But it lacks the beauty of Kannan;
Though somewhat outlined is the face;
The blooming smile it doth, aye, lack, alas!

(Ramachandran 1980: 47)

Near equivalent to this concept is the idea expressed in the third, fourth and fifth lines of Hopkins’s SSL:

Her fond yellow hornlight wound to the west,
her wild hollow hoarlight hung to the height
Waste; her earliest stars, earlstars, stars
principal, overbend us,
Fire-featuring heaven.
Slowly but inexorably, the evening covers the daylight world first with dusk, then with darkness, culminating in the emergence of the majestic constellations, which overbend the world with fiery radiance. Things are now seen not as they appear by day, but in simple black and white. The gentle soft light of the yellow sun being replaced by bleak starlight, recalls the blurred vision of Kannan in Bharathi’s poem. In both the ‘inscape’ is gradually vanishing. The earth’s definite particularity (dapple) is eclipsed in Hopkins’s poem while Kannan’s lovely face looks blurred in Bharathi’s poem. The self’s loss of the vitalizing contact with the world/nature in Sibyl seems to be represented in Bharathi’s poem as the loss of vision of Kannan. Nature seems to be the Kannan-figure in Hopkins’s SSL. The loss of earth’s “dapple” in SSL finds its equivalent in the last stanza of kan where the beloved points out with agony that she does not even have a painted picture of the lover Kannan. The ideas of gradual loss of vision, and loss of dapple are found in both poems.

In both SSL and kan, an unmistakable sense of duality, split is explicitly conveyed which suggests the sense of estrangement between the poet and his God. Bharathi employs three parallel similes to convey the miserable, estranged condition: The beloved in the poem likens herself to a bee forgetting honey, to the
sunflower divorced from the sun, and to a shoot forgetting rain. The idea of split and duality is clearly suggested by Hopkins in *SSL* through the use of “spool” and sheep imagery.

...Let life, waned, ah let life wind

Off her once skeined stained veined variety

upon, all on two spools; part, pen, pack,

Now her all in two flocks, two folds-

black, white; right, wrong; reckon but, reck but, mind

But these two; ware of a world where but

These two tell, each off the other

Hopkins and Bharathi conclude *SSL* and *kan* respectively with a grim warning of the fate of the soul. Both shudder at the prospect of total god forsakenness like Dr. Faustus in the last hours of his life. The heart of the beloved in *kan* still treasures the affection/vision of Kannan though the mind seems to have forgotten the face. Ceaseless and restless heart recalls Kannan’s ways; the lips chant the ‘sweet cheat’s praise’; the beloved feels herself as a helpless and hapless creature; and the mind has forgotten but the heart has retained the vision of Kannan. The beloved in the poem asks in agony how she could survive such a wretched condition. This disintegrated condition of agony finds its parallel in the concluding lines of *SSL*: “of a rack/Where, selfwrung, sheathe and shelterless, thoughts against
thoughts in groans grind.” The heart versus mind conflict presented in Bharathi’s poem seems to be represented here as “thoughts against thoughts”—a cerebral combat. Both poems are marked by an antithesis reaching the zenith without apparently any positive term of mediation between the poet and his God.

Hopkins’s *IW* and Bharathi’s *kkt* are ‘night’ poems in which the benighted soul undergoes the experience of hell on account of the loss of ‘vision’. Both describe the pangs of spiritual sickness (separation) through the imagery of physical ailment. *IW* and *kkt* employ ‘night’ imagery to suggest the benighted state of the human soul- spiritual darkness. Hopkins wakes and feels the fell of dark and talks about the torment experienced that “night.” Bharathi, the lover, also keeps awake awaiting the arrival of his sweetheart/Kannamma at the usual meeting place in the southern corner of the grove by the riverside when the moon is up. His heart goes pit-a-pat on account of the failure of his sweetheart to keep her word. Broken-hearted, he sees phantoms of his sweetheart wherever he turns. Hopkins also refers to the sight, which his heart had seen that night but does not specify the object seen. Both poems describe ‘lost’ condition poignantly in terms of physical sickness. The spiritual sickness experienced by Hopkins is suggested through the imagery of acute physical malaise and discomfort. He describes his tormented condition over the years as
“black hours” when he had felt “gall...heartburn” (IW). This imagery of acute physical suffering is symbolic of his inner state of mind. He uses another vivid image of a spiritual sickness when the sense of oppression is so great that something physically clammy, lumpish and sour seems to have settled on the spirit: “Self yeast of spirit a dull dough sours.”

Hopkins explicitly likens his condition to the damned souls in hell, in fact his condition is worse, he says. Bharathi also expresses the spiritual sickness through physical sickness and he also characterizes his agony as ‘hellish’. As Hopkins experiences “gall and heartburn”, Bharathi is all in a fever and his head whirls and aches

Hopkins compares himself to those damned in hell, while Bharathi feels that

All the earth relaxed and asleep

Is at rest.

Only I in my lonely hell

Toss oppressed. (POS 1982: 108)

He also feels that he is damned, because he is unable to

Spend but one night with you (kannamma)

In your arms held fast!

Fondle you, utter sweet nothings,

Your person cover
With caresses a thousand crores. (POS 1982: 108)

Bharathi and Hopkins express a ‘lost’ condition with no chance for a happy reunion with God and pour out their anguish. Hopkins writes that his

...lament

Is cries countless, cries like dead letters sent

To dearest him that lives alas! away. (Iw)

The imagery of “dead letters” conveys the feeling of being totally cut off from God and from all comforts. This feeling is experienced by many in the religious state.

Bharathi expresses the cut off state from God through an imagery of inaccessibility: Though he is her slave, he can’t be with his sweetheart / Kannamma at his pleasure because she is guarded at all times by her sentinels. He wonders why she, a princess, should choose to put up with all this tyranny unbearable, bondage, surveillance concentrated. In both poems Lover-sweetheart relationship is maintained between the poet and his God. God is treated as the sweetheart in Bharathi’s poem while Hopkins treats his God as the lover.

Hopkins’s NW and Bharathi’s ktp also describe their spiritual torment. Hopkins and Bharathi use powerful imagery to suggest the
agony of the estranged soul. Hopkins has been plunged into incomparable depth of misery:

Pitched past pitch of grief.

More pangs will, schooled at forepangs, wilder wring. (NW) “Pitched” and “pitch” are rich words here, which suggest not only blackness and of being hurled, but also the stress of highly wrought being, his mind. The torment has increased in violence and subtlety: “My cries heave, herds-long; huddle in a main, a chief-Woe, world-sorrow.” An odd image, which effectively conveys endless unrest. He winces with pain on an” age-old anvil.” The anvil is “age-old” because the chosen man of God has always suffered, almost beyond endurance. The tense and highly wrought mind of Hopkins plunged him beyond all rational comfort and religious support. He experienced “cliffs of fall”, “Frightful, sheer, no-man fathomed”-unprecedented agony of a human being. In the expression “Here! Creep/wretch” the language is reminiscent of the tormented Lear, houseless in the storm, creeping into a hovel. The “whirlwind” comfort recalls the nun’s exposure to the storm in WD. Only sleep and death can put an end to such misery, he feels. Richards observes that in few writers have dealt “more directly with their experience or been candid” than Hopkins in NW (1985:76). Bharathi expresses similar agony in ktp through a number of
parallel imagery. The poet-damsel’s poor heart flutters uneasily like a worm in the hook, like a flame in the breeze. She suffered all alone like a caged parrot. She was disenchanted with many things, which pleased her once. Even the presence of his mother was a source of vexation. The ceaseless chatter of her friends is dreaded as a disease. She is sleepless and restless with no taste for food. She does not like even flowers or their fragrance. No firmness but only confusion she experienced no joy even momentarily.

The ‘lost’ condition is reflected in their poetic activity too. Hopkins and Bharathi confess that they have lost poetic inspiration and pray for its recuperation. Hopkins’s sonnet, *To R.B.* and Bharathi’s *kta*, a poem in 172 lines share thematic and structural parallels. Both are autobiographical poems, which confess the loss of poetic inspiration and express the longing for its recuperation. Poetic creation is represented by both, in terms of conjugal imagery. Poetic process involves the happy union of the poet with his Muse. Loss of poetic inspiration is presented as damnation, the poet’s estrangement from his Muse. The longing for recuperation represents the prayer for reunion with the Muse.

Both convey their view of poetic creation through conjugal imagery, which reflects their *býidal* mysticism. Joy and energy characterize poetic inspiration. Poetic creation is the result of the
happy union between the poet and his Muse. The Muse is an embodiment of energy – Sakti/stress. Hopkins defines inspiration as a "mood of great, abnormal in fact, mental acuteness, either energetic or receptive, according as the thoughts which arise in it seem generated by a stress and action of the brain, or strike into it unasked." He adds that the poetry of inspiration can be written only in this mood of mind (AHR 1966: 129).

In To R.B., Hopkins devotes the first eight lines to define the poetic process in objective terms through conjugal imagery. The "striking sexual image" here is his "most finely sustained metaphor," says Norman White (1992: 452). Poetic creation is likened to the conception and birth of a child. The Muse-Father makes a lightning lusty contact with the Poet-Mother, which results in the conception of the Poem-child. The poet-mother "wears, cares and combs" the embryo within her and delivers the poem-child after nine months or, may be, nine long years. Bharathi presents the relationship with his Muse in subjective terms: the poet is the lover and the Muse his sweetheart. He describes the beauty of his Muse in sensuous terms: a damsel with a smiling glistening golden face, a forehead radiant with wisdom, sword-like eyes, cool and soft flower-like fingers and a sweet voice. As Chellappan points out elsewhere, to Bharathi, "strength (power) is beauty, Beauty is strength" (1987: 176).
So, the beauty of the Muse in the poem should be seen as denoting power/karpana ēakti (the power of imagination). The Muse of Hopkins is also characterized by power and masculinity, which is suggested by the expression: “strong /spur, live and lancing” (To R.B.).

Bharathi and Hopkins describe the moment of inspiration as a state of joy. Hopkins uses the epithets—“fine delight”, “sweet fire”, “rapture”, “bliss”—to denote joy. Bharathi’s communion with his Muse is also marked by joy. He describes the joy of her company as the taste of nectar. The touch of her has inspired ecstasy and he has been immersed in the sea of joy.

Bharathi and Hopkins have experienced the loss of poetic inspiration. Such a spell represents the estrangement from the Muse. It is seen by both poets as a state of damnation, a period of loss of joy and energy. They express the pangs of separation poignantly. Hopkins confesses with “some sighs” that his “lagging lines” lack the “roll, the rise, the carol.” Here “roll” and “rise” suggest poetic vigour, and “carol” denotes joy. But as Bottrall rightly remarked that “this magnificent sonnet” is one of the last poems, which are a living proof that his poetic genius did not decline but increased. She exclaims: “With what mastery Hopkins makes his complaint” that his poetry does not express (1985: 19). In kta,
Bharathi registers his tremendous shock over the loss of his poetic inspiration through a metaphorical statement that the golden pot of nectar has vanished. He also states that his Muse has not appeared before him even in a dream and that even the happy memories of his past association with his Muse have completely waned.

Bharathi explicitly and elaborately specifies the causes, which led to the estrangement from his Muse. The ostensible reason attributed is poverty, the cruelest of all evils on earth. Poverty struck him like a venomous thorn in the throat and weaned him away from his Muse. He states how poverty forced him to place himself at the soul-killing service to the king of Ettayapuram, and how he had to be away from his home and live in the midst of strangers. Bharathi obviously has in mind his life at Benares and the initial days of his exile at Pondicherry. During these periods Bharathi was away from his wife and from his fellow-freedom fighters. Hopkins declares most laconically that his “winter days” were responsible for his estrangement from his Muse. The nature of this period is poignantly described in his terrible sonnets. Hopkins too, like Bharathi, was away from his home and suffered in the midst of strangers: Away from “Father and mother dear/Brothers and sisters” who were in “Christ not near” and away from “England... wife to my creating thought” (TSS). Hopkins obviously refers to his
life at Dublin, which was a period of intense physical fatigue and spiritual languor.

Unable to bear with the pangs of separation, Hopkins and Bharathi, like repentant spouses, long for the happy reunion with their Muse—restoration of joy and energy. The title, *kta*, itself clearly indicates that the poem is Bharathi’s ardent prayer, addressed directly to his estranged Muse/Goddess, for a reunion, for restoration of energy — “arul” (grace). The poem opens with invocation to the Muse. He addresses her as the most happily named sweetheart. Hopkins also expressly longs for (poetic inspiration) the reunion with his Muse: “Sweet fire the sire of Muse, my soul needs this, I want the one rapture of an inspiration.”

Meditation/Contemplation (*rajayoga*) insists on the concentration of the mind, which is necessary for realization. Hopkins and Bharathi understand the need for mental concentration and sense-restraint on the path of god realization. They strive hard to follow the path of contemplation and pray to god to bless them in this regard. They admonish their mind and heart not to go astray and instruct them to work in consonance with their aim. Bharathi’s *cac* and Hopkins’s *THP* are such self-instructional poems. Bharathi’s *natu* and Hopkins’s *LEGE* dramatize the dialectical participation of
the spirit in sense. Meditation/Contemplation/Rajayoga is controlling the senses, will and mind. The mind seems to be layer on layer. Our real goal is to cross all these intervening strata of our being and find God. The end and aim of yoga is to realize God. To do this we must go beyond relative knowledge, go beyond the sense world. Concentration is the essence of all knowledge. The power of attention, when properly guided and directed toward the internal world will analyze the mind and illumine facts. The powers of the mind are like rays of light dissipated. The knowledge in the world has been gained but by the concentration of the powers of the mind. The strength and force of the blow come through concentration. There is no limit to the power of the human mind. The more concentrated it is, the more power is brought to bear on one point. It is easy to concentrate the mind on external things. The mind naturally goes outward. But it is not so in the case of religion or psychology or metaphysics, where the subject and object are one. The object is internal—the mind itself is the object. It is necessary to study the mind itself—mind studying mind. rajayoga teaches how to concentrate the mind, then how to discover the innermost recesses of our own minds.
Bharathi and Hopkins are men of practical religion and believe that only through contemplation Self-Realization becomes possible.

Bharathi describes this process:

Control your breath by pranayama

And live like a clod, like a dilapidated wall.

As you see the bright sun in a well,

So in yourself you will see God,

Not exposition

But experience leading to bliss

Is true gnosis. (POS 1982: 52)

pranayama suggests the process of contemplation here. The contemplative striver is required to discard a false self or ego for the true self that he just is. To convey this idea, Bharathi uses the “clod” and “wall” imagery. The steady reflection on and of God/Self turns the contemplative seer whose vision penetrates the mystery of the object beheld and merges into it. The seer and the seen become one. The knower and the known become one. The steady reflection becomes possible only in an unruffled, steadfast mind. Bharathi suggests this idea through the “well” imagery. Hopkins also insists on contemplation as a way of Self-Realization. According to him, the absolutely highest end of man is “the fullest action of his mind—that is contemplation, and that on the purest attainable forms,
namely what is eternally and unchangeably true” (qtd. in Cotter 1972: 311). Hopkins was impressed by an Ephesian theology of the human being transformed into Christ and of an eternal destiny “in Christ” (qtd. in Lichtmann 187). In AK Hopkins goes into the heart of the contemplative programme and the notion of transformation into Christ is made explicit in it. The sestet of the poem reads:

...the just man justices;
keeps grace :that keeps all his goings graces
Acts in God’s eye what in God’s eye he is Christ.

By verbalizing the noun “justices”, Hopkins implies that the just one’s justice is both that person’s essence and existence; the union of the two in one word captures the unity between inner and outer, says Lichtmann. She also observes that the hearer of this line, and Hopkins preferred his poetry to be heard, catches a pun, hearing instead “the just man just ises”, she further explains that the way to do is to be. Behind the humble “just” of the just person lies the exalted “I am” of God, for human ‘Isness’ is God’s. The next verb “Acts” implies that what he acts is no mere performance but his true inner being. The rest of the (in God’s eye what in God’s eye”) echoes with its perfect symmetry the integrity between inner and outer of the just man’s being. God giver of

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grace, is the subject of seeing and being oneself (184-86). The “well” imagery is used by Hopkins also in WD, where he says: “I steady as water in a well, to a poise” (st 4).

Bharathi describes the human mind as a sea, which is full of turbulent waves, eddies and exposed to the violent winds. It has an area of Golden Silence. It contains both cold and hot zones. In Hopkins, the comparison of mind with the sea is implicit. In 

Heaven-Haven, he longs to go,  

Where no storms come,  
Where the green swell is in the havens dumb,  
And out of the swing of the sea.

The “storm” and “swing” here have the obvious parallels to winds and waves of Bharathi’s description. Hopkins compares the mind to the mountain: “O the mind, mind has mountains; cliffs of fall/Frightful, sheer, no-man-fathomed” where he experiences only “whirlwind comfort” (NW). It is a “classic image of psychic torment” (White 1992: 396).

Bharathi and Hopkins have suffered torment and pray for peace of mind. Bharathi appeals to his mind not to fret in vain (vn st. 12) and not to be scared even if bolt from sky falls before him (st. 23). He longs to establish God’s sceptre in the kingdom of his mind.
He prays for a mind free from tumult and ignorance; so that he can attain beatitude.

Hopkins also has suffered from ‘war within.’ In his life and belief, he tended to hold too harsh an opposition between naked will power (the elective will) and the desires and inclinations of nature (the affective will). He has suffered from a "jaded and harassed mind" (qtd. in Mcchesney 163). He struggled hard to wriggle out of "this tormented mind/...tormenting yet" (MH). In this state, “the fullest action” of his “mind that is contemplation... on the purest attainable forms, namely what is eternally and unchangeably true” is impossible (qtd. in Cotter 1972: 310). Hopkins too prays for relief:

Comforter, ... where is your comforting?

Mary, mother of us, where is your relief? (NW)

Bharathi and Hopkins admonish their hearts and seek their cooperation to get relief from the tormented state. Both identify the tormented state as hell, as a state of spiritual darkness/ignorance. Bharathi tells his heart that worrying indeed is black inferno and that liberation from worry is freedom (vn st. 36). Hopkins reminds his heart of the “black hours” experienced by him (IW). Bharathi addresses his heart as heart of absolute foolishness (vn st. 17).
While Hopkins calls his heart “mother of being in me” but “unteachably after evil” (WD st.18), Bharathi instructs his heart to get rid of deceitful worry (vn st. 15). He urges his heart to leave everything to the hands of God:

Flurry not if thunder on thy head falls,

Come what may; think ‘what is unto us?’

The world moves on by the grace of Parasakti.

Why then aught of burden for us? (vn 1980: 21)

Hopkins appeals to his “grating” heart (PH) “soul, self...poor Jackself”, to allow him to live to his “sad self hereafter kind, charitable and give room for comfort” (MH). Like Bharathi he also impresses upon the need for patience, for everything depends upon the will of God:

God knows when to God knows what; whose smile

’s not wrung, see you; unforeseen times rather- as skies

Between mountains—lights a lovely mile. (MH)

Hopkins and Bharathi state their resolution to take to a spiritual and austere life and to discard all the pleasures of the senses. Hopkins’s THP and Bharathi’s cac are self-instructional poems aimed at the restraint of senses in order to attain contemplative vision. Both poems consist of 4 lined stanzas; Hopkins’s poem contains only 7 stanzas, while Bharathi’s poem contains 46 stanzas, but
thematically they are similar and share remarkable parallels.

Turner comments on THP: “This is Hopkins in his pre-Jesuit days” (1985: 131).

The first stanza of THP is concerned with the restraint over the sense of hearing. Hopkins rejects the pleasure of listening to music, and prefers silence. He personifies silence and calls upon it to sing to his “whorled ear” only silent melodies and tunes. He is not interested in hearing the shepherds playing upon their pipes and producing musical tunes in the pastures where their sheep graze.

Bharathi, in the third stanza of cac is similarly concerned with dedication of his sense of hearing to the goddess Sakti:

Make your ears a tool for Sakti,
It will hear the voice of sivasakthi.
Make your ears a tool for Sakti,
It will long to hear the hymns of Sakti. (s 1983: 69)

Thus, the first stanza of THP and the third stanza of cac are concerned with the dedication of the sense of hearing and both are in the form of self-instruction.

The second stanza of THP and the fourth stanza of cac are concerned with the faculty of speech. Hopkins addresses his lips to be “lovely dumb.” He rejects the pleasure of speaking and indulging in eloquent speeches. By surrendering their power of speech, his lips
will attain true eloquence. He must surrender his faculty of speech in order to lead the life of a recluse for spirituality is nourished by silence not by talk. Bharathi urges to make the mouth an instrument of Sakti so that it will praise the glory of the goddess and it will define the need of Sakti.

The third stanza of THP and the second stanza of cac are concerned with the sense of sight. Hopkins wants to withdraw his eyes from the pleasure of feasting on beautiful sights, urging his eyes to “Be Shelled” in order to find the “Uncreated Light”, the radiant vision of God. The variegated sights of the world and the entire whirl of material interests simply ensnare and distract the beholder’s eyes from the sight of the god to “the abiding energy” of the mind, which alone can ensure the contemplative vision. Similarly Bharathi wants the eyes to become tool for Sakti so that the path leading to the vision could be traced and Truth and Grace could be attained.

The fourth stanza of THP and the tenth stanza of cac are concerned with the sense of taste. Hopkins would not like to gratify his sense of taste. He asks his palate not to crave “to be rinsed with wine.” He would like to observe “fasts divine” which would please God, and to satisfy his hunger only with dry bread and plain water. Similarly, Bharathi asserts that his stomach is meant for Sakti and
that it would turn even ashes into most nutritious food. It would sustain his body to enable him to attain Sakti. In the fifth stanza, the last two lines assert that he dedicates his tongue as a tool for Sakti, which will relish the taste of divinity.

The fifth stanza of THP and the fifth stanza of cac are addressed to the nostrils, the sense organs of smell. Hopkins urges his nostrils to take pleasure in the sweetness of the incense that is burnt at church when holy ceremonies are performed. They should not crave for the exquisite scents and perfumes which proud ladies wear. Bharathi urges to make the nostrils the tool of Sakti and inhale the breath of divinity.

The sixth stanza of THP and the eighth and twelfth stanzas of cac are addressed to the sense of touch. Hopkins addresses his hands and feet, which normally seek the touch of soft things. He says he would neither crave for the “feel-of primrose” nor seek the pleasure of walking upon thick velvety grass—“plushysward.” He would “walk the golden street” to partake of the consecrated bread which is symbolic of the body of Christ. The eighth stanza of cac urges to make the shoulders a tool for Sakti so that they could gain Herculean strength to bear the weight of heaven and earth. In the twelfth stanza Bharathi urges to make the legs a tool for Sakti so that they can even surmount the huge waves of the sea.
The concluding stanzas of *THP* and fortieth stanza of *cac* are concerned with the observance of fast and a simple life. Hopkins takes poverty as his "bride" and would not look for ostentation and showy robes but would be content with simple clothes, which like the lilies of the field involve no labour or toil. Bharathi urges the mind to become a tool for Sakti, so that it would observe the fast to attain Sakti, which would give sweet food and joy.

Bharathi's *nattu* and Hopkins's *LEGE* is thematically and structurally similar. The hub on which they revolve is the dialectic of sense and spirit. *LEGE* is one of his "smoothly flowing" verses (Sapir 1985: 65). It is "strangest of his experiments" (Murry 1985: 52). It was intended for a specific context. It was designed for his unfinished drama. Bharathi’s poem is written in a general philosophic context. Both poems are in the form of a debate. In the poem of Hopkins there are two voices, one represented by the Leaden echo and the other by the Golden Echo. In Bharathi’s poem, there are three participants—the *Bogi*, the *Yogi*, and the *Gnani*.

*LEGE* of Hopkins and the *Bogi* of Bharathi constitute the thesis in the dialectic of the respective poems. Both are preoccupied with the sense/sensuality. The Leaden Echo is apparently concerned with the physical beauty. The *Bogi* is an advocate of sensual pleasures. Since joy is the keynote of the hedonistic *Bogi* who
employs words which denote it: “iccai tira” (to heart’s content), “inpaq” (pleasure), “nallinpaq” (great joy) and “pokagr” (sensual pleasure). The joy is as intense but implicit in the Leaden Echo whose repetition of the word beauty: “Black beauty, keep it, beauty, beauty, beauty”- and the great despair at the thought of the gradual loss of beauty with age is ample proof.

The Leaden Echo and the Bogi open their speeches rhetorically. The Leaden Echo asks,

How to keep... beauty from vanishing away?

O is there no frowning of these wrinkles...

Down? No waving off these... messengers of Grey? And she answers in the negative. Similarly, the Bogi considers wine and women the greatest pleasures and asks rhetorically if there could be greater pleasures on earth. Since the Leaden Echo is concerned with physical/mortal beauty, her language is marked by the “shoptalk of women with such items as bows, brooches, braids and braces serving as symbols of the effort to enhance and safeguard beauty” (McChesney 1968: 126). These fanciful items find their equivalents in the sensuous catalogue of the Bogi’s passions such as fresh cashew, honey, toddy, feast, and enchanting women. Hopkins’s poem also lists out the sensuous features of an enchanting woman—winning ways, sweet looks, loose locks, long locks, and love locks.
The Golden Echo and the Yogi are concerned with the divine essence. They believe in sense-denial, which constitutes the antithesis in the dialectic of the poems. The Golden Echo and the yogi oppose the stand taken by the Leaden Echo and the Bogi respectively. Both contain a tone of strong disapproval and implicit admonition. The Golden Echo almost orders the Leaden Echo to stop worrying about the evanescent nature of earthly beauty: spare! ... (Hush there!). The yogi uses the epithet “koccai gakkai” (ordinary mortals) insinuating that the Bogi belongs to this category. It is a retort to the Bogi’s obvious insinuation contained in his exhortation to laugh at the silly opinion of those who condemn sensual pleasures.

The Golden Echo and the yogi are concerned with spirituality—the former with spiritual beauty and the latter with spiritual pleasures. Both use terms, which connote the divine Essence/immortal State. The yogi’s epithets “āivakkāli” (ecstasy), “injya ēru ēivan” (sivam the divine essence), “neiṇāṇan” (knowledge of the Truth), “ēivanilai” (immortal state) find their parallels in the Golden Echo’s expressions such as, “the beauty-in-the-ghost”, “tenderest truth”, “best being.” They seek union with the divine essence and believe that it could be attained only through
renunciation/sense-denial. The yogi exhorts to live a life of unalloyed joy in the company of Goddess Sakti.

The same idea is reflected in the Golden Echo’s belief that mortal beauty attains immortality when fastened with the tenderest truth.

To its own best being.

To attain such a blessed state of divine essence one has to surrender mortal beauty to God:

Resign them, sign them, seal them, motion

them with breath,

And with sighs soaring, soaring sighs deliver Them...

Give beauty back to God.’

The yogi who exhorts to shed all earthly desires shares the same sentiment. He urges to register a conquest over the five senses.

In natu, the thesis (Bogi/sense) and the antithesis (yogi/spirit) are followed by a synthesis, which is represented by the Gnani who explodes the myth of the dichotomy between the sense and the spirit. Apparently there is no separate Gnani-counterpart in the poem of Hopkins. But the basic ideas of the Gnani are found in the poem of Hopkins too though not in a separate unit as in the poem of Bharathi and the dichotomy

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between the sense and the spirit gets resolved here also at a deeper level.

The *Gnani* spells out the traits of an ideal saint. He explodes the myth of the dichotomy between heaven and earth, Joy and sorrow, and sensual and spiritual pleasures. He wins over both the *Bogi*/sense and the *Yogi*/spirit and so the poem *natu* concludes with their song of ecstasy in a chorus. They vindicate that since they are aware that their sweet God is Bliss, everything that God has created is pleasure—sky, the moon, the stars, the earth, ocean, mountain, victory, defeat, all that men do, wine and women. The word *natu* in the title, at first appears to refer to wine, which is a symbol of earthly pleasure. In the last stanza the same word is employed as many as seventeen times in eight lines. Now the word connotes both sensual and spiritual pleasures. Thus, the dialectical participation of the sense and the spirit is vindicated at thematic as well as structural level in the poem of Bharathi.

Apparently there is no *Gnani*-Counterpart in the Leaden Echo, but the core of his contention is found here also. The *Gnani* of Bharathi does not look upon earthly pleasures as worthless. In Hopkins’s poem also the inherent worth of youthful/earthly beauty is neither disputed nor condemned. The *Gnani’s* affirmation that all
pleasures derive from God finds a parallel in the Golden Echo’s affirmation that God is “beauty’s self and beauty’s giver.”

All religions hold that man is a degeneration of what he was. The path of Knowledge (gnanayoga) aims at the realization that man is divine. The Advaita Vedanta and the Christian Gnostic traditions lay emphasis on Self-Realization through knowledge. Bharathi and Hopkins followed the path through their respective religious traditions. They define gnosis and declare their personal attainment of it. Hopkins’s NHF and Bharathi’s nan reveal all the vital features associated with non-dualistic experience which is reinforced at the structural level through parallelism of thought and sound.

Swami Vivekananda, an Advaitin, sums up the experience of Self-Realization: man, after vain search for various gods outside himself comes back to his own soul. He finds that the god whom he was searching for in hill and dale, whom he was seeking in every brook, in every temple in churches and heavens and ruling the world, is his own self. He asserts “I am he and he is I. None but I was god, and this little I never existed.” Knowledge of this truth liberates the man in a moment. All the darkness will vanish. When man has seen himself as one with the being of the universe, when all separateness has ceased, when the whole universe has melted
Into that oneness, then all fear and sorrow disappear. He asserts “I am the one existence of the universe” (1987: 67).

Bharathi and Hopkins believe that union with God can be attained in this life on earth. Bharathi has only contempt for those who believe in attaining immortality in heaven, after their death. The realized soul is one who gains gnosis in this life (caṅku/The Conch). Bharathi asserts that an Advaitin can conquer death (pa st.4). The Advaitin’s knowledge that God and he are one constitutes Self-Realization. Bharathi’s poems abound in the definitions of gnosis, all insisting on the realization that the Ultimate Reality is one. Brahman is the one truth, the realization of which makes a man Brahman (avt). As the Upanishads say, to know Brahman is to be Brahman.

Hopkins asserts that man “can know God” (S 1959: 239). Hopkins also knows from Parmenides that “To be and to know or Being and thought are the same” (qtd. in Cotter 234). He affirms that “Christ is truth” (On the Portrait of Two Beautiful Young People). His knowledge of immortality derives from the Resurrection of Christ. He states that the “just man” knows that he is Christ (AK). He firmly believes that man can “baffle death” and become Christ, through the realization of the “New self and nobler me” (BV). Clement of Alexandria defines Christian gnosis:
“Knowledge (gnosis) is essentially a contemplation of existences on the part of the soul, either of a certain thing or of certain things, and when perfected, of all together” (qtd. in Cotter 1972: 252). It apprehends not only species and genus but also totality of being. He also explains gnosis as the faculty of identification of and with Christ, as human and divine wisdom, a sharing in his species of genius. Hopkins defines gnosis in his Exercise Notes “On the contemplating Persons, Words and Actions”: “Knowledge, the being aware... is the sense of the presence of God” (qtd. in Cotter 1972: 257). Knowledge originates in the historical incarnation of him who is the beginning and the end. For Hopkins, the first step towards gnosis of God in Christ is knowledge of one’s own self-being. As Cotter points out, Hopkins’s commentary on the “Foundation” is the “cornerstone of his Christology.” The Delphic axiom “Know thyself” becomes the biblical source of the inner man’s return to his creator (1972: 111-12).

Bharathi and Hopkins express their spiritual and poetic aspirations. Bharathi asserts that he would become immortal in this life on earth (pa st.6). Hopkins also makes no secret that he looks “forward with earnest desire to seeing the matchless beauty of Christ’s body in the heavenly light” (AHR 1966: 366). In ck, Bharathi describes his goddess Sakti as a flame in the deepest
recesses of his inmost being and his endeavour is to discover that light within (through contemplation) and experience the bliss of heaven. This “bliss” should be imparted through the language of his poetry, which should be like an incantation (mantra). Similarly, Hopkins strives to reach his “heart’s vault” to bask in the radiance of the “vital candle”-Christ (The Candle Indoors). He seeks to “instress” (realize within him through contemplation) the “mystery” (presence of the risen Christ) and to “stress” (express) (WD st.5) the “fine delight”, that “bliss”, the “one rapture of an inspiration” in his poetry (To R.B.). Bharathi prays, in kāṇṇaṃ varavu (The Nativity of Kannan), to Lord Krishna to rise in his soul as the sun in the eastern horizon. The sun of knowledge will dispel the darkness of ignorance, which is responsible for the illusion that man is different from God. Similarly, Hopkins prays that Christ, his “heart’s...fire”, may “easter” in him, and “be a dayspring to the dimness”, and “be a crimson-cresseted east” (WD st.35). Bharathi prays to Lord Krishna to remove the thought of his own self so that he can merge into Him (kovinṭaṇ pattu /The song of Govinda). Hopkins also notes, “the nature of faith in God/in man/ knowing his own truth” (qtd. in cotter 150).

Bharathi and Hopkins declare that they have attained their spiritual ambition, Bharathi in nan and Hopkins in NHF. The whole
growth of gnosis, nurtured through study, reflection and prayer, the sum of each of their lives and vision finds its expression. These poems contain all the vital features associated with non-dualistic experience.

In the opening lines of his spiritual autobiography, pa, Bharathi declares that he is a realized soul. nāṇ is one of his last poems. In the concluding lines of it, Bharathi asserts that he is Brahman:

āṇa porukal anāittin un oṭrāi
arivāi vilañku nutar cōti nāṇ.

(I am the one Existence, the Light of Consciousness which illuminates all that-is).

As Sachithanandan remarks, Bharathi has given “profound expression to his faith in the oneness of all things” (1970: 73). The Ultimate Reality of metaphysics is a Supreme Identity in which the opposition of all contraries, even of being and not being, is resolved. According to Kailasapathy, Bharathi's poetry is a reflection of this identity. He also remarks that at the height of his creativity Bharathi becomes metaphysical (1987: 9-10). In nāṇ, Bharathi scales new heights of his creativity as it embodies his identity with the Ultimate Reality in all its fullness. It embodies the personal
experience of a realized soul, the most sublime theme in a
deceptively simple style.

Like Bharathi, Hopkins also asserts that he has become
immortal like Christ, in the concluding lines of NHF, “nearly the final
poem in Hopkins’s corpus” (Lichtmann 1989: 213):

I am all at once what Christ is, since
He was what I am, and
This Jack, joke, poor potsherid, patch, matchwood,
immortal diamond,

Is immortal diamond.

The assertion of Attainment is marked by simplicity, as in Bharathi’s
poem. Elizabeth Jennings observes that Hopkins’s poetry is “a
poetry of incarnation” and that his “oneness with God is oneness
with Christ, both as God and Man” (1985: 190). This oneness gets a
definitive statement in the concluding lines of NHF. NHF may be
described as the best among the contemplative poems of Hopkins,
as the vision here attains its fullness. As Cotter observes, the poem
may be regarded as Hopkins’s summa, the culmination of years of
studying nature and mankind in his own search for inner gnosis. He
says it embodies an “integrating vision” and calls it a “new
mythogenetic expression”, though it employs traditional subject
matter: the consuming elemental cycles of fire, air, water, and earth (1972: 231-32).

The process of knowing implies the subject who knows and the object that is known. An act of cognition involves the triple forms, the cognizer, the object cognized and the means of cognition. Attainment of Advaitic knowledge through contemplation signifies the oneness of these three. Knowing Brahman is being Brahman. In NHF, Hopkins the cognizer, Christ the object, and contemplation the means, become one. Hopkins is “the clearest selved spark”, Christ “the beacon, an eternal beam”, and contemplation is suggested by the “bonfire” which “burns on.” Bharathi, blessed with a “flame” like mind (kēṭpana/A Prayer), becomes one with the “Light of lights.” The blazing moment of contemplation is suggested by the statement that he “treads the aerial path lit by the flame of knowledge” (nāṇ).

The light-imagery/diamond imagery is used by both to convey the attainment of the knowledge of union with God. As Lichtmann points out, Hopkins has discovered an image that resonates throughout mystical literature, most notably in Teresa of Avila, who compares divinity to a very clear diamond symbolizing how all things are seen in God and how he contains all things within
Him (1989: 212). The diamond also suggests the incarnational ideal of spirit in matter. The presence of "-iam-" (the 'isness' of God) in the word "d-iam-ond", a stone /matter. The visible duality of the words "I am" may be seen to denote the superficial sense of dichotomy between man and God. "I" represents Hopkins/Matter and "am" represents Being/Spirit. The dialectic between these two is resolved in the word "diamond", which signifies both spirit and matter: d-iam-ond, the stone/matter contains the Being 'I am' in the centre. The discovery of divinity in matter is thus reinforced.

Self-Realization is described as bliss by the Upanishads. Bharathi and Hopkins also identify it as bliss and declare that they experience it in nān and NHF. Brahman-knowledge is of the nature of happiness or bliss. It marks the cessation of all sorrow; it signifies the culmination of all desires. A man of illumination has no wants and is impelled by no desire. He has nothing to accomplish in this world or in the next. Nor is there anything left for him to be attained either here or hereafter. When he has achieved the supreme human goal, what need has he for the trinkets of the world? He revels in the bliss of Brahman; and the realization that he is non-different from the Absolute gives him felicity and peace. That
there is no misery in this world for him who has realized the self is proclaimed by the Brahadaranyaka Upanishad (4.4.12):

If a man knows the self as 'I am this',
Then desiring what and for whose sake
Will he suffer in the wake of the body?

(qtd. in Mahadevan 1969: 275)

Bharathi and Hopkins identify the self-realized state as 'bliss' and in nāṇ and NHF, they declare that they have attained that state. Bharathi and Hopkins understand God as a being, enjoying unalloyed and eternal joy and man's union with God implies such joy. Bharathi describes the Supreme Being in the Alogical state as nectar (vaɪya nulutun). The attained state of man is described variously as a state of divine wisdom and unalloyed joy in various poems. Hopkins understands his God as one, who "bides in bliss" (The Soldier). In nāṇ, Bharathi states that he has become the monolith of all the joys in the world. Hopkins declares that all sorrow—"grief's gasping, joyless days, dejection"—has vanished (NHF).

Bharathi and Hopkins insist on the need for unity in art. Hopkins states that in art "it is essential to recognize and strive to realize on a more or less wide basis this unity in some shape or
other” (qtd. in Cotter 269). This search for unity finds its definition in the statement of Hopkins’s poetic ambition:

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. (AHR 1966: 150)

Bharathi also stresses the unity of poetry, which lies in its power to forge a meaning, pattern out of the trivial, isolated and diverse incidents of day-to-day life, in ntv. What Bharathi means here is the same as what Hopkins means by “design, inscape.”

To ‘inscape’ his poetry, Hopkins, a student of scripture all his life, adopted scripture’s predominant form – parallelism—as his own major poetic strategy. Because it embodies likeness in form as it communicates likeness in meaning, parallelism exemplifies the incarnational ideal of matter as spirit. Maria Lichtmann observes that a mind like Hopkins’s—at once poetic, filled with sensuous appreciation of beauty; philosophical, capable of penetrating to that beauty of essence or form; and spiritual, is aware that all beauty can be charged with God and the parallelism of Hebrew poetry was the perfect statement of the integrity of outward form. He further observes that parallelism is the inscape of Hopkins’s poetry; it’s distinguishing mark or pattern. With its tendency to repeat,
parallelism works toward an ontological integration of the poem, making for unity with regard to both space and time. She says that the key word here is “unity”, perhaps the first word of Hopkins’s poetic creed (1989: 8). In short, according to her, Hopkins wanted to “re-sacralize” poetry, to make its utterance special and discontinuous with ordinary prose, to safeguard the possibility of truth in poetry (1989: 35). She observes that Hopkins’s is the incarnational ideal of all great poetry, a return to an unfallen language that is “the utterance and assertion of Being” (1989: 28). Bharathi also uses the parallelistic device profusely in his poetry. His poetic ambition is also re-sacralization, for he wants poetry to be given the stamp of incantation: “nantiran pōḷ vēṇṭunatā col īṇpan” (The pleasure of poetry should be like the one given by the chanting of God’s name), to induce the ‘bliss’ in the reader which has been experienced by the poet (ck). Bharathi is in search of a word, which contains divinity in all its fullness and wonders if om is that word (col).

The idea of oneness is conveyed through four thought-movements in nāṇ and NHF. The first two stanzas of nāṇ are marked by parallelistic statements of oneness between nature and poet/man. The poet identifies himself with each of the cardinal elements and the fauna and flora of the earth, individually in each
The parallel assertions in the first eight lines converge on one thought movement – that nature and the poet/man are one. In Hopkins’s *NHF*, the first thought-movement is marked by “inscopes of nature in motion” (Cotter 1972: 232). The octave presents the following parallels: the clouds "flaunt forth" and "march" on the “air built thoroughfare” and “glitter” and the “boisterous” “bright wind” “ropes”, “wrestles, beats” [Air]; the “dazzling whitewash” on the “elms on the bare earth” [Earth]; the “pool and rutpeel parches/Squandering ooze to squeezed dough” [Water]; the omnipresence of the light/sun (Fire) is felt on all these elements which has been indicated by the under lined words. All the elements become one in the “nature’s bonfire” in the ninth line. This convergence marks the first thought-movement, as in Bharathi’s *nāṇ*.

The second thought-movement in both these poems is concerned with the assertion of man’s oneness with nature. In *nāṇ*, the third and the fourth stanzas constitute this movement. The poet enumerates his identification with man’s artistic and architectural excellences, individually in parallel statements in each of these lines. The poet also identifies with the joy and sorrow of man. In *NHF* too, the second thought-movement deals with man and man’s oneness with nature. This movement is already foreshadowed in the
first, by “manmarks treadmire toil”, the activities and achievements of man. It is followed by the description of man as the “bonniest, dearest” and “clearest selved spark.” But he also becomes one with nature in “an enormous dark” of the dissolution of the world.

Both poems, in the third thought-movement, make a statement of the truth of equality of man with God. In nāṇ, Bharathi describes God’s nature and function. God is the creator and sustainer, the cause and effect of the phenomenal world and identifies himself with each of these aspects in parallel statements. The sum thought here is that he/man and God are one. In NHF too, the third movement is marked by the proposition that God and man are one, which is represented by the “Resurrection”, the event that established the divinity of man.

The fourth thought-movement in both the poems marks the consolidation of all the preceding movements. The poet, Nature, and God, all merge into one. In nāṇ, the sense of duality which is the result of human ignorance vanishes in the second line of the last stanza. Bharathi states that he is the one who treads on the path of the Light of knowledge in the sky. Now comes the subjective assertion that he is the one Existence, which is behind all the existent things in the phenomenal world and that, he is the one Intelligence, the Light of all lights. The fourth movement in NHF is
also marked by total Illumination, which occurs in a “flash.” The “foundering deck”, (the ignorance which is the root cause of the loss of faith in man’s divinity), receives a “dazzling whitewash” from the “beacon, an eternal beam” —Christ. Now comes the subjective assertion that he is also immortal like Christ. That man’s divinity is not something acquired but the recovery of what is inherent but dormant is suggested by the “matchwood” imagery by Hopkins. As Cotter observes, “created in the image of Christ and wonderfully new created through his death, human nature returns in the end to its “original pattern” preserved hidden and untarnished and ready for the light in this “matchwood” existence as a crystalline allotrope of carbon (1972:135).

In *nāṭ* and *NHF*, phonetic parallelism reinforces the idea of oneness conveyed by semantic parallelism. Both poems abound in alliterations, assonances and use rhyme schemes, all of which finally seem to converge on the first Breath of God, *om/I AM*. The iteration imparts an incantatory dimension which Bharathi and Hopkins sought to accomplish in their poetry.

In Bharathi’s *pc*, after her contemplative union with Kannan, Draupadi emerges as Goddess Sakti, and she utters *om* before taking the vow to take revenge upon her enemies (st. 103). All Gods chanted *om*(sū104). This shows that in Bharathi’s
consciousness *om* is associated with the attained state. He has faith that the chanting of *om* will ensure immortality for man (*vaiya nulutum*). He prays that he may be "oned with Him In yogic meditation with *omkaar* Resounding in the soul" (*vn* 1980: 8). His poetic ambition is to arrive at the one word, which contains divine energy in full and wonders if *om* is that word (*coi*).

*nāṇ* is marked by an overall symmetry in versification. It is divided into seven stanzas of equal length of four lines. Every line ends with the refrain – the word *nan*. The poem also abounds in initial reiteration, alliteration and assonances. In view of Bharathi’s deep preoccupation with the monosyllable, the monosyllabic refrain, *nāṇ*, which is repeated at the end of every line of the poem, may be said to echo *om*, in the contemplative ears of Bharathi. Bharathi’s poetic ambition that poetry should have the dimension of a chant (*mantra*) is like Hopkins’s concern with ‘repetition, oftening, over-and-overing, aftering of the inscape.’ His search for the one word, which contains divinity in full, ends in the arrival at it – *nāṇ* (the liberated ‘I’).

Hopkins **NHF** is marked by an overall asymmetrical lines. But it abounds in alliterations and assonances. A movement toward unity marks the rhyme scheme. The rhyme is as follows: ABBA, ABBA, CDCD DCC EEE, FFF, and GGG. The violation of the rules of
the sonnet form has limited number of lines is a structural reflection of the mind’s going beyond the world of Time and Space, from finiteness to Infinity. The sense of duality suggested by the rhymes in the first fifteen lines disappears. From the sixteenth line there are three sets, each set is marked by a certain uniformity (EEE, FFF, GGG).

Traditionally the Greek Omega, the last letter of the hornbook alphabet or Christ-cross-row, expresses finality, the end, purpose and meaning: “telos”, of human acts and the cosmos. In Christian gnosis, it is the perfection and completion which the faithful steward of Jesus aims for and achieves through piety and learning. Jesus is Omega, the homecoiling centre of the Second Coming, the pole and final mark of creation in time. Transliterated into English, Omega becomes long “O.” “O” is the sign Omega, the secret Christogram of gnosis. Cotter remarks that “the Ah’s and O’s with which Hopkins’s poetry is so lavishly studded sound the full scope and meaning of his myth: Alpha and Omega – ‘But ah, but o though terrible’ (CC), Christ the creator and judge” (1972: 287). Hopkins showed a familiarity with oriental religious beliefs and shared in the new interest at Oxford in philology and comparative mythology. On account of this familiarity, Cotter suggests that Hopkins privately may have associated Greek “Omega”
with the sacred syllable *om* and that he may also have linked *om* with “home” (1972: 286).

To Hopkins, “Verse is (inscape of spoken sound, not spoken words...) speech wholly or partially repeating the same figure of sound” (1966: 140). Lichtmann observes that no poet, who writes so much iteration into his poems, as Hopkins increasingly did, can be concerned merely with their manifest sense. She adds that Hopkins’s almost incantatory figures of repetition brings us closer to a state approaching trance, as they still the mind’s transitional energies (1989: 167). Like the refrains of a litany or hymn, parallelism of resemblance elevate the poem toward unity as they cause a slowing down or lingering so that the mind can repeat the same energy on the same matter. The words “I am” seem to be phonetically reiterated six times: “I am all... what I am... immortal diamond is immortal diamond.” It is a phonetic inscaping of the name of Hopkins’s God, IAM, through “oftening and aftering” device. The repetition of the “o” sound in NHF may be seen as an attempt to inscape Omega. For, the “o” sound is repeated as many as 38 times in the poem, the last two in the last two lines of the poem.

As Lichtmann observes, “Never was there a copula that was more the utterance and assertion” of Being than in Hopkins’s final
line, which performs an alchemical transformation of the “poor potsherd” into “immortal diamond.” As elsewhere in his poetry, the perfect symmetry of this parallelism is used to connote ecstasy and wholeness—a complete vision accessible only to a self-bowing to Being’s utterance. “The sheer iteration of the last four words is no tautology but expresses the faith that the miracle of Resurrection is here and now present, in this very ‘Jack, joke, poor potsherd’ as well as beyond it” (1989: 127).

To conclude, Bharathi and Hopkins are men of practical religion. They acknowledge the superiority of man over all other creatures in the hierarchy of creation. The final stage in the hierarchy of souls is found in man. On account of this, both assert that man can consciously attain divinity. Bharathi is influenced by the theistic Advaitic school and holds the ideal of Self-Realization dear to his heart, while Hopkins by the Christian Gnostic tradition and cherishes the goal of identification with Christ. They portray exemplary god-realization, Bharathi in pa and Hopkins in the second part of WD. The moment of union with god is presented as one in contemplation in both cases. Draupadi and the chief nun are shown to have followed the other three paths of Attainment also.

Bharathi and Hopkins are men of Action/karmayogis. They consider selfless hardwork a sure means of Self-Realization and
dedicate themselves to such work throughout their lives. Their selfless concern is reinforced by their identification with the cause of toilers and the downtrodden. They condemn man’s exploitation of nature and other fellowmen for the sake of material prosperity.

In the Path of Devotion/Bhakti yoga, the chief thing is to “want” God. Bharathi and Hopkins show deep faith in god and reveal an ardent longing for union with god. Bharathi’s *kan* and *kkt* sequences are compared with Hopkins’s “terrible sonnets” to bring out the longing for union with god and the sufferings to reach their goal. Contemplation in these poems turns from outer to inner, from bright to dark, mirroring the last stage of the contemplative life that is often described as one of progress in darkness, which is reflected in the use of the imagery of darkness. Poignant sense of estrangement from god finds expression in these poems. The same sense is reflected in their poetic career too as loss of poetic inspiration and lack of vigour in poetic expression which is brought out by a comparative study of Bharathi’s *kta* and Hopkins’s sonnet, To R. B.

As contemplatives (*rajayogis*), Bharathi and Hopkins understand the need for mental concentration and sense-restraint in god-realization. Both strive hard to plumb the depth of their mind and heart to reach the height of the soul. This *rajayogic* concern
finds expression in Bharathi’s *cac* and Hopkins’s *THP*. Bharathi’s *gatu* and Hopkins’s *LEGE* dramatize the dialectic of the spirit and the sense. The concluding part of this chapter brings out the similarity in the assertions of oneness with god, by Bharathi and Hopkins. The use of light imagery reinforces their belief. The structure of the poems, *nāṇ* and *NHF* reflect the non-dualistic, dialectical belief. These poems may be taken as the poetic documents testifying to the attainment of their twin aspirations: personal Self-Realization and re-sacralization of the language of poetry.